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MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

DOCUMENT 16	Report on NAMMCO's educational project
Submitted by	Secretariat
Action requested	To take note Provide comments and ideas
Background/content	<p>NAMMCO Communication Strategy and Communication Plans (CPs) were generated following an increased awareness of the Commission of the necessity of being visible, to support broadening the visibility of the organisation, as well as its transparency.</p> <p>Council 29 (September 2022) adopted <i>the 3rd Communication Plan CP3 2023–2024</i>. <i>One of the COS target audiences in focus and specifically that of CP3 is "Youth, children and educators, member countries' educational networks"</i>.</p> <p>NAMMCO's website has a wealth of information on marine mammals and marine mammal management in the North Atlantic. It is detailed and extensive but not written in a language that is easy to understand for youth. Some adaptations or specific projects were needed for reaching this targeted public.</p> <p>The project of developing an educational portal was initiated in 2023 and funding sought. Partners to the educational project are from the four NAMMCO countries and Denmark.</p> <p>The portal would be freely available on the NAMMCO website for schools and youth and the wider public. The strategy behind the development of the portal is to engage the youth in marine conservation, enhance awareness to responsible, transparent, and sustainable use of marine mammals, to increase the visibility and</p>

	<p>engagement of scientific projects coordinated by NAMMCO and to NAMMCO's work in general.</p> <p><i>"If you want to conserve marine mammals, conserve the sea"</i></p>
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The NAMMCO Educational project is presently centred around one large interregional project: GUARDNA—Guardians of the North Atlantic: Looking after our Seas to Conserve Marine Mammals.

GUARDNA is a three-year project (2023–2026) aiming to educate and contribute to the empowerment of the coming generation (7- to 20-year-old children and young adults), bringing the North Atlantic into the classroom and the students out into the North Atlantic (NA).

GUARDNA intends to develop a marine portal with appealing and playful educational materials, both information and indoors and outdoors activities, that intends to spark curiosity and interest of the youngest into ocean sustainability, using marine mammals as emissaries for the entire marine ecosystem, with the understanding that protecting/conserving marine mammals imply to conserve their habitat, i.e., to conserve the ocean. The GUARDNA educational portal will contain all the educational materials and will be freely accessible. Produced in English, the material will be translated to Danish, Faroese, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Northern Sámi, making it accessible to youth of the whole NA realm.

At present the partners of the Project are:

- NAMMCO
- Institute of Learning at the University of Greenland (project leader for the part funded by Novo Nordisk)
- NÁM, Faroese educational Publisher
- Faculty of subject teacher education, Háskóli Íslands
- Nordnorsk Vitensenter

To accomplish the objectives of the GUARDNA project, the NAMMCO Secretariat has established communication with schools, universities, science, and environmental organisations, as well as science communication and education service centers. During the idea development phase, the Secretariat closely collaborated with educators from Denmark, Iceland, Faroe Islands, Norway, and Greenland, who provided valuable feedback and expressed enthusiasm for the project. The goal of the Secretariat is to expand and strengthen this network further, actively focusing on the continuous improvement of the materials, which will promote the adoption of the project in as many schools as possible in the NA.

During this reporting period the GUARDNA partners hold contacts through regular meetings, in February, March, May, August, October and November.

This document summarises the progress and status of the GUARDNA project per March 2025.

1. Educational material

GUARDNA provides simple, inspiring, and motivating educational materials to the schools to The materials will be tailored to meet the learning needs of four different age groups: 7 to 10 years, 10 to 12 years, 12 to 15 years, and 15 to 20 years. These materials will include:

- Information Cards designed for classroom use, delivering concise and accessible information about key aspects of marine mammal conservation. Several sets of information cards will be created, related to marine mammal species, threats, users, utilisations, etc. (Figure 1).
- Diverse exercises and hands-on cross-curricular activities that will feature a wide range of exercises and hands-on activities, both indoors and outdoors.



Figure 1. The GUARDNA information cards feature information on marine mammals, stakeholders, threats and uses.

- Activities connected to MINTAG and NASS–North Atlantic Sightings Survey 2024 (NASS24) to allow students to participate in real-world high-profile research.

The original material is produced focusing on the oldest age-group, then adapted to fit the younger age-groups. Different activities are produced for the different age groups. Some original activities can be simplified from the original activity produced for the age-group 15-20, while others are totally different and specific.

In spring and summer 2024, the NAMMCO Secretariat coordinated and developed educational materials for the GUARDNA project, including information cards, activities, and a teacher's guide. Since autumn 2024 most of the efforts have been focused on preparing the website to make the materials accessible. All materials developed until now are available on the project website, which is currently under development: <https://guardna.wpenginepowered.com/>.

The development of information cards and activities continues.

2. Pilot tests and next steps

The first activity was tested at an international school in Nuuk in June 2024, receiving positive feedback. Additional testing will take place in Greenland, Iceland and Norway during Spring 2025. Users (teachers and students, as well as students in the pedagogy curriculum in the partner institutions) will be encouraged to provide feedback all along the project (e.g., through the program website and the workshops) to enhance the quality of the materials and tailor it to their needs.

