



What is the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission?

Background

The North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) was established in 1992 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 multiregional organization to deal with other marine mammals, such as seals and walrus.

Therefore, NAMMCO was founded on the idea that a regional organization 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 Hunting 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

Postbox 6453, Sykehusveien 21-23, N-9294 Tromsø, Norway

Tel: +47 77687371; E-mail: nammco-sec@nammco.no

Website: www.nammco.no, Facebook: www.facebook.com/nammco.no/



Management Committees

NAMMCO has two Management Committees, for cetaceans and for seals and walrus. They make proposals for conservation and management and recommendations for scientific research with respect to stocks of marine mammals within their mandate.

The Management Committees comprises members appointed by the member nations. The Management Committees meet annually and the reports of the Management Committees are included in the Annual Reports.

Scientific Committee and Research

Scientists from the NAMMCO member countries are involved in many different research projects related to marine mammals in the North Atlantic, covering all species of resident marine mammals and including the endemic Arctic species (bowhead whales, beluga, narwhal, walrus and ringed and bearded seal research). The Scientific Committee meets annually, and provides advice in response to requests from the Council.

See link for research highlights <http://www.nammco.no/about-nammco/scientific-committee/research-in-nammco-member-countries/>

Committee on Hunting Methods

The Committee provides advice on hunting methods for marine mammals. The advice is based on the best available scientific findings, technological developments and traditional and local knowledge, with due consideration given to safety requirements, animal welfare and efficiency of utilisation.

Committee on inspection and Observation

The Committee provides advice on the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme for the hunting of marine mammals. The Committee monitors the implementation of the Observation Scheme under the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme and provides recommendations for improvements.

Secretariat

The NAMMCO Secretariat has 3 full-time staff members — a General Secretary, assisted by a Deputy Secretary and a Scientific Secretary. The Secretariat is responsible for carrying out the work of the Commission, coordinating and organizing meetings of the various NAMMCO Committees, and preparing and publishing the reports from NAMMCO.

Website

The new website launch at the occasion of the 25-year jubilee (April 2017) contains information on NAMMCO, NAMMCO's work and views, as well as extensive information on marine mammals with focus on the stocks hunted in the NAMMCO area, see at <https://nammco.no/marinemammals/>

Effectiveness

In a relatively short time, NAMMCO established itself as a powerful and evolving voice in the marine mammal management community.

In strong contrast to the International Whaling Commission, where polarization has made progress seem impossible, NAMMCO has been able to achieve significant cooperation amongst its members with the goal of rational management of North Atlantic marine mammal populations.

North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

Postbox 6453, Sykehusveien 21-23, N-9294 Tromsø, Norway

Tel: +47 77687371; E-mail: nammco-sec@nammco.no

Website: www.nammco.no, Facebook: www.facebook.com/nammco.no/