



NORTH ATLANTIC MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

Twenty Third Meeting of the Council
3-5 February 2015, Reykjavik, Iceland

NAMMCO/23/12 INFORMATION

NAMMCO/23/12-1	28 th Conference of the European Cetacean Society, 5-9 April 2014, Liège, Belgium
NAMMCO/23/12-2	8 th Conference on Marine Mammals of the Holarctic, 22-26 September 2014, St Petersburg, Russia
NAMMCO/23/12-3	International Conference on Growth in Blue Bioeconomy, 2-3 June 2015, Tórshavn, Faroe Islands

NAMMCO/23/12-1

Report from the 28th Conference of the European Cetacean Society, Liège, Belgium, 5-9 April 2014

The 28th Conference of the European Cetacean Society (ECS) was held at the University of Liège Aquarium-Museum. The theme was “Marine mammals as sentinels of a changing environment.”

NAMMCO was represented by Jill Prewitt, who attended two days of workshops (5-6 April) and 3 days of plenary talks.

The first workshop held on 5 April was titled “Exploring technologies for improved data capture from platform of opportunity surveys of marine mammals - Estimating the probability of detection from passive acoustic data” and was organized by Rachel Davies, Conservation Science Manager at MARINELife. The workshop was attended by about 20 people, from 17 different countries. The main focus of the workshop was to discuss new technology and improvements in data capture while conducting surveys from platforms of opportunity (ferries, whale watching boats, shipping vessels, etc.). There were a few presentations on mobile apps that have been developed, or are being developed, to collect data on mobile phones or tablets, and either upload them directly to a database stored on the cloud, or upload the data once wifi connection is established. There was also an interesting presentation on using unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) for collecting data. Although this workshop focused on using platforms of opportunity, the information presented was useful to consider using these technologies for directed surveys (either national surveys or TNASS). It may also be interesting to consider using platforms of opportunity to obtain data on hard to survey species in NAMMCO member countries.

The second workshop held on 6 April was titled “Introducing noise into the marine environment: what are the requirements for an impact assessment for marine mammals?” and was organized by Peter Evans of the Sea Watch Foundation. The workshop was attended by about 75 people from over 20 countries. There were 14 presentations on various aspects of the impacts of noise on marine mammals, including presentations on how to measure noise, how to measure the impact of the noise on certain species (e.g., physical and behavioural effects), and how to perform an impact assessment using a risk management framework. This workshop was particularly useful in developing ideas for planning the NAMMCO workshop on the impacts of disturbance on narwhals, belugas, and walrus, both for thinking about topics that must be included, and useful experts to invite.

There were 3 days of plenary talks and 2 poster sessions. This conference was a very useful opportunity for Jill to get an overview of current marine mammal research in Europe. Jill was also able to meet many

European researchers, including researchers that are authors of recent papers in *NAMMCO Scientific Publications* and people who have worked with NAMMCO as experts in the past.

NAMMCO/23/12-2

8th Conference on Marine Mammals of the Holarctic, 22-26 September 2014, St Petersburg, Russia

The Marine Mammal Council (MMC) is a unique community of expert professionals, which brings together all the leading researchers of marine animals in Russia and the Ukraine, the United States, Canada and other countries. Biennially MMC holds an International Conference called "Marine Mammals of Holarctic", where the experts share their experience on the results of the latest techniques and zoological researches. This 8th Conference (<http://www.mmc2014spb.com/en/>) organised by the Marine Mammal Council in St Petersburg, Russia, was the first time that a representative from NAMMCO had attended. Christina Lockyer attended from the NAMMCO Secretariat.

The primary reason for NAMMCO's attendance in September 2014 was the idea of jointly convening and holding a Global Symposium/Workshop on Monodontids in autumn 2016. Holding the meeting in affiliation with this organisation would ensure attendance of Russian scientists, many of whom are researching and studying belugas and whose work is rarely heard of outside Russia. The organisation, through its Council, has close links with American scientists, especially from NOAA. Although held in Russia, every time, attendance of outside countries is welcomed and encouraged. Russian simultaneous translation was available at all sessions and was very good. The quality of the oral presentations was generally good, including those also from overseas – USA, Norway, New Zealand, etc. and some space was made available for posters although there were fewer of these. The organisation of the conference was efficient and professional. Abstracts and the programme are held in the NAMMCO Secretariat.

I spoke with the project manager member of the organising committee, Dmitry Shupinskiy, also on the Marine Mammal Council, regarding the possibility of co-convening a global symposium/workshop on Monodontids and I was given the opportunity to speak during the Council meeting on the last day and present the proposal. This was well received, and the Council accepted the idea, and plans will be ongoing regarding liaison over the next conference when a 3-day symposium/workshop will be scheduled before the main conference.

The venue is not normally decided upon until latest 6 months before the conference, and attendance at the 8th conference was about 270 registered participants. It will be necessary to seek external funding for inviting experts. In summary, the proposed symposium will be as follows:

- The proposal is for a 3-day scientific symposium - workshop, with invited experts on monodontids, and about 50 international participants
- The focus of the scientific symposium - workshop would be a comprehensive review of all aspects of the biology and study of belugas and narwhals in all regions where they occur
- The scientific symposium-workshop should be held in conjunction with the 2016 Conference on Holarctic Marine Mammals – before or after the event
- The rationale being that this conference is attended by many Russian experts researching belugas, and would attract a high attendance of relevant experts
- External funding would be sought to support attendees internationally as well as from within Russia, and an organising committee has already been established
- A scientific report would be produced after the event, to be published online together with presented scientific papers in the free access NAMMCO Scientific Publications Series site at <http://septentrio.uit.no/index.php/NAMMCOASP/index>

NAMMCO/23/12-3

International Conference on Growth in Blue Bioeconomy, Tórshavn, Faroe Islands, 2-3 June 2015

Advanced notice of a planned conference supported by Norden and the Faroese Ministry of Fisheries. This appears to be relevant to the topic of food security – Council agenda (NAMMCO/23/2, item 12.1).



The Conference is hosted by the Faroese Ministry of Fisheries as the chairman for the Nordic Fisheries cooperation in 2015. It will provide an overview of the huge growth potential in marine bio-economy. The target audience is ministers, parliamentarians, industry, investors, decision makers and policy advisers. The focus will be on necessary political initiatives to support growth. The Nordic Marine Think Tank is responsible for the organisation of the conference.

The conference has three themes:

- Theme I:** Blue Growth at the global and regional level
- Theme II:** Potential growth in Marine Industries
- Theme III:** Structures hindering or promoting Blue Growth

The current marine biomass usage and possibilities for adding value per biomass unit will be reviewed. This includes usage of marine biomass as raw material in the food industry (additives), cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, but also possibilities for replacing materials based on mineral oil with biomass based products, substituting renewable biomass for fossil resources. Business cases will be highlighted.

The Conference will also discuss if there are obstacles to blue growth. Are states able to cooperate in these matters? Are there policies and action plans to make growth possible?

The Conference will focus on the Northeast Atlantic and the Arctic.

A synthesis report on political and technical aspects of blue bioeconomy will be prepared in advance of the meeting and will be circulated to participants.

The Final Announcement of the Conference, with a confirmed list of keynote and other speakers, will be published in February 2015.

A summary of the Conference, by the Chair of the Conference, will be published at the end of the conference week.

Registration opens January 8th 2015 at www.norden2015.fo

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