

NAMMCO Council March 24. – 26. Opening statement NORWAY March 24

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends of NAMMCO.

Thank you to the Greenlandic authorities for inviting us to Nuuk. No need to say how exotic and interesting it is to be visiting. Greenland was on every news channel earlier this year, and still is, and we all know why.

Let us hope this gathering today and the next two days would not reach the news in the same extent, although what we are going to discuss should ideally spark a lot more than just a general interest.

The well being of the oceans and the animals that are depending upon healthy oceans have gained far more attention the last couple of years. The public opinion has finally understood that a precondition for being able to thrive on this planet is healthy and productive oceans. This is indeed emphasized through United Nations Sustainable Goal nr 2 , to get rid of hunger, and number 14; a sustainable use of the oceans. The population on earth would likely increase to 10 billion in 2050, and they would all depend upon a steady access to proteins. And we know already that this increasing need of proteins could not be met by an increased production of pork, beef or poultry. It must origin from the oceans.

NAMMCO members have known this for centuries. We have always been dependent upon the oceans as a reliable source for access to food, but also for leisure and recreation.

The Scientific Committee (SC) and its work is the core of the work of NAMMCO. Over the years the SC has provided NAMMCO with data essential to understand what is going on in the North-Atlantic. Norway very much want it to continue this way. But action must follow nice words. All member countries must join forces to make sure that the SC is provided with the operational instruments needed to be able to continue the good work. If we reduce the expectations we have regarding the quality of the work of the SC, I am afraid this will have a negative impact of the work of the various working groups under the NAMMCO umbrella. And if we end up in such a situation we will also run the risk of reducing the importance and visibility of NAMMCO. So we have a shared responsibility to avoid that to happen. I therefore urge my fellow colleagues to make sure to generate the resources needed for the SC to be able to keep up the good work.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us use the next couple of days to have a profound and vivid discussion about the well being of NAMMCO, where we are and where we are going.

I wish all participants a succesful meeting.

Thank you.