

NAMMCO ANNUAL MEETING 33

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

24–26 March 2026

Hotel Hans Egede, Nuuk, Greenland

DOCUMENT 07rev	Administrative Report 2025
Agenda item(s)	3.4, 11, 12
Submitted by	Secretariat
Action requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take note of the report • Provide comments and input to the work of the Commission
Background/content	The Administrative Report provides an overview of the activities of the Commission and the Secretariat over the year 2025.

Abbreviations used in the report

AM: Annual Meeting
 AMB: Arctic and Marine Biology
 ACAP: Arctic Contaminants Action Program
 AMAP: Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme
 BYC: By-catch
 BYCELS: Council Working Group on By-catch, Entanglements and Live Strandings
 CAFF: Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
 CHM: Committee on Hunting Methods
 CIO: Committee on Inspection and Observation
 FAC: Finance and Administration Committee
 NASS: North Atlantic Sightings Surveys
 NCLOS: Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea
 NPR: National Progress Report
 NSP: NAMMCO Scientific Publications Series
 PAME: Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment
 SC: Scientific Committee
 SEC: Secretariat
 SDWG: Sustainable Development Working Group
 StG: Steering Group
 UiT: The Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø
 WG: Working Group
 WS: Workshop

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1 NAMMCO OFFICERS

The officers listed in Table 1 below are those elected at the 32nd Council Meeting on 25-27 March 2025.

Table 1. NAMMCO officers in 2025

NAMMCO Body	Chair (Member Country : Officer)	Term
	FO: Páll Nolsøe	Post NAMMCO 32 – NAMMCO 34 (2027)
Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)	GL: Amalie Jessen	Post NAMMCO 32 – NAMMCO 34 (2027)
Management Committee for Cetaceans (MCC)	NO: Guro Gjelsvik	Post NAMMCO 32 – NAMMCO 34 (2027)
Management Committee for Seals and Walrus (MCSW)	IS: Jóhann Ásmundsson	Post NAMMCO 32 – NAMMCO 34 (2027)
Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM)	FO: Ulla S. Wang	Post NAMMCO 32 – NAMMCO 34 (2027)
Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO)	NO: Guro Gjelsvik	Post NAMMCO 32 – NAMMCO 34 (2027)
Scientific Committee (SC)	IS: Sandra Granquist, Chair	Post SC 31 – SC 34 (2028)
	NO: Anne Kirstine Frie, Vice-Chair	Post SC 31 – SC 34 (2028)

2 FOCAL ACTIVITIES

2.1 COMMITTEES

A summary of the focal activities in the NAMMCO Committees during 2025 is presented below. Further information is also available in the list of meetings under item 4. NAMMCO Meetings.

2.1.1 Committee on Hunting Methods (CHM)

The CHM met three times on the period from April 2025 to March 2026: 28 August 2025 (CHM/2025-02), 11 November 2025 (CHM/2025-03), and 17 February 2026 (CHM/2026-01). All CHM meeting reports can be found [here](#). The CHM was chaired by Ulla S. Wang (Faroe Islands).

During this period, the CHM reviewed the catch database and continued their task of improving the clarity of the database. The CHM also discussed GDPR concerns regarding public access to detailed catch data, and recommended the Council develops a data policy for NAMMCO as a whole.

Between April 2025 and March 2026, the CHM continued to strengthen its engagement with hunters, including inviting a Norwegian seal hunter to present on pack-ice sealing. Hunter training video materials also remained a major focus: the CHM found two previous whaling videos to be useful, and discussions are ongoing to determine the most suitable topic for the next training video based on stakeholder needs.

Following the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop recommendations, the CHM advanced work on standardising terminology for hunting and welfare reporting and proposed defining realistic welfare outcomes per species and hunt type in the next cycle.

2.1.2 Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO)

The Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) met three times on the period from April 2025 to March 2026: 6 May 2025 (CIO/2025-02), 28 October 2024 (CIO/2025-04) and 10 February 2026 (CIO/2026-01). All the reports of the CIO can be found [here](#). An additional meeting was held on 28 August 2025 (CIO/2025-03) to provide an update on the Observation Activities (OA) to the CIO.

One of the main tasks of the CIO in 2025 was to develop a proposal for a methodology to identify future OA. Although limited progress was made, the discussions were constructive, and this work continues in 2026.

The CIO held the Observers' Corps Annual Meeting on 3 December 2025. During the meeting, observers were informed about the evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the observation scheme, as well as the plans for the 2025–2026 observation activities. The observers highlighted the

need for improved communication and coordination among stakeholders during the OA. In line with this, CIO members continued their efforts to increase participation and engagement with hunters in national arenas.

2.1.3 Council Working Group BYCELS

Following a recommendation from BYCELS, Council 29 agreed to make it a dormant standing WG which will be activated when called upon. BYCELS was not called upon for advice in 2025, and the Working Group was therefore not active.

2.1.4. Scientific Committee (SC)

The SC held its 32nd annual meeting, SC/32, in January 2026. At this meeting, the SC discussed the status of all requests for advice, received available updates on all pinniped and cetacean species, and reviewed the reports of the working group (WG) and workshop meetings held since SC/31.

The WG meetings included:

- an interim online meeting of the WG on Harp and Hooded Seals held in September;
- an in-person (September) and two online (November and December) meetings of the WG on Abundance Estimates;
- an online meeting of the Genetics WG held in October;
- an in-person meeting of the Pilot Whale WG held in November;
- and an in-person meeting of the Large Whale Assessment WG held in January, just prior to SC/32.

Updates were also given from the By-Catch WG, whose AG-Fisk-funded project on mapping the potential exposure of marine mammals to by-catch risk within NAMMCO waters is progressing.

A workshop on spatio-temporal modelling of complex cetacean surveys was held in November; the SC agreed that such modelling shows promise and should be pursued in the context of analysing NASS data.

A workshop on investigating alternative methods to classic cetacean surveys is planned for 2026.

Finally, the MINTAG Steering Group met several times online during 2025, and in person just prior to the SC meeting in 2026, to evaluate the 2025 field effort and make plans for the following season and end of project obligations. Outcomes and plans were presented to and discussed by the SC.

It was noted that participation from the Norwegian delegation was limited at SC/33, with only the SC Vice-Chair participating in person, and one delegate partially attending online.

2.1.4 Finance and Administration Committee (FAC)

The FAC held meeting during the Council 32 meeting in March 2025 and then held three face-to-face meetings back-to-back with HoDs meeting (September 2025, February 2026, and one just ahead of the 33rd meeting of the Council).

The focus of the Committee has been to follow up on the administrative and financial activities of the Commission and NAMMCO bodies, including the review of the accounts and the preparation of the 2027 draft and 2028 forecast budgets. The FAC also followed up on the ongoing projects (NASS, MINTAG, Educational Project) in terms of progress, funding and expenses incurred.

2.2 SECRETARIAT

Besides the usual support to the Commission's and subsidiary bodies' activities, and the preparation of meetings, specific Secretariat activities in 2025 were:

- Organising and holding the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop, back-to-back to the 32nd Annual Meetings of NAMMCO, as well as reporting and financial follow up.

- Continuing implementing the 3rd Communication Plan [CP3](#) 2023–2024, adopted by Council 29 in September 2022 and extended to 2025: developing communication and dissemination events relevant to CP3, either by organising specific events or participating in external events, and continuing developing the educational portal on marine mammals and the marine environment, which will target students and youth from 7 to 20 in and that will become freely available on the NAMMCO website.
- Developing the GUARDNA Educational Portal with partners from institutions in NAMMCO member countries and Denmark: creating Information Cards and related activities, preparing and coordinating meetings with the partners and stakeholders; developing funding application (see under point 6.3 and doc NAMMCO/32/16 for more detail); organising translation work to Danish, English, Faroese, and Greenlandic, searching for funding for the translation to Icelandic, Norwegian and Northern Sami.
- Updating the species pages on the website: adding catch data from NPR 2024 and assessment information with the results of the WGs and WS; updating the pages for the minke whale, after the review by SC/31 (January 2025); updating the pages for sei, sperm and killer whales with the recent publications and preparing them for the review of SC/32 (January 2026).
- Updating NAMMCO’s databases, including after the 2025 meetings of the Management Committees and the Council: - Requests from the Council to the SC and SC responses; - Proposals for Conservation and Management and Research Recommendations, and Responses from member Countries; - Removals (with the data received from member Countries in their National Progress Reports 2024).
- Supporting the analyses of the data generated by NASS 2024: organising of and reporting from the meetings of the Abundance Estimate WG; reporting to the Norwegian Ministries involved in Norway’s voluntary contribution to the NASS 2024 survey; developing and maintaining the NASS website and updating the progress of the different surveys (see doc NAMMCO/32/115 for more details).
- Supporting the MINTAG project: including the organisation and reporting of the StG meetings and other activities; developing and maintaining the MINTAG website www.mintag-project.com (Figure 2); maintaining the tracking database and ensuring that the database was filled by the scientists with the information related to each tagging event; keeping contact with the tag producer, ensuring that the agreement is followed, (see doc NAMMCO/32/14 for more details).

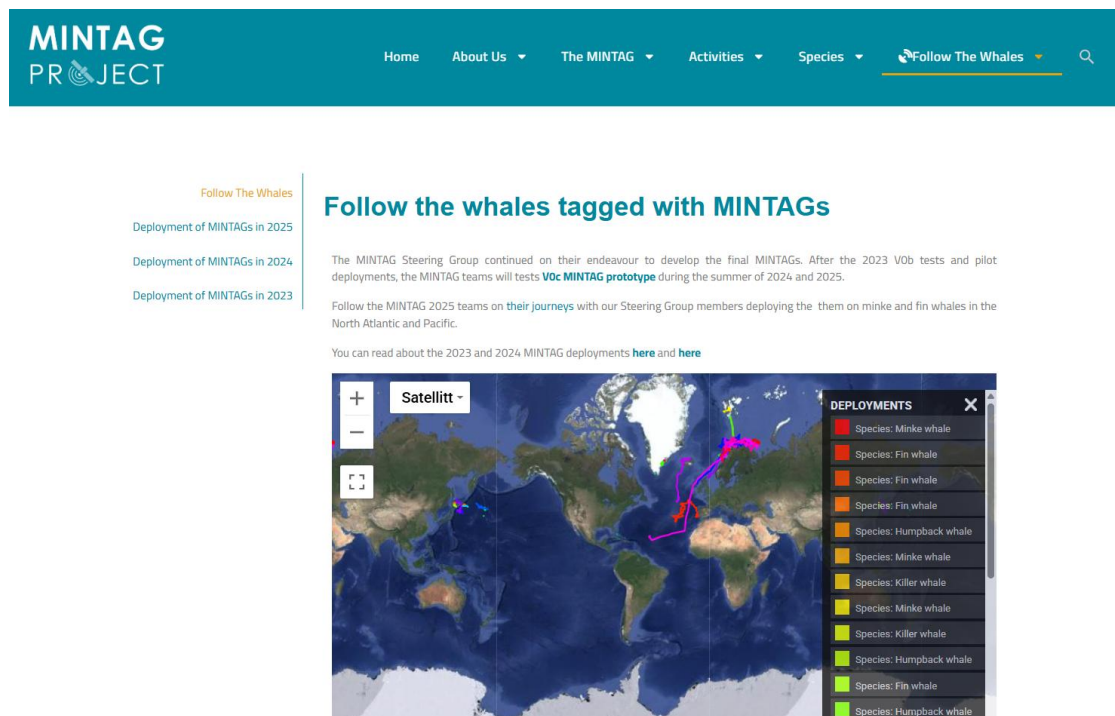


Figure 1. “Follow the Whales” page on the MINTAG website, showcasing whale tracks from the 2025 tagging.

3 SECRETARIAT STAFF

In October 2025, the Secretariat had the pleasure to welcome for nine months Olof Bengtsson, PhD, as Research Assistant to develop, under the framework of an AG-Fisk-funded project the mapping of the potential exposure of marine mammals to by-catch risk within NAMMCO waters, this under the supervision of the NAMMCO WG on By-catch and Deputy Secretary Garagouni.

The staff of the Secretariat included in 2025 4 Secretaries, 1 Research Assistant, as well as 4 interns - although not all at the same time (Table 2).

Table 2. Secretariat staff and interns in 2025

Secretary General	Geneviève Desportes (GD)
Deputy Secretaries	Ian Bolduc (IB) - Focus Finance and Administration
	Maria Garagouni (MG) - Focus Science
Research Assistant	Naima El bani Altuna (NEA) - Focus Science Communication and Dissemination
	Olov Bengtsson - By-catch risk: from 13 October 2025
Interns	Noor Elias (NE): from 1 September 2024 - June 2025
	Eli Oerlemans (EO): from 1 September 2025 - February 2026
	Ricardo Almeida Mendez (RAM): from 20 October 2025 - April 2026
Intern UiT-Realfagspraksis, 120 hrs	Bjørn C. L. Pérez (BP): March-April



Figure 2. Secretariat in 2025. From left to right: IB, GD, MG, NE, NEA

4 NAMMCO MEETINGS

Table 3 presents a chronological overview of the NAMMCO meetings held in 2025, i.e., the meetings of NAMMCO bodies, project related meetings and events (WS and WG) organised by the Secretariat. Meetings with suppliers are not included. The staff attending the meeting, as well as the main themes when relevant, are specified. All the reports that are publicly available can be found on the NAMMCO website under [Meeting reports and documents](#).

Table 3. Overview of NAMMCO meetings in 2025 (NAMMCO bodies and project-related meetings).

