

NAMMCO



COMMITTEE ON HUNTING METHODS

*11 June 2020
Video Conference*

REPORT



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1. SUMMARY

The Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM) held a video conference on 11 June 2020. Present were Kathrine A. Ryeng (Chair) (Norway), Guðni Magnus Eiríksson and Kristján Loftsson (Iceland), Sofia Abelsen, Nette Levermann and Jesper Ødegaard Jacobsen (Greenland), Signar Petersen (Faroe Islands), and Mana Tugend (NAMMCO intern) and Charlotte Winsnes from the Secretariat.

The primary aim of this meeting was to discuss the planning of an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) scheduled for 2021.

Actions arising from the meeting

Greenland

- To propose a date for the EGM 2021.
- Greenlandic hunters in the 2015 EGM had pointed to clear differences in killing efficiency between regions, and Greenland was encouraged to look into this before the meeting
- To look for video footage of the hunts

Secretariat

- To send invitations to Canada, Alaska and other potential countries for the EGM.
- To send a preliminary program and the invitations to the experts before 15 July 2020, after discussing the candidates with other CHM members.
- To prepare a doodle poll regarding the date of the next CHM meeting.

All members

- To identify suitable experts for the EGM and send the names to the Secretariat as soon as possible and no later than 1 July 2020. This will then be discussed per email or through a short virtual meeting before 14 July.
- To review the preliminary program and give input with this report.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND REVIEWING DOCUMENTS

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

3. PLANNING OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING 2021

3.1 AIM OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING

The aim of the present agenda items is to make a timeline for how to proceed for the EGM. At the last meeting, CHM established the scope for the EGM, which is:

- 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.

The focus of the meeting will be two-folded. One part will assess the time to death (TTD) for narwhal and beluga collected by Greenland as a follow up from the 2011 Expert group meeting on small cetaceans. However, analysis remains to be done before an assessment can be carried out, and Greenland reiterated its commitment to finalise these before the EGM. To assure the completion of the analysis prior to the meeting, Greenland informed that a three-steps strategy had been identified.

The second part of the meeting will be dedicated to brainstorming ways to improve hunting methods involving both harpooning and rifle. CHM agreed that to succeed would require the involvement of both experts with a practical experience on the technical aspects of hunting like weaponry and

ballistics and researchers working on animal welfare. The participants should have a broad range of knowledge such as *inter alia* biology, veterinary medicine and hunting experience/ knowledge.

The CHM agreed to internally discuss and identify potential experts and submit their names with reasons for suggesting him/her to the Secretariat before the end of June.

The CHM reiterated the importance of having participation from other regions with similar hunting practices, such as Canada (Nunavut, Makivik, other territories and the United States of America (Alaska). To establish interest the Secretariat should approach these regions inviting them to participate and request their response by 15 September. It was agreed to also send invitation to Russia and relevant Caribbean states.

The CHM acknowledged that there were at least two possible outcomes for the meeting:

- new probable ideas will surface and Greenland and NAMMCO will be recommended to follow this up, or
- a recognition that the likelihood of finding better methods in the foreseeable future that take into account both hunting efficiency, hunters' safety and animal welfare does not exist

The importance of visualisation was underlined, and Greenland was encouraged to obtain video footage of relevant hunts. The CHM recalled that Greenlandic hunters in the 2015 EGM had pointed to clear differences in killing efficiency between regions, and Greenland was encouraged to look into this as it would be a valuable input to the meeting.

The CHM discussed whether the two points to be discussed at the meeting should be separated into two meetings: an EGM to assess the data collected by Greenland and a workshop (WS) discussing the hunting methods and ways to improve them with invited experts. It was suggested that the EGM takes place online prior to the WS, but after discussion it was not seen as feasible due to technical difficulties (low internet speed) and not the least the need for interpretation for the Greenlandic hunters.

The CHM agreed that the labelling of the meeting was less important be it an EGM or a WS, but it would be organised as one single meeting in Greenland targeting both goals, i.e. assessing TTD and brainstorming.

At the last meeting, CHM urged the Faroe Islands to undertake structured examinations and develop a spinal lance blade that will improve the dolphin hunt. The Faroe Islands have developed such spinal lance, but have not been able to test it, due to the circumstances induced by the covid-19. The new spinal blade is 2,5cm in width and 5cm in length.

