

NAMMCO



COMMITTEE ON HUNTING METHODS

*9 February 2020
Hafnarfjörður, Iceland*

REPORT



© North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

Please cite this report as:

NAMMCO-North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (2020). Report of the Committee on Hunting Methods, February 2020, Hafnarfjörður, Iceland.

Available at <https://nammco.no/topics/committee-on-hunting-methods/>

DISCLAIMER:

The content of this report contains the view of the Committee and does not necessarily represent the views of the Council.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY	4
2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS	4
3. UPDATES OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS AND LIST OF REFERENCES	4
4. ANNUAL REPORTING FROM MEMBERS	5
5. WORKSHOP (WS)/EXPERT GROUP MEETING (EGM)	5
6. WEBSITE – QUALITY CHECK	7
7. WORKPLAN 2020-2021	7
8. ACTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW UP	8
9. NEXT MEETING	8
10. ADOPTION OF REPORT	8
APPENDIX 1: Agenda	9
APPENDIX 2: List of Documents	10

1. SUMMARY

The Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM) met on 9 February 2020 at the Directorate of Fisheries in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland. Present were Kathrine A. Ryeng (Chair) and Hild Ynnesdal (Norway), Guðni Magnus Eiríksson and Kristján Loftsson (Iceland), Nette Levermann (Greenland), Signar Petersen (Faroe Islands) and Charlotte Winsnes from the Secretariat.

Actions arising from the meeting

Secretariat

- Re video on handling the Whale grenade 99 – contact Henriksen Verksted
- To review the list of recommendations with the aim of identifying those that relates To the planned EGM

Chair, GL and Secretariat

- To formulate a proposal for the EGM including budget for the upcoming Council meeting in March

FO

- To undertake structured examinations and develop a spinal lance blade that will improve the dolphin hunt, preferably before the EGM.

GL

- To finalise the analysis of TTD data from beluga and narwhal prior to the EGM
- To reach out to contacts in Canada, and the Caribbean in cooperation with the Secretary
- To quality check information on the website as soon as possible

IS

- To quality check information on the website within the end of February

All members

- To develop English summaries of main content for all laws and regulations where these are lacking

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

Chair Kathrine A. Ryeng opened the meeting. The agenda was adopted (appendix 1), and the list of documents (appendix 2) were reviewed.

3. UPDATES OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS AND LIST OF REFERENCES

Iceland acting on the advice from NAMMCO has regulated the seal hunt. The declining abundance of grey and harbour seals combined with insufficient catch reporting have been of concern. The new regulation makes catch reporting obligatory and hunters must have a license. The regulation prohibits killing of seals around fish farms and salmon river mouths and prohibits commercial trading with seal products.

CHM questioned the rationale for banning commercial trade considering that the quota or license will be set based on sustainability of the population.

Norway informed that the regulation on the coastal seal hunt had been amended to accommodate requirements put forward by the US in relation to the MMPA (Marine mammals protection Act). It is

now prohibited to hunt seals near aqua plants. A regulation on whale watching has been approved that prohibits activity that displace whales from their natural habitat, prohibits whale watching closer than 0.2 nautical miles from fishing vessels or fixed gear and prohibits swimming, diving or paddling closer than 0.4 nautical miles from fishing vessels or fixed gear.

Greenland is revising the executive order (EO) on walrus and the revised EO is expected to come into force in 2020. Levermann also informed that all laws and regulations are available online on www.lovgivning.gl, and all annual *Piniarneq* booklets are available on www.businessingreenland.gl. There are ongoing efforts to update the webpage of the Ministries with more information and data becoming available electronically.

Winsnes informed that an overview of all applicable laws and regulations in original language were given on the website (<https://nammco.no/topics/laws-and-regulations/>). Where official legal translations to English or Danish exist, they are included. CHM was reminded that it has previously agreed for the purpose of transparency to develop English summaries of main content for all listings.

4. ANNUAL REPORTING FROM MEMBERS

In 2019 the Council decided to extend the annual national progress reporting to include standardised data requirements from all committees and subsidiary bodies and not only the Scientific Committee. The Secretariat had circulated an email to this extent with the agreed deadline of 1 February.