Dates	Meetings	Venue	Staff	Comments
January				
19-20	MINTAG StG	Tromsø; NO	NEA, GD, NE	
21	AEWG		MG, GD, NE	
20-21	SC/31		MG, GD, NE, NEA, IB (one day)	
February				
17	CIO	Online	NEA, GD	
19	FAC	Copenhagen, DK	GD, IB	
20	HODs			
March				
11	CHM	Online	NEA, GD, NE, BP	
18	GUARDNA - NO	Tromsø, NO	NEA, GD	With Nordnorsk Vitensenter
23	FAC/HODs		GD, IB	
24	Marine Mammal Welfare WS		GD, IB, MG, NEA, NE, BP	Funded by AG-fisk, NORA and NAMMCO
25-27	Council		GD, IB, MG, NEA, NE, BP	
27	FAC		GD, IB	Finalising draft budget 2026 & forecast 2027
April				
11	GUARDNA - GL	Nuuk, GL	NEA	With Institute of Learning, University of Greenland and Greenland Agency of Education
30	MINTAG StG	Online	GD, NEA	
May				
6	CIO	Online	GD, IB, NEA	
20	GUARDNA - GL	Online	NEA	
June				
17	GUARDNA - FO	Online	NEA, GD	General update, as well as translation issues
25	GUARDNA - NO	Online	NEA, GD	Update on progress
27	GUARDNA - IS	Online	NEA	Contact with eventual partner
July				
2	GUARDNA - IS + DK	Online	NEA	Contact with eventual partners
10	GUARDNA - DK	Online	NEA	
August				
21	GUARDNA IS	Online	NEA, GD	Exploring collaboration with Húnaklúbburinn
26	GUARDNA DK	Online	NEA, GD	Exploring collaboration with Ecoscience - Marine Ecology, Aarhus Uni.
28	CHM	Online	GD, IB, NEA	
28	CIO	Online	GD, IB, NEA	Discussion focussing on the 2026 OA
September				
3-4	WGHARP	Online	MG, NEA	Lightweight WGHARP, with the view to a more substantial meeting in 2026.
9	MINTAG StG	Online	GD, NEA	
16	FAC	Coenhagen, DK	GD, IB	
17	HODs			
23-26	AEWG	Copenhagen	GD, MG	
October				
28	CIO	Online	GD, IB, NEA	
November				
5	MINTAG StG+WC	Online	NEA, GD	Short meeting to address issues with carriers
11	CHM	Online	NEA, GD, RAM	
13-15	Complex spatial modelling WS	Tromsø, NO		
18	AEWG	Online	GD, MG	
24-27	PWWG	Copenhagen, DK	GD, MG	
28	HODs	Online	GD, IB	
December				
2	BYCWG	Online	GD, MG	
3	Observers' corps AM	Online	GD, NEA, IB	
17	AEWG	Online	GD, MG	

5 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Over the past 3 decades, NAMMCO has attempted reconciling use of marine mammals and sustainable management; this means conserving both marine mammal populations and their ecosystems, which count different predators including human beings. With the marine mammal conservation landscape rapidly evolving (including emerging threats and changing policy frameworks), the conservation of marine mammals can only be achieved by keeping abreast of developments through a developing network of partners and collaborators.

NAMMCO and its Secretariat maintain a relationship with a number of stakeholders around the world, that are relevant for its work and the management and conservation of marine mammals and the marine environment, as well as for the education, dissemination and research related to marine mammals. These includes non-member Governments as well as national, inter-governmental, and non-governmental bodies.

The purpose of these relationships can be presenting and sharing views, information, and expertise, enhancing existing cooperation, coordinating joint events, or simply keeping updated on issues relevant to the work of NAMMCO. The types of external relations and the nature of the activities differ therefore between bodies and years.

5.1 JAPAN

NAMMCO and Japan have been engaged in a long-term relation since the establishment of the Commission. They have cooperated on various issues and projects related to the management and use of marine mammals, including research and animal welfare.

In 2021 Japan and NAMMCO initiated a multi-year scientific cooperation, the MINTAG project, to develop for the first-time transdermal satellite transmitters specifically designed for lesser-known, fast-swimming species of interest to both NAMMCO countries and Japan (blue, fin, sei, Bryde's, minke, and pilot whales). These species had not been successfully tagged until then, except for short periods not covering their winter migration. If successful, this project would contribute to providing a new tool for identifying movement patterns and stock structure of these species, which are essential to their sound management. More details on this cooperations can be found in doc NAMMCO/32/ 15.

Japan and scientists from the Norwegian Institute of Marine Research (HI) and the Icelandic Marine and Freshwater Institute (HAFRO) started in 2023 a project to further the understanding of the factors behind annual changes in distribution and feeding ecology of western North Pacific common minke whales, by comparing with North Atlantic common minke whales. The cooperation is progressing and reviewed by the NAMMCO SC.

The NAMMCO SC established in 2023 a working group on Genetics to review the genetic data that will be used in NAMMCO's species/stocks assessments and serve as a consultation body on topics related to genetics and stock structure for NAMMCO's working groups. A Japanese scientist from the Japanese Institute of Cetacean Research is a member of this WG and attended the in-person meeting supported by Japan. More details on this cooperations can be found in doc NAMMCO/32/8.

Japan and NAMMCO will discuss further which further projects would be the best candidates for such a project-based cooperation in the future.

5.2 NATIONAL, INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL BODIES

5.2.1 Arctic Council and Working Groups

NAMMCO maintains a relationship with the Arctic Council Secretariat, and primarily with the AMAP and CAFF Working Groups.

After the pause in the activity of the Arctic Council and its WGs due to the war in Ukraine, the WGs resumed their activity in the Fall of 2024, although with online meetings. The Secretariat attended the board meetings of the Arctic Council Working Groups ACAP, AMAP, CAFF, and PAME.

One member of the NAMMCO SC (Ugarte) and the NAMMCO Secretariat (Desportes) are active members of CAFF Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) - Marine and of its Marine Mammal Expert Network (MEN).

5.2.2 ASCOBANS

NAMMCO maintains a relationship with ASCOBANS, both at the Secretariat level for exchanging information and by participating in ASCOBANS Advisory Committee (AC) and the Meetings of the Parties (MOP). Both secretariats keep the other informed of activities on species of special interest to the other organisation, and forward relevant reports.

The intersessional Working Group on Lagenorhynchus, formed by ASCOBANS AC 26 (2021), started its work in Spring-Summer 2024, i.e., reviewing the status of the white-sided and white beaked dolphins in the North Atlantic. Desportes and Garagouni were heavily involved in this work, bringing in the review the work done by the 2023 Dolphin WG and under the framework of the NASS series. The Report from the intersessional Working Group on Lagenorhynchus was finalised in summer 2025 and can be accessed here: [‘A review of available information on white-beaked dolphin and Atlantic white-sided dolphin.’](#)

5.2.3 ICES

NAMMCO and ICES have a joint working group together with NAFO, the ICES/NAFO/NAMMCO WG on harp and hooded seals (WGHARP) in charge of providing management recommendations for both species. The 2023 revised population models were still not fitting the field data and alternative approaches were needed, and no meeting were held in 2024, giving time to progress in this development. It held a lightweight online version of WGHARP in 2025, with the view to a more substantial meeting in 2026.

Several members of the SC are also participating in different ICES activities of relevance for the work of NAMMCO, such as ICES Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology (WGMME), the Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (WGBYC), as well as the ICES Annual Science Conference (ASC).

5.2.4 Regional Fishery Body Secretariats’ Network and FAO

The Secretariat keeps regular contact with the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats’ Network (RSN). It contributes to the [Magazine](#) edited by the RSN since 2011 by submitting material for publication that describes the importance of its work on the conservation and management of marine mammals and highlights ongoing priorities.

Invited by the FAO, Desportes attended the Climate Change Workshop II organized by the RSN Secretariat for Regional fisheries Bodies of the Atlantic region ‘*Mainstreaming climate change into international fisheries governance – the case of Regional Fisheries Bodies in the Atlantic region*’. Held on 21-22 October 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa, the workshop aimed to facilitate the exchanges among RFBs from the Atlantic region on responses and opportunities to address climate change impacts on relevant fish stocks and ecosystems, current practices integrating climate change in fisheries management advice, and propose actionable recommendations for future efforts. More information is presented in Appendix 1#3.

5.3 NATIONAL AND IGO EVENTS/MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE SECRETARIAT

Table 4 below presents a chronological overview of the events/meetings organised by governmental and inter-governmental organisations that were attended by the Secretariat in 2025. The staff members that attended each meeting are specified. Observer reports (available in Appendix 1) are provided when directly relevant, internally or externally, for NAMMCO work.

5.4 IGO EVENTS ATTENDED BY MEMBER COUNTRIES ON BEHALF OF NAMMCO

As is the practice, member Countries represented NAMMCO at the 2025 annual meetings of NASCO (Faroe Islands), NAFO (Iceland) and NEAFC (Norway).

5.5 CONTACT WITH IGOs' & NGOS' SECRETARIATS, AND RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The Secretariat staff maintained in 2025 a closer contact with some IGOs secretariats and staff from various institutions, either for facilitating the sharing of information or for preparing events (a.o., Arctic Council, AMAP, CAFF, IWC, Nordnorsk Vitensenter).

The Secretariat has also regular contacts with institutions within the Arctic University of Norway, including the Department of Arctic and Marine Biology and the Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea; this can be for lecturing, advising students, being external advisers as well as taking short-time interns from some of the courses and supervising them (e.g. the RealfagsPraksis under the Faculty of Natural Science), and organising the annual Marine Mammal Student Symposium with their students.

Table 4. Overview of national bodies or inter-governmental organisations events attended in 2025. Observer reports (available in Appendix 1) are provided when directly relevant, internally or externally, for NAMMCO work.

Dates	Meetings	Venue	Staff	Comments	App. 1 #
January					
27-28	8 th meeting of the Collective Arrangement	Online	GD		
29	AC Observer meeting	Tromsø, NO	GD		
February					
5-6	ASCOBANS / ACCOBAMS joint By-catch WG	Online	NE		
25-27	CAFF Biennial Board Meeting	Online	GD	OS	
March					
3-11	PAME pre-meetings	online	GD, MG, NE	Each observed different ones	
13-14	PAME Biennial Board Meeting	online	GD; MG		
April					
May					
12	14th Arctic Council Transition Meeting	Tromsø, NO / Online	NEA	Observer	
June					
18-19	AMAP 37th WG Meeting	Online	NEA		App. 1#1
25	AMAP webinar Effects of Plastic Pollution on	Online	GD		
July					
August					
September					
9-11	CAFF WG Plenary 2025-II	Online	GD	OS	
16-18	ASCOBANS AC29	Online	MG	Observing, presenting short	App. 1#2
October					
8	AMAP webinar on equitable Indigenous participation and meaningful engagement in Arctic	Online	NEA	Presentation: on diverse knowledge systems to improve marine mammal management	
21-22	FAO/RSN WS 'Mainstreaming climate change into international fisheries governance - The case of regional fisheries bodies in the Atlantic region'	Cape Town, SA	GD	Presentation: 'Marine Mammal Hunting & Climate Change'	App. 1#3
21-23	PAME Ecosystem Approach Expert Group - 7th EA-EG Workshop: 'Value and Valuation'	Sommarøya, NO	NEA	To support the work of the UIWG.	App. 1#4
28 & 30	CBMP Marine Annual Meeting	Online	GD, NEA		
November					
11	Arctic Council Introductory Visit for New Senior Arctic Officials	Tromsø; NO	GD	'NAMMCO: Dealing with a controversial resource & (Norwegian Marine Mammal Committee)	
17-18	Sjøpattedyrvalget	Tromsø, NO	GD, NEA		
19	AMAP webinar equitable Indigenous participation and meaningful engagement in Arctic research	Online	NEA	Shared NAMMCO efforts in enhancing user involvement in decision-making processes.	App. 1#5
24-26	AMAP 38th WG Meeting	Online	NEA		
December					

5.6 EXTERNAL RESEARCH PROJECTS WITH PARTICIPATION FROM NAMMCO SECRETARIAT

5.6.1 NAPA project – Seal Stigma and Survival

NAMMCO continues as a supportive partner to the 3-year project '*Seals, Stigma and Survival: Finding Solutions to the EU Stigmatization of Seal Hunting*', led by the University of Southern Denmark (SDU). Project partners include researchers and organisations from Canada, Finland, and Norway.

The project Seals, Stigma and Survival explores potential solutions to the stigma associated with seal products, seal hunting and sealers in the European Union. The negative stigma is impacting the capacity of rural and coastal fishing communities in the Nordic countries and parts of Canada to openly practice, express and profit from traditional hunting practices associated with hunting and using seals and to effectively manage seal populations in ways that sustainably use the whole animal. Using a multi-disciplinary approach drawing on political science, international relations, psychology, history, and education studies, the project explores broadly how stigma is attributed, what are the consequences of stigma attribution, focusing on negative stigma, and what are possible avenues for overcoming stigma.

The project is designed around the four Arctic countries impacted by the EU seal product ban: Greenland/Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Canada.

The primary role of NAMMCO is to help amplify the public outreach of the project in the Nordic region and Arctic through the promotion of project findings and milestones on NAMMCO website and amongst its networks. NAMMCO has helped to identify and recommend resources and provide suggestion for potential interviewees (stakeholders/rightsholders).

Periodically the project website (<https://survivingsealingstigma.com/>) and social media (@SealsandStigma; @sealsandsurvival.bsky.social)) publish short pieces, including brief research-related pieces and general information on the project.

5.6.2 FutureArcticLives

FutureArcticLives (full title: Future Arctic livelihoods and biodiversity in a changing climate) is an international research project coordinated by University of Copenhagen. It aims to assess the impacts of climate and biodiversity change on the well-being of Arctic communities. One of the work packages of the project involves assessing the likely future development of populations of bird, mammal, and fish species used by Greenlandic communities, i.e., whether these animal populations are likely to increase, decrease, or remain stable, as well as experience distribution shifts, across short- and long-term timeframes.

The Secretariat was approached to contribute their expertise on different marine mammal species. Deputy Secretary Garagouni agreed to participate, filling out evaluations on the current and projected trajectories of dolphin species, and weighting existing literature on the subject, with regards to pertinence, trustworthiness, and robustness. It is expected that a publication on this topic will be prepared in the coming months, on which Garagouni will be a co-author.

