



Northwest Atlantic  
Fisheries Organization

# Meeting Proceedings of the Commission

01 September 2024 – 31 August 2025

Compiled by:  
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December 2025



## 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 2024 to 31 August 2025. This follows a NAFO cycle of meetings starting with an Annual Meeting rather than by calendar year.

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# Structure of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)

(01 September 2024 to 31 August 2025)

## CONTRACTING PARTIES

Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, 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 (STACPUB) 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
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
Senior Science Coordinator	Andrea Perreault (began 24 February 2025)
Fisheries Information Administrator	Catherine Thompson

## Headquarters Location

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

46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO, 23-27 September 2024  
Halifax, Canada

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**PART I.**  
**Report of the NAFO Commission**

46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO, 23-27 September 2024  
Halifax, Canada

**I. Opening Procedure**

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

The NAFO President and Chair of the Commission, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America), called the plenary session of the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO to order on Monday, 23 September 2024.

The Chair welcomed the Deputy Mayor of Halifax, Cathy Deagle Gammon, who provided a welcome statement on behalf of the city of Halifax.

The opening statement from the Chair is outlined in Annex 1.

The Chair welcomed delegates, both in person and virtually, from 12 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, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States of America (Annexes 3– 8 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/24-180 on 24 July 2024. An additional item to discuss the outcomes of the NAFO Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council and related Scientific Council workload discussions was inserted under a new agenda item 17.e. With this addition, the agenda was adopted (Annex 9).

**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 Sargasso Sea Commission attended the meeting as a special observer according to the MoU with NAFO. The Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), 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: Marine Stewardship Council and Ecology Action Centre.

**5. Publicity**

In accordance with the agreed established practice, the 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 Chair of the Commission and the Chair of the Scientific Council. The Chair noted the *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 2023 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 Chair noted that the *Administrative and Activity Report* (COM Doc. 24-03) has been prepared by the NAFO Secretariat, and the Commission forwarded the report to STACFAD for review.

### **8. 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 Chair highlighted the current list of experts (as of 13 September 2024) outlined in COM WP 24-04 and invited Contracting Parties who have not nominated experts to this list to provide an update to the NAFO Secretariat.

### **9. Review of NAFO Resolutions**

The Secretariat presented the resolutions in COM WP 24-05 noting that the list of resolutions has not been reviewed in recent years, and some may be outdated. The Commission agreed to task STACFAD with reviewing the NAFO resolutions that may no longer be relevant, and developing a formalized procedure for the adoption and archiving of NAFO resolutions for consideration and review at the 2025 Annual Meeting. STACFAD addressed this request under agenda item 15.a in Part III of this report.

### **10. Guidance to STACFAD**

The Commission forwarded the *Administrative and Activity Report* (COM Doc. 24-03) to STACFAD for its review under agenda item 7.

### **11. Guidance to STACTIC**

The Chair of STACTIC, Patrick Moran (United States of America) presented a summary report of the STACTIC intersessional meeting held in May 2024 (COM Doc. 24-02). No further guidance to STACTIC for discussion at this meeting was provided under this agenda item.

Canada noted that there will be a proposal tabled in the Commission later in the agenda on the American plaice bycatch measures in the yellowtail flounder fishery noting that there is not enough data available for STACTIC to review the measures as outlined in Article 6.11 of the NAFO CEM.

### 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 2023 Annual Meeting, as outlined in section 10 of the *Administrative and Activity Report* (COM Doc. 24-03).

#### 13. International Relations

##### a. Relations with other International Organizations

The Executive Secretary reported that the Secretariat maintains an open dialogue with other RFMOs, through the Regional Secretariats Network (RSN) and makes every effort to attend the meetings most relevant to the organization, and responds to developments that the Secretariat should be taking part in. Further details are available in the *Administrative and Activity Report* (COM Doc. 24-03).

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

Eszter Hidas from the FAO presented an update on the work of the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Sea Fisheries Project, administered by the FAO.

The Chair also highlighted the formal request from the FAO Deep-Sea Fisheries Project for deep-sea fishing effort data by position and gear for fisheries using bottom contact gears in COM WP 24-06. The Commission discussed the data request and agreed that the information could be provided to the FAO. Using fishing speed as a proxy for effort, the positions will be anonymized and aggregated at a spatial resolution at 1° latitude by 1° longitude. The data, and any maps produced using the data, will include caveats that the data are at a resolution of 1° latitude by 1° longitude but that the actual fishing footprint within some of the grid cells is actually far less, that the data are based on a range of fishing speeds as a proxy for effort, and that actual fishing effort could also be far less.

- **The Commission agreed that the Secretariat will prepare the package that will be provided to the FAO Deep-Sea Fisheries Project in response to their request and circulate it to Contracting Parties for review prior to forwarding it to the FAO.**

##### c. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between other organizations

The Executive Secretary updated that the MoU with the Sargasso Sea Commission was signed in December 2023, and the MoU between NAFO and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) was signed in October 2023.

##### d. NAFO Members as Observers to External Meetings

As agreed at the 2023 NAFO Annual Meeting, Contracting Parties appointed to serve as observers of other relevant organizations should provide links to the relevant meeting reports, where available, and to the press releases from the meetings when reports are not available in time for the NAFO Annual Meeting. The Contracting Parties appointed to serve as observers of other relevant organizations during 2023/2024 were as follows:

- Canada represented NAFO at the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC).
- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) represented NAFO at the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC).

- European Union represented NAFO at the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), and South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).
- Japan represented NAFO at the South East Atlantic Fishery Organization (SEAFO).
- Norway represented NAFO at the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO).
- The United States of America represented NAFO at the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO).

For the 2024/2025 meetings, the United Kingdom agreed to represent NAFO at the ICCAT meeting in place of the European Union. For the remaining meetings, the same Contracting Parties agreed to represent NAFO in 2024/2025.

#### **14. Oil and Gas Activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area**

The Executive Secretary referred to page 5 of the *Administrative and Activity Report* COM-WP 24-03 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 (NRA).

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 NRA. Canada reiterated that oil and gas activities are sovereign Canadian activities for which NAFO has no regulatory role, and in consideration of the Scientific Council workload, questioned the need to continue this request to the Scientific Council.

### **IV. Joint Session of Commission and Scientific Council**

#### **15. Implementation of 2018 Performance Review Panel recommendations**

The Commission Chair highlighted the summary of the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review Panel in COM WP 24-07. The Commission Chair reflected on the progress made on each of the recommendations and noted that NAFO may need to start to consider initiating the process for the next performance review.

The United States of America and Canada presented a joint proposal to establish a virtual working group, to be chaired by the Chair of STACFAD, with a goal of working intersessionally to discuss the scope and timelines for the next NAFO Performance Review, draft Terms of Reference and criteria for the review. The virtual working group will present the results of their work to the Commission at the 2026 Annual Meeting with a recommendation on whether to launch the next Performance Review of the Organization, if appropriate.

- **The Commission adopted the proposal on the initiation of a Performance Review of NAFO presented by the United States of America and Canada in COM WP 24-21 now COM Doc. 24-20 (Annex 10).**

#### **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, Diana González Troncoso (European Union), 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. 24/16 (Revised) and SCS Doc. 24/17. 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 in the past year.

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

The Commission provided one written submission for requests to the Scientific Council for additional information. The submission contained a question from the European Union related to the frequency of advice for Division 3M cod, including making available the probabilities of growth of the spawning biomass in 2026 compared to 2024 for the considered projections [P(SSB26 > SSB24)]. The full response can be found in SCS Doc. 24/19. The Commission thanked the Scientific Council for their work on responding to the question.

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

The Commission Chair highlighted the voluntary contribution, from the United States of America, that has been put forward to facilitate Scientific Council work on climate change impacts. The details of the work were discussed in the Scientific Council during the meeting. The Commission Chair also highlighted the new vacancy announcement that has been posted for the Science Coordinator position in the NAFO Secretariat and encouraged interested individuals to apply.

**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), 2024**

The Commission Chair highlighted the meeting report from the E-WG in COM-SC Doc. 23-06, and the proposed meeting dates for consideration by the Commission. The E-WG proposed that for 2025, 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
- **The Commission adopted the proposed meeting dates of 17–28 February 2025; 31 March–11 April 2025; and 14–25 July 2025 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 Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), April 2024**

The co-Chair of CESAG, Katherine Sosebee (United States of America) presented an update on the status of the work of CESAG in 2024. CESAG completed its work via correspondence for 2024, and the final estimates for the 2023 catch 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).

**c. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), April and August 2024**

The co-Chairs of WG-RBMS, Fernando González-Costas, (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada) presented the reports and recommendations from the April and August 2024 WG-RBMS meetings in COM-SC Doc. 24-01 and COM-SC Doc. 24-03. The co-Chairs presented an update on the work for the management strategy evaluation (MSE) process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut and highlighted the WG-RBMS recommendation for the adoption of the candidate management procedure and exceptional circumstances protocol. It was also noted that the WG-RBMS recommended that the Scientific Council use the new management procedure to provide advice on the total allowable catch for 2025 at the 2024 Annual Meeting. The WG-RBMS acknowledged that exceptional circumstances will be occurring, however, sensitivity analyses indicated that the application of the new management procedure was appropriate. Further discussion on the Greenland halibut MSE took place under agenda item 20.c. The co-Chairs also reported on the progress of the MSE for 3LN redfish, noting

the revised workplan. Canada indicated that they are committing additional resources to the 3LN redfish MSE and hope to make additional progress on this by the end of the calendar year.

The co-Chairs also presented an update on the work toward the revision of the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF), and presented the revised framework to the Commission for adoption in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-03 (Rev. 2). It was noted that the WG-RBMS also recommended 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. The WG-RBMS also recommended that the Scientific Council give priority to the development of reference points for stocks that currently do not have them, to facilitate implementation of the PAF.

The WG-RBMS co-Chairs also noted the discussions held relating to the Scientific Council workload, noting that there has been an increased push for MSE processes for RFMO-managed fisheries to receive Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification, and as such, WG-RBMS recommended that the Commission send correspondence to the MSC, and other certifying bodies as appropriate, highlighting the adoption of the Revised Precautionary Approach Framework and noting the concerns and challenges of requiring MSEs for RFMO-managed fisheries to receive certification.

Additionally, WG-RBMS recommended that the Commission and the Scientific Council endorse the revised Terms of Reference, outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-01 (Revised).

The Commission and Scientific Council adopted the reports of the WG-RBMS meetings (COM-SC Doc. 24-01 and COM-SC Doc. 24-03) as well as the recommendations as follows:

- 1. In relation to the MSE process for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut, WG-RBMS recommends the adoption of the candidate management procedure and exceptional circumstances protocol.**
  - 2. In relation to the application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut Management Strategy,**
    - 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 Approach Framework (COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-03 (Rev. 2) Annex 4 of COM-SC Doc. 24-03). 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.**
  - 5. In relation to the Scientific Council workload, 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, 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) now COM-SC Doc. 24-05 (Annex 11).**
- d. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), August 2024**

The co-Chair of WG-EAFFM, Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America) in consultation with the co-Chair Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) presented the report and recommendations from the August 2024 WG-EAFFM meeting in COM-SC Doc. 24-02. The presentation highlighted the work completed by the working group



in relation to the vulnerable marine ecosystem (VME) and significant adverse impact (SAI) assessments, the Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), Scientific Council workload, bycatch issues relation to the Action plan, Greenland shark, and directed fishing policy. In relation to the ecosystem roadmap, the co-Chairs highlighted that WG-EAFFM is undertaking to compile a summary description of the NAFO Roadmap for an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (Annex 4 of COM-SC Doc. 24-02), which is open for comments from Contracting Parties. Additionally, WG-EAFFM recommended that the Commission and the Scientific Council endorse the revised Terms of Reference, outlined in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08 (Rev. 2).

The Commission and Scientific Council adopted the report of the WG-EAFFM meeting outlined in COM-SC Doc. 24-02 as well as the recommendations as follows:

- 1. In relation to 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 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 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,**
  - 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 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 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 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) now COM-SC Doc. 24-04 (Annex 12).**
- 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.**

**e. NAFO Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council**

The Chairs of the Commission and Scientific Council presented a summary of all the discussions that have taken place in relation to Scientific Council workload since the last annual meeting. The discussions focused on some concrete actions, including a workload assessment and review of scheduling of stock assessments, the potential for Contracting Parties to provide the resources for new proposals, cooperation with external organizations,

an increase in scientific capacity within the NAFO Secretariat, recruitment and outreach, and additional internal support.

The Scientific Council presented a proposal to further address the workload issues. To balance the number of full assessments in a given year, the full assessment of Greenland halibut Division 1 inshore could be rescheduled to 2025 and then assess on a two-year schedule after that if the coastal State agrees. The coastal State agreed to take the proposal into consideration when submitting its annual coastal State request to the Scientific Council. The proposal also recommended rescheduling the reassessment of SAI on VME to 2027. The Scientific Council Chair noted that while this would not alleviate the number of full assessments, it would free up additional time in the Scientific Council June meeting to review the full assessments. The Commission noted that this re-scheduling would require a decision in 2026 to revise the CEM text to extend the existing VME closed areas for an additional year.

- **The Commission agreed to reschedule the reassessment of SAI on VME to 2027.**

#### **18. Formulation of Request to the Scientific Council for Scientific Advice on the Management in 2026 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, draft of the requests outlined in COM WP 24-11 was developed by the steering committee and circulated in advance of the meeting. The committee consisted of representatives from Canada and European Union, with assistance from the NAFO Secretariat. The Commission and the Scientific Council reviewed the document, reflected on some of the discussions under other agenda items, and formulated the final requests in COM WP 24-11 (Rev. 3).

- **The Commission adopted the request to the Scientific Council for scientific advice in COM WP 24-11 (Rev. 3) now COM Doc. 24-18 (Annex 13).**

### **V. Conservation of Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area**

#### **19. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area, 2025**

The Chair highlighted the working paper outlining the draft quota table as well as a summary of the scientific advice and Commission decisions for NAFO fish stocks in COM WP 24-08. The 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 24-08 (Rev. 7) now COM Doc. 24-11 (Annex 14).

The Chair recalled the recommendations given by the Scientific Council, to the Commission, for the 2024 full stock assessments, as outlined in SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

##### **a. Cod in Division 3M**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for cod in Division 3M outlined on pages 13-17 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised). The European Union, under agenda item 16.b submitted a question to the Scientific Council requesting the advice to be provided for 2025 only, as originally requested, and the Scientific Council provided the response and corresponding advice (SCS Doc. 24/19).

While not blocking a consensus decision, several Contracting Parties noted that they would have preferred a more conservative management approach given the very low recruitment levels and the lower likelihood of growth in SSB over longer projection periods.

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC for 3M cod at 2/3  $F_{lim}$  in 2025, corresponding to a TAC of 12 613t.**

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 24-17 now COM Doc. 24-14 (Annex 15).**

**b. Redfish in Division 3M**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for redfish in Division 3M outlined on pages 18-21 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC for 3M redfish to 17 503 t in 2025 and 15 636 t in 2026.**

**c. Shrimp in Division 3M**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for shrimp in Division 3M outlined in SCS Doc. 24/18.

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium for 3M shrimp applicable to 2025 and 2026.**

**20. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks Straddling National Jurisdictions, 2025**

**a. Cod in Divisions 3NO**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for cod in Divisions 3NO outlined on page 33 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium for 3NO cod applicable to 2025.**

**b. Redfish in Divisions 3LN**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for redfish in Division 3LN outlined on pages 22-24 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised). Canada noted that they will be committing additional resources to the 3LN redfish MSE process, with the hope of making progress on the model by the end of the calendar year, and as such, suggested taking a decision for this stock for one year rather than two. Contracting Parties reflected on previous decisions made for this stock in evaluating an appropriate TAC level, and agreed to set the TAC for this stock at 6 000 t for 2025.

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC for 3LN redfish to 6 000 t in 2025.**

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

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO outlined in SCS Doc. 24/19, that was calculated using the new management procedure that was recommended by the WG-RBMS. It was also concluded that 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 Chair also highlighted the recommendation from WG-RBMS that the agreed Management Procedure be applied to set the TAC for 2025.

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC at 14 791t for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut, resulting in a TAC of 10 960t for 3LMNO Greenland halibut.**

During this meeting, the Scientific Council also noted some updates required to the formulas for the management procedure. The Commission reviewed these changes and agreed to update the proposal originally forwarded by the WG-RBMS (Annex 3 of COM-SC Doc. 24-03).

- **The Commission agreed to reflect the changes to the management procedure and the exceptional circumstances protocol in the NAFO CEM as outlined in COM WP 24-23 now COM Doc. 24-16 (Annex 16).**

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

The Chair highlighted the information from the Scientific Council on this stock, noting that there is currently no new information available. It was agreed to set the TAC to 0t for 2025, noting that if the ICES advice and decision of NEAFC changes, there would be an opportunity to revisit this decision.

- **The Commission agreed set the TAC for Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F3K pelagic *Sebastes mentella* to 0t for 2025.**

**e. American plaice in Divisions 3LNO**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for American plaice in Divisions 3LNO outlined on page 32 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium for 3LNO American plaice applicable to 2025 and 2026.**

**f. Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for witch flounder in Divisions 3NO outlined on pages 25-28 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

- **The Commission agreed to set the TAC for 3NO witch flounder to 1 395t in 2025 and 1 461t in 2026.**

**g. White hake in Divisions 3NO**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for white hake in Divisions 3NO outlined on page 33 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

- **The Commission agreed to roll over the 3NO white hake TAC of 1000 t for 2025.**

**h. Capelin in Divisions 3NO**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for capelin in Divisions 3NO outlined on page 33 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised).

- **The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium for 3NO capelin applicable to 2025.**

The Commission also reviewed the text of Article 7.12 of the NAFO CEM, and agreed that the text should be updated to reflect the decision to maintain the moratorium.

- **The Commission agreed to reflect the change to Article 7.12 in the NAFO CEM as outlined in COM WP 24-16 now COM Doc. 24-13 (Annex 17).**

**i. Skates in Divisions 3LNO**

The Chair noted the Scientific Council advice for thorny skate in Divisions 3LNO and Subdivision 3Ps outlined on pages 29-31 of SCS Doc. 24/16 (Revised). The Commission reflected on the uncertainty of this stock as a result of missing survey information, as well as the inability to determine if the recent decline in catches is due to market dynamics, availability to the fishery, or stock decline. As such, the Commission agreed to take a one-year TAC decision for this stock.

