

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Commission Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules
Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS)
in the NAFO Regulatory Area Meeting**

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
02-03 May 2018

NAFO
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
2018

**Report of the NAFO Commission Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules
Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS)
in the NAFO Regulatory Area Meeting**

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
02-03 May 2018

1. Opening by the Chair, Temur Tairov (Russian Federation)	3
2. Appointment of Rapporteur and Adoption of Agenda	3
3. Discussions	3
4. Recommendations	5
5. Other Business	5
6. Adoption of Report	5
7. Adjournment	5
Annex 1. List of Participants	6
Annex 2. PowerPoint Presentation by the Secretariat – Available Information on Bycatch and Discards in the NRA	8

Report of the NAFO Commission Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area Meeting

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
02-03 May 2018

1. Opening by the Chair, Temur Tairov (Russian Federation)

The Chair, Temur Tairov (Russian Federation), opened the meeting at 10:00 hours on Wednesday, 02 May 2018 at the NAFO Headquarters in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada. Representatives from Canada, the European Union, and United States of America were present and representatives from Iceland participated via WebEx (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur and Adoption of Agenda

The NAFO Secretariat (Ricardo Federizon) was appointed rapporteur.

The provisional agenda circulated earlier (NAFO/18-066) was based on the following points that shall be considered in examining the feasibility of introducing policies to minimize or eliminate discards in NAFO (COM Doc. 17-23).

- Reasons or objectives for eliminating discards;
- Performance indicators to be considered in evaluating the implications of eliminating discards (e.g., conservation and sustainability, ecosystem function, economic benefits, food security, reliability of scientific advice, cost of managing fisheries, public perception of fisheries and fishery management);
- Analysis of how well a policy to eliminate discards will perform relative to the objectives, and compared to alternative approaches for addressing the objectives; and
- Current or potential impacts of discards on quota management.

3. Discussions

On the outset, participants expressed concern that the Working Group would not be able to have in-depth discussion of the substantive items in the provisional agenda as the information on discards has not yet been fully compiled or analysed to inform the extent and scope of the discard issue in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA).

Some participants recalled that the *Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards* (COM Doc. 17-26) adopted in 2017 was meant to offer a better picture of the discard problem in the NRA, and the Working Group should use this opportunity to identify potential challenges in its implementation. It was noted there was also the potential to consider targeted solutions to fishery specific problems once they have been identified and there is confidence in the reliability of discard data. As a result, participants noted that discussions would be largely philosophical in nature, recalling that the *Action Plan* already identified key objectives and timelines.

The meeting proceeded with the Secretariat's presentation "*Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards in NAFO*" (Annex 2). The presentation covered the identification of provisions in the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NCEM) that pertains, directly and indirectly, to bycatch and discards; catch estimates (retained + rejected) of moratoria species derived from 2017 daily catch reports (CATs);

frequency analysis of occurrence of hauls exceeding bycatch thresholds using 2017 haul by haul data; and, mapping of directed fisheries and their associated bycatch.

While the presentation was found to be informative, especially on the bycatch situation, it highlighted two issues:

1. low submission rates of the 2017 haul by haul data; and
2. sparse and low-level discard data.

The Working Group discussions engendering from the presentation centered on how these issues can be addressed while maintaining sight on the adopted *Action Plan*. Concerning the former, it has been noted that the haul by haul data could provide bycatch and discards information by fishery with more precise location than other data sources (e.g. daily catch reports) available in the Secretariat could not. Concerning the latter, it was noted that the sparsity and low discards level could be due to non-compliance and/or non-occurrence of discards in the NRA, the extent of both are undetermined. The limited indications of discards suggested that it was an isolated problem but a more complete analysis was needed. It was also noted that Task 1.3 of the *Action Plan* pertains to data completeness and identification of data gaps. The Working Group and the Secretariat identified NAFO bodies to perform the task by September 2019.

