

International Commission for



the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries

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NINTH SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING - DECEMBER 1976

North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

Fourteenth Annual Meeting

Press Notice

The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission was held in Estoril, Portugal from 1-9 July 1976. The President, Captain J.C.E. Cardoso (Portugal) was in the Chair. Delegations attended from all Member States, namely:

Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, the German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom.

Observers represented the Governments of Bulgaria, Canada, Cuba, and the United States of America and the following organizations: the European Economic Community, FAO, ICES, ICSEAF and OECD.

2. Opening Address given by the Portuguese Secretary of State for Fisheries

The meeting was opened by the Portuguese Secretary of State for Fisheries, who referred not only to the steps being taken by the Portuguese Government to secure the viability and future development of the domestic fishing industry with its long tradition as a source of food and employment, but also to the need for close international co-operation both at regional and world levels. Only through such co-operation could the living resources of the sea be fully utilized and managed with due regard for conservation and the needs of future generations. This remained a fundamental truth despite the move towards the establishment of 200 mile "exclusive economic zones" which Portugal had been supporting in the context of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference. The proposed extension of coastal state jurisdiction over the resources, including fisheries, within such zones would inevitably create both new opportunities for the states concerned and necessitate a new balance being struck between their interests and those of other countries. In all discussions of the subject within NEAFC and elsewhere the Portuguese Government would be aiming to contribute constructively to a fair solution of the problem.

3. Accession of new Member Countries

The Commission welcomed the accession of Finland to the Convention and noted the intention of the Government of Cuba to accede later this year.

4. Future of the Commission

It was unanimously agreed to set up a Working Group to consider the future international management of fisheries resources in the Convention area, including possible modification of the NEAFC Convention, in the light of the move towards extended fisheries jurisdiction of some coastal states and the proceedings of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference. The Working Group will consist of the President of NEAFC and persons nominated by the Federal Republic of Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USSR and by ICES, all of whom shall act in a personal capacity. It will submit its report in time for consideration by the Commission at its Mid-Term meeting in November 1976.

5. Mixed fisheries

Several new or revised measures were agreed in order to regulate the catch of protected species taken in the course of fisheries for other than human consumption.

The closed area for industrial fisheries for Norway put in the North Sea off the North East coast of the United Kingdom, originally agreed at the Mid-Term meeting in November 1975 but lost as a result of objections by several countries, was reinstated for the period from 1st August to the last day of January.

A new Recommendation (5) was agreed, reinstating a limit of 25% by weight on the proportions of fish of protected species which may be taken as a by-catch in mixed fishery catches not intended for human consumption. No more than 10% by weight may consist of undersized protected species subject to the overall 25% limitation.

6. Industrial fishing for Herring

Industrial fishing for herring remains prohibited in the main part of Region 2 of the Convention area. By-catches of herring taken in industrial fisheries in this region are limited to:

- (a) 15% in weight of each landing of sprat from 1st July to 31st March and 10% from 1st April to 30th June, subject to an overall limitation of 5% in weight of the aggregate annual landings of sprat in any country;
- (b) 10% in weight of each landing of Norway pout, sandeel or other fisheries, subject to an overall limitation of 5% in weight of the aggregate annual landings of any country.

7. Sole and Plaice Fishing in the North Sea, the English Channel, the Bristol Channel and the Irish Sea

Having considered the available scientific advice on these stocks, the Commission agreed that total allowable catches and national quotas for sole and plaice fishing in 1977 in the North Sea, the English Channel, the Bristol Channel and the Irish Sea should be the same as for 1976, namely:

<u>North Sea Sole</u>	
	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	<u>12,500</u>
Belgium	1,200
Denmark and Faroes	600
France	350
Federal Republic of Germany	500
The Netherlands	9,200
United Kingdom	600
Others	50

<u>North Sea Plaice</u>	
	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	<u>99,900</u>
Belgium	4,700
Denmark	24,200
France	2,100
Federal Republic of Germany	4,700
The Netherlands	35,600
United Kingdom	27,800
Others	800

<u>English Channel Sole</u>	
	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	<u>1,450</u>
Belgium	150
France	870
United Kingdom	405
Others	25

<u>English Channel Plaice</u>	
	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	<u>3,340</u>
Belgium	150
France	1,880
United Kingdom	1,280
Others	30

Bristol Channel Sole

	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	700
Belgium	400
France	100
United Kingdom	190
Others	10

Bristol Channel Plaice

	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	640
Belgium	100
France	130
United Kingdom	400
Others	10

Irish Sea Sole

	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	1,670
Belgium	720
France	150
Ireland	100
The Netherlands	240
United Kingdom	450
Others	10

Irish Sea Plaice

	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	4,150
Belgium	200
France	220
Ireland	1,100
The Netherlands	20
United Kingdom	2,570
Others	40

In addition a number of modifications were made to this Recommendation, simplifying the task of interpretation and enforcement.

8. Regulation of fishing effort in the southern part of the Convention area

The Commission agreed to a Recommendation aimed at maintaining catches of fish in the southern part of the Convention area at approximately the present level so as to forestall the possibility of potentially damaging large-scale diversion of effort to this region from other grounds.

For ICES Statistical Area VIII, the area off the western coast of France and the northern coast of Spain, the total allowable catch of all species except tuna, clupeiform fish and shellfish, was set at 242,000 tons, divided as follows:

	<u>tons</u>
France	60,000
Spain	180,000
Others	2,000

For ICES Statistical Area IX, off the western coasts of Spain and Portugal, the corresponding figures were:

	<u>tons</u>
Total Allowable Catch	218,000
France	2,400
Portugal	140,300
Spain	74,800
Others	500

9. Regulation of Redfish Stocks

The Commission agreed to ask for scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea on the ~~status~~ of redfish stocks off Ireland and the East coast of Greenland so that possible conservation measures may be considered at its next meeting.

10. Minimum mesh sizes

The Commission agreed to consider at its November meeting the possibility of recommending a minimum mesh size of 80 mm for fisheries of sole, plaice, cod, whiting and haddock in the Convention area.

11. Regulation of stocks of herring, mackerel, saithe, Arcto-Norwegian cod and haddock, and cod, haddock and whiting in the North Sea

The Commission discussed at some length the state of these stocks in the light of the most up to date statistical and biological advice. It was, however, considered impracticable to decide at this stage on regulatory measures, particularly national quota allocations, in the light of the uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference and possible extensions of fisheries jurisdiction by some coastal states. It was decided that the Commission should readdress itself to these questions in November.

12. Enforcement Measures

Acting on the recommendations of its Enforcement Committee the Commission decided on a number of new enforcement measures, the most important being:

- the introduction of a standard NEAFC inspection form;
- the introduction of a permit system for vessels conducting fisheries research (which are exempt from the Commission's Recommendations);
- the eventual introduction of log books for all fishing vessels of, initially, 25 metres or more overall length;
- a Recommendation on the prompt reporting to flag states of landings by their vessels in foreign ports.

13. Contribution to the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

The Commission allocated the sum of £8,500 from its budget for 1976/77 as its annual contribution to ICES.

14. Future Meeting

The Commission agreed to hold a Mid-Term Meeting from 22nd to 29th/30th November 1976. The venue has yet to be finally decided.

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