

28<sup>TH</sup> MEETING

# NAMMCO Scientific Committee

24-28 January 2021, Greenland Representation, Copenhagen

## DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

**1. Welcome from the Chair & Opening Remarks**

*New member: Gudjon*

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

**3. Appointment of Rapporteurs**

**4. Review of Available Documents and Reports**

4.1. National and annual progress reports

4.1.1. Updates from observers

4.2. Working group reports

*Will be presented under item 7.*

4.3. Other reports and documents

*List of active council requests*

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**5. Updates from Council**

5.1. General comments

5.2. Endorsed SC work plan

2021	2022	2023
<p><b>Working Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Narwhal in East Greenland</li> <li>- NAMMCO-JCNB JWG on Narwhal and Beluga</li> <li>- By-catch</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harp &amp; Hooded Seals Benchmark kick off (online)</li> <li>- NASS Planning (online)</li> <li>- (Super-tag: Development)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Working Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bearded Seal</li> <li>- Ringed Seal</li> <li>- Harbour Porpoise</li> <li>- Coastal Seals</li> <li>- Pilot Whale</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harp &amp; Hooded Seals Benchmark Meeting</li> <li>- NASS Planning</li> <li>- (Super-tag: Testing)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Working Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Harp &amp; Hooded Seals</li> <li>- Dolphins</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NASS Planning</li> <li>- (Super-tag: Research)</li> </ul>

**6. Collaboration between SC Members**

6.1. MINTAG Project

*Update to be presented by Mads Peter Heide-Jørgensen and the Secretariat.*

6.2. Other collaborations

**7. Reports of the Working Groups**

7.1. By-catch

*Convenor Genevieve Desportes will provide an overview of the BYCWG Report, noting that the report was not made publicly available until it has been reviewed by the SC following a request from the Faroe Islands that it be withheld.*

7.2. Narwhals in East Greenland

*The NEGWG report will be presented under the relevant species.*

7.3. NAMMCO-JCNB Joint Working Group

*The JWG report will be presented under the relevant species.*

## **8. Environmental/Ecosystem Issues**

### **8.1. Marine Mammal / Fisheries Interactions**

#### **8.1.1. Consumption of resources by marine mammals**

#### **8.1.2. Review and status of active requests (R-1.1.5, R-1.1.8)**

***Request (R)-1.1.5** Standing request to periodically review and update available knowledge related to the understanding of interactions between marine mammals and commercially exploited marine resources.*

***R-1.1.8** In addressing the standing requests on ecosystem modelling and marine mammal fisheries interaction, to extend the focus to include all areas under NAMMCO jurisdiction. In the light of the distributional shifts seen under T-NASS 2007, the SC should investigate dynamic changes in spatial distribution due to ecosystem changes and functional responses.*

### **8.2. Multi-species approaches to management and modelling**

#### **8.2.1. Review and status of active requests (R-1.2.1)**

***R-1.2.1** To consider whether multispecies models for management purposes can be established for the North Atlantic ecosystems and whether such models could include the marine mammals compartment. If such models and the required data are not available then identify the knowledge lacking for such an enterprise to be beneficial to proper scientific management and suggest scientific projects which would be required for obtaining this knowledge.*

*As agreed, we are expecting Mette Skern-Mauritzen to come with an update (see Report SC27)*

***R-1.2.2** In relation to the importance of the further development of multispecies approaches to the management of marine resources, to monitor stock levels and trends in stocks of all marine mammals in the North Atlantic.*

### **8.3. Environmental issues**

#### **8.3.1. Review and status of active requests (R-1.5.3, R-1.5.4)**

***R-1.5.3** To monitor the development of the Mary River Project and assess qualitatively or if possible quantitatively the likely impact and consequences on marine mammals in the area.*

The JWG was suggested to provide more specific terms of reference for a workshop on disturbance from the mine (SC27)

***R-1.5.4** Committed to furthering its ecosystem approach to the management of marine mammals, and recognising the range of anthropogenic pressures facing North Atlantic marine mammals associated with the climate and environmental changes taking place, the Council requests the SC to advise on the best process to investigate the effects of non-hunting related anthropogenic stressors on marine mammal populations, including the cumulative impacts of global warming, by-catch, pollution and disturbance.*

SC/26 previously answered this request by implementing a requirement that all WGs include other anthropogenic impacts as an agenda item. How best to address these impacts and further improve the work on this topic was also addressed in the response to the performance review recommendations. How are we moving forward with this request?