5.6.3 Information requests

Throughout the year, various informal information requests are made to the Secretariat by students (sometimes as interview contribution to research projects), educational institutes, RFMOs, Parties' representatives or other organisations, as well as the media. These requests are answered to the best of the Secretariat's ability, or when relevant, forwarded to the Heads of Delegation.

6 COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Outreach efforts to communicate the work of NAMMCO to a wide variety of audiences are important to ensure that the organisation is a) visible and accessible to diverse groups, b) maintains strong international networks, and c) fulfils its desire to be transparent. The outreach activities organised by the Secretariat and/or supported by NAMMCO in 2025 included: maintenance of an up-to-date and engaging website, presentations at schools and universities and external events, articles in academic journals, as well as engagement in social media platforms.

This part of the report provides an overview of these activities divided into four sections: 1) Website; 2) Summary of activities on the NAMMCO website and on social media; 3) NAMMCO Educational Project; 4) Overview of presentations made in various fora in 2024; 5) Overview of reports and scientific publications.

6.1 WEBSITE

Council 29 reiterated that the website www.nammco.org remains the most important information platform for the organisation, both as an internal and external tool, and keeping it updated and accurate should represent a priority. Priority continues, therefore, to be granted to the provision of continual updates regarding the work of NAMMCO committees, and the knowledge on the different species.

6.1.1 Website content quality review

Based on recommendations from the Committees, the Council endorsed in 2020 a process for reviewing the content quality of the NAMMCO website.

The task of keeping the hunting information and regulations up to date is carried out by the CHM, which reviews and informs the Secretariat of any updates. The SC reviews four species pages at each committee meeting. At its 2026 meeting, the SC/32 reviewed and provided comments on the information provided for the following four species: blue whale, killer whale, sei whale and sperm whale.

6.1.2 Website News/Blogs

In 2025, news posts on the website included announcements on the publication of committee and working group reports, new articles published by the NAMMCO communities, announcements of NAMMCO events, and the arrival and presentation of a new Secretariat intern. A total of 36 news items were published, as well as one blog post on intern experiences at the Secretariat.

6.2 ACTIVITY ON WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

An extended summary of the activity in 2025 on the NAMMCO website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn accounts is available in Appendix 2.

In autumn 2025, the Secretariat began work on strengthening NAMMCO's brand identity and ensuring greater consistency across all platforms together with Art & Bulle Paris. The goal is to make the NAMMCO brand more recognisable, increase engagement on social media, and expand the organisation's reach beyond its current audience. This work, together with the development of a detailed publishing strategy and schedule, is expected to be completed in spring 2026.

6.2.1 Activities on nammco.org

In 2025, Google Analytics was used to track activities on the [NAMMCO website](http://www.nammco.org). Data for 2024 is not available, and data for 2025 is only available from 24 February onwards. Nevertheless, in 2025, the website had 37,025 users, a growth of 1.01% since 2023 (36,654) and a 43.20% growth since 2021 (25,854).

In 2025, 53.7% of users discovered the website through organic searches (i.e., searches of the NAMMCO site through search engines such as Google), which is a decrease from 59.5% in 2023. However, direct searches for the website saw an increase this year, rising to 39% compared to 28.9% in 2023. Meanwhile, visits from social media and other external sources, decreased from 9% in 2023 to 7.26% in 2025.

The main visiting country to the website in 2025 remained the United States, followed by China (a new country among the top 5), Norway, the United Kingdom and Canada. There was no data available this year, on the distribution of age and gender among website users. Such seems to be due to a new privacy policy by Google Analytics, which limits the sharing of age and gender data with the website, until a certain threshold of users is achieved. The most visited pages on the website include the front page, the narwhal, internship, ringed seal and About NAMMCO webpages. Further details can be found in Appendix 2#1.

6.2.2 Facebook

Posts on Facebook during 2025 have included the weekly “Fun Fact Friday” posts, announcements on the publication of committee and working group reports, new articles published in NSP, dissemination of scientific articles by scientists at NAMMCO committees, as well as scientific articles relevant to NAMMCO’s work (with all posts cross-linking to the NAMMCO website).

As of 11 February 2026, the [NAMMCO Facebook account](#) has 3,000 likes and 3,717 followers. The account received 401 new followers since 11.02.2025. [In Comparison, CAFF has 4,600 followers, ASCOBANS has 1,400 followers, and ACCOBAMS has 3,300].

The top three Facebook posts of 2025 (measured as the number of persons reached by the post) ranged between 6,170 and 126,514 users reached. The post with the highest reach (126,514 users reached) and most interactions was a “Fun Fact Friday” entitled “Have you ever wondered how scientists, observers, hunters, and recreational whale watchers recognise different whale species from far away?”. This post had 1,266 reactions and 310 shares, with 53 users clicking the link in the post, which took them to NAMMCO’s webpage on “Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises”. The 2nd top post was another “Fun Fact Friday” “Do you know what body part the melon in toothed whales evolved from?”. This post reached 8,145 users, gathered 57 reactions, 33 shares and had 39 users clicking the link in the post, which took them to NAMMCO’s webpage on “Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises”. The third post was on a different type of content, as it was an announcement of a newly published paper by Freitas et al. (2025) on the “Impact of baleen whales on ocean primary production across space and time”. This last post had a lower reach (6,170 users reached) than the second most popular post, but had almost double the number of reactions, at 105, as well as 14 shares and 63 link clicks, which took them to the paper’s webpage.

In 2025 compared to 2024, the Facebook page saw an increase of 48.5% in the number of followers, but a decrease of 36.1% of page visits and 20.2% decrease in link clicks to the website. This could be due to the public’s knowledge of NAMMCO’s existence, and its work is becoming more widespread among the public; therefore, it is possible that people are less curious about visiting NAMMCO’s Facebook and website pages, which could explain the drop in visits and link clicks. Further details of the posts can be found in Appendix 2#2.

Up until now, the Secretariat has been adding page links to the main body text of NAMMCO’s Facebook publications. However, Facebook is now using algorithmic penalties to suppress posts, leading users away from the site. In turn, this can limit the reach of our social media posts. To bypass these penalties, the Secretariat is now using a different approach, already in use by other Facebook pages, which consists of adding link pages to the comment section, instead of the post’s main text body.

6.2.3 Instagram

Activities on [Instagram](#), which was launched in September 2022, have increased in 2025 compared to 2024; however, the platform continues to be used less than Facebook. Posts included announcements of meetings, new reports, articles in NSP, dissemination of articles with NAMMCO scientists as co-authors, publication of reports and promotion of the Marine Mammal Student Symposium. The Instagram page had 690 visits in 2025, a 28.4% decrease when compared to 2024. However, the account currently has 593 followers (16.02.2026), a 19.6% increase compared to early 2025, with 495 followers (28.02.2025). During 2025, the Instagram account reached 4,374 users, an increase of 138.6% compared to 2024 and had 244 interactions, double the amount compared to 2024.

The three posts which reached the most accounts in the 2025 calendar year were the announcement of the 7th Marine Mammal Student Symposium (34 reactions, 8 shares and reach of 1,148), followed by a post on the applications for the NAMMCO internship position (34 reactions, 4 shares and reach of 956), and then a post announcing the start of the 2025 MINTAG tagging season (25 reactions, 4 shares and reach of 630). See the posts in Appendix 2#3.

6.2.4 LinkedIn

As of 18 February, 2026, the [LinkedIn](#) NAMMCO page has 2,116 followers. The account received 403 new followers since 18.02.2025. [In Comparison, CAFF has 931 followers, Marine Mammal Foundation has 866 followers and ACCOBAMS has 2541 followers].

Data from LinkedIn seems to suggest that the increases in followers were highly correlated with the amount of content impressions, with the highest peaks in new followers occurring at similar times as the content with the most impressions.

The top three LinkedIn posts over the last 365 days (18/02/2025 to 18/02/2026), measured as the number of impressions by the post, ranged between 4,772 and 917 users. The most popular publication was a reminder post about the applications for the NAMMCO Secretariat's internship programme, which had 323 clicks, 40 likes and 9 reposts. The second place went to a post about a new paper by Mikkelsen et al. (2025), titled "Spatial overlap among harbour, ringed and bearded seals in Kongsfjorden, Svalbard, during the post-moulting foraging period", gathering 1,546 impressions, 26 clicks, 31 likes and 1 repost. The third place also went to a post about a new paper, this one by Postel et al. (2025), titled "Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (H5N5) detected in an Atlantic walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus*) in the Svalbard Archipelago, Norway, 2023", gathering 36 clicks, 28 likes and 6 reposts. Details of the posts can be found in Appendix 2#4.

6.3 NAMMCO EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

'GUARDNA—GUARDIANS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC: LOOKING AFTER OUR SEAS TO CONSERVE MARINE MAMMALS'

The Educational project, developed and coordinated by NAMMCO, is centred around one large interregional three-year project (2023–2026): the development of an educational portal, GUARDNA, together with educators from the NAMMCO Parties and Denmark, that will be freely accessible and available in Danish, English, Faroese, Greenlandic, Icelandic, Norwegian and Northern Sámi. GUARDNA offers engaging materials about ocean sustainability, using marine mammals as ambassadors for the marine ecosystem. The portal aims at educating and contributing 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.

In 2025, work focused on building the portal and translating materials. Early designs for younger groups are in review and activities for ages 13–15 have been aligned with national curricula. Across the region, progress on GUARDNA varies. In Denmark, all Danish translations are completed and available online, and collaboration continues to ensure alignment with the updated curriculum. In the Faroe Islands, partner engagement is strong: teaching students tested the materials with positive feedback,

translations are expected in April 2026, and teacher testing is planned for autumn 2026, potentially leading to inclusion in the 2027–2028 course catalogue. In Greenland, materials have been translated and reviewed, and because in-person outreach is difficult, partners aim to use the Kivitsisa digital scheme to support dissemination through remote teaching tools and example videos. In Iceland and Norway, progress is currently on hold due to a lack of funding for translations. More details can be found in document NAMMCO/33/16.

Through Eli Oerlemans' Master's project, GUARDNA engaged with teachers across the target region in autumn 2025 to assess how the portal can be effectively communicated and integrated into classroom practice. Based on teacher interviews and a supporting literature review, the study identified usability, clarity, and practical applicability as central to successful adoption. Educators emphasised the value of ready-to-use, clearly structured materials requiring minimal preparation, as well as intuitive design that supports credibility and sustained use.

The findings align strongly with GUARDNA's current approach. The portal already offers printable information cards, time-efficient activities, and a teacher's guide that supports implementation and addresses common questions. Teachers also appreciated modular, student-centred resources that fit naturally within existing teaching practices. NAMMCO's scientific authority further enhances trust, particularly when content is presented in accessible formats, while continued visibility within professional networks remains essential for uptake.

6.4 OUTREACH EVENTS & LECTURES

6.4.1 Outreach events and presentations

Table 5 presents an overview of the outreach and dissemination events directly related to marine mammals that the staff of the Secretariat organised or participated in 2025. When relevant, the events are described in more detail in Appendix 3.

6.4.2 Marine Mammal Student Symposium

NAMMCO took in 2019 the initiative of organising a Marine Mammal Student symposium, hoping to make this an annual event and support or initiate interactions between the students studying subjects related to the marine environment and marine mammals in different institutions of Tromsø. The event has been co-organised with the Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea since 2020, as well as the Department of Arctic and Marine Biology from the University of Tromsø since 2021.

A symposium has been organised every year since, with the dual purpose of a) promoting the work NAMMCO does amongst early-career marine mammal scientists and marine-oriented lawyers and b) creating networking opportunities for students, 3) making them in contact with senior researchers. The symposium represents an opportunity for students with common interests from various fields in natural, social, and legal sciences to share their ideas, knowledge, experiences and projects on topics related to marine mammal conservation and management. It supports a more global and interconnected approach to the environment, therefore increasing the chance to positively impact the conservation of the Arctic marine environment. Since 2022 (Covid year), the symposium has been held in a hybrid format, enabling participation from students and invited speakers worldwide. The symposium combines student presentations of their research projects with keynote talks from experts in marine mammal biology and marine policy. More information about the symposium can be found [here](#).

NAMMCO interns take the lead in organising the symposium. They also present their own research, either from their master or in relation with the project they have carried out at the Secretariat.

The theme of the symposium changes every year. The theme for the 7th Symposium in 2025 was: '*Exploring the Digital Deep: Technologies Shaping Marine Mammal Research and Management*'. See

Appendix 3#8 for more information on the 2025 Symposium. The theme in 2026 is *'Navigating human impacts on marine mammals: Challenges, mitigation and conservation opportunities.'*

Table 5. Outreach events participated in or organised by the Secretariat in 2025. Reports on the event can be found under Appendix 3. Observer reports (available in Appendix 1) are provided when directly relevant, internally or externally, for NAMMCO work.

