



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

06–08 May 2026
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

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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 09:00 hours on Wednesday, 06 May 2026. The Chair welcomed representatives, both in-person and virtually, from the following Contracting Parties: Canada, Denmark (in Respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Ukraine 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

The Chair introduced the provisional agenda and asked representatives if there were any comments or additions. The European Union proposed the addition of the NAFO Inspectors' Workshop under agenda item 19 (Other Business).

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 discussions on STACTIC WP 26-01 and STACTIC WP 26-02, and agenda item 6, only if the Secretariat intends to display any Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) website information that is intended exclusively for control purposes. However, there were no in-camera discussions because all attendees were government representatives or Commissioners.

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

4. Annual Compliance Review 2025

The NAFO Secretariat presented the draft Compilation of Fisheries Reports 2025 in STACTIC WP 26-01 (Rev. 3). Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for their work and provided comments and clarifications.

The NAFO Secretariat also presented the Summary of Inspection Information for 2025 in STACTIC WP 26-02 (Revised). The Secretariat noted that, following a request from the 2025 Annual Meeting, sub-totals by inspection party for at-sea and port inspections are included in Table 1 in Part I. The European Union noted that some inspection reports were submitted and uploaded to the MCS Website almost a year after the inspection took place.

The United States of America recommended that STACTIC further reflect on Part III of the working paper, questioning whether STACTIC could identify any trends or patterns in the infringements, and if any modifications to the CEMs or enforcement were needed. It was suggested that STACTIC consider whether a vessel-by-vessel analysis would provide more useful information than a year-by-year analysis.

Canada included an update on their Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) activity in STACTIC WP 26-02 (Rev. 2) and also delivered a presentation on their RPAS and processes. Contracting Parties thanked Canada for the presentation and asked follow-up questions.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the Summary of Observer Information for 2025 in STACTIC WP 26-03 (Revised). The European Union highlighted discrepancies in the submissions, particularly on missing or incorrect information. As noted in their submission, Norway explained that it's unclear how to calculate the percentage derogated in Part II (*Comparison of Fishing Activities With and Without An Observer*) of the template. Two Contracting Parties suggested basing the percent derogated on number of fishing days in the case where an observer is not on board for a whole fishing trip.

Contracting Parties acknowledged that there are varying interpretations of the template and more clear instructions would be beneficial. One Contracting Party suggested changing the language from “percent derogated” to “percent observed” to better align with the text of Article 30.4 of the CEM. The European Union highlighted that the aim of the exercise is specifically to check how Contracting Parties are implementing Article 30 and that observers collect independent information to that of the Master of the vessel. The European Union raised that four Contracting Parties had Observer and Master figures exactly matching by kilogram, which according to the European Union, suggests a lack of independent data recording. The European Union stated that in the past there had been vessels in these fisheries, that had been cited for infringements related to mis recording of catches, not identified by observers.

Contracting Parties discussed the table in the working paper titled: *Summary of fishing trips where the figures of the observer in Part 2 of the observer trip report are the same or very similar to the figures reported by the master for observed tows*. The European Union suggested changing the exercise from a calculation at the haul-by-haul level to one on the fishing trip level, as each trip has many hauls. Contracting Parties noted that the purpose of this exercise is to ensure that observers are reporting independent data. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that if there's figures that are not matching, there needs to be an explanation why. It was noted that Japan has added context as to why the figures are matching, and it may be useful for all Parties to provide similar explanations. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested adding columns to include the observer figures, master figures, and landed figures for comparison.

The United Kingdom noted that it would be useful to have clear instructions on what Contracting Parties should be including in the Article 30 reporting template, as it seems Parties have varying interpretations of how to complete the tables. Contracting Parties agreed to revisit this discussion of the Article 30 reporting template at the 2026 Annual Meeting. The NAFO Secretariat presented the first draft Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review in STACTIC WP 26-04 (Revised), and Contracting Parties provided initial comments and clarifications. Canada offered to facilitate a meeting with interested Parties to draft the conclusions and recommendations sections ahead of the 2026 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties provide any necessary revisions to STACTIC WP 26-01 (Rev. 4), STACTIC WP 26-02 (Rev. 2), STACTIC WP 26-03 (Rev. 3), and STACTIC WP 26-04 (Rev. 2) ahead of the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Canada and the Secretariat to coordinate a meeting with interested Contracting Parties to review STACTIC WP 26-04 (Rev.2), with the aim of drafting the conclusions and recommendations sections, prior to the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

5. Annual compliance review format

Canada re-presented potential revisions to the compliance review format in STACTIC WP 25-10 (Revised), which was first introduced at the STACTIC Intersessional Meeting in May 2025. The intent of the proposal was to stimulate discussion on evolving the compliance review to enhance STACTIC's core mandate of evaluating compliance in support of advising the Commission on compliance patterns, trends, issues and mitigating measures, as well as to increase compliance and Contracting Party accountability. Contracting Parties expressed support for revising the compliance review format, while also noting concerns relating to increased workload for Contracting Parties and the Secretariat. Some Contracting Parties noted that there are many

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obligations within the CEM and any revisions to the report should simplify the compliance process, rather than add to it. Canada agreed to update STACTIC WP 25-10 (Revised) for presentation at the 2026 Annual Meeting and welcomed additional comments from Contracting Parties in advance of the meeting to support the continuance of this discussion.

