



**NAMMCO STEERING COMMITTEE
FOR PLANNING THE SECOND
TRANS NORTH ATLANTIC SIGHTINGS SURVEY**

Teleconference, Monday 5 November 2012

Draft Report

1. OPENING REMARKS

Acquarone, the Convenor from the Secretariat, welcomed the nationally appointed members (SC/20/TNASS-STC/01) of the T-NASS Steering Committee (StC) to their first meeting by online teleconference. He reminded them of the Terms of Reference (SC/20/TNASS-STC/04) drawn by Council, that this StC was established directly under the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) and thus differs fundamentally from the Scientific Committee (SC) Working Groups in that its workings and reports are not subject to approval by the SC. Also the StC is to meet at intervals decided internally or as instructed by the FAC to which it reports directly. On this subject it is important to note that the next meeting of the FAC is planned for March 2013. Furthermore the StC disposes of its own independent budget. The StC is, however, encouraged to inform the SC of its workings.

Acquarone also reported that the StC had been appointed as a response from Council to the presentation of the SC plans for the next T-NASS and associated long-term budget forecast. Council requested that the StC continued in the planning of T-NASS for 2015 and that as a first task it should inform the FAC with a detailed budget specifying the expected origin of funding for each item.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda (SC/20/TNASS-STC/02) was adopted

3. APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

Acquarone was appointed rapporteur.

4. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Heide-Jørgensen was nominated unanimously for the position of Chairperson of the StC. Before his election Heide-Jørgensen wished to state his views on the planning for T-NASS. In particular he wanted to underline that he considered essential:

- Having a full day in person meeting for this StC as soon as practical, in order to gather momentum within the planning activities and decide on essential details;
- Defining a limited number of target species to facilitate survey design, at most one target species per member country;
- Utilising fully the expertise present within NAMMCO countries before turning to outside help;

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- Limiting external coordination, placing as a second priority level the coordination of the methods with associated surveys in order not to weaken the power of internal NAMMCO collaboration and estimates.

The StC expressed its appreciation to Heide-Jørgensen for the clarifications of his points of view and unanimously elected him Chairperson.

5. DEFINITION OF A WORK-PLAN

At the time of the meeting the StC it was not deemed possible to define the work plan of the StC before the upcoming meeting in-person (see point 7).

In general the year 2015 for the next T-NASS, made at previous meetings of the Survey Planning working group, is confirmed.

It was noted that Iceland would probably elect fin whales as target species for the shipboard surveys but that the target species for the East Greenland coastal area could be minke whales depending on coverage. In the case of pilot whales and other schooling cetaceans technological solutions should be investigated that allow gathering improved information essential to the estimation.

It was also noted that Norway's obligations regarding the requirements of IWC's RMP, may limit the choice of the area to be covered in 2015. However, at present the Norwegian government intends initiating a new survey cycle including the year 2015.

Regarding the associated European SCANS III surveys the target species will differ from those of T-NASS. SCANS III will focus mostly small cetaceans, which might provide useful information for NAMMCO countries, but not necessarily essential for the management. NAMMCO's interests in SCANS III species could number the harbour porpoise and the pilot whale.

6. DELIVERABLES FOR THE NEXT MEETING

In preparation of the next meeting the members of the StC are encouraged to gather their thoughts and information on:

- Which target species should be chosen for each NAMMCO country;
- The feasibility of obtaining valid and improved estimates of abundance for pilot whales from the next T-NASS, and the appropriateness of using financial means on this method for the provision of management advice. (Other useful information for improving the current assessment could list data on stock distribution);
- The areas and the timing for T-NASS in the different areas;
- Which compromises can be made to satisfy the national requirements and the requirements for the different management systems for prioritising of areas and species;
- Practical information on surveys already planned to take place in 2015.

7. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The StC agreed to meet in Copenhagen on 10 December 2013 at 09:00, at the Greenland Representation offices, to exchange information for the preparation of a report to be presented to the FAC at its March 2013 meeting.