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27TH ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2005

**Accurate Identification of wolffish and hake Species
Harvested in the NAFO Regulatory Area
(Proposal by Canada) (ADOPTED)**

Explanatory Memorandum

Accurate reporting of all species harvested in the NAFO Regulatory Area is essential to sound management of fish stocks. To ensure that management decisions are based on the best possible scientific advice, it is important that all species captured are accurately recorded and reported.

Of particular concern in recent years is the apparent misidentification of wolffish and hake species caught in the NRA. Although 3 distinct types of wolffish are encountered in the Regulatory Area, the Northern, Striped and Spotted wolffish are all recorded under a single three-alpha code for unspecified wolffish (CAT). With recent reported catches of wolffish in the NRA ranging from 5 - 700 tons, efforts should be taken to accurately quantify the amounts of each species that are being harvested.

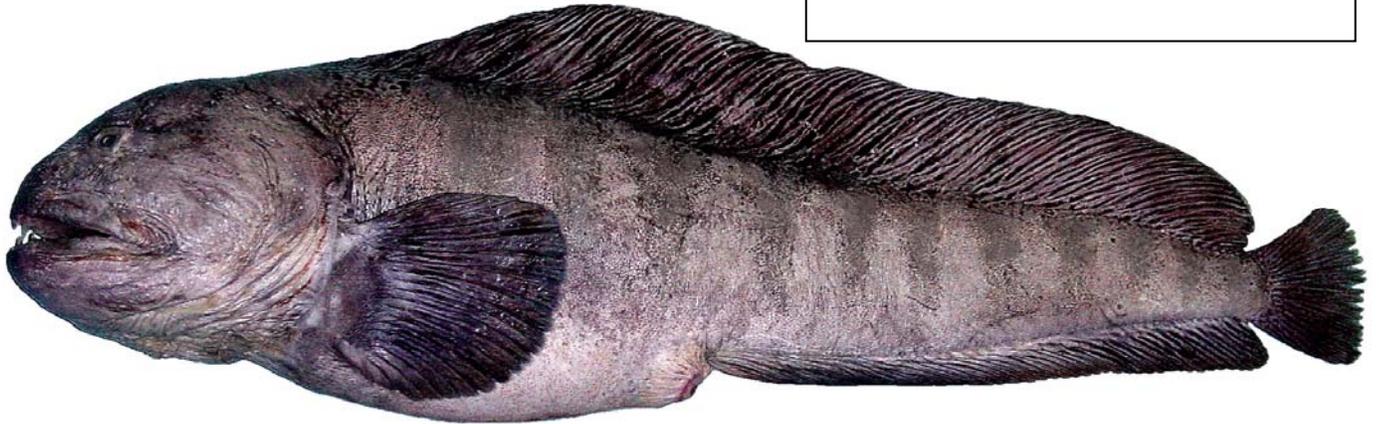
In 2005, White hake came under quota regulation in NAFO for the first time, with a Total Allowable Catch of 8500 tons. Given concerns that at least some of the white hake reported may have been misidentified as Longfin hake, a mechanism is proposed to ensure catches of these hake species be reported accurately to NAFO.

In addition to the possible misidentification of Longfin hake as White hake, it is also likely that the significant quantities of Red hake reported to NAFO in recent years (almost 6,000t in 2003) may be Threebeard rockling, a species more commonly found in significant quantities in the NRA as compared to Red hake.

Given the importance of ensuring that all fish harvested in the NRA are accurately reported to NAFO, it is proposed that a photo handout be developed for masters, inspectors and observers to facilitate the differentiation of hake and wolffish species. This handout should include three-alpha codes for accurate recording and requires the adoption of new codes for the identification of Northern wolffish, Longfin hake and Threebeard rockling. It is proposed that the handout be developed in consultation with Scientific Council and follow the format proposed in the attached Annexes.

