

Committed to **Conservation** and **Management** of **Fisheries** and **Ecosystems** in the Northwest Atlantic



NORTHWEST ATLANTIC
FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

NAFO Annual Report 2017



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NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

Annual Report 2017

This Annual Report summarizes and highlights discussions, decisions and events of NAFO during 2017. It does not replace the detailed NAFO meeting reports, such as *Scientific Council Reports and Meeting Proceedings of the Commission*, which are accessible on the NAFO Website.

www.nafo.int



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May 2018

A YEAR IN REVIEW



Fred Kingston, NAFO Executive Secretary, gave a presentation on NAFO at a side event organized by the FAO at the “UN Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)” Preparatory Committee in New York, New York, United States of America, 18 July. Photo courtesy of the FAO.

The highlight of 2017 was the coming-into-force of significant amendments to the NAFO Convention on 18 May. These amendments, which were agreed in principle in 2007, modernize NAFO, particularly by incorporating an ecosystem approach framework to fisheries management. This approach includes safeguarding the marine environment, conserving marine biodiversity and minimizing the risk of long term adverse effects of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem. The amendments also streamline NAFO’s decision-making process, strengthen the obligations of Contracting Parties, flag States and port States, and institute a formal dispute settlement mechanism. In practice, many of the obligations arising from these amendments had already been applied provisionally in 2008, after the amendments were first agreed, thereby allowing NAFO, for instance, to put in measures to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems.

The coming-into-force of these amendments was timely given recent developments related to international governance. In particular, it comes as the United Nations is about to launch negotiations to establish an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS (the UN Convention on the Law of

the Sea) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction – the so-called “BBNJ process”. As NAFO’s President noted in his opening remarks at the 2017 Annual Meeting of NAFO, with its efforts and commitment to ensuring the “*long term and sustainable use of the fishery resources*” and the safeguarding of the “*marine resources in which these resources are found*”, can be seen as “*a model for best practices in international regional fisheries governance*”.

Overall, 2017 was a very busy year. In the lead up to the Annual Meeting there were 25 intersessional meetings of Contracting Parties, both face-to-face and virtual – or over two meetings per month. The development of the management strategy for Greenland halibut alone was the main subject of five (5) of these meetings and took up a lot of time from certain managers and scientists, as well as the Secretariat. In addition the Secretariat had to steer the transition to the amended Convention, including adjustments related to the new decision-making structure and to the new financial arrangements that this transition entailed. The fact that this transition proceeded virtually seamlessly, particularly with the heavy meeting schedule, is a credit to the hard work and professionalism of NAFO staff.

Unfortunately for them, 2018 looks to be just as busy!

The Secretariat also welcomed the addition of Ms. Whitney McEvoy as the term Office Administrator, admirably filling in for Sarah Guile, while she is on maternity leave.

The 2017 Annual Meeting in Montréal, Québec, Canada was the first annual meeting held under the amended Convention. In addition, to the traditional total allowable catch (TAC) and quota decisions, significant decisions were made regarding the following:

- **NAFO agreed to a management strategy for Greenland halibut**, currently NAFO's most valuable commercial species. This management plan will be in force from 2018 to 2023 and the TAC for this stock will be adjusted annually depending on the agreed Harvest Control Rule (HCR).
- **NAFO agreed to relaunch its second Performance Review**. This Performance Review should be completed by the next Annual Meeting in September 2018 and will address: conservation and management; compliance and enforcement; governance; science; international cooperation; financial and administrative issues. The previous NAFO Performance Review took place in 2011, with all of its recommendations having been subsequently addressed. The second Performance Review will also assess how NAFO has addressed these recommendations.
- **NAFO agreed to protect the entire New England Seamount chain**, amending the boundary of the area closed to bottom fishing

to include all peaks in the chain up to the USA's 200-mile limit. The protection of the entire chain as a whole will help in sustaining the biological connectivity and function of seamount communities at all depths. In addition, procedures leading to these closures were further streamlined.

- **NAFO agreed to a benchmark assessment of cod on the Flemish Cap in 2018**. This benchmark assessment will explore the robustness of the current assessment model and evaluate alternatives including multi-species models, with a number of international experts being invited to review. This assessment aims to improve confidence in future assessments of this stock.

On the science side, Scientific Council's assessments in 2017 did not show major changes in the status of any of the stocks managed by NAFO. The cod stock on the Flemish Cap remained at a high level, however several years of below average recruitment has meant that the stock would be expected to decline in the near future if it continues to be fished at the current rate. Consequently, Scientific Council recommended a substantial cut in the catch from this stock. For other stocks, scientific advice was similar to last year's catch.

I want to congratulate Mr. Stéphane Artano (France-SPM) for his election as NAFO President and Chair of the Commission, Mr. Brian Healey (Canada) for his election as Chair of the Scientific Council and Mr. Temur Tairov (Russian Federation) for his election as Vice-Chair of the Commission. I also want to express NAFO's appreciation to the out-going Chair of the Scientific Council, Kathy Sosebee (USA), for the great amount of time she devoted to NAFO issues, outside of her day job, that ensured, amongst other things, the successful conclusion of the development of the Greenland halibut management strategy. Additionally, I would like to thank the out-going Chair of STACFEN, Andrew Cogswell, and the out-going Chair of STACFIS, Joël Vigneau, for their hard work and dedication to Scientific Council.

Finally, I wish to thank Canada very much for hosting the 2017 Annual Meeting in Montréal. The excellent organization of our Canadian hosts contributed greatly to the overall success of the meeting and to its proceeding in record time.

