



COMMITTEE ON HUNTING METHODS

20 May 2022

Greenland Representation, Copenhagen, Denmark

REPORT



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Please cite this report as:

NAMMCO-North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (2022). Report of the Committee on Hunting Methods, May 2022, Copenhagen

Available at <https://nammco.no/committee-on-hunting-methods-reports/>

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1. SUMMARY

The Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM) met at the Greenland Representation 20 May 2022.

Present were Hild Ynnesdal, Guro Gjelsvik and Kathrine A. Ryeng (chair) (Norway), Guðni Magnús Eiríksson, Elin B. Ragnarsdóttir and Kristján Loftsson (Iceland), Masaana Dorph (Greenland) and Charlotte Winsnes from the Secretariat. Loftsson participated online.

Actions arising from the meeting:

Chair and Secretariat

Finalise video proposal to be circulated for CHM approval prior to Council 29.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

The Chair, Kathrine A. Ryeng, opened the meeting for comments to the agenda. The agenda was adopted, and meeting documents reviewed (Appendix 1). Elin B. Ragnarsdóttir was welcomed as a new member of the committee replacing Guðni Magnús Eiríksson.

3. ANNUAL REPORTING FROM MEMBERS

This agenda item was discussed in a joint meeting of the CIO, CHM and BYCELS.

The current annual reporting to NAMMCO from the member countries was introduced in the 2020 reporting for the year 2019. The content and format of the requests were agreed and approved by Council in 2019 after considerable discussions over several years in all the relevant committees. The background for the new extended reporting was a desire to develop a procedure whereby the member countries submitted, once a year, all the data required for the committees to go about their tasks in the most efficient manner. Furthermore, it was also an attempt to standardise data with the objective of being able to make comparisons between countries and activities.

Based on the accumulated experiences since 2020 it has become apparent that there are too many “non-functional” data categories primarily because they were identified based on a “nice to know” rather than “necessary to know” basis. Experience has also revealed that the diversity of target species, hunting methods, national regulations and praxis make many of the requested data redundant and renders a feeling of purposelessness for the members. Reporting requires the involvement of different national departments and institutions and as such represents a major effort for the member countries. A growing concern from all involved has therefore surfaced when the outcome is that the usability of the reporting does not meet the expectations, and the ruling perception is that the whole annual reporting procedure is ineffective and serves little purpose for the member countries.

The different committees reviewed and re-evaluated all data categories pertaining to their ToR taking into consideration:

- what data does NAMMCO/the committee need to meet its mandate
- priorities for the members with respect to mandate

Several categories were deleted, and the agreed result is reflected in the revised Database May 2022.

In relation to the work of the CHM the following data categories were deleted:

Pinnipeds:

Catch (pups <1 year), actual hunting period, hunting methods pups, number of hunting licences approved, coastal seal hunt, number of seal hunters (GL)

Cetaceans:

Actual hunting period, number of licensed boats/licenses/hunters reporting catches. For Greenland it is reflected that there are two methods, from vessels and skiffs.

The meeting agreed that the manner in which the annual reporting is carried out is not ideal. It is inefficient both for the member countries and for the Secretariat. It was agreed that it would be recommendable to find better ways of doing it, perhaps by implementing new software that would enable members to submit the data directly into the database.

4. VIDEO PROJECT NO 2

Document [NAMMCO/CHM-2022-02/02](#) contained a draft proposal for a second video project developed by Ryeng and Winsnes.

At the last meeting CHM briefly discussed developing an animation video on optimal target location and shooting angle related to large whale hunting with harpoon gun and the rifle as a back-up weapon. The video would represent the 2nd of series of training videos for hunters that will be freely accessible on www.nammco.org.

The general aim is to achieve optimal animal welfare outcomes in large whale hunting through visualising best practice and the optimal use of equipment for increasing *instant death rate* (IDR) and decreasing *time to death* (TTD).

Specifically, this proposal focusses on four different elements/sequences; the chase, target area and shooting angle, assessment of the effect of the shot and back-up rifle.

The CHM welcomed the proposal and especially discussed whether to include the chase. The NAMMCO Expert group meetings in 2010 and 2015 documented that it can play a significant role with respect to TTD and IDR, and that different regions and hunts exercise different approaches. However, recalling that the opportunistic nature of the harpoon gun hunt taking place in NAMMCO countries inflict minimal stress prior to the killing, the CHM agreed that for the purpose of this video the chase would not be included.