Dates	Meetings	Venue	Staff	Comments	App. 3 #
January					
25-26	Arctic Youth Conference	Tromsø, NO	NEA	Participation and moderation of panel on youth involvement in governance	App. 3#1
27	Arctic Frontiers side event on research data & science cooperation for marine mammal conservation beyond borders	Tromsø, NO	MG	Organisation of and presentation at AF side event: "Quantifying marine mammal by-catch exposure", & participation to panel, attended other talks	App. 3#2
18	WS on Killer Whales in the North Atlantic	Tarifa, Spain	MG	MG rapporteured, WS was co-chaired by Fernando Ugarte and Filipa Samarra	
30	Association of Polar Early Career Scientists	Tromsø, NO	NEA	Participation as a panelist	App. 3#3
February					
19	Mr.Goodfish3.0.	Tromsø, NO	NEA	Participation in workshop. EU funded project	App. 3#4
March					
5	DIS lecture	Office	GD, NEA, NE, Mia	GD: "Whaling and Sealing in perspectives - Is using MM as food sources an environmental crime or is there nuances to that?" (1.5hr + Q&A)	App. 3#5
13	ITLOS Nippon Fellows	Office	GD	GD: "Whaling and Sealing in perspectives - NAMMCO organisation and work".	App. 3#6
28	UIT Ecosystem Based Management Course	Tromsø, NO	MG	MG: "Community-based monitoring & management of marine mammals" (30 min + Q&A)	
April					
4	DIS lecture	Online	GD (IB, NE)	GD: "Marine Mammals: Conservation &/or use ?"	
8-10	UArctic Thematic Network WS: Identifying practical approaches for bridging user-based and scientific knowledge for decision-	Nuuk, GL	NEA	Participation in workshop and presentation of NAMMCO's initiative with the UIWG	App. 3#7
10	Marine Mammal Student symposium	Tromsø, NO	NE, IB, MG, GD	GD: "NAMMCO and the right use of marine mammals" NE: "Establishing a Baseline for Detecting Anthropogenic Impacts on Bottlenose Dolphins"	App. 3#8
Mai					
June					
September					
17	Mr.Goodfish3.0.	Tromsø, NO	NEA	Participation in workshop	App. 3#9
October					
7	DIS lecture	Tromsø, NO	NEA, GD, EO	NEA: "Resources and footprints"	App. 3#5
November					
3	UIT BIO-3021 Science Communication Lecture and Seminar	Tromsø, NO	NEA	"Science communication for sustainability: tips and tricks"	
December					

6.5 PUBLICATIONS

6.5.1 NAMMCO Reports

The NAMMCO reports that have been published in 2025 can all be found on the NAMMCO website under ['Meeting Reports and Documents'](#).

6.5.2 NAMMCO Scientific Publications

Volume 14 (2025) (<https://doi.org/10.7557/3.14>) welcomed submissions on the theme "Anthropogenic Impacts on Marine Mammals". This theme was selected to encourage the publication of both catch statistics and research on the effects of human disturbance on marine mammals. To streamline the review process, Section Editors with expertise in relevant topics were invited for this Volume. They oversaw the suitability of submissions for the journal and managed the selection of and

communication with reviewers. This volume features a follow-up study on the deterrent effect of pingers on harbour porpoises in Norwegian gillnet fisheries, a comprehensive 25-year overview of pinniped strandings in New York, an analysis of minke whale by-catch in Norwegian waters, a review of seal hunting as a management measure in Sweden to protect fisheries, and an investigation into the effects of shipping noise on harbour seals in France. The full list of contributions can be found in Appendix 4.

At SC/32, the Editorial Board (NAMMCO's SC) discussed how to proceed with the journal given the relatively low number of submissions in recent years and the recurring challenges in meeting submission and review deadlines. Despite the difficulties, NSP remains a highly relevant and fitting publication venue as only a limited number of journals worldwide focus specifically on marine mammals, and for many NAMMCO-related topics there are often no suitable alternative outlets within the marine mammal field. For upcoming NSP volumes, the promotion of NSP will be strengthened through more active and targeted communication via relevant channels, Editorial Board members' professional networks, and potential connections to open peer-review platforms for preprints.

Volume 15 (2026) will include one general issue welcoming a broad range of marine-mammal-related topics and one issue focused on abundance estimates and surveys, with the aim of initiating the collection of contributions stemming from NASS and outputs from the AEWG. The themed issue will accept submissions until 15 May 2026, to ensure publication within the same calendar year.

From 2026 on, NSP will adopt a new format, in which submissions are accepted year-round without restrictions on topic. This continuous-submission model is expected to reduce timing challenges for authors, reviewers, and editors, as papers can be published online at any time. These will be compiled into yearly issues without specific themes, with each manuscript being published in the calendar year in which the review process was completed. Annual volumes may also contain themed issues, for which there will be strict submission and publication deadlines.

6.5.3 Other scientific publications

The Secretariat and NAMMCO affiliated scientists have authored and co-authored a number of scientific articles in 2025 that were published or have been accepted for publication in other scientific journals. The references of these articles are provided in Appendix 5.

7 YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN NAMMCO

7.1 NAMMCO INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The NAMMCO internship program, which started in November 2017, continues to be a very positive and useful experience for the Secretariat and the selected candidates. It provides the Secretariat with substantial additional human resources and expertise, e.g., in technical and sometimes legal domains, and helps to alleviate the demanding workload of the permanent staff. Having interns able to carry out various administrative or technical duties in the daily work of the organisation generates time for the permanent staff to focus on tasks requiring higher levels of expertise. Bringing new and young people into the organisation on a regular basis has brought new life, ideas, energy, motivation, and creative input to the otherwise small Secretariat.

All interns contribute to the day-to-day work of the Secretariat, in particular helping to prepare for any meetings of the Commission. They are responsible for public outreach activities on social media; they create posts for the Facebook and Instagram sites of NAMMCO, including the *Fun Fact Friday* posts. This work is carried out under the supervision of the Deputy Secretaries El bani Altuna and Garagouni and has been very beneficial for growing the NAMMCO community and NAMMCO's audience.

In 2025, three interns have served at NAMMCO; their background and activities are described below.

7.1.1 Noor Elias (NL)

01.09.2024 – 26.06.2025, M.Sc. in Marine Biology, Bangor University (UK)

Noor started in September 2024. Since joining, she has contributed to the preparations for the 31st Scientific Committee meeting and participated in its in-person sessions in Tromsø, where she also attended the meetings of the MINTAG Steering Group and the Abundance Estimates Working Group. Additionally, she took part in the in-person Genetics Working Group meeting in Copenhagen.

In the first quarter of 2025, her focus was on the preparations for the 32nd Annual Meeting and for the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop (MMWWS) held back-to-back with the Annual Meeting, including assisting with the organisation of meeting documents and reports and some logistics. She contributed greatly to the document 06 essential to the MMWWS: *Summary of Welfare-related data provided by the participant countries for the MMWWS 2025*. Noor ensured the collation of the information, checked it and clarified when needed with data providers, and prepared of the graphism. She also presented the documents to the participants. Alongside these responsibilities, Elias managed NAMMCO's social media content, creates Fun Fact Friday posts, and contributed to the updates of various species pages on the website.

Noor supervised the organisation of the 7th Marine Mammal Student Symposium, done with the Norwegian Centre for Law of the Sea, and the Department of Arctic and Marine Biology. She hosted and moderated the day-symposium held on 10 April 2025. The symposium focused on the theme '*Exploring the Digital Deep: Technologies Shaping Marine Mammal Research and Management*'. See Appendix 3.6 for more information on the 2025 Symposium.

7.1.2 Eli Oerlemans

01.09.2025 - 20.02.2026, Major in Wildlife Management, Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science (NL)

Eli started in September 2025 and completed her major's Wildlife Management thesis '*Communicating Marine Mammal Conservation: Educational Strategies for Engaging Young Audience*' by the end of January. Her project focused on gaining a better understanding of how GUARDNA could be effectively communicated and sustainably implemented in educational practice. Initially, she planned to base her research mainly on two surveys-one for teachers and one for pupils-but due to low response rates, she shifted her approach to focus on semi-structured interviews with teachers, successfully conducting four interviews. These interviews became the main source of data for her analysis in ATLAS.ti, a software tool specifically designed for analysing qualitative data, such as interview transcripts. She complemented this analysis with insights from relevant literature and the limited survey responses.

Throughout her entire internship, Oerlemans was involved in supporting GUARDNA. In addition to her thesis work, she contributed to developing materials, including creating information cards and designing a new layout specifically tailored for younger age groups. After completing her thesis in January, she stayed for an additional month to continue refining and expanding these materials.

7.1.3 Ricardo de Almeida Mendes

20.10.2025 – 05.05.2026, M.Sc. in Marine Biological Resources, Ghent University (BE)

Ricardo started his internship at NAMMCO in October 2025. Since then, he has managed NAMMCO's social media content, reviewed the catch-database of NAMMCO's member countries, updated several of the website species' pages, and participated in two online meetings, including the Genetics WG meeting in October and the CHM meeting in November. Ricardo also participated in the Spatial Modelling workshop held by the Institute for Marine Research (IMR) in Tromsø, helping with note-taking and the report. He participated in the preparation and coordination of the 32nd annual meeting of the SC in the Faroe Islands, providing technical support and note-taking during the meeting days.

Currently, Ricardo is supporting further activities at the Secretariat. He is preparing the 33rd annual meeting of the Council by organising documents and templates for presentations and compiling the website and social media activity report. He is coordinating the 8th Marine Mammal Student Symposium, co-organised by NAMMCO, the Norwegian Centre for Law of the Sea, and the Department of Arctic and Marine Biology, with the theme '*Navigating human impacts on marine mammals: Challenges, mitigation and conservation opportunities.*' He is also representing NAMMCO at the CAFF Webinar Series project '*Climate Change Impacts on Arctic Ecosystems and Associated Climate Feedbacks.*'

7.2 REINFORCING YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN NAMMCO

Although the Secretariat does not officially have a youth program, the staff at the Secretariat has committed to engaging with youth across several areas. This includes:

- its communication strategy, which involves disseminating information about NAMMCO in schools and using platforms like Instagram to reach a younger audience
- the educational program, which targets young people aged 7–20 and will be reviewed by students at the University of Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland, through our partners
- the internship program, which has hosted 14 interns since 2017
- the collaboration with UiT, through which the Secretariat delivers lectures to students, organises the Marine Mammal Student Symposium, and participates in the UiT Realfagspraksis program
- the collaboration with the Danish International School, DIS-Copenhagen, through which the Secretariat reaches US students and presents them whaling and sealing under perspectives and rationales they are not used to hearing.

This focus on younger audiences not only enhances NAMMCO's visibility and stimulates discussions about the sustainable and responsible use of marine mammals but also serves as a capacity-building process. It provides young people with the opportunity to learn about management, decision-making, coordination, and administrative work within an intergovernmental organisation.

NAMMCO has significant potential to enhance youth participation in its work. One of them is to continue supporting the Secretariat's youth engagement efforts, both financially and otherwise, to enhance its commitment and effort in engaging with young people.

8 FINANCIAL STATUS UPDATE

The 2025 Audited Accounts and Financial Statements are presented in document NAMMCO/33/05.

With regard to the Commission itself (i.e., excluding the four projects MINTAG, NASS, Educational Portal, and By-Catch), the 2025 budget, the reallocation approved by Council 32 and the operating result are presented in Appendix 6. The accounts closed with a positive operating result of NOK 543,740 compared to NOK 128,814, which was the anticipated 2025 outcome after the Council 32 reallocation. Thanks to the positive operative result, the general reserve increased and amounted to NOK 1,958,930 as of 31 December 2025, compared to the anticipated amount of NOK 1,544,044.

The positive discrepancy between the reallocation of funds operated by Council 32 in March 2025 and the accounts is mainly explained by most expenditure items being below what was anticipated, notably *Staff travel and subsistence* and *Scientific Committee*, both because of the low numbers of working group meetings in 2025. Increased or not previously taken into account overheads related to projects, notably the MINTAG project (overheads cover here the overheads since the beginning of the project in 2021) contribute also strongly to the positive discrepancy. The three budget items that were higher than expected were *Staff related costs*, *Office supply*, and *Accounts and auditing*. More details on the financial results can be found in the report of the FAC to the Council in document NAMMCO/33/04.

APPENDIX 1. SECRETARIAT'S OBSERVER REPORTS – IGO AND NATIONAL EVENTS ATTENDED

1. AMAP Working Group 37 (18-19.06) - Online

The 37th AMAP WG meeting was held online 18–19 June 2025. **El bani Altuna** attended the meeting from the NAMMCO Secretariat.

Following the opening and welcome, the second session focused on outcomes of the 14th Arctic Council meeting and the Kingdom of Denmark's Chairship's priorities in relation to AMAP and the modalities for WG and project level work.

During 36th AMAP WG, observers were invited to submit a report on potential collaboration opportunities to strengthen each other's work. During the 37th AMAP WG, the common topics outlined by Observers were presented and identified. AMAP informed that these will be used for future organisation into webinars or events.

From the document NAMMCO Secretariat submitted the common topic identified was Indigenous participation and meaningful engagement in Arctic research. Discussions around this topic will contribute to NAMMCO's UIWG developing process.

2. ASCOBANS 29th Advisory Committee Meeting (16-18.09) - Online

The 29th Advisory Committee Meeting of ASCOBANS was held online from 16 to 18 September 2025. Party and project representatives presented overviews of activities undertaken or completed during the preceding months. Of particular relevance to NAMMCO were projects related to underwater noise, by-catch, and cumulative impacts on cetaceans. A review of available information on white-beaked and white-sided dolphins, to which Desportes and Garagouni had contributed substantially—drawing on the work of the Dolphin WG 2023 meeting—was presented. A workshop on these species will be held as part of the European Cetacean Society conference in April 2026, and Garagouni has provided input for the organisers of said workshop.

On behalf of NAMMCO, **Garagouni** provided a written overview (and brief oral summary) on the Commission's work that would be of interest to ASCOBANS Parties, namely the completion of the NASS 2024 data collection, planned workshops on cetacean survey and analysis methods, and the By-catch WG's project on risk mapping.

3. FAO WS 'Mainstreaming climate change into international fisheries governance (21-22.10) – Cape Town; South Africa

Most RFBs have difficulty in engaging in the topic of climate change despite the existence of good science. In this context, COFI-35 (2022) requested FAO to develop guidance on climate resilient fisheries management, and as part of the solution, convene a workshop with RFBs.

Atlantic Climate Change Workshop II "*Mainstreaming climate change into international fisheries governance – the case of Regional Fisheries Bodies in the Atlantic region*" aims to facilitate the exchanges among RFBs from the Atlantic region on responses and opportunities to address climate change impacts on relevant fish stocks and ecosystems, current practices integrating climate change in fisheries management advice, and propose actionable recommendations for future efforts.

Examples presented by RFBs from the Atlantic region were intended to cover their relevant ongoing and planned work towards implementing risk-based management approaches that respond to changes in ecosystem states, including the impacts of climate change. The RFBs participating were: GFCM, ICCAT, BCC, CECAF, CRFM, NEAFC, SEAFO, COMHAFAT, COPPESAALC, NAMMCO, WECAFC.

