



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

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30. Aug. 2005

AUG 16 2005

REPLY . . . FILE

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

Mr. Tom De Meulenaer
Senior Scientific Officer
CITES Secretariat
International Environment House
Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Mr. De Meulenaer:

The purpose of this letter is to follow up with your correspondence of 23 June 2005 with respect to the application of CITES Article IV to exports of narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*) from Canada.

Canada takes its obligations under CITES seriously and ensures exports of narwhal specimens from Canada are in accordance to the provisions of Article IV. We are pleased to note that we have encountered no problems in the application of Article IV for this species.

Specifically, regarding provision 2(a) of Article IV, the Scientific Authority at *Fisheries and Oceans Canada* reviews on a yearly basis the narwhal stock status, harvest, management regime and export data in order to advise whether export of legally harvested narwhal specimen would be detrimental to the survival of Canadian narwhal populations. Attached, you will find the basis for the advice of the Scientific Authority for exports.

Narwhal are harvested by Inuit communities for subsistence purposes and harvest is not oriented towards national or international trade. Further, Canadian export data indicates that the proportion of harvested specimens that enter international trade is low. We are confident that continued export at current levels will not pose an increased pressure on Canadian narwhal harvest in the near future.

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Ottawa, Canada
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Regarding provision 2(b), the Management Authority will only issue an export permit for narwhal specimens that were legally harvested. Almost all exports consist of tusk. On application for export, a numbered hunting tag, affixed to each tusk as required under our Canadian regulations, must be presented with the tusk. This tracking system allows for the monitoring of the aboriginal narwhal harvest for regional management purposes and provides a means to confirm legal origin of specimens.

Provision 2(c) would be applied as a matter of procedure should an export of live narwhal be authorized. This has not occurred to date.

Regarding provision 3, the Scientific Authority regularly monitors exports of narwhal specimens and has noted that it has never approached annual allowable harvest. Thus, the Scientific Authority has determined that a limit of export does not need to be imposed as the export has minimal influence on the harvesting level. At a national level, precautionary quotas are used to limit, where appropriate, the aboriginal harvest of narwhal to ensure sustainability.

All other provisions under Article IV are applied as a matter of standard procedure or are not relevant to the export of wild-harvest narwhal specimens from Canada.

Attached you will find a short review entitled: "Status, Management and International Trade of Narwhal from Canada" prepared for the benefit of the Animals Committee. This review provides current information on Canadian narwhal distribution, abundance, harvest rate and sustainability of the traditional Inuit harvest in Canada. Management measures are explained. A summary of recent harvest and export figures of narwhal specimen as well as details on the CITES administration of narwhal export from Canada are presented. This document expands on the information provided to the Secretariat and Animals Committee Chair on 8 July, 2004 in response to their earlier request. As noted during the 21st meeting of the Animals Committee, new information on the species will only be available after the October 2005 meeting of the Joint Scientific Working Group of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee on Narwhal and Beluga and the Canada/Greenland Joint Commission on the Management and Conservation of Beluga and Narwhal.

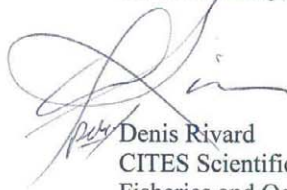
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I trust that this will satisfy the Committee's request for information regarding how Article IV of the Convention is being implemented in Canada for narwhal exports.

If you have any outstanding questions or concerns, I would be more than happy to discuss them with you. Please feel free to contact me at +1 613 990 0280.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Denis Rivard', is written over a faint, larger signature.

Denis Rivard
CITES Scientific Authority
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

c.c. Lynda Maltby, Director, Species at Risk Branch, Canadian Wildlife Service
Dr. Thomas Althaus, Chair, CITES Animals Committee

Attachments



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

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MEMORANDUM

NOTE DE SERVICE

To
A Blair Hodgson
DFO CITES Management Authority

From
De Denis Rivard, A/Director General
Fisheries, Ecosystem and Biodiversity Science
DFO CITES Scientific Authority

Security Classification - Classification de sécurité
Unclassified/Non classifié
Our File - Notre référence 2005-007-00737
Your File - Votre référence
Date July 19, 2005

Subject
Objet **Standing Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) for Exports in 2005 of Products derived from Narwhal**
(*Monodon monoceros*)

As is required under Article IV, Paragraph 2 of CITES, any export permit shall only be granted when the Scientific Authority of the State of export has advised that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species.