*Fred Kingston,
Executive Secretary*

ANNUAL MEETING

NAFO's 39th Annual Meeting was hosted by Canada in Montréal, Québec, 18–22 September 2017. This was the first Annual Meeting held under the amended NAFO Convention, which came into force 18 May, 2017. The delegates were welcomed to Canada by the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard at the reception later in the week. To review the results of the Annual Meeting, please see NAFO's press release: www.nafo.int/Portals/0/PDFs/press/pressept17.pdf



Left to right: Fred Kingston, NAFO Executive Secretary; Honourable Dominic LeBlanc; Stéphane Artano, NAFO President and Chair of the Commission



The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, speaks at the NAFO Annual Meeting.

Montréal

Québec



Heads of Delegation

Back row - left to right: Fred Kingston (Executive Secretary), Kenro Iino (Japan), John Bullard (USA), Temur Tairov (Vice-Chair of the Commission), Konstantin Drevetnyak (Russian Federation), Mads Trolle Nedergaard (DFG), Benoît Tourtois (France - SPM), Anders C. Jessen (EU).

Front row - left to right: Jóannes Vitalis Hansen (DFG), Ayoung Kim (Republic of Korea), Nora Yong Mena (Cuba), Stéphane Artano (NAFO President and Chair of the Commission - SPM), Sigrun Holst (Norway), Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir (Iceland), Sylvie Lapointe (Canada).



Commission in session

Left to right: Jana Aker (Secretariat), Temur Tairov (Vice-Chair of the Commission), Stéphane Artano (Chair of the Commission and NAFO President), Fred Kingston (NAFO Executive Secretary).



STACFAD



Scientific Council






STACTIC

Contracting Parties of NAFO



Canada 

Cuba 

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) 



European Union 

France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) 

Iceland 

Japan 

Norway 

Republic of Korea 

Russian Federation 

Ukraine 

United States of America 

ELECTED OFFICERS

Commission



President of NAFO & Commission Chair
Stéphane Artano
(France-SPM)
(Sep. 2015–Sep. 2017)



Commission Vice-Chair
Temur Tairov
(Russian Federation)
(Sep. 2015–Sep. 2017)



STACFAD Chair
Deirdre Warner-Kramer
(United States of America)
(Sep. 2012–Sep. 2018)



STACFAD Vice-Chair
Élise Lavigne
(Canada)
(Sep. 2013–Sep. 2017)



STACTIC Chair
Judy Dwyer
(Canada)
(Sep. 2015–Sep. 2017)



STACTIC Vice-Chair
Aronne Spezzani
(European Union)
Jun 2012–Sep. 2017

Scientific Council



Scientific Council Chair
Katherine Sosebee
(United States of America)
(Sep. 2015–Sep. 2017)



SC Vice-Chair & STACREC Chair
Brian Healey
(Canada)
(Sep. 2015–Sep. 2017)



STACFIS Chair
Joël Vigneau
(European Union)
(Sep. 2015–Sep. 2017)



STACFEN Chair
Andrew Cogswell
(Canada)
(Sep. 2014–Sep. 2017)



STACPUB Chair
Margaret Treble
(Canada)
(Sep. 2013–Sep. 2017)

COMMISSION

AMENDED CONVENTION 2017

Significant amendments to the Convention establishing the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), that were agreed in 2007, came into force on 18 May 2017.

These amendments are intended to modernize NAFO, in particular by incorporating an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. This approach includes safeguarding the marine

environment, conserving marine biodiversity and minimizing the risk of long term adverse effects of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem. The amendments streamline NAFO's decision-making process, strengthen the obligations of Contracting Parties, flag States and port States, and institute a formal dispute settlement mechanism.



STACFAD

FINANCIAL STATUS UPDATE

The Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD) oversees the budget and administrative matters of the Organization. At the Annual Meeting in Montréal, Québec, Canada, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (USA) led the committee throughout its deliberations.

STACFAD was pleased to report that the overall financial affairs of the Organization continue to be in a stable position. The 2017 NAFO budget was set at \$2.126 million while actual expenditures for the year were \$1.957 million. Noteworthy savings for the year can be attributed to the deferral of NAFO's second Performance Review until 2018 (\$93K), the hosting of the 2017 Annual Meeting in Montréal by Canada (\$27K), and limited SC Intersessional Meetings (\$38K). Operating cash at year end was at a reasonable level, with membership contributions for 2017 of \$30,988 being outstanding.

Under the amended NAFO Convention, the formula to calculate the respective annual contributions of Contracting Parties was revised. Annual contributions for 2017 were therefore pro-rated with the first part of the year calculated based on the previous formula, and contributions from 18 May onwards based on the revised formula in the amended Convention. It was agreed by the Organization that any difference in 2017 annual contributions either owing from, or payable to Contracting Parties, resulting from the revised calculation versus the 2017 billing previously issued, would be applied against 2018 annual contributions.

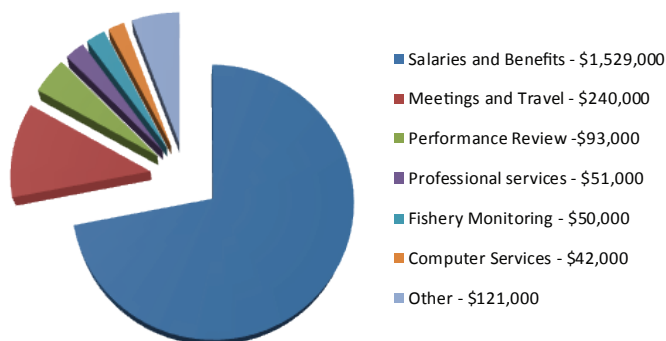
Grant Thornton, the auditors appointed to audit NAFO'S financial records for the 2016–2020 fiscal periods, recommended that the Organization change its accounting standards from International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) to Not-for Profit Standards. At the 2017 Annual Meeting, it was agreed to proceed with switching accounting standards which included the modification of NAFO'S Financial Regulations noting that it will follow Not-for-Profit accounting standards and to describe the specific departures from any generally accepted accounting practices.

