

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



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

24 April 2020
via WebEx

NAFO
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
2020

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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 24 April 2020. The meeting was opened at 9:30 hours (Atlantic Daylight Time) by co-Chairs Katherine Sosebee (USA) and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation). Representatives from NAFO Contracting Parties (Canada, European Union, and USA) were in attendance (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Ricardo Federizon and Tom Blasdale) was appointed rapporteur for this meeting.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The provisional agenda previously circulated was modified. Under agenda item 6 Other Business “*2018 NAFO Performance Review Panel Recommendation # 4*” was inserted. The adopted agenda is reflected in Annex 2.

4. Review and finalization of the 2019 Catch Estimates

At the CESAG WebEx meeting in February (COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-01), while in the process of reviewing the preliminary 2019 catch estimates, it was realized that the SC recommendation of incorporating the mesh information as potential enhancement to the Catch Estimation Strategy (as outlined in Annex 1 of COM-SC Doc 17-08) could not be applied. The recommendation relating to mesh size information was highlighted from a science perspective. As the submission of the haul by haul reports requires 100% coverage, they are the best potential source of the mesh size information. The haul by haul reports are transmitted to the Secretariat using the template as presented in Annex II.N of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures. The Secretariat was requested to draft a recommendation to include mesh information in the haul by haul reporting. The draft recommendation was presented by the Secretariat and refined by CESAG at this meeting. It was agreed to forward the recommendation to the Commission (see agenda item 7). CESAG also reiterated its 2017 recommendation relating to the review by STACTIC of current measures relating to reporting catch by Division (see agenda item 7).

The Secretariat presented the catch estimates of all NAFO TAC-managed stocks and all other species for 2019 (COM-SC WP 20-05). This represents the core task that was assigned to the Secretariat --- applying the Catch Estimation Strategy in deriving the catch estimates.

Canada indicated that it would provide the remaining supplementary data (3NO Capelin, 3L Shrimp, and Grenadier) to complete the estimates. Once received, the Secretariat would update the working paper accordingly and forward to the Scientific Council by 01 May for consideration in its fish stock assessment work (see agenda item 7).

5. Review of statistics and catch data comparison prepared by the Secretariat

Upon request of CESAG, three working papers were prepared and presented by the Secretariat:

1. COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-02, on the comparison of catch data sources,
2. COM -SC CESAG-WP 20-03, on the calculation of the availability of catch amounts on a division basis in port inspection, and

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3. COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-04, on the calculation of the percentage of catch (from CATs – Daily Catch Report) for species by weight that was inspected in port.

Upon review of these working papers, it was noted that the information contained in these working papers complements COM-SC WP 20-05 and helpful when calculating the catch estimates using the Catch Estimation Strategy.

6. Other Business

a. 2018 NAFO Performance Review Panel Recommendation #4

The group recalled the 2018 NAFO Performance Review Panel Recommendation # 4, which states that “*NAFO implements the applicable outcomes of the catch estimates methodology study once completed, continue the work of CESAG and utilize Scientific observer data.*”

In response, CESAG agreed to have a meeting in February 2021 to review the 2019 report *Catch Estimates Methodology Study* completed by MRAG Americas, and identify elements in that report that could be applied by CESAG towards the improvement of the Catch Estimation Strategy (see agenda item 7).

In spite of the issue of availability of the Scientific observer data, CESAG noted that its actions in performing its work are in alignment with the *Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations from the 2018 Report of the NAFO Performance Review Panel* (NAFO COM Doc. 19-32). It committed to continue its work in accordance with the PR recommendation and the Action Plan.

7. Recommendations

The CESAG recommends that:

- 1) the Commission request STACTIC to review the haul by haul reporting template (Annex II.N of the NAFO CEM) and investigate the practicality of adding the codend mesh size or hook size to the reporting requirements.
- 2) the Secretariat revise the 2019 catch estimates contained in COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-05 to include the remaining Canadian data and forward it (COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-05 Revised) to the Scientific Council by the 01 May deadline.
- 3) the Commission request STACTIC to continue to review current measures relating to reporting of catch by NAFO Division to identify and implement improvements which ensure the most reliable information is available for catch estimation, recognizing its importance in stock assessments.
- 4) a meeting be held in February 2021 to review and discuss the MRAG report recommendations for potential further enhancements to the CESAG methodology of catch estimation.

8. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be in February 2021 via WebEx. A doodle survey will be circulated to determine the date and time.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 hours (ADT)

Annex 1. List of Participants**CESAG CO-CHAIRS**

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Annex 2. Agenda

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