In determining the extent that harvesting of narwhal in Canadian waters for trade is potentially impacting the wild population, the following have been considered:

- The population of narwhal in Canada is healthy, with abundance estimates from past surveys calculated to be more than 60,000 individuals. With an average removal of less than 500 individuals in the last 5 years, the harvest rate is less than 1% and is considered to be sustainable.
- Through the cooperation of research scientists in Canada and Greenland, several studies have been carried out in recent years on stock discrimination. These included satellite tagging, genetic analysis, contaminant analysis and the collection of hunters' observations. Current scientific evidence suggests that there is little and possibly no sharing of narwhal between the two countries, contrary to what has been previously assumed.
- The narwhal harvest by Inuit communities is managed using a community quota system or a similar "harvest limit" system. The quota or limits are based on recent research findings. Quota and harvest limits will be revisited when new scientific results are available. Moreover, many communities harvest fewer narwhal than what the government quota would authorize.
- The quota or harvest limits are managed using a tag system. Each narwhal carcass or tusk is therefore accompanied with a tag and information is collected on each animal that is harvested.

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Canada

This ensures that quotas or harvest limits are respected and monitored. Furthermore, the tag system also provide the database to control trade through CITES.

- Narwhal are harvested by Inuit communities for subsistence purposes only. Narwhal tusks are a by-product of the hunt. Narwhal harvest in Canada is not a commercial activity and it is not oriented for national or international trade. Tusks are sometimes sold outside Nunavut and sometimes outside Canada. Each tusk that leaves the Nunavut Territory (the only territory in Canada where narwhals are harvested) has to be accompanied by a Marine Mammal Transportation License.
- Narwhals are co-managed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), although DFO maintains the responsibility for conservation. There are local Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO's) in each Nunavut community. These HTO's are productive partners in the management of these resources. In many cases, they are playing an important role in enforcing the quota or the harvest limits as well as their general harvesting guidelines. Government Fisheries Officers also regularly observe narwhal hunting activities to ensure that rules and regulations are respected.
- Canada and Greenland established a joint commission, the *Canada/Greenland Joint Commission on the Management and Conservation of Narwhal and Beluga (JCNB)* at a time when it was believed that Greenland and Canada were sharing some stocks of narwhals. The Joint Commission's Scientific Working Group meets every two years to discuss beluga and narwhal stock status and to develop joint recommendations for management.
- In the last 5 years, an average of 109 narwhal tusks were exported from Canada. This is a small number relative to the number of narwhals that are harvested by Inuit in Canada each year. It indicates that trade is not a factor influencing harvest.

Based on the above, narwhal stocks in Canada are distinct from those hunted in Greenland waters and are abundant. Harvests for this species are for subsistence purposes and any tusks obtained from narwhal carcasses are a by-product and not usually the main reason for the hunt. International trade does not appear to be a factor impacting the Canadian narwhal population. Moreover, the current number of individual narwhals taken appears low relative to the overall population and is sustainable. Therefore, I am of the opinion that the current levels of export of narwhal products that are legally taken do not have any detrimental effects to the survival of the wild population.



Denis Rivard
CITES Scientific Authority

Status, Management and International Trade Of Narwhal from Canada

This information document is presented by Canada's Scientific Authorities for Aquatic Species.

Introduction

The intent of this document is to provide to the Animals Committee recent information on Canadian narwhal population abundances, aboriginal harvests, international trade in narwhal products and our confidence on our management measures. Recent scientific activities, current management regime and monitoring programs are briefly described, as are the cultural and traditional aspects of narwhal harvesting by Canadian Inuit.

Distribution and Migration of Narwhals in Canada

Canada has conducted several scientific studies in recent years on narwhal stock discrimination, distribution and migration. These studies, many done in cooperation with Greenlandic research scientists, included satellite-linked tagging studies, aerial surveys, genetic and contaminant analysis, and the collection of Inuit observations about narwhal behavior and biology (past and present). This scientific effort has produced a likely model for the stock structure of the narwhals in Canada and Greenland. Although narwhals travel between Canadian and Greenlandic waters, research results indicate that narwhals from Canadian stocks have a low risk of being harvested in West Greenland and that narwhals from Greenlandic stocks have a low risk of being harvested in Canada. This is because narwhals from Canadian stocks do not frequent Greenland hunting grounds and *vice versa*. Narwhals from Greenland and Canada aggregate in winter in northern Davis Strait, in areas that are inaccessible to hunters from both countries. This high degree of separation is considered in setting management regimes for the species.