Desportes participated to the workshop and, among others, presented “Marine Mammal Hunting & Climate Change”.

4. PAME Ecosystem Approach Expert Group - 7th EA-EG Workshop: “Value and Valuation” (21-23.10) – Sommarøy, Norway

The 7th EA-EG Workshop, titled “*Value and Valuation*”, was organised by the PAME Ecosystem Approach Expert Group. Its purpose was to explore how diverse value systems—particularly those of Indigenous and Arctic communities—can be acknowledged, integrated, and applied within ecosystem-based management of Arctic Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs). The workshop brought together scientists, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs, and community representatives to exchange perspectives, share methodologies, and present practical examples.

One of the most valuable aspects for the NAMMCO Secretariat (represented by **El bani Altuna**) was the discussion on approaches to identifying and respectfully recognising diverse values and the value holders. These conversations also emphasised equitable stakeholder participation, best practices, and illustrative examples (e.g., the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council’s [LKTKS protocol](#)), which are directly relevant to NAMMCO’s ongoing initiative to enhance user involvement in its decision-making processes.

A comprehensive report will be produced based on the workshop’s outcomes (not available as of March 2026). This will contribute to updated implementation guidelines for the Ecosystem Approach to management in Arctic LMEs, with a particular focus on recognising and incorporating diverse value systems.

5. AMAP webinar on equitable Indigenous participation and meaningful engagement in Arctic research (19.11) – Online

During the 36th AMAP Working Group meeting (2024), Observers were invited to submit reports on potential collaboration opportunities to strengthen each other’s work. NAMMCO contributed with a report identifying several topics, including user involvement in decision-making, a shared priority with AMAP.

To advance this discussion, AMAP hosted a webinar on 19 November under the title “Indigenous participation and meaningful engagement in Arctic research” where the NAMMCO Secretariat and other AMAP Observers shared approaches to integrating Indigenous knowledge and fostering collaboration:

- Germany (Volker Rachold): Presented examples of Germany’s approach to building equitable research relationships across knowledge systems, emphasizing collaboration and mutual respect.
- UK (Megan Richmond): Outlined the UK’s strategy for Indigenous co-development in Arctic research, highlighting policy frameworks and engagement mechanisms.
- NAMMCO (**Naima El Bani Altuna**): Discussed integrating diverse knowledge systems to improve marine mammal management, focusing on NAMMCO’s efforts in enhancing user involvement in decision-making processes.
- AMAP (Lauren Divine): Shared insights into Indigenous engagement in recent AMAP initiatives, including climate adaptation and food security projects.

The session concluded with a Q&A. While attendance was lower than expected, the webinar showcased NAMMCO’s efforts and served to initiate dialogue on best practices with other advisory bodies such as AMAP.

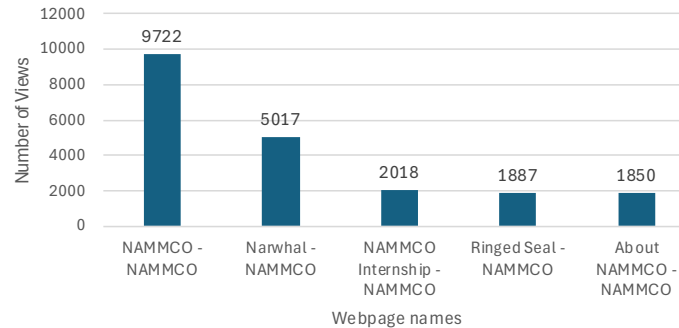
APPENDIX 2. STATISTICS OF ACTIVITIES ON THE NAMMCO WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

1. NAMMCO website use in 2025 (24/02/2025 to 31/12/2025)

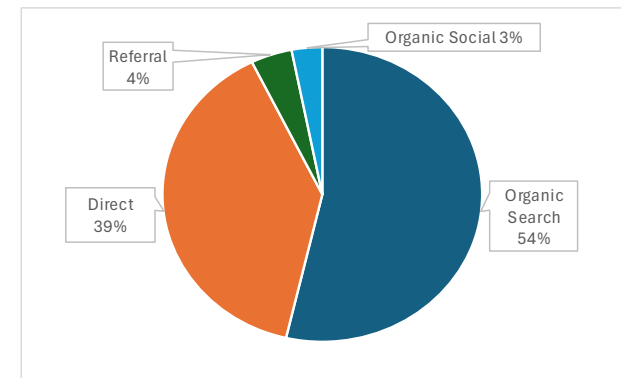
Unique users

2020: (1 Jan – 31 Dec)	16,410
2021: (1 Jan – 31 Dec)	25,854
2022: (1 Jan – 31 Dec)	33,183
2023: (1 Jan – 31 Dec)	36,654
2025: (1 Jan – 31 Dec)	37,025

The five most viewed pages in calendar year 2025



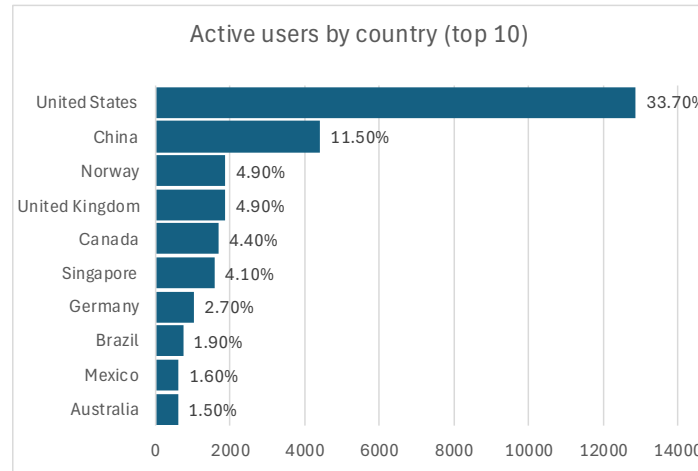
How users found NAMMCO:



Active users by country

COUNTRY	ACTIVE USERS	ACTIVE USERS (%)
United States	12887	33.7%
China	4409	11.5%
Norway	1880	4.9%
United Kingdom	1874	4.9%
Canada	1689	4.4%
Singapore	1584	4.1%
Germany	1040	2.7%
Brazil	732	1.9%
Mexico	621	1.6%
Australia	592	1.5%
Other countries	10976	28.7%

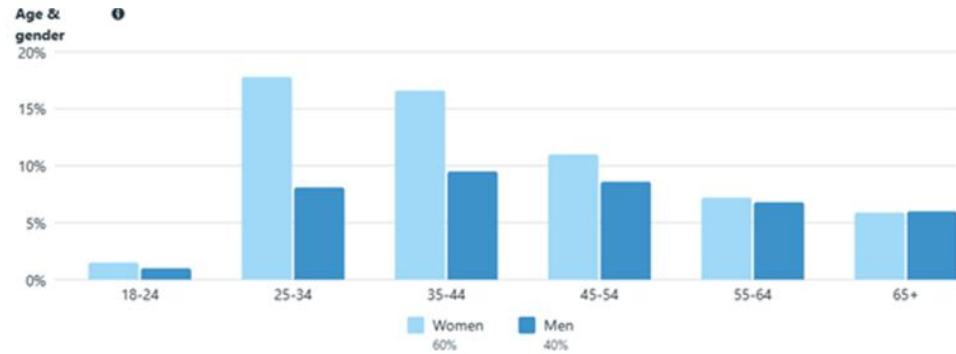
Active users by country (top 10)



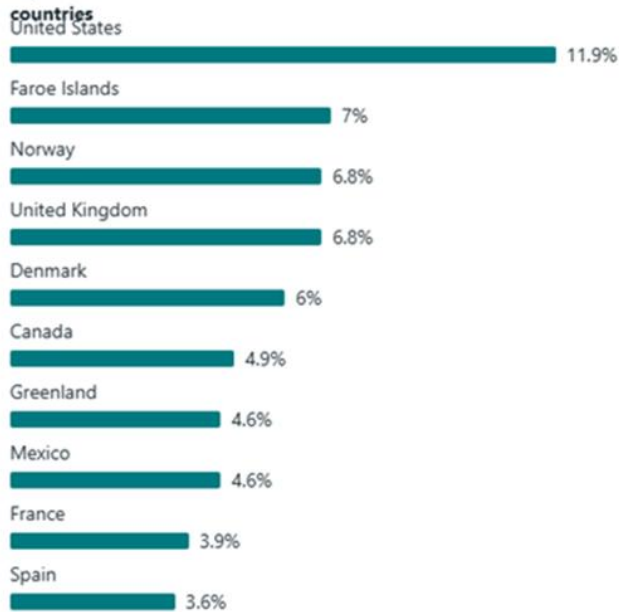
2. Facebook (01.01.2025-31.12.2025)

Likes and followers

Year	Likes	Followers
2021	2 213	2 291
2022	2 644	2 919
2023	2 838	3 224
2024(28.02.24)	2,969	3422
2026(18.02.26)	3,000	3,717

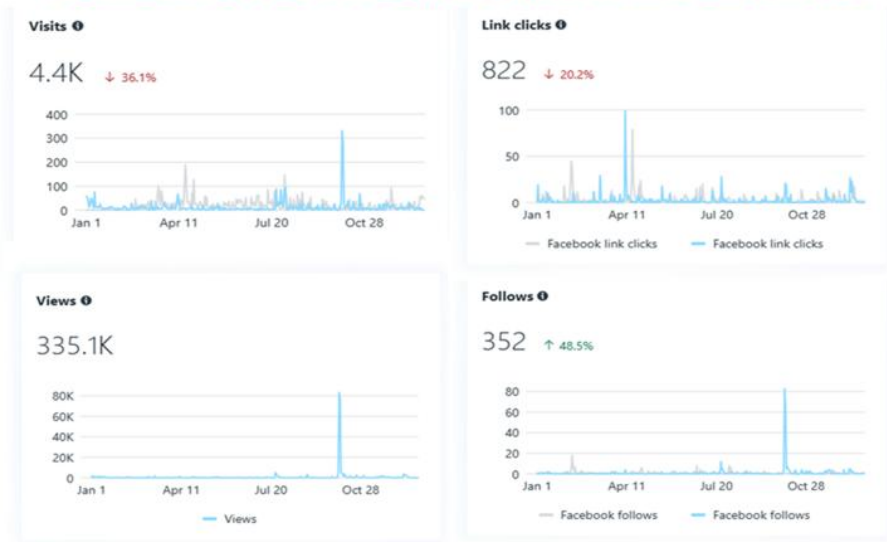


Top countries

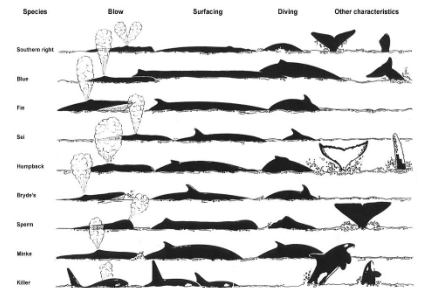


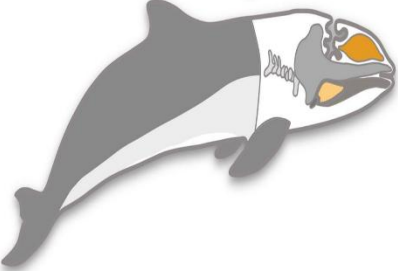
2025 calendar year performance results in comparison to 2024

Blue lines indicate data from 2025, and grey lines indicate data from 2024



Top 3 posts (in terms of both reach and likes) between January 2025 and December 2025:

<p>03/10/2025</p> 	<p>#FunFactFriday</p> <p>Have you ever wondered how scientists, observers, hunters, and recreational whale watchers recognise different whale species from far away?</p> <p>Well, there are many different methods of identifying different cetacean (whale, dolphin, and porpoise) species. We talked about one of them before—photo ID of humpback whales based on the uniqueness of their tail fluke. But there are many more methods of identification.</p> <p>In the illustration you can see features that can help identify large cetaceans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🐋 The position of the blowhole changes the way water spouts in different species, so that is one of the identifying characteristics. In sperm whales, for instance, the “blow” is aimed forward instead of upward. 🐋 Next is the way the animal surfaces for air. Some species only show a small part of their back or dorsal fin at a time, while others surface their entire body or even jump out of the water. 🐋 Some species are more likely to show their tails when diving, such as humpback or sperm whales, while some other species never do. <p>So the next time you are out at sea, keep your eyes open, and if you spot a whale, try to identify the species! In the meantime, make sure to read up on different species that live in the North Atlantic: https://nammco.no/whales-dolphins-and-porpoises/.</p> <p>Illustrations © Tony Pyrzakowski</p>	<p>127,139 Views</p> <p>1,266 Reactions</p> <p>49 Comments</p> <p>310 Shares</p> <p>166 Saves</p> <p>53 Link clicks</p>
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<p>18/12/2024</p> 	<p>#FunFactFriday</p> <p>Do you know what body part the melon in toothed whales evolved from?</p> <p>The melon is a rounded, fatty organ in the forehead of odontocetes, the toothed whale group, which includes dolphins, sperm whales, and beaked whales among others. It helps them with echolocation, by focusing and amplifying sound beams. But how did it develop in the first place?</p> <p>Millions of years ago, as odontocetes adapted to life underwater, their bodies changed dramatically. For instance, since they generally swallow their food whole, they no longer needed strong jaw muscles. And as sound works so differently underwater than it does in air, their ear muscles also deteriorated. A recent study indicates that the fatty tissues in and around these muscles began to increase and replace the muscle tissue, eventually developing into the melon and smaller fat deposits within the skull.</p> <p>This astounding transformation allowed dolphins, porpoises, and other toothed whales to use sound to hunt and navigate in deep or murky waters, giving rise to their incredible ability to "see" with sound.</p> <p>You can read more about the study here: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38224921/</p> <p>Want to learn more about how whales and dolphins communicate and navigate? Visit: https://nammco.no/whales-dolphins-and-porpoises/</p> <p>Illustration by Takeuchi et al. (2024)</p>	<p>14,435 Views</p> <p>99Reactions</p> <p>0 Comments</p> <p>28Shares</p> <p>14Saves</p> <p>39Link clicks</p>
<p>25/07/2025</p>	<p>A study by Freitas and colleagues, titled "Impact of baleen whales on ocean primary production across space and time", was published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) in September 2025.</p> <p>Primary production in the ocean is the process by which phytoplankton use sunlight, CO₂, and nutrients to create new organic matter and increase their abundance. This is fundamental to supporting marine food webs and global carbon sequestration, that is, the capture and storage of carbon for the long term. When a whale defecates or dies, the faeces and its corpse sink to the bottom of the ocean, and this way, whales contribute to ocean primary production by releasing nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus and iron, yet the extent of their contribution is unclear.</p>	<p>8,511 Views</p> <p>111Reactions</p> <p>0 Comments</p> <p>54 Shares</p> <p>13 Saves</p> <p>65 Link clicks</p>



In this study, the authors presented daily estimates of nutrient input by baleen whales in high-altitude feeding grounds (Nordic and Barents Seas), based on the chemical analysis of faeces and urine. They then used ecosystem models to assess the impact of these nutrients on primary production. The models indicated that baleen whales, including minke, fin, humpback, blue and bowhead whales, support annual and seasonal primary production, with varying impacts across space and time.

