



NAMMCO ANNUAL MEETING 29

*13-15 September 2022
Grand Hotel, Oslo & Hybrid*

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

DOCUMENT 17	COMMUNICATION PLANS (CPs) 17a: review of the implementation status of CP2 in the period 2019-2022) 17b: proposal CP3 2023-2024
Submitted by	Secretariat / Hods
Action requested	Take note of the implementation status for CP2 2019-2022 Provide input to the Proposal for CP3 2023-2024 Endorse CP3
Background/content	<p>In 2017, the Council (NAMMCO 25) adopted a Communication Strategy for NAMMCO, COS, and endorsed a Communication Plan for the two first years, CP1 2017-2018.</p> <p>In 2019, the Council (NAMMCO 27) reviewed the implementation of CP1 2017-2018 and endorsed a Communication Plan for the next two years, CP2 2019-2020.</p> <p>CP2 2019-2020 continued guiding the period 2021- 2022; there was no Council meeting in 2020, the meeting of the Council in 2021 was virtual and shorter and reviewing CP2 and adopting a new plan was not considered a priority issue.</p> <p>CP3 2023-2024 should guide NAMMCO's communication and outreach work during the next two-year leg.</p> <p>The COS and CPs were generated following an increased awareness of the Commission of the necessity of being visible, and consequently the necessity of elaborating a well-defined and tuned message, anchored in facts but also in the present conservation discourse and issues, such as blue economy, SDGs, resilient and sustainable food systems.</p>

DOCUMENT 17a

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CP2 2019-2022

CONTENTS A

1. CP2 Focus area.....	3
2. Evaluation of CP2 implemetation status	4
2.1 Complete species sections and maintain general updates of nammco.no	4
2.1.1 Work performed	4
2.1.2 Measurable Results.....	5
2.2 Increase activity on SoMe through regular posts on Twitter & Facebook	5
2.2.1 Work performed	5
2.2.2 Measurable Results.....	5
2.3 Participate in high profile events	6
2.3.1 Work performed	6
2.3.2 Measurable Results.....	7
2.4 Update Wikipedia site on NAMMCO and marine mammal species	7
2.5 Increase internal communication and information flow and generate material contributions from the NAMMCO community.....	7
3. Conclusion	7
Overview of the planned communication initiatives in 2019-2020 (from CP2) and implementation status	9

CP2 IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

In 2017, the Council (NAMMCO 25) adopted a Communication Strategy for NAMMCO, COS, and endorsed a Communication Plan for the two first year, CP1 2017-2018.

The implementation of the CP1 2017-2018 endorsed by NAMMCO 25 was reviewed by NAMMCO 27, which reiterated its full support to the work and activity of the Secretariat in the communication domain and its continued effort towards a better communication and a wider outreach.

Council 27 endorsed CP2 2019-2021, which was developed drawing upon the COS and based on the experience gained with the implementation of CP1. Council 27 endorsed the website as the primary tool of and pivot for NAMMCO communication and outreach. Its maintenance and continual update were a priority by the Secretariat and the Committees. The importance of keeping and strengthening the quality of the website was reiterated by Council 28.

1. CP2 FOCUS AREA

CP2 was articulated around presenting whaling and sealing in a global environmental context. Disseminating information and increasing NAMMCO visibility should be attempted through five main actions.

Focus areas CP2 2019 - 2020

Message: - whaling and sealing in a global environmental perspective

Research, refine and develop the message under three themes

- Whaling and sealing in a blue economy & global environmental perspective
- Absolute and relative environmental cost of whaling and sealing
- Marine mammals as environmental-friendly contributors to food security.

Priority Actions:

Get the message across & increase the visibility of NAMMCO, through 5 actions

1. Complete species sections and maintain general updates of **nammco.no**
2. Increase activity on SoMe¹ through regular posts on Twitter & Facebook
3. Participate in high profile events
4. Update Wikipedia site on NAMMCO and marine mammal species
5. Increase internal communication and information flow and generate contributions.

NB: Posts on Facebook, and when possible, on Twitter, and should make a connection to nammco.no to encourage and increase the flow of visitors.

¹ SoMe: Social Media

Following on these global perspectives, the extension period 2021-2022 focussed on disseminating the message that, by bringing a low-carbon and low-water protein option in places with few alternatives, whaling and sealing do

- ✓ contribute to food security and sovereignty of coastal communities
- ✓ contribute to resilient and sustainable food systems (socially, economically, and environmentally)
- ✓ therefore, support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), not only 14 *Life below water*, but also 2, 11, and 12 (by improving livelihoods), and 1, 8, and 10 (by generating economic growth).
- they do so in many coastal areas around the world, not only in the Arctic.

2. EVALUATION OF CP2 IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The three first priority actions defined in CP2 were overall implemented, while actions 4. and 5. were more difficult to progress with. Further details are provided in the sections below.

The final table provides an overview of the implementation of the CP2 planned communication initiatives. The table is the overview over planned activity provided by CP2 to which a fifth column has been added which reports on the status of the implementation.

