

Chair, Delegates, Observers and Guests – dear friends

We wish you a warm welcome to the city of Oslo. It feels good to finally be able to meet again.

After 30 years NAMMCO is a well established organisation, constructive in its work and forward looking. Norway would like to express its sincere gratitude to all the parties, and the secretariat, for contributing to this unique environment of cooperation. The management of marine mammals represents challenges of various kinds. In NAMMCO we meet these with a solid combination of the best available science and the knowhow of the hunter.

At this meeting we are particularly looking forward to hear about – and see – the work from the committee on hunting methods. We also welcome further exploring how inclusion of user knowledge can progress within NAMMCO.

NAMMCO leans heavily on science and research, while over the years they have not moved far from the group it is intended to assist – the hunters. The scientific committee in NAMMCO is central in giving the organisation legitimacy and direction with regard to which direction it should move.

Marine mammals have an important role to play when it comes to contributing to the supply of food and proteins. In 2050, there will be an estimated 10 billion people on the planet. These will need a supply of proteins in the form of healthy and nutritious food. It is recognized that a significant part of the future consumption of food will come from the sea, in the form of wild caught and farmed fish, but marine mammals should be able to play a role here. The UN's sustainability goal 14, life under water, is essential in order to achieve sustainability goal 2 – to be able to ensure people's access to sustainable and healthy food production in the future.

Finally, NAMMCO contribute to communication with other international organisations that need a sustainable management of the ocean's resources. Not least when establishing the UN's sustainability goals, the necessity of good coordination of global processes on these matters has been made visible in a completely different way than before. The work in the International Ocean Panel, under Norwegian leadership, is an example of this. Good management of marine resources has thus acquired a far more prominent role than just a few years ago. NAMMCO is also part of this.

Look forward to and wish you all a fruitful meeting.