Two distinct populations of narwhals are recognized in Canada: the Hudson Bay narwhal population and the Baffin Bay narwhal population. Hudson Bay narwhal have a geographically distinct distribution, summering in northwestern Hudson Bay and wintering in Hudson Strait. The Baffin Bay narwhal population is much larger and consists of several summer aggregations in the eastern Canadian High Arctic that gather in deep waters of Baffin Bay and northern Davis Strait during the winter.

It should be noted that, based on Inuit traditional knowledge, scientific observation and archeological studies, there is no indication that the range of the narwhals in Canada has changed over the last century. The timing of narwhal migration and distribution are greatly influenced by ice cover and the presence of predators. Much of the year, narwhals are in areas inaccessible to Inuit hunters.

Population Abundance of Narwhals in Canada

Narwhals are most abundant in the Canadian High Arctic. Aerial surveys conducted in 2002 and 2003, included most known narwhal aggregation areas, and produced a population estimate of 59,942 (CV = 47%) narwhals for the Baffin Bay Population. This population estimate does not include narwhals known to aggregate in Peel Sound at that time of year, or those found in other less-densely distributed parts of their range. It should be noted that the methods and results of these surveys have been presented and peer reviewed by the Joint Scientific Working Group of the Canada/Greenland Joint Commission on the Conservation and Management of Narwhal and Beluga (JCNB) and the Scientific Committee Working Group on the Population Status of Narwhal and Beluga in the North Atlantic of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO). Improvements to the analysis were proposed by the Joint Working Groups and the results of the new analyses were further reviewed by the Canadian National Marine Mammal Peer Review Committee (NMMPRC). Additional surveys were also conducted in Eclipse Sound and Parry Channel in August 2004. These results are to be reviewed by the Joint NAMMCO-JCNB Scientific Working group in October 2005.

Recent population surveys indicate higher population abundance and larger distribution than what was initially believed. This is likely due to better survey methods, bias correction for diving animals and improved coverage. Traditional knowledge and observations from local Inuit communities suggest a similar conclusion, that is, narwhal abundance has not changed significantly over the last century.

The smaller Hudson Bay narwhal population was surveyed in 2000, and its population abundance was estimated at: 3952 (CV=32%) animals. Although this is small compared to the Baffin Bay population, the size the Hudson Bay narwhal population and the hunt it supports has never been very high. The current population estimate is believed to be close the historic population size.

Estimating narwhal abundance is a difficult task due to the species' clumped distribution, preference for heavy ice-covered areas, wide geographic range and its diving behavior. However, recent technological advances in satellite telemetry, time depth recorders and survey techniques and a greater coverage of their range have greatly improved the accuracy of survey estimates. Surveys are done from small aircraft and combine the used of digital cameras and observers counts.

Harvest Rate and Sustainability of the Traditional Inuit Harvests in Canada

Narwhals are closely related to belugas, and are thought to have similar reproductive parameters. Scientists estimate that these Monodontid cetaceans have maximum growth rates around 3%-4%, and consider an annual hunting rate of 2% or less to be conservative.

Narwhal harvesting in Canada is sustainable. If we simply divide the total population estimate of narwhals by the harvest, the harvest rate is around 1%. Even if we assume a high hunting loss

-3-

rate of 30% (animals that are killed but not retrieved or reported), the resulting hunting mortality is still low (~1.5%).

Although narwhal populations in Canada are considered healthy, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has recently proposed a “special concern” listing for the species because of uncertainties in stock size and hunting losses. A special concern species is one that is particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events but is not an endangered or threatened species. These concerns are being addressed by enhancing scientific activities such as the recent surveys that were conducted on the Canadian narwhal populations and by the recent strengthening of the community based management plan.

Community based management emphasizes reduction in loss rates through the development of hunting rules, detailed catch reporting, hunter education and mentorship by elders. As such, the objective of the management regime for the Canadian narwhal population is to maintain the populations, at minimum, at their present healthy numbers. This goal is shared between government authorities and aboriginal communities that are working closely together.

The harvest for each Inuit communities is managed using a community quota system or a similar “harvest limit” system. The quotas or limits are based on recent research findings. Quota and harvest limits are reassessed as new information become available. This ensures that the quotas are sustainable and based on the principle of conservation. While the landings have increased in recent years, this represents a strictly controlled harvest and, according to recent scientific information, current removals are sustainable.

