

NAMMCO



# COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION

13 February 2026

*Online*

**REPORT**



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**Chair**

Guro Gjelsvik

**Rapporteur**

Naima El bani Altuna

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The Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) met online on 13 February 2026. The CIO was chaired by Guro Gjelsvik (Norway). The meeting agenda and list of participants are available in Appendix 1 and 2, respectively.

## 1. Adoption of agenda and review of documents

Gjelsvik welcomed the participants to the meeting. Deputy Secretary Naima El bani Altuna was appointed as rapporteur.

The Chair presented the agenda (CIO/2026-01/1a, agenda without annotations, and CIO/2026-01/1b annotated agenda) and the meeting documents. The agenda was adopted without modification (Appendix 1).

## 2. Observation activities 2026

Ian Bolduc informed the Committee that the Observation Activity (OA) that was planned in Greenland in 2026 had been postponed to 2027. The target species were narwhal, beluga and walrus in West Greenland. Despite the original intention for the OA in West Greenland, the requirement for observer training, combined with the limited capacity of the relevant stakeholders, caused the postponement of the Greenlandic OA to 2027. The decision to postpone was made on 15 January 2026.

Consequently, the Secretariat is now trying to organise an OA in Norway in 2026. The target species is minke whale, and the last OA in Norway for that species was conducted in 2016. This is a challenge to organise as it is already mid-February. However, Bolduc said that the Secretariat will do its best to make it happen. So far, three boats have been identified for the OA.

According to the catch data received from Norway, the best period to have an observation activity is from late May to mid-June, even though the catch period can start as early as April and last until mid-August.

The Secretariat also contacted the Heads of Delegation and the CIO members on 10 February in order to update the list of the Observer Corp members. They were provided with an official letter, which explained the process to nominate candidates, as well as a template CV to describe their qualifications. New observers to the Corp need to be approved by the Council in March 2026 and the deadline to do so was 27 February. The CIO members **agreed** to respond to this correspondence at their earliest convenience. As a reminder, Bolduc said that, according to the Observation Scheme, Member Countries are required to have a minimum of two members in the Observer Corp.

Bolduc also mentioned that, following the update to the Observer Corps list, a training will have to be planned towards the end of 2026.

The CIO members **took note** of the information.

## 3. Development of methodology to determine future observation activities

Building on the work undertaken by the CIO in CIO/2025-02 and CIO/2025-04 to develop a system for identifying which hunt should be observed next as part of the OA, Geneviève Desportes further developed a framework that consolidates previous discussions (CIO/2026-01/02a and CIO/2026-01/02b). These documents provide an overview of the hunts currently practiced by NAMMCO Parties and compile the documented or reported information available for each of them.

Several welfare-related parameters are not required to be reported by hunters under national legislation and are therefore not submitted to NAMMCO, making them unavailable to the CIO (e.g., TTD, IDR, duration of chase or drive). The factors that *are* available were assigned scores, and an index

was developed by summing these scores and calculating an average. The results of the test using the selected parameters are presented in CIO/2026-01/02b.

The CIO did not have sufficient time to fully review the documents and therefore requested additional time. A preliminary discussion was held, and Committee members **agreed** to reflect on aspects such as whether all factors should be weighted equally and whether additional parameters should be included.

The CIO **agreed** that the system has the potential not only to identify which hunt should be observed next, but also to highlight possible areas for improvement in hunts and inspection systems. The Committee took note of the work and **recommended** that development of the system continue in the next cycle 2026-2027, potentially including an in-person meeting held back-to-back with the Observer Training Corps, which is tentatively planned for autumn 2026 (see item 6).

In addition, the CIO discussed how to proceed with the observation of inspection activities, as outlined in the *Provisions of the NAMMCO Observation Scheme (version 2021)*<sup>1</sup>. While part of this task would naturally be carried out by the observer if an inspection takes place during the OA<sup>2</sup>, the CIO **agreed** that preparatory work should begin by compiling the checklists used by national inspectors for each hunt and reviewing them in collaboration with the CHM. The Committee **recommended** that this review be undertaken in the next cycle (2026–2027).

#### 4. Status of CIO's communication plans

As part of the 2025–2026 workplan, the CIO was tasked with continuing communication efforts with hunters (NAMMCO/32, p. 16). The main goal of this task is to strengthen relationships with hunters, build trust, and enhance the exchange of information between NAMMCO's CIO, CHM, and the hunting community.

##### Faroe Islands

Ulla S. Wang (Faroe Islands) will contact the Faroese Pilot Whale Association to provide the same presentation there.

##### Greenland

Niels Lyberth (Greenland) informed the Committee that their capacity is currently limited, but they continue to make efforts to maintain open communication channels with hunter associations.

##### Iceland

Jóhann Ásmundsson (Iceland) added that they also keep regular communication with hunters, even though there is no formal arena or association for this purpose and noted that the NAMMCO Observation Scheme activity is referenced in whaling licensing procedures in Iceland.