ANNEX 1 - Wolffish Species

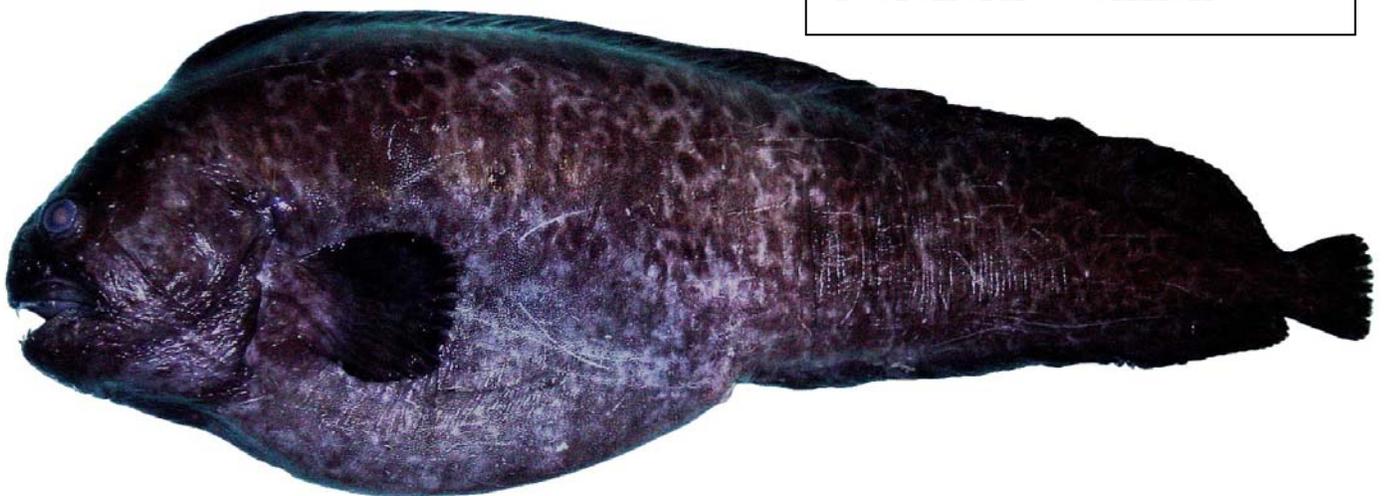
Atlantic Wolffish - CAA



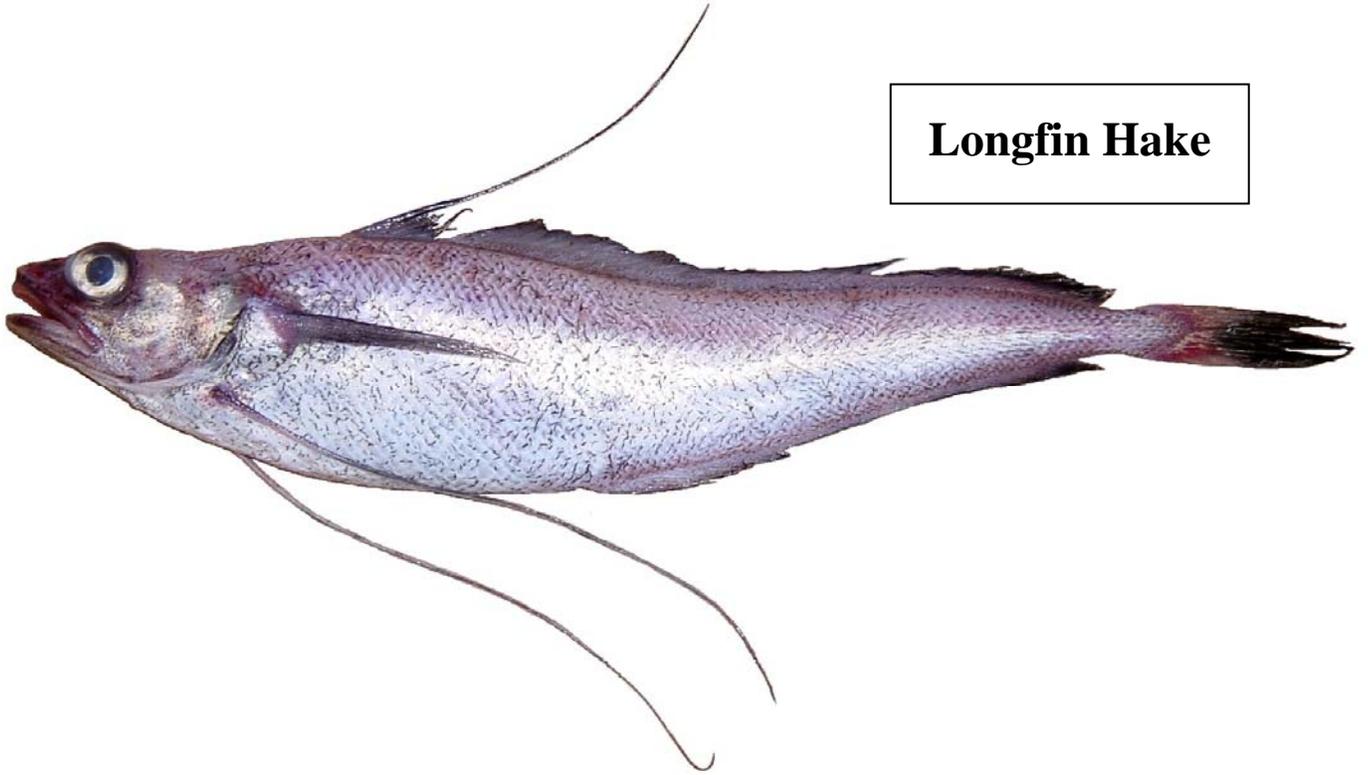
Spotted Wolffish - CAS



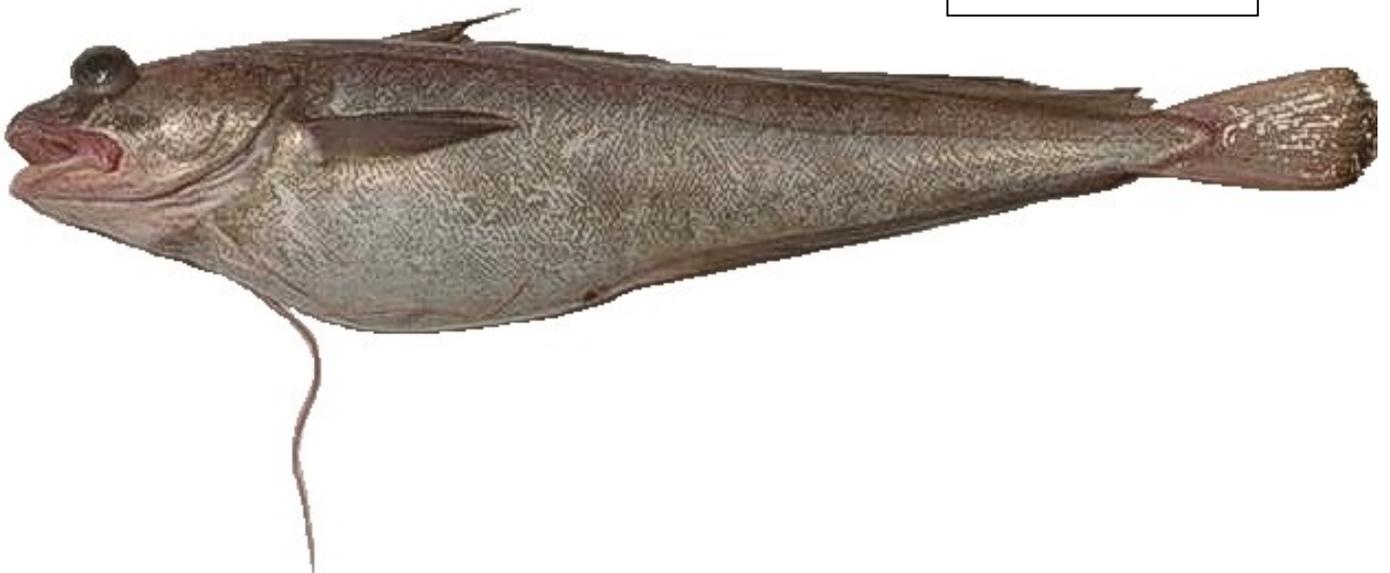
