

Delineation of Walrus in Canada

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Abstract

Information that has become available since Born *et al.* (1995) reviewed stock-structure of walrus in Canada does not radically alter their conclusions. Walrus in Foxe Basin appear to be a separate population although there is evidence of limited exchange with other areas. There is new evidence to support the previously speculated separation of the walrus in SEHS from others. The suspected subdivisions in HRCS walrus appears substantiated by isotopic evidence although interbreeding among walrus at various wintering areas needs to be examined. Among Baffin Bay walrus, there now are preliminary data that suggest further subdivision into west Lancaster Sound, west Jones Sound, and east Jones Sound.

General Considerations

The concept of "stock" is common in fisheries management for making intraspecific subdivisions, usually focussing on the question "Which animals are taken where by whom?" to assist managers in making allocation decisions. But, while prevalent in the literature, the concept of "stock" is not rigorously defined. Outside of fisheries, the word "stock" generally refers to the base from which other groups derive, analogous to the stem of a tree rather than its branches; an interpretation constant since at least the 14th