

NMTT Newsletter

NORDIC MARINE THINK TANK

◆
08 April 2026



Here's what has happened at the Nordic Marine Think Tank and what's to come!

Before diving into the full stories, here are the two key highlights from this quarter:

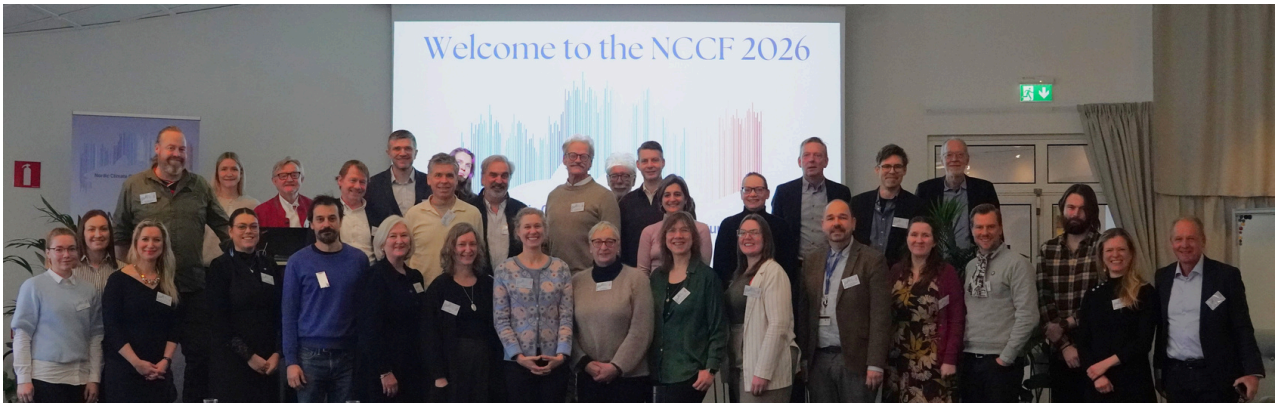
- **NCCF26 successfully hosted in Helsingborg with strong Nordic participation**
- **New project on marine spatial planning funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers**

Welcome to our first Nordic Marine Think Tank newsletter! We are excited to share updates from our work to strengthen the use of Nordic skills and solutions in marine environment and management issues. As an independent, science-based organisation dedicated to improving the marine environment and sustainable development, we support healthy oceans, responsible marine resource use, and evidence-based decision-making across the Nordic region.

Firstly, we would like to express our gratitude to all of our new members, who joined our organisation after the Nordic Climate Change Forum (NCCF). We are always happy to grow our network of Nordic experts in marine and fisheries issues. And don't forget to pay your membership fee, so we can continue our great work.

We are also excited to announce that we successfully hosted the fourth Nordic Climate Change Forum on the 29th of January in Helsingborg, Sweden. The day was filled with meaningful discussions and concrete ideas to strengthen Nordic cooperation to tackle shared challenges. We hope to see you next year to continue the great work.

In this newsletter, you can read more about the key outcomes from NCCF26 and a short insight from the NMTT Chair. We look forward to continuing the dialogue, strengthening collaboration across borders, and working together towards sustainable and resilient marine ecosystems. Especially, within our project on marine spatial planning that has been successfully granted by the Nordic Council of Ministers.



Nordic Climate Change Forum 2026 participants

Nordic Climate Change Forum 2026

The Nordic Climate Change Forum (NCCF26) brought together policymakers, researchers, and industry representatives to explore how climate change, geopolitics, and innovation are shaping the future of Nordic & European fisheries and aquaculture. The forum was organized in **three sessions**:

1. The State of European Fisheries and Seafood markets
2. The Social Acceptability of Aquaculture
3. The State of Nordic Fisheries

Discussions highlighted the urgent need for cross-border collaboration, long-term resource governance, and stronger crisis preparedness, while emphasizing that sustainable seafood systems depend not only on biology but also on markets, social trust, and community acceptance.

Here are some main **take-home messages**:

- Climate impacts are uneven, but deeply interconnected
- Collaboration across borders is no longer optional — it's essential
- Fisheries and aquaculture hold untapped potential as climate solutions
- The North Atlantic remains a living laboratory for innovation and leadership

It was also encouraging to see that the forum led to concrete outcomes. The NCCF26 speakers from Greenland and Iceland inspired new case studies that we included in our application on maritime co-existence to the Nordic Council of Ministers, while also strengthening our shared understanding of Nordic challenges and where cooperation can be further developed.

What do you think the Nordic region needs to discuss more — or differently — when it comes to our shared seas? Let us know on our LinkedIn posts.