The Committee put forward a budget proposal for the 2018 fiscal year of \$2.297 million, representing an increase of 8.0% over the 2017 budget. The one significant increase in the 2018 budget can be attributed to supplementary funds required to cover the increase in the unfunded pension liability as noted in the latest actuarial valuation of the NAFO employee pension plan.

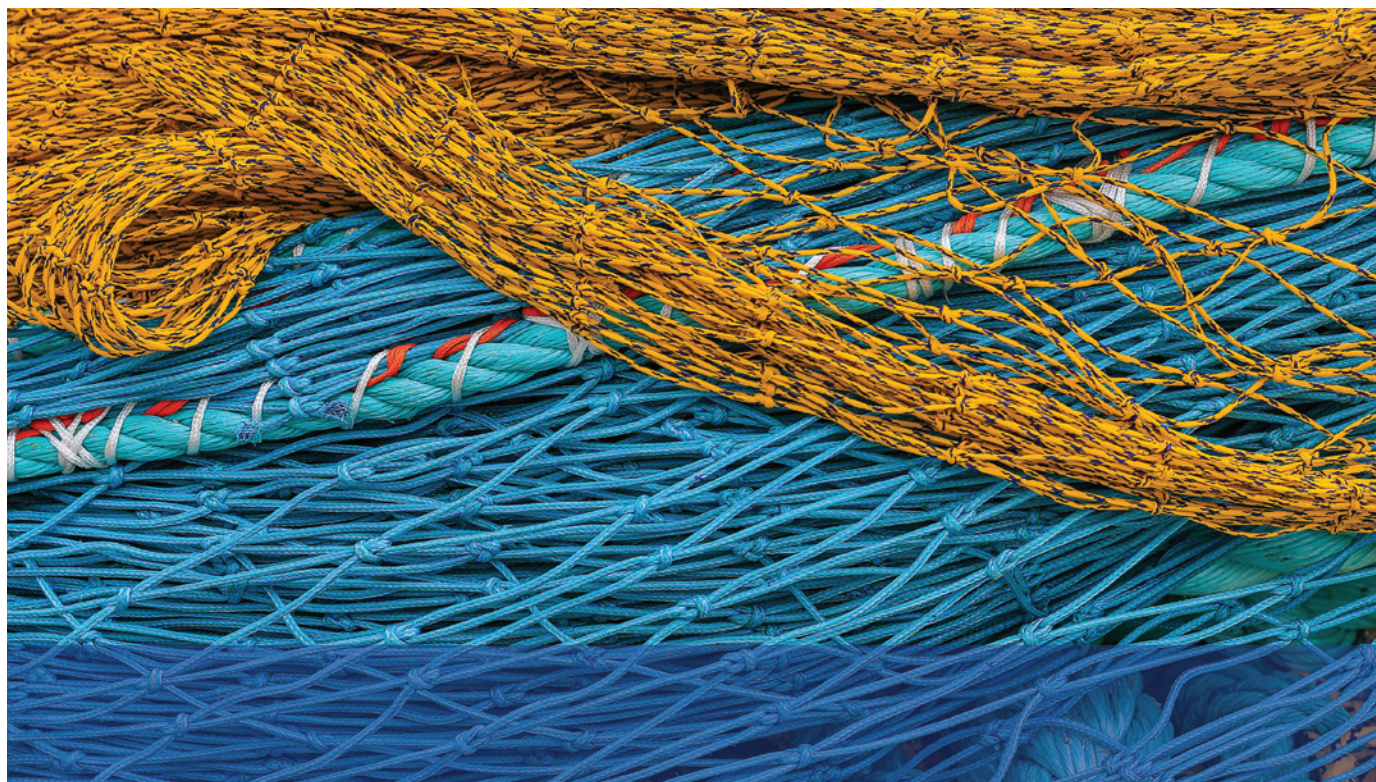
The present vice-Chair, Élise Lavigne (Canada), was re-elected for a two-year term.

The next meeting of STACFAD will be held during the 2018 Annual Meeting of NAFO in Tallinn, Estonia.

2017 Budget - \$2,126,000



FISHERIES MANAGEMENT



2017 Fishing Effort

The fisheries in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA) is generally groundfish in Divisions 3LMNO.

In 2017, there were 45 fishing vessels spending approximately 3 800 days in the NRA. Smaller vessels tend to fish for yellowtail flounder and Atlantic halibut in Tail of the Grand Banks, and cod in the Flemish Cap using longline gears; and larger vessels go on much longer fishing trips using bottom trawls in the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks and in the Flemish Cap directing for cod, Greenland halibut, redfish, and skates (See Table 1).

Table 1. Fishing effort in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA) in 2017

| Vessel Size | # of fishing vessels | # of fishing trips | Main Fishing Gear | f = Total Fishing Days | Fishing Trip Range (days) | Main Species | Fishing Area |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|
| Class 3-4 vessels (less than 500 MT) | 7 | 17 | Longline | 192 | 1-18 days | Cod, yellowtail flounder | Flemish Cap (for cod); Tail of the Grand Banks (for yellowtail flounder) |
| Class 5 vessels (500-1000 MT) | 10 | 31 | Bottom Trawl | 1020 | 9-71 days | Cod, Greenland halibut, redfish, skates | Flemish Cap; Tail and Nose of the Grand Banks |
| Class 6 vessels (1000-2000 MT) | 26 | 60 | Bottom Trawl | 2417 | 2-100 days | Cod, Greenland halibut, redfish, skates | Flemish Cap; Tail and Nose of the Grand Banks |
| Class 7 vessels (> 2000 MT) | 2 | 4 | Bottom Trawl | 181 | 28-57 days | Cod, Greenland halibut, redfish, skates | Flemish Cap; Tail and Nose of the Grand Banks |



STACTIC Intersessional - May 2017

Boston, Massachusetts, USA



2017 Catches

In 2017, approximately **56 thousand tonnes** of the species subject to catch limitation (species listed in the Quota Table) were caught in the NRA, and the catches, by stock, are outlined in Table 2. Redfish remains the predominant species, followed by cod and Greenland halibut.

