

ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 1968Proposals for Standardizing Abbreviations, Symbols, etc.  
in Tabular Statistical Publications of ICNAF, ICES and FAO

by

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 With the development of the common inter-agency program of ICNAF, ICES and FAO to standardize and otherwise refine national reporting and agency processing and publication of North Atlantic fishery statistics, it has become obvious that the task of readers using the various publications of the different inter-governmental fishery agencies would be greatly facilitated if the abbreviations and symbols used in tables were standardized. Such standardization would also facilitate the task of the national offices when reporting in tabular form data to these agencies.

2. ACTION BY THE CWP

The following paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5 are paragraphs 7.1 to 7.5 respectively of the Report of the Fifth Session of the CWP, April 1967.

- 2.1 With reference to document STANA:5/67/3G (Notes on the standardization of abbreviations, tabular symbols and terminology in fishery statistical publications (FAO Fisheries Circular No. 151)) the Continuing Working Party discussed the need for and the possibility of a common system of abbreviations and symbols for use in statistical publications.
- 2.2 In this connection it was pointed out that the symbol  $\phi$ , used for "negligible, or less than half the unit listed" presented typographic difficulties for some printers, and might easily be confused with other statistical symbols. It was therefore recommended that the Secretary of the Continuing Working Party should investigate the possibility of changing to another symbol, or to use 0 (zero) as meaning "nil, or less than half the unit listed", in the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics.
- 2.3 In the meantime, however, it was agreed that FAO, ICNAF and ICES would continue to use the symbol " $\phi$ " temporarily in order to achieve a common system for the three publications giving catch statistics for the North Atlantic. The Continuing Working Party also recommended the introduction, in all North Atlantic fishery statistical publications, of bold horizontal or vertical bars to indicate significant breaks in the historical comparability of time series.
- 2.4 The Continuing Working Party recommended that the Secretary, after consulting other international statistical bodies, prepare a standard list of symbols for consideration and adoption by FAO's Department of Fisheries, ICES and ICNAF.

2.5 The Continuing Working Party also urged that the designation "Nominal catch" should replace the world "catch" where practicable in the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics, Bulletin of Fishery Statistics and Fisheries Circulars, as well as in other publications whenever "live weight equivalent of the landed weight" is indicated.

3. SUBSEQUENT ACTION BY THE SECRETARY OF THE CWP

3.1 The Secretary of the CWP raised this problem concerning the standardization of tabular abbreviations and symbols at a UN Meeting of Statisticians. It was recommended that the abbreviations and symbols used by the UN Statistical Office in its annually published Statistical Yearbook would be the most appropriate basis to be used for standardizing these features of statistical publications.

3.2 The symbols as used by the UN Statistical Office in its Statistical Yearbook are as follows:

EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

Category not applicable . . . . .	.
Data not available . . . . .	...
Magnitude zero . . . . .	-
Magnitude less than half of unit employed . . . . .	{ 0
Provisional . . . . .	{ 0.0
United Nations estimate . . . . .	*
Data calculated by the Statistical Office of the United Nations	X
A marked break in the series is indicated by a vertical bar . .	↑
Decimal figures are always preceded by a period (.).	↓
Thousands and millions are separated by a space.	
Figures not included in totals and subtotals are given in parentheses.	

3.3 The symbols used by the UN together with their definitions, have been adjusted to those used currently in the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics. This revised version is given below (see Section 4). It is proposed that these are considered by ICNAF, ICES and FAO Department of Fisheries, as the basis for further discussion before a standard version is adopted by all the fishery agencies concerned. Should this be acceptable, FAO would introduce these new symbols and replace the existing ones in the Yearbook of Fishery Statistics, commencing with Volume 26, and in the Bulletin of Fishery Statistics and Fisheries Circulars to be published beginning 1 January 1969.

3.4 It should be stressed that not all the symbols and concepts listed and defined below in Section 4 need be used in publications. It is proposed that each agency should be free to select those which it wishes to use, but should, in making selections, conform to these proposed standards.

4. STANDARD NOTES AND SYMBOLS: DRAFT PROPOSALS

4.1 NOTE ON GEOGRAPHIC AREAS ("COUNTRIES" AND "TERRITORIES").

In the stubs and column headings of tables the term "country" covers also territories, parts of countries, parts of territories, or combinations of these, such as economic or customs unions, etc. The designations of countries and territories and the arrangement of material in this publication should not be considered as implying any endorsement or other judgment by the Secretariat of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations regarding the legal status of any country or territory, or of its authorities, or in respect of the delimitation of its boundaries.

The form of statistical presentation in this Yearbook was adopted solely for the purpose of providing a convenient geographic basis for the accompanying statistical series. The same qualification applies equally to all notes and explanations concerning the geographic units for which data are presented.

4.2 STANDARD TIME REFERENCE

Nominal catch and landings data in this Yearbook refer to the "year of landing", i.e., to the twelve months of the calendar year or of the split year during which the fish was landed. Adjusted data referring to the "year of capture", are footnoted.

The calendar year is indicated by the normal annotation (e.g. 1938, 1948, 1958, 1963, etc.)

A split year — twelve-month period beginning in one calendar year and ending in the next — is indicated by an oblique stroke (e.g. 1960/61, 1962/63)

A period of consecutive calendar years, including both years specified, and an average of a period of consecutive calendar years are both indicated by a dash (e.g. 1948-52, 1953-57, 1958-62).

4.3 STANDARD EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

Thousands and millions are separated by a space and a period precedes the decimal figure(s) (e.g. 9 876 543.21)

- (a) Magnitude known to be nil or zero; (b) given in original source as "nil or negligible" without further precision
- 0 } (a) Magnitude known to be more than zero but less than half the unit  
0.0 } or final digit used; (b) negligible or insignificant
- ... Not available (mainly because unobtainable or included in another figure)
- . Category not applicable
- " " Data expressed in units other than metric tons
- ( ) Sub-totals or figures that must be shown distinctly
- [ ] Species aggregates of which more than ten percent was estimated by the agency
- \* Provisional; preliminary
- x Estimate made by the agency
- ‡ Data calculated by the agency
- | A marked break in a time series presented horizontally
- A marked break in a time series presented vertically
- nes. Not elsewhere specified
- sp. Species (singular)
- spp. Species (plural).