- **The Commission agreed to roll over the 3LNO skates TAC of 7 000 t for 2025.**

The Commission also discussed footnote 12 in Annex I.A of the NAFO CEM and agreed that it should be updated to read *Should catches exceed 4 500 tonnes, additional measures would be adopted to further restrain catches in 2025*. This change is reflected in COM WP 24-08 (Rev. 7) now COM Doc. 24-11 (Annex 14).

## 21. Other matters pertaining to Conservation of Fish Stocks

### a. Shrimp in Division 3M

The Chair reflected on the discussions over the last several years on the work towards the establishment of a new allocation scheme for this stock, noting that there has not been consensus on this issue. Iceland reflected on previous discussions and reiterated that until we have a final agreement on a way forward, there is no interim agreement. The European Union and Norway noted their willingness to continue work on their joint proposal from 2023 for continued discussions in a future meeting. The Russian Federation noted their disappointment that this issue has still not been resolved. The Chair closed the agenda item noting that discussions on this issue will continue at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

### b. Cod in Divisions 2J3KL

The Chair summarized the activity that had taken place in relation to this stock leading up to the 2024 Annual Meeting, specifically the decision of Canada to re-open this stock, the proposal from the European Union and call for an intersessional decision consistent with Rule 2.5 of the *NAFO Rules of Procedure: Commission*, the point of order, and the withdrawal of the proposal from the European Union for continued discussion at this meeting. Canada and the European Union tabled a joint proposal on the re-opening of the fishery for cod in Divisions 2J3KL in the Regulatory Area outlined in COM WP 24-18. Contracting Parties discussed the proposal throughout the course of the meeting, and agreed to adopt the proposal outlined in COM WP 24-18 (Rev. 4).

- **The Commission adopted the proposal for re-opening of the fishery for Cod in Divisions 2J3KL in the Regulatory Area and associated amendments to the NAFO CEM outlined in COM WP 24-18 (Rev. 4) now COM Doc. 24-17 (Annex 18).**

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) made the following statement in relation to the adoption of this proposal:

*DFG appreciates the efforts of the EU and Canada in drafting this joint proposal. However, we would like to reiterate our concerns regarding certain aspects of the proposal. We believe the proposed distribution does not accurately reflect historical catch levels in the area. The selected time period, in our view, provides an incomplete and unfair representation of the broader fishing history. As a result, the historical catches of some Contracting Parties, including DFG, are not adequately reflected. That said, we are encouraged by the acceptance of our proposed revisions, particularly the clarification that the current measures will not set a precedent for catch limits or quota allocation criteria, and also the addition stating, that the Commission shall review these measures at the request of any Contracting Party.*

The United States of America made the following statement in relation to the adoption of this proposal:

*We appreciate the work of the European Union and Canada on the flanking management measures for northern cod and appreciate the effort to clarify and operationalize the original measure adopted in 1996. At the same time, we continue to have significant concerns about basing any allocation decisions on only catch history particularly 50 year old catch history that pre-dates not only the current Convention of NAFO, but pre-dates the actual founding of the organization itself, as well as the recognition of our Exclusive Economic Zones. We appreciate the need to accommodate the changes in the governance structure, however, there are many changes in our fisheries that have occurred since this stock was last available, that are not being accounted for in this allocation approach. The Convention specifically obligates us to consider more than just catch history. The United States has long expressed a core principle that allocation discussions within NAFO must be governed by the Convention and reflect the real interests of all current NAFO Contracting Parties. Thus,*

*while we will not block consensus on this measure, we want to clearly express that this measure must not be considered to establish any precedent that would undermine that principle.*

## **VI. Ecosystem Considerations**

### **22. Other matters pertaining to Ecosystem Considerations**

No other matters pertaining to ecosystem considerations were discussed under this agenda item.

## **VII. Conservation and Enforcement Measures**

### **23. Report of STACTIC from this Annual Meeting and Recommendations**

The STACTIC 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 24-12 (Revised) *Publication of the NAFO register of fishing vessels and authorizations* (now COM Doc. 24-05 (Annex 19))
- STACTIC WP 24-13 (Revised) *Surveillance procedures* (now COM Doc. 24-06 (Annex 20))
- STACTIC WP 24-16 (Rev. 2) *Proposal for amending NAFO CEM Article 13.11 (c) Lost or Abandoned Fishing gears* (now COM Doc. 24-07 (Annex 21))
- STACTIC WP 24-22 *Proposal for Squid Fishery* (now COM Doc. 24-08 (Annex 22))
- STACTIC WP 24-24 (Revised) *Data Collection on Marine Pollution in the NAFO Regulatory Area* (now COM Doc. 24-09 (Annex 23))
- STACTIC WP 24-25 (Rev. 2) *Establishment of New Measures in the 3M Cod Fishery (Article 6)* (now COM Doc. 24-10 (Annex 24))

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

- STACTIC OPR-WP 24-03 (Revised) *Article 30 Report Template*
- STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 8) *DRAFT Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2024 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2023)* (now COM Doc. 24-21 (Annex 25))
- STACTIC WP 24-09 (Revised) *NAFO IUU List Update* (Annex 26)
- STACTIC WP 24-18 (Rev. 2) *To introduce electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT "Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange" (FLUX)* (now COM Doc. 24-22 (Annex 27))
- STACTIC WP 24-28 (Revised) *Contracting Party's Self-Assessments of Flag State Performance* (now COM Doc. 24-23 (Annex 28))

The Commission thanked the STACTIC Chair for the report and STACTIC participants for their work throughout the year.

- **The Commission adopted the reports and recommendations from STACTIC outlined in COM Doc. 24-02 and Part II of this report.**

### **24. Other matters pertaining to Conservation and Enforcement Measures**

The United States of America presented a proposal on the establishment of an ad-hoc working group on NAFO directed fishing policy in COM WP 24-12. The United States of America reflected on the many short-term responses, often with limited applicability, to certain fisheries that have been adopted in recent years to

address the implications of the current definition of directed fishing. Following additional discussions during the meeting, the United States of America and Canada presented a joint proposal to re-convene the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) for the purpose of considering the current definition of directed fishery and associated bycatch provisions outlined in COM WP 24-12 (Revised). Contracting Parties agreed to this proposal and noted that the working group would benefit from NAFO members drawing on wide expertise for this work, including managers, scientists, compliance experts, and industry advisers.

- **The Commission agreed to re-convene the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity to consider NAFO's current measures relating to directed fisheries and mitigating bycatch of moratoria species as outlined in COM WP 24-12 (Revised) now COM Doc. 24-19 (Annex 29).**

Canada presented a proposal for the extension of timeline for yellowtail flounder measures (Article 6 of the NAFO CEM) in COM WP 24-14, noting that there has not been enough data collected on the implications of the measures that were adopted at the 2023 NAFO Annual Meeting to evaluate the measures. Contracting Parties also noted the related discussions in STACTIC on this issue, as well as the proposal to reconvene the WG-BDS and agreed to extend the measures for an additional year.

- **The Commission agreed to extend the measures for yellowtail flounder for 2025 as outlined in COM WP 24-14 now COM Doc. 24-12 (Annex 30).**

The European Union, France in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom presented a proposal for control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish in COM WP 24-22. The proposal noted that the measures were intended prevent adverse effects on the sustainability of shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish in the Irminger Sea deriving from the continuation of high-level targeted fishing activities on these stocks when NAFO has established a zero TAC in Subarea 2 and Divisions 1F+3K. Contracting Parties were generally supportive of the proposal, noting that similar proposals were tabled at the 2023 Annual Meeting in both STACTIC and the Commission, as well as in STACTIC at this meeting. One Contracting Party noted that the proposal was outside of the scope of the NAFO Convention and therefore no consensus was reached. The Chair recalled that the management of this stock was discussed earlier in the meeting, and that the Commission agreed to set the TAC at 0t for 2025. One Contracting Party noted that all efforts to reach consensus on this issue had been exhausted, and requested that the Chair call for a vote in accordance with Article XIII Paragraph 2 of the NAFO Convention. Of the 12 Contracting Parties present, ten voted in favour of the proposal, one abstained, and one voted against the proposal. Consequently, the proposal was adopted with the requisite two-thirds majority.

- **The Commission adopted the proposal for control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish outlined in COM WP 24-22 now COM Doc. 24-15 (Annex 31).**

Throughout the voting process, several Contracting Parties reflected on the importance of consensus-based decision making in NAFO, noting that this was an exceptional circumstance and should not set a precedent for future decision-making processes.

The Head of Delegation for Canada made the following statement:

*First, I note that Canada fully supports the proposal on control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish, which is the result of significant discussion, collaboration and compromise by most Contracting Parties within STACTIC over several years. With respect to moving this proposal to a vote, we highlight that our NAFO Convention requires that all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted before resorting to a vote. Additionally, it is Canada's strong view that this step should be used only in extraordinary cases, where there is a serious risk to the conservation or sustainable management of a stock, as is NAFO's core mandate. In this case, Canada feels that these two considerations have been met, and therefore will vote in favour of the proposal's adoption. That said, we continue to encourage all Contracting Parties to continue to uphold NAFO's commitment to, and practice of consensus-based decision-making wherever possible.*

The Head of Delegation for Japan made the following statement:

*Japan wished it could have joined consensus on the subject since it has always supported initiatives to fight against IUU fishing. In reality, however, it is inconceivable for the Japan's port authorities to face situation in which it will enforce landing/ transshipments of red fish which have been caught in such a remote area as the sea areas in question. We have not completed internal analyses as to whether we can actually enforce the requirements of the proposal before us. It is for this reason why Japan had to abstain if it is forced to vote at this time.*

The Commission Chair made the following statement:

*I note the importance of consensus in this organization and very much echo the statements that were made by delegations that consensus remains both the core decision-making standard in the Convention and fundamentally important for the functioning of this organization to ensure that measures are fully supported and clearly adopted by all. However, the Convention also provides that, when consensus cannot be reached after extended efforts, the Commission may utilize a voting mechanism. I will remind delegates that the provisions related to this are covered in the Convention as well as all of the procedural aspects. Thank you all very much for your flexibility and hard work in trying to achieve consensus on this proposal, and it remains my intention as Chair to ensure that resorting to a vote on any measure is done only very rarely, and that we will continue to work in the spirit of collaboration and consensus around this table.*

## **VIII. Finance and Administration**

### **25. 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 Audited Financial Statements for 2023, a review of the NAFO Internship Program, the additional requests from the Scientific Council for the 2025 budget estimate, and the creation of an annual meeting funding model. The Commission thanked the STACFAD Chair for the report and STACFAD participants for their work during the meeting.

### **26. Adoption of the 2025 Budget and STACFAD recommendations**

- **The Commission adopted the STACFAD report, including the 2025 budget and recommendations from STACFAD outlined in Part III of this report.**

## **IX. Closing Procedure**

### **27. Other Business**

No other business was discussed under this agenda item.

### **28. Time and Place of Next Annual Meeting**

The 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO will be in Halifax, Canada, from 15–19 September 2025.

### **29. Press Release**

The Press Release of the meeting was developed by the Senior Scientific Information Administrator and Executive Secretary, through consultation with the Chairs of the Commission as well as the Heads of Delegation. The agreed Press Release (Annex 32) was circulated and posted to the NAFO website at the conclusion of the meeting on Friday, 27 September 2024.



**30. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned on Friday, 27 September 2024. The summary of decisions and actions taken by the NAFO Commission is presented in Annex 33.

### **Annex 1. Opening Statement from the NAFO President and the Chair of the Commission**

I am pleased to welcome all of you here to the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO. It is wonderful to be back in NAFO's beautiful hometown for the first time since 2015. I want to thank the Secretariat for the exceptional work that they have done through the year to support all of our growing workload and also for the excellent preparations for this meeting.

Returning to Halifax after so many years gives us a moment to pause and look back at how much we have changed, and where we have come from.

The last time we met here, we were still operating under the original NAFO Convention. Now we are under the new Convention, amended to incorporate all of the modern best standards for fisheries management, and our work has likewise evolved to take on those mandates for transparency, participatory nature, and a grounding in the precautionary and ecosystem approaches to fisheries management. We have also worked really hard over these years to put all of the words into practice.

At the 2015 Annual Meeting, we adopted a measure to set up the Terms of Reference for the Scientific Council to kick off a comprehensive review of the Precautionary Approach Framework, and here we find ourselves back in Halifax with the final product of that on the table, ready for us to adopt.

Likewise, at that meeting we adopted modifications to NAFO's seamount closures that extended the protections to those vulnerable and essential areas, and this year NAFO is the first-ever RFMO to submit those seamount closures as Other Effective Area-based Conservation and Management measures under the CBD framework.

Since 2015, we have seen some stocks recover and grow, although there are still too many that are struggling to achieve sustainability. But we have responded to those core fisheries management needs by advancing cutting-edge management procedure for key stocks, and we will have important decisions to make at this meeting to keep that work going. Of course, all of this work rests on the shoulders of strong science, and we will once again be taking a look at how we can continue to ensure that NAFO's scientific work is properly supported — that we have the right kinds of expertise and the right kind of resources to continue these successes into the future.

I look forward to working with all of you this week to advance all of the important work that we need to do, whether it is for the management of our core fisheries, or all of these other related issues. I now declare the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO officially open.

**Annex 2. Participant List**

<b>CANADA</b>	
Head of Delegation	Burns, Adam. Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Email: Adam.Burns@dfo-mpo.gc.ca [In-person]
Head of Delegation (Alternate)	Walsh, Ray. Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Email: Ray.Walsh@dfo-mpo.gc.ca [In-person]
Advisers/Representatives	Barbour, Natasha. Fisheries and Oceans Canada Email: Natasha.barbour@dfo-mpo.gc.ca [Virtual]
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### **Annex 3. Opening Statement by the Delegation of Canada**

Canada is pleased to join with our fellow Contracting Parties in Halifax at this 46th 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 are incredibly grateful to the Secretariat as the official host of this meeting for their exceptional efforts in making all the meeting arrangements. We remain very pleased to offer you all an unofficial warm welcome to Canada.

This year's meeting marks an important milestone, as Canada has lifted its Northern cod moratorium off the north and east coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador. This historic decision re-establishes a commercial cod fishery for Canada in NAFO Divisions 2J3KL. In resuming a commercial fishery, Canada remains committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability of this stock, and therefore to ensuring that the proper conservation and control measures are in place within the NAFO Regulatory area to protect it. Canada looks forward to working with all Contracting Parties this week to undertake this important task.

Canada notes the significant progress that has been made by the Scientific Council, STACTIC and the numerous working groups throughout the year. In particular, we congratulate the Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies on concluding two significant, multi-year Commission priorities: a Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework and a revised management procedure for Greenland halibut in NAFO Divisions 2+3KLMNO. This work could not have been completed without the extensive efforts by the Scientific Council over many years to ensure the robust, scientific foundation of these management tools. Canada is delighted to support the Commission's adoption of these recommendations which will support sound, risk-based management decisions for many years to come.

This relates to the ongoing discussions in various NAFO bodies on 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, NAFO's primary purpose. Canada is committed to working to prioritize and focus requests to SC to align with the Council's capacity and expertise and to ensure that NAFO is able to fulfil its core responsibilities, while at the same time advancing on other important work such as VME protections and climate change. Canada continues to encourage 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. Despite a staffing gap over the last several months, the outstanding support to all NAFO bodies continued seamlessly.

In conclusion, Canada looks forward to working with others this week in a constructive manner in order to take sustainable management decisions for key stocks and advance NAFO's priorities.

**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 expressing our gratitude to the Secretariat for organising this 46th Annual Meeting and for the opportunity to convene in the beautiful surroundings of Halifax. We also commend the Secretariat for its excellent work in organising this annual meeting, facilitating the work of the organisation, promptly answering our questions, and keeping us well informed.

NAFO has played a vital role in fisheries management by developing conservation and management measures that ensure the sustainable use of fishery resources based on scientific evidence.

We are pleased to note the Scientific Council's report on the stability of the Spawning Stock Biomass in the cod stock in 3M over the past four years. DFG remains committed to the long-term conservation and sustainable utilisation of this resource, and thereby also a secure and stable framework for our industry and its activities. When setting the TAC for cod in 3M, the Commission must evaluate the risks associated with different approaches, relying on the best available scientific advice while also considering social and economic factors.

Another key issue is the management of shrimp in 3M. While the Scientific Council's advice for 2024 recommends no directed fishery, previous discussions have explored transitioning from fishing days to quotas. DFG believes that any future framework should prioritise objective and quantifiable factors, particularly historical catches and allocated fishing days.

Looking ahead, we are looking forward to the potential reopening of cod fisheries in 2J3KL and are committed to collaborating with all parties to develop fair and sustainable management for this valuable resource.

In conclusion, 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 46th 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 Canada and the city of Halifax for hosting the 46th Annual Meeting of NAFO in this wonderful city, that intertwines maritime history with vibrant modern city.

Secondly, we would like to note the excellent preparatory work carried out ahead of this meeting which should allow 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 delegation 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 in Halifax a joint success.



### **Annex 6. Opening Statement by the Delegation of Japan**

First of all, Japan would like to express its deepest gratitude to the NAFO Chairs and Secretariat staff for the excellent preparation and arrangements to hold the 46th Annual Meeting.

As Japan expressed in the past meetings, NAFO has played an important role for fisheries management through development of conservation and management measures for sustainable use of fishery resources based on scientific evidence.

In relation to fishery resource management, Japan would like to express our respect and gratitude to all efforts made by the Contracting Parties and all works by Scientific Council. Development of MSE is one notable example of this work. We expect this will further strengthen transparent, efficient, and cooperative ground for fishery resource management. We believe that these efforts in cooperative manner will contribute to rewarding results such as stock recovery.

Recently, global discussions on climate change and bio-diversity are emerging and gaining ground. Japan expects that NAFO will continue to serve a leading role among RFMOs and contribute to addressing these emerging issues based on its experience gained from its long history in fishery management.

In conclusion, Japanese delegation is ready to work closely and cooperatively with other delegations to find good solutions and sincerely hopes that this Annual meeting will be successfully and fruitfully concluded.

### **Annex 7. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the United Kingdom**

The UK would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the Secretariat for their efforts in organising and hosting the 46<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO).

