

NAMMCO ANNUAL MEETING 33

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

24–26 March 2026

Hotel Hans Egede, Nuuk, Greenland

DOCUMENT 19	<p>Communication Plans (CPs)</p> <p>17a: review of the implementation status of CP3 in the period 2023-2025</p> <p>17b: proposal CP4 2026-2027</p>
Agenda item(s)	12.6
Submitted by	Secretariat
Action requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take note of the report on the implementation of CP3 • Consider the proposed CP4 • Provide input • Adopt a communication plan
Background/content	<p>NAMMCO Communication Strategy (COS) and Communication Plans (CPs) were generated following an increased awareness of the Commission of the necessity of being visible, and consequently the necessity of elaborating a communication strategy with a well-defined and tuned message, anchored in facts but also in the present conservation discourse and issues.</p> <p>Making the work of NAMMCO more widely known among priority target groups and strengthening NAMMCO as an international actor is a long-term project. The COS is seen as a 10-years initiative, providing an overarching long-term framework for NAMMCO’s communication and addressing long-term communication objectives, overarching messages, target groups and types of communication channels. It focuses on both external and internal communication. As a principle <i>NAMMCO Communication is proactive, responsive and cooperative, factual and not emotional</i>. The COS considers NAMMCO’s two main handicaps in terms of visibility, outreach and communication: it is a very small and specialised organisation with a small community, and it has a very small and non-communication specialised secretariat.</p> <p>Shorter legs of implementation in the form of Communication Plans (CP) address shorter periods of 2 years. The CPs build on the COS but go into more detail, outlining the specific focus for the period covered and the planned activities.</p> <p>Not only the COS and the CPs support broadening the visibility of the organisation, but they also support its transparency. The COS, was adopted by NAMMCO 25 (2017). Three previous communication plans have been adopted, CP1 for the period 2017-2018, CP2 for the period 2019-2020 and extended to 2022 and CP3 for the period 2023-2024 and extended to 2025.</p> <p>This document presents a review of the implementation of CP3 and a proposal for CP4, which describes the focus of the communication and outreach work for the two-year period 2026-2027.</p>

1	COS (as a reminder)	2
2	CP3 Implementation review	2
	2.1 Implemented activities	3
	2.2 activities not implemented	3
	2.3 Conclusion	6
3	Communication Plan 2026-2027 – CP4	6
	3.1 CP4 objectives and focus	6
	3.2 Core messages	7
	3.3 Proposed Actions	7

1 COS (AS A REMINDER)

Vision

NAMMCO is perceived as the pre-eminent and most effective forum for the conservation and management of marine mammals in the North Atlantic.

Mission

To provide factual, timely and clear information on marine mammals and related issues

Goals

NAMMCO communication and outreach shall

- Develop a higher level of visibility, especially in NAMMCO countries
- Support transparency
- Convey that NAMMCO has the following characteristics; it is:
 - appropriate and credible;
 - active (in science, conservation and welfare);
 - relevant in current debates (e.g. Arctic Issues, Climate Change, Food Security, Animal Welfare and Blue Growth);
 - a credible source of information;
 - founded upon a transparent management advice-generating process;
 - based on best practices, science and local knowledge;
 - the only international management forum for pinnipeds;
 - a good partner for dialogue and cooperation.

Key messages

- NAMMCO is the credible and relevant international forum for issues concerning Marine Mammals in the Arctic and Northern Atlantic Ocean;
- NAMMCO supports the preservation of biodiversity, by ensuring the sustainable use of marine mammal resources;
- NAMMCO strives to convey the many-sided aspects of species and stock management and consequently the multifaceted nature of conservation issues;
- NAMMCO ensures that issues associated with the Arctic region and the environment of marine mammals are highlighted and given priority;
- NAMMCO supports food security and resilient communities by underpinning sustainable use of marine resources and addressing the effect of climate change on a marine food resource.

2 CP3 IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

CP3 was adopted by Council 29 in 2022 for the period 2023-2024 but was extended to 2025. The message the CP3 wanted to spread was **how NAMMCO, as an organisation, commits to robust and responsible management through supporting and facilitating:**

- **High-quality independent scientific research projects**, which are essential in generating the knowledge required for a sound management
- **Improved hunters' safety and animal welfare** by producing tools contributing to the training of the hunters

NAMMCO in 2023-2024 (and later years) has been supporting and facilitating two high profile projects: the **NASS 2024** running in 2023-2025 and the **MINTAG Project** running in 2022-2028, both coordinated through the NAMMCO Secretariat.