Table 2. Catches of species in the NRA subject to catch limitation (species listed in the Quota Table) in the 2017 calendar year, based on the daily catch reports (CATs)

| Stock Area | Species | Amount (tonnes) |
|------------|---------|-----------------|
| 3L | COD | 103 |
| 3M | COD | 14 189 |
| 3NO | COD | 581 |
| 3LN | RED | 7806 |
| 3M | RED | 7085 |
| 3O | RED | 7267 |
| 1F23K | REB | 0 |
| 3LNO | PLA | 984 |
| 3M | PLA | 160 |
| 3LNO | YEL | 3880 |
| 3L | WIT | 46 |
| 3NO | WIT | 253 |
| 3NO | HKW | 182 |
| 3NO | CAP | 11 |
| 3LNO | SKA | 4144 |
| 3LMNO | GHL | 9260 |
| 3+4 | SQI | 17 |
| 3LNO | PRA | 0 |
| 3M | PRA | 0 |

Total 55 968



Total Allowable Catch (TAC)

The annual TACs in the NAFO Convention Area are agreed by the Commission. TAC decisions are based on scientific advice of the Scientific Council which conducts regular assessment of the fishery stocks. Existing moratoria (TAC = 0) were extended to allow rebuilding of depleted stocks and quotas for other stocks that were set by the Commission.

2017 AND 2018 TACs (METRIC TONNES)

| Stock/Year | 2017 | 2018 |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|
| 3L Cod | 0 | 0 |
| 3M Cod | 13 931 | 11 145 |
| 3NO Cod | 0 | 0 |
| 3LN Redfish | 14 200 | 14 200 |
| 3M Redfish | 7000 | 10 500 |
| 3O Redfish | 20 000 | 20 000 |
| Sub-Area 2 and Div. 1F+3K Redfish | 0 | 0 |
| 3LNO American plaice | 0 | 0 |
| 3M American plaice | 0 | 0 |
| 3LNO Yellowtail flounder | 17 000 | 17 000 |
| 3L Witch flounder | 0 | 0 |
| 3NO Witch flounder | 2225 | 1116 |
| 3NO White hake | 1000 | 1000 |
| 3NO Capelin | 0 | 0 |
| 3LNO Skates | 7000 | 7000 |
| 3LMNO Greenland halibut | 10 966 | 12 227 |
| Sub-areas 3+4 Squid (Illex) | 34 000 | 34 000 |
| 3L Shrimp | 0 | 0 |
| 3NO Shrimp | 0 | 0 |
| 3M Shrimp | 0 | 0 |

Compliance

The Inspection and Surveillance Scheme is implemented to ensure compliance of NAFO-registered fishing vessels in the NAFO Regulatory Area.

Inspectors are appointed by Contracting Parties and assigned to fishery patrol vessels tasked to carry out inspection duties at sea. In 2017, Canada and the European Union continued to deploy inspection vessels in the NRA.

Over 120 at-sea inspections were conducted on the vessels during the 2017 fishing trips. From these inspections, fewer than 10 Apparent Infringements (AI) were detected by the inspectors, and the nature of the AIs range from non-serious (e.g. failure to maintain a stowage plan) to serious (e.g. exceeding bycatch thresholds of moratorium species). As required by the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NCEM), the Contracting Parties of which the vessels belong reported the dispositions and follow-up actions undertaken to address the AIs.

NAFO, through the Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC), continues to produce an annual review of compliance of the fishing vessels operating in the NAFO Regulatory Area. STACTIC reviews and revises the process of the compliance review to ensure that it highlights specific compliance issues in a given year. At the 2017 Annual Meeting, STACTIC agreed on a revised template for the Annual Compliance Review that will provide STACTIC with additional data sources to support sound conclusions and recommendations.

ACTION PLAN IN THE MANAGEMENT AND MINIMIZATION OF BYCATCH AND DISCARDS

At the 2017 Annual Meeting, the Commission Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS) presented an Action Plan, which was adopted by the

Commission. This Action Plan outlines the necessary actions and identifies the relevant NAFO bodies for achieving overarching objectives, examples of which are effective management and the minimization of by-catch and discards, and improvement of

selectivity, in fisheries of the NRA; accurate reporting of target, non-target and incidental catch; account for total catch (retained and non-retained) in scientific assessments and management measures; etc.

Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) - Areas closed to bottom fishing

The Commission agreed to modify the boundaries of the New England Seamounts closure to better protect the seamount features in the area. The new boundary of the closure is reflected in Fig. 1.

In total, there are 21 areas closed to bottom fishing, constituting six (6) seamounts, one (1) coral zone and 14 VME areas. Protocols for exploratory fishing in new fishing areas and for encountering VME species are elaborated in Chapter II of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NCEM). These measures are reviewed by the Scientific Council and the Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on the Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) upon availability of new scientific information.

