



**Press Release – February 11, 2015**

*NAMMCO - 24th Annual Council in Oslo*

## **Whales and seals: Management matters!**

The increasing stocks of narwhal, beluga and walrus are a clear result of sound and science-based management, following advice from NAMMCO, the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission.

This was one of several positive results and initiatives presented to the Council of NAMMCO at its annual meeting in Oslo on February 10-11.

However, the NAMMCO Council recognises that increased human activities (shipping, mining, etc.) in the Arctic may threaten the ecosystem.

The parties were particularly concerned by a large scale iron-ore project (Mary River Project operated by Baffinland Iron Mines Corp) which may include shipping up to 10 months a year through some of the most important areas for narwhal, beluga and walrus. The increased shipping activities and noise disturbances could lead to the marine mammals abandoning these areas. This could have severe consequences for local communities, both in Canada and Greenland.

Also, climate change carries serious consequences for marine mammals. This can already be seen from the decreasing blubber thickness of harp seals and minke whales in the Barents Sea, and the changes in geographical distribution of minke whale and fin whale around Iceland.

**Therefore, effective ecosystem-based management matters.**

For more information concerning the Council Meeting outcome, see below.

**For further information, please contact**

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