

## NAMMCO SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON ABUNDANCE ESTIMATES

Copenhagen, May 22-24, 2018

### 1. CHAIRMAN WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Daniel Pike welcomed all participants (Appendix 1) to the meeting, noting that the group valued the full participation and input of the invited experts. Deputies particularly welcomed Greg Donovan (IWC), who participated in the meeting on behalf of Alessandro Zerbin, the chair of the IWC Working Group on Abundance Estimates in the framework of the newly established cooperation between the two working groups (see under item 15.7).

The task before the group was a general one: to consider abundance estimates particularly from the most recent NASS in 2015, but also from previous and more recent surveys (Table 1). Estimates can be recommended for acceptance by the Scientific Committee, or further work can be recommended. In addition to the estimates from the NASS series, the Group will also consider information made available from surveys in adjacent areas, for context and to put into context with the wider North Atlantic area. Pike noted that there was an abundance of new information available to the Group, which would require an efficient approach to cover in the time available.

**NOTE:** Estimates from the 2015 Icelandic/Faroese ship survey component of the NASS were revised subsequent to the meeting according to the recommendations of the Working Group, and accepted by correspondence in October 2018. See Annex 1 for details.

### 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda (Appendix 2) was accepted with minor changes.

### 3. APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEURS

In the absence of a Scientific Secretary, various members acted as Rapporteurs for sections of the report.

### 4. REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

Pike noted that most of the primary documents (Appendix 3) contained several estimates for particular species and surveys. Therefore, to maximize efficiency the Group would review them in two stages, looking first at general aspects of the analyses that affected all species estimates, then focusing in on individual species and years.

The summaries and discussions pertaining to the design and conduct of the surveys and the general aspects of the analyses common to all species are therefore collated under Section 4, while the summaries and discussions pertaining to each species are given under the specific species headings. The status of the abundance estimates presented (accepted, accepted pending small modifications, not accepted because of further analysis needed, etc.) to this Group is summarized in Table 1.

#### 4.1 SCGZ/AG/08 TNASS Ship 2007, Iceland and Faroes

##### Author's summary

SCGZ/AG/08 presents a summary of the results of the Icelandic and Faroese components of the Trans North Atlantic Sightings Survey (T-NASS) ship surveys conducted in 2007. This was the fifth in a series of large-scale cetacean surveys conducted previously in 1987, 1989, 1995, and 2006. Four vessels were employed as dedicated survey vessels, each one equipped with two observing platforms. Three of these were dedicated solely to the cetacean survey, while a fourth conducted fishery surveys coincident with the cetacean survey. Five additional vessels conducting fishery surveys were employed as "extension" vessels, each carrying two observers operating from a single platform and surveying areas mainly to the northeast and southwest of the core survey area, but with some overlap. The core survey used Icelandic/Faroese (I-F) mode, with a "stacker" platform using binoculars to survey for ahead of the vessel and track sightings until they passed abeam or were sighted by the primary platform. Duplicate sightings were identified by a dedicated observer on the tracker platform. Abundance of cetaceans in the