

## Background to the development of Section A of the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme for the hunting of marine mammals

Council-03 (July 1993) established a Working Group (WG) “to consider inspection and observation schemes, in order to harmonize regulations and thereby *interalia* ensure that data collected will be compatible”.

The ToR of the WG, would apply, where appropriate, to the utilisation of all marine mammals relevant to NAMMCO.

The WG began its work by reviewing the existing systems that were in place for different hunts in member countries. Based on this review it became clear that (WG 1<sup>st</sup> meeting September 1993):

- All whale hunts were nationally regulated and apart from Norwegian sealing in Russian zone, all hunting took place within members own fisheries zones thus only national authorities could exercise action in connection with breaches of regulations.
- Existing control and inspection schemes had developed largely in relation to the nature of the hunts themselves.
- Hunting of larger whales (minke) were licensed, regular reporting systems existed, and some system of control and inspection were in effect.
- Where an inspector is present the opportunity exists to gather a wide range of data in addition to other tasks of the inspector.
- **This would be an Inspection scheme for coastal minke whaling not small cetaceans or seals.**

The WG in its meeting in November 1994 “clarified the reasons for establishing a common inspection scheme. It was considered important to ensure that the basic data collected in the course of inspection schemes on a national basis were compatible for scientific purposes. Furthermore, it was agreed that, while minke whaling operations differed from country to country, it was worthwhile to determine the necessary basic elements for effective control and inspection which were common to all forms of coastal minke whaling in the region, and which could be applied and built upon by national authorities as appropriate”.

Following this meeting the WG began developing a list of common elements (checklist) which inspectors should be responsible for checking, i.e. the elements that later became Appendix 1 – Items for inclusion in whaling logbooks.

In its 1995 meeting the WG states “it was noted that the checklists could only apply to offshore whaling with harpoon guns”. However, this must later have been qualified to also include near-coast whaling with harpoon guns although no particular reference to this qualification has been found.

Council-06 (March 1996) adopted the ***Provisions of the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme for the hunting of Marine Mammals***, at that time covering Sections A and B and Appendix 1. It was clearly noted that Section A concerned hunting of whales from vessels with harpoon gun onboard, and that it was not limited to offshore whaling.

In its November meeting in 1996 the WG agenda included “Information from member countries on the work on the implementation of the Inspection Scheme”. In the report it is noted: “Regarding the implementation of the *National Inspection Schemes for coastal whaling in NAMMCO member countries*, no member had yet finalised the preparations for the guidelines for the national inspectors. It was noted that it is a precondition for the final implementation of the Control Scheme

as a whole that each member country prepares and implements the inspection part of the Scheme parallel to the implementation of the Observation Scheme. Work towards this goal has begun in member countries.”

Council-07 (May 1997) noted the information given by member countries to the Management Committee’s request for updates on the progress of implementation of Section A - Common elements for national inspection schemes for coastal whaling (*From the MC report (May 1997)*):

*With respect to the Faroe Islands and Iceland, it was noted that there were not at present any whaling activities carried out in these countries of the type to which provisions under Section A applied, i.e. hunting of whales from vessels with a harpoon gun.*

*Greenland reported that although there had been some delays in implementing revised regulations in accordance with Section A of the Joint Control Scheme, Greenland Home Rule authorities were currently preparing a new directive in connection with the hunting of large whales from vessels using a harpoon gun.*

*Norway reported on national measures with respect to inspection of Norwegian minke whaling and sealing operations, in which an inspector is present on board each vessel. It was also reported that a new mechanism for electronic surveillance of whaling activities (cf. Joint Control Scheme, article A.3.3) was currently being examined.*

In 1998 Section B (the Observation Scheme) of the Joint NAMMCO Control scheme was implemented and observers were active for the first time. In the years to come the work of the WG was mainly focused on the running of the Observation Scheme.

In 2007 coinciding with dividing the general Management Committee (MC) into one for cetaceans and one for seals and walruses, the Provisions were changed to reflect that the reporting body would now be the Council and not the MC as previously.

In 2008-2009 CIO undertook a full revision of the Provisions mainly initiated by the following elements:

- Observations had gone from only land based to primarily out at sea and safety conditions for observers needed reconsidering
- An electronic monitoring system had been implemented in Norway

As part of the revision CIO reviewed the overall structuring of paragraphs and made changes to both the Section A and B, and appendix 1 and guideline to Section B. In the case of Section A the changes pertained mostly to the electronic monitoring.

Council endorsed the revisions in September 2009. In 2019 Council endorsed a new Observation Scheme that replaced Section B inc guidelines. However, Section A has not been looked at before now.