



NORDIC MARINE THINK TANK

Report of the

Eighth Ordinary General Assembly of the Nordic Marine Think Tank

Tuesday 20 October 2020, 13.00 – 15.00 hours, Axelborg, Copenhagen

Agenda for the General Assembly

- 1) Election of moderator and rapporteur**
 - 2) Adoption of the agenda and possible mandates**
 - 3) The annual report from the Chair**
 - 4) Presentation of annual accounts for adoption**
 - 5) Presentation of the Board's work plan concerning activities planned for the upcoming year**
 - 6) Presentation of the Board's proposed budget for the coming financial year, including the level of the membership fees, for adoption**
 - 7) Proposals submitted**
 - 8) Election of the Board and Auditor**
 - 9) Any other business**
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1. **Election of moderator and rapporteur**

The NMTT Chair welcomed the participants to the eighth ordinary General Assembly. Odma Johannesen was elected as Moderator for the meeting and Victor Hjort as rapporteur.

The moderator informed the participants that after the conclusion of the GA, all participants were invited to participate in the following activities:

- findings of the NMTT project “Payment Systems in Nordic Fisheries” and
- proposal to establish a Nordic Climate Change Forum for Fisheries and Aquaculture.

2. **Adoption of the agenda and possible mandates**

The Moderator confirmed that the agenda for the meeting had been distributed within the prescribed deadline and that one proxy had been received giving voting rights to one of the participating members. She ascertained that the meeting had the necessary quorum.

The agenda was adopted.

(15 people were “present”: 12 members and 2 non-members took part online + 1 member by proxy. 4 of the participants shared a connection in a meeting room in Axelborg, Copenhagen).

The moderator informed that according to point 5.2 of the NMTT statutes, electronic participation counts as physical presence.

3. **The annual report from the Chair**

The NMTT Chair presented the annual report.

After last year’s GA the board constituted itself. Carl-Christian was elected chair of the Board and Dorothy vice chair. Victor Hjort announced that he after many years was not prepared to continue as the NMTT Secretary, so Lars and Odma were elected to the Secretariat. The GA thanked Victor for his many years of work and for his help today.

The Board meetings in May and in August were virtual meetings, where the impacts of NMTT activities were discussed in the light of the Coronavirus.

NEW NMTT Statutes

Last year the 8th October 2019 the GA agreed on the new Statutes. And in January 2020 all members of the Board had signed.

Danish Tax

The NMTT had some problems with the Danish Tax Authorities. They claimed that the NMTT was a commercial company. We spent time and money on the issue. To remove any doubt the NMTT decided to modernize its statutes. In the beginning of this year we finally had the approval from The Danish Tax office: NMTT is a voluntary organisation working for the public benefit and it will not have to pay tax provided it has no commercial income.

Also the NMTT is legally registered in Denmark and meets all legal demands towards the bank.

NMTT membership fee

The Board has discussed the high costs for moving the membership fees from one country to another. To save on the NMTT costs we recommend that NMTT members pay their membership fees for 2 or 3 years at a time. If the NMTT members have any other idea how to deal with this issue we would like to hear from you and you can e-mail your suggestions to the Secretariat.

Protection of personal data

According to the EU regulation¹ the NMTT must respect the rules on registration and protection of personal data. That covers NMTT members' data as well as data from any other physical person. We will inform on this on the NMTT homepage. In general the NMTT Secretariat only has the members' names and their e-mail addresses.

NMTT Newsletter

We distributed our first NMTT Newsletter in June 2020. We would like to have your comments. Should we have a newsletter or not – why and why not, what kind of news would you prefer?

We think that the newsletter should not be a regular one. We should make a newsletter when we have the news. Members' suggestions may be e-mailed to the NMTT Secretariat.

Ecosystem Based Fmsy Values in Fisheries Management

This project is the largest project yet managed by NMTT and partially funded by the EU and Nordic Council of Ministers, with Henrik Sparholt as Project Leader. A presentation of the project was planned in the Faroe Islands but had to be cancelled as a consequence of the COVID-19.

Results from the project have just been published in the ICES Journal of Marine Science, see link: <https://academic.oup.com/icesjms/advance-article->

¹ In 2016 the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopted regulation (EU) 2016/679 of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. The regulation came into force on May 25, 2018.

