



NORTHWEST ATLANTIC
FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

Meeting Proceedings of the Commission

01 September 2023–31 August 2024

Compiled by:
Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
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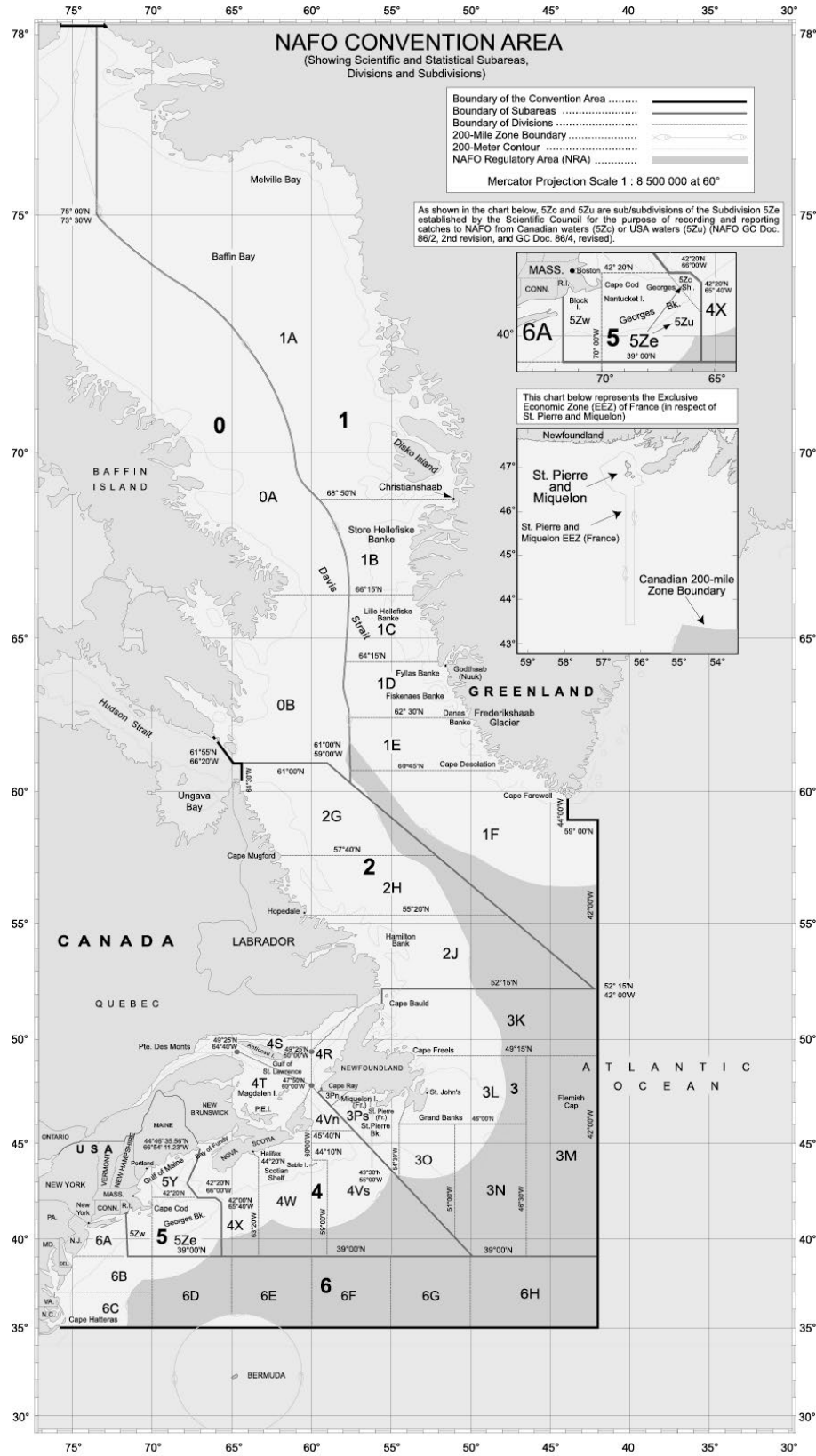
November 2024

Foreword

This issue of the *Meeting Proceedings of the Commission* contains the meeting reports of the Commission (COM) and the joint Commission-Scientific Council (COM-SC), including their subsidiary bodies and working groups held between 01 September 2023 to 31 August 2024. This follows a NAFO cycle of meetings starting with an Annual Meeting rather than by calendar year.

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June 2015



Structure of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)

(01 September 2023 to 31 August 2024)

CONTRACTING PARTIES

Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union (EU), France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States of America (USA).

CONSTITUENT BODIES

Commission	<i>Chair</i> – Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America) <i>vice-Chair</i> – Bernard Briand (France in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon)
Scientific Council	<i>Chair</i> – Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) <i>vice-Chair</i> – Mark Simpson (Canada)

STANDING COMMITTEES

Commission	Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD) Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)	<i>Chair</i> – Robert Fagan (Canada) <i>vice-Chair</i> – Imogen Gibbins (United Kingdom) <i>Chair</i> – Patrick Moran (United States of America) <i>vice-Chair</i> – Brent Napier (Canada)
Scientific Council	Standing Committee on Fishery Science (STACFIS) Standing Committee on Research and Coordination (STACREC) Standing Committee on Publications (STAC PUB) Standing Committee on Fisheries Environment (STACFEN)	<i>Chair</i> – Martha Krohn (Canada) <i>Chair</i> – Mark Simpson (Canada) <i>Chair</i> – Rick Rideout (Canada) <i>Chair</i> – Miguel Caetano (European Union)

SECRETARIAT

Executive Secretary	Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir
Deputy Executive Secretary / Senior Finance and Staff Administrator	Stan Goodick
Fisheries Commission Coordinator	Jana Aker
Senior Scientific Information Administrator	Dayna Bell MacCallum
Scientific Council Coordinator	Tom Blasdale (until 22 March 2024)
Senior Office Administrator	Sarah Guile
Senior IT Manager	Matthew Kendall
Database Development/Programmer Analyst	DJ Laycock
Senior Executive Assistant to the Executive Secretary	Lisa LeFort
Senior Publications/Web Manager	Alexis Pacey
Fisheries Information Administrator	Mikaela Soroka (until 08 November 2023)
Fisheries Information Administrator	Catherine Thompson (started 08 January 2024)

Headquarters Location

1601 Lower Water St., Suite 401, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 3P6, Canada



Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



Report of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting

11 September 2023
Webex

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2023

Report of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting

11 September 2023
Webex

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Report of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting11 September 2023
Webex**1. Opening of the Meeting**

The meeting opened at 09:10 (UTC/GMT -3 hours) on Monday, 11 September 2023 virtually via Webex and the Chair welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (In Respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Japan, and the United States of America (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Mikaela Soroka) was appointed as rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The Chair introduced the provisional agenda and asked representatives if there were any comments or additions. There were no comments, and the agenda was adopted (Annex 2).

4. NAFO CEM Article 30 Implementation**a. Use of derogation**

The Secretariat presented STACTIC OPR-WP 23-13 which summarises the use of derogation since 2019 (when the observer program was last revised). It was noted that one Contracting Party is using the derogation consistently and the working group suggested the working paper be forwarded to STACTIC for information during the 2023 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

b. Article 30 reporting template

Canada presented the proposed Article 30 reporting template in STACTIC OPR-WP 23-05 (Revised). The working group thanked Canada for their work on this proposal and agreed to allow a short timeline for Contracting Parties to submit any additional comments/revisions to the Secretariat for incorporation into a proposal from the WG-OPR prior to the 2023 STACTIC Annual Meeting, with the goal of reaching endorsement in STACTIC.

c. Article 30 revisions

The European Union presented the draft Article 30 revisions in STACTIC OPR-WP 23-09 (Rev. 5) emphasising the changes made since the last WG-OPR meeting. The first change was to include a 2-year timeline (until 30 September 2026) for the new derogation measures to be fully implemented to allow Contracting Parties time to prepare for the change. This would also allow time for an initial trial of how the observer application and implementation will work and allow any adjustments to be made on the measures.

The European Union also added a section for "Implementation" which proposes timelines for another review of Article 30 to take place in 2027, and for a review of the use of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REMs) during observer derogations to take place in 2024.

The European Union also proposed that explicit language be added to Article 38, regarding observer intimidation/bribery, to include prior, during and after the deployment, noting it may be beneficial to add explicit language regarding the matter.

Lastly, the European Union added a draft on minimum requirements for REM measures. The European Union noted the previous discussion on the three possible ways forward with the implementation of REM; either the flag state determines their REM system requirements entirely, there are some minimum standards created, or full-fledged requirements outlined in the NAFO CEM. The European Union noted that the proposal would be the in between approach and a good starting place, and would allow for Contracting Parties to try the measures and come forward with any changes necessary at the proposed 2024 review of the requirements.

The working group thanked the European Union for their efforts on the revised proposal. The working group agreed on a comment period for the document to allow Contracting Parties to further review the changes in advance of the Annual Meeting. Working group participants agreed to send their comments to the Secretariat for incorporation, with the goal of forwarding the working paper as a WG-OPR proposal to STACTIC for discussion at the 2023 Annual Meeting. The working group agreed to also submit a clean version of the working paper to STACTIC. The Chair proposed a deadline of 14 September 2023 for Contracting Parties to send their comments to the Secretariat, for the Secretariat to finalise and make the working papers into WG-OPR proposals to then be forwarded to STACTIC for endorsement at their 2023 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Article 30 derogation summary outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 23-13 be forwarded to STACTIC for information.**
- **The WG-OPR agreed to provide comments on STACTIC OPR-WP 23-05 (Revised) and STACTIC OPR-WP 23-09 (Rev. 5) to the Secretariat by 14 September 2023.**
- **The Secretariat will incorporate comments to STACTIC OPR-WP 23-05 (Revised) and STACTIC OPR-WP 23-09 (Rev. 5) and post the working papers as WG-OPR proposals to STACTIC for the 2023 Annual Meeting.**

5. Other Business

Nothing was presented under this item.

6. Adoption of the Report

The report was adopted via correspondence.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 (UTC/GMT -3 hours).

Annex 1. List of Participants

CHAIR	Napier, Brent (Canada)
CANADA	Barbour, Natasha Browne, Dion
DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF THE FAROES ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)	Holm, Jannik
EUROPEAN UNION	Arevalillo, Gabriel Babcionis, Genadijus Belmonte, Luis Grossmann, Meit Quintans, Miguel Tubio, Xose
JAPAN	AKIYAMA, Masahiro ONODERA, Ryo TAKEHARA, Toya
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Jaburek, Shannah Pohl, Katie
NAFO SECRETARIAT	Soroka, Mikaela Aker, Jana Kendall, Matt Laycock, DJ

Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. NAFO CEM Article 30 Implementation
 - a. Use of derogation
 - b. Article 30 reporting template
 - c. Article 30 review
5. Other Business
6. Adoption of the Report
7. Adjournment

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Commission and its Subsidiary Bodies
(STACTIC and STACFAD)**

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO
18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2023

**Report of the NAFO Commission and its Subsidiary Bodies
(STACTIC and STACFAD)**

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

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PART I.
Report of the NAFO Commission

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

I. Opening Procedure

1. Opening by the Acting Chair, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America)

The acting Chair of the Commission, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America), called the plenary session of the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO to order on Monday, 18 September 2023.

The acting Chair welcomed the General Director of Fisheries Management and Aquaculture, Juan Ignacio Gandarias Serrano, who provided a welcome statement on behalf of the Government of Spain.

The opening statement from the acting Chair is included in Annex 1. The acting Chair welcomed delegates, both in person and virtually, from the 13 Contracting Parties of NAFO (Annex 2), and the following Contracting Parties provided opening statements: Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States of America (Annexes 3-11 respectively).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as Rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The provisional agenda was previously circulated to all Contracting Parties in NAFO/23-167 on 19 July 2023 (Annex 12).

The European Union requested to add one item under agenda item 21 for discussion on Cod in Divisions 2J3KL. The United States of America also tabled a proposal on labour standards in NAFO fisheries (COM WP 23-17) under agenda item 30 - Other business. With these additions, the agenda was adopted (Annex 12).

The acting Chair also noted that the discussions under agenda item 17.e would take place as the first item under agenda item 17, and the proposal from the United States of America on labour standards (agenda item 30) would take place on the first day of the meeting to allow Contracting Parties time to consider the proposal.

4. Admission of Observers

According to Rule 1(a) of the NAFO Rules of Procedure: *Observers to NAFO Meetings - The Executive Secretary shall invite, as observers, intergovernmental organizations that have regular contacts with NAFO.*

Upon the invitation of the Executive Secretary, in accordance with the NAFO Rules for Observers, the following intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) attended this meeting: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ABNJ Deep-Sea Fisheries Project. The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) and the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO) respectively were represented by a NAFO Contracting Party.

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) accredited with NAFO Observer Status that attended this meeting were: the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC), Fishermen and Hunters Association in Greenland (KNAPK), and Oceans North.

Opening statements from FAO, DSCC and Oceans North are available in Annex 13 to 15.

5. Publicity

In accordance with the NAFO Media Policy, the acting Chair reminded meeting participants that no public statements, including social media posts, would be made until after the conclusion of the meeting, when a press release would be prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the acting Chair of the Commission and the Chair of the Scientific Council. The acting Chair noted the *NAFO Media Policy: Conditions for Attendance by Media Representatives at NAFO Meetings* outlined in COM Doc. 22-21.

II. Supervision and Coordination of the Organizational, Administrative and Other Internal Affairs

6. Review of Membership of the Commission

The membership of the Commission has not changed since the 2022 Annual Meeting and is currently comprised of thirteen (13) Contracting Parties: Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union (EU), France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States of America (USA).

7. Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat

The acting Chair noted that the *Administrative Report and Financial Statements* (COM Doc. 23-05) has been prepared by the NAFO Secretariat, and Commission forwarded the report to STACFAD for review.

8. NAFO Headquarters Agreement

The acting Chair noted that the *NAFO Headquarters Agreement* entered into force on 28 March 2023 as circulated to Contracting Parties in NAFO/23-095. The acting Chair also noted the change to the NAFO Staff Rules taking effect as a result of the Headquarters agreement coming into force, outlined in COM WP 23-03.

9. Review of the list of experts to serve as panelists under the NAFO Dispute Settlement provisions

In accordance with Annex II, paragraph 1 of the NAFO Convention, the Executive Secretary has updated the list of experts who are willing and able to serve as panelists following the dispute settlement provisions of the NAFO Convention (Article XV). The acting Chair highlighted the current list of experts (as of 06 September 2023) outlined in COM WP 23-04 (Revised).

10. Guidance to STACFAD

The Commission forwarded the *Administrative and Activity Report* (COM Doc. 23-05) to STACFAD for their review under agenda item 7.

The acting Chair noted that there might be discussions under agenda item 17.e (report of the Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council) that could have budgetary implications and requested STACFAD keep their agenda open in case of any recommendations resulting from those discussions that require review by STACFAD.

11. Guidance to STACTIC

The interim Chair of STACTIC, Patrick Moran (United States of America) presented a summary report of the STACTIC intersessional meeting held in May 2023 (COM Doc. 23-02). No further guidance, for discussion at this meeting, was provided to STACTIC under this agenda item.

III. Coordination of External Affairs

12. Report of Executive Secretary on External Meetings

The Executive Secretary reported on NAFO's participation in external activities since the 2022 Annual Meeting, as outlined in section 10 of the administrative report (COM Doc. 23-05).

13. International Relations

a. Relations with other International Organizations

The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat maintains an open dialogue with other RFMOs and make every effort to attend the meetings most relevant to the organization.

b. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Sea Fisheries Project

Eszter Hidas from the Food and Agriculture Organization presented an update on the work of the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Sea Fisheries Project, administered by the FAO in COM WP 23-26.

c. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NAFO and the Sargasso Sea Commission

The Executive Secretary provided an update on the status of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Sargasso Sea Commission, which has been finalized and awaits signature.

d. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NAFO and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

The Executive Secretary highlighted the MOU with ICES, noting that the MOU was originally signed in 2003 and the NAFO Secretariat and the ICES Secretariat reviewed and updated the MOU to ensure that it still accurately reflects the roles and responsibilities of each organization.

- **The Commission reviewed the revised MOU with ICES in COM WP 23-07 and adopted the revisions. The Commission requested that the NAFO Secretariat proceed with finalizing the revised MOU.**

e. NAFO Members as Observers to External Meetings

As agreed at the 2022 NAFO Annual Meeting, Contracting Parties were appointed to serve as observers of other relevant organizations during 2022/2023, and the relevant appointments were:

- Canada represented NAFO at the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) (COM WP 23-13) and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) (COM WP 23-14).
- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) represented NAFO at the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) (COM WP 23-25).
- European Union represented NAFO at the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) (COM WP 23-10), International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic

Tunas (ICCAT) (COM WP 23-11) and South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) (COM WP 23-12).

- Japan represented NAFO at the South East Atlantic Fishery Organization (SEAFO) (COM WP 23-08).
- Norway represented NAFO at the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) (COM WP 23-09).
- The United States of America represented NAFO at the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) (COM WP 23-20) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO) (COM WP 23-21).

The same Contracting Parties agreed to represent NAFO at the same meetings for 2023/2024.

The acting Chair also reflected on the process of Contracting Parties creating reports for presentation under this agenda item and weather delegates would prefer providing links to the reports from these meetings when available or to the press releases if no formal report is available at the time of the NAFO Annual Meeting. Contracting Parties welcomed the suggestion from the acting Chair, noting this would reduce the workload of the Contracting Parties appointed to serve as observers of other relevant organizations.

- **The Commission agreed that the Contracting Parties appointed to serve as observers of other relevant organizations can provide links to the relevant meeting reports, where available, or to the press releases from the meetings when reports are not available in time for the NAFO Annual Meeting.**

14. Oil and Gas Activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area

The acting Chair referred to COM WP 23-05 outlining the NAFO Secretariat's actions over the last year under the information exchange arrangement between NAFO and Canada related to oil and gas activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area.

The European Union thanked Canada for sharing the relevant information on oil and gas activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area and noted the importance of having the Scientific Council continue to look at the potential impacts of activities other than fishing in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA). Canada reiterated that NAFO has no regulatory role on the oil and gas activities in the NRA, and in consideration of the Scientific Council workload, considers this a duplication of the work that is completed through the Canadian review processes. The European Union clarified it is not seeking a regulatory role for NAFO but noted that an ecosystem approach is not useful if no efforts are made to assess and integrate all impacts on fisheries. The acting Chair noted that these discussions would continue under agenda items 17.e and 18.

IV. Joint Session of Commission and Scientific Council

15. Implementation of 2018 Performance Review Panel recommendations

The acting Chair highlighted COM-WP 23-01 which summarized the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review Panel, noting that NAFO has made excellent progress on addressing the recommendations, and that each recommendation has been addressed in some way. The acting Chair noted that, since it has been 5 years since the last performance review, the Commission may need to reflect on the timing of the next performance review.

16. Presentation of scientific advice by the Chair of the Scientific Council

a. Response of the Scientific Council to the Commission's request for scientific advice

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Karen Dwyer (Canada), provided a comprehensive presentation of the work of the Scientific Council, including the responses to the Commission requests for scientific advice on fish stocks

and on other topics, outlined in detail in SCS Doc. 23/18. Contracting Parties expressed their deepest appreciation for the work of the Scientific Council and thanked the Scientific Council Chair for the presentation and for her leadership of the Scientific Council for the past two years.

b. Feedback to the Scientific Council regarding the advice and its work during this meeting

Under this agenda item, the Commission provided written submissions for requests to the Scientific Council for additional information. One question related to a request for additional analyses for 3LNO yellowtail flounder in COM WP 23-27, and the Scientific Council provided its response to this question in COM WP 23-32. Two questions were received for additional analyses for 3M cod in COM WP 23-28 and COM WP 23-29, and the Scientific Council responded to those questions in COM WP 23-38 and COM WP 23-39 respectively. The Commission thanked the Scientific Council for their work on responding to the questions.

c. Other issues as determined by the Chairs of the Commission and the Scientific Council

The Chairs of the Commission and the Scientific Council noted that there would be further discussion relating to the Scientific Council workload under Agenda item 17.e.

17. Meeting Reports and Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Groups

a. Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG), 2023

The acting Chair highlighted the meeting report from the E-WG in COM-SC Doc. 23-01, and the proposed meeting dates for consideration by the Commission. The E-WG proposed that for the 2024 NAFO year, the following two-week periods, be considered for NAFO intersessional meetings:

- 26 February – 08 March 2024;
- 15 – 26 April 2024; and
- 12 – 23 August 2024
- **The Commission adopted the proposed meeting dates of 26 February – 08 March 2024; 15 – 26 April 2024; and 12 – 23 August 2024 noting that Contracting Parties are not obliged to schedule meetings during these periods, but the dates may help in future planning of intersessional meetings.**

b. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), April and July 2023

The co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas, (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada) presented the reports and recommendations from the April and July 2023 WG-RBMS meetings in COM-SC Doc. 23-02 and COM-SC Doc. 23-03. The co-Chairs highlighted the work on the management strategy evaluation (MSE) processes for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut and 3LN redfish, as well as the provisional draft Precautionary Approach (PA) framework, and noted the working group’s updated workplans for the MSE processes and the PA Framework revision. The co-Chairs thanked meeting participants for their collaboration through the year, as well as the invited experts that facilitated the work of the PA framework review.

The Commission and Scientific Council thanked the co-Chairs for the presentation and the working group for all the ongoing work that is being completed. Pending the progress with the other MSE processes, some Contracting Parties noted a preference that 3LNO yellowtail flounder and 3NO witch flounder should be the next stocks for MSE development.

- **The Commission and Scientific Council adopted the reports of the WG-RBMS meetings outlined in COM-SC Doc. 23-02 and COM-SC Doc. 23-03 and the recommendations outlined in section 11 of COM-SC Doc. 23-03.**

c. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), July 2023

The co-Chairs, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America) presented the report and recommendations from the July 2023 WG-EAFFM meeting in COM-SC Doc. 23-04. The co-Chairs highlighted the recommendation to maintain vulnerable marine ecosystem (VME) closed areas 7a, 11a, 14a, and 14b and resulting changes to the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) (COM-SC EAFFM-WP 23-15), the requests for the Scientific Council to continue their work on the Ecosystem Roadmap, the recommendation to put forward the seamount closure areas and the sponge VME fishery closures 1 to 6 for inclusion in the World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), and the recommendation for Contracting Parties to minimize the impacts of trawl surveys in NAFO VME areas.

The Commission and Scientific Council thanked the co-Chairs for the presentation and the working group for all the ongoing work being completed. The co-Chairs noted that the WG-EAFFM, recognizing the workload issues with the Scientific Council, did not reach consensus on including a request to the Scientific Council to provide advice on the potential impact of activities other than fishing in the Convention Area for next year. Some Contracting Parties wanted to maintain the ongoing request. This issue was discussed further under agenda item 18.

- **The Commission and Scientific Council adopted the report of the WG-EAFFM meeting outlined in COM-SC Doc. 23-04 and the recommendations outlined in section 14 of COM-SC Doc. 23-04, including the changes to the NAFO CEM outlined in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 23-15 now COM-SC Doc. 23-05 (Annex 16).**

d. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), April 2023

The co-Chair of CESAG, Katherine Sosebee (United States of America) presented an update on the status of the work of CESAG in 2023. CESAG completed its work via correspondence for 2023, and the final estimates for the 2022 catch (COM-SC CESAG-WP 23-01 (Rev. 2)) were circulated to the Scientific Council by the 01 May deadline, following the procedure outlined in the Terms of Reference (COM-SC Doc. 17-09). In 2024, it is intended that the review of the 2023 catch estimates will be made by correspondence unless new issues (e.g., revision of the Catch Estimation Strategy) emerge that would warrant a virtual meeting.

e. Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council, April 2023

The Scientific Council Chair and acting Commission Chair presented the report from the NAFO Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council (COM-SC WP 23-01). The Chairs discussed some of the options that were tabled during that meeting as possible ways to alleviate the workload of the Scientific Council. The Commission agreed that some action is required and requested STACFAD to review financial implications of some of these options. STACFAD reviewed and discussed these options in detail under agenda item 15.d in Part III of this report.

18. Formulation of Request to the Scientific Council for Scientific Advice on the Management in 2025 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters

In accordance with the procedure outlined in FC Doc. 12-26, a steering committee was formed to assist in the drafting of the Commission Request. The committee consisted of the Scientific Council Coordinator and representatives from Canada and European Union. The first draft of the requests was presented to the Commission in COM WP 23-41, which was updated and circulated to the Scientific Council for comments in COM WP 23-41 (Revised). The Commission reviewed the input from the Scientific Council, reflected on some of the discussions under other agenda items, and formulated the final requests in COM WP 23-41 (Rev. 3).

- **The Commission adopted the request to the Scientific Council for scientific advice in COM WP 23-41 (Rev. 3) now COM Doc. 23-09 (Annex 17).**

V. Conservation of Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area

19. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), April and July 2023 (if more discussion is required)

The report and recommendations of the WG-RBMS were adopted under agenda item 17.b.

20. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area, 2024

The acting Chair highlighted a new working paper for this year outlining the draft quota table as well as the scientific advice and Commission decisions for NAFO fish stocks in COM-WP 23-15. The acting Chair noted that the document would be updated throughout the meeting as decisions were taken by the Commission. The final version of the working paper is outlined in COM WP 23-15 (Rev. 5) now COM Doc. 23-10 (Annex 18).

The acting Chair recalled the recommendations given to the Commission by the Scientific Council for the 2024 full stock assessments, as outlined in [SCS Doc. 23/18](#).

a. Cod in Division 3M

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for cod in Division 3M outlined on pages 13-17 of [SCS Doc. 23/18](#). Canada and Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), submitted requests for additional analyses to the Scientific Council during this meeting in COM WP 23-28 and COM WP 23-29, and the Scientific Council provided the responses in COM WP 23-38 and COM WP 23-39.

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC at 2/3 F_{lim} in 2024, corresponding to a TAC of 11 708 t.**

The Commission also reflected on the additional control measures currently in place for cod in Division 3M outlined in Article 7 of the NAFO CEM, as well as the seasonal closure outlined in Article 5.5(j) of the NAFO CEM.

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the additional measures for cod in Division 3M in the NAFO CEM, including the seasonal closure, and the required changes to the NAFO CEM to reflect this were adopted in COM WP 23-40, now COM Doc. 23-11 (Annex 19).**

b. Shrimp in Division 3M

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for shrimp in Division 3M outlined in [SCS Doc. 23/20](#).

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024.**

The acting Chair also reflected on the proposals and discussions that were held during the intersessional meeting on 17 September 2023 relating to the management regime for shrimp in Division 3M (COM Doc. 23-08). The Commission and Scientific Council have agreed that the stock should change from an effort regulated to a catch regulate management system, however the catch allocation scheme has not been decided. Several proposals were discussed at the intersessional, however there was no consensus on a specific proposal. The proposals were:

- COM WP 23-24: Joint proposal from Norway and the European Union: New fishing regime for shrimp in division 3M
- COM WP 23-18: Canadian Perspective on 2022 Discussions on an Alternative Fishing Regime for 3M Shrimp
- COM WP 23-19 (Revised): A variant on fishing regime for shrimp in Division 3M (Proposal from the Russian Federation)
- COM WP 23-22 and COM WP 23-22 Addendum: Proposal from the United States of America. More information was provided during this meeting on this proposal in COM WP 23-34.

- COM WP 23-23 (Revised): Proposal from France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)

The Commission agreed that, absent new scientific information that the stock may have recovered enough to resume directed fishing, it would not convene an intersessional meeting on the allocation issues in 2024. Norway presented an additional proposal in COM WP 23-31 relating to a request to the Scientific Council to provide advice for this stock in terms of Total Allowable Days (TAD) as a supplement to the advice in Total Allowable Catch (TAC). Norway expressed that this would provide supplementary advice to the TAC advice using the same metric (fishing days) as currently applied in the management of this stock and therefore adequate guidance on sustainable management in the event of a reopening of the fishery before the Commission has agreed to a new TAC-based management regime. The Commission agreed to include the following text in the request to the Scientific Council for 2024: “For 3M shrimp, supplementary advice in terms of fishing-days could also be considered as appropriate.” Contracting Parties noted that the only way to sustainably manage this fishery in the future is through scientifically-based catch regulation with quota allocation. Canada noted that, should a quota share regime not be achieved, a TAC combined with a competitive fishing day regime could also ensure sustainable catch levels. Norway and the European Union, however, objected to a TAC management system combined with an Olympic Fishery.

- **The Commission agreed to continue the discussions on the allocation regime for shrimp in Division 3M at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

c. **Redfish in Division 3M**

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for redfish in Division 3M outlined on pages 18-21 of [SCS Doc. 23/18](#).

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC at 17 503 t in 2024.**

d. **American plaice in Division 3M**

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for American plaice in Division 3M outlined on pages 22-24 of [SCS Doc. 23/18](#).

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024, 2025, and 2026.**

21. **Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks Straddling National Jurisdictions, 2024**

a. **Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO**

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO outlined on pages 33-40 of [SCS Doc. 23/18](#), which concluded that while exceptional circumstances were occurring, but that based on the results of a sensitivity analysis, the existing Management Procedure could still be used to calculate the TAC for this stock. The acting Chair also highlighted the recommendation from WG-RBMS that the agreed Management Procedure be applied to set the TAC for 2024 ([COM-SC Doc. 23-03](#)).

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC at 15 153 t for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut, resulting in a TAC of 11 228 t for 3LMNO Greenland halibut.**

b. **Pelagic *Sebastes mentella* (oceanic redfish) in Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K**

The acting Chair highlighted that the Scientific Council determined at its meeting in June 2023 that discussion on this stock would be deferred to this meeting ([SCS Doc. 23/18](#)). The Scientific Council provided advice for this stock in COM WP 23-35.

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the ban on directed fishing for this stock in 2024.**

c. Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO outlined on pages 25-18 of [SCS Doc. 23/18](#). Canada requested the Scientific Council to provide additional projection tables with assumed 2023 catch levels of 8,100t and 10,500t, reflecting the likelihood that actual catches will be well below the TAC for 2023, in COM WP 23-27 and the Scientific Council provided their response in COM WP 23-32. Some Contracting Parties expressed concern with basing projections on assumed catches rather than catch equal to the agreed TAC for that year. The Commission later agreed to update Annex A of COM WP 23-41 (Rev. 3) to allow the Scientific Council the flexibility to provide additional projections based on the best available catch estimation in instances where catches are expected to be significantly different from the agreed TAC.

- **The Commission agreed on a TAC of 15 560 t for 2024 and 15 810 t for 2025.**

Canada also presented a proposal to amend the measures related to bycatch of American plaice in the yellowtail fishery (Article 6) in COM WP 23-37, noting that seasonal changes in the distribution of both of these stocks have led Canadian harvesters to have difficulty consistently maintaining bycatch levels of American plaice below the threshold levels, despite total annual bycatch levels in the fishery remaining well below those levels. Contracting Parties provided additional comments and feedback to Canada on this proposal. The European Union noted that American plaice is under moratorium, and that bycatch of this stock should be kept as low as possible. The European Union noted it could accept the proposal for one year only with the clear intention that it will be reviewed by STACTIC. The United States of America noted that they could sympathize with the proposal as similar issues have occurred in its yellowtail flounder fisheries and urged the Commission to review the definition of bycatch and directed fishing in the NAFO CEM, noting that these are policy discussions.

- **The Commission agreed to adopt the proposal for the Establishment of New Measures in the Yellowtail Fishery outlined in COM WP 23-37 (Rev. 3) now COM Doc. 23-12 (Annex 20).**

d. White hake in Divisions 3NO

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for white hake in Divisions 3NO outlined on pages 29-31 of [SCS Doc. 23/18](#).

- **The Commission agreed to roll over the TAC of 1000 t for 2024.**

Canada highlighted questions about the process for intersessional adjustment to the Division 3NO white hake quota outlined in Article 5.13 and 5.14 of the NAFO CEM and presented a proposal to amend this process in COM WP 23-36. Following discussions, Canada withdrew this proposal.

e. Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO

The acting Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for shrimp in Divisions 3LNO outlined in [SCS Doc. 23/20](#).

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024 and 2025.**

f. Cod in Divisions 2J3KL

The European Union requested to include discussions on cod in Divisions 2J3KL under this agenda item and sought clarification on the catches of this stock, noting that it is currently under a moratorium, and the provisions in Article 7 of the NAFO CEM allow for a limit of 5% of the TAC for this stock to apply to other Contracting Parties in the NAFO Regulatory Area. The European Union also noted that Canada has been reporting increasing catches for this stock in recent years. Canada highlighted that this is a Canadian-managed stock of critical importance to its coastal communities. Accordingly, Canada has applied a conservative management approach with a primary focus on long term sustainability and rebuilding of the stock. Its inshore cod stewardship program uses no mobile gear and is extensively regulated. The program enables small,

artisanal harvesters to gain insights on cod abundance in inshore areas and further inform their participation in the annual science and fishery advisory processes. Canada noted that it will continue to voluntarily provide the results of its stock assessment to the Scientific Council for information and agreed to provide additional information on the inshore stewardship program on request from Contracting Parties.

22. Other matters pertaining to Conservation of Fish Stocks

No other matters pertaining to conservation of fish stocks were discussed under this agenda item.

VI. Ecosystem Considerations

23. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), July 2023 (if more discussion is required)

The report and recommendations of the WG-EAFFM were adopted under agenda item 17.c.

24. Other matters pertaining to Ecosystem Considerations

The United States of America presented a proposal to address the impact of climate change on NAFO fisheries in COM WP 23-16. Contracting Parties welcomed the proposal, noting the importance of considering the impacts of climate change on NAFO fisheries in the context of the objective of the NAFO Convention to ensure the long term and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area. The delegations of Canada and the United Kingdom worked further with the United States of America and presented a joint proposal in COM WP 23-33 (Revised).

- **The Commission adopted the proposal on Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on NAFO Fisheries outlined in COM WP 23-33 (Revised) now COM Doc. 23-13 (Annex 21).**

Canada recalled that the measure to conserve Greenland Sharks that was adopted by the Commission at the 2022 Annual meeting (COM Doc. 22-15) included a request for the Scientific Council to advise the Commission, at its 2024 Annual Meeting (if possible given capacity limitations), on other appropriate management options for the bycatch of Greenland sharks in the NRA, to inform the Commission's consideration of additional measures for their conservation.

- **The Commission agreed to re-direct this request to the WG-EAFFM, which will be added to the agenda for its 2024 meeting.**

VII. Conservation and Enforcement Measures

25. Update of the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area

The acting Chair noted that this working group has not met since 2021, and there have been no calls to reconvene the working group. The Russian Federation submitted a working paper updating on the work of the WG-BDS in COM WP 23-30. The Commission noted the importance of the work completed by the WG-BDS under the Action Plan that was adopted in 2017 (COM Doc. 17-26), and agreed that the elements of the Action Plan continue to be addressed in the other working groups and STACTIC. While not part of WG-BDS's Action Plan, Norway noted that work with respect to consideration of a landing obligation and discard ban in NAFO should also continue to be discussed in these fora.

- **The Commission requested that the Chair of STACTIC, and the co-Chairs of WG-RBMS and WG-EAFFM to review the WG-BDS Action Plan (COM Doc. 17-26) when formulating the agendas for the next meetings of each of these bodies to ensure that the work continues where required.**

26. Report of STACTIC from this Annual Meeting and Recommendations

The STACTIC interim Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America), presented the STACTIC Meeting Report (see Part II), and brought the following proposed amendments to the NAFO CEM to the Commission for consideration and adoption:

- STACTIC WP 23-12 (Revised) *Catch reporting (Article 28(6) NAFO CEM)* (now COM Doc. 23-14 (Annex 22))
- STACTIC EDG WP 23-01 *Proposed edits to the time format in the NAFO CEM* (now COM Doc. 23-15 (Annex 23))
- STACTIC EDG WP 23-02 *Proposed edits to Article 5.3(b) of the NAFO CEM* (now COM Doc. 23-16 (Annex 24))
- STACTIC EDG WP 23-03 *Proposed edits to Articles 6.2(c) and 6.3(e) of the NAFO CEM* (now COM Doc. 23-17 (Annex 25))
- STACTIC EDG WP 23-04 *Proposed edits to Article 5.11 and 9.4* (now COM Doc. 23-18 (Annex 26))
- STACTIC EDG WP 23-05 (Rev. 3) *Proposed edits to Article 12.1 (d bis) of the NAFO CEM* (now COM Doc. 23-19 (Annex 27))
- STACTIC WP 23-09 (Rev. 4) *Proposal for Squid Fishery* (now COM Doc. 23-20 (Annex 28))
- STACTIC WP 23-21 *NAF Field Character Limit Increase* (now COM Doc. 23-21 (Annex 29))
- STACTIC WP 23-26 *Proposed Modifications to Article 4.7 (Research Vessels)* (now COM Doc. 23-22 (Annex 30))
- STACTIC WP 23-19 (Rev 4) *Proposed revisions to the NAFO Observer Scheme* (now COM Doc. 23-23 (Annex 31))

Additionally, STACTIC endorsed the following working papers for Commission consideration and adoption:

- STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev 6) *DRAFT Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2023 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2022)* (now COM Doc. 23-24 (Annex 32))
- STACTIC WP 23-10 (Revised) *NAFO IUU List Update* (Annex 33)
- STACTIC WP 23-25 (Rev) *Terms of Reference (ToR) for a NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)* (now COM Doc. 23-25 (Annex 34))

The Commission thanked the interim STACTIC Chair for the report and STACTIC participants for their work throughout the year, noting the significant work that has gone into the review of the NAFO Observer Program.

- **The Commission adopted the reports and recommendations from STACTIC outlined in COM Doc. 23-02 and Part II of this report.**

Japan noted that it has been undertaking work for several years in STACTIC to address an issue on its squid fishery, and thanked Contracting Parties for their collaboration in working towards a solution.

The United States of America noted the continued discussion of the definition of bycatch and directed fisheries in the NAFO CEM and that the discussions should continue in the Commission as well as in STACTIC as they relate to policy considerations and are not limited to control and enforcement issues.

- **The Commission agreed that STACTIC will continue the discussions of directed fisheries and bycatch but ensure that there is coordination with other relevant NAFO bodies where appropriate.**

27. Other matters pertaining to Conservation and Enforcement Measures

The European Union presented a joint proposal, on behalf of the European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom, for control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish in COM WP 23-42, noting that there were extensive discussions on this proposal in STACTIC. It was noted that the proposal was intended to avoid supporting the unsustainable fisheries on this

stock regardless of where the fishery takes place. Contracting Parties were not able to reach consensus on this proposal but noted that it is an issue of ongoing concern.

The co-sponsors of the proposal provided the following statement:

*The European Union, France in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom would like to express their profound concern in relation to the status of shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters for which ICES advised a zero catch for 2023 and 2024 and has been subject to a zero TAC in NAFO (REB 1F_2_3K) since 2012.*

Despite the adoption of measures prohibiting directed fisheries, a Contracting Party had objected to the measures and continues to carry out unsustainable, targeted fisheries on these stocks. In order to prevent adverse effects on the sustainability of these stocks deriving from the continuation of high-level targeted fishing activities, NEAFC adopted Recommendation 01:2022 on management measures for the protection of the shallow pelagic redfish stock and the deep pelagic redfish stock in the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters in 2022, 2023 and 2024. These measures ensure that other Contracting Parties do not contribute to unsustainable fishing activities by providing port, transshipment or support services. We consider it critical that NAFO also adopts similar measures and are committed to addressing this with a view to bringing proposals forward should the fishery continue in 2024.

The European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom call upon the Contracting Party carrying out unsustainable fishing to discontinue them. Furthermore, the European Union, France in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom call upon all NAFO Contracting Parties to adopt measures applicable in their waters and ports and to their vessels to ensure that they do not contribute to unsustainable fishing activities on shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish stocks.

VIII. Finance and Administration

28. Report of STACFAD from this Annual Meeting

The Chair of STACFAD, Robert Fagan (Canada), presented the STACFAD meeting report and recommendations (see Part III), including recommendations for the adoption of the 2022 Financial statements, the promotion of three Secretariat staff to the senior positions of their respective classifications, the hybrid meeting documentation policy, a new visual identity for NAFO, alternative approaches for Annual meeting funding, proposed options to alleviate the workload of the Scientific Council, and the budget for 2024.

The Commission thanked the STACFAD Chair for the report and STACFAD participants for their work during the meeting and encouraged Contracting Parties to continue discussions on alleviation of the Scientific Council workload throughout the year.

29. Adoption of the 2024 Budget and STACFAD recommendations

- **The Commission adopted the report and recommendations from STACFAD outlined in Part III of this report.**

IX. Closing Procedure

30. Other Business

The United States of America presented a proposal for a Non-Binding Resolution on Core Principles on Labour Standards in NAFO Fisheries outlined in COM WP 23-17. Contracting Parties thanked the United States of America for the proposal and offered comments throughout the meeting; the final proposal was presented in COM WP 23-17 (Rev. 2).

- **The Commission adopted the proposal for a Non-Binding Resolution on Core Principles on Labour Standards in NAFO Fisheries outlined in COM WP 23-17 (Rev. 2) now COM Doc. 23-26 (Annex 35).**

31. Election of Chair and vice-Chair

In accordance with Rule 3.1 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure: Commission *“The Commission shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson for a term of two years.”*

- **The acting Chair of the Commission, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America), was elected to serve as Commission Chairperson and NAFO President for a two-year term.**
- **Bernard Briand (France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)) was elected to serve as the vice-Chairperson of the Commission for a two-year term.**

32. Time and Place of Next Annual Meeting

The 46th Annual Meeting of NAFO will be in Halifax, Canada, from 23-27 September 2024.

The acting Chair urged Contracting Parties to prepare offers to host future Annual Meetings as far in advance as possible to avoid having to make non-refundable deposits on meeting facilities in Halifax. The European Union announced its intention to offer to host the 2026 Annual Meeting in Lithuania.

33. Press Release

The Press Release of the meeting was developed by the Scientific Information Administrator and Executive Secretary, through consultations with the Chairs of the Commission and Scientific Council. The agreed Press Release (Annex 36) was circulated and posted to the NAFO website at the conclusion of the meeting on Friday, 22 September 2023.

34. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on Friday, 22 September 2023. The summary of decisions and actions taken by the NAFO Commission is presented in Annex 37.

Annex 1. Opening Statement by the Acting Chair of the NAFO Commission

Dear General Director, distinguished colleagues, and friends, it is wonderful to see you all again. I am very pleased to welcome you to the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO and offer my warm thanks to the government of Spain and the European Union for hosting us once again in beautiful Vigo. We could hardly find a more fitting venue for our discussions this week than sitting just across the street from the busy waterfront of one of the largest fishing ports in Europe.

I would also like to thank the Secretariat for their as-always excellent preparations for this meeting and their strong support of our work throughout the year.

I was delighted to join all of you last year for our first hybrid annual meeting, after fully virtual meetings during the pandemic. We continue the hybrid format this year, but I remain confident that NAFO will have another fruitful meeting with full engagement from all members, whether attending virtually or in person.

Like the NAFO annual meeting, Scientific Council's June meetings have been held in hybrid format since the end of the pandemic, although we were happy to see that the majority of participants in 2023 were able to attend in person. The SC has continued to produce work of an exceptional quality, and quantity. For example, for the first time in 2023, the Scientific Council produced detailed Ecosystem Summary Sheets for the Grand Bank and Flemish Cap Ecosystem Production Units. I'm sure these will prove invaluable in furthering managers' understanding of the interaction between fisheries and their supporting ecosystems. But, as we noted last year, we have work to do to address the imbalance between the demands on our SC and the resources available to meet them. I urge us to develop a clear plan this week for tackling this longstanding challenge.

NAFO overall has continued to maintain an intense pace since our last annual meeting, with 22 meetings of various NAFO committees and working groups producing the recommendations and developments we will take up this week.

Beyond NAFO, the time since our last annual meeting brought a landmark number of oceans and fisheries-related developments at the global level:

The adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in December 2022, setting ambitious goals and targets for protecting ecosystems and biodiversity.

The convening of the Resumed Review Conference of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the Fourth Meeting of the Parties of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, both in May of this year, continued international momentum on key actions such as strengthening the ecosystem approach to fisheries management and combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

And of course, the adoption of a new agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, which will open for signature in New York this very week, on Wednesday.

Our hard work to build a world-class science and management framework has ensured that NAFO is well-positioned to respond to these new commitments and fully engage once the new BBNJ agreement enters into force. I look forward to working with all of you this week to keep that momentum going, whether in setting the science-based management measures for our NAFO fisheries, or in tackling the broader issues under NAFO's mandate.

I now declare the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO officially open.

Annex 2. Participant List from the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO

CHAIRS	
Acting Chair of the Commission	Warner-Kramer, Deirdre (USA)
Scientific Council	Dwyer, Karen (Canada)
CANADA	
Head of Delegation	Burns, Adam, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (in-person) Email: Adam.Burns@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Head of Delegation (Alternate)	Walsh, Ray, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (In-person) Email: Ray.Walsh@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Advisers/Representatives	Barbour, Natasha, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Virtual) Email: Natasha.Barbour@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
	Bonnell, Carey, Ocean Choice International (In-person) Email: cbonnell@oceanchoice.com
	Boudreau, Cyril, Government of Nova Scotia (Virtual) Email: Cyril.Boudreau@novascotia.ca
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Annex 3. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the Canada

Canada is pleased to join with our fellow Contracting Parties at this 45th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) as we continue to work co-operatively to ensure the long term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area. We extend sincere appreciation to the European Union, Spain and our host city of Vigo for their warm welcome and hospitality in this beautiful city.

Canada is pleased with the significant progress that has been made by the Scientific Council, STACTIC and the numerous working groups throughout the year.

In particular, we note the first meeting of the Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council. This was an important first step in seeking concrete ways to address the long-standing concerns regarding capacity and workload of the SC. The advice provided by the Scientific Council is the foundation of our stock management decisions and strategies which are at the core of the purpose of NAFO. Canada is committed to working to prioritize and focus requests to SC in order to align with its capacity and expertise. In view of enhancing the capacity of the Council, Canada encourages all Contracting Parties to consider the level of expert participation they are providing to it. We also encourage all Contracting Parties to continue to reflect on these points during our discussions this week and the Commission to exercise restraint in its requests to SC with a focus on NAFO's key priority areas.

We also acknowledge and appreciate the continuing exemplary work and dedication of the NAFO Secretariat. It was a year of change as several new staff members established themselves in senior positions, including Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir as the new Executive Secretary. The outstanding support to all NAFO bodies continued seamlessly through this transition period.

We look forward to listening to the input from others and continuing to advance on key priorities this week including Management Strategy Evaluations for 3LN redfish and Greenland halibut, a revised Precautionary Approach Framework, establishing responsible and sustainable management measures for key stocks, and continued protections for identified Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems.

Our progress this week is of critical importance to the protection of our ocean resources for future generations while providing important economic opportunities to Canada, its coastal communities and to all Contracting Parties.

Annex 4. Opening Statement by the Delegation of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Faroe Islands and Greenland (DFG) would like to begin by thanking our Spanish hosts for the opportunity to meet in beautiful Vigo, on the Galician coast. This delegation would also like to convey its appreciation to the Secretariat for its outstanding efforts in planning this annual meeting and for facilitating the work of the organization, always answering our questions, and keeping us well informed.

One of the key issues for this organization is to ensure the sustainable management of the shrimp stock in subarea 3M. Contracting parties have committed to discussing a transition to a new management scheme from fishing days to quotas, most recently during the 2023 intersessional meeting, where no consensus was reached. DFG is of the view that further work should consider primarily objective and quantifiable factors, particularly historical catches, and allocated fishing days – and that should other factors be introduced, they can be considered only secondary to these. The Scientific Council advice for shrimp in 3M recommends no directed fishery in 2024, but there is still a need to make progress towards a new scheme ahead of future fisheries, that otherwise will take place under the current effort allocation scheme.

Another important issue is the conservation and management of the cod stock in 3M. We are pleased to note that the Scientific Council anticipates growth and stability for the total biomass and the Spawning Stock Biomass in the short-term forecast for 2024 and 2025 in the projected scenarios, except when setting a TAC at Flim. DFG wishes to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable utilization of this fishery resource, and thereby also a secure and stable framework for our industry and its activities. In this regard DFG would like to recall Article III of the NAFO convention, where Contracting Parties have committed themselves to promote the optimum utilization and long-term sustainability of fishery resources. Thus, when setting a TAC for cod in 3M, the Commission must evaluate the risks associated with different approaches based on the best available scientific advice and take due account for social and economic factors as well.

Lastly DFG would like to raise our concern shared by other Contracting Parties about the continuous workload of the Scientific Council. Consistent with the objectives and principles of the Convention, the task of the Scientific Council is to provide advice as required by the Commission, however Commission requests have grown in scope beyond the primary task of assessing stocks and the ecosystems in which they occur. Therefore, DFG urges Contracting Parties to work together on finding solutions, that do not imply increasing the workload of the Council.

To conclude Madame Chair, the Faroe Islands and Greenland are looking forward to a productive week in these lovely surroundings and to work constructively with all other delegations to contribute to a successful outcome of this 45th Annual Meeting.

Thank you.

Annex 5. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the European Union

Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, we would like to thank the Government of Spain for hosting the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO in the wonderful city of Vigo, a city inextricably linked to the sea. We hope the rich maritime history of this city will provide a positive and enabling spirit for our negotiations.

We also want to recognise the excellent preparatory work carried out ahead of this meeting. This should help us to reach decisions that will contribute to the effective and sustainable management of international fisheries that this organisation has been entrusted to manage. The Commission will again have to set TACs for fish stocks under the purview of NAFO that ensure their sustainable management and exploitation for the years to come while taking into account environmental, economic and social considerations. The EU will continue to seek and support solutions based on the best available scientific advice, aiming to ensure long-term sustainability for the stocks and predictability for the industry that depend on their exploitation for their livelihoods.

The EU has carefully studied the advice emanating from the Scientific Council and will continue to support sustainable approaches for the long-term management of key stocks, such as cod, Greenland halibut and redfish, which are of particular importance to the EU. In this regard, special consideration must also be given to technical and control measures that can help us better achieve the conservation objectives of NAFO. We are aware of the difficult situation of Northern shrimp in division 3M and have taken note of the most recent recommendation from the Scientific Council. The disappointing result of the scientific assessment of the status of this stock does however not deflect from the need for a new management regime based on a TAC and quota allocation, possibly together with other management measures. The EU remains committed to devising a new and better fisheries management plan for Shrimp 3M and will engage constructively in the discussions.

In the context of the review of VME closures, I reiterate the EU's continued support for a coherent and clear policy aimed at protecting VMEs, including through its support for the NEREIDA project. The EU would like to stress that the Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management and the NAFO Scientific Council should continue to work on the potential impact of activities other than fishing in the NAFO Convention Area.

Regarding control and enforcement, the EU will continue to promote compliance of the EU fleet with the NAFO rules in force, both at sea and in port. The EU also supports measures that increase the efficiency of NAFO's control and inspection systems.

The EU delegation looks forward to working with all Parties around the table in order to achieve the best possible result for fishers, fish stocks and ecosystems.

**Annex 6. Opening Statement by the
Delegation of France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)**

First of all, France in respect of Saint-Pierre et Miquelon would like to thank Spain for organising this annual session, in this symbolic venue for European fisheries management.

We would also like to thank you, Madam Chair, for all your efforts to ensure that this meeting ends with a collective success for the joint management and conservation of the species monitored by NAFO.

Finally, we would like to thank the NAFO secretariat for its daily work in the service of the organisation's members, and we particularly welcome the appointment of Ms. Benediktsdóttir.

Fishing is a fundamental pillar in the socio-economic balance of a coastal territory such as Saint-Pierre et Miquelon, and therefore these negotiations are of particular importance to us.

With its profoundly European history, its North American geographical position and the ties of friendship that bind us to the nations of Europe and America, Saint-Pierre and Miquelon is a natural link between both sides of the Atlantic.

We hope that the Commission will be able to find a constructive compromise for each of the species concerned that will enable us to meet the achievement of objectives as important as the conservation of the resource, the preservation of the activity of our operators and the food security of our populations.

Annex 7. Opening Statement by the Delegation of Japan

First of all, Japan would like to express its deepest gratitude to Spain, the NAFO Chairs and Secretariat staff for the excellent preparation and arrangements to hold the 45th Annual Meeting.

This year is one of the year when remarkable events occurred in the international fora of fishery.

It has been more than 20 years since the entry into force of *the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks*, which established minimum international standards for the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks, including precautionary approach. The resumed review conference was held from 23rd to 27th May this year and appreciated the effective performance by Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs), indicating that some areas need to be further improved as well.

In June this year, *the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction* was adopted after discussions in several intergovernmental conferences. This established the general principles and approaches, including ecosystem approach, and introduced area-based management tools for conservation of marine biodiversity in high seas and calls for cooperation with RFMOs in the areas.

In parallel with these global discussions, NAFO has recently been intensively discussing precautionary approach framework, ecosystem roadmap and other effective area-based conservation measures with careful consideration. Addressing these important issues can contribute to further improvement of management of fishery stocks and the whole ecosystem. Japan would like to be constructively engaged in these discussions in NAFO which has taken the lead in actively addressing them.