3.2 PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

The Chair shared a preliminary program for the EGM (see Appendix 3). The preliminary program includes five parts:

1. Introduce the aim of the meeting and give necessary background information relate to scope. Clarify what the gold standard is, what the ideal weapon is, what species are targeted what the TTD is, etc.
2. Presentation of the various hunting methods: hunting using harpoon or firearms or combinations of both harpoon and firearms.
3. Reviewing and assessing struck and loss (S/L) and TTD data on narwhal and beluga hunts in Greenland.
4. Review of the assessment of the recent and ongoing research pertaining to the improvements and technical innovations in hunting methods and gear for hunting.
5. Discussion and recommendations of possible technical improvements (the main part of the brainstorming module of the meeting).

The CHM discussed the draft agenda and agreed to give further input when reviewing the draft report of the meeting.

3.3 TIME AND VENUE

The meeting shall take place in Greenland in 2021. At the previous CHM meeting, the cities of Maniitsoq and Illulissat had been suggested. However, Greenland had reviewed the options including Sisimiut and for logistical and other reasons proposed Illulissat as venue for the meeting.

The CHM had previously said that the meeting should take place during the second quarter of 2021. Greenland agreed to come back with a proposal for time taking into account what suits the hunters best.

4. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled as a face to face meeting in Copenhagen on 26-27 August 2020. However, in view of the covid-19, it was agreed to postpone the meeting to after the deadline for responses from other regions and invited experts (15 September 2020).

The CHM discussed the *pro et con* of face to face meetings versus virtual meetings. The experience so far is that platforms like Zoom and Teams enables virtual meetings to be as productive as physical meetings, albeit not fostering communication among members to the same extent. However, the advantages of less travel for the environment and financially and timewise for the organisation and its members are substantial. Virtual meetings also give more flexibility to the structure of a meeting, i.e. a full day of sitting in a meeting may be divided into two or more modules/sequences.

Recognising that the scene of virtual meetings is still new, the CHM agreed to an annual meeting schedule based on virtual meetings and only one face to face meeting.

The CHM agreed that the next meeting shall be held remotely on two consecutive days. The Secretariat will set up a doodle poll for the period 21 September to 16 October.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

6. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The report was adopted by correspondence on 25 June 2020.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

- 1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS**
- 2. EXPERT GROUP MEETING 2021**
- 3. NEXT MEETING**
- 4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

WORKING DOCUMENTS

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
CHM-2020-02/EGM planning/01	Draft Annotated Agenda	1
CHM-2020-02/EGM planning/02	List of recommendations relating to the focus of the EGM	
CHM-2020-01	Agenda item 5 from the last CHM meeting held in February 2020 https://nammco.no/topics/committee-on-huntingmethods/	
NAMMCO/CHM-2020-01/07-	Overview of recommendations to member countries arising from EGM and WS endorsed by the Committee and the Council	3

FOR INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
CHM/2020-02/FI01	Report of previous meetings https://nammco.no/topics/committee-on-huntingmethods/	1
CHM/2020-02/FI02	Previous WS/EGM https://nammco.no/topics/expert-group-meetings/	

APPENDIX 3: PRELIMINARY AGENDA FOR THE EGM

1. **Introduction to 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
 - What species to focus on? Minke, narwhal and beluga, more?
 - Animal welfare – optimal weapon
 - Anatomical features for the different small cetaceans, minke whale (Narwhal, beluga, hp, white sided/white beaked dolphins, pilot whale, killer whale)
 - Criteria of death /reflexes
 - TTD – why/how/how many
 - Ballistics?

2. **Hunting using harpoon or firearms or combinations of harpoon/firearms**
 - Greenland – presentations of hunting methods of different species and seasons
 - Specifications of weapons used / caliber /bullet type/harpoon / floating devices / step by step / influencing factors
 - Experienced hunters / specific problem factors/success factors
 - What is feasible
 - TTD
 - Canada – presentations of hunting methods of different species and seasons
 - Specifications of weapons used / caliber /bullet type/harpoon / floating devices / step by step / influencing factors
 - Experienced hunters / specific problem factors/success factors
 - What is feasible
 - Other countries

3. **Review and assess updates on S/L and TTD data ref. recommendation in the EGM 2011 (narwhal & beluga) - Greenland**

4. **Review and assess information on recent and ongoing research on improvements and technical innovations in hunting methods and gear used for hunting**
 - **Small cetaceans**
 - **Greenland**
 - **Canada**
 - **Other**
 - **Large whales**
 - **Alaska**
 - **Greenland**
 - **Canada?**
 - **Other?**

5. **Discuss and recommend possible technical improvements**
 - a. **Small cetaceans**
 - b. **Minke whale**
 - c. **Seals**