



NAFO Communications Strategy

NAFO is an intergovernmental fisheries science and management body. NAFO manages the fishery in the international waters of the Northwest Atlantic and reflects the effort to ensure the international cooperation in these waters and maintain the compatibility of conservation and management measures between the coastal state and the international areas. The mandate has recently been updated to include an ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

The NAFO Secretariat provides administrative support to the Organization and its chief administrative officer is the Executive Secretary who is appointed by the General Council.

Many specific duties of the Executive Secretary (or delegate) regarding distribution of information to Contracting Parties are contained in the Rules of Procedure. It is understood that, in the interest of transparency, information for the general public and other interested groups as appropriate, be communicated in an accurate, timely and professional manner.

NAFO has a clearly defined Media Policy as reported in GC Doc. 04/4 that outlines the conditions for attendance by Media Representatives at NAFO Meetings. This policy has been applied and seems to work well.

This Communications Strategy provides guidelines for external communications from the Secretariat using various mediums including:

- Printed materials such as newsletters, articles, and brochures.
- Electronic materials such as email, postings to web sites or social media sites.
- Media relations such as requests for interviews, news releases, and media inquiries.

General Requests:

Each staff member is responsible for communicating basic and routine information to the public and others in relation to their specific job duties. Requests for private data or information outside of the scope of an individual's job duties should be routed to the Information Officer for discussion with the Executive Secretary.

General Requests received by the Information Officer may be forwarded to the appropriate staff member to reply.

Official Requests:

Throughout the year requests may be received from the UN, FAO or other RFMOs or intergovernmental organizations. These could be in the form of requests for responses to UNGA Resolutions or questionnaires. Depending on the subject matter, the requests are reviewed by the Executive Secretary and with input from the Coordinators and the Information Officer and the response is prepared and compiled. After completion and depending on the topic, the responses may be circulated to all Contracting Parties for comments and review before being finalized and returned.

Reports of NAFO Activities:

From time to time NAFO Secretariat staff participate in outside events and meetings. The participating staff member may be requested to supply a report of recent NAFO activities. These reports are usually summary accounts of information available to the public or a description of Secretariat work. Examples of this are reports to RSN, CWP, FIRMS and ASFA.

Media Requests:

All requests for interviews or information from the media are routed through the Information Officer. Media requests include anything intended to be published or viewable to others in some form such as television, radio, newspapers, newsletters, and web sites. If the Information Officer is unavailable, staff are requested to ask the media representative's name, contact information, questions and deadline and refer to the Executive Secretary (or delegate).

Interview requests will be first considered by the Executive Secretary. Based on type or subject of request these may be delegated to either of the Coordinators. Coordinators may decide to contact the Chair or other appropriate NAFO official (such as Designated Experts).

Press Releases:

In general a Press Release is circulated only after the Annual Meeting. No public statements are made by any participants until after the conclusion of the meeting when an official Press Release is prepared by the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the Chairs of the General Council, Fisheries Commission and Scientific Council. The Information Officer is responsible for drafting the Press Release and coordinating input from the Coordinators and other members of the Secretariat.

The Press Release is circulated to a broad distribution list which is updated annually.

In some recent years Scientific Council Highlights have been prepared by Scientific Council Chairs in conjunction with the SC Coordinator. These have been placed on the website.

Public Information:

NAFO has a well-developed public website and it is the responsibility of the Secretariat to ensure information presented there is timely and up-to-date. Meeting Reports are uploaded after reports are finalized by the respective Constituent Bodies and all deadlines have passed. Each Team is responsible for ensuring the content of pages pertaining to their field of expertise is current and correct.

Posters of various NAFO highlighted work, such as VMS, Advice to Management, etc. have been developed to use in presentations for the public.

Publications:

Electronic publication is an efficient, cost-saving method of disseminating information. If a report is available to the public electronically, there are no specific requirements to print and distribute hard copies of the documents for general distribution.

However, NAFO does maintain a print publication distribution list. These print publications are distributed mainly to Contracting Party libraries and key individuals as well as other RFMOs and international fishery bodies. A "purchase list" is maintained where recipients are invoiced and payment is received before a print publication is mailed.

Print and electronic versions (DVD) of the previous year's reports are circulated to meeting participants during the June Scientific Council meeting and the Annual Meeting.

The Journal of Northwest Atlantic Fishery Science has its own website and pdf articles are available for anyone to download for free. As well there is a limited paper publication distribution list. The NAFO Scientific Council Studies is mainly an electronic publication. Recently identification guides have been circulated on waterproof paper to those working on the water.

The NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures remains a key NAFO publication. Over 600 paper copies are distributed each year to Contracting Parties, inspectors and fishery monitoring centers. This publication is also available on the NAFO website as a downloadable pdf file.