

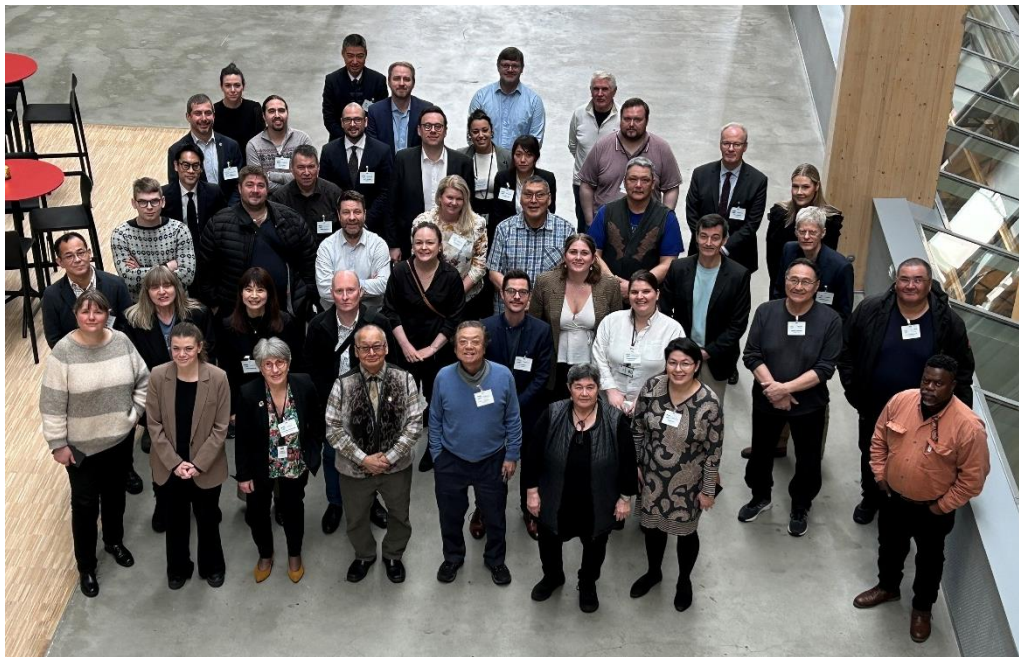


32nd MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

25-27 March 2025

Fram Centre, Tromsø, Norway (also streamed)

COUNCIL REPORT



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1. OPENING PROCEDURES

1.1 WELCOME ADDRESS

The Chair of the Council, Hallveig Ólafsdóttir (Iceland), welcomed participants and invited guests (Appendix 1: List of Participants, and [NAMMCO/32/01rev](#)) to the 32nd Annual Meeting of NAMMCO, hosted by the Secretariat, and to Tromsø—where she studied.

The Chair announced that on the occasion of the 32nd meeting of the Council, and following the previous year's approach, NAMMCO would like to continue reflecting on the welfare issues associated with the hunting of marine mammals and on how welfare outcomes can continue to be improved. NAMMCO saw two ways of doing that:

- Learning from each other, by sharing our good and bad experiences & getting inspired
- Establishing a status and exploring together how we can best progress

In this line of thought, two presentations would be offered, one on Whaling in St Vincent and the Grenadines, focussing on the hunt of smaller cetaceans, and the other reporting the outputs from the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop (MMWWS) that was held the day before in cooperation with Japan on the theme: "Animal Welfare in the Context of Marine Mammal Hunting - Status by 2025: Where are we & what can we do better?"

1.2 ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

On behalf of the Council, the Chair welcomed and thanked the observers (Appendix 1: List of Participants and [NAMMCO/32/01rev](#)), from Denmark, Japan, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Sweden, Nunavik, Nunavut, the Arctic Council Working Group on Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Fishermen and Hunters Association in Greenland (KNAPK), and the World Conservation Trust (IWMC). The Norwegian delegation was observing for the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO).

The Chair noted that Sweden, the IWC, and the IWMC could not be present physically but would be following the meeting online.

Apologies had been received from Canada and the United States as well as from the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO).

1.3 OPENING STATEMENTS

The Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, and Norway, as well as Japan, Nunavik, Nunavut, AMAP, IWC, KNAPK, and IWMC, provided opening statements (Appendix 4: Opening Statements).

1.4 ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda ([NAMMCO/32/02](#), Appendix 2: Agenda) was adopted without amendments. Supporting documents to the meeting ([NAMMCO/32/03](#)) are listed in Appendix 3: List of Documents and [NAMMCO/32/01](#). All documents can be found under [Council Meetings](#) on the NAMMCO website.

1.5 MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair informed that the agenda items were planned to be addressed according to the schedule of the meeting, and any changes would be duly announced, so the online participants could more easily follow.

The Secretary General, Geneviève Desportes, joined in welcoming on behalf of the whole Secretariat all the participants to Tromsø and presented the meeting arrangements. She extended an invitation from NAMMCO to a boat excursion, with dinner, around the island of Tromsø on Wednesday evening.

She underlined that the entire Secretariat and in particular the team of Interns would be happy to provide any help needed.

1.6 WHALING IN ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Vincent Reid, Director of the Barrouallie Whalers Project and Observer for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) was invited to present “The history, cultural, social, and subsistence value of whaling in SVG” which a focus on the whaling of smaller whales and dolphins.

The Vincentian representative’s first task was to put St Vincent and the Grenadines on the world map, so its location was familiar, and to provide some information about the country. Whaling in SVG is restricted to two places, Bequia Island for humpback whales (since the 1870s and with an IWC aboriginal subsistence whaling quota of four whales per year since 2013) and from Barrouallie on the western coastline of Saint Vincent Island for dolphins (smaller delphinids at first, then since around 1910 also short-finned pilot whales; around 250 animals per year; no quotas).

A brief history of smaller cetacean whaling was given, and the current situation was detailed with emphasis on the legal framework, tools used in whaling, and the types of small cetacean that were caught. The main species hunted is short-finned pilot whales (52% of the catch); other species are killer, false killer, and pigmy killer whales, and 8 species of smaller delphinids. Emphasis was put on the cultural and social importance of the year-round shore-based hunt for small cetaceans from the small town of Barrouallie and the use of almost every part of the animal caught for food and local health supplements was underlined.

Reid described some struggles and hurdles that create dents in the whaling activities, as some NGOs are pressing for an end to whaling. Nevertheless, there are governmental commitments, and a new small cetaceans processing facility was built and about to open in the whaling port of Barrouallie. Additionally, efforts were being made to promote a sustainable approach to whaling using scientific research into the genetics of cetaceans, population studies, and the recording of catch data.

The preservation and protection of the species are of significant value to the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, who recognise the importance of the humpback whale and dolphin species to their food security, and the preservation of their historical, cultural, and religious observances and rights.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Chair thanked Reid for his interesting presentation focussing on small type whaling and opened the floor for questions. Other delegations joined in in thanking Reid for his lively presentation regarding a whaling style that is not very well known by NAMMCO Parties, the only reporting to the IWC being the hunting of humpback whales by the Bequia community.

Reid was asked why whaling was limited by law to only two villages, Bequia for humpback whales and Barrouallie for small cetaceans. He answered that the law in a way enshrined the practice that had been historically developed in the region.

It was asked whether the whalers needed a license or a permit. Reid specified that a special license was only required for using the harpoon gun. There was no special training of the hunters, but there were whaling families, and the know-how was passed through generations within the families. Reid specified that whaling represented important benefits for the whalers’ and vendors’ families. The vendors buy the whales/dolphins from the whalers as they arrive back onshore, butcher them, and sell them further as portioned food. The meat and most of the organs are eaten, including lungs, liver and kidneys, as well as skin and blubber. The oil of short-finned pilot whales is used as medicine and a source of vitamins, and a small local company is selling encapsuled oil. There is limited waste from the entire process. SVG expresses its support to the activity by presently constructing, with the support of the Japanese Fisheries Agency, a large processing facility for the vendors, including crane towing facilities and a butchering hall with butchering tables and access to running water. Emphasis is placed on ensuring a hygienic process throughout.

As Reid had pointed out that there was no quota or seasonal restrictions for the smaller cetaceans, he was asked if there were plans of setting Catch Limit on these hunts. Reid answered that they did not intend to do so, as the hunt was considered sustainable and for subsistence purpose, although some of the meat is locally commercialised. There was no plan either to increase the catches, even though the meat from small cetaceans could not be sold outside SVG because of the limited landings—the whalers see no need to catch more animals once local demand is fulfilled.

1.7 REPORT FROM THE MARINE MAMMAL WELFARE WORKSHOP, MMWWS 2025

The Chair reminded that NAMMCO has long been aware of animal welfare in relation to marine mammal hunting, and of continuing to improve welfare outcomes of the hunts. Already at its inaugural meeting in 1992, NAMMCO established an *ad hoc* Committee on Hunting Methods, which became permanent in 1998. This awareness is still important for NAMMCO.

To continue reflecting on the welfare issues, the then Chair, Jón Brándur Stefánsson (Iceland), organised last year a theme session on “Welfare issues in marine mammal hunting”, where a Norwegian veterinarian, Kathrine Ryeng, and an Icelandic jurist, Snjólaug Árnadóttir, both specialised in welfare issues, presented their views.

This year, as a continuation of this initiative, the Heads of Delegation took the initiative of organising a status workshop on welfare, inviting Japan to be co-organiser. The WS was intended as a forum where hunters, veterinarians, scientists, and managers could, in full trust, respect, and inclusivity, hold a dialogue on the status of animal welfare in marine mammal hunts in 2025 and how to cooperate with and learn from each other to further improve animal welfare outcomes.

The Chair invited the Chair of the MMWWS 2025, Ichiro Nomura (Japan) and the Secretary General to present the outputs of the workshop (WS).

The workshop was held the previous day with 11 hunting communities participating, Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Japan, Iceland, Norway, Nunavik, Nunavut, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sweden, and Åland, with a total of 59 participants, including hunters, scientists, and managers.

The focus of the WS was to a) assess the **status of welfare in the different marine mammal hunts in 2025**, including the level of our knowledge on animal welfare outcomes, b) **consider the optimal welfare criteria** to be applied in monitoring welfare outcomes, and c) identify **how to move forward** to globally improve welfare outcomes

As an introduction to the Workshop, the NAMMCO founding principles were underlined, i.e., the people's right to hunt and utilise marine mammal resources with, embedded in this right, the obligation to ensure that the hunt is sustainable and conducted responsibly with respect to killing efficiency, hunter safety, and animal welfare. NAMMCO sees good welfare outcomes in hunting as minimising pain, distress, and suffering during the hunting process and minimising killing time, balanced by consideration of hunter safety and the risk of losing the animal. The factors defined by NAMMCO as important to consider for good welfare outcomes are:

- ✓ Time to death (TTD), incl. instant death rate (IDR)
- ✓ Animal awareness
- ✓ Struck-and-lost rate
- ✓ Hunter skills and training
- ✓ Weapon adequacy and maintenance

The recommendations provided by NAMMCO over the years have addressed how best to monitor hunt efficiency and welfare outcomes and which data are required, how welfare outcomes could be improved in specific hunts, weapons adequacy and maintenance, the importance of training and education of hunters and not the least the importance of their involvement in the processes, from monitoring and improving welfare outcomes to regulating hunting practices.

All participant countries & communities were asked to fill in a database with information on the hunts prior to the workshop. A summary of the information collected regarding the period 2019–2023 was

presented to the Workshop. The most hunted species among cetaceans were harbour porpoises, long-finned pilot whales, belugas and minke whales, and among pinnipeds, harp, ringed, and grey seals. The main hunting methods were the deck-mounted grenade harpoon gun for large whales and the rifle for smaller cetaceans and seals. Catches were asked to be reported, and struck-and-lost rates were only required to be systematically reported for large whales. Time to death and instant death rates had only been studied for large whale hunts and were only known for a few other hunts.

The Faroe Islands, Greenland, Japan, Nunavut, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Sweden provided presentations of their hunting methods, including information on how hunting methods had improved to generate better welfare outcomes, and which issues remained, especially regarding struck-and-lost rate and hunter safety.

It was clear that marine mammal hunting takes place in many different regions of the world with a variety of weapons and methods depending on factors such as species and size of animal, hunting habitat and environmental conditions, cultural traditions, commercial availability of gear, legislation, economy, personal experiences and preferences, and animal welfare considerations. In several hunts, significant advances have been made in achieving the goals of increasing IDR and reducing TTD and struck-and-lost rates. The discussion exposed how the sharing of knowledge and experience was important. An open dialogue and exchange of information allows people to learn from each other and get new insights and ideas on methodology in a manner that maximises hunter safety and reduces TTD and struck-and-lost rates.

The main outputs of the Workshop were the need to:

Develop a common framework for terminology, data collection, and analysis, taking into account the specificities of each hunt.

Define best welfare outcomes by species and hunt type. This includes finding realistic best practices for the lowest possible TTD, highest IDR, and minimum struck-and-lost. Improving global welfare outcomes does not require standardisation of regulations across countries and regions.

Promote the fast killing of the animal to reduce suffering and improve welfare outcomes, which has been recognised as being in the hunters' best interest. It should be a principle that the best available equipment should be used for the hunt.

Make available the necessary hunting equipment to improve welfare outcomes and have a more efficient hunt. For this purpose, we should aim at having stable access to the best available equipment.

Develop new methods and find the best available equipment for an efficient hunt. This should be supported by accessible and adequate training, as well as with the appropriate practical support.