The study highlights the ecological significance of nutrient cycling by whales (supporting up to 10% of net primary production in offshore areas, during the summer season) and underscores the value of integrating whale nutrient data into ecosystem modelling to assess the broader impacts they have on marine productivity.

You can read the full article by Freitas et al., here:

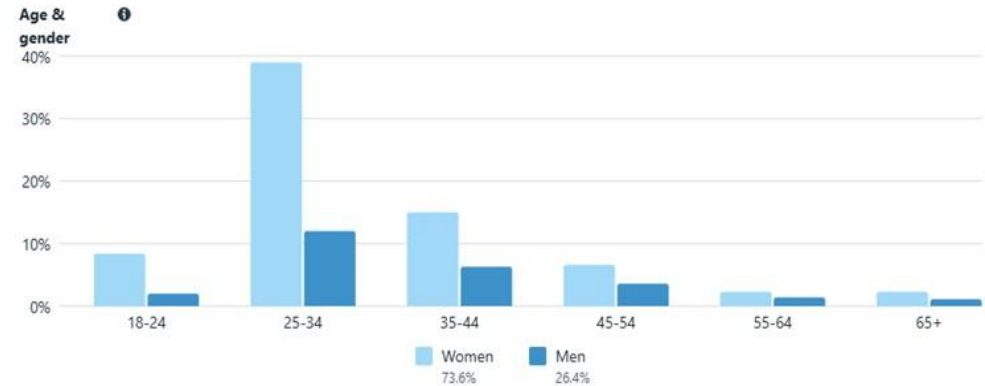
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2505563122>

Photo credit: Aqqalu Rosing-Asvid.

3. Instagram (01.01.2025-31.12.2025)

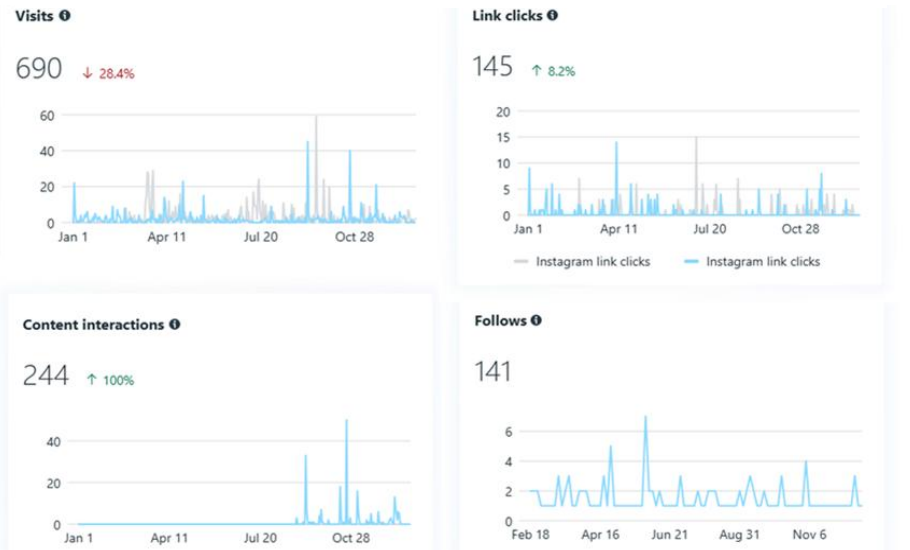
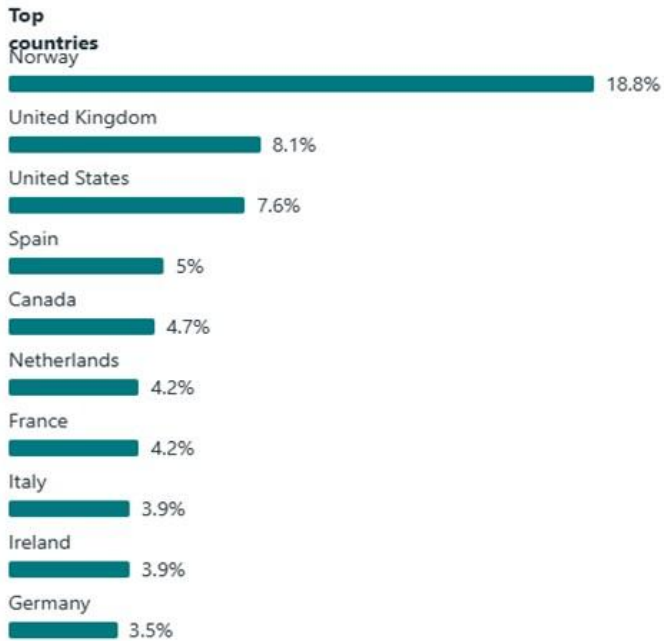
As of 23/02/2026

- Followers: 596
- Following: 188
- Posts: 181




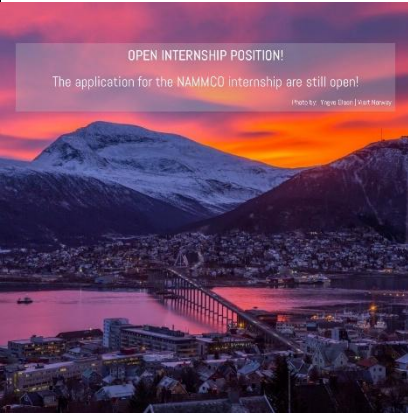
2025 calendar year performance results in comparison to 2024

Blue lines indicate data from 2025, and grey lines indicate data from 2024



Top 3 posts (in terms of both reach and likes) between January 2025 and December 2025:

<p>02/01/2025</p> 	<p>We are excited to announce the 7th Marine Mammal Student Symposium co-organised by North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission, Norwegian Centre for Law of the Sea, and Department of Arctic and Marine Biology. This year’s theme is: “Exploring the Digital Deep: Technologies Shaping Marine Mammal Research and Management”.</p> <p>📅 Thursday, 10th of April</p> <p>📍 Hybrid Event: Online and Universitetsbibliotek Room 132</p> <p>📄 Registration form link in bio!</p> <p>📧 Any questions: intern@nammco.org</p> <p>In an era of rapid technological advancement, the tools we use to study and manage marine mammals are evolving faster than ever. From AI-powered monitoring systems to satellite tracking and genomic innovations, these technologies are transforming our understanding of marine ecosystems. But with these advancements come questions: How can we responsibly integrate these tools into research and management? And how do we ensure they benefit both marine mammals and the people who depend on healthy oceans?</p> <p>This symposium offers a platform for students from diverse fields—including natural sciences, social sciences, and legal studies—to share ideas, knowledge, and experiences on how technology is shaping marine mammal research and management. Whether you have finished research, ongoing projects, or innovative ideas, this is your chance to present and discuss your work.</p> <p>Students whose research does not directly involve new technologies are also encouraged to participate. Highlighting how their work could have been done differently with these advancements or exploring the potential impact of these tools on their research is equally valuable. Research that intersects with marine mammals or addresses related challenges is also welcome.</p> <p>Let’s dive into the digital deep together, exploring how innovation, law, and science can work hand in hand for a sustainable future. See you at the symposium!</p>	<p>1,837 Views</p> <p>1,148 reach</p> <p>8 shares</p> <p>34 likes</p> <p>0 comment</p> <p>6 save</p> <p>5 new followers</p>
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<p>08/04/2025</p> 	<p>Applications are still open for the NAMMCO Internship Programme!</p> <p>The internship offers students and early career individuals a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in international marine mammal management, enhance their skills in communication and science outreach, and dive into the work of NAMMCO and its activities.</p> <p>If you would like to gain experience by: 🧠 learning more about the management and conservation of marine mammals 📡 staying up to date with the latest research in the field 🌐 expanding your professional network while developing skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🗣️ working on communication and outreach 📅 organising meetings and events ✍️ writing reports and editing website content <p>...then you could be NAMMCO's next intern!</p> <p>Applicants must be from NAMMCO member or EEA countries. The internship is full-time, based at the NAMMCO Secretariat in Tromsø, Norway, and includes a monthly stipend to help cover living expenses. The next internship is expected to start in autumn 2025.</p> <p>! The application deadline is 30 April 2025</p> <p>You can find the link in the Bio to learn more about the Internship Program.</p> <p>Photo credit: Yngve Olsen Visit Norway</p>	<p>1,810 Views</p> <p>956 reach</p> <p>4 shares</p> <p>34 likes</p> <p>0 comments</p> <p>14 save</p> <p>9 new followers</p>
<p>20/06/2025</p>	<p>The 2025 MINTAG tagging season has officially begun, with Japan being the first partner country to head out today!</p> <p>The MINTAG project is an international scientific project between the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Japan, and Norway. Working to develop small satellite tags so that we can track fast-swimming whales, like fin, minke, pilot and sei whales, more effectively and learn more about where they spend time during the winter, how they move, and how they respond to their environment.</p>	<p>1,058 views</p> <p>630 reach</p> <p>3 shares</p> <p>25 likes</p> <p>1 comments</p> <p>4 save</p>



Although the project is still in development, some exciting results came in from the 2024 tagging efforts:

🌴 A minke whale tagged in northern Norway was tracked for 231 days, making its way all the way to the Caribbean. This is one of the longest minke whale satellite tracks in the North Atlantic!

🐋 Another tag on a fin whale in Svalbard sent data for 195 days, showing the whale travelling south of the Azores and the Iberian Peninsula.

🌊 An Icelandic minke whale was tracked for 109 days. After spending some time around Iceland, it made its way to the Azores.

Last year's promising results bode well for this summer's tagging efforts, and you can be part of it by following the whales on the site! Link in bio!

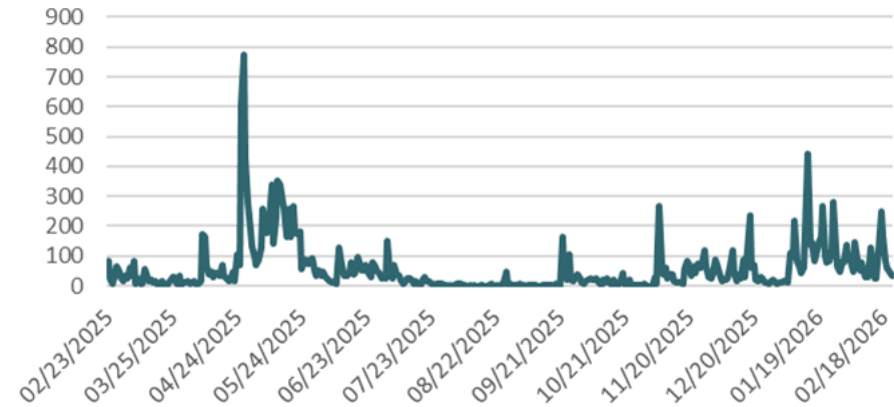
5 new followers

4. LinkedIn (18.02.2025-18.02.2026)

As of 18.02.2026, NAMMCO’s LinkedIn page had **2,116 followers** and gained **410 new followers** over the last 365 days.