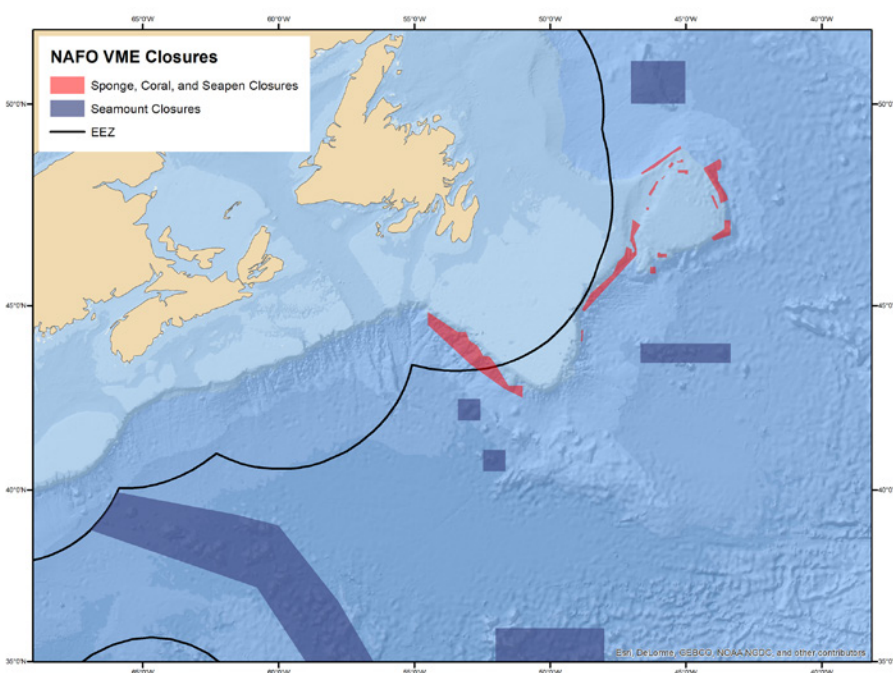


Fig. 1. The NAFO VME closures, including the revision of the New England Seamounts closure that was adopted at the 2017 Annual Meeting.

COMMISSION-SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

In 2013, three joint Working Groups were established in response to the 2011 Performance Review recommendations.

These Working Groups (WGs) provide a forum for an improved dialogue between fishery managers and scientists, and address major issues concerning ecosystem approach to fisheries management, risk-based management strategies, and catch reporting in a more holistic manner. In 2017, these WGs continued to meet and provided recommendations to the Commission and Scientific Council relating to the general objective of long term conservation, sustainable use of fishery resources and the safeguard of the marine ecosystems.

Among the 2017 major recommendations from these joint working groups, which the Commission

adopted, are the Greenland halibut Management Strategy, the development of a catch estimation strategy using port inspection data, and the initiation of the review of the New England Seamount boundaries to better protect seamount

features. Documents and reports from the joint Working Groups are archived in a series of documents entitled COM-SC Documents and can be found at: <https://www.nafo.int/Library/Documents/COM-SC>.

Greenland halibut Management Strategy

Upon the recommendation of the Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) at the 2017 Annual meeting, the Commission adopted the new Greenland Halibut Management Strategy. It will be in force from 2018 to 2023 inclusive. The Management Strategy allows the



determination of the annual TAC through the agreed Harvest Control Rule (HCR) which adjusts the TAC from year to year. The Management Strategy is outlined in Annex I.F of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NCEM).



On 14 July 2017, the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) met at the NAFO Secretariat in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.



On 15-16 September 2017, the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) met in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

Stock Status

NAFO's Scientific Council and its subsidiary bodies met from 01 to 15 June 2017 at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, to formulate scientific advice to the Commission and Coastal States. This included advice on the status of fish stocks and the implementation of relevant steps in the workplan for the management strategy evaluation (MSE) of Greenland halibut. Five of the stocks managed by NAFO received full assessments and the others were subject to interim monitoring.

A full assessment showed that the biomass of cod on the Flemish Cap (Division 3M) is well above its precautionary approach limit reference point, however recruitment since 2013 has been low. Because of this, Scientific Council considers that recent fishing levels are not sustainable and recommended a reduction in TAC from 13 931 to 8182 tonnes in 2018.

The redfish stock in Division 3M currently has high biomass as a result of high recruitment from 2002 to 2006, however abundance and recruitment are declining and recruitment in 2015 and 2016 was among the lowest on record. Although the stock could produce larger catches in the short term, Scientific Council advised that the TAC should remain close to its current level of around 7000 tonnes to maximize longer term yields.

The stock of American plaice in Division 3M has increased slightly in recent years due to improved recruitment. Although the catches since 1996 have been low, this stock remains at a relatively low level and the Scientific Council recommended that there should be no directed fishery.

The stock with flounder on the Grand Bank (Division 3NO) has been declining since 2012. Recruitment has been decreasing since 2013 with survey estimates in 2016 approaching the lowest of the time series. Scientific Council advised that catch rates should not increase from 2016 levels, giving a recommended TAC of 1116 tonnes in 2018.

The assessment of white hake in Divisions 3NO and 3Ps showed that the stock biomass remains at a low level. Although recruitment in 2011 was higher than other recent years, it was not comparable to the very high recruitment observed in 2000 and hence the Scientific Council advised that catches should not increase.

Interim monitoring was undertaken for the remainder of the stocks managed by NAFO. The Scientific Council expressed concern that survey indices for several demersal fish stocks on the Grand Bank (NAFO Divisions 3LNO) have declined (sometimes sharply) over the last two years. These declines in specific demersal fish stocks are consistent with observed declines in overall finfish biomass on the Grand Bank neighbouring areas (NAFO Divs. 2J3K). While these changes over multiple stocks are not fully understood, it is considered that these declines currently do not indicate a change in the status of the stocks for which multi-year advice was provided in 2016.

In September, the Scientific Council met at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences Institute of

Marine Research, in Lysekil, Sweden to advise on the status of shrimp stocks. Shrimps on the Grand Bank and Flemish Cap continue to be at low levels, with little sign of recovery and Scientific Council therefore advised no directed fishery for either of these stocks in 2018 and 2019.

In response to a request from the Commission, Scientific Council, began work on a review of the available information on the life history, population status, and current fishing mortality of Greenland sharks (*Somniosus microcephalus*). This work will continue in 2018 and advice will be given at that time.



Scientific Council Chairs

Tom Blasdale (SC Coordinator), Andrew Cogswell (Chair of STACFEN), Margaret Treble (Chair of STACPUB), Katherine Sosebee (Chair of SC), Brian Healey (Vice-Chair of SC & Chair of STACREC), Joël Vigneau (Chair of STACFIS), Fred Kingston (Executive Secretary).

