



NAFO

Annual Report 2004



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**Northwest Atlantic
Fisheries Organization
(NAFO)**



NAFO Annual Report

2004

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Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization Annual Report 2004

This Annual Report summarizes and highlights discussions, decisions and events of NAFO during 2004. It does not replace the detailed NAFO meeting reports (*Scientific Council Report* and *Meeting Proceedings of the General Council and Fisheries Commission*) that are accessible on the NAFO Website (www.nafo.int).

Address by the Executive Secretary



For NAFO's silver anniversary 2004, Contracting Parties adopted a number of innovative measures that will improve the protection of fish stocks in the Northwest Atlantic, affirming NAFO as one of the key-players in international fisheries management. After an eventful year and lengthy negotiations Delegates could agree to many "firsts", for example:

- the first NAFO Compliance Report,
- the first management implementation of a NAFO Precautionary Approach,
- the first regional management plan for a skate or shark species

worldwide.

In addition, NAFO strengthened its management role by not only expanding the list of fish stocks under quota regulation but also by adding these species to long-term protection plans comparable to the one developed last year for Greenland halibut. Also, Delegates fortified the role of NAFO inspectors to enhance compliance of member vessels with the NAFO regulations.

Still, in spite of the significant progress NAFO cannot rest on its achievements. Following scientific advice, a complete moratorium has to be maintained for cod, American plaice, witch flounder, capelin and one redfish stock. Also, the state of Greenland halibut, squid, and redfish are of concern. A few species, however, show signs of recovery such as yellowtail flounder and shrimp. NAFO very wisely did not increase TACs at the first signs of growth of these stocks and instead allows them to become stronger before submitting them to added fishing pressure.

NAFO recognizes that its links to the international (global) community are very important and is committed to strengthening its cooperation with other regional fishery bodies as well as with UN organizations. One emerging requirement of international fisheries management is the design and implementation of an ecosystem approach that NAFO will discuss over the next years.

I wish everybody a successful and happy year 2005.

Sincerely,

Dr. Johanne Fischer
NAFO Executive Secretary

General Council

NAFO Silver Anniversary

2004 marked NAFO's 25th anniversary. In his opening speech at General Council Mr. David Bevan from Canada, NAFO's President and Chair of General Council, stated that international fisheries had a long history on the Grand Banks and the Flemish Cap, that it remains part of our fabric and ties NAFO and its fishers historically, economically, socially and culturally.

He pointed to the difficult times that the fishery has encountered during the past 25 years and to the need to invest in improved conservation, a strong science and a focus on stock rebuilding. He also emphasized that the protection of ocean habitat and deep sea biodiversity has become more important than ever in light of biological limits being stressed in the world's ecosystems under an unprecedented combination of human activities and natural changes. While NAFO had made progress in addressing these issues in recent years, NAFO still had to strengthen its management and governance structure to manage the ocean resources in the NAFO Regulatory Area in a sustainable and profitable way. The Chair closed his opening statements by affirming the imperative role that close cooperation and collaboration play in facing the significant challenges.

NAFO celebrated its Silver Anniversary with a traditional Nova Scotia Dinner at Fishermen's Cove accompanied by lovely guitar music by Kevin Perkins. This provided delegates with a much appreciated break from the hard work and negotiations during the Annual Meeting and a good time was had by all. Thanks, Forbes Keating (NAFO Secretariat) for organizing the event which was sponsored by Canada, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), Iceland, Norway, and USA.



Kevin Perkins

Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting

The 26th Annual Meeting took place in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia from 13 to 17 September 2004. 200 delegates from 16 Contracting Parties participated. FAO, NEAFC, and NAMMCO sent observers. A reception was organized by Canada after the first meeting day. Thanks, Canada!

The Annual Meeting 2004 was very successful and good progress was achieved on a number of important issues regarding management (e.g. extending number of regulated fish stocks, implementing the Precautionary Approach, expanding long-term protection plans, first NAFO Compliance Report, etc.).

Changes to NAFO Membership

Starting 2005, the membership of NAFO will change as four Contracting Parties, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, have acceded to the European Union. However, they will remain active participants in NAFO as part of the EU delegation. Therefore, starting 2005, there will be 13 NAFO Contracting Parties: Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Island and Greenland), European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine, and United States of America.

Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD)

Among the highlights were:

As every year, lengthy discussions on budgetary and administrative related matters took place.

- A new Media Policy was adopted.
- A new more transparent system of job classification for the Secretariat including re-structuring of staff tasks and responsibilities was approved.
- General Council endorsed the concept of a Secretariat Staff Association and Staff Representative.
- A budget of Can \$1,524,000 for 2005 was adopted.

Contracting Parties were urged to take immediate action to meet any outstanding financial obligations.

Standing Committee on Fishing Activities of Non-Contracting Parties in the Regulatory Area (STACFAC)

STACFAC first met in June 2004 in Copenhagen, Denmark to discuss a modification of the NAFO Scheme to promote compliance by Non-Contracting Party (NCP) vessels with the Conservation and Enforcement Measures established by NAFO. This discussion was continued in September. The proposed modifications include for example the concept of a NCP IUU vessel list (IUU = illegal, unreported, unregulated) and possible sanctions against IUU vessels. Related topics regarding NAFO Contracting Party vessels were discussed in a joint session (Report) with STACTIC (*Standing Committee on International Control*). These propositions have very complex and sometimes controversial implications and it will require more time and thought to find an acceptable solution for NAFO.

During its September meeting (Report), STACFAC noted its interest in having a compilation of the history of Non-Contracting Party fishing vessels to facilitate future discussions. A diplomatic demarche to Dominica regarding IUU fishing was initiated. In the continuation of its June discussions of a modification of the NAFO NCP Scheme, a joint NAFO/NEAFC scheme was proposed and will be discussed next year.

FIRMS Partnership Arrangement

At the Annual Meeting, General Council, based on a recommendation by Scientific Council, approved of a NAFO partnership arrangement with FIRMS (Fishery Resources Monitoring System). FIRMS is a partnership of international organizations, regional fishery bodies and national scientific institutes to report and share information on status and trends of fishery resources within a formal agreement. This information is published through the *Fisheries Global Information System* (FIGIS), a web-based information management tool operated by FAO. Annex 2 of the Partnership Agreement is different for each FIRMS member and, in the case of

NAFO, was drafted based on previous recommendations from Scientific Council and on discussion during the first meeting of the FIRMS Steering Committee.

NAFO is represented by the Executive Secretary who already participated as an observer at the FIRMS Steering Committee in early 2004. The next FIRMS Steering Committee meeting takes place in February 2005 in conjunction with the CWP (Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics) meetings in Copenhagen.

Future Meetings

Future annual meeting dates have been set as follows:

- 19–23 September 2005
- 18–22 September 2006
- 17–21 September 2007

The next Annual Meeting is hosted by the European Union and will take place in Tallinn, Estonia. The other meetings will take place in the Halifax–Dartmouth area unless an invitation to host is extended by a Contracting Party and accepted by the Organization.

Fisheries Commission

Discussion About a Possible Management of 30 Redfish

In March, a Fisheries Commission Working Group met in St. John's, Canada (Report), to examine management and possible regulation of Div. 30 redfish. The group was chaired by Nadia Bouffard (Canada) and discussed issues related to Total Allowable Catch (TAC), minimum size, effort control and closure/depth restrictions (see report). This matter was resolved at the Annual Meeting when Fisheries Commission decided to start managing 30 redfish and implemented a TAC of 20,000 mt for this stock.

Promoting Compliance by Contracting Parties A Joint Discussion of STACFAC and STACTIC

In June, STACTIC (Standing Committee of International Control) met co-jointly with STACFAC (Standing Committee of Fishing Activities of non-Contracting Parties in the Regulatory Area) in Copenhagen, Denmark (Report). The meeting was co-chaired by Nadia Bouffard (Canada, Vice Chair of STACFAC) and Martin Newman (EU, Chair of STACTIC) and discussed the possibilities of a scheme to promote compliance of NAFO Contracting Parties similar to the one for non-Contracting Parties that STACFAC had discussed the days prior to the joint meeting.

In 2004, much publicity, especially in Atlantic Canada, was given to NAFO compliance matters and some controversy regarding a few cases was experienced within NAFO. The discussion regarding measures to improve compliance is ongoing and particularly sensitive due to the very complex and sometimes controversial implications of the issues involved.

