



North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

29th Annual Meeting, 13-15 September 2022

PRESS RELEASE

The Council of NAMMCO held its 29th annual meeting in Oslo, Norway, from the 13th to 15th September. NAMMCO is an international organisation for regional cooperation on the conservation, management and study of marine mammals in the North Atlantic, with the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway as members.

Sustainable harvesting of marine mammals for food defines NAMMCO and unites its member countries, which share a strong commitment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 – to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Japan and the USA observed the meeting, as well as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. International organisations represented during the meetings included the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and the World Conservation Trust (IWMC).

Climate change and food security

Marine mammals represent an environmentally friendly sustainable food resource with a low carbon footprint. In light of the challenges brought on by Climate Change, the annual meeting stressed the importance of sustainable utilisation of local marine resources and food security.

Their role will be highlighted in the upcoming international conference and gastronomic showcase “Marine Mammals: A Sustainable Food Resource” on the 5th and 6th October in Tórshavn which will also celebrate the 30th anniversary of NAMMCO.

Hunter safety and animal welfare

NAMMCO continues to put effort on improving safety for hunters and animal welfare. A newly developed instruction video featuring the safe handling of the whaling cannon and explosive grenade was screened at the meeting. The funding for the production of a second video on animal welfare focusing on shooting angles and targets site was approved.

User Knowledge

Acknowledging the importance of both user and scientific knowledge to form the basis for management advice, member countries agreed to form a Working Group that would look at how these two knowledge systems can be best integrated into the advice process.

The MINTAG

The meeting welcomed updates on the MINTAG project, a cooperation between NAMMCO Countries and Japan, aiming for the first time at developing miniaturised tags for lesser known and difficult to tag species (fin, sei and minke whales) to study their movements. First tests were carried out in Iceland in July.

NASS 2024

The member countries reiterated their commitment to carry out North Atlantic Sightings Surveys in 2024 in order to obtain essential abundance estimates of cetacean stocks in the North Atlantic. These surveys represent a unique timeseries as they have been conducted in regular intervals for the last four decades.

NAMMCO

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Anthropogenic stressors

NAMMCO reiterated its concerns on anthropogenic stressors i.e. shipping traffic and their negative impact on marine mammals and their habitat. Therefore, a strong scientific approach to predict the effect of these stressors is needed.

Supplementary Information

The agreement to establish NAMMCO was signed in Nuuk on 9 April 1992.

The agenda, list of participants and documents for the Council and Management Committee Meetings can be found at <https://nammco.no/council-reports/>

More information on NAMMCO and its activities can be found at www.nammco.org

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