

Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting

05–07 May 2025

Bergen, Norway

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1. Opening by the Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America)

The Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America), opened the meeting at 9:00 hours on Monday, 05 May 2025. The Chair welcomed Frank Bakke-Jensen, the Director of Fisheries of the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries, who provided an opening address. The Chair welcomed representatives, both in person and virtually, from the following Contracting Parties (CPs): Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Catherine Thompson) was appointed as rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Following the rules outlined in the Standing Committee on international Control (STACTIC) Rules of Procedure regarding data confidentiality and participation in meetings (COM Doc. 22-19), the Chair highlighted a nomination for in-camera sessions for agenda item 4 (specifically STACTIC WP 25-02, STACTIC WP 25-03, and STACTIC WP 25-08), and agenda item 6 (if the NAFO Secretariat intends to display MCS website information that should be available only for control purposes). Following a brief discussion, Contracting Parties agreed that STACTIC WP 25-08 could be discussed in an open session, and only STACTIC WP 25-02 and STACTIC WP 25-03 were to be discussed in in-camera sessions.

The European Union proposed the addition of two items under agenda item 18 (Other business). First, an update on the NAFO Inspectors' Workshop, and secondly, a discussion on the implementation of the 2018 Flag State Performance Review Recommendations.

The agenda was adopted, with the changes highlighted above, as outlined in Annex 2.

4. Annual Compliance Review 2024

The NAFO Secretariat presented the draft Compilation of Fisheries Reports 2024 in STACTIC WP 25-02 (Rev. 2). Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for the work and provided initial comments and clarifications.

The NAFO Secretariat also presented the Summary of Inspection Information for 2024 in STACTIC WP 25-03 (Rev. 3). One Contracting Party noted that the majority of infringements at-sea involve directed fishery violations, noting a concern with the definition of directed fishery. It was also noted that several vessels have repeated violations, and it would be interesting to review the information also in different formats, such as by vessel. The European Union highlighted the information by vessel is already included in STACTIC WP 25-03. Contracting Parties agreed to provide written feedback on the working paper prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the first draft of the Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review in STACTIC WP 25-04 (Rev. 2), and Contracting Parties provided initial comments and clarifications. Canada suggested that interested Contracting Parties meet to review the working paper further and draft the conclusions and recommendations sections in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting. The European Union, the United Kingdom, and other Contracting Parties expressed interest in participating in such a meeting and the Secretariat agreed to support meeting coordination.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the Summary of Observer Information for 2024 in STACTIC WP 25-08 (Rev. 2). The Secretariat noted that Contracting Parties raised some questions regarding the report. First, Contracting Parties are asked to provide in Part III of the template: *a summary of fishing trips where the figures of the observers in Part 4.B of the observer trip report are the same or very similar to the figures reported by the master; however*, there is no definition for “very similar” as it relates to the figures reported by the observer and the master. Second, Contracting Parties expressed confusion if Contracting Parties were required to report on whether the measures have been fully implemented or whether they were required to report specific occurrences where the measures were implemented. Several contracting parties highlighted their interpretation that Part I of the report aims at assessing the alignment of Contracting Parties’ internal procedures with the requirements of Article 30.

Contracting Parties discussed the utility of the Article 30 reporting template section comparing observer and master figures, and noted that Contracting Parties may need to provide additional information on how the observer and master figures are derived, and evaluate the instances of verbatim data. For example, some Contracting Parties included specific rationale for why the figures reported by the observer and the master are equal. It was noted that in some cases the estimates between the observer and the master are the same. While this alone, may not indicate a direct copying of the figures, the importance of having independent observer estimates was stressed. The European Union stressed that information relating to several infringements identified by inspectors could have been reported by observers.

