



Opening statement by Greenland to NAMMCO 21st Annual Meeting 2022, Oslo, Norway

Mr Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, congratulations to all NAMMCO member countries, observers, and the Secretariat in the occasion of the 30 years anniversary for the creation of North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission.

We are very pleased to be here with you after 2 years of virtual meetings. We have both good and less good experiences with virtual meetings. One of the good things is that we use less fuel and thus less gas emissions. Good for everyone, including marine mammals.

We are gathered to address issues on the conservation and management of marine mammals NAMMCO has focussed on the last 30 years. We have gained impressive results and still eager to develop and make it more effective to benefit conservation and management of marine mammals. I am sure everybody is doing their best ability. It has been another busy year dealing with conservation and management issues being a country based its economy and subsistence from marine resources. The COVID-19 has severely impacted the food security.

The important meat supplies

Greenland, being a large coast-based and isolated land is reliant on self-sufficiency. Marine mammals are the most important part of our food as shown in the National Progress Report on the numbers of reported catches. The Government is obliged to provide the framework for food security by law. The government is also obliged to incorporate hunter- and user knowledge in their decision-making processes.

The need for increased focus on hunter and user knowledge

Greenland has followed most of the scientific advice since the establishment of NAMMCO. For the last 6-7 years, there has been clear evidence that there is a need to improve and structure the collection and use of hunter and user knowledge in relation to addressing issues on the conservation and management of marine mammals. There is an imbalanced situation, which increases challenges between scientists and hunters. The situation has a severe impact on the management on marine mammal in Greenland. It is also cause for frustrations in the hunter communities, in meat supply and to our cultural heritage.