



37TH ANNUAL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 2015

Recommendations from the WG-BDS to forward to the Fisheries Commission

The Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS) met on 13-14 July 2015 in Halifax, Nova Scotia and agreed on the following recommendations (FC Doc. 15/06):

1. **FC to encourage Contracting Parties to carry out selectivity experiments with sorting grids in the Div. 3M cod fishery (SCS Doc. 15/12, p.21);**
2. **FC to request SC, based on analysis of logbook data and patterns of fishing activity conducted by the Secretariat, to examine relative levels of bycatch and discards of 3M cod/redfish, and stocks under moratoria in the different circumstances (e.g. fisheries, area, season, fleets, depth, timing);**
3. **The Secretariat to analyze data for trends, patterns, anomalies:**
 - **In cases where bycatch thresholds (NCEM Article 6.3, Annex I.A footnote 21) are exceeded or trends are apparent, the analysis should provide additional information on the associated catch weights for the specific stocks (3NO Cod, 3M American Plaice, 3LNO A. Plaice);**
 - **Analysis should consider both historical and current CATs (2012 to current);**
 - **Trends in reported catch of non-Annex IA species (3M Witch Flounder and 3M Skate).**
4. **FC to consider a modification of the notification process outlined in NCEM Article 5.12.d to ensure timely closure of the fishery. While there was general agreement on the principle of closing the directed fishery (and the retention of bycatch) based on projected catches, there was recognition that the text modifications proposed below may need to be further refined and that the language should be forwarded to STACTIC for that purpose.**
 - **Delete the first "and then 100%";**
 - **Insert new paragraph (e) to read: *determines the date of closure of 3M redfish, and notifies all Contracting Parties 72 hours in advance. Closure date will be established by estimating the date on which the reported catch will reach 100% of the TAC, based on projected catches.***
5. **FC to adopt the Action Plan outlined below:**

Action plan

Overarching objectives:

- **Effective management and the minimization of bycatch and discards, and improvement of selectivity, in fisheries of the NRA**
- **Accurate reporting of target, non-target and incidental catch.**
- **Account for total catch (retained and non-retained) in scientific assessments and management measures**
- **Management regimes are adaptive and address changing fishery conditions over time, or differences among areas and fleets**
- **Management measures reflect the precautionary and ecosystem approaches to fisheries management**
- **Identify priority areas for bycatch management, in particular areas where there is a risk of causing serious harm to bycatch species**



- **Ensure linkage to other NAFO bodies doing work related to bycatch management (e.g. STACTIC, SC, ~~WG-ESA~~, WG-EAFFM, WG-CR)**

Issues for the Fisheries Commission to consider. These are the key themes of an action plan:

1. Data management

- **IT technical issues and capacity**
- **Standardized formats and transmission (including fixed and mobile gear)**
- **Logbook data**
- **Gap identification**
- **Completeness (retained and non-retained)**
- **Opportunities for data sharing**

2. Analysis and ongoing monitoring

- **Trends, patterns, anomalies**
- **Time, area, depth, fleet-specific issues, fishery-specific issues**
- **Identification of best practices**

3. Identification of priorities

- **Moratoria species**
- **Areas where there is a risk of causing serious harm to bycatch species**
- **High rates of discards**

4. Develop management options

- **Selectivity measures**
- **Time area management**
- **Fishery-specific solutions and identification of best practices**
- **Avoid measures that incentivize bycatch and discards**