## **9. Management Procedures (R-1.6.7)**

***NEW: R-1.6.7** The SC is requested to explain how and at what level the precautionary approach is, or can be, integrated into advice provided by the SC for use in conservation and management, with a particular focus on depleted stocks.*

## **10. Seals & Walrus Stocks – Status and Advice to the Council**

### **10.1. Harp seal**

#### **10.1.1. Updates**

*Updates on this species are requested as there is a Working Group scheduled in the workplan.*

#### **10.1.2. Review and status of active requests (R-2.1.9)**

***R-2.1.9** To investigate possible reasons for the apparent decline of Greenland Sea stock of hooded seals; and assess the status of the stock on basis of the results from the planned survey in 2007.*

- 10.2. Hooded seal
  - 10.2.1. Updates
  - 10.2.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

- 10.3. Ringed seal
  - 10.3.1. Updates

*Updates on this species are requested as there is a Working Group scheduled in the workplan.*

- 10.3.2. Review and status of active requests (R-2.3.1, R-2.3.3)

**R-2.3.1** *To advise on stock identity of ringed seals for management purposes and to assess abundance in each stock area, long-term effects on stocks by present removals in each stock area, effects of recent environmental changes (i.e. disturbance, pollution) and changes in the food supply, and interactions with other marine living resources.*

**NEW: R-2.3.3** *To convene a working group in 2022 with the aim of conducting a thorough review of the existing data and to go ahead with the assessment of stocks for which it was possible. If the data required for a full assessment of (some of) the stocks were not available, the WGs and the SC should identify, and prioritise, which specific data essential to their assessments are still needed.*

- 10.4. Harbour seal
  - 10.4.1. Updates
  - 10.4.2. Review and status of active requests (R-2.5.2)

**R-2.5.2** *To conduct a formal assessment of the status of harbour seals around Iceland and Norway as soon as feasible.*

This will be done through the CSWG, which was initially planned to meet in April 2020 but due to COVID-19 has now been rescheduled for 2022.

- 10.5. Grey seal
  - 10.5.1. Updates
  - 10.5.2. Review and status of active requests (R-2.4.2)

**R-2.4.2** *To provide a new assessment of grey seal stocks throughout the North Atlantic.*

This will be done through the CSWG, which was initially planned to meet in April 2020 but due to COVID-19 has now been rescheduled for 2022.

- 10.6. Bearded seal
  - 10.6.1. Updates

*Updates on this species are requested as there is a Working Group scheduled in the workplan.*

- 10.6.2. Review and status of active requests (R-2.7.1)

**NEW: R-2.7.1.** *To convene a working group in 2022 with the aim of conducting a thorough review of the existing data and to go ahead with the assessment of stocks for which it was possible. If the data required for a full assessment of (some of) the stocks were not available, the WGs and the SC should identify, and prioritise, which specific data essential to their assessments are still needed.*

An intern at the Secretariat has reviewed available published literature.

- 10.7. Walrus
  - 10.7.1. Updates
  - 10.7.2. Review and status of active requests (R-2.6.3)

**R-2.6.3** *Provide advice of the effects of human disturbance, including fishing and shipping activities, tourism, hydrocarbon exploration and mineral extractions on the distribution, behaviour and conservation status of walrus in Greenland*

This request was partly answered by the walrus working group (WWG) in 2018. However, the SC reiterated its concern about mining in the Wolstenholme Fjord and advances in the Mary River project. SC27 endorsed a recommendation that a workshop on disturbance from the Mary River mine be organised and that this should include impacts on walrus. SC27 suggested that the JWG provide more specific terms of reference for this workshop at its next meeting.

## 11. Cetacean Stocks – Status and Advice to the Council

- 11.1. Beluga
  - 11.1.1. Updates

11.1.2. Review and status of active requests (R-3.4.11)

**R-3.4.11** *To update the assessment of both narwhal and beluga, noting that new data warrant such an exercise*

SC/27 received an updated assessment for beluga from the JWG meeting in 2020 and noted that an updated assessment for narwhal is expected in 2021.