Ecosystem Approach

The Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Science and Assessment (WG-ESA) met for their 10th meeting, 7–16 November, at the offices of the NAFO Secretariat, to address requests for advice and its standing terms of reference. Over the course of the meeting many items were addressed including the implementation of the ecosystem approach “roadmap”, risk assessments for impacts of trawl surveys on VMEs in closed areas and assessment of NAFO bottom fisheries for significant adverse impacts (SAI) on vulnerable marine ecosystems.



Scientific Council



Katherine Sosebee presents Eugene Colbourne with a Scientific Merit Award at the SC June Meeting.



Brian Healey (SC Vice-Chair and Chair of STACREC) presents Katherine Sosebee (SC Chair) with a Scientific Merit Award at the SC September meeting.



WG-ESA met in November at the NAFO Secretariat



Katherine Sosebee (SC Chair) presents Don Power with a Scientific Merit Award at the SC September meeting.

NAFO MEETINGS

Reports of all NAFO meetings are available on the NAFO public website.

- 30 January 2017, NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process, held via WebEx.
- 06 February 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Catch Reporting (WG-CR) held at the NEAFC Secretariat in London, United Kingdom.
- 07–09 February 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) held at the NEAFC Secretariat in London, United Kingdom.
- 14 March 2017, NAFO STACTIC Editorial Drafting Group (EDG) of the NAFO CEM, held via WebEx.
- 20–24 March 2017, Joint ICES/NAFO Working Group on Deep-water Ecology held at the ICES secretariat in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- 22–23 March 2017, Joint Advisory Group on Data Management held at the NEAFC Secretariat in London, United Kingdom.
- 03–07 April 2017, NAFO Greenland Halibut Management Strategy Evaluation in Vigo, Spain.
- 19–21 April 2017, International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS) Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- 20 April 2017, NAFO Ad Hoc Joint FC-SC Catch Data Advisory Group (CDAG), held via WebEx.
- 25–27 April 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) in Falmouth, Massachusetts, USA.
- 05 May 2017, NAFO Ad hoc NAFO Website Re-Design Working Group: Phase II – Data Classification, held via WebEx.
- 08 May 2017, NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) in Boston, USA.
- 09–11 May 2017, Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting in Boston, USA.
- 18 May 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Catch Reporting (WG-CR) and NAFO Ad Hoc Joint Commission-Scientific Council Catch Data Advisory Group (CDAG), held via WebEx.
- 01–15 June 2017, NAFO Scientific Council and its Standing Committees at St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- 20 June 2017, NAFO Informal Virtual Working Group on the Performance Review Terms of Reference, held via WebEx.
- 28 June 2017, NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process, held via WebEx.



03–07 Apr. - NAFO Greenland Halibut Management Strategy Evaluation, Vigo, Spain



09–11 May - NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting, Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Past meetings are listed on the meeting page on the NAFO public website.

- 10 July 2017, NAFO Ad Hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) held at the NAFO Secretariat in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- 11–13 July 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) held at the NAFO Secretariat in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- 14 July 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries (WG-EAFFM) held at the NAFO Secretariat in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- 24 August 2017, Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Catch Reporting (WG-CR) and NAFO Ad hoc Joint Commission-Scientific Council Catch Data Advisory Group (CDAG), held via WebEx.
- 06 September 2017, NAFO Ad hoc NAFO Website Re-Design Working Group: Phase II – Data Classification, held via WebEx.
- 15–16 September 2017, NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) in Montréal, Québec, Canada.
- 18–22 September 2017, NAFO 39th Annual Meeting in Montréal, Québec, Canada.
- 27 September–04 October 2017, Joint NAFO/ICES *Pandalus* Assessment Group Meeting in Lysekil, Sweden.
- 07–16 November 2017, NAFO Working Group on Ecosystem Science and Assessment (WG-ESA) held at the NAFO Secretariat in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.



06 Feb. - NAFO Joint Fisheries Commission-Scientific Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Catch Reporting (WG-CR), NEAFC Secretariat, London, UK



07-09 Feb. - NAFO Joint Fisheries Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), NEAFC Secretariat, London, UK



10 Jul. - NAFO Commission Ad Hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area, Dartmouth, NS, Canada

UN Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Preparatory Committee, New York, New York, 17–19 July. 2017.

Pictured (Left to right): Michael Brakke (USA), Kate Neilsen (New Zealand), Tim Adams (Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency), Merete Tandstad (FAO), NAFO Executive Secretary Fred Kingston, and Alejandro Anganuzzi (FAO)

Photo courtesy of the FAO.



External Meetings

Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep Seas Project Steering Committee meeting, Rome, Italy, 7–9 February 2017

Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston, attended the ABNJ Deep Seas Project Steering Committee meeting.

The FAO BlueBRIDGE Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF) meeting, in Rome, Italy, 28 February–2 March

Scientific Council Coordinator, Tom Blasdale, attended the meeting. The GRSF database will combine the FIRMS, RAMM, and Fish Source databases and create on large data base for consumers. The group will meet again next year and work intersessionally.

The Third and Fourth Sessions of the UN Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Preparatory Committee, New York, New York, United States of America, 3–5 April & 17–19 July 2017

Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston, attended the third and fourth sessions of the Preparatory Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ).

On 18 July, at the fourth session, Fred Kingston gave a presentation on NAFO at a side event organized by the FAO entitled “*Exploring a new instrument through the lens of Regional Fisheries Bodies (including Regional Fisheries Management Organizations)*”.

The Annual Meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), Vancouver, Canada, 19–21 April 2017

NAFO was represented by Fred Kingston, Executive Secretary, and Stan Goodick, Deputy Executive Secretary/



19–21 April 2017 - International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS) Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Senior Finance and Staff Administrator at the Annual Meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS). The meeting was hosted by the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC).

