

30TH ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2008

(ADOPTED)

**Large-mesh (modified Polish-type) Topside Chafers
Proposal by Canada**Explanatory Memorandum

The NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NAFO/FC Doc. 08/1), Chapter I, Article 12. 6 states the following:

“Vessels shall not use any means or device which would obstruct the mesh or diminish the size of the meshes. However, vessels may attach devices described in Annex XV to the upperside of the codend in such a manner that they will not obstruct the meshes of the codend inclusive of any lengthener(s).”

The use of the topside chafers permitted in Annex XV was originally conceived to allow for the protection of the top of a codend in the event that it turned over on the ocean floor or during retrieval and in cases where side-trawlers were employed that took codends onboard over the side of the vessel. The use of side-trawlers has declined to a point where there are no longer any operating in the NRA and rarely, if ever, do trawls towed by stern trawlers turn over.

In addition to the above noted factors, the advent of, and shift to, stronger and more buoyant man-made materials, coupled with trawl designs that taper away from the bottom, have all but eliminated the justification for topsider chafers.

PROPOSAL**Prohibiting the use of Large Mesh (modified Polish-Type) topside chafers in the NRA:
effective January 1, 2009.**

In order to eliminate unnecessary and potentially restrictive protective gear Canada would propose a prohibition on the use of Large Mesh (modified Polish-Type) topside chafers in the NRA, by way of the below amendment of the NCEM's, effective for the 2009 NAFO fishery.

Amend: Annex XV – Conservation and Management Measures as follows:

Delete the following from Annex XV;

3. Large-mesh (modified Polish-type) topside chafer

The large-mesh topside chafer consists of a rectangular piece of netting made of the same twine material as the codend, or of a single, thick, knotless twine material, attached to the rear portion of the upper side of the codend and extending over all or any part of the upper side of the codend and having in all its parts a mesh size twice that of the codend when measured wet and fastened to the codend along the forward, lateral and rear edges only of the netting in such a way that each mesh of the netting coincides with four meshes of the codend.

