



Production of marine plants strengthened

I am a fisherman and a hunter. I come from a settlement in the North where for generations the sound utilization of living resources has been a way of life.

Fishing and hunting is important to our national identity and still today constitute a livelihood for many families, especially in the smaller settlements.

Fishing is also the backbone in Greenland's economy and ensures approximately 90 percent of Greenland's exports.

The Government therefore sees it as its main task to protect the fishing industry, including participation in the development of initiatives that support the industry and allows for dynamic sustainable development.

Arctic waters are filled with some of the most delicious seafood in the world, the quality is high and the products are in demand on the world market. The fish industry in Greenland is depending on consumers around the world buying our products. Therefore, we must constantly bear in mind what consumers demand.

In recent years much has happened within what supermarket chains require of our products on behalf of consumers. Today consumers also demand that the living resources are managed in a proper way. The terms and conditions for fishing are no longer local - they are global.

Therefore, I am very pleased that we have managed to obtain MSC certification on our prawn fishery and our lumpfish fishery.

The higher market prices on certified products have saved the economy of the fisheries in times of either declining stocks or low market demand on uncertified products. This is necessary to note. Seafood certification is an important development and we continue the work, also with other species.

Another topic for improvement is to develop even greater processing and upgrading of products. We must support national innovation initiatives for dynamic development in the industry towards better use of marine resources.

To promote a sustainable development of the value chain we must seek to support initiatives towards better utilization of our seafood. Ensuring that our biological resources are used as sustainably as possible while – and very importantly – generating employment opportunities, has high priority for me.

A dynamic blue economy also means adapting the fishery to the potential which is brought along with the presence of new species as pelagic fish stocks.

I believe that development and opportunities in the fishing industry in the Arctic region rely on robust fish stocks and investments in innovation and technology to improve the yield and enhance the quality of the products.

By combining a strong fishing industry with research, development and innovation in biotechnology, I think the economy in the Arctic fisheries industry will benefit.

Trophy hunting on musk ox and caribou and reindeer is a growing business in Greenland. The foreign hunters are guided by local hunters who are authorized trophy hunt organizers. An old trophy bull can increase its economical value by a factor 10 [caribou 20.000 DKK, Musk ox 40.000 DKK].

The foreign hunter take the trophy back home, while the meat and other valuable parts of the animal stay in Greenland.

Trophy hunting could be expanded to other species as is seen in some parts of the Arctic. This could give greater income for smaller, remote communities which struggle with unemployment and less income for the traditional hunter. But export trade regulations as CITES and the political as well as the civil society awareness makes it difficult to develop the business in this direction.

International export of meat products from land mammals has to come from one of 3 export approved abattoirs [Neqi in Narsaq, Lilleholm in Kangerlussuaq for musk ox and Isortoq Reindeer Station].

If it is desired to promote the export of special Greenlandic meat and meat products to the EU, the purchasing and processing need to take place at approved and EU-authorized companies. The Government already contributes in meat inspection for both the national and the international market as well prepares and holds courses for hunters, making them eligible for selling their hunt to the export licensed abattoirs. It is a goal to have more hunters educated in the future and a greater share of the hunted game channeled through approved companies to achieve export status.

A significantly underutilized marine resource in the North Atlantic I would like to address is marine mammals.

Marine mammals are an important resource, which has great significance for the Arctic coastal communities. The importance of maintaining a balance between conservation and utilization of marine mammals is very

high, both at the political level and for the general population.

There is extensive evidence that Inuit communities have been stigmatized and negatively affected by former and current political campaigns, including campaigns against the utilization of marine mammals.

I feel a strong concern about some parties' perception that commercial exploitation and marketing of f.ex. seal products as something that automatically is negative and should be banned without consideration of the sustainability in the use of resources.

It is extremely difficult to understand the attitude that discarding a resource is preferable to using it. It is especially hard to understand in a political period with a focus on bio-economy, and in particular blue bio-economy.

Lastly I would like to mention seaweed, a neglected resource with regards to export. Currently private local initiatives are strengthening their human resource capacity, as well as the needed infrastructure and facilities, for the sustainable harvest and the following treatment of the seaweed on a larger scale.

These developments are being undertaken in collaboration with relevant departments of the government, so that neither food security nor biological sustainability, is being compromised.

It is a business which is currently in an emerging stage, but there could be potential for providing additional sources of income, in especially remote regions of the country.

With these words I wish to give the floor to our invited panel speakers. I look forward to hearing their points of view.

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