Share knowledge about hunting tools/equipment and know-how among hunting communities. NAMMCO could organise a dedicated initiative to go further into exchanging knowledge. The specific hunts to be discussed in this setting could be prioritised in consultation between hunters and managers.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Chair thanked Nomura and Desportes for their report. She also thanked the Secretariat for organising the WS, underlining that such an organisation just ahead of the Annual Meeting had brought quite a heavy load of additional work. The Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Norway seconded the Chair in thanking the Secretariat for a well organised and smoothly conducted workshop.

There are many nuances on the subject of welfare issues associated with whaling and sealing, and this workshop was far from having exhausted the topic—further opportunities for discussion will no doubt arise. The WS provided a reliable and useful status of welfare outcomes, where they ought to be improved, and other remaining issues that should be dealt with. Certainly, the importance of sharing experience and knowledge was recognised and underlined.

2. NATIONAL & ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

Member Countries submitted their National Progress Reports (NPR) for 2024 in accordance with the deadline of 1 March (NAMMCO/32/NPR/FO-2023, NAMMCO/32/NPR/GL-2023, NAMMCO/32/NPR/IS-2023, NAMMCO/32/NPR/NO-2023. All NPR are available on the [NAMMCO Website](#). NPR had also been received from Japan (Small Cetaceans – 2023 and Large Cetaceans -2024).

The Chair thanked the Parties, and Japan, for sending in their annual progress reports. No specific remarks or clarifications to the reports were brought forward.

3. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

3.1 REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (FAC)

The Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, Páll Nolsøe (Faroe Islands), presented the activities of the Committee since the last Council meeting in March 2024 ([NAMMCO/32/04](#)). The Committee had also met prior to the Council meeting to discuss finances and the proposed committees' workplans.

The Council 31 had urged the FAC to keep an attentive eye on the budget and evolution of the expenses, and to inform the Parties if any issue arises. The focus of the FAC in 2024 had been on administrative matters, the finances of the Commission, and the following up of the ongoing projects (NASS, MINTAG, Educational Project, and MMWWS 2025) in terms of expenses incurred.

FAC recommendations to Council 32

- Approve the 2024 audited accounts
- Take note of the anticipated results for 2025
- Adopt the 2026 draft budget as the 2026 budget
- Approve the 2027 forecast budget as the draft budget 2027
- Recommend that the necessity for physical meetings contra virtual meetings continue to be carefully weighed by committees and subsidiary bodies, both from a financial and an environmental perspective
- Following this line, that the number of in-person working groups and workshops organised by the Scientific Committee continues being limited to four per year
- Recommend that the expenses for inviting external experts to meetings organised by the SC be, as a rule, capped at NOK 50,000
- Recommend that external funding be sought to cover meetings for which expenses would be higher.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Chair thanked Nolsøe for his presentation.

The Council noted the report and **endorsed** the recommendations of the FAC.

The Chair thanked the FAC Chair for his presentation and thanked the Committee for its work. She welcomed the upcoming FAC Chair, Amalie Jessen (Greenland).

3.2 AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2024

Deputy Secretary Ian Bolduc presented the audited accounts for 2024 ([NAMMCO/32/05](#) and Appendix 5A and B: Audited Accounts).

The audited accounts for 2024, which include the results of NAMMCO and the three projects MINTAG, NASS, and Educational Project, closed with an overall positive result of NOK 490,291.

As for NAMMCO specifically, it closed with a positive result of NOK 161,980 as compared to the planned NOK 362,348, which was the anticipated 2024 result after the reallocation carried out by Council 31. Consequently, the general reserve slightly increased and amounted to NOK 1,415,190, but was lower than the anticipated amount of NOK 1,615,559.

The negative discrepancy between the reallocation and the final accounts are explained by the fact that although most of the posts were at budget levels or lower, including:

- Slightly lower staff-related costs
- Lower costs related to internship, meetings, staff travel, and Scientific Committee
- Significant lower expenses in Communication and Outreach because many of the expenses incurred were covered by projects

the office rent and the accounting and auditing expenses were significantly higher than anticipated. Also, the overheads coming from the NASS project will be accounted for in 2025, not 2024.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

As recommended by the FAC, the Council **approved** the 2024 audited accounts.

3.3 BUDGET 2025, DRAFT BUDGET 2026, AND FORECAST BUDGET 2027

3.3.1 Anticipated results 2025

Bolduc introduced the anticipated results for 2025 ([NAMMCO/32/06draft](#): Anticipated Results 2025, Draft budget 2026, Forecast budget 2027 and Appendix 6). The draft anticipated results of 2025, as of 1 March 2025 and using the actual 2024 results, gave a negative result of NOK -13,186, compared to the deficit budgeted for by Council 31, NOK -60,361. Some expenditure items were expected to be over budgeted ones. The general reserve was anticipated to be at NOK 1,402,005 on 31 December 2025, a lower amount compared to the budgeted general reserve of NOK 1,555,198.

Considering the committee's workplans in 2025–2027 and the other foreseen expenses, the FAC modified the 2025 posts allocation; the anticipated results 2025 ended up with a positive operating result of NOK 128,814. Added to the effective General Reserve on 31 December 2024, the new General Reserve expected on 31 December 2025 was increased to NOK 1,544,005 instead, only slightly lower than the NAMMCO 31 budgeted General Reserve of 1,555,198.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council took note of the new expected 2025 result.

3.3.2 Draft budget 2026 and forecast budget 2027

The presentation to the Council of 2026 draft and 2027 forecast budgets were postponed until the end of the meeting to accommodate decisions made by the Council regarding the workplan of the various committees (Appendix 6).

The FAC focused its attention on keeping the general reserve above the Protected Reserve, which is expected to be kept at 10% of the operating expenses.

The most important change brought to the draft budget 2026 approved by Council 31 was to increase the allocation to the Observation Activities in 2026, to follow the decision of conducting them with the same target species and areas as the 2023 Observation Activities (West Greenland, narwhal, beluga, and walrus). To not increase overall expenses, small funding was cut in various posts.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Norway thanked the Chair of the FAC. The budget is tight for the coming years, and the FAC should make sure that there is not more money spent than the Commission has.

The Council **adopted** the 2026 draft budget, as budget 2026 and **approved** the 2027 forecast budget, as draft budget 2027 (Appendix 6: Budget and Anticipated Results 2025, Budget 2026, Draft Budget 2027).

3.4 ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT 2024

The Secretary General introduced the Administrative Report ([NAMMCO/32/07](#)), which presented an overview of the Commission's (Council, subsidiary bodies, Secretariat) activities in 2024.

The year 2024 was still a learning year for the Secretariat, which had welcomed in September 2023 two full time Deputy Secretaries, Maria Garagouni and Naima El bani Altuna, responsible for Science, and Science Communication and Dissemination, respectively, and in June 2024, the former Administrative Officer Bolduc as Deputy Secretary responsible for Finance and Administration.

Continuing introducing the new staff to NAMMCO procedures and work still represented a major occupation in 2024. Updating the website with new information, and in particular the species pages, as well as the NAMMCO's databases also remained a strong focus. The Secretariat also worked on continuing the implementation of the 3rd Communication Plan, [CP3](#) 2023–2024, adopted by Council 29 in September 2022, developing the educational portal on marine mammals and the marine environment that will be made freely available on the NAMMCO website (more details on the project can be found under Item 12.4 and document [NAMMCO/32/16](#)).

The Secretariat also strongly contributed to supporting the preparation and execution of NASS 2024 and the MINTAG projects (for more information, see Items 5 and 6, respectively).

The internship programme, which started in 2017, continued with two interns (Marina Metić from Croatia and Noor Elias from the Netherlands) joining the Secretariat in 2024. The programme continues providing the Secretariat with additional human resources and expertise and is a highly appreciated input to the otherwise small Secretariat, in terms of energy, ideas, and creativity. It is considered a positive experience for both the interns and the Secretariat. It also exposes the interns to today's reality of whaling and sealing within the perspective of the relative environmental cost of food resources, food security, blue economy, and contribution to fulfilling the UN SDGs, bringing nuances to the prevailingly negative views on whaling and sealing activities—nuances that the interns are hoped to bring forward in their next career steps.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Chair thanked Desportes for her presentation.

Greenland thanked the Secretary General for her dedication and expressed the appreciation of the work the Secretariat is doing, especially when it comes to connections with the Greenlandic University in relation to the educational project.

The Council took note of this part of the report.

3.5 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

4. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

4.1 REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (SC)

The Chair of the SC, Aqqalu Rosing-Asvid, presented the activities of the SC since the last meeting of the Council in March 2024. Rosing-Asvid focused on the general part of the SC activities and report ([NAMMCO/32/08](#)), as information and recommendations pertaining to species and ecosystem related issues had been presented to the relevant Management Committees ([NAMMCO/32/FI01-03](#)).

4.1.1 Overall work between the 30th and 31st meetings of the Scientific Committee

The 31st meeting of the SC was held on 21–24 January 2025, in Tromsø, chaired by Rosing-Asvid and observed by delegates from Japan.

Working Groups, Planning Groups and Project Meetings

In 2024, only two WGs held meetings. The WG on By-catch held an online meeting in May and an in-person meeting in October, in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland. (The meeting outcomes were presented to the Joint meeting of the Management Committees). The WG on Genetics held its first in-person meeting in October, in Copenhagen, Denmark. The WG was tasked with examining literature on population structure for species and stocks with upcoming assessments, namely pilot whale, narwhal, beluga, harbour porpoise, coastal seals, and walrus, as well as providing recommendations for further research that could inform assessments.

The Scientific Planning Committee (SpC) for NASS 2024 and the MINTAG Steering Group (StG) held several meetings in 2024. The SpC met in January, March, and May to finalise the design and practical components of the summer survey. After the completion of the survey itself, the SpC held a debriefing meeting in October, to evaluate the overall planning and outcomes of the survey. The MINTAG StG met both online (April and October) and face-to-face (January 2024 and 2025). The StG also organised and overviewed a second experimental deployment of prototype tags in summer–fall 2024.

In January 2025, the WG on Abundance Estimates held a hybrid meeting, adjacent to the SC meeting, which included the members of the SpC and a member of the Norwegian survey and analysis team (Deanna Leonard). It was chaired by Daniel Pike (Essox Associates, CA). At this meeting, the timeline and plans for data processing and analysis were discussed, and ideas were put forward for invited experts to include in subsequent meetings.

4.1.2 Proposed workplan for 2025–2027

Rosing-Asvid presented a workplan for 2025 and a suggested workplan for 2026–2027. These were adopted after some scheduling modifications under agenda Item 4.2 (Table 1).

The SC annual meeting will be hosted by the Faroe Islands on January 26–30, 2026. The location is to be decided.

4.1.3 Other business

The Council was informed that Sandra Granquist (IS) would become after the meeting of the Council the new Chair of the SC, with Norway as Vice-Chair.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Nunavut requested some clarification on the links between NAMMCO and Canada in terms of working groups and shared stocks. Rosing-Asvid and Greenland informed that a collaborative approach to management and data sharing has been maintained for years, whereby shared stocks are reviewed/assessed with expertise and/or information from both sides. This includes narwhal and beluga, but also ringed and bearded seals.

Regarding the workplan, Norway commented on the importance of abiding with a strict budget for in-person meetings, as finances are limited. The Faroe Islands echoed this sentiment, acknowledging that the SC is the backbone of NAMMCO's advisory work.

The Chair thanked the SC Chair for his presentation and thanked the SC Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee for their work. She welcomed the upcoming SC Chair, Granquist (IS).

4.2 ADOPTION OF PRIORITIES AND WORKPLAN 2024–2026

Following extensive discussion around each Party's needs for management advice and the optimal timing thereof, the workplan shown in Table 1 was adopted for 2025–2027. Items listed in the same cell could be organised back-to-back, reducing travel costs for participants.

The Walrus WG will meet in the Fall of 2026, if the data from a survey in April 2026 are already analysed, or in early 2027. A decision on whether the JWG will meet in 2026 will be made following an online meeting of the JCNB later this year. The AEWG will meet late in 2025, with the aim of reviewing all target species abundance estimates (with priority to pilot, fin, and minke whales). It will meet a second time in 2026 if needed.

4.3 OTHER BUSINESS

Bjarni Mikkelsen (Faroe Islands) thanked the outgoing SC Chair, Rosing-Asvid, for his efficient 3-year chairing. Desportes concurred and thanked Rosing-Asvid for having been a pleasant, easy to work with and responsive SC Chair, and for his collaborative spirit. In turn, Rosing-Asvid thanked the Secretariat for its support during these three years and congratulated Desportes on having fostered an exceptional and enthusiastic team who had been a pleasure to work with.

Table 1: SC workplan adopted by the Council for the period 2025–2027. Activities in italics were already held. Hollow bullet points denote that the meeting may be moved to a different year or not held at all. Items in bold denote preferably in-person meetings.

