



REPORT MMFR 11 June 2015

Actions arising from the meeting:

The Secretariat:

- circulate a revised background document based on the discussions in the meeting for comments by July/August.
- contact whalers/sealers Loftsson, Myklebust and Karlsen – find out what they have done on health aspects
- contact Lars Walløe with respect to input on comparison between whaling/sealing and agriculture with respect to different kinds of costs (habitat loss, soil erosion, contamination, release of greenhouse gases, release of chemical additives etc), and the relative energetic cost and carbon footprint of locally produced food versus long travelled food.
- to approach NORA for funding when project part I is finalised

Amalie, chair of MMFR

- follow up with Gerd Mulvad regarding status on research on health aspects

Ole-David, Norway

- contact NIFIS or supply the Secretariat with name of contact person(s) to get an update on health findings since 2004 (Norwegian White paper on marine mammals)

All members

- Comment on the background document when this is available

Meeting of the Planning Group on Marine Mammals as Food Resource

11 June 2015, Greenland Representation, Copenhagen

Participants: Amalie Jessen (GR), chair, Ásta Einardottir, (I), Ole-David Stenseth (N), Geneviève Desportes and Charlotte Winsnes from the secretariat.

1 & 2. Opening remarks for the Chair and adoption of the agenda

The chair welcomed the participants to the meeting, and the agenda was adopted.

3. Follow up from Council and the last MMFS meeting

The update information and discussions under this agenda item are reported under the respective agenda items below.

4. Project part I: Background document

The Secretariat presented a very preliminary draft document built around some of the themes identified at the last meeting. The Committee agreed that it was premature to discuss the document in detail at this stage but rather focused its discussion on a more general, overall level. The following points were made:



- The overarching principle for exploitation of natural resources is that it is sustainable. Either the hunt is sustainable or it is not sustainable, there will be no reference to indigenous or the concept of right of small communities to hunt for special reasons.
- The other principle is that exploitation of animals must take into consideration the welfare of aspects of the hunt i.e. to carry out the hunt in a manner that minimizes animal suffering.
- The ethics of hunting will NOT be discussed. It will only be short general text acknowledging that this is an issue in its own right, and for the purpose of this document, the ethics of killing have different meanings depending on cultures, religions and individuals.
- The goal of the project is to normalize marine mammals as food resources and to show that this is a food resource equal to food from other mammals. The working title was therefore changed from “marine mammals and food security” to “marine mammals as a food resource”. The issue of food security will be one of many concerns/issues deriving from this.
- Health aspect: important to underline that definition of contaminants depends on where in the world you are. Methods of analyzing, techniques used, how contaminants are exposed and documented will differ according to culture. Specifically Gert Mulvad (Amalie) and Lars Walløe (Secretariat) will be contacted for input on the health aspect. NIFIS (National (Norwegian) Institute for Nutrition and Seafood Research) will be contacted to enquire what kind of work have been done (Ole-David).
- Hunting methods will be described in general terms with references to where information on the various hunts can be found. The specifics of the hunts in the member countries will not be detailed.
- Sources of inspiration may be the “Question and answers” found on some governmental homepages dealing with whaling and sealing like the Icelandic, the Faroese and Canadian.
- Generally, the document should be short and to the point with references to further reading. There were discussion of developing kinds of two documents – one for internal use to substantiate our own arguments and one for circulation to the outside world.
- The Secretariat will continue to develop the background document based on the discussion, and a new draft will be circulated in late June for comments in July/August.

5. Project part II – Communication strategy

The Committee reiterated the intention and importance of involving experts on communication to develop a communication strategy and also focus the message. References were again made to a documentary on seaweed, the website “Inspired by Iceland” (Ásta), and the Inuit Sila project (Amalie), and the members would make enquiries as to process and costs.

The Committee discussed the idea of using food presentations//events at NAMMCO meetings and as side events at other meetings as one way of advocating marine mammals as a food resource. Food in the sense of local, regional food has become a new focus for many environmental oriented organisations and people concerned with short travelled, low carbon footprint, healthy food and also



in the long term perspective of food security. Food festivals are popular new arenas and should represent an opportunity for promoting marine mammals. The programme under the Nordic Council of Ministers “New Nordic Food” has been a huge success, and it is of interest to monitor the follow up of this programme.

The target groups are broadly speaking the general public, media and policy makers with a geographical focus on the Nordic countries and Europe. When looking for expert help it was suggested to look for someone from outside the Nordic countries as such a person presumably would have a better understanding of the sentiments and processes creating these sentiments and thus be in a better position to give advice on a way forward. This idea will be taken into consideration when identifying and developing part II of the project.

The Committee briefly discussed the idea of a labelling system for whale and seal meat. Amalie informed the meeting that Greenland has a labelling system for seal skin and there is also an ongoing project on “story telling” that among other things require restaurants to inform their guests on where the meat that they eat comes from. Ole-David reported on the ongoing work taking place by the Whaling Association in Norway on marketing of whale meat.

The following, not finalised, list represents possible meetings/arenas for the presentation of the project: Seaweed event in September in Nuuk, Arctic Council, Arctic Circle, Nordic Council of Ministers, COFI/FAO, IUCN, IWC. In addition, it was agreed that the Secretariat should attend and present the project at the upcoming Ethical dilemmas in Helsinki, Finland in August 2015.

6. Time schedule for the project – part 1 and part 2

The Committee agreed to make an evaluation of the status of the project at the next meeting in the end of September after the Helsinki meeting.

7. Budget

The budget has been revised and is presently at NOK 1 150 000 for 2015 - 2016. This represents NOK 600 000 (Salaries), NOK 200 000 (4 meeting in planning group), NOK 300 000 (development of communication strategy) and NOK 50 000 (presentation of project). NAMMCO contributes with NOK 700 000, Nordic Council of Ministers NOK 260 000), Indigenous Survival Greenland NOK 45 880 in 2015 and probably around DKK 20 000 – 30 000 in 2016. Presently the project needs to find funding for approximately NOK 50 000 – 60 000 in 2016.

It was agreed to approach NORA again when project part I is finalised – i.e the background document to apply for the remaining funding.

8. Next meeting

The next meeting will be 23 September probably in Copenhagen. If members are unable to attend it will be organised so that they may attend via Linc or tele meeting.

9. Adoption of report

The report was adopted by correspondence on 13 July 2015.