



44th ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2022

**Update on Data Classification – NAFO Meeting Documentation Policy:
Performance Review Recommendation #26
(Prepared by the NAFO Secretariat)**

Preamble

The *Ad Hoc* virtual NAFO Website Re-Design Working Group: Data Classification has been working to develop a policy regarding the posting and distribution of meeting documentation, and thereby enhance the transparency of the Organization.

The goal is to present a policy regarding the posting and distribution of meeting documentation to STACFAD for consideration and adoption at the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO.

The *Ad Hoc* virtual NAFO Website Re-Design Working Group: Data Classification met 12 April 2022 via WebEx. At this meeting, the *Ad hoc* Virtual Working Group considered a hybrid policy as a possible viable solution which could ensure transparency without impeding efficiency.

The potential hybrid meeting documentation policy as was presented in page 2 of STACFAD WP 22-02 (Revised):

- **Prior to the start of a meeting** – NAFO meeting documentation, such as working papers, which is received and deemed open access be made available to the general public on the NAFO website.
- **During the meeting** – NAFO meeting documentation, such as working papers and subsequent revisions, be posted on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint.
- **Following the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September** – The majority of meeting documentation, such as working papers which are adopted during the Annual Meeting, are converted into a NAFO document and made available to the general public on the NAFO website.

It was noted that the focus of the considerations of such a policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation publicly is two-fold (access to working documents and Determination of Working Papers that are subject to confidentiality rules). The Chair further noted that these considerations are more appropriately applied to meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

Proposed Recommendations

The *Ad Hoc* virtual Working Group **agreed** that a hybrid meeting documentation policy could ensure transparency without impeding efficiency.

In 2022, the *Ad Hoc* virtual Working Group agreed to recommend the following to STACFAD at the 2022 Annual Meeting ([COM Doc. 22-02](#)).

- In terms of development of a policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation publicly, a hybrid meeting documentation policy (as detailed below) be adopted by NAFO as an interim measure. This hybrid meeting documentation policy would be reviewed by STACFAD after one year (i.e. at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO).
- In terms of development of guidelines for classification of working documents, an interim measure be adopted that the Contracting Party submitting a Working Paper is responsible to designate that Working Paper as “open access” and made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting. If the Contracting Party does not make such a designation, then it will not be made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting. These guidelines for classification would be reviewed by STACFAD after one year (i.e., at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO).

A hybrid meeting documentation policy includes:

- **Prior to the start of any NAFO meeting**, NAFO meeting documentation that is received and deemed “open access”, such as a working paper, is made available to the general public on the NAFO website and to the meeting participants on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint.
- **Prior to the start of any NAFO meeting**, NAFO meeting documentation that is received and deemed “restricted”, such as a working paper, is made available only to the meeting participants on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint.
- **During the meeting**, NAFO meeting documentation, such as working papers and subsequent revisions, is posted on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint, but not made publicly available on the NAFO website. (This is the current practice)
- **Following the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September**, meeting documentation that is adopted, such as a working paper, is converted into a NAFO document and made available to the general public on the NAFO website with the exception of Working Papers deemed “restricted”. (This is also the current practice)

Potential Impact of the Proposed Recommendations

The recommendation of the *Ad Hoc* virtual Working Group closely mirrors NAFO’s current practice of providing meeting documentation therefore its impact would be limited. The key difference would be that Contracting Parties would now have the opportunity to deem its Working Papers as “open access” and make it available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the start of any meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat, in consultation with the *Ad Hoc* virtual Working Group, will continue to work intersessionally on developing data classification guidelines of pro-forma meeting documentation such as a Working Papers prepared by the Secretariat annually for information purposes.

The hybrid meeting documentation policy and interim classification guidelines would be reviewed by STACFAD after one year (i.e. at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO).

For your convenience, please find enclosed the current policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation for each NAFO body (Annex 1).

Annex 1. Current policy for posting and distribution of meeting documentation

The table below details the current policies of each NAFO body posting and distribution of meeting documentation.

NAFO Bodies, Standing Committees, and Working Groups	Current policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation
NAFO Scientific Council	<p>The working papers of the Scientific Council are neither publicly available on the NAFO website nor available on the password protected NAFO Members' pages.</p> <p>All final SCS (Scientific Council Summary) and SCR (Scientific Council Research) documents are publicly available on the NAFO website.</p>
NAFO Commission	<p>The working papers of the Commission are not publicly available on the NAFO website however they are available on the password protected NAFO Members' pages.</p> <p>Any working papers that are adopted at the Annual Meeting in September, are converted into NAFO documents which are then made publicly available on the NAFO website.</p>
STACFAD	<p>At the 2019 Annual Meeting of NAFO, STACFAD agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a meeting, STACFAD Working Papers will be made publicly available on the NAFO website (https://www.nafo.int/) with the exception of Working Papers deemed restricted (e.g., personnel matters). <p>It was further agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exclusive STACFAD Username and Password will no longer be required to access STACFAD documentation on the NAFO Members' pages. • STACFAD documentation will be available in the NAFO Meetings SharePoint (https://meetings.nafo.int/) with the exception of Working Papers deemed restricted (e.g., personnel matters). • Following a meeting, STACFAD Working Papers will be made publicly available on the NAFO website (https://www.nafo.int/) with the exception of Working Papers deemed restricted (e.g., personnel matters). • General Council (GC) and Commission Documents will be made publicly available on the NAFO website (https://www.nafo.int/) with the exception of documents deemed restricted (e.g., personnel matters).

NAFO Bodies, Standing Committees, and Working Groups	Current policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation
STACTIC	<p>At the 2019 Annual Meeting of NAFO, STACTIC agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any Contracting Party can request to have their own STACTIC working papers posted to the NAFO public website going forward. <p>It was further agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NAFO vessel registry (vessel flag State, vessel name, radio call sign) be posted to the NAFO public website. The NAFO Secretariat consolidate the information on the Research Vessels page of the NAFO Members website for review at the 2020 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, and STACTIC will determine if it is appropriate to be posted to the NAFO public website. The Provisional Catch Information page of the NAFO Members pages will remain on the NAFO Members pages website and not be posted to the NAFO public website. Contracting Parties review the material on the Practices and Procedures page to determine which information may be posted to the public website, and which information should be migrated to the NAFO MCS Website at the 2020 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. The NAFO Secretariat consolidate the location and gear details information, and create a map showing the locations of the lost gear for review at the 2020 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, and STACTIC will determine if it is appropriate to be posted to the NAFO public website. The 3M redfish fishery real time catch uptake (showing total catch amounts) be posted to the NAFO public website. Any Contracting Party can request to have their own STACTIC working papers posted to the NAFO public website going forward. <p>Any STACTIC working papers that are adopted by the Commission at the Annual Meeting in September, are converted into NAFO documents which are then made publicly available on the NAFO website.</p>