It may require closer cooperation with other international bodies to effectively address these issues, although NAFO has been actively cooperating with them. Japan expects that the mutual close communication with such bodies will give shape to strengthened cooperation.

In conclusion, Japanese delegation is ready to work closely and cooperatively with other delegations for better management of marine living resources in accordance with the objective of the Convention on Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries.

Annex 8. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the Russian Federation

Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

NAFO Annual Meeting is an important forum for Russia to address key issues related to management of fish stocks, protection of marine ecosystems and implementation of conservation measures in the North West Atlantic.

We appreciate the effort by the Contracting Parties aimed at achieving the goals of the NAFO Convention, “to ensure the long term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area and, in so doing, to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which these resources are found”. As fisheries managers, we ought to keep in mind that it is our aim to ensure the most effective management regime, applying the possibilities and expertise provided by NAFO to our common benefit. NAFO has both the capacity and responsibility to ensure sustainable fisheries of the Northwest Atlantic stocks and safeguard their environment.

We would like to take this opportunity to commend the important work undertaken by the Scientific Council, the subsidiary bodies and working groups of NAFO. We are pleased to see the advice to increase total allowable catch for certain stocks and we hope that the Commission will follow these. However, the spectrum of potential regulatory measures presented at the working group meetings this year raises a concern. We suggest that, if numerous proposals on the management of the same stock arise during this meeting, they should be addressed as a whole, taking possible interactions between them and the risk of redundancy into account.

We also recognize the need to continue discussing the ways of a better integration of the ecosystem approach in fisheries management to increase the sustainability of fisheries.

Russia is committed to pursue its cooperation within NAFO on the meeting agenda in the spirit of openness and mutual respect.

Thank you!

Annex 9. Opening Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine

Thank you Chair for the floor and Good morning to everyone!

First of all, I would like to thank the host country, Spain, and the NAFO Secretariat for the work done to organize this participation, as well as the opportunity to join the work of NAFO in a remote format.

Undoubtedly, NAFO's activities are important for all of us, as the cooperation of Member States ensures the achievement of the Convention's key objectives - ensuring the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources in this Convention area.

It is worth mentioning that Ukraine has made a significant contribution to the discovery and research of fish stocks in the world's oceans, including the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Our vessels have traditionally fished in these areas since the mid-60s. Together with some other former Soviet states, they discovered and developed certain types of fishing in these waters.

However, the current reality is that during the period of NAFO membership, Ukraine has harvested only about 1.8 thousand tons of fish. One of the reasons for this situation is the limited fishing opportunities of Ukraine in the NAFO area. This state of affairs does not allow us to benefit fully from our status in the Organization, as it does not provide an opportunity to organize an economically feasible voyage even for 1 fishing vessel.

We should note that the harvesting of marine living resources is a very important component of our country's food security.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the situation with Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. These actions of Russia are undoubtedly an unjustified and unprovoked act of aggression against the independent and sovereign state of Ukraine, as well as a violation of all existing norms of international law, as well as basic norms of morality and principles of human coexistence.

In addition, since Russia's illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2014 and Russia's full-scale military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the aggressor state has completely blocked Ukraine's access to the Sea of Azov and a significant part of Ukraine's exclusive maritime economic zone in the Black Sea. Marine fishing for aquatic bioresources in the part of the Black Sea waters controlled by Ukraine also cannot be properly implemented due to security risks in connection with Russia's militarization of these waters.

Therefore, we call on all parties to take into account the current situation of Ukraine in addition to such criteria as traditional fishing, discovery and study of fish stocks, and development of new types of fishing when allocating national quotas and determining fishing rights of nations.

We sincerely wish this session of NAFO a successful and productive work and hope that it will contribute to Ukraine's return to this fishing area as a full-fledged user of marine living resources,

Thank you!

Annex 10. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the United Kingdom

The UK is pleased to be a part of the 45th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Secretariat for its tireless efforts in organising this meeting, and to the EU (and member state Spain) for hosting us this year. We would also like to thank members of Standing Committees and Working Groups for their valuable work throughout the year.

NAFO plays an essential role in sustainable fisheries management and in establishing best practice. We urge the Commission to keep at the forefront of its mind the need for long-term sustainability and stock health when taking decisions, and to put proper weight to the Scientific Council's advice. It is crucial that NAFO demonstrates global leadership through its commitment to considering the current and future benefits of stable and resilient stocks and oceans.

The UK strongly supports the recommendations from recent Working Group on the Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management and is proud of our scientific contribution to this group. The work identifying which NAFO fishery measures meet the criteria for Other effective area-based conservation measures, as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity, is valuable in demonstrating NAFO's contribution to the long-term protection of biodiversity, alongside NAFO's wider work on sustainable fisheries management. We were also pleased to participate in the recent working group on Risk Based Management Strategies and support the progress of the Precautionary Approach Framework review.

The UK looks forward to working with all Parties around the table in order to achieve the best possible result for NAFO stocks and ecosystems, and to make this Annual Meeting a success.

Annex 11. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America

Madam Chair, Delegates, Ladies, and Gentlemen, the United States is pleased to participate in this 45th NAFO Annual Meeting. We are very happy to once again be back in Vigo and are looking forward to reacquainting ourselves with this beautiful city. We thank the Government of Spain for hosting this year's meeting, and we would also like to extend our thanks to the NAFO Secretariat for their skill and dedication, without which these meetings could not take place.

As we have emphasized in previous years, the United States remains committed to maintaining the highest possible standards relative to decisions taken on the conservation and management of NAFO stocks, and their associated species and ecosystems. Success in this area relies on three elements.

First, there must be consistency between the management decisions of the Commission and the advice of the Scientific Council. It is our hope that NAFO Parties will support this basic principle and act accordingly – even when the decisions are difficult.

Second, we must do everything in our power to ensure that the scientific advice that managers are considering is of the highest possible quality. Effective management is reliant on advice based on the “best available” scientific information. Thus, the United States urges Contracting Parties to engage in a focused, proactive discussion at this Annual Meeting to identify and prioritize concrete steps to ensure that the Scientific Council has the tools and resources necessary to meet all of the current demands faced by modern Regional Fisheries Management Organizations.

The third element necessary for effective decision making is transparency. This element has both external and internal components. Internally, we must ensure that all Contracting Parties are provided the opportunity to fully participate in all NAFO deliberations and decisions as they deem necessary. Externally, we must take all reasonable steps to provide for a decision making process that allows for the participation (as appropriate) of our constituents.

We have no comments at this time regarding specific NAFO stocks under consideration for management action this year. However, as noted above, we urge that Commission members adhere to scientific advice and use precaution when considering decisions relative to these stocks. Additionally, the United States is hopeful that discussions on Division 3M shrimp stock will continue as necessary to ensure that an effective regime is in place to sustainably manage the stock in the event it reopens. We must not lose the momentum gained in the intersessional meeting that preceded the Annual Meeting.

Finally, the United States looks forward to engaging in productive discussions during this meeting relative to our proposal addressing the impacts of climate change on NAFO fisheries, and our proposed Resolution on core principles on labor standards in NAFO fisheries. These are vital issues impacting both NAFO stocks and constituents, and they deserve serious consideration by Contracting Parties.

Thank you very much and we look forward to a productive week.

Annex 12. Agenda

I. Opening Procedure	
1.	Opening by the Acting Chair, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America)
2.	Appointment of Rapporteur
3.	Adoption of Agenda
4.	Admission of Observers
5.	Publicity
II. Supervision and Coordination of the Organizational, Administrative and Other Internal Affairs	
6.	Review of Membership of the Commission
7.	Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat
8.	NAFO Headquarters Agreement
9.	Review of the list of experts to serve as panelists under the NAFO Dispute Settlement provisions
10.	Guidance to STACFAD
11.	Guidance to STACTIC
III. Coordination of External Affairs	
12.	Report of Executive Secretary on External Meetings
13.	International Relations
	a. Relations with other International Organizations
	b. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Sea Fisheries Project
	c. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NAFO and the Sargasso Sea Commission
	d. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NAFO and the International Council for the Exploration for the Sea (ICES)
	e. NAFO Members as Observers to External Meetings
14.	Oil and Gas Activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area
IV. Joint Session of Commission and Scientific Council	
15.	Implementation of 2018 Performance Review Panel recommendations
16.	Presentation of scientific advice by the Chair of the Scientific Council
	a. Response of the Scientific Council to the Commission's request for scientific advice
	b. Feedback to the Scientific Council regarding the advice and its work during this meeting
	c. Other issues as determined by the Chairs of the Commission and the Scientific Council
17.	Meeting Reports and Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Groups
	a. Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG), 2023
	b. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), April and July 2023
	c. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), July 2023
	d. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), April 2023
	e. Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council, April 2023
18.	Formulation of Request to the Scientific Council for Scientific Advice on the Management in 2025 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3, 4 and Other Matters

V. Conservation of Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area	
19.	Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), April and July 2023 (if more discussion is required)
20.	Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area, 2024
	a. Cod in Division 3M
	b. Shrimp in Division 3M
	c. Redfish in Division 3M
	d. American plaice in Division 3M
21.	Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks Straddling National Jurisdictions, 2024
	a. Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO
	b. Pelagic <i>Sebastes mentella</i> (oceanic redfish) in Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K
	c. Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO
	d. White hake in Divisions 3NO
	e. Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO
	f. Cod in Divisions 2J3KL
22.	Other matters pertaining to Conservation of Fish Stocks
VI. Ecosystem Considerations	
23.	Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), July 2023 (if more discussion is required)
24.	Other matters pertaining to Ecosystem Considerations
VII. Conservation and Enforcement Measures	
25.	Update of the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area
26.	Report of STACTIC from this Annual Meeting and Recommendations
27.	Other matters pertaining to Conservation and Enforcement Measures
VIII. Finance and Administration	
28.	Report of STACFAD from this Annual Meeting
29.	Adoption of the 2024 Budget and STACFAD recommendations
IX. Closing Procedure	
30.	Other Business
31.	Election of Chair and vice-Chair
32.	Time and Place of Next Annual Meeting
33.	Press Release
34.	Adjournment

Annex 13. Opening Statement by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Chair, Contracting Parties, Observers, and members of the Secretariat, it is with great pleasure that FAO makes a statement at NAFO's 45th annual meeting, a leading Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) with whom FAO enjoys a close working relationship.

Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs) are increasingly aware of the challenges posed by climate change, and some have initiated actions ranging from public awareness-raising initiatives, policies, management plans, projects and other initiatives. However, there is a consensus that most organizations have difficulty in engaging in the topic of climate change despite the existence of good science, according to relevant discussions during the 9th Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) in September 2022. In this context, COFI-35 requested FAO to develop guidance on climate resilient fisheries management, and as part of the solution, convene a workshop with RFBs. As a follow-up to this request, FAO will be organizing a workshop entitled "Mainstreaming climate change into international fisheries governance – the case of Regional Fisheries Bodies" in two regions, the Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific. These workshops will aim to facilitate the exchanges among RFBs about how they are integrating climate change in fisheries management advice, discuss responses and opportunities to address the impacts of climate change on relevant fish stocks and ecosystems, and propose actionable recommendations for future efforts. FAO looks forward to NAFO's active participation in the workshop focused on the Atlantic, currently foreseen to take place in the first quarter of 2024.

FAO recognizes the important role that RFB's have in helping countries achieve the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) new Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The GBF aims to reduce 'threats' to biodiversity and ensure 'people's needs are met' from sustainable use of renewable resources. As such, fisheries have an important role to play in conserving ocean biodiversity and contributing to human well-being. The sustainability of natural resources is becoming extremely important and involves many actors working across different sectors. Within this context, improved actions and synergies at the global and regional levels are essential. The GBF includes a number of crucial targets that aim to conserve biodiversity globally, including Target 3, which calls for 30% of the planet to be conserved in protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures or OECMs, by 2030. FAO applauds NAFO's work to determine how it can contribute to this target in a meaningful way through the recognition of OECMs under the jurisdiction of NAFO. We encourage NAFO to continue this work and to document their decision-making process and final determination on which area-based fisheries management measures meet the OECM criteria. FAO believes that other RFBs can learn from NAFO's valuable experience as they move forward with discussions on how they too can contribute to the CBD's global biodiversity targets. In particular, we note that FAO is organizing a workshop on OECMs during the days prior to the annual Regional Seas Network meeting in January 2024, which will include an opportunity for NAFO to share its OECM experience with other RFMOs and RFBs.

Finally, NAFO was a valuable partner of the first phase of the Global Environment Facility funded and FAO-led ABNJ Deep Sea Project, which ran from 2014 to 2019. NAFO's support contributed greatly to the success of the project. NAFO is also a partner of the second phase of the project, entitled Deep-Sea Fisheries Under the Ecosystem Approach (DSF Project), which runs from 2022 through to 2027. FAO looks forward to the ongoing constructive partnership with NAFO and in particular, leveraging NAFO's specialized expertise in fisheries research and management, the application of the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems to advance the work of the project. We are especially excited about the prospect of co-sponsoring a symposium on EAF with NAFO in 2025.

Annex 14. Opening Statement by the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC)

Chair, Heads of Delegation, Delegates and fellow Observers, we are pleased once again, to be back in Vigo for the NAFO Annual Meeting and extend our appreciation to Spain and the city of Vigo for hosting. We also express our appreciation for the return of in person meetings as well as the flexibility for virtual participation.

The 100+ member organizations of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition remain steadfast in our work to protect the deep sea from significant adverse impacts of human activities, and ensure responsible and sustainable management of deep sea fisheries. This year, we welcome the commitment made by NAFO Contracting Parties, where you are signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to the unprecedented adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework under the CBD in December 2022. In addition, this week, as many of you are likely aware, we expect a significant number of countries to sign on to the recently adopted text of the Biodiversity beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty during the United Nations General Assembly meetings in New York.

This year, we continue our call for NAFO Contracting Parties to fully implement the UNGA resolutions related to bottom fishing as well as heed the August 2022 review of bottom fishing measures. Despite NAFO's good work, not all VMEs that are known or likely to occur are protected from bottom fishing. NAFO's protection of all seamounts in the NAFO Regulatory Area continues to be a precedent setting and we urge Contracting Parties to take the same actions in other RFMOs including as a priority, NEAFC and SPRFMO.

We acknowledge that there is a continued need for additional scientific expertise and capacity to address the increasingly complex nature of fisheries management beyond single stock decisions, including the impacts of climate change. We urge NAFO Contracting Parties to ensure that this expertise is provided so that NAFO can continue to lead the way on modern fisheries management, in accordance with the UN Fish Stocks Agreement standards and obligations, including by strengthened biodiversity protection and assessment of the impacts of human activities on the NAFO regulatory area ecosystems. NAFO should also effectively communicate this work and its progress in other fora.

For the 2023 Annual meeting we provide the following recommendations, that can also be found in our annual checklist for NAFO, available in hard copy to all Contracting Parties and online at www.savethehighseas.org. At this 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, we expect NAFO to:

- Adopt all recommendations of the WG -EAFFM, including on:
 - Maintaining the closures of VME areas 7a, 11a and 14b until at least 31 December 2026 (considering the review cycle) and adopt the proposed changes to the NAFO CEM.
 - Minimizing impacts of research surveys within VME closures, with a strong preference to avoid these areas.
- Contracting Parties undertake research to identify ways to make fishing gear more selective for the protection of sharks.
- Direct the SC to conduct research on key biological and ecological parameters, life-history, behavioural traits and migration patterns, as well as on the identification of potential mapping, pupping and nursing grounds of key shark species.
- Adopt precautionary quota decisions for all managed stocks in line with science advice for all NAFO managed species.
- Request the Scientific Council to annually provide information on ecosystem overfishing in relation to the TCI.
- Include recent cumulative catch levels and a scoping of expected cumulative catch levels.
- Request the Scientific Council to develop stock summary sheets for all NAFO managed stocks.

- Advance NAFO commitment to addressing climate change in all of its activities, including reducing emissions from fishing activity.
- Include climate vulnerability in all stock summary sheets, and integrate into the decision making of the WG-EAFFM.
- Endorse the Provisional Draft Precautionary Approach (PA) framework and the updated PA workplan.
- Contribute the additional scientific expertise needed to on ecosystem approach, impacts of activities other than fishing, and ensure that Scientific Council is supported to successfully deliver on the requests approved by the Commission.

We look forward to participating in the discussions this week and to working with all of you to advance biodiversity protection and sustainable management of deep sea fisheries so that future generations may continue to benefit. The increasing loss of biodiversity coupled with unprecedented ocean warming in the North Atlantic during the summer of 2023, place further responsibility on NAFO's Contracting Parties to act proactively to the increasing complexities required of intergovernmental governance agencies.

DSCC Contacts at the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO:
Daniela Diz (dizdani@gmail.com)
Matt Gianni

Annex 15. Opening Statement by Oceans North

Chair, Heads of Delegation, Delegates, and fellow Observers.

From Oceans North Kalaallit Nunaat (ONKN) we wish to thank Spain for hosting the 45th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization in the beautiful city of Vigo.

As this is Oceans North Kalaallit Nunaat's first attendance to NAFO, we are looking forward to experiencing the work and decisions of NAFO and meeting many of you on the margins of the meeting. We are grateful for the opportunity to attend.

We are a new non-governmental organization, and we work in Greenland, in the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans. With the goal of achieving healthy ocean ecosystems, we support sustainable fisheries together with sustainable use of other marine living resources, clean oceans, and marine protection in close partnership with Greenlandic stakeholders such as local communities and researchers.

Oceans North Kalaallit Nunaat calls for quota setting to be aligned with scientific advice. The setting of quotas above scientific advice has historically led to collapse of fisheries in ecosystems, thus radically reducing the economy of fisheries and coastal communities. This should be avoided.

To improve the status of the biodiversity, the health of the ecosystems and thereby productive and sustainable fisheries we support NAFO following science advice, advancing the ecosystem approach and support NAFO's consideration of climate change in its decisions. We support extending all 2-year vulnerable marine ecosystem closures for another five years.

We note that this week countries will be signing the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction / High Seas Biodiversity Treaty, which is the next step towards ratification. ONKN emphasises the continued need for NAFO to collaborate with other intergovernmental organizations with jurisdiction on the high seas and seafloor to ensure collective initiatives on biodiversity protection.

We are looking forward to working with NAFO partners in the future on these important issues and are looking forward to a productive week.

Jenseeraq Poulsen, Executive director
Oceans North Kalaallit Nunaat
September 2023

Annex 16. Changes to Article 17.3 of the NAFO CEM
(COM-SC EAFFM-WP 23-15 now COM-SC Doc. 23-05)

The objective of the following edits to the NAFO CEM is to maintain VME closures 7a, 11a, 14a, and 14b to 31 December 2026 and incorporate these closures with the other VME Area closures outlined in article 17.3. and Table 7 of the NAFO CEM.

Article 17 – Area Restrictions for Bottom Fishing Activities

Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem Area Closures

3. Until 31 December 2026, no vessel shall engage in bottom fishing activities in areas 1-14b³ illustrated in Figure 5 and defined by connecting the coordinates specified in Table 7a in numerical order and back to coordinate 1.

Table 7a. Boundary Points Delineating the Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem Area Closures in the NAFO Regulatory Area Referenced in Article 17.3.

	Description	Coordinate No.	Latitude	Longitude
1	Tail of the Bank	1.1	44° 02' 53.88" N	48° 49' 09.48" W
		1.2	44° 21' 31.32" N	48° 46' 48.00" W
		1.3	44° 21' 34.56" N	48° 50' 32.64" W
		1.4	44° 11' 48.12" N	48° 50' 32.64" W
		1.5	44° 02' 54.60" N	48° 52' 52.32" W
		1.6	44° 00' 01.12" N	48° 53' 28.75" W
		1.7	43° 59' 57.52" N	48° 49' 26.47" W
2	Flemish Pass/ Eastern Canyon	2.1	44° 50' 56.40" N	48° 43' 45.48" W
		2.2	46° 18' 54.72" N	46° 47' 51.72" W
		2.3	46° 25' 28.56" N	46° 47' 51.72" W
		2.4	46° 46' 32.16" N	46° 55' 14.52" W
		2.5	47° 03' 29.16" N	46° 40' 04.44" W
		2.6	47° 11' 47.04" N	46° 57' 38.16" W
		2.7	46° 40' 40.80" N	47° 03' 04.68" W
		2.8	46° 30' 22.20" N	47° 11' 02.93" W
		2.9	46° 17' 13.30" N	47° 15' 46.64" W
		2.10	46° 07' 01.56" N	47° 30' 36.36" W
		2.11	45° 49' 06.24" N	47° 41' 17.88" W
		2.12	45° 19' 43.32" N	48° 29' 14.28" W
2.13	44° 53' 47.40" N	48° 49' 32.52" W		
3	Beothuk Knoll	3.1	45° 49' 10.20" N	46° 06' 02.52" W
		3.2	45° 59' 47.40" N	46° 06' 02.52" W
		3.3	45° 59' 47.40" N	46° 18' 08.28" W
		3.4	45° 49' 10.20" N	46° 18' 08.28" W
4	Eastern Flemish Cap	4.1	46° 44' 34.80" N	44° 03' 14.40" W
		4.2	46° 58' 19.20" N	43° 34' 16.32" W
		4.3	47° 10' 30.00" N	43° 34' 16.32" W
		4.4	47° 10' 30.00" N	43° 20' 51.72" W
		4.5	46° 48' 35.28" N	43° 20' 51.72" W
		4.6	46° 39' 36.00" N	43° 58' 08.40" W
5	Northeast Flemish Cap	5.1	47° 47' 46.00" N	43° 29' 07.00" W
		5.2	47° 40' 54.47" N	43° 27' 06.71" W
		5.3	47° 35' 57.48" N	43° 43' 09.12" W

	Description	Coordinate No.	Latitude	Longitude
		5.4	47° 51' 14.40" N	43° 48' 35.64" W
		5.5	48° 27' 19.44" N	44° 21' 07.92" W
		5.6	48° 41' 37.32" N	43° 45' 08.08" W
		5.7	48° 37' 13.00" N	43° 41' 24.00" W
		5.8	48° 30' 15.00" N	43° 41' 32.00" W
		5.9	48° 25' 08.00" N	43° 45' 20.00" W
		5.10	48° 24' 29.00" N	43° 50' 50.00" W
		5.11	48° 14' 20.00" N	43° 48' 19.00" W
		5.12	48° 09' 53.00" N	43° 49' 24.00" W
6	Sackville Spur	6.1	48° 18' 51.12" N	46° 37' 13.44" W
		6.2	48° 28' 51.24" N	46° 08' 33.72" W
		6.3	48° 49' 37.20" N	45° 27' 20.52" W
		6.4	48° 56' 30.12" N	45° 08' 59.99" W
		6.5	49° 00' 09.72" N	45° 12' 44.64" W
		6.6	48° 21' 12.24" N	46° 39' 11.16" W
7	Northern Flemish Cap	7.1	48° 25' 02.28" N	45° 17' 16.44" W
		7.2	48° 25' 02.28" N	44° 54' 38.16" W
		7.3	48° 19' 08.76" N	44° 54' 38.16" W
		7.4	48° 19' 08.76" N	45° 01' 58.56" W
		7.5	48° 20' 29.76" N	45° 01' 58.56" W
		7.6	48° 20' 29.76" N	45° 17' 16.44" W
7a	Northern Flemish Cap	7a.1	48° 25' 02.28" N	45° 17' 16.44" W
		7a.2	48° 25' 02.28" N	44° 54' 38.16" W
		7a.3	48° 19' 08.76" N	44° 54' 38.16" W
		7a.4	48° 18' 06.84" N	44° 44' 22.81" W
		7a.5	48° 08' 18.42" N	44° 23' 10.57" W
		7a.6	48° 10' 08.98" N	44° 15' 54.97" W
		7a.7	48° 19' 30.47" N	44° 26' 38.40" W
		7a.8	48° 24' 57.13" N	44° 37' 58.40" W
		7a.9	48° 26' 21.37" N	44° 54' 34.60" W
		7a.10	48° 27' 52.20" N	45° 17' 19.25" W
8	Northern Flemish Cap	8.1	48° 38' 07.95" N	45° 19' 31.92" W
		8.2	48° 38' 07.95" N	45° 11' 44.36" W
		8.3	48° 40' 09.84" N	45° 11' 44.88" W
		8.4	48° 40' 09.84" N	45° 05' 35.52" W
		8.5	48° 35' 56.40" N	45° 05' 35.52" W
		8.6	48° 35' 56.40" N	45° 19' 31.92" W
		8.7	48° 34' 23.52" N	45° 26' 18.96" W
		8.8	48° 36' 55.08" N	45° 31' 15.96" W
9	Northern Flemish Cap	9.1	48° 34' 23.52" N	45° 26' 18.96" W
		9.2	48° 36' 55.08" N	45° 31' 15.96" W
		9.3	48° 30' 18.36" N	45° 39' 42.48" W
		9.4	48° 12' 06.60" N	45° 54' 12.94" W
		9.5	48° 17' 11.82" N	45° 47' 25.36" W
		9.6	48° 16' 07.06" N	45° 45' 48.19" W
		9.7	48° 27' 30.60" N	45° 34' 40.44" W
10	Northwest Flemish Cap	10.1	47° 49' 41.51" N	46° 22' 48.18" W
		10.2	47° 47' 17.14" N	46° 17' 27.91" W
		10.3	47° 58' 42.28" N	46° 06' 43.74" W
		10.4	47° 59' 15.77" N	46° 07' 57.76" W

	Description	Coordinate No.	Latitude	Longitude
		10.5	48° 07' 48.97" N	45° 59' 58.46" W
		10.6	48° 09' 34.66" N	46° 04' 08.54" W
		10.7	48° 07' 59.70" N	46° 05' 38.22" W
		10.8	48° 09' 13.46" N	46° 09' 31.03" W
		10.9	47° 51' 30.13" N	46° 26' 15.61" W
11	Northwest Flemish Cap	11.1	47° 25' 48.00" N	46° 21' 23.76" W
		11.2	47° 30' 01.44" N	46° 21' 23.76" W
		11.3	47° 30' 01.44" N	46° 27' 33.12" W
		11.4	47° 25' 48.00" N	46° 27' 33.12" W
11a	Northwest Flemish Cap	11a.1	47° 27' 36.29" N	46° 21' 23.69" W
		11a.2	47° 30' 01.44" N	46° 21' 23.76" W
		11a.3	47° 30' 01.44" N	46° 27' 33.12" W
		11a.4	47° 37' 38.86" N	46° 16' 31.12" W
		11a.5	47° 34' 39.61" N	46° 12' 03.92" W
		11a.6	47° 32' 28.90" N	46° 16' 26.58" W
		11a.7	47° 32' 10.00" N	46° 14' 29.87" W
		11a.8	47° 28' 27.80" N	46° 16' 05.74" W
12	Northwest Flemish Cap	12.1	48° 12' 06.60" N	45° 54' 12.94" W
		12.2	48° 17' 11.82" N	45° 47' 25.36" W
		12.3	48° 16' 07.06" N	45° 45' 48.19" W
		12.4	48° 11' 03.32" N	45° 52' 40.63" W
13	Beothuk Knoll	13.1	46° 13' 58.80" N	45° 41' 13.20" W
		13.2	46° 13' 58.80" N	46° 02' 24.00" W
		13.3	46° 21' 50.40" N	46° 02' 24.00" W
		13.4	46° 21' 50.40" N	45° 56' 48.12" W
		13.5	46° 20' 14.32" N	45° 55' 43.93" W
		13.6	46° 20' 14.32" N	45° 41' 13.20" W
14a	Eastern Flemish Cap	14a.1	47° 45' 24.44" N	44° 03' 06.44" W
		14a.2	47° 47' 54.35" N	44° 03' 06.44" W
		14a.3	47° 50' 11.33" N	44° 03' 34.49" W
		14a.4	47° 50' 10.86" N	43° 58' 28.99" W
		14a.5	47° 47' 54.35" N	43° 59' 23.39" W
		14a.6	47° 45' 55.19" N	43° 58' 08.94" W
		14a.7	47° 44' 44.59" N	44° 02' 41.50" W
14b	Eastern Flemish Cap	14b.1	47° 35' 21.77" N	43° 56' 50.10" W
		14b.2	47° 37' 33.53" N	43° 52' 56.50" W
		14b.3	47° 30' 04.79" N	43° 48' 18.54" W
		14b.4	47° 27' 34.88" N	43° 48' 18.54" W
		14b.5	47° 27' 34.88" N	43° 52' 00.34" W

~~3 bis. Until 31 December 2023, no vessel shall engage in bottom fishing activities in the areas illustrated in Figure 5 and defined by connecting the coordinates specified in Table 7b in numerical order and back to coordinate 1.~~

~~Table 7b. Boundary Points Delineating the Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem Area Closures in the NAFO Regulatory Area Referenced in Article in Article 17.3 bis.~~

	Description	Coordinate No.	Latitude	Longitude
7a	Northern Flemish Cap	7a.1	48° 25' 02.28" N	45° 17' 16.44" W
		7a.2	48° 25' 02.28" N	44° 54' 38.16" W
		7a.3	48° 19' 08.76" N	44° 54' 38.16" W
		7a.4	48° 18' 06.84" N	44° 44' 22.81" W
		7a.5	48° 08' 18.42" N	44° 23' 10.57" W
		7a.6	48° 10' 08.98" N	44° 15' 54.97" W
		7a.7	48° 19' 30.47" N	44° 26' 38.40" W
		7a.8	48° 24' 57.13" N	44° 37' 58.40" W
		7a.9	48° 26' 21.37" N	44° 54' 34.60" W
		7a.10	48° 27' 52.20" N	45° 17' 19.25" W
11a	Northwest Flemish Cap	11a.1	47° 27' 36.29" N	46° 21' 23.69" W
		11a.2	47° 30' 01.44" N	46° 21' 23.76" W
		11a.3	47° 30' 01.44" N	46° 27' 33.12" W
		11a.4	47° 37' 38.86" N	46° 16' 31.12" W
		11a.5	47° 34' 39.61" N	46° 12' 03.92" W
		11a.6	47° 32' 28.90" N	46° 16' 26.58" W
		11a.7	47° 32' 10.00" N	46° 14' 29.87" W
		11a.8	47° 28' 27.80" N	46° 16' 05.74" W
14a	Eastern Flemish Cap	14a.1	47° 45' 24.44" N	44° 03' 06.44" W
		14a.2	47° 47' 54.35" N	44° 03' 06.44" W
		14a.3	47° 50' 11.33" N	44° 03' 34.49" W
		14a.4	47° 50' 10.86" N	43° 58' 28.99" W
		14a.5	47° 47' 54.35" N	43° 59' 23.39" W
		14a.6	47° 45' 55.19" N	43° 58' 08.94" W
		14a.7	47° 44' 44.59" N	44° 02' 41.50" W
14b	Eastern Flemish Cap	14b.1	47° 35' 21.77" N	43° 56' 50.10" W
		14b.2	47° 37' 33.53" N	43° 52' 56.50" W
		14b.3	47° 30' 04.79" N	43° 48' 18.54" W
		14b.4	47° 27' 34.88" N	43° 48' 18.54" W
		14b.5	47° 27' 34.88" N	43° 52' 00.34" W

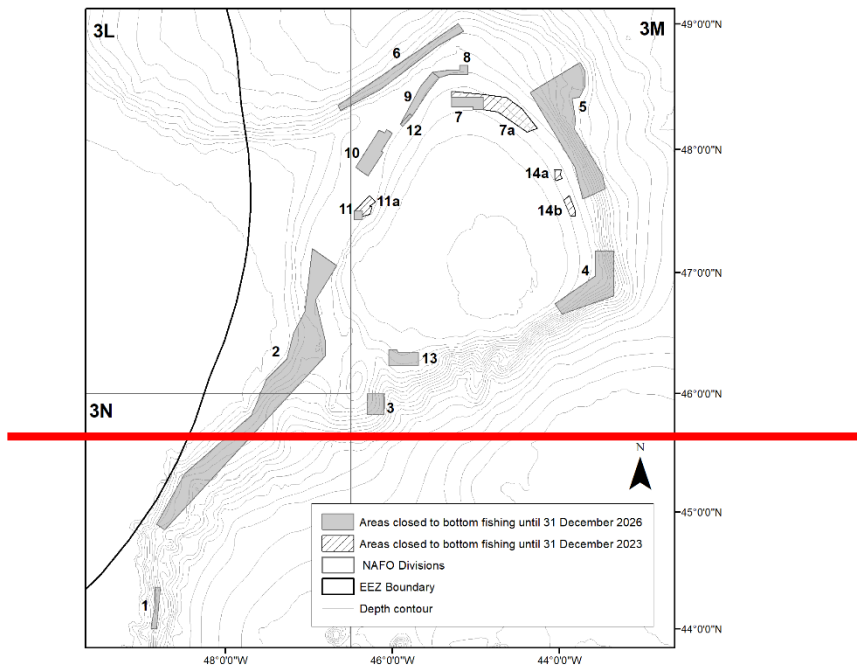
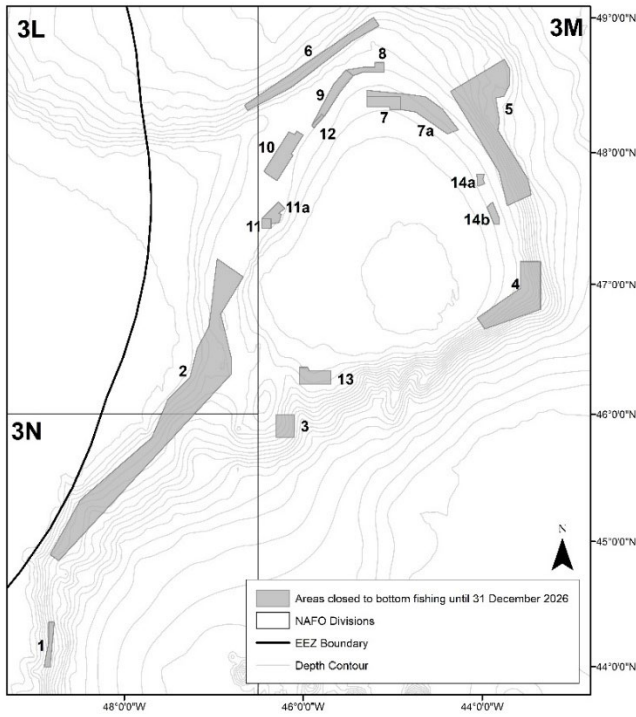


Figure 5. Polygons Delineating Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem Area Closures Referenced in Article 17.3 and Article 17.3 bis.

**Annex 17. The Commission's Request for Scientific Advice on Management in 2025 and Beyond of
Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters**
(COM WP 23-41 Rev. 3 now COM Doc. 23-09)

Following a request from the Scientific Council, the Commission agreed that items 1, 2, 3 and 7 should be the priority for the June 2024 Scientific Council meeting subject to resources.

1. The Commission requests that the Scientific Council provide advice for the management of the fish stocks below according to the assessment frequency presented below. In keeping with the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (FC Doc. 04/18), the advice should be provided as a range of management options and a risk analysis for each option without a single TAC recommendation. The Commission will decide upon the acceptable risk level in the context of the entirety of the SC advice for each stock guided and as foreseen by the Precautionary Approach.

Yearly basis	Two-year basis	Three-year basis	Interim Monitoring Only
Cod in Div. 3M	Redfish in Div. 3M Thorny skate in Div. 3LNO Witch flounder in Div. 3NO Redfish in Div. 3LN White hake in Div. 3NO Yellowtail flounder in Div. 3LNO Northern shrimp 3LNO Northern shrimp in Div. 3M	American plaice in Div. 3LNO American plaice in Div. 3M Northern shortfin squid in SA 3+4 Redfish in Div. 3O Cod in Div 3NO	SA 6 Alfonsino SA 2-3 Roughhead Grenadier Capelin in 3NO

Advice should be provided using the guidance provided in **Annexes A or B as appropriate**, or using the predetermined Harvest Control Rules in the cases where they exist (currently Greenland halibut 2+3KLMNO). For 3M shrimp supplementary advice in terms of fishing-days could also be considered as appropriate.

To implement this schedule of assessments, the Scientific Council is requested to conduct a full assessment of these stocks as follows:

- In 2024, advice should be provided for 2025 for: Cod in Div. 3M and Redfish in Div. 3LN.
- In 2024, advice should be provided for 2025 and 2026 for: Redfish in Div. 3M, Thorny skate in Div. 3LNO, Witch flounder in Div. 3NO, and Northern shrimp in 3M.
 - With respect to Northern shrimp in Div. 3M, Scientific Council is requested to provide its advice to the Commission prior to the 2024 Annual Meeting based on the survey data up to and including 2024.
- In 2024, advice should be provided for 2025, 2026 and 2027 for: American plaice in Div. 3LNO.

The Commission also requests the Scientific Council to continue to monitor the status of all other stocks annually and, should a significant change be observed in stock status (e.g. from surveys) or in bycatch in other fisheries, provide updated advice as appropriate.

2. The Commission requests the Scientific Council to monitor the status of Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 + Div 3KLMNO annually to compute the TAC using the most recently agreed HCR and determine whether exceptional circumstances are occurring. If exceptional circumstances are occurring, the exceptional circumstances protocol will provide guidance on what steps should be taken.

3. The Commission requests that Scientific Council continue to advance work on the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut and 3LN redfish MSE processes during 2023-2024, as per the approved 2024 workplan [COM-SC RBMS-WP 23-06 (Rev. 3)]:
 - a. For the Greenland Halibut MSE: test Candidate Management Procedures (CMP) performance against established management objectives and initial discussions on exceptional circumstances protocol.
 - b. For the 3LN Redfish MSE: (1) review and finalize Operating Models, (2) review any further work on performance statistics; (3) select the CMP(s) for RBMS consideration and potential testing against established management objectives.
4. The Commission requests that the Scientific Council continue to work on tiers 1 and 2 of the Roadmap, specifically to:
 - a. Annually provide catch information in relation to 2TCI, including recent cumulative catch levels and a scoping of expected cumulative catch levels;
 - b. As practicable and taking into account Scientific Council capacity constraints, develop stock summary sheets for NAFO managed stocks that are evaluated using HCR or MSE processes.
5. In relation to the habitat impact assessment component of the Roadmap (VME and SAI analyses), the Commission requests that Scientific Council:
 - a. Support the Secretariat in developing a centralized data repository using ArcGIS online to host the data and data-products for scientific advice;
 - b. Continue working with WG-EAFFM towards developing operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA; and
 - c. Work towards the reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2026.
6. The Commission requests Scientific Council to continue progression on the review of the NAFO PA Framework in accordance to the PAF review work plan approved in 2020 and revised in 2023 (NAFO COM-SC RBMS-WP 23-19 (Revised)), specifically to undertake testing of the Provisional Draft PA Framework (COM-SC RBMS-WP 23-20 (Revised)).
7. The Commission requests Scientific Council to update the 3-5 year work plan, which reflects requests arising from the 2023 Annual Meeting, other multi-year stock assessments and other scientific inquiries already planned for the near future. The work plan should identify what resources are necessary to successfully address these issues, gaps in current resources to meet those needs and proposed prioritization by the Scientific Council of upcoming work based on those gaps.
8. The Commission requests that any new Canadian stock assessments for Cod 2J3KL and Witch flounder 2J3KL, and any new ICES stock assessments for Pelagic *Sebastes mentella* (ICES Divisions V, XII and XIV; NAFO 1) be included as an annex to the Scientific Council's annual report.
9. The Commission requests the SC to monitor and provide regular updates on relevant research related to the potential impacts of activities other than fishing in the Convention Area, subject to the capacity of the Scientific Council.
10. The Commission requests that the Scientific Council at its 2024 meeting: summarize the information it currently has available regarding the current and future impacts of climate change on NAFO-managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems; and identify any consequential data gaps, research needs and opportunities for productive research.

ANNEX A: Guidance for providing advice on Stocks Assessed with an Analytical Model

The Commission request the Scientific Council to consider the following in assessing and projecting future stock levels for those stocks listed above. These evaluations should provide the information necessary for the Fisheries Commission to consider the balance between risks and yield levels, in determining its management of these stocks:

1. For stocks assessed with a production model, the advice should include updated time series of:
 - Catch and TAC of recent years
 - Catch to relative biomass
 - Relative Biomass
 - Relative Fishing mortality
 - Stock trajectory against reference points
 - And any information the Scientific Council deems appropriate.

Stochastic short-term projections (3 years) should be performed with the following constant fishing mortality levels as appropriate:

- For stocks opened to direct fishing: 2/3 F_{msy} , 3/4 F_{msy} , 85% F_{msy} , 90% F_{msy} , 95% F_{msy} , F_{msy} 0.75 X $F_{status\ quo}$, $F_{status\ quo}$, 1.25 X $F_{status\ quo}$, $F=0$; TAC Status quo, 85% TAC Status quo, 90% TAC Status quo, 95% TAC Status quo
- For stocks under a moratorium to direct fishing: $F_{status\ quo}$, $F = 0$.

The first year of the projection should assume a catch equal to the agreed TAC for that year. In instances where Scientific Council expects catches to be significantly different from the agreed TAC, an additional projection could be provided based on the best available catch estimation.

Results from stochastic short-term projection should include:

- The 10%, 50% and 90% percentiles of the yield, total biomass, spawning stock biomass and exploitable biomass for each year of the projections
- The risks of stock population parameters increasing above or falling below available biomass and fishing mortality reference points. The table indicated below should guide the Scientific Council in presenting the short-term projections.

F in 2025 and following years	Yield 2024 (50%)	Yield 2025 (50%)	Yield 2026 (50%)	Limit reference points						P(F> F_{msy})			P(B< B_{msy})			P(B2026 > B2024)
				P(F> F_{lim})			P(B< B_{lim})									
				2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026	
2/3 F_{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
3/4 F_{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
85% F_{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
90% F_{msy}	t	t	t													
95% F_{msy}	t	t	t													
F_{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
0.75 X $F_{status\ quo}$	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
$F_{status\ quo}$	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1.25 X $F_{status\ quo}$	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
$F=0$	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
TAC Status quo																
85% TAC Status quo																
90% TAC Status quo																
95% TAC Status quo																



2. For stock assessed with an age-structured model, information should be provided on stock size, spawning stock sizes, recruitment prospects, historical fishing mortality. Graphs and/or tables should be provided for all of the following for the longest time-period possible:

- historical yield and fishing mortality;
- spawning stock biomass and recruitment levels;
- Stock trajectory against reference points

And any information the Scientific Council deems appropriate

Stochastic short-term projections (3 years) should be performed with the following constant fishing mortality levels as appropriate:

- For stocks opened to direct fishing: $F_{0.1}$, F_{max} , $2/3 F_{max}$, $3/4 F_{max}$, $85\% F_{max}$, $75\% F_{status\ quo}$, $F_{status\ quo}$, $125\% F_{status\ quo}$,
 - For stocks under a moratorium to direct fishing: $F_{status\ quo}$, $F = 0$.

The first year of the projection should assume a catch equal to the agreed TAC for that year.

Results from stochastic short-term projection should include:

- The 10%, 50% and 90% percentiles of the yield, total biomass, spawning stock biomass and exploitable biomass for each year of the projections
- The risks of stock population parameters increasing above or falling below available biomass and fishing mortality reference points. The table indicated below should guide the Scientific Council in presenting the short-term projections.

F in 2025 and following years*	Yield 2024	Yield 2025	Yield 2026	Limit reference points						P(B2026 > B2024)							
				P(F > F _{lim})			P(B < B _{lim})				P(F > F _{0.1})			P(F > F _{max})			
				2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026		2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026	
F _{0.1}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F _{max}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
66% F _{max}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
75% F _{max}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
85% F _{max}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
0.75 X F ₂₀₁₈	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F ₂₀₁₈	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1.25 X F ₂₀₁₈	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%



ANNEX B. Guidance for providing advice on Stocks Assessed without a Population Model

For those resources for which only general biological and/or catch data are available, few standard criteria exist on which to base advice. The stock status should be evaluated in the context of management requirements for long-term sustainability and the advice provided should be consistent with the precautionary approach.

The following graphs should be presented, for one or several surveys, for the longest time-period possible:

- a. time trends of survey abundance estimates
- b. an age or size range chosen to represent the spawning population
- c. an age or size-range chosen to represent the exploited population
- d. recruitment proxy or index for an age or size-range chosen to represent the recruiting population.
- e. fishing mortality proxy, such as the ratio of reported commercial catches to a measure of the exploited population.
- f. Stock trajectory against reference points

And any information the Scientific Council deems appropriate.

Annex 18. NAFO Quota Table 2024 – NAFO CEM Annex I.A and I.B
including a comparison of the Scientific Councils advice on NAFO fish stocks and the
management measures decided by the Commission
(COM WP 23-15 (Rev. 5) now COM Doc. 23-10)

This document outlines the quota and effort allocation decisions made by the Commission for 2024. The document is broken down into two parts:

Part 1: Annex I of the NAFO CEM for 2024 including the total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons) for 2024 of particular stocks in Subareas 1-4 and 6 of the NAFO Convention Area and Effort Allocation for Shrimp Fishery in the NAFO regulatory Area Div. 3M, 2024.

Part 2: A comparison of the Scientific Councils advice on NAFO fish stocks and the management measures decided by the Commission.

Part 1.

(2024)
ANNEX I – FISHERIES MANAGEMENT
Annex I.A – Annual Quota Table

CATCH LIMITATIONS 2024–Article 5. Total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons in live weight) for 2024 of particular stocks in Subareas 1–4 and 6 of the NAFO Convention Area.

Species Stock Specification	Cod				Redfish				American plaice		Yellowtail	
	COD 3L	COD 3M		COD 3NO	RED 3LN		RED 3M	RED 3O	REB 1F_2_3K (i.e. Sub-Area 2 and Divs. 1F+3K)	PLA 3LNO	PLA 3M	YEL 3LNO
% of TAC			% of 3M Cod TAC			% of 3LN Redfish TAC						
Contracting Party												
Canada		93.7	0.80	0	7 710	42.60	500	6 000	0 ¹	0	0	15 171
Cuba		433.2	3.70	-	1 774	9.80	1 750	-	0 ¹	-	-	-
Denmark (Faroe Islands & Greenland)		2 616.7	22.35	-	-		69 ¹⁰	-	0	-	-	-
European Union		5 585.9 ⁵	47.71	0 ⁴	3 300 ⁴	18.23	7 813 ⁴	7 000	0 0 ⁷	0	0 ⁴	-
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-	-	-	-		69 ¹⁰	-	0 ¹	-	-	311
Iceland		-	-	-	-		-	-	0	-	-	-
Japan		-	-	-	-		400	150	0 ¹	-	-	-
Korea		-	-	-	-		69 ¹⁰	100	0 ¹	-	-	-
Norway		1 083.0	9.25	-	-		-	-		-	-	-
Russian Federation		757.5	6.47	0	5 207	28.77	9 137	6 500	0	-	0	-
Ukraine		-	-	-	-		-	150	0 ¹	-	-	-
United Kingdom		1 091.2	9.32	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
United States of America		-	-	-	-		69 ¹⁰	-	0 ¹	-	-	-
Others		46.8	0.40	0	109	0.60	124	100	-	0	0	78
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*	11 708	100.0 ¹³	*	18 100	100.0 ¹⁴	17 503	20 000 ⁸	0 ^{3,9}	*	*	15 560



Annex I.A (2024)

Species	Witch			White hake	Capelin	Skates	Greenland halibut	Squid (<i>Illex</i>)	Shrimp		Alfonsino
Stock Specification	WIT 3L	WIT 3NO		HKW 3NO	CAP 3NO	SKA 3LNO	GHL 3LMNO	SQI 3_4 (i.e. Sub-areas 3+4)	PRA 3L	PRA 3NO	ALF 6 (i.e. Sub-area 6)
% of TAC			% of 3NO Witch TAC								
Contracting Party											
Canada		820	60.00	294	0	1 167	1 684	N.S. ²	0		
Cuba		-		-	0	-	-	510	0		
Denmark (Faroe Islands & Greenland)		-		-	-	-	193	-	0		
European Union		181 ⁴	13.27	588	0 ⁵	4 408	6 583 ⁶	<u>N.S.</u> ² 611 ⁵	0 ⁶		
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-	-	-	184	453	0		
Iceland		-		-	-	-	-	-	0		
Japan		-		-	0	-	1 151	510	0		
Korea		-		-	-	-	-	453	0		
Norway		-		-	0	-	-	-	0		
Russian Federation		352	25.73	59	0	1 167	1 433	749	0		
Ukraine		-		-	-	-	-	-	0		
United Kingdom		-		-	-	-	-	-	-		
United States of America		-		-	-	-	-	453	0		
Others		14	1.00	59	-	258		794	0		
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*	1 367	100.00 ¹⁵	1 000	*	7 000 ¹²	11 228	34 000 ⁸	0 ⁸	* ⁸	*

Annex I.A (2024)

Symbol	Definition
-	Contracting Party does not have a quota allocation
*	Ban on fishing in force
0	Contracting Party has quota, but the TAC is zero
Blank	No quota allocation defined

- ¹ Quota to be shared by vessels from Canada, Cuba, France (St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Korea, Ukraine and USA.
- ² The allocations to these Contracting Parties are as yet undetermined, although their sum shall not exceed the difference between the total of allocations to other Contracting Parties and the TAC (= 29.467 tonnes).
- ³ Should NEAFC modify its level of TAC, these figures shall be adjusted accordingly by NAFO through a mail vote.
- ⁴ Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in accordance with the sharing arrangement of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission in 2003 (FC WP 03-7), as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the European Union.
- ⁵ Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in accordance with the sharing arrangement of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission in 2003 (FC WP 03-7), and to Poland, as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the European Union.
- ⁶ Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the EU.
- ⁷ Allocation of 17.85% to Lithuania and 2.15% to Latvia following their accession to the European Union.
- ⁸ Applicable to 2024 and 2025.
- ⁹ If an increase in the overall TAC as defined in footnote 3 leads to an increase in these shares, the first 500 tonnes of that increase shall be added to the quota share referred to in footnote 1.
- ¹⁰ Notwithstanding the provision of Article 5.3(b) and without prejudice to future agreements on allocations, these quotas may be fished in their entirety by these Contracting Parties.
- ¹¹ Applicable to 2024, 2025, and 2026.
- ¹² Should catches exceed 4 500 tonnes, additional measures would be adopted to further restrain catches in 2023 and in 2024.

Historical statements

- ¹³ The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1998 Quota Table. In 1999, a moratorium on cod in Division 3M was declared.
- ¹⁴ The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1997 Quota Table. In 1998, a moratorium on redfish in Division 3LN was declared.
- ¹⁵ The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1994 Quota Table. In 1995, a moratorium on witch flounder in Division 3NO was declared.

**Annex I.B – Effort Allocation Scheme for Shrimp Fishery in the
NAFO Regulatory Area Div. 3M, 2024**

CONTRACTING PARTY	NUMBER OF FISHING DAYS¹
Canada	0
Cuba	0
Denmark	
– Faroe Islands	0
– Greenland	0
European Union	0
France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)	0
Iceland	N/A
Japan	0
Korea	0
Norway	0
Russia	0
Ukraine	0
United Kingdom	0
USA	0
TOTAL	0

¹ When the scientific advice estimates that the stock shows signs of recovery, the fishery shall be re-opened in accordance with the effort allocation key in place for this fishery at the time of the closure.

Part 2. A comparison of the Scientific Councils advice on NAFO fish stocks and the management measures decided by the Commission.

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
Cod in Division 3M	<p>Catches up to $3/4 F_{lim}$ are projected to result in a very low probability ($\leq 10\%$) of the stock going below B_{lim} and of fishing mortality exceeding F_{lim} in 2024. All fishing scenarios with fishing mortality less than $2/3 F_{lim}$ are projected to promote growth in SSB.</p> <p>SC therefore advises that exploitation should not exceed $2/3 F_{lim}$ in 2024 (SCS Doc. 23/18).</p>	2023	The Commission agreed to set the TAC at $2/3 F_{lim}$ in 2024, corresponding to a TAC of 11 708 t.
Cod in Division 3NO	<p>No directed fishing in 2022 to 2024 to allow for stock rebuilding. Bycatch of cod in fisheries targeting other species should be kept at the lowest possible level. Projections of the stock were not performed but given the poor strength of all year-classes subsequent to 2006, the stock will not reach B_{lim} in the next three years (SCS Doc. 21/14(Rev.)).</p>	2021	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2022, 2023, and 2024 (COM Doc. 21-21 (Rev.)).
Redfish in Divisions 3LN	<p>Available data indicate that biomass is at or below the long-term mean. The stock appears to be above the interim limit reference point (B_{lim}). In the absence of Canadian spring surveys in 2020 and 2021 proxy fishing mortality cannot be determined for those years. However, it is unlikely that levels of fishing mortality have changed substantially. Recruitment has been below the long-term average since the mid-2010s.</p> <p>Scientific Council advises that catches should not exceed their current level of 11 500 t (the mean of the last 5 years) (SCS Doc. 22/18).</p>	2022	It was agreed to set the TAC at 18 100 tonnes, applicable to 2023 and 2024 (COM Doc. 22-27).
Redfish in Division 3M	<p>Some instability in the assessment results compared to previous assessments was evident. SC was not able to resolve the reason for this retrospective pattern and this adds uncertainty to the projection results.</p>	2023	The Commission agreed to set the TAC to 17 503 t in 2024.

