

UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
LIMITED

A/CONF.10/L.31/Corr.1  
17 June 1955

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

1955

Item 12 (b) of the agenda

INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION  
OF THE LIVING RESOURCES OF THE SEA

International conservation problems requiring solution .....

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVATION OF  
STOCKS OF FISH AND SEA MAMMALS IN ARCTIC WATERS

by

Paul Hansen

1. Delete the first sentence of paragraph 1, and substitute the following:

"For more than 230 years Greenland has been under Danish sovereignty, and during that long space of time it has always been the aim of Denmark to help and protect the native population and to develop all possible industries which can be carried out in that remote part of the world which lies on the boundary of the existence of human beings."

2. Delete the text of paragraph 4, and substitute the following:

"Until the climatic change set in the twenties of this century, seal hunting was the principal industry. With the increasing temperatures of the sea, cod appeared in greater numbers and over larger areas than before, and a very important cod fishery was gradually developed in the southern and middle part of West Greenland. Seal hunting, however, is still of vital importance to the population of North and East Greenland where cod are lacking or occur in a very short season. From the seal the Greenlanders get all they need for existence in the cold Arctic regions. The seal skin is used for clothes and cover for kayaks, umiaks and tents. The blubber is used for heating the houses, and together with the meat, intestines and all other entrails of the seal, it forms almost the only procurable nourishing food."

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3. Delete the text of paragraph 5, and substitute the following:

"Six species of seals occur in Greenland waters. Four species are stationary or only slightly migrating seals, while two species, namely the harp seal (Phoca groenlandica) and the grey seal (Cystophora cristata), are migrating seals which have breeding and moulting places in other regions far away from Greenland and only visit Greenland in periods of feeding migration. The most important seals are the harbour seal (Phoca hispida) and the harp seal, but in some localities the grey seal is of importance. For the polar Esquimaux tribe in Thule districts, the walrus is an extremely important animal."

4. Delete the text of paragraph 10, and substitute the following:

"We are aware that our situation is similar to that of the countries especially interested in the coastal state question. But there is a difference between Greenland and other countries in this matter. Other countries commonly have other resources upon which they have the possibility of building up industries. For instance, they have in many cases been able to carry out fishing, whaling and seal hunting in waters far away from their home countries. This possibility does not exist for the poor Greenlander who hunts seal with very primitive gear and has only had the opportunity of developing a fishery for a period of about twenty-five years. In spite of the fact that the Greenland fishing fleet has grown in extent in recent years, the greater part of the fleet still consists of very small boats with very weak engines. Very few are fitted for operations in off-shore waters. It will take many years until a rather primitive and poor population such as this will be able to exploit distant fishing and hunting grounds."

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