2.1 COMPLETE SPECIES SECTIONS AND MAINTAIN GENERAL UPDATES OF NAMMCO.NO

2.1.1 Work performed

Council 27 and 28 reiterated that the website, nammco.org, shall be the most important information platform for the organisation, and the hub and umbrella of all internal communication activities. The top priority was therefore its completion (missing species page) and continual updates regarding the work of NAMMCO committees.

Pages should also be revised/reformulated to better take into account search engine optimisation (SEO). The Secretariat had a review made by a SEO-related firm, which provided a status and gave advice on where to focus efforts, so the website became more visible and accessible to different search engines.

The completion of the species page was done by May 2020. At the end of 2020, all abundance estimates, and assessment data were up to date for all species. Older species pages were updated with more recent information, new abundance estimates as well as assessment results: harbour seal, walrus, pilot whale, and minke whale in 2021, and humpback whale, beluga, narwhal, and fin whale in 2022.

The SC progressed with its revision and update of the species pages, with four species reviewed and updated at each SC meeting starting with in 2021 – in other words with eight species now reviewed and updated.

The CHM and CIO as well as BYCELS also reviewed and updated the information relevant to their work and completed their review in February 2021.

Throughout 2021 and the beginning of 2022, the Secretariat has been working on a revamped NAMMCO webpage. This webpage was launched on 13 April 2022 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Nuuk agreement. Besides a restructure of the menu (including a new heading “Resource Management”) and a completely new landing page, several new content pages were added: Resources, Sustainability, Responsibility, Supporting Sustainable Development Goals, Hunting Past & Present.

2.1.2 Measurable Results

The flow of visitors to the NAMMCO website, although varying from year to year has increased markedly and is 2,5 times larger in 2021 compared to 2018. The number of unique visitors on the NAMMCO website has increased from 9,597 in 2018 to 25,854 in 2021 with a quite stable visitor profile: over 51-52% of female visitors and an organic search of 65% or higher. There seems to be an increasing number of younger visitors, with 17% and 32% in the age group 18-34 and 25-34 respectively in 2019-2020 and 23% and 26% in the same age groups in the period 2019-2021, the older age groups remaining similar. See more details on the activities on the website and visitors profile in Document [NAMMCO/29/07](#) under 9. *Communication and Outreach* and in Appendix D *Statistics of activities on the NAMMCO Website and Social Media for 2021*.

2.2 INCREASE ACTIVITY ON SOME THROUGH REGULAR POSTS ON TWITTER & FACEBOOK

2.2.1 Work performed

Structuring the practice, developing rules for engagement in NAMMCO Social Media (SOME), and regularising the practice of posting was one goal of CP2. This was achieved and more regular posts were produced on NAMMCO two SOME channel, Facebook and Twitter, with a special thanks to the interns who dedicated time, research and creativity to this task. Besides informing on new NAMMCO publication and report release, new publication with co-author from the NAMMCO community were announced and the Fun Fact Friday post was produced nearly every Friday by the interns, under the supervision of the Scientific Secretary.

All Facebook and Twitter posts have been prepared in the view of increasing the flow of visitors to the website, i.e., many are used as trailers for larger posts on the website, if not they always contained a link to the website. For example a Fun Fact Friday post on pinnipeds (26.08.22) ends with: "To learn more about all living species of pinnipeds in the North Atlantic check out our species pages here: <https://nammco.no/seals-and-walrus/>".

2.2.2 Measurable Results

The activity has increased markedly on Facebook, but also on Twitter, although the latter media has not been prioritised.

The number of page likes on the NAMMCO Facebook has increased from 846 on 1 March 2019, with 843 followers, to 2,517 on 31 August 2022, with 2,682 followers. The most popular post has reached over 107,518 organic users and be shared over 502 times (See document [NAMMCO/28/07 – Administrative Report 2019-2020](#)): "[Did you know that humpback whales have inspired new wind turbine technology?](#)"

The number of followers and engagements with NAMMCO through its Twitter account has also increased from 60 followers in 2019 to 587 followers on 31 August 2022.

Although both the Facebook and Twitter posts mostly referred and link to a longer story the NAMMCO website, most users find the NAMMCO website through an organic search, while 27% navigate to the site directly. Facebook and Twitter referred just under 6% of users.

More information on the activity and interactions in SOME can be found in Document [NAMMCO/29/07](#) under 9. *Communication and Outreach* and in Appendix D *Statistics of activities on the NAMMCO Website and Social Media for 2021*.

2.3 PARTICIPATE IN HIGH PROFILE EVENTS

2.3.1 Work performed

The Secretariat participated in several communication and outreach event in the period 2019-2022, some being high international profile events and other national or institutional. Several presentations were made focus on the CP2 theme (Sealing and whaling in a global ecological perspective in 2019-2020, and its continuation (marine mammal as contributor to sustainable food system and supporting the SDGs) in 2021-2022.

The table below provide an update of the outreach activities performed by the Secretariat at different national or international events.

