



# SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP ON BY-CATCH

*May 16, 2024  
Video Conference*

## **REPORT**

*Presented to the 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Committee as NAMMCO/SC/31/05*

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The content of this report contains the view of the Working Group and does not necessarily represent the views of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee or Council.

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The NAMMCO Scientific Committee Working Group on By-Catch (BYCWG) held its 9<sup>th</sup> meeting as a video conference on May 16, 2024. The Working Group (WG) was chaired by Kimberly Murray (NOAA, USA). The full list of meeting participants is available in Appendix 2. The aim of the meeting was to finalise the draft data call to the four Member countries for information on fishing effort.

## 1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR AND OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed the participants to the meeting, remarking on the untimely loss of Simon Northridge, who passed away in March and whose presence is sorely missed. Murray further welcomed two new members to the WG, Allen Kingston (University of St Andrews, UK) and Dunja Jusufovski (MFRI, Iceland), and called for a round of introductions.

## 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda (Appendix 1) was adopted with one modification. As all participants had acquainted themselves with the responses from the Member countries' Fisheries Departments on the types of data available (NAMMCO/SC/31/BYCWG/04), item 4 was not explicitly discussed, but referred to as needed during the discussion of item 5. The full list of meeting documents is available in Appendix 3.

## 3. APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEURS

NAMMCO Deputy Secretary Maria Garagouni was appointed as the primary rapporteur, with assistance from other participants as needed.

## 4. REVIEW OF DRAFT DATA CALL

The WG reviewed a draft data call (NAMMCO/SC/31/BYCWG/05) and data entry template (NAMMCO/SC/31/BYCWG/06) that will be circulated to the relevant fisheries departments of the four Member countries. Revisions were made to ensure that all relevant data will be submitted in comparable formats across all countries and vessel types. The WG **agreed** that data on foreign fishing effort within NAMMCO waters should also be requested, to provide fuller context for the magnitude of domestic fishing effort.

The **final version** of the data call is included in Appendix 4.

## 5. PLANS AND AGENDA FOR IN-PERSON MEETING

At its 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, the NAMMCO Council approved funds for an in-person meeting of the BYCWG in 2024. The WG agreed that this meeting should focus on progressing with the results of the data call. Potential locations and dates for a meeting in late Autumn 2024 were discussed, but will be decided at a later stage. The WG discussed the necessity of holding a virtual meeting prior to this, during which the group could review the data and ask the data submitters for any necessary corrections or clarifications prior to the in person meeting.

## 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business discussed.

## 7. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The report of this meeting was adopted by correspondence on May 30, 2024.

## **APPENDIX 1: DRAFT AGENDA**

- 1. Welcome from the Chair**
- 2. Adoption of agenda**
- 3. Appointment of rapporteurs**
- 4. Review responses from Fisheries Departments**
- 5. Review draft data call and finalise**
- 6. Discuss agenda for in-person meeting in autumn**
- 7. Other business**
- 8. Next meeting**

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For information:

### ***Terms of Reference of the Scientific Committee By-catch Working Group established by SC 21:***

- 1. Identify all fisheries with potential by-catch of marine mammals.*
- 2. Review and evaluate current by-catch estimates for marine mammals in NAMMCO countries.*
- 3. If necessary, provide advice on improved data collection and estimation methods to obtain best estimates of total by-catch over time.*

## APPENDIX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

**Allen Kingston (Invited Expert)**

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## APPENDIX 3: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

### Working Documents

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
SC/31/BYCWG/01	Draft Agenda	2
SC/31/BYCWG/02	Draft List of Participants	1
SC/31/BYCWG/03	Draft List of Documents	4, 5
SC/31/BYCWG/04	Fisheries data available in each NAMMCO country	4, 5
SC/31/BYCWG/05	Draft Data Call	5
SC/31/BYCWG/06	Draft Data Template	5

### For Information Documents

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
SC/31/BYCWG/FI01	Report of NAMMCO Scientific Committee Working Group on By-Catch – 2023	Several
SC/31/BYCWG/FI02	ICES WGBYC Data Call	4, 5
SC/31/BYCWG/FI03	ICES WGBYC Data Template	4, 5

## APPENDIX 4: DATA CALL

# DATA CALL 2024 FOR NAMMCO WORKING GROUP ON MARINE MAMMAL BY-CATCH IN FISHERIES

## 1. AIM OF THE DATA CALL

The purpose of this call is to gather data on the extent and types of fishing effort in the waters of the four NAMMCO countries. These data will be used to calculate the seasonal and spatial intensity of fishing activities, allowing the NAMMCO Working Group on By-Catch (BYCWG) to map the exposure of marine mammals to the threat of by-catch. These data will remain confidential within the WG, and when reported will be presented in compliance with confidentiality guidelines applicable to each country.

