



What is the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission?

Background

The North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) was established in 1982 by the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway, as a regional wildlife management body concerned with the conservation of marine mammals in the North Atlantic region.

The reason for NAMMCO's creation was the signatories' dissatisfaction with the International Whaling Commission (IWC), notably with its ten-year moratorium on all commercial whaling in 1982 and the fact that the IWC was not serving the purpose of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling stated in its preamble.

Furthermore, it was felt the IWC lacked competence to deal with small whales and that there was a need for a multilateral organisation to deal with other marine mammals, such as seals and walrus.

Therefore, NAMMCO was founded on the idea that a regional organisation was a better vehicle for effectively achieving regional cooperation and managing sustainable use while respecting the needs of coastal communities and indigenous peoples.

Mandate

The NAMMCO Agreement stipulates that with regards to the members' common concerns for "the conservation and optimum utilization of the living resources of the sea" the objective of the Commission "shall be to contribute through regional consultation and cooperation to the conservation, rational management and study of marine mammals in the North Atlantic."

Members

Current members are the original signatory countries, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway.

Observers

The Governments of Canada, Russia, Denmark, Japan, St. Lucia and USA and the EU are observers to NAMMCO.

Six Sectors

NAMMCO is divided into six main sectors, consisting of the Council, two Management Committees, a Scientific Committee, a Committee on Harvesting Methods, a Committee on Inspection and Observation and a Secretariat.

Council

The Council is comprised of member government representatives. It meets once a year to review the advice requested from and provided by its subsidiary bodies and makes management recommendations and proposals to its members directly and through the management committees. Decisions are reached by consensus.

North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

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