The two flag events under the thematic developed during the period 2021-2022 were/are

- the NAMMCO booth at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in France in September 2021 and the material prepared for this event
- the Conference and Gastronomic Showcase “Marine Mammals: a Sustainable Food Resource” in the Faroe Islands in October 2022.

Date	Conference or Meeting // Contribution	Venue
2019		
12-14/03	2nd International Workshop on Beluga Whale Research and Conservation Presentation by NAMMCO/Reeves <i>“Global Review of Monodontids”</i>	Mystic, USA
13/09	Masters Top Predator Course, University of Tromsø Lecture by NAMMCO/GD <i>“Management bodies and science-based management advice in NAMMCO-IWC-ICES”</i>	Tromsø, NO
22/11-11/12	Homeward Bound Global Leadership Initiative Lecture & Interactive Workshop by NAMMCO/FW <i>“Science Meets Ethics and Politics”</i>	Hebridean Sky, Antarctica
05-06/12	Bi-annual meeting of the Norwegian Small Whalers Union Presentation by NAMMCO/CW <i>“Sjøpattedyr som matvareressurs”</i>	Svolvær, NO
11-12/07	Sustainable Use of Aquatic Living Resources Presentation by NAMMCO/GD (invited) <i>“Impact of food choices”</i>	Tokyo, JP
09-11/12	World Marine Mammal Conference Presentation by NAMMCO/GD <i>“Outreach on the case of Arctic Sealing: opening up for a reframing of the sustainability discourse?”</i> Booth operated by NAMMCO/GD+SH, together with B. Porgilsson (Pi technology, IS)	Barcelona, SP
2020		
05/02	Student Symposium, NAMMCO & NO UiT Biology Presentation by NAMMCO/GD <i>“Challenges & Opportunities facing Science for Policy in a Changing Arctic”</i>	Tromsø, NO
09/06	Lunch Seminar (University of Oslo) Presentation by NAMMCO/FW (invited) <i>“Diverse ways of knowing in environmental decision-making”</i>	Online
10/06	Virtual Conference on Interdisciplinarity, Sustainability and Expert Disagreement, NO U-Life Sciences Presentation by NAMMCO/FW (invited) <i>“Science, ethics and politics in the sustainable management of narwhal in East Greenland”</i>	Online
06/11	Danish Marine Mammal Society Annual Symposium Presentation by NAMMCO/FW (invited) <i>“Challenges facing marine mammal management in the new millennium”</i>	Online
2021		
22/02	Arctic User Knowledge WS, NORDECO Presentation by NAMMCO/FW-SEC <i>“User Knowledge in NAMMCO's Advisory Work”</i>	Tromsø, NO
09/04	Student Symposium, NAMMCO & NCLOS Presentation by NAMMCO/GD <i>“NAMMCO - Contributing to a sustainable North”</i>	Online

03-11/09	IUCN // World Conservation Congress Exhibition Booth by NAMMCO/GD, HM, MB	Online
02/11	Study excursion, DIS Copenhagen (students from USA) Lecture by NAMMCO/ GD, CW "How the sustainable use of MM contributes to a sustainable North"	SEC
2022		
25/03	Study excursion, DIS Copenhagen (students from USA) Lecture by NAMMCO/ GD "30 years of Regional Marine Mammal Management contributing to a sustainable North"	Tromsø, NO
05/04	European PHD students Lecture by NAMMCO/ GD "30 years of Regional Marine Mammal Management as a contribution to a sustainable North"	Online
07/04	Student Symposium, NAMMCO & NCLOS Presentation by NAMMCO/GD "Management of marine mammals, a multifaceted resource"	Tromsø, NO
09/06	Sustainable Use of Aquatic Living Resources, Japan Presentation by NAMMCO/GD & P. Nolsøe "Another sound of music"	Online
22/08	Institute of Biology (SDU) marine mammal international networking meeting Presentation by NAMMCO/GD "Food for thoughts: marine mammals as a blue and SDGs friendly food resource"	Kerteminde & hybrid, DK
5-6/10	NAMMCO Conference and Gastronomic Showcase "Marine Mammals: a Sustainable Food Resource"	Tórshavn, FO

2.3.2 Measurable Results

The impacts of this communication and outreach effort are more difficult to measure.

It has been surprising to experience how this unusual way of presenting marine mammals and whaling and sealing, not as iconic species and issues, but and as a food resource within the global context of food security, blue economy and the relative ecological cost of resources, when well supported by facts, open for a positive dialog and elicit food for thoughts in dialog partners – and that of all origins and views.

A positive measurable result has been for the Secretariat to be invited again in the same fora, and through a snow ball effect in other fora, to again present NAMMCO work and perspective on the utilisation of marine mammals.

2.4 UPDATE WIKIPEDIA SITE ON NAMMCO AND MARINE MAMMAL SPECIES

This has been started on, but is difficult because of Wikipedia very strict policy, which preclude or make very difficult for an organisation and its members to give information on and quote itself.