It was stressed that possible non-compliances listed in the Article 30 reporting should be only those stemming from observer reports. Contracting Parties agreed to defer STACTIC WP 25-08 (Rev. 2) to the WG-OPR for further discussion and potential amendments to the Article 30 reporting template.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties provide any necessary revisions to STACTIC WP 25-02 (Rev. 2), STACTIC WP 25-03 (Rev. 3), and STACTIC WP 25-04 (Rev. 2) by 15 June 2025.**
- **Canada and the Secretariat to coordinate a meeting with interested Contracting Parties to review STACTIC WP 25-04 (Rev. 2), with the aim of drafting the conclusions and recommendations sections, prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **STACTIC WP 25-08 (Rev. 2) be forwarded to the WG-OPR for further discussion and potential amendments to the template of the report on the implementation of Article 30.**

5. Annual compliance review format

In March 2025, Canada and the Secretariat coordinated a virtual meeting with several Contracting Parties to review other RFMOs’ compliance reports and identify best practices that could be considered for adoption within NAFO. As a result, Canada presented questions for STACTIC’s consideration, accompanied by a draft outline of potential changes to the Annual Compliance review template in STACTIC WP 25-10. Contracting Parties provided initial comments pertaining to confidentiality of compliance information, the addition of quota uptake information, and the possible addition of case studies to the annual compliance review. The European Union suggested to include Electronic Monitoring information and highlighted the importance to evaluate the purpose of effort-specific information in the report, such as catch per unit effort (CPUE). Contracting Parties supported the concept of a revised compliance review process that would better inform mitigation measures STACTIC could recommend to the Commission. The Chair noted that the compliance review was an iterative process that would evolve to support the needs of NAFO and emerging and developing compliance issues. Canada welcomed further comments on the working paper prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada committed to working with Contracting Parties to evolve the proposal and will present a revised version of STACTIC WP 25-10 at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting. Contracting Parties are asked to provide any comments by 15 June 2025.**

6. NAFO MCS website and application development

The NAFO Secretariat noted its continuing work on the MCS Website, the Observer application, and the ePSC application. The Secretariat has received feedback from Contracting Parties on the MCS Website, and any potential updates will be presented at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will continue to work on the MCS Website and application development, with the intention of presenting updates at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

7. Report and recommendations of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)

The Chair of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) (Brent Napier, Canada) provided a summary of the meeting that took place 22–24 January 2025 ([COM Doc. 25-02](#)).

At this meeting, the WG-OPR discussed the 2024 implementation of NAFO CEM Article 30, noting significant discussion on the use of observer derogation, and that clearer rules regarding the use of derogation from 100% observer coverage would be beneficial. The Secretariat provided an update on the development of the observer application, which is currently undergoing at-sea trials. The Secretariat is incorporating feedback from Contracting Parties into the application and finalizing all of the Annex II.M reporting fields.

The WG-OPR reviewed a proposal for amendments to Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02, and requested the NAFO Secretariat to develop a summary of the provisions that fall under the Rules of Confidentiality in the NAFO CEM to support a discussion at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. The summary was presented in STACTIC WP 25-05. Some Contracting Parties noted that there is a need to review the provisions of Annex II.B. Specifically, one Contracting Party expressed reservation about expanding the scope of the terms of the Rules of Confidentiality without performing a full overhaul of the Rules to ensure textual alignment. Furthermore, several Contracting Parties noted that the Rules need to be updated to match current protocols. It was therefore agreed to forward the proposal outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 to the WG-OPR for continued discussion. The European Union highlighted that extensive discussions on STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 had been already held in the WG-OPR and invited parties to submit any proposed change to or questions on the proposal with the aim of finalizing the exercise by the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 4), which outlines a possible revision of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM to incorporate minimum standards for the electronic observation program. The paper is based on the recommendations established in STACTIC WP 22-48 (Rev. 2) and STACTIC WP 23-01 (Rev. 1). The European Union, noting the extensive discussions that have already taken place in the OPR WG, welcomed additional comments from Contracting Parties, which were incorporated during the meeting. Contracting Parties discussed several elements of electronic monitoring, such as the minimum standards outlined in the proposal, the process for reviewing video footage, and requirements for data storage and retention. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for their work on the proposal and agreed to provide additional comments on the proposal in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Canada presented the draft Shark Identification and Safe Handling and Release Guides in STACTIC WP 25-14. The guide was developed in collaboration with Oceans North (NGO) to improve shark species identification and handling practices by at-sea observers, masters, and inspectors operating in the NAFO Regulatory Area