Other points of discussions emerged during the meeting that were not necessarily consensus views and/or did not result in suggested recommendations:

- Clarification on the definition or description of bycatch. No “blanket” definition, as it can be modified depending on the directed fishery; there is no qualitative/narrative descriptor; definition considered previously by the Working Group and STACTIC; NCEM clearly establish what constitutes bycatch and explicitly states that it should be minimized;
- Information on survivability of discards required;
- Catch data analysis as prerequisite to consideration of management options;
- Flexibility is needed before a total discard ban; need to consider fishery specific solutions; important to consider the mixed nature of some NAFO fisheries;
- Need to incorporate VME species list in Annex I.C of the NCEM;
- Sharing of information between NAFO, NEAFC and ICCAT regarding straddling stocks and geographical overlap of fishing vessels with other RFMOs in the NRA.

In support of Task 1.3 of the *Action Plan*, the Working Group agreed that:

The Secretariat prepare a work plan for the bycatch and discard analyses of the available data, including haul by haul data (beginning from 2016). The work plan shall be reviewed by the Working Group via correspondence, which shall provide guidance to the Secretariat in conducting the analyses. The plan should be completed no later than the 2018 Annual Meeting.

The analyses shall include, but not be limited to, bycatch and discard quantities of all hauls, instances of excess of thresholds and their associated quantities, more finely-grained mapping on a geographic and temporal scale to identify bycatch and discard “hotspots”.

The Secretariat should identify trends, patterns, anomalies, as well as data gaps; provide regular updates to the WG-BDS in the form of progress reports; and seek clarification or direction from the WG-BDS as warranted (possibly through WebEx).

4. Recommendations

It was **agreed** that:

1. *The Commission and Scientific Council, and their subsidiary bodies, as well as the Secretariat, move forward with full implementation of the Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards (COM Doc. 17-26).*
2. *The Commission consider a means of formal follow-up with Contracting Parties to address non-compliance with the requirement to submit haul by haul data, including previous years (2016 and 2017).*
3. *Contracting Parties be encouraged to explore with their respective industry representatives the reasons for discards and bycatch and report back to the Working Group at its next meeting. To the extent possible, this information should seek to identify specific times, areas, fisheries and/or other factors.*
4. *The Commission include in its request for advice to Scientific Council at the 2018 meeting the task identified under Section 2.2 of the Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards (COM Doc. 17-26).*
5. *STACTIC review existing NAFO observer and haul-by-haul reporting requirements to consider enhancements that would provide specific information related to the rationale for discards.*
6. *The Secretariat, in conjunction with STACTIC and WG-EAFFM, develop tools to cross-reference the relevant FAO 3-alpha code with the VME indicator species, set out in Annex I.E of the NCEM to facilitate their inclusion in observer and haul by haul catch reports.*

5. Other Business

There was no other business discussed under this agenda item.

6. Adoption of Report

The meeting report was adopted by correspondence.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 hours on 03 May 2018.

Annex 1. List of Participants

CHAIR

Tairov, Temur (Russian Federation). Representative of the Federal Agency for Fisheries of the Russian Federation in Canada, 47 Windstone Close, Bedford, Nova Scotia, B4A4L4
Tel: +1 902 405 0655 – Email: temurtairov@mail.ru

CANADA

Dwyer, Judy. Director, Enforcement, Conservation and Protection, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 200 Kent Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6
Tel: +1 613 993-3371 – Email: judy.dwyer@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Fagan, Robert. Senior Analyst, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, International Programs & Corporate Services, Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Centre, 80 East White Hills Road, St. John's, NL, A1C 5X1
Tel: +1 709 772 7627 – Email: Robert.Fagan@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Walsh, Ray. Regional Manager, Fisheries Management, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 80 East White Hills Road, St. John's, NL A1C 5X1
Tel: +1 709 772 4472 – Email: ray.walsh@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

ICELAND

Asgeirsson, Hrannar Mar (via WebEx). Directorate of Fisheries, Surveillance Department, Fiskistofa, Dalshrauni 1, 220 Hafnarfjörður, Iceland
Email: hrannar@fiskistofa.is

Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur (via WebEx). Senior Expert, Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Ministry of Industries and Innovation, Skúlagötu 4, 150 Reykjavík, Iceland
Tel: +354 545 9700 – Email: bb@anr.is

EUROPEAN UNION

González Costas, Fernando. Instituto Español de Oceanografía (IEO), Aptdo 1552, E-36280 Vigo, Spain
Tel: +34 986 49 22 39 – Email: fernando.gonzalez@ieo.es