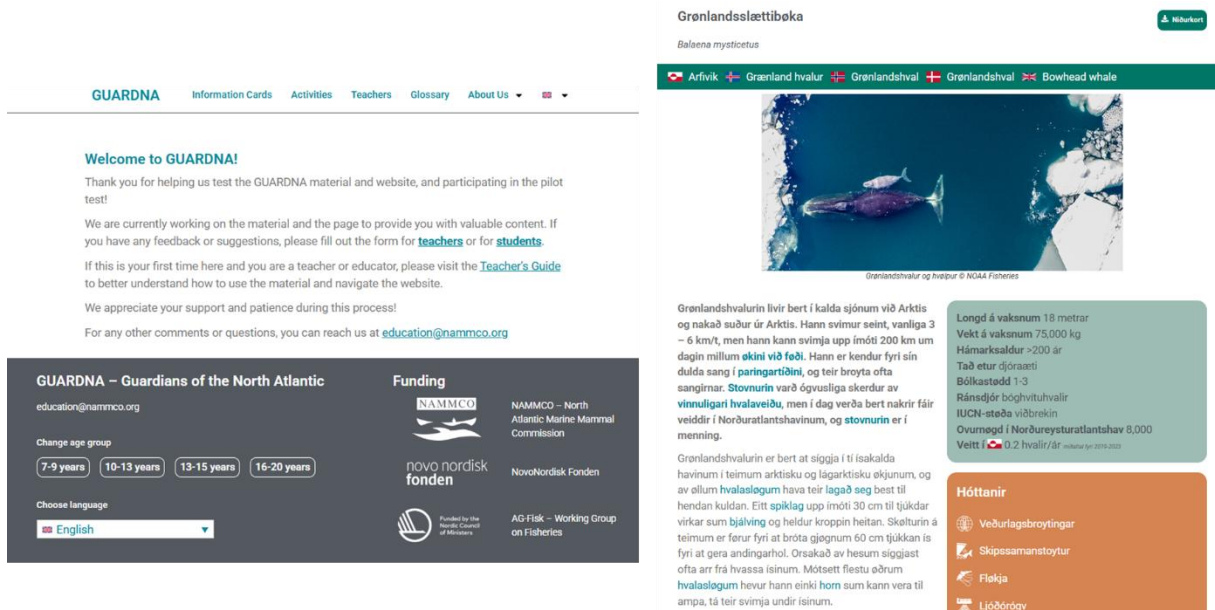


Figure 2. Draft GUARDNA website. Left photo: home page. Right photo: bowhead whale page in Faroese.

The translation of the material to Greenlandic and Faroese started in winter 2025 and is ongoing (Figure 2). Translation into Danish, is expected to begin in Spring 2025. Due to funding constraints, translations into Icelandic, Norwegian, and Northern Sámi has been delayed, but can hopefully begin in Spring 2025. Even after translation, the material will continue to undergo feedback and refinement.

3. Financial update

The activities within the GUARDNA project are funded by NAMMCO (in kind funding as working hours), with support from national and regional funding bodies. NAMMCO has been successful with the applications for financial support from Novo-Nordisk and AG-Fisk.

Educational Project - Multi-Year Project			
Funding (Received, Planned, and Applied For)		Nammco In-Kind Contribution	339,921.23
2024	1,045,796.88		
2025	1,718,489.34		
2026	804,886.37		
Total	3,569,172.59		
2024 and 2025 (up to 07.03.25)			
Contributions	Received	Planned	Applied for
AG-Fisk	917,686.45	164,197.84	
Novo Nordisk	620,111.24	1,281,377.06	
Norden (50,000 EUR)			585,800.00
Total Contributions	1,537,797.69	1,445,574.90	585,800.00
Expenses			
Project management, project website & dissemination	338,297.18		
Total Expenses	338,297.18		
Remaining Expected Funding as of 07.03.25	3,230,875.41		

Figure 3. Financial status as of March 2025.

In early October 2024, the Secretariat applied to Norden 0-30 (Nordic Council of Ministers) to cover translation costs to Icelandic, Norwegian and Northern Sámi. The funding was not granted, and the Secretariat reapplied in February 2025. A reply is expected April 2025. Ideas for further funding opportunities are most welcome.

4. Timeline and status of the project

The timeline of the activities as per March 2024 is summarised in Table 3

Table 1. Summary of timeline of activities related to GUARDNA as of March 2025.

Main activities	2023	2024				2025				2026			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Development and design of educational materials													
Information cards													
Education activities													
Supportive material and guidelines													
Website development and design													
Translation of materials													
DK													
FO													
GL													
IS, NO, NS													
Partners activities													
Review of draft material by partners													
Partners evaluation meetings			Online	Online	Online		Online	Online	Online	Online	Online	Online	Physical
Launching of GUARDNA and announcement													
DK, FO, GL													
IS, NO													
Dissemination of GUARDNA the educational systems													
DK, FO, GL													
IS, NO													
Material related to NASS 2024 survey and MINTAG tags deployment and follow up according to results													
GUARDNA Network - Collection of teachers/users input and experience for material improvement and tuning													
Feedback from and input from users of materials													
Workshop with teachers, teachers and educators / GL							Physical?						
Workshop with teachers, teachers and educators / FO									Physical?				
Workshop with teachers, teachers and educators / DK										Physical?			
Workshop with teachers, teachers and educators / IS											Physical?		
Workshop with teachers, teachers and educators / NO												Physical?	
Final workshop with partners, teachers and educators													Physical?
Reporting													
Project reporting to funding agencies													
Reporting to NAMMCO													