

**44th ANNUAL MEETING OF NAFO - SEPTEMBER 2022****STACTIC Proposal for Additional Trial Tows****Background**

For the last several years, the United States has raised concerns that the definition of directed fishing may generate unintended consequences by attempting to account for the master's intentions through singularly focusing on the composition of one individual haul. At the 2021 STACTIC Intersessional and subsequent Bycatch and Directed Fishing Working Group meetings, the United States recommended incorporating elements of the move-along provisions (Art. 6.6(b)) into the directed fishing framework to prevent vessels that indirectly direct on a non-target species from being sent home with a serious infringement. *See* STACTIC WP 21-05.

Contracting Parties recommended exploring the possibility of providing additional opportunities for trial tows along with other alternative measures. At this time, we seek to advance a conservative approach by providing one trial tow upon the first entrance into a Division on a fishing trip. We implore STACTIC to review and evaluate the effects and implications of this limited measure as well as assess whether additional opportunities and flexibilities may be afforded in the future.

Proposed Modifications**Article 6****Exceeding Bycatch Limits in Any One Haul**

6. Each Contracting Party shall ensure that its vessels:
 - a. do not conduct directed fisheries for species referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article;
 - b. observe the following, where the weight of any species subject to the bycatch limits exceeds the greater of the limits specified in paragraph 3 of this Article in any one haul:
 - i. immediately move a minimum of 10 nautical miles from any position of the previous tow/set throughout the subsequent tow/set;
 - ii. leave the Division and not return for at least 60 hours if the bycatch limits specified in paragraph 3 of this Article are again exceeded following the first tow/set after moving in accordance with paragraph 6(b)(i) of this Article;
 - iii. undertake a trial tow for a maximum duration of 3 hours before starting a new fishery following an absence of at least 60 hours. If the stocks subjected to bycatch limits form the largest percentage, by weight, of the total resultant catch in the haul, this should not be considered as a directed fishery for those stocks, and the



vessel must immediately change position in accordance with provisions of paragraph 6(b)(i) and (ii); and

- iv. identify any trial tow conducted in accordance with paragraph 6(b) and record in the fishing logbook the coordinates pertaining to the start and end locations of any trial tow conducted.
- 7. In a directed fishery for shrimp, the move referred to in paragraph 6 shall apply when, for any one haul, the quantity of the total groundfish stock listed in Annex I.A exceeds 5% in Division 3M or 2.5% in Division 3L.
- 8. When a vessel is conducting a directed fishery for skate with a legal mesh size appropriate for that fishery, the first time that catches of stocks for which bycatch limits apply, as specified in paragraph 2, comprise the largest percentage by weight of the total catch in a haul, they shall be considered as incidental catch, but the vessel shall immediately move as specified in paragraph 6.
- 9. The percentage of bycatch in any one haul is calculated as the percentage, by weight, for each stock listed in Annex I.A of the total catch from that haul.
- 10. Upon its first entrance into a Division on a fishing trip, a vessel may undertake one trial tow for up to a maximum duration of 3 hours. If the stocks subjected to bycatch limits form the largest percentage, by weight, of the total resultant catch in the haul, this shall not be considered as a directed fishery for those stocks, and the vessel must immediately change position in accordance with provisions of paragraph 6(b). Vessels must identify any trial tow conducted in accordance with this paragraph and record in the fishing logbook the coordinates pertaining to the start and end locations of any trial tow conducted.

Annex II.A

Logbook Entries

- 15. Was a trial tow conducted in accordance with Article 6.6(iii) or Article 6.10~~conducted~~? (Y/N)