



NORTH ATLANTIC MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

TWENTY FOURTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

10 - 11 February 2016, Grand Hotel, Oslo, Norway

**DOCUMENT 04 REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
COMMITTEE**

Submitted by: Finance and Administration Committee

The Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)

- **Recommends** Council to
 - Take note of the document
 - Endorse the recommendations

REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

1. INTRODUCTION

Since NAMMCO 23, the Finance and Administration Committee held three face to face meetings and two telephone/skype conferences (see Table 1) under the Chairmanship of Ole-David Stenseth (Norway). The composition of the FAC changed somewhat during the period (Table 1). From the secretariat, Geneviève Desportes and Charlotte Winsness participated in all the meetings, while Jill Prewitt participated in the October meeting.

Table 1 indicates the main items for discussion at each meeting, while the items leading to principle decisions and/or calling for actions are summarised under each meeting.

Table 1. Meetings of NAMMCO FAC in the period NAMMCO 23 – NAMMCO 24.

Date	Participants	Main subjects	Location
May 26, 2015	Ásta Einarsdóttir (Is), Amalie Jessen (Gr), Ernst Olsen (Fr), Ole-David Stenseth (No).	NASS 2015, preparation and funding. Actions to be taken for getting the project through.	Telephone/skype
June 10, 2015	Einarsdóttir (Is), Jessen (Gr), Olsen (Fr), Stenseth (No).	Current accounts and budget. Domestic questions. NASS 2015. Webpage. Vision of the new GS. Information from Parties and Secretariat. NAMMCO 24.	Greenland Representation, Copenhagen
October 23, 2015	Einarsdóttir (Is), Jessen (Gr), Stefan Í Skorini (Fr), Stenseth (No).	Application of observers. Attendance and funding of scientific experts. Update on activities. Preparation NAMMCO 24.	Telephone/skype
January 26, 2016	Einarsdóttir (Is), Jessen (Gr), Margrtha Jacobsen (Fr), Stenseth (No), Alessandro Tøvik Astroza (No).	Accounts 2015. Staff Rules. Rules for Observers. Performance review. Strategy for Information and Communication. Jubilee 2017. NAMMCO 24.	Greenland Representation, Copenhagen
February 8, 2016	Einarsdóttir (Is), Jessen (Gr), Jóannes V. Hansen (Fr), Stenseth (No), Tøvik Astroza (No).	Attendance and funding of scientific experts. Staff travel. Health insurance. Information from Parties and Secretariat. External relationships. Changes to RoPs. Draft budgets. NAMMCO 24.	Grand Hotel, Oslo

2. FAC TELEPHONE CONFERENCE MAY 26, 2015

The only item of discussion was NASS 2015. Main items of discussions were 1) the alarming delayed preparations of some countries and 2) how to proceed and taking advantage of the funding from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when the funding confirmation came at such a late date, when national survey plans were already settled under the understanding that the funding for NASS Extension would not happen.

The only possible action for FAC members was calling the survey organisers for flexibility and willingness to find a solution.

3. FAC MEETING JUNE 10, 2015

3.1 Current accounts

The Committee asked the Secretariat to develop guidelines for staff travel that would aid decision-making regarding attendance of staff at external meetings.

3.2 Website

The Committee reiterated the importance of getting the webpage finalised.

3.3 Views and visions of the new General Secretary on NAMMCO and the Secretariat

There was agreement that NAMMCO should develop a communication strategy and the Secretariat was asked to draft such a strategy.

3.4 NASS 2015

The flexibility, open-mindedness and willingness of the survey organisers in Greenland and Norway had made it possible to change plans at this very late stage and allowed NASS-Extension to be carried out.

The Committee expressed great satisfaction that NASS 2015 would take place and commended the Secretariat for its dedicated work in finding a solution for the implementation of NASS 2105.

3.5 NAMMCO 24

The structure of the annual meeting with the Meetings of the Management Committees placed before the Council Meeting and not in the middle.