(NRA). Canada welcomed comments from Contracting Parties on the draft guides ahead of the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat noted that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Deep Seas Fisheries (DSF) Project is developing a shark identification application, and any updates on that work will be presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The Chair of the WG-OPR also provided a progress update on the status of the work of the WG-OPR in STACTIC WP 25-11 and recommended extending the mandate of the WG-OPR to continue working on outstanding items, such as the use/implementation of the observer application and the observer reporting requirements. Contracting Parties agreed that an additional virtual WG-OPR be scheduled in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting to continue these discussions and report back to STACTIC at the NAFO Annual Meeting 2025.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The proposal outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 be forwarded back to the WG-OPR for further discussion on the basis of additional comments or questions to be submitted to the European Union by the other Contracting Parties by 31 July 2025.**
- **Contracting Parties would provide additional comments on STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 4) for further discussion at the STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties would provide comments to Canada on the draft Shark Identification and Safe Handling and Release Guides, outlined in STACTIC WP 25-14, by 04 July 2025.**
- **The Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) to meet prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting to finalize the outstanding items identified in STACTIC WP 25-11.**

8. Report and recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)

The Editorial Drafting Group (EDG) met in November 2024 to review the 2025 draft NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) (STACTIC WP 24-30). The EDG forwarded a few items to STACTIC for consideration, which were addressed under other agenda items.

9. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM

Canada proposed additional control measures relating to vessels engaging in non-compliant activities while employing the derogation from observer coverage (Article 30) in STACTIC WP 25-12. Contracting Parties provided initial comments, and some concerns were noted, including potential due process issues, challenges with deploying an observer for an entire year after a vessels derogation eligibility had been temporarily revoked, and the differences in trip lengths between Contracting Parties. Canada presented a revised proposal in STACTIC WP 25-12 (Rev.), and Contracting Parties agreed to provide any further comments to Canada in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and Iceland pointed out, that they can not support the proposal as it stands, and they would like to further discuss it at the STACTIC Annual Meeting 2025.

The European Union proposed the addition of a new article in the NAFO CEM obligating all vessels with length overall >15 meters operating in the NRA to be equipped with and to maintain continuously operational an Automatic Identification System (AIS) in STACTIC WP 25-13, recognizing the usefulness of the tool for inspection planning and monitoring and control purposes and stressing the already existing obligation stemming from other international instruments for the currently authorized vessels to be equipped with AIS. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for their proposal and shared experiences with AIS to support an ongoing conversation about AIS implementation in NAFO, noting that other RFMOs are discussing and adopting specific measures on AIS. Contracting Parties discussed various aspects of AIS, such as cost, reliability, resolution, frequency of signals, and the implications of satellite services being in the public domain. One

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Contracting Party outlined areas of concern with using AIS, questioning how the data would be received, stored, and for how long. Another Contracting Party noted that potentially not all vessels fishing in the NRA meet the IMO AIS carriage requirement of 300 GT. Following a specific question by a Contracting Party, the European Union clarified that the intention was not to replace the current Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) but rather provide inspectors with an additional monitoring, control and enforcement tool.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada will present a revised version of STACTIC WP 25-12 (Rev.) at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties provide any additional comments to the European Union on STACTIC WP 25-13 ahead of the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties to consider sharing experiences on the use of AIS as monitoring, control and surveillance tool.**

10. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM

The NAFO Secretariat presented a summary of the implementation of Article 4 in STACTIC WP 25-06, noting that three research plans have been received to date in 2025.