Issues Discussed by the Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)

STACTIC met twice in 2004, first in June in Copenhagen, Denmark (Report) for intersessional discussions and then, as usual, during the An-

nual Meeting in September in Dartmouth, Canada under the chairmanship of Martin Newman (EU). STACTIC recommended a number of measures which were adopted by Fisheries Commission at the Annual Meeting (Report):

- ***NAFO Compliance Report:*** One important item on STACTICs agenda was the elaboration of the first NAFO Compliance Report with the goal to identify areas in which compliance with the NAFO measures can be improved.
- ***Improvements to the NAFO inspection scheme:*** Product labeling and storage plans are now obligatory for all species and vessels. Also, harmonization of NAFO reports with formats already used in the Northeast Atlantic by NEAFC has made great progress. STACTIC recommended amendments to Article 32 of the *NAFO CEM* to clarify that inspectors are entitled to remain on board of fishing vessels in cases where citations for serious infringements have been issued.
- ***Workshop for NAFO inspectors:*** The EU has offered to host a workshop for inspectors to examine procedures and methods for inspections at sea and in port. The goal of this workshop is to increase confidence and to harmonize the approach of inspection authorities of NAFO Contracting Parties.
- ***Detailed observer data for scientific assessments:*** Upon request of Scientific Council and recommendation by STACTIC, Fisheries Commission decided that detailed observer data (catch and effort for each haul, location [longitude and latitude], depth, time of net on bottom, catch composition and discards) be made available to Scientific Council by submitting them in an electronic format to the NAFO Secretariat.

Annual Meeting: Fisheries Commission

The Fisheries Commission, under the chairmanship of Dean Swanson (USA), made a number of guiding decisions regarding the conservation of fish stocks in the Regulatory Area (Report). The negotiations were particularly long and difficult (and included one all-nighter). As a result, on top of

adopting the STACTIC recommendations above the following measures were approved:

- ***NAFO starts implementing the Precautionary Approach:*** NAFO adopted a framework for the Precautionary Approach (PA). As a first step towards its implementation Fisheries Commission requested Scientific Council to provide advice for selected stocks (yellowtail flounder in Division 3LNO and shrimp in Division 3M) in 2005 within the PA framework. The outcomes from the evaluation of these selected stocks will be used to guide Fisheries Commission regarding the most appropriate application of the framework to all NAFO stocks.
- ***Three additional stocks are now under regulation:*** Among the highlights of this Annual Meeting was the inclusion of 3 new stocks to the Quota Table (redfish 3O, white hake 3NO and skates 3LNO). Regarding thorny skate, this is the first time that a Regional Fisheries Organization has regulated the fishery of an elasmobranch species (skates and sharks).
- ***Additional long-term protection plans:*** In line with the new strategy for more efficient protection that was developed last year for the first time for Greenland halibut, TACs for the newly regulated species have been set to a fixed level for the next 3 years. The Greenland halibut rebuilding plan has been reviewed and will be continued, as agreed in 2003, with a decrease in the TAC for 2005.
- ***Quota Table was adjusted to account for the new membership:*** Due to the accession of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland to the European Union the quota table had to be adjusted.

Many fish stocks in the NAFO Regulatory Area are still in poor condition (e.g. Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut, American plaice, witch flounder, shortfin squid), the regulated yellowtail flounder stock is showing signs of continued recovery.

The Fisheries Commission agreed to conservation measures for the following stocks:

- **fishing ban (moratorium)** for the following stocks is continued:
 - cod in Division 3M and Division 3L (that portion within the Regulatory Area) and Divisions 3NO,
 - redfish in Division 3LN, American plaice in Divisions 3M and 3LNO,
 - witch flounder in Divisions 3NO and 3L (that portion within the Regulatory Area); and
 - capelin in Divisions 3NO.
- **TACs and quotas are in place for the following stocks (PA = Precautionary Approach; LPP = Long-term Protection Plan):**
 - shrimp fisheries in Division 3L,
 - yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO (PA),
 - greenland halibut in Divisions 3LMNO (LPP),
 - short-finned squid in Subareas 3 and 4,
 - redfish in Division 3M,
 - redfish in Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K
 - redfish in Division 3O (LPP)
 - white hake in Divisions 3NO (LPP)
 - skates in Divisions 3LNO (LPP).
- **An Effort Allocation Scheme** is continued for shrimp in Division 3M (PA)

The Quota Table for 2005 was adopted. The request for future advice was formulated.