	2025	2026	2027
WG and WS meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abundance Estimates WG ▪ WS on spatial modelling for cetacean surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large whale Assessment WG ▪ WS on seal modelling ▪ Coastal seals WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walrus WG ▪ Harp and hooded seals WG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WS on alternative cetacean survey methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Harbour porpoise WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bearded seals WG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By-catch WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By-catch WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WS on multispecies models
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilot whale WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ JWG NAMMCO-JCNB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WS on age estimation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Abundance Estimates WG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MINTAG end workshop
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MINTAG StG: online and physical meetings ▪ MINTAG: deployment fieldwork and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MINTAG StG: online and physical meetings ▪ MINTAG: deployment fieldwork and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MINTAG StG: online and physical meetings ▪ MINTAG: analysis
Participation of SC members in external events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>North Atlantic Killer Whale WS during V Orca Symposium</i> ▪ ECS pilot whale WS & trans-Atlantic tagging initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MINTAG StG in SMM workshop on tagging 	TBD

5. NASS 2024

5.1 UPDATE ON SURVEY AND EFFORT

The Chair invited Deputy Secretary Garagouni to present updates on the North Atlantic Sightings Survey (NASS) 2024 project (document [NAMMCO/32/14](#)). This cetacean survey, the seventh in the series, was coordinated by the SpC (see also Item 4.1.1) and successfully completed over the summer of 2024. The primary aim of NASS is to obtain abundance estimates of target species (most of those undergoing hunts in each member country). The secondary aim is to calculate the abundance of non-target species, as well as to detect any long-term trends or changes in species distribution.

All four member countries participated in NASS 2024, using either airplanes (Greenland) or dedicated and opportunistic ships as the survey platforms. Thanks to a voluntary contribution from Norway, more ship- and plane-time could be chartered, and thus a more complete snapshot of the eastern North Atlantic was obtained. The survey blocks and track lines of the Faroese and Icelandic dedicated vessels were designed by Daniel Pike (invited consultant for the SpC) under the guidance of the group. The remaining platforms all used predefined track lines (mackerel and redfish surveys, Norwegian mosaic survey, and Greenlandic aerial survey). Certain changes had to be made last-minute to allow for slightly reduced sailing time from the Faroese vessel, and an ice-edge protocol for the Icelandic vessel. Despite this, good coverage was achieved across the entire region (see Figure 1).

Besides visual cetacean observations, the dedicated Faroese vessel collected passive acoustic monitoring data, while the opportunistic one collected environmental DNA (eDNA), and the dedicated Norwegian vessel was able to successfully deploy two MINTAG tags (see Item 6).

The Secretariat created a dedicated webpage (<https://nass.nammco.org>) for the dissemination of “live” information during the survey. Cruise leaders were asked to coordinate the submission of interesting sightings or “a day in the life” log entries that could be shown alongside the progress of each survey platform. Despite some challenges, the dissemination efforts reached a wide audience, both scientific and non-scientific. At the debriefing meeting in October 2024, it was agreed that the optimal way to ensure consistent updates is to delegate the task to the younger observers on board, which both keeps them more engaged throughout the survey and alleviates some of the cruise leader’s workload.

On behalf of the SpC and the SC, Garagouni thanked Norway for the generous contribution to the NASS 2024 project, which had allowed for the extension the survey area and intensified the effort.

5.2 PLANNING AND TIMELINE FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

The next step of the project is to conduct the analysis and generate abundance estimates, which will be reviewed by the AEWG. Greenland has already calculated abundance estimates for its target species, and the other three countries will pool their data to obtain a single estimate for the entire region. Of immediate importance were to obtain abundance estimates for pilot whales, and fin, minke, and humpback whales, as these species will be assessed in late 2025 and early 2026, respectively.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ON ITEM 5

The Faroe Islands thanked Garagouni for her excellent presentation, observing that the survey itself is a remarkable effort and extending congratulations to all participants and organisers. Norway echoed this and stated that NASS as a whole highlights how NAMMCO takes the responsibility to study marine mammals seriously.

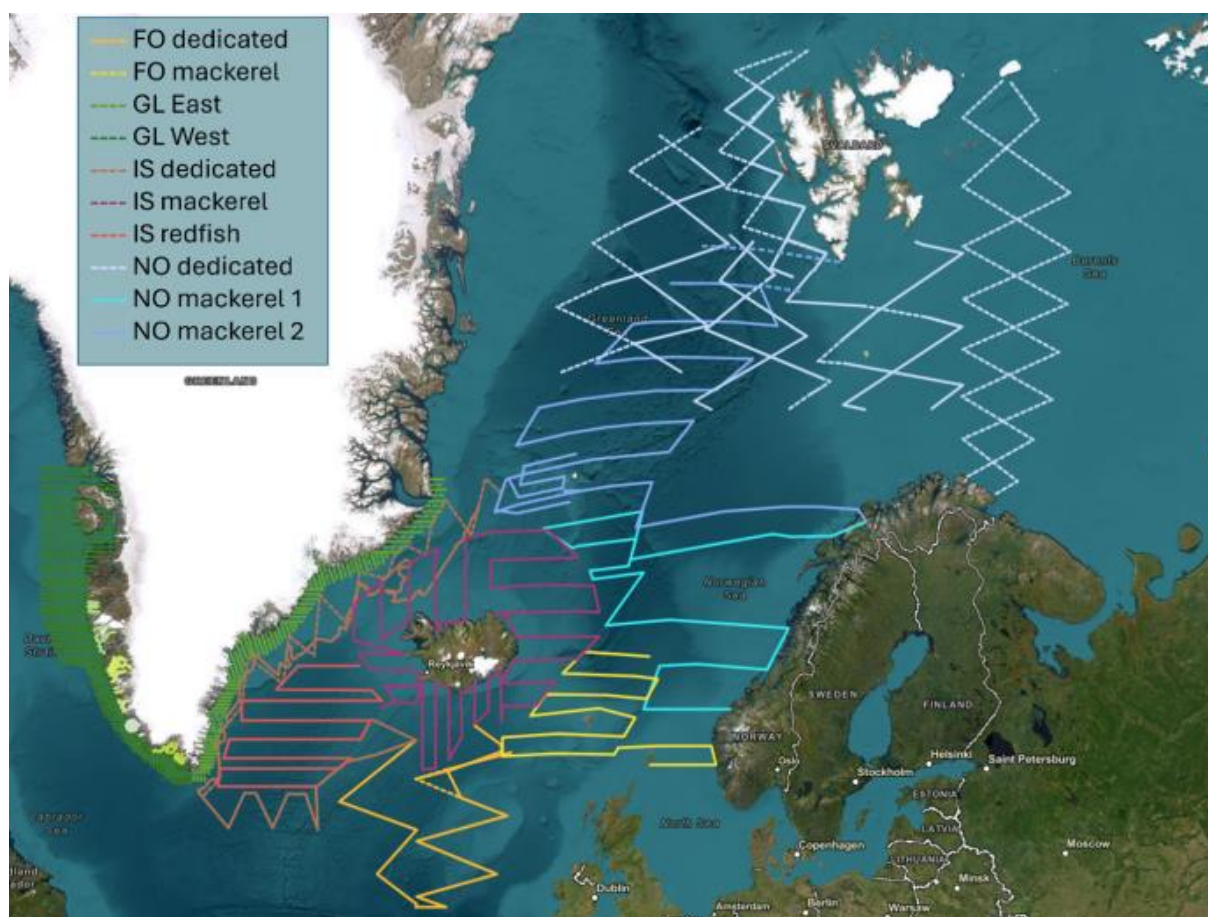


Figure 1. Map of the NASS 2024 planned (dashed lines) and achieved (solid lines) survey effort.

6. MINTAG PROJECT



The MINTAG (Miniature Tag) Project, launched on 4 August 2021, is a scientific cooperation between NAMMCO and the Fisheries Agency of Japan (FAJ). It aims at developing smaller and lighter satellite transmitters with optimal ballistic performance for long-distance deployments on lesser-known fast-swimming rorqual species (blue, fin, sei, Bryde's, and minke whales) and pilot whales. MINTAG intends to respond to outstanding questions on habitat use, dispersal and movements, behaviour, and stock delineation. The high-profile project aims at providing missing but essential tools for the management of these lesser-known species in the North Atlantic and North Pacific Oceans.

The Steering Group (StG) is composed of SC members and scientists from the Institute of Cetacean Research of Japan, as well as the Fisheries Agency of Japan and the NAMMCO Secretariat. Mads Peter Heide-Jørgensen from the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources is the project leader; the project is administrated by the NAMMCO Secretariat. The StG chose, in February 2022, to cooperate with the US satellite tag manufacturing company Wildlife Computers (WC). Report of the MINTAG Steering Group

Activities March 2024 – March 2025

Sandra M. Granquist (Iceland) introduced the project's progress report for March 2024–March 2025 and the activity plan up to March 2026 ([NAMMCO/32/15](#)).

The summer 2023 was used to deploy the V0 prototype design of tags, with years 2024 and 2025 planned for the larger tag deployment. Following the low rate of successful deployment (impaired by poor logistics and tag technical issues), the StG agreed that more tag development was required and

that summer 2024 should be used to test redesigned prototype tags, before deciding about a final tag design. This decision resulted in a yearlong delay, with the large tag deployments delayed to 2025 and 2026 and the End Project Workshop postponed from 2026 to 2027.

In 2024, Iceland, Japan, and Norway got 10 tags each, five with a cone configuration and five with a petal configuration. While not all tags were deployed in 2024, the V0c tags seemed to perform better compared to the V0b tags deployed in 2023. In addition to the V0c tags used through the MINTAG project, eight V0b tags and nine V0c tags were deployed through collaborative projects, on bowhead whales in Disko Bay, West Greenland, on blue whales in northwest Svalbard, and on southern right whales in Argentina.

Of the deployed tags, 69% transmitted data successfully, compared to the 48% (11 out of 23 deployed) the tags successfully deployed in 2023. Three out of the four unsuccessful tags were shot but did not hit the whale and one got deployed but it did not transmit data. The longest deployment lasted 231 days, with intermittent data transmission (Figure 2). Another tag, which was embedded too deep according to the deployment report, uplinked for the first time 31 days after being deployed and started sending data 195 days after the deployment. This tag, on a fin whale, migrated south of the Azores, then to the west side of the Iberian Peninsula. The most consistent tag had almost 109 days of continuous data transmission since the day of deployment (Figure 2). The MINTAG project is primarily a tag development project, but the tracks from two minke whales and one fin whale have already provided valuable new data about the wintering area for these whales. Further tracking will provide a wider understanding of the migrations of whales, and it is planned to continue and expand the tagging effort in 2025. Plans for 2025 will include tagging of pilot whales in East Greenland, Norway, and the Faroe Islands, as well as tagging of minke and fin whales in Norway, Iceland, and Japan.

Project dissemination

The project website (www.mintag-project.com), developed by the Secretariat during the summer 2022 in collaboration with the StG, offers information on the project, background and aim, target species, project partners and participating institutes, timeline, and activities. During summer 2023 and 2024, it was updated with the deployment activities of the different tagging teams and the movements of the tagged whales. The pages most visited from spring 2024 were the “Follow The Whales” pages/Deployment of MINTAGs in 2024, that reported on the tag deployment activities and provided maps of the whale movements.

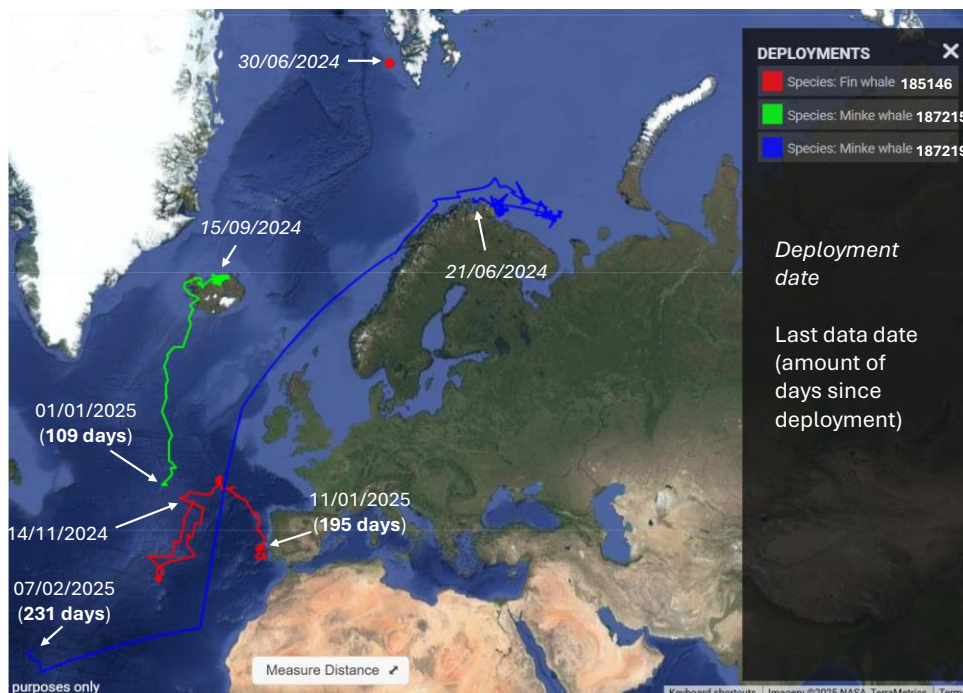


Figure 2. Map showing the three tags with the longest duration of transmissions as of March 2025.

6.1 FINANCIAL UPDATE

Desportes presented an overview of the MINTAG project's financial update ([NAMMCO/32/15](#)).

The overall cost of the project was estimated to be close to NOK 26,500,000, including direct costs (tag development and production, NOK 10,315,000) and in-kind costs (scientists' work and field work costs, such as ship time, food, travel, etc.).