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
	<p>Given the uncertainty in the projections, this stock will be reassessed in 2024, and therefore SC is providing advice for only one year. The TAC corresponding to a fishing mortality of F0.1 would be 21 888 t in 2024.</p> <p>However, SC advises that fishing mortality be kept at the current level, corresponding to a TAC of 17 503 t in 2024 (SCS Doc. 23/18).</p>		
Redfish in Division 30	<p>The stock is below an interim survey-based proxy for B_{MSY} but above the limit reference point ($B_{lim} = 0.3_{MSY}$-proxy) with a probability >99%. There is insufficient information on which to base predictions of annual yield potential. Catches have averaged about 9 000 t over the period used for the MSY proxy calculation (1991 -2021). Scientific Council is unable to advise on an appropriate TAC for 2023, 2024 and 2025 (SCS Doc. 22/18).</p>	2022	It was agreed to rollover the TAC of 20 000 tonnes applicable to 2023, 2024, and 2025 (COM Doc. 22-27).
Pelagic <i>Sebastes mentella</i> (oceanic redfish) in Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K	<p>ICES advises that when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catch in each of the years 2022, 2023, and 2024.</p> <p>Scientific Council endorsed the conclusions of both the ICES assessment results and its advice (SCS Doc. 22/18).</p> <p>No new stock assessment for Pelagic <i>Sebastes mentella</i> was done in 2023. Current advice from ICES is valid until 2024 (COM WP 23-35).</p>	2023	The Commission agreed to maintain the ban on directed fishing for this stock in 2024.
American plaice in Divisions 3LNO	<p>Scientific Council recommends that, in accordance with the rebuilding plan, there should be no directed fishing on American plaice in Div. 3LNO in 2022, 2023 and 2024. Bycatch of American plaice should be kept to the lowest possible level and restricted to unavoidable bycatch in fisheries directing for other species (SCS Doc. 21/14 (Rev.)).</p>	2021	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2022, 2023, and 2024 (COM Doc. 21-21 (Rev.)).

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
American Plaice in Division 3M	The stock has recovered to the levels of the mid 1990s, however, recruitment has been poor since 2018. SC considers that there is not sufficient supporting evidence that the stock would be able to sustain a fishery at this time and recommends that there be no directed fishing in 2024, 2025 and 2026. Bycatch should be kept at the lowest possible level (SCS Doc. 23/18).	2023	The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024, 2025, and 2026.
Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO	Scientific Council advises that fishing mortality up to 75% F_{msy} , corresponding to catches of 15 560 t and 15 810 t in 2024 and 2025, respectively, have risk of no more than 30% of exceeding F_{lim} , and are projected to maintain the stock around B_{msy} with a low risk of being below B_{lim} (SCS Doc. 23/18).	2023	The Commission agreed on a TAC of 15 560 t for 2024 and 15 810 t for 2025.
Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO	In the projection period there is less than a 10% probability of being below B_{lim} , however the probability of exceeding F_{lim} is estimated to be above 30% in 2024 for F greater than $2/3 F_{MSY}$. Scientific Council therefore recommends that F should be no higher than $2/3 F_{MSY}$ (SCS Doc. 22/18).	2022	The Commission agreed on a TAC of 1 295 applicable to 2023, and 1 367 tonnes applicable to 2024 (COM Doc. 22-27).
White hake in Divisions 3NO	Stock status is unknown. Catches of white hake in 3NO should not increase above recent levels (the average of the most recent five years is around 400 tonnes) (SCS Doc. 23/18).	2023	The Commission agreed to roll over the TAC of 1000 t for 2024.
Capelin in Divisions 3NO	For 2022-2024, no directed fishery (SCS Doc. 21/14 (Rev.)).	2021	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2022, 2023, and 2024 (COM Doc. 21-21 (Rev.)).
Skates in Division 3LNO	The stock has been stable at recent catch levels in Div. 3LNO (approximately 3 710 t, 2017 - 2021) however, given the low resilience to fishing mortality and higher historic stock levels, Scientific Council advises no increase in catches (SCS Doc. 22/18).	2022	It was agreed to rollover the TAC of 7 000 tonnes applicable 2023 and 2024 (COM Doc. 22-27). Footnote 12 of the Quota Table revised to read: Should catches exceed 4 500 tonnes, additional measures would

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
			be adopted to further restrain catches in 2023 and in 2024.
Greenland halibut in Sub-area 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO	<p>Exceptional Circumstances are occurring due to recent gaps in Canadian survey time series. However, sensitivity analyses indicate that the application of the HCR will still be appropriate. The TAC for 2024 derived from the HCR is 15 153 t (SCS Doc. 23/18).</p> <p>The NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) agreed to recommend to the Commission that the agreed Management Procedure be applied to set the TAC for 2024 (COM-SC Doc. 23-03).</p>	2023	The Commission agreed to set the TAC at 15 153 t for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut, resulting in a TAC of 11 228 t for 3LMNO Greenland halibut.
Northern shortfin squid in Subareas 3+4 ³	<p>Although the primary stock indices for Div. 4VWX were not available during 2021 and 2022, the 2022 biomass indices for both Divs. 3NO and Div. 3M EU summer surveys were near the lowest levels of their respective time series, suggesting that the stock has returned to a low productivity state.</p> <p>Scientific Council advises catches between 19 000 and 34 000 tonnes per year (two proxies for F_{lim}, the potential yield which the northern stock component may be able to sustain under a low productivity regime) (SCS Doc. 22/22).</p>	2022	It was agreed to rollover the TAC of 34 000 tonnes applicable to 2023, 2024, and 2025 (COM Doc. 22-27).
Northern Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO	No directed fishery in 2024 and 2025 as the stock is below B_{lim} with no indication of short-term recovery (NAFO/23-230).	2023	The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024 and 2025.
Splendid alfonsino in Subarea 6 ⁷	<p>The substantial decline in CPUE and catches on the Kükenthal peak in the past year indicates that the stock may be depleted.</p> <p>Scientific Council advises to close the fishery until biomass increases to exploitable levels.</p>	2019	Ban on fishing (COM Doc. 19-34 (Rev.)).

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
Shrimp in Division 3M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stock continues to be below B_{lim}. <p>To be consistent with the Precautionary Approach, Scientific Council advises that no directed fishery should occur in 2024 (NAFO/23-230).</p>	2023	The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024.



Annex 19. Review of NAFO CEM Article 5.5(j)
(COM WP 23-40 now COM Doc. 23-11)

The Commission reviewed Article 5.5(j) of the NAFO CEM, which is time sensitive, and agreed to the following updates:

Article 5 – Catch and Effort Limitations

Closure of Fisheries for Stocks Listed in Annex I.A and I.B Subject to Quota or Fishing Effort

....

5. Each Contracting Party shall:

- (j) close its directed fishery for cod in Division 3M between 00:01 UTC 1 January ~~2023~~2024 and 24:00 UTC 31 March ~~2023~~2024. During this period, all Contracting Parties shall ensure that its vessels limit the catches retained on board and in any one haul of this stock in line with Article 6.3(a) and observe the move-on provisions in Article 6.6(b).

Annex 20. Establishment of New Measures in the Yellowtail Fishery (Article 6)
(COM WP 23-37 (Rev. 3) now COM Doc. 23-12)

Background

3LNO yellowtail flounder was historically a mixed flatfish fishery with 3LNO American plaice, which has been under moratorium since 1995. As the primary quota holder for both stocks, Canada is strongly committed to the conservation of both and specifically the rebuilding of 3LNO American plaice.

Noting that American plaice 3LNO is currently under moratorium and noting the advice of the Scientific Council that bycatches should be kept to the lowest possible level and restricted to unavoidable bycatch in fisheries for other species.

Canada has been successful over the years in consistently maintaining a bycatch rate well below the 15 per cent threshold including in the most recent years when catch of yellowtail flounder has increased. However, this proved particularly challenging in fall of 2022 when Canadian operators encountered levels of bycatch that, while low in tonnage, triggered the move-away protocols under Article 6.6 of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM). These challenges have continued in 2023.

The fluctuation in distribution of these stocks may be the results of climate change as it appears to coincide with general warming of the core fishing areas in the southern Grand Banks during the fall period as determined by temperature recorded during fishing events. This warming trend has also been noted by NAFO Scientific Council (NAFO SCS Doc. 22/18 p.87) as well as peer-reviewed Fisheries and Oceans Canada research (Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat (CSAS) Report 2023-019¹ p.6).

In light of these circumstances, Canada has been exploring adaptive management approaches that respond to the changing fishery dynamics to allow operators to conduct economically viable fisheries while minimizing the potential impact on moratoria species. As such, at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional meeting, Canada proposed two amendments to the NAFO CEMs in STACTIC WP 23-14.

Recognizing that the annual by-catch of American Plaice in the directed Canadian yellowtail flounder fishery has been maintained at levels well below the current threshold of 15%, and have generally been in the range of 3-5%.

Highlighting that the obligation remains to ensure that annual 3LNO American plaice catches do not exceed the 15% threshold.

Noting that the measure has a very narrow application, impacting only Canadian fishers, and the need to address a challenge in this fishery that to date has been seasonal in nature, Canada also proposes an expedited implementation period, as provided for in the Convention.

Following discussions at the 2023 STACTIC Annual meeting, Canada now presents a number of additions to Article 6.

¹ https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/csas-sccs/Publications/SAR-AS/2023/2023_019-eng.html

Proposed Amendments

Article 6 – Bycatch Retention on Board of Stocks Identified in Annex I.A as Bycatch when No Directed Fishery is Permitted

Limits for Species Listed in Annex I.A Retained on Board as Bycatch

3. Each Contracting Party shall ensure that its vessels, including vessels chartered in accordance with Article 26, shall limit the retention of on board species classified as bycatch to the maxima specified below:
 - (a) for cod in Division 3M, redfish in 3LN and witch flounder in 3NO: 1 250 kg or 5%, whichever is the greater;
 - (b) for cod in Divisions 3NO: 1 000 kg or 4%, whichever is the greater;
 - (c) for all other stocks listed in Annex I.A where no specific quota has been allocated to the flag State Contracting Party: 2 500 kg or 10%, whichever is the greater;
 - (d) where a ban on fishing applies (moratorium): 1 250 kg or 5%, whichever is the greater;
 - (e) when the "Others" quota opened for that stock has been fully utilized: 1 250 kg or 5%, whichever is the greater, for those Contracting Parties that notified the use of the "Others" quota in accordance with Article 5;
 - (f) once the directed fishery for redfish in Division 3M is closed in accordance with Article 5.5(d): 1 250 kg or 5%, whichever is the greater; and
 - (g) while conducting a directed fishery for yellowtail in Divisions 3LNO: 15% of American plaice; otherwise bycatch provisions in Article 6.3(d) apply. Until December 31, 2024, if a vessel is carrying an observer:
 - (i) this maxima shall be 2 900 kg or 15% of American plaice, whichever the greater;
 - (ii) a vessel may exceed the maxima referred to in Article 6.3(g)(i) for bycatches of American plaice retained on board during the first 9 fishing days in the Regulatory Area provided that American plaice bycatches represents 15% or less by the end of that period or when the vessel leaves the Regulatory Area, whichever occurs first.
 - (iii) each Contracting Party shall inspect 100% of landings of fishing vessels that have conducted directed fishery for yellowtail in Divisions 3LNO.
4. The limits and percentages in paragraph 3 of this Article are calculated by Division as the percentage, by weight, for each stock of the total catch of stocks listed in Annex I.A retained on board for that Division at the time of inspection, on the basis of the fishing logbook figures.

Exceeding Bycatch Limits in Any One Haul

8. When a vessel is conducting a directed fishery for skate with a legal mesh size appropriate for that fishery, the first time that catches of stocks for which bycatch limits apply, as specified in paragraph 2,

- comprise the largest percentage by weight of the total catch in a haul, they shall be considered as incidental catch, but the vessel shall immediately move as specified in paragraph 6.
9. Until December 31, 2024, where a vessel is carrying an observer and is conducting a directed fishery for yellowtail with a legal mesh size appropriate for that fishery, the first two times on a fishing trip that catches of American plaice comprise the largest percentage by weight of the total catch in a haul, they shall be considered as incidental catch, but the vessel shall immediately move as specified in paragraph 6.
 - 9bis. Until December 31, 2024, by way of derogation from Article 6.6.b(ii), if the American plaice bycatch limits are exceeded again, instead of leaving the Division for at least 60 hours, the vessel may move a minimum of 10 nautical miles from any position of the previous tow in up to three consecutive hauls in which the American plaice bycatch limit is exceeded. If the bycatch limits are exceeded again, the vessel shall leave the Division and not return for at least 60 hours, in accordance with Article 6.6.b(ii).
 10. The percentage of bycatch in any one haul is calculated as the percentage, by weight, for each stock listed in Annex I.A of the total catch from that haul.
 11. Upon its first entrance into a Division on a fishing trip, a vessel may undertake one trial tow for up to a maximum duration of 3 hours. If the stocks subjected to bycatch limits form the largest percentage, by weight, of the total resultant catch in the haul, this shall not be considered as a directed fishery for those stocks, and the vessel must immediately change position in accordance with provisions of paragraph 6(b). Vessels must identify any trial tow conducted in accordance with this paragraph and record in the fishing logbook the coordinates pertaining to the start and end locations of any trial tow conducted.

Implementation

12. In 2024, STACTIC shall:
 - (a) assess if the provisions in paragraphs 6.3(g) and 9 led to an increase on American plaice bycatches or directed fishery on American plaice; and
 - (b) review paragraphs 6.3(g) and 9.
13. This measure shall become binding on each Contracting Party seven days following the date of transmittal by the Executive Secretary, with no bearing on the provisions of paragraph 2 of Article XIV.

Annex 21. Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on NAFO Fisheries
(COM WP 23-33 (Revised) now COM Doc. 23-13)

Explanatory Memorandum

There are pressures that are increasingly impacting fisheries and the health of our ecosystems. Climate change in particular is unequivocally altering marine ecosystems with consequences for fish stocks around the globe, including their contributions to food security and nutrition. Warming oceans, rising seas, melting sea ice, deoxygenation and increasing acidification are altering ecosystem structure and the distribution and abundance of marine species. Changing ocean conditions affect the distribution, seasonality, and productivity of fish stocks, as well as fishery interactions with bycatch, protected species, and other ocean users.

At the 35th meeting of FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI), COFI encouraged the FAO to increase the knowledge and awareness on climate change impacts in fisheries and aquaculture and to provide guidance on adaptation and mitigation, highlighting the need for guidance on climate resilient fisheries management, including by convening a workshop with regional fisheries bodies. Additionally, the 2021 UN General Assembly Sustainable Fisheries Resolution A/RES/76/71 calls on RFMOs to consider climate change in carrying out their work. Subsequently, RFMOs globally are taking notice of the serious implications that climate change poses to fisheries and of the science and adaptive management actions that likely are needed in response.

In light of this, the co-sponsors are proposing that NAFO strengthen how the organization addresses the impacts of climate change on target stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems, including supporting scientific efforts, building upon the SC's existing climate related work. The objective of this proposal is to identify climate change-related information and information gaps relevant to NAFO stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems to empower the Commission to incorporate climate science into its future decision-making.

The first step to that end is for the Scientific Council to identify what information it currently has regarding climate change impacts on NAFO resources, as well as gaps in that information that could otherwise inform possible future action for the Commission. The Scientific Council is already engaged in a number of climate change related efforts. For example, the Standing Committee of Fisheries Environment (STACFEN) provides climate related analysis to the Scientific Council to inform stock assessments and the Ecosystem Roadmap includes climate related efforts in tiers 1 and 2. This proposal is not requesting any new scientific research or advice, but rather for Scientific Council to collate the information it has available to it, and to determine if there are any gaps in that information, as well as any gaps in the expertise in the SC, to be able to advise the Commission on the impacts of climate change on NAFO resources, and how the Commission can address those impacts.

Proposal

ACKNOWLEDGING that climate change poses both short- and long-term significant challenges for NAFO, and given the widespread and lasting effects of climate change on the ocean environment and ecosystems, it also affects the individuals and communities that depend upon the fisheries and other resources within the Convention Area;

HIGHLIGHTING NAFO's commitment to implementing the ecosystem and precautionary approaches to fisheries management, as reflected in its Convention;

UNDERSCORING NAFO's commitment to addressing climate change in NAFO fisheries, as reflected in the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management Roadmap;

Underscoring that the Scientific Council has already begun to address climate change effects at the ecosystem level within the Convention Area as part of NAFO's Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management Roadmap;

RECOGNISING the need to fully utilize existing data sources, and to identify additional information sources to gain a more complete understanding of the potential impacts of climate change on NAFO managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems in the Convention Area;

COMMITTING to developing effective management strategies and approaches in NAFO to adapt to ongoing broad-scale changes in environmental conditions that have been documented in the Northwest Atlantic Ocean, including supporting the resilience of NAFO stocks and related ecosystems, as well as of fishing communities, in the face of climate change.

Therefore, NAFO resolves to

1. Consider the current and future impacts of climate change on NAFO managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems in the Convention Area, including, *inter alia*, as appropriate, in its decision making, and through its work in the Ecosystem Roadmap.
2. To that end, take into account the best scientific advice available on the current and future impacts of climate change on NAFO-managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems, when developing conservation and management measures, with a view to address the effects of such impacts.
3. Further, evaluate how the management of target and non-target NAFO-managed stocks and associated ecosystems, as well as fishing activities, may be affected by climate change and examine if there are actions that could be taken to reduce or mitigate such impacts, including, as appropriate, consideration of adapting NAFO management approaches.
4. To inform the work in paragraphs one through three, and while recognizing the capacity challenges of the Scientific Council, request that the Scientific Council at its 2024 meeting summarize the information it currently has available regarding the current and future impacts of climate change on NAFO-managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems. The Scientific Council should further identify any consequential data gaps, research needs and opportunities for productive research.
5. Based on that information, the Commission should at the 2024 Annual Meeting consider appropriate next steps to advance NAFO's work on this important issue.

Annex 22. Catch reporting (Article 28.6 NAFO CEM)
(STACTIC WP 23-12 (Revised) now COM Doc. 23-14)

Background

At the 2021 Annual Meeting, the NAFO Secretariat presented STACTIC Working Paper 21-36, noting that the use of COX messages to report the last catches before the vessel leaves the RA may lead to a lack of proper reporting of the catching area in the COX message when exit area and the catching area are not the same. STACTIC referred the issue to JADGM and, at its 2022 Intersessional Meeting, further requested JADGM to consider the possibility of using a CAT message instead of the COX if the catching and exit area differ.

JADGM noted no technical concerns with using a CAT message instead of the COX if the catching and exit area differ, provided that the CAT is sent prior to the COX. JADGM also noted that NAFO CEM Annexes II.D and II.F were inconsistent in the naming of the data element with field code “OB”.

It is proposed to amend Article 28.6 provisions on catch reporting to require the use CAT messages to report daily catches, including for the day in which the vessel exits the RA, instead of COX reports; and to adjust the naming of the data element with field code “OB” in Annex II.F.6 such that it is aligned with the naming in Annex II.D.

Proposal

Article 28.6 NAFO CEM and Annex II.F.6 are amended as follows:

Article 28.6:

Catch Reporting

6. *Every fishing vessel shall transmit electronically to its FMC the following reports in accordance with the format and the content prescribed for each type of report in Annex II.D and Annex II.F:*
- (a) *catch on entry (COE): quantity of catch on board by species upon entry into the Regulatory Area, transmitted at least six (6) hours in advance of the vessel's entry;*
- (b) *catch on exit (COX): quantity of catch onboard by species upon exit from the Regulatory Area transmitted at least six (6) hours in advance of the vessel's exit;*
- (c) *catch report (CAT):*
- (i) *quantity of catch retained and quantity discarded by species for the day preceding the report, by Division, including nil catch returns, sent daily before 12:00 UTC ~~unless otherwise submitted in a COX report.~~*
- (ii) quantity of catch retained and quantity discarded by species for the day in which the fishing vessel exits the Regulatory Area, by Division, including nil catch returns, sent before the COX report.**

Nil catch retained and nil discards of all species shall be reported using the 3 alpha code MZZ (marine species not specified) and quantity as “0” as the following examples demonstrate (//CA/MZZ 0// and //RJ/MZZ 0//);

Data Element	Field Code	Mandatory/Optional	Requirements for the field
Catch species live-weight Quantity on board <u>in live weight</u>	OB	M	Activity detail; Total quantity by species on board rounded to the nearest 100 kg, upon exit from the RA. Allow for several pairs of fields, consisting of species (FAO 3 alpha codes) + live weight in kilograms (until 9 digits), with each field separated by a space, e.g. //OB/speciesspaceweightspacspeciespaceweightspacspeciespaceweight//
Days Fished	DF	O	Activity detail; number of fishing days in the Regulatory Area
Date	DA	M	Message detail; UTC date of transmission of this report from the vessel
Time	TI	M	Message detail; UTC time of transmission of this report from the vessel
End of record	ER	M	System detail; indicates end of the record

¹ Optional if the vessel is subject to satellite tracking in accordance with Article 29.1.

Annex 23. Edits to the time format in the NAFO CEM
(STACTIC-EDG WP 23-01 now COM Doc. 23-15)

Article 5 – Catch and Effort Limitations

Closure of Fisheries for Stocks Listed in Annex I.A and I.B Subject to Quota or Fishing Effort

5. Each Contracting Party shall:

[...]

(d) close its directed fishery for 3M redfish between ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC of the day the accumulated reported catch is estimated to reach 50% of the 3M redfish TAC, as notified in accordance with paragraph 15 (d)(i) of this Article, and 1 July;

(e) close its redfish fishery in Division 3M at ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC of the day the accumulated reported catch is estimated to reach 100% of the 3M redfish TAC, as notified in accordance with paragraph 15 (e) of this Article;

[...]

(j) close its directed fishery for cod in Division 3M between 00:01 UTC 1 January 2023 and ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC 31 March 2023. During this period, all Contracting Parties shall ensure that its vessels limit the catches retained on board and in any one haul of this stock in line with Article 6.3(a) and observe the move-on provisions in Article 6.6(b).

Article 9 – Shrimp

Shrimp in Division 3M

[...]

5. No vessel shall fish for shrimp in Division 3M between 00:01 UTC on 1 June and ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC on 31 December in the following area as described in Table 2 and depicted in Figure 1(2):

[...]

Article 11 – Squid

Squid Closure

1. No vessel may fish for squid between 00:01 UTC on 1 January to ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC on 30 June in Sub-areas 3 and 4.

[...]

Article 28 – Monitoring of Catch

Production Logbook

3. Each fishing vessel shall:

(a) maintain a production logbook that:

(i) accurately records the daily cumulative production for each species and product type in kg for the preceding day from 00:01 UTC until ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC;

[...]

Stowage of Catch

[...]

5. Each fishing vessel shall:

(a) maintain a stowage plan that:

[...]

(ii) is updated daily for the preceding day from 00:01 to ~~23:5924:00~~ UTC; and

[...]

Annex 24. Edits to Article 5.3(b) of the NAFO CEM
(STACTIC-EDG WP 23-02 now COM Doc. 23-16)

Article 5 – Catch and Effort Limitations

Quotas and Effort

3. For stocks identified in Annex I.A or I.B caught within the Regulatory Area by vessels entitled to fly its flag, each Contracting Party shall:
 - (b) ensure that all [species-catch](#) from stocks listed in Annex I.A caught by its vessels are counted against the quota allocated to that Contracting Party, including the bycatch of 3M redfish taken between the estimated date when 50% of the 3M redfish TAC is taken, as notified in accordance with paragraph 15 of this Article, and 1 July;

Annex 25. Edits to Articles 6.2(c) and 6.3(e) of the NAFO CEM
(STACTIC-EDG WP 23-03 now COM Doc. 23-17)

**Article 6 – Bycatch Retention on Board of Stocks Identified in Annex I.A as Bycatch
When No Directed Fishery is Permitted**

2. A species listed in Annex I.A shall be classified as bycatch when it is taken in a Division where any of the following situations exist:
 - (c) the "Others" quota for a particular stock has been ~~fully utilized~~closed, following notification by the Executive Secretary in accordance with Article 5.
3. Each Contracting Party shall ensure that its vessels, including vessels chartered in accordance with Article 26, shall limit the retention of on board species classified as bycatch to the maxima specified below:
 - (e) when the "Others" quota opened for that stock has been ~~fully utilized~~closed: 1 250 kg or 5%, whichever is the greater, for those Contracting Parties that notified the use of the "Others" quota in accordance with Article 5;

Annex 26. Edits to Article 5.11 and 9.4 of the NAFO CEM
(STACTIC-EDG WP 23-04 now COM Doc. 23-18)

Article 5 – Catch and Effort Limitations

Transfer of Quotas

[...]

11. Fishing days allocated under Annex I.B for shrimps in Division 3M are not transferable between Contracting Parties. ~~However, chartering arrangements related to fishing days are permitted, subject to the provisions of Article 26.~~

Article 9 – Shrimp

Shrimp in Division 3M

[...]

4. ~~Fishing days referred to in this Article are not transferable between Contracting Parties.~~ Fishing days ~~allocated under Annex I.B to one of one~~ Contracting Party may be utilized by a vessel entitled to fly the flag of another Contracting Party only in accordance with Article 26.

Annex 27. Edits to Article 12.1 (d bis) of the NAFO CEM
(STACTIC-EDG WP 23-05 (Rev. 3) now COM Doc. 23-19)

Article 12 – Conservation and Management of Sharks

Duties of the Contracting Party

1. Each Contracting Party shall:

...

(d bis) Notwithstanding the provisions in paragraph (d), a flag State Contracting Parties may allow the retention on board and landing of dead, incidental catches of Greenland sharks provided that this is consistent with its with applicable domestic law that mandating requires a general discard ban or that dead fish be landed, may, in accordance with their national law and provided that the fish is dead, retain on board and land incidental bycatch of Greenland sharks. Contracting Parties shall ensure that fishing vessels ~~Fishermen~~ are prohibited from drawing any commercial value from such fish. Contracting Parties with Domestic law mandating a general discard ban or that dead fish be landed shall provide the Secretariat with its Domestic legislation within 30 days prior to any fishing activity. Contracting Parties that fall under the criteria of this derogation shall inform the Secretariat that the derogation is in accordance with its domestic law.

Duties of the Executive Secretary

7. The Executive Secretary posts without delay the information provided by Contracting Parties in accordance with Article 12.1(d bis) to the NAFO MCS Website and the secure part of the NAFO Website. The Executive Secretary posts the above information provided by the Contracting Parties to the NAFO MCS Website and the public part of the NAFO Website.

Annex 28. Squid Fishery
(STACTIC WP 23-09 (Rev. 4) now COM Doc. 23-20)

Background

- (1) A serious infringement could be identified with respect to paragraph 1 of Article 38 of NECM, if the non-targeted stock unintentionally comprises the largest percentage in weight in a situation where the mesh size required for the targeted stock under paragraph 2 of Article 13 is not complied with. It is understood that the targeted stock is the stock for which a vessel conducts “directed fishery” defined in paragraph 2 of Article 5 of NECM.
- (2) For example, when fishing for squid with the legal mesh size (60 mm), however, in reality, there might be a possibility that redfish can be by-caught accidentally and it comprises the largest percentage in weight. Since the mesh size requirement for the redfish fishery is no smaller than 90 mm or 130 mm, this fishery operation could be identified with infringement against the mesh size requirement.
- (3) As Japanese vessels have not fished for squid since many years ago, they could not have confidence that they can avoid the above situation. The uncertainty unreasonably deprives them of their fishing opportunity to fish for squid.
- (4) In order to address the concern and provide a vessel with strong incentives to minimize the catch of by-catch or non-target species, Japan would like to propose the revision to the relevant part of NCEM. This may contribute to reducing by-catch species in the squid fishery.

Proposed Modifications

Article 11 – Squid

Squid Closure

1. No vessel may fish for squid between 00:01 UTC on 1 January to 24:00 UTC on 30 June in Sub-areas 3 and 4.

Temporal exemption on catch composition rules in squid fisheries

2. A vessel may notify their intent to engage in the squid fishery in Sub-areas 3 and 4 under paragraph 3 when carrying an observer on board and using a mesh size no smaller than 60mm.

Duties of the Master

3. The master shall notify the flag state Contracting Party no later than 3 days before the start of the specified period. The following information shall be included in the notification:
 - (a) the name and call sign of the vessel;
 - (b) the period between 1 July and 31 December when it will conduct hauls targeting squid, including the start and end dates and times in UTC;
 - (c) the Division in which hauls targeting squid will be conducted; and
 - (d) the minimum mesh size to be used.
4. The period specified in 3(b) shall be limited to ~~two~~ weeks at maximum.

5. During the period notified in paragraph 3(b), if any Annex I.A species other than squid comprises the largest percentage, by weight, of the total catch in the haul, it shall not be considered as being taken in a directed fishery for the stock concerned per Article 5.2, or as fishing with a mesh size smaller than prescribed by Article 13.2 and 13.4.

In such scenario, the vessel shall immediately move a minimum 10 nautical miles from any position of that tow/set and not return to any such position for targeting squid for the remainder of the calendar year, and the master of the vessel and the observer onboard shall immediately report the following information to the flag State Contracting Party:

(a) the date and time (UTC) of the start and end of the haul;

(b) the depth at the start and end of the haul;

(c) the position at the start and end of the haul; and

(d) the catch composition of the haul by weight.

6. If a directed fisheries haul described in paragraph 5 occurs three times during the notified period, the vessel shall cease fishing for squid for the remainder of the calendar year.

Duties of the flag State Contracting Party

7. The flag State Contracting Party shall:

(a) transmit without delay the notification and the information referred to in paragraphs 3 and 5 to the Executive Secretary; and

(b) ensure that no exemption is granted to its vessels before the notification referred to in paragraph (a) is submitted to the Executive Secretary.

Duty of the Executive Secretary

8. The Executive Secretary posts without delay the notification and information provided in accordance with paragraph 7 to the NAFO MCS website.

Implementation

9. The exemption referred to in paragraphs 2 to 8 shall apply during 2024 and be reviewed by STACTIC in 2024.

Annex 29. NAF Field Character Limit Increase
(STACTIC WP 23-21 now COM Doc. 23-21)

Part C of Annex II.D (Format for electronic exchange of fisheries monitoring information (The North Atlantic Format)) of the NAFO CEM sets down the technical specifications (data format, data type, etc.) of the data to be transmitted in the NAF messages.

While adapting its internal system, the EU performed some tests on data exchanges of vessel notifications and authorizations with NAFO. These tests showed that some current limitations do not allow communication of the required information correctly and completely. For example, the vessel owner or operator addresses cannot fit within the limits of 60 characters. It means that in some cases, data available at NAFO is incomplete.

At the March 2023 meeting (COM Doc. 23-03), JAGDM proposed to make the following changes be made to part C of Annex II.D of the NAFO CEM by increasing the limitation of the maximum allowed characters for some data elements. JAGDM agreed that the proposals should proceed to PECMAC and STACTIC respectively to make the necessary changes to the Scheme and CEM.

Category	Data Element	Field Type	Type	Contents	Definitions
Registration	Vessel Name	NA	Char* 30 45		Name of the vessel
Details	Port Name	PO	Char* 20 45		Port of registration of the vessel/homeport
	Vessel Owner	VO	Char* 60 250		Name and address of the vessel owner
	Vessel Charterer	VC	Char* 60 250		Name and address of the vessel charterer
Vessel Character Details	Vessel Tonnage Unit	VT	Char*2 Num*4 5	"OC"/"LC" Tonnage	According to: "OC" OSLO 1947 Convention /"LC" LONDON ICTM-69
Activity Details	Port Name	PO	Char* 20 45		Name of the actual port of landing

Annex 30. Modifications to Article 4.7 (Research Vessels) of the NAFO CEM
(STACTIC WP 23-26 now COM Doc. 23-22)

Duties of the Executive Secretary

[...]

7. NAFO will review these measures in ~~2023~~2024.

Annex 31. Revisions to the NAFO Observer Scheme
(STACTIC WP 23-19 (Rev. 4) now COM Doc. 23-23)

This paper outlines a possible revision of Articles 30 and 38 and Annexes II.M of the NAFO CEM, in accordance with the recommendations established in STACTIC Working Paper 22-48 (Rev. 2). The working paper was under discussion by the WG-OPR as STACTIC OPR-WP 23-09 (Rev. 6).

CHAPTER V OBSERVER SCHEME

Article 30 – Observer Program

General provisions

1. The purpose of this observer program is to collect reliable, independent information and data on activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area. The information and data collected through the observer program shall be made available to any NAFO body requesting it.
2. This program shall apply to all Contracting Parties' fishing vessels operating in the Regulatory Area.

Duties of the flag State Contracting Party

3. Each flag State Contracting Party shall:
 - (a) adopt appropriate measures and set up all administrative, legal, and technical structures necessary to:
 - (i) effectively and fully implement the NAFO observer program;
 - (ii) utilize the data originating from the observer program for control, inspection, enforcement, and as appropriate scientific purposes;
 - (iii) take appropriate action with respect to its vessels to ensure safe working conditions, and the protection, security, and welfare of observers in the performance of their duties, consistent with international standards and guidelines; and
 - (iv) establish corrective measures regarding observers, observer providers, vessel masters and owners, where necessary, in order to ensure that the program meets the requirements specified in this Article.
 - (b) take all necessary steps to ensure that an observer is removed from a fishing vessel flying its flag if, during deployment, it is determined that a serious risk to the observer exists, unless and until the risk is addressed;
 - (c) ensure that its observers:
 - (i) have no financial or beneficial interest in, and are paid in a manner that demonstrates financial independence from the fishing vessel being monitored;
 - (ii) execute their duties and functions in an unbiased manner regardless of nationality and of which flag the vessel is flying;
 - (iii) are free from undue influence or benefit linked to the fishing activity of the vessel;
 - (iv) are independent and impartial;

- (v) treat all data and information related to the fishing operations collected during their deployment, including images and videos taken, in a confidential manner;
- (vi) have the training, knowledge, skills and abilities to perform all of the duties, functions and requirements as specified in this Article;
- (vii) can always establish direct and confidential communication with the flag State FMC when deployed by:
 - (1) ensuring the observer is provided with an independent satellite two-way communication device at sea, and/or
 - (2) ensuring the observer is provided with a communication device and ensuring that the observer is provided by the vessel master with unhindered independent data and voice internet access on board at all times; and
 - (3) ensuring that protocols are put in place for the observer to safely and directly contact the flag State FMC to report safety concerns.
- (d) establish ongoing list of observers that it intends to deploy to vessels entitled to fly its flag operating in the Regulatory Area;
- (e) require its vessels to carry an observer from the list it submitted to the Executive Secretary;
- (f) to the extent practicable, ensure that individual observers are not deployed on consecutive fishing trips on the same vessel;
- (g) ensure that the masters of its vessel cannot refuse an observer deployment nor be involved in the process to select the observer to be deployed;
- (h) upon receipt of a report from its observers on discrepancies with the CEM or an incident, including any instances of obstruction, intimidation, interference with, or otherwise prevention of the observer from performing their duties:
 - (i) treat the report with the utmost sensitivity and discretion, in a confidential manner;
 - (ii) assess the reported discrepancies and conduct any follow-up action deemed appropriate;
 - (iii) use the information for risk assessment for inspection, control and surveillance at sea and in port; and
 - (iv) create a report on follow-up actions;
- (i) unless otherwise agreed with another Contracting Party, bear the costs of remunerating every observer it has deployed;
- (j) submit to the Executive Secretary:
 - (i) the list of observers referred to in paragraph 3(d) and any changes thereof without delay and before the deployment of an observer on its vessels;
 - (ii) without delay and in advance of the fishing trip, a notification including the details of the circumstances preventing a 100% observer coverage referred to in paragraph 4(a);

- (iii) without delay, all documents and data relating to its vessels subject to electronic observation program in accordance with paragraph 4(b);
- (iv) without delay, the PSC-3 report referred to in paragraph 5;
- (v) without delay following its receipt, the daily OBR report referred to in paragraph 7(a);
- (vi) without delay following its receipt, the observer trip report information referred to in paragraph 7(b);
- (vii) by 1 March each year for the previous calendar year, a report on its compliance with the obligations outlined in this Article, including:
 - (1) the follow-up actions referred to in paragraph 3(h)(iv); and
 - (2) a report containing a comparison of all relevant catch and fishing activities showing the difference between the fishing trips where the vessel had an observer on board and those where the observer was withdrawn;
- (k) subject to the exception in paragraph 4, ensure that every fishing vessel flying its flag:
 - (i) carries at all times at least one observer in accordance with the provisions of this program while conducting fishing activities in the Regulatory Area; and
 - (ii) does not carry out fishing activities until an observer is deployed on the vessel.

Partial withdrawal of observers

4. By way of derogation from paragraph 3(k), a flag State Contracting Party may allow its vessels to carry an observer for less than 100%, but not less than 25% of the fishing trips conducted by its fleet or of the days the vessels are present in the Regulatory Area calculated for a prior period of one calendar year in the following cases:
 - (a) for vessels targeting species in areas where negligible bycatch of other species is expected to occur; or where the flag State Contracting Party has provided information on why a 100% coverage is not applied; or extraordinary and unforeseeable circumstances duly documented and justified by the flag State Contracting Party preventing 100% observer coverage; or
 - (b) where a vessel deploys an electronic observation program approved by the flag State Contracting Party and;
 - (i) the Contracting Party provides the NAFO Secretariat with a copy of their electronic observation standards and guidelines; and
 - (ii) the Contracting Party submits a completed copy of the Annex II.M Observer Report within 3 months of the electronically observed trip.
5. For each fishing trip of its vessels without an observer on board pursuant to paragraph 4, the flag State Contracting Party shall physically inspect the landing of the vessel in its ports or otherwise evaluate as appropriate each landing in its ports, following risk assessment. Inspections shall be documented in the format prescribed in Annex IV.C (PSC 3).
6. Where an inspector issues a notice of an infringement to a fishing vessel that is not carrying an observer, in accordance with this derogation, at the time of the notice, the infringement shall be deemed a serious

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infringement for the purpose of Article 38.1 and, where the flag State Contracting Party does not require the fishing vessel to proceed immediately to port in accordance with Article 38.3, it shall deploy an observer to the fishing vessel without delay.

Duties of the Observers

7. Each flag State Contracting Party shall ensure that its observers perform, at a minimum, the duties listed below:
 - (a) transmit the OBR report as set out in Annex II.G to the flag State FMC daily before 12:00 UTC for the day preceding the report, by division, whether the vessel was fishing or not;
 - (i) report without delay to the flag State FMC any discrepancy with the CEM and any instances of obstruction, intimidation, interference with or otherwise prevention of the observer from performing their duties;
 - (b) complete the observer trip report as set out in Annex II.M, noting that data collection on Greenland sharks shall be carried out minimizing the damage to the sampled individuals;
 - (c) monitor the vessel's product labelling, production logbook, and stowage plan against requirements in Articles 27 and 28, and record in the observer trip report any discrepancies identified;
 - (d) record any observed interruption or interference with VMS;
 - (e) submit the information in Annex II.M by electronic means to the flag State FMC and to the port State FMC as soon as possible after leaving the Regulatory Area and at the latest at the arrival of the vessel in port for landing;
 - (f) make themselves available to inspectors at sea, or in port upon arrival of the vessel, for the purposes of providing information related to the fishing activities of the vessel;
 - (g) maintain detailed records, including relevant images and video footage, of any circumstances and information related to any instances of discrepancies with the CEM, for transmission to the flag State FMC at the earliest opportunity, and at the latest upon the arrival of the vessel in port for landing.
8. A flag State Contracting Party may make use of the software developed by the Executive Secretary to transmit the information referred to in Annexes II.G and II.M in accordance with paragraphs 7(a) and (e).

Obligations of the Master

9. Each flag State Contracting Party shall ensure that masters of vessels entitled to fly their flag:
 - (a) extend such co-operation and assistance as may be required to enable the observer to carry out his or her duties, including providing the observer with such access as may be required to the catch retained on board and discards and catch registration documents (e.g. fishing logbook, production logbook, stowage plan);
 - (b) provide food and accommodations to the observer of a standard no less than that provided to the vessel's officers. If officers' accommodations are not available, the observer shall be provided accommodations of a standard as close to an officer as practicable but no less than that provided to the crew;

- (c) provide access to all operational areas of the vessel and equipment necessary to complete their duties, including the vessel's hold(s), production area(s), bridge, and navigation, communication, and garbage processing equipment;
- (d) do not, personally or through their agents, employees, or crewmembers, obstruct, intimidate, interfere with, influence, bribe or attempt to bribe or compromise the safety of an observer in the performance of his/her duties;
- (e) include the observer in all emergency drills conducted on board;
- (f) notify the observer when an inspection party has signaled their intent to board the vessel; and
- (g) provide the observer with unhindered independent internet access on board at all times, unless the observer has available a fully operational two-way satellite communication device.

Duties of the Executive Secretary

10. The Executive Secretary:

- (a) posts without delay the information received in accordance with paragraphs 3(j)(i)-(vi) to the NAFO MCS Website and ensures it is made available without delay to all Contracting Parties, solely for control and enforcement purposes;
- (b) makes available upon request the observer data, including the daily OBR report, to other NAFO bodies;
- (c) makes available to flag State Contracting Parties software (NAFO Observer App) enabling the transmission of the information referred to in Annexes II.G and II.M in accordance with paragraphs 7(a) and (e);
- (d) where the information referred to in Annex II.G has not been received for 2 consecutive days, notifies the flag State Contracting Party and any Contracting Party participating in the at-sea Inspection and Surveillance Scheme that an OBR has not been received;
- (e) submits to STACTIC a synthesis of the Contracting Parties reports referred to in paragraph 3(j)(vii); and
- (f) where a Contracting Party has not provided the report required in paragraph 3(j)(vii) by the Executive Secretary by close of business on the specified deadline, submits a request for the report to the Contracting Party.

Implementation

11. STACTIC will review the implementation of this observer program in 2024.

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Annex II.M Standardized Observer Trip Report information

Part 1. A - Fishing Vessel – Fishing Trip and Observer Information

Fishing Vessel information	
Vessel Name	
Vessel Radio Call Sign	
Flag State	
Vessel IMO number	
Total Frozen Hold Capacity (m ³)	
Fish Meal Hold Capacity (m ³)	
Other Hold Capacity (m ³)	

Trip information	
Master's Name	
Directed Species	
Date of Entry into NRA (ENT)	
Date of Exit from NRA (EXI)	
NAFO Division/s visited	
Other Area/s visited	
Transshipment	
Port of Landing	

Observer information	
Observer's Name	
Observation Date Started	
Observation Date Ended	
Date of Report	

Comments



Part 1.B - Fishing Gear Information

Trawl Gear																				
Gear Number	Gear Type	Gear Make	Mesh Size (mm)												Measured by observer/inspector/master	Date measured	Attachments	Grate Spacing	Straps (Describe)	Comments
			Wings			Body			Lengthening Piece			Codend								
			High	Low	Average	High	Low	Average	High	Low	Average	High	Low	Average						
1																				
2																				
3																				

Longline											
Gear Number	Gear Type	Total Length	Hooks			Hook size	Buoys	Anchors	Main line material	Bait line material	Comments
			Number	Average spacing (m)	Hook type		Marked yes/no	Number			
1											
2											
3											
...											



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Part 2. Catch and effort information by fishing operation

To w /S et	Gear Number	Start of Gear Setting ¹						End of Gear Setting ²					
		NAFO Division	Latitude (decimal)	Longitude (decimal)	Depth (m)	Time (UTC) (HHMM)	Date (YYYYMMDD)	NAFO Division	Latitude (decimal)	Longitude (decimal)	Depth (m)	Time (UTC) (HHMM)	Date (YYYYMMDD)
1													
2													
3													
...													

Gear Retrieval Start ³						Gear Retrieval End ⁴						Duration ⁵	Species (FAO 3-alpha Species Code ⁶)	Directed Species (yes or no)	Product Form	Observers Estimates				
NAFO Division	Latitude (decimal)	Longitude (decimal)	Depth (m)	Time (UTC) (HHMM)	Date (YYYYMMDD)	NAFO Division	Latitude (decimal)	Longitude (decimal)	Depth (m)	Time (UTC) (HHMM)	Date (YYYYMMDD)					Observer Conversion Factor Used	Retained (kg live weight)	Discarded (kg live weight)	Undersized (kg live weight)	Observed Fishing Operation (Y/N)

Fishing Logbook			Vessel Production Logbook		Potential non Compliance with the CEM (yes/no)	Potential non Compliance Details	Comments
Vessel Conversion Factor Used	Retained (kg live weight)	Discarded (kg live weight)	Retained (kg)				

- 1 Data at the time when gear first enters the water.
- 2 Data at the time gear is fully set.
- 3 Data at the time the start of gear retrieval.
- 4 Data at the time gear is fully retrieved and onboard vessel.
- 5 Decimal hours. In the case of trawl fisheries, the time from the end of setting to the start of gear retrieval. In any other case, the time from the start of gear setting to the end of retrieval.
- 6 Including VMEs indicators.



Part 3. Trip Observations

Observations	Y/N	Details
Any instance of obstruction, intimidation, interference with or otherwise prevention of the observer from performing his/her duties.		
Summary of potential non-compliance with the CEM (please include references)		
Functioning of the satellite tracking device (report all interruptions, interference and malfunctions)		
Transshipments (report all)		
At-Sea Inspections (report dates, times and any other observation)		
Any other observation		

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Part 4. Effort and Catch Summary¹

4A. Effort Summary

Effort Summary Table									
NAFO Division	Gear Type	Directed Species*	Date		Number of Tow/sets	Depth (m)		Hours fished*	Fishing Days***
			Start	Finish		Minimum	Maximum		

* As per CEM Article 5.2

** In the case of trawl fisheries, fishing time is the time from the end of setting to the start of gear retrieval. In any other case, fishing time is the time from the start of gear setting to the end of retrieval. Summed haul duration for all hauls in the listed division, by gear type and directed species

*** As per CEM Article 1.6

Comments	
1	On Fishing activity by Division
2	On Data Communication
3	On Mesh sizes
4	Other issues

4B. Catch Summary

Trip Catch Summary (catch by Division and Species)							
Species (FAO 3-alpha Species Code)	Division	Observer Estimates			Recorded in the Fishing Logbook		
		Retained (kg live weight)	Discarded (kg live weight)	Total (kg live weight)	Retained (kg live weight)	Discarded (kg live weight)	Total (kg live weight)
Total							

Comments	
1	On composition of catch and sizes
2	On discrepancies with the fishing logbook entries
3	On discards
4	Other issues

¹ Based on the information provided in Part 2

4C. Average unit weight verifications

Date	Number of units sampled	Species	Product Form	Average unit weight (Kg)	Average product weight per unit (Kg)	Labelled unit weight in label (Kg)

4D. Verification of labelling

Date	Number of units verified	Number of units with potential non-compliant labelling	Description of the potential non-compliant labelling



Part 5. Data for Each Greenland Shark Caught per Fishing Operation¹

Tow/ Set Number	Total Number of Greenland sharks in Tow/Set	Shark Number	Estimated Weight (kg live weight)	Total Length (cm, from tip of snout to tip of tail fin)	Total Length Measured (M) or Estimated (E)?	Fork Length (cm)	Fork Length Measured (M) or Estimated (E)?	Sex and Maturity ²	Catch Disposition ³	Photo Y/N	Comments, in English to the extent possible

¹ Data collection on Greenland sharks shall be carried out minimising the damage to the sampled individuals.
² JM: Juvenile male, AM: Adult male, M: Male maturity unknown, F: Female, U: sex and maturity unknown
³ Indicate at least one of the following catch disposition, as applicable: A: alive, D: dead, UI: uninjured, I: injured, M: moribund, U: unknown.



Part 6. Length Frequency Form¹

Year					
Month					
Day					
Gear number					
Tow/Set Number					
Species 3 alpha code					
Catch weight (kg live weight)					
Sample Type (discard, retained, mix)					

Sample Weight in kg live weight					
Min Size					
Max Size					
Sex					
Total Number of Samples (n=)					
Meas. Convention (TL, SL, FL, etc.)					
Measure Type					
Unit (mm or cm)					
Comments					

Size between	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
9.5-9.99					
10.0-10.49					
10.5-10.99					
11.0-11.49					
11.5-11.99					
12.0-12.49					
12.5-12.99					
...					
...					
...					
97.0-97.49					
97.5-97.99					
98.0-98.49					
98.5-98.99					
99.0-99.49					
99.5-99.99					
100.0-100.49					
...					

¹ To be filled in based on scientific data collection instructions



Annex II.D
Data Exchange Format and Protocols

Category	Data Element	Field code	Type	Content	Definitions
Activity Details	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]
	Potential non-Compliance with CEM	AF	Char*1	Y or N	For onboard observer to report their observations
	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]

Annex II.G
Observer Report

Data Element	Code	Mandatory / Optional	Requirements for the field
[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]
Potential non-compliance with the NAFO CEM	AF	M	Activity detail; "Yes" or "No" ⁴
[...]	[...]	[...]	[...]

[...]

⁴ "Yes" if the observer detects any potential non-compliance with the CEMs

[...]

(h) Article 38 – Additional Procedures for Serious Infringements

1. List of Serious Infringements

1. Each of the following violations constitutes a serious infringement:

[...]

- (l) obstructing, intimidating, interfering with, bribing or attempting to bribe, compromising the safety of or otherwise preventing inspectors or observers from performing their duties, including prior, during or after the relevant observed or inspected fishing trip;

[...]

Annex 32. Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2023
(Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2022)
 (STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev. 6) now COM Doc. 23-24)

1.0 Introduction

The scope of this review covers the fishing activities of NAFO-registered vessels (Article 25 of NAFO CEM) which operated in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA) in 2022¹ (see Figure 1.0).

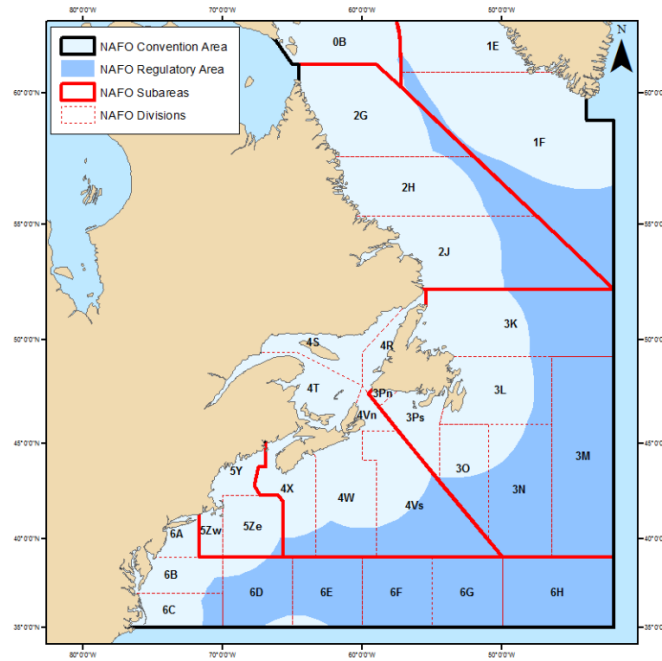


Figure 1.0. Divisions of the NAFO Convention Area and the Regulatory Area (dark blue).

This review was conducted in accordance with rules 5.1 and 5.2 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure. As part of the review process, the NAFO Secretariat compiled the 2022 information from a variety of data sources including vessel monitoring system (VMS), hail messages delivered by the vessels (Vessel Transmitted Information – VTI), electronic logbook (haul by haul) reports, port inspection reports (PSC3), at-sea inspection reports, reports on dispositions of infringements, and observer trip reports.

Villa de Pitanzo

On 15 February 2022, the Spanish fishing vessel, Villa de Pitanzo, sank during a fishing trip in the NAFO Regulatory Area. Deepest condolences are extended to all of those affected by this devastating tragedy.

¹ According to Article 1.7 of the 2022 NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NAFO CEM), a fishing trip includes “the time from its entry into until its departure from the Regulatory Area and continues until all catch on board from the Regulatory Area is unloaded or transhipped”. All article and annex numbers in this report reference the 2022 NAFO CEM. Quantitative information presented in this report are summarized according to 2022 calendar year, unless otherwise indicated.

2.0 Fisheries in the NRA

2.1 Fishing effort by gear type

There are three main fisheries that take place within the NAFO Regulatory Area: groundfish (GRO - primarily in Divisions 3LMNO), shrimp (PRA in Division 3M), and pelagic redfish fisheries (REB - primarily in Divisions 1F and 2J). There was no directed fishing for shrimp in Division 3M in 2022. Table 2.2.1 summarizes the main fishing gears and fishing effort for trips in the NAFO Regulatory area that ended in 2022.

Bottom trawlers accounted for 95.18% of fishing effort in terms of fishing days, catching Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut, yellowtail flounder, redfish, thorny skate and silver hake in Divisions 3LMNO. Longline vessels accounted for 4.64% of the fishing effort catching Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut and white hake. There was one midwater trawler in the NRA in 2022, accounting for 0.18% of the fishing effort that targeted pelagic redfish.

