

SECTION IV
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**Report of the FC Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on
Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (WGFMS-CPRS)
7 April 2011
(via WebEx)**

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Report of the FC Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (WGFMS-CPRS)

(FC Doc. 11/2)

7 April 2011 (via WebEx)

1. Opening

The Executive Secretary (Vladimir Shibanov) opened the inaugural meeting at 1410 GMT on Thursday 7 April 2011, and welcomed all participants. Canada, European Union, Norway, the Russian Federation, and the USA were represented. The Scientific Council (SC) Chair was also present (Annex 1).

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Jean-Claude Mahé (EU) and Morley Knight (Canada) were elected Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively. The newly-elected Chair presided the meeting for the subsequent agenda items.

3. Appointment of Rapporteur

The Fisheries Commission Coordinator (Ricardo Federizon) was appointed rapporteur.

4. Adoption of Agenda

The provisional agenda as previously circulated was adopted (Annex 2).

5. Review of the current SC advice relevant to CPRS and consideration of a formulation of additional FC request to SC

The SC Chair (Ricardo Alpoim, EU) presented the latest scientific advice on two fish stocks currently under the *Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies* programme, 3LNO American plaice and 3NO cod (Annex 3). The advice was formulated by the SC during its June 2010 meeting and was already presented at the September 2010 Annual Meeting. He indicated that the detailed advice and comments are contained in the document SCS Doc 10/18 Rev.

The SC Chair indicated the SC is aware of time constraints imposed by the Rules of Procedure concerning Fisheries Commission (FC) Requests and SC responses. However, it is ready in its scheduled June 2011 Meeting in Germany to accommodate additional and relevant request for advice that may emanate from this WG Meeting. The results of the SC June 2011 Meeting would be finalized within few days after the adjournment, and thus this WG would have adequate time to consider and utilize the SC June 2011 Meeting results in time for the next WG meeting (see item 7 of this report).

The current FC Request for Scientific Advice (FC Doc 10/9 Rev) which was formulated at the 2010 Annual Meeting and which would be considered by SC at its June 2011 Meeting was reviewed. Noting that one of the specific duties of this WG as defined in the ToR is the review of reference points and Harvest Control Rules, which would be undertaken at the next WG meeting, it was clarified that F_{msy} and B_{msy} and a provision for advice on reference points would be addressed by item 7 of the FC Request. Likewise, Harvest Control Rule could be covered by Paragraph 2c of Annex I of the FC Request.

It was concluded the latest SC advice and comments on the two fish stock and forthcoming results of the SC June 2011 Meeting would be adequate for this WG to continue its work at the next meeting. Thus, no additional request to SC for advice is necessary.

6. Consideration of the agenda of the next meeting

The draft provisional agenda of the next meeting circulated in March 2011 (GFS/11-119) was reviewed. It was agreed that a new item "SC Chair presentation of scientific advice from the SC June 2011 meeting" be inserted (Annex 4). The *revised* draft provisional agenda would be dispatched to the Contracting Parties as soon as possible.

7. Confirmation of agreed date (26-28 June) and location of the next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada on 26 – 28 June 2011, as previously agreed by the Contracting Parties. The Secretariat was in the process of negotiations with an appropriate hotel as the venue. Hotel information and logistical details will be circulated as soon as possible.

8. Other business

It was pointed out that in the Terms of Reference document (FC Doc 10/11), a maximum of three participants per Contracting Party is allowed. It was agreed that there should be some flexibility on this rule, as it may be necessary for Contracting Parties to send more than three delegates, as advisers for example.

The SC Chair suggested that a *SharePoint* site be created in the NAFO Web site to facilitate coordination and sharing of documents among members of this WG. The Secretariat committed to implement the suggestion.

It was asked if there was a need for another WebEx meeting prior to the 26-28 June meeting. It was concluded that there would probably not be any other matter arising before the SC June meeting and that since there will only be one week delay between the end of the SC June meeting and the next WGFMS-CPRS, there was no need for an additional WebEx meeting.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1530 GMT on Thursday, 7 April 2011.