2.5 INCREASE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION FLOW AND GENERATE MATERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE NAMMCO COMMUNITY

The Secretariat has not succeeded so far in stimulating the NAMMCO community (any levels) to spontaneously share information and material with the secretariat (media discussion and issues, field work plans and blogs). Most of the members of the NAMMCO SC are however now spontaneously sharing their new publication with the Secretariat, which then announce them on Facebook with a link to a news on the website.

3. CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the implementation of CP2 should be seen in regards of the COS goals:

NAMMCO communication and outreach shall

- *Develop a higher level of visibility, especially in NAMMCO countries*
- *Support transparency*
- *Convey that NAMMCO has the following characteristics, that it is:*
 - *appropriate and credible*

- *active (in science, conservation and welfare)*
- *relevant in current debates (e.g. Arctic Issues, Climate Change, Food Security, Animal Welfare and Blue Growth)*
- *a credible source of information*
- *founded upon a transparent management advice-generating process*
- *based on best practices, science and local knowledge*
- *the only international management forum for pinnipeds*
- *a good partner for dialogue and cooperation.*

Clearly progress has been made, and NAMMCO has become a much more visible actor among the network of marine conservation and specifically marine mammal conservation. By the same token, NAMMCO's credibility has increased and its website for example is used by non-NAMMCO marine mammal specialists for the quality of its information, although they do not share the view of NAMMCO on the use of marine mammals.

Outreach events, publicizing the very specific message of NAMMCO on the sustainable use of marine mammals, have been successfully conducted in fora, both scientific and wider, which were not used to hear about this specificity before (e.g., Homeward Bound Global Women Leadership Initiative and the World Marine Mammal Conference in 2020, the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2021 and the SDU Marine Mammal International Network in 2022). It has open up for many interesting dialog and through food for thoughts in many persons, who have clearly expressed that the dialog with NAMMCO, had if not always change their mind about the utilisation of marine mammal as food resource, set things in a different perspective they were used to and open their eyes to geographical differences and realities with regards to sustainability of food systems.

The effort so far has been principally borne by the Secretariat, although the COS specify in its *Priorities and Actions* that an essential element for successfully implementing the COS is switching the mindset of all NAMMCO actors, in particular the Council, to communication mode so that they envisage their input to NAMMCO also in terms of communication.

The Secretariat has become very aware of the communication dimension of its work and has embraced this dimension with interest, challenge and creativity. However, it would be difficult to say that the mindset of the whole NAMMCO community has switched to communication mode. It remains very difficult for the Secretariat to obtain any input from the Parties, this at all levels. The Secretariat has limited human resources and a significant workload, it clearly is not in a position to prioritise the search for further information from member countries to feed into its communication activities, when these are not spontaneously provided.

It can be hoped if CP3 is more focussed on disseminating information on specific projects, that the actors involved in these projects will be more willing in sharing information and material on those projects.

To continue and support NAMMCO communication and outreach effort two things are essential, the Commission will, demonstrated through the allocation of stable and predictable resources, and the involvement of the whole NAMMCO community.

OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNED COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES IN 2019-2020 (FROM CP2) AND IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

The activities in grey were considered of lesser priority

Media	Action	Resources	Results intended	Implementation
nammco.no	Finalise and update species status (deadline 2019). Review and update all information (deadline 2020). SEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat - NPR - Inputs from NAMMCO members & community on national activities and debates - Specialised companies 	Web becomes a hub for NAMMCO outreach. Increased information and knowledge given to the wider public and thereby enhanced credibility and understanding.	Implemented All species pages were completed by 2021. Most information has been reviewed by the relevant committee. The SC has started reviewing the species page, four at each SC meeting. Meanwhile the Sec is updating with new information A review was made by a specialised "SEO" Norwegian company, which provided advice on focus actions.
Blog	Generate more blog posts, especially on timely issues of relevance for NAMMCO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat - Open to community - Open to outsiders 	More traffic to website and to FB. NAMMCO's perspective in/on global conservation issues shared and known.	Not really implemented. Very few blogs have been generated.
SoMe	Structure practice and develop rules for engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat - Open to community 	Regular information flow to the NAMMCO community. Connection with those beyond the current community. Enhanced traffic to the website.	Implemented
Facebook	Regularise the practice of posting. NAMMCO specific post weekly as a minimum.			Implemented. The interns are in charge of the Fun Fact Friday and the regular announcement of new publications. Only the SEC is producing posts
Twitter	Increase the practice. Engage in dedicated efforts to enhance followers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secretariat 	Information distributed on NAMMCO activities. Be seen as a relevant actor in international research and management of marine mammals.	Some tweets produced by media not prioritised

