



NAMMCO ANNUAL MEETING 29

*13-15 September 2022
Grand Hotel, Oslo & Hybrid*

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

13-15 September 2022

DOCUMENT 12	LIST OF NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND REQUESTS FOR ADVICE TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
Submitted by	Management Committee for Cetaceans (MCC), the Management Committee for Seals and Walrus (MCSW) and the Joint Meeting of the Management Committees (MCJ)
Action requested	To adopt
Background	

1. NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH

GENERAL

Marine Mammal - Fisheries interactions

- *In the Norwegian CRF, the collection of the lower jaw of seals becomes a mandatory term in the boat contract.*
- *Iceland encourage collecting DNA samples and taking photos of by-caught seals in 2022 to validate inspector reports and calculate rate of misidentification by fishermen.*
- *Iceland support the analysis of DNA samples to assess rates of species misidentification through the provision of necessary funding.*

CETACEANS

Beluga

- *Greenland conducts a summer survey of the High Arctic beluga population.*
- *In East Greenland, hunter observations of belugas be collected in a structured manner, incl. photo or video footage of the animals, where and when the sighting took place and how many individuals were seen.*
- *Greenland collects the following additional information from all dead (caught or by-caught) belugas: skin biopsy sample, length, tooth, girth measurements and presence of milk in the female's mammary glands.*
- *Greenland collects genetic data and/or microchemistry data that could show new stocks or mixing of existing stocks.*
- *In West Greenland, genomic analysis should be performed on samples from Igloolik and Taloyoak.*

Narwhal

- *Greenland collects life history data from non-depleted stocks of narwhals in W Greenland and Canada, to examine impact of climate change.*
- *Greenland undertakes further research on stock structure and abundance in Smith Sound.*
- *Greenland conducts new survey in Melville Bay and Inglefield Bredning as soon as possible.*
- *Greenland establishes a community-based biopsy programme of live narwhals to provide samples for stock structure analysis.*
- *Greenland collects the following additional information from hunted narwhals (if a hunt goes ahead, despite recommendations of zero catches in East Greenland): a skin biopsy sample, type of animal (according to the 3 categories described by hunters), photograph of the back, girth measurements and presence of milk in the female's mammary glands.*
- *In West Greenland, where climate change is also expected to have an impact, life history data be collected from non-depleted stocks of narwhals for examining the impact of climate change on life history parameters.*
- *In West Greenland, different approaches to counting narwhals in the fjords be further examined, but only to the extent that new approaches will be compatible with the existing time-series.*
- *In West Greenland, the planning of surveys continues to be done in collaboration with the hunters and survey methodology (including the design of the track lines) continues to be done according to internationally accepted survey standards, to ensure that abundance estimates derived from the survey can be accepted by NAMMCO and used in the assessment.,*

- *In West Greenland, definitions be developed for what constitutes small stocks, depleted stocks and stocks at risk of extirpation, and that frameworks for advice and management then be articulated for what actions should be taken or these different categories.*

Killer whale

- *NAMMCO should become involved in the organisation of the North Atlantic part of the World Conference planned for April 2023 in Spain.*

Long-finned pilot whale

- *Faroese complete the analyses of both the biological and the tagging data and forward them to the PWWG.*

PINNIPEDS

Bearded seals

- *Greenland prioritize the analysis of data on local abundance and make it available to the Bearded Seal WG (meeting planned for March 2023).*

2. NEW REQUESTS FOR ADVICE TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

GENERAL

Acknowledging the importance of the website as NAMMCO's main dissemination tool, and the value of the species pages, the Council requests the SC to continue its regular review of these pages following the procedure proposed by the SC26 (2019).

3. NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PROPOSALS FOR MANAGEMENT RECEIVED AT THE JOINT MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

USER KNOWLEDGE

- *Norway should look into how to include user knowledge in the management of coastal seals, i.e. to collect hunter observations in a systematic way to complement existing survey methods, specifically by improving spatial and temporal coverage and resolution.*

- **Proposal for a new Working Group on User Knowledge:**

From points raised during the council meeting and previously by various parties, it seems there is imbalance between how purely scientific information and information derived from various stakeholders are used in assessment and management approaches for marine mammals in the NAMMCO context.

*While the topic of how to include user knowledge in management processes has been raised in various specialised working groups, it seems this topic is of sufficiently broad relevance as to warrant a separate **working group** to specifically address how best to include user knowledge in management and decision-making processes. Such a working group should consist of relevant stakeholders (such as hunters etc) as well as, managers, and scientists with expertise on marine mammal management and, more importantly, representatives with expertise in how to incorporate user knowledge in research and management processes.*

4. REQUESTS FOR ADVICE TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE TO BE MODIFIED

GENERAL

- **Request 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.*
- Split in two separate requests
 1. *In addressing the standing requests on ecosystem modelling and marine mammal fisheries interaction, to extend the focus to include all areas under NAMMCO jurisdiction.*
 2. *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.*

PINNIPEDS

Harp and Hooded seals

- **Request 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.*
- Rephrased as
- *To investigate possible reasons for the apparent decline of Greenland Sea stock of hooded seals and assess the status of the stock.*

Ringed seals

- **Request 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.*
- Rephrased as
- *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 climate change) and changes in the food supply, and interactions with other marine living resources.*