Table 2.1.1. *Main fishing gears and fishing effort in the NAFO Regulatory Area for fishing trips that ended 2022.*

Fishing Gear	# Fishing vessels	# Fishing trips	Fishing days in NAFO RA	Main Species (FAO 3-alpha code)	NAFO Divisions
Longline	8	15	180	COD, HAL, HKW	3M, 3N, 3O
Bottom Trawl	29	82	3709	GHL, RED, HKS, YEL, SKA, COD, HAL	3L, 3M, 3N, 3O
Midwater Trawl	1	1	7	REB*	1F
Total	38	98	3896		

*The pelagic redfish fishery in 1F+2+3K is subject to zero TAC and was fished by the Russian Federation under a unilateral quota.

2.2 Effort distribution by depth in demersal fisheries other than shrimp

Hourly positions of fishing vessels are required to be transmitted through the VMS in accordance with Article 29.1 of the NAFO CEM. Figure 2.2.1 shows the distribution of fishing effort, in hours, for vessels fishing (assumed fishing speeds for the purpose of this analysis were between 0.5-5 knots) in Divisions 3LMNO. Most of the fishing effort in Divisions 3LMNO is at depths 500 meters and shallower, with an additional concentration of fishing effort around 1000 meters, which can be attributed to the Greenland halibut fishery.

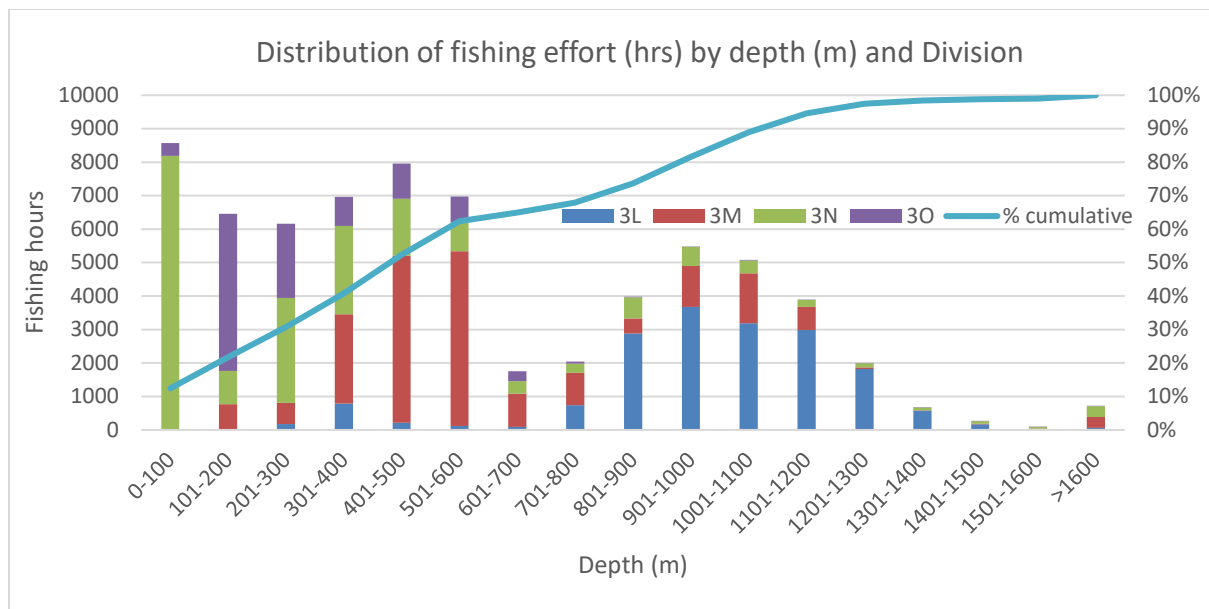


Figure 2.2.1. *Distribution of fishing effort (in hours) by depth (m) in the NRA in 2022. Vessels are assumed to be fishing at speed in the range of 0.5-5.0 knots.*

2.3 Catches in the NAFO Regulatory Area

A total of 54 306.2 t of fish (53 146.6 t retained + 1 159.6 t discarded) were caught by vessels authorized to fish in the Regulatory Area in 2022 (Tables 2.3.1 and 2.3.2). In terms of quantities caught, the stocks 3M Cod, 3LMNO Greenland halibut, 3M Redfish, 3LN Redfish, 3O Redfish, 3LNO Yellowtail flounder and 3NO Skates constitute the major groundfish fishery in the NRA.

Table 2.3.1 Total reported retained catches (in tonnes) of species (in FAO 3-alpha code) by Division in calendar 2022 (Source: CA field of CAT Reports).

Species	Common name	3L	3M	3N	3O	1F	TOTAL
<i>Species subject to catch limitations (as listed in Annex I of the NAFO CEM)</i>							
COD	Atlantic cod	69.7	3941.8	239.7	48.1		4299.3
GHL	Greenland halibut	7532.0	1847.7	557.0	6.6		9943.3
HKW	White hake			55.9	295.0		350.9
PLA	Amer. plaice(=Long rough dab)	12.4	130.3	424.6	86.9		654.1
REB	Beaked redfish					63.6*	63.6
RED	Atlantic redfishes nei	1386.9	10277.6	6280.1	3346.0		21290.5
SKA	Raja rays nei	60.3	33.1	2698.8	307.5		3099.6
SQI	Northern shortfin squid			0.0	0.0		0.1
WIT	Witch flounder	17.8	35.3	95.1	161.6		309.8
YEL	Yellowtail flounder			5150.6	3.0		5153.6
<i>Selected species not listed in Annex I</i>							
ANG	American angler			8.4	31.3		39.8
ANT	Blue antimora						0.0
ARG	Argentines						0.0
BET	Bigeye tuna						0.0
CAA	Atlantic wolffish		17.8				17.8
CAB	Northern wolffish						0.0
CAP	Capelin						0.0
CAS	Spotted wolffish		2.6				2.6
CAT	Wolffishes(=Catfishes) nei		5.4	0.0			5.4
CRA	Marine crabs nei						0.0
CRB	Blue crab						0.0
CRQ	Queen crab						0.0
CUX	Sea cucumbers nei						0.0
GDE	Threadfin rockling						0.0
GKS	Broad cockle						0.0
HAD	Haddock		0.1	8.8	1.9		10.8
HAL	Atlantic halibut	34.1	95.0	366.8	58.7		554.6
HKR	Red hake						0.0
HKS	Silver hake			501.9	6707.3		7209.2
HKX	Hakes nei						0.0
MLL	Softhead grenadier						0.0
POK	Saithe(=Pollock)			0.0			0.0
RHG	Roughhead grenadier	45.5	33.6	22.6			101.8
RNG	Roundnose grenadier	25.8	2.8	8.3			36.9
SAN	Sandeels(=Sandlances) nei						0.0
SCU	Sculpins						0.0
SWO	Swordfish						0.0
TUN	Tunas nei						0.0
USK	Tusk(=Cusk)		0.5	1.8	0.0		2.4
<i>Sharks</i>							
BSK	Basking shark						0.0
CFB	Black dogfish						0.0
DGS	Picked dogfish						0.0
DGX	Dogfish sharks nei						0.0
GSK	Greenland shark						0.0
POR	Porbeagle						0.0
SKX	Sharks, rays, skates, etc. nei						0.0
SMA	Shortfin mako						0.0
SRX	Rays, stingrays, mantas nei		0.6				0.6
Total		9184.6	16424.1	16420.4	11053.9	63.6*	53146.6

*The pelagic redfish fishery in 1F+2+3K is subject to zero TAC and was fished by the Russian Federation under a unilateral quota.

Table 2.3.2 Total reported rejected catches (in tonnes) of species (in FAO 3-alpha code) by Division in calendar year 2022 (Source: RJ field of CAT Reports).

Species	Common name	3L	3M	3N	3O	1F	TOTAL
<i>Species subject to catch limitations (as listed in Annex I of the NAFO CEM)</i>							
COD	Atlantic cod		5.4	1.4	0.0		6.7
GHL	Greenland halibut	2.3	0.4	0.1			2.7
HKW	White hake	0.2		0.9	4.9		6.0
PLA	Amer. plaice(=Long rough dab)	0.3	2.5	7.8	0.6		11.3
REB	Beaked redfish						0.0
RED	Atlantic redfishes nei	0.0	2.2	0.3	1.3		3.8
SKA	Raja rays nei	1.9	5.1	198.4	0.3		205.7
SQI	Northern shortfin squid				0.0		0.0
WIT	Witch flounder	0.2	0.4	1.8	4.0		6.4
YEL	Yellowtail flounder			21.8	0.0		21.8
<i>Selected species not listed in Annex I</i>							
ANG	American angler	0.1		0.0	1.6		1.7
ANT	Blue antimora	11.2	11.2	7.5			29.9
ARG	Argentines		0.6				0.6
BET	Bigeye tuna				0.2		0.2
CAA	Atlantic wolffish	0.1	0.1	7.4			7.6
CAB	Northern wolffish	0.1					0.1
CAP	Capelin			6.5	0.1		6.6
CAS	Spotted wolffish	0.1					0.1
CAT	Wolffishes(=Catfishes) nei	21.8	25.9	12.3	5.0		64.9
CRA	Marine crabs nei			0.0	0.0		0.0
CRB	Blue crab			0.0			0.0
CRQ	Queen crab			2.1	0.3		2.4
CUX	Sea cucumbers nei			114.8	0.2		115.0
GDE	Threadfin rockling	17.7	3.3	1.2			22.1
GKS	Broad cockle	0.8					0.8
HAD	Haddock			0.0			0.0
HAL	Atlantic halibut			0.1			0.1
HKR	Red hake	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.2		1.5
HKS	Silver hake			10.3	108.9		119.3
HKX	Hakes nei				0.0		0.0
MLL	Softhead grenadier	0.8	0.5				1.2
POK	Saithe(=Pollock)						0.0
RHG	Roughhead grenadier	134.2	85.5	17.5	1.9		239.1
RNG	Roundnose grenadier	50.3	57.6	13.2	0.3		121.5
SAN	Sandeels(=Sandlances) nei			0.0			0.0
SCU	Sculpins			8.4			8.4
SWO	Swordfish		0.1	0.2	9.8		10.1
TUN	Tunas nei			0.2	0.1		0.3
USK	Tusk(=Cusk)						0.0
<i>Sharks</i>							
BSK	Basking shark			2.0	20.0		22.0
CFB	Black dogfish	0.0	0.8	0.0			0.9
DGS	Picked dogfish		0.7	0.1	2.2		2.9
DGX	Dogfish sharks nei	0.9	0.2	0.5			1.7
GSK	Greenland shark	38.2	29.8	13.7	7.9		89.6
POR	Porbeagle	0.2	0.2	2.8	9.9		13.0
SKX	Sharks, rays, skates, etc. nei			0.1			0.1
SMA	Shortfin mako		0.1	3.0	4.5		7.6
SRX	Rays, stingrays, mantas nei		3.8				3.8
Total		282.3	236.6	456.4	184.3	0.0	1159.6

3.0 Inspection and Surveillance

Chapter VI of the NAFO CEM outlines the general provisions and protocols for the at-sea inspection and surveillance scheme in the NRA. Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America deployed patrol vessels and their inspectors in the NRA in 2022.

3.1 Patrol Activity

In 2022, seven (7) patrol vessels were deployed in the NAFO Regulatory Area by Contracting Parties with an inspection presence, accounting for 249 patrol-days (Table 3.1). There were 168 days with no patrol vessel, 149 days when there was one patrol vessel, and 48 days when there was more than one patrol vessel present in the NRA. Figure 3.1 shows the time of the year the patrol vessels were present in the NRA in relation to the number of fishing vessels present.

In addition, Canada deployed surveillance aircraft, collectively flying 1221 hours, with 826 vessel sightings in the NRA. No non-Contracting Party vessel suspected of conducting IUU fishing activities was detected.

Table 3.1 *The total number of patrol vessels, patrol vessel deployments, and patrol days in the NAFO Regulatory area in 2022 by Contracting Party with Inspection Presence.*

Contracting Party with Inspection Presence	Number of Patrol Vessels	Number of Deployments	Number of Patrol Days
Canada	3	28	169
European Union	3	7	66
United States of America	1	1	15
Total	7	36	249

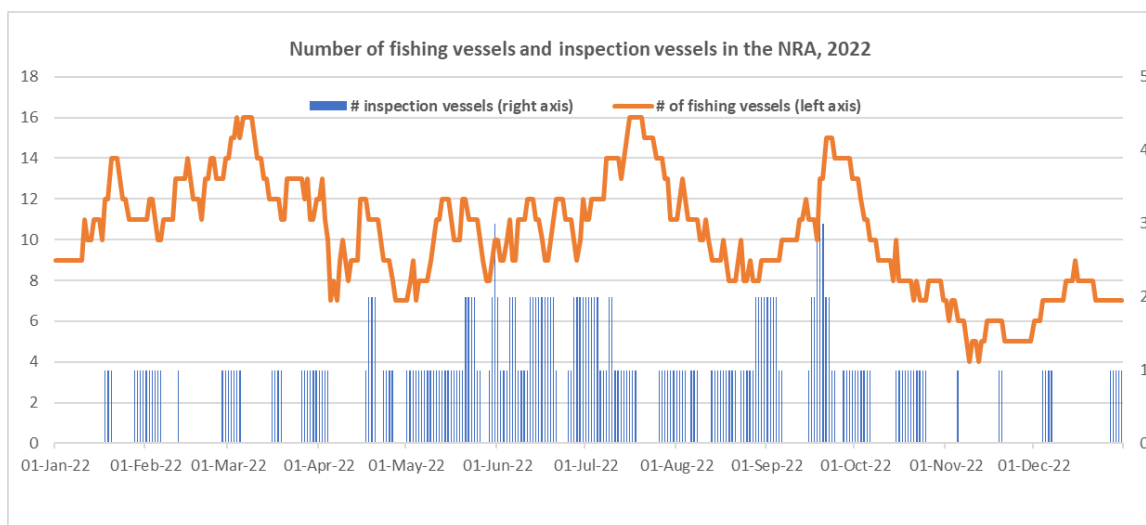


Figure 3.1 *Fishing vessel and inspection vessel presence in the NAFO Regulatory Area in 2022.*

3.2 At-sea inspections

A total of 77 at-sea inspections were conducted in 2022, and five (5) inspections resulted in the issuance of serious infringements. Two (2) of the vessels issued a serious infringement in 2022 had inspections in the 2021 fishing year with serious infringements. In total, there were twelve infringements issued in 2022 during at-sea inspections. A summary of the infringements and their disposition can be found in Section 4.2.

3.3 Port inspections

Under Article 10.4(e) of the NAFO CEM, landings of Greenland halibut from Divisions 2+3KLMNO are subject to port inspections if the quantity of this stock on board represents either more than 5% of the total catch or more than 2 500kg. In evaluating compliance with the port inspection measures outlined in Article 10 of the NAFO CEM, a total of 52 trips met the criteria of having more than 5% of the total catch or more than 2 500kg of Greenland halibut on board. Port inspection reports (PSC3s) were received for all 52 of these trips, therefore there is a 100% port inspection coverage, as shown in Table 3.3.1.1.

Table 3.3.1.1 *Fishing trips in Divisions 3LMNO with Greenland halibut (GHL) catch (based on Daily Catch Reports for the trip) and percent coverage of port inspections for the identified trips, by flag State.*

Flag State CP	Number of identified trips by vessels larger than 24 m: trip with GHL catch > 2.5t	Total amount of GHL from trips identified (t)	Port inspection CP	Number of identified trips with Port Inspection (PSC3)	Port Inspection Coverage (% based on identified trips with GHL catch)
CAN	2	11.3	CAN	2	100%
EU	40	7 633.3	EU	40	100%
JPN	4	1 202.3	CAN	4	100%
RUS	6	1 502.3	DFG (3) EU (3)	6	100%
Overall	52	10 349.2		52	100%

Pursuant to Article 7.6(c) of the NAFO CEM, landings or transshipments of cod from Division 3M were subject to a 50% inspection benchmark for vessels with more than 1 250kg onboard in 2022. In evaluating compliance for 2022 with the port inspection measures outlined in Article 7.6(c) of the NAFO CEM, 32 trips with more than 1 250kg of 3M Cod on board were identified. Port inspection reports (PSC3s) from 30 trips were received, resulting in a 93.75% coverage rate, as shown in Table 3.3.1.2. The trips without a PSC3 had a total of 508.5 t onboard according to the CAT reports.

Table 3.3.1.2 *Fishing trips with 3M cod catch (based on Daily Catch (CAT) Reports for the trip) and percent coverage of port inspections for the identified trips, by flag State.*

Flag State CP	Number of identified trips by vessels 3M Cod catch > 1250 kg	Total amount of 3M COD from trips identified (t)	Port inspection CP	Number of identified trips with Port Inspection (PSC3)	Port Inspection Coverage (% based on identified trips with 3M Cod catch)
DFG	3	1 086	DFG	2	66.67%
EU	25	1 758.5	EU	25	100%
NOR	2	555.4	NOR	1	50%
RUS	2	243.1	EU	2	100%
Overall	32	3 643		30	93.75%

According to Article 43.10 of the NAFO CEM, the port State Contracting Party shall carry out inspections of at least 15% of all such landings or transshipments by vessels flagged to other Contracting Parties during each reporting year. In evaluating compliance with port State Control measures outlined in Chapter VII of the NAFO CEM, a review of the submission of port State Control Prior Request (PSC1) forms and port inspection reports (PSC3) is presented in Table 3.3.2. The minimum coverage of 15% (Article 43.10) was met by all port State Contracting Parties.

Table 3.3.2 *The number of PSC1s and corresponding PSC3s received by the NAFO Secretariat relating to the inspection of landings or transshipments by vessels flagged to other Contracting Party.*

Port State Contracting Party	PSC1 (prior request)	Number of PSC1's with intention to land/tranship catch	PSC3 (port inspection report)	% Coverage (#PSC3 received /#PSC1)
Canada	14	12	12	100%
EU	6	6	6	100.0%
DFG	5	4	3	75.0%
FRA(SPM)	1	0	0	-

4.0 Compliance

In this section, reporting obligations, including follow-up actions to infringements are examined.

4.1 Reporting obligations

The NAFO CEM requires fishing vessels and flag State Contracting Parties (through the Fisheries Monitoring Centre - FMC) to provide reports on the fishing activity within a determined time frame.

4.1.1 Vessel Activity Reporting

4.1.1.1 Vessel Transmitted Information (VTI) – Catch-on-Entry (COE), Daily Catch Reports (CAT), and Catch-on-Exit (COX)

The FMCs are responsible for transmitting the VTI reports to the NAFO Secretariat. The COE and COX messages are transmitted at least 6 hours in advance of entry and exit to and from the NRA and identify the amount of catch on board. The CATs contain a record of the daily catch (retained and rejected) reported by species and Division while on a fishing trip. The daily catch reports are used to monitor the quota uptake of the Contracting Parties.

Table 4.1.1.1 outlines the number of COE, COX, and CAT reports received by the NAFO Secretariat, as well as of fishing trips and fishing effort-days in the NRA. All identified 2022 fishing trips had corresponding COE and COX messages. No major technical issues were encountered in transmission and receipt of the VTI reports.

Table 4.1.1.1 *Fishing effort and VTI statistics in the NRA 2022.*

Number of fishing trips identified	98
Fishing Days ¹	3 896
Number of Daily Catch Reports (CATs) ²	4 103
Number of Trips with Catch on Entry Reports (COEs)	98
Number of Trips with Catch on Exit Reports (COXs)	98

¹ Estimate based on EXI-ENT date of 2022 fishing year

² CATs of 2022 fishing year

4.1.1.2. Catch reporting on sharks

Article 28.6.g requires that all shark catches be reported at the species level, to the extent possible. When species specific reporting is not possible shark species shall be recorded as either large sharks (SHX) or dogfishes (DGX). Greenland shark and basking shark constitutes most of the total shark catches by weight (see table 2.3.2). The vast majority of shark catches were reported to be discarded according to the daily catch reports (CATs).

4.1.1.3 Fishing logbook (haul by haul) reports

The submission of logbook data to the NAFO Secretariat became mandatory in NAFO in 2015 (Article 28.8.c of the NAFO CEM). The fishing logbook information submitted to the NAFO Secretariat must contain, at a minimum, the information outlines in Annex II.N of the NAFO CEM. Out of the 98 fishing trips identified, logbook reports from 97 trips were received, resulting in a 98.98% coverage for 2022.

4.1.1.4 Position reporting – VMS

According to Article 29, every fishing vessel operating in the NRA shall be equipped with a satellite monitoring device capable of continuous automatic transmission of position to its land-based FMC of the flag States, which in turn is transmitted to the Secretariat in real time. The transmission of position reports (POS) shall be no less frequently than once an hour.

The Secretariat can confirm that the requirement is fully complied with. Occasionally, technical problems were encountered by the fishing vessels or FMCs. During these events, the position reports were transmitted manually or queued and transmitted once the technical issues were resolved. Technical issues were usually resolved within a few days through the coordination between the Secretariat and the FMC.

4.1.1.5 Closed areas and exploratory fisheries

As of 2022, NAFO has restricted bottom fishing activities in 27 areas within the NRA, including 15 areas to protect sponge, sea pen, and corals, and 12 seamount areas. The measures concerning the protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) from bottom fishing are stipulated in Chapter II of the NAFO CEM. No reports of vessels fishing within the VME closure boundaries were received.

4.1.1.6 Chartering arrangements

Article 26 of the NAFO CEM outlines the provisions for chartering arrangements between two Contracting Parties: the chartering Contracting Party and the flag State Contracting Party of the fishing vessel. Catches by the chartered fishing vessel are counted against the quota of the chartering Contracting Party.

In 2022, there was one (1) chartering arrangement in place pertaining to yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO. Monitoring of the implementation of the chartering arrangements are made possible through the notifications of commencement, suspension, resumption, and termination, and the daily catch reports of the chartered fishing vessel. All reported catches were within the fishing possibilities stipulated in the chartering arrangement. The submission of the required documentation (Article 26.7 and 26.8) and reporting of implementation dates (Article 26.9) were complied with by both parties of the chartering arrangement.

4.1.1.7 Notifications on the use of Others Quota

There were 36 notifications on the use of Others Quota in 2022 relating to vessels from three (3) Contracting Parties. In 2022, the Others Quota for 3LNO Yellowtail flounder was the only Others Quota to be fully utilized. The NAFO Secretariat circulated a notification on 18 February 2022 with a projection that 100% of the quota could be reached by 20 February 2022.

4.1.1.8 Research activities

In 2022, three Contracting Parties, Canada, the European Union, and Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands) submitted notifications for research activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands) notified that the scientific procedures for the 3M Cod survey would be conducted in connection with the commercial fishery.

4.1.2 Observer Reports

Contracting Parties are required to ensure that their vessels have 100% observer coverage while conducting fishing activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area in accordance with Article 30.5 of the NAFO CEM. By way of derogation, Article 30.6 of the NAFO CEM allows for Contracting Parties to allow their vessels to carry an observer for less than 100%, but not less than 25% of the fishing trips conducted by its fleet in the NAFO Regulatory Area.

In evaluating the compliance to observer trip report submission (Article 30.14.a of the NAFO CEM), fishing trips were grouped according to the implementation of Article 30.5 or 30.6. Table 4.1.2 shows the observer coverage percentage, by Contracting Parties, based on the percentage of the submission of the observer trip reports.

Table 4.1.2 *Observer coverage based on the submission of observer trip reports, 2022. Two Contracting Parties issued notifications on the intention to invoke Article 30.6 of the NAFO CEM, which requires coverage no less than 25% during 2022.*

Contracting Party	Number of Identified Trips	Number of Trips with Trip Observer Reports	% Coverage under Art 30.5 (100% required)
CAN	22	22	100%
DFG ¹	11	1	9%
EU	48	48	100%
JPN	4	4	100%
NOR ²	2	2	100%
RUS	10	10	100%

¹ Invoked Article 30.6 of the NAFO CEM. Required coverage is no less than 25%.

² Submitted a notification in accordance with Article 30.6 of the NAFO CEM, however both trips had an observer onboard.

DFG invoked Article 30.6 NAFO CEM derogation allowing a coverage of no less than 25% but only deployed observers on 9% of the trips. That Contracting Party submitted a report Article 30.6(e) on the difficulties of completing a data comparison on observed and non-observed trips.

Review of Contracting Party compliance with Article 30 more broadly indicates that further improvements within the application of the program are possible, including in relation to ensuring the independence, safety, and appropriate training of observers; the use of observer program data; and the submission of Contracting Parties' reporting requirements.

4.2 Infringements detected at-sea and at-port

In 2022, a total of ten (10) vessels were cited with an infringement by inspectors at sea and port authorities. Details on the nature of the infringements and their disposition are provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 *Summary of infringements detected by inspectors at-sea and by port authorities in 2022 and their disposition. Infringements presented in bold were considered serious by the inspectors as per the NAFO CEM Article 38 definition.*

CP	Infringements detected at-sea. Serious Infringements in bold	Infringements detected in port (PSC3: Section E.1.B.c). Serious Infringements in bold	Follow-up to Infringements, as reported by the Contracting Party
EU		Failure to meet labelling requirements (Article 27.1, Article 27.2); Obstructing inspectors (Article 38.1(l)). Gaining access to sealed areas (Article 38.1(n)).	Case pending. Case led by Portugal. Precautionary order - seizure of relevant catches
EU		Exceeding bycatch limits (Article 6.3(a), Article 6.3(b), Article 6.3(d))	Case Pending. Case led by Portugal.
EU		Underreporting certain catches (Article 28.1); Failed to maintain accurate stowage plan (Article 28.5(a)(i)(1)).	Case Pending. Case led by Portugal.
EU	Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Failed to maintain accurate production logbook (Article 28.3(a)); Failed to maintain accurate stowage plan (Article 28.5(a)); Infringements considered serious (Article 38.1(i)).	Failure to meet labelling requirements (Article 27.1, Article 27.2); Exceeding bycatch limits (Article 6.2(b), Article 6.3(a))	Case Pending. Case led by Portugal.
DFG		Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Infringement considered serious (Article 38.1(i)).	Case closed. Faroe Islands Fisheries Inspection (Vørn) have collected all Infringements against the vessel together and have made a legal proceeding against the vessel. But in the meantime, forced auction was made against the vessel 20th January 2023, and the owner and company were judge bankrupt.
DFG	Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Infringement considered serious (Article 38.1(i)).	Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Infringement considered serious (Article 38.1(i)). Failed to label products (Article 27.1(b), (d), (e)); Infringement where there is no observer onboard (Article 38.1(m)).	Case closed. Faroe Islands Fisheries Inspection (Vørn) have collected all Infringements against the vessel together and have made a legal proceeding against the vessel. But in the meantime, forced auction was made against the vessel 20th January 2023, and the owner and company were judge bankrupt.
CAN	Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Failed to maintain accurate production logbook (Article 28.3(a)); Infringements considered serious (Article 38.1(i)). Article 25.9; Article 27.1 (a), (b), (d), and (e).		Actions taken concerning infringement / surveillance. A complete Investigation was undertaken by CAN authorities in port, including a fully monitored offload of the vessel. The investigation undertaken confirmed the infringements issued. CAN authorities have laid charges related to these infringements against both the master and licence holder. The case is presently before the courts. Judicial / administrative actions or sanctions. CAN authorities have laid charges related to these infringements against both the master and licence holder. The case is presently before the courts.
DFG		Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Infringement considered serious (Article 38.1(i)).	Case closed. Faroe Islands Fisheries Inspection (Vørn) have collected all Infringements against the vessel together and have

CP	Infringements detected at-sea. Serious Infringements in bold	Infringements detected in port (PSC3: Section E.1.B.c). Serious Infringements in bold	Follow-up to Infringements, as reported by the Contracting Party
			made a legal proceeding against the vessel. But in the meantime, forced auction was made against the vessel 20th January 2023, and the owner and company were judge bankrupt.
CAN		Exceeding bycatch limits (Article 6.3(b), Article 6.3(g)); Conducted directed fishery contrary to Article 6.6(a); Infringement considered serious (Article 38.1(c)).	Case Closed. Actions taken concerning infringement / surveillance A complete Investigation was undertaken by CAN authorities in port, including a fully monitored offload of the vessel. The investigation undertaken confirmed the infringements issued. Consultation with the prosecution service determined that these infringements did not meet the threshold to proceed to prosecution. As result of this finding, the case has now been closed by CAN authorities.
EU	Failure to produce documents on request of inspectors (Article 35.1 (g)); Obstructing inspectors (Article 38.1(l)).		Case Pending. Case led by Portugal.
CAN		Exceeding bycatch limits (Article 6.3(b), Article 6.3(g)).	Case Closed. Actions taken concerning infringement / surveillance A complete Investigation was undertaken by CAN authorities in port, including a fully monitored offload of the vessel. The investigation undertaken confirmed the infringements issued. Consultation with the prosecution service determined that these infringements did not meet the threshold to proceed to prosecution. As result of this finding, the case has now been closed by CAN authorities.
CAN		Exceeding bycatch limits (Article 6.3(b), Article 6.3(g)); Conducted directed fishery contrary to Article 6.6(a); Infringement considered serious (Article 38.1(c)).	Case Closed. Actions taken concerning infringement / surveillance A complete Investigation was undertaken by CAN authorities in port, including a fully monitored offload of the vessel. The investigation undertaken confirmed the infringements issued. Consultation with the prosecution service determined that these infringements did not meet the threshold to proceed to prosecution. As result of this finding, the case has now been closed by CAN authorities.
CAN		Exceeding bycatch limits (Article 6.3(g)).	Case Closed. Actions taken concerning infringement / surveillance A complete Investigation was undertaken by CAN authorities in port, including a fully monitored offload of

CP	Infringements detected at-sea. Serious Infringements in bold	Infringements detected in port (PSC3: Section E.1.B.c). Serious Infringements in bold	Follow-up to Infringements, as reported by the Contracting Party
			the vessel. The investigation undertaken confirmed the infringements issued. Consultation with the prosecution service determined that these infringements did not meet the threshold to proceed to prosecution. As result of this finding, the case has now been closed by CAN authorities.
EU	Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Failure to submit CAT report (Article 28.6(c)); Infringements considered serious (Article 38.1(i)).		Case pending. Case led by Portugal. Precautionary order: sealing of the hold.

4.3 Follow-up to infringements

Article 39 of the NAFO CEM outlines the obligations of a flag State Contracting Party that has been notified of an infringement. It includes taking immediate judicial or administrative action in conformity with the national legislation of the flag State Contracting Party and ensuring that sanctions applicable in respect of infringements are proportional to severity.

Article 40 requires Contracting Parties to report on the disposition of the infringements. The legal resolution of infringements may take more than a year. Contracting Parties shall continue to list such infringements on each subsequent report until it reports the final disposition of the infringement. Table 4.3 summarizes the status of infringement cases in the last five years (2018-2022) and their resolution.

Table 4.3 *Resolution of citations (by at-sea inspectors and port authorities) against vessels fishing in the NRA by year in which the citations were issued (as of March 2022). A citation is an inspection report that lists one or more infringement. Inspections carried out for confirming a previous citation are not included.*

Year	Number of Inspection Reports with an infringement citation	Number of Resolved Cases	Number of Pending Cases*	% Resolved
2018	7	6	1	86%
2019	5	4	1	80%
2020	12	5	7	42%
2021	16	7	9	43.8%
2022	16	8	8	50%

**still under investigation, litigation or appeal*

5.0 Trends and Analysis

Five-year trends (2018-2022) on effort and catch, reporting obligations of Contracting Parties and observers, compliance by fishing vessels, and at-sea inspections, and infringements are presented in this section.

5.1 Effort and Catch

Table 5.1 Fishing days, as defined by Article 1.6, by fishing gear.

	Longline	Mid-water Trawl	Bottom trawl	Shrimp trawl	TOTAL
2018	304	82	3719	0	4105
2019	321	56	4297	0	4674
2020	250	127	4224	21	4622
2021	169	0	4247	479	4895
2022	180	7	3709	0	3896

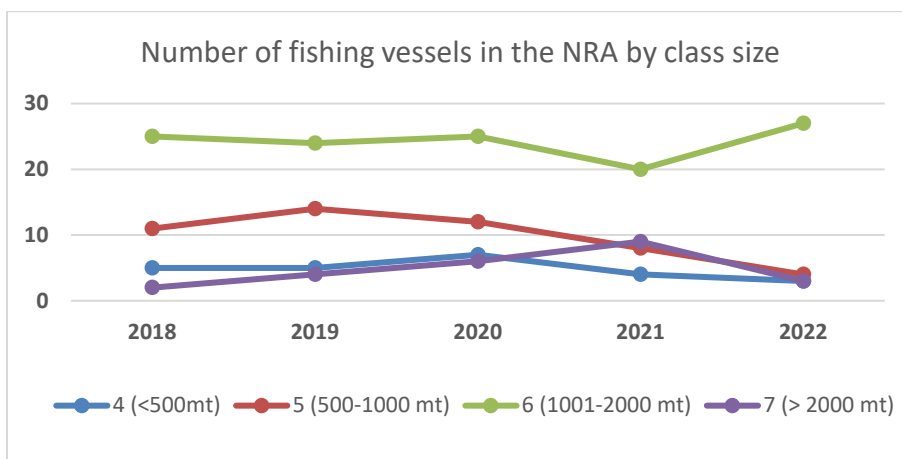


Figure 5.1.1 Number of fishing vessels that completed trips in the NRA in Divisions 3LMNO by class size, 2018-2022. The class sizes are based on the STATLANT classification.



Figure 5.1.2 Catches (in tonnes) by Division of selected species managed by TAC, 2018-2022 (Source: CATs).

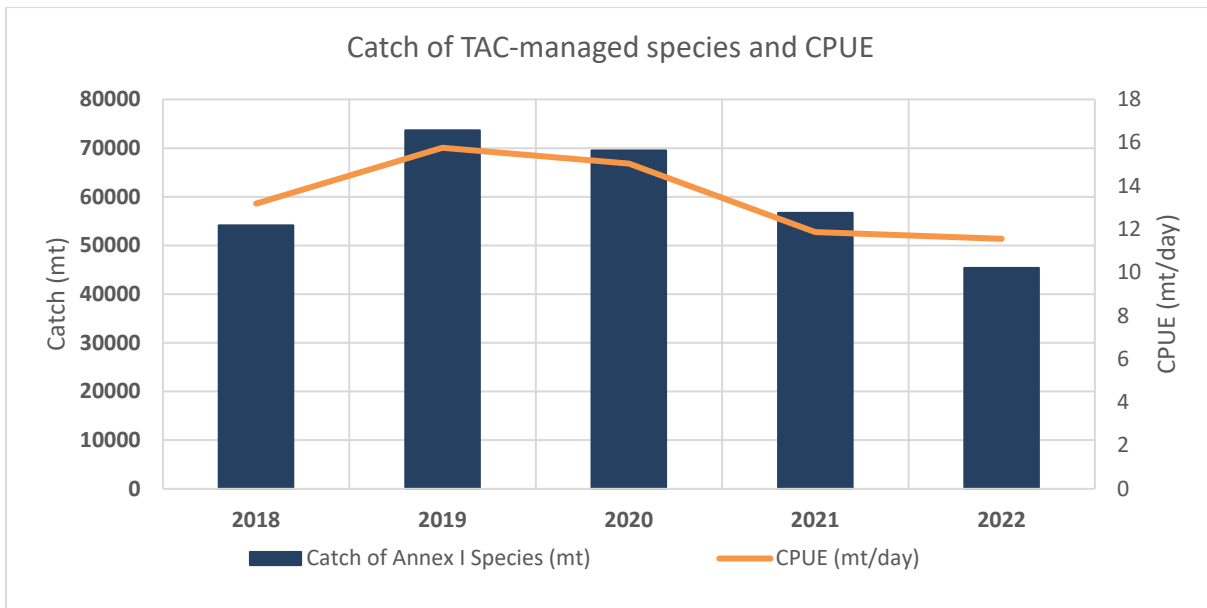


Figure 5.1.3 Catch of TAC-managed species and CPUE in 2018 -2022, expressed in total catch of TAC-managed species per fishing day. Data Source: CATs and VMS reports.

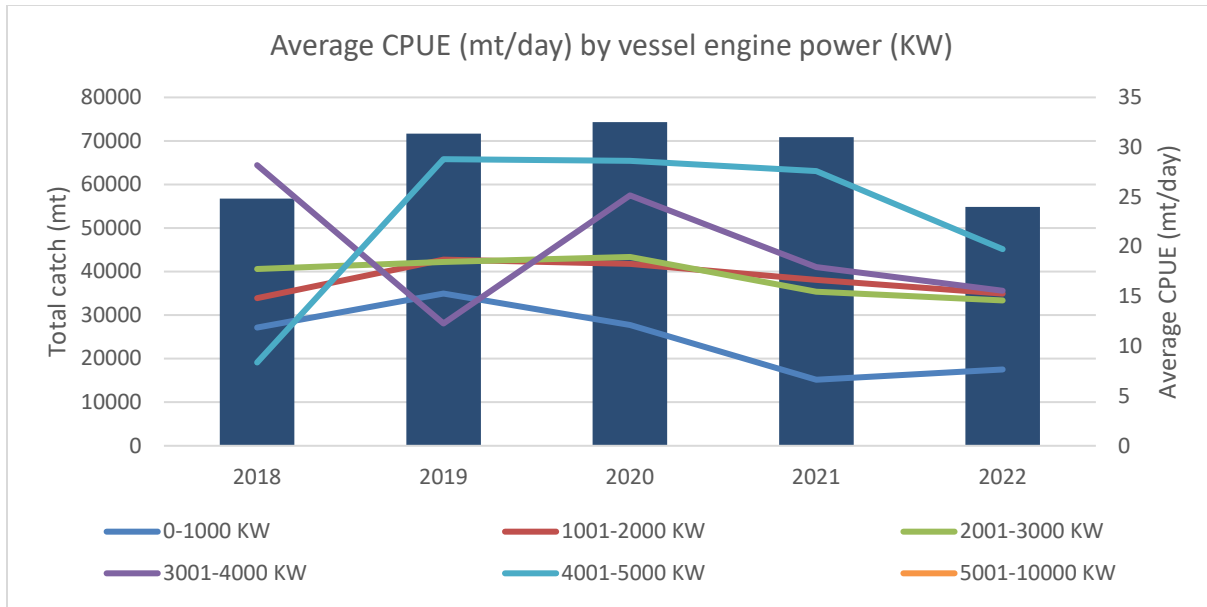


Figure 5.1.4 Total catch for trips from 2018-2022 and the average CPUE (mt/day) by vessel engine power (kw) per year.

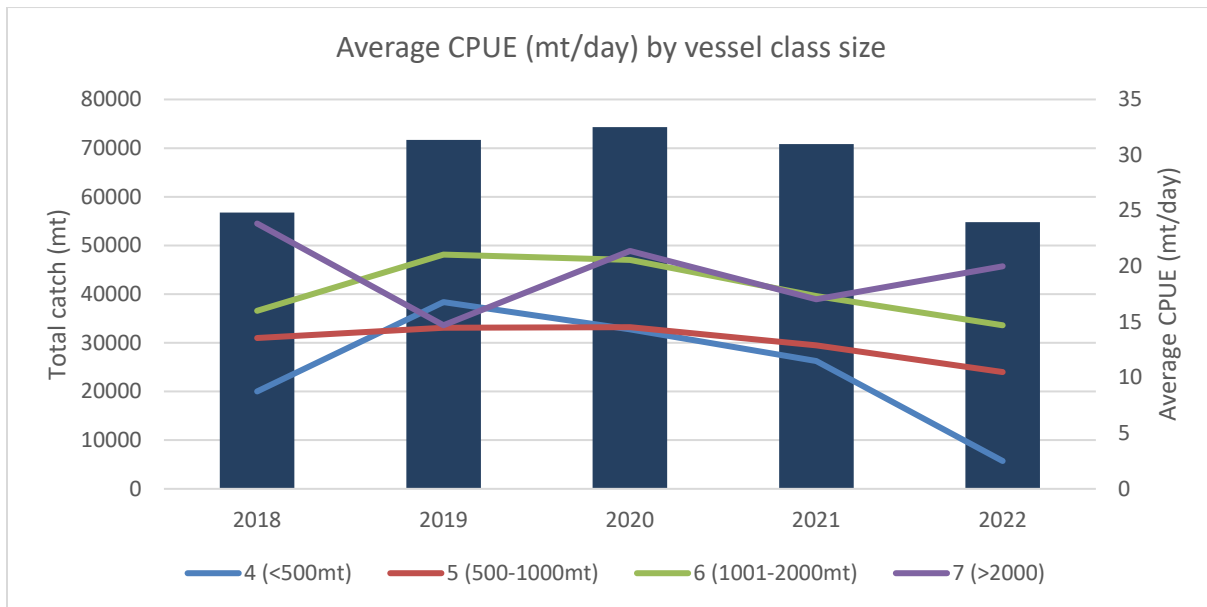


Figure 5.1.5 Total catch for trips from 2018-2022 and the average CPUE (mt/day) by vessel class size per year. The class sizes are based on the STATLANT classification.

5.2 Reporting Obligations by Contracting Parties

Compliance relating to reporting obligations is quantified as a percentage coverage – the ratio of the fishing trips accounted for by the reports and of the total number of relevant fishing trips. A 100% coverage would mean that all expected reports were transmitted to the Secretariat. Figure 5.2 shows the submission rates in



the period of 2018-2022. In 2022, the submission rates of electronic logbook reports (Article 28.8(c) of the NAFO CEM) and observer trip reports (Article 30.5 of the NAFO CEM) are 98.9% and 100% respectively.

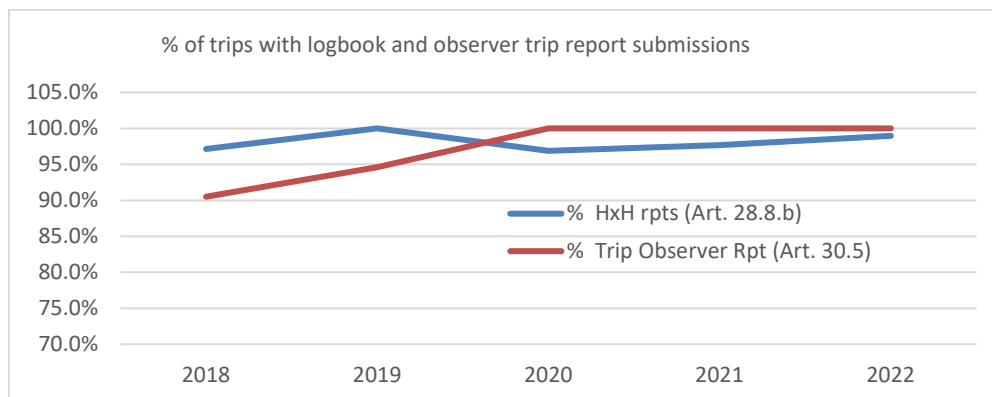


Figure 5.2 Percent coverage of observer trip reports for fishing vessels (operating under Article 30.5), and logbook (haul by haul) reports (Article 28.8(c)), 2018-2022.

5.3 Compliance by Fishing vessels

In the 5-year review period of 2018-2022, VMS and VTI requirements (Article 28 and 29) have been fully complied with. Hourly position reports (POS), as well as the daily catch reports by Division (CATs), were transmitted to the Secretariat while the vessels were in the NRA. The Catch-on-Entry (COE) and Catch-on-Exit (COX) reports for each fishing trip were also transmitted.

5.4 Inspections and Infringements

At-sea inspection rates, computed as a ratio of the number of at-sea inspections and the total fishing effort (fishing days), in the period 2018-2022 are presented in Figure 5.4.1. The inspection rate continues to increase from its lowest level in 2020, from 0.9% to 1.96% in 2022, though it is still below the pre-COVID inspection rate.

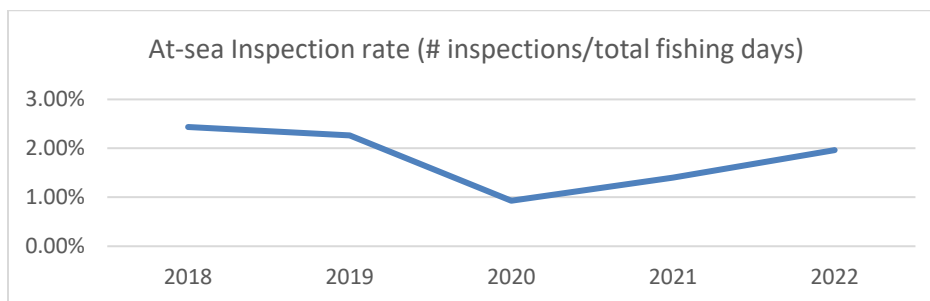


Figure 5.4.1 Inspection rates (number of at-sea inspections/fishing days) in the NAFO Regulatory Area, 2018-2022.

With regards to the infringements detected at sea and in port, mis-reporting of catches remains the most common infringement (Figure 5.4.2).

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
By-catch requirements			•	•••	••••••••
Catch communication violations				•	•
Directed fishing of moratorium stock					••



Directed fishing of stock without quota allocation	•				
Evidence tampering			•	••	•
Fishing after date of closure					
Gear requirements - mesh size, illegal attachments			•	•	
Greenland halibut control measures (Art. 10.4.d)			•		
Inspection protocol (interference)			••		••
Observer protocol			•	••	
Production logbook requirements				••	•••
Mis-recording of catches - inaccurate recording	••••	••	•••	•••••	••••••••
Mis-recording of catches -stowage	•	••••••		••	••
Product labelling	••	••	••••	•••••	••••
Vessel requirements - capacity plans	••	•		•	•

Figure 5.4.2 *Frequency of infringement cases detected by at-sea inspectors and port authorities in 2018-2022. Black and blue dots represent infringement issued at-sea and at port, respectively.*

6.0 Conclusions

During 2022, the main NAFO fisheries were demersal trawls and longlines for groundfish. The total catches decreased to approximately 54,000 tonnes in 2022 compared to approximately 70,000 tonnes in 2021. The 2022 CPUE for managed stocks was consistent with what was seen in the 2021 fishery, though total catch decreased.

The at-sea inspection rate continues to increase following a decrease in inspections resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, however they are still below pre-pandemic levels. In 2022, in addition to Canada and the European Union, the United States of America also participated in the At-Sea Inspection and Surveillance Scheme, deploying an inspection vessel in the NRA for the first time since 2011. There was an approximately 40% increase in the number of infringements issued in port in relation to bycatch requirements of the NAFO CEM compared to previous years.

In 2022, a Contracting Party conducted directed fishery in the pelagic redfish REB (1F_2_3K) subject to a zero TAC based on an objection to the TAC and a unilateral quota.

A Contracting Party invoked Article 30.6 NAFO CEM derogation allowing a coverage of no less than 25% but only deployed observers on 9% of the trips. That Contracting Party submitted a report Article 30.6(e) on the difficulties of completing a data comparison on observed and non-observed trips.

Timely receipt of CATs has allowed effective monitoring of quota uptakes. The timely submissions have also assisted inspection services in carrying out risk assessments and conducting monitoring, control and surveillance activities, providing an accurate reporting of catches taken in the NRA along with compliance of other obligations under the NAFO CEM.

The 2022 data on enforcement indicates a different practice in place by Contracting Parties with regard to the application of NAFO CEM bycatch rules.

7.0 Recommendations

- STACTIC recommends that all Contracting Parties continue to explore and report back on the use of remote electronic monitoring and equivalent sensor technologies, with a view to incorporate these tools into the NAFO CEM.
- STACTIC highlights that all Contracting Parties need to comply with the NAFO Observer Program requirements, including ensuring the independence, safety, and appropriate training of the observers; the analysis and follow-up of the observer program data for risk assessment and inspection; the submission of the Contracting Party's reports required by the NAFO CEM, and that the level of observer coverage specified in the NAFO CEM is maintained on an annual basis.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties participate and engage in the Inspectors' Workshop, for the purpose of sharing best practices and procedures and to promote international cooperation on control amongst Contracting Parties.
- STACTIC recommends that the annual review of Contracting Parties' compliance with Article 30 be reflected in this review, and that analysis of observer data in this document be increased.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties continue to support the NAFO Secretariat on the development and implementation of the NAFO Observer Application.
- STACTIC encourages Contracting Parties to continue to maintain inspection presence in the NAFO Regulatory Area and promote inspector exchanges on at-sea deployments, as well as the use of novel technologies for control such as Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties consider including, in this Compliance Review, a review of any infringement trends that have been observed within a 3-year time period.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties consider including in this review a review of CP compliance with the submission of required notifications, including but not limited to vessel authorizations, Others quota notifications, and submission of research plans. STACTIC recommends that to prevent the possibility of backdating those notifications in the MCS website.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties continue to review the work of other RFMOs' Compliance Committees to identify best practices that can be incorporated to the NAFO compliance review.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties find consensus and apply consistent methodologies for the verification of compliance with NAFO CEM provisions on catch recording and reporting.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties commit to follow up on all infringements in a timely and consistent manner and, depending on the gravity of the offence and in accordance with domestic law, adopt sufficiently deterrent judicial or administrative actions.
- STACTIC recommends that the understanding of the NAFO CEM on bycatch rules is harmonized, and that, to the extent necessary, the NAFO CEM provisions are revised to provide consistent outcomes that provide appropriate deterrents.

Annex 33. NAFO IUU List Update
(STACTIC WP 23-10 (Revised))

This is the regular update on the NAFO IUU list in accordance with Article 53 of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures since the last STACTIC meeting:

The NAFO Provisional IUU list

The Secretariat has not received any record of new IUU vessels in the Northwest Atlantic from Contracting Parties since the 2006 Annual Meeting, however at the 2022 Annual Meeting STACTIC agreed to add all IUU listed vessels from other RFMOs be added to NAFO's Provisional IUU List ([COM Doc. 22-09](#)).

The following vessels are contained on NAFO's provisional IUU List for review by STACTIC:

- **Table 1A** NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed vessels listed from other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, or that were inadvertently not included in the list outlined in STACTIC WP 22-10. (As agreed at the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, these IUU vessels were placed on NAFO's Provisional IUU List for review by NAFO.)
- **Table 1B** NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed IUU vessels de-listed by other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, or that were inadvertently not included in the list outlined in STACTIC WP 22-10. (In accordance with Article 53.5(d), the Secretariat removed these vessels from NAFO's IUU list and placed them on NAFO's Provisional List for review by NAFO.)
- **Table 2** NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed vessels amended from other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, or that were inadvertently not included in the list outlined in STACTIC WP 22-10.

The NAFO provisional IUU List can be accessed on the Members' pages of the NAFO website at: <https://members.nafo.int/Compliance/IUU>.

The NAFO IUU list

The NAFO IUU list was last reviewed by STACTIC at the Annual Meeting, September 2022 (STACTIC WP 22-10). The NAFO IUU List was updated allowing for the migration from the NAFO IUU List to the NAFO Provisional IUU List of all IUU listed vessels either de-listed and/or amended by other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO (see Table 3).

The NAFO IUU list can be accessed on the public pages of the NAFO website at: <https://www.nafo.int/Fisheries/IUU>.

Table1A. NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed vessels listed from other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, or that were inadvertently not included in the list outlined in STACTIC WP 22-10. (As agreed at the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, these IUU vessels were placed on NAFO's Provisional IUU List for review by NAFO.)

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
417000878	ABISHAK PUTHA 3		Unknown		4SFXXXX		2020-08-14	SIOFA	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	AKASH		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	ANNAI VELAMKANNI		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	ARPUTHA MATHA		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	AVEMARIYA		India		Unknown		/05/2022	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	BENEDICTA		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	EASRON		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
8025082	El Shaddai	Banzare	South Africa		ZR6358		08-Jul-20	SIOFA/ CCAMLR (2021)	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	EMMANUEL		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	GIFT OF GOD		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
9017666	GLORIWAVE		Togo	Palau, Sierra Leone	T8A4017		26-Jul-23	NPFC	Added by NPFC March 2023, came into effect 26 July 2023.
4000354	HALELUYA		Unknown		5IM615		2021-02-17	ICCAT	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8529533	HALIFAX		Namibia	Senegal	6WMR		2021-02-17	ICCAT	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8524492	HE LI 1 HAO	Sinar Abadi 69	Unknown	Panaman, Indonesia	Unknown	HP7651	May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	IMULA 0730 KLT/LAKPRIYA 14		Sri Lanka		4SF4482		/06/2021	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	IMULA 0846 KLT/GOD BLESS		Sri Lanka		Unknown		/06/2021	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	IMUL-A-1028-TLE/DEWLI FISHING KUDAWELLA		Sri Lanka		Unknown		/06/2021	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	IND-TN-15-MM8297/ARARAT/RESH MITHA		India		Unknown		/06/2021	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8004076	ISRAR 1		Oman		A4BB5		2021-11-23	ICCAT	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8568694	ISRAR 2		Oman		A4BA3		2021-11-23	ICCAT	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8568682	ISRAR 3		Oman		A4BA5		2021-11-23	ICCAT	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
7929176	KIKI		Gambia		C5J130		2022-09-05	ICCAT	Added by ICCAT in 2022
Unknown	LITTLESHA		India		Unknown		/05/2022	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
9038402	Lucas		Unknown		C5J128		2022-05-28	ICCAT	Vessel listed by ICCAT in 2022
Unknown	MANGALA		Sri Lanka		Unknown		/05/2022	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8808654	Nika		Unknown	Panama	HP6686		2020	CCAMLR	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	NOVA		India		Unknown		/05/2022	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8665193	OCEAN STAR No2		Unknown		YJRU6		2021-02-17	ICCAT	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8819691	QIAN YUAN		Panama		H3YK	5VEZ8	26-Jul-23	NPFC	Added by NPFC March 2023, came into effect 26 July 2023.
Unknown	SHARJI AMMA		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
8214645	SHUN HANG	VILA MOOSUN	Unknown	Panama, Tuvalu	H3DE		26-Jul-23	NPFC	Added by NPFC March 2023, came into effect 26 July 2023.
Unknown	STAR OF THE SEA		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	Unknown (This vessel indicated its name as "ZHOU YU 809 (舟漁809)" when sighted)		Unknown - raised flag of China		Unknown	Not Known	2018	NPFC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	Unknown (vessel displaying the name LU RONG YUAN YU 197 鲁荣远渔 197)		Unknown		Unknown		2020	NPFC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	Unknown (vessel displaying the name LU RONG YUAN YU 582 鲁荣远渔 582)		Unknown		Unknown		2020	NPFC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	Unknown (vessel displaying the name LU RONGYUAN YU 581 鲁荣远渔 581)		Unknown		Unknown		2020	NPFC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
Unknown	YHOVA NICY		India		Unknown		May-23	IOTC	Added by IOTC May 2023
Unknown	YONA		India		Unknown		/05/2022	IOTC	Inadvertently not included on the 2022 NAFO IUU list.
8907888	ZHONG FU HAO 111	HUMBOLDY BAY	Unknown	Panama, Liberia	HO4706		26-Jul-23	NPFC	Added by NPFC March 2023, came into effect 26 July 2023.

