

Status for Greenland Action Plan on Whale Hunting Methods, 2004

(Submitted by the Greenland Home Rule Government)

Implementation of the Greenland Action Plan on Whale Hunting Methods was described in IWC/46/AS3. Recent development in Greenlandic Whaling was furthermore presented in IWC/49/AS3, IWC/51/WK6, IWC/51/WK7, IWC/51/WK8 and IWC/56/8.

With reference to the 10 point Revised Action Plan recommended from the workshop on Whale Killing Methods, 1995, the status for the Greenland Action Plan on Whale Hunting Methods in 2003 is summarized as follows.

Re. Rev. Action Plan point 2: Continue improving accuracy of delivery of penthrite grenade harpoons, including assessment of refined sighting equipment suitable for rapid action under conditions encountered at sea. Support and encourage the development and implementation of programmes to provide training in the safe handling and effective use of killing devices including the penthrite grenade and in other aspects of the hunt.

In close co-operation with the Greenlandic Trade Company (Pilersuisoq A/S) detonating penthrite grenades are distributed according to the issued licenses on 14 places for sale throughout the whaling season. In the period 1991 - 1994, 147 persons (fishermen and hunters, distributors and shipyard workers) have obtained the course in safe handling and firing of the detonating grenade and other hunting equipment. Further 48 persons finished the course in 1999.

The overhaul programme for the harpoon cannons was successfully concluded in 1998. **In 2004 there were 73 harpoon cannons on the West coast of Greenland authorized to apply for a license to go whaling.** The harpoon cannons are inspected every 2 years - reducing the risks for the hunters to a minimum and maximizing the efficiency when killing whales.

From March to September 2000, 9 courses were held in Greenland on the handling and instruction in the use of the new Norwegian whale grenade-99. All persons who completed a course on the 1985-whale grenade proto type and newcomers were offered to attend the course that included information on how to keep the harpoon cannons in good shape. The course also included items mentioned in the Action Plan point 2, 3, 4 and 8.

From April to August 2003 an additional 9 courses on the handling and instruction of the use of the Norwegian penthrite grenade (Whale Grenate-99) were held for about 75 whalers. The course also included items mentioned in the Action Plan point 2, 3, 4 and 8. **From July to September 2004 an additional 2 courses were held for 30 whalers.**

Re. Rev. Action Plan point 3: Continue to review constraints on shooting distance and relative orientation of vessel and whale and encourage reducing times to death.

Shooting distances and shooting angle are dealt with in the course in safe handling and firing of the detonating grenade. Furthermore, maintenance of the harpoon cannons is reviewed.

Re. Rev. Action Plan point 4: Continue to review the effectiveness of secondary killing methods with a view to reducing time to death in whales and encourage the application of the most effective methods.

In fin whaling the secondary killing methods is - like the first - the penthrite grenade, while in the hunt for minke whales a minimum of a 30.06 cal. (7,62 mm) rifle has proven sufficient. Some hunters use cal. .375 or cal. .458 as well.

Re. Rev. Action Plan point 8: Encourage the collection and presentation of struck and lost rates and standardized time to death records in aboriginal subsistence catches of whales and undertake the assessment of requirements for controls on the use of rifles to kill unsecured whales.

In 1992, the Greenland Home Rule Government introduced the time to death in the self-reporting system for catch reports in the hunt for fin and minke whales. The regulations and catch report system are also reviewed in the course on the handling of the penthrite grenade.

Re. Rev. Action Plan point 9; Encourage the incorporation of data collection and reduction of struck and lost rates in the initiatives in Greenland relating to the beluga and narwhal hunts.

The Greenland Home Rule Government and Denmark do not recognise IWC competence on small cetacean issues, and consequently Greenland will not provide any information as to point 9.