Ivanescu, Raluca. NAFO Desk Officer, European Commission, Directorate General for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs (DG MARE B2), Rue Joseph II, 99, B-1049, Brussels, Belgium
Email: raluca.ivanescu@ec.europa.eu

Rodriguez-Alfaro, Sebastián, International Affairs, European Commission, Scientific Advice and Data Collection, DG-MARE C3, Rue Joseph II, 99, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2295 4043 – Email: Sebastian.RODRIGUEZ-ALFARO@ec.europa.eu

Sepúlveda Angulo, Pedro. Esteban Secretaría General de Pesca, Subdirección General de Acuerdos y Organizaciones Regionales de Pesca, Velazquez 144, 28006 Madrid, Spain
Tel: +34 913 476 137 – Email: psepulve@magrama.es

Tuvi, Aare. Fishery Resources Department, Ministry of the Environment, Narva mnt 7^a, 15172 Tallinn, Estonia
Tel: +372 626 0712- Email: aare.tuvi@envir.ee

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Tairov, Temur (see above)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mencher, Elizabethann. International Policy Advisor, Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection,
National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, (NOAA), 1315 East-
West Hwy., Silver Spring, MD 20910, USA
Tel: +1 301 427 8362 – Email: liz.english@noaa.gov

Warner-Karmer, Deirdre. Senior Foreign Affairs Officer, Office of Marine Conservation (OES/OMC), Department
of State, Washington, DC 20520
Tel +1 202 647 2883 – Email: warner-kramerm@state.gov

NAFO SECRETARIAT

2 Morris Drive, Suite 100, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada – Tel: +1 902 468-5590

Kingston, Fred. Executive Secretary.

Email: fkingston@nafo.int

Blasdale, Tom. Scientific Council Coordinator.

Email: tblasdale@nafo.int

Federizon, Ricardo. Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator

Email: rfederizon@nafo.int

Aker, Jana. Fisheries Information Administrator

Email: jaker@nafo.int

Glindtvad, Sebastian. NAFO Intern

Annex 2. PowerPoint Presentation by the Secretariat – Available Information on Bycatch and Discards in the NRA

Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards in NAFO Regulatory Area

(presented by the Secretariat)

[WG-BDS Working Paper 18-01]



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

1

Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards

- **Adopted in September 2017 (NAFO/COM Doc 17-26)**
- **Overarching Objectives**
 - Minimization of bycatch, discards and improvement of selectivity
 - Accurate reporting of target, non-target and incidental catch
 - Management measures are adaptive to changing fishery conditions
 - Management measures reflect precautionary and ecosystem approaches
 - Identification of priority areas for bycatch management (priority: when this is risk of causing serious harm to bycatch species)
 - Linkages with NAFO Bodies: STACTIC, WG-EAFFM, WG-ESA, WG-CR
- **Components**
 - Data management (Secretariat, CP's, BDS)
 - Ongoing analysis and monitoring (Secretariat, SC)
 - Identification of priorities (SC, BDS, Secretariat)
 - Development of management options (BDS, STACTIC, SC)

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

2



Examining the feasibility of introducing policies to minimize or eliminate discards in NAFO

- Adopted in September 2017 (NAFO/COM Doc 17-23)
- WG-BDS shall consider the following:
 - Reasons or objectives for eliminating discards [agenda item 3]
 - Performance indicators in evaluating the implications of eliminating discards [agenda item 4]
 - Analysis of how well a policy to eliminate discards will perform relative to the objectives [agenda item 5]
 - Potential impacts of discards on quota management [agenda item 6]
- In parallel, STACTIC shall consider the following:
 - Identification of the current discard obligations in the NCEM
 - Compilation of existing relevant domestic legislations of CP
 - Examination of possible measures to minimize or eliminate discards
 - Review the approaches to control of the landing obligations
- STACTIC and WG-BDS shall coordinate their plans, including realistic timetables and present them to the Commission during the AM 2018.
- The Secretariat will inform STACTIC, at its May 2018 Intersessional, the results of this meeting.

