



# COMMITTEE ON HUNTING METHODS

*11 March 2025  
Online*

**REPORT**



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The Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM) met online 11 March 2025 from 13:00 to 16:00 CET. The CHM meeting was chaired by Jóhann Ásmundsson (Iceland). The meeting agenda and list of participants are available in Appendix 1 and 2, respectively.

## 1. Adoption of agenda and review of documents

Ásmundsson welcomed the CHM members and introduced new members of the NAMMCO Secretariat, Noor Elias, intern, and Bjørn L. Pérez, short-term intern as part of the Realfagspraksis program at UiT-The Arctic University of Norway.

The Chair presented the agenda and the meeting documents. The agenda was adopted without modification

## 2. Review of hunting information submitted for Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop

Geneviève Desportes (NAMMCO Secretariat) introduced the background and the call for data from participating countries for the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop (WWS) scheduled for March 2025. Elias presented an overview of the collected data requested from all countries attending the upcoming WWS on 24 March 2025 (documents CHM/2025-01/02 and CHM/2025-01/03). The discussion focused on marine mammal hunting practices and welfare considerations, emphasising reporting standards, variations in hunting methods, and assessing welfare impacts. CHM members provided feedback to improve the presentation of the data for the workshop. The illustrated summary of the data provided by the participating entities to the WS and collated in the hunt information database, will be a good starter to the WS discussion.

The CHM acknowledged that this initiative is informative and supports the work of the Committee. Despite the data submitted by the countries is not directly comparable due to the specificities of each country, it serves as a first step to identify knowledge gaps and areas for improvement.

Desportes asked the members of the CHM to send corrections to the submitted data no later than 13 March 2025.

## 3. General information updates

The CHM reviews and updates information related to its terms of reference regularly. The following overview documents are updated either in connection with meetings or by correspondence intersessionally. Prior to and during the meeting members of the CHM were reminded to update the Secretariat on the missing information presented under items 3.1 and 3.2.

### 3.1 List of laws and regulations and list of references

Members informed about new references ([here](#)) and laws ([here](#)) and regulations collated in the NAMMCO website. This item was followed up by email correspondence.

### 3.2 Other

Members informed about updates related to the conservation status of marine mammal stocks ([here](#)) and hunting methods and regulations in NAMMCO member countries ([here](#)). This item was followed up by email correspondence.

## 4. Evaluation of video project

### Evaluation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> video and other hunter training materials

The CHM was tasked by the Council 31 (2024) to *“discuss the impact of the current videos, whether they are used by hunters and contribute to improving safety and killing methods. If the outcome seems positive, the Committee will explore potential topics for new videos, including subjects like seal hunting, dolphin drives, how to minimise struck and lost rates, and how to best implement the recommendations provided by the CHM Expert Groups.”*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> information video (animation) “Large Whale Hunting. Target Area and Shooting Angle” was published in Greenlandic, Norwegian and English in June 2024 (the video is available [here](#)).

Amalie Jessen (Greenland) reported that the instructors of the Harpoon cannon certificate course, which hunters are recommended to attend every other year, has informed the Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting in Greenland of the video's usefulness. The course attendees include gunners using harpoon grenades, individuals who repair harpoon cannons, and the personnel of the firm handling the grenade. Additionally, new Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting staff and Wildlife Officers who observe whale hunting also participate in these courses. The instructors incorporate the video into their courses and plan to continue using it in future sessions. In addition to this, Jessen informed about the utilisation of both videos and manuals on large and small cetaceans. Despite the last manual being published in 2015, the information remains updated and to ensure accessibility in areas with limited internet connectivity, Greenland plans to produce physical copies of these materials. Greenland emphasised the importance of having the video available in Greenlandic.

Kristján Loftsson (Iceland) noted that staff at the Hvalur hf. are also instructed to watch and read the videos and relevant manuals prepared by the CHM. Ásmundsson informed that he would forward the training materials produced by the CHM for the course for minke whale hunters in Iceland.

Kathrine A. Ryeng (Norway) mentioned that the videos and manuals were used during the course with whalers, indicating their practical application.

The CHM videos have therefore proven to be a valuable tool and to be widely used. The videos are an important and accessible tool for training hunters, standardising the message being sent.

### Discussion around a proposal for a 3<sup>rd</sup> hunter training video or other training material

Expert Groups on Hunting Methods in 2015 recommended to *“that hunters be trained to measure and report on strike location and detonation location, and the distance between the two in order to evaluate the efficiency of the hunts”* ([Expert Group report, p. 18](#)). Such information may help to investigate reasons why IDR and TTD in different hunts.