Table1B. NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed IUU vessels de-listed by other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, or that were inadvertently not included in the list outlined in STACTIC WP 22-10. (In accordance with Article 53.5(d), the Secretariat removed these vessels from NAFO’s IUU list and placed them on NAFO’s Provisional List for review by NAFO.)

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
9179359	Bellator	Tavrida/ Aurora, Pacific Conqueror/ Neptune 1	Angola		D3P5442	UBR16	2015-02-06	SPRFMO	No longer on the SPRFMO IUU list
Unknown	Melilla No 101		Unknown	Panama	Unknown				Inadvertently included twice on the 2022 NAFO IUU list, this is the deletion of the duplicate.
Unknown	Melilla No 103		Unknown	Panama	Unknown				Inadvertently included twice on the 2022 NAFO IUU list, this is the deletion of the duplicate.
Unknown	No 101 Gloria	Golden Lake	Unknown	Panama	Unknown				Inadvertently included twice on the 2022 NAFO IUU list, this is the deletion of the duplicate.
Unknown	Ocean Lion		Unknown	Equatorial Guinea	Unknown				Inadvertently included twice on the 2022 NAFO IUU list, this is the deletion of the duplicate.
7816472	Summer Refer	Okapi Marta	Unknown		Unknown				Inadvertently included twice on the 2022 NAFO IUU list, this is the deletion of the duplicate.
Unknown	XIN SHI JI 16		FIJI		3DTN		01.12.2019	IOTC	No longer on the IOTC IUU list

Table 2. NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed vessels amended from other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO, or that were inadvertently not included in the list outlined in STACTIC WP 22-10.

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	Unknown		Unknown - raised flag of China		Not Known	Not Known	2018	NPFC	NPFC notes that unknown vessel #29 on their IUU list indicated its name as “Zhou Yu 808 (舟漁 808)” when sighted. Should the name be changed to “Unknown (This vessel indicated its name as “ Zhou Yu 808 (舟漁 808)” when sighted)”

Table 3. NAFO IUU List – The NAFO IUU List was updated allowing for the migration from the NAFO IUU List to the NAFO Provisional IUU List of all IUU listed vessels either de-listed and/or amended by other RFMOs since the 2022 Annual Meeting of NAFO (see Table 1A, Table 1B and Table 2 above).

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	ABUNDANT 1	YI HONG 06	Unknown		CPA 226		2015-05	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 12	YI HONG 106	Unknown		CPA 202		2015-05	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 3	YI HONG 16	Unknown		CPA 201		2015-05	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 6	YI HONG 86	Unknown		CPA 221		2015-05	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 9	YI HONG 116	Unknown		CPA 222		2015-05	IOTC	
20060010	ACROS NO. 2		Unknown	Honduras	Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
20060009	ACROS NO. 3		Unknown	Honduras	Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	Al'Amir Muhammad		Egypt		Unknown		2018-07	GFCM	
7306570	Alboran II	White Enterprise	Unknown	Panama, St. Kitts & Nevis	Unknown		Gibraltar (31 March 2009)	NEAFC/NAFO	
7036345	Amorinn	Iceberg II/ Lome/ Noemi	Unknown		5VAN9		2003	CCAMLR	
Unknown	ANEKA 228		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05	IOTC	
Unknown	ANEKA 228; KM.		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05	IOTC	
7236634	Antony	Urgora/Atlantic Oji Maru No.33/ Oji Maru No. 33	Unknown	Venezuela/ Honduras/ Panama/ Belize/ Indonesia	PQMG		2016	CCAMLR	
7322897	Asian Warrior	Kunlun/ Taishan/ Chang Bai/ Hongshui/ Huang He 22/ Sima Qian Baru 22/ Corvus/ Galaxy/ Ina Maka/ Black Moon/ Red Moon/ Eolo/ Thule/ Magnus/Dorita	Unknown		J8B5336		2003	CCAMLR/IOTC (2015)	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
9042001	Atlantic Wind	Zemour 2/ Luampa/ Yongding/ Jiangfeng/ Chengdu/ Shaanxi Henan 33/ Xiong Nu Baru 33/ Draco I/ Liberty/ Chilbo San 33/ Hammer/ Seo Yang No. 88/ Carran	Unknown		5IM813		2004-11-05	CCAMLR/IOTC (2015)	
9037537	Baroon	Lana/ Zeus/ Triton I	Unknown	Nigeria/ Mongolia/ Togo/ Sierra Leone	5IM376		2007-11-02	CCAMLR	
Unknown	Bhaskara No. 10		Unknown	Indonesia	Unknown		2005-12-26	IATTC	
Unknown	Bhaskara No. 9		Unknown	Indonesia	Unknown		2005-12-26	IATTC	
Unknown	BIGEYE		Unknown		FN 003883		2006-10-23	ICCAT	
Unknown	BRAVO		Unknown		T8AN3		2004-08-24	ICCAT	
Unknown	Camelot		Unknown	Belize	Unknown		2005-12-26	IATTC	
6622642	Challenge	Perseverance/ Mila	Unknown		H05381		2006	CCAMLR	
Unknown	CHI TONG		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	Chia Hao No. 66 / Sage	Chi Fuw No. 6	Unknown	Gambia, Belize	C5J82	V3IN2		IATTC	
Unknown	CHOTCHAINAVEE 35		Unknown		Unknown		2019-06-01	IOTC	
7330399	Cobija	Cape Flower/Cape Wrath II	Unknown	Bolivia, Sao Tome, South Africa, Canada	CPB3000		2017	SEAFO / IOTC (2020)	
Unknown	DANIAA		Unknown		3X07QMC		2008-11-14	ICCAT	
Unknown	Dragon III		Unknown	Cambodia	Unknown			IATTC	
7302548	Freedom 7	ZHI MING, No 101 Gloria	Cameroon		JVAW7		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA 18		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 01		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 02		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 06		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 08		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 09		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 11		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 13		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 17		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 20		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 21		Unknown		OTS 024 or OTS 089		2013-05-31	IOTC	IOTC indicates that there is no information on whether the two vessels FU HSIANG FA NO. 21 are the same vessels
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 21		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	IOTC indicates that there is no information on whether the two vessels FU HSIANG FA NO. 21 are the same vessels
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 23		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 26		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 30		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
7355662	FU LIEN NO 1		Unknown	Georgia	Unknown	4LIN2	2010-12-10	WCPFC	
Unknown	Full Rich		Unknown	Belize	HMEK3		2013-05-31	IOTC	
Unknown	GALA I	Manara II/ Roagan	Unknown	Libya	Unknown		2008-06-27	ICCAT	
Unknown	Goidau Ruey No. 1	Goidau Ruey 1	Unknown	Panama	HO-2508		2009-06-06	IATTC	
7020126	GOOD HOPE	Toto	Nigeria		5NMU		2007	CCAMLR	
6719419	Gorilero	Gran Sol	Unknown	Sierra Leone, Panama	Unknown		La Coruna, Spain (September 2007)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	GUNUAR MELYAN 21		Unknown		Unknown		2008-06-11	IOTC	
Unknown	Hai Da 705		Unknown		Not Known	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
7322926	Heavy Sea	Duero/ Julius/ Keta/ Sherpa Uno	Unknown		3ENF8		2004	CCAMLR	
Unknown	HOOM XIANG 101		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	HOOM XIANG 103		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	HOOM XIANG 105		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		2014-06-12	IOTC	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	Hoom Xiang II		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		2010-03-05	IOTC	
7332218	Iannis 1		Unknown	Panama	H03374		Indian Ocean (2007)	NEAFC/NAFO	
6607666	Jinzhang	Hai Lung /Ray/ Killy/ Tropic/ Isla Craciosa/ Constant	Unknown	Sierra Leone, Belize, Equatorial Guinea, South Africa	PQBT		2006	CCAMLR/ SEAFO (2012)	
Unknown	JYI Lih 88		Unknown		Unknown		2005-12-26	IATTC	
Unknown	KIM SENG DENG 3		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
7905443	Koosha 4		Iran, Islamic Republic of		9BQK		2011	CCAMLR	
Unknown	KUANG HSING 127		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	KUANG HSING 196		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
7325746	Labiko	Maine	Unknown	Guinea Conakry	3XL2		NEAFC Regulatory Area (29 Oct 2007)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	Liao Yuan Yu 071		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Liao Yuan Yu 072		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Liao Yuan Yu 9		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	LILA NO. 10		Unknown		Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
7388267	Limpopo	Ross/ Alos/ Lena/ Cap George	Unknown		Unknown		2003	CCAMLR	
Unknown	Lu Rong Shui 158 (鲁荣水158)		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2018	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yu 1189		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yu 612		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2018-08-19	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan YU 101		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 102		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 103		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 105		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 106		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 108		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 109		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-11-13	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 787		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2018-08-19	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu 797		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2018-08-19	NPFC	
Unknown	Lu Rong Yuan Yu Yun 958		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2018-08-19	NPFC	
Unknown	MAAN YIH HSING		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	MADURA 2		Unknown		Unknown		2004-11-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	MADURA 3		Unknown		Unknown		2004-11-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	MARIA		Unknown		FN 003882		2006-10-23	ICCAT	
Unknown	Marwan 1	AL WESAM 4, CHAICHANACHOKE 8	Somalia	DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSN5721	01.05.2018	IOTC	
Unknown	MELILLA NO. 101		Unknown	Panama	Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	MELILLA NO. 103		Unknown	Panama	Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
7385174	Murtosa		Unknown	Togo	Unknown		Aveiro, Portugal (since 2005)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	Neptune		Unknown	Georgia	Unknown	4LOG	2010-12-10	WCPFC/ IATTC	
Unknown	NEW BAI I NO. 168		Unknown		YGMV		2016-11-19	ICCAT	
Unknown	NO 2 CHOYU		Unknown		Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	NO. 3 CHOYU		Unknown		Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
8808903	NORTHERN WARRIOR	Millennium/ Ship 3	Angola		PJSA		2016	CCAMLR	
Unknown	OCEAN DIAMOND		Unknown		Unknown		2004-11-16	ICCAT	
7816472	Okapi Marta		Belize		Unknown		2021-02-17	ICCAT	
Unknown	Orca		Unknown	Belize	Unknown			IATTC	
Unknown	ORIENTE NO.7		Unknown		Unknown		2006-10-16		
5062479	Perlon	Cherne/ Bigaro/ Hoking/ Sargo/ Lugalpesca	Unknown		5NTV21		2003	CCAMLR	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
9319856	Pescacisne 1, Pescacisne 2	Zemour 1/ Kadei/ Songhua/ Yunnan/ Nihewan/ Huiquan/ Wutaishan Anhui 44/ Yangzi Hua 44/ Trosky/ Paloma V	Mauritania	Equatorial Guinea	3CAF		2008	CCAMLR/IOTC (2015)	
Unknown	PROGRESO	AI WESAM 5, CHAINAVEE 54	Unknown	Cameroon, DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSN5447	2018-05	IOTC	
Unknown	Reymar 6		Unknown	Belize	Unknown			IATTC	
Unknown	SAMUDERA PASIFIK NO. 18		IDN		YGGY		2013-11-25	ICCAT	
Unknown	SAMUDERA PERKASA 11		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	SAMUDERA PERKASA 12		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
7424891	Sea Urchin	Aldabra/ Omoa I	Unknown		5VAA2		2007-01-01	ICCAT/CCAMLR	
8692342	Sea View	AL WESAM 2, CHAINAVEE 55	Unknown	Cameroon, DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSB3852	01.05.2018	IOTC	
8692354	Sea Wind	AL WESAM 1, SUPPHERMNAVEE 21	Unknown	Cameroon, DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSN5282	01.05.2018	IOTC	
Unknown	SHARON 1		Unknown		Unknown		2008-06-27		
Unknown	SHENG JI QUN 3		Unknown		CPA 311		2017-07-15	IOTC	
Unknown	SHUEN SIANG		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SHUN LAI	HSIN JYI WANG NO. 6	Unknown		CPA 514		2017-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 6		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 67		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 8		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 9		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	SOUTHERN STAR 136		Unknown		Unknown		2005-03-08		

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	SRI FU FA 168		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 18		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 188		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 189		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 286		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 67		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 888		Unknown		Unknown		2014-06-05	IOTC	
8514772	STS-50	Ayda/ Sea Breeze/ Andrey Dolgov/ Std No. 2/ Sun Tai No. 2/ Shinsei Maru No. 2	Togo		5VDR2		2016	CCAMLR	
9259070	Ta Fu 1		Unknown	Belize	Unknown		2005-12-26	IATTC	
Unknown	Tching Ye No 6		Unknown	Belize	V3GN		2009-06-06	IATTC	
Unknown	TIAN LUNG NO. 12		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
7321374	Trinity	Enxembre, Yucutan Basin, Fontenova, Jawhara	Unknown	Ghana, Panama	Unknown		Tema, Ghana (Sep 2011)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	Unknown		Unknown - raised flag of China		Not Known	Not Known	2018	NPFC	NPFC notes that unknown vessel #29 on their IUU list indicated its name as “Zhou Yu 808 (舟漁 808)” when sighted. Should the name be changed to “Unknown (This vessel indicated its name as “Zhou Yu 808 (舟漁 808)” when sighted)”
8994295	Wen Teng No. 688		Unknown	Belize	V3TK4		2005-12-26	IATTC	
7826233	XING HAI FENG	OCEAN LION	Unknown	Panama, Equatorial Guinea	3FHW5		2005-06-03	IOTC	
Unknown	YI HONG 3		Unknown		Unknown		2015-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	YU FONG 168		Unknown	Chinese Taipei	BJ4786		2009-12-11	WCPFC / IOTC (2015)	
Unknown	YU MAAN WON		Unknown	Georgia	Unknown		2007-05-18	IOTC	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	Yuanda 6 (Assumed from MMSI number)		Unknown - raised flag of China		Unknown	Not Known	2019	NPFC	
Unknown	Yuanda 8 (Assumed from MMSI number)		Unknown - raised flag of China		Unknown	Not Known	2019	NPFC	
Unknown	YUTUNA 3	HUNG SHENG NO. 166	Unknown		CPA 212		2017-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	YUTUNA NO. 1		Unknown		CPA 302		2017-05-01	IOTC	
Unknown	Zhe Ling Yu Leng 90055		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhe Ling Yu Leng 905		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhexiang Yu 23029		Unknown - raised flag of China		Unknown	Not Known	2019	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 651		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 652		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 653		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 656		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 657		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 658		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 659		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 660		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
Unknown	Zhou Yu 661		Unknown		Unknown	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	

**Annex 34. Terms of Reference (ToR) for a
NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)**
(STACTIC WP 23-25 (Revised) now COM Doc. 23-25)

Background

Pursuant to its original mandate, the Working Group provided a proposal for improvements to the NAFO Observer Program at the 2023 NAFO Annual Meeting. STACTIC reviewed and adopted the proposed revisions to the NAFO Observer Program, however, it was noted that there could be continued improvements to the Observer Program. STACTIC requested the Working Group to focus its efforts on making recommendations to STACTIC to revise the provisions in Article 30 NAFO CEM. The Working Group mandate was extended to continue discussion on improvements to the implementation of the Observer Program and report to STACTIC on its progress at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.

This document proposes updates to the Terms of Reference for the **Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)** which reflect its extended mandate and additional taskings from STACTIC at its 2023 Annual meeting.

Membership

All Contracting Parties are welcome and encouraged to participate in the Working Group (WG). The WG should be comprised of representatives from Contracting Parties with a working knowledge of NAFO observer practices and procedures, Article 30 requirements and understanding of the changes made to the program.

Scientific Council has nominated an expert to participate as a liaison between the WG and the Council. This liaison shall attend all meetings of the WG.

The WG should elect its chair.

Objective

Pursuant to Article 30.19 NAFO CEM, a mandatory review was conducted of Article 30 NAFO CEM as adopted in 2019. The WG should continue to identify implementation challenges of the Observer Scheme and provide recommendations to STACTIC to address those issues, to enhance the quality and types of data captured and to improve the overall consistency and efficiency of the observer program.

Tasks

The Working Group should focus its efforts on making recommendations to STACTIC to revise the provisions in Article 30 NAFO CEM with a view to improve the program, including:

1. The minimum level of observer coverage required under derogation
2. Use of the observer electronic application and its implementation
3. Use of electronic observation program and to recommend minimum requirements for those systems to be used as an alternative to Observers.
4. Standardized reporting templates and reporting
 - a. Observer reporting requirements
 - i. The possible inclusion of the collection of vessel's garbage disposal practices

5. Potential improvements on Data Collection on Sharks
 - a. Review findings presented in STACTIC WP 21-49 Rev3 “Review of Greenland shark Data Collection and Methodologies”
 - i. Pursue development of standardized handling and release guidelines
 - ii. Pursue development of for a species identification guide/observer handbook for Sharks
6. Consider revisions of infringements relating to the Observer Program
7. To discuss mechanisms to promote quality control for Observer and electronic observation data

The WG should take into account documents compiled by the Secretariat and any additional information provided by Contracting Parties and NAFO bodies (i.e., STACTIC, Scientific Council) for identification of areas requiring improvement.

Meetings

The WG should meet as required to perform the duties prescribed and will communicate regularly through teleconferences and electronically.

A face-to-face meeting with hybrid capacity will be hosted by Canada, the dates to be determined in consultation with participating Contracting Parties.

Reporting

The WG should prepare a report of the proceedings of each of its meetings to be presented to STACTIC.

The WG reported to STACTIC at the 2023 NAFO Annual Meeting with its findings. The WG requested and was granted an extension into 2024 for its review.

The WG will report to STACTIC at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting with an update, and present its findings and recommendations to the 2024 NAFO Annual Meeting.

Annex 35. Non-Binding Resolution on Core Principles on Labour Standards in NAFO Fisheries
(COM WP 23-17 (Rev. 2) now COM Doc. 23-26)

Explanatory memorandum

Illegal and inhumane working conditions, such as forced labour, occur within the global fishing sector, and are devastating for victims and their families. They also contribute to destabilization of maritime security and supply chains, and create circumstances that lead to the depletion of fish stocks and degradation of marine ecosystems. Combating illegal labour practices when they occur is particularly challenging within the fishing sector, especially for vessels that are out to sea for long periods of time. It is known that some captains subject victims to physical, mental, and sexual abuse; deception about working conditions and wages; debt bondage; withholding of wages; excessive overtime; abusive working and living conditions; and isolation for extended periods of time.

The FAO, ILO, and other international fora have noted the importance of RFMOs in comprehensively and holistically addressing these labour related concerns in the fishing sector. A number of RFMOs are taking action. For example, in 2018 the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission adopted Resolution 2018-01 “Resolution On Labour Standards For Crew On Fishing Vessels” and in 2021 the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas established an ad hoc Working Group on Labour Standards.

The United States is submitting this nonbinding resolution on labour and safety standards in NAFO fisheries to underscore the importance of standards for fair and decent working conditions for all crew onboard fishing vessels. The resolution encourages Contracting Parties to adopt international labour standards within their domestic regulatory programs, if they have not already done so. The resolution further calls for NAFO to review this resolution in three years.

Non-Binding Resolution on Core Principles on Labour Standards in NAFO Fisheries

The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

Recalling that Contracting Parties, under NAFO’s Convention, have committed themselves to conducting responsible fishing activities;

Further recalling that the Convention takes into account the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;

Recognizing that Articles 6 and 8 of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries sets out international standards, including for the responsible conduct of fishing operations to ensure safe, healthy and fair work and living conditions as well as calling upon States to ensure that fishing is conducted with due regard to the safety of human life;

Recalling that Article 94 of United Nations Law of the Sea Convention requires States to take measures to ensure safety at sea, including in regards to labour conditions and the training of crews, taking into account the applicable international instruments,

Further recalling the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the right not to be subjected to any discriminatory conditions of labour;

Reaffirming the importance of flag State responsibilities under international law regarding fishing vessels flying their flag, including with respect to safety at sea and labour conditions on fishing vessels;

Noting the increasing global attention to instances of poor labour conditions and mistreatment of crews including forced labour and child labour on board some fishing vessels;

Emphasizing that the resumed review Conference of the United Nations Fish Stock Agreement encouraged regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, as appropriate, to adopt standards for decent working conditions for crew, inspectors, and observers within the fisheries within their competence, in accordance with international instruments;

Underscoring NAFO's requirement for flag State Contracting Parties to take appropriate action with respect to their vessels to ensure safe working conditions, the protection, security and welfare of observers; and

Acknowledging the important role played by crew members in assisting the conduct of fishing vessel operations in compliance with NAFO Conservation and Management Measures, and the central role that crew members play in contributing to effective fishing operations;

Resolves that

1. Contracting Parties are encouraged to ratify, as appropriate, international conventions or instruments concerning labour standards on board fishing vessels and to adopt and implement, or maintain measures that establish minimum standards regulating crew labour conditions. These measures should be consistent with generally applicable international minimum standards to ensure fair and decent working conditions on board for all crew working on vessels flying their flag and operating in fisheries managed under NAFO, including, *inter alia*:
 - a. The absence of forced, trafficked, or any other form of involuntary or compulsory labour;
 - b. A safe and secure working environment with minimum risk to health and well-being;
 - c. Fair terms of employment, that are enshrined in a written contract, or other equivalent or comparable arrangement, and made available to the employee, in a form and language that facilitates the employee's understanding of the terms, and is agreed by the employee;
 - d. Decent working and living conditions on board vessels, including access to potable water and food, vessel and operational safety protections, medical care, adequate periods of rest, and acceptable standards of sanitary hygiene;
 - e. Access to appropriate safety equipment onboard vessels and adequate safety training before first deployment on a vessel and at appropriate intervals thereafter; such training should be in line with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) safety training standards, as applicable;
 - f. Access to a communication device and a designated point of contact in case of concerns related to safety or labour abuses;
 - g. Decent and regular remuneration as well as appropriate insurance for the crew; and
 - h. The opportunity for crew to disembark, to access their identity documents, to terminate the contract of employment, to communicate with an organization that can render assistance to crew, to submit complaints regarding vessel working conditions, and to seek repatriation.

2. Contracting Parties are encouraged to make every effort to ensure that these measures extend to all crew, including migrant workers, working on vessels flying their flag and operating in fisheries managed under NAFO.
3. Contracting Parties are further encouraged to, as appropriate, work with any entities involved in recruitment of crew to implement the provisions of this Resolution, including promoting the prohibition of recruitment fees and related costs being charged to crew.
4. Contracting Parties are encouraged to apply and, where appropriate, strengthen effective jurisdiction and control over vessels flying their flag and to exercise due diligence to improve and enforce all relevant laws and policies regarding labour conditions and crew safety on board vessels.
5. Contracting Parties are further encouraged to ensure the adequate enforcement of all relevant laws relating to the treatment of crew for those vessels that land fish in their ports or operate in their waters.
6. The Commission may consider progress on these issues, three years after the Resolution's adoption.


Annex 36. Press Release
NAFO HOLDS 45th ANNUAL MEETING IN VIGO AND CONTINUES TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND ECOSYSTEMS IN THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VIGO, SPAIN, 22 September 2023-At its 45th Annual Meeting, the collaborative efforts between the Contracting Parties of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) continued to advance the Organization's ecosystem and fisheries objectives, focusing on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and climate change, while also reinforcing the protection of fishery observers, and labour standards in NAFO fisheries. The NAFO delegates were welcomed to Vigo at the start of the meeting, 18 September, by the acting Chair of the Commission, Deirdre Warner-Kramer, and General Director of Fisheries Management and Aquaculture, Juan Ignacio Gandarias Serrano.

During the meeting, NAFO furthered its progress on the ecosystem approach framework to fisheries management by adopting the recommendation that its bottom fishing closures on seamounts and six of its sponge VME closures be submitted to the CBD Secretariat and to the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC) for inclusion in the World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs). NAFO also agreed to maintain all of its VME bottom fishing closures until 31 December 2026.

Additionally, NAFO agreed to consider the current and future impacts of climate change on NAFO managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems in the Convention Area, including, *inter alia*, as appropriate, in its decision making, and through its work in the Ecosystem Roadmap.

NAFO reviewed and revised the NAFO Observer Program to include key provisions to reinforce the protection and independence of fishery observers. NAFO also adopted a Non-Binding Resolution on Core Principles on Labour Standards in NAFO Fisheries.

NAFO selected Deirdre Warner-Kramer (USA) as the new NAFO President and Chair of the Commission, for a two-year term, as well as Bernard Briand (France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)) as the vice-Chair of the Commission. Diana González Troncoso (EU) was selected as the new Chair of the Scientific Council, and Mark Simpson (Canada) as the vice-Chair of the Scientific Council and Chair of STACREC.

The 46th Annual Meeting will take place 23-27 September 2024, in Halifax, Canada. This will mark the first meeting that NAFO will go entirely paperless to reduce the Organization's carbon footprint.

The total allowable catches and quotas for 2024 can be found [here](#). Meeting reports for the NAFO Commission and the Scientific Council will be made available on the NAFO website at a later date.

For further inquiries, please contact:
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**Annex 37. Summary of Decisions and Actions of the Commission from the
45th Annual Meeting of NAFO**

ANNEX #	NAFO WORKING PAPER #	DOCUMENT TITLE	NAFO DOCUMENT #
16	COM-SC EAFFM-WP 23-15	Changes to Article 17.3 of the NAFO CEM	COM-SC Doc. 23-05
17	COM WP 23-41 (Rev. 3)	The Commission's Request for Scientific Advice on Management in 2025 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters	COM Doc. 23-09
18	COM WP 23-15 (Rev. 5)	NAFO Quota Table 2024 – NAFO CEM Annex I.A and I.B including a comparison of the Scientific Councils advice on NAFO fish stocks and the management measures decided by the Commission	COM Doc. 23-10
19	COM WP 23-40	Review of NAFO CEM Article 5.5(j)	COM Doc. 23-11
20	COM WP 23-37 (Rev. 3)	Establishment of New Measures in the Yellowtail Fishery (Article 6)	COM Doc. 23-12
21	COM WP 23-33 (Rev.)	Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on NAFO Fisheries	COM Doc. 23-13
22	STACTIC WP 23-12 (Revised)	Catch reporting (Article 28(6) NAFO CEM)	COM Doc. 23-14
23	STACTIC EDG WP 23-01	Edits to the time format in the NAFO CEM	COM Doc. 23-15
24	STACTIC EDG WP 23-02	Edits to Article 5.3(b) of the NAFO CEM	COM Doc. 23-16
25	STACTIC EDG WP 23-03	Edits to Articles 6.2(c) and 6.3(e) of the NAFO CEM	COM Doc. 23-17
26	STACTIC EDG WP 23-04	Edits to Article 5.11 and 9.4	COM Doc. 23-18
27	STACTIC EDG WP 23-05 (Rev. 3)	Edits to Article 12.1 (d bis) of the NAFO CEM	COM Doc. 23-19
28	STACTIC WP 23-09 (Rev. 4)	Squid Fishery	COM Doc. 23-20
29	STACTIC WP 23-21	NAF Field Character Limit Increase	COM Doc. 23-21
30	STACTIC WP 23-26	Modifications to Article 4.7 (Research Vessels)	COM Doc. 23-22
31	STACTIC WP 23-19 (Rev. 4)	Revisions to the NAFO Observer Scheme	COM Doc. 23-23
32	STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev 6)	Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2023 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2022)	COM Doc. 23-24
33	STACTIC WP 23-10 (Revised)	NAFO IUU List Update	
34	STACTIC WP 23-25 (Rev.)	Terms of Reference (ToR) for a NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)	COM Doc. 23-25
35	COM WP 23-17 (Rev. 2)	Non-Binding Resolution on Core Principles on Labour Standards in NAFO Fisheries	COM Doc. 23-26
	STACFAD WP 23-03 (Revised) to 23-16 (Revised)	STACFAD Recommendations including the 2024 Budget	see PART III. (below)

PART II.
Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

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Report of the Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

1. Opening by the Interim Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America)

The Interim Chair (Chair), Patrick Moran from the United States, opened the meeting at 2:03pm (GMT+2) on Monday, 18 September 2023 at the Palacio de Congresos Mar de Vigo in Vigo, Spain and via WebEx. The Chair welcomed representatives from the following Contracting Parties (CPs) – Canada, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Korea, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Mikaela Soroka) was appointed as rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The Chair introduced the provisional agenda and asked representatives if there were any comments or additions. The European Union requested to add a discussion item “STATLANT data” under “other business”. The Secretariat requested to add an update for PSMA Alignment Review Report under “other business”. The agenda was adopted, as amended (Annex 2).

Following the rules outlined in the Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Rules of Procedure regarding data confidentiality and participation in meetings (COM Doc. 22-19), the Chair highlighted a nomination for in-camera sessions for agenda items 4, 5, and 6. The Chair noted that the Secretariat would not be presenting information that may be subject to confidentiality measures under agenda item 6, and it was agreed that the item would be held in an open session. The Chair confirmed with Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) that no confidential information would be presented under agenda item 5 regarding observer derogations in STACTIC WP 23-04 (Rev.4). It was agreed that agenda item 5 would be held in an open session in its entirety. Contracting Parties acquiesced that for this meeting, agenda item 4 be discussed under an in-camera session.

4. 2022 Annual Compliance Review including review of apparent infringement reports and of chartering arrangements

The NAFO Secretariat highlighted the Draft 2022 Compilation of Fisheries Reports table in STACTIC WP 23-01 (Rev. 3) and noted that comments and corrections received since the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting have been incorporated. One additional comment was incorporated into STACTIC WP 23-01 (Rev.3).

The Secretariat presented the Draft 2022 Compliance report (STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev.2)) and reminded the group that the table of inspection information is now presented as a summary in the compliance report, as agreed to at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. During the discussion of the draft report, Contracting Parties agreed that there is a need to review the template of the compliance report and discuss the possibility of removing certain sections that are not relevant to the conclusions and recommendations on compliance. STACTIC agreed to have Contracting Parties conduct a review in advance to the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, with the aim to discuss this matter at that meeting. Under this agenda item, Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) explained the difficulties they had in fulfilling a comparison between trips with and without observers aboard in accordance with Article 30.6(e) (shown in STACTIC WP 23-04 (Rev.4)). STACTIC noted that there is currently no template for the comparison, however, this was addressed in STACTIC WP 23-20, which was endorsed under agenda item 5.

Discussion also took place regarding the recent use of backdating an authorization notification and possible complications if this becomes a regular practice. STACTIC agreed to instruct the NAFO Executive Secretariat to not backdate authorisations or “Others” quota notifications from now on.

On the second day of the meeting, Canada updated the information on the follow-up to four reported infringements on bycatch rules for American plaice and cod in yellowtail fisheries, where the decision of the Canadian prosecutor service was not to pursue prosecution given the circumstance of the cases. The European Union regretted this outcome as it disregards the agreed NAFO CEM and the level playing field between the Contracting Parties when applying the same provisions to different vessels. STACTIC concluded that this data on enforcement indicates a different practice in place by Contracting Parties with regard to the application of NAFO CEM bycatch rules, and recommended that the understanding of the NAFO CEM on bycatch rules is harmonized, and that, to the extent necessary, the NAFO CEM provisions are revised to provide consistent outcomes and appropriate deterrents.

STACTIC agreed that Contracting Parties should consider including in the compliance review a review of Contracting Parties’ compliance with the submission of required notifications, including but not limited to vessel authorizations, “Others” quota notifications, and submission of research plans. The final version of the draft Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review for 2022 is outlined in STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev. 6), and STACTIC agreed to forward this to the Commission for adoption.

The Secretariat presented the summary of inspections for 2022 STACTIC WP 23-03 (Rev.3) and noted that comments and corrections received since the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting have been incorporated. One comment was incorporated into STACTIC WP 23-03 (Rev.4).

The NAFO Secretariat highlighted the overview of 2022 chartering arrangements and compliance document outlined in STACTIC WP 23-16 (Revised) for information. There were no further comments on the working paper.

At the 2021 STACTIC Annual Meeting, it was agreed that the Secretariat would provide an updated version of the tables of at-sea inspection information presented in STACTIC WP 21-52 for the 2023 STACTIC Annual Meeting. As agreed, the Secretariat presented the update in STACTIC WP 23-17 (Rev.). Contracting Parties agreed that this was a valuable exercise and agreed to conduct the same updates every two years going forward, and to update the first table of the document to be included in the annual compliance review.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will review the format of the annual compliance review and discuss the inclusion of other compliance elements, as well as the possible deletion of certain sections that are not relevant to the conclusions and recommendations section pertaining to compliance at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**
- **The draft Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review outlined in STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev. 6) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **In that it is a Contracting Party responsibility the NAFO Secretariat will not backdate authorisations or “Others” quota notifications from now on.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat will provide an updated version of the information presented in STACTIC WP 23-17 (Rev.) for the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting and will repeat this update every other year.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat will include the information provided in table 1 of STACTIC WP 23-17 (Rev.) in the annual compliance reviews.**

5. Review of Article 30 of the NAFO CEM

The Secretariat presented the summary of observer information STACTIC WP 23-04 (Rev.3) and highlighted the revisions made since the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. STACTIC requested that the Contracting Party who used the partial withdrawal of observers (Article 30.6) in 2022 provide their comparison required in accordance with Article 30.6(e) prior to the conclusion of this meeting. The Contracting Party submitted a report highlighting their difficulties in performing this comparison in STACTIC WP 23-04 (Rev.4).

The Secretariat updated STACTIC on the status of the observer application development; a trial of the application will occur in the coming weeks. Following the trial, the Secretariat will call upon the individuals who volunteered to take part in the development of the application to further the development.

The Chair of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) (Brent Napier, Canada) provided a summary of the meetings that took place in July (COM Doc. 23-06) and September 2023 (COM Doc. 23-07). The WG-OPR Chair presented items from the report intended to be reviewed by STACTIC. STACTIC reviewed the documents one by one:

STACTIC WP 23-20 was presented to STACTIC, proposing a standardised reporting template. During the discussion of the proposal, STACTIC agreed that these templates did not need to be included in the NAFO CEM, instead, it can be made available to Contracting Parties and posted on the NAFO public website. The Secretariat was requested to provide a reminder to Contracting Parties of the template in the event a derogation is used. The United States requested that Contracting Parties, to the extent possible, provide anonymized data for the derogation report to ensure these discussions can be held in open session. Contracting Parties agreed that it would be left to the Contracting Party to decide if the information is presented in an anonymized way or not.

The WG-OPR Chair presented the group's proposed revision to the current Article 30 in STACTIC WP 23-19. Extensive discussions, clarifications and revisions occurred for this proposal, and it was endorsed by STACTIC as STACTIC WP 23-19 (Rev.4). The European Union noted that the revision of the program proposed in the paper includes key provisions to reinforce the observer program, the protection and independence of the observers, and to limit the use of derogations on a 100% observer coverage, which should be based on deploying an electronic observation program. Given the issues identified by the WG-OPR on the implementation of the program during the past four years, the European Union urged STACTIC to find a compromise to revise the program at this STACTIC Annual Meeting, even if the minimum standards for the electronic observation program could be decided during 2024. During the discussion of the proposal, STACTIC agreed that the WG-OPR would be tasked with drafting the minimum standards and criteria needed to implement the use of an electronic observation program. STACTIC also agreed to review the derogation measure in 2024. To ensure that electronic observation meets the objectives of the organization and can serve as an adequate replacement to human observers for scientific purposes and monitoring and control, the United States of America requested that NAFO conduct independent verification of the electronic observation data. The United States also recommended holding an exclusive meeting to discuss electronic observation minimum standards, inviting other relevant experts and advisors to promote a comprehensive electronic observation scheme. Contracting Parties wanted to keep the discussions within WG-OPR. Contracting Parties also suggested that the verification of electronic observation data as well as the verification of observer data be discussed in the WG-OPR.

The WG-OPR Chair presented the current Terms of Reference for the group as outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 23-01 (rev.2). The WG-OPR Chair indicated that there would need to be revisions made to the Terms of Reference based on the conversations that took place at the meeting. STACTIC reviewed the Terms of Reference and updated them to include the mandated items from this meeting. The updated terms of reference as outlined in STACTIC WP 23-25 (Rev.) will be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will use the templates outlined in STACTIC WP 23-20 to report on observer program compliance and to complete a comparison of trips with and without observers onboard.**
- **The mandate of the WG-OPR will continue and the Terms of Reference (STACTIC WP 23-25 (Rev.) will be forwarded to the Commission for endorsement.**
- **STACTIC WP 23-19 (Rev.4) on the revision of the NAFO observer program will be forwarded to the Commission for endorsement.**
- **In 2024, STACTIC will review the implementation of the newly endorsed observer program, including the derogation for the 100% observer coverage, reporting requirements and templates, minimum standards in order to implement the use of the electronic observation program and the infringements related to the observer program.**

6. NAFO MCS website and application development

The Secretariat informed STACTIC that there have been no updates to the NAFO MCS website since the last meeting. The European Union requested that the column allowing for backdating of a notification be removed from the “Notification of Others Quota” page on the MCS website in line with the STACTIC guidance provided to the NAFO Secretariat at this meeting regarding the no-backdating policy for authorisations and notifications of “Others” quota.

The Secretariat updated STACTIC that the ePSC is in the initial stages of development.

7. New and Pending Proposals on Enforcement Measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM

Japan presented a proposal for the squid fishery in STACTIC WP 23-09 (Rev.2). After the group reviewed the revisions made since 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, further comments were received during this meeting and with the revisions STACTIC WP 23-09 (Rev.4) was endorsed by STACTIC and will be sent to the Commission for adoption. This proposed measure is subject to review at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The European Union presented a proposal on control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish in STACTIC WP 23-13 (Rev.2). STACTIC discussed the proposal and one Contracting Party objected to the proposal and another felt the proposal fell outside the scope of STACTIC and should be discussed in the Commission. The European Union thanked the group for their comments and for the assistance in getting the proposal to a point where most Contracting Parties are in agreement with the text, and decided to reflect internally on their next steps for the proposal and may bring it forth to the Commission.

Canada presented a proposal on labelling requirements in STACTIC WP 22-25 (Rev.). Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) expressed concerns since their new fleets are using electronic labeling which dates the product with the date it is processed, and not necessarily the date it was caught. There were also concerns with the proposal raised, since the date of capture is already listed in the logbook, if this measure would be negligible. Canada emphasized that since RED 3M is an Olympic fishery and 3M shrimp is managed by effort in fishing days, there is considerable importance on knowing the date of capture for Inspectors to ensure compliance with such matters as fishery closures, catch by Division and cross-referencing of logbook data with catch in the fish hold. Contracting Parties agreed to continue the discussion on this proposal at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.

Canada presented a proposal on a new measure for the yellowtail fishery in STACTIC WP 23-24. Canada explained their vessels has been successful over the years in consistently maintaining a bycatch rate well below the 15% threshold. However, this proved particularly challenging in fall of 2022 when Canadian operators encountered levels of bycatch that, while low in tonnage, triggered protocols under Article 6 of the NCEMs. These challenges have continued in 2023, mainly due to fluctuation in distribution of shallow water stocks,

possibly the results of climate change as it appears to coincide with general warming of the core fishing areas in the southern Grand Banks. There were reservations from Contracting Parties regarding the proposed change from a 15% American plaice bycatch threshold, to 25%.

The European Union noted that a similar proposal was tabled at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting and that in both cases, the group would benefit to having more time to analyse the proposals. The European Union informed the group that they had completed an analysis in between STACTIC meetings relating to the bycatches of American plaice in yellowtail fisheries, noting that it would be necessary to have more time to analyse the new proposal. The analysis indicates that for a sample of 845 fishing operations from 2021, 2022 and 2023 of randomly selected yellowtail fishing trips, only one haul exceeded the threshold of 3750 kg and two hauls exceeded a 25%. The current rules led on average to a 2% likelihood regarding the need to apply move-on provisions for the vessels, which is low and could be seen as working as intended for the protection of the moratorium stock. Based on the data analysis, the proposal presented by Canada implies that move-on provisions would never be triggered. The European Union also noted a very low likelihood of directed fisheries (two cases), but it could compromise to the inclusion in the NAFO CEM of a provision allowing a 1-strike derogation in a fishing trip, which was suggested already to Canada and is part of the proposal. The European Union asked for more time to analyse the rest of the proposal. Given the reservations, and the view that many of the proposed changes were more appropriately discussed at the commission level, at the next revisit of this agenda item, Canada decided to withdraw the proposal from STACTIC, and will present it directly to the Commission. The European Union noted that the proposal contains numerous technical elements on control that should be discussed first by STACTIC in accordance with its remit. The European Union noted the need for the Contracting Parties to avoid circumventing STACTIC's role by submitting directly their control-related proposals to the NAFO Commission before discussing them in STACTIC and allowing Parties to analyse them and to find a compromise. Canada noted the comments by the European Union.

The United States suggested to have a more general conversation on definitions of directed fishing and bycatch and the resulting impacts these definitions have within specific fisheries. STACTIC agreed to initiate the discussion on these matters and to consult with other NAFO subsidiary bodies as necessary.

From this discussion, the United States noted that over the last several years, Contracting Parties have been raising concerns related to the definitions of directed fishing and bycatch and the resulting impacts these definitions have within specific fisheries. In an effort to develop a comprehensive view toward the implications of these definitions on all fisheries, the United States recommended convening a joint working group between STACTIC members, RBMS members, and potentially others within NAFO to discuss the current framework of directed fishing and the bycatch allowances, limitations, and enforcement concerns related to these definitions, and potential modifications to the CEMs. The European Union could not support this language as it transmitted a negative impression on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatch which is the NAFO selectivity standards.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The proposal on the squid fishery outlined in STACTIC WP 23-09 (Rev.4) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **STACTIC will continue its discussion on Canada's proposal on labeling requirements (STACTIC WP 23-25 (Rev.)) at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**
- **STACTIC will start the discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches at their 2024 Intersessional Meeting.**

8. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM

In accordance with Article 4.7, STACTIC agreed to review Article 4. In preparation for the discussion, the Secretariat was asked to prepare a working paper that summarised the research activities that took place in 2023 and how they complied with the new measures found in Article 4 since the last Annual Meeting (STACTIC

WP 23-23). Contracting Parties noted an issue with compliance pertaining to the new measures of Article 4. The group agreed that there needed to be more careful application of the new measures and agreed to discuss it further under the conclusions section of the Compliance Report (STACTIC WP 23-02 (Rev. 6)) and continue its review of the article in 2024 (STACTIC WP 23-26). The group also agreed that if there is better compliance with the article at next year's review, then there will be no need to have another annual review in 2025.

The Secretariat flagged that in Article 4.3(e), Contracting Parties are required to notify the Secretariat when their research activity is going to commence, however, there are no provisions for the Secretariat to do anything with this notification.

It was **agreed** that:

- **STACTIC would continue the review of Article 4 in 2024 as outlined in STACTIC WP 23-26, which will be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The compliance with the Article 4 measures will be included in the Compliance report for 2023.**

9. Practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO

The Secretariat updated STACTIC that the ePSC is in the initial stages of development under agenda item 6. The Secretariat will continue its work on the system.

The PECMAC Chair, Thord Monsen (Norway), was invited to provide an update on NEAFC's understanding of the issue of calculating percent difference in PSC3 reports. The PECMAC Chair informed the group that there are also differing definitions in NEAFC, and they are having similar discussions. The group agreed it was best to wait for PECMAC's decision before concluding in STACTIC to avoid confusion in vessels that fish under both RFMOs. The group also agreed to add the discussion to the next Inspectors' Workshop to canvas information on how it is currently being practised.

At the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional meeting, STACTIC requested that the NAFO Secretariat engage with the FAO Secretariat on the GIES system to determine the data exchange opportunities between NAFO and the GIES. Following the Intersessional meeting, the Secretariat contacted the FAO Secretariat to gain access to the GIES system. The NAFO Secretariat was able to log into an internal test environment, however, there were no port inspections to derive its functionality or data exchange possibilities. The NAFO Secretariat has reached out to FAO on the matter, but as of September has not received further instructions or information. In the latest Meeting of the Parties, the Terms of Reference for the Technical Working Group on Information Exchange were adopted, and the NAFO Secretariat requested approval from STACTIC for participation in this working group to further progress on data exchange opportunities. STACTIC agreed it would be beneficial for the Secretariat to participate in this working group.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Secretariat will continue its work on its ePSC system and will provide an update at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**
- **The calculation on percent difference in the PSC3 be added to the next Inspectors' Workshop agenda.**
- **STACTIC will wait to continue the discussion on calculating the percent difference in PSC3 reports until PECMAC has reached a decision.**
- **The Secretariat will participate in the FAO Technical Working Group on Information Exchange.**

10. Marking of gears

The Chair opened this item and asked if there was any desire to continue discussion here at this time. Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) informed STACTIC that they are undertaking some domestic research on the marking of gears, and that they are mostly using AIS now. Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) mentioned that they may create a proposal in the future regarding the use of electronic marking.

The group agreed that the addition of gear and vessel marking standards to the NAFO CEM would be beneficial. To initiate this process, and as agreed to at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, the Secretariat will research and compile other RFMO's vessel and gear marking requirements, and report back to STACTIC at their 2024 Intersessional Meeting. The discussion on gear marking requirements will continue at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will research the vessel and gear marking requirements of other RFMOs and report back at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional meeting.**

11. Report and recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)

The Chair of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG), Patrick Moran (United States of America) presented the report (STACTIC WP 23-15) from the EDG meeting that took place on 18 July 2023. The EDG had endorsed and forwarded several working papers to STACTIC for consideration:

Time formatting (STACTIC EDG-WP 23-01), Article 5.3(b) (STACTIC EDG-WP 23-02), Articles 6.2(c) and 6.3(e) (STACTIC EDG-WP 23-03), and Article 12.1(d bis) (STACTIC EDG-WP 23-05).

The EDG had one working paper they decided to bring to STACTIC for revision or endorsement without having endorsed the document itself for Article 5.11 and 9.4 (STACTIC EDG-WP 23-04).

STACTIC endorsed STACTIC EDG-WP 23-01, STACTIC EDG-WP 23-02, STACTIC EDG-WP 23-03, and STACTIC EDG-WP 23-04 as presented by the EDG Chair. The group provided further comments to STACTIC EDG-WP 23-05 and endorsed the amendments in STACTIC EDG-WP 23-05 (Rev.3).

It was **agreed** that:

- **The EDG proposed edits to the time format in the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC EDG-WP 23-01 be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The EDG proposed edits to Article 5.3(b) of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC EDG-WP 23-02 be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The EDG proposed edits to Articles 6.2(c) and 6.3(e) of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC EDG-WP 23-03 be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The EDG proposed edits to Article 5.11 and 9.4 of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC EDG-WP 23-04 be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The EDG proposed edits Article 12.1 (d bis) of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC EDG-WP 23-05 (Rev.3) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

12. Review and evaluation of Practices and Procedures

The NAFO Secretariat noted that there have been no additions to the Practices and Procedures webpages since the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, as outlined in STACTIC WP 23-06, and reminded Contracting Parties to submit at anytime to the Secretariat and it will be presented at the next meeting.

13. Review of Current IUU list Pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53

The Secretariat presented STACTIC WP 23-10 (Rev.) and highlighted the changes made since the intersessional meeting. There were no additional comments from the group, and therefore it will be sent to Commission for adoption.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The changes proposed to the IUU List (STACTIC WP 23-10 (Rev.)) will be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

14. Report and advice of the Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM)

The JAGDM Vice-Chair (Natasha Barbour, Canada) presented the report for their most recent meeting (COM Doc. 23-04). The Chair of JAGDM also presented the proposal to increase the number of allowed characters in some of the NAF fields in Part C of Annex II.D of the NAFO CEM (STACTIC WP 23-21) which was agreed to at their meeting to forward to STACTIC. STACTIC endorsed the proposal from JAGDM, and it will be sent to the Commission for adoption.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The changes proposed to the Part C of Annex II.D of the NAFO CEM (STACTIC WP 23-21) will be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

15. Discussions on garbage disposal onboard vessels

The WG-OPR Chair asked on behalf of the group for more guidance on how to advance their work on the issue of garbage disposal. All Contracting Parties agreed that since there is no data available from the Scientific Council on garbage disposal, that they are not able to advance their discussion on possible measures to be added to the NAFO CEM regarding proper garbage disposal protocol at sea. STACTIC agreed that it would be of great use to have the WG-OPR discuss and propose observers collect data on garbage disposal to then be reviewed by STACTIC to advance their discussion on possible measures.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) will discuss observer data collection on garbage disposal at sea.**

16. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review recommendations

The NAFO Secretariat presented an update on the implementation of the 2018 Performance Review Recommendations 17, 18, 20 and 21 found in STACTIC WP 23-08 (Rev. 2). Updates to the recommendations since the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting and updates that occurred during this meeting were as follows:

- **Recommendation 17** – status was updated to Complete at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. During this meeting the recommendation was updated as Closed.

- **Recommendation 18** – status update that at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting STACTIC agreed to mandate the WG-OPR to investigate the possibility of having a garbage disposal data collection requirement as part of the tasks of NAFO Observers. During this meeting, it was agreed to have the WG-OPR continue its work on this matter.
- **Recommendation 20** – status update that at the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting Contracting Parties agreed to continue to submit their comments on the FAO voluntary guidelines by the 2023 STACTIC Annual Meeting. During this meeting, STACTIC reviewed the comments received by four Contracting Parties in STACTIC WP 23-18 (Rev.). It was agreed at this meeting that STACTIC would update the Commission on the status of this recommendation and inform it that NEAFC is undertaking a similar review. It was noted during the discussion that if the review is required, then Contracting Parties should be mandated to carry out the review within a specified timeline.
- **Recommendation 21** – status updated to Complete during the EDG July 2023 meeting where it was decided that no further clarifications to the NAFO CEM were required for this recommendation.

The updates from this meeting were included in STACTIC WP 23-08 (Rev.5).

It was **agreed** that:

- **STACTIC will update the Commission on the status of recommendation 20 from STACTIC WP 23-08 (Rev.5) and inform it that NEAFC is undertaking a similar review.**
- **STACTIC will continue its discussion on the recommendations outlined in STACTIC WP 23-08 (Rev.5).**

17. Other business

STATLANT data

The European Union summarized the Secretariat's working paper on the history and relevant bodies that use STATLANT 21 data (STACTIC WP 23-22). The European Union informed the group that since 1960, when STATLANT 21 was first introduced, there have been many different forms of data submissions developed for the Contracting Parties to comply. The European Union proposed whether it could be possible to remove the STATLANT 21 submissions for fishing activities in the NRA as a requirement if all the same data can be found in alternative data sources (i.e., NAF data, monthly aggregated catch data, haul by haul, etc.). The United States noted that as a coastal Contracting Party there is data sent in the STATLANT data that is not captured through other data streams. It was also noted that the STATLANT data is also used by the FAO. STACTIC agreed that the best way forward would be to send a letter to the Chair of the Scientific Council to request how they are currently using and what data they are using from the data found in STATLANT 21 and if they could get that data from an alternative source. Once a reply is received from the Scientific Council, STACTIC will continue its discussion on this item at their next meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **A letter be sent from the STACTIC Chair to the Scientific Council Chair requesting information on how STATLANT 21 data is being used, what data is being used and if other sources of data could be used in its place.**
- **STACTIC will continue the discussion on STATLANT 21 at their meeting following the reply from the Scientific Council Chair.**

PSMA Alignment Review Report

The Secretariat informed STACTIC that they were asked to review a draft document assessing how RFMOs are fulfilling the provisions of the PSMA. There were some issues with the interpretation of the NAFO CEM provisions and the implementation of the PSMA being drafted for Parties and not RFMOs, so the Secretariat did provide the author with additional information on this. The Secretariat just wanted to flag to STACTIC so that they are aware that the document will be published soon.

18. Election of Chair and vice-Chair

At the 2022 Annual Meeting, Patrick Moran (United States of America) was elected as the Interim Chair of STACTIC for 2023, and the position of vice-Chair remained vacant. In accordance with Rule 5.4 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure for the Commission, the Interim Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America) opened the floor for nominations for the positions of STACTIC Chair and vice-Chair to serve for two years.

