

Distinguished Chair, Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Icelandic delegation, I would like to begin by thanking the Chair for his leadership and efforts, and Greenland for hosting this meeting. I would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the work undertaken in preparing this meeting and ensuring the smooth organisation of our work over the coming days.

As we look ahead to the discussions and agenda items before us, I would like to repeat what Iceland noted in the opening statement last year: the work of NAMMCO in fostering cooperation on the conservation, management and study of marine mammals in the North Atlantic remains just as important today as when the organization was established more than 30 years ago.

At the core of this work is science. Through the cooperation within NAMMCO, valuable knowledge has been developed over the years on marine mammals and their role in the North Atlantic ecosystem. This knowledge helps improve our understanding of the marine environment and supports informed discussions.

Iceland places great importance on this scientific cooperation and remains committed to contributing to the continued development of knowledge in this field. Research, monitoring, and collaboration among scientists and institutions all play important roles in strengthening the work carried out within NAMMCO.

To carry this work forward, we rely on the dedication and expertise of many individuals and institutions who contribute their time and knowledge. Iceland would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in advancing the scientific work that underpins NAMMCO.

As always, there is significant work ahead of us during this meeting, and Iceland looks forward to constructive discussions with our NAMMCO partners in the days to come.

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