



FISKERI- OG KYSTDEPARTEMENTET

Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs

**The Hunt in Norway:
Management objectives, regulations and organisation**

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The seal hunt in Norway: Management objectives

- Norway's marine mammal policy follows the principle of conservation and sustainable use based on scientific advice
- The main objective of the Norwegian sealing policy is to make possible a profitable development of the sealing industry
- Today, the most important management objective is to help the industry live through the current problems

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- Establish a scientific basis for the transition to the ecosystem approach to management; in this connection, the size of marine mammal populations must be evaluated in relation to management of other living marine resources
- Review the determination of critical reference points and precautionary reference points for viable stocks of seal and whale species whose natural distribution range includes Norwegian waters

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- Increase the catch quotas for the harp seal stocks substantially from the current levels to reduce these stocks to levels that will give the maximum long-term harvest of seals. Harp seals in the East Ice must be managed in cooperation with Russia
- Implement measures to improve knowledge of the stock size and population biology of hooded seals

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- Review methodological improvements of the monitoring system for coastal seal species
- Regulate population growth in coastal seals to reduce damage to the fisheries, etc., and at the same time maintain viable stocks on the basis of scientific advice
- Permit foreign nationals to take part in hunting for coastal seals provided that they do so under expert guidance

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- Reorganise support for sealing to increase profitability; this will mean a greater emphasis on product development, processing and marketing. Business profitability is an essential basis for a lasting rise in the numbers of seals harvested.
- Encourage sealers to establish joint projects with Russian companies to increase seal catches in the East Ice. Norway runs a business development fund and an investment fund for North Western Russia, and these can provide funding for such projects
- Assess the need for mobile slaughtering units for seals

The seal hunt in Norway: Regulations

- Sealing in Norway is subject to strict and detailed regulations concerning all aspects of the sealing activities:
- Participation
- Hunting seasons
- Quotas
- Methods of slaughtering
- Instructions and training of seal hunters and their supervisors, and
- Approval of vessels

The seal hunt in Norway: Organisation

- The Government attaches great importance to the **education and training** of sealers, inspectors and observers
- A **supervision and control regime** is run by the Directorate of Fisheries who employs inspectors to be present on board every sealing vessel during the entire season
- If minor deviations from hunting regulations are observed, the inspector shall ask the captain of the vessel to correct it
- If a more serious matter arises or deviations are repeated, the inspector shall communicate directly with the Directorate of Fisheries on how to handle it.

Conclusions

- Whaling and sealing a natural part of Norwegian harvesting of marine living resources
- It is important to accept that it will take time to normalize this policy
- We can only hope that the sealing industry will survive the period it will take to normalize it.
- In the long term perspective, the most important aim is to manage the resources in a way that will give the users sustainable and stable harvesting conditions
- In the shorter perspective the main challenge is to find ways to support the sealing industry, which makes it possible for it to come out of the current traumatic situation strong and vigorous