

NAMMCO



COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION

*16 May 2024
Online*

REPORT



© Cover photo by Þ. Sigurður– Whaling boat in Sisimiut (GL).

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NAMMCO

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The Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) met online on 16 May 2024. The CIO was chaired by Ulla S. Wang (Faroe Islands). The meeting agenda and list of participants are available in Appendix 1 and 2, respectively.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

Wang welcomed the participants to the meeting.

The agenda was adopted without further amendments and the meeting documents reviewed (Appendix 1).

2. OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES

2.1 OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES IN 2023 AND LESSONS LEARNED

The CIO continued the discussions about the observation activities (OA) conducted in 2023 in Greenland (CIO/2024-02/02), started at their February meeting (CIO/2024-02).

Although the two observers did not witness any hunts during the observation period and faced significant challenges, including inappropriate ice conditions, lack of observation vessel, communication issues with hunters, and a lack of trust towards the observers, the CIO believed that the 2023 OA provide valuable insights for improving the implementation of NAMMCO's Observation Scheme and preparing for future OA. These include, but are not limited to, better adapting the OA to the target hunt and the country and improving the way the OA are prepared and the local logistic followed up on until the OA are executed. It was noted that the weather and ice conditions are changing and that older catch statistics may not always provide useful information.

The CIO **emphasised** the importance for all the parties to be aware and commit to the [Provisions of the NAMMCO Observation Scheme](#). It was also deemed crucial that the preparation of the OA aligns with these Provisions to ensure they are fully met.

2.2 EVALUATION OF THE OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES

The NAMMCO Council 31 requested the CIO:

- *To evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the observation scheme, the appropriate methodologies for effective OA and the means to improve the effectiveness of the observation effort, through evaluating i.e.:*
 - *The regularity and intervals of the OA,*
 - *The benefit of allowing certified national and local observers to serve as observers,*
 - *The benefit of new observation methods such as drones and other means for remote monitoring,*
 - *Any other question the CIO would find relevant to examine, such as the need for flexibility in addressing Observation Activities, as appropriate.*
- *To carry out such an evaluation through consultations with all relevant parties— observers, hunters, local authorities, and other stakeholders—as appropriate, to understand how each party envisions successful Observation Activities, what the needs are, and how the current format of the Observation Activities should be improved.*

The CIO discussed this point, using feedback from the Observers (CIO/2024-02/03) and started the planning to prepare the report to be delivered by the NAMMCO Council 32 (2025) with relevant recommendations concerning the above.

Evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Observation Scheme

According to the work plan endorsed by the NAMMCO Council 31, members of the CIO will participate in national meetings with whalers and sealers to both consult and disseminate information about the Observation Scheme. The CIO **agreed** to use the meetings with hunters during the autumn not only to

disseminate information about the NAMMCO Observation Scheme but also to gather feedback from the hunters about the scheme, how it could be improved and how a trust atmosphere could be generated. Additionally, CIO members participating in these meetings will inquire about the hunters' perspectives on NAMMCO recommendations. This feedback could provide some insights into the effectiveness of the recommendations.

The CIO **highlighted** the importance of building trust with the hunters, acknowledging that this process requires time and patience.

Evaluation of the appropriate methodologies for effective OA

The previous CIO meeting (CIO/2024-01), the NAMMCO Council 31 and the NAMMCO Observer Corps Annual Meeting (CIO/2024-02/03) all three bodies agreed that to improve their effectiveness, the OA should be more flexible, adapted to the specificities of the target hunt, the country and the parties involved, with likely different methodologies involved.

The CIO **agreed** that addressing the Council's questions regarding the benefits of including national and local observers, using new methods such as drones and remote monitoring, requires thorough discussions within the ministries and delegations regarding what was possible or not. These points are crucial for assessing the budget needs of future OAs, their costs having an impact on their regularity.

To better understand the specificities of each country, the CIO **agreed** to complete the questionnaire (Appendix 3) by the end of June 2024 and return it to the Secretariat. The evaluation of the responses and further discussions will take place at the end of August 2024.

3. REVIEW 2023 MEMBERS' DATA ON HUNTING EFFORT AND CONTROL EFFORTS

The CIO was tasked with reviewing the 2023 members' Catch Data on national control effort reported by the member states (CIO/2024-02/04). The CIO was not very knowledgeable about its duty related to this task and **agreed** to postpone the discussion until further clarification was obtained from former Deputy Secretary Charlotte Winsnes. This item will be revisited by email.

After a preliminary observation of the data, the CIO concluded that if the data was well-reported, it could be useful to identify infringements, learn about the proportion of hunts observed by national inspectors and therefore to support the planning of upcoming OAs.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

The next CIO meeting will be held in August 2024 (see item 2.2.).

The report was adopted by correspondence on 31 May 2024.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

1. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS**
2. **OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES (OA)**
 - 2.1 **OA IN 2023 AND LESSONS LEARNED**
 - 2.2 **EVALUATION OF THE OA**
3. **REVIEW 2023 MEMBERS' DATA ON HUNTING EFFORT AND CONTROL EFFORTS**
4. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Working Document Reference	Title	Agenda item
CIO/2024-02/01	Draft agenda & list of documents	1
CIO/2024-02/01b	Draft annotated agenda	1
CIO/2024-02/02	Report on Observation Activities 2023	2.1
CIO/2024-02/03	Report of the Observers' Annual Meeting	2.2
CIO/2024-02/04	2023 Members' data on hunting effort and national control	3
For Information Document Reference	Title	Agenda item
CIO/2024-02/FI-01	NAMMCO Observation Scheme (revised 2021)	

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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APPENDIX 3: EVALUATION OF THE APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGIES FOR EFFECTIVE OA

Country	
Contact person	
Parties involved filling this form Give the information of the bodies (e.g., Ministries, Departments, Organisations, Observers, Hunters) consulted to fill this form.	
Allowing national/local observers	
Do you think it would be beneficial to allow national/local observers to serve as NAMMCO observers in OA taking place in your country?	
If yes, who could serve as such? National inspectors, scientists, hunters, others... Please be specific.	
Using new methods for OA	
Do you think it could be appropriate to use remote monitoring for conducting OA in your country for some of the hunts?	
If yes which hunts?	
If yes, which means would you suggest using? Please be specific.	
What are the pros and cons of using these methods in your country?	
Regularity of the OA	
What would you consider as the appropriate regularity for conducting OA in your country?	
Should all the hunts be observed with the same regularity?	
Other questions	
Is there any specific relevant question the CIO should consider when preparing OA in your country?	