We express our appreciation for the ongoing work of the various working groups and standing committees that support and advance the work of the Commission's objectives throughout the year. In particular this year, we recognise the continued efforts to address concerns regarding the workload of the Scientific Council and emphasise the importance of transparency in identifying the best way to prioritise requests made by the Commission.

The UK is eager to engage in constructive discussions on stock management, with a particular focus on ensuring that sustainability is a central consideration. We give our thanks to the Scientific Council for their work in preparing and providing detailed advice to inform the Commission's discussions and decision-making.

Furthermore, we wish to highlight the significance of NAFO's work on climate change and the importance in integrating this with the stock science. We welcome any further discussions on the necessary steps to advance this work at commission and at NAFO's working groups.

We look forward to collaborating with the Secretariat and the other Contracting Parties of NAFO to ensure a productive and successful Annual Meeting.

### **Annex 8. Opening Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America**

Chair, Delegates, Ladies, and Gentlemen, the United States is pleased to be back in Halifax to participate in this 46th NAFO Annual Meeting. We are looking forward to spending the week in fruitful discussions with our colleagues around the table, and to revisiting our favorite restaurants and other spots that make this city so special. We extend our hearty appreciation to the NAFO Secretariat for their hard work, skill, and dedication. We could not do this without them.

This year, as always, the United States remains committed to maintaining the highest possible standards relative to decisions taken on conservation and management of NAFO stocks and associated species and ecosystems. We are committed to ensuring that there is consistency between the advice of the Scientific Council and the management decisions of the Commission. As in previous years, we will likely face difficult management decisions during this meeting – ones that may challenge our resolve on this principle. But it is our hope that NAFO Parties will respond in a manner that supports the long-term sustainability of NAFO stocks rather than seeking only short term benefits.

That said, in order to achieve high standards in decision making, the Scientific Council must have the tools and resources necessary to provide scientific advice of the highest possible quality. Over recent years, both the scope of existing issues, and number of emerging issues before the Scientific Council have expanded considerably. Yet, the resources (both in terms of funding and expertise) available to the Scientific Council have remained relatively static or declined. This is not a sustainable strategy for success. Thus, we would urge Contracting Parties to continue pragmatic and reasoned discussions at this meeting focusing on charting a path forward that more effectively supports both the current and emerging needs of our Scientific Council, which will assist us in achieving the objectives that we have set forth in the Convention. We must take specific and concrete steps. For example, we must determine a way to more fully integrate climate considerations into stock assessments, including the revised Precautionary Approach Framework that we hope is adopted at this meeting. The United States is pleased to announce that we have made a voluntary, extra-budgetary contribution this year intended to assist the Scientific Council in identifying tools to integrate climate change into our stock models. We will be speaking in more detail about this contribution later in the meeting. It is our hope that other Contracting Parties will take similar steps to assist the Scientific Council in building the capacity needed to achieve the challenges NAFO faces in the future.

Another key element to decision making is transparency. While NAFO has made great strides over the years, particularly around opening up its process to participation by non-governmental and other stakeholders, more work is needed. First, we must work to ensure that Contracting Parties themselves are provided the opportunity to fully participate in all NAFO deliberations and decisions as they deem necessary. Second, 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 specific comments at this time regarding NAFO stocks under consideration for management action this year. However, we would like to highlight that we remain committed to updating the NAFO Directed Fishing Policy to reflect the changing landscape of NAFO fisheries to address unintended consequences relative to enforcement of that policy. Our current approach of implementing small fixes is no longer effective; we need to conduct a comprehensive review of the policy to create a strategy that better aligns with our conservation objectives and how NAFO fisheries are now operating. These discussions will require expertise from scientists, managers, and enforcement. We will be seeking further dialogue on this issue during this meeting, and we are hopeful that a process to address these concerns can be adopted.

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

**Annex 9. Agenda**

<b>I. Opening Procedure</b>	
1.	Opening by the Chair, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America)
2.	Appointment of Rapporteur
3.	Adoption of Agenda
4.	Admission of Observers
5.	Publicity
<b>II. Supervision and Coordination of the Organizational, Administrative and Other Internal Affairs</b>	
6.	Review of Membership of the Commission
7.	Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat
8.	Review of the list of experts to serve as panelists under the NAFO Dispute Settlement provisions
9.	Review of NAFO Resolutions
10.	Guidance to STACFAD
11.	Guidance to STACTIC
<b>III. Coordination of External Affairs</b>	
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. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between other organizations
	d. NAFO Members as Observers to External Meetings
14.	Oil and Gas Activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area
<b>IV. Joint Session of Commission and Scientific Council</b>	
15.	Implementation of 2018 Performance Review 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), 2024
	b. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), April 2024
	c. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), April and August 2024
	d. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), August 2024
	e. NAFO Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council

18.	Formulation of Request to the Scientific Council for Scientific Advice on the Management in 2026 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters
V. Conservation of Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area	
19.	Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area, 2025
	a. Cod in Division 3M
	b. Redfish in Division 3M
	c. Shrimp in Division 3M
20.	Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks Straddling National Jurisdictions, 2025
	a. Cod in Divisions 3NO
	b. Redfish in Divisions 3LN
	c. Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO
	d. Pelagic <i>Sebastes mentella</i> (oceanic redfish) in Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K
	e. American plaice in Divisions 3LNO
	f. Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO
	g. White hake in Divisions 3NO
	h. Capelin in Divisions 3NO
	i. Skates in Divisions 3LNO
21.	Other matters pertaining to Conservation of Fish Stocks
	a. Shrimp in Division 3M
	b. Cod in Divisions 2J3KL
VI. Ecosystem Considerations	
22.	Other matters pertaining to Ecosystem Considerations
VII. Conservation and Enforcement Measures	
23.	Report of STACTIC from this Annual Meeting and Recommendations
24.	Other matters pertaining to Conservation and Enforcement Measures
VIII. Finance and Administration	
25.	Report of STACFAD from this Annual Meeting
26.	Adoption of the 2025 Budget and STACFAD recommendations
IX. Closing Procedure	
27.	Other Business
28.	Time and Place of Next Annual Meeting
29.	Press Release
30.	Adjournment

**Annex 10. Initiation of a Performance Review of NAFO**  
[COM WP 24-21 now COM Doc. 24-20]

Given NAFO’s significant progress implementing the recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review Panel, the United States and Canada propose that Contracting Parties initiate a new Performance Review process in 2025. NAFO has maintained a Performance Review Fund, which currently contains approximately 90 percent of the funds necessary for the next Review.

The United States and Canada propose that the Commission agree to establish a virtual working group that will meet intersessionally and develop recommendations for consideration at the 2026 Annual Meeting. The chair of STACFAD would chair the virtual working group. In addition, the chairs of Scientific Council, STACTIC, and the Commission should be members. In addition, any Contracting Party interested in participating in the virtual Working Group should designate a member and inform the Secretariat of their intent to participate. This virtual working group would:

- Discuss the scope and timeline for a third NAFO Performance Review.
- Develop draft Terms of Reference and criteria to conduct the third NAFO Performance Review.
  - This includes the composition of the review panel, the scope of the Review, and the work schedule, as well as the criteria for assessment of the performance of NAFO.
- Present these documents at the 2026 NAFO Annual Meeting to the Commission for review, and a recommendation on whether to launch the next Performance Review, if appropriate.

Given the success of the implementation of the 2018 Performance Review and ongoing concerns related to workload, the third Performance Review should focus on a smaller set of discrete issues, rather than a full, comprehensive review. Contracting Parties are encouraged to send potential topics to the working group for consideration.

**Annex 11. REVISED Terms of Reference – NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS)**  
[COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-01 (Revised) now COM-SC Doc. 24-05]

**Structure:**

The Working Group shall be comprised of fishery managers, scientists, and advisors from Contracting Parties supported by observers and invited experts.

Plenary discussions will be conducted in an informal, open manner, unless the Contracting Parties decide to conduct sessions in a delegation format. Recommendations to Commission will be developed and agreed upon through formal sessions of official delegations.

The Co-Chairs will consist of a fishery manager from the Commission and a scientist from the Scientific Council.

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.

The Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies reports to both the Commission and Scientific Council; considers the advice of Scientific Council; and provides recommendations to Commission.

**Objective:**

The main objectives of the Working Group are to make recommendations to the Commission and feedback to Scientific Council on the development and effective implementation of management strategies, based on the 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 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. 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 written reports of its sessions and present its recommendations to the Commission and Scientific Council at the NAFO annual meeting.



**Annex 12. REVISED Terms of Reference – NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM)**  
[COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08 (Rev. 2) now COM-SC Doc. 24-04]

**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 13. The Commission's Request for Scientific Advice on Management in 2026 and beyond  
of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters**  
[COM WP 24-11 (Rev. 3) now COM Doc. 24-18]

Following a request from the Scientific Council, the Commission agreed that items 1, 2, and 3 should be the priority for the June 2025 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 line with the Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (Annex 4 of COM-SC Doc. 24-03) the Commission should be informed by the range of options and associated risks provided by the Scientific Council. The Commission will decide upon the acceptable risk level in the context of the entirety of the Scientific Council advice for each stock guided and as foreseen by the NAFO Precautionary Approach.

<b>Yearly basis</b>	<b>Two-year basis</b>	<b>Three-year basis</b>	<b>Interim Monitoring Only</b>
Cod in Division 3M	Redfish in Division 3M Thorny skate in Divisions 3LNO Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO Redfish in Divisions 3LN Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO Northern shrimp in Divisions 3LNO Northern shrimp in Division 3M White hake in Divisions 3NO	American plaice in Division 3M Northern shortfin squid in Subareas 3+4 Redfish in Division 3O Cod in Divisions 3NO American plaice in Divisions 3LNO	Subarea 6 Alfonsino Subareas 2-3 Roughhead Grenadier Capelin in Divisions 3NO

Advice should be provided using the guidance provided in **Annex A**, or using the predetermined Management Procedure in the cases where they exist (currently Greenland halibut 2+3KLMNO). For Division 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 2025, advice should be provided for 2026 for: Cod in Division 3M
- In 2025, advice should be provided for 2026 and 2027 for: Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO, White hake in Divisions 3NO, Northern shrimp in Divisions 3LNO
  - With respect to Northern shrimp in Divisions 3LNO, Scientific Council is requested to provide its advice to the Commission prior to the 2025 Annual Meeting based on the survey data up to and including 2025.
- In 2025, advice should be provided for 2026, 2027 and 2028 for: Redfish in Division 3O, Northern shortfin squid in Subareas 3+4.

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 + Divisions 3KLMNO annually to compute the TAC using the agreed Management Procedure 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 3LN redfish MSE processes during 2024-2025.
4. As practicable and taking into account Scientific Council capacity constraints, develop stock summary sheets for NAFO managed stocks that are evaluated using MSE processes.
5. In relation to the Ecosystem Roadmap as a whole, the Commission requests that the Scientific Council develop a reference document detailing the ecosystem roadmap, for completion in the next 1-3 years.
6. In relation to the habitat impact assessment component of the Roadmap (VME and SAI analyses), the Commission requests that Scientific Council:
  - a. Continue the development of a centralized data repository using ArcGIS online to host the data and data-products for scientific advice, in conjunction with the NAFO Secretariat
  - b. Work towards the reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2027; including potential management options in the reassessment of bottom fisheries.
  - c. Develop materials on the potential of submitting NAFO coral bottom fishing closed areas as OECMs for discussion at the 2025 WG-EAFFM meeting.
7. The Commission requests the Scientific Council to develop reference points to facilitate the implementation of the Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework, for stocks that currently do not have them.
8. In relation to its workload, the Commission requests the Scientific Council to:
  - a. Continue to update the 3-5 year work plan, which reflects requests arising from the 2024 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.
  - b. 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:
    - i. the organization / structure and function of the Scientific Council, its standing committees and working groups,
    - ii. further development and implementation of the Scientific Council's workplan.
9. The Commission requests Scientific Council to conduct ongoing analysis of the Division 3M cod fishery data by 2025 in order to:
  - a. monitor the consequences of the management decisions (including the analysis of the redistribution of the fishing effort along the year and its potential effects on ecosystems, the variation of the cod catch composition in lengths/ages, and the bycatch levels of other fish species, benthos in general, and VME taxa in particular); and
  - b. carry out any additional monitoring that would be required, including Division 3M cod caught as bycatch in other fisheries during the closed period.
10. Noting the voluntary contribution of the United States to support a consultant to provide feedback on NAFO's processes to address climate change impacts, requests the SC to conduct an analysis of progress and/or outcomes of that work.

**ANNEX A: Guidance for providing advice on Stocks Assessed**

The Commission requests 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 Commission to consider the balance between risks and yield levels, in determining its management of these stocks:

Stochastic short-term projections (3 years) should be performed with the  $F$  levels that are included in the risk table from the Revised PA Framework (Table 1 below), based on the point estimate of biomass. 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.

In relation to Tier 1 of the Roadmap Scientific Council should provide annually catch information in relation to 2TCI, including recent cumulative catch levels and a scoping of expected cumulative catch levels.

For stocks assessed with a production model, the advice should include updated time series or plots of:

- Catch and TAC of recent years
- Catch to relative biomass
- Relative Biomass
- Relative Fishing mortality
- Stock trajectory against precautionary approach reference points

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 precautionary approach reference points

For stocks 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 the longest time-period possible:

- catch and TAC of recent years
- length distributions
- time trends of survey abundance estimates
- an age or size range chosen to represent the spawning population
- an age or size-range chosen to represent the exploited population
- recruitment proxy or index for an age or size-range chosen to represent the recruiting population.
- fishing mortality proxy, such as the ratio of reported commercial catches to a measure of the exploited population.
- stock trajectory against precautionary approach reference points

In all cases any additional information the Scientific Council deems appropriate should be provided.

**Table 1.** The Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework risk table.

y current year (year in which the assessment is made, data until year y-1)

	Yield			P(F>F <sub>lim</sub> )			P(B<B <sub>lim</sub> )				P(F>F <sub>target</sub> )			P(B<B <sub>trigger</sub> )				P(By+3 > By)	(By+3-By)/By
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		
<b>Critical Zone</b>																			
F=0	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F=X% current*	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F current	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Cautious Zone</b>																			
F lower edge leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F midrib leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F upper edge leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Healthy Zone</b>																			
F=0.75F <sub>msy</sub>	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F <sub>target</sub> =0.85F <sub>msy</sub>	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F <sub>lim</sub> =F <sub>msy</sub>	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

\*X% may vary stock by stock. In the future, this framework may be modified to include F bycatch.  
The number of years in the risk projections table will be the same as the years of advice.

**Annex 14. NAFO Quota Table 2025 – NAFO CEM Annex I.A and I.B including a summary of the Scientific Council advice on NAFO fish stocks and the management measures decided by the Commission**  
[COM WP 24-08 (Rev. 7) now COM Doc. 24-11]

This document summarizes the quota and effort allocation decisions made by the Commission for 2025. The document is broken down into two parts:

- Part 1:** Annex I.A and I.B of the NAFO CEM for 2025 including the total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons) for 2025 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, 2025.
- Part 2:** A table summarizing the Scientific Council advice on NAFO fish stocks and the management measures decided by the Commission.

**Part 1.****(2025)**  
**ANNEX I – FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**  
**Annex I.A – Annual Quota Table****CATCH LIMITATIONS 2025** – Article 5. Total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons in live weight) for 2025 of particular stocks in Subareas 1–4 and 6 of the NAFO Convention Area.

Species	Cod					Redfish					American plaice		Yellowtail
Stock Specification	COD 3L <sup>13</sup>		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 3L Cod TAC		% of 3M Cod TAC			% of 3LN Redfish TAC						
Contracting Party													
Canada	18 000 <sup>14</sup>	95.00	100.90	0.80	0	2 556	42.60	500	6 000	0 <sup>1</sup>	0	0	15 415
Cuba	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	466.68	3.70	-	588	9.80	1 750	-	0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-
Denmark (Faroe Islands & Greenland)	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	2 819.01	22.35	-	-		69 <sup>10</sup>	-	0	-	-	-
European Union	735 <sup>15</sup>	3.88	6 017.66 <sup>5</sup>	47.71	0 <sup>4</sup>	1 093.8 <sup>4</sup>	18.23	7 813 <sup>4</sup>	7 000	0 <sup>7</sup>	0	0 <sup>4</sup>	-
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	-		-	-		69 <sup>10</sup>	-	0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	316
Iceland	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	-		-	-		-	-	0	-	-	-
Japan	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	-		-	-		400	150	0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-
Korea	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	-		-	-		69 <sup>10</sup>	100	0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-
Norway	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	1 166.70	9.25	-	-		-	-		-	-	-
Russian Federation	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	816.06	6.47	0	1 726.2	28.77	9 137	6 500	0	-	0	-
Ukraine	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	-		-	-		-	150	0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-
United Kingdom	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	1 175.53	9.32	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
United States of America	19.14 <sup>15</sup>	0.101	-		-	-		69 <sup>10</sup>	-	0 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-
Others		0	50.45	0.40	0	36	0.60	124	100	-	0	0	79
<b>TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH</b>	18 947	100.00	12 613	100.0 <sup>16</sup>	*	6 000	100.0 <sup>17</sup>	17 503	20 000	0 <sup>3,9</sup>	* <sup>8</sup>	* <sup>8</sup>	15 810



## Annex I.A (2025)

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		837	60.00	294	0	1 167	1 643.8	N.S. <sup>2</sup>	0		
Cuba		-		-	0	-	-	510	0		
Denmark (Faroe Islands & Greenland)		-		-	-	-	188.4	-	0		
European Union		185 <sup>4</sup>	13.27	588	0 <sup>5</sup>	4 408	6 425.9 <sup>6</sup>	<u>N.S.<sup>2</sup></u> 611 <sup>5</sup>	0 <sup>6</sup>		
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-	-	-	179.6	453	0		
Iceland		-		-	-	-	-	-	0		
Japan		-		-	0	-	1 123.5	510	0		
Korea		-		-	-	-	-	453	0		
Norway		-		-	0	-	-	-	0		
Russian Federation		359	25.73	59	0	1 167	1 398.8	749	0		
Ukraine		-		-	-	-	-	-	0		
United Kingdom		-		-	-	-	-	-	-		
United States of America		-		-	-	-	-	453	0		
Others		14	1.00	59	-	258		794	0		
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*	1 395	100.00 <sup>18</sup>	1 000	*	7 000 <sup>12</sup>	10 960	34 000	0	*	*

Annex I.A (2025)

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

- <sup>1</sup> Quota to be shared by vessels from Canada, Cuba, France (St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Korea, Ukraine and USA.
- <sup>2</sup> 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).
- <sup>3</sup> Should NEAFC modify its level of TAC, these figures shall be adjusted accordingly by NAFO through a mail vote.
- <sup>4</sup> 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.
- <sup>5</sup> 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.
- <sup>6</sup> Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the EU.
- <sup>7</sup> Allocation of 17.85% to Lithuania and 2.15% to Latvia following their accession to the European Union.
- <sup>8</sup> Applicable to 2025 and 2026.
- <sup>9</sup> 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.
- <sup>10</sup> 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.
- <sup>11</sup> Applicable to 2025, 2026, and 2027.
- <sup>12</sup> Should catches exceed 4 500 tonnes, additional measures would be adopted to further restrain catches in 2025.
- <sup>13</sup> The TAC for this stock is established as per Article 7 with a quota year of July 1 to June 30
- <sup>14</sup> This is the limit established by Canada for Canadian fishers.
- <sup>15</sup> This distribution key shall not serve as a precedent in future years for establishing catch limits or criteria for quota allocations. The Commission shall review these allocations upon request by any of the Contracting Parties.

