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Moving in concert: Social and migratory behaviour of dolphins and whales in the North Atlantic Ocean

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Acknowledgements

Those of you wondering about how one could end up with a PhD like mine, I will take back a couple of years to one of those birthdays on a Sunday afternoon where it is customary for Dutch families to gather around a small table laced with pairs of apple pies and coffee cups, themselves neatly organised around the sugar bowl. Our family was slightly different in respect to most others, in that my grandmother used to bring all the newspaper clippings she deemed relevant for specific members of her clan, collected over the interval since the last birthday. One of those, describing dolphin research in the Azores, had my name on it and marked the beginning of my research into whale behaviour, and later, this PhD.

It turned out later that 'uncustomary' would not only apply to the starting point of my thesis, but would typify its full trajectory (if you lacked a *rode draad* in this thesis: here it is). Finalising it would therefore never have been possible without the inventiveness, flexibility, patience and support of the many people that have contributed along the way.

Thank you all very much, what a great time!

If you enjoy looking for the resemblance between dogs and their owners, you may have noticed the migratory pathway of this thesis, northbound, not unworthy of a baleen whale, and the presence of many long-term stable associations, essential also to social cetaceans. I am very grateful to my supervisors, Jef and Graham, who have provided knowledge and guidance from day one, to a project outside of their direct area of expertise, outside of regular trajectories and to a PhD-student who was mostly out of the country. Jef, I have greatly enjoyed learning from your highly inventive scientific mind, your precision, and from our chocolate-laden manuscript-writing sessions (they will be dearly missed). Graham, you have provided key support at many essential stages of this project, from accepting me as an external PhD-student, to finding creative funding opportunities (in Greece!), collaborators and statistical solutions. Thank you for your many insights, and for providing support whenever it was needed.

The migration from the Azores to Norway was initiated by Kees den Hollander, who decided to make me part of his team to study the behaviour of terrorists, unknowingly opening the door to cetacean research in the Arctic. Kees, thank you for inventing this highly creative match of research topics. I have greatly enjoyed our cooperation and look forward to seeing you again in the field. Frans-Peter Lam, Jim Eckman, René Dekeling and Mike Weise, this part of the project also would not have commenced and succeeded without your dedicated (and creative) support. Thank you for your enthusiasm, and your willingness to cross some unexpected hurdles.

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to look at dolphins (well, actually it is ☺), but may also entail long hours spent behind binoculars while trying to keep the tent from blowing off the cliff, or entering data on a computer on a small boat while being sea-sick; rain or no rain. It was great to have you as part of the team, thank you for your enthusiasm and I hope to see you on the water in the future!

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