

International Commission for



the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries

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(REVISED)

SEVENTH SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING - SEPTEMBER 1975

US proposal for international regulation of fishing gear employed
in the fisheries in Subarea 5 of the Convention Area

At the Annual Meeting (June 1975) the United States proposed an amendment to the ICNAF regulations, which, if recommended by the Commission and adopted by Contracting Governments, would have prohibited the taking of fish other than crustacea and scallops by vessels over 155 feet (47.2 m) in length with fishing gear other than pelagic fishing gear in part of Subarea 5 (Georges Bank). (See ICNAF Comm. Doc. 75/30).

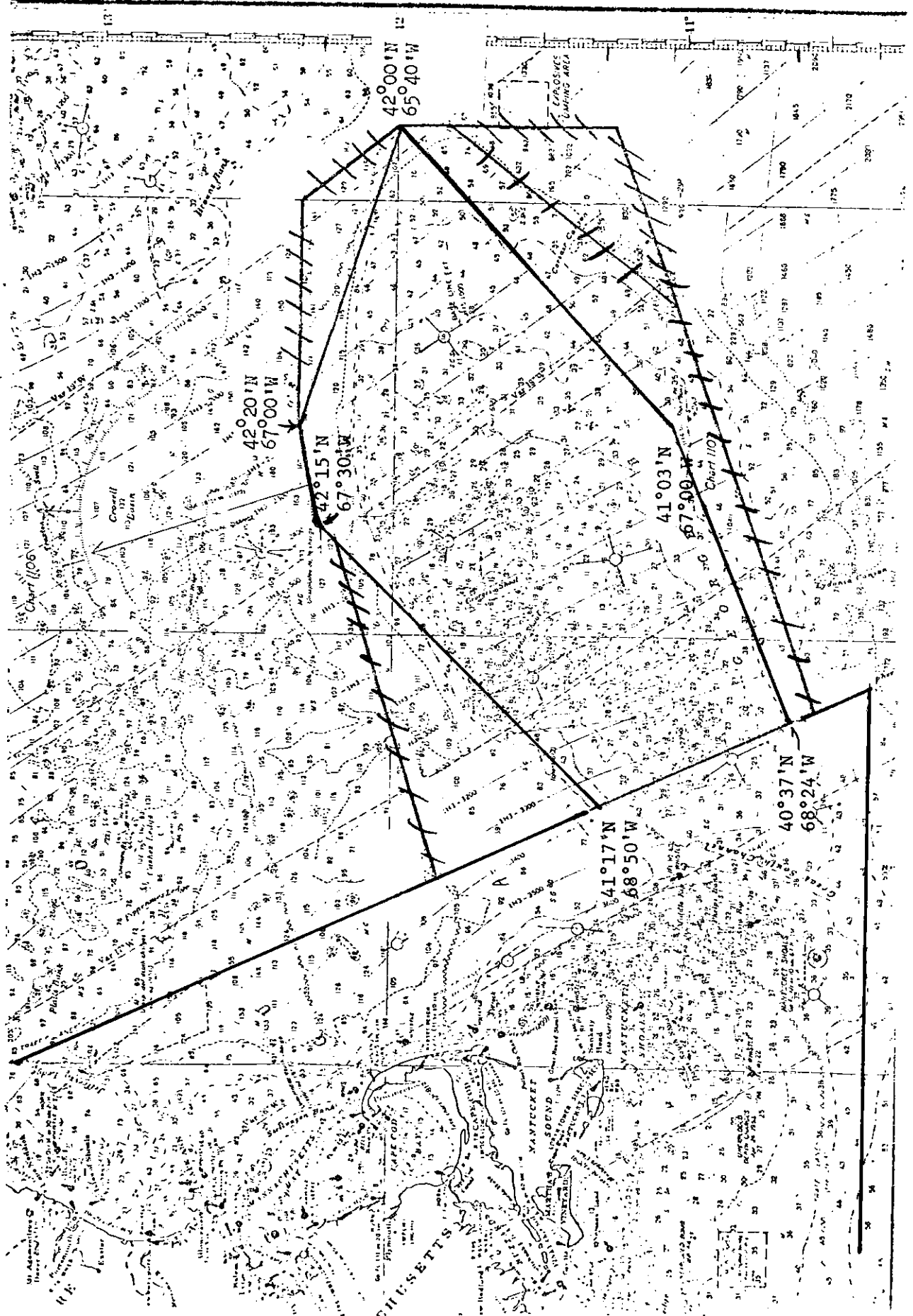
As was noted in that document, the United States is deeply concerned about the continuing effect of high incidental catches in mixed fisheries upon individual stocks, particularly in those areas of Subarea 5 where the mix of species includes haddock, yellowtail flounder, and other flounders--species of extreme importance to the small U. S. coastal fishing fleet. It is the view of the United States that the present system fails to cope with the by-catch problem in Subarea 5 (Georges Bank). These by-catches, frequently discarded and not reported, as revealed through inspection under the Scheme of Joint Enforcement, often represent an important component of the total removal from the stocks. U. S. officials believe the by-catches may be equally or more damaging to stocks than catches in directed fisheries. U. S. officials note that the reported by-catch off southern New England (5ZW and Statistical Area 6) was reduced by about 70 percent in 1974, and believe this can be attributed to gear restrictions similar to this proposal imposed in that area in 1974 and for the following years.

Accordingly, the United States, having considered the views of various Contracting Governments, has revised the proposal set forth in Comm. Doc. 75/30. It is the U. S. view that the present deteriorated state of ground-fish stocks and fishery, and the certainty of further deteriorations unless effective measures are taken, makes it imperative that this proposal be implemented without further modification.

"That the Contracting Governments take appropriate action to prohibit the taking of fish other than crustacea and scallops, by vessels over 155 feet (47.2 m) in length by persons under their jurisdiction with fishing gear other than pelagic fishing gear (purse seines, or true midwater trawls, using midwater trawl doors incapable of being fished on the bottom) and from attaching any protective device to pelagic fishing gear or employing any means which would in effect make it possible to fish for demersal species during the entire year in the area of Subarea 5 bounded by straight lines connecting the following coordinates in the order listed:

42°20'N, 67°00'W
42°00'N, 65°40'W
41°03'N, 67°00'W
40°37'N, 68°24'W
41°17'N, 68°50'W
42°15'N, 67°30'W

A chart illustrating the changes in this revised proposal for this area is attached.



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