Management Measures, Quota and Harvest monitoring

Narwhals in Canada are co-managed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB), although the DFO retains the responsibility for conservation. There are local Hunters and Trappers Organizations (HTO) in each Nunavut Communities. These HTOs are productive partners in the management of marine and terrestrial wildlife resources. In many cases, they conduct an important role in enforcing community quotas or the harvest limits as well as preparing local general harvesting guidelines. Government Fisheries Officers also regularly monitor narwhal hunting activities to ensure rules and regulations are respected and compile harvest data.

Narwhal hunting is restricted to Inuit in regulations, and is managed by either community quotas or harvest limits. These quotas and harvest limits are administered using a tag system. An Inuk must be in possession of a numbered government issued hunting tag in order to harvest a narwhal, and this tag must be attached to the narwhal carcass or tusk as soon as the animal is landed. Information is collected on each animal that is harvested. This ensures that quota or harvest limits are respected and monitored. Furthermore, the tag system also provides the data to insure the legality of international trade.

Hunting techniques have changed over the years and education and mentoring programs have been developed to train young hunters in narwhal hunting techniques. Some communities have

developed specific rules to limit hunting losses. Such rules regulate the use of harpoons or list mandatory equipment in order to ensure that narwhal are efficiently dispatched and retrieved. DFO personnel monitor hunting losses reported by the communities, and this information is incorporated when assessing narwhal populations and setting harvest limits.

Canada/Greenland Joint Commission on the Management and Conservation of Beluga and Narwhal (JCNB)

The JCNB was established in 1989 under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Fisheries and Oceans of the Government of Canada and the Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting of the Greenland Home Rule Government. The JCNB was established at a time when Canadian scientists thought that Greenland and Canada were sharing some stocks of narwhals, in order to address common management and conservation issues concerning the use of the shared narwhals and belugas. Today scientific evidence suggests that there is minimal sharing of narwhals between the two countries.

The MOU recognizes the importance of narwhal and beluga hunting to Inuit communities in both countries, and notes the concern of both governments for "*the rational management, conservation and optimum utilization of living resources of the sea*" as reflected in the 1982 UN Convention of the *Law of the Sea*.

The JCNB is responsible for the exchange of information and the co-ordination of joint research projects concerning marine mammals, and it involves resource users through its Inuit commissioners and delegations from Inuit organizations. The JCNB has established a Scientific Working Group (SWG), whose function is to submit proposals concerning scientific research and to make recommendations respecting the conservation and management of shared stocks to the responsible governments. This SWG now meets jointly with the NAMMCO Scientific Committee Working Group on the Population Status of Narwhal and Beluga. The SWG did not assess the sustainability of narwhals at its last meeting in 2004 in Montreal; this assessment is planned for their next meeting in October 2005 in Greenland.

CITES Administration

Canada enacted the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act* to control the movement of wildlife specimen across borders, nationally and internationally. The act was brought into force in 1996 at the same time as the regulations took effect. The purpose of this act is to protect Canadian and foreign species of animals and plants that may be at risk of over-exploitation because of poaching or illegal trade, and to safeguard Canadian ecosystems from the introduction of species designated as harmful. It accomplishes these objectives by controlling the international trade and interprovincial transport of wild animals and plants, and their parts and derivatives, and by making it an offence to transport illegally obtained wildlife between provinces or between Canada and other countries. This Act is the legislative vehicle by which Canada meets its obligation under CITES.

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Environment Canada is the lead agency responsible for implementing CITES on behalf of the federal government. Implementation occurs through cooperation with other federal, provincial and territorial agencies with responsibilities for the management of Canadian species. These jurisdictions have appointed management and scientific authorities and these Canadian authorities have specific roles in controlling import and export of wildlife or wildlife products listed by CITES. The management authorities ensure that specimens were legally acquired. The scientific authorities ensure that the movement of a specimen will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. If either authorities is not satisfied that all conditions have been met, a permit will not be issued.

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans is the delegated management and scientific authority for aquatic species in Canada. In the case of narwhal, the *Fisheries and Oceans Canada* Scientific Authority reviews on yearly basis new scientific information, the management regime, allowable harvest limits, and the export data of narwhal in order to advise whether export can be detrimental to the survival of Canadian narwhal populations.

