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Comment by the Faroese delegation
re management of the Flemish Cap cod stock 1981

The cod stock on Flemish Cap is, according to scientific evidence, a stock where recruitment is very variable. The key managemental points seem therefore to be, first, to secure that the occasional large year-classes pass through the immature ages and contribute significantly to the spawning stock, and secondly that the fishery on the stock is kept at a magnitude, which makes these large year-classes to contribute to a profitable fishery for several years.

According to the provisional catch figures for 1980 the restrictive TAC set for 1980 seems to have brought down the removals from the stock.

The reduction of the fishing mortality on the stock is one way to utilise the potentials of the stocks to form a sound base for a viable fishery.

An equally valid way to achieve the same result is to increase the age of entry to the fishery, or put in another way to improve the exploitation pattern in the fishery.

If the fishery only introduces a insignificant mortality on the younger age groups, the effect will be the same as reducing the mortality in the total fishery with the present exploitation pattern.

This is the reason why the Faroese delegation at last year's meeting asked for a special quota for the longline fishery.

An analysis of the Faroese longline fishery will show, that this fleet selectively exploits the older parts of the stock. This is an effect of the way the longline is handled (hook size, bait size, ground selected) and the base of this is really that there is a very large price difference between large cod and smaller sizes in the production of wet salted cod. If the long trip from the Faroes to Flemish Cap shall pay, there has to be a regular catch of medium and large size cod. If the daily set of about 24,000 hooks shall be profitable the hooks must not be occupied of predominantly small cod.

This is one of the main reasons why the Faroese interest in a well-managed stock on Flemish Cap is so manifest.

The table below shows some analysis of the exploitation pattern of the Faroese longline fleet for 3M Cod in 1980.

Age	Abundance from	Catch by age Faroe Longline numbers x 10 ⁻³	Relative	Expl. Patt. relative to age 8	1980 assessment	
	Canadian Survey Jan. 1980 numbers		Expl. Pattern Catch/abundance		Expl. patt. 1979 (VPA)	Expl. patt 1980 (assumed)
2	1,035	-	-	-	-	-
3	19,435	88	0.005	0.024	0.672	0.044
4	2,422	131	0.054	0.255	1.971	0.173
5	2,896	303	0.105	0.495	4.368	0.900
6	2,718	89	0.033	0.156	3.745	1.000
7	3,903	746	0.191	0.901	1.000	1.000
8	184	39	0.212	1.000	1.000	1.000
9	25	-	-	-	1.000	1.000
10+	36	-	-	-	1.000	1.000