Scientific Council

Scientific Council Highlights

As every year, Scientific Council meetings took place in June (Dartmouth, Canada), in September (Dartmouth, Canada) and in November (Copenhagen, Denmark) chaired by Joanne Morgan (Canada). Highlights from these meetings included:

- the provision of scientific advice on fish stocks in the Convention area,
- the finalization of the Precautionary Approach Framework,
- a Special Session in September 2004 on "*The Ecosystem of Flemish Cap*",
- continuous work of the Working Groups on "*Reproductive Potential*" and "*Harp and Hooded Seals*" (joint ICES–NAFO Working Group),
- work done by Scientific Council's *Standing Committees on Fisheries Science, Fisheries Environment, Publications, and Research Coordination*.

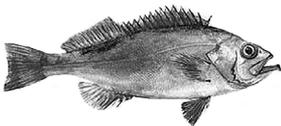
Scientific Council voiced concern regarding the accuracy of catch information available which might contribute to a higher uncertainty of the advice in future years if the situation continues.

Fish Stock Assessments

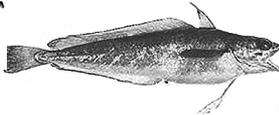
Fish stock assessments conducted by the Standing Committee on Fisheries Science in 2004 took place under the chairmanship of Hilario Murua (EU/Spain). The STACFIS report was based on 4 major geographic regions of the Northwest Atlantic to enable quick comparisons of stocks inhabiting the same or adjacent regions regarding their status, trends of biomass and exploitation. For the first time, environmental reviews for each geographic regions were reported together with the stock assessments.

As a result from the scientific assessments all current moratoria on 9 fish stocks (3L, 3M, 3NO cod, 3LN redfish, 3LNO and 3M American plaice, 3L and 3NO witch flounder and 3NO capelin) will have to be maintained. Among the stocks assessed 3 had been only recently included (3O redfish, 3NO white hake, and 3LNO thorny skate). All the newly assessed stocks are now under quota regulation. While advice for yellowtail flounder increased slightly to 15 000 tons, for Greenland halibut it was noted that the exploitable biomass at present is estimated at its lowest observed level. For the first time, the shrimp stock assessments were done conjointly with the relevant ICES Working Group (WGPAND) which benefits both organizations, especially when some initial problems will be overcome. It is good news to NAFO that the 2004 shrimp assessments concluded that the four shrimp stocks are in good shape.

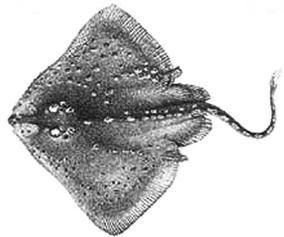
The three recently included species in the NAFO assessments:



Redfish



White hake



Thorny skate

Precautionary Approach Framework

Since 1997 NAFO scientists have worked on the development of a framework for the Precautionary Approach which following a NAFO Resolution from 1999 was to be implemented in NAFO. The framework was in essence finalized in 2003 (*SCS Doc. 03/23*) and described 5 zones (Safe, Overfishing, Cautionary Danger and Collapse Zones) and defined proposed management strategies and courses of action within each zone. This framework and contained revised during the Meeting of SCs Limit Reference Point Study Group (LRPSG) during April in France. At its Annual Meeting in 2004 Fisheries Commission adopted the Precautionary Approach Framework and implemented it as a first step for two stocks (yellowtail flounder in Division 3LNO and shrimp in Division 3M) starting in 2005.

Fisheries Environment

Chaired by Eugene Colbourne (Canada) the Standing Committee on Fisheries Environment (STACFEN) convened in June and, as is tradition for this committee, started their session with an invited presentation by Kenneth Frank (BIO, Dartmouth, Canada) on "*Assessment of the State of a Large Marine Ecosystem – the Eastern Scotian Shelf*". Participants then proceeded to review relevant hydrographic and related information from the Marine Environmental Data Service (MEDS). This was followed by consideration of the physical, biological and chemical environment of the NAFO Convention Area as described in a number of research documents from NAFO scientists. STACFEN also elaborated the NAFO Annual Ocean Climate Status Summary for 2003. In addition, the incorporation of environmental indices into regional fish stock assessments was discussed.