The Federal Marine Mammal Regulations require that a government-issued hunting tag be affixed to each landed narwhal. This tag must remain attached to the tusk of male narwhal, and is used by the Management Authority as proof of legal harvest. In addition, Canadian Customs Officers monitor outgoing CITES exports; they receive regular training on CITES administration and the identification of wild products.

Importance to Local Canadian Inuit Arctic Communities

Narwhals are only harvested for subsistence purposes and to maintain an ancestral tradition. There is no other harvest of narwhal in Canada. This means that harvest of narwhals in Canada is restricted to Inuit, who hunt them for food. Narwhal tusks are a by-product of the subsistence hunt. The annual harvest is too small for industries to establish around the trade of narwhal parts.

Canadian Inuit have experienced rapid cultural changes in the last few generations. This, and the limited economic opportunities across the Canadian Arctic, provides a challenge to their socio-economic conditions. Maintaining a link to natural resources is extremely important for Inuit cultural, mental and physical wellbeing. This is accomplished by traditional activities such as arctic char fishing, seal harvesting, caribou hunting and berry picking. Among these activities, Narwhal harvesting holds a special place for Inuit cultural identification. It has an important role in defining their culture and enhancing community wellbeing through the sharing of marine mammal products.

Recent International Trade of Narwhal Parts

The intact raw tusk is the most common narwhal part exported from Canada. On average, only a small fraction of the tusks available annually from the Canadian aboriginal subsistence harvest

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enters international trade. Exports of narwhal parts varies from year to year and there are no indication from the CITES Export data that exports have increased significantly in recent years. In the past 15 years, a yearly average of 90 tusks was exported yearly. Over the same period, a yearly average of 403 narwhals was harvested. The demand for tusks appears to be smaller than the number of tusks that would be available from the annual subsistence hunt.

There are no domestic or international industry established around the narwhal parts trade in Canada and the demand for narwhal products is low.

Canadian Aboriginal Narwhal Harvest and International Trades⁽¹⁾ of Narwhal Parts 1990-2004		
	Total Canadian Harvest^{(2) (3)}	CITES Trade (exported narwhal parts)
2004	549 (<i>current quota is 709</i>)	69
2003	444	100
2002	449	106
2001	560	127
2000	629	133
1999	543	81
1998	384 (<i>quota prior 1999 was 542</i>)	79
1997	281	69
1996	294	98
1995	257	80
1994	350	35
1993	332	57
1992	325	108
1991	374	97
1990	275	108
Average (15 years)	403	90

- (1) Most exports consist of whole raw tusks
- (2) A more restrictive quota system was in place prior 1999. These restrictive quotas were not based on scientific information but on past harvest levels. In 1999, the management system was modified and the current maximum harvest levels were set in 2001. In some areas, multi-year maximum harvest levels were instituted to adapt to various specific environment and to allow some flexibility to harvesters while ensuring sustainability of the catches
- (3) Present quotas for all communities add up to 709, although not all the quotas are actually used. This compare to a total quota of 542 prior 1999.

Recent and Ongoing Research Activities on Narwhal in Canada

Extensive surveys to estimate the abundance of narwhals in the Baffin Bay and the Hudson Bay populations were conducted recently (2000-2004). During the same interval, research on migration, distribution and stock discrimination has been done using satellite telemetry, and

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genetic and contaminant analyses. In 2004, a four-day scientific meeting was held in Montreal which focused mainly on narwhal populations in Canada and Greenland. This was a joint meeting between the NAMMCO Scientific Committee and the JCNB Scientific Working Group. About 18 scientific documents were presented and reviewed by a group of 23 experts from Canada, Greenland, Norway and USA.

This scientific working group meets regularly to address specific question. The next joint NAMMCO-JCNB Scientific Working Group meeting is scheduled for October 2005 in Greenland. An assessment of the Canadian High Arctic narwhal population will be conducted at this meeting. Results from this scientific meeting will be used to provide further advice for the management and conservation of narwhals in Canada.