**Historical statements**

- <sup>16</sup> The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1998 Quota Table. In 1999, a moratorium on cod in Division 3M was declared.
- <sup>17</sup> The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1997 Quota Table. In 1998, a moratorium on redfish in Division 3LN was declared.
- <sup>18</sup> 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, 2025**

CONTRACTING PARTY	NUMBER OF FISHING DAYS <sup>1</sup>
<b>Canada</b>	0
<b>Cuba</b>	0
<b>Denmark</b>	
Faroe Islands	0
Greenland	0
<b>European Union</b>	0
<b>France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)</b>	0
<b>Iceland</b>	N/A
<b>Japan</b>	0
<b>Korea</b>	0
<b>Norway</b>	0
<b>Russia</b>	0
<b>Ukraine</b>	0
<b>United Kingdom</b>	0
<b>USA</b>	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>

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<sup>1</sup> 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 summary of the Scientific Council 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>Recommendation for 2025 and 2026</p> <p>Catches up to <math>3/4 F_{lim}</math> are projected to result in a very low probability (<math>\leq 10\%</math>) of the stock going below <math>B_{lim}</math> and of fishing mortality exceeding <math>F_{lim}</math>. SSB is projected to increase with a probability of more than 50% under all fishing scenarios with fishing mortality less than <math>0.56 F_{lim}</math>. Scientific Council recommends a level of F that promotes SSB growth. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC to 12 613 t in 2025.
Cod in Division 3NO	<p>Recommendation for cod in Divisions 3NO for 2022 and beyond:</p> <p>No directed fishing from 2022 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 <math>B_{lim}</math> in the next three years. There will be no full assessment until interim monitoring shows that conditions have changed. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 21/14 Rev.</a>; <a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2025.
Redfish in Divisions 3LN	<p>Recommendation for 2025 and 2026</p> <p>The stock has decreased since 2015 and there is a 42% risk of the stock being below <math>B_{lim}</math> in 2023. Recruitment has been at or below the long-term average since the mid-2010s. To be consistent with the NAFO Precautionary Approach, Scientific Council advises that no directed fishery should occur in 2025 and 2026. Bycatch should be kept at the lowest possible level. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC to 6 000 t in 2025.

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
Redfish in Division 3M	<p>Recommendation for 2025 and 2026</p> <p>Given the life history of this stock, considering that the current <math>F</math> levels are below <math>F_{0.1}</math>, and to try to maintain the stock around the long-term average, Scientific Council advises that catches do not exceed the <math>F</math> corresponding to the current TAC (17 503 t in 2025 and 15 636 t in 2026). (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC to 17 503 t in 2025 and 15 636t in 2026.
Redfish in Division 3O	<p>The stock is below an interim survey-based proxy for <math>B_{MSY}</math> but above the limit reference point (<math>B_{lim} = 0.3_{MSY}</math>-proxy) with a probability &gt;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 (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 22/18</a>; <a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2022	It was agreed to rollover the TAC of 20 000 t applicable to 2023, 2024, and 2025 ( <a href="#">COM Doc. 22-27</a> ).
Pelagic <i>Sebastes mentella</i> (oceanic redfish) in Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K	<p>No new data available at this time. The ICES Northwest Working Group (NWWG) will assess these stocks at its meeting on 4-6 September 2024. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC to 0 t for 2025.
American plaice in Divisions 3LNO	<p>Recommendation for 2025 and beyond</p> <p>Advice for American plaice in Divisions 3LNO is provided based on an Interim Monitoring Report which indicates no major changes in this stock. Scientific Council recommends that, in accordance with the rebuilding plan, there should be no directed fishing on American plaice in Divisions 3LNO until an assessment indicates a very low probability of being below <math>B_{lim}</math>. Bycatches of American plaice should be kept to the lowest possible level and restricted to unavoidable bycatch in fisheries directing for other species. There will be no full assessment until interim monitoring shows that conditions have changed. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2025 and 2026.

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
American Plaice in Division 3M	<p>Recommendation for American plaice in Division 3M for 2024-2026:</p> <p>The stock has recovered to the levels of the mid 1990s, however, recruitment has been poor since 2018. Scientific Council 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. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 23/18</a>; <a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2023	The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024, 2025, and 2026 ( <a href="#">COM Doc. 23-28</a> ).
Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO	<p>Scientific Council advises that fishing mortality up to 75% <math>F_{msy}</math>, 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 <math>F_{lim}</math>, and are projected to maintain the stock around <math>B_{msy}</math> with a low risk of being below <math>B_{lim}</math> (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 23/18</a>; <a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>).</p>	2023	The Commission agreed on a TAC of 15 560 t for 2024 and 15 810 t for 2025 ( <a href="#">COM Doc. 23-28</a> ).
Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO	<p>Recommendation for 2025 and 2026</p> <p>In the projection period the probability of being below <math>B_{lim}</math> is very low (<math>\leq 10\%</math>), however the probability of exceeding <math>F_{lim}</math> is projected to be above 30% for F greater than 75% <math>F_{msy}</math>. Scientific Council therefore recommends that F should be no higher than 75% <math>F_{msy}</math>. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC to 1 395 t in 2025 and 1 461 t in 2026.
White hake in Divisions 3NO	<p>Recommendation for white hake in Divisions 3NO and Subdivision 3Ps for 2024 and beyond:</p> <p>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). There will be no full assessment until interim monitoring shows that conditions have changed. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 23/18</a>; <a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to rollover the TAC of 1000 t for 2025.

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
Capelin in Divisions 3NO	<p>Recommendation for capelin in Divisions 3NO for 2022 and beyond:</p> <p>No directed fishery. There will be no full assessment until interim monitoring shows that conditions have changed. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2025.
Skates in Divisions 3LNO	<p>Recommendation for 2025 and 2026</p> <p>No new survey information is available to determine stock status, however, given the low level of thorny skate catch in recent years (average 3 460 t, 2019 - 2023), it is unlikely that there have been major changes to the state of the stock. Given the low resilience to fishing mortality and higher historic stock levels, Scientific Council advises no increase in catches. (<a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a>)</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC at 7 000 t for 2025.
Greenland halibut in Sub-area 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO	<p>Exceptional Circumstances are occurring due to recent gaps in the EU-Spain 3L series. However, sensitivity analyses indicate that the application of the HCR (i.e., the Management Procedure [MP]) adopted in 2024 will still be appropriate. The TAC for 2025 derived from the MP is 14 791 t. This compares to the TAC for 2024 of 15 153 t, which was calculated using the MP adopted in 2017. The 2.4% reduction stems from two sources: 1) a downwards adjustment to the current MP formula to meet the long-term biomass target, and 2) the MP responding to a slight declining trend in the combined survey index.</p>	2024	It was agreed to set the TAC at 14 791 t for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut, resulting in a TAC of 10 960t.
Northern shortfin squid in Subareas 3+4	<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 <math>F_{lim}</math>, the potential yield which the northern</p>	2022	It was agreed to rollover the TAC of 34 000 t applicable to 2023, 2024, and 2025 ( <a href="#">COM Doc. 22-27</a> ).

Fish Stock(s)	Scientific Advice	Year of decision	Management measures
	stock component may be able to sustain under a low productivity regime) ( <a href="#">SCS Doc. 22/22</a> ; <a href="#">SCS Doc. 24/16 Rev.</a> )		
Northern Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO	No directed fishery in 2024 and 2025 as the stock is below Blim with no indication of short-term recovery ( <a href="#">SCS Doc. 23/20</a> ).	2023	The Commission agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2024 and 2025 (COM Doc. 23-28).
Splendid alfonsino in Subarea 6	The substantial decline in CPUE and catches on the Kükenthal peak in the past year indicates that the stock may be depleted.  Scientific Council advises to close the fishery until biomass increases to exploitable levels.	2019	Ban on fishing ( <a href="#">COM Doc. 19-34 (Rev.)</a> ).
Shrimp in Division 3M	The stock remains below B <sub>lim</sub> .  To be consistent with the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework, Scientific Council advises that no directed fishery should occur in 2025 and 2026.	2024	It was agreed to maintain the moratorium applicable to 2025 and 2026.



**Annex 15. Review of NAFO CEM Article 5.5(j)**  
[COM WP 24-17 now COM Doc. 24-14]

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

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5. Each Contracting Party shall:

- (j) close its directed fishery for cod in Division 3M between 00:01 UTC 1 January ~~2024~~2025 and 24:00 UTC 31 March ~~2024~~2025. 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 16. Changes to the NAFO CEM resulting from the  
Revised Management Strategy for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut**  
[COM WP 24-23 now COM Doc. 24-16]

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.

**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 shall be in force from 2025 to 2034 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  $y$ ,  $\gamma$  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:

$$J_y = \sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2} \frac{J_{current,y}^i}{J_{target}^i} / \sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2} \quad (2)$$

with  $(\sigma^i)^2$  being the estimated variance for index  $i$  (estimated in the SCAA model fitting procedure),

$$J_{current,y}^i = \frac{1}{q^i} \sum_{y' \in Q^i}^{y-1} I_{y'}^i \quad (3)$$

$$J_{target}^i = \alpha \frac{1}{5} \sum_{y'=2011}^{2015} I_{y'}^i \quad (\text{where } \alpha \text{ is a control/tuning parameter for the MP}) \quad (4)$$

where  $q^i$  indicates the number of years in  $Q^i$ , and  $Q^i$  the years in the period  $y' = y - 5$  to  $y' = y - 1$  used to determine current status for survey series  $i$  (i.e. missing survey values are treated as missing in the calculation using the rule, as was done in the MSE testing). 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  $y$ .

#### *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  $y' \in Q^i$  (as defined above) for each survey series  $i$  considered, with:

$$s_y = \sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2} s_y^i / \sum_{i=1}^5 \frac{1}{(\sigma^i)^2} \quad (6)$$

with the standard error of the residuals of the observed compared to model-predicted logarithm of survey index  $i$  ( $\sigma^i$ ) 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  $\mu$  is a tuning parameter.

Finally, constraints on the maximum allowable annual change in TAC are applied, viz.:

$$\text{if } TAC_{y+1} > TAC_y(1 + \Delta_{up}) \quad \text{then} \quad TAC_{y+1} = TAC_y(1 + \Delta_{up}) \quad (7)$$

and

$$\text{if } TAC_{y+1} < TAC_y(1 - \Delta_{down}) \quad \text{then} \quad TAC_{y+1} = TAC_y(1 - \Delta_{down}) \quad (8)$$

During the MSE process, this inter-annual constraint was set at 10%, for both TAC increases and decreases, and these constraints were adopted as part of the adopted MP.

**Table 1.** Control parameter values for the adopted MP. The parameters  $\mu$ ,  $\alpha$ , 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.

$\mu$	0.963
$\gamma$	0.15
$q$	3
$\alpha$	0.972
$\lambda_{up}$	1
$\lambda_{down}$	2
$X$	-0.0056
$\Delta_{up}$	0.1
$\Delta_{down}$	0.1

### **Annex I.G**

#### **Exceptional Circumstances Protocol**

The following criteria constitute Exceptional Circumstances:

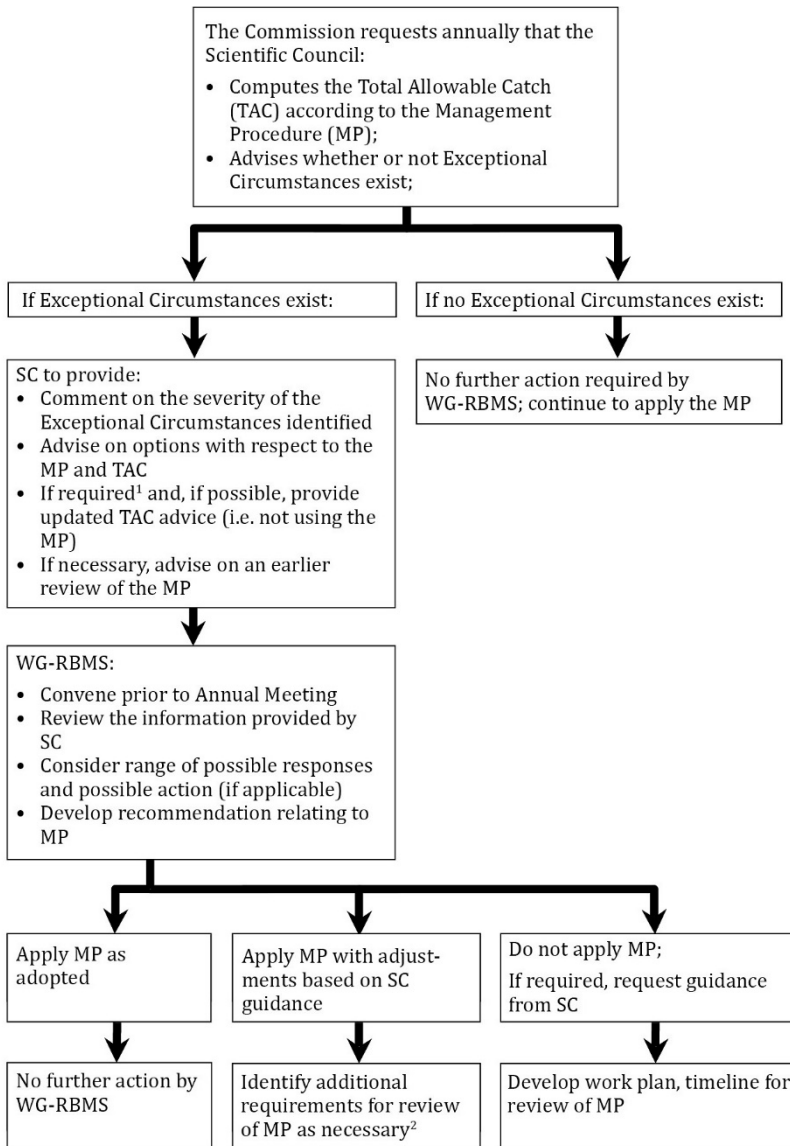
1. Missing survey data:
  - More than two values missing, in a five-year period, from a survey used in the MP;
  - Missing more than two of the five survey indices from the terminal year.
2. The composite survey index used in the MP, in a given year, is above or below the 90 percent probability envelopes projected by the base case operating models from SSM and SCAA under the MS;
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;
3. discrepancies between catches and the TAC calculated using the MP.<sup>1</sup>

Figure 1 illustrates the actions to be taken in Exceptional circumstances.

<sup>1</sup> Noting that 10% exceedance of TAC was tested during MSE.



<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 17. Review of NAFO CEM Article 7.12**  
[COM WP 24-16 now COM Doc. 24-13]

The Commission reviewed Article 7.12 of the NAFO CEM, which is time sensitive, and agreed to the following updates:

**Article 7 – Cod**

**Divisions 3NO – Interim Cod Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategy....**

12. Ecosystem Considerations:

Considering the importance of capelin as a food source, consistent with the ecosystem approach, the moratorium on 3NO capelin will continue until at least 31 December ~~2024~~2025.

## **Annex 18. Re-opening of the fishery for Cod in Divisions 2J3KL in the Regulatory Area**

[COM WP 24-18 (Rev. 4) now COM Doc. 24-17]

### **Background**

It is proposed to revise Article 7 of the NAFO CEM to automatically set the NAFO quota for the NRA immediately following Canada's annual decision and in line with Canada's fishing season of July 1 to June 30, and to establish a procedure for the NAFO Executive Secretariat to update Annex I.A figures following the adoption of the TAC.

The distribution key of the Parties indicated in the current paragraphs 1 and 4 of Article 7 are placed in Annex I.A and expressed in % of the TAC.

In this proposal, the catch limit for Contracting Parties other than Canada will follow the same methodology used to establish the original shares (catches in reference period 1973-1976). The European Union share is updated from 3,27% (corresponding to 65.4% of 5% of the TAC) to 3,88% to reflect catches in this period of all current EU Member States. The remaining share (1,12%) is divided equally between all 11 other NAFO Contracting Parties providing each an individual share of 0,101%. The proposal includes the corresponding quota figures for the July 2024 to June 2025 TAC based on this distribution key.

The distribution key of the 5% in this proposal shall not serve as a precedent for quota allocations.

Consistent with Canadian management measures for this stock, it is proposed to adopt flanking measures to support the recovery of the stock: a seasonal closure for directed fishing, gear requirements, and an increased minimum fish size.

To strengthen compliance, it is proposed that provisions be added requiring a vessel to proceed immediately to a port for a full inspection if it appears that the vessel committed specified infringements while conducting a directed fishery for cod in Division 3L when there was no observer on board.

The following changes to the measures shall become binding on each Contracting Party seven days following the date of transmittal by the Executive Secretary.



**Amendments to the 2024 NAFO CEM****Amend Articles 5, 6, 7, 13, and 38 and Annexes I.A and I.D of the NAFO CEM as follows:****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:

...