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

3

Some relevant NCEM Articles

Directed Fishery:

Art.5.2 (a): the species which comprises the largest percentage by weight of the total catch in the haul shall be considered as being taken in a **directed fishery** for the stock concerned.

After the species with the largest percentage is identified in a single haul, is the rest of the catch in the haul is considered bycatch?

Bycatch:

Art. 6.2 –A species listed in the Quota Table* shall be classified as bycatch where any of the situations exist:

- (a) No quota has been allocated to that CP;
- (b) Moratorium for a particular stock is in force;
- (c) “Others” quota has been fully utilized.

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

4

Some relevant NCEM Articles

Bycatch Thresholds:

Art. 6.3 –Each CP shall ensure that its vessels... shall limit the retention of on board species classified as bycatch to the maxima specified ...:

Generally, 1250 kg or 5%, whichever is greater. For 3NO Cod, the threshold is 1000 kg or 5%, whichever is greater.

Threshold calculations:

Art. 6.4 –The limits and percentages in paragraph 3 of this Article are calculated by Division as the percentage, by weight, for each stock of the total catch of stocks listed in Annex I.A **retained on board** for that Division at the time of inspection, on the basis of the fishing logbook figures.

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

5

Some relevant NCEM Articles

“Discards”:

Art. 5.5 (i) – ensure that, after a closure of its fishery in accordance with this paragraph, **no more fish** of the stock concerned **is retained on board** the vessels entitled to fly its flag unless otherwise authorized by the CEM.

Art. 14.1 - **No vessel shall retain on board any fish** smaller than the minimum size established in accordance with Annex I.D, which it shall **immediately return to the sea**.

Art. 28.6 (c) – [Daily catch reports, by species and Division. **Requirement also to report Discards.**]

Annex I.D = Minimum Fish Size

Species	Gilled and gutted fish whether or not skinned; fresh or chilled, frozen, or salted.			
	Whole	Head Off	Head and Tail Off	Head Off and Split
Atlantic Cod	41 cm	27 cm	22 cm	27/25 cm**
Greenland halibut	30 cm	N/A	N/A	N/A
American plaice	25 cm	19 cm	15 cm	N/A
Yellowtail flounder	25 cm	19 cm	15 cm	N/A

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

6

Bycatch and discards in the NRA: preliminary analysis of the 2017 data**2017 Data:**

- From 2017 VMS position reports, we identified 112 trips with 3823 days present in the NRA.
- From 2017 daily catch reports (CATs), 56890 t of fish retained.
- From 2017 daily catch reports (CATs), 1387 t discarded.
- Of the 112 trips, only 72 have H x H data (Compliance issue)
- Of the 72 trips, HxH reports from 2 trips are incomplete/useless.
- Only 70 trips are considered in the analysis. 2944 days.
- 70 trips: HxH catch = 37847.8 (37738.0 + 109.8). 6436 hauls.
- For quick comparison - CAT catches = 45354.7 (44420.2 + 934.5) t.
- HxH data (6436 hauls) were used for threshold analysis.

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

2017 Retained and Discarded Catches (t):**Table 1. Retained catches of 2017 fishing trips (source: CATs)**

	3L	3M	3N	3O	6G	Grand Total
COD	98.3	14187.1	328.6	212.3	0.0	14826.3
GHL	6594.3	1562.0	1092.9	8.3	0.0	9257.6
HKW	0.0	1.9	56.0	108.6	0.0	166.5
PLA	82.7	158.5	600.0	231.8	0.0	1073.0
RED	3720.4	7079.3	4117.4	6991.1	0.0	21904.0
SKA	76.9	43.3	3612.4	420.6	0.0	4153.2
SQI	0.0	2.8	0.0	11.5	0.0	14.4
WIT	38.1	181.7	87.5	179.3	0.0	486.6
YEL	0.0	0.0	3816.7	43.9	0.0	3860.6
NonReg	193.0	187.6	253.4	453.9	56.2	1148.2
Grand Total	10803.7	23404.2	13964.9	8661.3	56.2	56890.4

