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(ADOPTED)

**31<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2009**

**Interim Measures to Protect Significant Coral Concentrations**

Background

In 2006, the United National General Assembly (UNGA) in its Sustainable Fisheries Resolution 61/105 called for States and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) to adopt conservation and management measures in order to prevent significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems. UNGA will review the actions of States and RFMO in this respect in the fall of 2009.

*Mindful* of the work of the FAO in facilitating the development of international guidelines for the management of deep-sea fisheries operating in the high seas that serve to guide the identification of VMEs

*Noting* the commitment of NAFO Contracting Parties to implement an ecosystem approach and implement measures following the precautionary approach to address the impacts of fishing on VMEs

*Recognizing* the significant steps already taken by NAFO to protect Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA) including inter alia:

- the closure of four seamounts to commercial fishing (2006)
- the establishment of a 30 Coral Protection Zone (2007)
- the closure of the Fogo Seamounts (2008)
- the adoption of a comprehensive framework for the implementation of UNGA Resolution 61/105 including provisions for the identification of existing bottom fishing areas (footprint), assessment of bottom fishing, Exploratory Fishery Protocol for new fishing areas and the interim Encounter provisions for VMEs in both fished and unfished areas of the NRA (2008)

*Further recognizing* the numerous international scientific research efforts that are designed to enhance knowledge in the area of VMEs, in particular with respect to addressing knowledge gaps on benthic habitat, communities and species in the NAFO Regulatory Area, especially the upcoming Spanish survey in 2009 and the Canadian survey in 2010

*Conscious* of the 2008 Intersessional Fisheries Commission Meeting which established a process to determine the boundary for existing fisheries and non-fished areas, and the 2008 NAFO Annual Meeting Fisheries Commission request to Scientific Council to more precisely identify significant concentrations of corals at its October 2008 meeting and significant concentrations of sponge at its June 2009 meeting

*Recognizing* the SC response which identified remaining concentrations of corals in its October 2008 report

It is proposed that, as part of a continuing commitment to implement the UNGA Resolution, the Working Group of Fisheries Managers and Scientists recommends to the Fisheries Commission for adoption in September 2009:

1. Establishment of additional coral protection zones in Divisions 3L and 3M:

Insert new Article 16 (2) of NCEM:

2. As of January 1, 2010 the following areas shall be closed on an interim basis to all bottom fishing activities until December 31, 2011. The closed areas are defined by connecting the following coordinates (in numerical order and back to coordinate 1).

Revoke current Article 16 (2) as this work has been completed.

Amendment to Article 16 (3)

3. The measures referred to in Article 16(1) shall be reviewed in 2012 by the Fisheries Commission taking account the advice from the Scientific Council and the Working Group of Fisheries Managers and Scientists, and a decision shall be taken on future management measures.

Area	Sub-Area	Coordinate 1	Coordinate 2	Coordinate 3	Coordinate 4
Eastern Flemish Cap	1	46°49'13"N 43°20'05"W	46°55'06"N 43°20'05"W	46°55'06"N 43°32'24"W	46°49'13"N 43°32'24"W
Northern Flemish Cap	1	48°20'30"N 44°54'38"W	48°25'02"N 44°54'38"W	48°25'02"N 45°17'16"W	48°20'30"N 45°17'16"W
Northern Flemish Cap	2	48°35'56"N 45°05'36"W	48°40'10"N 45°05'36"W	48°40'10"N 45°11'45"W	48°35'56"N 45°11'45"W
Northern Flemish Cap	3	48°34'24"N 45°26'19"W	48°36'55"N 45°31'16"W	48°30'18"N 45°39'42"W	48°27'31"N 45°34'40"W
Northwest Flemish Cap	1	47°58'42"N 46°06'44"W	48°01'07"N 46°12'04"W	47°49'42"N 46°22'48"W	47°47'17"N 46°17'28"W
Northwest Flemish Cap	2	47°25'48"N 46°21'24"W	47°30'01"N 46°21'24"W	47°30'01"N 46°27'33"W	47°25'48"N 46°27'33"W
Southwest Flemish Pass	1	47°03'31"N 46°40'09"W	47°05'49"N 46°45'00"W	46°48'24"N 47°01'49"W	46°34'40"N 46°57'29"W
		Coordinate 5	46°35'50"N 46°51'31"W	Coordinate 6	46°46'24"N 46°55'18"W
Southwest Flemish Pass	2	46°18'54"N 46°47'51"W	46°23'07"N 46°47'51"W	46°23'07"N 46°54'01"W	46°18'54"N 46°54'01"W

