

TNASS Steering Committee Skype Call, 27 April 2015

Members of the TNASS Steering Committee Heide-Jørgensen, Gunnlaugsson, and Desportes conducted a Skype meeting on 27/4/15. The Faroes and Norway had agreed to participate but did not join the call. Prewitt from the Secretariat was also on the call.

The following points were discussed:

1. Status for National survey plans for 2015

Greenland is still awaiting budget approval in parliament, but expects funding for the West Greenland survey and an additional 900DKK for a survey in East Greenland as part of TNASS2015.

Iceland will cover coastal areas of Iceland with aerial surveys and ships, and offshore areas with ships.

Norway will proceed with the already planned survey of the Norwegian Sea.

The Faroe Islands will cover areas around the Faroes with ships.

2. Status for the TNASS2015 survey

As the full funding has not been provided in time, the plans for a synoptic survey in the North Atlantic in 2015, as envisaged in the full TNASS2015 proposal, are cancelled. The important Jan Mayen area will not be fully covered, and a synoptic coverage of minke whales in the Central North Atlantic cannot be achieved without coverage of the Jan Mayen area. Therefore the StC views its work as terminated.

Heide-Jørgensen was of the opinion that there was therefore no NASS 2015 coordinated under the auspice of NAMMCO and having the possibility of being supported by SC funds, but only national surveys supported by national funding. Desportes challenged this view, arguing that the Faroese and Icelandic part of the surveys were still part of NASS 2015 and could be coordinated and facilitated by NAMMCO, giving a situation similar to NASS 2001. She underlined that the decision ultimately lies with Council.

3. Future coordinated North Atlantic Sighting Surveys

There are currently no plans for future NASS surveys and further guidance is awaited from the Council on this matter.

4. Funding

The group discussed whether the remaining funds in the Scientific Committee budget should continue to be used towards the National Surveys (e.g., development of the e-inclinometer, drone, etc.). In previous discussions (Steering Committee and Scientific Committee), it was agreed to allocate some funds to planning meetings and to purchase equipment to support

National Surveys. As discussed above (see under point 2, last paragraph), the group disagreed at this meeting whether to continue this level of support.