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

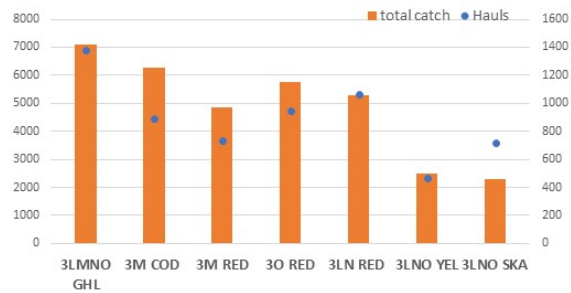
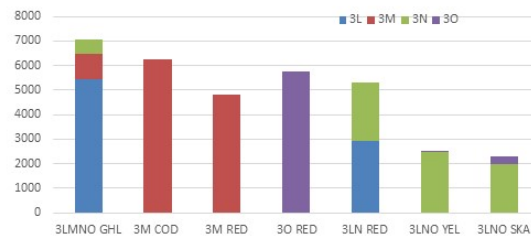
8

2017 Retained and Discarded Catches (t):**Table 2. Rejected catches of 2017 fishing trips (source: CATs)**

	3L	3M	3N	3O	Grand Total
COD	4.9	7.1	30.0	0.0	41.9
GHL	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	1.2
HKW	0.0	0.0	14.9	0.6	15.5
PLA	5.5	1.3	58.6	3.7	69.1
RED	1.0	10.8	1.2	2.9	15.8
SKA	2.1	2.2	61.7	0.9	66.8
SQI	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.1	2.2
WIT	8.1	1.3	6.6	9.0	25.0
YEL	0.0	0.0	24.5	0.0	24.5
GSK	183.0	36.3	125.7	19.7	364.7
MZZ	280.4	120.2	320.0	40.0	760.6
Grand Total	484.9	179.3	644.3	78.9	1387.4

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

9

Number of Hauls and their total Catches**Haul Catches by Division**

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

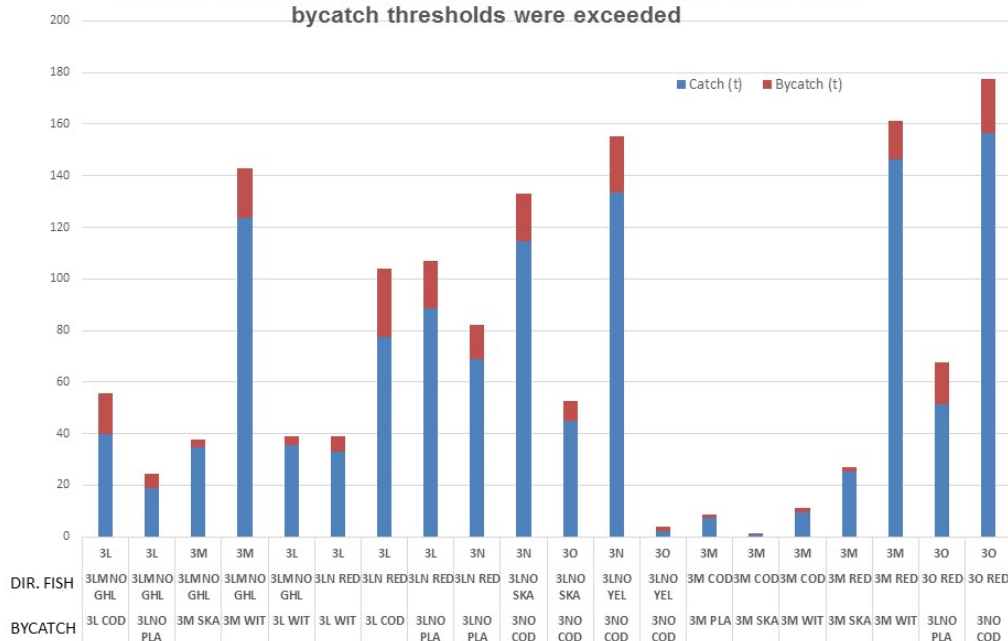
10

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H

- 70 trips. 2944 days in the NRA (according to VMS records)
- Total: 6436 hauls, 37848 t of fish caught.
- 7 Stocks considered as directed fishery: 3LMNO GHL, 3M COD, 3M RED, 3O RED, 3LN RED, 3LNO YEL, and 3LNO SKA.
- 6 Stocks considered as bycatch: 3NO COD, 3M PLA, 3LNO PLA, 3L COD, 3L WIT, 3M WIT, 3M SKA
- 6236 hauls with directed fishery of one of the DF stocks. These hauls account for 34054 t of fish caught.
- Of 6236 hauls, 317 have exceeded threshold.

