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2023 NARW Tagging Workshop Summary

Co-hosted by NOAA Fisheries, Marine Mammal Commission and Office of Naval Research in coordination with
Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

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Workshop Objectives

1. Review key knowledge gaps and data needs regarding the movements, life history, and ecology of North Atlantic right whales (NARWs);
2. Review the history of satellite telemetry and evaluate progress in tag attachment technologies and follow-up studies;
3. Generate knowledge to inform planning and permitting decisions regarding potential tagging of NARWs, as well as other endangered baleen whales.

The workshop was not designed to make decisions but rather seek various experts' opinions on the topic



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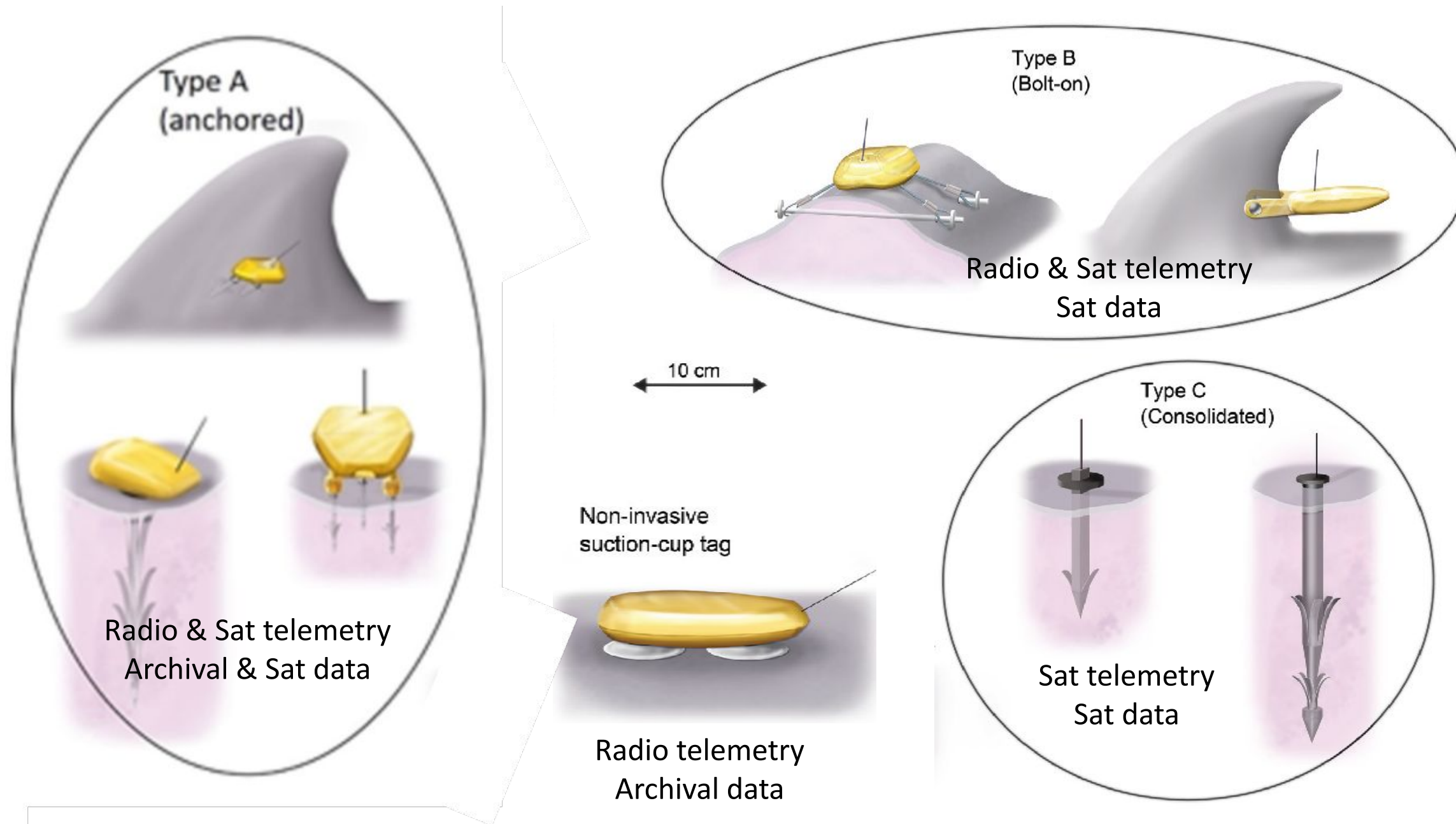
Workshop Attendees & Structure

- 52 invited experts participated
- First day open to public ~200 attendees
 - More details about Day 1 are posted online at mmc.gov
- Diverse fields represented:
 - Biological and ecological research
 - Veterinary medicine
 - Technology development
 - Management and policy



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Cetacean Tag Types



Andrews et al. 2019



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Gaps

- Temporal/Spatial Distribution
 - Breeding grounds, migration and feeding grounds
 - Migratory paths
 - Offshore distribution
 - Unknown habitats
- Movement, behavior, and risk encounter relative to areas of threats
 - Vessel traffic, wind energy areas, fishing activity, etc.
- Fine scale dive behavior and bioenergetics
- Communication with stakeholders



Is Tagging the Best Approach?

- Management Question
- Decision-making matrix: 4 different tag types
 - Tag duration
 - Sensor assumptions
 - Compare to other survey tools

Decision Matrix

	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D	Total Benefit
Solution 1					
Solution 2					
Solution 3					
Criteria Weights					

Key Takeaways



Next Steps

- Development of criteria for tagging candidates
- Potential improvements to follow-up health assessment protocols/study design
 - Vets will have a follow-up meeting in November on methods to assess potential health effects of tags
- Synthesis of data collected by previously deployed tags on NARWs
- A workshop report will be published soon
- Retrospective analysis of the impacts of tagging with old model tags on NARW tagged prior to 2010 using PCOD model