Some changes to the original budget were made when the agreement with WC was signed, based on the real cost agreed with the manufacturer (in US dollars). Some expenses that had not been accounted for were also added. A further increase in cost originates in the change in exchange rate between US dollars and NOK, which was not favourable to the project, and may significantly increase the cost of the US produced development and tags.

Despite the delay in the project and therefore in incurring expenses (both due to the delayed start and the necessity of the second prototype's deployment in 2024), the five partners continued to agree that the transfer of the allocated funding would follow the initial schedule. The protracted use of the funds would cover costs until the end of the project, now delayed by one year with the End Project Workshop in the end of 2027 instead of 2026.

What remains essential for the project is that the funding from the five partners originally agreed upon, both in kind and direct, continues to be delivered.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ON ITEM 6

The Council took note of the report.

Granquist and members of the Secretariat responded to the Council's questions about the technical aspects of the project, including the expected duration of the tags, attachment challenges, and the recovery of additional samples during tagging, such as biopsy samples.

Japan expressed its gratitude for being a partner in the MINTAG project and reaffirmed its ongoing commitment to the initiative, both scientifically and financially.

7. COMMITTEE ON HUNTING METHODS

7.1 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HUNTING METHODS (CHM)

The Chair of the Committee on Hunting Methods, Jóhann Ásmundsson (Iceland) presented the activities of the CHM since Council 31 ([NAMMCO/32/09](#)).

The CHM had reviewed and updated background information on hunting in member countries available on [nammco.org](#). The review of the catch database exposed the need for more detailed data and instructions given for filling it, to reduce the possibilities of misinterpretation (e.g., the difference between no data available or data equal to 0). It discussed the possible concern for NAMMCO of GDPR-related issues concerning the publication of catch data on the website, while maintaining transparency but also adhering to privacy regulations.

The CHM had not been successful in involving hunters in its meeting in 2024 and had agreed to give high priority to communication with hunters. It felt the need to prioritise hunts from which hunters should be invited and had agreed on the following criteria: a) Focus on hunts with high struck-and-lost rates or longer time to death, b) Prioritise hunts involving a larger number of animals, c) Highlight hunts where there is a lack of information.

The output and recommendations from the MMWWS 2025 would indicate how to proceed in cooperating with Japan and other participating countries on issues pertaining to the improvement of hunting-related animal welfare outputs. It would also help identify the appropriate topic for the 3rd hunter training video and/or manual, but the CHM would also consult with hunters and hunters' instructors. The tasks identified by the Workshop would be included in the list of objectives to be completed throughout 2025-2027.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council noted the report, thanked the outgoing Chair, Ásmundsson, and welcomed the Faroe Island as new Chair and Norway as Vice-Chair.

Norway emphasised the importance of involving hunters in the Committee's and Council's work. If the CHM has any suggestions on how to achieve this, they are invited to share their ideas with the Council. Ásmundsson reaffirmed the Committee's commitment to find a system and facilitate these discussions in a way that is meaningful not only for the CHM but also for the hunters.

Greenland noted that there are various ways to involve hunters, but in Greenland's specific context, geographic, financial, and logistical challenges make in-person meetings difficult. While online meetings have become more accessible since the pandemic, they still present certain complications. Greenland suggested that discussions on how to organise such meetings could begin within individual countries and then transition to online formats to enable broader participation.

7.2 ADOPTION OF PRIORITIES AND WORKPLAN 2025-2027

The workplan proposed by the CHM and adopted by the Council 32 is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. CHM workplan proposed by the CHM and adopted by Council for the period 2025-2027.

2025	2026	2027
Update information on regulations and laws	Update information on regulations and laws	Update information on regulations and laws
Review the catch & hunting data-base (data 2024)	Review the catch & hunting data-base (data 2025)	Review the catch & hunting data-base (data 2026)
Invite hunters to CHM meetings	Invite hunters to CHM meetings	Invite hunters to CHM meetings
Evaluate reception of current videos if possible. If videos were considered useful, then discuss themes for a new video	Develop new training material?	
Follow up on the outcomes of the WWS		
Review past CHM docs on Struck-and-lost information		

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council **endorsed** the proposed workplan (Table 3), noting the importance of the CHM incorporating the outcomes of the MMWWS 2025 into the coming year's work.

Greenland expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the CHM and the Secretariat in producing videos and manuals. While the manuals are over 10 years old, they remain relevant, although they could be updated to include new equipment and recent developments. Greenland also expressed its expectation of the production of additional training materials by the Committee.

7.3 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

8. COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION

8.1 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION (CIO)

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee on Inspection and Observation, Ulla S. Wang (Faroe Islands), the Vice-Chair, Guro Gjelsvik (Norway), presented the activities of the CIO since Council 31 ([NAMMCO/32/10](#)).

In 2024, the CIO focussed on conducting the evaluation of the Observation Activities (OA), as requested by Council 31 and in reporting the findings to Council 32. The CIO had also consulted the NAMMCO Observer Corps during the observers' annual meeting in May. It had also consulted directly and through a questionnaire with staff in relevant ministries and directorates, and with hunters during national meetings and via a survey distributed widely.

The CIO strongly emphasised the need for better communication and coordination among stakeholders, and in particular with the hunters. Information should be created with this in mind and communicated in good time. The CIO expressed confidence that the current method (in person) worked, although specific aspects (e.g., communication) needed significant improvement. The CIO agreed that addressing and enhancing communication is essential and recommended this is taken as a priority and implemented before the next OA.

The CIO agreed to a set of recommendations for improving the OA

- To create information material for generating a better communication with the hunters and local authorities and communities and communicate it in good time before any OA. The CIO recommended this is taken as a priority and implemented before the next OA.
- To improve their effectiveness, the OA should be more flexible, adapted to the specificities of the target hunt, the country, and the stakeholders involved, with likely different methodologies involved. CIO suggested looking into a system that would allow the identification of hunting activities that require more frequent observation due to their higher likelihood of non-compliance with regulations.
- Regarding the possibility of using national and local observers and not foreign observers as is currently the NAMMCO general rule, the CIO recommended that the Council reconsider its 2019 response and make the approach country specific, allowing for the use of national and local observer when well received and considered more efficient.
- Prioritising holding meetings with hunters every year to increase information dissemination and explain the rationale behind the OA. For this task to be successfully accomplished, there is a need for funds to translate materials into local languages.
- The general objective of the OA should be clearly outlined by the Council, the CIO would like to know what NAMMCO expects to achieve from conducting OA, as this will have an impact on their regularity in the different hunts.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council took note of the report, thanked the outgoing Chair, Wang, and welcomed Norway as the Chair and Greenland as Vice-Chair.

Greenland suggested the use of social media to prevent misunderstandings between hunters and observers during Observation Activities. Greenland noted that materials prepared by the CIO could be translated to better reach Greenlandic hunters and proposed that these materials be shared through Greenlandic social media platforms, such as Facebook groups for fishers and hunters.

Norway emphasised that, in the early days of NAMMCO, having observers on board was considered very important. However, they noted that communication and logistical challenges must be addressed. Norway further stressed the critical importance of securing funding for translations to ensure that hunters interacting with observers fully understand the process and what is expected of them.

The Council concluded that the evaluation is complete and **endorsed** the recommendations made by the CIO based on the findings of the evaluation.

8.2 OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES IN 2026

The Council 31 (2024) agreed that, should the OA take place in 2026, they should target the same hunts as in 2023: beluga, walrus, and narwhal hunts in Sisimiut and Upernavik. However, Greenland noted that conducting OA in Upernavik is highly complicated and suggested that the CIO reconsider and evaluate alternative areas.

Additionally, to ensure the success of the OA, Greenland reiterated the importance of observers engaging in discussions with the Ministry prior to the activities.

8.3 ADOPTION OF PRIORITIES AND WORKPLAN 2025–2027

The CIO proposed the following workplan for the period 2025–2027 (Table 4).

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council **endorsed** the proposed workplan (Table 4), noting that budget had not been requested to conduct a course for the observers in 2025 and was therefore not allocated.

Table 4. Workplan proposed by the CIO and adopted by the Council for the period 2025-2027.

2025	2026	2027
Prepare the OA 2026	Implement OA 2026	Evaluate OA 2026
	Prepare the OA 2027	Implement OA 2027
		Prepare the OA 2028
Observer Corps Training		
Communication with hunters	Communication with hunters	Communication with hunters
NAMMCO Observer's Annual Meeting	NAMMCO Observer's Annual Meeting	NAMMCO Observer's Annual Meeting

8.4 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

The Management Committees met on 25 and 27 March (see also documents [NAMMCO/32/FI01, 02, 03](#)). Garagouni presented to the Council:

- The SC's proposals for conservation and management, forwarded by the MCs as advice to the Parties.
- The SC's recommendations for new research with implications for the Parties, NAMMCO, or involving shared stocks with non-NAMMCO countries, forwarded by the MCs.
- Proposals for new and modified requests for Advice from the SC, which the Council was asked to consider and endorse, if appropriate.

The MCs had reached consensus on all of the above proposals and recommendations.

9.1 PROPOSALS FOR CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

All Parties

All species

- Facilitate access to marine mammal density estimates or abundances within the NAMMCO area, in a format suited to the type of risk mapping described in BYCWG report.

Greenland

Dolphins

- *(reiterated from SC/30)* Validate the Greenlandic removals with a special focus on minimising underreporting and estimating struck-and-lost rates, thus facilitating a full assessment of white-beaked dolphins as soon as possible.

Killer whale

- Validate all killer whale catches every year to ensure accuracy of reporting.

9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PARTIES OR NAMMCO

All Parties

Harbour porpoise

- Focus efforts on collecting the necessary data for a full assessment of harbour porpoise stocks in all NAMMCO areas.

Greenland

Ringed seal

- Determine whether there are isolated ringed seal stocks in different fjord systems.

Narwhal

- *(reiterated from SC/30)* Collect biological samples when available from narwhals in East Greenland, including areas north of Scoresby Sound, to explore genetic connectivity of different stocks.

Iceland and Norway

Coastal seals

- *(reiterated from SC/28 and SC/30)* Improve knowledge on by-catches with data on species, genetics, and age, by collecting jaws from by-caught seals.

NAMMCO

WG/WS meetings

- Hold a discussion or workshop on alternative survey methods for cetaceans, such as drones, acoustics, genetics, and opportunistic surveys.

Non-NAMMCO countries

Canada

Bearded seal

- Investigate bearded seal movements between West Greenland and Canada to determine if there is a shared stock between the two areas.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ON ITEM 9.1 AND 9.2

The Council took note of all proposals and recommendations forwarded to the Parties and NAMMCO.

9.3 REQUESTS FOR ADVICE FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The following request regarding multispecies management and modelling approaches was considered sufficiently answered by the Management Committees, as it is the Scientific Committee's default understanding that requests relate to all NAMMCO areas unless otherwise specified.

- ***R-1.2.3 (2022, ongoing but not prioritised)*** In addressing the standing requests on ecosystem modelling and marine mammal fisheries interaction, to extend the focus to include all areas under NAMMCO jurisdiction.

Two **new requests** for advice were proposed for the Council's consideration.

Hooded seal

- *R-2.1.12: Investigate whether and to what extent the coastal hooded seal hunt in East Greenland will be affected if the decline in the Greenland Sea and west Atlantic populations continues.*

Harbour and grey seals

- *R-2.5.3: To investigate alternatives to traditional crewed aerial and boat-based surveys as methods for estimating coastal seal abundance.*

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Request R-1.2.3 was considered **closed**, and the Council **endorsed** the two new requests for advice that were **forwarded to the SC**.

9.4 OTHER BUSINESS

No other business pertaining to the MCs was discussed.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS & ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT

The Chair noted the importance that environmental questions have for NAMMCO. Environmental matters directly related to scientific advice on the conservation and management of marine mammals were addressed by the MCJ—the points of discussion can be found in the report of the MCJ ([NAMMCO/32/FI03](#)).

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

No further comments were made.

11. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Chair noted that the Administrative Report (NAMMCO/32/07, Item 5) presented an overview of the relations with national, inter-governmental, and non-governmental bodies, and the meetings and events where NAMMCO was represented in 2024, also providing relevant observer reports.

11.1 COOPERATION WITH NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

The Chair extended his thanks to the Observers from non-member governments for their interest in the work of NAMMCO and their participation in this Annual Meeting, which this year included Denmark, Japan, Sweden and for the first time Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Desportes provided an update on the relationships NAMMCO had maintained since Council 31 with non-member countries, in particular the cooperation with Japan.

The MINTAG project is a scientific cooperation between NAMMCO and Japan, initiated in 2021, to develop for the first-time transdermal satellite transmitters specifically designed for lesser-known, fast-swimming species of interest to both NAMMCO Parties and Japan (blue, fin, sei, Bryde's, minke, and pilot whales). These species have not been successfully tagged to date, except for short periods not covering their winter migration. This project should contribute to/provide a new tool for identifying movement patterns and stock structure of these species, knowledge essential to sound management. See also Item 6 and document [NAMMCO/31/15](#) for further details.

Scientists from the Japanese Cetacean Research Institute (ICR), the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (HI), and the Icelandic Marine and Freshwater Institute (HAFRO) started in 2023 a project to further the understanding of the factors behind annual changes in distribution and feeding ecology of western North Pacific common minke whales, by comparing with North Atlantic common minke whales.

A geneticist from the ICR is a member of the NAMMCO working group (WG) on Genetics, established in 2023 to review the genetic data that will be used in NAMMCO's species/stocks assessments and serve as a consultation body for other WG on topics related to genetics and stock structure.