(k) close its directed fishery for cod in Division 3L between 00:01 UTC 15 April 2025 and 23:59 UTC 30 June, 2025. 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 6 – Bycatch Retention 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 Divisions 3L and 3M, redfish in 3LN and witch flounder in 3NO: 1 250 kg or 5%, whichever is the greater;

**Article 7 - Cod*****Divisions 2J3KL***

1. The Commission shall obtain annually the decision of Canada on the limit it has established for catches by Canadian fishers. Canada will endeavour to inform the Secretariat of its decision by June 15 of each year. This limit shall be 95% of the TAC for this stock. If no limit is established by Canada for the following fishing season, no directed fishing for the stock shall be permitted in the Regulatory Area.
2. ~~The Commission shall establish a catch limit in the Regulatory Area that shall apply to the other Contracting Parties. This limit shall be 5% of the TAC for this stock. Within two business days after obtaining the decision of Canada referred to in paragraph 1, the Executive Secretary will update Annex I.A. in accordance with the distribution key set out in that annex and notify the Contracting Parties accordingly. These quota limits shall become binding on each Contracting Party on July 1 of the current year and shall remain in effect until June 30 of the following year.~~
4. ~~The distribution key that shall apply for the 5% figure when the fishery in the Regulatory Area is resumed shall be 65.4% for the EU and 34.6% for the other Contracting Parties.~~
5. ~~The measures in this Article shall apply when a decision is taken to allow the resumption of fishing for cod in the Regulatory Area, and shall not serve as a precedent in future years for establishing catch limits of criteria for quota allocations of other stocks.~~

### Article 13 – Gear Requirements

#### ***Mesh Sizes***

1. For the purpose of this Article, mesh size is measured in accordance with Annex III.A.
2. No vessel shall fish with a net having a mesh size smaller than prescribed for each of the following species:
  - (a) 40 mm for shrimps, including prawns (PRA);
  - (b) 60 mm for short finned squid (SQI);
  - (c) 280 mm in the codend and 220 mm in all other parts of the trawl for skate (SKA);
  - (d) 130mm when using the sorting grid referred to in Article 13.9 or 155mm for cod in Divisions 3L and 3M;
  - (e) 130 mm for all other groundfish, as defined in Annex I.C.;
  - (f) 100 mm for pelagic *Sebastes mentella* (REB) in Subarea 2 and Divisions 1F and 3K; and
  - (g) 90 mm for redfish (RED) in the fishery using mid-water trawls in Divisions 3O, 3M and 3LN. Within this fishery mid-water trawl means trawl gear that is designed to fish for pelagic species, no portion of which is designed to be or is operated in contact with the bottom at any time. The gear shall not include discs, bobbins or rollers on its footrope or any other attachments designed to make contact with the bottom. The trawl may have chafing gear attached.

### Article 38 – Additional Procedures for Serious Infringements

#### ***Duties of the flag State Contracting Party***

3. In the case of a serious infringement, the flag State Contracting Party shall:
  - (a) acknowledge receipt of the related information and images without delay;
  - (b) ensure the inspected vessel does not resume fishing until further notification;
  - (c) using all information and material available, review the case and, within 72 hours:
    - i) require the vessel to proceed immediately to a port for a full inspection under its authority, if any of the following serious infringements are apparent:
      - (1) directed fishing for a stock which is subject to a moratorium;
      - (2) directed fishing for a stock for which fishing is prohibited under Article 6;
      - (3) mis-recording of catch, contrary to Article 28; ~~or~~
      - (4) repetition of the same serious infringement during a 6 months period; or
      - (5) directed fishing during a closed time contrary to Article 5.5(k) or fishing with an unauthorized mesh size, grid or grate bar spacing, or without the use of grid or grate, contrary to Article 13.2(d) when there is no observer on board and the vessel is directing for cod in Division 3L.

**Annex I.A**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Cod</b>	
<b>Stock Specification</b>	<b>COD 3L <sup>1</sup></b>	
<b>% of TAC</b>		<b>% of 3L Cod TAC</b>
<b>Contracting Party</b>		
<b>Canada</b>	18 000 <sup>2</sup>	95.00
<b>Cuba</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>European Union</b>	735 <sup>3</sup>	3.88
<b>France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Iceland</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Japan</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Korea</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Norway</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Russian Federation</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Ukraine</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>United Kingdom</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>United States of America</b>	19.14 <sup>3</sup>	0,101
<b>Others</b>		0
<b>TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH</b>	18 947	100.00

<sup>1</sup> The TAC for this stock is established as per Article 7 with a quota year of July 1 to June 30.

<sup>2</sup> This is the limit established by Canada for Canadian fishers.

<sup>3</sup> This distribution key shall not serve as a precedent in future years for establishing catch limits or criteria for quota allocations. The Commission shall review these allocations upon request by any of the Contracting Parties.

**Annex I.D – Minimum Fish Size**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Gilled and gutted fish whether or not skinned; fresh or chilled, frozen, or salted.</b>			
	<b>Whole</b>	<b>Head Off</b>	<b>Head and Tail Off</b>	<b>Head Off and Split</b>
Atlantic cod	41 cm***	27 cm	22 cm	27/25 cm**
Greenland halibut	30 cm	N/A	N/A	N/A
American plaice	25 cm	19 cm	15 cm	N/A
Yellowtail flounder	25 cm	19 cm	15 cm	N/A

\* Fish size refers to fork length for Atlantic cod; whole length for other species.

\*\* Lower size for green salted fish.

\*\*\* 43cm in 3L

**Annex 19. Publication of the NAFO register of fishing vessels and authorizations**  
[STACTIC WP 24-12 (Revised) now COM Doc. 24-05]

**Background**

Several RFMOs have taken steps towards disclosing the register of notified fishing vessels to the public, including the details of the authorizations to operate under the auspices of the relevant RFMO. As agreed at the 2019 NAFO Annual Meeting, NAFO publishes in its website the identification of vessel notified to fish in NAFO in accordance with Article 25 of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM). However, this vessel register does not include authorizations data or the details of the vessels other than flag state, name and call sign.

The publication of the authorization and vessels' details improves the transparency of the RFMO and allows the operators to confirm the status of their authorizations. For these purposes, the information in the public register and active authorizations should be public and updated following a modification of the authorizations notified by the flag State Contracting Party. The information on authorizations to be public should include the notifications to fish "Others" quotas.

As a safeguard for personal data protection and confidentiality, the public register of fishing vessels and authorizations should not include the names and addresses of the owner(s) and, where applicable, the charterers.

**Proposal**

Amend Article 25.13 of the NAFO CEM as follows:

*13. Subject to the appropriate confidentiality requirements, the Executive Secretary:*

*(a) posts the register referred to in paragraph 12, to the NAFO MCS Website and ensures that it is made available to all Contracting Parties;*

**(b) posts in the public part of the NAFO Website:**

**(i) the register referred to in paragraph 12 except for the information referred to in paragraph 8(f); and**

**(ii) for fishing vessels with an active notification referred to in Article 5.3(e), the vessel identification, authorisation date and relevant stock; and**

**(c) deletes from the register any vessel that has not conducted fishing activities in the Regulatory Area for a period of two consecutive years, or that has been classified as IUU.**

**Annex 20. Surveillance Procedures**  
[STACTIC WP 24-13 (Revised) now COM Doc. 24-06]

## Background

Article 33 of the NAFO Control and Enforcement Measures (CEM) includes surveillance procedures in case of sightings on fishing vessels flying the flag of a Contracting Party for which there are reasons to suspect an apparent infringement of the CEM. There are however no clear procedures where the inspector does not have reasons to suspect an apparent infringement at the time of the sighting. This absence of procedures prevents that the information of the sighting is shared with all Contracting Parties and that the flag State Contracting Party cross-checks the sighting information with other available fisheries data and, as appropriate, against applicable domestic law. In some cases, the information obtained during a previous sighting can be useful for the follow up of an apparent infringement reported at a later stage during an inspection. To ensure the proper follow up and enforcement of these cases, basic information for all sightings should be documented, including whether images and footage were recorded, and shared with all Contracting Parties via MCS Website for control purposes.

## Proposal

Amend Article 33 of the NAFO CEM as follows:

### *Article 33 – Surveillance Procedures*

**1. The inspecting Contracting Party shall ensure that its inspectors record in a Sighting Report, for each sighting in the Regulatory Area of a fishing vessel entitled to fly the flag of a Contracting Party, the following information:**

- (a) inspecting Contracting Party and the inspector(s) identification;**
- (b) identification or call sign of the inspecting platform;**
- (c) flag State, name, and call sign of the sighted fishing vessel;**
- (d) sighted fishing vessel's activity in accordance with ANNEX II.I.B;**
- (e) date and time of the sighting;**
- (f) position of the fishing vessel at the time of the sighting; and**
- (g) if images or footage were recorded and any other relevant observations.**

**24. Where an inspector observes in the Regulatory Area a fishing vessel entitled to fly the flag of a Contracting Party for which there are reasons to suspect an apparent infringement of the CEM, and where an immediate inspection is not practicable, the inspector shall:**

- (a) fill out the Surveillance Report Form set out in Annex IV.A. If the inspector has made a volumetric or catch composition evaluation of the content of a haul, the Surveillance Report shall include all relevant information regarding the composition of the tow, and refer the method used for the volumetric evaluation;**
- (b) record images of the vessel and record the position, date and time the image was recorded; and**
- (c) without delay electronically transmit the Surveillance Report and images to their competent authority.**

**32.** The inspecting Contracting Party shall: ~~without delay:~~

**(a) without delay and no later than 15 days after the end of the deployment, submit the Sightings Report to the Executive Secretary:**

**(b) upon request, transmit a copy of images and/or footage recorded and any other available information relating to a sighting referred to in paragraph 1 to the flag State Contracting Party; and**

**(c) without delay, in respect of the sighting referred to in paragraph 2:**

**(ia)** submit to the Executive Secretary the Surveillance report for transmission to the flag State Contracting Party of the vessel;

**(iib)** transmit a copy of images recorded to the flag State Contracting Party of the vessel; **and**

**(iiie)** ensure security and continuity of the evidence for subsequent inspections.

**43.** Each flag State Contracting Party shall **on receipt of a Surveillance Report referred to in paragraph 2, including any image recorded, concerning a vessel entitled to fly its flag:**

**(a) on receipt of a Surveillance Report, including any image recorded, concerning a vessel entitled to fly its flag,** conduct such investigation as may be necessary to determine appropriate follow-up action; **and**

**(b)** submit without delay to the Executive Secretary the investigation report.

#### *Duties of the Executive Secretary*

**54.** The Executive Secretary posts without delay to the NAFO MCS Website:

**(a) the Sightings Reports referred to in paragraph 1**

**(ab)** the Surveillance Reports, including any image recorded, referred to in paragraph ~~12~~ and ensures that they are automatically transmitted to the flag State Contracting Party of the vessel concerned; and

**(bc)** the investigation report referred to in paragraph ~~34~~ and ensures that it is transmitted to the Contracting Party that has generated the Surveillance Report.

**Annex 21. Amending NAFO CEM Article 13.11 (c) Lost or Abandoned Fishing gears**[STACTIC WP 24-16 (Rev. 2) now COM Doc. 24-07]**Background Information**

At the intersessional STACTIC meeting in Copenhagen 06-08 May 2024 Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Island and Greenland) agreed to draft a proposal on a definition of abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear, that could be included in Article 1 of the NAFO CEM for discussion at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

The definitions of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear are copied from FAO Voluntary Guidelines for the Marking of Fishing Gear.

With reference to point 18 (Implementation of the Performance Review Recommendations) - of the STACTIC Report on the discussion on a reference to MARPOL this is done in point 4 a) “Definition of fishing gear” and in the amendment to article 13.11 prohibition of discarding fishing gear at sea, which also is in line with the NEAFC Schem of Control and Enforcement.

**Amendments to Article 13.11:**

(c) no master shall deliberately abandon **or discard** fishing gear, except for safety reasons.

**Annex 22. Squid Fishery**  
[STACTIC WP 24-22 now COM Doc. 24-08]

**Background**

- (1) A serious infringement could be identified with respect to paragraph 1 of Article 38 of NAFO CEM, 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 NAFO CEM.
- (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. This possibility deprived Japanese vessels of their fishing opportunity to fish for squid as a result.
- (3) To address this issue, Japan proposed a derogation by modifying Article 11 of NAFO CEM, and this was adopted at 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting last year. Following this derogation, Japan intended to conduct the first Squid Fishery scheduled from 21st August to 2nd September, duration of which had been reported to the Secretariat in accordance with Article 11, paragraph 7. However, considering the effect of Hurricane Ernesto, the vessel adjusted the original plan and conducted it in division 30 on 1<sup>st</sup> September, but squid (*Illex*) was not caught by this haul and the move on rule was triggered in accordance with Article 11, paragraph 5.
- (4) Recognizing that this derogation continues to be necessary to ensure opportunity for squid fishery and collection useful data, Japan proposes to keep this derogation until 2026 and collect as many practical data as possible, with following necessary modification to Article 11 of NAFO CEM. Japan believes that this would also contribute to possible development of a new solution to minimize catch of by-catch or non-target species.

**Modifications**

**Article 11 – Squid**

**Duty of the Executive Secretary**

9. The exemption referred to in paragraphs 2 to 8 shall apply during **2025 and 2026**, and be reviewed by STACTIC



**Annex 23. Data Collection on Marine Pollution in the NAFO Regulatory Area**[STACTIC WP 24-24 (Revised) now COM Doc. 24-09]

Under the 2017 Convention on Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, Contracting Parties are called “to minimize pollution and waste originating from fishing vessels.” Art. III(i). Currently, there is no infrastructure within the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) to effectively enforce this obligation. While Contracting Parties, as signatories to MARPOL Annex V., have some prescribed international obligations to eliminate and reduce the amount of garbage being discharged into the sea from ships, those requirements can quickly be diluted or lost without a clear mandate from NAFO. As a first step in developing a program that effectively manages and enforces against vessel pollution and waste in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA), it would be useful to understand the scope of the problem. In 2022, STACTIC requested that the NAFO Scientific Council provide some information related to this question. However, they were unable to devote the necessary resources to answer this question.

Therefore, in an effort to better understand what is occurring within the NRA, we recommend that observers record information related to pollution and waste. Specifically, under “Part 3: Trip Observations” of the Observer Report in Annex II.M of the NAFO CEM, provide specific space for observers to catalogue any observation or interaction with marine pollution or waste.

**Part 3. Trip Observations**

Enter observation on:

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)		
<b>Waste or other marine debris (including position, date, time, and description of waste)</b>		
Any other observation		

## **Annex 24. Establishment of New Measures in the 3M Cod Fishery (Article 6)**

[STACTIC WP 24-25 (Rev. 2) now COM Doc. 24-10]

### **Background**

1. The UK understands a ‘directed fishery’ to be defined as the species which comprises the largest percentage, by weight, of the total catch in any given haul as per paragraph 2 of Article 5 of the NAFO CEM and a ‘serious infringement’ to be defined as per paragraph 1 of Article 38 of the NAFO CEM.
2. While operating in the NAFO RA this year a UK operator was found to have committed a serious infringement by conducting a directed fishery for a species in which the UK does not hold quota.
3. The operator was targeting 3M cod but in a small number of hauls took a level of 3M redfish bycatch which meant that the vessel, under the NAFO definition of a ‘directed fishery’, was now targeting 3M redfish, a species in which the UK does not have quota. This meant that a serious infringement had occurred, and the vessel was required to stop fishing and return to port for inspection.
4. This infringement occurred whilst in the presence of an observer and while using the appropriate mesh size. It occurred in only 3 out of 129 hauls, where the master was performing short tows to monitor the levels of redfish; was of a small tonnage and in each case the move on provisions as per paragraph 6(b) Article 6 were followed.
5. Scientific Council advice acknowledges the species are likely to be found in close proximity to each other, stating ‘There are strong trophic interactions between these species in the Flemish Cap’ and that redfish is an important prey species for cod. The 3M redfish and cod stocks are also considered by the Scientific Council to be healthy.
6. The UK feels that given the strong ecosystem interactions and NAFO’s role in facilitating sustainable harvesting, it is inappropriate to deem these levels of redfish bycatch a directed fishery and so trigger a serious infringement process.
7. This proposal seeks to establish a more measured approach for unintentional directed fishing of 3M redfish, whilst noting that vessels have an obligation to keep bycatch as low as possible as per paragraph 1 of Article 6. In this instance we feel it would be more appropriate to derogate from the exceeding bycatch limit rules in paragraph 6(b) of Article 6 of the NAFO CEM by categorising the first two instances where a directed fishery for 3M redfish unintentionally occurs to be ‘incidental catch’, therefore not triggering the serious infringement process. Furthermore, we feel it would also be appropriate to allow for a measured approach to move on provisions; specifically allowing a vessel operator to move position an additional two times should bycatch limits exceed those limits set in paragraph 3(e-f) rather than requiring the vessel to leave the Division for 60 hours.
8. The UK recognises that the “Others” quota for 3M redfish exists as a bycatch mitigation measure for parties who do not hold quota in the stock but also notes that the “Others” quota can close as a result of the measures as per paragraph 5 of Article 5 being triggered, necessitating a measure which can apply in incidences where this occurs.

**Amendments:****Article 6 – Bycatch Retention on Board of Stocks Identified in Annex I.A as Bycatch When No Directed Fishery is Permitted****Exceeding Bycatch Limits in Any One Haul**

- 8 (i). Where a vessel is carrying an observer and is conducting a directed fishery for cod in Division 3M with a legal mesh size appropriate for that fishery, the first two times on a fishing trip that catches of redfish comprise the largest percentage by weight of the total catch in a tow/set, they shall be considered as incidental catch, but the vessel shall immediately move as specified in paragraph 6.
- 8 (ii). By way of derogation from Article 6.6.b(ii), if the 3M redfish bycatch limits are exceeded again, instead of leaving the Division for at least 60 hours, the vessel may again move a minimum of 10 nautical miles from any position of the previous tows/sets in up to two consecutive hauls in which the redfish 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).

...

**Implementation**

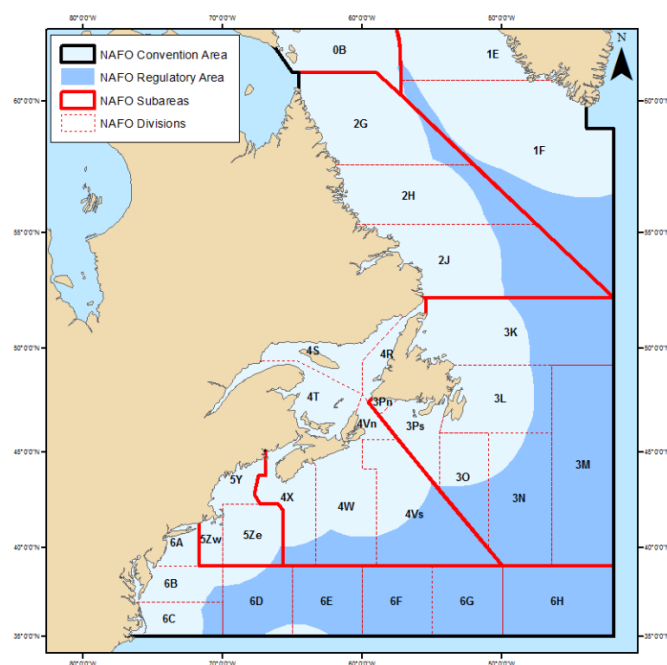
...