Conclusion

1. Canada takes its responsibilities regarding the conservation of narwhal very seriously and has confidence in its sustainable management of this species.
2. Narwhal subsistence harvesting by Canadian Inuit is not driven by trade. It is a traditional activity conducted for food and spiritual/cultural wellbeing. There are no industries established around the trade in narwhal parts, and the demand for narwhal parts is low. Narwhal tusks are a by-product of an aboriginal subsistence hunt and exports are low compared to the number of animals harvested.
3. Currently, many communities harvest fewer narwhals than are authorized by their quotas. This indicates that narwhal harvesting is driven by factors other than trade.
4. International exports of narwhal products have been low. There are no indications that export has risen following the recent increase of harvest. The export data indicate that trade rose in the 1980s and, although there is considerable fluctuation and a linear increase in the overall catch, the linear trend of trade has been flat since 1989.
5. Narwhals are abundant in Canada and recent scientific surveys suggest narwhal stocks are larger than previously estimated, and have remained stable over a number of decades. The recent increase in narwhal quota (and harvests) is supported by scientific information. Present harvests of narwhals in Canada are sustainable with harvest levels of less than 1.5% (including a high estimate for hunt loss).
6. Narwhal hunting is managed by using harvest limit and community quota. A government-issued tag must be attached to each animal that is landed to monitor harvest and ensure harvest limit are not exceeded.
7. The government of Canada has recently focused considerable effort to update the scientific knowledge on narwhals. This included population surveys conducted in 2002,

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2003 and 2004, satellite tracking of narwhals, contaminant and genetic analysis and the collection of users' knowledge.

8. Studies indicate that narwhals from Canadian stocks have a low risk of being harvested in West Greenland and that narwhals from Greenlandic stocks have a low risk of being harvested in Canada. This high degree of separation is considered in setting management regimes for this species.
9. Scientific studies on narwhals in Canada are ongoing. A scientific meeting to review recent scientific information will take place in October 2005. The last such meeting was held in Montreal in 2004. A copy of the report of this meeting was sent to the CITES Secretariat in July 2004.

NAMMINERSORNERULLUTIK QQARTUSSAT · GRØNLANDS HJEMMESTYRE

Aalisarnermut Piniarnermullu Pisortaqarfik
Direktoratet for Fiskeri og Fangst
Department of Fisheries and Hunting



CITES
International Environment House
Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva
Switzerland
Att. Tom De Meulenaer
Senior Scientific Officer
Scientific Support Unit

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30. Aug. 2005
REPLY . . . FILE

Subject: Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species

Dear Sir/Madam,

At its 21st meeting, the CITES AC examined a summary of annual report statistics showing the recorded exports over recent years. On the basis of this and other information available to the Committee, they selected a number of species of priority concern for review.

Amongst those selected was the narwhal *Monodon monoceros*.

In accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP 13) you seek the comments of Denmark (Greenland) regarding any problems it has in the application of Article IV (of the Convention) for this species.

On that background the Department of Fisheries and Hunting, DFH, responsible for the management of *Monodon monoceros*, officially have asked our CITES Scientific Authority, SA, The Greenland Institute of Natural Resources, to carry out an "non-detriment finding" review based on scientific findings and information on trade with *Monodon monoceros* with the intention to identify problems and solutions regarding the implementation of Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) in the Convention.

The answer from our SA are enclosed this letter.

DFH have the following comments to the review:

Management:

Based on the executive order on the protection and hunting of belugas and narwhals, in setting quotas user knowledge and hearing of the Hunting Council is also to be considered. User knowledge is partially incorporated through hunter participation in the meetings of the Joint Working Group (JWG), and in the meetings of North Atlantic Marine Mammals Commission (NAMMCO) and The Joint Commission on the conservation and management of Narwhal and Beluga (JCNB).

Allakkat tamarmik pisortaqarfirmut nassiunneqassapput inunnut ataasiakkaanuungitsiq.

Al korrespondance bedes adresseret til direktoratet og ikke til enkelte personer.

25. august 2005
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Narwhals in West Greenland:

The maximum recommended removal for West Greenland, excluding Melville Bay, is based on a sex-ratio of 50/50. According to the separate reportings for each narwhal harvested after the introduction of quotas the proportion of males in the harvest is significantly higher. The department have received separate reports for each licenced narwhal harvested from all municipalities except the municipality of Qaanaaq. This information will be discussed in the next meeting of the JWG.

Regarding the recommendation from JCNB in 2004 it should be added that JCNB first of all recommended a substantially reduction in the first quota year, and thereafter to a level as close as possible to the level recommended by the SWG (JWG). The new quotas for the second quota year from July 1st 2005 to June 30th 2006 will be set within two weeks and will be forwarded to you as soon they have been set.

Narwhals in East Greenland:

The NAMMCO Council have asked it's Scientific Committee (SC) to make a new assessment for the narwhals in East Greenland.