CHM like CIO saw the reporting for the year 2019 as a trial year to assess if the identified data categories were functional and if needed to make improvements and decide on follow up actions.

Only Iceland and the Faroe Islands had submitted their reports within the deadline. Greenland suggested a few revisions to the new data collection template, but CHM agreed to postpone the discussion until all reports were available.

5. WORKSHOP (WS)/EXPERT GROUP MEETING (EGM)

At the last meeting CHM noted the lack of new information to benefit organising an EGM on small cetaceans. CHM reiterated the importance of exploring possible alternatives to the hunting methods where death was not immediately, e.g. types of hunts requiring harpooning before killing in order not to lose the animal. Also acknowledging that the majority of the small cetaceans' hunts in NAMMCO are carried out by this method, CHM had concluded:

- to combine the two events and focus on methods to improve animal welfare in hunts for all marine mammals where harpoon and rifle is not one weapon, i.e. all small cetaceans, minke whales, seals and walruses.

Nette Levermann, Signar Petersen, Kathrine Ryeng and Charlotte Winsnes had been tasked to form a planning group to work intersessional and report back to CHM. The group was never scheduled to meet, and instead the Chair and the Secretary had prepared NAMMCO/CHM-2020-01/06 as background for this agenda item.

CHM discussed the format, whether this should be a WS or an EGM, or a combination of the two. EGMs dealing with assessment of killing methods considering inter alia time to death data have been smaller events. Participation of experts (veterinarians, biologist, statisticians and hunters) have been by invitation only to secure the presence of relevant expertise. Workshops dealing with hunting and killing methods but on a different level have typically attracted a larger group of people as these have been open for all interested parties. The transparency aspect of the WS has been viewed as valuable and important towards the outside world.

Members held different opinions regarding format but concluded that it should be organised as an EGM.

The idea of an EGM originated from recommendations from the 2010 EGM on small cetaceans. Greenland informed they had collected the recommended data on TTD for narwhal and beluga. However, analysis remains to be done before an assessment can be carried out. Reference was also made to the Faroe Islands examinations initiated by Petersen, pertaining to the spinal lance not being optimal for the dolphin hunt in the Faroe Islands.

CHM urged Greenland to finalise the analysis prior to the EGM and the Faroe Islands to undertake structured examinations and develop a spinal lance blade that will improve the dolphin hunt.

CHM agreed to recommend the following:

The scope

- To improve hunts where the animal is harpooned and shoot in separate sequences deploying two different types of weapons. In NAMMCO this would pertain to small cetaceans' hunts, the rifle hunt for minke whales, seal- and walrus hunts.

Terms of reference

- Review and assess current hunting and killing methods,
- Review and assess information on recent and ongoing research on improvements and technical innovations in hunting methods and gear used for hunting,
- Review and assess updates on S/L and TTD data ref. recommendation in the EGM 2011 (narwhal & beluga),
- Discuss and recommend possible technical improvements.

Invited Experts – preliminary not excluding others

- Mads Peter Heide Jørgensen together with technician expert on developing tagging devices for marine mammal hunts in Greenland
- Egil Ole Øen
- Forsvarets forskningsinstitutt (Norway)
- Henriksens verksted
- Pierre-Yves Daoust
- Lars Walløe
- Hunters covering the focus hunts
- Robert Suydam

CHM underlined the importance of seeking expertise and experience from similar hunts outside of NAMMCO. As a first step it was agreed to look towards Canada and Alaska. Chukotka, Japan and Caribbean states would also be possible participants.

Greenland has close cooperation with Canada and the territories on many hunts and Levermann with the aid of the Secretariat agreed to reach out to contacts in Canada, and the Caribbean.

Budget

NOK 100 000 has been allocated as a lump sum in 2020. The expenses are related to the number of invited experts paid by NAMMCO and will have to be revised when the list of participants is finalised. NAMMCO will cover the external experts while member countries normally cover the costs of their respective hunters. Generally, CHM considered that the EGM is arranged for the benefit of hunters and thus their participation should not be covered by NAMMCO.

Time and venue

Given that these are all hunts that take place in Greenland CHM agreed to recommend holding it in Maniitsoq or Ilulissat in 2021, and tentatively in the second quarter or whatever season is best for the hunters in questions.