11. Review of specific measures in Article 6 of the NAFO CEM

a. Measures relating to the cod fishery

In accordance with Article 6.11 of the NAFO CEM, Contracting Parties reviewed the measures referred to in paragraphs 8 (i) and 8 (ii), adopted in COM Doc. 24-10. It was noted that, to date, the new measures have not been utilized, but that a fulsome discussion on the measures should take place at the 2025 Annual Meeting and requested that the Secretariat conduct a similar analysis to the yellowtail flounder analysis in preparation for those discussions. The United Kingdom welcomed further comments on Contracting Parties' experiences in using the measures, prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

b. Measures relating to the yellowtail flounder fishery

In accordance with Article 6.12 of the NAFO CEM, STACTIC is required to review the provisions in paragraphs 6.3(g) and 8 bis. It was noted that there has been insufficient fishing activity to inform an analysis of measures at this time, and that further information would be required to complete the review. It was agreed that the Secretariat will provide an update to the analysis that was presented in STACTIC WP 24-26 for presentation at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The European Union noted the importance of continuing the discussion on the opportunity to remove several derogations not actually used, and invited other Contracting Parties to consider looking at derogations in a horizontal manner, to avoid more ad-hoc rules creating confusion and lack of clarity for inspectors.

c. Numbering of Article 6.8 of the NAFO CEM

Contracting Parties discussed the numbering of Article 6.8, as recommended at the November 2024 EDG Meeting. The United Kingdom proposed re-numbering of Article 6.8 in STACTIC WP 25-15 (Rev.). Contracting Parties agreed that Article 6.8 requires re-numbering, but noted that the text of the articles will also be under review at the 2025 Annual Meeting. As such, it was agreed to continue discussions at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **With guidance from interested Contracting Parties, the Secretariat will conduct an analysis of the available data to facilitate the review of the measures outlined in Article 6.8(i) and 6.8(ii) of the NAFO CEM.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat will update the analysis on the yellowtail flounder fishery, outlined in STACTIC WP 24-26, for presentation at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Article 6.8 of the NAFO CEM requires re-numbering, and that discussions on the re-numbering will continue at the 2025 Annual Meeting.**

12. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures

Following the adoption of the changes in the NAFO CEM relating to surveillance procedures (COM Doc. 24-06), it was agreed that STACTIC will consider whether a standardized template for sightings reports is required. Canada noted that the current process was the most practical at this time, but will evaluate whether a standardized template would improve the process. The European Union offered to engage with Canada on a possible way forward, if needed.

Norway raised a question on whether the amendment of Article 38.3(c)(i)(5), that was adopted in COM Doc. 24-17 was intended to prohibit directed fishing for cod in Division 3L without the use of a sorting grid when there is no observer on board, noting that it is not prohibited under Article 13.9. Norway, together with Canada agreed to review this issue with the potential to bring a proposal forward at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Norway, together with Canada, agreed to review this issue with the potential to bring a proposal forward at the 2025 Annual Meeting.**

13. Discussion on the definition of directed fishery and bycatches

It was noted that the Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area has not yet taken place, and the Secretariat agreed to keep STACTIC informed on the outcomes of the discussion in the working group.

The NAFO Secretariat presented instances of the use of terms other than “directed fishery” in the NAFO CEM in STACTIC EDG-WP 24-02. It was noted that a review was required of these instances to determine if there is a need for alignment of terms, and it was agreed to forward this to the EDG for discussion at their next meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The EDG will review the identified cases in STACTIC EDG-WP 24-02 where similar terms to “directed fishery” were used in the NAFO CEM with the view to standardize the terms in alignment with the established definition within the NAFO CEM.**
- **The Secretariat will inform STACTIC on the progress of the discussions in the WG-BDS.**

14. Introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)

The United Kingdom proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Working Group on the Introduction of Flux UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX) in STACTIC WP 25-01. This was a joint proposal from the United Kingdom, the European Union and Norway. Contracting Parties thanked the United Kingdom for the proposal and offered some comments on the draft ToRs to ensure the scope did not presuppose a commitment to adopting FLUX. Contracting Parties wanted to ensure an objective analysis is

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performed and proper endorsements are received from the Commission throughout the process. Comments from Contracting Parties were incorporated into the proposal to address procedural concerns, and STACTIC agreed on the final draft of the ToRs outlined in STACTIC WP 25-01 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that the FLUX standard was agreed in NEAFC, and thus encouraged Contracting Parties to implement the same format in NAFO, since several Parties in NAFO are also Parties in NEAFC and some vessels operate in both RFMOs.