Desportes further noted that all working groups and workshops organised or co-organised by NAMMCO are, as a standing rule, inviting external experts as participants; in 2024, these were from institutes in Canada, Denmark, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council took note of the update.

Japan reiterated its willingness to strengthen its cooperation with NAMMCO. NAMMCO looks forward to the discussion with Japan on ways to strengthening their cooperation.

11.2 COOPERATION WITH INTER- AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The Chair extended her thanks to the Observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations for their interest in the work of NAMMCO and their participation or representation in this Annual Meeting; this year, these included Makivik, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., as well as AMAP, IWC, IWMC, KNAPK, NAFO, and NEAFC.

Desportes provided an update on the relationships NAMMCO had maintained since Council 31 with governmental and intergovernmental organisations working on marine management and detailed the 2024 highlights as given below. More information can be found in the Administrative Report [NAMMCO/32/07](#).

11.2.1 Arctic Council and Working Groups

NAMMCO maintains a relationship with the Arctic Council Secretariat, and primarily with the AMAP and CAFF Working Groups.

There has been a pause in the activity of the Arctic Council and its Working Groups because of the war in Ukraine. The activity of these groups resumed in a more normal way in the Fall of 2024, and the Secretariat attended as observers the pre-meetings and board meetings of the Arctic Council Working Groups ACAP, AMAP, CAFF, PAME, and SDWG.

Two members of the NAMMCO SC (Hansen and Ugarte) and the NAMMCO Secretariat (Desportes) are active members of *CAFF Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) - Marine* and of its *Marine Mammal Expert Network (MEN)*.

11.2.2 ASCOBANS

NAMMCO maintains a relationship with ASCOBANS, both at the Secretariat level for exchanging information and sharing relevant reports, and by participating in the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC) Meetings and Meeting of the Parties (MOP). Desportes attended the 10th MOP in September 2024.

The intersessional Working Group on *Lagenorhynchus*, which was formed by ASCOBANS AC 26 (2021), finally started its work in Spring-Summer 2024, i.e., reviewing the status of the white-sided and white beaked dolphins in the North Atlantic. Desportes and Garagouni were heavily involved in this work, bringing to that review the work done by the NAMMCO 2023 Dolphin WG and under the framework of the NASS series.

11.2.3 ICES

NAMMCO maintains a relationship with ICES, and they have a joint ICES/NAFO/NAMMCO Working Group on harp and hooded seals (WGHARP) in charge of management recommendations for both species. The scientists have concluded that the 2023 revised population models were still not fitting the field data and that alternative approaches needed to be developed. Therefore, the WGHARP did not hold a meeting in 2024, waiting for the scientists to progress in this development.

Several members of the SC are also participating in different ICES activities of relevance for the work of NAMMCO, such as ICES Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology (WGMME), the Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (WGBYC), as well as the ICES Annual Science Conference (ASC).

11.2.4 Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN)

NAMMCO is a member of the RSN and regularly contributes to the RSN [Magazine](#), submitting material for publication that describes the importance of its work on the conservation and management of marine mammals and highlights ongoing priorities, with as the latest a contribution to Issue No 22 "[Changes for changing climate](#)" (February 2024), with an article highlighting the effects of climate change on marine mammals and marine mammal users.

Desportes participated online in the 10th Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network, held in Rome in July 2024.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ON ITEM 11.2

The Council took note of the update.

11.3 OTHER BUSINESS

The Secretariat had also represented NAMMCO at several meetings of national organisations, as described in the Administrative Report [NAMMCO/32/07](#).

The Arctic and Marine Biology Department, the Arctic University of Norway (UiT-AMB) and NAMMCO signed in 2024 a cooperation [agreement](#). The Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea (UiT-NCLOS), and the NAMMCO Secretariat continued in 2024 the contacts and cooperation initiated in 2020.

NAMMCO, NCLOS and AMB organised jointly the 6th Marine Mammal Student Symposium on 19 April 2024, with the theme "*Navigating Arctic Waters: Strengthening ties between Marine Mammal Research, Indigenous Knowledge & Law and Policy Making*" (See also Item 12.3.1).

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Council took note of the update.

Norway asked which kind of feedback was received from the students on the symposium. Desportes said that the feedback was positive, both from the students attending the physical meeting and those that were participating online.

12. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Deputy Secretary El bani Altuna and Intern Noor Elias provided an update on the communication and outreach activities carried out by the Secretariat since Council 31, noting that information regarding the entirety of 2024 could be found in the Administrative Report ([NAMMCO/32/07](#)).

12.1 WEBSITE

The Secretariat continued to have a strong focus on the [website](#) and on updating and enhancing its content, regarding the work of NAMMCO committees, the knowledge on the different species, and the research conducted within the Parties. Keeping the hunting information and regulations up to date is carried out by the CHM. At its 2024 meeting, the SC reviewed and provided comments on the information provided for the following 4 species: bearded seal, ringed seal, white-sided dolphin, and white-beaked dolphin.

12.2 SOCIAL MEDIA

Stories posted on Facebook act as teasers for news, articles, and reports published on the NAMMCO website. They direct the reader to a specific section of the website, thus contributing to enhancing its visitor flow.

The interest in the NAMMCO [Facebook](#) page has increased, reaching 2,969 likes and 3,422 followers. The Facebook “Fun-fact Friday” posts are often complimented for their diverse and interesting content. They were also regularly shared by other organisations working with marine mammals, such as the Society for Marine Mammalogy (worldwide), the American Cetacean Society, the Wild Dolphin Project (BAMA), and Humpbacks and High-rises (Australia). The top three Facebook posts of 2024 (measured as the number of persons reached by the post) ranged between 13,959 and 15,220 persons reached. The most popular post “the announcement of the NAMMCO Internship Programme”, was followed by a ‘Fun-fact Friday’: *“Have you ever wondered how scientists, observers, hunters, and recreational whale watchers recognise different whale species from far away?”*, which was the post with the most interactions, including 73 reactions and 57 shares.

Activities on the NAMMCO [Instagram](#) account, which was launched in September 2022, have increased in 2024 compared to 2023. The account had 495 followers as of 28/02/2025, a 66.1% increase compared to 2023. The posts that reached the most accounts in 2024 were the announcement of the 6th Marine Mammal Student Symposium (60 likes and reach of 481) and the announcement related to the arrival and the departure of the new and former interns.

The [LinkedIn](#) account has 1,736 followers, with 254 new followers since 2023. The top three LinkedIn posts of 2024 (measured as the number of impressions by the post) ranged between 1,400 and 1,000 users. The top post was a video of a MINTAG tag being deployed, which 103 people then clicked to follow a link to the MINTAG website.

12.3 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

12.3.1 Student Symposium

An annual Student Symposium was initiated by the Secretariat in 2019. The objective was to expose to the work of NAMMCO the Tromsø community of postgraduate students working with the marine environment, and in particular marine mammals, and provide them with a forum for sharing and presenting their projects, as well as opportunities for networking. The NAMMCO intern is the lead organiser, under the guidance of the Secretariat. NCLOS and AMB (UiT) agreed to have students cooperating in the organisation. During the pandemic years 2020 and 2021, the symposium was held online, which created an opportunity to include students from all over the world. After COVID restrictions were lifted, it was decided to continue the Symposium as a hybrid event.

In 2024, the Secretariat, NCLOS, and UiT-AMB, with Intern Marina Metic as lead organiser, jointly organised the 6th Marine Mammal Student Symposium on the theme ***“Navigating Arctic Waters: Strengthening ties between Marine Mammal Research, Indigenous Knowledge & Law and Policy Making”***. This 2024 symposium had 73 participants from different countries. Ten student presentations were given; the invited keynote speakers were from NCLOS and UiT-AMB (in person), and Germany (online).

In 2025, the Symposium that will take place on 10 April will have as theme ***“Exploring the Digital Deep: Technologies Shaping Marine Mammal Research and Management”***, with Intern Noor Elias as lead organiser.

12.3.2 Lectures to diverse audiences

The Secretariat gives a number of lectures every year in different national and international fora for high school and university students, scientists, associations, and the general public.

The lectures present NAMMCO, its foundation, vision of conservation, and advisory processes. The focus is to provide food for thought by presenting marine mammal use—and bans thereof—in the perspective of sustainable food systems, blue economy, Sustainable Development Goals, and food security, showing that whaling and sealing, if well-managed, can represent sustainable food systems and contribute to blue economy and blue justice. The perspectives presented are usually new for most audiences and thought-provoking, challenging the prevailingly negative views on whaling and sealing activities. The discussions afterwards are usually lively and interesting. Participants express that the perspectives presented were an eye opener on the issues' complexity, the important question being at the end which food/resource is in a specific place *de facto* the most environmentally friendly; that is, they recognise that while the sustainability of food systems is a global issue, it has local solutions.

An interesting experience in 2024 was the Role Play on Environmental Management, which the Secretariat organised for the UiT-AMB MSc students enrolled in the Top Predator course to demonstrate interactions between science, ethics, and politics in (international) deliberations and decision-making on environmental issues. The students playing the role of the UN Global Sustainability Council were asked to decide on overarching directions for good environmental policy, with a focus on the sustainability of food systems, the question to be addressed at that specific meeting being: Can the harvest of marine mammals be part of sustainable food systems?

12.4 EDUCATIONAL PORTAL GUARDNA

Council 29 (2022) adopted the 3rd Communication Plan [CP3](#) 2023–2024. One of NAMMCO Communication Strategy's target audiences, and specifically that of CP3, is *“Youth, children and educators, member countries' educational networks”*. The Secretariat developed communication events relevant to CP3, including developing the concept of and applying for funding for an educational project on marine mammals and the marine environment. The educational project is presently centred around one large interregional project: *GUARDNA—Guardians of the North Atlantic: Looking after our Seas to Conserve Marine Mammals*, an educational portal that will be made freely available on the NAMMCO website for schools and youth ([NAMMCO/32/16](#)).

GUARDNA is a three-year project (2023–2026) aiming to educate and contribute to the empowerment of the younger generation (7- to 20-year-old children and young adults), bringing the North Atlantic into the classroom and the students out into the North Atlantic. GUARDNA intends to develop a marine portal (see Figure 3) with appealing and playful educational materials, both information and indoor and outdoor activities, aiming to spark curiosity and interest of the youngest in ocean sustainability, using marine mammals as emissaries for the entire marine ecosystem, with the understanding that protecting/conserving marine mammals implies conserving their habitat, i.e., the marine environment.

GUARDNA has partners from the four NAMMCO Member countries and Denmark and has so far received funding, besides NAMMCO, from Novo Nordisk (with the Greenland Institute of Learning as project leader for that part), and the Working Group for Fisheries (AG-Fisk) under the Nordic

Committee of Senior Officials for Fisheries and Aquaculture; applications have also been submitted to other funding sources. To accomplish the objectives of the GUARDNA project, the NAMMCO Secretariat has established communication with schools, universities, science, and environmental organisations, as well as science communication and education service centres.

The educational materials are centred around Information Cards, which deliver in a more concise and accessible format the information contained on the NAMMCO website about marine mammal species in the North Atlantic, the threats they face, users (hunters, fishers, tourists, scientists, managers, etc.) and utilisation (food, culture, tourism, etc.). Activity Cards, linked to the Information Cards, are developed that feature cross-sectorial hands-on activities, as well as activities related to the MINTAG and NASS projects. The project will also provide accompanying and supporting resources, including lesson plan suggestions, to facilitate effective integration of the materials into the curriculum. GUARDNA also aims to foster a network of schools spanning various regions and countries, through two sets of workshops: national workshops of teachers in 2025/2026, and a final workshop in Autumn 2026 with representatives from all the five countries. The educational portal will be translated into the languages of the NAMMCO Countries, including Northern Sami, as well as Danish.

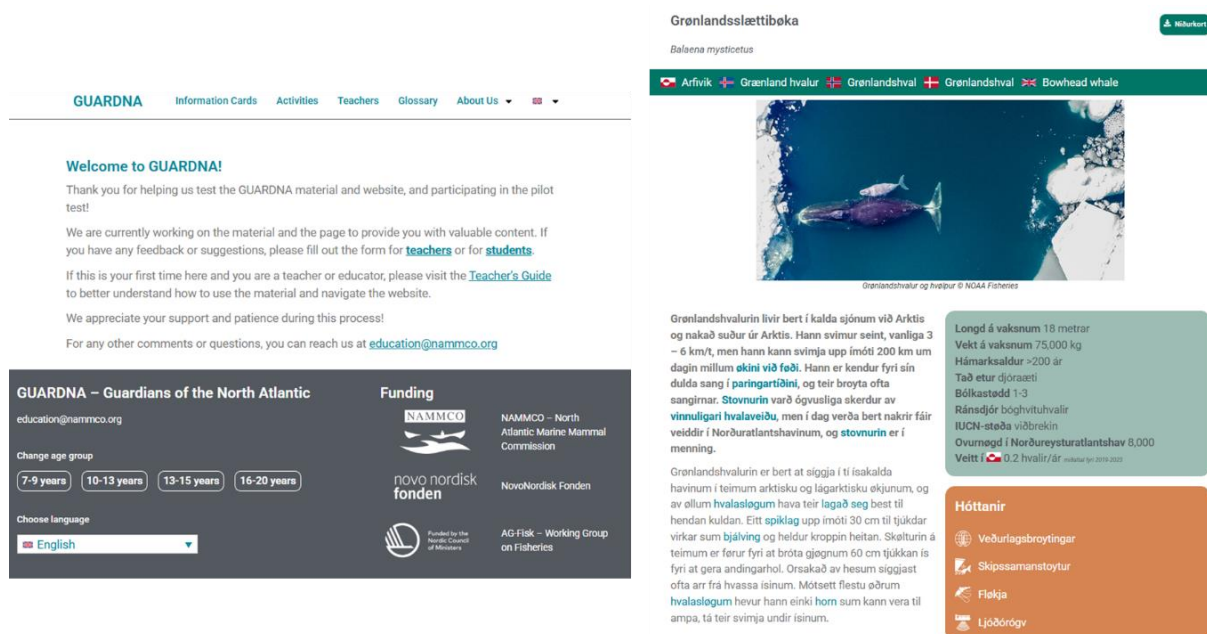


Figure 3. Draft GUARDNA website. Left photo: home page. Right photo: bowhead whale page in Faroese.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Norway, seconded by the other delegations, found the project very interesting, the development very nice and attractive and complimented the work already done, not least the obtention of the funding.