NAMMCO/29/17a

Leaflets	Produce 1-2 leaflets on message in focus.	- Secretariat	Hand-outs available for contacts made during events. Educational resource that can be shared with others.	Not implemented
Internal communication	To be developed – see below.	- Secretariat - Community, both scientists and managers	Contribute to a sense of belonging and to synergy.	No further implementation
Newsletter	Sent out in June and Dec.		Generate commitment to outreach.	Not implemented
One-page summary	One-page summary/FB post for all meetings within 48 hrs of end	- Secretariat - Chairs	Increased internal information. Provide material for nammco.no and SoMe.	Not implemented. Actually, in this four-year period this has been less accomplished than in the period before-
Fieldwork & project plans	Fieldwork plans delivered in June. Project plans as incoming	- SC members		Not implemented
External communication	To be reinforced	- Secretariat - Parties	Increase visibility and message outreach.	Implemented by the SEC
Wikipedia	NAMMCO site Updating essential sites with NAMMCO references	- Secretariat	Increasing the visibility and knowledge of NAMMCO's work.	Some done but difficult as WIKIPEDIA policy is that you cannot write on yourself.
High profile events	Attending events. Making presentations or manning a booth	- Secretariat - Parties	Increasing the visibility of NAMMCO and its credibility.	Implemented. Many events attended with specific material created and the message of NAMMCO disseminated
Review of implementation	Review the implementation and circulate to Council	- Secretariat - Community •	Tuning to obtain a better adjustment between goals and effects.	Not implemented, regularly, but done at the end of the second period in 2022, with this document.

DOCUMENT 17b

NAMMCO COMMUNICATION PLAN 2023 – 2024 (CP3)

1.	Background	12
2.	COS 2027 in short.....	12
3.	Communication Plan 2023-2024	13
4.	Measuring the impact of the Communication Plan.....	17
5.	Focus areas 2023-2024 in a nutshell.....	18
6.	Overview of communication initiatives in 2023-2024	18

1. BACKGROUND

NAMMCO Communication Strategy (COS) and Communication Plans (CPs) were generated following an increased awareness of the Commission of the necessity of being visible, and consequently the necessity of elaborating a well-defined and tuned message, anchored in facts but also in the present conservation discourse and issues. Both the COS and the CPs support broadening the visibility of the organisation, but also support its transparency. The COS was adopted by NAMMCO 25 ([COS 2017](#)) and provides an overarching long-term framework for NAMMCO's communication and outreach work, while shorter legs of implementation in the form of Communication Plans (CP) address shorter periods of 2 years.

Making the work of NAMMCO more widely known among priority target groups and strengthening NAMMCO as an international actor is a long-term project. The COS is seen as a 10-years initiative, addressing long-term communication objectives, overarching messages, target groups and types of communication channels. It focuses on both external and internal communication. The CPs build on the COS but go into more detail, outlining the specific focus for the period covered and the planned activities.

NAMMCO has had two previous communication plans, CP1 for the period 2017-2018 and CP2 for the period 2019-2020. CP2 extended in practice to the period 2021-2022, because of the COVID-related restriction, and the postponement of Council meeting 28 to March 2021 and the shorter meeting in 2021 where the communication was not prioritised.

The present CP, CP3, describes the focus of the communication and outreach work for the two-year period 2023-2024.

2. COS 2027 IN SHORT

2.1 COS VISION, MISSION, AND KEY MESSAGES

COS 2017 Vision

NAMMCO is perceived as the pre-eminent and most effective forum for the conservation and management of marine mammals in the North Atlantic.

COS 2017 Mission

To provide factual, timely and clear information on marine mammals and related issues

COS 2017 Goals

NAMMCO communication and outreach shall

- Develop a higher level of visibility, especially in NAMMCO countries
- Support transparency
- Convey that NAMMCO is:
 - appropriate and credible
 - active (in science, conservation and welfare)
 - relevant in current debates (e.g., Arctic Issues, Climate Change, Food Security, Animal Welfare and Blue Growth)
 - a credible source of information
 - founded upon a transparent management advice-generating process
 - based on best practices, science and local knowledge
 - the only international management forum for pinnipeds
 - a good partner for dialogue and cooperation.

2.2 COS 2017 GOVERNING PRINCIPLES

To be efficient, NAMMCO Communication needs to be developed for both the long and short terms, and also needs to be proactive, responsive and cooperative, factual and not emotional.

- *Proactive communication is a prerequisite for NAMMCO because of the small size and specialised scope of the organisation.*
- *NAMMCO deals with a controversial field, and attention shall be given to conducting responsive and cooperative activities rather than reactive and confrontational ones.*
- *NAMMCO communication must be factual. Fact based, responsive and cooperative communication is much more productive and has much more potential as a breeding ground for exchange and understanding.*

The communication strategy shall consider NAMMCO's two main handicaps in terms of visibility, outreach and communication:

- *It is a very small and specialised organisation with a small community*
- *It has a very small and non-communication specialised secretariat.*

2.3 KEY MESSAGES & INFORMATION TO BE DISSEMINATED

Cos 2017 also defined key messages that NAMMCO should disseminate in its communication and outreach work.

The key information was detailed in [CP1](#) and remains actual and pertinent .

3. COMMUNICATION PLAN 2023-2024

CP2 (2019-2020) focussed on replacing whaling and sealing in a global ecological perspective, under three themes: 1) Whaling and sealing in a blue economy perspective, 2) Absolute and relative environmental cost of whaling and sealing, and 3) Marine mammals as environmental-friendly contributors to food security.