## 2. RATIONALE

The Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the BYCWG, as established by the NAMMCO Scientific Committee in 2014 (SC/21) are:

- i) Identify all fisheries with potential by-catch of marine mammals.
- ii) Review and evaluate current by-catch estimates for marine mammals in NAMMCO countries.
- iii) If necessary, provide advice on improved data collection and estimation methods to obtain best estimates of total by-catch over time.

In fulfilment of ToR i, the data collated through this call will be used to calculate the individual risk of becoming by-caught for marine mammals in the NAMMCO region, by area and gear type. This by-catch likelihood will be mapped and annotated in the BYCWG reports<sup>1</sup>, and will provide a basis for advice generated in fulfilment of ToR iii. More specifically, the ultimate goal of this exercise is to advise on the need for by-catch monitoring programs in areas/fisheries where risk is highest. The appropriate allocation of monitoring effort will allow for more accurate estimates of total by-catch rates in the NAMMCO countries.

## 3. DEADLINE

NAMMCO countries are requested to provide data no later than **September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024**. This will allow sufficient time for data validation and analyses prior to the upcoming BYCWG meeting later in 2024. Data submitted after this date may not be included in the analyses. At the Joint Meeting of the Management Committees in March 2024 (NAMMCO 31<sup>2</sup>), the four Member countries agreed to respond to this data call in a thorough and timely fashion.

## 4. DATA TO REPORT

### TEMPORAL SCOPE

Countries are asked to submit fishing effort data for the preceding five years (2019–2023 inclusive), at a monthly resolution (i.e., January 2019, February 2019...November 2023, December 2023). In the

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<sup>1</sup> All WG reports are made publicly available on the NAMMCO website ([www.nammco.no](http://www.nammco.no)).

<sup>2</sup> NAMMCO-North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (2024). [Report of the Joint meeting of the Management Committees](#), March 2024.



event that monthly resolution contravenes national data protection/privacy laws, data can be aggregated by quarter.

Obligatory fields in this category are Year and Month (*or* Year and Quarter, if the above exception applies).

### **GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE**

The data call encompasses the waters of all four NAMMCO countries, including coastal and offshore areas. If the fishing effort occurs within ICES waters, the data should be aggregated to [ICES Rectangles](#) or [ICES Statistical Areas](#) (if rectangle is unavailable). If fishing effort occurs beyond ICES waters, the data should be aggregated to [NAFO Divisions](#).

Obligatory fields in this category are Area Type (ICES Rectangle/Statistical Area or NAFO Division) and Area Code (the alphanumeric code of the fishing area in question).

### **FISHING EFFORT DATA**

Data are requested for all commercial vessels and gear types, aggregated separately by domestic and foreign flag, unless countries are prohibited from distributing foreign data. Foreign fishing effort refers to other countries fishing within a NAMMCO country's EEZ.

Obligatory fields in this category include [Métier Level 4](#) (which describes Gear Type) and, if this is not available, [Level 3](#) (which describes Gear Group); Vessel Size Class (following ICES classification to the finest resolution possible); Number of Vessels in each of these categories; Number of Fishing Trips undertaken by those vessels in each month; and Number of Days at Sea during that month. Target Assemblage is also a desired (but not mandatory) field.

## **5. DATA SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Attached to this data call is an Excel template with three sheets: File Data, Fishing Effort, and Data Key. Please email the filled in template to [maria@nammco.org](mailto:maria@nammco.org).

- Under File Data, please fill in the relevant details of the person/organisation submitting the data.
- Under Fishing Effort, please fill in all obligatory data fields and any additional fields for which the data are available. Note that some of the fields should be filled in from drop-down menus.
- The Data Key sheet should not be edited, it is there for information only.

Mandatory fields are highlighted in red. In some cases where the mandatory data are not available *or* cannot be shared with a third party, there is an alternative field highlighted in yellow. Please fill this in *only* when the above restrictions apply.

Most fields have Notes associated with them (small red triangle in upper right corner). These provide some additional information on the type of data to be entered in each column. Additionally, some field names in the Fishing Effort tab link to ICES classifications, which should be followed whenever possible. In the Data Key tab, details for each type of Area Code are also linked to.

For any clarification regarding the purpose of this data call or assistance with the data entry, please contact the NAMMCO Secretariat/Maria Garagouni at [maria@nammco.org](mailto:maria@nammco.org).