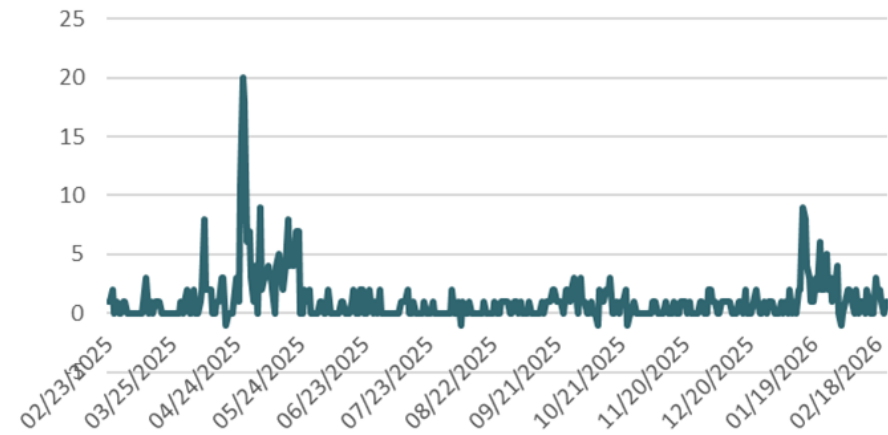
PAGE	TOTAL FOLLOWERS	NEW FOLLOWERS	TOTAL POST ENGAGEMENTS	TOTAL POSTS
NAMMCO	2122	410	404	43
Marine Mammal Foundation	866	282	525	43
CAFF	931	104	78	7
ACCOBAMS	2541	750	2987	89

Content Impressions over the last 365 days












LOCATION	TOTAL FOLLOWERS	FOLLOWERS PERCENTAGE
Tromsø Region, Norway	55	2.6%
Copenhagen Metropolitan Area, Denmark	41	1.9%
Washington DC-Baltimore Area	39	1.8%
Greater Boston	34	1.6%
London Area, United Kingdom	29	1.4%
Greater Paris Metropolitan Region, France	28	1.3%
San Francisco Bay Area	21	1.0%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale Area	21	1.0%
Lisbon Metropolitan Area, Portugal	19	0.9%
New York City Metropolitan Area	19	0.9%

New followers over the last 365 days



Top 3 posts (in terms of both reach and likes) over the last 365 days, counting from 23/02/2026:

<p>08/04/2025</p> 	<p>Applications are still open for the NAMMCO Internship Programme!</p> <p>The internship offers students and early career individuals a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience in international marine mammal management, enhance their skills in communication and science outreach, and dive into the work of NAMMCO and its activities.</p> <p>If you would like to gain experience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  learning more about the management and conservation of marine mammals  staying up to date with the latest research in the field  expanding your professional network <p>while developing skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  working on communication and outreach  organising meetings and events  writing reports and editing website content <p>...then you could be NAMMCO's next intern!</p> <p>Applicants must be from NAMMCO member or EEA countries. The internship is full-time, based at the NAMMCO Secretariat in Tromsø, Norway, and includes a monthly stipend to help cover living expenses. The next internship is expected to start in autumn 2025.</p> <p>! The application deadline is 30 April 2025</p> <p> You can find the application form here: https://lnkd.in/diS43yVk</p> <p>And don't forget to check our website for more info: https://lnkd.in/d38Vjn-5</p> <p>Photo credit: Yngve Olsen Visit Norway</p>	<p>4,772 Impressions</p> <p>323 Clicks</p> <p>40 Reactions</p> <p>0 Comments</p> <p>9 Reposts</p>
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<p>13/01/2026</p> 	<p>A study by Mikkelsen and colleagues, titled “Spatial overlap among harbour, ringed and bearded seals in Kongsfjorden, Svalbard, during the post-moulting foraging period”, was published in the journal Marine Ecology Progress Series (MEPS), in October 2025.</p> <p>The Arctic is highly impacted by global warming, with temperatures increasing at four times the global average. The Svalbard archipelago is a climate hotspot, even in an Arctic context, and is experiencing rapid sea ice loss, significant ocean warming, accelerated glacier melting, and ecosystem changes. Such rapid changes can significantly affect the ecology of the local species.</p> <p>The authors investigated the space use patterns of two Arctic endemic seals living in Kongsfjorden, Svalbard: ringed seals (<i>Pusa hispida</i>), bearded seals (<i>Erignathus barbatus</i>), and harbour seals (<i>Phoca vitulina</i>). The latter recently became resident in Kongsfjorden due to continued climate warming. Using GPS tracking and dive data, Mikkelsen and colleagues determined that harbour seals overlapped 55.8% of ringed seals’ and 69.5% of bearded seals’ main diving areas. However, they also identified habitat and different behaviours between the species.</p> <p>The study suggests that these three species are currently not in direct competition, but continued warming will likely favour the expansion of the mild-climate harbour seal at the expense of Arctic seals.</p> <p>You can read the full article by Mikkelsen et al., here: https://lnkd.in/evbkw9x5</p> <p>Photo credit: Christian Lydersen.</p>	<p>1,546 Impressions</p> <p>323 Clicks</p> <p>31 Reactions</p> <p>0 Comment</p> <p>9 Reposts</p>
<p>08/05/2025</p>	<p>A new study by Postel and colleagues, titled "Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (H5N5) detected in an Atlantic walrus (<i>Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus</i>) in the Svalbard Archipelago, Norway, 2023", was published in Emerging Microbes & Infections in February 2025. This is the first time a dangerous type of bird flu virus, specifically H5N5, has been found in a walrus.</p> <p>The walrus was found dead on Hopen Island in Svalbard in 2023, at a time when several other dead walrus were also reported in the area. Tests showed that the walrus was carrying the virus, and further analysis revealed high similarities to infected birds found in Norway and other countries, between 2022 and 2024. Some features of the virus suggest it may be changing in ways that make it more able to infect mammals.</p>	<p>917 Impressions</p> <p>36 Clicks</p> <p>28 Reactions</p> <p>0 Comments</p> <p>6 Reposts</p>



Although the researchers could not confirm that the virus caused the walrus' death, the discovery raises concerns about how bird flu could affect other animals in the Arctic.

Read the full article here: <https://lnkd.in/eWJZkF4u>

Photo credit: Mario Acquarone

APPENDIX 3. REPORTS FROM OUTREACH EVENTS ORGANISED OR ATTENDED BY THE SECRETARIAT

1. Arctic Youth Conference (24-26.01) – Tromsø

The Norwegian Chairship of the Arctic Council (2023-2025) hosted the first Arctic Youth Conference in Tromsø, Norway. This event brought together around 300 young people from across the Arctic, along with representatives from various intergovernmental organisations. Over three days, participants engaged in sessions, workshops, and panel discussions. Conversations at the conference underscored the importance of including young, Indigenous, and minority voices in all decision-making spaces. Participants also highlighted successful examples of intergenerational cooperation and discussed actionable strategies for meaningful inclusion. **El bani Altuna** moderated and co-organised a workshop with the Arctic Frontiers Emerging Leader program alumni entitled “Inclusive Governance in Shaping Arctic Futures: Empowerment of Youth Leadership”. Additionally, the conference provided an opportunity to meet and connect with people across borders and interact with organisation representatives, particularly funding bodies, which are crucial for expanding the reach of the educational program.

The conference was particularly relevant to the NAMMCO Secretariat. Although the Secretariat does not officially have a youth program, the staff at the Secretariat is committed to engaging with youth across several areas. This includes:

- (1) its communication strategy, which involves disseminating information about NAMMCO in schools and using platforms like Instagram to reach a younger audience,
- (2) the educational program, which targets young people aged 7-20 and will be reviewed by students at the University of Greenland and University of Iceland, through our partners,
- (3) the internship program, which has hosted 12 interns since 2017, and
- (4) the collaboration with UiT, through which the Secretariat delivers lectures to students, organises the Marine Mammal Student Symposium, and participates in the UiT Realfagspraksis program.

This focus on younger audiences not only enhances NAMMCO’s visibility and stimulates discussions about the sustainable and responsible use of marine mammals but also serves as a capacity-building process. It provides young people with the opportunity to learn about management, decision-making, coordination, and administrative work within an intergovernmental organisation.

The Secretariat recognises significant potential to enhance youth participation beyond its own initiatives. Currently, delegations to the Scientific Committee, Management Committees, and Council are often composed of senior male members. The Secretariat believes that actively including younger scientists, managers, and users would be beneficial for all delegations. The importance of mentorship and knowledge-transfer from mid-career and senior members across different fields was also a recurring recommendation from the Arctic Youth Conference. By including early-career professionals or young members in delegations, the delegations provide them with valuable opportunities to learn from more experienced colleagues and support their skill development. It would bring fresh and innovative ideas to the delegations and, given the complex structure and processes of NAMMCO, ensure knowledge transfer and continuity, especially as senior members approach retirement.

2. Arctic Frontier side event (27.01) – Tromsø

Objective: Discussion on research data & science cooperation for marine mammal conservation beyond borders

At the Arctic Frontiers conference in Tromsø in early 2025, a side event was co-organised by Heriot-Watt University (Lauren McWhinnie, Kate Gormley), the NAMMCO Secretariat (Maria Garagouni,

Naima El bani Altuna), and UiT (Emma Vogel). The aim of the event was to spark a discussion around data sharing and collaboration when it comes to marine mammal conservation. Garagouni attend the event.

Vogel, Gormley, and **Garagouni** each gave presentations about their own relevant experience with large-scale projects that require multiple collaborators and data streams to successfully complete. They outlined the benefits of cooperation for their specific goals, achievements and welcome surprises in the process, and difficulties that had to be circumvented. Each presentation was followed by questions from the audience. The presentation of Garagouni was "*Quantifying marine mammal by-catch exposure*".

Following the presentations, the speakers held a panel discussion, chaired by McWhinnie, centred around four key questions:

- Are there potential data resources that could be shared/used (pan-arctic/internationally)?
- What are the data/information needs for different users?
- Are there possible mechanisms to make information sharing easier for different end users?
- What opportunities are there for collaboration?

Audience questions and comments were also discussed. The meeting was well attended in person (and streamed online) and engagement was high, particularly from younger members of the audience (undergraduate and MSc students).

3. Arctic Dimensions (30.01) – Tromsø

Every year, the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) hosts an open workshop for early-career individuals as part of Arctic Frontiers and the Arctic Frontiers Student Forum. In 2025, the workshop took place on Thursday 30 January at the Fram Centre, Tromsø. The workshop, titled "*Arctic Dimensions*" aimed to explore the landscape of Arctic governance and research.

During the second half of the event, a panel discussion featured Robbie Mallet, a postdoctoral researcher at UiT, Jens Toft, Project Coordinator at the Arctic Council Secretariat, and **El Bani Altuna**. The panellists discussed their career paths, reflected on their current roles, and shared insights into how they interact with Arctic governance and research, as well as the challenges and inspirations they encounter.

The audience consisted of approximately 60 early-career individuals and students from the Arctic Frontiers Student Forum (a cohort of bachelor's and master's students) and various academic and research institutions. The main aim was for participants to leave the workshop feeling inspired about the diverse opportunities available for engaging with Arctic topics.

4. Mr.Goodfish3.0 samskapingsverksted (19.02) – Tromsø

Mr. Goodfish 3.0 is a project aimed at raising awareness for the responsible consumption of sea, freshwater, and aquaculture products. This initiative involves upgrading and expanding the Mr. Goodfish app as part of an EU-wide awareness campaign. The app will be integrated into an ecosystem of tools and activities co-created by stakeholders in three pilot sites: Tromsø, Boulogne-sur-Mer (France), and Larnaka (Cyprus).

This workshop marked the first gathering in Tromsø of stakeholders from across the seafood value chain to explore challenges and opportunities for promoting sustainable consumption of marine products. Participants included:

- Norwegian Seafood Council
- Marine Stewardship Council
- Stiftelsen Norsk Mat
- Havforskningsinstituttet

- Norsk Råfisklag
- Akvaplan-niva
- Nofima
- Smak av kysten
- NINA - Norsk institutt for naturforskning
- NAMMCO Secretariat (represented by El bani Altuna)

During the workshop, participants collaborated to identify gaps in the value chain, develop guidelines, and brainstorm key messages and solutions to the challenges of sustainable seafood production and consumption. Although the workshop primarily focused on the fishing industry due to the significant representation of representatives from fisheries, the presence of the NAMMCO Secretariat served as a reminder of the diverse range of seafood available in the ocean. It highlighted the importance of exploring the sustainability of all types of seafood, not just fish.

5. Lecture for DIS (05.03 & 07.10) – Tromsø & Online

Desportes and **El bani Altuna** gave a 1.5-hrs lecture on 5 March and 7 October, respectively, to two groups of ca. 25 US students of DIS Copenhagen, who were on Study Tour in Tromsø on NAMMCO.

DIS is a non-profit academic institute offering semester, academic year, and summer abroad programs for students from North American universities, who have completed at least two semesters in their own university.

The lectures presented NAMMCO's foundation, vision of conservation, and processes in its advisory work, as well as its work in disseminating science and fact-based information on marine mammals and marine mammal hunting and use. It also underlined the challenges in managing marine mammals and providing food for thought in presenting marine mammal use, and seal bans, in the perspective of blue economy and sustainable food systems.

Evidently, the US students were presented with perspectives and rationales they had not been presented with before, which created lively discussions and, hopefully, rethinking of their own views.

6. Lecture for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (13.03) – Office

ITLOS, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, with M. Benatar as organiser, asked **Desportes** to give a lecture on the work of the Commission to young government officials and academics taking part in a capacity-building and training programme. **Desportes** gave a lecture on NAMMCO organisation and work: "*Whaling and Sealing in perspectives*". The lecture presented NAMMCO's foundation, vision of conservation, and processes in its advisory work, as well as its effort in disseminating science and fact-based information on marine mammals and marine mammal hunting and use. It provided food for thought in presenting marine mammal use, and seal bans, in the perspective of blue economy and sustainable food systems, a new perspective for the students.

The lecture was received, both by the group and the organiser and led to a longer discussion.

7. Collaborative Resource Management in the Arctic: Bridging Knowledge for Decision-Making, Workshop Nuuk (8-10.04) – Nuuk, Greenland

This workshop aimed to strengthen the practice of knowledge co-production in Arctic resource management by fostering dialogue among Indigenous representatives, local resource users, scientists, advisory bodies such as NAMMCO and managers from across the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions, including Alaska, Canada, Denmark, Greenland, Japan, and Norway. The event seeks to address this gap by exploring real-world experiences, identifying challenges, and developing actionable guidance for decision-making.

The three-day programme combined case-based learning and critical discussion. Day 1 introduces six case studies from Greenland, Nunavut, Alaska, and NAMMCO, showcasing methods and lessons from

collaborative approaches to fisheries, marine mammal management, and environmental monitoring. **El bani Altuna** presented the work of the Working Group on Enhancing User Involvement in decision making in NAMMCO (UIWG) and NAMMCO's efforts to increase user representation in the different committees. Day 2 focused on facilitating dialogue to clarify what effective co-production looks like, identify tools and ethical practices, and discuss scaling strategies while maintaining local integrity. Day 3 concluded with drafting practical guidance for integrating knowledge systems.

The main deliverable from the workshop is a manuscript compiling the reflections discussed in the meeting and submitted to *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* as a commentary under the title of "Bridging Knowledge Systems to Guide Natural Resource Decision-Making". The published article can be found here: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tree.2025.12.009>.