[abstract/doi/10.1093/icesjms/fsaa175/5923788?redirectedFrom=fulltext](https://doi.org/10.1093/icesjms/fsaa175/5923788?redirectedFrom=fulltext)

The Artic Ocean

There are many on-going processes on climate changes: The 2nd UN Ocean Decade and Climate Forum and The United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, our vice-chair Dorothy is involved in current processes in the Artic Ocean.

Many interests are involved in the Arctic Ocean. China is interested in the new shorter and cheaper transport routes caused by the melting ice in the Arctic Ocean. Local communities have their livelihood in the areas with changing condition.

These people have a knowledge of the development on climate changes. One important issue to consider is how to involve nations and generations in the uncertainty of the future and how should the dialogue be analyzed and organized.

It is a huge process to develop science and understand the ocean according to our needs in the future. Social scientists, stakeholders including indigenous people, local industry, their knowledge and data will be relevant. The role of regional organisations and their capacity will be involved. A good dialogue is important.

The migrating mackerel stocks provide a relevant example of a future scenario for other fish stocks.

NMTT needs to define its own role based on dialogue and information on the structure and institutional set up, including the coordination and the objectives of the work. It should be clarified if countries will deliver their separate input to the process. Based on this context the NMTT could work on its own strategy to find the right time and place for involvement.

Aquaculture

The importance of the aquaculture sector is increasing as a world food supplier. The NMTT has to find its own role and NMTT members could help our aquaculture expert, Jesper, to find a way forward.

Some comments were given to the Chair's report:

- Concerning the project **Ecosystem Based Fmsy Values in Fisheries Management** Sten was disappointed that there was no sign or mention of the task and role of NMTT in this project which is a flagship of NMTT projects.
- Support for the idea of collecting two or three annual payments of the membership fee in order to avoid unnecessary transfer fees.

- Agreement to a NMTT newsletter, not with fixed dates but whenever relevant news items are on the agenda.

The Chair's Annual Report was approved by the assembly.

4. **Presentation of annual accounts for adoption**

Lars presented the accounts for 2019 as approved by the auditor.

The NMTT financial results in 2019 are achieved by ways of project management and members' voluntary contributions.

The deficit from ordinary activities mainly relates to costs for legal advice as well as normal expenditure for hosting the GA.

The Board has recommended that the financial results from finished project be transferred to the NMTT's own assets.

The GA approved:

- the accounts as stated by the auditor
- that the deficit is covered by our net capital and that the result of finished projects is transferred to the net capital as explained in the note.

5. **Presentation of the Board's work plan concerning activities planned for the upcoming year**

The Board discussed in August NMTT's possible future activities including: a. Nordic Climate Change Forum for Fisheries, b. Aquaculture, c. Arctic issues and d. Proposals and inputs from Members including United Nations Decade of Ocean and the role of NMTT. Further information on possible NMTT involvement and other actions will be provided after the GA closure.

6. **Presentation of the Board's proposed budget for the coming financial year, including the level of the membership fees, for adoption**

In August, the Board agreed on a budget for 2020 and on membership payment levels (DKK 100 for regular members and DKK 5.000 for institutional members). We have now updated the accounts till the end of September. Costs are lower than expected due to less costs for travel and physical meetings. There will be some cost in the last quarter of the year. The GA approved: a) the membership fees and b) the proposed budget.

7. **Proposal submitted.**

No proposals were submitted.

8. Election of the Board and auditor

The GA elected

- Bryndís Björnsdóttir (IS)
- Carl-Christian Schmidt (DK)
- Jesper Heldbo (DK)
- Johan Williams (NO).

The GA 2019 elected

- Ásmundur Guðjónsson (FO)
- Dorothy Dankel (NO)
- Odma Johannesen (FO)
- Staffan Waldo (SE).

The NMTT auditor Hans Jørgen Larsen has retired from his function as NMTT auditor.

The Board proposed the GA to elect Birgitte Gawron from Albjerg Revision in Brøndby, Danmark for two years.

Birgitte Grawon works for Albjerg Revision, Brøndby, Denmark and has experience i.a. from auditing the EU funded BSAC (Baltic Sea Advisory Council). The NMTT expenses will be 7.500 DKR + VAT a year for the accounting service.

The GA elected her as the new NMTT accountant.

9. Any other business

No additional points.

The chair thanked the participants for good conduct and declared the meeting closed.

/Victor Hjort/Odma Johannesen/Lars Clink 26 October 2020