Contracting Parties nominated Patrick Moran (United States of America) to serve as the next Chair of STACTIC. Contracting Parties expressed their unanimous support for the election of Patrick Moran to serve as STACTIC Chair for two years.

Contracting Parties nominated Brent Napier (Canada) to serve as the next vice-Chair of STACTIC. Contracting Parties expressed their unanimous support for the election of Brent Napier to serve as STACTIC vice-Chair for a period of two years.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Patrick Moran (United States of America) will serve as the next Chair of STACTIC for a period of two years.**
- **Brent Napier (Canada) will serve as the next vice-Chair of STACTIC for a period of two years.**

19. Time and Place of next meeting

The next STACTIC Intersessional meeting will be hosted by Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) in Copenhagen and will take place in May 2024.

20. Adoption of Report

The report was adopted on 21 September 2023, prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

21. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am (GMT+2) on 21 September 2023. The Chair thanked meeting participants for their cooperation and input. The participants likewise expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chair for her leadership as well as to the NAFO Secretariat for their arrangements/technical work.

Annex 1. List of Participants

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Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by the Interim Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Compliance review 2022 including review of apparent infringement reports and of chartering arrangements
5. Review of Article 30 of the NAFO CEM
6. NAFO MCS website and application development
7. New and Pending Proposals on Enforcement Measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM
8. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM
9. Practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO
10. Marking of gears
11. Report and recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)
12. Review and evaluation of Practices and Procedures
13. Review of Current IUU list Pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53
14. Report and advice of the Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM)
15. Discussions on garbage disposal onboard vessels
16. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review recommendations
17. Other business
 - STATLANT data
 - PSMA Alignment Review Report
18. Election of Chair and vice-Chair
19. Time and Place of next meeting
20. Adoption of Report
21. Adjournment

PART III.
Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD)

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

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**Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on
Finance and Administration (STACFAD) Meeting**

45th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 18-22 September 2023
Vigo, Spain

1. Opening by the Chair, Robert Fagan, (Canada)

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Robert Fagan (Canada) at 14:00 hours on Monday, 18 September 2023. Representatives were welcomed from Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and the NAFO Secretariat (Annex 1).

The prioritization of the agenda allowed Contracting Parties to efficiently reach agreement on routine matters in advance by correspondence. The Chair thanked delegates for their continued flexibility and cooperation to facilitate this process.

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as Rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The provisional agenda as circulated in NAFO/23-167 of 19 July 2023 was modified to include “*Alternative Funding Approaches for Annual Meetings*” under agenda item 15 “*Other Business*”:

The revised agenda was adopted as presented in Annex 2.

4. Audited Financial Statements for 2022

Baker Tilly Nova Scotia Inc. was appointed to perform the audit for the 2022 fiscal year, in accordance with the NAFO Financial Regulations. The draft audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022 were circulated to the Heads of Delegations and STACFAD delegates in advance of the meeting. The financial statements are presented as drafts until they are reviewed by STACFAD and approved by the Organization.

The deficiency of revenues over expenditures for 2022 was \$20,641 while the previous year had an excess of revenues over expenditures (2021 - \$203,566).

Total expenditures incurred for the fiscal period ending 2022, as shown in the draft financial statements, amounted to \$2,351,231, which was \$235,769 under the approved budget of \$2,587,000. Overall savings for the year can mainly be attributed to the post COVID-19 era and the resulting reduction in travel and meeting costs with meetings being held virtually.

The operating fund had a balance of \$517,343 at year end which was used to reduce contributions from Contracting Parties in 2023. As approved at the September 2022 Annual Meeting, the contingency fund remained at \$285,000; the relocation fund was replenished to its maximum level of \$100,000 and the performance review fund was increased by \$15,000 to \$60,000.

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The 2022 Financial Statements be adopted.**

5. Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat

The Administrative and Activity Report was reviewed by the Committee. All Contracting Parties are encouraged to share it among their delegation as it provides a comprehensive summation of Secretariat activities for the period September 2022 to August 2023 (COM Doc. 23-05).

6. Financial Statements for 2023

Financial Statement estimates for 2023 (projected to 31 December) have been provided by the Secretariat in COM Doc. 23-05.

Operating Expenses for 2023

The operating budget for 2023 was approved at \$2,650,000 while expenditures for the year are projected to be at \$2,588,000, or \$62,000 under the approved budget. The Secretariat continues to adapt to the scheduling of meetings and their locations as in-person participation at meetings returns to previous levels. Although an increasing number of meetings are now being held virtually or in a hybrid format, the cost of travel and venue rental for in-person meetings is increasing significantly. The primary savings for 2023 can be attributed to the Annual Meeting being hosted by the European Union (Spain).

All remaining 2023 operating expenses are anticipated to be on or near budget for the year. The above noted cost savings of \$62,000 will be returned to the accumulated surplus and will be available in part to reduce Contracting Parties contributions in 2024.

Assessed Contributions

At the beginning of 2023, the accumulated surplus was \$517,343, which was deemed to be in excess of the needs of the Organization and was allocated towards the 2023 operating budget. As the 2023 budget included an \$85,000 provision for Executive Secretary recruitment and relocation costs, funds will be transferred from the recruitment and relocation fund to offset these expenses. Therefore, in order to meet the 2023 operations budget of \$2,650,000, Contracting Parties were assessed contributions in the amount of \$2,047,657.

Balance Sheet

The Organization's cash position on 31 December 2023 is estimated to be \$681,971 while assessed contributions totalling \$257,348 for 2023 are currently outstanding from two Contracting Parties. Although the estimated cash balance should be sufficient to finance appropriations in early 2024 pending the receipt of annual payments, concerns were raised by the Secretariat over being able to meet its future financial obligations if outstanding contributions continue to rise.

7. Review of Accumulated Surplus and Funds

According to the NAFO Financial Regulations, STACFAD and the Commission shall review the amount available in the accumulated surplus account during each Annual Meeting. The accumulated surplus account shall be set at a level sufficient to temporarily finance operations during the first three months of the year, plus an amount up to a maximum of 10% of the annual budget for the current financial year to be used for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses. In addition, the Organization shall also maintain a recruitment and relocation fund, up to a maximum of \$100,000, for relocation costs of internationally recruited staff. In addition, the Organization shall also maintain a performance review fund to pay costs associated with having an external performance review. The performance review fund balance shall be kept at a maximum of \$100,000.

The accumulated surplus account on 31 December 2023 is estimated to be \$810,000 as shown in STACFAD WP 23-03 (Revised).

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The amount maintained in the accumulated surplus account be set at \$285,000 of which \$200,000 would be sufficient to finance operations during the first three months of 2024, and of which \$85,000 would be a contingency fund available to be used for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.**
- **The recruitment and relocation fund be increased by \$12,000 to \$46,000 for future recruitment and relocation costs of internationally recruited staff.**
- **The performance review fund be increased by \$15,000 to \$75,000 for future costs associated with having an external performance review.**
- **The estimated balance remaining of \$404,000 shall be maintained in the Operating Fund and applied to reduce annual contributions due from each Contracting Party for the following year.**

8. Personnel Matters

The Secretariat presented a proposal to promote Dayna Bell MacCallum, Sarah Guile and Matthew Kendall to the senior position of their respective classifications at their annual employment anniversary in 2024 (STACFAD WP 23-04).

Secretariat staff can be promoted to the Senior category based on a minimum of 10 years' work experience, with at least five years at the NAFO Secretariat, through excellent overall work performance, advanced familiarity with NAFO matters, expertise of qualifications described in their job classification, excellent team working capabilities, taking on advanced responsibilities, and other factors.

The three staff members being considered for promotion have demonstrated that they have achieved a high level of specialized knowledge and program management abilities at the NAFO Secretariat. The Committee agreed with the Secretariat's proposal to promote the staff members.

STACFAD recommends that:

- **Dayna Bell MacCallum, Sarah Guile and Matthew Kendall be promoted to the senior position of their respective classifications at their annual employment anniversary in 2024.**

9. Internship Program

Previous activities and tasks of the NAFO internship program were presented in STACFAD WP 23-05. The NAFO internship program has been suspended since the Spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NAFO internship program continued to be paused for 2023 to allow for the transition of NAFO Secretariat staff (incoming Executive Secretary, Fisheries Management Coordinator and the Fisheries Information Administrator).

The internship program offers considerable benefits to the Organization and to the interns themselves. It is anticipated that the program will resume in 2024.

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The internship period be maintained for six (6) months during 2024.**

10. Report on the Annual Meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), 25–27 April 2023

The annual meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS) was hosted by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) during 25–27 April 2023 in San Diego, USA, with an option to join by video-conference. The meeting was attended by the Executive Directors and Finance Officers of the seven International Fisheries Commissions with headquarters located in Canada and the United States of

America. NAFO was represented by Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir, Executive Secretary, and Stan Goodick, Deputy Executive Secretary/Senior Finance and Staff Administrator. The IFPCS Directors appointed by the Governments of Canada and the United States of America also attended the meeting.

Background information on the pension plan, investment returns, actuarial valuation and administration was presented within the information paper (STACFAD WP 23-06).

The next annual meeting of the IFPCS will be hosted by the Government of Canada during the week of 15 April 2024 in Ottawa, Canada. It was agreed that the meeting would provide a virtual/hybrid option for those not able to attend in-person.

11. Implementation of 2018 Performance Review Panel recommendations

As agreed at the 2019 Annual Meeting, an update was provided regarding the recommendations tasked to STACFAD in the “*Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations from the 2018 Report of the NAFO Performance Review Panel*” (COM Doc. 19-32) and any other recommendations, as assigned by the Commission.

a. Design a potential new visual identity for NAFO

An update was provided on the work completed since the 2022 Annual Meeting to initiate a process to design a potential new visual identity for NAFO to better reflect the role and responsibilities of the Organization (STACFAD WP 23-11).

The visual identity focus group and STACFAD members continued to work intersessionally to develop and refine potential logo options. The results of this work were presented to STACFAD and next steps were discussed (STACFAD WP 23-12). After additional feedback from STACFAD members, it was agreed to recommend adoption of the new visual identity depicted in STACFAD WP 23-15 (Revised). The Secretariat will develop an implementation plan and include as part of its annual operational plan.

The Committee extended its appreciation to the NAFO Secretariat (Alexis Pacey, Senior Publications/Web Manager, and Lisa LeFort, Senior Executive Assistant) for the commitment and efforts on this project.

STACFAD recommends:

- The Commission adopt the new visual identity depicted in STACFAD WP 23-15 (Revised).



b. Data classification and access rights of the NAFO websites

As agreed at the last Annual Meeting, the hybrid documentation policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation as well as the guidelines for classification of routine meeting documentation was reviewed by STACFAD at this Annual Meeting (STACFAD WP 23-13 Revised).

There were no concerns and/or questions raised from Contracting Parties to the hybrid documentation policy regarding posting and distribution of meeting documentation.

STACFAD recommends a hybrid meeting documentation policy including:

- Prior to the start of any NAFO meeting, NAFO meeting documentation that is received and deemed “open access”, such as a working paper, is made available to the general public on the NAFO website and to the meeting participants on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint.
- Prior to the start of any NAFO meeting, NAFO meeting documentation that is received and deemed “restricted”, such as a working paper, is made available only to the meeting participants on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint.
- During the meeting, NAFO meeting documentation, such as working papers and subsequent revisions, is posted on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint, but not made publicly available on the NAFO website.
- Following the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September, meeting documentation that is adopted, such as a working paper, is converted into a NAFO document and made available to the general public on the NAFO website with the exception of Working Papers deemed “restricted”.

It was further noted that since the implementation of the hybrid meeting documentation policy there were no instances in which a Contracting Party, when submitting a working paper, designated it as “open access” and to be made available to the general public on the NAFO website.

It was noted Contracting Parties may not be aware of this requirement in the hybrid meeting documentation policy. The Committee suggested a reminder be included in the circulation of pre-meeting correspondence that Contracting Parties are responsible, to designate a working paper as “open access” when submitting if they want it to be publicly available on the NAFO website. This will assist in the implementation of the policy.

STACFAD recommends the following guidelines for classification of working documents:

- The Contracting Party submitting a Working Paper is responsible to designate that Working Paper as “open access” and made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting. If the Contracting Party does not make such a designation, then it will not be made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting.
- The Secretariat will include a reminder in the circulation of pre-meeting correspondence that Contracting Parties are responsible, when appropriate, to designate a working paper as “open access” when submitting so it may be made available to the general public on the NAFO website.

12. Budget Estimate for 2024

All budgetary items will be considered by STACFAD based on the Secretariat's presentation.

The 2024 budget estimate, as prepared by the Secretariat, was provided in COM WP 23-02. Additional details and highlights on the 2024 budget estimate were provided in STACFAD WP 23-07.

Budget Estimate 2024	Approved Budget 2023
\$2,636,000	\$2,650,000

The 2024 budget estimate of \$2,636,000 represents a decrease of \$14,000 or 0.5% over the prior year's approved budget.

It should be noted that the budget for both 2023 and 2024 include recruitment and relocation costs for the Executive Secretary changeover which are nonrecurring items. If the recruitment and relocation costs were removed from the budget analysis, the increase for 2024 would be \$45,000 or 1.75%.

The Secretariat is not immune to price increases caused by current inflation. The Secretariat has attempted to hold costs steady whenever possible when preparing the budget estimate. However, increases have been budgeted for the hosting of the Annual Meeting in Halifax as well as travel costs.

The personnel services budget estimate is down \$13,000 from the prior year. NAFO follows the salary scales of similar positions held in the Public Service of Canada which provide for routine economic and salary step increases. Public Service of Canada contracts which have been negotiated in 2023 have included economic increases higher than what was previously anticipated. This has resulted in an increase to the salaries budget estimate. Offsetting the salaries budget increase, the latest actuarial valuation of the NAFO pension plan indicated a reduction in the unfunded liability, therefore the required annual payments to reduce the unfunded liability have also decreased. This resulted in a decrease to the superannuation and annuities budget estimate from the prior year.

The sessional meetings budget includes all costs associated with the hosting of the September Annual Meeting in Halifax, Canada. There is a limited availability of venues to host an annual meeting in Halifax and costs have increased dramatically since NAFO last hosted in Halifax in 2015. The sessional meetings budget estimate provides for a \$48,000 increase.

The recruitment process for the next NAFO Executive Secretary (ES) was launched in 2022 with an appointment for the 2023–2026 term. The 2023 budget included \$85,000 of relocation costs for both the incoming and outgoing Executive Secretaries. Certain relocation costs have been deferred until 2024. The relocation fund established in 2017 is anticipated to have \$46,000 available in the fund to offset the 2024 and future recruitment and relocation expenses.

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The budget for 2024 of \$2,636,000 (Annex 3) be adopted.**

A preliminary calculation of billing for the 2024 financial year is included in Annex 5.

13. Budget Forecast for 2025 and 2026

The preliminary budget forecast for 2025 (\$2,690,000) and 2026 (\$2,765,000) (Annex 4) was provided in COM WP 23-02. The forecasts were approved in principle, and it was noted that the budget for 2025 will be reviewed in detail at the next Annual Meeting.

14. Adoption of 2023/2024 Staff Committee Appointees

The NAFO Staff Committee was established to address the rare occurrence when a staff conflict cannot be resolved internally. In such an instance, the Staff Committee may be asked to intervene and to assist in achieving a solution through mediation. The Staff Committee has not been called on since its inception in 2005.

The Secretariat members nominated the following people to serve as members of the Staff Committee for September 2023–September 2024: Brian Healey (Canada), Ignacio Granell (European Union) and Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America).

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The Commission appoint the three Staff Committee nominees for September 2023–September 2024: Brian Healey (Canada), Ignacio Granell (European Union) and Deirdre Warner-Kramer (USA).**

15. Other Business

The following other matters were discussed under this agenda item, namely:

a. Alternative Funding Approaches for Annual Meetings

Canada suggested an initial discussion on possible alternative funding approaches for Annual Meetings be explored.

In the past, STACFAD has strongly urged Contracting Parties to strive, whenever possible, to provide more than 12 months notice of the intention to extend an invitation to host a NAFO Annual Meeting. This would help avoid potential negative financial of implications NAFO having to make a non-refundable deposit to secure conference space.

There are a variety of factors such as internal domestic policies of individual Contracting Parties that make it challenging to make budgetary commitments more than one year in advance.

The establishment of an annual meeting fund may better allow Contracting Parties to provide further advance notice of the intention to extend an invitation to host a NAFO Annual Meeting. The further in advance that notice can be provided would result in greater availability of meeting venue options. An annual meeting fund would provide opportunity for smaller Contracting Parties to extend an invitation to host that it may not have been able to otherwise. To illustrate the cost comparison between Annual Meetings hosted by NAFO or by a Contracting Party, the Secretariat provided a summary of recent NAFO Annual Meeting expenses (STACFAD WP 23-16 (Revised)).

The members of STACFAD supported the establishment of exploring alternate funding approaches. It was encouraged that the Secretariat work intersessionally, in consultation with STACFAD members, to identify options and ultimately develop a proposal of alternative funding approaches for Annual Meetings for consideration at the 2024 Annual Meeting. This could include, as appropriate, a review of current practices employed by other RFMOs when funding an Annual Meeting.

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The Secretariat work intersessionally, in consultation with STACFAD members, to identify options and develop a proposal for Alternative Funding Approaches for Annual Meetings for presentation at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

b. Paperless Meeting Documentation Policy

As agreed at the 2018 Annual Meeting, the distribution of meeting documentation was reduced from one paper copy per meeting delegate to three (3) paper copies per Contracting Parties, unless requested otherwise. This shift significantly reduced the amount of paper generated at NAFO Meetings as well as reduced the costs and resources dedicated to printing and distribution of meeting documentation.

The use of NAFO Meetings SharePoint has increased and the electronic distribution of meeting documentation before, during and after meeting hours is now the primary means of distributing documents. In support of sustainability, and as a natural evolution of the current meeting documentation policy, STACFAD agreed to recommend that a paperless approach to meeting documentation be implemented for 2024 with an individual Contracting Party retaining the option to request a paper copy.

STACFAD recommends that:

- **Meeting documentation be distributed exclusively by electronic means unless requested otherwise.**

It was suggested that the Secretariat explore a notification capability to allow meeting delegates to receive an alert when a file or folder changes on the SharePoint. The activation of this feature would allow delegates to be updated as new documentation becomes available.

c. Update from the Russian Federation on the status of its contribution payment

The Russian Federation provided an update on the continued efforts to make its contribution payment.

Canada confirmed that it has provided to Russian officials the information required to transfer funds to the NAFO Secretariat to pay its assessed contributions.

d. Proposed Options to alleviate SC Workload

During the Annual Meeting, the joint session of Commission–Scientific Council requested STACFAD to provide estimated budgetary implications for the proposed options to alleviate SC Workload in response to the report and recommendations of the *NAFO Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council Meeting*, 25 April. In its role, STACFAD considered budgetary implications of the potential options that were proposed and not the merit of these options.

STACFAD was tasked to provide budgetary estimates of two (2) potential options. The first was the expansion of the current internship program to include the creation of a second internship focused on scientific work and the second option was to provide funding to support 2–3 contracted experts.

It was discussed that there are potential additional costs, such as travel, beyond salary and other personnel benefits. In addition to budgetary implications, it was noted there are other factors to be considered. If the expectation is for the additional personnel to work on-site at the NAFO Secretariat then consideration needs to be given to if the current office is capable of accommodating these additional personnel.

Based on additional feedback from the Commission and Scientific Council, STACFAD was further asked to determine the cost to support one (1) contracted expert for a four-month term with included estimated travel costs to the June Scientific Council meeting in-person, and if such funding could be made available. The estimated cost for such a request would be approximately \$85,000 as presented in (STACFAD WP 23-14 Rev. 3).

It was noted that while STACFAD fully supports the objective of alleviating the workload of SC, some Contracting Parties had limited flexibility for unforeseen additional expense of this amount. It was noted that if Contracting Parties had been made aware earlier in the process of preparing the 2024 budget forecast, further options could have been considered. For those reasons, the funding to support one (1) contracted expert for a four-month term with included estimated travel costs to the June Scientific Council meeting in-person could not be available in 2024.

It was agreed to continue to consider costing options and potentially incorporate them in the 2025 budget forecast pending direction from the Commission relating to financial costs in the broader context of discussions about how to manage the SC's workload. It was also noted that that some Contracting Parties do not see increased budgetary expenses as the only solution to alleviate the workload of SC and other options should be considered outside the scope of STACFAD.

STACFAD recommends:

- **The postponement of the existing internship in 2024 and reallocation of these funds in the budget forecast to scientific purposes, if required.**

16. Election of vice-Chair

According to Rule 5.4 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure: Commission "*The Committees shall elect, to serve for two years, their own Chairperson and vice-Chairperson, who shall be allowed a vote.*"

The current Chair, Robert Fagan (Canada), was re-elected in September 2022.

Report of STACFAD,
18–22 September 2023

The vice-Chair position is currently vacant as Jake Round (United Kingdom) stepped down in June 2023.

Imogen Gibbons (United Kingdom) was nominated and elected as vice-Chair for a two-year term.

17. Time and Place of 2024–2026 Annual Meetings

It was previously agreed that the dates for the 2024–2025 Annual Meetings be as follows:

2024 - 23 – 27 September in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

2025 - 15 – 19 September will be held in Halifax, unless an invitation to host is extended

STACFAD reviewed and recommended the dates for the 2026 Annual Meeting as follows:

2026 - 21 – 25 September

STACFAD recommends that:

- **The 2026 Annual Meeting be held 21–25 September 2026 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, unless an invitation to host is extended by a Contracting Party and accepted by the Organization.**

18. Adjournment

The final session of the STACFAD meeting adjourned at 18:45 hours on 20 September 2023. The meeting report was adopted by correspondence.

Gratitude was expressed to the Committee members for their effective cooperation this week, and to the NAFO Secretariat for its excellent support.

Annex 1. List of Participants

CHAIR	Fagan, Robert (Canada)
CANADA	Her, Natalie (virtual) Johnson, Kate Marsden, Dale
DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF THE FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)	Nygård Jensen, Rebekka
EUROPEAN UNION	Błażkiewicz, Bernard
FRANCE (IN RESPECT OF ST. PIERRE ET MIQUELON)	Lintanf, Philippe
JAPAN	Nomura, Ichiro Onodera, Ryo (virtual) Takehara, Toya (virtual)
NORWAY	Fagerbakke, Sara Lier
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Tairov, Temur (virtual)
UKRAINE	Ohorodnik, Artem (virtual)
UNITED KINGDOM	Gibbins, Imogen
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Mencher, Elizabethann Yanoff, Callan Warner-Kramer, Deirdre
NAFO SECRETARIAT	Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Goodick, Stan LeFort, Lisa

Annex 2. Agenda

1.	Opening by the Chair, Robert Fagan (Canada)
2.	Appointment of Rapporteur
3.	Adoption of Agenda
4.	Audited Financial Statements for 2022
5.	Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat
6.	Financial Statements for 2023
7.	Review of Accumulated Surplus and Funds
8.	Personnel Matters
9.	Internship Program
10.	Report of the Annual Meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), 25–27 April 2023
11.	Implementation of 2018 Performance Review Panel recommendations
	a. Design a potential new visual identity for NAFO
	b. Data classification and access rights of the NAFO websites
12.	Budget Estimate for 2024
13.	Budget Forecast for 2025 and 2026
14.	Adoption of 2023/2024 Staff Committee Appointees
15.	Other Business
	a. Alternative Funding Approaches for Annual Meetings
	b. Paperless Meeting Documentation Policy
	c. Update from the Russian Federation on the status of its contribution payment
	d. Proposed options to alleviate SC Workload
16.	Election of vice-Chair
17.	Time and Place of 2024–2026 Annual Meetings
18.	Adjournment

Annex 3. Budget Estimate for 2024NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANIZATION
Budget Estimate for 2024
(Canadian Dollars)

	Approved Budget 2023	Projected Expenditures 2023	Preliminary Budget Forecast 2024	Budget Estimate 2024
1 Personnel Services				
a) Salaries	\$1,269,000	\$1,280,000	\$1,311,000	\$1,302,000
b) Superannuation and Annuities	495,000	495,000	500,000	450,000
c) Medical and Insurance Plans	113,000	110,000	116,000	112,000
d) Employee Benefits	99,000	114,000	79,000	99,000
Subtotal Personnel Services	<u>1,976,000</u>	<u>1,999,000</u>	<u>2,006,000</u>	<u>1,963,000</u>
2 Additional Help	2,000	8,000	2,000	2,000
3 Communications	27,000	27,000	28,000	28,000
4 Computer Services	71,000	71,000	67,000	71,000
5 Equipment	27,000	27,000	27,000	27,000
6 Fishery Monitoring	45,000	45,000	46,000	46,000
7 Hospitality Allowance	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
8 Internship	14,000	0	14,000	14,000
9 Materials and Supplies	31,000	31,000	32,000	32,000
10 NAFO Meetings				
a) Sessional	192,000	140,000	195,000	240,000
b) Inter-sessional Scientific	30,000	24,000	30,000	30,000
c) Inter-sessional Other	48,000	48,000	48,000	50,000
Subtotal NAFO Meetings	<u>270,000</u>	<u>212,000</u>	<u>273,000</u>	<u>320,000</u>
11 Other Meetings and Travel	40,000	40,000	40,000	45,000
12 Professional Services	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
13 Publications	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
14 Recruitment and Relocation (Note 1)	85,000	66,000	0	26,000
	<u>\$2,650,000</u>	<u>\$2,588,000</u>	<u>\$2,597,000</u>	<u>\$2,636,000</u>

Note 1: Recruitment and relocation expenses will be paid from the available funds in the Recruitment and Relocation Fund. Balance in the fund as of 01 January 2023 was \$100,000.



Notes on Budget Estimate 2024
(Canadian Dollars)

Item 1(a)	Salaries Salaries budget estimate for 2024.	\$1,302,000
Item 1(b)	Superannuation and Annuities Employer's pension plan which includes employer's contributions, administration costs, actuarial fees and the required annual payment towards previous pension plan deficits.	\$450,000
Item 1(c)	Group Medical and Insurance Plans Employer's portion of Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, Group Life Insurance, Long Term Disability Insurance and Medical Coverage.	\$112,000
Item 1(d)	Employee Benefits Employee benefits as per the NAFO Staff Rules including overtime, repatriation grant, termination benefits, vacation pay, and home leave travel for internationally recruited members of the Secretariat.	\$99,000
Item 2	Additional Support Other assistance as required.	\$2,000
Item 3	Communications Phone and internet services Postage and Courier	\$28,000 \$21,000 7,000
Item 4	Computer Services Computer hardware, software, supplies, support and website hosting.	\$71,000
Item 5	Equipment Leases (print department printer, photocopier and postage meter) Purchases Maintenance	\$27,000 \$14,000 10,000 3,000
Item 6	Fishery Monitoring Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) annual maintenance fee including programming changes as required due to changes to CEM Oracle database annual maintenance	\$46,000 \$43,000 3,000
Item 10(a)	NAFO Sessional Meetings Annual Meeting, September 2024 SC Meeting, June and October 2024	\$240,000

Item 10(b)	NAFO Inter-sessional Scientific Meetings Provision for inter-sessional meetings, symposia and a general provision for unforeseen expenses necessarily incurred by SC required for the provision of answering requests for advice from the Commission.	\$30,000
Item 10(c)	NAFO Inter-sessional Other General provision for Commission inter-sessional meetings.	\$50,000
Item 11	Other Meetings and Travel International Meetings regularly attended by the NAFO Secretariat which may include the following: Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA), Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Co-ordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP), Fisheries Resources Monitoring Systems (FIRMS), International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), Inspector Workshops, Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN), United Nations, etc.	\$45,000
Item 12	Professional Services Professional Services (audit, consulting, legal fees, and insurance) Professional Development and Training Public Relations	\$45,000 \$29,000 11,000 5,000
Item 13	Publications Production costs of NAFO publications, booklets, brochures, posters, etc.	\$14,000
Item 14	Recruitment and Relocation Relocation costs for the NAFO Executive Secretary (2023-2026 term) deferred from 2023.	\$26,000

Annex 4. Preliminary Budget Forecast for 2025 and 2026

NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANIZATION
Preliminary Budget Forecast for 2025 and 2026
(Canadian Dollars)

	Preliminary Budget Forecast 2025	Preliminary Budget Forecast 2026
1 Personnel Services		
a) Salaries	\$1,357,000	\$1,417,000
b) Superannuation and Annuities	456,000	462,000
c) Medical and Insurance Plans	115,500	119,000
d) Employee Benefits	109,500	108,000
Subtotal Personnel Services	2,038,000	2,106,000
2 Additional Help	2,000	2,000
3 Communications	28,000	29,000
4 Computer Services	71,000	72,000
5 Equipment	27,000	27,000
6 Fishery Monitoring	48,000	49,000
7 Hospitality Allowance	3,000	3,000
8 Internship	14,000	14,000
9 Materials and Supplies	32,000	33,000
10 NAFO Meetings		
a) Sessional	243,000	246,000
b) Inter-sessional Scientific	30,000	30,000
c) Inter-sessional Other	50,000	50,000
Subtotal NAFO Meetings	323,000	326,000
11 Other Meetings and Travel	45,000	45,000
12 Professional Services	45,000	45,000
13 Publications	14,000	14,000
14 Recruitment and Relocation	-	-
	\$2,690,000	\$2,765,000

Annex 5. Preliminary Calculation of Billing for Contracting Parties for 2024

**Preliminary calculation of billing
for the 2024 financial year
(Canadian Dollars)**

Budget Estimate	\$2,636,000
Deduct: Amount Allocated from Accumulated Surplus	-\$404,000
Amount Allocated from Relocation Fund	-\$26,000
Funds required to meet 2024 Administrative Budget	\$2,206,000

Part A

Contracting Parties	2021 nominal catches (metric tons)	Catch %	NAFO Convention Article IX.2.a,b,c			
			10%	30%	60%	Subtotal
Canada	156,090	36.24%	\$91,713	\$50,908	\$479,673	\$622,294
Cuba	-	0.00%	-	\$50,908	-	\$50,908
Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) (Note 2)	166,507	38.67%	\$97,834	\$50,908	\$511,836	\$660,578
European Union	42,501	9.87%	-	\$50,908	\$130,638	\$181,546
France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)	276	0.06%	\$162	\$50,908	\$794	\$51,864
Iceland	-	0.00%	-	\$50,908	-	\$50,908
Japan	1,677	0.39%	-	\$50,908	\$5,161	\$56,069
Norway	1,576	0.37%	-	\$50,908	\$4,897	\$55,805
Republic of Korea	-	0.00%	-	\$50,908	-	\$50,908
Russian Federation	9,437	2.19%	-	\$50,908	\$28,986	\$79,894
Ukraine	-	0.00%	-	\$50,908	-	\$50,908
United Kingdom	-	0.00%	-	\$50,908	-	\$50,908
United States of America	52,574	12.21%	\$30,891	\$50,908	\$161,611	\$243,410
Total	430,638	100.00%	\$220,600	\$661,804	\$1,323,596	\$2,206,000

Part B

Contracting Parties	Subtotal from Part A	NAFO Convention Article IX.2.d (Note 1)					Subtotal	Total contribution
		% Contribution	Catch % minus DFG	10%	30%	60%		
Canada	\$622,294	28.21%	59.11%	\$29,573	\$9,896	\$140,396	\$179,865	\$802,159
Cuba	\$50,908	2.31%	-	-	\$9,896	-	\$9,896	\$60,804
Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) (Note 2)	\$660,578	29.94%	-	-\$39,586	-\$118,752	-\$237,520	-\$395,858	\$264,720
European Union	\$181,546	8.23%	16.09%	-	\$9,896	\$38,217	\$48,113	\$229,659
France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)	\$51,864	2.35%	0.10%	\$52	\$9,896	\$238	\$10,186	\$62,050
Iceland	\$50,908	2.31%	-	-	\$9,896	-	\$9,896	\$60,804
Japan	\$56,069	2.54%	0.63%	-	\$9,896	\$1,497	\$11,393	\$67,462
Norway	\$55,805	2.53%	0.60%	-	\$9,896	\$1,426	\$11,322	\$67,127
Republic of Korea	\$50,908	2.31%	-	-	\$9,896	-	\$9,896	\$60,804
Russian Federation	\$79,894	3.62%	3.57%	-	\$9,896	\$8,480	\$18,376	\$98,270
Ukraine	\$50,908	2.31%	-	-	\$9,896	-	\$9,896	\$60,804
United Kingdom	\$50,908	2.31%	-	-	\$9,896	-	\$9,896	\$60,804
United States of America	\$243,410	11.03%	19.90%	\$9,961	\$9,896	\$47,266	\$67,123	\$310,533
Total	\$2,206,000	100.00%	100.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,206,000

Note 1

The annual contribution of any Contracting Party which has a population of less than 300,000 inhabitants shall be limited to a maximum of 12% of the total budget. When this contribution is so limited, the remaining part of the budget shall be divided among the other Contracting Parties in accordance with Article IX.2.a,b and c of the NAFO Convention.

Note 2

Faroe Islands 2,631 metric tons
Greenland 163,876 metric tons



Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group
Process (E-WG) Meeting**

02 November 2023
via Webex

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2023

**Report of the NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process
(E-WG) Meeting**

02 November 2023
via Webex

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Report of the NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) Meeting

02 November 2023
via Webex

1. Opening by the Chair, Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir (NAFO Secretariat)

The Chair, Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir (NAFO Secretariat) opened the meeting on Thursday, 02 November 2023 at 08:05 hours (UTC/GMT -3 hours, Time in Halifax) and welcomed the Chairs and co-Chairs of the NAFO Working Groups (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as circulated (Annex 2).

4. Finalize schedule for upcoming meetings scheduled for 2024

The tentative schedule of 2024 NAFO Meetings was presented in COM-SC WP 23-03.

The group focused its discussions on the NAFO Meetings still to be scheduled for 2024. It was noted that the exact date(s), format (i.e., in-person, virtual or hybrid) and location of many of the meetings are still to be confirmed by the Secretariat, after consultation with the respective Chairs, co-Chairs and Contracting Parties.

The tentative schedule of 2024 NAFO Meetings was revised in COM-SC WP 23-03 (Rev.) to incorporate the discussions of the group (Annex 3).

5. Consider the three two-week periods during the NAFO year for scheduling of possible intersessional meetings in 2025

To assist in meeting planning, the Working Group selects three two-week periods annually in which meetings of NAFO subsidiary bodies and Working Groups may be held. It was noted that as always, these two-week periods would not require meetings of NAFO subsidiary bodies to meet during those dates nor would they preclude the scheduling of meetings of NAFO subsidiary bodies outside those dates.

The group discussed if there was merit in continuing to establish these three two-week periods annually and it was agreed this provides helpful guidance when scheduling meetings. The three two-week periods proposed for 2025 were presented in COM-SC WP 23-04.

6. Recommendations to forward to the Commission and Scientific Council

The Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) recommends that:

- **For the 2025 NAFO year, the following two-week periods, be considered for NAFO intersessional meetings:**
 - **17 – 28 February 2025;**
 - **31 March – 11 April 2025; and**
 - **14 – 25 July 2025**

7. Other matters

- **Meeting formats and participation**

The group noted that during the WG-RBMS Meeting in July 2023, there was discussion regarding meeting formats (in-person, virtual, hybrid) and Contracting Party participation.

The new hybrid meeting format has become standard practice following the COVID-19 pandemic. It was noted that in-person participation may better facilitate the meeting dialogue and may allow better opportunities for networking and additional discussions on the margins of meetings. The group noted that in-person participation may not always be possible as some Contracting Parties are facing travel constraints. A hybrid meeting format allows those delegates who otherwise have been unable to travel to an in-person meeting to participate virtually. The problem arises when the majority of the Contracting Parties decide to participate virtually so that the advantages of face-to-face participation are lost and it would probably be more efficient for everyone if the meeting were held virtually.

It was felt that feedback on meeting formats (in-person, virtual, hybrid) and Contracting Party participation from NAFO Bodies, Standing Committees, and Working Groups would help facilitate this discussion. For that reason, it is requested that the matter be brought forward at upcoming NAFO meetings in 2024.

The Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) agrees that:

- **Feedback from NAFO Bodies, Standing Committees, and Working Groups is required on meeting formats (in-person, virtual, hybrid) and Contracting Party participation. It is requested that the matter be brought forward at upcoming NAFO meetings in 2024.**

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be scheduled virtually early in November 2024.

The exact date and time(s) to be determined following the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September 2024.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 09:00 hours (UTC/GMT -3 hours, Time in Halifax).

Annex 1. List of Participants

CHAIR OF COMMISSION	Warner-Kramer, Deirdre (USA)
CHAIR OF SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL	González, Diana (European Union)
VICE-CHAIR OF SC	Simpson, Mark (Canada)
CHAIR OF STACFAD	Fagan, Robert (Canada)
CO-CHAIRS OF CESAG	Sosebee, Katherine (USA) Warner-Kramer, Deirdre (USA)
CO-CHAIR OF WG-EAFFM	Mencher, Elizabethann (USA) Sacau Cuadrado, Mar (European Union)
CO-CHAIR OF WG-RBMS	González-Costas, Fernando (European Union)
NAFO SECRETARIAT	Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana Blasdale, Tom Goodick, Stan LeFort, Lisa

Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by the Chair, Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir (NAFO Secretariat)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Finalize schedule for upcoming meetings scheduled for 2024
5. Consider the three two-week periods during the NAFO year for scheduling of possible intersessional meetings in 2025
6. Recommendations to forward to the Commission and Scientific Council
7. Other matters
8. Date and Time of Next Meeting
9. Adjournment

Annex 3. 2024 NAFO Meeting – Tentative Schedule
(COM-SC Working Paper 23-03 Revised)

The following NAFO Meetings are scheduled, or are to be scheduled, for 2024:

Date	Title	Venue
January 2024 (TBD)	<p align="center">Scientific Council Meeting</p> <p><i>For GHL MSE: Testing CMP performance against established management objectives & initial discussions on exceptional circumstances protocol.</i></p> <p><i>For 3LN RED MSE: Address and review any further work on OMs, performance statistics, and CMPs stemming from WG-RBMS</i></p> <p>Proposed: In consultation with the SC Chair, a doodle poll is to be circulated to identify a date for a one-day virtual meeting during the weeks of 08 and 15 Jan.</p>	Webex
TBD To be discussed during Jan. SC Meeting.	<p align="center">NAFO: Scientific Council/Precautionary Approach Framework Working Group (PA-WG)</p> <p>Discussions on the PAF will take place during the January SC meeting, and an additional PA-WG Meeting may be scheduled but more details to follow the January SC Meeting.</p>	TBD
23 Feb.	Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM) Meeting	Virtual
26-Feb. – 08-Mar.	* First period for the scheduling of Working Group meetings	
15–26 Apr.	* Second period for the scheduling of Working Group meetings	
Spring 2024	<p align="center">NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting</p> <p>Proposed: A three (3) day meeting to be held virtually from 09:00 to 13:00 hours daily during the 15-26 April period.</p> <p>The Secretariat to confirm with Contracting Parties that the Spring WG-RBMS meeting will be held virtually during the 15-26 April period.</p>	Virtual
Early 2024	<p align="center">NAFO Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council</p> <p>Proposed: A half-day meeting to be held virtually in early 2024 (perhaps during the first two-week period of 26 February to 08 March)</p> <p>The COM and SC Chairs to discuss and confirm if one or two meetings are required. The proposal is for one meeting to be held in early 2024 and one to be held following the SC Meeting in June. It was noted that STACFAD is working intersessionally on this matter too.</p>	Virtual
Prior to 30 Apr.	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting	via correspondence unless new issues emerge

Date	Title	Venue
Prior to STACTIC May Mtg.	NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)	TBD
06–08 May	NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting	Copenhagen, Denmark
Prior to June SC Mtg.	NAFO SC STACREC Data Review Meeting Proposed: The Secretariat to confirm with meeting participants to hold the virtual meeting on 02 May	Virtual
31 May –13-Jun	NAFO Scientific Council and its Standing Committees Meeting	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Following the SC Meeting in June	NAFO Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council Proposed: A half-day meeting to be held virtually following the SC Meeting in June	Virtual
12–23 Aug.	<i>* Third period for the scheduling of Working Group meetings</i>	
Week of 12 Aug. (TBC)	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting Proposed: The WG-EAFFM and WG-RBMS Meetings to be held back-to-back. The WG-EAFFM Meeting (2.5 to 3 days) is to be held followed by the WG-RBMS Meeting (3 days). The Secretariat to explore if meetings can be held during the week of 12 August as well as potential hosting options in Europe. Further details are expected in January.	In Europe (TBC)
Week of 12 Aug. (TBC)	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting Proposed: The WG-EAFFM and WG-RBMS Meetings to be held back-to-back. The WG-EAFFM Meeting (2.5 to 3 days) is to be held followed by the WG-RBMS Meeting (3 days). The Secretariat to explore if meetings can be held during the week of 12 August as well as potential hosting options in Europe. Further details are expected in January.	In Europe (TBC)
Sep. TBD	NAFO SC and STACFIS Shrimp Assessment Meeting <i>Focus: Shrimp in Div. 3M Assessment</i> Proposed: The one-day meeting is to be held virtually directly before the Annual Meeting in September.	Virtual
23–27 Sep.	NAFO 46 th Annual Meeting	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Oct./Nov. TBD	NAFO/ICES <i>Pandalus</i> Assessment Group Meeting (NIPAG)	TBD

Date	Title	Venue
Nov. TBD	NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) Meeting	Virtual
Nov. TBD	NAFO Working Group on Ecosystem Science and Assessment (WG-ESA) Meeting The meeting date and further details to follow WG-ESA in November 2023.	TBD

* *As always, these two-week periods would not require meetings of NAFO subsidiary bodies to meet during those dates nor would they preclude the scheduling of meetings of NAFO subsidiary bodies outside those dates.*

** *Please note, the meeting dates have not all been confirmed and may be subject to change.*

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting

16-17 April 2024
via Webex

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2024

Report of WG-RBMS,
16-17 April 2024

Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting

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Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting

16–17 April 2024
via Webex

1. Opening by co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada)

The meeting was opened by the co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada), at 09:06 hours (UTC/GMT -3 hours in Halifax, Nova Scotia) on 16 April 2024. The co-Chairs welcomed representatives from Canada, European Union, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and United States of America (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteurs

The NAFO Secretariat (Dayna Bell MacCallum and Jana Aker) was appointed as rapporteur of this meeting.

The co-Chairs thanked the former Scientific Council Coordinator, Tom Blasdale, for his work with the WG-RBMS before his departure from the NAFO Secretariat.

3. Adoption of Agenda

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

4. Progress on the MSE process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut

Paul Regular (Canada), on behalf of the Greenland halibut Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) technical team, presented an update on the MSE for Greenland halibut in NAFO Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO.

At the January 2024 Scientific Council meeting, a level of plausibility was assigned to each of the operating models (OMs), see Table 1. The plausibility levels are subjective and intended to serve as a means to weigh the operating models. As an example, it was explained that a high plausibility OM should pass the primary and secondary performance statistics requirements, however a low plausibility OM may fail a secondary performance statistic requirement, but that should not result in failing the management procedure. The working group supported moving forward with the inclusion of the plausibility levels in the robustness table, noting that discussions on how to use the levels assigned will continue in Scientific Council.

Table 1. The robustness tests and operating models (OMs) for the Greenland halibut management strategy evaluation.

OMs for GHM MSE from SC July meeting	Plausibility	SCAA	SSM
OM1: Base Case	High	✓	✓
OM2: Hockey-stick stock-recruit relationship	High	✓	✓
OM3: Assume allometric natural mortality	High	✓	✓
OM4: Include future random error in natural mortality	High	✓	
OM5a: Assume PROVISIONAL conversion factors are biased (10%)	High	✓	✓
OM5b: Assume the 3LNO conversion factor is biased (10%)	High	✓	✓
OM6: Increase the variance in natural mortality for younger ages	Intermediate	✓	
OM7: Zero selectivity on plus-group	Intermediate	✓	✓
OM8: Decrease the doming in the commercial selectivities	Intermediate	✓	
OM9: Decrease starting values $N(2022, a)$ by 10% for all ages a	Intermediate	✓	✓
OM10: 8 years with recruitment halved	Low	✓	✓
OM11: Assume senescence	Low	✓	✓
OM12: 8 years with increased natural mortality	Low	✓	✓
OM13: Catch = 110% TAC	Low	✓	✓
OM14: 8 years with limited survey data from 3LNO	Low	✓	✓
OM15: EU only data	Low	✓	✓

The preliminary results of the Candidate Management Procedure (CMP) testing were presented by Paul Regular and Doug Butterworth (Japan). These results are preliminary pending availability of the final calibration factors for the Canadian fall survey. It is expected that these calibration factors will be available soon and the final results will be presented at the Scientific Council in June. It was noted that, at the July 2023 WG-RBMS meeting (COM-SC Doc. 23-03), it was agreed to move forward with testing a probability-based alternative CMP. However, during the January 2024 Scientific Council meeting, due to time constraints, it was decided that this work was not able to be advanced; however, the alternative CMP will continue to be reviewed by the Scientific Council, and any significant updates will be brought forward to the WG-RBMS in the future.

Therefore, the CMP being considered is the current combined Slope and Target management procedure. The results of the performance statistics related to biomass and catches for each operating model are summarized in Figure 1. Additional details of the Statistical Catch at Age (SCAA) and the State-Space Model (SSM) management strategy trials and their results are outlined in SCR Doc. 24/001REV and SCR Doc. 24/002, respectively.

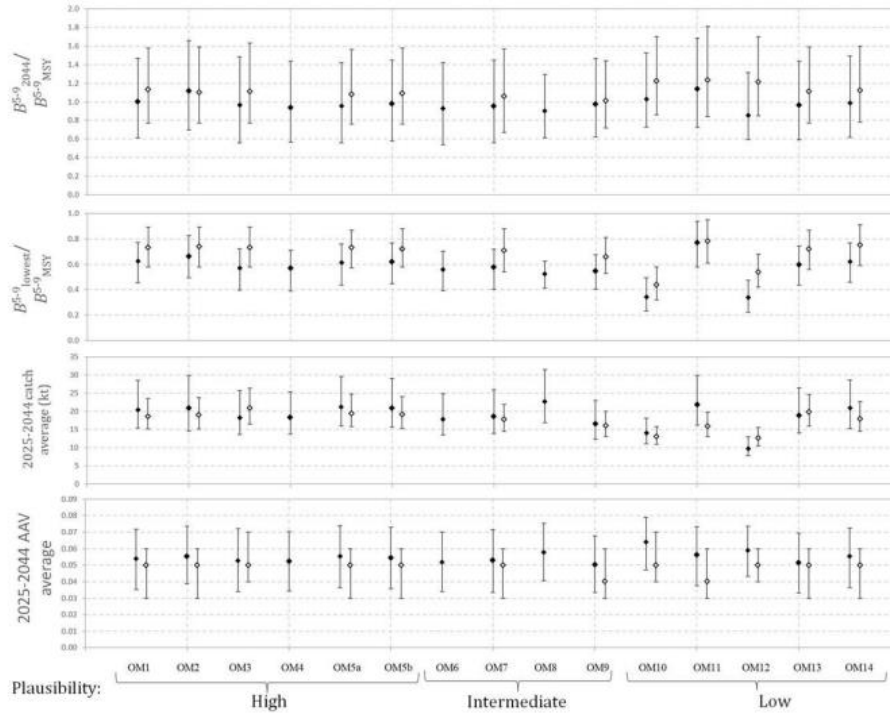


Figure 1. Performance statistics related to biomass and catches for each operating model under the new candidate management procedure for the SCAA (black diamonds) and SSM (white diamonds).

Paul Regular (Canada) presented a Scientific Council proposal to change the exceptional circumstances protocol in the new Greenland halibut MSE. The protocol was reviewed and revised (see Annex 1 of SCS Doc. 24/02) to reflect the current operating models and management procedure being considered, given the better balance of the weighting of surveys. In consideration of the ongoing exceptional circumstances work, the Scientific Council noted a preference to continue discussions on the revised exceptional circumstances protocol at its June 2024 meeting. The working group supported a review and further discussion of the exceptional circumstances protocol at the August 2024 meeting.

The working group thanked the Greenland halibut MSE technical team for all of the work that has gone into the process.

5. Progress on the MSE process for 3LN redfish

Andrea Perreault (Canada) presented an update on the progress of the 3LN redfish MSE process. The update included progress on the age-structured catch at length (SURBAL) and the surplus production (SPiCT) models. In January 2024, the Scientific Council **recommended** continuing the work of developing the OMs for both models, prioritizing the OMs based on the SURBAL for its higher flexibility since these models allow a flexible framework for simulating episodic recruitment (SCS Doc. 24/02). The Scientific Council also **recommended** that the Base Case OMs be based on the assumption of 3LN as a stock, and if time permits, other OMs with difference population structure be developed.

Following the workplan outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 23-06 (Rev. 3), the performance statistics were to be finalized at this meeting. Andrea Perreault presented draft performance statistics, noting that they are still subject to refinement following the results of additional testing, and will be discussed by the Scientific Council in tandem with the operating models. The working group reviewed the proposal for the performance statistics of the redfish MSE, and did not raise any concerns. It was agreed to delay the final proposal until having agreed on the final list of OMs and CMPs to be tested. The working group thanked Andrea for the update and the progress made so far on the 3LN redfish MSE process.

6. Next steps in the MSE processes

The working group reviewed the MSE workplan outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 23-06 (Rev. 3), and noted that the progress made is currently in line with the expected outcomes, recognizing that work is still in progress. The working group reflected on the monumental efforts of the Scientific Council in the MSE processes and that the working group is on target to meet its goals for the year. The workplan will be reviewed at the August 2024 WG-RBMS meeting, noting specifically that the timelines for the 3LN redfish MSE process will need to be updated.

7. Exceptional circumstances for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut in 2023

The Scientific Council, at its meeting in January 2024 (SCS Doc. 24/02), noted that it is anticipated that a new Harvest Control Rule (HCR), to be developed under the current MSE, will be used to compute the TAC for 2025. However, in the event that the new MSE is not completed and/or adopted by the Commission by September 2024, it suggested that it may be necessary to use the HCR and exceptional circumstances protocol adopted by NAFO in 2017 for 2018 to 2023 inclusive. Scientific Council subsequently, **recommended** *estimating the 2025 TAC using the same HCR that was used in 2023 to produce the 2024 TAC*. During further intersessional discussions with members of the Greenland halibut MSE technical team and Scientific Council Executive, it was recognized that this management strategy was no longer in force. Article 10.1 of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures states: *The current Management Strategy (MS) for Greenland halibut stock in Subarea 2 + Divisions 3KLMNO adopted by NAFO in 2017 shall be in force from 2018 to 2023 inclusive.*

The working group acknowledged that, in the Commission requests to Scientific Council for 2025 (COM Doc. 23-09), there was no clear direction on whether the Scientific Council should provide advice based on the expired management strategy, or based on the new management strategy that has yet to be adopted by the Commission. However, taking into account the work completed to date, the working group noted that there were no significant issues outstanding that would impede the adoption of a new management strategy to inform the 2025 TAC. The working group agreed that the Scientific Council should move forward with the new management strategy and that advice based on the expired management strategy is not required.

Formal advice is not expected following the conclusion of the June 2024 Scientific Council meeting; however, an update on the new MSE process will be provided at the August 2024 WG-RBMS meeting. If exceptional circumstances are occurring, the WG-RBMS will provide guidance to the Scientific Council at this time. The working group supported the Scientific Council providing final advice on the 2025 TAC at its meeting in September, pending the adoption of the new MSE harvest control rule by the Commission at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The working group noted the importance of having a clear transition procedure established for future revisions of management strategies in MSE processes going forward and, for this year, agreed that when recommendations for the Commission are developed at its August meeting, that it should include a clearly defined process for the transition period.

8. Precautionary Approach Review progress

The Chair of the NAFO Precautionary Approach Working Group (PA-WG), Fernando González-Costas (European Union), presented a summary of the latest PA-WG meeting that took place on 04 April 2024 (SCS Doc. 24/05). The PA-WG Chair thanked the technical teams for their efforts and the progress made on the precautionary approach. The presentation included the different approaches that will be used in the testing of the PA framework, the formulation of the HCR as well as the different models and scenarios that will be used in the testing process. More detailed information on these points can be found in the PA-WG report (SCS Doc. 24/05).

As part of the presentation, the PA-WG Chair highlighted a management objectives proposal developed by the PA-WG, see Table 2. The working group reviewed and agreed to the management objectives as presented by the PA-WG. The working group acknowledged that the Scientific Council and the PA-WG will work intersessionally, in advance of the June Scientific Council meeting, to develop the performance statistics to measure the management objectives to facilitate testing. An update will be provided at the August 2024 WG-RBMS meeting.

Table 2. Management objectives for the Precautionary Approach Framework.

Management Objectives
Very low risk of stock depletion
Rebuild stocks to B_{MSY}
Maintain stocks above B_{MSY} more often than not
Maintain catches at approximately MSY in the long-term
Low risk of overfishing (fishing above F_{lim})
Good fishery performance (low interannual TAC variation, low yield loss while in the Cautious Zone)
Good stock recovery performance (good/rapid growth over time, good/short recovery times)

9. Other matters

No other matters were discussed under this agenda item.