Canada also noted that in other RFMOs, such as the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), compliance reviews also focus on Contracting Party obligations in addition to vessel-specific obligations, and this might be something for NAFO to consider given its effectiveness in other RFMOs. Canada presented a discussion paper on an accountability process intended to address Contracting Party-level non-compliance in STACTIC WP 26-13, noting that NAFO has a process to address non-compliance at the vessel level, but not at the Contracting Party level. One way of achieving this is through a Notification Letter, as detailed in the discussion paper. Canada clarified that this type of letter would be sent from the STACTIC Chair, not from the Secretariat, to the Contracting Party to advise of non-compliance and to ask remediation.

Contracting Parties thanked Canada for the proposal and expressed support for enhancing accountability measures, while also noting concerns relating to the capacity of creating new infrastructure and processes for assessing Contracting Party non-compliance, as well as, the workload for Contracting Parties, and whether this falls under the mandate of STACTIC. Canada welcomes further comments on the working paper, with the intention of providing a revised version at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties would provide comments to Canada on STACTIC WP 25-10 (Revised) and STACTIC WP 26-13 ahead of the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting to support further discussion.**

6. NAFO MCS website and application development

The NAFO Secretariat presented updated functionalities of the observer application. The Secretariat highlighted the observer status flow, which displays the flow of the observer message from the FMC to the Secretariat. The observer application is designed to operate without internet access, as data is stored locally within the browser until internet access is available. The Secretariat offered to provide more detailed demonstrations of the application to Contracting Parties, if desired. Some Contracting Parties, including the United Kingdom, will start utilizing the observer application during 2026; usage of the application will serve as an alternate means of reporting both the daily observer reports (OBRs) as outlined in Annex II.G, and the observer trip report as outlined in Annex II.M.

The Secretariat was also asked to provide an update on the status of the ePSC system. It was noted that due to the workload of finalizing the observer application, there has not been much progress made on the ePSC system, but that the work will be continuing.

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

In STACTIC WP 26-07, Canada proposed amendments to Article 6.3(g)(iii) with the intent of applying the same procedures to 100% port inspections within the yellowtail fishery as in other NAFO fisheries with the same 100% port inspection requirement. Contracting Parties offered minor comments and clarifying questions, broadly agreeing with the intention to ensure port inspection processes are consistent, though discussing whether placement in Article 6 is the best course of action. Canada will continue to engage with Contracting Parties on the proposal with the intention of providing a revised version of the paper ahead of the 2026 Annual Meeting.

The European Union proposed amendments to Article 5.9 of the NAFO CEM in STACTIC WP 26-08 (Revised). The European Union noted that the proposal aims to strengthen transparency and accountability in quota

transfers by introducing mandatory notification requirements for vessel-specific allocations. Contracting Parties expressed support for developing a more transparent system, while also raising questions around how vessel-specific allocations would be monitored. One Contracting Party noted that domestically, quota transfers are not designated to one vessel at the time of the transfer. Contracting Parties discussed whether monitoring of the quota can be done by the Parties themselves and whether this could be a voluntary system rather than a uniform approach. The European Union clarified that the proposed amendment was not changing the practice of current quota transfers between Contracting Parties. Rather the proposal is to address vessel specific quota transfers when a Contracting Party has no quota allocated for that particular stock in accordance with Annex I.A. The proposal would allow inspectors to better plan control, by allowing them access to information on specific vessels, their quota uptake and thus what specific bycatch rules should apply. The European Union mentioned that the monitoring of vessel specific quota uptake would not be a new task for the Secretariat. However, an interim solution would be required, where the communication of exhausted quota would be provided to the Executive Secretary for disclosure to Contracting Parties with an inspection presence in the NAFO RA. The European Union also thanked Contracting Parties for their initial comments and noted that they remain open to further feedback on the proposal.

The European Union presented a proposal on surveillance procedures in STACTIC WP 26-09, which included proposed amendments to Article 33 and Annex IV.A of the NAFO CEM. The European Union proposed the inclusion of the term “footage” to the surveillance procedures. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for the proposal and agreed to forward the proposal to the Commission for adoption.