11. The measures referred to in paragraphs 8 (i) and 8 (ii) shall apply during 2025 and be reviewed by STACTIC in 2025.

## Annex 25. Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2024 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2023) [STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 8) now COM Doc. 24-21]

### 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 2023<sup>1</sup> (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 2023 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.

### 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 or pelagic redfish in Divisions 1F and 2J in

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<sup>1</sup> According to Article 1.7 of the 2023 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 2023 NAFO CEM. Quantitative information presented in this report are summarized according to 2023 calendar year, unless otherwise indicated.

2023. Table 2.2.1 summarizes the main fishing gears and fishing effort for trips in the NAFO Regulatory area that ended in 2023.

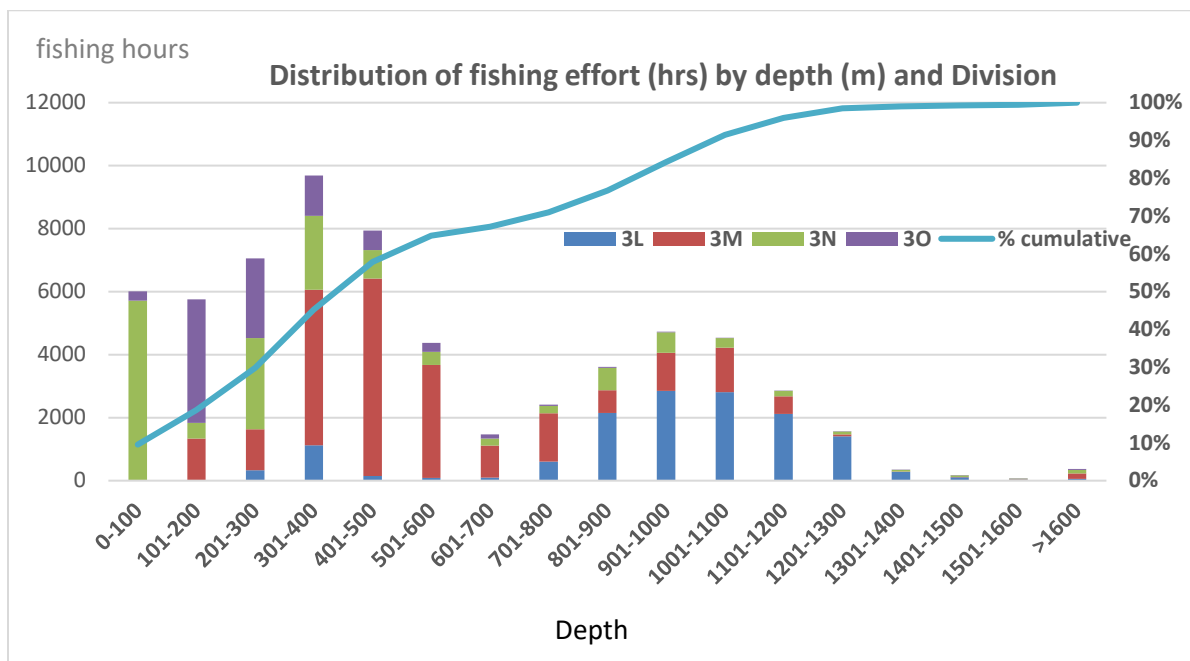
Bottom trawlers accounted for 95.36% of fishing effort in terms of fishing days, catching Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut, yellowtail flounder, redfish, thorny skate and silver hake in Divisions 3LMNO. Longline vessels accounted for 4.64% of the fishing effort catching Atlantic cod and Atlantic halibut.

**Table 2.1.1.** *Main fishing gears and fishing effort in the NAFO Regulatory Area for fishing trips that ended 2023.*

Fishing Gear	# Fishing vessels	# Fishing trips	Fishing days in NAFO RA	Main Species (FAO 3-alpha code)	NAFO Divisions
Longline	9	9	165	COD, HAL	3M, 3N, 3O
Bottom Trawl	25	70	3365	GHL, RED, HKS, YEL, SKA, COD	3L, 3M, 3N, 3O
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>3530</b>		

## 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 2023. 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 49 786.56 t of fish (48 771.79 t retained + 1 014.77 t discarded) were caught by vessels authorized to fish in the Regulatory Area in 2023 (Tables 2.3.1 and 2.3.2).

**Table 2.3.1** *Total reported retained catches (in tonnes) of species (in FAO 3-alpha code) by Division in calendar 2023 (Source: CA field of CAT Reports).*

Species	Common name	3L	3M	3N	3O	Total
<i>Species subject to catch limitations (as listed in Annex I of the NAFO CEM)</i>						
COD	Atlantic cod	61.90	6096.71	248.04	53.89	6460.54
GHL	Greenland halibut	6511.33	2206.16	673.98	0.86	9392.33
HKW	White hake			62.51	337.04	399.55
PLA	American plaice	45.21	105.59	398.94	79.60	629.34
RED	Atlantic redfishes nei	1648.98	9795.51	6492.29	3053.57	20990.35
SKA	Raja rays nei	56.96	26.73	1534.13	397.81	2015.63
WIT	Witch flounder	21.37	40.28	37.45	109.46	208.55
YEL	Yellowtail flounder			2512.30	4.70	2517.00
<i>Species not listed in Annex I</i>						
ANG	American angler			2.04	58.30	60.34
CAA	Atlantic wolffish		30.72	2.32		33.03
CAB	Northern wolffish			6.17		6.17
CAS	Spotted wolffish		17.63	0.95		18.58
CAT	Wolffishes		6.17			6.17
HAD	Haddock			1.15	29.28	30.42
HAL	Atlantic halibut	29.52	148.60	285.97	86.98	551.07
HKR	Red hake			0.13		0.13
HKS	Silver hake			158.34	5190.99	5349.33
RHG	Roughhead grenadier	21.15	19.55	31.56		72.25
RNG	Roundnose grenadier	20.07	2.85	3.63		26.56
USK	Tusk (Cusk)		2.99	1.45		4.44
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8416.50</b>	<b>18499.49</b>	<b>12453.35</b>	<b>9402.46</b>	<b>48771.79</b>

**Table 2.3.2** *Total reported rejected catches (in tonnes) of species (in FAO 3-alpha code) by Division in calendar year 2023 (Source: RJ field of CAT Reports).*

Species	Common name	3L	3M	3N	3O	Total
<i>Species subject to catch limitations (as listed in Annex I of the NAFO CEM)</i>						
COD	Atlantic cod	0.04	4.36	1.50	0.00	5.90
GHL	Greenland halibut	1.18	0.73	0.05		1.95
HKW	White hake		0.01	0.10	4.71	4.82
PLA	American plaice	0.95	2.61	19.73	1.03	24.33
RED	Atlantic redfishes nei	0.72	2.03	0.19	0.84	3.77
SKA	Raja rays nei	1.98	11.92	58.42	0.38	72.71
WIT	Witch flounder	1.43	3.02	0.99	13.13	18.57
YEL	Yellowtail flounder			18.28	0.27	18.54
<i>Species not listed in Annex I</i>						
ALC	Baird's slickhead			0.30		0.30
ANG	American angler				0.08	0.08
ANT	Blue antimora	8.19	6.24	5.27		19.70
CAA	Atlantic wolffish	0.03	0.01	2.69		2.73
CAB	Northern wolffish		1.06	3.90		4.96
CAP	Capelin			3.25	0.02	3.26
CAS	Spotted wolffish	0.02		0.03		0.05
CAT	Wolffishes	17.24	42.43	6.79	1.43	67.89
CIN	Muksun		0.10			0.10
CRA	Marine crabs nei			0.01	0.09	0.10
CRJ	Jonah crab			0.08		0.08
CRK	Atlantic rock crab			0.25		0.25
CRQ	Queen crab			1.22	0.03	1.25
CUX	Sea cucumbers nei			136.40	0.15	136.55
GDE	Threadfin rockling	11.48	7.06	0.78		19.32
HAD	Haddock		0.30		0.05	0.35
HAL	Atlantic halibut			0.03	0.20	0.22
HKR	Red hake	1.46	1.83	0.31		3.60
HKS	Silver hake			3.86	89.70	93.56
JEL	Jellyfishes nei	1.03				1.03
MJW	Toad, lyre crabs nei			0.05		0.05
RHG	Roughhead grenadier	155.70	111.55	24.08	1.66	292.99
RNG	Roundnose grenadier	38.18	35.17	11.56		84.91
SAN	Sandeels nei			0.14		0.14
SCU	Sculpins			4.88		4.88
SWO	Swordfish		0.42		0.33	0.75
<i>Sharks</i>						
BSK	Basking shark		1.60		3.00	4.60
CFB	Black dogfish			0.11		0.11
DGS	Picked dogfish		0.13		0.01	0.14
DGX	Dogfish sharks nei	1.95	3.07	1.08	0.52	6.62
DUS	Dusky shark		0.35			0.35
GSK	Greenland shark	36.35	46.63	14.30	3.50	100.78
POR	Porbeagle		0.24	0.56	5.14	5.93
SHX	Dogfish sharks, etc. nei	0.16	0.05	1.38		1.59
SKX	Sharks, rays, skates, etc. nei			0.05	0.26	0.31
SMA	Shortfin mako		1.34	2.42	0.56	4.32
SRX	Rays, stingrays, mantas nei		0.40			0.40
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>278.07</b>	<b>284.65</b>	<b>324.99</b>	<b>127.06</b>	<b>1014.77</b>

### 3.0 Inspection and Surveillance

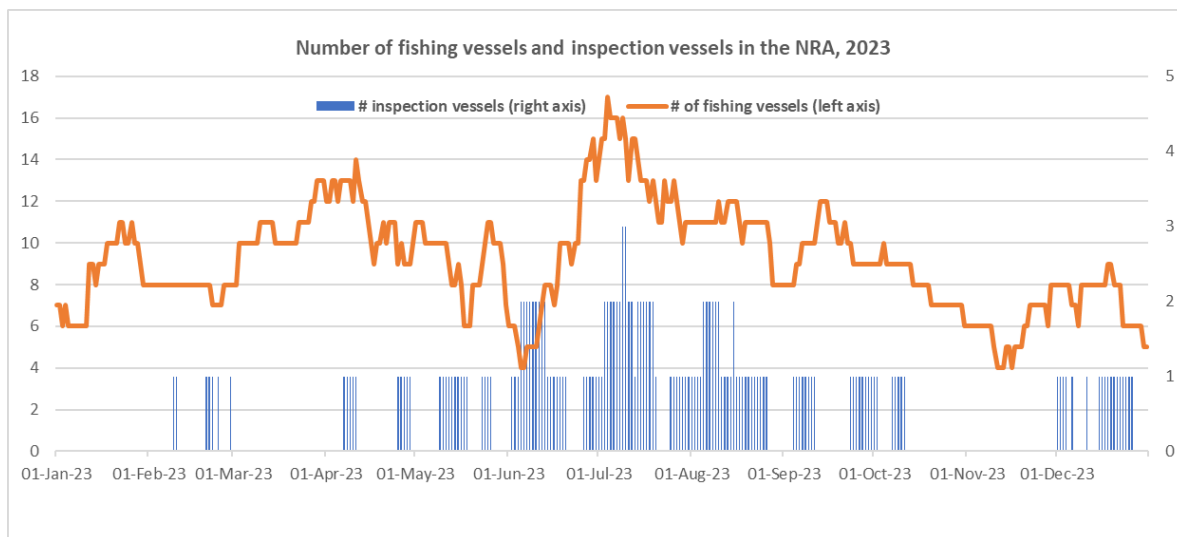
Chapter VI of the NAFO CEM outlines the general provisions and protocols for the at-sea inspection and surveillance scheme in the NRA. Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America deployed patrol vessels and their inspectors in the NRA in 2023.

#### 3.1 Patrol Activity

In 2023, seven (7) patrol vessels were deployed in the NAFO Regulatory Area by Contracting Parties with an inspection presence, accounting for 183 patrol-days (Table 3.1). There were 216 days with no patrol vessel, 117 days when there was one patrol vessel, and 32 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 388 hours, with 556 vessel sightings in the NRA. The European Union completed a total of 10 RPAS flight hours, with five (5) sightings.

**Table 3.1** *The total number of patrol vessels, patrol vessel deployments, and patrol days in the NAFO Regulatory area in 2023 by Contracting Party with Inspection Presence.*

Contracting Party with Inspection Presence	Number of Patrol Vessels	Number of Deployments	Number of Patrol Days
Canada	3	18	87
European Union	3	7	88
United States of America	1	1	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>183</b>



**Figure 3.1** *Fishing vessel and inspection vessel presence in the NAFO Regulatory Area in 2023.*

#### 3.2 At-sea inspections

A total of 72 at-sea inspections were conducted in 2023, and seven (7) inspections resulted in the issuance of infringements, five (5) of which were considered serious. In total, there were twelve infringements issued in



2023 during at-sea inspections. A summary of the infringements and their disposition can be found in Section 4.2. Table 3.2 outlines the total number of at-sea inspections completed by each Contracting Party.

**Table 3.2.** *The number of at-sea inspections completed by each inspection Contracting Party (Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America) for each flag State Contracting Party participating in fishing activities.*

CP	Number of inspections by Canada					Number of inspections by the European Union					Number of Inspections by the United States of America**	
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022	2023
CAN	4*	4*	8	1	0	0	2	2	2	3	0	0
DFG	3	0	3	1	0	1	1	0	5	6	0	0
EU	64	8	25	37	20	21	25	22	20	28	4	2
FRA	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JPN	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	2	2	2	0	0
NOR	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
RUS	11	0	3	3	3	1	4	0	2	6	0	1
USA	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

\*Inspections completed in accordance with domestic procedures.

\*\* During the period of 2019-2023, the United States of America deployed an inspection vessel in the NRA in 2022 and 2023.

### 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 49 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 48 of the 49 trips, therefore there is a 98% 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)
EU	39	7154.8	EU	39	100%
JPN	4	1149.1	CAN	4	100%
RUS	6	1431.4	EU (3) NOR (2)*	5	83%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>9735.3</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>98%</b>

\* This is a Russian landing in Båtsfjord, Norway. Norway failed to conduct the port state control as required by the CEM.

Pursuant to Article 7.6(c) of the NAFO CEM, landings or transshipments of cod from Division 3M were subject to a 25% inspection benchmark for vessels with more than 1 250kg onboard in 2023. In evaluating compliance for 2023 with the port inspection measures outlined in Article 7.6(c) of the NAFO CEM, 38 trips with more than 1 250kg of 3M Cod on board were identified. Port inspection reports (PSC3s) from 34 trips were received, resulting in an 89% coverage rate, as shown in Table 3.3.1.2. The trips without a PSC3 had a total of 889 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	8	1626.2	DFG	4	50%
EU	26	3203.6	EU	26	100%
NOR	1	845.5	NOR	1	100%
RUS	3	377.7	EU	3	100%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>6052.9</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>89%</b>

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 intention to land)
CAN	6	4	4	100%
EU	3	3	3	100%
GBR	1	0	0	-
NOR	3	3	2	67%

## 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 2023 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 2023.*

Number of fishing trips identified	79
Fishing Days <sup>1</sup>	3 530
Number of Daily Catch Reports (CATs) <sup>2</sup>	3 688
Number of Trips with Catch on Entry Reports (COEs)	79
Number of Trips with Catch on Exit Reports (COXs)	79

<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on EXI-ENT date of 2023 fishing year

<sup>2</sup> CATs of 2023 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 constitutes most of the total shark catches by weight (see table 2.3.2), and 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 79 fishing trips identified, logbook reports from 79 trips were received, resulting in 100% coverage for 2023.

##### 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

In 2023, there were 27 areas restricted bottom fishing activities in 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 Notifications on the use of Others Quota

There were 22 notifications on the use of Others Quota in 2023 relating to vessels from four (4) Contracting Parties. One infringement was issued relating to the timing of the notification of the intention to fish under the Others Quota in 2023, see table 4.2 for details. In 2023, the Others Quotas for 3NO white hake and 3LNO yellowtail flounder were fully utilized. The NAFO Secretariat circulated notifications on 12 July 2023 and 25 October 2023 respectively notifying Contracting Parties of the 100% quota uptake projections.

#### 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, 2023. One Contracting Party issued a notification on the intention to invoke Article 30.6 of the NAFO CEM, which requires coverage no less than 25% during 2023.*

Contracting Party	Number of Identified Trips	Number of Trips with Observer Trip Reports	% Coverage under Art 30.5 (100% required)
CAN	11	11	100%
DFG <sup>1</sup>	8	1 <sup>2</sup>	13%
EU	48	48	100%
JPN	4	4	100%
NOR	1	1	100%
RUS	7	7	100%

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

<sup>2</sup> During one observed trip, the observer was removed from the vessel due to illness mid-trip, and observer trip report was not received by the Secretariat.

#### 4.1.3 Research activities

In 2023, 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.

**Table 4.1.3.** *A summary of the 2023 research plans received by the NAFO Secretariat in accordance with Article 4.3(b) of the NAFO CEM.*

Research plan number	Timelines for submission met (Article 4.3(c)?	Catches onboard retained with the purpose of marketing (Article 4.3(d)	Applicable with Article 4.3(d), complied with reporting requirements in Chapter IV (Article 4.3(d)(i))?	Applicable with Article 4.3(d), observer with sufficient expertise onboard (Article 4.3(d)(ii))?	Applicable with Article 4.3(d), catches counted against quota (Article 4.3(d)(iii))?
1	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Yes	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

#### 4.1.4 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 2023, there was one (1) chartering arrangement in place pertaining to yellowtail founder 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. 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.

