



Joint Institute of Marine Research / NAMMCO Workshop on the Status of Harbour Porpoises in the North Atlantic 3 - 7 December 2018, FRAM Centre, Tromsø, Norway

This international workshop on the Status of Harbour Porpoises in the North Atlantic is organised by IMR/NAMMCO, in cooperation with scientists from the Sea Mammal Research Unit (UK), NEFSC-NOAA Fisheries (US), Fisheries and Oceans (Canada), Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (Ireland), and the University of Agricultural Sciences (Sweden).

The North Atlantic harbour porpoise is subject to increasing anthropogenic activities, including directed and incidental removals, noise and chemical pollution and other anthropogenic disturbances, as well as effects from climate and environmental changes. The goal of the workshop is to update the 1999 NAMMCO review, taking into account the 2008 IUCN assessment, and report on the conservation status of the North Atlantic harbour porpoise population(s). This current review will outline knowledge gaps and will provide recommendations for monitoring and research priorities for future assessments in this region.



This current review will outline knowledge gaps and will provide recommendations for monitoring and research priorities for future assessments in this region.

The workshop should:

- identify the appropriate assessment units (populations/sub-populations/ecological stocks/management units/assessment units) for harbour porpoises in the North Atlantic and/or knowledge gaps for doing so

And for each assessment unit:

- review information on distribution, abundance, directed and incidental catches, and life history parameters, in order to determine if it reaches the threshold for conducting a quantitative assessment
- review information available on indirect (sub-lethal) pressures, including chemical and plastics, and noise pollution;
- where sufficient data are available, undertake a quantitative assessment using a population dynamics modelling approach, which includes an evaluation of directed and incidental capture rates;
- identify knowledge gaps and define research priorities and opportunities to cooperate to assess the conservation status within each unit, as well as monitoring requirements within each unit.

Background information supporting the Stock Review and Assessment

- i) Background key-note presentations will address the following general topics: 1) Stock identity, Michael Fontaine; 2) Lethal pressures, Finn Larsen; 3) Sub-lethal pressures, Sinead Murphy/ Florence Caurant & Jakob Tougaard; 4) Life history parameters and health status, Sinead Murphy & Ursula Siebert (remotely); 5) Feeding ecology, Graham Pierce; 6) Population unit assessment, Debra Palka; and 7) Effect of indirect threats – the PCoD framework, Leslie New (remotely).
- ii) Presentations on specific topics will complete this background information.
- iii) Areas and sub-areas information collated by area ambassadors (according to provided guidelines).

Tentative schedule:

Day 1: Key topic and specific topic talks, as well as discussion and implication for the assessments

Day 2-3: presentation of area draft report and assessment of data quality for modelling

Day 4-5: modelling, stock assessment, conservation status

Day 5: "rap-up" discussions and identification of research priorities and cooperation

Planning group:

Ulf Lindstrøm (Chair) & Arne Bjørge (IMR), Geneviève Desportes & Solveig Enoksen (NAMMCO, Secretariat), Phil Hammond (SMRU), Sara Köningsson (SUA), Jack Lawson (DFO), Bjarni Mikkelsen (NAMMCO, Faroes), Sinead Murphy (GMIT), Debi Palka (NEFSC), Gisli Víkingsson (NAMMCO, Iceland).



Background and tentative assessment areas (& area “ambassadors”)

Background

The North Atlantic harbour porpoise is subject to increasing anthropogenic activities, including directed and incidental removals, noise and chemical pollution and other anthropogenic disturbances, as well as effects from climate and environment changes. A comprehensive review of harbour porpoises in the North Atlantic and adjacent waters was undertaken in 1999 by NAMMCO (Haug et al 2003¹) and a world-wide IUCN Red List Assessment² was performed in 2008 (Hammond et al 2008³). Since these reviews a significant amount of data have become available in many areas of the North Atlantic, including assessments of population structure, population abundance (with recent surveys both in western and eastern North Atlantic), distribution and movements, by-catch rates, chemical and noise pollution and effects thereof, and life history parameters.

10 North Atlantic areas and subareas, and area ambassadors

- Eastern USA: Debi Palka
- Eastern Canada: Jack Lawson
 - Newfoundland and Labrador
 - Gulf of St. Lawrence
 - Scotian Shelf
- Greenland: Nynne Elmelund Lemming
 - West Greenland
 - East Greenland
- Iceland-Faroes: Gisli Víkingsson and Bjarni Mikkelsen
 - Iceland
 - Faroe Islands
- Norwegian (North of 62°N) and Russian coasts: Arne Bjørge
- Europe: Phil Hammond and Sinead Murphy
 - West Scotland-Northern Ireland (WSNI)
 - Celtic and Irish Seas (CIS)
 - Greater North Sea (GNS)
- Kattegat and Belt Seas (Gap area): Signe Sveegaard
- Baltic Sea: Sara Köningsson and Julia Carlström
 - West Baltic
 - East Baltic
- Iberian Peninsula: Graham Pierce
- Northwest Africa: TBD

¹ Haug T, Desportes G, Víkingsson G and Witting L. eds. 2003. Harbour porpoises in the North Atlantic. NAMMCO Scientific Publications 5, 315pp. available at <https://nammco.no/topics/volume-5-harbour-porpoise/>

² <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/17027/0>

³ Hammond, P.S., Bearzi, G., Bjørge, A., Forney, K., Karczmarski, L., Kasuya, T., Perrin, W.F., Scott, M.D., Wang, J.Y., Wells, R.S. & Wilson, B. 2008. *Phocoena phocoena*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2008: e.T17027A6734992. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2008.RLTS.T17027A6734992.en>.