Canada proposed a recognition for joint At-Sea Inspections under the NAFO Joint Inspection and Surveillance scheme in STACTIC WP 26-10. The European Union expressed support for the proposal but had concerns with the changes to the inspection report and questioned what the process would be if there are three Contracting Parties on one vessel. They proposed a discussion on the paper at the Inspectors’ Workshop at the end of May.

It was agreed that:

- **Contracting Parties provide comments to Canada on STACTIC WP 26-07 ahead of the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting for further discussion.**
- **Contracting Parties provide comments to the European Union on STACTIC WP 26-08 (Revised) ahead of the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **The proposal on surveillance procedures in STACTIC WP 26-09 be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **Contracting Parties provide comments to Canada on STACTIC WP 26-10 ahead of the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **The Inspectors’ Workshop continue discussions on STACTIC WP 26-10 at its upcoming meeting.**

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

a. Measures relating to the cod fishery in Division 3M

In accordance with Article 6.13 of the NAFO CEM, Contracting Parties are tasked with reviewing the measures referred to in Article 6.10 to assess whether the provisions led to an increase in 3M redfish bycatches or directed fishery.

The United Kingdom delivered a presentation outlining its internal procedures for monitoring use of the derogations in Article 6.10. In this context, the United Kingdom presented several practical tools, including flow diagrams and a MS Excel-based tracking tool, designed to facilitate haul-by-haul monitoring of catch levels and

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to support understanding of the measures. The United Kingdom confirmed its willingness to share these tools with other Contracting Parties and invited feedback to support further refinement. Contracting Parties thanked the United Kingdom for their presentation.

Contracting Parties requested that the Secretariat update the data analysis of the cod fishery in Division 3M, which was presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting in STACTIC WP 25-24. The Secretariat will provide an updated analysis at the 2026 Annual Meeting which will include 2026 fishing data to support STACTIC's review of the measures.

b. Measures relating to the yellowtail flounder fishery

The Chair noted that in accordance with Article 6.14 of the NAFO CEM, STACTIC is required to assess if the provisions in Articles 6.3(g) and 6.9(a) led to an increase on American plaice bycatches or directed fishery on American plaice; and review Articles 6.3(g) and 6.9(a). The Secretariat presented an updated analysis of the yellowtail fishery in STACTIC WP 26-12, and Contracting Parties agreed to review the analysis ahead of the 2026 Annual Meeting. The Secretariat will provide an updated analysis at the Annual Meeting which will include 2026 fishing data.

c. Measures relating to the squid fishery

In accordance with Article 11.9 of the NAFO CEM, the exemption referred to in Articles 11.2 to 11.8 shall apply during 2025 and 2026 and be reviewed by STACTIC. Japan explained that sufficient data has not yet been accumulated and indicated that it may propose a further extension of the derogation. Due to the absence of sufficient data at this time, Contracting Parties agreed to discuss the review of the measures to the 2026 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will update the data analysis of the cod fishery in Division 3M for presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat will update the yellowtail fishery analysis in STACTIC WP 26-12 for presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties will review the measures relating to the cod, yellowtail and squid fisheries at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

9. Update from the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)

The review of the 2026 draft NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) was completed by correspondence, so there was no meeting of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG) in 2025. Iceland noted an inconsistency in the language of Article 38 (j) of the CEM, and the European Union noted an inconsistency in the language of Article 5. These discrepancies will be forwarded to the EDG for review.

10. Report and recommendations of the Working Group on the Introduction of FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX)

The United Kingdom recently welcomed a new Chair of the WG-FLUX, Luke Smith. The Chair has been in contact with the Secretariat to plan an in-person meeting in advance of the 2026 Annual Meeting. If any Contracting Party is interested in hosting the meeting, they are encouraged to contact the Secretariat. The United Kingdom noted that tasking from the Annual Meeting was for the WG-FLUX and the Secretariat to assess what information is required to allow for a complete cost analysis to operate and maintain the current NAF system, a hybrid NAF and FLUX model, and a single FLUX model.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The WG-FLUX Chair and the NAFO Secretariat will coordinate a meeting in advance of the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

11. Review of the Electronic observation program

In accordance with Article 30.13 of the 2026 NAFO CEM, STACTIC is tasked with reviewing the implementation of the Electronic Observation Program. The European Union noted that there have not been any operators to date utilizing the Electronic Observation Program. Discussions on this item will continue at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

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

The NAFO Secretariat was tasked with reporting on its experience in the implementation of binding measures adopted by the Commission at the 2025 Annual Meeting, which came into force in January 2026 (NAFO/25-252 of 25 November 2025). The Secretariat indicated that there's nothing to report at this time. Canada requested that for future reviews, the Secretariat produces a paper with a list of the new NAFO CEM measures, as a reminder for Contracting Parties.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will produce a paper with a list of the new NAFO CEM measures, to catalogue the review exercise.**

13. Discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches

Contracting Parties discussed the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches, noting the inconsistencies in the interpretation of these definitions. The United Kingdom suggested an exercise to address inconsistencies in the terminology within the CEM, but not changing the definitions themselves per se; there are instances in the CEM where the terms "directed" and "targeted" may be used incorrectly. STACTIC will revisit the discussion paper on instances of "directed fishing" in the CEM, and the Secretariat will update previous work (e.g. STACTIC EDG-WP 24-01 and STACTIC EDG-WP 24-02) to facilitate further discussion at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Discussions on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches continue at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat will update previous work (e.g. STACTIC EDG-WP 24-01 and STACTIC EDG-WP 24-02) to facilitate further discussion at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

14. Flag State Performance Review

At the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting, it was agreed that all Contracting Parties will complete the self-assessment of flag State performance in accordance with the criteria set out in the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for flag State performance for initial presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.

Norway submitted a draft document, based on a review conducted in 2018 for the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC). Some Contracting Parties noted that they were in the process of drafting the assessment.

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Contracting Parties discussed both the purpose and feasibility of the exercise, noting that the self-assessment is onerous and may result in the duplication of effort. Norway noted that the purpose of the summary report is to identify improvements in the NAFO CEM, but it's unclear how this will be achieved. The European Union questioned whether this assessment would be necessary for every Contracting Party, including those that don't conduct fishing activity in the NAFO Regulatory Area. Some Contracting Parties suggested using Norway's assessment as a working model and selecting the criteria within the assessment that feels useful for NAFO. Iceland suggested creating a table similar to the one in STACTIC WP 26-03 (Revised) as a way to summarize each flag State assessment against the FAO Guidelines.

It was agreed that Contracting Parties will postpone the deadline for the assessment to the 2027 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Discussions on the assessment will continue at the 2026 Annual Meeting, particularly on the purpose, format, and desired outcome of the assessment.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will complete the self-assessment of flag State performance in accordance with the criteria set out in the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for flag State performance for initial presentation at the 2027 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties will continue discussions on the self-assessment of flag State performance at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

15. Practical application of port State measures in NAFO

At the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting, it was agreed that discussions on the practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO continue at the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Canada noted that NPFC are utilising the FAO Global Information Exchange System (GIES) and shared its experience uploading inspection data to the platform. In doing so, Canada highlighted that the GIES applies a methodology for calculating percentage differences between landed and logged catches that differs from the two approaches currently used within NAFO during PSC inspection processes. This is something Canada is reviewing, with the intention of providing additional information at the 2026 Annual Meeting. The European Union noted that there was a recommendation to move towards the GIES system in NAFO, but that might take a long time for some Contracting Parties to implement.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Discussions on the practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO will continue at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

16. Review of Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM

The United States of America presented a discussion paper on amendments to NAFO's Rules on Confidentiality in STACTIC WP 26-11. The paper serves as a starting point for updating the Rules on Confidentiality within Annex II.B. and draws from processes within other RFMOs.

Contracting Parties thanked the United States of America for the proposal and expressed support for updating Annex II.B. The Secretariat has provided initial comments on the proposal, which will be reflected in the revised working paper. Contracting Parties agreed to review the proposal ahead of the 2026 Annual Meeting so that further discussions can take place.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Discussions on the review of Annex II.B will continue at the 2026 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

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

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest version of the NAFO Provisional IUU list in STACTIC WP 26-05, noting that there are two additions to the provisional IUU list. An updated version of the working paper will be presented at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

18. Review and evaluation of practices and procedures

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest list of Contracting Party practices and procedures in STACTIC WP 26-06.

19. Other business

a. NAFO Inspectors' Workshop

The European Union will host the NAFO Inspectors' Workshop in Lisbon, Portugal from May 26–28, 2026. The European Union requested confirmation of participation from Contracting Parties, and whether they plan on presenting at the meeting.

20. Time and place of next meeting

The next STACTIC meeting will be held in Vilnius, Lithuania, from 21–25 September 2026.

21. Adoption of the report

The report was adopted on 08 May 2026, prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

22. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 hours on 08 May 2026. Contracting Parties expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chair for his leadership. The Chair and Contracting Parties thanked 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 2025
5. Annual compliance review format
6. NAFO MCS website and application development
7. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM
8. Review of 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. Measures relating to the squid fishery
9. Update from the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)
10. Report and recommendations of the Working Group on the Introduction of FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX)
11. Review of the Electronic observation program
12. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures
13. Discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches
14. Flag State Performance Review
15. Practical application of port State measures in NAFO
16. Review of Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM
17. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53
18. Review and evaluation of practices and procedures
19. Other business
 - a. NAFO Inspector' Workshop
20. Time and place of next meeting
21. Adoption of report
22. Adjournment