The FAO First Meeting of the Parties to the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures, Oslo, Norway, 29–31 May 2017

Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston, attended the First Meeting of the Parties to the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures.

Before the Port State Measures meeting, Mr. Kingston also attended an informal meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN).

Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) Meetings in Copenhagen, Denmark, 19–22 June 2017

Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator, Dr. Ricardo Federizon, attended the Intersessional Aquaculture and Fisheries Subject Group Meetings of the CWP. It was the 26th meeting of the Fisheries Subject, being held jointly for first time with the Aquaculture Subject meeting. At the CWP-Fisheries Subject meeting, participating RFMOs reported on their catch reporting systems. Dr. Federizon presented the newly-developed *Catch Estimation Strategy* and its application to the NAFO-managed fish stocks. He also presented the NAFO Annual Compliance Review process.

The 10th Session of the FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, 22–24 June 2017

Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator, Dr. Ricardo Federizon, attended the FIRMS Steering Committee meeting. During the meeting, it was decided that the Committee will take ownership of the Global Record of Stocks and Fisheries (GRSF) developed under the BlueBRIDGE initiative. The meeting also discussed the role of FIRMS in support to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.4.1 “Percentage of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels”.

Our Oceans Conference, Malta, 5–6 October 2017

Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston attended the 4th Our Oceans Conference in Malta.

The 5th Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, 29 November–1 December 2017

Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston, attended the SOS meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia and gave a presentation about NAFO.

7th Experts Sixth Experts Meeting on Maritime Confidence-Building in the Spratly Area (South China Sea), Beijing China, 6–8 December 2017

Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator, Dr. Ricardo Federizon, attended the conference and gave two presentations. The first presentation was entitled, “*Presentation of case studies of successful cooperative management and protection of the marine environment*” and discussed international fisheries management, regional fisheries bodies and NAFO. The second presentation was entitled, “*Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Practices of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)*”.

SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES

Internships

At the 2011 Annual Meeting, a NAFO Internship Program was adopted by the Organization. As part of the internship program, interns focus their work on the Scientific Council and Commission. In turn, this allows the opportunity for interns to experience various meetings of NAFO including various Joint Commission-Scientific Council meetings, the June Scientific Council meeting and the NAFO Annual Meeting.

Since its inception in 2011, nine interns have taken part in the NAFO Internship Program, with one intern being selected to participate in 2017.

JESSICA RANDALL



Jessica arrived at the NAFO Secretariat for a three-month internship from September to November 2017. Jessica came to the Secretariat from the United States of America where she worked as a fisheries biologist at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center. Her research interests primarily focus on early life histories and recruitment of Arctic and sub-Arctic fishes. Jessica formerly worked as a fisheries observer in the North Pacific groundfish fleet.

During her internship, Jessica was able to attend the NAFO Annual Meeting in Montréal,



Secretariat Staff Members 2017

For the period of January – December 2017, the Secretariat was comprised of the following employees:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Executive Secretary | Fred Kingston |
| Deputy Executive Secretary and Senior Finance and Staff Administrator | Stan Goodick |
| Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator | Ricardo Federizon |
| Scientific Council Coordinator | Tom Blasdale |
| Senior Executive Assistant to the Executive Secretary | Lisa LeFort |
| Scientific Information Administrator | Dayna Bell MacCallum |
| Fisheries Information Administrator | Jana Aker |
| IT Manager | Matthew Kendall |
| Senior Publications Manager | Alexis Pacey |
| Database Developer/ Programmer Analyst | DJ Laycock |
| Office Administrator | Sarah Guile |
| Office Administrator | Whitney McEvoy |

Québec. Jessica assisted with the compilation of information and reports leading up to the Annual Meeting, and played a key role in the compilation of the 2018 Conservation and Enforcement Measures. Jessica also assisted with data processing of the various fisheries related reports, worked with the Fisheries team preparing

data for the various analyses that need to be completed in 2018, and completed preparations for the 2018 Performance Review. Jessica was also able to work with the Database Developer/Programmer Analyst to gain experience and knowledge in web programming and database management.

WHITNEY MCEVOY

Whitney joined the NAFO Secretariat in July 2017 as the term Office Administrator.

She holds a Small Business Management Diploma from the Maritime Business College and has previous work experience in both administrative services and as a flight attendant. Whitney is the first point of contact at the Secretariat and assists with meeting logistics and travel arrangements.



Outreach

MEDIA

The Secretariat continued to circulate its annual press releases to a dedicated NAFO media contact list. This year, a press release was circulated to announce the amended Convention coming into force, as well as following the closing of the Annual Meeting. The Secretariat continues to increase its outreach including outreach initiatives with various groups and universities and by updating its various social media platforms.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

During the past year, Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston has participated in meetings to discuss NAFO-related issues, including the following:

- 12 January 2017, visited the offices of the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) in Halifax and met with Susanna Fuller and Katie Schleit. The EAC is an accredited non-governmental organization (NGO) observer to NAFO meetings.
- 19 May 2017, met with Roger Sterling, President of the Seafood Producers Association of Nova Scotia.
- 30 October, with Geneviève Desportes, General Secretary, North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO).
- Attended the monthly meetings of the Nova Scotia Consular Corps.



Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston, gave a lecture on RFMOs and NAFO to students participating in the International Ocean Institute (IOI)'s 2017 training program on ocean governance, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.

The Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston also continues to strengthen NAFO's relationship with the academic community.