CP3 external target audience in focus were:

- Marine mammal scientists
- Journalists/Media working on arctic and environmental issues
- Youth, children and educators, member countries' educational networks
- NAMMCO wide community

Six actions were seen as essential:

- 1) Create specific lively sites on nammco.org dedicated to each project
- 2) Maintain general updates of these sites and use the news on the main site to announce updates on the specific site
- 3) Maintain a high activity on the three social media (SoMe) through regular posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram related to the preparation and the developments of the projects, also during the analysis phase. Such post should redirect to the specific project website
- 4) Create, if possible, page/links on Wikipedia connecting to the projects
- 5) Creating web educational/dissemination material (information, play, quiz, podcasts, competition) to generate interest for the projects and that can be downloaded and used by schools/high schools to initiate a longer-term following of the projects.
- 6) Use the two high profile projects, NASS 24 and MINTAG, in any outreach and dissemination effort.

Table 1 includes an overview of the actions initiating during CP3, as well as those continuing from previous CPs and supporting the COS, and their status as of December 2025.

2.1 IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

The primordial focus of the period 2023-2025 has been reaching youth and member countries' educational networks for disseminating and making use of the wealth of regularly updated information contained on the NAMMCO website. However, this necessitated an adaptation of the information, as it was conceived for scientists not for youth. This resulted in the birth of the GUARDNA project, and educational programme targeting 12-to-20-year-olds which was developed in summer 2023: GUARDNA - Guardians of the North Atlantic. Looking after our Seas to Conserve Marine Mammals. The GUARDNA project has partners of all NAMMCO member countries, and the Secretariat is thus in contact with the educational networks of the four parties.

2.2 ACTIVITIES NOT IMPLEMENTED

Creating page/links on Wikipedia connecting to the flagship projects has not been done, but remain a goal, although creating pages on Wikipedia is not evident for persons directly linked to the page they wish to create.

The production of printed material, that was planned originally in the COS and previous CPs have been suspended as its production, except in exceptional cases, has lost interest in regard of the high digitalisation of communication and outreach.

The de facto lack of support and interest from the NAMMCO community in its communication effort has also led in discontinuing some of the planned activities, like reporting on the field work conducted in and by NAMMCO members, which is not coordinated through NAMMCO.

Table 1. Actions proposed for CP3 and their status prior to CP4

Media	Description	Status of the action prior to CP4	Intended results
NAMMCO website (nammco.org) (new website presented to Council25)	Review and update all information every year	Ongoing. Species pages and the catch database updated annually. National hunting regulations reviewed and updated annually as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce nammco.org as a hub for NAMMCO outreach • Increased information and knowledge given to the wider public and thereby enhanced credibility and understanding • More traffic to website and to FB. • NAMMCO's perspective in/on global conservation issues shared and known • Blogs should be announced on FB and twitter
	Increase effort on SEO	Ongoing	
	Develop specific sites for the different flag projects	Completed. MINTAG, NASS, and GUARDNA each have their own page	
	Produce more blog, posts, especially about flagship projects (e.g., MINTAG), their development, and results	Ongoing. News on new hires, flagship project updates, NAMMCO Scientific Publications, SC member publications, and new reports posted on the website; shared on social media with links to the site	
Social media			
Facebook (2015- present)	Regularise posting of NAMMCO-specific updates and project news (establish a suitable rhythm)	Ongoing. At least one or two posts per week on the NAMMCO Facebook page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular information flow to the NAMMCO community • Connection with those beyond the current community • Enhanced traffic to the website
	Continue FFF (Fun Fact Friday) practice	Ongoing, with higher activity during flag project field work	
Twitter (2018-2022)	Increase the practice with reference to the CP flag projects.	Discontinued but started LinkedIn in 2022 instead of.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more visible in Twitter community and increase number of followers
Instagram (2022-present)	Develop the use of Instagram	Ongoing. Instagram posting integrated into regular workflow, with higher activity during flag project field work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching out more widely the younger public
Other initiatives			
Leaflets	Produce 1-2 leaflets on the CP flag projects	Discontinued. Not needed due to low interest in printed materials. Information on flag projects made more visible on website and included in GUARDNA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand-outs available. for contacts made during events • Educational resource that can be shared with others
One-page summary	One-page summary/FB post for all meetings within 48 hrs of end	Discontinued. Meetings are now announced on SoMe, with picture etc and meeting reports announced on the website and shared on social media	
Fieldwork plans	Fieldwork plans delivered in May by NAMMCO scientific community	Discontinued for non-NAMMCO project (projects not directly coordinated through NAMMCO because of lack of input from relevant scientists). Ongoing for NAMMCO-related fieldwork (NASS, MINTAG), which are announced on the digital platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased internal information • Provide material for nammco.org and SoMe
Field work & project results	Blogs, results, publications provided asap	Ongoing for flagship projects	

