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Proposal for the Provision of Catch reporting Data to the NAFO Scientific Council and Scientific Council/Fisheries Commission Working Groups

Recalling that an objective of the NAFO convention is to *ensure that complete and accurate data concerning fishing activities within the Regulatory area are collected and shared* among Contracting Parties in a timely manner (NAFO/GC Doc. 08/3);

Noting that the Performance Review panel recommended that NAFO should develop and consolidate NAFO fishery data access and in particular share fishing vessel data to be used by the Scientific Council;

Noting that Management decisions should be based on best available science;

Recognizing that accurate reporting of catches is critical for scientific assessments and advice;

Recalling that the Scientific Council may have access to VMS data without the vessels identification, by their own request to the Executive Secretary (Article 29.10 (d));

Considering that the Scientific Council should continue to explore VMS data in order to carry out their mandated responsibilities;

Recognizing that sharing information with the Scientific Council is important to develop confidence and to address the catch discrepancy problem observed in some stocks; and,

Conscious of the need to maintain confidentiality of fishing activity data (i.e. commercial sensitivity of catches and detailed fishing location).

It is recommended that the following paragraph is added to Article 28.5:

(e) makes the catch reporting data specified in Article 28.2 (c) available to the Scientific Council and Scientific Council/Fisheries Commission Working Groups upon their request, without the vessel's and Flag State identification, in line with the data confidentiality rules as specified in Annex II.B and for data transmitted to the NAFO secretariat after the 1 January 2013. In case the request includes VMS data under Article 29.10 (d) a vessel codification should permit the cross analysis of both catch and VMS data by vessel and this way allow the Scientific Council and Scientific Council/Fisheries Commission Working Groups to carry out their mandated responsibilities. Data made available shall be used only for the purpose of research within the functions of the Scientific Council or Scientific Council/Fisheries Commission Working Groups and publication of scientific results should be in an aggregated format without any detailed information regarding individual vessels or Flag States.