

Opening Statement - Japan
29th meeting of the NAMMCO Council
13- 15 October 2022 Oslo, Norway

At the outset, Japan would like to thank the Norwegian Government for hosting the NAMMCO Council meeting, with great hospitality and efficiency. We recognize that NAMMCO has made great achievements in the conservation and management of marine mammals since its establishment in 1992, and we would like to extend our heartfelt congratulation to all the NAMMCO Members on its 30th Anniversary. We are honored to attend the Council meeting in the anniversary year and wish to contribute to discussions as an observer. We also appreciate NAMMCO's initiative to hold NAMMCO Conference and Showcase in Faroe Islands next month, which will be a good opportunity for us to reaffirm the importance of marine mammals as food resources.

As you all are aware, Japan withdrew from the ICRW on 30 June 2019, and since July 2019 has resumed commercial whaling for sei, Bryde's and common minke whales in the western North Pacific. The catch limits were calculated in line with the Revised Management Procedure (RMP) and set at 171 for minke whale, 187 for Bryde's whale and 25 for sei whale in 2019. As for minke whales, we obtained a new abundance estimate for minke whales in 2021, the annual catch limit for minke whale was revised as 167 in 2022.

Even since its withdrawal from ICRW in 2019, Japan has remained committed to international cooperation for the proper management of cetaceans, through cooperation with relevant international organizations, including NAMMCO and IWC. More specifically, in addition to the NAMMCO Council, Japan will also participate in the 68th Meeting of the International Whaling Commission as an observer and work with IWC member countries that share the basic position to promote sustainable use of aquatic living resources in order to contribute to the science-based sustainable management of whale resources.

In March 2022, Japanese Cabinet adopted the Basic Plan for Fisheries. The Basic Plan states that under Japan's basic stance of sustainable use of marine living resources based on scientific evidence, whaling will be carried out sustainably in accordance with international law. To further strengthen its science-based approach, Japan is eager to enhance collaboration with NAMMCO and its Members. From such perspective, Japan would like to continue scientific and financial contribution to the MINTAG Project.

Finally, Japan would like to reiterate its conviction that the collaboration between NAMMCO and Japan is a vital force in international fora to promote conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources based on science.

Thank you for your attention.