- 2 March 2017, gave a lecture on NAFO to the Faculty of Law, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada.
- 29 June 2017, gave a lecture on RFMOs and NAFO to students participating in the International Ocean Institute (IOI)'s 2017 training program on ocean governance, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.
- On 2 November 2017, Ms. Jana Aker and Ms. Dayna Bell MacCallum gave a brief presentation about NAFO to the Dalhousie University Marine Affairs Program class, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

GUESTS TO THE SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat had several visitors over the past year, during various parts of the year, including:

- On 23 May 2017, Mr. Gilles Hosch, a consultant for the ABNJ Deep Seas project, visited the NAFO Secretariat to discuss catch documentation schemes.
- On 29 June 2017, students from the International Ocean Institute (IOI), visited the NAFO Secretariat for a guest lecture.
- On 25 July 2017, Halifax Municipal Councillors, Mr. Tony Mancini and Mr. Richard Zurawski paid a courtesy visit to the NAFO Secretariat.
- On 10 October 2017, Mr. Darren Fisher, Member of Parliament for Dartmouth-Cole Harbour, paid a courtesy visit to the NAFO Secretariat.
- On 26 October, met with Karsten Mecklenburg, Head of Trade and Economic Section, European Union Delegation to Canada.
- On 17 November 2017, H.E. Peteris Ustubs, Ambassador of the EU to Canada, paid a courtesy visit to the NAFO Secretariat.
- On 28 November 2017, Mr. Mark Taconet, Chief of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics and Information Branch, of the Food and Agricultural Organization of

The NAFO Secretariat (Fred Kingston) welcomed visitors



Karsten Mecklenburg, Head of Trade and Economic Section, European Union Delegation to Canada.



Geneviève Desportes, General Secretary, North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO).



Peter Flewwelling, Compliance Manager at the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC).



Darren Fisher, Member of Parliament for Dartmouth-Cole Harbour.



Peteris Ustubs, EU Ambassador to Canada



Mark Taconet, Chief of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics and Information Branch, of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

the United Nations (FAO), paid a courtesy visit to the NAFO Secretariat. During his visit, Mr. Taconet had the opportunity to discuss the NAFO/FAO partnerships with the Secretariat staff.

- On 13 December 2017, Mr. Trevor Kenchington visited the NAFO Secretariat and gave a lecture on the History of Trawling to the NAFO Secretariat staff.
- On 18 December 2017, Mr. Peter Flewwelling, Compliance Manager at the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), paid a courtesy visit to the NAFO Secretariat.

The NAFO Secretariat continues to hold smaller working group meetings in its boardroom whenever possible as well as offer the use of the space to affiliated groups for a nominal fee. In the past, universities and Fisheries and Oceans Canada have used the space for meetings including the ICES Working Group on the Northwest Atlantic Regional Sea (WG-NARS) held in March 2017.

Information Requests

The NAFO Secretariat regularly responds to requests from various international sources. During the last year, the Secretariat has responded specifically to:

Request for input on:

- United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's Report on developments in the field of ocean affairs pursuant to UNGA Resolution 71/257 on Oceans and the law of the sea.
- European Union Directorate-General Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) FishHub study: database questionnaire.
- DG MARE Survey Study on Availability and Dissemination of Data Collection Framework (DCF) Data.

- UN Convention on Biodiversity: Submission of information on experience in mainstreaming biodiversity in fisheries.
- Fisheries and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Global Transshipping Survey.
- Contributions to the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network (RSN) Newsletters.

Throughout the year various informal requests are made to the Secretariat regarding specific information, procedures of NAFO, etc. by students, educational institutes, RFMOs, Contracting Parties representatives or other organizations. These are answered to the best of the ability and as time permits by various members of the NAFO Secretariat.



International Oceans Day

The NAFO Secretariat continued to participate in World Oceans Day 2017. Two Secretariat staff members, Jana Aker, Fisheries Information Administrator, and Lisa LeFort, Executive Assistant to the Executive Secretary, attended the local Oceans Day in Halifax, Nova Scotia on 2 June at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic on the Halifax waterfront.

Information Technology

SECURITY

NAFO implemented an almost completely redesigned firewall system in 2017 that greatly enhanced security and redundancy. It also allowed for adding even greater protection for certain servers. We also had an outside security firm test our new systems to confirm we have the best possible protection.

MONITORING, CONTROL & SURVEILLANCE (MCS) WEBSITE

The NAFO Secretariat has updated the MCS website so Inspectors can now query the amount (in kilograms) of catches and rejects for any species and division.

SHAREPOINT

The NAFO SharePoint continues to be a valuable resource allowing access to the meeting documentation before, during and after meeting hours.

NAFO WEBPAGES

Since the launch of the new NAFO public website in October 2016, there has been positive feedback regarding the new site. Phase III – migration of ICNAF documents and publications was completed in March 2017. Phase II – data classification and Members Pages is the last component of the redesign project and is in progress.

Members' pages are being discussed within a small *ad hoc* working group

and is part of Phase II. The working group will review levels of security and access for the members-only section and SharePoint. This is on-going and should be completed by the 2018 Annual Meeting.

JNAFS WEBSITE

The *Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science* published three articles for Volume 49, 2017. All articles can

be submitted online through a third party, Scholastica. There is a link on the JNAFS website to access this new feature. This enables the editorial board and author(s) to view the progress and status of submitted manuscripts and ensures a transparent submission process.

Publications

During the period of January–December 2017, in addition to the meeting documents and working papers for NAFO meetings, the NAFO Secretariat prepared the following publications listed below:

NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (190 pages)

NAFO Annual Report 2016 (20-pages)

NAFO Meeting Proceedings of General Council and Fisheries Commission for 2016/2017 (294 pages)

NAFO Meeting Proceedings of the Commission for 2017 (66 pages)

NAFO Scientific Council Reports, 2017 (544 pages)

Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science, Volume 49, 2017 (62 pages)

Convention on Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (46 pages)

NAFO Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations 2017 (33 pages)

All publications and documents are available on the NAFO website: www.nafo.int/Publications

ASFA (AQUATIC SCIENCES AND FISHERIES ABSTRACTS)

ASFA inputting and indexing is completed for 2017 documents and publications. For more information about ASFA view their webpage: www.fao.org/fishery/asfa/en