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the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries

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Canadian proposal regarding minimum mesh sizes
for trawl nets used in the Convention Area

Current regulatory measures for minimum mesh sizes for trawl nets used in the Convention Area involve anomalies which make the regulations unnecessarily difficult or impossible to enforce.

In Subareas 2 and 3, for example, the minimum mesh size of 130 mm (manila) applies to all parts of the net; whereas, in Subareas 4 and 5, the minimum mesh size of 130 mm (manila) applies only to the cod-end and a minimum size of 114 mm (manila) for all other parts of the net. Another and more complex problem relates to differentials between minimum mesh sizes for different types of material. The wide range of synthetic twines available makes it difficult under general enforcement conditions to determine the twine category applicable to a particular net without chemical testing. The result is a complex and confusing situation for the fishermen and enforcement authorities of the Member Countries.

Canada, therefore, proposes that at its 1974 Annual Meeting the Commission consider amending existing minimum mesh size regulations to provide for a single uniform mesh size in all appropriate Subareas for all parts of nets, regardless of material used.

In making this proposal, Canada realizes that there may be substantial inventories of netting which would become obsolete if this proposal is adopted. Therefore, in order to minimize economic hardship, it is further proposed to permit a transition period of, at least, one year so that fishermen and sellers of nets can use up present inventories before a uniform mesh size regulation is implemented.