#### 4.2 Infringements detected at-sea and at-port

In 2023, a total of eight (8) 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 2023 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		Fishing logbook; Production logbook; Exceeding bycatch limits; Stowage plan; Capacity plan; Product labelling; Gaining access to sealed areas	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)); Failed to meet labelling requirements (Article 27.1, Article 27.2).	Fishing logbook; Production logbook; Stowage plan; Product labelling	Case pending. Case led by Portugal.
NOR	Product labelling requirements (Article 27.1)		Case closed. The Directorate of Fisheries have followed up the case, including a physical inspection of the vessel, and have taken administrative action in the form of giving the owner of the vessel written guidance in accordance with domestic legislation and practice. The vessel committed no serious or repeated infringements.
EU	Failed to maintain accurate fishing logbook (Article 28.2(a)); Failed to maintain accurate production logbook (Article 28.3(a)); Failed to Communicate catch reporting requirements (Article 28.6(c)).		Case closed. CA inspectors notified the master in July of an infringement committed in the previous fishing trip (21 May). No infringements were detected during Port inspection (5-22 June/Aveiro) related to that fishing trip.
DFG	Fishing an “Others Quota” without prior notification to the Executive Secretary (Article 38.1(a)).		Case closed FMC failure to send to SEC, notification from vessel to MCS website about fishing of “Others Quota”
RUS	Failure to comply with Master obligations to facilitate a boarding ladder in accordance with Annex IV.G.6		Case pending Case led by Russian Federation.
EU	Capacity plan certification (Article 25).		Case closed. Case led by Portugal. The master was not liable for an error in the capacity plan issued by PT administration.
RUS	Failed to accurately record catch (Article 26.2(2)); Failed to include disposition of catch per tow (Article 28.2(b)); Failed to report quantity discarded by species (Article 28.6(c)); Failure to report all catches of sharks in accordance with Article 28 (Article 12.1(a)); Misrecording of catches contrate to Article 28 (Article 38.1(i)).		Case pending Case led by Russian Federation.

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
CAN		Master conducted a directed tow for 3N PLA (under moratorium), contrary to Article 6.6(a) of the NCEMs	Case Closed.  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 this infringement did not meet the threshold to proceed to prosecution. As result of this finding, the case has now been closed by CAN authorities.

### 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 (2019-2023) 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 April 2023). 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
2019	7	7	0	100%
2020	5	4	1	80%
2021	12	7	5	58%
2022	16	8	8	50%
2023	10	5	5	50%

*\*still under investigation, litigation or appeal*

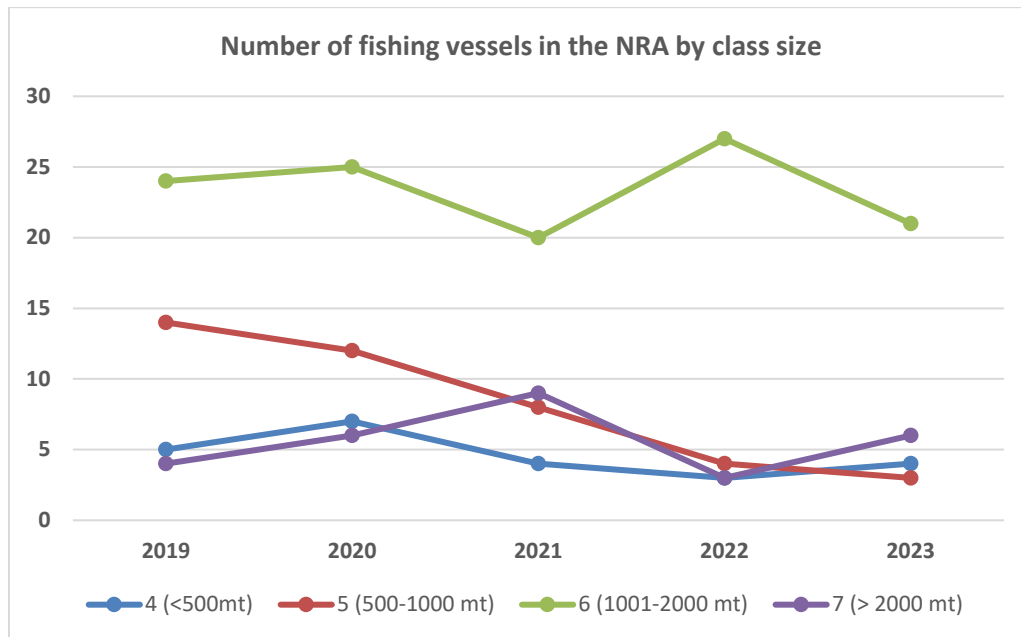
### 5.0 Trends and Analysis

Five-year trends (2019-2023) 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
2019	321	56	4297	0	<b>4674</b>
2020	250	127	4224	21	<b>4622</b>
2021	169	0	4247	479	<b>4895</b>
2022	180	7	3709	0	<b>3896</b>
2023	165	0	3365	0	<b>3530</b>

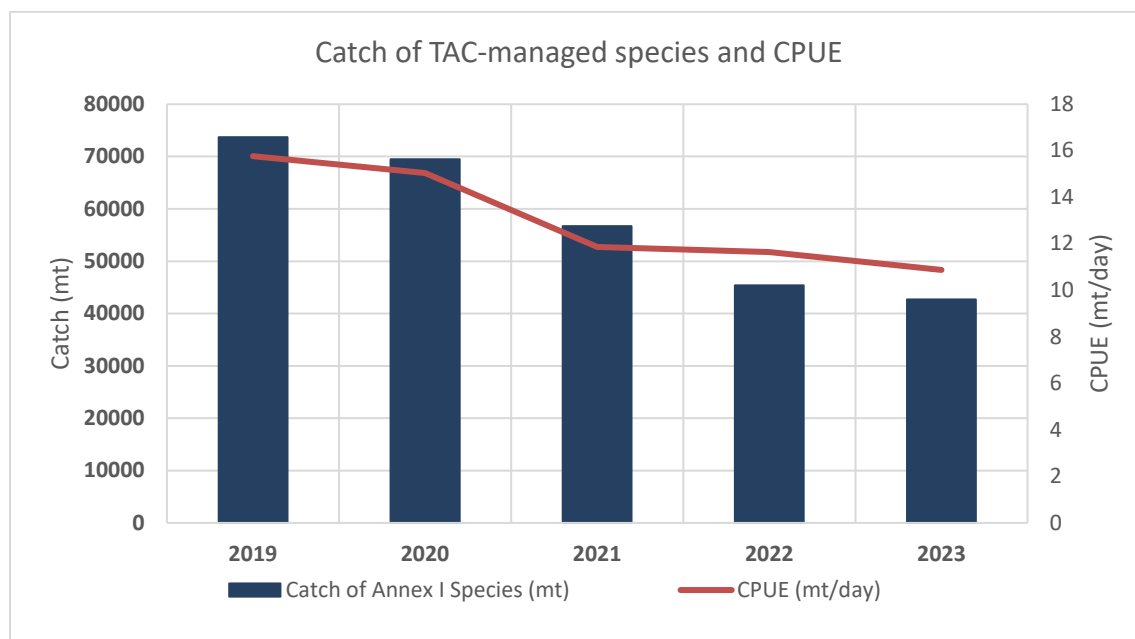


**Figure 5.1.1** *Number of fishing vessels that completed trips in the NRA in Divisions 3LMNO by class size, 2019-2023. The class sizes are based on the STATLANT classification.*





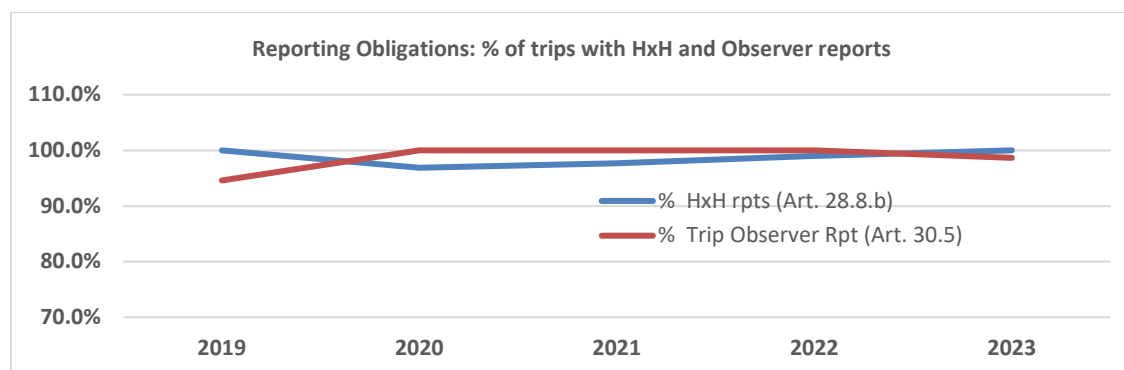
**Figure 5.1.2** Catches (in tonnes) by Division of selected species managed by TAC, 2019-2023 (Source: CATs).



**Figure 5.1.3** Catch of TAC-managed species and CPUE in 2019 -2023, expressed in total catch of TAC-managed species per fishing day. Data Source: CAT reports.

## 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 2019-2023. In 2023, 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 100% and 99% respectively.



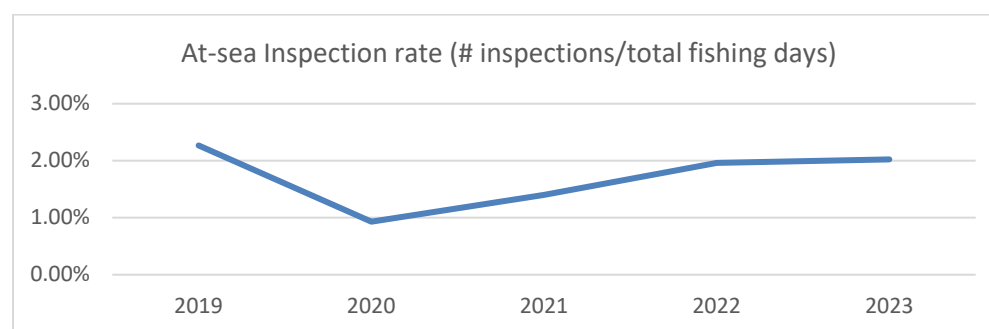
**Figure 5.2** *Percent coverage of observer trip reports for fishing vessels (operating under Article 30.5), and logbook (haul by haul) reports (Article 28.8(c)), 2019-2023.*

## 5.3 Compliance by Fishing vessels

In the 5-year review period of 2019-2023, 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 2019-2023 are presented in Figure 5.4.1. The inspection rate continues to increase from its lowest level in 2020, from 0.9% to 2.02% in 2023.



**Figure 5.4.1** *Inspection rates (number of at-sea inspections/fishing days) in the NAFO Regulatory Area, 2019-2023.*

Figure 5.4.2 outlines the frequency a type of infringements detected by at-sea inspectors and port authorities from 2019-2023.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
By-catch requirements		•	•••	••••••••	•
Catch communication violations			•	•	•
Directed fishing of moratorium stock				••	•
Evidence tampering		•	••	•	•
Gear requirements - mesh size, illegal attachments		•	•		
Greenland halibut control measures (Art. 10.4.d)		•			
Inspection protocol (interference)		••		••	•
Observer protocol		•	••		
Others quota notification					•
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 2019-2023. Black and blue dots represent infringement issued at-sea and at port, respectively.*

## 6.0 Conclusions

During 2023, the primary NAFO fisheries consisted of demersal trawls and longlines for groundfish. The total catches decreased approximately 4,000 tonnes from approximately 50,000 tonnes in 2022 to approximately 54,000 tonnes in 2023. The at-sea inspection rate increased in 2023, following a decline in inspections resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. However inspection levels are still below pre-pandemic levels. In 2023, Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America participated in the At-Sea Inspection and Surveillance Scheme, deploying inspection vessels in the NRA, along with exchanges of inspectors to other Contracting Party's vessels.

Contracting Parties are committed to supporting and ensuring compliance with the NAFO Observer Program. One Contracting Party invoked Article 30.4 NAFO CEM derogation allowing a coverage of no less than 25% but the coverage did not reach 25% as an observer had to be removed from one of the trips due to illness.

A Contracting Party set a unilateral quota for pelagic redfish REB (1F\_2\_3K). There were fishing activities on this stock in 2022, but there was no directed fishing activity in 2023 in the NAFO Regulatory Area. Some Contracting Parties considered it necessary to determine whether the Objection Procedure to the TAC had been met.

Timely receipt of the daily catch reports (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 2023 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 the Observer Working group continue to explore and develop standards for remote electronic monitoring and equivalent sensor technologies, with a view to incorporate these tools into the NAFO CEM, as well as advancing work on processes and procedures to further the implementation in NAFO, including re-alignment of the Rules of Confidentiality with NAFO's evolving needs.
- STACTIC recommends that, provided that the Contracting Parties agree on carrying out the flag State performance evaluation, and that the Parties submit their reports on or before the agreed deadline.
- STACTIC highlights that all Contracting Parties need to comply with the NAFO Observer Program requirements, and that the level of observer coverage specified in the NAFO CEM is maintained on an annual basis and for Contracting Parties to provide information for the use of derogations pursuant to Article 30.4.
- 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 Contracting Parties continue to support the NAFO Secretariat on the development and implementation of the NAFO Observer Application and ePSC system.
- STACTIC encourages Contracting Parties to continue to maintain and support inspection presence in the NAFO Regulatory Area and promote inspector exchanges on at-sea deployments and in port, as well as the use of technologies for control such as Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems.
- STACTIC recommends that Contracting Parties focus monitoring and control efforts on derogations related to directed fisheries and bycatch rules in 2025.
- STACTIC recommends Contracting Parties continue to find consensus and apply consistent methodologies for the verification of compliance with NAFO CEM provisions on catch recording and reporting in particular.
- 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, take sufficiently deterrent judicial or administrative actions.
- STACTIC recommends that the understanding and application 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.
- STACTIC recommends that Contracting Parties allocate sufficient resources to ensure compliance with the NAFO CEM port inspection benchmarks.

## **Annex 26. NAFO IUU List Update**

[STACTIC WP 24-09 (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 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO.
- **Table 1B** NAFO Provisional IUU List – All IUU listed IUU vessels de-listed by other RFMOs since the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO.

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 Vessel List**

The NAFO IUU list was last reviewed by STACTIC at the Annual Meeting, September 2023 (STACTIC WP 23-10 (Revised)). 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 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO.

- **Table 2** NAFO IUU Vessel List

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 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO.

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-5477	AVE MARIA		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unknown	EL SHADAI		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	Added to the IOTC IUU list in May 2023 and was inadvertently not included in the NAFO IUU list crosslisting exercise
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-8696	GODS GIFT		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IMUL-A- 1053TLE	HAMBANTOTA EXPRESS		Sri Lanka		4SF5385	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IMUL-A-0867- KLT	IMULA0867KLT & SAMPATH		Sri Lanka		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IMUL-A-2159- CHW	IMULA2159CHW & SANJANA PUTHA		Sri Lanka		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Registry No. 12-0001812	Kuda Laut 03		Philippines		DUM4015		Dec-23	WCPFC	Added to the WCPFC IUU list for 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-5344	MANJU MATHA		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-4683	MANJUMATHA		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-6756	MARIYAL		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-5383	MOTHER OF JESUS		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-8001	SEA ANGEL 2		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-7154	ST ANNES		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-8997	ST ANTONY		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024
Unique vessel ID: IND-TN-15- MM-3793	ST MARYS		India		Unknown	Not Known	May 2024	IOTC	Added to IOTC IUU list in May 2024

**Table1B. NAFO Provisional IUU List** – All IUU listed IUU vessels de-listed by other RFMOs since the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO.

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
4000354	HALELUYA		Unknown		5IM615		2021-02-17	ICCAT	Removed from the ICCAT IUU list November 2023
8529533	HALIFAX		Namibia	Senegal	6WMR		2021-02-17	ICCAT	Removed from the ICCAT IUU list November 2023

**Table 2. NAFO IUU Vessel List** – In accordance with Article 53.1(b), the NAFO IUU Vessel List was adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO. Updates, such as vessel name changes, from other RFMOs have been incorporated.