Annex 1. List of Participants

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Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening
2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
3. Appointment of Rapporteur
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Review of current SC advice relevant to CPRS and consideration of a formulation of additional FC request to SC
6. Consideration of the agenda of the next meeting
7. Confirmation of agreed date (26-28 June) and location of the next meeting
8. Other business
9. Adjournment

Annex 3. Summary of Scientific Advice on 3LNO American plaice and 3NO Cod

Fish Stock	3LNO American plaice	3NO Cod
Biomass	Biomass and SSB are very low compared to historic levels. SSB declined to the lowest estimated level in 1994 and 1995. SSB has been increasing since then and is currently at 33, 000 t. B_{lim} for this stock is 50 000 t	The 2010 total biomass and spawning biomass remain low but are estimated to be at their highest levels since 1992.
State of the Stock	The stock remains low compared to historic levels and although SSB is increasing, it is estimated to be below B_{lim} . Scientific Council notes that SSB was projected in the last assessment to surpass B_{lim} in 2010. However, in this assessment recent estimates of SSB were revised downward as a result of relatively low survey indices in 2009, as well as slight revisions to input data from previous years. In addition, stock weights and maturities now appear to be reduced compared to values used in the projections in the last assessment.	Remains relatively low but has improved in recent years to levels just prior to the moratorium. Nevertheless, SSB is still well below B_{lim} .
Reference Points	An examination of the stock recruit scatter shows that good recruitment, with the possible exception of the 2003 year class, has rarely been observed in this stock at SSB below 50 000 t and this is currently the best estimate of B_{lim} . In 2009 STACFIS adopted an F_{lim} of 0.4 consistent with stock history and dynamics for this stock. The stock is currently below B_{lim} and current fishing mortality is below F_{lim} .	The current best estimate of B_{lim} is 60 000 t. SSB in 2010 is estimated to be 12 700 t which is 21% of B_{lim}
Short-term considerations	<p>Simulations were carried out to examine the trajectory of the stock under 3 scenarios of fishing mortality: $F = 0$, $F = F_{2009}$ (0.13), and $F_{0.1}$ (0.2) (show below). Simulations were limited to a 5-year period. Recruitment was resampled from three sections of the estimated stock recruit scatter, depending on SSB.</p> <p>At $F = 0$ spawning stock biomass is estimated to increase and there is a 50% probability that SSB will surpass B_{lim} by 2012. Under $F_{current}$ and $F_{0.1}$ the population is estimated to grow more slowly and there is a less than 50% probability that SSB will reach B_{lim} by 2015.</p>	Simulations were carried out to examine the trajectory of the stock under two scenarios of fishing mortality: $F=0$, $F=0.07$ (the average F on ages 4-6 from 2007-2009). Simulations were limited to a 3-year period. Given the SSB is still estimated to be well below B_{lim} , recruitment (at age 3) was only re-sampled from 1994-2009 as this represents a reasonable expectation of what has occurred under low productivity conditions. At $F = 0$ spawning stock biomass is estimated to increase and there is an 88% probability that SSB will remain under B_{lim} by 2013. At $F = 0.07$ the population is estimated to grow more slowly. If the fishing mortality in 2010-2012 remains at the average estimated in 2007-2009 then yield is estimated to increase over the 3-year time period.
Recommendations	There should be no directed fishing on American plaice in Div. 3LNO in 2011. Bycatches of American plaice should be kept to the lowest possible level and restricted to unavoidable bycatch in fisheries directing for other species.	There should be no directed fishing for cod in Div. 3N and Div. 3O in 2011-2013. Bycatches of cod should be kept to the lowest possible level and restricted to unavoidable bycatch in fisheries directed for other species

Annex 4. Draft Provisional Agenda of Next Meeting

**2nd Meeting of the
FC Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists
on Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (WGFMS-CPRS)**

**26-28 June 2011
Halifax, Canada**

Draft Provisional Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Matters arising from the WebEx meeting (April 2011)
5. SC Chair presentation of scientific advice from the SC June 2011 meeting
6. Review and update of the 3NO Cod Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategies (Article 9 of the NCEM)
7. Review and update of the 3LNO American Plaice Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategies (FC Doc 10/13)
8. Next Steps
9. Recommendations to be forwarded to the Fisheries Commission
10. Other Matters
11. Adoption of Report
12. Adjournment