

NAMMCO SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE 30**AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON NARWHAL IN
EAST GREENLAND**

12–15 December 2023, Greenland Representation Copenhagen, Denmark

DRAFT AGENDA

Tuesday 12 December

1. Opening of Meeting

- 1.1. Welcome and opening remarks from the Chair and Introductions
- 1.2. Review of Terms of Reference and Recommendations for Research
- 1.3. Review of available documents
- 1.4. Appointment of rapporteurs
- 1.5. Adoption of agenda

2. East Greenland Narwhal stock structure

- 2.1. Updates on genetic analyses (*M Louis*)
 - 2.1.1. Fine-scale population structure
- 2.2. Seasonal distributions (*review MP Heide-Jørgensen*)
 - 2.2.1. From aerial surveys
 - 2.2.2. Tracking data
 - 2.2.3. User observations, removal records
- 2.3. Stock definition and Management units
 - 2.3.1. Are current stock definitions supported by new fine scale data?
 - 2.3.2. Consider separating Scoresby Sound stock into two seasonal stocks—
Definition

3. Distribution and abundance of East Greenland Narwhal (*MP Heide-Jørgensen*)

- 3.1. Survey review and results
- 3.2. Distribution



3.3. Latest abundance estimates

3.4. Discussion of Recommendations 2.2 and 2.3.

4. Anthropogenic impacts on East Greenland Narwhal (*MP Heide-Jørgensen*)

4.1. Catch and by-catch

4.2. Other threats

Wednesday 13 December

5. Discussion of Recommendation 2.4 (*R Hobbs*)

5.1. Develop definitions and frameworks for advice and management

5.2. Apply frameworks to East Greenland Narwhal assessment

6. Stock assessment for East Greenland Narwhal

6.1. Review of the East Greenland Narwhal Population Model (*L Witting*)

6.2. Updating the East Greenland Narwhal Population Assessment Model (*L Witting*)

6.2.1. Draft assessment model

6.2.2. Review of model structure: multiple stocks or seasons

6.2.3. Review of population model: time- or habitat-dependent parameters

6.2.4. Review of model priors

6.2.5. Revise stock assessment model (if necessary)

6.3. Implementation of previous advice

Thursday 14 December

7. Distribution and abundance of East Greenland Beluga

7.1. Occurrence

7.1.1. Aerial surveys

7.1.2. Hunter and user data

7.2. Abundance estimates

8. East Greenland Beluga stock structure

8.1. Updates on genetic analyses (*E Lorenzen*)



8.1.1. Connectivity with Svalbard population (*M Skovrind*)

8.2. Stock definition and Management units

9. Anthropogenic impacts on East Greenland Beluga

9.1. Catch and by-catch

9.2. Other threats

10. Stock assessment for East Greenland Beluga

10.1. Population Assessment Model

10.1.1. Review of available data

10.1.2. Data gaps that need to be filled before conducting an assessment

11. Recommendations for Research & Management

11.1. Recommendations for Research

11.1.1. For Narwhal

11.1.2. For Beluga

11.2. Recommendations for Conservation & Management

11.2.1. For Narwhal

11.2.1.1. Suitable regularity of abundance surveys and assessments

11.2.2. For Beluga

11.2.2.1. Suitable regularity of abundance surveys and assessments

Friday 15 December

12. Any other business

13. Review and Adoption of Report

14. Close of meeting

For information:

The Terms of Reference for the Meeting are:

- a) *To update the assessment of Narwhals in South-East Greenland using data from recent surveys.*
- b) *To review the situation of Belugas in East Greenland with participants from Norway.*
- c) *To define the suitable regularity of abundance surveys and assessments for each specific case (species/stock). (Standard ToR as of NAMMCO30)*

Recommendations for Research regarding East Greenland, endorsed by SC28:

Rec. 2.2 *That 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.*

Rec. 2.3 *That, although the planning of surveys should be done in collaboration with the hunters, the 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.*

Rec. 2.4 *That 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 for these different categories.*