

33rd Council of NAMMCO – Opening Statement
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March 2025

I am very pleased to join this annual meeting of the Council of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission on behalf of the International Whaling Commission.

This is an important opportunity to share progress on the different areas of collaboration between our two organisations in our common mission of cetacean science and stewardship.

I welcome the increased cooperation of the last years, including the recent meeting between our two Secretariats, in which we agreed to strengthen our collaboration over Abundance Estimates, Whale Killing Methods and Welfare, and communication between our Scientific Committees.

In this regard, we are fortunate to have the same experts working in both Scientific Committees. I would particularly like to thank the NAMMCO members who are also valued members of the IWC Scientific Committee.

Since my intervention in the last Council Meeting, we had the meeting of the Scientific Committee in April 2024 and the 6th meeting of the Commission in September 2024. A very important outcome was the successful renewal of the Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling quotas at IWCCB, which includes Greenlandic hunts of Bowhead, Humpback, Fin and Common Minke whales.

The scientific advice provided by the Scientific Committee was pivotal for the implementation of a new, clearer and more transparent process to manage the Commission's responsibilities regarding Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling. The new process was used for the first time at IWCCB and resulted in consensus renewal of all quotas on the first day of the meeting.

Also, as part of our role overseeing Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling, the IWC maintains records of historical and modern whale catches. This database relies on contributions to remain up-to-date and maintain its efficacy, and we thank NAMMCO members for their help in this.

Data-sharing is also evident in the production of abundance estimates, which provide the crucial foundations for our work and our decision-making. Our increased cooperation will be key to achieve consistency between IWC and NAMMCO's tables of approved abundance estimates.

Welfare issues are also extremely important to both our organisations. At IWCCB we welcomed the NAMMCO Executive Secretary who provided updates on their latest training initiatives for hunters at our Whale Killing and Welfare Issues meeting.

We are also collaborating in areas outside the immediate influence of our two organisations to respond to the increasing scale and range of threats to whale stocks. These include issues such as ship strikes, pollution and climate change which can only be addressed through multi-disciplinary co-operation, working across many different fora to ensure that the health of our oceans and their