It was agreed to ask Ryeng and Winsnes to finalise the proposal, including budgetary considerations, based on the discussion and circulate this by email to the committee before submitting it to Council.

5. ACTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE WORK PRIORITIES

The Secretariat had been asked to revisit document [NAMMCO/CHM-2022-01/02](#) discussed at the last meeting in February. The document gave an overview of active recommendations of a similar nature that were recurring from all WS/EG. The recommendations were grouped under the following headings:

- Training and Education
- Reducing Struck and Lost
- Improve Minke Whale Rifle Hunt in Greenland
- Cooperation Hunters – Managers – Regulatory Measures
- Monitoring
- Data Requirements - Knowledge Gaps

The last meeting asked the Secretariat to add to the document which countries had followed up and which had not related to the different recommendations. As noted last time some recommendations are not followed up due to lack of necessary resources, and it is not foreseen that it will be in the near future. Other recommendations are followed up although the problem is not solved and never will be solved. E. g. the recommendations on identifying reasons for struck and lost in the minke whale hunts had been followed up through identifying what causes it, but one of the main reasons itself is not manageable (harpoon line cut in propeller or on bones) thus this will continue to be a risk.

The CHM noted the revised document and devoted the remaining time to discuss ideas for future work and priorities.

A standing recommendation, approved by Council 27 in 2019, is to look at the rifle hunt in Greenland. The proposal was to focus on hunting methods where death was not immediate, e.g. types of hunts requiring harpooning before killing in order not to lose the animal, within the format of an EG/WS. This activity was later postponed until a time when Greenland would be able to constructively participate. Still the situation is that there are not sufficient resources available to prioritise the necessary work involved for such an undertaking to be successful. The concern of the animal welfare issues related to the rifle hunt and similar small whale and walrus hunts are very much the same and the CHM agreed to revisit the issues as soon as Greenland is in a position to go ahead.

The CHM agreed to continue the production of videos and discussed looking towards some of the active standing recommendations for inspiration. One proposal could be to make a video on how to report and measure with reference to the following recommendation:

- hunters be trained to measure and report on strike location, detonation location and distance between the two to investigate reasons for why NO has a higher IDR than GL in the minke harpoon hunt (EG-2010, 2015: GL)

It was reported that EU is working on a regulation to prohibit the use of lead bullets. Lead bullets are poisonous, especially so when exposed to water. The CHM discussed the possibility of looking into the ballistics and use of leadfree bullets for marine mammal hunts. Given that this mostly concerns the seal hunts the shooting tests should be done on seal carcasses. Reference was also given to the guidelines developed by NAMMCO on how to conduct shooting trials.

Finally, the CHM discussed and agreed that outsourcing work (i.e., carrying out work under NAMMCO control and funding) could be considered to advance pending work.

The CHM also reiterated the intention to invite hunters to participate in CHM meetings to inform and update the members on specific hunting methods and essential issues related to the activity like their views on challenges and opportunities.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting will be in February 2023, exact dates and location to be confirmed later.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Hild Ynnesdal and Guðni Magnús Eiríksson were both stepping down, Ynnesdal to retire from the Directorate and Magnusson to focus on non NAMMCO matters. Ynnesdal had been a member of the Norwegian representation to NAMMCO since the beginning in 1992 with the exception of some intermittent years dedicated to maternity leaves. Magnusson joined NAMMCO in XXXX as a member of the Icelandic representation. Both had served as standing members of the CHM, CIO and BYCELS and the MCCs. Their expertise and dedication had greatly contributed to the successful work of the committees.

8. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The report was adopted by correspondence 22 June 2022.

APPENDIX: AGENDA AND LIST OF DOCUMENTS

AGENDA

1. Adoption of agenda and review of documents
2. Annual reporting from members
3. Video projects – ongoing and proposals
4. Active recommendations and future work priorities
5. Next meeting
6. Any other business

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

NAMMCO/CHM-CIO-BYCELS-2022-01/01	Agenda and List of Documents
NAMMCO/Database-2021	Submitted data from member countries
NAMMCO/CHM-2022-01/02	Reoccurring similar recommendations
NAMMCO/CHM-2022-02/02	Video proposal