11.2. Narwhal

11.2.1. Updates

11.2.2. Review and status of active requests (R-3.4.11)

**R-3.4.11** *To update the assessment of both narwhal and beluga, noting that new data warrant such an exercise*

SC/27 received an updated assessment for beluga from the JWG meeting in 2020 and noted that an updated assessment for narwhal is expected in 2021.

11.3. Dolphins

11.3.1. Updates

*Updates on dolphin species are requested as there is a Working Group scheduled in the workplan, also given the SC27 response to R-3.9.6 (see below)*

11.3.2. Review and status of active requests (R-3.9.6)

**R-3.9.6** *The SC was asked to carry out assessments of these species but to date insufficient information has been available on stock delineation, distribution, abundance and biological parameters to initiate the work...The Committee endorsed the plan of the SC to proceed with the assessments once the above mentioned studies have been completed.*

SC/27 received an update on the information available in each member country to perform an assessment and answer this request. Noting that some data was still lacking, a working group meeting was tentatively proposed for 2023 and a review of the available information will be undertaken again SC28.

11.4. Common minke whale

11.4.1. Updates

11.4.2. Review and status of active requests (R-1.7.11)

**R-1.7.11** *To develop estimates of abundance and trends as soon as possible once the survey has been completed, with the primary target species (fin, minke and pilot whales) as a first priority, and secondary target species as a second priority.*

11.5. Fin whale

11.5.1. Updates

11.5.2. Review and status of active requests (R-1.7.11)

**R-1.7.11** *To develop estimates of abundance and trends as soon as possible once the survey has been completed, with the primary target species (fin, minke and pilot whales) as a first priority, and secondary target species as a second priority.*

11.6. Harbour porpoise

11.6.1. Updates

11.6.2. Review and status of active requests (R-3.10.1)

**R-3.10.1 (Renewed)** *The Council noted that the harbour porpoise is common to all NAMMCO member countries, and that the extent of current research activities and expertise in member countries and elsewhere across the North Atlantic would provide an excellent basis for undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the species throughout its range. The Council therefore requested the SC to perform such an assessment, which might include distribution and abundance, stock identity, biological parameters, ecological interaction, pollutants, removals and sustainability of removals.*

The SC is progressing with this task and has now completed the assessment for West Greenland. It has also provided recommendations for the other areas regarding the data needed to conduct such assessments and given advice on how to obtain reliable information. Harbour porpoise assessments for Norway and Iceland are now tentatively scheduled for 2022, with final confirmation pending the availability of the necessary data.

**R-3.10.1 (Renewed)** *The Management Committee recommends that total removal estimates are made for all areas, and that abundance estimates from the 2007 survey in Iceland and the 2010 survey in the Faroe Islands are available before a WG meeting. (NAMMCO 19).*

SC/27 noted that the BYCWG had progressed on its delivery of by-catch estimates for Iceland and Norway. It also noted that abundance estimates for Iceland (2007 survey) and the Faroe Islands (2010 survey) were now complete. Assessments for Norway and Iceland are therefore tentatively planned for 2022, pending final confirmation of the availability of the necessary data

#### 11.7. Pilot whale

##### 11.7.1. Updates

*Updates on this species are requested as there is a Working Group scheduled in the workplan.*

##### 11.7.2. Review and status of active requests (R-1.7.11, R-3.8.6)

***R-1.7.11** To develop estimates of abundance and trends as soon as possible once the survey has been completed, with the primary target species (fin, minke and pilot whales) as a first priority, and secondary target species as a second priority.*

***R-3.8.6** To continue work to complete a full assessment of pilot whales in the North Atlantic and provide advice on the sustainability of catches, as soon as necessary further information becomes available, with particular emphasis on the Faroese area and East and West Greenland. In the short term, the SC was requested to provide a general indication of the level of abundance of pilot whales required to sustain an annual catch equivalent to the annual average of the Faroese catch in the years since 1997.*

