



Ad hoc Working Group on Narwhal in East Greenland (NEGWG)

October 25-29 2021, Copenhagen

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Review the latest information on genetic discrimination of stocks in East Greenland.
2. Review the narwhal stock structure of Area 1 (Scoresby Sound and coast north of 68.5 degrees) based on genetic structure, seasonal distribution and movements and hunter and user knowledge.
3. Review information from hunters on biology, distribution and abundance of narwhals. Provide advice on collection and documentation of hunter and user data and knowledge for use in stock assessments.
4. Review hunting statistics and life history data.
5. Assess the importance of climate and other environmental changes on the life history, distribution and trends in abundance of narwhals in East Greenland. Discuss methods for using this information in the assessments.
6. If data are available at the meeting, passive acoustic monitoring of narwhal abundance in Scoresby Sound in 2017.
7. Update the narwhal assessment using a revised likelihood model for Tasiilaq abundance from the 2016 survey, hunter and user knowledge, catch data, life history data from the hunt, and possibly revised stock structure. Prepare advice on sustainable catches.

Belugas

8. Review available information on belugas in SE Greenland and recommend research necessary for an initial assessment.

Other reviews and advice

9. Review of survey plans, including comparison to historical distribution and recent hunter observations, and other scientific activities that could assist the next assessment.
10. Review of payments to hunters, and commercial aspects of the hunt.
11. Development of guidelines for assessment of small and depleted stocks.



This Ad hoc Working Group was initially convened in response to a recommendation from the NAMMCO Scientific Committee (SC25) in 2018 to assess the status of narwhals in East Greenland and report results back to the committee at its 26th meeting (SC26). This recommendation was endorsed by the Joint Management Committee at the NAMMCO Council meeting held in 2019 (NAMMCO 26).

The Terms of Reference for the initial meeting were:

1. Review the latest information on surveys in East Greenland including options for updating the surveys from the 1980s.
2. Review information of satellite tracking of narwhals in East Greenland
3. Present the latest information on genetic discrimination of stocks in East Greenland
4. Assess the importance of climate change on the distribution of narwhals in East Greenland
5. Compile hunting statistics and information from hunters on availability of narwhals
6. Assess the future sustainability of catches