Following on these global perspectives, the extension period 2021-2022 focussed on disseminating the message that

- by bringing a low-carbon and low-water protein option in places with few alternatives
- in many coastal areas around the world, and not only in the Arctic,

whaling and sealing do

- ✓ contribute to food security and sovereignty of coastal communities
- ✓ contribute to resilient and sustainable food systems (socially, economically, and environmentally)
- ✓ therefore, support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), not only 14 *Life below water*, but also 2, 11, and 12 (by improving livelihoods), and 1, 8, and 10 (by generating economic growth).

An absolute prerequisite for whaling and sealing to support the SDGs and be ecologically sound is, however, that **these activities are carried out sustainably and responsibly, and thus are effectively and efficiently managed in the wider meaning**. Such management must be based on a thorough understanding of the conservation status or marine mammal stocks and theirs and humans' role in the marine ecosystem(s).

In other words, such management requires both a strong science foundation, supported by the best user knowledge, and a strong focus on responsibility, i.e., on hunter safety and animal welfare.

The message the plan 2023-2024 wants to spread is how, as an organisation, NAMMCO commits to robust and responsible management.

NAMMCO commits to robust and responsible management through supporting and facilitating

- **high-quality independent scientific research projects**, which are essential in generating the knowledge required for a sound management
- **improved hunters' safety and animal welfare** by producing tools contributing to the training of the hunters

3.1 ANCHORS TO THE MESSAGE

high-quality independent scientific research projects essential to a sound knowledge on marine mammal stocks

3.1.1 High-quality independent scientific research projects

NAMMCO in 2023-2024 (and later years) will be supporting and facilitating two high profile projects: the **NASS 2024** running in 2023-2025 and the **MINTAG Project** running in 2022-2027. Both projects are coordinated through NAMMCO and financially supported both by the Commission and its member countries.

Both projects greatly contribute to bringing data and information essential to a thorough understanding of the species and stocks and their place in the Nordic marine ecosystem. They therefore contribute to an effective, robust, science-based, well-tuned management. Both projects, because of their importance for a sound management and as knowledge source, have the interest of several research groups worldwide outside the NAMMCO community.

The period 2023-2024 will focus on disseminating the development and the results of these two flag projects. Importantly, if NAMMCO facilitates research projects, the results and conclusion are acquired independently from the Commission.

NASS 2024 is the 7th edition of the North Atlantic Sightings Surveys of cetaceans, with its preparation in 2023, the survey in summer 2024 followed by the analysis in 2024 and 2025.

Besides informing on present summer population abundance, NASS 2024 continues a series of surveys initiated in 1987, thus providing population trends over a 37-year period. Such long population trends are invaluable for monitoring the status of the populations, and to follow changes in the species distribution related to the overall climate and environmental changes. This series is unique by its length and its geographic coverage and deserves to be exposed as such.

The **MINTAG project** aims at developing miniaturised satellite tags that can be used on lesser-known although exploited fast-swimming rorquals and pilot whales. Although these whales are common off NAMMCO countries in spring-summer, the wintering areas of the different stocks remain unknown. As a result, the species stocks structures, although knowledge essential to a sound management, are not well defined. The project has the interest of several research groups that acknowledge the benefit of developing such miniaturised tags, but do not have the means to do so. The project, which target understudied species, will also represent a unique tagging effort by the novelty of the tag, its intensity, and its plurality, both in terms of target species and geographic focus area.

The 25 first prototypes of MINTAG should be deployed in summer 2023, and the first batch of new tags (ca. 100) in spring summer 2024, with the anticipated possibility of following the first movements of individual whales from spring-summer 2023 both in the North Atlantic and in the North Pacific.

3.1.2 Responsibility through training

The pursuit of responsible hunting has been targeted through the improvement of hunting methods according to three identified criteria: increased efficiency of the operations (e.g., not losing any struck animals), increased safety for the hunters, and minimised animal suffering.

NAMMCO is currently the only international organisation actively working towards improving marine mammal hunting methods. This work is therefore something that is unique to NAMMCO and an area in which NAMMCO has the world leading expertise.

NAMMCO has previously formulated recommendations on the best ways to improve Time to Death (TTD) and Instantaneous Death Rate (IDR) for large whales using harpoon guns with explosive grenades. In addition, all Workshops and Expert Group meetings have strongly emphasised the importance of training and experience in conducting a successful hunt. Indeed, the NAMMCO Committee for Hunting Methods has repeatedly and consistently emphasized that training, experience, and transfer of knowledge are prerequisites to responsible hunting practices.

The period 2023 – 2024 will continue to focus on strengthening the safety for the hunters and on improving animal welfare for the animals with special focus on the production of instruction/training videos. The first in a series of such videos was produced in 2021-2022. A second video should be produced in 2022-2023, and the effort will continue in 2024.

3.2 FOCUS GROUP

External target audience in focus

- *Marine mammal scientists*
- *Journalists/Media working on arctic and environmental issues*
- *Youth, children and educators, member countries' educational networks*
- *NAMMCO wide community*

Generally, but not as a focus group for CP3, the wider public in Member Countries and elsewhere

The appropriateness of the communication channel depends on the target groups.