*SC/27 received an update on the ongoing research efforts within the Faroe Islands to inform an assessment and noted that the request would be answered by the pilot whale working group at its scheduled meeting in 2022.*

#### 11.8. Beaked whales

##### 11.8.1. Updates

##### 11.8.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.9. Blue whale

##### 11.9.1. Updates

##### 11.9.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.10. Bowhead whale

##### 11.10.1. Updates

##### 11.10.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.11. Humpback whale

##### 11.11.1. Updates

##### 11.11.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.12. Killer whale

##### 11.12.1. Updates

##### 11.12.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.13. Northern bottlenose whale

##### 11.13.1. Updates

##### 11.13.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.14. Sei whale

##### 11.14.1. Updates

##### 11.14.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

#### 11.15. Sperm whale

##### 11.15.1. Updates

##### 11.15.2. Review and status of active requests (None)

## 12. Website Updates & Quality Review

*Following the procedure agreed at SC26, the SC is asked to review and provide corrections/updates for the information on the NAMMCO website regarding 4 species: Narwhal, Beluga, Fin whales, Humpback. This can be performed prior to the meeting and if necessary, between plenary sessions, with updates emailed to the Secretariat directly.*

*Note it will be particularly important to review and provide updates on the information related to stocks, abundance estimates and trends, hunting and utilisation and any new research activities and/or findings regarding general species characteristics and other human impacts. Ideally updates should be provided as lines of text that can be added/changed on the website, and include reference details as appropriate. The relevant webpages have been converted to Word documents to facilitate an easy review process (available as working documents **XXX**) but of course the pages can also be viewed online at [www.nammco.no/marinemammals/](http://www.nammco.no/marinemammals/)*

**13. Abundance / Assessment / Conservation status tables**

*Ask how to move forward with these. Present the latest suggestion.  
Does Nammco keep a record of all the abundance estimates by species/area/strata from the various Nammco countries in a simple tabular format? If not, are there any plans on doing so?*

**14. Review of Management Areas**

*SC is asked to quickly check the overview and comment on the items in red.*

**15. NASS 2024**

*Update to be presented by the Chair of the planning sub-group Rikke Hansen, including what information is required to advance in the planning. It is hoped that the SC/planning group can arrive at a timeline for the future planning efforts (including consideration of new methods and involvement of external experts) through to the planned conduct of the survey in 2023 - this timeline can be worked on between plenary sessions and delivered later in the week if necessary.  
New survey methods – workshop, contracted review, participation of experts?*

**16. Interactions with other organisations**

- 16.1. ASCOBANS
- 16.2. CAFF
- 16.3. ICES
- 16.4. IUCN
- 16.5. IWC
- 16.6. JCNB
- 16.7. NORDECO
- 16.8. Other

**17. Future Workplans**

*Draft revision of the workplan from Council 28 to include the intentions of the SC (to be presented to Council 29):*

2021	2022	2023
<b>Working Groups:</b> - Narwhal in East Greenland - NAMMCO-JCNB JWG on Narwhal and Beluga - By-catch <b>Other:</b> - NASS Planning (online) - Harp & Hooded Seals Benchmark kick-off (online) - MINTAG kick-off	<b>Working Groups:</b> - Bearded Seal (workshop co-organised with CAFF) - Ringed Seal - Harbour Porpoise - Coastal Seals - Pilot Whale <b>Other:</b> - Harp & Hooded Seals Benchmark Meeting - NASS Planning -MINTAG Project development and field work	<b>Working Groups:</b> - Harp & Hooded Seals - Dolphins <b>Other:</b> - NASS Survey - MINTAG Field work

*Plan date for next SC meeting*

**18. Budget 2022-23**

*Charlotte Winsnes from the Secretariat will provide an overview of 2021 expenses and the projected budget for 2022 activities. The SC is asked to consider the sufficiency of the proposed budget for the planned activities, including the invitation of external experts to join WG meetings.*



**19. NAMMCO Scientific Publications Update**

- 19.1. Volume 12 update
- 19.2. Volume 13?

**20. Election**

*Election of Chair and Vice-Chair.*

**21. Any Other Business**

**22. Review of Report**

**23. Meeting Closure**