

SEAFO – 7th Annual Meeting of the Commission

Agenda Item 17 Reports of SEAFO Representatives at 2009/2010 meetings of other International Organizations;

NAMMCO (2010) - Norway (Mr Odd Gunnar Skagestad):

Report from NAMMCO 19

The undersigned attended the 19th Meeting of the Council of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), which was held at Torshavn, the Faroe Islands, 31 August – 2 September 2010.

During their discussions at the NAMMCO Council Meeting, the Parties (Members and Observers) noted the usefulness and desirability of extending the cooperation with other International Organizations, including RFMOs attending and reporting from their respective activities. There was, in particular, agreement to invite SEAFO to participate, on a mutual basis, in such attendance and reporting as already takes place between NAMMCO and a number of Intergovernmental Organizations (IWC, NAFO and NEAFC).

It was furthermore agreed to entrust Norway (in the person of the undersigned) with the task of reporting – in the presumed capacity of a SEAFO Representative - from the NAMMCO Council Meeting to this 7th Annual Commission Meeting of SEAFO, providing of course that the SEAFO Commission Meeting would welcome such a procedure as appropriate.

At the 19th Council Meeting, the Member Countries of NAMMCO reconfirmed their commitment to the general principles of conservation, responsible management and sustainable use of renewable natural resources, including international cooperation on ensuring the sustainable utilization of marine mammals through active regional cooperation and science-based management decisions.

In his opening address to the meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Faroe Islands, Mr Jørgen Niclasen, highlighted the vital importance of marine mammals as renewable resources for economies and cultures across the North Atlantic region, noting that it is the regional basis for cooperation through NAMMCO that makes it a more effective organization. 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.

Among events and conclusions from the meeting, special note should be taken of the ongoing work concerning 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 includes 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.

In a Joint Statement by Member Countries and Observers, NAMMCO expressed its position on the ban on the import of seal products into the European Union, noting that this ban raises serious concerns for the future of international cooperation on responsible management and the sustainable use of renewable natural resources in general. .

In submitting this Report, I would like the SEAFO Commission Meeting to be informed that NAMMCO was established in 1992 as a regional management organization with four regular Member Parties, viz. the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway, with Canada, Denmark, Japan and Russia having Observer status. Intergovernmental organizations with Observer status include the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC).

For the convenience of fellow Delegations, I am attaching the text of the NAMMCO Agreement to the electronic version of this Report.

Windhoek (Namibia), 12 October 2010.

Odd Gunnar Skagestad.