Trade and Export:

The information given about the value of the skin and tusk is based on pre-quotation information. The Department for Fisheries and Hunting are collecting information about the internal trade in skin and the selling of tusks for export after the introduction of quotas. The preliminary conclusions are that the prices for skin and tusks has increased, but with the significant change that the hunters keep most of the skin themselves. In this regard The Department for Fisheries and Hunting would like to draw your attention to the note on trade in the comments on requests from CITES AC to Greenland with respect to scientific studies on Narwhal, Beluga, and Polar Bear by Michael C.S. Kingsley enclosed in our letter to David Morgan, Head of CITES Scientific Support Unit July 23, 2004: "Tusks are only borne by males, and trade in tusks is therefore not risky for the species. On the contrary, trade in tusks, by maximising the value to the hunter of each animal taken, may reduce pressure for larger quotas, and may also direct harvest toward males and therefore away from females."

More general about the implementation of the Convention

During CoP13 Greenland informed that the Greenland Home Rule Government had passed a new government order fully implementing the Convention.

According to the new government order our CITES MA, The Ministry of Environment and Nature, may submit all applications for CITES export permits to our SA to obtain advise if such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species concerned.

Our CITES MA have received an application for pre-issued export permits in connection with tourists' export of specimen of narwhal *Monodon monoceros*. The

application has been forwarded to our CITES SA to obtain its advice. Therefore the enclosed review has also been forwarded to our MA.

The review is our SA's first of its kind, and it's our intention to establish more formal administrative procedures and guidelines regarding future "non-detriment findings" between our departments and our SA.

As emphasized in your letter our comments is part of the first stage of the review, and by the time being we consider that Article IV of the Convention is being correctly implemented.

We will keep you informed of future developments.

Yours sincerely



Amalie Jessen
Deputy Minister

Enclosed: Greenland Institute of Natural Resources – (A review of) Standing Non-detrimental Findings for Exports from Greenland of Products derived from Narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*)

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ALLAGAQ/BREV NR.

JOURNAL NR.

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Standing Non-Detrimental Findings for Exports from Greenland of Products derived from Narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*)

As is required under Article IV, Paragraph 2 of CITES, any export permit shall only be granted when the Scientific Authority of the State of export has advised that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species.

In determining the extent that harvesting of narwhals in Greenland waters for trade is potentially impacting natural populations, the following have been considered:

Management

- New regulations came into the Greenland legislation in March 2004 allowing the Home Rule Government to set quotas on narwhals in West Greenland. Quotas are not set for East Greenland. The quota and harvest is managed using separate reporting for each narwhal and a general reporting system - PINIARNEQ - where each hunter reports the total harvest of all species for each month.
- Quotas are based on management recommendations from international management organisations. The Canada/Greenland Joint Commission on Conservation and Management of Narwhal and Beluga (JCNB) gives recommendations for stocks of narwhal and beluga that are shared between Greenland and Canada. And the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) gives recommendations for Greenlandic stocks not shared with Canada.
- The scientific advice for JCNB and NAMMCO on harvest sustainability is provided by a Joint Working Group (JWG) of the Scientific Working Group (SWG) of JCNB and a NAMMCO Scientific Committee Working Group. The NAMMCO SC reconsiders the recommendations of the JWG before they are given to the Commission. The JWG meets on a regular basis - approximately every two years - to discuss beluga and narwhal stock status, to perform stock assessments, and to develop joint recommendations for management.

