

Annex P

Proposal for Developing a Cooperative Research Programme to Address Critical Research Needs for the Greenland Stocks

The sub-committee on Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (Annex I) had noted with great concern that it has never been able to provide satisfactory scientific advice on either the fin or minke whales off West Greenland. The reason that satisfactory advice cannot be given is the lack of requisite data, particularly on stock structure and abundance. That sub-committee had recognised that the logistical difficulties of obtaining the necessary information are enormous, both in terms of the physical environment (including weather conditions) and the level of resources required. However it believed that it was unacceptable to merely continue to provide less than satisfactory advice and make general recommendations for further work.

Similarly, the Standing Working Group on the Development of the AWMP (Annex F) had agreed that providing advice on the Greenlandic fisheries was a matter of the highest priority. It agreed that given our present state of knowledge, developing a *Strike Limit Algorithm* for the Greenland Fisheries that would fulfil all the Commission's objectives will be an extremely difficult, if not impossible task.

Born noted that research directed at obtaining a better understanding stock structure by using a variety of techniques has been initiated this year in co-operation with

Norwegian scientists. He added that a survey for the purpose of estimating abundance of cetacean stocks off Greenland was planned within the next five years. The Committee welcomed the Greenland research initiative.

Taking into account its discussions on priorities for the Commission's work (Plenary Item 6), the Committee therefore, agreed to establish a Working Group, in collaboration with Greenlandic scientists, to determine a *costed* research programme that will enable the Committee to provide satisfactory advice to the Commission as soon as possible. At a minimum this programme should address questions of stock identity and abundance. The programme should include representatives of the AWMP in which group the important relationship between data requirements and management procedures has already been stressed. Noting that the Greenlandic scientists are currently designing a research programme, the Committee agreed to establish an Intersessional Correspondence Group (convened by Born) to assist in this process. Noting the full workload of the SWG on the AWMP and the fact that the sub-committee on aboriginal subsistence whaling does not need to carry out a major reassessment next year, the Committee agrees that consideration of the Greenlandic research programme should be accorded high priority status in the work of that sub-committee next year.
