



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**North Atlantic whaling and sealing in 2010 and beyond**

The North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission held its 19th annual meeting from 31 August to 2 September 2010, in Tórshavn, Faroe Islands. The member countries of NAMMCO, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway again confirmed their commitment to ensuring the sustainable utilisation of marine mammals through active regional cooperation and science-based management decisions.

In his opening address to the meeting, the Faroese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Jørgen Niclasen, stressed the vital importance of marine mammals as renewable resources for economies and cultures across the region. Mr Niclasen noted that it is the regional basis of cooperation through NAMMCO that makes it a more effective organisation. Fisheries and hunting nations in the North Atlantic share many of the same practical experiences and challenges and agree on the fundamental principles underlying cooperation on conservation and management of whales and seals.

The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Japan and the Russian Federation are represented by observers at meetings of NAMMCO.

Key events and conclusions from the meeting included the following:

**Canadian sealing in focus**

Mr Denis Longuépée, a professional sealer from the Magdalen Islands in Canada, was the guest speaker at the opening of the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the NAMMCO Council. His illustrated account highlighted the importance of the traditional seal hunt in the Magdalen Islands, Quebec, the growing abundance of seal stocks in the region, problems arising from the EU seal import ban, as well as the economic prospects for the development of new seal products and new markets.

**Status of whale stocks**

Stock assessments based on the final outcome of estimates from the Trans North Atlantic cetacean sightings surveys (T-NASS) in 2007 are now available for fin, minke and humpback whales. Management procedures applied have been derived from those already developed in the IWC using the Revised Management Procedure (RMP) approach with accepted tuning levels.

A priority task for the NAMMCO Scientific Committee in coming months will be the finalisation of an updated abundance estimate for pilot whales in the North Atlantic.

Planning of the next regular NASS survey at some time between 2013 and 2015 will now get underway.

### **Ecosystem Management and Modelling**

NAMMCO, through its Scientific Committee, is now committed to an extensive and unique modelling programme that will involve experts from countries both within and outside NAMMCO and included Canada, Japan, Russia and South Africa. This ambitious ecosystem modelling programme is likely to become a major step forward in this field on a global scale. It will run over 2-3 years to progress work towards achieving NAMMCO's commitment to using ecosystem-based management of marine resources in the North Atlantic region. Four different models will be applied in two geographical regions: the Barents Sea and the waters around Iceland.

### **Expert Review of Whale Killing Data**

The Committee on Hunting Methods convened an expert working group in early 2010 to undertake a review and evaluate the large whale killing data from member countries and Japan, as well as examine data and information on recent and ongoing research on improvements and technical innovations in hunting methods and gears used for the hunting of large whales in NAMMCO countries. The expert working group made a number of recommendations. The report is available on the website [www.nammco.no](http://www.nammco.no)

A similar expert working group will also be planned in the near future to examine in more detail data on killing methods used in catches of small whales.

### **Humpback Quotas for Greenland**

Greenland informed the Council that it has resumed humpback whaling in West Greenland with a quota of 9 humpback whales allocated by the IWC, including "struck and lost" and a carry-over system. So far this year, one humpback whale has already been taken.

Based on the most recent advice from the NAMMCO Scientific Committee, the Management Committee on Cetaceans concluded that a total removal of up to 20 humpback whales per year from 2010 to 2015 would be sustainable.

### **North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission**

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