West Greenland

- Narwhals occur in four aggregations in West Greenland and only one, the Melville Bay, is considered distinct. The other three aggregations are suspected to be connected through annual migrations from Inglefield Bredning in summer, to Uummannaq in November and to Disko Bay in winter. Other stocks summering in Northern Canada winter in central Baffin Bay and do not seem to provide whales to the hunting grounds along the coast of West Greenland. A stock in Jones and Smith Sound may, however, be providing animals for the harvest in West Greenland.
- Surveys conducted in 2001 and 2002 in Inglefield Bredning show that the abundance of narwhals at this locality has decreased since last surveys in 1985-86 and that the decline in recent years may have been as large 10% per year. Surveys conducted in Disko Bay from 1981 through 1998 indicate an annual decline in abundance of narwhals of 3% per year.
- The level of removals of narwhals in West Greenland has increased considerably since the 1950s. The removals apparently peaked in the early 1990s where after they have remained relatively constant at 700 per year until 2004, where a quota was set. The increase in removals since the 1980s is considered a main cause of the observed decline in abundance in the two survey areas in West Greenland.
- Several assessment models testing different stock structure hypotheses for narwhals in West Greenland were run by the JWG in February 2004. Despite of some variation in the results of the different models, they all point to the conclusion that West Greenland narwhals are severely depleted and that immediate actions needs to be taken to halt the decline. The maximum recommended removal for West Greenland, excluding Melville Bay, was 135 whales per year (including loss).
- For Melville Bay it was not possible to develop a formal assessment because no abundance data were available from this area. Since surveys had failed to detect narwhals in Melville Bay, it was assumed that the abundance is low, and it was recommended that no further catches be taken from this area until abundance estimates are made available.
- JCNB recommended in 2004 that removals in Greenland should be reduced to a level as close as possible to the level recommended by the SWG (JWG). The Greenland Home Rule complied with this recommendation by introducing one-year quotas from July 1 2004, with a quota of 300 non-transferable units for western Greenland.

East Greenland

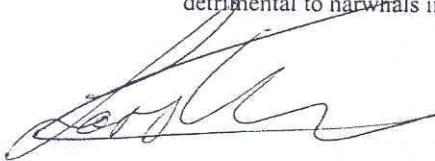
- There is only little information on the population structure of narwhals in East Greenland. Genetic studies show that they are not related to those in Baffin Bay-Davis Strait.
- There is only little information on stock size and abundance of narwhals in East Greenland.
- Data on reported catches are available for East Greenland. They are un-corrected and trends are difficult to infer unless correction factors are applied. Current un-corrected reporting shows an average take of 80 narwhals per year.
- No assessment has been conducted for narwhals in East Greenland. The last considerations of NAMMCO SC relating to East Greenland narwhals are from 1999, where it was noted that present harvesting probably does not pose an immediate threat to the stock, considering the large area from which the whales are recruited relative to the restricted areas where hunting is conducted.

Trade and Export

- Export of narwhal products from Greenland is mainly restricted to tusk, tooth and crafted parts of narwhal tusks. Because of several confounding factors, the statistics on export of narwhal products cannot be used directly to provide insight into the utilisation of narwhals in Greenland.
- The most valuable hunting product of narwhal in Greenland is the skin, also known as mattak. All mattak can be sold at the internal market in Greenland and no export occurs. The meat can be sold for much lower prices and also for local consumption only.
- Tusks have a relative low value compared with mattak, and trade in tusks is not the primary incentive for the narwhal hunt in Greenland. However, income from selling of tusks is also part of the subsistence economy, and it cannot be excluded that trade in tusk and crafted parts thereof is not influencing the harvest of narwhals.

Conclusion on non-detrimental findings for export

- Although the increased removals since the 1980s is considered a main cause of the observed decline in narwhal abundance in the two survey areas in West Greenland, the current management system should allow exports of products from narwhals hunted in West Greenland to be non-detrimental to the survival of natural narwhal populations if the annual removal (including loss) of narwhals from specified areas in West Greenland are smaller than or equal to the scientific recommendations of the JWG. If removals from specified areas exceed the recommendations it cannot be concluded that exports are non-detrimental. The current recommendation is an annual removal (including loss) of no more than 135 narwhals from West Greenland excluding Melville Bay, and no removal from Melville Bay. The preliminary estimate of the removal (including reported loss) for 2004/05 - the first year of the quotation system - is 294 narwhals from West Greenland with 62 taken in Melville Bay.
- For East Greenland the lack of explicit scientific recommendations on sustainability makes it difficult to conclude on non-detrimental findings. The consideration of NAMMCO SC in 1999 that "present harvesting probably does not pose an immediate threat to the stock" and the lack of an apparent trend in recent catch statistics for East Greenland suggests that current takes in East Greenland may be non-detrimental. As narwhal in East Greenland will be taken up at the next meeting of the JWG to be held in October 2005, it is recommended that the status of non-detrimental findings for narwhal in East Greenland is reconsidered after the next meeting of the NAMMCO SC.
- As there is no trade-system in place that will distinguish whether narwhal products originate from whales caught in West Greenland excluding Melville Bay, in Melville Bay, or in East Greenland it cannot be concluded that the current export of narwhal products from Greenland is non-detrimental as, with the current catches, it might be detrimental to narwhals in West Greenland.



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