- Scientists will be likely better reach through the website, reporting in scientific conferences and publishing results in scientific journals
- Journalists and media maybe more accessible through Twitter and article in vulgarisation journals, as well as direct contact,
- Youth will be better reached through posts on Instagram
- The educational network will be better reached through direct contacts and developing the awareness of the educational material existing on the website

3.3 KEY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

3.3.1 Website

nammco.org remains the most important information site and transparency channel of the organisation, internally as well as externally. It is the hub and umbrella of all communication activities, and the host of the NAMMCO archive, where all documents and material are made available.

Its continual update and improvement is therefore the utmost priority of the Secretariat, as well as made it as SEO friendly as possible.

3.3.2 Social Media (SoMe)

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are seen as fora for communicating with the wider NAMMCO community and attract new persons to this community. They are also fora that can channel audiences to the website, where new visitors can then hopefully appreciate the scope and range of information provided by nammco.org. An Instagram account will be created, as Instagram is reaching a younger and internationally wider public than Facebook, of which the use has become limited geographically and mostly used by middle and older generations. Instagram is therefore more suited than FB to wider NAMMCO wider community. The demographics of Twitter are the middle young generation (20 to 50 years old), but more important it is used by higher educated person and communication professionals.

SoMe should be used to reflect on activities in NAMMCO at all levels and represent NAMMCO-related national activities.

3.3.3 Educational sectors

Contact with educational sectors, starting with NAMMCO member countries, should be taken, or nurtured when existing, and the interest in and best tools for following the research projects on a longer term investigated. If relevant, educational material could be created (including besides the species information, individual migration maps, focus quiz, etc.) and posted on the website for downloading.

Focussing on the education sector would be a new activity for NAMMCO, although it has previously been put forward as a possibility.

The MINTAG project, which includes funding for dissemination activities, could be a good starting point. As a several years project, it represents a unique educational material to develop pupils' and students' interest for the marine environment and its conservation and make them apprehend whaling and sealing in a global ecological perspective.

3.3.4 External outreach

External communication should be reinforced to increase the visibility of the Organisation and help conveying the message in focus.

Participation to high profile events, both scientific or connected to marine conservation and marine-related SDGs, should be attended. Participation should be accompanied to direct presentations, dialog events or manning of booth focussing on the NAMMCO CP 2023-2024 flag projects.

3.4 KEY ACTIONS

3.4.1 General - Website and SOME Focus 2023-2024

- 1) continue the practice of updating and using the website.
 - Use the information contained in the NPR to update on national activities
 - Generate blogs on the different projects, directly involving the participants
 - Update the species status pages with the conclusion of the SC and WG meetings
 - Generate more news
 - See under 3.4.2 for specific action on CP3 focus message
- 2) generalise the use of SOME by Secretariat's staff, continue regular and varied posting regarding the activity of NAMMCO and NAMMCO community on news, FB, use the same elements to increase posting on Twitter and initiating the use Instagram
 - All meetings of Council, committees, and subsidiary bodies, as well as any NAMMCO events, should be announced. For all meetings (except FAC's and HoD's) and events, there should be an announcement, a start story, and posts and photos during the meeting and a final post (with group pictures).
 - The release of any NAMMCO reports and publications shall continue be announced
 - Posts of wider interest should be boosted to increase the contact with new viewers and create the opportunity to increase the number of likes and followers.
 - National representatives were asked in the 2019-2020 plans to send post on national activities, also in their country's language, but this possibility has not been used. However, it would still be interesting for NAMMCO to exploit.
 - See under See under 3.4.2 for specific action on CP3 focus message

The developments of the MINTAG project, and individual whales' movements, as well as the progress of the NASS 2024 survey and its results should be used as much as possible on all SOME – see also below in specific key actions.

3.4.2 Specific - Disseminating CP3 message using flag projects

The dissemination around the three flag projects, NAMMCO wants to anchor the CP3 message on, can be dealt with in similar ways, although the MINTAG project and NASS 2024 are probably better suited for dissemination to a larger and non-specialised audience.

The key actions should focus upon

- making the CP flag projects highly visible, thus widening the audience of NAMMCO. It should also attempt to
- building up audience loyalty.

They should spark off and stimulate in the public, and especially kids/young, the wish to follow the projects on a long-term and thereby continue using the nammco.org and the specific project sides.

Six actions are seen as essential:

- ✓ Create specific lively sites on nammco.org dedicated to each project
- ✓ Maintain general updates of these sites and use the news on the main site to announce updates on the specific site
- ✓ Maintain a high activity on the three SoMe through regular posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram related to the preparation and the developments of the projects, also during the analysis phase. Such post should redirect to the specific project website
- ✓ Create, if possible, page/links on Wikipedia connecting to the projects
- ✓ Creating web educational/dissemination material (information, play, quiz, podcasts, competition) to generate interest for the projects and that can be downloaded and used by schools/high schools to initiate a longer-term following of the projects.
- ✓ Use the two high profile projects, NASS 24 and MINTAG, in any outreach and dissemination effort.

