

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy
Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting**

23 July 2019
via WebEx

NAFO
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
2019

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1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Katherine Sosebee (USA) and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation)

The NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) met via WebEx on 23 July 2019. The meeting was opened at 10:00 hours (Atlantic Daylight Time) by co-Chair Katherine Sosebee (USA) as Temur Tairov (Russian Federation) was unable to attend. Representatives from NAFO Contracting Parties (Canada and the European Union) and MRAG Americas, Inc. were in attendance (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed rapporteur for this meeting.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as previously circulated (Annex 2).

4. Presentation of the revised final report of the *Catch Estimates Methodology Study* by MRAG Americas, Inc.

At the WebEx meeting on 14 March, a draft final report was presented by MRAG Americas, Inc. (COM-SC CESAG-WP 19-01). At that meeting, it was agreed then that CESAG participants would provide written comments on this draft.

At the WebEx meeting on 30 April, CESAG participants reviewed the comments to provide clear feedback and direction to MRAG Americas, Inc. for the revision of the draft final report (COM-SC Doc. 19-02). The feedback and direction were forwarded to MRAG Americas, Inc. in COM-SC CESAG-WP 19-07 (Revised).

MRAG Americas, Inc. presented the revised draft final report *Catch Estimates Methodology Study* that was circulated to meeting participants on 08 July 2019.

Following the presentation by MRAG Americas, Inc. CESAG noted its satisfaction with the amendments made to the current revised draft final report. A few amendments were suggested in order to finalize the report. Contracting Parties agreed to submit any additional suggested amendments to the Secretariat by Thursday, 25 July to be immediately forwarded to MRAG Americas, Inc. for incorporation into the final report, as appropriate.

As Contracting Parties noted these amendments would be non-substantive, it was agreed that another meeting is not required, and the co-Chairs would review the final report for approval.

CESAG agreed on the following next steps:

- CESAG participants will provide final written comments to the NAFO Secretariat by 25 July 2019.
- The Secretariat will compile the comments and forward to MRAG Americas, Inc. by 26 July 2019 for incorporation in the final report, as appropriate.
- MRAG Americas, Inc. will submit the final report by 06 August
- This final report to be provided to the CESAG co-Chairs for final review and approval.

- Once the approval is received from the CESAG co-Chairs, the final invoice to be prepared to process for the payment.

Subsequent to this meeting, the course of action and timeline outlined above were followed.

The co-Chairs indicated that the final version of the report was in accordance with the scope of the project contract and all concerns and suggestions of CESAG were addressed in the final report.

In August 2019, the co-Chairs sought guidance from CESAG members through correspondence regarding the further distribution of the final report. CESAG recommended that the report be made public – to be circulated to all Contracting Parties and be published on the NAFO public website.

5. Potential enhancements to the CESAG method based on advice from the Scientific Council

The Catch Estimation Strategy (CESAG method), as outlined in Annex 1 of COM-SC Doc. 17-08, has been applied by the Secretariat since 2017. The estimates are forwarded to Scientific Council to inform its fish stock assessment work, as per the CESAG Terms of Reference (COM-SC Doc. 17-09). At its June 2019, the Scientific Council recommended that *CESAG review the Catch Estimation Strategy to consider potential refinements, such as the inclusion of gear type, mesh size, and quarter into the strategy.*

CESAG discussed the Scientific Council recommendation and agreed to consider these potential refinements. As an initial step, the co-Chair (Katherine Sosebee, USA) and the Secretariat will explore the possible inclusion these potential refinements. These findings will be reviewed and considered by CESAG prior to completing its catch estimates for 2019.

6. Other Business

No other matters were raised under this agenda item.

7. Recommendations

CESAG recommends that:

- 1. The *Catch Estimates Methodology Study* report prepared by MRAG Americas, Inc. be accepted and made available as a public document.**
- 2. The NAFO Secretariat, in coordination with the CESAG co-Chair, will consider the potential refinements to the Catch Estimation Strategy in response to the recommendation from the Scientific Council.**

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The date and time of the next meeting to be determined following the 2019 Annual Meeting of NAFO in September.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 hrs.

Annex 1. Participant List

Sosebee, Katherine (USA)	co-Chairs
Fagan, Robert Hwang, Steve	Canada
Alpoim, Ricardo Błażkiewicz, Bernard Granell, Ignacio Ribeiro, Cristina	European Union
Harford, Bill Moir Clark, James Parkes, Graeme Sissenwine, Michael Swasey, Jill Watson, Andy	MRAG Americas, Inc.
Kingston, Fred Aker, Jana Blasdale, Tom Federizon, Ricardo Goodick, Stan LeFort, Lisa	NAFO Secretariat

Annex 2. Provisional Agenda

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