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**Interim 3LNO American Plaice Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategy
(NCEM – new Article to be inserted in Chapter I)**

1. Objective(s):

- a) Long-term Objective: The long-term objective of this Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategy is to achieve and to maintain the 3LNO American plaice Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) in the 'safe zone', as defined by the NAFO Precautionary Approach framework, and at or near Bmsy.
- b) Interim Milestone: As an interim milestone, increase the 3LNO American plaice Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) to a level above the Limit Reference Point (Blim). It may reasonably be expected that Blim will not be reached until after 2014.

2. Reference Points:

- a) Limit reference point for spawning stock biomass (Blim) – 50,000t
- b) An intermediate stock reference point or security margin BISR¹ – [100,000t]
- c) Limit reference point for fishing mortality (Flim = Fmsy) – 0.31
- d) Bmsy – [242,000t]

3. Re-opening to Directed Fishing:

- a) A re-opening of a directed fishery should only occur when the estimated SSB, in the year projected for opening the fishery, has a very low² probability of actually being below Blim.
- b) An annual TAC should be established at a level which is projected to result in:
 - i. continued growth in SSB,
 - ii. low³ probability of SSB declining below Blim throughout the subsequent 3-year period, and
 - iii. fishing mortality < F0.1

4. Harvest Control Rules:

Noting the desire for relative TAC stability, the projections referred to in items (a) through (d) below should consider the effect of maintaining the proposed annual TAC over 3 years. Further, in its application of the Harvest Control Rules, Fisheries Commission may, based on Scientific Council analysis, consider scenarios which either mitigate decline in SSB or limit increases in TACs as a means to balance stability and growth objectives.

- a) When SSB is below Blim:
 - i. no directed fishing, and
 - ii. by-catch should be restricted to unavoidable by-catch in fisheries directing for other species
- b) When SSB is between Blim and BISR:
 - i. TACs should be set at a level(s) to allow for continued growth in SSB consistent with established rebuilding objective(s),

¹ A 'buffer zone' (Bbuf) is not required under the NAFO PA given the availability of risk analysis related to current and projected biomass values; however, SC has advised that an additional zone(s) between Blim and Bmsy could be considered. An intermediate stock reference point (BISR) is proposed to delineate this zone. The proposed value is equivalent to twice Blim.

² 'very low' means 10% or less

³ 'low' means 20% or less

- ii. TACs should result in a low probability of SSB declining below B_{lim} throughout the subsequent 3-year period, and
 - iii. Biomass projections should apply a low risk tolerance
- c) When SSB is above B_{isr} :
- i. TACs should be set at a level(s) to allow for growth in SSB consistent with the long term objective, and
 - ii. Biomass projections should apply a risk neutral approach (i.e. mean probabilities)
- d) When SSB is above B_{msy} :
- i. TACs should be set at a level of F that has a low probability of exceeding F_{msy} , and
 - ii. Biomass projections should apply a risk neutral approach (i.e. mean probabilities)