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

11

Directed Fisheries and their Bycatch by Division - only hauls when bycatch thresholds were exceeded

NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

12



Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

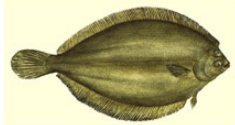
3LMNO GHL



**1385 hauls, 52
hauls exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

3L and 3M WIT



3L COD



3LNO PLA



3M SKA



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

13

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

3M COD



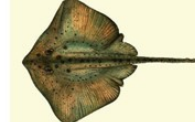
**899 hauls, 16
hauls exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

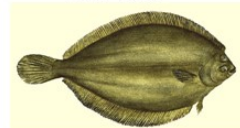
3M PLA



3M SKA



3M WIT



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

14

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

3M RED



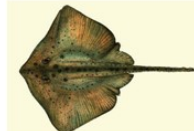
**735, 38 hauls
exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

3M WIT



3M SKA



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

15

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

3O RED



**954 hauls, 27
hauls exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

3NO COD



3LNO PLA



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

16

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

3LN RED



**1072 hauls, 37
hauls exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

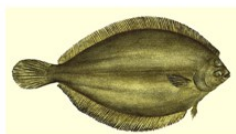
3L and 3NO COD



3LNO PLA



3L WIT



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

17

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

3LNO YEL



**469 hauls, 44
hauls exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

3NO COD



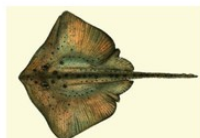
NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth,
NS, Canada

18

Analysis of frequency of hauls exceeding thresholds. Data: 2017 H x H
 - Of 6236, 317 hauls exceeded threshold.

Directed Fishery

3LNO SKA



**724 hauls, 103
hauls exceeded
threshold**

Bycatch stocks

3NO COD



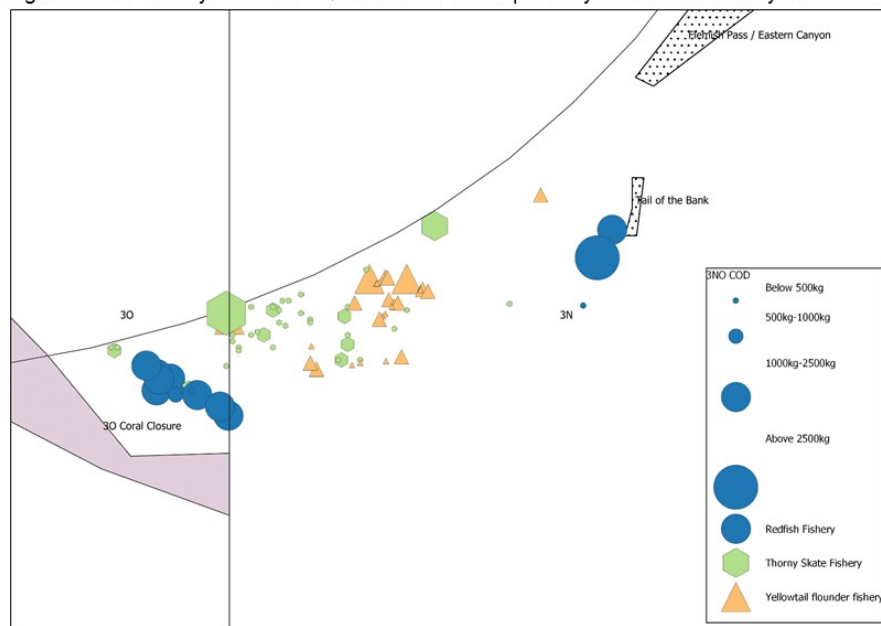
3LNO PLA



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

19

Figure 1. 3NO Cod Bycatch in 2nd Quarter 2017 - a sample analysis. Source: Haul by Haul Data.



NAFO WG-BDS, 2-3 May 2018, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

20