High profile events	Attend high profile events & present NAMMCO and its work	Partially completed. Attendance to only a few major events, HoDs policy having been to reduce travelling. The Secretariat (GS) visited Japan (FAJ and MOFA), & attended ASCOBANS MoP and AC, and FAO WS, where it presented NAMMCO. It organised the Marine Mammal Welfare Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread the message • Increasing the visibility of NAMMCO and its credibility
	Give presentations or manning a booth, illustrating the progress in the three flag projects	See above. However, roll-ups updated in 2025 and used at in-person events.	
Implementation review	Review the implementation at the end of 2023 and tuned for 2024	Not done due to staff changes. Implementation review done at the end of 2025 with tuning for next CP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuning of effort to obtain a better adequation between results and goals

2.3 CONCLUSION

Although all CP3 actions have not been implemented, and some where discontinued (see above three examples), CP3 has been well followed and has reached the target group chosen.

The development of the GUARDNA project responded directly to actions 5 and 6. It also contributed to the visibility of NAMMCO in areas where NAMMCO was not known, i.e. all the educational sectors. The visibility in these sectors will increase when the educational portal becomes freely available to the educational sectors and the wider public.

3 COMMUNICATION PLAN 2026-2027 – CP4

3.1 CP4 OBJECTIVES AND FOCUS

The planned communication actions support several overarching strategic objectives. NAMMCO aims to strengthen its visibility, credibility, and transparency by improving its digital platforms, producing more targeted, accessible and engaging content, and ensuring information is well-structured and regularly updated. **The specific CP4 objectives is to continue to reach to younger audiences, including kids and students (through GUARDNA as a follow up of CP3), as well as early-career professionals, engage with resource users and hunters, and broaden outreach of NSP beyond NAMMCO related scientists and existing scientific network.** CP4 strategy also seeks to enhance understanding of NAMMCO’s perspectives on sustainable marine mammal management and global conservation discussions. Additionally, initiatives such as training videos, lectures, and the annual Student Symposium contribute to knowledge transfer and capacity-building. Strengthened communication channels with users and Observation Activities observers further support collaboration, trust, and stakeholder involvement.

The actions outlined in CP4 identify several priority audiences beyond the “traditional” NAMMCO audience. Building up on CP3’s work, CP4 central audience include the younger audiences such as school pupils, university students, and early-career professionals, as well as marine-mammal users, including hunters and coastal communities.

As part of its effort to broaden NAMMCO’s reach and credibility, CP4 also aims to expand NAMMCO’s visibility within the wider scientific community and increase its relevance beyond its current scientific network, through a higher dissemination effort of the NAMMCO Scientific Publications. Different media platforms and initiatives target specific audience segments—for example, younger demographics on Instagram and professional communities on LinkedIn or at high-profile events—and the strategy tailors its approaches accordingly.

Table 2 summarises CP4 specific objectives and focus groups.

Table 2. CP4 Specific objectives and focus group

<p><i>Specific objectives</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with resource users and hunters • Broaden NSP outreach beyond NAMMCO existing scientific network • Continue to reach to younger audiences, including kids and students • Reach early-career professionals <p><i>External target audience in focus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth, children and educators, member countries' educational networks • Users and hunters • Marine mammal scientists • Institutional partners <p><i>Internal target audience in focus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observer corps • NAMMCO community

3.2 CORE MESSAGES

Across all channels and activities, NAMMCO continues to communicate a set of core messages:

- **NAMMCO promotes science-based, sustainable management of marine mammals**, grounded in an ecosystem-oriented approach and adapted to the North Atlantic context.
- **Scientific knowledge, together with local and traditional knowledge, are central to NAMMCO's work**, informing decisions and ensuring relevance for communities and ecosystems.
- **Decisions are transparent and collaborative**, reflecting NAMMCO's regional cooperation model.
- **NAMMCO provides a credible, evidence-based alternative to anti-marine-mammal-use narratives** in global marine mammal debates by communicating its perspectives clearly and consistently.
- **NAMMCO supports responsible hunting practices**, including supporting training and close communication with users.
- **NAMMCO recognises the importance of younger generations and early-career professionals** in shaping the future of marine mammal conservation and invests in their development.

3.3 PROPOSED ACTIONS

CP4 uses a combination of digital platforms, content improvement and production, engagement activities with different stakeholders. The implementation review planned for late 2027 ensures the CPs remains align with the COS goals and are responsive to outcomes.