An important role of STACFEN, in addition to providing climate summaries for the NAFO Convention Area, is to determine the response of fish and invertebrate stocks to the changes in the physical and biological oceanographic environment. It is felt that a greater emphasis should be placed on these activities within STACFEN and at the June 2002 Meeting STACFEN had recommended that further studies be conducted attempting to link climate and fisheries and to bring forward such studies for review. In this context, a number of presentations were made in June 2004: a) Report of the Workshop on "Transport of fish larvae between Iceland and Greenland waters – Hydrography and Biology" in Reykjavik, Iceland, 2004; b) "Transport of Juvenile Cod (*Gadus morhua*) and Haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) from Iceland to Greenland – Is there Environmental Forcing?"; c) "Assessing Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Taxa from the CPR Survey in NAFO Subareas 2 and 3 in the Northwest Atlantic" and d) "A Preliminary Investigation of the Effects of Ocean Climate Variations on the Spring Distribution and Abundance of Thorny Skate (*Amblyraja radiata*) in NAFO Divisions 3LNO and Subdivision 3Ps".

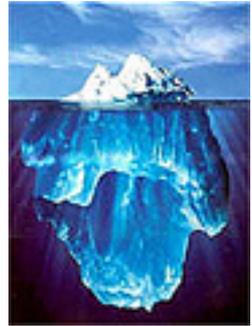
Publications

The Standing Committee on Publications (STAC PUB) met in June and September chaired by Manfred Stein (EU/Germany). Among the most prominent issues discussed was the development of an electronic version of the *Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science* on its own website which went online in September 2004 just after the Annual Meeting.

Research Coordination

The Standing Committee on Research Coordination (STACREC) met under the chairmanship of Antonio Vazquez (EU-Spain). STACREC noted that serious difficulties existed during this June 2004 Meeting with regard to determination of the best estimates of catch for the various species of concern to Scientific Council and Fisheries Commission. Participants reviewed the ongoing and planned NAFO-related research activities by its members (biological sampling and surveys). STACREC also discussed issues related to CWP and FIRMS (see below).

STACREC reiterated its need for access to set-by-set data from the NAFO Observer Program and based on this request Fisheries Commission decided that detailed observer data (catch and effort for each haul, location [longitude and latitude], depth, time of net on bottom, catch composition and discards) be made available to Scientific Council by submitting them in an electronic format to the NAFO Secretariat.



Symposium on the Ecosystem of the Flemish Cap

This Symposium was convened by Joanne Morgan (Canada) and Antonio Vazquez (EU-Spain) and held a week prior to the NAFO Annual Meeting in September at Dartmouth, Canada. The goal of the Symposium was to improve understanding of the ecosystem of the Flemish Cap and its evolution, and it addressed the physical environment, descriptive ecology, the ecosystem in space, trophic ecology and the ecosystem in time. The 3-day symposium was well received by its 45 participants, it proved to be very informative and generated considerable discussion. The proceedings will be published in the NAFO Journal.



Secretariat Activities

Staff Issues



Ricardo Federizon
Fisheries Commission
Coordinator

New NAFO Staff Member: The Secretariat has an additional member since January 2004, Dr. Ricardo Federizon, NAFO's new Fisheries Commission Coordinator and as such responsible for the Secretariat's services to Fisheries Commission. In 2004, Ricardo has developed the information basis for the annual NAFO compliance report. Ricardo is a fisheries scientist with a very diverse background who worked in the Philippines, Indonesia, the USA, Germany, Papua New Guinea, and Canada. He brings to the Secretariat over 15 years of experience in global and regional fishery issues as

well as statistical data analysis acquired during his activities as research scientist, project manager, and university professor.

Staff Committee: For the first time NAFO has a Staff Committee consisting of Fred Kingston (EU), Joanne Morgan (Canada) and Jim Baird (Canada) who were nominated by NAFO staff and appointed by General Council in September 2004. The Staff Committee is mandated to advise and mediate in the rare event that conflicts within the Secretariat cannot be solved internally.

Staff Association: The NAFO Secretariat now also has a Staff Association and Staff Representative whose general mandate is to ensure that staff interests are adequately presented in relevant decision-making processes. In November 2004 the Staff Association elected Tissa Amaratunga with the mandate to represent NAFO staff for the review of the NAFO staff rules.

