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**DOCUMENT 16 REPORT FROM THE PROJECT ON MARINE MAMMALS AS
FOOD RESOURCES**

**Submitted by: Planning Group for the Marine Mammals as Food Resources
(MMFR) project**

Action requested:

- Take note of the progression of the project
- Provide input

REPORT FROM THE PROJECT MARINE MAMMALS AS FOOD RESOURCES

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ministerial Meeting in 2012 emphasised the importance of an increased focus on marine mammals as a food resource. A Planning Group (PG) was established at NAMMCO 21 (September 2012) to progress on this issue.

The PG outlined two main parts in the project – firstly, production of a background document reviewing and compiling the existing material on the topic, and secondly, communicating the message. The second part required a communication strategy involving experts in communication to develop the message. The development of background document started in May 2015.

2. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES SINCE NAMMCO 25 (APRIL 2017)

- Meeting of the PG:
 - November 3, present: Jóannes V. Hansen (FO), Amalie Jessen (GL), Geneviève Desportes and Charlotte Winsnes (Sec).
- Organisation of a Breakout Session at the Arctic Circle in October in Reykjavík, Iceland, together with NTI and WWF (See Doc NAMMCO/26/17 for details): „*Arctic sealing: threat or blue prospect*” with a presentation from Desportes: *“Is Arctic sealing responsible in an ecosystem perspective”*. The BOS was attended by ca. 120 people of different backgrounds. The Inuit regions of Canada and Alaska were resented as participants.
- Participation at several conferences/events, with presentations on different aspects of marine mammals as food resources.
- Initiation of the life cycle assessment pilot project, comparing the ecological cost of consuming locally hunted seals contra alternative imported protein sources in Greenland.

3. STATUS OF THE PROJECT

3.1 Part I. Background document

The background document titled “*Marine Mammals: a Multifaceted Resource*” was completed and posted on the new website in April 2017. An executive summary/appetiser/trailer will be added to the document.

The document was to be considered more like a white paper and not intended for publication. It was, however, reviewed and complemented by various persons, who strongly recommended that it be published. The Secretariat is presently updating the document. The PG agreed that it

would be a good idea to publish the background document and recommended to investigate the possibilities of publishing it in the IGWIA journal.

The document is extensively displayed and referenced on the website, and the content has been used as background for several presentations. The Greenland Ministry of Fisheries, Hunting and Agriculture has decided to translate part of the document for inclusion on their website.

3.2 Part II. Communication strategy

Different aspects of the project were presented at different fora (Table 1).

The PG agreed that it might be worth attending fora like the World Seafood Congress (WSC) as they represent fora that are quite different from what NAMMCO normally attends and as such the outreach effect may potentially be higher. For this kind of activities to have any real effect, it was likely beneficial to attend more than one time. Any attendance at future WSC should explore possibilities for coordination with other projects such as the “Arctic as a food producing region”.

The kid/youth focus, with development of a special site on the website and special teaching material, was not developed so far. However, the Secretariat had contacted Tromsø University and Tromsø teacher Seminaries in an effort to get them interested in a kid/youth project, but with no success until now. This effort will be continued in the future.

The PG felt that it was important to target this age group and hoped that the idea would be followed up by NAMMCO. The Secretariat was encouraged to continue its efforts to engage with the teacher schools and communication (any kind) departments of universities/high schools.

3.3 Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) analysis

An interesting side effect of the attendance to the WSC was meeting with a Swedish LCA expert. *Life-cycle assessment¹ (LCA, also known as life-cycle analysis, eco-balance, and cradle-to-grave analysis) is a technique to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product's life from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, repair and maintenance, and disposal or recycling. LCAs can help avoid a narrow outlook on environmental concerns by:*

- *Compiling an inventory of relevant energy and material inputs and environmental releases;*
- *Evaluating the potential impacts associated with identified inputs and releases;*
- *Interpreting the results to help make a more informed decision.*

The PG agreed that it would be interesting to do this kind of analysis for marine mammal products from the different NAMMCO countries and compare with alternative products. The PG agreed that the remaining money on the budget for 2017 should be used to initiate a small pilot Life Cycle Assessment project.

The Swedish Institute RISE has been contracted to conduct the LCA pilot project. The pilot project is started and will compare the ecological cost of consuming seal meat and imported

¹ Wikipedia

chicken/pork meat in Greenland. A short description of the project and its status can be found in appendix 1.

