



## Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

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In all correspondence,  
please refer to:

NAFO/23-128

19 May 2023

TO: All Contracting Parties;  
Representatives of SC; and  
Representatives of WG-EAFFM

Dear Colleagues,

**Subject:** Provisional Agenda – *NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting, 20–22 July 2023 in Edinburgh, United Kingdom*

Further to NAFO/23-110 of 20 April 2023 and pursuant to Rule 4.2 of the *NAFO Rules of Procedure: Commission*, please find enclosed the provisional agenda for the *NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting, 20–22 July 2023 in Edinburgh, United Kingdom*.

This meeting is being held back-to-back with the *NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting*. For those Contracting Parties that are unable to attend the meeting in-person, Webex capabilities will be provided.

All relevant meeting documentation will be accessible on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint at <https://meetings.nafo.int/wgs/eaffm> as it becomes available.

For logistical purposes, we would appreciate receiving from Contracting Parties the names of delegates planning to participate in the meeting both in-person and virtually. We kindly ask your assistance in providing this information to the members of your meeting delegation. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir  
Executive Secretary

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Enclosed: Provisional Agenda (03 pgs.) and Tentative Timetable (01 pgs.)

*NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting*

20–22 July 2023  
Edinburgh, United Kingdom

**Draft Provisional Agenda**

- 1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America)**
- 2. Appointment of Rapporteur**
- 3. Adoption of Agenda**
- 4. Presentation of Scientific Council responses to Commission requests for advice (COM Doc. 22-20) relevant to WG-EAFFM**

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted the requests for scientific advice in COM Doc. 22-20. The Scientific Council responses to the requests that are relevant to the WG-EAFFM will be discussed under this agenda item.*

**5. VME Assessments**

**a. Review of VME areas 7a, 11a, 14a, and 14b (COM Request #6.a)**

*These areas were adopted at the 2021 Annual meeting and are in place until 31 December 2023 (COM Doc. 21-16). The WG-EAFFM will review the work of the Scientific Council (as per request 5.b.i of the Commission requests for scientific advice (COM Doc. 22-20)) and develop recommendations to forward to the Commission under this agenda item.*

**b. Review of Article 17.3bis of the NAFO CEM**

*The current text of Article 17.3bis will need to be updated depending on the recommendations to be forwarded to the Commission on the VME areas 7a, 11a, 14a, and 14b.*

**c. Data for VME and SAI assessments (COM Request #6.b)**

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted recommendations 1 and 2 (from COM-SC Doc. 22-02) tasking the Secretariat to develop and host relevant data sets to support SC's work. An update on this will be provided under this agenda item.*

**d. Work towards developing operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA (COM Request #6.c)**

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted recommendation 9 (from COM-SC Doc. 22-02) requesting the SC and WG-EAFFM inform a Commission discussion on operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA.*

## 6. Ecosystem Roadmap

### a. Exploration of effective methods to communicate TCI-related information (COM Request #5.b.ii)

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted recommendation 5 (from COM-SC Doc. 22-02) tasking WG-EAFFM explore effective methods to communicate TCI-related information to the Commission, in particular when 2TCI is, or is expected to be exceeded.*

### b. Management considerations for occasions in which the 2TCI ecosystem reference point were to be exceeded (COM Request #5.b.i)

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted recommendation 6 (from COM-SC Doc. 22-02) tasking WG-EAFFM to explore possible underlying scientific causes and management considerations in the rare event when 2TCI is or is expected to be exceeded, similar to those when exceptional circumstances are triggered within MSE. Additionally, at the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted recommendation 8 (from COM-SC Doc. 22-02) tasking WG-EAFFM explore how NAFO might consider these management options, including the potential roles of WG-EAFFM and WG-RBMS.*

### c. Discussion of Ecosystem summary sheets for subareas 3M and 3LNO (COM Request #5.c)

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted request 5.c (in COM Doc. 22-20) to complete the development of the 3LNO ecosystem summary sheet (ESS), advance as much as possible the development of the 3M ESS.*

## 7. Outcomes of the NAFO Informal group of WG-EAFFM on “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)”

*The informal working group on “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)” met on 20 March 2023. The co-Chairs of the working group will provide a summary of the discussions (outlined in COM-SC WP 23-01) under this agenda item.*

## 8. SC advice on potential impact of activities other than fishing in the Convention Area (COM request #12).

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted request 12 (in COM Doc. 22-20) requesting the NAFO Secretariat and the Scientific Council with other international organizations, such as the FAO and ICES to inform the Scientific Council's work related to the potential impact of activities other than fishing in the Convention Area.*

## 9. SC advice on scientific trawl surveys in VME in closed areas (COM request #3)

*At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted request 3 (in COM Doc. 22-20) requesting Scientific Council continue its evaluation of the impact of scientific trawl surveys on VME in closed areas and the effect of excluding surveys from these areas on stock assessments.*

**10. Response from STACTIC on Recommendation 4 of COM-SC Doc. 20-03**

*At the 2020 Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted recommendation 4 in COM-SC Doc. 20-03 tasking STACTIC to insert a footnote into Annex II.N of the NAFO CEM to clarify and match the definition of start and end time of fishing in Annex II.M of the NAFO CEM (see Annex 4 of COM-SC Doc. 20-03). STACTIC has had subsequent discussion on this item at their 2021 and 2022 meetings, and at the 2022 Annual Meeting agreed to forward STACTIC WP 22-46 (Rev. 5) to the WG-EAFFM for information as STACTIC continues its discussions on this matter.*

**11. Review of the Terms of Reference for WG-EAFFM**

*At the August 2022 WG-EAFFM meeting, it was noted by the co-Chairs that the terms of reference for the working group (FC-SC Doc. 14-05) were due for review. WG-EAFFM participants were requested to reflect on this for discussion at this meeting.*

**12. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review Panel Recommendations**

*As agreed at the 2019 Annual Meeting, the NAFO Secretariat will provide an update on the progress in addressing the “Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations from the 2018 Report of the NAFO Performance Review Panel” (COM Doc. 19-32). There are three remaining recommendations addressed to WG-EAFFM, Recommendations 1, 14 and 37, and these will be discussed under this agenda item. Additionally, regarding recommendation 16, STACTIC agreed to forward STACTIC WP 22-19 to WG-EAFFM for information.*

**13. Other Business****14. Recommendations****15. Adoption of the Report****16. Adjournment**

*NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting*

20–22 July 2023  
Edinburgh, United Kingdom

**Tentative Timetable\***

<b>Thursday, 20 July</b>	
13:30 – 14:00 hrs	Registration
14:00 – 17:00 hrs	Meeting
<b>Friday, 21 July</b>	
09:00 – 12:30 hrs	Meeting
12:30 – 14:00 hrs	Lunch Break
14:00 – 17:00 hrs	Meeting
<b>Saturday, 22 July</b>	
09:00 – 12:30 hrs	Meeting
12:30 – 14:00 hrs	Lunch Break
14:00 – 17:00 hrs	Meeting (closing)

*\*times are subject to change at decision of meeting*