3.6 Performance Review

The Committee agreed that it would be timely for NAMMCO to take on an external examination of the organisation and tasked the Secretariat to follow this up for inclusion on the agenda for NAMMCO 24.

3.7 Budget

The Committee agreed to allocate NOK 20 000 to the Disturbance Symposium in accordance with the request received.

The Committee noted that the General Reserve would be at the agreed level next year. In that connection, it was important to find out whether this was the result of an actual

underspending or simply that budgeted activities were being postponed so that the costs will surface in future years.

4. FAC TELEPHONE CONFERENCE OCTOBER 23, 2015

4.1 Attendance of external experts

The two questions rose were whether the presence of External Expert(s) at stock status & assessment work/WG should be considered a requirement and a principle in NAMMCO, and FAC wished to financially support both External Experts and National. The FAC did not wish to take a decision on that issue and awaited advice from the SC.

The Secretariat pointed out that the decision was a principle decision that would have financial implication, and may therefore not be within the remit of the SC.

In the absence of a decision on the issue, it was agreed that the Coastal Seal WG will be treated in the same manner as the Large Whale Assessment WG, meaning that NAMMCO would support all invited scientists (i.e. all scientists not member of the Scientific Committee).

4.2 NAMMCO 24

The Secretariat was task to develop a proposal for a Performance Review of NAMMCO for the next FAC meeting, with the aim of presenting it to Council at NAMMCO 24.

5. FAC MEETING JANUARY 26, 2016

5.1 Accounts

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the accounts for 2015 which gave a positive balance of NOK 402 840. The balance includes earmarked funding from Shell to the 2017 Monodontids Workshop (NOK 72 936) and from ISI-Greenland to the project Marine Mammals as food resource (NOK 45 889).

5.2 Staff Rules

The text on Conditions for Staff Relocations was accepted with some changes and would be recommended for adoption by Council.

FAC agreed that some points in the present Staff Rules needed clarification to avoid misinterpretation and decided to ask Council to task FAC to make a general review of the Staff Rules, without changing the existing balance of benefices and duties.

5.3 Rules for Observers

It was agreed that, as proposed, only Council should accredit observers and the RoPs of the different Committees should be changed accordingly. It was also agreed, that in the name of transparency, all committees except FAC should, as a general rule, accommodate observers.

The proposed rules should be modified according to the agreed changes and simplified accordingly taking into account that rules should become the same for all committees except FAC.

It was decided to recommend Council to adopt the text proposed with the amendments made.

5.4 Performance review

FAC agreed to ask Council to endorse the process of a Performance review and to task FAC to prepare for such a review process with the aim of endorsing a proposal at NAMMCO 25.

5.5 Strategy for Information and Communication

FAC agreed to recommend Council to take note of the document developed and to support the idea of NAMMCO adopting and implementing a communication and outreach strategy.

It was also agreed that all efforts and priority should be given to updating and upgrading the NAMMCO website as a first step in implementing a communication strategy and facilitate the access to information. Funds should be allocated to this task.

It was agreed that the journalist Stine Leth-Nissen would observe both the Management Committees and the Council meetings and would be invited to the June meeting to present her work and suggestions for a NAMMCO communication strategy.

5.6 25-years Jubilee

Ideas such as seal fur show, a recipe book and something related to the project Marine Mammals and Food Security were considered.

FAC agreed that the jubilee events would be the jubilee logo, the announcement of the Performance Review - if endorsed by Council at NAMMCO 25 - and the release of the new website. The date for NAMMCO 25 could be postponed to include April 9 (signature day of the agreement).

5.7 NAMMCO 24

FAC agreed to withdraw from the agenda point 13. Perspective for the next five years and point 15. 25-years Jubilee, as well as the points associated to item 16. Performance Review.

6. FAC MEETING FEBRUARY 08, 2016

6.1 Criteria for Staff travel

It was agreed that FAC should continue this discussion on the basis of the document produced by the Secretariat, and that Staff Travel should be seen in the light of the visibility strategy and prioritisation of NAMMCO.