NAFO Website

This year the focus was on the NAFO member pages and the development of a new site for the electronic version of the *Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science*.

Member Pages: The member pages are now assembled in a more user friendly fashion with relevant documents organized under the NAFO body they pertain to. In addition to NAFO documents and correspondence, the member pages include an address list of NAFO participants, vessel registry, provisional catch statistics, meeting documents and many useful links. The Secretariat plans to revamp the public pages during 2005 and make them more attractive and informative for the general public.

NAFO e-Journal: The NAFO e-Journal was developed throughout 2004 and has been up and running since September. It contains open-access, free-of-charge scientific and peer-reviewed papers and is identical in content to the printed "*Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science*". However, articles will be accessible through the electronic Journal in a more timely fashion.

The NAFO Journal focuses on environmental, biological, ecological and fishery aspects of living marine resources and ecosystems of the Northwest Atlantic. It also welcomes inter-disciplinary fishery-related papers and contributions of general applicability (e.g. methodology, reviews from other areas).

Publications and Other Services

New CEM format: The format of the *NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures* (CEM) publication underwent a substantial makeover. Not only has the content of the NAFO CEM been re-organized, it received a completely new look as well. The format is smaller and more practical for everyday use and transport. The cover is now made of a sturdy water-proof polyvinyl that should last for many years even under tough conditions at sea. The binder format has the advantage that frequent

reprinting and binding of the whole book becomes unnecessary. CEM users can update their copy each year with a new cover page and those pages that have been amended. We are confident that users will find the new format functional.



NAFO Handbook revamped: Ron Myers from the Secretariat's Graphic and Print Department was kept busy creating a new look for the *Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries* and the *NAFO Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations* were published as a separate booklet. Both publications were circulated at the

Annual Meeting, a great new look and congratulations to the department on a job well done.

Publications 2004: NAFO published three volumes of the *Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science* during 2004, Vol. 32 (Miscellaneous Papers), Vol. 33 (*Reproductive Potential of Fish Populations of the North Atlantic*) and Vol. 34 (*Hydrographic Variability in NAFO Waters*) in both electronic and hard-copy formats and a CD Rom was included with Volumes 33 and 34.

As every year, two compilations of NAFO reports were published: *Scientific Council Reports 2003* ("Redbook") and the *Meeting Proceedings of General Council and Fisheries Commission September 2003–August 2004*, again both as hard copies and as electronic (html) versions (web and CD).

With the *2003 Annual Report* the format of this publication was changed to an electronic html version only. The development took some time which is why the 2003 report was online late March only.

In November 2004, the Secretariat said farewell to its outdated press (which will, however, be kept for emergency purposes) and enthusiastically welcomed a new heavy-duty printer that will be a great tool for our print publications.

Modernization of Meeting Support: Another technical innovation has been the purchase and implementation of a wireless server for meetings which is presently used by Scientific Council participants who all bring their laptops to NAFO meetings. This technology allows participants to exchange, share, update, and print documents from their laptops. Stan Goodick and Barb Marshall received special training to set up and maintain the wireless server which worked great the first time we installed it in June 2004.

Cooperation with Others

CWP: The Executive Secretary represented NAFO at the CWP (*Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics*) intersessional meeting in 2004 that took place at FAO in Rome in conjunction with the first FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting. Participants decided to organize a workshop on "*How can CWP Assist in the Implementation of the FAO Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries*" early 2005 in Copenhagen in conjunction with the next meeting. David Evans presented an overview of definitions, activities and results of studies that have been conducted mainly by the Regional Fisheries Bodies that also included a proposal for the development of a framework for quality assurance for statistical systems. The paper will be published in the FAO Fisheries Circular Series after review.

FIRMS: The FIRMS (*Fishery Resources Monitoring System*) Steering Committee had its first meeting with NAFO being represented by the Executive Secretary as an observer. Participants adopted rules of procedure and discussed various issues related to data submission to the FIRMS online database and the development of FIRMS within FIGIS (*Fisheries Global Information System*). During its Annual Meeting 2004, NAFOs General Council approved the membership of NAFO in FIRMS.

