

**Opening Statement - Japan**  
**30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the NAMMCO Council**  
**29-30 March 2023, Tromsø, Norway**

At the outset, Japan would like to thank the NAMMCO Secretariat 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 gratitude to all the NAMMCO Members on its significant contribution for over 30 years. We are honored to attend the Council meeting and are fully prepared to contribute to discussions as an observer. We also appreciate NAMMCO's initiative to hold NAMMCO Conference and Showcase in Faroe Islands last October. It was an invaluable opportunity for Japan including its municipalities and industries to reaffirm the importance of marine mammals as food resources.

Even after its withdrawal from the ICRW in 2019, Japan remains committed to international cooperation for the proper management of cetaceans, working with relevant international organizations, including NAMMCO and the IWC. Japan also participated in the 68th Meeting of the IWC as an observer and worked with IWC member countries including all the NAMMCO Members that share the basic position of promoting sustainable use of aquatic living resources based on the best available scientific evidence.

To further strengthen its science-based approach, Japan is willing to enhance collaboration with NAMMCO and its Members. From this perspective, Japan would like to continue scientific and financial contribution to the MINTAG Project, which aims at developing a new satellite tag to be used on fast swimming rorquals and pilot whales, species demanding a long-range deployment and a tag with as little drag as possible. Furthermore, at the 29th Meeting of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee, a collaborative study between NAMMCO and Japan for further understanding the role of baleen whales in marine ecosystem was discussed. These kinds of scientific collaboration could contribute to the proper management of marine living resources in the North Atlantic and the North Pacific oceans.

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.