Table 1. Communication events related to the MMFR project

Dates	Meeting and organisateur	Venue	NAMMCO Staff	Input from NAMMCO staff	Screening of Angry Inuk
May					
09	Conference on Sustainable Utilisation, Arctic Group to Danish Parliament	Copenhagen	CW	Presentation: "NAMMCO 25 years - role, experience and responsibility", MMFR project mentioned	
September					
10 - 13	World Seafood Congress 2017	Reykjavik, Iceland	GD	Presentation: "Sealing and Whaling and Blue Growth: Coherence or paradox?"	
October					
13 - 15	Arctic Circle Assembly	Reykjavik, Iceland	GD	NAMMCO/NTI/WWF BOS: "Arctic sealing: threat or blue prospect" - GD presentation: "Is Arctic sealing responsible in an ecosystem perspective"	yes
22 - 27	Society for Marine Mammalogy Biennial	Halifax, Nova Scotia	JP, GD	NAMMCO Booth a.o. with presentation of leaflet "No food - or?" and the summary of the booklet "Marine Mammals - a Multifaceted Resource"	
November					
08	Nordistmødet, NCM	Oslo, Norge	GD	Presentation: "Contributing to a Sustainable North – NAMMCO"; MMFR project mentioned	
29	How can we support indigenous people's sustainable hunt in the Arctic? The initiative of a QR Code for Seal Skin, EP	Brussels, Belgium	GD	Presentation: "Arctic Sealing, a blue activity?"	
30	The initiative of a QR Code for Seal Skin; Greenland representation				
	Think.DK	Copenhagen, Denmark	GD	Presentation: "Is Arctic Sealing responsible in an Ecosystem Perspective?"	yes
December					
07 - 08	Norwegian Small Whalers Union	Svolvær, Norge	CW	Presentation: "25 år med NAMMCO - hva er oppnådd?"; MMFR project mentioned	
17	Human Rights Cultural Festival, European Master on Human Rights and Democratisation	Venice, Italy	GD	Presentation: "Arctic Sealing - an Ecosystem Perspective"	yes

4. BUDGET

The accounting for 2017 and budget for 2018 is presented in Table 2.

The project is due to deliver its final report to the Nordic Council of Ministers in December 2018.

CONCLUSION

The PG agreed that the main goals of the project were successfully reached and agreed to finalise the project by the end of 2017, except for a LCA analysis, which will therefore constitute the last part of the project.

It was also agreed that instead of developing entirely new presentations and try to tune them for different target groups, the Secretariat would make the existing presentations available on the website for all interested parties to use as they see fit.

The PG agreed that it was important to continue to flag marine mammals as food resource. The convening of events such as BOS was encouraged, and it was recommended that the next such event should focus more on the human dimension and storytelling through interventions by the

hunters and stake holders themselves more than managers/scientists. One should also explore the possibilities for a food event based on marine mammals.

The planning group agreed to recommend to Council:

- To consider the project as finalised, except for the LCA analysis.
- To continue with organising side events or meetings/conferences with an emphasis on marine mammal as food resource, in particular from a story telling perspective.

Table 2: Project accounting 2017 and budget 2018

	Notes 2017	Accounts 2017	Budget 2018
Funding			
NAMMCO salaries		200,000	100,000
NAMMCO general MMFR		100,000	
Nordic Council of Ministers			36,000
ISI - Greenland			
Transferred from previous year		159,538	120,712
		459,538	256,712
Expenses			
Staff salaries		200,000	100,000
Planning group meetings	1	26,321	
Stine Leth-Nissen - summary of background doc	2	13,856	
Language editing of background document		5,174	
Arctic Circle	3	45,775	
Printing and development of leaflet		4,567	
World Seafood Congress	4	20,973	
Stine Leth-Nissen - contract work MMFR presentation	5	4,000	
Meeting in EU, Brussels		12,730	
Venice Cultural Festival		5,160	
Miscellaneous		270	
Life Cycle Assessment project			145,000
Updating and publication of background document			11,712
		338,826	256,712
		Result	-

NOTES 2017:

1: meeting November travel AJ+JH+CW

2: contract work

3: registration and travel expenses GD + invited speakers and moderator

4: registration fee and travel expenses GD

5: contract work presentation

Appendix 1: Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of alternative food choices in Greenland

What will be done and why? LCA is a method for assessment of environmental impacts of products that has been used to quantify the environmental impacts of food production systems for a few decades now. It is often used to make comparisons between products or the same product produced in different ways. Here, the goal is to quantify the environmental impacts of seal meat produced in Greenland with the most common alternative protein food product consumed, which will be identified in literature/statistics. The production, processing and transportation of this alternative product to Greenland will be contrasted with locally produced seal meat to study primarily greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. Other impacts will be studied more qualitatively such as, animal welfare and use of land, antibiotics and pesticides in both supply chains (alternative protein and seal). The study is a pilot study, since no LCA studies have so far been undertaken on marine mammal meat.

Who is doing the work? The study is led by Friederike Ziegler at RISE Research Institutes of Sweden in Gothenburg, Sweden, e-mail: friederike.ziegler@ri.se, Tel. +46 704 205609. Feel free to get in touch with any questions you might have.

Who is involved? The North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) has initiated (and funded) this work (the overall MMFR project being supported by The Nordic Council of Minister). The project will be undertaken in collaboration with the Greenlandic Ministry for Fisheries and Hunting and the Greenlandic association of Fishers and Hunters (KNAPK). All organisations are part of the reference group and will assist with data collection.

How will results be used? Results will be used to inform (through the NAMMCO website and possibly in presentations) about the relative environmental performance of consuming seal products versus alternative imported animal-based foods. Results will be presented in a report or, if possible, be published scientifically.

If the pilot project gives informative results, funding will be sought to extend the LCA analysis to all NAMMCO countries.

Present Status: The project has held one skype meeting (February 21). Data and information requirements were discussed, as well as relevant sources and literature. The project is in a data and information collection phase.

The project should be completed by November 2018.