##### Norway

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<sup>1</sup> "2. These objectives will be reached by NAMMCO appointing observers to observe hunting and inspection activities in NAMMCO member countries and the Committee on Inspection and Observation reviewing the observation activities and the implementation of NAMMCO recommendations in national legislations (see section 1)." (General Provisions of the NAMMCO Observation Scheme, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> "15. If a national inspector is present at the time of the observation, the observer shall also oversee whether the inspection is done according to national regulations." (Duties of the Observer of the NAMMCO Observation Scheme, 2021).

Gjelsvik attended the Small Whalers Association meeting in December 2025 and presented document CIO/2025-04/05. As repeating the exact same presentation in 2026 may be redundant, Gjelsvik suggested not delivering it again in the same format.

## 5. Process for reviewing NAMMCO’s recommendations nationally

To prepare for the CIO’s upcoming task of reviewing the implementation of NAMMCO recommendations in national legislation<sup>1</sup>, recommended for the next cycle (2026–2027), the Committee **agreed** that El Bani Altuna will first compile all relevant recommendations. Once this compilation is completed, each delegation will provide information on the status of each recommendation, including how it has been addressed or implemented at the national level.

## 6. Workplan 2026-2028

Table 1 presents the CIO **recommended** workplan for the 2026–2028 period. Appendix 3 provides a more detailed overview. Activities in italics may include activities requiring funding.

2026	2027	2028
Implementation of the OA 2026	Implementation of the OA 2027	Implementation of the OA 2028
Evaluation the OA 2026	Evaluation the OA 2027	Evaluation the OA 2028
Preparation for the OA 2027	Identification the OA 2028	Identification the OA 2028
<i>Development of the methodology to identify the OA</i>	Preparation for the OA 2028	Preparation for the OA 2029
Compilation and revision of checklists used by national inspectors		Compilation and revision of checklists used by national inspectors
Review NAMMCO's recommendations in national legislations		Review NAMMCO's recommendations in national legislations
<i>Communication with hunters</i>	Communication with hunters	Communication with hunters
NAMMCO Observer’s Annual Meeting	NAMMCO Observer’s Annual Meeting	NAMMCO Observer’s Annual Meeting
<i>Observer Corps training</i>		

## 7. Next meeting

The next meeting of the CIO will be held on 21 May 2026.

## 8. Any other business

No other business was discussed.

## 9. Adoption of the report

The report was adopted by correspondence 23 February 2026.

## APPENDIX 1: Agenda and list of documents

1. Adoption of agenda and review of documents
2. Observation Activities 2026
3. Development of methodology to determine future OA
4. Status of CIO's communication plans
5. Process for reviewing NAMMCO's recommendations nationally
6. Workplan 2026-2028
7. Next meeting
8. Any other business

### List of documents

In italics, documents that will be made available after the meeting.

Document Reference	Title	Agenda Item
<b>Working Documents</b>		
CIO/2026-01/01a	Agenda & list of documents	1
CIO/2026-01/01b	Draft annotated agenda	1
CIO/2026-01/02a	Proposal for methodology on how to identify next OA	3
CIO/2026-01/02a	Test of proposal for methodology on how to identify next OA	3
CIO/2026-01/03	Workplan proposal 2026-2028 for CIO	6
<b>For information documents</b>		
CIO/2026-01/FI01	Timeline of observed hunts	3

## APPENDIX 2: Participant list

### NAMMCO MEMBER COUNTRIES

**Guro Gjelsvik** (Chair, NO)  
Directorate of Fisheries

**Niels Lyberth** (GL)  
Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting

**Jóhann Ásmundsson** (IS)  
Directorate of Fisheries

**Ulla Svarrer Wang** (FO)  
Ministry of Fisheries, Industry and Trade

### NAMMCO SECRETARIAT

**Ian Bolduc**  
Deputy Secretary

**Naima El bani Altuna**  
Deputy Secretary

### APPENDIX 3: Detailed proposed workplan 2026-2028 for the CIO

	2026												2027												2028		
	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<b>NAMMCO Annual Meeting</b>																											
<b>Meeting of the CIO</b>																											
Development of the methodology to identify the OA																											
In-person meeting to finalise the proposal <sup>1</sup>																											
<b>OA</b>																											
2026																											
Preparation for the OA 2026																											
Evaluation of the OA 2026																											
2027																											
Preparation for the OA 2027																											
Evaluation of the OA 2027																											
2028																											
Identification of the OA 2028																											
Preparation for the OA 2028																											
2029																											
Identification of the OA 2029																											
Preparation for the OA 2029																											
Compilation and revision of checklists used by national inspectors																											
Revision NAMMCO's recommendations in national legislations																											
Initiation of the process and the path forward																											
Bi-annual review of recommendations																											
Communication with hunters																											
FO																											
GL																											
IS																											
NO																											
<b>Observation Activity</b>																											
<b>NAMMCO Observer's Annual Meeting</b>																											
<b>Observer Corps Training</b>																											

- Month with CIO meeting
- Event taking place
- During this time period