North Atlantic Regional Fisheries Management Organizations: Executive Secretaries from IBSFC, NAMMCO, NASCO, NEAFC and NAFO met in March 2004 in London at the NEAFC headquarters. This annual meeting represents an important opportunity for the administrations of similar organizations to discuss work-related issues, coordinate their activities, and inform each other of innovations and progress achieved so

far. Among other issues, the Secretariats discussed in particular practical cooperation on IUU fishing, exchange of information regarding the ecosystem approach to fisheries management, as well as media and NGO attendance at meetings. It was agreed to hold the next meeting in conjunction with the 4th FAO Regional Fishery Bodies Meeting in Rome in 2005.

Public Relations

Keynote Address by Executive Secretary: Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, asked NAFO's Executive Secretary to give the keynote address to a conference on "*Navigating Global Waters: Atlantic Perspectives on International Issues*" organized by students of that university. Johanne gave a 45 minutes presentation on "*International Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic*" elaborating on how fisheries affect marine ecosystems and how NAFO, as an example for international cooperation, works.

Article on NAFO: Johanne was given the opportunity to write an article on NAFO in "*HOOK, LINE AND THINKER*", the journal of the "*Fishermen and Scientists Research Society*" (FSRS) based in Nova Scotia.

NAFO Poster: In addition, NAFO was invited to present a poster at the 11th Annual Conference of FSRS in Halifax in March. For this purpose, Johanne designed a NAFO poster (2.5 mbyte) that can be downloaded and used by all interested. NAFO was represented by Barb and Johanne.

Catastrophic Events



White Juan – worst snow storm in decades. On Thursday, February 19, 2004 the Nova Scotia government declared a state of emergency as one of the worst snow storms in decades pounded the province. Ninety-five centimeters of snow fell within 24 hours, bringing Nova Scotia to a standstill. It was the

worst snow storm that NAFO employees had ever experienced and the Secretariat had to be closed for 3 days.

Wet snow and high winds in November resulted in a province-wide power outage including Dartmouth and forced the Secretariat to again close for one day (Monday, 15 November).

Festive Celebrations

The 25 Plus Club: 2004 marked the 25th anniversary of seven NAFO staff members: Barry Crawford, Forbes Keating, Cindy Kerr, Barb Marshall, Gordie Moulton, Ron Myers, and Ferne Perry. Many had previously worked with ICNAF, which added up to 10 years more to their work experience with regional fishery issues in the NW Atlantic. The occasion was celebrated in March with a nice lunch and the jubilees presented with solar watches.



Japanese Christmas Dinner: As every year, the Japanese Fishery Representative in Halifax invited their main Secretariat contact people to a truly delicious Christmas dinner. This gesture is very much appreciated.

Chairs of NAFO Bodies – 2004

President of the Organization and Chair of the General Council	–	David Bevan (Canada)
Chair of the Fisheries Commission	–	Dean Swanson (USA)
Chair of the Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)	–	Martin Newman (EU)
Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD)	–	Fred Kingston (EU)
Chair of the Standing Committee on Fishing Activities of Non-Contracting Parties in the Regulatory Area (STACFAC)	–	Nadia Bouffard (Canada)
Chair of the Scientific Council	–	Joanne Morgan (Canada)
Chair of the Standing Committee on Publications (STACPUB)	–	Manfred Stein (EU-Germany)
Chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries Science (STACFIS)	–	Hilario Murua (EU-Spain)
Chair of the Standing Committee on Research Coordination (STACREC)	–	Antonio Vazquez (EU-Spain)
Chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries Environment (STACFEN)	–	Eugene Colbourne (Canada)

NAFO Secretariat

Tissa Amaratunga, Deputy Executive Secretary
 Dorothy Auby, Office Secretary
 Barry Crawford, Graphic Arts/Printing Technician
 Ricardo Federizon, Fisheries Commission Coordinator
 Johanne Fischer, Executive Secretary
 Stan Goodick, Finance Officer
 Forbes Keating, Administration Officer and Meeting Coordinator
 Cindy Kerr, Fisheries Information Officer
 Bev McLoon, Personal Assistant to Executive Secretary
 Barbara Marshall, Information and Web Manager
 Gordon Moulton, Conservation and Enforcement Officer
 Ronald Myers, Graphic Arts/Printing Technician
 Ferne Perry, Publications and Archives Officer

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