

Report from the Meeting of the Planning Group (PG) for MMFR

7 February 2016, Akersgaten 59, Oslo, Norway

Participants: Einarsdóttir (IS), Jessen (GR), Hansen (FR), J, Tøvik Astroza (No), Desportes and Winsnes (Sec). Amalie Jessen chaired the meeting. Meeting facilities was organised by Norway. The only meeting document was the draft background document developed by the Secretariat.

Actions arising from the meeting:

Secretariat

- **Incorporate in the background document the ideas brought up at the meeting and finalise the document by mid-March and circulate to PG.**
- **Develop a communication strategy, together with a communication expert to be presented at the June meeting.**
- **Prepare a test Power Point presentation rising the issues of MM as FR and addressing managers in NAMMCO countries to be presented at the June meeting.**

PG members

- **Sending relevant references addressing food security issues and the positive health contribution and the pollution aspects to the Secretariat as soon as possible.**
- **Commenting on the background document and give input at the latest by mid-April.**
- **Each country will present their outreach material and campaign at the June meeting.**

1. Chair's opening remarks

Jessen thanked Norway for organising the meeting and noted that it was already three years ago that the decision of this project had been taken (NAMMCO 21, 2012). She underlined the importance of rising the awareness of marine mammals as food resources and mentioned that Food Security was a growing issue in small communities of Northern and eastern Greenland.

2. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted, the report of the PG to Council would be dealt with under 7. AOB

3. Presentation / Summary on the project

Jessen summarised the development of the project, at the attention of the two new members of the PG, Hansen and Tøvik Astroza, with *Part I. Background document* and *Part II. Communication strategy*. The communication strategy should address the communication of the information to different target groups, managers, media and the general public. She noted that the project had been under prioritised and was therefore delayed. Winsnes gave the budget background.

4. Status of the Budget

The funds available to the project are NOK 325.000 in 2016 and NOK 220.000 in 2017. So far, the only cost incurred has been salaries of the Secretariat and the time used by the Planning Group.

	Accounts 2015	Revised budget 2016	Draft budget 2017
Funding			
NAMMCO salaries	100,000	325,000	175,000
NAMMCO general MMFR		150,000	100,000
Nordic Council of Ministers		150,000	100,000
ISI - Greenland	45,880		
Transferred from previous year			45,880
Total funding	145,880	625,000	420,880
Expenses			
Staff salaries	100,000	300,000	200,000
Planning group meeting 2 meetings		100,000	100,000
Development of communication strategy and message		200,000	95,880
Presentations/side events		25,000	25,000
Total expenses	100,000	625,000	420,880
Result	45,880	0	0

It was not clear at this point whether there will be a need for more funding, as this will depend on the level of activities.

5. Follow up from the last MMFS meeting (June 2015)

At the January 2015 meeting the PG agreed to ask Norway to investigate the possibility of getting expert help from the communication / information department in the Ministry. Astroza had been in contact with them, but they could not pronounce themselves without seeing the background document and receiving more specific inquiries.

It was noted that there was presently quite a lot of noise in Denmark regarding what was happening with Great Greenland as a result of the EU ban on seal skin. For the small communities it has resulted in the loss of important working places and a general situation where seal skins are bought by the government to financially help the hunters only to be destructed instead of being utilised. There was quite a lot of support expressed and the timing was therefore likely good to start an awareness campaign.

6. Status of Project part I: Background document

The PG reviewed in some details the draft background document prepared by the Secretariat and presented by Desportes. The PG thanked the Secretariat for its work and commended the document produced.

The PG agreed that the document represented a very valuable and comprehensive tool, touching upon most aspects of the issue at hand. Numerous ideas for improvement were proposed and

discussed by the group. As a principle, the document should continue not to refer to “indigenous people”, and the part on Indigenous rights should be moved in an appendix.

It was decided that the Secretariat would review the document in the light of the proposed changes, incorporates the ideas brought up at the meeting and finalise a draft for Mid-March. The PG would have until Mid-April for commenting on the document and give their input.

7. Status of Project part II: Communication strategy

On the basis of the final draft, the communication and outreach strategy would be developed by the Secretariat but with the cooperation of a communication specialist, thus using funds available to the project for this.

The PG unanimously agreed that it needed the help of a communication specialist/marketing person for elaborating a communication strategy and an awareness campaign. It agreed to use (part of) the NOK 200.000 on the 2016 budget to this aim.

The group reviewed examples of changes in public perception due to awareness campaigns. Examples cited were domestic violence and the rights of indigenous people.

Outcome of the project and success criteria

The PG underlined the importance of defining the expected outcome from the project. In other words, what was the overall target group which should be reached and “moved” and moved where. This was important to define as it would be the basis for identifying success criteria and thus being able to evaluate the project and its progress.

Target group(s)

It was important to define who should be targeted? This would also allow to evaluate the success of the project.

Civil servants were receptive to factual arguments, but changing the public opinion could not be achieved without reaching and interesting the media.

The PG agreed that the minimum to achieve was to reach “Group 2”, i.e., the group of people between those who accept sealing and whaling as normal providers of food resource and those “religiously” against the use of marine mammals. If the project succeeded in getting acceptance and respect, not automatically support, for these activities in group 2, then the project will have succeeded.

It was underlined that often people built their opinion based on false premises or lack of information. Often when they are presented with well-founded facts, they may change their view and/or their level of acceptance. Hansen reported the Faroese success with pilot whaling and the support gained from the Danish parliamentarians because of an intensive factual information campaign.

Outreach strategy

The strategy would need to identify more specific target groups and the specific content of the messages to address, as well as the relevant substantiating facts.

The strategy should also define what should be done at the level of NAMMCO and what should be done at the level of the Parties.

The general message should be factual and reflect that NAMMCO countries were proud of their view on marine mammal conservation.

This strategy would be presented to the Group at its meeting in June. It should include for each target group identified, the relevant key messages to be delivered and the information best substantiating these key messages.

Together with this strategy a power point would be prepared and presented to the PG, as an example/test presentation. The target group for that specific presentation would be Managers in NAMMCO Countries.

The PG agreed that it was important to learn from each other experience and decided that each country would present examples of media/public outreach and public relation at the June meeting. Examples of interesting websites were norskhval.no and whaling.fo. A company to investigate was maybe Master Vision (DK).

The PG felt confident and positive in the outcome of the project and its chance of success. It was however, important to focus on the success criteria and to progress in logical steps, monitor progress and gaining experience on the ways.

The importance for NAMMCO of being pro-active in communication and visible on social media was underlined, as well as the necessity of being totally open and transparent. NAMMCO should be proud of its management, and its management results and the improvement in hunting methods and its observation scheme.

8. Review of Time schedule for the project – part 1 and part 2

The Secretariat would incorporate in the background document the ideas brought up at the meeting and finalise the document by mid-March and circulate to the PG. The deadline for comments and input was mid-April.

The Secretariat would develop a communication strategy, together with a communication expert, to be presented at the June meeting and prepare a test Power Point presentation rising the issues of MM as FR and addressing managers in NAMMCO countries to be presented at the June meeting.

While the project has changed in character and has been delayed, the PG felt that it was now well on its way and that the present background document represented a very valuable base to work from.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled back to back with the FAC June meeting on June 21 or 22.

10. AOB

Genevieve would write the report to be presented to Council. Considering the time constraint, she would only circulate it to Amalia.