NCCF26 speakers from left to right: Katrine Kærgaard, Dorothy Dankel, Macarena Davies, Siri Granum Carson, Cecilia Hammerlund, Holly Perryman, Andre Visser, Unn Laksá and Guus Pastoor



From the Helm: Insights from the Chair Dorothy Dankel

Something shifted in the room in Helsingborg this January. Not loudly — the way these things sometimes do — but in the quality of the questions being asked.

The opening provocation came from our Keynote Speaker, Katrine Kærgaard from Greenland, with the question **“When does the new normal start for Greenland?”** Referring to the emerging diplomatic and geopolitical contest between a united Denmark and Greenland and a Trump-led United States, as well as the climate crisis that is melting sea ice and critical glaciers, creating more storms that affect the locals, who rely on fisheries for self-sufficiency and as Greenland's most important economic driver.

Cecilia Hammarlund's remarks as a supply chain economist mapping Swedish seafood for crisis preparedness was also a wake-up call: Is what we're calling **resilience** actually **“protectionism in disguise”**? It was the kind of question that makes you sit up straighter. Sweden's aquatic self-sufficiency stands at 23%. Swedes eat one portion of seafood per week when the nutritional evidence calls for three. We know what we should do. We're not doing it. That **gap — between knowing and acting** — felt like the quiet theme running through every session.

Jon Páll Hreinsson, mayor from Bolungarvik, the small Icelandic municipality of a thousand people, said something I keep returning to: **“Trust can only be realized through open communication between stakeholders.”** He wasn't speaking in abstractions. He was speaking from forty years of watching aquaculture reshape his community, his fishing grounds, and his neighbors' livelihoods. Speaking up and speaking out about sharing space. Sharing futures. Sharing values.

What I noticed is how often the word legitimacy came up — not as bureaucratic language, but as something **earned** and **lost** and **rebuilt**. Social contracts, we were reminded, don't get signed once. They need to be renegotiated as the world changes. That's not a weakness. That's how living systems work. Also in the Nordics.

The foresight researchers studying fishers of the future offered what felt to me like the most useful compass of the day: **identify the Nordic future we want, then work backwards**. This sounds simple. It isn't. It asks us to get honest about which futures we're unconsciously defending.

As Guus Pastor from Seafood Europe put it: **“Nobody wants mackerel when it's not sustainable.”** And Holly Perryman from DNV: **“Ocean health is ocean wealth.”** These aren't slogans. They're invitations — to close the gap between what we say we value and how we actually show up.

That's the work we strive to achieve in the Nordic Marine Think Tank. A big thank you to all our wonderful speakers and participants at this year's Nordic Climate Change Forum in Helsingborg. Again and again, the NCCF is a welcoming, inquisitive get-together of Nordic leaders who share the same goals: We stand committed to bringing insights together for the three main pillars of sustainability – **economic, social and environmental** – so that our Nordic seas can help us reach our true potential. Thank you for being part of these important conversations.

We are busy collecting ideas for next year's NCCF27, so please feel free to reach out to us with speaker and topic suggestions!



NMTT board from left to right: Johan Williams, Hildur Hauksdóttir, Staffan Waldo, Dorothy Dankel, Jens Henrik Møller, Carl-Christian Schmidt, Sonja Feldthaus, Lars Clink

Looking ahead - Great News!

At the Nordic Marine Think Tank, we are committed to building a lasting network of Nordic experts working on marine and fisheries issues. By strengthening this community, we aim to foster constructive dialogue, share knowledge, and develop sustainable solutions to the challenges facing our region.

Climate change is already transforming the marine environment, affecting regions differently and increasing the need for coordinated responses. Therefore, cross-border collaboration is no longer optional — it is essential.

As a direct outcome of NCCF26, we have taken an important step towards strengthening Nordic collaboration by submitting an application to a project call from the Nordic Council of Ministers. This initiative reflects the forum's role as a platform for building partnerships and confirms the importance of the NCCF in fostering meaningful Nordic cooperation.

We are therefore delighted to share that our proposal has been granted funding. This initiative will tackle growing spatial pressures in shared marine areas—where offshore wind, fisheries, and aquaculture increasingly overlap —by fostering sustainable coexistence. Through workshops and case studies in Skagerrak/Kattegat, Iceland, and Greenland, we'll build practical skills, strengthen cross-sector collaboration, and develop transformation pathways aligned with Nordic roadmaps.

Looking ahead, we will continue to promote cooperation, innovation, and knowledge exchange to support resilient marine ecosystems and a sustainable future. If you as member, have any project ideas or would like to participate in a joint project, feel free to reach out to us. Also, make sure to follow us on LinkedIn or check out our website to stay up-to-date.

NORDIC MARINE THINK TANK



<https://www.nmtt.org/>

nmtt.secretariat@gmail.com