More detailed and targeted communication plan should be developed for each project, including specific goals and objectives, success criteria and measurable output. The overall and the specific communication plans, and especially the stories told on the website, should follow the three-act structure (set-up, ascension to climax, pay-off) to maintain the attention of the audience.

Specific funding could be sought from Funds which have as vision of stimulating the public involvement in nature and conservation and especially that of the marine environment conservation.

Develop contact with whale watching companies and marine/science centres in FO, GL, IS and NO to report on the MINTAG project and NASS2024. Whale watching companies could be asked to report sightings of whales, especially if they see tagged whales. Cooperating with ferries and tourist charter boats could also be investigated to increase reported sightings and as dissemination platforms; flyers, posters, and interactive platforms could be used.

4. MEASURING THE IMPACT OF THE COMMUNICATION PLAN

The Vision of the COS (see under Point 2.1) is that *“NAMMCO is perceived as the pre-eminent and most effective forum for the conservation and management of marine mammals in the North Atlantic.”* One goal of the COS was for NAMMCO to reach a higher level of visibility, especially in NAMMCO countries. The success of the CP3 should therefore be measured against this vision and goal.

One way of measuring visibility is to analyse the flow of visitors on the main communication tool of NAMMCO, i.e., its website and looking whether the visitor profile evolves. In this case one of the targets for the CP3 is *“Youth, children and educators, member countries’ educational networks”*.

This may be measured by examining the age profile of the visitors and examining whether it changes during the two-year period, using the analytical tools provided.

Similarly, the number and profile of the visitors and interactions on the SoMe will also provide some measurement on the success of the outreach.

If educational material is produced and placed on the website, then examining the use of the different website pages will give an idea whether the material is used. The number of interactions with educational institutions will also give an idea of the outreach.

Invitation to present at conferences and events and give lecture in the education sectors can also demonstrate the effectiveness of CP3 in increasing the awareness to the plans three flag projects and to NAMMCO and its action in general.

Evaluation the success of the communication should be done regularly to allow for tuning and tweaking the plans to the reality encountered.

5. FOCUS AREAS 2023-2024 IN A NUTSHELL

Message: - NAMMCO commits to robust and responsible management through supporting and facilitating

1) high-quality independent scientific research projects

2) improved hunter safety and animal welfare

Actions: - Get the message across & increase the visibility of NAMMCO through 6 main actions

- ✓ For each of the three flag projects
 - **Developing a specific communication plan, with the goal of building up audience loyalty and interest in following the progress of the projects**
 - **Developing a specific project site on the NAMMCO website**
 - **Posting regular information on the development, implementation, and results of the projects on the main & specific website and on the SoMe**

In general

- ✓ **Make the press aware of the uniqueness of the projects by using twitter and contacting the media in members countries**
- ✓ **Use the three projects in any outreach and dissemination events**
- ✓ **Raise awareness of the educational sector to the projects, and develop educational material to be downloadable form the website if interest is there**

6. OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION INITIATIVES IN 2023-2024

Media	Action	Resources	Results intended
nammco.org	Review and update all information every year Increase effort on SEO Develop specific sites for the different flag projects	- Secretariat - NPR - Input from projects participants - Inputs from NAMMCO community on national activities and debates	Reinforce nammco.org as a hub for NAMMCO outreach Increased information and knowledge given to the wider public and thereby enhanced credibility and understanding
Blog	Generate more blog posts, especially on the flag projects, their development, and results	- Secretariat - Open to project participants - Open to community	More traffic to website and to FB. NAMMCO's perspective in/on global conservation issues shared and known

		- Open to outsiders	Blogs should be announced on FB and twitter
SoMe	Regularise the practice of posting NAMMCO specific post and project update (find a suitable rhythm). Continue FFF (Fun Fact Friday) practice	- Secretariat - Open to community	Regular information flow to the NAMMCO community Connection with those beyond the current community Enhanced traffic to the website
Facebook			
Twitter	Increase the practice with reference to the CP flag projects.	- Secretariat	Be more visible in Twitter community and increase number of followers
Instagram	Develop the use of Instagram	- Secretariat	Reaching out more widely the younger public
Leaflets	Produce 1-2 leaflets on the CP flag projects	- Secretariat	Hand-outs available. for contacts made during events Educational resource that can be shared with others
One-page summary	One-page summary/FB post for all meetings within 48 hrs of end	- Secretariat - Chairs	Increased internal information Provide material for nammco.org and SoMe
Fieldwork plans	Fieldwork plans delivered in May by NAMMCO scientific community	- SC members	
Field work & project results	Blogs, results, publications provided a.s.a.p	- Project participants	
High profile events	Attending events. Making presentations or manning a booth, illustrating the progress in the three flag projects	- Secretariat - Parties	Spread the message Increasing the visibility of NAMMCO and its credibility
Implementation review	Review the implementation at the end of 2023 and tuned for 2024	- Secretariat - NAMMCO Community	Tuning of effort to obtain a better adequation between results and goals