10. Recommendations

There were no recommendations from this meeting, but the overall conclusions from the WG-RBMS are outlined below.

In relation to progress on the MSE process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut:

The working group endorsed the OMs and the plausibility rankings agreed upon by the Scientific Council (Table 1).

The working group agreed with the Scientific Council proposal to test only the combined Slope and Target CMP in the MSE.

The working group discussed the first proposed protocol for the exceptional circumstances of this MSE presented by the Scientific Council and agreed to continue its development for final approval at the August meeting.

The working group supported the Scientific Council providing final advice on the 2025 TAC at its meeting in September 2024.

The working group noted the importance of having a clear transition procedure established for future revisions of management strategies in MSE processes going forward and, for this year, agreed that when recommendations for the Commission are developed at its August meeting, that it should include a clearly defined process for the transition period.

In relation to the progress on the MSE process for 3LN Redfish:

The working group reviewed the proposal for the performance statistics of the redfish MSE and agreed to delay the final proposal until agreeing on the final list of OMs and CMPs to be tested.

In relation to the Precautionary Approach Review progress:

The working group agreed with the table of management objectives (Table 2) developed and presented by the PA-WG.

Report of WG-RBMS,
16-17 April 2024

11. Adoption of report

The report was adopted via correspondence.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 hours (UTC/GMT -3 hours in Halifax, Nova Scotia) on 17 April 2024.



Annex 1. List of Participants

CO-CHAIRS	González-Costas, Fernando Walsh, Ray
CANADA	Burridge, Angela Devitt, Steve Dwyer, Shelley Fagan, Robert Johnson, Kate Koen-Alonso, Mariano Krohn, Martha Lapointe, Sylvie Lebeau, Amy Perreault, Andrea Regular, Paul Schleit, Katie Simpson, Mark
EUROPEAN UNION	Alpoim, Ricardo Belmonte, Luis Dybiec, Leszek Garrido Fernández, Irene Gonçalves, Patricia Gonzalez-Troncoso, Diana Granell, Ignacio Lopes, Luis Merino, Adolfo Pérez Rodríguez, Alfonso Teixeira, Isabel Tuvi, Aare
JAPAN	Butterworth, Doug Iwano, Taisuke Rademeyer, Rebecca Takehara, Toya Taki, Kenji
NORWAY	Hvingel, Carsten
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Belyaev, Vladimir Fomin, Konstantin Tairov, Temur
UNITED KINGDOM	Fischer, Simon
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Jaburek, Shannah Kelly, Moira Mencher, Elizabethann Sosebee, Kathy Warner-Kramer, Deirdre
NAFO SECRETARIAT	Aker, Jana Bell MacCallum, Dayna LeFort, Lisa

Annex 2. Agenda

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3. Adoption of Agenda
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7. Exceptional circumstances for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut in 2023
8. Precautionary Approach Review progress
9. Other matters
10. Recommendations
11. Adoption of report
12. Adjournment

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)
Intersessional Meeting**

06-08 May 2024
Copenhagen, Denmark

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2024

**Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)
Intersessional Meeting**

06–08 May 2024
Copenhagen, Denmark

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**Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)
Intersessional Meeting**

06–08 May 2024
Copenhagen, Denmark

1. Opening by the Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America)

The Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America), opened the meeting at 09:06 hours on Monday, 06 May 2024. The Chair welcomed representatives, both in person and virtually, from the following Contracting Parties (CPs): Canada, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States of America (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The Provisional Agenda was circulated on 06 March 2024, with two insertions under agenda item 20 - Other Business, and four additional items were included at this meeting:

- a. From Norway on Introducing Electronic Reporting System (ERS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) in NAFO based on the FLUX UN/CEFACT International Standard
- b. From Canada on the 2024 NAFO Inspectors Workshop.
- c. From Canada on Closure of Others quota – Article 5.5(h)
- d. From Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) on the revision of FAO gear codes

The agenda was adopted as outlined in Annex 2.

Following the rules outlined in the *Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Rules of Procedure regarding data confidentiality and participation in meetings (COM Doc. 22-19)*, the Chair highlighted a nomination for in-camera sessions for agenda item 4 (specifically STACTIC WP 24-01 and STACTIC WP 24-02 including associated revisions and discussions), agenda item 5 (if the NAFO Secretariat was intending to display any information from the MCS Website), and agenda item 6 (specifically STACTIC WP 24-05 and associated revisions and discussions, depending on the data included). The Secretariat would not be presenting any detailed information from the NAFO MCS Website under agenda item 5, and Contracting Parties agreed that STACTIC WP 24-05 could be discussed in an open session. As a result, STACTIC WP 24-01 and STACTIC WP 24-02, and associated revisions and discussions under agenda item 4, were agreed to be held in an in-camera session.

4. Annual Compliance Review 2023

The NAFO Secretariat presented the draft Compilation of Fisheries Reports 2023 in STACTIC WP 24-01 (Rev. 2). Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for the work and provided initial comments and clarifications. Contracting Parties agreed to forward any further comments on STACTIC WP 24-01 (Rev. 3) to the NAFO Secretariat by 10 June 2024 for inclusion in the final version that will be circulated on 24 June 2024 in accordance with Rule 5.1(e) of the *NAFO Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations*.

The NAFO Secretariat also presented the Summary of Inspection Information for 2023 in STACTIC WP 24-02 (Rev. 2). A question was raised regarding the statute of limitations for NAFO infringement cases, and Contracting Parties shared information on the statute of limitations within their domestic procedures. The European Union also noted that some of the infringements issued in port were confirmation of infringements issued at-sea, and these will need to be clarified as some may be double counted in figure 5.4.2 of the draft

annual compliance review. Contracting Parties agreed to provide additional comments and feedback to the NAFO Secretariat by 10 June 2024.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the first draft Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review in STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 2). Contracting Parties provided initial comments and clarifications. Contracting Parties agreed to forward any further comments on STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 3) to the NAFO Secretariat by 10 June 2024. STACTIC also reflected on the agreement from the 2023 Annual Meeting to review the format of the annual compliance review and discuss the inclusion of other compliance elements and agreed to include a specific agenda item on the format of the annual compliance review at the 2024 Annual Meeting. It was also agreed that the Secretariat research the publicly available compliance review documents from other RFMOs to determine the type of information that is being included as background information for these discussions.

The NAFO Secretariat presented an analysis of available catch per unit of effort (CPUE) information in STACTIC WP 24-04, noting that the analysis was expanded following a request from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) from the 2023 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) highlighted that CPUE information would be useful in determining whether fishing capacity is commensurate with the quota available for a specific species and area and requested that the analysis continue to be expanded. Contracting Parties reflected on the information and noted a preference to have a specific proposal from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) to gain a better understanding of how this information would facilitate the compliance review process before tasking the NAFO Secretariat with additional data analysis. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agreed to draft a proposal on this for the 2024 Annual Meeting, with the inclusion of some examples to further assist with the analysis.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will provide comments to the NAFO Secretariat on STACTIC WP 24-01 (Rev. 3), STACTIC WP 24-02 (Rev. 2), and STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 3) by 10 June 2024.**
- **An item on the format of the annual compliance review be added to the agenda for the 2024 Annual Meeting. The NAFO Secretariat will review the publicly available compliance reports from other RFMOs and compile background information to facilitate the discussions.**
- **Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) will draft a proposal to clarify the request for the CPUE analysis and how it can inform the compliance review process.**

5. NAFO MCS website and application development

The NAFO Secretariat provided an update on the MCS website and noted that there have been no significant updates to its functionality since the last meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat also provided an update on the status of the observer reporting application. The application is currently in a beta phase and has had successful testing at-sea by two Contracting Parties, with more at-sea testing scheduled. Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for the update and the work on the application and noted that discussions will continue on the language requirements within the application, whether the application will replace the need for the daily OBR reports, and any additional functionality that may be beneficial to include.

6. Review of Article 30 of the NAFO CEM

The Chair of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR), Brent Napier (Canada), provided a status update, noting that the group had not been able to meet since the 2023 Annual Meeting. The WG-OPR Chair highlighted the importance of the ongoing work of the WG-OPR in continuing to address the items outlined in the Terms of Reference (COM Doc. 23-25), and noted the goal of convening a meeting, in July 2024, subject to Contracting Party availability, to provide a report to STACTIC at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

Contracting Parties thanked the Chair of the WG-OPR for the update and noted their support for the continued work of this group.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the Summary of Observer Information for 2023 in STACTIC WP 24-05 (Rev. 2). The European Union highlighted that additional review may be required by Contracting Parties on some of the items in the table of the implementation of the observer program: as an example, some Contracting Parties noted that the provisions of Article 30.3(h)(i) were not applicable because no reports were received, however the provision to treat the reports with confidentiality is still applicable, even if no reports were received. The European Union again raised concerns with the absence of OBR discrepancies reported by the observers on board fishing vessels of other Contracting Parties, including in cases where suspected infringements were detected during observed trips.

The European Union expressed concern about the independence of observer data and observers onboard where the observer reports the same quantities as the masters' estimations. Contracting Parties agreed to review the implementation of the NAFO Observer Program in order to ensure that observers are reporting independent data.

This further raised the topic of confidentiality and the relationship between Article 30.3(h)(i) and the Rules on Confidentiality within Annex II.B. The United States expressed some concern with the lack of clarity as to whether the observer could share their data with the master. The United States also noted that Annex II.B specifically references Articles 28 and 29, not Article 30. Given this, there is no prohibition from sharing information between the observer and master. Contracting Parties have different views on this issue. Given the different interpretations, Contracting Parties agreed that it would be beneficial to review the provisions on the data confidentiality measures in the NAFO CEM. Contracting Parties also reflected on the reporting template that was agreed to at the 2023 Annual Meeting in STACTIC WP 23-20 and agreed that the WG-OPR should review the reporting template at their upcoming meeting to ensure that it captures the type of information that is required to be reported.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties review the information provided in STACTIC WP 24-05 (Rev. 2) and provide any updates to the NAFO Secretariat.**
- **The next WG-OPR meeting will take place in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting.**
- **The WG-OPR will review the reporting template outlined in STACTIC WP 23-20 during the next meeting.**
- **The WG-OPR should consider a review of the provisions on the data confidentiality measures in the NAFO CEM.**

7. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM

The European Union presented a proposal for the publication of the NAFO register of fishing vessels and authorizations outlined in STACTIC WP 24-12. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union and noted their support to the proposal to further increase transparency. Contracting Parties noted some editorial improvements that can be made to the text of the proposal and agreed to forward any comments to the European Union in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The European Union presented a proposal on surveillance procedures outlined in STACTIC WP 24-13. While there was some support for the concept of the proposal, Contracting Parties raised several discussion points on the proposal including the potential increased workload for those Contracting Parties that carry out a significant number of sightings, the details on the flow of information to the MCS Website, the specific definition of a sighting that should be used, the confidentiality rules applicable to the information being shared, as well as the general objective of sightings where VMS data is available for vessels. The European Union thanked Contracting Parties for the discussions and welcomed additional feedback on the proposal in writing in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The European Union invited Contracting Parties to reflect on the proposal for measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish (Article 5) outlined in STACTIC WP 23-13 (Rev. 2), noting that the decision on the total allowable catch (TAC) has not been made for 2025, and that these discussions will likely need to continue at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The European Union recalled that the proposal was tabled at the 2023 NAFO Annual Meeting by five Contracting Parties, who issued a joint statement on the need to adopt measures to avoid the continuation of unsustainable fishing. Norway noted their support to the proposal and that they have also established national legislation to address this issue.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will submit editorial revisions to the European Union on the proposal for the publication of the NAFO register of fishing vessels and authorizations to the NAFO public website outlined in STACTIC WP 24-12, which will be incorporated and presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties will provide comments to the European Union on the proposal on surveillance procedures outlined in STACTIC WP 24-13 and continue discussions on this proposal at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

8. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM

The NAFO Secretariat presented a summary of the implementation of Article 4 in STACTIC WP 24-06 (Revised), noting that four research plans have been received to date in 2024. Contracting Parties noted additional information should be included in this working paper on how Contracting Parties met each of the requirements outlined in Article 4 of the NAFO CEM. The Secretariat was requested to compile the additional details into a revision of the working paper for presentation at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will update STACTIC WP 24-06 (Revised) to include detailed information on each of the research plans for presentation at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

9. Review of the new measures in the yellowtail fishery

The Chair opened this agenda item by reflecting on the measures in the yellowtail fishery (COM Doc. 23-12) that were adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting, and that STACTIC shall review the new measures in accordance with Article 6.11 of the 2024 NAFO CEM. Contracting Parties noted that there has not been much activity in this fishery since the measures came into force, and there is limited data available to determine if the new measures have led to an increase of American plaice bycatches or directed fishery on American plaice, in accordance with Article 6.11(a) of the NAFO CEM. To facilitate the data analysis, it was agreed that the NAFO Secretariat, with the assistance of representatives from Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America, will work to determine the required data analyses to facilitate the review of the measures which will be discussed further at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The European Union recalled that the measures in the yellowtail fishery expire automatically on December 31, 2024, and that it would be necessary to have that analysis to review the measures and consider whether the measures should be maintained, be further tailor-made or consist on a horizontal measure instead of derogations for a particular fishery. Additionally, the European Union explained the shared understanding with Canada already noted at the last EDG meeting regarding the interpretation of 9 fishing days in accordance with Article 6.3(g)(ii) of the NAFO CEM, noting that a fishing day defined in Article 1.6 of the NAFO CEM, and that the 9 days are not reset by exiting the NRA, but when the fishing trip ends as defined in Article 1.7 of the NAFO CEM. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for the clarification. Contracting Parties noted the opportunity to review the language during the revision of the measures for better clarity.

It was agreed that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat, with assistance from Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America will work to determine the required data analyses to facilitate the review of the measures as outlined in Article 6.3(g)(ii) of the NAFO CEM, for presentation at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

10. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures

The NAFO Secretariat noted that there were no substantive issues to raise under this agenda item that are not already being discussed under other agenda items.

11. Discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches

The Chair opened the agenda item noting the agreement from the 2023 STACTIC Annual Meeting that STACTIC will start the discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches at this meeting, with the Commission requesting STACTIC to ensure that there is coordination with other relevant NAFO bodies where appropriate. The United States of America reiterated their opinion from the 2023 Annual Meeting that the discussion on, and potential modification to, the definitions of bycatch and directed fisheries in the NAFO CEM involve substantial policy determinations and are better situated to be discussed in other NAFO bodies, such as the WG-RBMS or WG-EAFFM. Several Contracting Parties noted the importance for STACTIC to be part of those discussions. The Secretariat highlighted the Commission request for the working groups to reflect on the status of the Action Plan ([COM Doc. 17-26](#)) from the WG-BDS to ensure the work of that group continues. The Secretariat noted that this will be on the agenda for the August 2024 WG-EAFFM meeting and that the co-Chairs have requested the NAFO Secretariat to compile a summary of the work completed to date. Contracting Parties requested that the Secretariat share the summary with STACTIC for their review, as well as any working papers discussed during those working groups relating to changes to the bycatch and directed fisheries provisions of the NAFO CEM so that STACTIC may review such changes from a control and enforcement perspective in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting.

It was agreed that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will share the background information on the status of the BDS Action Plan and working papers from NAFO working groups relating to changes to the bycatch and directed fisheries provisions of the NAFO CEM with STACTIC when documents become available.**
- **Proposals for revisions to the NAFO CEM on measures pertaining to bycatch and directed fisheries from other NAFO working groups be forwarded to STACTIC for information and review in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

12. Practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO

The Chair opened this agenda item and reflected on the discussions from the 2023 Annual Meeting relating to the calculation of the percent difference in PSC3 reports, noting that STACTIC was awaiting the results of the discussions from PECMAC. The Chair of PECMAC, Thord Monsen (Norway), reported that all NEAFC meetings this year have so far been cancelled, and there have been no updated discussions in PECMAC. Norway reiterated that their calculation uses the landed weight as the denominator, as this is the verified weight, and Iceland noted that despite some practices, the policy is to do the same. The European Union reflected on the several provisions in the NAFO CEM which require to use the masters' estimations as the reference for the calculations, including the procedures outlined in Article 38.3(c) of the NAFO CEM for the calculation of the threshold that trigger additional enforcement actions, and that several Contracting Parties are applying that definition in the PSC3 calculations. Some options for a way forward on this issue were discussed, such as including a reference in the PSC3 forms for how the calculation was made or standardizing the calculation to be used in PSC3 forms across all Contracting Parties. It was decided that further information was required to better facilitate these discussions. The European Union additionally noted that there is a minimum threshold defined for the triggering of enforcement actions in the at-sea inspections, but this is not defined for port inspections and that

having common minimum thresholds would increase level playing field and legal certainty for operators. Contracting Parties discussed the difficulties to base this threshold only on the percentage of the discrepancies of the quantities as other elements are required and relevant to consider to decide on whether proceedings should be launched following a port inspection. In order to collect the relevant information to facilitate these discussions, STACTIC requested the NAFO Secretariat to develop a standardized questionnaire to collect this information from Contracting Parties on both how calculations in PSC3 forms are made and what conditions are used to consider the enforcement of discrepancies, which will be compiled and presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat updated that the NAFO e-PSC system is still in a development phase. STACTIC requested the Secretariat to provide a demonstration of the current e-PSC system to those Contracting Party representatives that expressed interest in assisting the Secretariat with the system in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting. The NAFO Secretariat also noted that they have been in contact with the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) Secretariat and are developing the NAFO e-PSC system in such a way that, if a future decision is made by NAFO to forward the information from the NAFO system to the Global Information Exchange System (GIES) system, this would be possible. It was noted that the priority for the Secretariat is to remain focused on the NAFO e-PSC system in the interim, and potential connections to the GIES can be discussed in future.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat develop a standardized questionnaire to collect information from Contracting Parties on how they are calculating the percent difference in the PSC3 forms, and what conditions are considered to decide on the enforcement of discrepancies.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat continue development on the NAFO e-PSC system and provide a demonstration, via a virtual meeting, of interested Contracting Party representatives, in advance of the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

13. Marking of gears

The NAFO Secretariat presented an information paper on the vessel and gear marking requirements of other RFMOs in STACTIC WP 24-07. Contracting Parties thanked the NAFO Secretariat for the information paper, and noted some revisions may be required.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) presented a proposal, outlined in STACTIC WP 24-11, for amending NAFO CEM Article 13 relating to gear requirements to include an option for AIS-transponders to be used in place of radar reflectors on the westernmost and the easternmost buoys. Contracting Parties raised several questions about the AIS-transponder technology noting that there may be a need for minimum standards to accompany this proposal and requested Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) to provide some additional information on the AIS-equipped buoys, including any information from fishing operations currently using the AIS transponders, for further discussion at the 2024 Annual Meeting. Several Contracting Parties noted that the use of AIS transponders is not prohibited by the current NAFO CEM and it would be useful to consider any changes in the current rules that those Contracting Parties using these requirements provide information on their experience. Several Contracting Parties mentioned the possibility to consider in the future a broader revision of the rules on gear marking. It was also mentioned that the telecommunication authorities of some coastal States have concerns on the use of AIS beacons on fishing gears and that the outcome of this investigation should be reviewed.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) also noted in the proposal that there is a need to examine the definitions in Article 1 of the NAFO CEM to add the FAO definition of abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), and agreed to draft a proposal for the 2024 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **In relation to STACTIC WP 24-11, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) will provide additional information on the AIS-transponder technology for continued discussions at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**
- **Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) will draft a proposal on a definition of abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG), that could be included in Article 1 of the NAFO CEM for discussion at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

14. Report and Recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)

The Chair highlighted the report of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG) meeting that took place on 3 November 2024 in STACTIC WP 23-27 and noted the recommendation for STACTIC to review Article 12.6 of the NAFO CEM regarding the results of research data on sharks to be submitted by the Contracting Parties to the Secretariat, and where this information should be posted or published. Contracting Parties requested the NAFO Secretariat to consult with the Scientific Council and relevant working groups to determine where the information should be forwarded. The Secretariat will report back to STACTIC on this issue at the 2024 Annual Meeting to assist STACTIC with any necessary revisions to Article 12.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will consult with the Scientific Council and relevant working groups to determine the best recipient for the information received in accordance with Article 12.6 of the NAFO CEM and report back to STACTIC at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

15. Review and evaluation of Practices and Procedures

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest list of Contracting Party practices and procedures in STACTIC WP 24-08, noting that there have been no updates made since the 2023 Annual Meeting. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that one submission can be removed from the list, as it is now out of date.

16. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM, Article 53

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest version of the NAFO IUU list in STACTIC WP 24-09. The Secretariat also highlighted the vessels on the provisional IUU lists for listing and de-listing for review by STACTIC. Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for the work in maintaining the IUU list following the provisions that were adopted at the 2022 Annual Meeting and requested an update from the Secretariat on the process. The Secretariat noted that the workload for maintaining the IUU list is manageable but noted that several RFMOs are completing the same exercise, which has the potential for errors to occur from multiple cross-referencing exercises, and that a centralized IUU list would alleviate the potential for discrepancies across RFMOs.

17. Report and advice of the Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM)

The NAFO Secretariat updated that the meeting scheduled to take place in April 2024 was postponed, and that there were no further updates at this time.

18. Implementation of the Performance Review Recommendations

The NAFO Secretariat presented the recommendations from the NAFO Commission Working Group to Address the Recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review Panel (WG-PR) relevant to STACTIC and the status of each in STACTIC WP 24-10.

As a general comment, Canada noted that given the Performance Review had been tabled in 2018, STACTIC should make concerted effort to conclude on the two outstanding items, either by identifying a path forward to

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respond to the recommendations, or alternatively by recommending to close the items, with appropriate rationale.

In relation to recommendation 18, STACTIC agreed that the WG-OPR should discuss the possibility of having a garbage disposal data collection requirement as part of the tasks of NAFO observers. It was also noted that while this would serve to contribute to the recommendation, that STACTIC should continue discussions on determining if amendments to the NAFO CEM, such as the reference made in NEAFC to MARPOL, are required to fulfill this recommendation and agreed to make a determination on how to move forward with this PR recommendation at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

In relation to recommendation 20 on Contracting Party self-assessments of flag State performance, the European Union noted the need to take a decision on whether the recommendation should be limited to the revision of the criteria in the FAO Guidelines or to include that Contracting Parties carry out their self-assessments in the context of NAFO. In order to move forward with the second option, several Contracting Parties indicated that the exercise should be carried out by all Contracting Parties, focused on the current NAFO framework, subject to clear deadlines and with the aim of improving how Contracting Parties implement the NAFO CEM and to identify room for improvement of the NAFO CEM. The European Union proposed to include these elements in a proposal for STACTIC mandate to be submitted to and gathered from the NAFO Commission. STACTIC discussed two options and agreed to carry out a NAFO exercise on self-assessments of flag State performance. No Contracting Parties objected to performing a self-assessment. Therefore, it was agreed that STACTIC will draft a mandate for endorsement by the Commission for Contracting Parties to complete their self-assessments. A suggested timeframe was discussed including presentation of the reports by the 2025 Annual Meeting and the review in the year following, but Contracting Parties agreed to reflect on more specific timelines. The European Union agreed to draft the mandate for review by STACTIC at the 2024 Annual Meeting, which will be forwarded to the Commission.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The WG-OPR continue discussions on the possibility of having a garbage disposal data collection requirement as part of the tasks of NAFO observers.**
- **STACTIC, at the 2024 Annual Meeting, make a final determination on if edits are required to the NAFO CEM to fulfill PR recommendation 18.**
- **The European Union will draft a mandate for Contracting Parties to complete the self-assessments of flag State performance to seek approval from the Commission on the way forward in addressing PR recommendation 20.**

19. STATLANT 21

The Chair reflected on the discussions from the 2023 Annual Meeting and highlighted the response from the Scientific Council Chair in NAFO/24-056. Contracting Parties thanked the Chair for coordinating the correspondence with the Scientific Council Chair and reflected on the importance of the STATLANT data in terms of the historical records, the transparency of the data, and that they are used in determining the annual fees for Contracting Parties. The United States highlighted that as a coastal State they provide STATLANT 21 data for the NAFO Convention Area. The European Union noted the reply indicates that only STATLANT 21 data from jurisdictional waters of Canada and France (in respect of St. Pierre and Miquelon) is used for fisheries management and that these data could be replaced by haul by haul data, highlighting there is a potential to streamline data submission requirements. The European Union noted that, based on the research carried out by the NAFO Secretariat, the submission of STATLANT 21 data by Contracting Parties is based on the Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Council, and therefore this is something that should be discussed further within the Scientific Council. Contracting Parties were encouraged to highlight this issue with their Scientific Council representatives.

20. Other Business

a. Introducing Electronic Reporting System (ERS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) in NAFO

Norway requested this item be added to the STACTIC agenda noting that NEAFC has adopted an Electronic Reporting System (ERS) based on the UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (flux), with a two-year transition implementation period since the implementation of the system by the European Union in January 2024. Contracting Parties were supportive of discussing upgrades to the reporting technology used in NAFO, considering a stepwise approach, and streamlining data reporting obligations. and requested additional information from Norway for further discussions at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Norway will provide a proposal on the way forward, including additional information on the FLUX standard, and how the implementation took place in NEAFC to facilitate further discussions on this item at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

b. 2024 NAFO Inspectors Workshop

Canada provided an update on the 2024 NAFO Inspectors Workshop that took place from 05-07 March 2024 in STACTIC WP 24-15, noting that several Contracting Parties were in attendance. Contracting Parties thanked Canada for hosting the workshop and noted the importance of this work to ensure consistency of how the NAFO CEM are applied. The European Union noted that they are planning to host the next workshop.

c. Closure of Others quota - Article 5.5(h)

Canada reflected on a situation from this year, where two vessels were fishing under the Others quota during the same period, which resulted in catches significantly exceeding the allocated quota. It was noted that the closure notification procedure outlined for the NAFO Secretariat for the Others quota may require review. The NAFO Secretariat reflected that there has been difficulty with the Others quota closure notifications in the past, as some of the quotas are so small that they can be fished in less than five (5) days, and the current procedure requires the Secretariat to provide a notice five (5) calendar days in advance of when the quota is projected to reach 100%. Contracting Parties agreed to continue discussions on this issue at the 2024 Annual Meeting and requested the NAFO Secretariat to provide some background information on past procedures to facilitate the discussions.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The discussions on the closure notification for the Others quota continue at the 2024 Annual Meeting, and that the Secretariat will prepare some background information to facilitate the discussions.**

d. FAO gear codes

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) presented a proposal in STACTIC WP 24-14 for a revision of Annex II.J of the NAFO CEM to be consulted with the Scientific Council, noting there have been changes in gear used by shrimp trawlers using twin trawls (OTS) or (OTT) or even multiple trawl (OTP) (triple). It was agreed to postpone making any changes to the gear code requirements pending the discussions regarding introduction and possibly implementation of ERS.

21. Time and place of next meeting

The next STACTIC meeting will be held in Halifax, Canada from 23–27 September 2024.

22. Adoption of report

The report was adopted on 08 May 2024, prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

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23. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 hours on 08 May 2024. Contracting Parties expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chair for his leadership. The Chair and Contracting Parties thanked Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) for hosting the meeting and the NAFO Secretariat for their support.



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Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by the Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Annual Compliance Review 2023
5. NAFO MCS website and application development
6. Review of Article 30 of the NAFO CEM
7. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM
8. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM
9. Review of the new measures in the yellowtail fishery
10. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures
11. Discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches
12. Practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO
13. Marking of gears
14. Report and Recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)
15. Review and evaluation of Practices and Procedures
16. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM, Article 53
17. Report and advice of the Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM)
18. Implementation of the Performance Review Recommendations
19. STATLANT 21
20. Other Business
 - a. Introducing Electronic Reporting System (ERS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) in NAFO
 - b. 2024 NAFO Inspectors Workshop
 - c. Closure of Others quota – Article 5.5(h)
 - d. FAO gear codes
21. Time and place of next meeting
22. Adoption of report
23. Adjournment

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



Report of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting

23-24 July 2024
Montreal, Canada

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2024

Report of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting

23-24 July 2024
Montreal, Canada

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Report of the STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting23-24 July 2024
Montreal, Canada**1. Opening of the Meeting**

The Chair, Brent Napier (Canada), opened the meeting at 9:00 (UTC/GMT -4 hours) on Tuesday, 23 July 2024 at the Courtyard Montreal Downtown in Montreal, Canada and via Webex, and welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Japan, Iceland, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Catherine Thompson) was appointed as rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The Chair introduced the provisional agenda and asked representatives if there were any comments or additions. There were no comments or additions, and the agenda was adopted (Annex 2).

4. NAFO CEM Article 30 - 2024 Implementation**a. Observer coverage levels**

The Chair presented a summary of the use of derogation from 100% Observer Coverage by Contracting Party in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-04. The document was compiled by the NAFO Secretariat and includes the rationale provided by each Contracting Party for derogation from 100%. Canada pointed out that NAFO allows for 25% observer coverage, but that it is not clear how this decision was made. Canada pointed out that it is difficult to ensure compliance with the measure since you have to wait until the end of the calendar year. The 25%-100% is a large range and should be re-considered to be more restrictive.

The United States of America noted that only some Contracting Parties identified the rationale for the derogation, e.g., if negligible bycatch of other species is expected to occur. What constitutes “negligible bycatch” under Article 30.4(a) is unclear.

The European Union thanked the Secretariat for preparing STACTIC OPR-WP 2024-04, which indicates that only one Contracting Party is making use of the derogation for a 100% observer coverage. The European Union noted that the derogations are too general, and requiring an electronic observation program to use the derogation would address this challenge. The European Union suggested the possibility of including consequences if minimum observer coverage levels are not met.

The working group discussed the scope of the derogations under Article 30.4. Several Parties noted the generic nature of the derogation. The European Union further noted that the origin of the derogation for negligible bycatches was related to shrimp fisheries and it was their view that it should be limited to clearly clean fisheries. The working group reflected on the inclusion of a risk-based approach to determine observer coverage levels and/or to employ the derogation, such as vessel compliance within a calendar year; however, further discussion in STACTIC was suggested. Canada volunteered to draft some text to revise the derogations in Article 30.4 for the STACTIC Annual Meeting and possible associated control measures.

Some participants noted that it would be of added value to carry out an editorial revision of the text of Article 30.4, with specific consideration to the formatting of the options included.

Report of WG-OPR,
23–24 July 2024

The Chair referenced a report by the Marine Stewardship Council titled “Review of optimal levels of observer coverage in fishery monitoring.” The report details several studies on observer coverage and the use of REM. The Chair encouraged the group to review the report.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada, in cooperation with other Contracting Parties, will review the existing observer coverage level provisions and possible associated control measures in advance of the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **WG-OPR recommends that STACTIC consider requesting the EDG to review Article 30.4 of the NAFO CEM.**
- **WG-OPR will propose to STACTIC to identify fisheries with negligible bycatch through either an internal assessment based on available data or seeking advice from the appropriate bodies.**
- **The WG-OPR will forward STACTIC OPR-WP 24-04 and the report under this agenda item to STACTIC for consideration.**

b. Observer application

The NAFO Secretariat provided an update on the Observer Application that is under development. Canada noted that it had completed a thorough review of the application and provided feedback to the Secretariat. The Secretariat is organizing at-sea trials of the application, including with a Spanish vessel. The application has also been tested on a vessel from the Faroe Islands.

The Observer Application is anticipated to be completed by the Annual Meeting. The Secretariat is considering options for user training, such as a video or written document. The Secretariat welcomes feedback from STACTIC-OPR members on methods for user training. Canada suggests that training will be best carried out between the flag States and observers.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties continue to support and endorse the development of the Observer Application by the NAFO Secretariat.**
- **Work on the Observer Application will be assessed and reported on at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**

c. Electronic observation program

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 24-01 (Revised) outlining a potential revision of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM to create minimum standards for a NAFO electronic observation program (i.e. REM). The proposal is based on the recommendations established in STACTIC Working Paper 22-48 (Rev. 2) and WG-OPR 23-19 Rev. 4.

Regarding the proposed definition for Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) under Article 1, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) pointed out that there is an element of responsibility from the flag State for reviewing video footage obtained through a REM system. The United States of America indicated that it must be clear of what the purpose of this review is and what qualifications the reviewer must possess. Other considerations that the group discussed included the retention period of video footage, who has access to the electronic monitoring data and for what purpose, whether Contracting Parties can request access to this information, and how electronic monitoring issues will be addressed at sea.

The European Union clarified that flag States are responsible, either directly or through a contractor, to review video footage and complete reporting. It was noted that it could be possible for the Secretariat to also have access to the footage, although it may be expensive to store and manage. Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that privacy of crew members is important to consider when implementing REM.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will provide their comments on STACTIC OPR-WP 24-01 (Revised) to the European Union for discussion at the 2024 Annual Meeting**
- **STACTIC WG-OPR will seek support to continue its existing work on REM.**

d. Data collection – Garbage disposal

The 2018 Performance Review Panel developed specific recommendations for minimizing harmful impacts to the marine environment, such as pollution. As discussed at STACTIC, observers can potentially capture information and data regarding garbage disposal at-sea.

Canada noted that we must be cognisant of the increased workload of observers. Further description of what needs to be recorded is required, for example, instances of garbage being disposed overboard, types of equipment on board for garbage disposal, whether garbage is disposed at port. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) is interested in understanding how garbage is handled on board, as a coastal State to the NAFO Regulatory Area.

The United States of America noted that there are new measures adopted in IMO for vessels over 100 GT to maintain a garbage record book, and that there could also be a role for master's to report on their garbage disposal practices. United States of America volunteered, with the assistance of the European Union and Canada, to draft a proposal for the inclusion of duties of the observer regarding data collection on garbage disposal for discussion at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The United States of America, with assistance from the European Union and Canada, will develop a Working Paper for presentation at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting on a potential observer role in data collection of garbage disposal.**

e. Data collection – Sharks

The Chair reflected on STACTIC WP 21-49 Rev. 3, which provides a review of Greenland shark data collection and methodologies. Observers are valuable in collecting data on sharks, including the identification of length, weight, age, and sex and maturity of the shark. This information can be obtained through photos. Identification guides can help observers with collecting shark data. The United States of America echoed the importance of observers in collecting shark data. Canada offered to assist with drafting a guide for shark identification noting their willingness to engage with other Contracting Parties and subject matter experts in the field, such as Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS). The guide could then be endorsed by the Scientific Council. It is unclear if or to what extent observers already have expertise on this topic. The United States of America referenced a report developed by Oceans North titled "Estimating Greenland Shark Weight" that can help guide recommendations.

Regarding the data elements in Part 5 of Annex II.M, there is a field to indicate that a photo was taken, but this is not a requirement. The group discussed whether this feature can be embedded in the Observer Application and the Secretariat confirmed that photos could be uploaded once the observer has access to high-speed internet.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will consider developing a proposal on data collection for sharks, regarding expected frequencies of activities and requirements for photographs.**

f. Review of infringements

The Chair reflected on the enhanced serious infringement relating to the obstruction / intimidation of observers that was adopted in COM Doc. 23-23, noting more time may be required to determine the effectiveness of this measure. The European Union also highlighted the additions to the list of serious infringements that have been included in the proposal outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-01 (Revised). The European Union welcomes comments from Contracting Parties on this proposal.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will assess the effectiveness of the new infringement related to the Observer Program as part of the compliance review process in 2025.**
- **Contracting Parties to provide their comments on STACTIC OPR-WP 24-01 (Revised) to the European Union, who will revise the proposal for discussion at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting**

g. Data collection – Quality control

The Chair highlighted the importance of having quality control for the observer data to ensure accuracy for its use in scientific and compliance related work in NAFO. Several Contracting Parties provided a summary of their domestic quality control processes. The European Union stressed the need for Contracting Parties to identify (through the data quality review process) and address various cases of verbatim data between master's and observer's estimation. The working group noted it would be useful for those Contracting Parties that have documented quality control processes to share the best practices with STACTIC at the Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed**:

- **To recommend to STACTIC that Contracting Parties to continue strengthening the monitoring of their programs' data quality to ensure the data is independent and reliable as required by the NAFO CEM.**
- **Contracting Parties will exchange best practices related to data quality control for observer data.**

5. Data collection – Data confidentiality

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 which proposes amendments to Annex II.B. The European Union noted that general revisions of Annex II.B. are outside the scope of the STACTIC OPR-WG; however, the group can focus on editorial changes and alignment at this stage, as some of the references within Annex II.B. are mis-aligned with references which appear elsewhere in the NAFO CEMs. In the future, a wider revision of the data confidentiality rules is required. Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) and Canada noted that if JAGDM has the capacity and expertise, they may be able to review the provisions on data confidentiality. The United States of America noted that internal policy considerations need to be reflected within STACTIC and perhaps, the Commission at large. The working group agreed to forward the proposal for the changes to Annex II.B to STACTIC for consideration at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **WG-OPR will forward STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 to STACTIC for consideration at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**
- **STACTIC could consider the possibility of a more comprehensive review of Annex II. B.**

6. Reporting template

The European Union presented amendments to Article 30 Report Template through STACTIC OPR-WP 24-03 in order to include information on the results of the investigations on cases of verbatim data. Contracting Parties provided both verbal and written feedback on the paper. Contracting Parties suggested amendments to the language around detections of potential non-compliance and incident types. The group also pointed out ambiguity in the language within the Incident Type table, particularly around the statement “Similar or same figures reported by master and observer.” The European Union revised the working paper based on the feedback received and presented the revisions in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-03 (Revised). Several Contracting Parties indicated their intention to provide further comments prior to the 2024 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will provide any further comments to the European Union on STACTIC OPR-WP 24-03 (Revised), who will revise the proposal for discussion at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

7. Other business

No items were brought forward under other business during the adoption of the agenda.

Prior to the close of the meeting discussions, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) highlighted the importance of following up on serious incidents at sea involving the working conditions of observers and to further discuss the protection/safeguards related to observers working conditions, noting there is an existing provision imposed on Contracting Parties to investigate violations. Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) may present a paper at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

8. Adoption of the Report

The report was adopted via correspondence.

9. Adjournment

Contracting Parties thanked Canada for hosting and chairing the meeting and thanked the NAFO Secretariat for their work.

The meeting adjourned at 3:02 (UTC/GMT -4 hours).

Annex 1. List of Participants

CHAIR	Napier, Brent (Canada)
CANADA	Browne, Dion Warren, Genevieve Hickey, Jenelle
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EUROPEAN UNION	Casarotto, Edoardo Tubio, Xosé Babcionis, Genadijus Jonaitis, Arūnas Märtin, Kaire Näks, Liivika Serrão, Miguel
ICELAND	Ingibergsson, Jón Gunnar Ragnarsson, Njáll
JAPAN	Iwano, Taisuke Takehara, Toya Onodera, Ryo
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Fomin, Konstantin
UNITED KINGDOM	Smith-Devey, Imogen
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Jaburek, Shannah Hale, Bo Mencher, Liz Pohl, Katie Provencher, Eric
NAFO SECRETARIAT	Thompson, Catherine Aker, Jana Laycock, DJ

Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by the Chair, Brent Napier (Canada)
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3. Adoption of Agenda
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 - a. Observer coverage levels
 - b. Observer application
 - c. Electronic observation program
 - d. Data collection – Garbage disposal
 - e. Data collection – Sharks
 - f. Review of infringements
 - g. Data collection – Quality control
5. Data collection – Data confidentiality
6. Reporting template
7. Other Business
8. Adoption of the Report
9. Adjournment

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on
Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting**

05-07 August 2024
Bergen, Norway

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2024

Report of WG-EAFFM,
05-07 August 2024

**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach
Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting**

05-07 August 2024
Bergen, Norway

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**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach
Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting**

05-07 August 2024
Bergen, Norway

1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America)

The meeting was opened by co-chairs, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America), at 09:03 hours (UTC/GMT +2 hours) on Monday, 05 August 2024. The co-Chairs welcomed participants attending in person and virtually. This included representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the United States of America, the Chair of the Scientific Council, and an accredited observer from the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition was present (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Dayna Bell MacCallum and Jana Aker) was appointed as rapporteur of this meeting.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The adopted agenda is outlined in Annex 2.

4. Presentation of Scientific Council responses to Commission requests for advice (COM Doc. 23-09) relevant to WG-EAFFM

The co-Chair of WG-EAFFM, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union), presented a summary of the Scientific Council advice relevant to the WG-EAFFM (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). The co-Chair noted that the Scientific Council advice will be discussed in detail in subsequent agenda items and presented a summarized overview of each of the responses. The working group thanked the Scientific Council for their work and the co-Chair for the presentation.

5. VME and SAI Assessments

a. Update on the centralized data repository (COM Request 5.a)

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 5. a. on the ArcGIS Data Repository (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). It was noted that a data subgroup has been formed and is currently working to build on the existing list of standard data layers, develop a workflow for the data management, configure and test the ArcGIS online platform, and to extend the data management strategies to include standardized analysis and reporting tools. The ArcGIS data repository is expected to be fully operational in 2026.

The working group thanked the Scientific Council for the update and recognized the importance of this work and the effort that has gone into the centralized data repository to date. The working group also reflected on the resources that have been allotted in setting up the data repository to date, and the work still required. The working group discussed the benefits of the data repository for the Scientific Council and that it will greatly assist in the work towards the VME reassessment in 2026, as well as possibly other Scientific Council work (i.e. stock assessments, etc.) in the future. There was also a discussion on the potential for future use of the data repository by other NAFO bodies, and potentially external users, however further detailed discussions on data confidentiality and privacy are required before expanding the scope of the data repository beyond use by the Scientific Council.

Report of WG-EAFFM,
05-07 August 2024

b. Update on reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2026 (COM Request 5.c)

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) presented an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 5.c. on the review of VME and reassessment of bottom fisheries (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). The Scientific Council noted that they will be undertaking the review of VMEs in November 2024, which will be presented to WG-EAFFM and Commission in 2025. The work on the reassessment of bottom fisheries (assessment of SAI) will be undertaken in November 2025 and will be presented to WG-EAFFM and Commission in 2026. The working group is recommending that the Commission request the Scientific Council to provide management options as part of the reassessment of bottom fishing.

6. Ecosystem Roadmap (COM Request 4)

Mariano Koen-Alonso (Canada) presented an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 4 on the continued work on tiers 1 and 2 of the Ecosystem Roadmap and the work that has been completed to date (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). It was recalled that, in response to a Commission request, the results of the TCI analysis included scoping for catches in the current and following year; Scientific Council concluded that, if TAC decisions are aligned with Scientific Council advice, catches would remain below the 2TCI ecosystem reference point in 2024 and 2025. It was noted that the next scheduled update of the Ecosystem Summary Sheets (ESSs) will be in 2027 and that there are vacancies in Designated Experts for the ESSs, reflecting the ongoing challenges in the Scientific Council's workload. The working group thanked the Scientific Council for their work, noting that the discussion also included points on the integration of climate change into the roadmap and the information exchange from Scientific Council to the Commission surrounding 2TCI.

7. Development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA (COM Request 5.b)

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) presented an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 5.b. on the development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). The WG-EAFFM co-Chairs reflected on the discussions from the 2023 WG-EAFFM meeting and noted that it was agreed to complete the intersessional work to develop a draft framework document. The co-Chairs updated that some work had been done on this, but that further clarification was required before moving forward. Following discussions, the working group agreed that the general principles of the NAFO Convention should be used as the starting point for outlining the goals for which the operational objectives would be following under. The co-Chairs presented a draft discussion paper on identifying operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-07 as a starting point to guide future work. The working group participants provided some feedback including the need to review the applicability of all the Convention General Principles in this exercise, the need to focus the development of the objectives and targets on what NAFO is doing in practice rather than the end goals, as well as the possibility of incorporating relevant elements of the FAO Deep Sea Guidelines. The co-Chairs thanked the working group for the detailed discussions and feedback on the way forward and agreed that they will continue work on the development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA intersessionally and circulate an updated version to WG-EAFFM participants for further discussion.

8. Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) and Brynhildur Benediktssdóttir (Executive Secretary) provided an update on the process of submitting the NAFO seamount closure areas and the sponge bottom fishing closed areas 1 to 6 to the CBD Secretariat and to the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC) for inclusion in the World Database on OECMs, as agreed at the 2023 Annual Meeting. The draft templates for the submission were provided to the working group for information and comments, and it was noted that the submission process was more complex than was previously discussed, and therefore has resulted in a delay in the submission. Contracting Parties were asked to review the draft templates and provide any comments to the Secretariat.

At the 2023 WG-EAFFM meeting, it was also agreed that WG-EAFFM continue to review the other NAFO area-based management measures in relation to the CBD OECM criteria. The working group discussed the possibility of submitting the coral bottom fishing closed areas as OECMs. It was agreed that WG-EAFFM recommend to the Commission to request the Scientific Council to develop the materials in support of the coral bottom fishing closed areas as OECMs to inform a discussion at the 2025 WG-EAFFM meeting.

9. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review Panel Recommendations

The NAFO Secretariat highlighted COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-01 outlining the recommendations from the 2018 performance review panel relevant to WG-EAFFM. The working group noted that the work is still ongoing in relation to Recommendation 1 and noted the discussions under agenda item 7. The working group also reflected the ongoing work of the WG-EAFFM and the Scientific Council to monitor and provide regular updates on the potential impacts of activities other than fishing in the Convention Area in relation to Recommendation 37. The working group noted that this work has now been engrained into the regular work of the Scientific Council and WG-EAFFM. As such, it was agreed to mark this recommendation as completed, noting the work will be continued. The status of the recommendation was updated in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-01 (Revised).

10. Scientific Council workload

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented an update of the discussions at the June Scientific Council meeting (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)) around the potential ways forward that were discussed in the NAFO Informal Group to reflect on the workload of the Scientific Council on 22 April 2024 (COM-SC WP 24-01). The Scientific Council Chair reiterated that the current workload of the Scientific Council is unsustainable, and that some of the continued issues are a lack of expertise to address specific requests, an increase in the number of working groups and meetings, and a lack of support from some Contracting Parties (i.e. scientists and Chairs). The Scientific Council Chair highlighted some short-term solutions agreed to at the June Scientific Council meeting, including a revised agenda for the Divisions 3LN redfish Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process, and the scheduling of the assessment for Division 3M cod from annual to biannual. In addition, at its June meeting, the Scientific Council **recommended** that *the Commission should conduct a detailed workload assessment of the NAFO Scientific Council with the intention of revisiting the way scientific work is organized and seeking for possible solutions to improve efficiency and effectiveness.*

The working group thanked the Scientific Council Chair for the presentation and reflected on the importance of addressing the Scientific Council workload issues including the availability of resources and prioritization of requests, while ensuring effective engagement during the process. The working group noted that there were two fundamental issues: understanding the resource and capacity needs to adequately address the current and forecasted workload, and addressing any additional resource and capacity needs from new work requests. Regarding existing Scientific Council work requirements, the Working Group reflected on the complexity of the 5-year workplan developed by the Scientific Council and noted that it would be beneficial to simplify the workplan to align it with the specific Commission requests to ensure that the Commission is better able to see how the Scientific Council workload aligns with each request. The working group developed a draft template for this and agreed that the discussions should continue at RBMS meeting, for further consideration by the Scientific Council and the Commission at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The working group also agreed that an assessment of the current workload is required to inform the ongoing effort to address the Scientific Council workload.

On questions of the future workload, the Working Group discussed a few approaches. While unable to agree upon a specific tool or approach, the Working Group underscored the need for the Commission and the Scientific Council to address these concerns. It was discussed that Contracting Parties' obligation to provide adequate scientific support to the Organization can be impacted due to unforeseen changes in policies or budgets.

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The Working Group concluded that additional analysis on the Scientific Council's processes and NAFO's priority development would assist in these efforts, and therefore, building upon the Scientific Council's recommendation, recommends that the Commission and/or the Scientific Council perform an assessment or assessments that can help inform future discussions.

11. Bycatch

a. BDS Action Plan

The co-Chairs reflected on the Commission tasking from the 2023 Annual Meeting for the working groups (including WG-EAFFM) to review the Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards (COM Doc. 17-26) to ensure that the work continues, where required. The working group discussed the current status of the tasks under the action plan and noted that Task 4 of the action plan, relating to the development of potential management options for the Commission to consider, had not been completed. The working group reflected that the analyses that had been completed by the NAFO Secretariat in the past had been very useful, but the information needed to be updated and compiled in a comprehensive manner to allow for the proper review of the work. As such, WG-EAFFM agreed to request the Commission to task the NAFO Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Council as appropriate, to compile a summary of the previous analyses completed under the action plan, as well as the relevant data sources associated with that work. The compilation will be shared with the WG-EAFFM, WG-RBMS, and STACTIC in 2025 for consideration. This will help the WG-EAFFM and/or the appropriate NAFO body to identify data gaps and available data sources that could help fill those gaps, and will inform scoping discussions for the rest of the work in the action plan.

b. Greenland shark bycatch

The co-Chairs reflected on the Commission tasking from the 2023 Annual Meeting for WG-EAFFM to consider other appropriate management options for the bycatch of Greenland sharks in the NAFO Regulatory Area, to inform the Commission's consideration of additional conservation measures. The working group reflected on the significant progress made to date in NAFO on the conservation of Greenland sharks, including but not limited to, the strengthening of management measures, improving data collection through the NAFO Observer Program, and developing guidance for identification as well as safe handling and release. It was noted that the management measures adopted in 2018 and 2022 reflect compromises across Contracting Parties, and that Contracting Parties need time to implement both the relatively new management measures, and consider how they will apply the new data collection elements. The working group noted the Commission, STACTIC and the Scientific Council have each been instrumental to this progress, in addition to the independent research and other efforts by Contracting Parties to complement this work. It was noted that NAFO at-sea observers have been completing the updated reporting template (Annex II.M Part 5 of the NAFO CEM) since 2020, and data are received by the Secretariat; however, no NAFO body is currently reviewing or otherwise using this data. To facilitate continued considerations of potential additional measures for the conservation for Greenland shark, WG-EAFFM agreed to recommend to the Commission that the Secretariat summarize and analyze the available observer data related to Greenland shark with a view to identify trends, and any potential data gaps. The WG-EAFFM will then review the summary and analysis at the 2025 meeting and as appropriate, and if necessary, consider any data gaps and/or issues, and discuss potential ways to address them. Additionally, the WG-EAFFM, at its 2025 meeting, will consider recommending that the Commission request to Contracting Parties to provide updates on their efforts to implement the relevant provisions of the NAFO CEM, including any independent relevant research or data, to WG-EAFFM for its 2026 meeting. At its 2026 meeting, WG-EAFFM will review the available information related to Greenland sharks, including any provided by Contracting Parties, to identify any additional scientific and/or technical gaps/issues. At its 2027 meeting, WG-EAFFM will, if necessary, consider appropriate management options for the bycatch of Greenland sharks in the NRA. For any proposals, Contracting Parties will need time to consider them. Proposals should be transparent, introduced and reviewed timely and be consensus based.

c. Directed Fisheries

The United States of America presented a discussion paper on NAFO Directed Fishing Policy outlined in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-06, which reflected the difficulties that some Contracting Parties vessels are facing in the changing landscape of NAFO fisheries while effectively balancing NAFO's current approach to directed fishing. The United States reflected on recent changes to the NAFO CEM that have been adopted to address specific fishery challenges with directed fishing, and noted the opinion that broader, policy level discussions are required to address these challenges. The working group reflected on the discussion paper and did not find a clear consensus on the best body to undertake these discussions and address these issues (i.e. STACTIC, WG-EAFFM, WG-RBMS).

12. Review of the Terms of Reference for WG-EAFFM

The co-Chairs reflected on the revisions made to the Terms of Reference at the 2023 WG-EAFFM meeting in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 23-14 (Rev. 3) and noted that they had consulted with the co-Chairs of WG-RBMS on the draft, as agreed at the 2023 meeting and presented further revisions in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08. The working group revised the draft changes, made additional suggestions, and agreed to recommend that the Commission and the Scientific Council review and approve the revised Terms of Reference as outlined in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).

13. Other Business

The Executive Secretary provided an update on the "Applying the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management in ABNJ" symposium scheduled to take place from 11-13 March 2025 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. More info about the symposium can be found at <https://eafm-symposium.nafo.int/>.

It was noted that the Ecosystem Roadmap will be discussed at the symposium, but there has not been a specific document developed in NAFO outlining the details of the Roadmap. The working group discussed the importance of having a comprehensive document to refer to when discussing the Roadmap and agreed to recommend the Commission to request the Scientific Council, over the next 1-3 years, to develop a reference document detailing the Ecosystem Roadmap. In the meantime, a draft summary description of the Roadmap is provided in Annex 4.

