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32nd ANNUAL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 2010

Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategy Working Group

Noting that international agreements such as the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA) and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries call for the rebuilding of depleted stocks through application of the precautionary approach;

Further noting that many Contracting Parties have domestic legislation or policies which require the identification of limit reference points and recovery targets;

Recalling that the 3LNO American Plaice stock and 3NO Cod stock have been under long term moratoria;

Further recalling that in 2007 NAFO adopted a Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategy for 3NO Cod that identified a limit reference point of 60,000t;

Recognizing that the moratoria have created significant hardships for all Contracting Parties;

Desiring continued recovery and growth of these stocks to ensure their long term sustainability and to promote associated economic opportunities;

Noting that Scientific Council has reported that the Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) for 3LNO American Plaice and 3NO Cod have been increasing since the moratoria and that these stocks are expected to further approach and possibly exceed B_{lim} in the short or medium term;

Mindful of the desire to allow further recovery and growth of these stocks;

Noting that it is necessary to implement a monitoring programme to ensure that these stocks are achieving rebuilding objectives in future years;

It is proposed that the Fisheries Commission:

1. Establish a Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists with the following Terms of Reference:

Terms of Reference

*Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on
Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies*

Structure

Establish a Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists, which reports to Fisheries Commission, consults with Scientific Council, and provides recommendations to Fisheries Commission.

The Working Group shall be comprised of fishery managers and scientists from Contracting Parties supported by advisors, as required, up to a maximum of three participants per Contracting Party. The Chair/Vice-chair shall be selected from participating fishery managers and scientists with both a fishery manager and a scientist represented in the two positions.

Consideration shall be given by the Fisheries Commission in 2011 to the continuation or dissolution of the working group.

Objective

1. Comprehensive review of the interim 3LNO Am. plaice and the existing 3NO Cod Conservation Plans and Re-Building Strategies.
2. Consider risk management approaches in the review, update and future development of Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies.

This work should be presented to Fisheries Commission for consideration at the 2011 Annual General Meeting and possible implementation in January 2012.

Specific Duties

The working group should review and update conservation plans and rebuilding strategies in respect of:

- a) Limit reference points, as provided by Scientific Council, and recovery target(s);
- b) Buffer reference points, developed in the context of precautionary approach framework and in support of robust rebuilding plans;
- c) Timelines or time frames that can reasonably be expected to achieve established targets;
- d) Conditions at which a directed fishery might occur;
- e) Harvest control rules which incorporate target, limit and buffer reference points, as well as, rebuilding timelines or timeframes; and
- f) An implementation strategy which promotes stability in response to natural resource fluctuations that may be expected to occur over the life of the rebuilding plan.

Possible Principles/Elements

In the conduct of its work, the working group may consider the following principles and elements in the development of Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies:

- a) When the stock has recovered beyond Blim, initial TAC levels should be set at conservative levels to allow for continued recovery and growth;
- b) Bycatch should be kept to the lowest possible level and restricted to unavoidable bycatch in fisheries directing for other species when SSB is below Blim;

- c) Interim target(s) for further growth in the stock prior to re-opening;
- d) Long-term rebuilding target (e.g. Bmsy) and associated timelines and/or timeframes;
- e) Harvest strategy, consistent with the Precautionary Approach, which ensure Spawning Stock Biomass remains above Blim;
- f) Monitoring and review process for each rebuilding plan to enable Fisheries Commission to assess and revise plans as necessary to ensure rebuilding plan targets are achieved.

The working group may also consider refining these principles/ elements outlined above.

Meetings

The Working Group shall hold its first meeting in advance of the 2011 Meeting of Scientific Council to allow for additional requests for advice.

The Working Group shall communicate regularly through teleconferences and electronically, as required.

A second meeting may be held at the discretion of the Chair.