Gareth Norman, the Head of Fisheries Systems for the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), provided a presentation on Using FLUX for International Fisheries Data Exchange. Contracting Parties engaged in a conversation on the presentation and thanked Gareth and the United Kingdom for their efforts.

It was **agreed** that:

- **To move forward with the Working Group on the Introduction of FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX) as outlined in the Terms of Reference in STACTIC WP 25-01 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).**

15. Practical application of port State measures in NAFO

At the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting, it was agreed that Contracting Parties reflect on STACTIC WP 24-20 (Rev. 5) and consider whether a uniform approach to the calculation of the percent difference in the PSC3 forms in NAFO is needed. It was noted that Contracting Parties have two different ways of completing this calculation. There was discussion on whether Contracting Parties need to have the same method for calculating percent differences in PSC3 forms, as the enforcement rules are different in each Party, and that there are many factors that need to be considered, such as quantity of species, if selecting a threshold.

Some Contracting Parties expressed concern with maintaining two different models, and while agreement could not be reached on a uniform approach at this meeting, all Contracting Parties committed to further reflection on a way forward.

To assist in further discussion on this matter, the NAFO Secretariat, with assistance from interested Contracting Parties, will conduct an analysis of the port inspection data to facilitate the review of the frequency of the instances where the difference between declared weight and landed weight identified in PSC3 reports.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Secretariat, with assistance from interested Contracting Parties, will conduct an analysis of the port inspection data to facilitate the review of declared catches versus inspected landed catches and the impacts of using two different denominators.**

16. Review and evaluation of practices and procedures

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest list of Contracting Party practices and procedures in STACTIC WP 25-07.

17. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest version of the NAFO IUU list in STACTIC WP 25-09, noting that there are no vessels on the NAFO Provisional IUU List as of 10 April 2025, and noted that an updated version of the working paper will be presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The Secretariat noted that the current process of the IUU cross-listing can be cumbersome, and that data is manually extracted from multiple sources to create the list, therefore the margin for error is large.

The workload of this process is not a concern for the Secretariat. Canada suggested that tools, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), could be explored to potentially support this process. Canada acknowledged the significant workload, but highlighted the importance of this as a deterrent to IUU activity.

18. Other business

a. Inspectors' Workshop

The European Union offered to host the next Inspectors' Workshop in 2026, noting that workload issues have delayed the meeting.

b. Flag State Performance Review

The European Union highlighted the agreement from the 2024 Annual Meeting for Contracting Parties to complete the self-assessments of flag State performance for presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Canada noted that it had begun the scoping exercise and advised Contracting Parties of the significant effort that will be required to complete the process, further noting that although Canada remained committed to completing the task, the current deadline of 2026 may be somewhat ambitious and an extended timeline may need to be considered in the future to allow all Contracting Parties to complete the exercise.

c. Methods for transmitting fishing information to the NAFO Secretariat

The Delegation of Ukraine reported that they are preparing for one vessel to begin fishing activity in the NRA, but noted technological challenges related to transmittal of fishing data, as electronic communication channels have not been established in Ukraine. Ukraine is exploring the option of connecting one vessel directly to the Secretariat on a temporary basis to transmit fishing data. The Secretariat noted that this approach has not been used before, therefore challenges are unknown. Canada and the European Union noted they may be able to explore the possibility to offer assistance and will discuss internally whether they can support the Ukrainian vessel through their Fisheries Monitoring Center (FMC).

19. Time and place of next meeting

The next STACTIC meeting will be held in Halifax, Canada from 15–19 September 2025.