14. Recommendations

The WG-EAFFM agreed to forward the following recommendations to the Scientific Council and the Commission for consideration and adoption at the 2024 Annual Meeting of NAFO:

1. **In relation to agenda item 5.b on the update on reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2026, the WG-EAFFM requests the Commission to recommend the Scientific Council to include potential management options in the reassessment of bottom fisheries, with the goal of supporting meaningful and effective discussions between scientists and managers at WG-EAFFM.**
2. **In relation to agenda item 8 on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), the WG-EAFFM recommends that the Commission request the Scientific Council to develop materials to inform a discussion on the potential of submitting NAFO coral bottom fishing closed areas as OECMs at the 2025 WG-EAFFM meeting.**
3. **In relation to agenda item 10 on the Scientific Council workload, the WG-EAFFM recommends the Commission and/or the Scientific Council consider undertaking internal, or support external, assessments to inform the ongoing effort to address the Scientific Council workload. Such assessments could include how to optimize:**
 - a) **the organization / structure and function of the Scientific Council, its standing committees and working groups,**
 - b) **further development and implementation of the Scientific Council's workplan,**

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- c) the process to prioritize across requests to Scientific Council, and
 - d) the process to consider the work of the Scientific Council in the NAFO budget.
4. In relation to agenda item 11.a on the Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards, the WG-EAFFM recommends the Commission requests the NAFO Secretariat, in collaboration with the Scientific Council as appropriate, compile a summary of the previous analyses completed under the action plan, as well as the relevant data sources associated with that work. The compilation will be shared with the WG-EAFFM, WG-RBMS, and STACTIC in 2025 for consideration.
 5. In relation to agenda item 11.b on Greenland shark bycatch, the WG-EAFFM recommends that the Commission requests that the Secretariat provide a summary and analysis of the observer data related to Greenland shark to WG-EAFFM at its 2025 meeting, with a view to identify trends, and any potential gaps, in that information.
 6. In relation to agenda item 12 on the review of the Terms of Reference, the WG-EAFFM recommends that the Commission and the Scientific Council review and approve the revised Terms of Reference, outlined in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).
 7. In relation to the ecosystem roadmap, WG-EAFFM recommends the Commission to request the Scientific Council to develop a reference document detailing the ecosystem roadmap, for completion in the next 1-3 years.

15. Adoption of the Report

The report was adopted via correspondence following the end of the meeting.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 15:20 hours (UTC/GMT +2) on Wednesday, 07 August 2024.

The co-Chairs thanked meeting participants for their cooperation and input. The participants likewise expressed their thanks and appreciation to the co-Chairs for their leadership. The working group also expressed their gratitude to Norway for hosting the meeting, and the NAFO Secretariat for their support.

Annex 1. List of Participants

CO-CHAIRS	In-person Sacau Cuadrado, Mar (European Union) Mencher, Elizabethann (United States of America)
SC CHAIR	In-person González-Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
CANADA	In-person Byrne, Vanessa Fagan, Robert Johnson, Kate Koen Alonso, Mariano Rayner, Gemma Simpson, Mark Virtual Burrige, Angela Fuller, Susanna Krohn, Martha
DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)	Virtual Svarrer Wang, Ulla
EUROPEAN UNION	In-person Belmonte González, Luis Virtual Abalo-Morla, Sara Blazkiewicz, Bernard Cortina, Angela Durán Muñoz, Pablo Dybiec, Leszek Garrido, Irene Granell, Ignacio Lopes, Luis Mancebo, C. Margarita Merino Buisac, Adolfo Palas Otero, Santiago Szumlicz-Dobiesz, Justyna Teixeira, Isabel Tuvi, Aare
ICELAND	In-person Bragason, Agnar Bragi
JAPAN	Virtual Iwano, Taisuke Takehara, Toya Taki, Kenji
NORWAY	In-person Bakke, Gunnstein Øvregård Østebø, Kjetil

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RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Virtual Fomin, Konstantin
UKRAINE	Virtual Honcharuk, Ihor Paramonov, Valerii
UNITED KINGDOM	In-person Gawlyk, Joe Gibbins, Imogen Kenny, Andrew
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	In-person Emmert, Samantha Jaburek, Shannah Warner-Kramer, Deirdre Virtual Sosebee, Katherine
ACCREDITED OBSERVERS	In-person Diz, Daniela (Deep Sea Conservation Coalition)
NAFO SECRETARIAT	In-person Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana Bell MacCallum, Dayna Virtual LeFort, Lisa

Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Presentation of Scientific Council responses to Commission requests for advice (COM Doc. 23-09) relevant to WG-EAFFM
5. VME and SAI Assessments
 - a. Update on the centralized data repository (COM Request 5.a)
 - b. Update on reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2026 (COM Request 5.c)
6. Ecosystem Roadmap (COM Request 4)
7. Development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA (COM Request 5.b)
8. Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)
9. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review Panel Recommendations
10. Scientific Council workload
11. Bycatch
 - a. BDS Action Plan
 - b. Greenland shark bycatch
 - c. Directed Fisheries
12. Review of the Terms of Reference for WG-EAFFM
13. Other Business
14. Recommendations
15. Adoption of the Report
16. Adjournment

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Annex 3. REVISED Terms of Reference – Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM)
(COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08 (Rev.2))

Structure:

The Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management reports to both the Commission (COM) and Scientific Council (SC); considers the advice of Scientific Council; and provides recommendations to the Commission.

The Working Group shall be comprised of fishery managers, scientists, and advisors from Contracting Parties, supported by observers and invited experts. The Co-chairs will consist of a fishery manager from the Commission and a scientist from the Scientific Council.

Plenary discussions will be conducted in an informal, open manner, unless the Contracting Parties, decide to conduct sessions in a delegation format. Recommendations to the Commission will be developed and agreed upon through formal sessions of official delegations. When the Working Group breaks from plenary session and reverts to participation by delegation, individual scientists remain as part of their delegations and Scientific Council as a whole would be represented by the Scientific Council Chair or a designated alternate.

Accredited observers may attend meetings of the Working Group. Participation will be subject to the *NAFO Rules of Procedure*.

If a Contracting Party so requests, particular agenda items of the meeting, or parts thereof, shall be restricted to delegates representing Contracting Parties and Scientific Council.

Objective:

The main objective of the Working Group is to make recommendations to the Commission and provide feedback to Scientific Council on the development and effective implementation of ecosystems approaches to fisheries management.

Specific Duties:

In responding to requests for advice and recommendations from the Commission, considering the associated advice of Scientific Council, the Working Group shall:

- Further develop and provide recommendations on the application of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) Roadmap.
- Consider ecosystem status, functioning and dynamics of NAFO marine ecosystems, including species interactions, and their productivity,
- Consider impacts of non-fisheries activities.
- Consider the impacts of climate change as an element of work on the EAF roadmap.
- Make recommendations on mitigation strategies and measures to avoid significant adverse impacts of fishing activities on vulnerable marine ecosystems, including the evaluation of associated risks.
- Review area closures periodically and other measures as outlined in the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEMs).
- Provide recommendations in relation to requests to conduct exploratory bottom fishing and evaluate authorized exploratory fishing activities.

- Provide recommendations for updating the CEMs in relation to EAF including the text in Chapter II (Bottom Fisheries in the NAFO Regulatory Area) and any associated Annexes (e.g. the Exploratory Protocol for New Fishing Areas - Annex I.E), as necessary.
- Provide recommendations and information, and support the Secretariat, on coordination with other regional or global organizations on activities related to the implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

Meetings:

The Working Group will typically meet annually unless otherwise agreed by the Scientific Council and the Commission.

Whenever possible, the regular meeting of the Working Group should occur after the June Scientific Council meeting and prior to the NAFO annual meeting.

Reporting out

The Working Group will issue a written report to the Commission and the Scientific Council, prior to the NAFO annual meeting.

Annex 4. A draft summary description of the NAFO Roadmap for an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries

As stated in its convention, NAFO's objective is to *ensure the long term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the Convention Area and, in so doing, to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which these resources are found*. The convention **recognizes** the economic and social benefits deriving from the sustainable use of fishery resources, **promotes** the long term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources based on the best available scientific advice and the precautionary approach, and **commits** to apply an ecosystem approach to fisheries management in the Northwest Atlantic that includes safeguarding the marine environment, conserving its marine biodiversity, minimizing the risk of long term or irreversible adverse effects of fishing activities, and taking account of the relationship between all components of the ecosystem.

Implementing an ecosystem approach along the lines established in the NAFO Convention requires the development of scientific tools and assessment methods that can inform the relevant components, their interactions, and trade-offs, as well as the production and integration of related scientific advice into the regular management processes, and activities of NAFO bodies.

To this end NAFO constructed a framework for the development and implementation of an ecosystem approach for its operations. This framework, commonly referred to as the NAFO Roadmap for an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF), highlights the scientific information and advice required to deliver an EAF. It aligns the information and advice with the structure and operations of the organization, and identifies the lead NAFO bodies associated with the production, delivery and implementation of its elements (Fig.1, Table 1). It amalgamates new and existing elements within the NAFO management cycle, and its design is purposely modular so that new and/or improved components can be incorporated into management practices as soon as their status is deemed ready for application. The Roadmap represents both, the structure needed for developing and implementing an EAF in NAFO, and the recursive process (management cycle) required to put it into practice (Koen-Alonso et al., 2019).

The Roadmap is intended to be adaptable by providing a basic structure and general principles on which to build an EAF for NAFO, and whose details can evolve as the different elements are developed, implemented, and tested through practice. Its core premises are: a) the approach has to be objective-driven, b) it should consider long-term ecosystem sustainability, c) it must be place-based, and d) the consequences of trade-offs in managing human activities have to be explicitly defined.

The ecological underpinning for the Roadmap structure is the nested hierarchical organization of natural ecosystems that integrates biological, chemical, and physical processes operating at different temporal and spatial scales, where higher level structures function as constraints for the levels within. In this context implementing EAF requires consideration of geographical units that are consistent with the spatial and temporal scales of the interacting stocks to be managed in a coordinated way, while considering what factors regulate and constrain ecosystem productivity at those scales. In practical terms, this requires taking into account two complementary and interrelated considerations: a) the effects of the ecosystem and fishing on the target stocks (impacts of the system on the stocks), and b) the effects of fishing on ecosystem components beyond the target stocks (impacts of fishing on habitats and other species).

The Roadmap addresses the effects of the ecosystem and fishing on the target stocks by informing sustainable harvest rates through a three-tiered hierarchical approach which evaluates sustainability at the ecosystem, multispecies, and stock levels (Fig. 1, Table 1). Tier 1 includes the identification of the ecosystem units, the assessment of ecosystem state, and the evaluation of productivity at the ecosystem unit scale. This tier of the Roadmap allows general considerations of large scale climate and ecological forcing, and the basic constraint imposed by primary production on fisheries productivity. Tier 2 considers multispecies interactions (e.g. predation, competition) and the impacts of environmental drivers on the managed stocks to evaluate the capacity of the system of interacting stocks to respond to anthropogenic and ecological perturbations. Tier 2 allows evaluation of trade-offs among fisheries, and identifies harvest rates which are consistent with multispecies sustainability. Tier 3 recognizes existing single-species stock assessments and allows consideration of traditional fishery management measures within sustainable ecosystem production limits. When taken together, the tiers of the Roadmap take into account ecosystem sustainability considerations at three nested levels of ecological organization, and informs stock management decisions which are framed by

the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF), and/or stock-specific Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) frameworks.

Complementary to this 3-tiered approach, the Roadmap addresses the effects of fishing on the ecosystem by focusing on both by-catch, and impacts on benthic habitats. While some fisheries can be more impactful than others, the full extent of fishing impacts on the ecosystem is cumulative in nature, and hence, their evaluation requires integration across all fisheries operating within an ecosystem production unit.

By-catch is one of the first ecosystem impacts of fishing for which management measures have been traditionally developed. Incidental catches of species of conservation concern (e.g. marine mammals, seabirds, turtles, sharks), as well as the catch of undersized commercial species and/or under moratoria, are issues of concern in most fisheries around the world. Mechanisms to address concerns of this nature were part of NAFO regulatory framework before the Roadmap, and its integration within the Roadmap aims at improving the evaluation of by-catch and assessing its effects at the ecosystem level.

Likewise, impacts on benthic habitats can only be fully addressed in terms of the integrated losses resulting from fishing practices. Each fishery may have quantitatively and qualitatively different impacts owing to the target species, gear, and modes of operation, but the overall impact on benthic habitats is defined by the cumulative effects of all fisheries operating in a particular region. These impacts would have different long-term consequences depending on the vulnerability of the habitat being perturbed, as well as the role of those habitats for overall ecosystem functioning. Currently, the habitat impacts component of the Roadmap is focused on the evaluation of Significance Adverse Impacts (SAIs) on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem (VME) habitats (FAO, 2009), which constitutes the key evidence for management measures aimed at protecting these habitats. As the Roadmap evolves, and our understanding on the role of different habitat structures on ecosystem functioning grows, habitat impact considerations could be expanded to other habitats types as necessary.

The practical implementation of the Roadmap requires a diversity of monitoring activities ranging from those linked to collection and analysis of scientific data, to those supporting regulatory compliance and enforcement. These monitoring activities are central to NAFO operations, and rely on coordinated efforts by Contracting Parties (CPs), and the support of the NAFO Secretariat. The full scope of these activities may exceed the Roadmap *per se*, but they are integral for understanding the Roadmap as a recursive process (management cycle) (Fig. 1, Table 1).

The setting of goals and objectives, paired with the actual action of making fisheries management decisions, constitutes both, the starting and ending point of the Roadmap as a recursive process representing the NAFO management cycle. It is the step where the information generated is incorporated and influences the outcomes of the decision-making process, as well as the generating point of feedback that will help refining and improving both, the objectives themselves, and the scientific and management work required to deliver on them.

At present, the Roadmap does not explicitly incorporate socio-economic and cultural elements into the EAF process.

In summary, the Roadmap requires for each geographically defined ecosystem unit, the development of a series of interconnected assessments aimed at different spatial scales and levels of ecological organization, which can be schematically described as ecosystem state, multispecies, stock, and habitat impacts assessments (Fig. 1, Table 1). These assessments require the implementation of analyses aimed at defining ecosystem-level fisheries productivity, exploring ecological trade-offs among exploited species, establishing the status of each exploited stock, and evaluating the cumulative impacts of fishing on benthic habitats. The results from these assessments, and their integration into the scientific advice and management discussion, provides the basis for ecosystem-informed fisheries management decisions in NAFO.

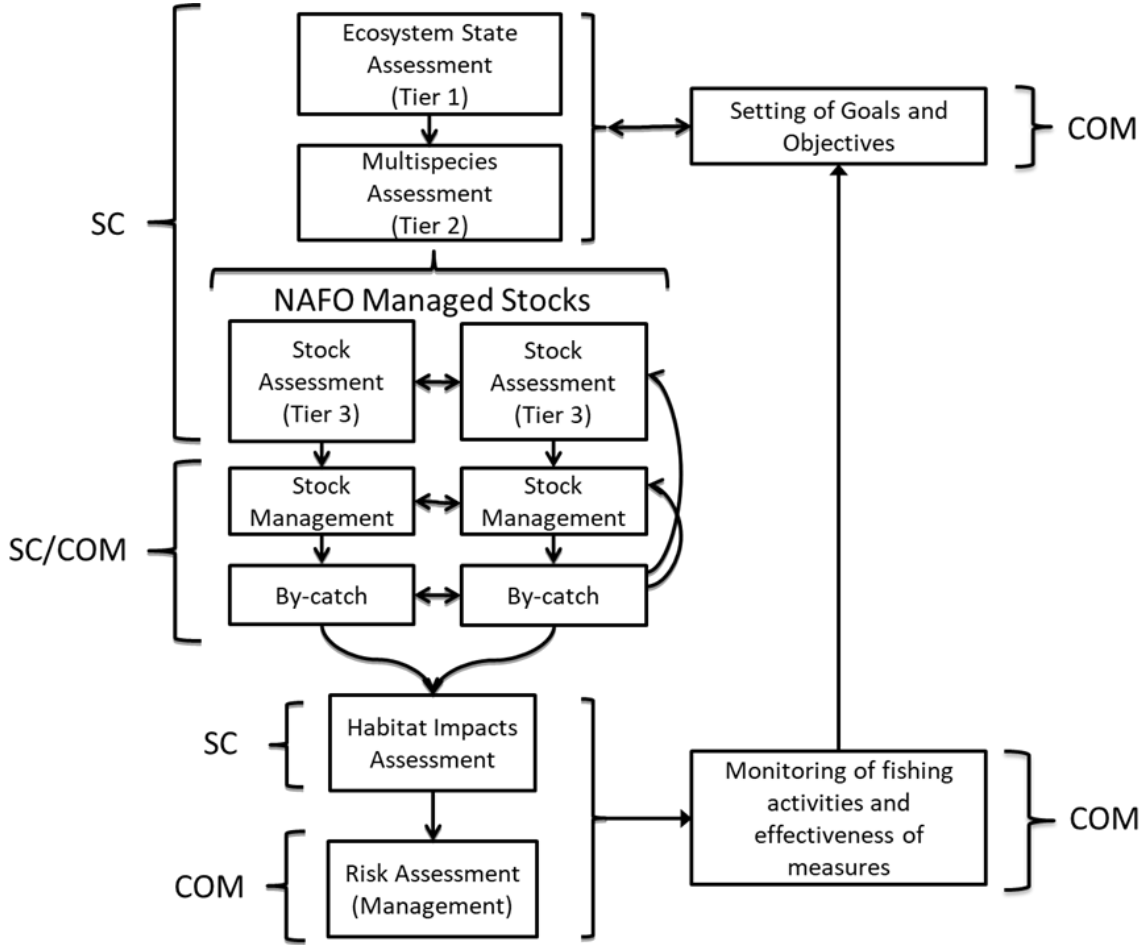


Figure 1. Current template of the NAFO Roadmap for EAF. SC: Scientific Council, COM: Commission. The labelled vertical brackets indicate the leading NAFO body for each Roadmap component.

Table 1. Brief description of the Roadmap components

Component	Examples of tasks/activities associated with the component	Lead NAFO body, and main supporting bodies
Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of operational objectives for NAFO fisheries (ecosystem and other levels). • Management decisions consistent with the objectives. 	<p>Lead: COM</p> <p>Supporting: SC, joint COM-SC WGs (WGEAFFM and WGRBMS), and COM STACTIC</p>
Ecosystem State Assessment (Tier-1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of spatial management units. • Evaluation of productivity state of the ecosystem and its variability, including impacts from large scale environmental forcing (e.g. cycles and climate change) at the ecosystem level. • Provision of advice on sustainability of total catches at the ecosystem level (risk of ecosystem overfishing). 	<p>Lead: SC</p> <p>Supporting: SC WGESA, SC STACFEN, joint COM-SC WGEAFFM, and COM</p>
Multispecies Assessment (Tier-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of species interactions and trends, including quantification of diets and predation. • Understanding the role of environmental drivers on ecosystem structure and dynamics. • Understanding the response of food webs to anthropogenic impacts. • Definition of multispecies reference points. • Provision of advice on catch portfolios based on multispecies considerations. 	<p>Lead: SC</p> <p>Supporting: SC WGESA, SC STACFEN, SC STACFIS, joint COM-SC WGEAFFM, and COM</p>
Stock Assessment (Tier-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock identification and delineation. • Assessment of the status of the stock. • Consideration of processes/environmental drivers affecting recruitment, growth, maturation and spatial distribution. • Consideration of sources of mortality at the stock level. • Provision of advice on stock-specific catch levels. 	<p>Lead: SC</p> <p>Supporting: SC STACFIS, SC STACFEN, SC WGESA, joint COM-SC WGs (WGEAFFM and WGRBMS), and COM</p>
Stock Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of a Precautionary Approach Framework, and related stock-level reference points. • Development and implementation of harvest control rules, stock-specific Management Strategy Evaluation frameworks, and rebuilding plans. 	<p>Lead: SC and COM</p> <p>Supporting: SC STACFIS, SC STACFEN, WGESA, and joint COM-SC WGRBMS</p>
By-catch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of by-catch of commercial and non-commercial species (including VME-defining species). • Reporting of by-catch for use in all assessments (ecosystem, multispecies, stock, and habitat impacts). 	<p>Lead: SC and COM</p> <p>Supporting: COM WGBDS, joint COM-SC WGs (CSAG, WGEAFFM and WGRBMS), COM STACTIC, and NAFO Secretariat,</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and implementation of measures to control by-catch levels. 	
Habitat Impacts Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of benthic areas/habitats of special concern (e.g. VMEs). • Characterization of the habitat, its functionality, and its capacity to tolerate perturbations. • Analysis of fishing impacts on benthic ecosystems. • Provision of advice on Significant Adverse Impacts (SAI) on habitats (e.g. VMEs) by fishing activities. 	Lead: SC Supporting: SC WGESA, SC STACFEN, SC STACFIS, joint COM-SC WGEAFFM, and COM
Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the risk of significant adverse impacts on habitats (e.g. VMEs), in the context of current activities and objectives. • Consideration of the risk of fisheries having significant adverse impacts on ecosystem structure and function, in the context of current activities and objectives. • Development and implementation of management actions in response to the outcomes of habitat risk assessments. 	Lead: COM Supporting: SC, and joint COM-SC WGEAFFM
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection, analysis, and interpretation of data pertaining to ecosystem status and human activities relevant to the NAFO convention objectives. • Use of available data to track the effectiveness of management measures. 	Lead: COM Supporting: SC, NAFO Secretariat, COM STACTIC, and joint COM-SC WGs (CSAG, WGEAFFM and WGRBMS)

References

- FAO 2009. International guidelines for the management of deep-sea fisheries in the high seas, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), Rome.
- Koen-Alonso, M., Pepin, P., Fogarty, M. J., Kenny, A., and Kenchington, E. 2019. The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization Roadmap for the development and implementation of an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries: structure, state of development, and challenges. *Marine Policy*, 100: 342-352.

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on
Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

08-10 August 2024
Bergen, Norway

NAFO
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2024

Report of WG-RBMS,
08-10 August 2024

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**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on
Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

08–10 August 2024
Bergen, Norway

1. Opening by co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada)

The meeting was opened by the co-Chairs Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada) at 09:07 hours (UTC/GMT +2 hours) on Thursday, 08 August 2024. The co-Chairs welcomed participants attending in-person and virtually. This included representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States of America. The Chair of the Scientific Council and an accredited observer from the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition were present (Annex 1).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Dayna Bell MacCallum and Jana Aker) was appointed as rapporteur of this meeting.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The working group agreed to include an item on the Terms of Reference under agenda item 9 – Other Business. The adopted agenda is outlined in Annex 2.

4. Finalization of the MSE process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut

Paul Regular (Canada) presented an update on the status of the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) process for Subarea 2 + Divisions 3KLMNO Greenland halibut and highlighted the Scientific Council response to Commission Request #3a (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). The Scientific Council, at its meeting in June 2024, reviewed the candidate management procedures¹ (CMP) and the revised exceptional circumstances protocol and recommended their adoption. The working group thanked the Scientific Council for their efforts and agreed to recommend the Commission adopt the candidate management procedure and exceptional circumstances protocol as outlined in SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised). The working group also agreed that the management procedure should be implemented for an initial period of ten years with an “update” assessment every three years, and a more in-depth MSE review after six years to revise the management procedure if needed. The “update” assessment can also be done any year if the exceptional circumstances, included in the exceptional circumstances protocol, occur. It was noted that the three year “update” assessment would involve rerunning the previously agreed base case models unchanged, except for the addition of any available data in subsequent years. A full assessment would include consideration of alternative assessment assumptions and methods. The working group also encouraged the Scientific Council to continue investigating the probability-based CMP in future, as workload allows.

The working group also noted the changes that would be required within the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) as a result of the adoption of the candidate management procedures and the revised exceptional circumstances protocol, and agreed to forward the proposed changes outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-02 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3) to the Commission for adoption.

5. Application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut Management Strategy

The Scientific Council Chair, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented an update on the application of the Management Strategy for Subarea 2 + Divisions 3KLMNO Greenland halibut (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). It was noted that the Scientific Council response to Commission Request #2 was deferred until the

¹ Management procedure and harvest control rule are used interchangeably in this meeting report.

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September 2024 Scientific Council meeting, pending the recommendation from WG-RBMS for the Commission to adopt the CMP and the revised exceptional circumstances protocol, which WG-RBMS agreed to recommend the Commission adopt under agenda item 4 (Recommendation 1). As a result, WG-RBMS recommends that, pending the Commission's adoption of Recommendation 1, the Scientific Council use the new management procedure to provide advice on the total allowable catch for 2025 at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The Scientific Council Chair also highlighted that exceptional circumstances will be occurring in the new management procedure due to recent gaps in the EU-Spain 3L series but that sensitivity analyses presented at this meeting indicate that the application of the new harvest control rule (HCR), without the EU-Spain 3L information, will still be appropriate.

6. Progress on the MSE process for 3LN redfish

The Scientific Council Chair, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented an update on the progress of the Divisions 3LN redfish MSE process, noting that due to the workload and capacity constraints, there has been no progress since January 2024. The Scientific Council updated the workplan at its June meeting (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)). Canada reflected on its commitment to support this work and noted that there is currently an internal review taking place to determine if more resources can be allocated to the redfish MSE process and requested additional time to review the workplan before recommending its adoption to the Commission. The working group noted the difficulty in developing the CMP for redfish and that it is novel work, and workplan timelines should take that into account. It was agreed that the discussion of the workplan would continue at the 2024 Annual Meeting, noting revisions may occur at that time depending on the internal review of available resources being completed by Canada.

7. Finalization of the Revised Precautionary Approach Framework

The Chair of the Scientific Council Precautionary Approach Working Group (PA-WG), Fernando González-Costas (European Union), presented the basic structure of the revised PAF, the objectives and performance statistics, the results of the generic and specific testing, as well as the conclusions from the Scientific Council July Intersessional meeting (SCS Doc. 24/17). The working group thanked the Scientific Council and technical teams for the tremendous efforts that have gone into the PAF revision process. The PA-WG Chair also highlighted some elements of the framework that needed to be discussed and clarified.

The working group compiled the elements of the Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-03 (Rev. 2) (Annex 4) and agreed to recommend it to the Commission for adoption. The recommended approach includes the use of the middle width leaf tested by SC and the development of a new risk-based table to guide the provision of SC advice (Appendix 1 and Table 2 of Annex 4). The working group highlighted the importance of implementing the revised PAF gradually, noting that things such as substantial TAC changes, or the need to establish reference points, may create difficulties in applying the PAF. The working group supported the Scientific Council to use expert judgement in the provision of advice in applying the PAF where reference points are not available. The working group also noted that the Scientific Council should work towards the development of reference points where they are not available, recognizing the other priorities and workload of the Scientific Council.

8. Scientific Council workload

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented an update of the discussions at the June Scientific Council meeting (SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised)) around the potential ways forward that were discussed in the NAFO Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council on 22 April 2024 (COM-SC WP 24-01). The co-Chair of WG-EAFFM, Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America), reported on the related discussions that took place at the August WG-EAFFM meeting, and highlighted the recommendation being put forward to the Commission from that working group. The WG-RBMS supported the discussions and recommendations being put forward by the WG-EAFFM on this topic.

Reflecting on the Scientific Council workload required to undertake MSE processes, the WG-RBMS noted that, under its Standard 3.0, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) will require the implementation of management strategies that have been tested using MSEs in order for fisheries to be eligible to receive certification for stocks managed by regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs). The working group reflected that MSEs may not be the best tools for certain stocks, and that there is a significant workload associated with the development and completion of MSE processes. Given limited scientific resources, the completion of these MSEs for healthy stocks, unintentionally diverts scientific resources from other stocks that may be in greater need of attention. Finally, it also noted that the Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework may fulfil the MSE requirement, as it was subject to thorough simulation testing. The working group recommended that the Commission send correspondence to the MSC, and other certifying bodies as appropriate, noting these concerns and challenges of requiring a MSE for RFMO managed fisheries to receive certification.

9. Other Business

a. Terms of Reference

At the July 2023 meeting, the working group discussed its Terms of Reference, and noted that a further review could be considered taking into account any proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference of the WG-EAFFM. The co-Chair of WG-EAFFM, Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America), highlighted the proposed changes to the WG-EAFFM Terms of Reference that were agreed to at their August 2024 meeting. WG-RBMS agreed to update its Terms of Reference to align with the changes from WG-EAFFM, and agreed to forward the revised Terms of Reference, outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-01 (Revised) (Annex 5), to the Commission for adoption.

10. Recommendations

The WG-RBMS agreed to forward the following conclusions and recommendations to the Commission.

1. **In relation to the MSE process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut (agenda item 4), WG-RBMS recommends the adoption of the candidate management procedure and exceptional circumstances protocol as outlined in SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised), and the changes to the NAFO CEM outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-02 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).**
2. **In relation to the application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut Management Strategy (agenda item 5),**
 - a. **WG-RBMS recommends that the Scientific Council use the new management procedure to provide advice on the total allowable catch for 2025 at the 2024 Annual Meeting.**
 - b. **WG-RBMS acknowledges that exceptional circumstances will be occurring due to recent gaps in the EU-Spain 3L series. However, sensitivity analyses presented at this meeting by the Scientific Council indicate that the application of the new HCR will still be appropriate.**
3. **WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission adopt the Revised Precautionary Framework (COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-03 (Rev. 2)) (Annex 4). Further, WG-RBMS recommends a periodic full review of the Framework on a timeline to be determined at a later date by the Commission following the advice of WG-RBMS.**
4. **WG-RBMS recommends that the Scientific Council gives priority to the development of reference points, to facilitate implementation of the PAF, for stocks that currently do not have them.**

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5. **In relation to the Scientific Council workload (agenda item 8), WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission send correspondence to the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), and other certifying bodies as appropriate, highlighting the adoption of the Revised Precautionary Approach Framework and noting the concerns and challenges of requiring a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for RFMO managed fisheries to receive certification.**
6. **In relation to the review of the Terms of Reference (agenda item 9.a), WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission and the Scientific Council endorse the revised Terms of Reference, outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-01 (Revised) (Annex 5).**

11. Adoption of report

The report was adopted via correspondence following the end of the meeting.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned early at 11:45 hours (UTC/GMT +2 hours) on Saturday, 10 August 2024.

The co-Chairs thanked meeting participants for their cooperation and input. The participants likewise expressed their thanks and appreciation to the co-Chairs for their leadership. The working group also expressed their gratitude to Norway for hosting the meeting, and the NAFO Secretariat for their support.

Annex 1. List of Participants

CO-CHAIRS	In-person González-Costas, Fernando (European Union) Walsh, Ray (Canada)
SC CHAIR	In-person González-Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
CANADA	In-person Burns, Adam Byrne, Vanessa Fagan, Robert Johnson, Kate Koen-Alonso, Mariano Rayner, Gemma Regular, Paul Simpson, Mark Virtual Burrige, Angela Gullage, Nicholas Krohn, Martha Kumar, Rajeev Lebeau, Amy Perreault, Andrea Rowsell, Nicole Varkey, Divya
DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)	In-person Svarrer Wang, Ulla
EUROPEAN UNION	In-person Belmonte, Luis Virtual Blazkiewicz, Bernard Cortina, Angela Garrido, Irene Granell, Ignacio Lopes, Luis Mancebo, Carmen Margarita Merino Buisac, Adolfo Tuvi, Aare
JAPAN	Virtual Butterworth, Doug Takehara, Toya Taki, Kenji
NORWAY	In-person Bakke, Gunnstein Sandberg, Per Virtual Hvingel, Carsten

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RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Virtual Fomin, Konstantin
UKRAINE	Virtual Didenko, Oleksandr Honcharuk, Ihor Paramonov, Valerii
UNITED KINGDOM	Virtual Fischer, Simon
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	In-person Emmert, Samantha Jaburek, Shannah Kelly, Moira Mencher, Elizabethann Warner-Kramer, Deirdre Virtual Sosebee, Kathy
ACCREDITED OBSERVERS	Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) Diz, Daniela (in-person)
NAFO SECRETARIAT	In-person Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana Bell MacCallum, Dayna Virtual LeFort, Lisa

Annex 2. Agenda

1. Opening by co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Finalization of the MSE process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut
5. Application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut Management Strategy
6. Progress on the MSE process for 3LN redfish
7. Finalization of the revised Precautionary Approach Framework
8. Scientific Council workload
9. Other Business
 - a. Terms of Reference
10. Recommendations
11. Adoption of report
12. Adjournment

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**Annex 3. Changes to the NAFO CEM resulting from the revised Management Strategy for 2+3KLMNO
Greenland halibut
(COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-02 (Rev. 2))**

The following edits to Article 10, Annex I.F and Annex I.G of the NAFO CEM reflect the proposed adoption of a revised management procedure and exceptional circumstances protocol recommended by the WG-RBMS.

Article 10 – Greenland Halibut

Rebuilding Program

1. The current Management Strategy (MS) for Greenland halibut stock in Subarea 2 + Divisions 3KLMNO adopted by NAFO in ~~2024~~2017 shall be in force from ~~2025~~2018 to ~~2034~~2023 inclusive, or until such a time that the Commission adopts a revision.
2. The total allowable catch (TAC) shall be adjusted annually according to the harvest control rule (HCR) specified in Annex I.F.

The text for Annex I.F below will replace the entirety of the current text of Annex I.F.

Annex I.F Greenland Halibut Management Procedure

The MP combines a “target based” and “slope based” rule, which was tuned to reach B_{msy} by 2044 under OM1 using the SCAA framework. The full set of control parameters are shown in Table 1.

Target based (t)

The target rule is:

$$TAC_{y+1}^{target} = TAC_y (1 + \gamma(J_y - 1)) \quad (1)$$

where TAC_y is the TAC recommended for year y , γ is the “response strength” tuning parameter, J_y is a composite measure of the immediate past level in the mean weight per tow from surveys (I_y^i) that are available to use for calculations for year y ; five survey series are used, with $i = 1, 2, 3, 4,$ and 5 corresponding respectively to Canada Autumn 2J3K, Canada Autumn 3LNO, EU-Spain 3L, EU-Spain 3NO and EU 3M 0-1400m:

$$J_y = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2} \frac{J_{current,y}^i}{J_{target}^i}}{\sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2}} \quad (2)$$

with $(\sigma^i)^2$ being the estimated variance for index i (estimated in the SCAA model fitting procedure),

$$J_{current,y}^i = \frac{1}{q} \sum_{y'=y-q}^{y-1} I_{y'}^i \quad (3)$$

$$J_{target}^i = \alpha \frac{1}{5} \sum_{y'=2011}^{2015} I_{y'}^i \quad (\text{where } \alpha \text{ is a control/tuning parameter for the MP}) \quad (4)$$

and q indicating the period of years used to determine current status. Note the assumption that when a TAC is set in year y for year $y + 1$, indices will not at that time yet be available for the current year y . Missing survey values are treated as missing in the calculation using the rule, as was done in the MSE. In such cases, q in equation (3) is reduced accordingly.

Slope based (s)

The slope rule is:

$$TAC_{y+1}^{slope} = TAC_y [1 + \lambda_{up/down} (s_y - X)] \quad (5)$$

where $\lambda_{up/down}$ and X are tuning parameters, s_y^i is a measure of the immediate past trend in the survey-based mean weight per tow indices, computed by linearly regressing $\ln I_{y'}^i$, vs year y' for $y' = y - 5$ to $y' = y - 1$, for each of the five surveys considered, with:

$$s_y = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2} s_y^i}{\sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2}} \quad (6)$$

with the standard error of the residuals of the observed compared to model-predicted logarithm of survey index i (σ^i) as estimated in the SCAA base case operating model. Missing survey values are treated as missing in the calculation using the rule, as was done in the MSE. In such cases, the slope for each index, s_y^i , in equation (6) is calculated from the available values within the last five years.

Combination Target and Slope based (s+t)

For the target and slope-based combination:

- 1) TAC_{y+1}^{target} is computed from equation (1),
- 2) TAC_{y+1}^{slope} is computed from equation (5), and
- 3) $TAC_{y+1} = \mu(TAC_{y+1}^{target} + TAC_{y+1}^{slope})/2$, where μ is a tuning parameter.

Finally, constraints on the maximum allowable annual change in TAC are applied, viz.:

$$\text{if } TAC_{y+1} > TAC_y(1 + \Delta_{up}) \quad \text{then } TAC_{y+1} = TAC_y(1 + \Delta_{up}) \quad (7)$$

and

$$\text{if } TAC_{y+1} < TAC_y(1 - \Delta_{down}) \quad \text{then } TAC_{y+1} = TAC_y(1 - \Delta_{down}) \quad (8)$$

During the MSE process, this inter-annual constraint was set at 10%, for both TAC increases and decreases.

Table 1. Control parameter values for the CMP. The parameters μ , α , and X were adjusted to achieve a median biomass equal to B_{msy} for the exploitable component of the resource biomass in 2044 for the Base Case SCAA Operating Model.

μ	0.963
γ	0.15
q	3
α	0.972
λ_{up}	1
λ_{down}	2
X	-0.0056
$\Delta\phi_{up}$	0.1
$\Delta\phi_{down}$	0.1

Annex I.G Exceptional Circumstances Protocol

The following criteria constitute Exceptional Circumstances:

1. Missing survey data:
 - ~~More than two values missing, in a five-year period, from a survey used in the MP~~ ~~More than one value missing, in a five-year period, from a survey with relatively high weighting in the HCR (Canadian Fall 2J3K, Canadian Fall 3LNO, and EU 3M surveys);~~
 - ~~Missing more than two of the five survey indices from the terminal year. More than two values missing, in a five-year period, from a survey with relatively low weighting in the HCR (Canadian Spring 3LNO and EU Spain 3NO surveys);~~
2. The composite survey index used in the ~~MP~~HCR, in a given year, is above or below the 90 percent probability envelopes projected by the base case operating models from SSM and SCAA under the MS; ~~and~~
3. TACs established that are not generated from the MP.

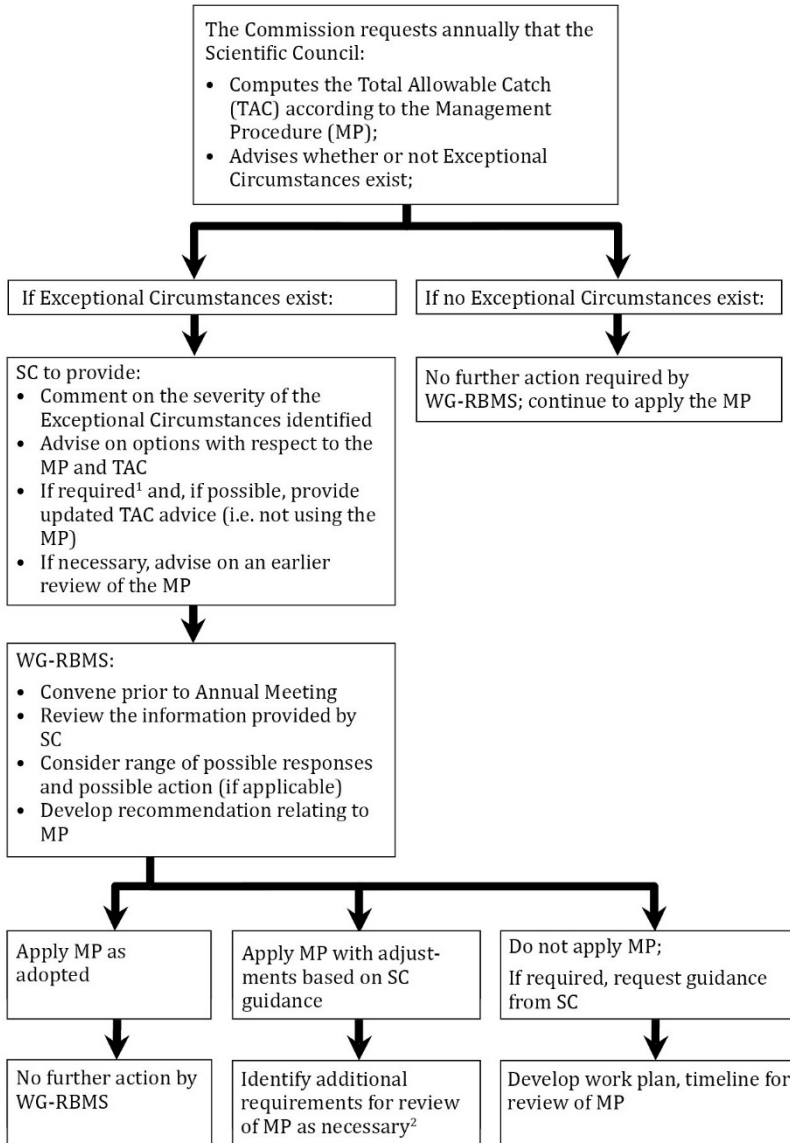
The following elements will require application of expert judgment to determine whether Exceptional Circumstances are occurring:

1. the five survey indices relative to the 80, 90, and 95 percent probability envelopes projected by the base case operating models (SSM and SCAA) for each survey;
2. survey data at age four (age before recruitment to the fishery) compared to its series mean to monitor the status of recruitment; ~~and~~
3. discrepancies between catches and the TAC calculated using the MP.¹

Figure 1 illustrates the actions to be taken in Exceptional circumstances.

¹ Noting that 10% exceedance of TAC was tested during MSE.

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¹ For example, where the SC determines that, in the light of identified exceptional circumstances, the application of the TAC generated by the MP may not be appropriate.

² This review may include updated assessment, sensitivity analysis, etc.

Figure 1. Decision tree illustrating actions to be taken in the event of Exceptional Circumstances.

Annex 4. Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-03 (Rev. 2))

The Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework is set out below. When implementing this Framework, the Commission should consider a gradual approach, for example if substantial TAC changes are indicated by the Revised Framework or if the required reference points have not yet been established. Further, the Commission and the Scientific Council, through WG-RBMS, should also consider potential refinements of the Framework that may become apparent over time, for example upon application across the NAFO stocks.

NAFO should apply this Precautionary Approach Framework in its fisheries management decision making. This framework defines three Zones (Healthy, Cautious, and Critical) to characterize the status of the stock. These zones are defined by two biomass reference points (B_{lim} and $B_{trigger}$). Within this framework, the limit fishing mortality is defined as $F_{lim}=F_{msy}$, and F_{target} as a fraction of F_{msy} (Fig. 1).

Reference Points could be set as a function of the type of stock being managed. As a first step in the initial implementation of the PAF, the reference points or their best proxies, in the context of Figure 1 are set as follows:

$$F_{target}=0.85 \cdot F_{msy}$$

$$B_{lim} = 0.30 \cdot B_{msy}$$

$$B_{trigger} = 0.75 \cdot B_{msy}$$

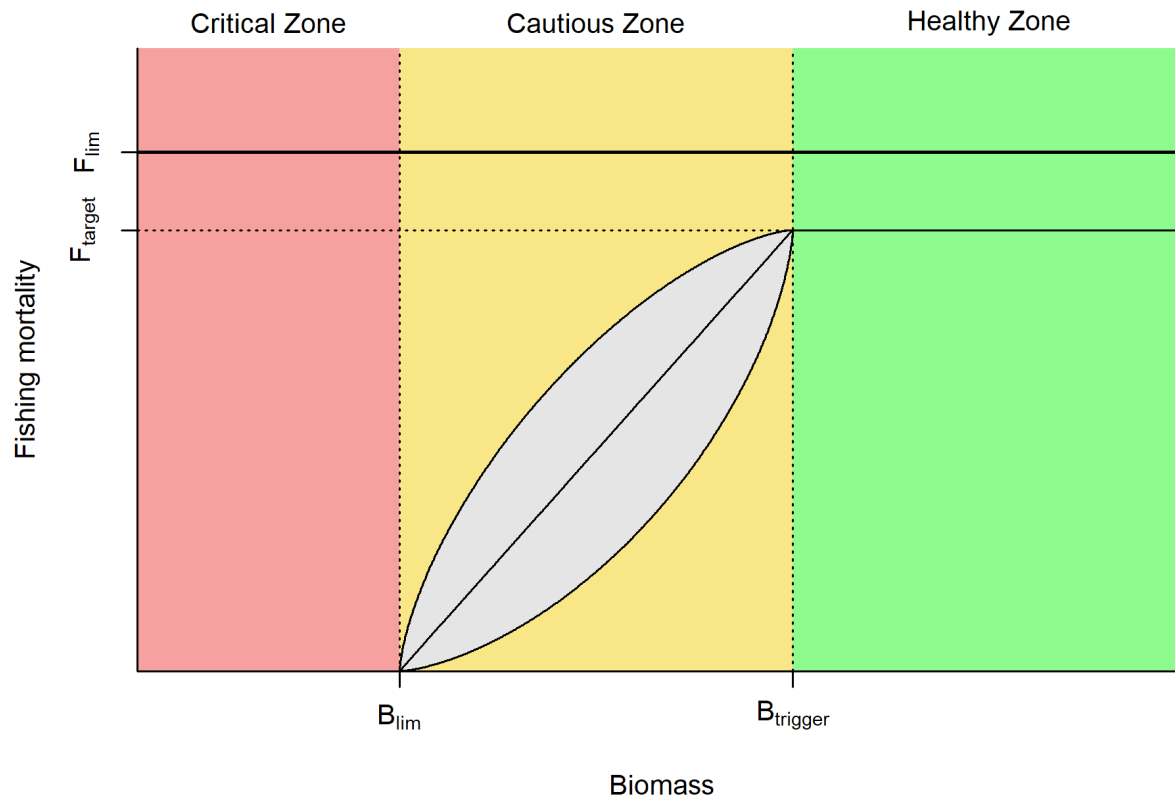


Figure 1. Schematic representation of the NAFO Precautionary Approach, including the leaf space to define fishing levels within the Cautious Zone.

Commission

Management decisions by the Commission within these zones will be informed as follows:

Healthy Zone:

In establishing an F for a stock in the Healthy Zone, the Commission should be informed by a range of options at, above, and below F_{target} , and associated risks, provided by the Scientific Council (Table 2) aimed at keeping the stock in the healthy zone.

Cautious Zone:

F should be generally managed within the boundaries of the leaf space defined by the structure of the PAF (Figure 1, Appendix 1).

Generally, the Commission should adopt an F that achieves the following policy objectives depending on stock trajectory and relative position in the cautious zone (Table 1).

Table 1.

Focus of management action within Cautious Zone		Stock status in the Cautious Zone	
		Low level	High level
Stock trajectory in the Cautious Zone	Decreasing Trend	Reduce risk of further stock decline	Mitigate stock decline
	Increasing Trend	Promote stock growth with high certainty	Promote stock growth

These focal elements for management actions are intended to articulate an increasing risk avoidance in management actions as the stock gets closer to B_{lim} . Overall, the intent is to avoid falling below B_{lim} .

Critical Zone:

F should be set as low as possible. In establishing F , the Commission should be informed by the range of options and associated risks provided by the Scientific Council (Table 2). The primary focus of management should be to rebuild the stock out of the Critical Zone.

Scientific Council

The role of Scientific Council is to inform Commission's decision of where F should be set by characterizing the consequences of alternative management actions. These consequences would be typically described in terms of the status of the stock and F levels as:

- Probability of $B > B_{\text{trigger}}$ within e.g. 1,2,3 years (depending on the stock)
- Probability of $B < B_{\text{lim}}$ within e.g. 1,2,3 years (depending on the stock)
- Probability of $B_{\text{future}} > B_{\text{current}}$ ($B_{\text{future}} = 1,2,3$ years depending on stock) including indication of magnitude of this growth.
- Probability of $F > F_{\text{lim}}$
- Probability of $F > F_{\text{target}}$

To inform the Commission's decision, SC would also provide:

- Current stock status and confidence intervals
- Recent trajectory of the stock

Whenever deemed necessary by the Scientific Council, interpretations of the consequences of fishing options and/or any additional considerations and advice that may be relevant for the management decision should also be provided. SC should not be prescriptive among the options in its advice.

SC should provide the Commission with a risk-based table that would indicate the risks/probabilities associated with the items indicated above, based on available information. The F levels to consider would depend on the Zone where the stock status falls, and generally would follow the template table indicated below.

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Table 2.

	Yield			P(F>F _{lim})			P(B<B _{lim})				P(F>F _{target})			P(B<B _{trigger})				P(B _{t+3} > B _t)	(B _{future} - B _{current})/B _{current}
F in y+1 and following years	Yield y (50%)	Yield y+1 (50%)	Yield y+2 (50%)	y	y+1	y+2	y	y+1	y+2	y+3	y	y+1	y+2	y	y+1	y+2	y+3		
Critical Zone																			
F=0	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F=X% current*	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F current	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Cautious Zone																			
F lower edge leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F midrib leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F upper edge leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Healthy Zone																			
F=0.75F _{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F _{target} =0.85F _{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F _{lim} =F _{msy}	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

*X% may vary stock by stock. In the future, this framework may be modified to include F bycatch.



Appendix 1. Implementation of the leaf HCR

The Leaf HCR represents a space within the Cautious Zone of the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF) that bounds the F levels to be considered by Scientific Council in its advice to the Commission.

The Leaf HCR space is defined by a generalized formulation for the edges of the leaf, where the upper or lower edges of the leaf HCR can be obtained by defining $F_t = f(B_t)$ as:

$$F_t = \frac{a^*(B_t - B_{lim})}{(B_x^* - B_{lim}) + (B_t - B_{lim})} \quad \text{Eq. 1}$$

where B_x^* is defined for the upper (B_x^{up}) and lower leaf (B_x^{low}) functions as:

$$B_x^* = B_{lim} + \left[\frac{(B_{50}^* - B_{lim})(B_{trigger} - B_{lim})}{(B_{trigger} - B_{lim}) - 2(B_{50}^* - B_{lim})} \right] \quad \text{Eq. 2}$$

where B_{50}^* , defined for the upper (B_{50}^{upper}) and lower (B_{50}^{lower}) leaf edge functions, controls the width of the leaf. In order to maintain a symmetric leaf shape B_{50}^* needs to be set in a “complementary” way in the upper and lower edge functions.

To facilitate the setup of the leaf width, B_{50}^* has been implemented as determined by X_{50}^* , i.e. $B_{50}^* = X_{50}^*(B_{trigger} - B_{lim}) + B_{lim}$, where X_{50}^* represents the fraction within the $B_{lim} - B_{trigger}$ range where the B_{50}^* is located. For the upper leaf edge function, X_{50}^{upper} must fall between 0 and 0.5, while for the lower leaf edge function X_{50}^{lower} must fall between 0.5 and 1. As mentioned above, to maintain the symmetry of the NAFO Leaf HCR the two X_{50}^* must be “complementary” in the sense that $X_{50}^{lower} = 1 - X_{50}^{upper}$.

Using B_x^* from Eq. 2, a^* can then be calculated for both the upper (a^{up}) and lower (a^{low}) leaf edge functions as:

$$a^* = \frac{F_{target} [(B_x^* - B_{lim}) + (B_{trigger} - B_{lim})]}{(B_{trigger} - B_{lim})} \quad \text{Eq. 3}$$

The Revised NAFO PAF has adopted a middle width leaf for its initial implementation, corresponding to:

$$X_{50}^{lower} = 0.75$$

$$X_{50}^{upper} = 0.25$$

**Annex 5. REVISED Terms of Reference – NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council
Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies
(COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-01 (Revised))**

Structure:

The Working Group shall be comprised of fishery managers, ~~and~~ and advisors from Contracting Parties supported by ~~experts and advisors observers and invited experts.~~

~~Plenary discussions will be conducted in The work form may be an informal, open manner, forum/dialogue unless the Contracting Parties decide to conduct sessions in a delegation format, at the discretion of the chairs of the working group and with the consent of Contracting Parties.~~ Recommendations to ~~Fisheries~~ Commission will ~~shall~~ be developed and agreed upon through formal sessions of official delegations.

The Co-Chairs will consist of ~~shall be selected from participating fishery managers and scientists with both a fishery manager from the Commission and a scientist from the Scientific Council~~ represented in the two positions.

Accredited observers may attend meetings of the working group. Participation will be subject to the NAFO Rules of Procedure.

If a Contracting Party so requests, particular agenda items of the meeting, or parts thereof, shall be restricted to delegates representing Contracting Parties and Scientific Council. ~~A total of up to two persons per non-governmental organizations that have been given the right to participate as observers shall be permitted.~~

The Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies reports to both the ~~Fisheries~~ Commission and Scientific Council; considers the advice of Scientific Council; and provides recommendations to ~~Fisheries~~ Commission.

Objective:

The main objectives of the Working Group are to make recommendations to the ~~Fisheries~~ Commission and feedback to Scientific Council on the development and effective implementation of management strategies, based on the application principles of the precautionary approach to fisheries management, including conservation plans and rebuilding strategies, and to facilitate dialogue between Scientific Council and the Commission.

Specific Duties:

In responding to requests for advice and recommendations from the ~~Fisheries~~ Commission, considering the associated advice of Scientific Council, the Working Group shall:

- Review, update and further develop a general framework including management objectives and performance statistics for the elaboration of management strategies, conservation plans and rebuilding strategies for all NAFO managed stocks.
- Evaluate, and as appropriate update and develop new ones where none exist, all management strategies, conservation plans and rebuilding strategies implemented in NAFO with respect to the Precautionary Approach framework, management objectives and performance statistics.
- Develop alternative strategies for stocks that may not be suited to formulaic rules and/or for stocks where reference points do not exist or cannot be developed.
- Consider all matters related to use of the NAFO Precautionary Approach framework.
- Consider risk management approaches in the review, update and future development of Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies.

Meetings:

~~The Working Group will typically meet annually unless otherwise agreed by the Scientific Council and the Commission. Meetings may be held at the request of the Fisheries Commission or the Scientific Council, in consultation with Contracting Parties and the NAFO Secretariat.~~ Timing should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

The working group shall communicate regularly through teleconferences and electronically, as required.

Reporting

The Working Group will issue a written report of its sessions to the Fisheries Commission and the Scientific Council and present its recommendations to the Commission and Scientific Council at the NAFO annual meeting.

An oral update can be provided to both SC and FC during the annual meeting.