

**REPORT FROM
THE PLANNING GROUP ON MARINE MAMMALS AND FOOD SECURITY**

Friday 28 February, Ministry of Trade, Industries and Fisheries, Oslo
09:00 – 14:00 hrs

Present were:

Amalie Jessen (chair) and Nette Levermann (G), Ernst Olsen (FO), Åsta Einarsdottir (D) and Einar Tøllaksen, Guri Marie Beringsgård and Ole-David Stenseth (N), Christina Lockyer and Charlotte Wissnes participated from the Secretariat.

Opening remarks by the chair

Amalie Jessen welcomed participants to the meeting and reviewed the agenda and list of documents. The agenda was adopted. The report from the last meeting on 16 January had been approved by correspondence.

The present report does not follow the agenda (see explanation later) but is structured around the discussions and as such reflects the main decisions.

The project

Initially the idea had been to organise one international event. Two main scenarios had been tabled – organising a small one-day event with a couple of invited speakers as opposed to having a full-fledged international conference over 2-3 days. The rationale behind the small more limited event was that resources and time would be better spent on getting the message out and not on organising the event itself. The underlying assumption being that we already know what message we want to send, namely that marine mammals represents a valuable, nutritious and abundant food supply. When taking into account the FAO's prediction that in the next 40 years the world will need an increase in present food resources of more than 70 % it is irrational to disregard marine mammals as a food resource on the basis of public sentiments that in addition is mostly arising from well fed people in the rich part of the world.

Discussions emphasised the importance of getting the message out, brainstorming around possible high-profile events where our initiative could be back to back or organised as a side event. Actors like FAO, the EU Parliament and future international events and conferences like the RUCN were mentioned.

Taking all of the above into account the Planning Group agreed to change the focus from organising an event to producing a paper/report that would essentially lead up to the message of marine mammals as a valuable, environmental friendly food and nutrition resource. The process would be two-fold – one to produce the report and two to develop a "to the point", attention-triggering method and manner in which to present the message to attract the intended audiences both locally, nationally and internationally. Conceptually the undertaking is more akin to a campaign where emphasis is on the message itself and the means to get it out. Target audience would be politicians, bureaucrats, businesses, retailers, NGOs, media, and the general public.

The meeting agreed to establish an Editorial Board with the task of defining the different themes that should be covered in the report, to identify possible contributors who could be commissioned to write and to oversee the work. The Editorial Board should consist of