



# North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, 29-30 March 2023

PRESS RELEASE

## NAMMCO marks its 30th Council Meeting in Tromsø, Norway

The 30th Council Meeting of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) took place the 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023, in Tromsø, Norway. NAMMCO was founded in 1992 by the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, and Norway.

### 30 years contributing to a sustainable North

Over the past 30 years, NAMMCO has played a critical role in advancing the cause of marine mammal conservation in the North Atlantic. With the support of its member nations and a dedicated network of partners and collaborators, NAMMCO has led the way in promoting sustainable management and protection of marine mammal populations and their habitats.

As NAMMCO marks its 30th Council Meeting, the organisation looks forward to continuing its important work and collaborating with stakeholders around the world to safeguard the future of marine mammals and the oceans they call home.

### Future NAMMCO

The future of NAMMCO was a focal point at the meeting. With the marine mammal conservation landscape evolving, participants explored the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for NAMMCO. From new technologies and emerging threats to shifting policy frameworks and evolving public attitudes, the discussion explored the many factors shaping the future of marine mammal conservation in the North Atlantic.

### Precautionary approach

Concerned by the status of some of the stocks, the Council adopted [principles for incorporating a precautionary approach](#) to the management of marine mammal stocks in NAMMCO. These include definitions of when stocks should be protected. It also adopted criteria for prioritising future assessments of all stocks.

### NASS24 and the MINTAG

North Atlantic Sightings Surveys in 2024 (NASS24) are fundamental for the progression of NAMMCO's work. The NASS surveys are essential to obtain trends in abundance of whales and dolphins in the North Atlantic and represent a unique timeseries conducted over the last four decades.

The Miniaturised Tag Project (MINTAG), a cooperation between NAMMCO Countries and Japan, aiming for the first time at developing satellite tags to study movements and identify migration patterns of whales. The first deployment of 25 tags is scheduled for summer 2023. To formalise this scientific cooperation, NAMMCO and Japan signed a [Letter of Intent](#), with the purpose to facilitate further project-based cooperation.

### WG User Knowledge

The Council reiterated commitment to find ways for better including User Knowledge in the work of NAMMCO.

**NAMMCO**

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## Supplementary Information

Sustainable harvesting of marine mammals for food defines NAMMCO. Member countries share a strong commitment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 – to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and UN Sustainable Development Goal 2 – Zero Hunger.

The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Japan and the USA observed the meeting, as well as Makivik. International organisations represented during the meetings included the International Whaling Commission, the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme, the Fishermen's and Hunter's Association in Greenland, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation, the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission, and the World Conservation Trust.

The agenda, list of participants and documents for the Council and Management Committee Meetings can be found at <https://nammco.no/council-reports/>

More information on NAMMCO and its activities can be found at [www.nammco.org](http://www.nammco.org)

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**Appendix: List of principles for integrating a precautionary approach in NAMMCO's management of cetaceans and pinniped stocks.**

- 1) Anthropogenic removals of marine mammals should be assessed for sustainability.
- 2) Sustainable management actions should be to maintain or restore stocks at levels ideally above 60% of their equilibrium in the absence of anthropogenic removals, disturbance and resource competition.
- 3) Stocks that are depleted below 60% should be managed to increase so that they can recover to the 60% level in a reasonable time period. For example, by having total removals that ensure at least a 70% probability of increase.
- 4) Stocks that are small (<1000 individuals, unless there are more than 400 reproductive age females in the population) should be fully protected from exploitation unless a data-based assessment is able to recommend a sustainable hunt.
- 5) Management decisions should be based on the best available science, which may include hunter and user data and observations.
- 6) Where the best available science is insufficient the precautionary approach shall be widely applied, particularly for small stocks. With greater uncertainty more caution is required.
- 7) Acknowledging that halting all hunting of a stock may not be sufficient to promote recovery of a depleted or small stock, additional management actions should be considered.
- 8) All species assessments should include data requirements for future assessments.

## NAMMCO

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