The NAMMCO Secretariat benefited significantly from participating, learning about diverse case studies that combine Indigenous and local knowledge with western science in advisory and management processes. The workshop also provided opportunities to expand networks and deepen understanding of co-production challenges and solutions, reinforcing NAMMCO Secretariat's commitment to inclusive and informed resource management.

8. 7th Marine Mammal Student Symposium (10.04) – Tromsø

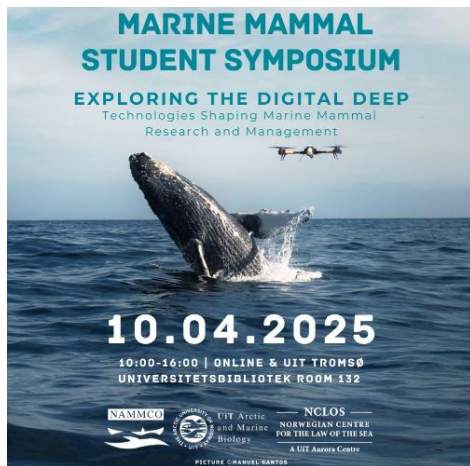
NAMMCO, in association with the Norwegian Centre for the Law of the Sea (NCLOS) and the Department of Arctic and Marine Biology (AMB) at UiT, hosted the 7th annual Marine Mammal Student Symposium on 10 April 2024. The theme for 2025 was: '*Exploring the Digital Deep: Technologies Shaping Marine Mammal Research and Management*'. The symposium organisation was led by NAMMCO Secretariat intern **Noor Elias**.

The event happened in a hybrid format, online and in person, allowing for people from all over the world to participate. In total, there was 94 registered people from over 30 different countries all over the world. This 2024 event saw a record number of 94 registered participants from over 30 different countries.

The symposium was divided into a morning and an afternoon session, with the NAMMCO intern Noor Elias and NCLOS student Soraya Gratton serving as the moderators for the day. The morning session began with a welcome and short presentations of NAMMCO, NCLOS and AMB by Geneviève Desportes, professor Vito De Lucia, and associate professor Sophie Bourgeon respectively. Following the introduction, the first and second student sessions started, with five students in total, one in person and four online giving their presentations.

After the lunch break with pizza, the participants reconvened for another round of student presentations with two persons presenting in person, and one giving their presentations online. The student presentations across the day covered a range of different topics, spanning both biology and law, and addressed a number of different themes, including tagging, genetics, behaviour, and legal regimes.

The last sessions of the day included presentations from four invited keynote speakers: Camilla Brattland (Sami Cultural Studies), Audun Rikardsen (Department of Arctic and Marine Biology), Bastiaan Klerk (NCLOS) and Konstantinos Deligiannis-Virvos (NCLOS). Following the presentation from keynote speakers, participants engaged in short but lively panel-like Q&A session with the speakers.



Posted on 2 January 2025, Views: 2,431
Reach: 1,535, Interactions: 26
Link clicks: 25



Posted on 3 April 2025, Views: 707
Reach: 489, Interactions: 14
Link clicks: 16

9. Mr.Goodfish3.0 samskappingsverksted (17.09) – Tromsø

Mr. Goodfish 3.0 is a project aimed at raising awareness for the responsible consumption of sea, freshwater, and aquaculture products, by helping consumers easily choose seasonal options through a user-friendly app. This initiative involves upgrading and expanding the Mr. Goodfish app as part of an EU-wide awareness campaign. The app will be integrated into an ecosystem of tools and activities co-created by stakeholders in three pilot sites: Tromsø, Boulogne-sur-Mer (France), and Larnaka (Cyprus).

This workshop marked the second gathering in Tromsø of stakeholders from across the seafood value chain to explore challenges and opportunities for promoting sustainable consumption of marine products. Participants included:

- Norsk Råfisklag
- Nofima Ocean
- Nofima Technology
- Dragøy AS
- NAMMCO Secretariat (represented by **El bani Altuna**)

During the workshop, attendees explored how an app like Mr. Goodfish could address challenges and unlock new possibilities in Norway. As in the previous meeting, the NAMMCO Secretariat emphasised the rich diversity of seafood available in the ocean and underscored the importance of assessing the sustainability of all marine species, not just fish. Including comprehensive information on various types of seafood within the app can help dispel stereotypes and misconceptions, including those surrounding marine mammals, as highlighted by NAMMCO.

APPENDIX 4. PUBLICATIONS IN NAMMCO SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS VOL. 14

The names of authors directly affiliated with NAMMCO (Secretariat, current and retired members of committees, working groups and project steering groups) are indicated in bold.

Lundström, K., Carlsson, A. M., Karlsson, M., Mion, M., Eriksson, P., & Ahola, M. P. (2025). The reintroduction grey seal hunting in Sweden – A review of hunting and seal population data (2001-2024). *NAMMCO Scientific Publications*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.7557/3.8086>

Moan, A., & Bjørge, A. (2025). By-catch of common minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*) in Norwegian demersal trawl and longline fisheries, 2011–2020. *NAMMCO Scientific Publications*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.7557/3.8083>

Moan, A., & Bjørge, A. (2025). Follow-up study after four years shows reduced deterrence effect of pingers on harbour porpoises in Norwegian gillnet fishery. *NAMMCO Scientific Publications*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.7557/3.8004>

Montello, M., McFarlane, W., Rickard, M., & Warren, J. (2025). Pinnipeds in New York (1996–2021) are stranding less frequently but human interaction cases are increasing. *NAMMCO Scientific Publications*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.7557/3.8047>

Wynn-Simmonds, S., Richard, G., & Vincent, C. (2025). Assessing shipping noise as a potential driver of harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*) habitat selection. *NAMMCO Scientific Publications*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.7557/3.8031>

APPENDIX 5. PUBLICATIONS IN OTHER SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS

The names of authors directly affiliated with NAMMCO (Secretariat, current and retired members of committees, working groups and project steering groups) are indicated in bold.

Baumgartner, C. D., Jourdain, E., Bonhoeffer, S., Borgå, K., **Heide-Jørgensen, M. P.**, Karoliussen, R., Laine, J. T., **Rosing-Asvid, A.**, Ruus, A., Tavares, S. B., **Ugarte, F.**, Samarra, F. I. P., & Foote, A. D. (2025). Kinship clustering within an ecologically diverse killer whale metapopulation. *Heredity*, 134(2), 109–119. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41437-024-00740-y>

Caron Delbosc, N., Mathias, D., Chauvaud, L., Ahonen, H., Llobet, S. M., **Lydersen, C.**, Kovacs, K. M., & Richard, G. (2025). Development of a conservative automated tonal detector with high performance at a large temporal scale. *Bioacoustics*, 34(6), 775–790. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09524622.2025.2568528>

Chosson, V., De Montety, L., **Halldórsson, S. D.**, & Randhawa, H. S. (2025). First record of *Ogmogaster antarctica* Johnston, 1931 (Trematoda: Notocotylidae) on the edge of the Arctic ocean. *International Journal for Parasitology: Parasites and Wildlife*, 28, 101131. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijppaw.2025.101131>

Di Clemente, J., Briefer, E. F., Nabe-Nielsen, J., Segre, P. S., Penry, G. S., Garagouni, M. (2025). “Why keep your mouth shut?” Inshore South African Bryde’s whales abort lunges within feeding dives. *Ethology, Ecology, and Evolution*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03949370.2025.2482528>

Di Clemente, J., Segre, P. S., **Garagouni, M.**, Wisniewska, D. M., Kahane-Rapport, S., Gough, W. T., Wahlberg, M., Goldbogen, J., Penry, G. S., Nabe-Nielsen, J., Briefer, E. F. (2025). How deep is their lunch: Inshore South African Bryde’s whales shift attack mode at different depths. *Marine Ecology Progress Series*, 761:115-128. <https://doi.org/10.3354/meps14845>

Turton, J. V., **El bani Altuna, N.**, Weber, C., Dahle, S., Boine Olsen, N., Fosshaug, E., Opheim, K., Morales-Aguirre, J., & Wara, A. (2025). From Five to Thirty-Five: Fostering the Next Generation of Arctic Scientists. *Geoscience Communication*, 8, 339–356, <https://doi.org/10.5194/gc-8-339-2025>

Freitas, C., Skogen, M. D., **Sigurðsson, G. M.**, **Biuw, M.**, **Haug, T.**, Lindblom, L., & Gundersen, K. (2025). Impact of baleen whales on ocean primary production across space and time. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 122(43), e2505563122. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2505563122>

Glarou, M., Rasmussen, M. H., Poldner, A., Ruppert, S. N. S., Sotiropoulou, D., Sadozai, Z., Jarzynowska, M., Iversen, M. R., **Sigurðsson, G. M.**, **Halldórsson, S. D.**, Chosson, V., Clapham, P. J., Ivashchenko, Y., Tormosov, D., & Christiansen, F. (2025). Size-specific strategies of sympatric cetaceans to reduce heat loss. *Journal of Experimental Biology*, 228(6), jeb249356. <https://doi.org/10.1242/jeb.249356>

Haug, T., Folkow, L. P., & **Biuw, M.** (2025). Hooded Seal *Cystophora cristata* (Erleben, 1777). In K. Hackländer & F. E. Zachos (Eds), *Handbook of the Mammals of Europe* (pp. 1–22). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65038-8_140-1

Heide-Jørgensen, M. P. (2025). Are narwhals critical for the meat supply in East Greenland? *Arctic Science*, 11, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1139/as-2024-0047>

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McCarthy, M. L., Martínez, A. R., Ferguson, S. H., **Rosing-Asvid, A.**, Dietz, R., De Cahsan, B., Schreiber, L., Lorenzen, E. D., Hansen, R. G., Stimmelmayer, R., Bryan, A., Quakenbush, L., **Lydersen, C.**, Kovacs, K. M., & Olsen, M. T.

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- Petitguyot, M. A. C., Fariñas-Bermejo, A., Brownlow, A., Ahola, M. P., Álvarez Neches, E., Arbelo, M., Authier, M., Balsera Riesgo, R., Berron, S., Bjørge, A., Brackmann, J., Brasseur, S., Carreira, G., Cervin, L., Claver, C., Covelo, P., Crespo-Picazo, J. L., Dabin, W., Dähne, M., ... **Sigurðsson, G. M.**, ... **Mikkelsen, B** ... Pierce, G. J. (2025). European stranding networks as a tool for monitoring marine mammal populations (Part I): Towards optimising the functioning of networks. *ICES Journal of Marine Science*, 82(11), fsaf194. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icesjms/fsaf194>
- Postel, A., Gremmel, N., **Lydersen, C.**, Kovacs, K. M., Schick, L. A., Siebert, U., Nymo, I. H., & Becher, P. (2025). Highly pathogenic avian influenza virus (H5N5) detected in an Atlantic walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus*) in the Svalbard Archipelago, Norway, 2023. *Emerging Microbes & Infections*, 14(1), 2456146. <https://doi.org/10.1080/22221751.2025.2456146>
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- Wams, L., Kovacs, K. M., **Lydersen, C.**, Lindstrøm, U., Tollefsen, D., & Ahonen, H. (2025). Singers of the high Arctic; Seasonal acoustic presence of bowhead whales (*Balaena mysticetus*) around Svalbard, Norway. *Scientific Reports*, 15(1), 14425. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-98302-7>

Conference presentations:

- Etiendem, D.N., Broberg, A., Dahl, P.E., Danielsen, F., **El bani Altuna, N.**, Enghoff, M., Hauser, D.D.W., Jakobsen, P., Larsen, Z.G., Lyberth, G.N.B., Meinertz, C., Nuttall, M., Nymand, J., Oishi Y., Petersen, M., Qujaukitsoq, V., Rosing, M., Rudolf, M.H.C., **Schiøtt, S.**, & Sutherland, W. (2025, December 16). Bridging Knowledge Systems for Critical Socio-Environmental Decision [Conference presentation] ArcticNet's Annual Scientific Meeting, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. <https://event.fourwaves.com/asm2025/abstracts/f4439ccf-67f6-4f31-bd76-28ba8d48b356>

APPENDIX 6. BUDGET, REALLOCATION AND RESULTS 2025

	Budget 2025 (CNL 31)	Reallocation 2025 (CNL32, using 2024 Total Reserve)	Accounts 2025
Income // Contributions			
Contributions Faroes	653,715	653,715	653,715
Contributions Greenland	653,715	653,715	652,858
Contributions Iceland	1,307,431	1,307,431	1,307,431
Contributions Norway	2,618,453	2,618,453	2,618,453
Interest in membership contributions			122,922
Income // Contributions	5,233,314	5,233,314	5,355,379
Expenditure			
Staff related costs	3,281,736	3,302,905	3,431,001
Internship	196,500	193,350	134,795
Staff travel and subsistence	130,000	263,000	176,894
Meetings	230,000	279,600	239,148
Office rent	310,712	364,206	313,202
Office supply	159,426	162,869	192,979
Communication and outreach	75,000	58,000	42,424
Accounts and auditing	220,500	301,313	370,113
Observation Scheme	60,000	0	0
Committee for Hunting Methods	25,000	25,000	990
Scientific Committee	215,000	200,000	70,697
WG User knowledge	40,000	0	0
Capacity building	20,000	20,000	11,419
Other expenses	75,000	65,000	42,977
NASS	180,000	180,000	180,000
NASS project overheads - Expected	-25,200	-25,200	
NASS project overheads - Actual		-385,543	-495,000
MINTAG	100,000	100,000	100,000
MINTAG project overheads			-550,621
Total expenditure	5,293,675	5,104,500	4,261,018
OPERATING RESULT	-60,361	128,814	1,094,361
Total Reserve 01.01	1,615,559	1,415,190	1,415,190
Transfer to/from general reserve	-60,361	128,814	1,094,361
New Total Reserve 31.12	1,555,198	1,544,004	2,509,551

- Green: items below expected cost
- Pink: items above expected cost