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More Detailed Catch/Effort Reporting

by Assistant Executive Secretary

At the 1971 Annual Meeting of ICNAF, STACRES considered that, for both assessment and regulatory purposes, it may be necessary that catch and effort data for some species be reported by smaller statistical areas than those used at present, and recommended that

- (i) ICNAF Secretariat solicit from the national offices information on the feasibility of their reporting of catches (and effort) of major groundfish species and herring by smaller statistical areas than those now in use;
- (ii) scientists from countries fishing in the ICNAF Area, and now using smaller statistical areas, provide maps of such area breakdowns in time for consideration at the 1972 ICNAF Annual Meeting.

(Redbook 1971, Part I, page 77)

The above information was solicited from all member countries in Circular Letter 72/11, dated 13 January 1972 with the request that the information reach the Secretariat by 14 April 1972.

Up to 15 May 1972 replies were received from four countries: Japan and United Kingdom use the current ICNAF system, while Canada and USA scientists submitted maps giving more detailed breakdowns into smaller unit areas (see Appendices). Replies received from Canada (Nfld) (A.M. Fleming), Canada (Maritimes) (A.C. Kohler and S.N. Tibbo), Japan (K. Akimoto), UK (D.J. Garrod), and USA (R.L. Edwards) are summarized below.

Canada (Newfoundland)

The Fisheries Research Board, for research purposes, collects catch statistics by smaller unit areas than the ICNAF divisions for both groundfish and herring. However, this coverage pertains only to otter trawls and purse seiners, and a large number of inshore boats (longliners, gillnetters, etc.) are not included. Appendix I gives the breakdown into smaller unit areas with code numbers as used at the St. John's Biological Station for recording catches and effort of the otter-trawl fleet in the groundfish fishery, and most captains in completing their logbook records now record catch location by unit area number. For the purse-seine fishery for herring, which is almost entirely in the coastal areas, essentially the same unit areas are used but with different code numbers.

The Economics Branch of the Canadian Fisheries Service is responsible for compiling and presenting to ICNAF the statistics of Canadian fisheries. However, they do not at the operational level (at least in the Newfoundland office) have an opportunity to comment on the feasibility of more detailed catch/effort reporting, since they are not notified of such matters as contained in Circular Letter 72/11, nor are they represented at meetings of Statistics and Sampling Subcommittee during ICNAF Meetings. For the offshore otter-trawl fleet, the St. John's Biological Station supplies the Economics Branch with information on catch and effort on an ICNAF Division basis.

Canada (Maritimes)

As distinct from the Economics Branch of the Canadian Fisheries Service which is responsible for reporting Canadian fishery statistics to ICNAF, the St. Andrews Biological Station of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada collects, for research purposes, catch and effort statistics for groundfish species and herring by smaller statistical areas than those now used by ICNAF. The information is available from logbook records of the mobile fleet fishing in ICNAF Subarea 4. Appendix 2 gives a breakdown of the smaller unit areas used for groundfish.

For the herring fishery the unit areas used in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in coastal waters along Nova Scotia and in the Bay of Fundy coincide with those given in the Appendix. The two unit areas for the Bay of Fundy have been considered very inadequate and 5 minute rectangles are now being used there. However, such detail for routine statistical reporting would be impractical, and, should it be necessary to deviate from the present ICNAF system (which in any case is not suitable for herring), the Assessment Subcommittee would have to consider unit stocks separately and specify the kinds of detail required for each stock.

Japan

Smaller statistical areas than those designated by ICNAF are not being used for reporting catch and effort statistics.

United Kingdom

Catch and effort statistics cannot at present be reported to a more detailed geographical breakdown than that currently used by ICNAF.

United States

Landings from the ICNAF Convention Area are recorded by "statistical areas" (SA) within ICNAF Divisions as shown on the appended base charts (Appendices 3 and 4). Each SA is assigned a three digit code, and breakouts by ICNAF divisions are by the first 2 digits of the code.

For interviewed trips and trips with log records, a second location set, designated by 10 blocks of latitude and longitude is also used. Presently these data represent 60-80 percent of all multiple-day trips.