Ryeng reflected on the potential value of a new training material on this topic, that would instruct hunters on how to report the strike location, where the harpoon grenade penetrates the animal, and where it detonates. Members of the CHM stressed that, to ensure optimal animal welfare outcomes during the hunt, the harpoon grenade should be aimed at the whale's chest cavity.

The CHM briefly considered the possibility of creating a manual instead of a video. While this option would be more cost-effective, it might be less appealing to the target audience.

### Recommendations

The CHM **recommended** conducting further investigations into the use and impact of the first two videos before deciding whether it is worthwhile to produce a third one. Additionally, the CHM **recommended** using information from the WWS, and consultations with instructors at national hunting courses to identify the appropriate topic for the 3<sup>rd</sup> hunter training video or manual. These tasks will be included in the list of objectives to be completed throughout 2025.

## 5. Future work of the Committee and workplan

The CHM needs to present a three-year workplan to the Council 32 for 2025, 2026, 2027. The CHM discussed and **recommended** the following items to be the focus in the upcoming years:

- **To follow up on the video project.** See agenda item 4.
- **To invite hunters to participate in CHM meetings.** During CHM/2024-03 (October 2024), the CHM developed a procedure for inviting hunters to its meetings. Participation should be facilitated online, with interpretation services if necessary. The WWS will serve as an initial step to better identify which hunters should be invited, using the criteria outlined in the procedure. Once the hunt of interest is identified, the CHM **agreed** to prepare a set of questions for the hunters and send them well in advance to ensure they know what to expect.
- **To follow up on outcomes of the WWS.**
- **To revisit older CHM documents and analyse the information existing on struck and lost (S&L).**

The CHM was informed that while the Greenlandic draft Executive Order, which would mandate reporting S&L as well as the catches, is yet to be presented to the new cabinet formed after the Greenlandic parliamentary election in March 2025. Jessen informed that the divisions of fisheries and hunting within their Ministry are in conversation to exchange data on by-catch and S&L. Digital reporting of catches, which has been successful for land-based animals, will soon be introduced for marine mammal species. Greenlandic members of the CHM will keep the CHM updated as developments occur, and the CHM will follow up on this matter at a later stage.

## 6. Next meeting

The CHM **agreed** to hold the next meeting before summer 2025. The date will be decided by email correspondence.

## 7. Any other business

The CHM revisited the discussion initiated in CHM/2024-03 (October 2024) regarding the use of the term "Animal Welfare." Following the suggestion presented in document CHM/2025-01/05, the group debated the suitability of the alternative term "Hunting Success."

While some Committee members supported this perspective, others expressed concern that this term might shift the focus away from the animal and its well-being, instead emphasising the hunting process, which could lead to misinterpretation. "Animal Welfare" in the context of hunting, is an internationally recognised term that emphasise minimising pain and suffering for the animal during the hunt. The CHM acknowledged the importance of engaging in such complex discussions and **agreed** to continue exploring this topic in future meetings.

## 8. Adoption of the report

The report was adopted by correspondence 19 March 2025.

## APPENDIX 1: Agenda and list of documents

1. Adoption of agenda and review of documents
2. Review of hunting information submitted for Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop
3. General information updates
  - 3.1 List of laws and regulations and list of references
  - 3.2 Other
4. Evaluation of video project
5. Future work of the Committee and workplan
6. Next meeting
7. Any other business

### LIST OF DOCUMENTS

In italics, documents that will be made available after the meeting.

Doc Reference	Title	Agenda item
CHM/2025-01/01a	Draft agenda & list of documents	1
CHM/2025-01/01b	Draft annotated agenda & list of documents	1
CHM/2025-01/02	WWS database	2
CHM/2025-01/03	Summary on WWS data	2
CHM/2025-01/03	"A comparative analysis of animal welfare legislation in selected countries" – N. Sellheim	2
CHM/2025-01/05	"Animal welfare and hunting success" – K. Loftsson	7

## APPENDIX 2: List of participants

**Amalie A. Jessen (GL)**

Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting

**Bjørn C. L. Pérez**

UiT-Realfagspraksis intern at NAMMCO Secretariat

**Geneviève Desportes**

NAMMCO Secretariat

**Jóhann Ásmundsson (Chair, IS)**

Directorate of Fisheries

**Kathrine A. Ryeng (NO)**

Institute of Marine Research in Norway

**Kristján Loftsson (IS)**

Hvalur hf. (Icelandic fin whaling company)

**Malik Hansen (GL)**

Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting

**Naima El bani Altuna**

NAMMCO Secretariat

**Niels Lyberth (GL)**

Ministry of Fisheries and Hunting

**Noor Elias**

NAMMCO Secretariat

**Ulla Svarrer Wang (FO)**

Ministry of Fisheries and Infrastructure