



THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

Progress Report on the Development of a
Standard Unit of Fishing Effort

At the Second Annual Meeting the following recommendation 18 (6) was passed:

"That the Executive Secretary be requested to inquire of the various Governments what information is now available as a basis for development of a standard unit of fishing effort, and to make a progress report at the Third Annual Meeting."

In a circular letter from headquarters (5 Dec. 1952) the participating countries were asked to forward information available for the development of a standard unit. Only one paper relative to the matter was received, viz. Clyde Taylor: Comments on a Standard Unit of Fishing Effort (Document No. 19). The paper deals theoretically with the matter, indicating the methods of research that could be used and emphasizing the difficulties to be met especially those arising from the variable schooling of fishes.

Thus little information has been received and no work relative to the recommendation has been reported on, therefore, the present report can not be much of a progress report.

The development of a single standard unit is not for the present an absolute need for the Commission's work. It will only be so when or if the future will call for a more common, extensive use of regulations bearing on various fisheries and fishing methods. In that case the standard unit will be of value as a means of ensuring that the restrictions to be made are fair to the various types of fishing.

The great variety of fishing methods within the area makes the development a very difficult one. An early, simple solution to the problem cannot be expected.

The problem of developing a standard unit or standard units has generally been approached from two angles, as stated by A.R. Margett¹⁾, 1) The experimental way by direct comparison of catches from various gears or vessels fishing closely together, and 2) the statistical way by comparison of landings from different fisheries carried out on the same grounds and in the same periods.

Of course the direct way is - as is generally the case - the one to be preferred.

Owing to the variety of fishing methods the experimental way will be long, tedious and expensive. As a standard unit is not much needed for the time being a greater amount of research work should not be spent on that matter at the expense of biological researches.

1)

A.R. Margett: Experimental Comparison of Fishing Capacities of different Trawlers and Trawls. Rapp. et Proc. Verb. Cons. Int. p. 1'Expl. de la Mer. Vol. CXXV. 1949.

Therefore it is proposed that researches aiming at an agreement to a single standard unit of effort is deferred for a number of years (cfr. proposals for recommendations in the Statistician's progress report, Document No. 30).

However, it could be considered to initiate work towards the development of special standard units for each of the most important fisheries, trawling and linefishing.

If the various national institutions can for the present carry out such researches only at the expense of the necessary biological researches the statistical way could be used.

From 1951 the Commission has collected statistics on efforts as well as on catches. At the headquarters an approach to the development of such special standard units could be tried by a combination of the two sets of statistical data.



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Executive Secretary.