It was very important for NAMMCO to be officially represented in other organisations. However it was also recognised that not only the Secretariat, but also members of national delegations could represent NAMMCO.

As a general rule, only one Secretariat Staff should participate in one meeting and that active representation should be prioritised (i.e., possibilities for presentation, stand, intervention, etc.).

6.2 External experts at Working and Expert Group meetings

A strength of NAMMCO Committees has been the opportunity to invite external experts. This option has contributed in enlarging the expertise of the - very small – scientific committee and other committees and underpin the credibility and transparency of the NAMMCO advice.

6.2.1 Attendance of expert

Whether external experts should be a rule in SC WGs dealing with endorsement of abundance estimate and assessment and advice on quota was recognised as a question of principle touching to the credibility, transparency, defensibility, legitimacy, as well as promotion of NAMMCO's expertise and best practices.

FAC decided to consult the Scientific Committee on this, although it was understood that their advice would only be used to inform the decision of FAC.

6.2.2 Funding of external expert

Whether NAMMCO chooses

- to support financially all scientists, non-member to the SC, considered necessary to the work of the WG and invited by the SC to participate in a WG,

or

- only support *external* scientists, i.e., defined as scientists invited for their general expertise, but not stakeholders in the data reviewed/assessed by the WG

was seen as a principle questions with financial implication for the SC budget. It was decided to consult the Scientific Committee on this, although it was understood that their advice would only be used to inform the decision of FAC. It was agreed that an interim decision was necessary until final decision was made.

6.3 Relationship with other bodies

The Secretariat has attended meetings of different bodies, of which the most directly relevant were IWC, AC and ASCOBANS.

Increasing relationship to and participation at AC meetings has been somewhat under-prioritised in the past and was now considered a priority. NAMMCO was presently discussing with the CAFF the modalities for them to become a partner in the organisation of the monodontids review.

ASCOBANS and NAMMCO are dealing with shared stocks, like harbour porpoises in the North Sea and common dolphins in the North Atlantic. It was proposed and considered positive to contact the ASCOBANS Secretariat and explore which areas would be relevant for a scientific cooperation between the two organisations. This in line with NAMMCO being an open-minded organisation, seeking expertise for the benefit of marine mammal conservation.

6.4 Budgets 2016 and 2017

Budget 2016 and draft budget 2017 were discussed, but not finalised pending Council decisions.

It was agreed that running costs should be kept as low as possible. In general the Secretariat was encouraged to regularly investigate for cost reduction.

The possibility of having interns at the NAMMCO Secretariat should be investigated further.

7. CONCLUSION

The main subjects of relevance to Council dealt with by the FAC since NAMMCO 23 concerns

- The improvement and clarification of NAMMCO rules (RoPs of Council and Committees, Staff Rules, Rules for Observers, attendance of External expert).
- The possibility of NAMMCO conducting a performance review
- The improvement of NAMMCO visibility and the need of elaborating a communication, information and outreach strategy
- Accounting, and preparation of budget 2016 and draft budget 2017

7.1 Proposal to Council

FAC recommend Council to

- Adopt the budget for 2016
- Adopt the forecast budget for 2017
- Adopt the amendments made to the rules, as agreed upon by FAC
- Support the idea of NAMMCO adopting a communication strategy and task FAC to develop this, on the basis of the document prepared by the Secretariat

and

- Endorse the prioritisation given by FAC to the elaboration of a new technically and updated website, serving as a hub of all NAMMCO information, communication and outreach activities, both internal and external. This prioritisation will have implication on the work priority of the Secretariat and the budget for 2016 and 2017.
- a) Support the idea of NAMMCO conducting a performance Review and task FAC to prepare for such a review process with the aim of endorsing it at NAMMCO 25.

FAC will continue working

with defining rules of attendance of external expert at meetings of subsidiary bodies and will seek the advice of, among others, the Scientific Committee on this issue.