CP4 builds on the work carried out under CP3 (e.g., outreach on MINTAG and NASS, GUARDNA development) and introduces new actions (e.g., efforts to spread the reach of NSP), as well as actions previously undertaken by various NAMMCO bodies that not only fulfil their primary purpose but also contribute to disseminating NAMMCO's vision more broadly (e.g., hunting training videos). Focus of CP4 (2026–2027) and actions proposed, along with the responsible bodies and the expected outcomes, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Actions proposed for CP4 (2026–2027), together with the resources or bodies required and the intended results of each action. Actions shown in italics are those proposed under CP3 that are recommended to continue.

Media	Description	Resources	Intended results
NAMMCO website (nammco.org)	<i>Review and update all information every year</i>	CHM, CIO, CNL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce nammco.org as NAMMCO’s central outreach hub • Provide accessible information to the wider public, enhancing credibility and understanding • Increased website traffic through sharing news and blog posts across networks • Broader visibility of NAMMCO’s perspectives on global conservation issues • Improved clarity and transparency in NAMMCO’s document archiving and organisation
	<i>Increase effort on SEO</i>	SC, Sec	
	<i>Update specific flag projects’ sites</i>	Sec	
	<i>Produce more blog posts, especially about flagship projects (e.g., MINTAG), their development, and results</i>	Sec, Cons	
	<i>Reorganisation of document library</i>	Sec	
Social media	Strengthen brand identity and consistency across all platforms	Sec, Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more recognisable NAMMCO brand and increased social media engagement
	Expand NAMMCO’s reach beyond its current audience (primarily marine mammal scientists)	Sec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased organisational reach • Wider recognition of NAMMCO’s perspectives on global conservation issues
Facebook	<i>Regularise posting of NAMMCO-specific updates and project news (establish a suitable rhythm)</i>	Sec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consistent information flow to the NAMMCO community • Engagement with audiences beyond the current community • Increased engagement and visibility among the general public
	<i>Continue FFF (Fun Fact Friday) practice</i>	Sec	
	<i>Develop a Facebook posting plan</i>	Sec	
Instagram	Develop an Instagram posting plan (posts and stories)	Sec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consistent information flow to the NAMMCO community • Enhanced reach among younger audiences • Increased engagement and visibility among the general public
LinkedIn	Develop a LinkedIn posting plan	Sec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consistent information flow to the NAMMCO community • Increased engagement and visibility, particularly within professional communities
	Regularise posting of NAMMCO-specific updates and project news	Sec	
Educational initiatives, training and science dissemination			
GUARDNA	Finalise the website and update content as needed	Sec, Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended reach, especially to younger audiences and early career professionals • Strengthened marine conservation stewardship • Wider recognition of NAMMCO’s perspectives on global conservation issues • Opportunities for interns to develop transferable and leadership skills
	Promote GUARDNA in target countries	Sec, Partn	
	Develop a continuation plan beyond project funding (mid-2028)	Sec, Partn	
Lectures	<i>Continue giving lectures at schools, universities, institutional partners, other fora</i>	Sec	
Hunting training videos	Use the training videos as a tool to communicate with hunters	Sec, CHM, Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and knowledge transmission on hunting activities • Make hunting and killing safer for hunters and minimise animal suffering
Student Symposium (StS)	<i>Continue organising the Marine Mammal Student Symposium, where NAMMCO as an organisation is presented</i>	Sec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand NAMMCO’s reach and visibility at the university level among early-career professionals, including natural scientists and legal scholars • Strengthen leadership and transferable skills for NAMMCO interns
NAMMCO Scientific Publications (NSP)	Continue supporting NSP’s work	Sec, SC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support marine mammal science in the North Atlantic • Increase the reach and impact of the journal beyond its current network
	Increase promotion through relevant networks		

Other initiatives			
High profile events	<i>Attend high profile events</i>	Sec, CNL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden awareness of NAMMCO's mission • Increase visibility and organisational credibility
	<i>Give presentations or manning a booth, illustrating the progress in the three flag projects</i>	Sec	
Bi-annual newsletter	Launch a bi-annual newsletter summarising past activities and upcoming plans	Sec	
Communication with users	Strengthen communication channels with users	Sec, CHM, CIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build trust and understanding of NAMMCO • Gather insights from marine mammal users
Communication with observers	Maintain the connection with observers through the NAMMCO Observer Corps Annual Meetings	Sec, CIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen collaboration with observers
Implementation review	Review the implementation of CP4 at the end of 2027 and prepare an update of the COS to be presented to NAMMCO 35	Sec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust efforts to ensure better alignment between goals and results

CNL=Council, CHM=Committee on Hunting Methods, CIO=Committee of Inspection and Observation, Cons=External consultants (will require funding), Partn=Partners, Sec=Secretariat, SC=Scientific Committee