Northern Wolffish - ???



ANNEX 2 - Longfin Hake and White Hake



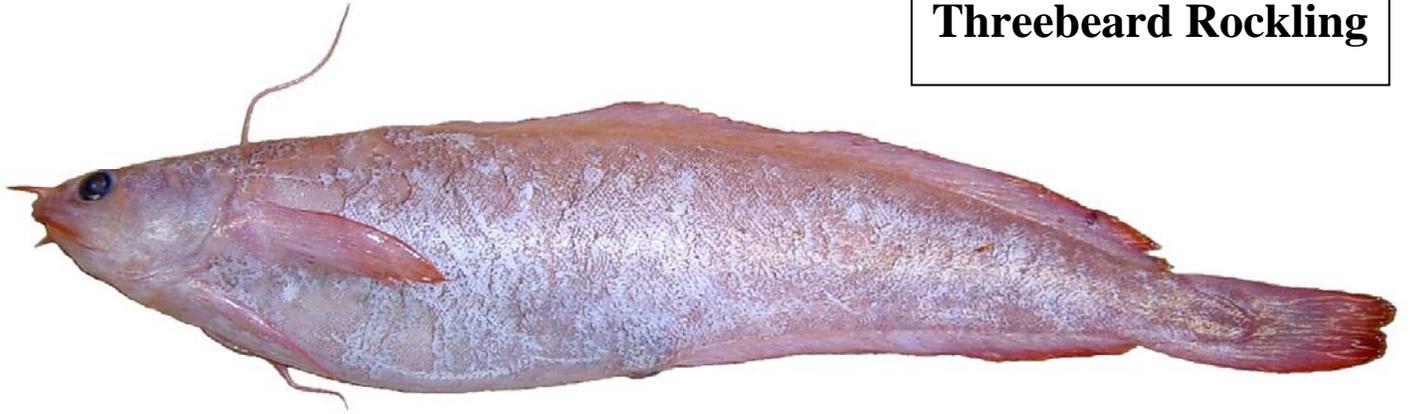
Longfin Hake



White Hake

ANNEX 3 - Threebeard Rockling and Red Hake

Threebeard Rockling



Red Hake