12.5 SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Volume 13 of the NAMMCO Scientific Publications series was finalised in December 2024. It continued the open call of the previous volume, namely “Marine Mammals in the North Atlantic”: *El bani Altuna, N. and Garagouni, G. (eds) Marine Mammals in the North Atlantic (II). NAMMCO Scientific Publications, 13.* <https://doi.org/10.7557/3.13>.

Volume 14 welcomed submissions related to the subject of “Anthropogenic Impacts on Marine Mammals”. Because of a slow pace of submission, the call for manuscripts was extended until late April 2025.

12.6 OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ON ITEM 12

Ryeng expressed that she was impressed by the communication and outreach work carried out by the Secretariat.

Reid asked what the overarching goal of the NAMMCO outreach work was. Desportes answered that the goal was to make NAMMCO much more visible as an organisation, and an active one, and to convey the message that the views on whaling and sealing issues could not be black and white, there were many nuances, and the use of marine mammals represents elements of food security in many areas of the world.

13. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

The Chair noted that NAMMCO has a principle of rotation of chairship between countries. Iceland became Chair at the 2023 Council Meeting and had now completed its two-year term.

Iceland proposed the Faroese and Nolsøe as Chair of the Council for the next two years. Norway proposed Greenland and Jessen as Vice-Chair. Both accepted and were duly elected and welcomed with applause. Both thanked the Parties for their confidence.

Norway thanked the previous Chair (until October 2024), Jón Prándur Stefánsson, for the very good work he did during his Chairship and asked that Iceland bring him the greetings of the Commission. The Faroe Islands concurred and thanked the outgoing Chair, Ólafsdóttir, for having efficiently stepped in on short notice.

Nolsøe, the incoming Chair, expressed that he was looking forward to chairing the Commission and maintaining close contacts with all members and the Secretariat, and to contributing to constructive and fruitful discussions and progress.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

15. CLOSING PROCEDURES

15.1 PRESS RELEASE

A press release summarising the main issues of the 2025 Council Meeting was **adopted** by the Council (Appendix 7: Press Release, and [web portal](#)).

15.2 NEXT MEETING

The next Annual Meeting, NAMMCO 33, including the meetings of the Management Committees and the Council, will be hosted by Greenland, in Nuuk, in week 12 (16–20 March 2026). Precise dates will be announced in due time.

The Chair thanked all the delegates and observers for a constructive and productive meeting. On behalf of all participants, she thanked the Secretariat staff for their hard work in preparing for the meeting and the workshop, and for their dedicated and precious support and energy during the meeting. The participants thanked the Chair for her able chairing.

The Chair declared the meeting closed.

The report of the 32nd Council Meeting of NAMMCO was **adopted** by correspondence on 14 May 2025 at 17:00.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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APPENDIX 2: AGENDA

Agenda Items	Document Reference
1. Opening Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Welcome address by the Chair 1.2 Admission of observers 1.3 Opening statements 1.4 Adoption of agenda 1.5 Meeting arrangements 1.6 Invited presentation by Vincent Reid, Advisor to the Barrouallie Whalers Project, St Vincent and the Grenadines: “The history, cultural, social, and subsistence value of whaling in SVG” 1.7 Report from the marine mammal welfare workshop, MMWWS 2025 	NAMMCO/32/01, 02, 03, 17
2. Annual Progress Reports	APR reports
3. Financial and Administrative issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Report from the Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) 3.2 Audited accounts 2023 3.3 Anticipated expenses 2025, draft budget 2026 and forecast budget 2027 3.4 Administrative report 2024 3.5 Other business 	NAMMCO/32/04, 05, 06, 07
4. Scientific Committee (SC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Report of the Scientific Committee 4.2 Adoption of priorities and work plan 2025-2027 4.3 Other business 	NAMMCO/32/08
5. North Atlantic Sightings Survey - NASS 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Update on survey and effort 5.2 Planning and timeline for data analysis and review 	NAMMCO/32/14
6. MINTAG Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1 Report of the MINTAG Steering Group 6.2 Financial update 	NAMMCO/32/15
7. Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Report of the Committee on Hunting Methods 7.2 Adoption of priorities and work plan 2025-2027 7.3 Other business 	NAMMCO/32/09
8. Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1 Report of the Committee on Inspection and Observation 8.2 Observation activities in 2026 8.3 Adoption of priorities and work plan 2025-2027 8.4 Other business 	NAMMCO/32/10

9. Management Committees (MCs) 9.1 Proposals for Conservation and Management 9.2 Recommendations for scientific research 9.3 Requests for Advice from the Scientific Committee 9.4 Other business	NAMMCO/32/12, 13, FI01, FI02, FI03, MC05, MC06
10. Environmental Questions & Ecosystem Approach to management	
11. External Relations 11.1 Cooperation with non-member countries 11.2 Cooperation with inter- and non-governmental organisations 11.3 Other business	NAMMCO/32/07
12. Communication and Outreach 12.1 Website 12.2 Social media 12.3 Outreach activities 12.4 Educational portal GUARDNA 12.5 Scientific publications (Vol. 13 and 14) 12.6 Other business	NAMMCO/32/07, 16
13. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	
14. Any other business	
15. Closing procedures 15.1 Press release 15.2 Next meeting	NAMMCO/32/11

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Reference	Title	Agenda Item
NAMMCO/32/01	List of participants	1
NAMMCO/32/02	Annotated draft agenda	1.4
NAMMCO/32/03	List of documents	All
NAMMCO/32/04	Report of the Finance and Administration Committee	3.1
NAMMCO/32/05	Audited accounts 2024	3.2
NAMMCO/32/06	Budget and expected account 2025, draft budget 2026, forecast budget 2027	3.3
NAMMCO/32/07	Administrative Report 2024	3.4, 11, 12
NAMMCO/32/08	Report of the Scientific Committee	4
NAMMCO/32/09	Report of the Committee on Hunting Methods	7
NAMMCO/32/10	Report of the Committee on Inspection and Observation	8
NAMMCO/32/11	Press release	15.1
NAMMCO/32/12	MCs' Decisions on SC/31 Recommendations to Parties for Conservation and Management and Research	9.1, 9.2
NAMMCO/32/13	MCs' Proposals for new or modified Requests for Advice from the SC	9.3
NAMMCO/32/14	Report on the North Atlantic Survey of Selected Cetaceans NASS-2024	5
NAMMCO/32/15	Update on the MINTAG project	6
NAMMCO/32/16	Report on NAMMCO's educational project	12.4
NAMMCO/32/17	Preliminary report from MMWWS 2025	1.7

For Information Documents		
NAMMCO/32/MC05	List of Proposals for Conservation and Management and Recommendations for Research generated by the MCs at their 2024 meeting, with responses from the Parties	9
NAMMCO/32/MC06	List of Active Requests from the NAMMCO Council to the Scientific Committee, with responses from the Scientific Committee	9
NAMMCO/32/FI01	Report of the Management Committee of Cetaceans	9
NAMMCO/32/FI02	Report of the Management Committee for Seals and Walrus	9
NAMMCO/32/FI03	Report of the Joint Meeting of the Management Committees	9
Annual Progress Reports		
NAMMCO/32/NPR/FO-2024	National Progress Report Faroe Islands – 2024	2
NAMMCO/32/NPR/GL-2024	National Progress Report Greenland – 2024	2
NAMMCO/32/NPR/IS-2024	National Progress Report Iceland – 2024	2
NAMMCO/32/NPR/NO-2024	National Progress Report Norway – 2024	2
NAMMCO/32/Database	NAMMCO Catches, by-catches & strandings up to and including 2024 – file <i>not available, as the submitted data are incomplete or not validated in order to follow the request for clarification of some of the fields made by the Committee on Hunting Methods.</i>	2
NAMMCO/32/NPR/JP-2023-24	Japan Progress Report on Large Cetaceans – April 2023-March 2024	2
NAMMCO/32/NPR/JP-2022-23	Japan Progress Report on Small Cetaceans – April 2022-March 2023	2
NAMMCO/32/APR/MA-2024	Makivvik Corporation Annual Progress Reports – 2024	2

APPENDIX 4: OPENING STATEMENTS

OPENING STATEMENT FROM THE FAROE ISLANDS

Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates and Observers - Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to attend the annual meeting of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission and to be back in the beautiful and captivating Tromsø, home to our organization's secretariat.

On behalf of the Faroese delegation, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Secretary General and the Secretariat for their excellent work - not only in organizing this annual meeting, but also for your ongoing efforts in managing the daily operations and tasks of the organization.

We have been looking forward to this annual meeting. The past year since our last annual meeting has been both eventful and exciting, with last summer's NASS whale surveys standing out as a key highlight. From the Faroese side, we look forward to reviewing the results once they become available.

For decades, the recurring whale surveys have been a flagship of our collaboration, demonstrating NAMMCO's leadership in the study of marine mammals and our ongoing commitment to advancing the organization's mission and vision.

Whaling has been an integral part of life in the Faroe Islands for over a thousand years and continues to be a part of our way of life and food culture. The hunting of marine mammals is a heritage we share not only with our fellow NAMMCO member countries, but also with people and communities around the world.

The right of coastal people to hunt and utilize marine mammal resources is a fundamental founding principle of NAMMCO. This right comes with the responsibility to ensure that such hunting is sustainable and carried out responsibly, with due regard for killing efficiency, hunter safety, and animal welfare.

In this spirit, NAMMCO, in collaboration with the Fisheries Agency of Japan, held the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop yesterday with participant from the NAMMCO member countries and Japan, Nunavut, Nunavik, Finland, Åland, Sweden and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. It was both interesting and inspiring to experience hunters, managers, officials, veterinarians and other experts come together to present marine mammal hunting practices from different parts of the world and to discuss how to collaborate on developing hunting methods.

The spinal lance, used in the Faroe Islands, is a shining example of how, in collaboration with NAMMCO's Hunting Committee, a hunting tool has been developed and successfully implemented into a whaling practice that has deep, centuries-old roots in our society.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants for their valuable contributions, which helped make the workshop a truly remarkable event.

Inspired by yesterday's workshop, I am looking forward with great anticipation to a productive and meaningful annual meeting.

Thank you!

OPENING STATEMENT FROM GREENLAND

Mrs Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, on behalf of the Greenlandic delegation, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the NAMMCO Secretariat for all their preparation in organising both the workshop yesterday and the annual meeting, and the Secretariat for hosting the 32nd annual meeting of our organisation. It is always a pleasure to be here in beautiful Tromsø.

I would like to repeat what Greenland said last year in our opening statement; that NAMMCO has succeeded in its work on animal welfare issues. The workshop yesterday is the latest evidence for that. However, NAMMCO is facing a generation shift in all levels. Also, when it comes to staff, committee members, for instance in the Committee on Hunting Methods. Therefore, we must take care of the challenges related to the generation shift. Without professionalism and dedication, we will not accomplish the important work of hunters and NAMMCO.

NAMMCO is a North Atlantic organization that has grown up with its work. The organization is also becoming more demanding when we come to administration on data for instance catch data, including struck-and-lost, Time to Death and other information. We should avoid too much administration and keep the administration balanced. However, Greenland will do our best to accommodate requests.

We are proud to inform that we have introduced a digital catch reporting system that will include marine mammals. It will ease the work of collection of data.

Greenland is an arctic society very dependent on marine mammals, as can be seen on the numbers of targeted marine mammals. We have both quota-management and non-quota system, but clear requirement of reporting the catches. This complies with the adopted policy on self-sufficiency from our own local resources, to minimize the import of food, and in that way to avoid emissions of house gases.

The current political situation in our country is that there is no quorum in the temporary government – after the March 11th Parliamentary election, the Naalakkersuisut is in an interim function. The outcome of the NAMMCO meeting will be presented for a completely new Government when a new coalition has been set.

However, we hope for a positive and constructive meeting.

Qujanaq – Thank you.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM ICELAND

Distinguished Chair, Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Icelandic delegation, to greet you all here today and thank Norway for welcoming us to the beautiful city of Tromsø. We would also like to thank the Secretariat for the work in preparing this meeting and we are looking forward to working together this week.

Dear all, the foundation for our joint mission here at NAMMCO is the science. Iceland is fully committed to this foundation and will continue to put emphasis on our scientific work in its engagement within NAMMCO. The valuable knowledge derived from the work of NAMMCO has served to support how we address the wide range of issues related to our cooperation on conservation, management and study of marine mammals in the North Atlantic.