Concluding, CHM tasked the Chair in cooperation with Levermann and Winsnes to formulate a proposal including budget for the upcoming Council meeting in March. The proposal will basically be what has been agreed above but with a more realistic budget. If needed a skype meeting will be held prior to Council to finalise the proposal.

For inspiration look at previous WS/EGM at <https://nammco.no/topics/expert-group-meetings/>

6. WEBSITE – QUALITY CHECK

CHM referred to the agreed 3-step process to ensure the quality of the content on the website:

1. To review all current text and information related to CHM on the website by 31.12.2019.
2. To have review of new information on the website as a standard agenda item for the annual meeting of the committee. If needed this may also be done by correspondence intersessionally
3. To consider how to make the work of CHM more visible

With regards to step 1, Norway and the Faroe Islands have reviewed the information pertaining to the species and hunts taking place in their respective countries, Greenland informed that other tasks (annual data reporting) had priority and Iceland committed to submit their input within the end of February.

With regards to step 2 CHM clarified that this represented a way of reminding CHM on its responsibility for quality checking the information displayed on the web.

With regards to step 3 members were encouraged to look at the existing information also from a communication point of view (format, layout, accessibility on the site) keeping in mind that the website was created in 2016.

One proposal was to develop an overview of legislative calibre and ammunition pertaining to different hunts, both what is used and if there are recommendations based on shooting studies to use different types.

7. WORKPLAN 2020-2021

CHM has agreed that the main criteria for future work should be: *To focus on hunts where animal welfare aspects are highlighted in recommendations and where improvements are important and possible.*

CHM agreed on the following workplan:

2020

Finalise EGM proposal for Council 28

Meeting 26-27 August

- Assess the quality and functionality of the requested annual data input
- Planning the EGM on hunting efficiency to be held in 2021
- Finalise the video on handling the Whale grenade 99 – Winsnes will contact Henriksen Verksted
- Review document 07 – categorise into active (ongoing, pending) and completed (including if it is decided that the recommendation will not be followed up)

2021

- Planning and organise the EGM
- Follow up unresolved issues from 2020

8. ACTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW UP

Document NAMMCO/CHM-2020-01/07 presented an overview of recommendations to member countries arising from EGM and WS and endorsed by the committee and Council, and responses from member countries.

CHM agreed to go through all recommendations and give input on whether this is completed or still active preferably with a reason noted.

The process was started during the meeting and recommendations up to and including number 63 were covered. To facilitate the process members were responsible for noting the results pertaining to their recommendations and submit these to the Secretariat afterwards for compilation into one document.

Looking at the recommendations from 1999 onwards, noting that many were still standing and presumably still valid, spurred a discussion around the rationality of using resources on new initiatives when member countries did not have the financial or political power to follow up. No conclusion was reached but CHM agreed that it was pertinent to have a dialogue and discussion around such fundamental questions.

CHM agreed to that it would be important to review the list of recommendations with the aim of identifying those that relates to the planned EGM. Winsnes in cooperation with the Chair will provide this overview for the next meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on 26-27 August in Copenhagen.

10. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The report was adopted by correspondence on 28 February 2020.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

- 1. Adoption of agenda and review of documents**
- 2. Updates list of laws and regulations and list of references**
- 3. Annual reporting from members**
- 4. Workshop/expert group meeting**
- 5. Website – quality check**
- 6. Workplan 2020-2021**
- 7. Active recommendations and follow up**
- 8. Next meeting**
- 9. Adoption of the report**

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DOCUMENTS**WORKING DOCUMENTS**

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
CHM/2020-01/01	Draft Agenda	1
CHM/2020-01/02	Draft List of Documents	1
CHM/2020-01/03	List of laws and regulations	2
CHM/2020-01/04	List of references on hunting methods	2
CHM/2020-01/05	Annual data reporting from members	3
CHM/2020-01/06	Workshop planning	4
CHM/2020-01/07	Overview of recommendations from EGM/WS to member countries	7

FOR INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
CHM/2020-01/FI01	Report of previous meetings https://nammco.no/topics/committee-on-hunting-methods/	
CHM/2020-01/FI02	Report of EGM on small cetaceans 2011 https://nammco.no/topics/expert-group-meetings/	4