20. Adoption of report

The report was adopted on 07 May 2025, prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

21. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 hours on 07 May 2025. Contracting Parties expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chair for his leadership. The Chair and Contracting Parties thanked Norway for hosting the meeting and the NAFO Secretariat for their support.

Annex 1. List of Participants

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Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by the Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America)
2. Appointment of rapporteur
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Annual compliance review 2024
5. Annual compliance review format
6. NAFO MCS website and application development
7. Report and recommendations of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)
8. Report and recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)
9. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM
10. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM
11. Review and specific measures in Article 6 of the NAFO CEM
 - a. Measures relating to the cod fishery in Division 3M
 - b. Measures relating to the yellowtail flounder fishery
 - c. Numbering of Article 6.8 of the NAFO CEM
12. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures
13. Discussion on the definition of directed fishery and bycatches
14. Introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)
15. Practical application of port State measures in NAFO
16. Review and evaluation of practices and procedures
17. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53
18. Other business
 - a. Inspector Workshop
 - b. Flag State Performance Review
 - c. Methods for transmitting fishing information to the NAFO Secretariat
19. Time and place of next meeting
20. Adoption of report
21. Adjournment

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Annex 3. STACTIC Working Paper 25-01 (Rev. 2) “Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Working Group on the Introduction of FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX)”

Background

At the NAFO annual meeting in September 2024 the NAFO Commission agreed to request STACTIC to review the potential necessary changes and technical preparations needed to consider the introduction of the international UN/CEFACT standard “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (UN/FLUX).

The UN/FLUX standard may be used for all data exchanged between FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat. UN/FLUX can be introduced stepwise, focusing first on vessel position reports (Vessel Monitoring Systems – CEM article 29) and fishing activities data (Monitoring of Catch – CEM article 28).

STACTIC has been requested to carry out any necessary consultations with other NAFO bodies and the NAFO Executive Secretariat and present its conclusions to the NAFO Commission.

Membership

All Contracting Parties are welcome and encouraged to participate in the Working Group (WG). The WG should be comprised of representatives from Contracting Parties with an understanding of data exchange and the required technical knowledge to input into this group. Participation of JAGDM representatives and experts with experience in implementing UN/FLUX standard in other RFMOs or domestically is also encouraged.

The WG should consult JAGDM and other NAFO subsidiary bodies when deemed necessary.

The group will be chaired by Imogen Smith-Devey – UK.

Objective

To assess the necessary preparations to allow the appropriate NAFO bodies and the Commission to consider the introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the UN/FLUX standard.

Tasks

The working group will be tasked with identifying and assessing the necessary preparations to allow the appropriate NAFO bodies and the Commission to consider the introduction of electronic communication between NAFO Contracting Parties’ FMCs and the NAFO secretariat of position and fishing logbook data based on UN/FLUX standard. Conclusions of each task will be reported to STACTIC:

1. Identify technical developments, and the administrative and economic consequences to allow the NAFO Secretariat and Contracting Parties to receive, handle, and reply to data, and present that data for conservation and enforcement purposes using UN/FLUX standard.
2. Consider technical specifications of the system architecture and data flow requirements, as well as assessing the suitability of existing implementation in other RFMOs.

Following the assessment on items 1, and 2, and subject to endorsement from the necessary NAFO bodies and the Commission, the working group will seek to review the following tasks:

3. To explore and to establish testing regimes, and implementation timelines, as appropriate.
4. To consider transition arrangements, as appropriate.

5. Identify necessary amendments to the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement (CEM) to establish requirements to use UN/FLUX as the format for electronic communication between the Contracting Parties FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat.

Meetings

The WG should meet as required to perform the duties prescribed and will communicate regularly through teleconferences and electronically.

A first meeting should be organised before September 2025.

Reporting

At each STACTIC meeting, the WG chair should inform STACTIC of the WG progress and conclusions.

Additionally, the WG will report the conclusions of these tasks to the necessary NAFO bodies and the Commission once complete.