To carry out this work we continue to rely on the individuals involved, as well as their respective organisations to lay the groundwork for which the decisions of NAMMCO are based on. This also includes cooperation with external parties. Iceland would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved.

We have important work ahead of us at this annual meeting and were off to a good start yesterday with our workshop on Animal Welfare in the Context of Marine Mammal Hunting. We are also looking forward to reviewing the work of our scientific colleagues as well as continued discussion on our work to ensure appropriate inspection and observation of hunts in our areas.

We look forward to a constructive debate with our NAMMCO partners and our joint work to consider management procedures which take into account the relationship between marine mammals and other marine living resources. We should never forget our basis in the general principle of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources as reflected in international law and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Madam Chair thank you for this opportunity to address the annual meeting on behalf of Iceland.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM NORWAY

Ladies and Gentlemen, friends of NAMMCO. It is a great pleasure to see you all here in springy Tromsø.

As usual we have a full agenda in front of us, indeed demonstrating that this organization is alive and kicking. Yesterday we also experienced a most constructive seminar focusing on the need to provide for animal welfare when hunting for marine mammals. Although not a formal part of the Council meeting, the focus and content of this seminar was a living proof of the concern that should be a natural part of being a hunter for marine mammals. As this seminar was arranged in the margins of the Council it emphasizes the consciousness of the NAMMCO family when it comes to the issue of animal welfare. From a Norwegian perspective we indeed welcome a strengthened focus on animal welfare also with regard to marine mammals. In general, the issue of animal welfare has proven to be a concern of the public opinion, and as such underlined the need for the authorities to continue to have a strong focus on the subject.

Last September there was time for another meeting of the IWC, this time in Lima, Peru. Norway considers that the legitimacy of the IWC is dependent upon its ability to balance its mandate with the diverse interests of its member states. However, this does not seem to be the case. Since the adoption of the Moratorium in 1982, the work of the IWC has been an example of how an international organization shall not work. As a result of the decisions made in Lima, the IWC seems to be digging deeper into a deadlock that has haunted the organization for more than four decades and has surely prevented further development of the organization to happen. Since 1982, the IWC has neglected to fulfil the second part of its mandate; the management of the whale stocks. Instead, the IWC has entirely focused on the other pillar of its mandate; conservation of whale stocks.

NAMMCO has since it was established in 1992 proved to be a completely different organization. Yes, the very purpose of the organization is different, but I also have in mind that NAMMCO operates with a eye on the future and the challenges ahead of us while IWC are stuck with their gaze fixed on the past.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I think the agenda for the next couple of days will remind us that there is a need for sustainable use of marine resources if we shall meet the need of proteins for a rapidly growing population on this planet, and that marine mammals should have a pivotal role to play in that regard.

I wish all participants a successful meeting.

Thank you.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM JAPAN

First of all, Japan would like to express its sincere respect to the Government of Norway for hosting the NAMMCO Council meeting with great hospitality and efficiency. NAMMCO has made remarkable achievements in the conservation and management of marine mammals since its establishment in 1992, and we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all NAMMCO Members for their significant contributions over the past three decades. It is an honor for us to attend this Council meeting and we stand ready to contribute to discussions as an observer.

Even after its withdrawal from the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) in 2019, Japan remains steadfast in its commitment to international cooperation for the proper management of cetaceans, working with relevant international organizations, including NAMMCO and IWC. Japan will continue to make every effort to reaffirm the unity of countries that support the sustainable use of marine living resources. As part of these efforts, this year, Japan plans to host the “Meeting on Sustainable Use of Aquatic Living Resources” in Tokyo around the end of September.

Japan will not stop its efforts to enhance collaboration with NAMMCO and its Members in order to further strengthen the science-based approach.

In this context, before anything else, Japan remains committed to continuing its scientific and financial contributions to the MINTAG Project, which aims to develop new satellite tags for fast-swimming rorquals and pilot whales.

Furthermore, at the 31st Meeting of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee held this year, it was decided that NAMMCO and Japan would continue collaboration on the research project which aims to elucidate factors which cause annual changes in the distribution and the feeding ecology of North Pacific common minke whales. Discussions also covered comparisons between the situation of this species in the North Atlantic and that in the North Pacific. It is expected that such scientific collaborations contribute to the proper management of marine living resources both in the North Atlantic and in the North Pacific. In 2024, an international workshop on the use of genetic data for the identification of whale stocks was organized by the Institute of Cetacean Research in Taiji, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan. Participants included geneticists from Norway and Iceland, and other members of the NAMMCO Genetics Working Group.

Our cooperation doesn't stop there. Yesterday, NAMMCO and the Fisheries Agency of Japan co-organized the “Animal Welfare Workshop in the context of marine mammal hunting.”

Japan would like to continue expanding its cooperation with NAMMCO beyond scientific areas to broader communication, and specific joint projects. Through these initiatives, we hope that NAMMCO's knowledge and best practices will serve the global community beyond a single region.

Finally, Japan would like to reiterate its strong belief that the collaboration between NAMMCO and Japan be a driving force in international fora to promote conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources based on scientific evidence.

Thank you.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Honourable Chair, Distinguished Delegates and Observers - Ladies and Gentlemen

Greetings and salutations from government and people of the multi-island country of **St Vincent and the Grenadines**. Special greeting from the whalers of Bequia and Barrouallie and our IWC commissioner Mr Edwin Snagg.

We are extremely thankful for the opportunity to be at this meeting as an observer. Gracious thank you to the Florida International University for facilitating this outcome and Heartfelt thank you to the NAMMCO secretariat for extending the invitation to be here and for ensuring the entire process of attendance ran smoothly.

St Vincent and the Grenadines find itself in the unique position of being the largest hunters of whales and other small cetaceans in the Caribbean region. Nevertheless, our hunting activity can only be described as aboriginal subsistence whaling. No matter its perceived commercial nature, it remains the main source of livelihood for large grouping of people, Vincentian.

The Barrouallie Whalers Project (BWP) seeks to preserve the oral tradition of the Barrouallie whaling heritage and promote sustainable whaling. We are very happy that our whalers understand and whole heartedly embrace the approaches to sustainability even as we acknowledge the importance of food security. Barrouallie Whalers have, over the last 20yrs gladly participated in scientific research in marine food quality, cetacean genetics, population abundance estimates and identification surveys.

This is a first for St Vincent and the Grenadine at this meeting. We are happy to be a part of this exercise and look forward to the collaboration, the sharing of information, knowledge and experience as we collectively promote sustainable hunting and the welfare of marine mammal.

Again, thank you for inviting us to this important function.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM MAKIVIK

On behalf of the Inuit of Nunavik, Makivik would like to extend its gratitude to Tromsø and the NAMMCO Secretariat for hosting the 32nd meeting and allowing us to participate as observers.

Marine mammals know no borders. Their wellbeing, and therefore our own, demands collaborative stewardship. This is why Makivik values the NAMMCO forum as it represents an essential opportunity to share knowledge and address issues concerning the sustainable use of marine mammals which are central to Nunavimmiut food security, culture and wellbeing. Our harvesting rights, enshrined our Land Claims Agreements, are inextricably linked to the health of the marine ecosystems and the mammals inhabiting them. We stand firm in our belief that effective wildlife management must be rooted in both Inuit knowledge and Western science and implemented with profound respect for the cultural practices of those who depend on these resources.

Nakurmiik, thank you, merci.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM NUNAVUT TUNNGAVIK INCORPORATED

Thank you for the opportunity to be here, and I would like to thank NAMMCO for supporting our delegation to travel to beautiful Tromsø at the occasion of the MMWWS 2025.

I would like to thank also my two colleagues here to come and doing a presentation yesterday on Animal Welfare.

Nunavut relies heavily on marine mammals, and we work with science and traditional knowledge. Food insecurity is great concern in Nunavut.

Canada is not part of NAMMCO, and we are currently in election mode till April 2, 2025. We (NTI), will continue to push Canada to look into becoming member to NAMMCO.

Again, we feel that we are in a friendly group, and we participated in the workshop.

Thank you.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM ARCTIC MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME (AMAP)

Madam Chair, Distinguished representatives of NAMMCO member countries and observers

I am honoured to address this assembly on behalf of the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme. AMAP is one of six working groups that operate under the direction of the Arctic Council, providing reliable and sufficient information on the status of, and threats to, the Arctic environment. Our mandate focuses on delivering sound science-based information for use in policy- and decision-making, with assessment activities that are internationally coordinated, subject to rigorous peer-review, and utilize the most up-to-date results from both monitoring and research.

AMAP's geographical coverage extends from the High Arctic to the sub-Arctic areas of Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and the United States, as well as their associated marine areas. This comprehensive coverage includes significant portions of the North Atlantic that overlap with NAMMCO's areas of interest and jurisdiction.

Our organization is committed to supporting Arctic governments and Indigenous Peoples in their efforts to implement remedial and preventive actions relating to contaminants and the adverse effects of climate change. This mission complements NAMMCO's goals of conservation, management, and sustainable use of marine mammals in the North Atlantic.

In conclusion, AMAP stands ready to support NAMMCO's mission through our scientific monitoring and assessment work. The environmental changes occurring in the Arctic present both challenges and opportunities for marine mammal conservation and the communities that depend on these resources. By combining AMAP's environmental monitoring expertise with NAMMCO's focus on marine mammal management, we can develop more robust, integrated approaches to ensuring both healthy marine mammal populations and thriving human communities in the North Atlantic region.

We look forward to exploring ways to strengthen our cooperation and to ensure that the best available science informs decisions affecting marine mammals and the people of the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the Commission.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION

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 69th meeting of the Commission in September 2024. A very important outcome was the successful renewal of the Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling quota at IWC69, 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 IWC69 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 IWC69 we welcomed the NAMMCO Secretary General 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 cetacean populations are part of any decision making. Bycatch is the greatest single threat to cetaceans and both NAMMCO's Working Group on Bycatch and IWC's Bycatch Mitigation Initiative are working with the fisheries sector to expand efforts to monitor and mitigate bycatch.

My IWC colleagues and I look forward to the discussions over the next two days. I take the opportunity to thank NAMMCO members for their willingness to engage with the IWC and provide valuable data, especially on catches. I look forward to continued and increased cooperation in our shared areas of interest and I wish you a successful meeting.

Thank you Chair.

OPENING STATEMENT FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF FISHERS AND HUNTERS IN GREENLAND (KNAPK)

KNAPK will hereby state the hunters' own observations and experiences in 2024 and 2025 for use at NAMMCO's annual meeting:

The food chain of marine mammals

The food chain of marine mammals and fish in the Arctic Sea areas is also affected by global warming and it is undergoing a major change, we can feel and experience this more and more in Greenland. The fishermen tell us that due to global warming and due to changes in sea temperature, more and more narwhals and belugas are observed IN ALL GREENLAND'S COASTS, and there are even so many in these years in our northern part of the country that this has become a big problem for halibut fishermen in the summer and autumn and it is a problem for the income of the fishermen. In Qaanaaq's fjord there is no halibut fishing in the summer, as there are so many narwhals and belugas, and in the northern Upernavik area there are so many narwhals all year round that it is a problem for the fishery. This is because when the whales come to the northern part of our country to the fishing grounds, for example to Uummannaq and Disko Bay, the halibut disappear, as they move and stay at depths of about 700-1100 meters.

Between Greenland and Canada in Baffin Bay, halibut fishing is a way of life for many fishermen. Scientists have reported that if adult female narwhals feed on halibut up to 50 percent, then it is estimated that the narwhals eat about 500,000 tons annually. If you also include the belugas, then you can expect that about 1,000,000 tons of halibut are eaten by belugas and narwhals. We must also remember that large whales also eat lots of fish - such as capelin and cod and other fish species on

These conditions must be understood by scientists who are advisors and decision-makers such as Naalakkersuisut and from the EU side. Larger whales have also become a major problem for fisheries.

White whales

White whales on the west coast of Greenland, which come from north to south, are increasing in number according to the fishermen. In recent years, the number observed from Sisimiut to the south has increased according to the fishermen, even increasing numbers are also seen around Cape Farewell in southern Greenland. In recent years, when there is also cod fishing in South Greenland, it is also a nuisance that is caught in the bottom nets. Just as larger whales (humpback whales) have also begun to destroy the bottom nets.

In East Greenland, more and more belugas are observed, which are noticed every year. In the autumn of 2023-24, around Tasiilaq in the village of Kuummiut, a lot of belugas were seen swimming past the village, swimming along the east coast of Greenland to the north and there were so many of them that they swam past the village all afternoon without interruption.

Also in the autumn of 2024, the hunters in the Ittoqqortoormiit fjord saw an unprecedented number of whales for the first time. They also caught their small quota in just one day.

Therefore, hunters living on the east coast of Greenland want fixed annual quotas that they can catch.

Narwhals

The number of narwhals is growing throughout Greenland, both on the west and east coasts. They are so numerous that narwhals in the northern part of Greenland have become a major problem in fisheries, and it has become so that in all fishing locations all year round there have been so many that there are no more halibut to catch, and many narwhals and belugas are accidentally caught in fishing nets, and of those caught in the nets, they are registered.

On the west coast of Greenland, narwhals are seen more and more often all year round, although this was not the case in the past. In 2023 and 2024, there will be an unprecedented number of narwhals in the summer at the Qaanaaq area and at the Upernavik area, and these have been filmed by some citizens and can be seen on YouTube.

In the spring of April 2025, the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources will begin to examine the DNA composition of narwhals and the people who will conduct the study in Qaanaaq and its settlements will do so in cooperation with the hunters, who are our members. We, from KNAPK, are grateful that such a study is being conducted, because hunters in the Qaanaaq area say that there are 3 different species of narwhal. If the DNA study shows that there are 3 different species, then we in KNAPK will be satisfied with that, and that in the Qaanaaq area in Melville Bay and at Upernavik the whale quota is increased, because there are a lot of narwhal and beluga whales in our country.

From KNAPK's side, we have continued to demand from Naalakkersuisut that a new quota system be implemented in Greenland, where quotas for narwhals are set for each area. This is desired because the supply of meat to the population as a whole must be adjusted accordingly.

Killer Whales

KNAPK wants more information about the number of killer whales in the North Atlantic? The extent of killer whales' food intake of beluga and narwhals needs to be investigated in more details.

To what extent do killer whales pose a danger to beluga and/or narwhals? What are the thoughts on reducing the number of killer whales in the North Atlantic? What do the NAMMCO member countries think about the problem?

Management Areas

East Greenland remains an area where no advice is given. Instead, the Institute of Nature has adopted a policy of not advising on quotas for narwhals and belugas. What is the reason for East Greenland remaining a moratorium?

Human Rights

Living resources in East Greenland must benefit fishers and hunters. This is the consideration of human rights regarding self-sufficiency, the right to a profession and the right to a decent life. At the same time, there are cultural considerations where people must be prioritized over animals.

Naalakkersuisut suppresses Inughuit in North Greenland and Livit in East Greenland, because they do not receive quotas for narwhals, belugas, walrus and polar bears to the extent that is needed.

Sustainability must be ensured. However, consideration of the human rights of citizens should be a higher priority in the management of living resources.

KNAPK believes that NAMMCO should take greater account of hunters when allocating quotas, and consideration of the hunters right to a profession, food and earnings as well as a decent life should be given higher weight than consideration of living resources. Therefore, biological and scientific advice must be designed to benefit the users.

Sustainability

The hunters and fishers have never caught or overfished living resources more than needed, because there is an ingrained DNA in the hunters' mentality that the exploitation of living resources must be based on a sustainable basis.

Long before the concept of sustainable exploitation became popular in the mid-1980's, the hunters in the Thule District have had regulations on restrictions on catches, hunting periods and restrictions on the number of animals caught in relation to the animals' reproduction. Thus, the Thule Laws of 1917 have had regulations on the protection of living resources, which include restrictions on the use of motorized vessels and a ban on disturbing marine mammals, birds and land animals in specific areas during parts of the year.

It can safely be said that Greenland has managed living resources based on sustainability long before animal protection organizations, environmental organizations or scientists came up with the idea of sustainability. In Greenland's case, it was the Thule Hunters' Council that introduced the principles of protecting living resources with restrictions on catches, hunting periods and allocation of special breeding grounds.

A version of KNAPK statement in Greenlandic and Danish can be found on the [NAMMCO website](#).

OPENING STATEMENT FROM THE WORLD CONSERVATION TRUST (IWMC)

Chair, distinguished delegates,

IWMC is pleased to address this meeting of the NAMMCO Council, where the importance of sustainable use and science-based conservation remains paramount. Considering the rapidly changing global circumstances, it is imperative that we reaffirm the role of marine mammals in food security and the principles underpinning their sustainable harvest.

The geopolitical landscape has shifted dramatically in recent years, with significant consequences for global food security. The ongoing crises in the World have starkly demonstrated how fragile international food supply chains can be. It affects availability and affordability, particularly in regions already vulnerable to food insecurity. Against this backdrop, the sustainable harvest of marine resources, including whales and dolphins, remains an essential means of ensuring resilient, locally sourced nutrition for coastal and Indigenous communities.

Moreover, the targeted species within NAMMCO member states' waters are not endangered. They are harvested under strict quotas, based on the best available scientific knowledge and in accordance with robust monitoring and management systems. It is neither scientifically justified nor ethically consistent to consider marine mammals separately from other species that are sustainably used for

food. The arbitrary distinction often made between cetaceans and other wild or domesticated food sources lacks an ecological or rational basis.

Crucially, hunting communities play a fundamental role in our understanding of marine ecosystems. Their knowledge accumulated over generations, provides invaluable insights into ecosystem dynamics, species distributions, and environmental changes—insights that often precede scientific discovery. In the face of global climate change, where marine ecosystems are experiencing rapid transformations, sidelining, or dismissing this knowledge would not only be a cultural loss but also a significant scientific and ecological setback. Sustainable hunting ensures that this expertise remains intact, fostering a deeper understanding of the shifting marine environment.

Scientific knowledge on whales continues to expand, enhancing our understanding of their ecological roles. It has been suggested that whales function as ‘carbon storage masters’ narrative increasingly used to argue against sustainable use. However, recent research, including a 2023 study published in *Frontiers in Marine Science*, raises critical questions about these claims. A position confirmed in a document authored by Professor Joji Morishita, circulated at IWC69. Policy decisions must be guided by comprehensive, balanced research rather than selective interpretations designed to fit ideological positions.

NAMMCO has long championed a science-based, sustainable approach to marine mammal management—one that acknowledges the importance of food security, respects the knowledge of hunters, and integrates the latest scientific understanding. IWMC stands firmly in support of these principles, and we support the Council to continue defending the right to sustainable use, ensuring that policies remain rooted in facts, not sentiment, and in equity, not exclusion.

Thank you.

APPENDIX 5A: AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2024

Income	
Contributions	5,177,540
Other project fundings	8,438,717
TOTAL INCOME	13,616,257
Expenditure	
Staff related costs	3,187,713
Internship	151,475
Staff travel and subsistence	264,504
Meetings	145,774
Rent of premises	353,598
Office supply	158,125
Communication & Outreach	15,244
Accounts & auditing	351,479
Observation scheme	8,031
Committee on Hunting Methods	0
Committee on Inspection and Observation	0
Scientific Committee	119,071
Other expenses	36,701
NASS	7,104,865
MINTAG	1,122,668
Educational project	211,186
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13,230,434
OPERATING RESULT	385,823
Financial revenue (interest)	104,768
Financial costs	- 300
RESULT TO RESERVE	- 490,291
BALANCE	
Assets	
Outstanding claims	435,424
Claim employee	0
Bank deposits	9,743,068
TOTAL ASSETS	10,178,492
Equity	
General Reserve	911,515
Restricted Reserve	600,000
Result	490,294
TOTAL EQUITY	2,001,809
Liabilities	
Japanese Fundings	501,029
MINTAG project	4,192,569
NASS project	2,490,135
Educational project	834,712
Creditors	68,455
Various liabilities	89,784
TOTAL LIABILITIES	8,176,683
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	10,178,492

APPENDIX 5B: BUDGET 2024 (NAMMCO 30) AND ACCOUNTS 2024

NAMMCO BUDGET AND ACCOUNTS 2024

	Budget 2024 (CL30)	Reallocation 2024 by CL31	Accounts 2024
Income // Contributions			
Contributions Faroes	640,897	640,897	640,897
Contributions Greenland	640,897	640,897	640,847
Contributions Iceland	1,281,795	1,281,795	1,281,795
Contributions Norway	2,567,111	2,567,111	2,567,111
NORA			46,890
Income // Contributions	5,130,700	5,130,700	5,177,540
Expenditure			
Staff related costs	3,032,013	3,086,834	3,079,229
Internship	220,400	189,300	151,475
Staff travel and subsistence	270,000	270,000	256,475
Meetings	205,000	200,000	155,825
Office rent	334,969	295,917	353,598
Office supply	189,000	156,300	158,125
Communication and outreach	150,000	75,000	15,251
Accounts and auditing	210,000	250,000	351,479
Observation Scheme	0	60,000	8,031
Committee for Hunting Methods	200,000	65,000	0
Scientific Committee	222,000	150,000	119,071
WG User knowledge	40,000	40,000	0
Capacity building	40,000	20,000	0
Other expenses	50,000	75,000	37,001
NASS	150,000	150,000	150,000
NASS project overheads - Expected		-495,000	
NASS project overheads - Actual			
MINTAG	180,000	180,000	180,000
Total expenditure	5,493,382	4,768,352	5,015,560
OPERATING RESULT	-362,682	362,348	161,980
Total Reserve 01.01	1,094,178	1,253,211	1,253,211
Transfer to/from general reserve	-362,682	362,348	161,980
New Total Reserve 31.12	731,496	1,615,559	1,415,190

APPENDIX 6: BUDGET AND ANTICIPATED RESULTS 2025, BUDGET 2026, DRAFT BUDGET 2027

	Budget 2025 (CL 31)	Anticipated Result 2025 (with result 2024 & reallocation CL 32)	Draft Budget 2026 (CL 31)	Budget 2026 (CL 32)	Draft Budget 2027 (CL 32)
Income // Contributions					
Contributions Faroes	653,715	653,715	666,789	666,789	680,125
Contributions Greenland	653,715	653,715	666,789	666,789	680,125
Contributions Iceland	1,307,431	1,307,431	1,333,580	1,333,580	1,360,251
Contributions Norway	2,618,453	2,618,453	2,670,822	2,670,822	2,724,239
Income // Contributions	5,233,314	5,233,314	5,337,980	5,337,980	5,444,740
Expenditure					
Staff related costs	3,281,736	3,302,905	3,306,210	3,418,192	3,080,679
Internship	196,500	193,350	219,600	200,681	208,709
Staff travel and subsistence	130,000	263,000	210,000	412,000	312,160
Meetings	230,000	279,600	200,000	208,000	220,000
Office rent	310,712	364,206	326,248	375,132	386,000
Office supply	159,426	162,869	162,615	168,000	170,000
Communication and outreach	75,000	58,000	75,000	50,000	50,000
Accounts and auditing	220,500	301,313	230,000	316,378	332,197
Observation Scheme	60,000	0	250,000	200,000	100,000
Committee for Hunting Methods	25,000	25,000	250,000	100,000	25,000
Scientific Committee	215,000	200,000	255,000	260,000	240,000
WG User knowledge	40,000	0	40,000	15,000	15,000
Capacity building	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Other expenses	75,000	65,000	280,000	270,000	220,000
NASS	180,000	180,000	150,000	150,000	-
NASS project overheads - Expected	-25,200	-25,200	-13,300		-
NASS project overheads - Actual		-385,543		-32,640	
MINTAG	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total expenditure	5,293,675	5,104,500	6,061,373	6,230,743	5,479,745
OPERATING RESULT	-60,361	128,814	-723,392	-892,763	-35,006
Total Reserve 01.01	1,615,559	1,415,190	1,555,198	1,544,005	651,241
Transfer to/from general reserve	-60,361	128,814	-723,392	-892,763	-35,006
New Total Reserve 31.12	1,555,198	1,544,005	831,806	651,241	616,236

APPENDIX 7: PRESS RELEASE

Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Sustainable and Responsible Marine Mammal Management

At NAMMCO's 32nd Annual Council Meeting, held from 25 to 27 March at the Fram Centre in Tromsø, Norway, the focus was on marine mammal welfare and on the various projects led by NAMMCO. Member countries reaffirmed their commitment to the sustainable use of marine mammals, best animal welfare outcomes, and evidence-based conservation and management, supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Animal Welfare: A Central Commitment for NAMMCO

NAMMCO is committed to contributing to the efficiency of marine mammal hunting, with the best possible welfare outcomes and hunters' safety. The opening of the 32nd Annual Council Meeting featured an overview of the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop that took place on the preceding day. At the workshop, various perspectives on the state of welfare outcomes and ways to improve practices were presented. Participants included hunters, veterinarians, and managers from the NAMMCO member countries, Finland, Japan, Nunavik, Nunavut, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sweden, and Åland. The importance of sharing knowledge and experiences was strongly emphasised. For more information on the Welfare Workshop [click here](#).

Obtaining Essential Information for Well-Grounded Management of Cetaceans: NASS 2024 and MINTAG

The most recent **North Atlantic Sightings Survey (NASS)** took place in the summer 2024. Started in 1987, this 37-year long NASS series constitutes a unique opportunity for obtaining crucial data and long-term trends on abundance and distribution of whales and dolphins in the North Atlantic. The 2024 survey covered an area of over 4,500,000 km². These data are essential to foster sustainable management and a better understanding of the impacts of environmental changes.

The **Miniature Tag Project (MINTAG)**, a cooperation between NAMMCO member countries and Japan, aims at developing smaller tags to study the movements and stock structure of lesser known and difficult to tag species (fin, sei, minke, and pilot whales). 2024 was the second year of tag deployments and the improvements made showed promising results in being able to follow minke and fin whale migration. For more details, visit the MINTAG website [here](#).

Engaging Youth in Safeguarding the Marine Environment

The project 'GUARDNA—Guardians of the North Atlantic: Looking after our Seas to Conserve Marine Mammals' launched in autumn 2023 was presented to the Council. The project is supported by Novo Nordisk, the Working Group for Fisheries under the Nordic Council of Ministers, and NAMMCO. This three-year international project is developing an open access marine educational portal with appealing and playful materials. The aim is to spark curiosity and interest of children and young adults in ocean sustainability and the conservation of marine mammals. The materials will be available in English, Faroese, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Norwegian, Northern Sámi, and Danish.