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		14-Aug-20	SIOFA	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 1	YI HONG 06	Unknown		CPA 226		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 12	YI HONG 106	Unknown		CPA 202		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 3	YI HONG 16	Unknown		CPA 201		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 6	YI HONG 86	Unknown		CPA 221		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	ABUNDANT 9	YI HONG 116	Unknown		CPA 222		May 2017	IOTC	
20060010	ACROS NO. 2		Unknown	Honduras	Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
20060009	ACROS NO. 3		Unknown	Honduras	Unknown		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	AKASH		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
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		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	ANEKA 228; KM.		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	ANNAI VELAMKANNI		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
7236634	Antony	Urgora/Atlantic Oji Maru No.33/ Oji Maru No. 33	Unknown	Venezuela/ Honduras/ Panama/ Belize/ Indonesia	PQMG		2016	CCAMLR	
Unknown	ARPUTHA MATHA		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
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 1/ Liberty/ Chilbo San 33/ Hammer/ Seo Yang No. 88/ Carran	Unknown		5IM813		2004	CCAMLR/IOTC (2015)	
Unknown	AVEMARIYA		India		Unknown		May 2022	IOTC	
9037537	Baroon	Lana/ Zeus/ Triton I	Unknown	Nigeria/ Mongolia/ Togo/ Sierra Leone	5IM376		2007-11-02	CCAMLR	
Unknown	BENEDICTA		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
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		HO5381		2006	CCAMLR	
Unknown	CHI TONG		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	CHOTCHAINAVEE 35		Unknown		Unknown		June 2019	IOTC	
7330399	Cobija	Cape Flower/Cape Wrath II	Unknown	Bolivia, Sao Tome, South Africa, Canada	CPB3000		2017	SEAFO / IOTC (2019) / CCAMLR (2023)	
Unknown	DANIAA		Unknown		3X07QMC		2008-11-14	ICCAT	
Unknown	Dragon III		Unknown	Cambodia	Unknown			IATTC	
Unknown	EASRON		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
8025082	El Shaddai	Banzare	South Africa		ZR6358		08-Jul-20	SIOFA/ CCAMLR (2021)	
Unknown	EMMANUEL		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	

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IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
7302548	Freedom 7	ZHI MING, No 101 Gloria	Cameroon		JVAW7		2006-10-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA 18		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 01		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 02		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 06		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 08		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 09		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 11		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 13		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 17		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 20		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 21		Unknown		OTS 024 or OTS 089		May 2013	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		June 2014	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		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 26		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	FU HSIANG FA NO. 30		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
7355662	FU LIEN NO 1		Unknown	Georgia	Unknown	4LIN2	2010-12-10	WCPFC	
Unknown	Full Rich		Unknown	Belize	HMEK3		May 2013	IOTC	
Unknown	GALA I	Manara II/ Roagan	Unknown	Libya	Unknown		2008-06-27	ICCAT	
Unknown	GIFT OF GOD		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
Unknown	Goidau Ruey No. 1	Goidau Ruey 1	Unknown	Panama	HO-2508		2009-06-06	IATTC	
7020126	GOOD HOPE	Toto	Nigeria		5NMU		2007	CCAMLR	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
6719419	Gorilero	Gran Sol	Unknown	Sierra Leone, Panama	Unknown		La Coruna, Spain (September 2007)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	GUNUAR MELYN 21		Unknown		Unknown		June 2008	IOTC	
Unknown	Hai Da 705		Unknown		Not Known	Not Known	2017-08-29	NPFC	
8214645	HAN	SHUN HANG, VILA MOOSUN	Unknown	Panama, Tuvalu	V4BK5	H3DE	26-Jul-23	NPFC	
8524492	HE LI 1 HAO	Sinar Abadi 69	Unknown	Panaman, Indonesia	Unknown	HP7651	May 2023	IOTC	
7322926	Heavy Sea	Duero/ Julius/ Keta/ Sherpa Uno	Unknown		3ENF8		2004	CCAMLR	
Unknown	HOOM XIANG 101		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	HOOM XIANG 103		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	HOOM XIANG 105		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	Hoom Xiang II		Unknown	Malaysia	Unknown		March 2010	IOTC	
7332218	Iannis 1		Unknown	Panama	H03374		Indian Ocean (2007)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	IMULA 0730 KLT/LAKPRIYA 14		Sri Lanka		4SF4482		June 2021	IOTC	
Unknown	IMULA 0846 KLT/GOD BLESS		Sri Lanka		Unknown		June 2021	IOTC	
Unknown	IMUL-A-1028-TLE/DEWLI FISHING KUDAWELLA		Sri Lanka		Unknown		June 2021	IOTC	
Unknown	IND-TN-15-MM8297/ARARAT/RESH MITHA		India		Unknown		June 2021	IOTC	
8004076	ISRAR 1		Unknow/Unclassified	Oman	A4BB5		2021-11-23	ICCAT	
8568694	ISRAR 2		Unknow/Unclassified	Oman	A4BA3		2021-11-23	ICCAT	

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IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
8568682	ISRAR 3		Unknow/Unclassified	Oman	A4BA5		2021-11-23	ICCAT	
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	
7929176	KIKI		Gambia		6WMP		2022-09-05	ICCAT	
Unknown	KIM SENG DENG 3		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
7905443	Koosha 4		Iran, Islamic Republic of		9BQK		2011	CCAMLR	
Unknown	KUANG HSING 127		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	KUANG HSING 196		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	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	LITTLESHA		India		Unknown		May 2022	IOTC	
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	

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 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	
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	
9038402	Lucas		Unknown		C5J128		2022-05-28	ICCAT	
Unknown	MAAN YIH HSING		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	MADURA 2		Unknown		Unknown		2004-11-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	MADURA 3		Unknown		Unknown		2004-11-16	ICCAT	
Unknown	MANGALA		Sri Lanka		Unknown		May 2022	IOTC	
Unknown	MARIA		Unknown		FN 003882		2006-10-23	ICCAT	
Unknown	Marwan 1	AL WESAM <sup>4</sup> , CHAICHANACHOKE 8	Somalia	DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSN5721	May 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	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	Neptune		Unknown	Georgia	Unknown	4LOG	2010-12-10	WCPFC/IATTC	
Unknown	NEW BAI I NO. 168		Unknown		YGMY		2016-11-19	ICCAT	
8808654	Nika		Unknown	Panama	HP6686		2020	CCAMLR	
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	NOVA		India		Unknown		May 2022	IOTC	
Unknown	OCEAN DIAMOND		Unknown		Unknown		2004-11-16	ICCAT	
8665193	OCEAN STAR No2		Unknown		YJRU6		2021-02-17	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	ICCAT	
5062479	Perlon	Cherne/ Bigaro/ Hoking/ Sargo/ Lugalpesca	Unknown		5NTV21		2003	CCAMLR	
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	Al WESAM 5, CHAINAVEE 54	Unknown	Cameroon, DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSN5447	May 2018	IOTC	
8819691	QIAN YUAN		Panama		H3YK	5VEZ8	26-Jul-23	NPFC	
Unknown	Reymar 6		Unknown	Belize	Unknown			IATTC	
9017666	RIWA	GLORIWAVE	Togo	Palau, Sierra Leone	5VIR8	T8A4017	26-Jul-23	NPFC	
7825215	Sage	Chia Hao No. 66 / Chi Fuw No. 6	Unknown	Gambia, Belize	C5J82	V3IN2		IATTC	
Unknown	SAMUDERA PASIFIK NO. 18		IDN		YGGY		2013-11-25	ICCAT	
Unknown	SAMUDERA PERKASA 11		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	SAMUDERA PERKASA 12		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
7424891	Sea Urchin	Aldabra/ Omoa I	Unknown		5IM207		2007-01-01	CCAMLR	
8692342	Sea View	AL WESAM 2, CHAINAVEE 55	Unknown	Cameroon, DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSB3852	May 2018	IOTC	
8692354	Sea Wind	AL WESAM 1, SUPPHERMNAVEE 21	Unknown	Cameroon, DJIBOUTI, THAILAND	Unknown	HSN5282	May 2018	IOTC	
Unknown	SHARJI AMMA		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
Unknown	SHARON 1		Unknown		Unknown		2008-06-27	ICCAT	
Unknown	SHENG JI QUN 3		Unknown		CPA 311		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	SHUEN SIANG		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SHUN LAI	HSIN JYI WANG NO. 6	Unknown		CPA 514		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 6		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 67		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 8		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	SIN SHUN FA 9		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	SOUTHERN STAR 136		Unknown		Unknown		2005-03-08	ICCAT	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 168		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 18		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 188		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 189		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 286		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 67		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	SRI FU FA 888		Unknown		Unknown		June 2014	IOTC	
Unknown	STAR OF THE SEA		India		Unknown		May 2023	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		May 2015	IOTC	

Report of the Commission,  
23–27 September 2024

IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
7321374	Trinity	Enxembre, Yucutan Basin, Fontenova, Jawhara	Unknown	Ghana, Panama	Unknown		Tema, Ghana (Sep 2011)	NEAFC/NAFO	
Unknown	Unknown (This vessel indicated its name as “Zhou Yu 808 (舟漁 808)” when sighted)		Unknown - raised flag of China		Not Known	Not Known	2018	NPFC	
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	
Unknown	Unknown (vessel displaying the name LU RONG YUAN YU 197 鲁荣远渔 197)		Unknown		Unknown		2020	NPFC	
Unknown	Unknown (vessel displaying the name LU RONG YUAN YU 582 鲁荣远渔 582)		Unknown		Unknown		2020	NPFC	
Unknown	Unknown (vessel displaying the name LU RONGYUAN YU 581 鲁荣远渔 581)		Unknown		Unknown		2020	NPFC	
8907888	WAN TONG	ZHONG FU HAO 111, HUMBOLDY BAY	Unknown	Panama, Liberia	TJM0159	H04706	26-Jul-23	NPFC	
8994295	Wen Teng No. 688		Unknown	Belize	V3TK4		2005-12-26	IATTC	
7826233	XING HAI FENG	OCEAN LION	Unknown	Panama, Equatorial Guinea	3FHW5		June 2005	IOTC	
Unknown	YAHOVA NICY		India		Unknown		May 2023	IOTC	
Unknown	YI HONG 3		Unknown		Unknown		May 2015	IOTC	
Unknown	YONA		India		Unknown		May 2022	IOTC	



IMO Number	Name	Previous Name(s)	Flag	Previous Flag(s)	IRCS	Previous IRCS	Original Date listed	Originating RFMO	Additional Information
Unknown	YU FONG 168		Unknown	Chinese Taipei	BJ4786		2009-12-11	WCPFC / IOTC (2015)	
Unknown	YU MAAN WON		Unknown	Georgia	Unknown		May 2007	IOTC	
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		May 2017	IOTC	
Unknown	YUTUNA NO. 1		Unknown		CPA 302		May 2017	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 27. To introduce electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)**  
[STACTIC WP 24-18 (Rev. 2) now COM Doc. 24-22]

**Preamble**

This proposal calls for introducing the UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX) as the format for electronic communication between the Contracting Parties’ FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat.

**Background**

At STACTIC 1 2024 under agenda item 20.a. Introducing Electronic Reporting System (ERS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) in NAFO, 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.

To introduce UN/FLUX as the communication format in NAFO as mentioned, it will require that STACTIC identifies which technical developments are needed at the NAFO Secretariat (both the ability to receive, handle, and reply to data obtained and the ability to present the received data to Contracting Parties for conservation and enforcement purposes) and to establish testing regimes as appropriate (please refer to point 2 in the attachment). This work should also include assessing the administrative and economic consequences for the involved parties if such a communication format is to be established.

Further, STACTIC will need to identify necessary amendments to the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement (CEM) to establish requirements to use UN/FLUX as the format for electronic communication between the Contracting Parties FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat.

The FLUX standard is envisaged to be used for all data exchanged between the FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat. However, the UN/FLUX should be introduced stepwise, focusing first on vessel position reports (Vessel Monitoring Systems – CEM article 29) and fishing activities data (Monitoring of Catch – CEM article 28).

The introduction of the UN/FLUX in NAFO envisages phasing out the paper fishing logbook, by introducing a requirement to use electronic fishing logbooks on board fishing vessels to provide data currently outlined in CEM article 28.2, 28.6 and 28.8. STACTIC may consider additional reporting requirements to be covered by the electronic fishing logbook as appropriate.

STACTIC should take into consideration the decisions taken by the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) to introduce the UN/FLUX standard for electronic communication of vessel position reports and fishing activity data between the Contracting Parties FMCs and the NEAFC Secretariat to ensure harmonization of the reporting requirements in NAFO and NEAFC as appropriate (please refer to point 1 in the attachment).

**Proposal**

STACTIC should seek a mandate from the NAFO Commission to assess the necessary preparations to introduce electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange”:

*The NAFO Commission agreed to request STACTIC to assess all necessary changes and technical preparations needed to consider the introduction of the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX) for the VMS and ERS domains, giving priority to the VMS domain. STACTIC is requested to carry out any necessary consultations with other NAFO bodies and the NAFO Executive Secretariat and present its conclusions to the NAFO Commission at the 2025 Annual Meeting.*

## Attachment

**1. The process in NEAFC**

NEAFC is in the process of introducing the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX) as the format for electronic communication between the Contracting Parties’ FMCs and the NEAFC Secretariat.

The introduction of the UN/FLUX standard in NEAFC will be done stepwise, starting with vessel position data and fishing activity data before 15 January 2026.

To introduce the UN/FLUX standard for electronic communication of vessel position reports and fishing activity data NEAFC has adopted recommendations and the necessary amendments to the NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement, and established test scenarios and a master data register for relevant documents and code lists. See in particular:

- [Recommendation 16:2018](#)
- [Recommendation 19:2019](#)
- [NEW NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement](#)
  - Articles 1, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 14
  - Annex IV. A. (provides an overview of the different data elements required in a specific report)
  - Annex IX. A)-C) (reference to the specific Implementation Documents)
- [NEAFC Master Data Register \(MDR\)](#)
  - NEAFC FLUX Vessel Position Implementation Document v1.0.1
  - NEAFC FLUX Fishing Activity Implementation Document v1.1.2 (currently implemented by the EU) and v2.0
  - On the MDR website (link above) test scenarios and code lists can be found

**2. About the UN/FLUX standard**

A detailed introduction and overview of the UN/FLUX standard can be found on the UNECEs website

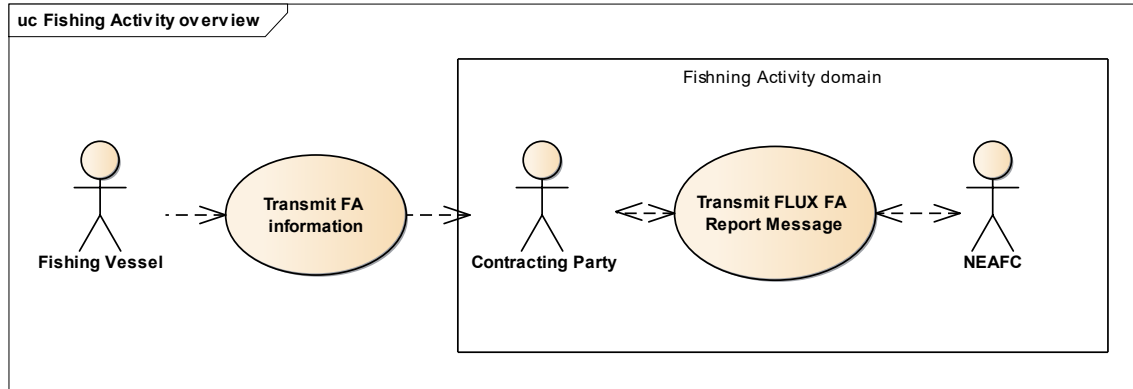
<sup>1</sup>. As stated there, the purpose of the UN/FLUX standard is to address “[...] the timely acquisition of information on vessels, stocks and catches as well as the exchange of such information between stakeholders” to ensure an effective management of fish resources.

As mentioned before, the scope of the proposal is limited to the exchange between a Contracting Party’s FMC and the NAFO Secretariat. How information is exchanged between the vessel and the FMC is considered out of the scope of this proposal (Figure 1 – Fishing Activity overview).

However, to fulfill the purpose of the exchange it is also necessary to describe expectations on the exchanges between the master of the fishing vessel and the flag state authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://unece.org/trade/uncefact/unflux>



**Figure 1.** Fishing Activity overview diagram.

**The UN/FLUX standard** provides a global standard for the exchange of fisheries business data and is divided in several business domains. Each domain has its own set of business messages defined, for example vessel position data, fishing activity data, notifications, and authorizations etc.

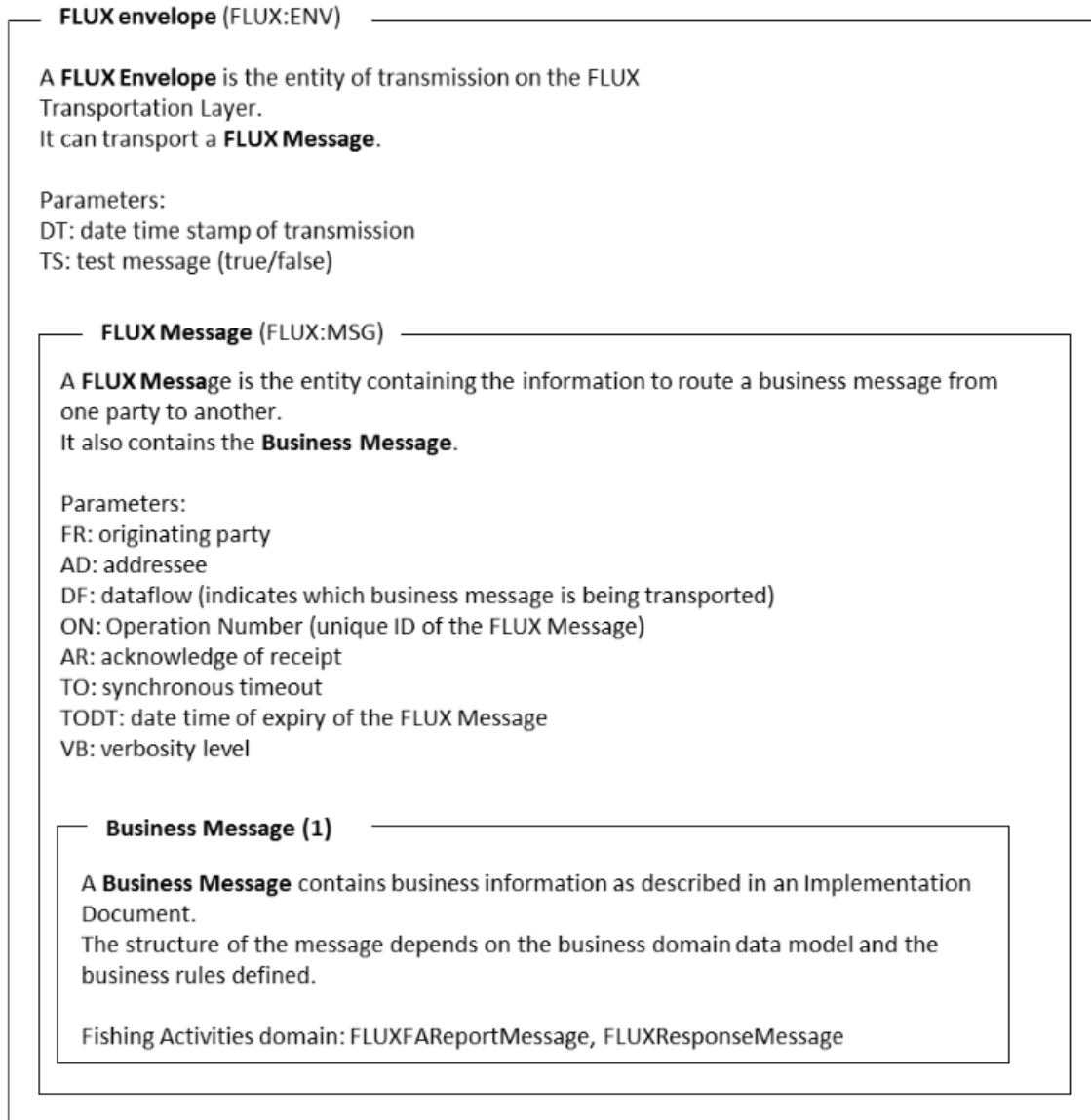
Business messages are transported over the FLUX Transportation Layer. The transportation layer is a business-independent network to exchange data. This means that the transportation layer is general and can be used to exchange all types of business data. In Figure 2 below this is described as a FLUX Message, containing a business message.

For the fishing activities domain, a business **Message** (FLUX FA Report Message) contains one or more **Reports** (FA Report Document). Each Message transmitted has a unique ID. A Message cannot be corrected, nor cancelled.

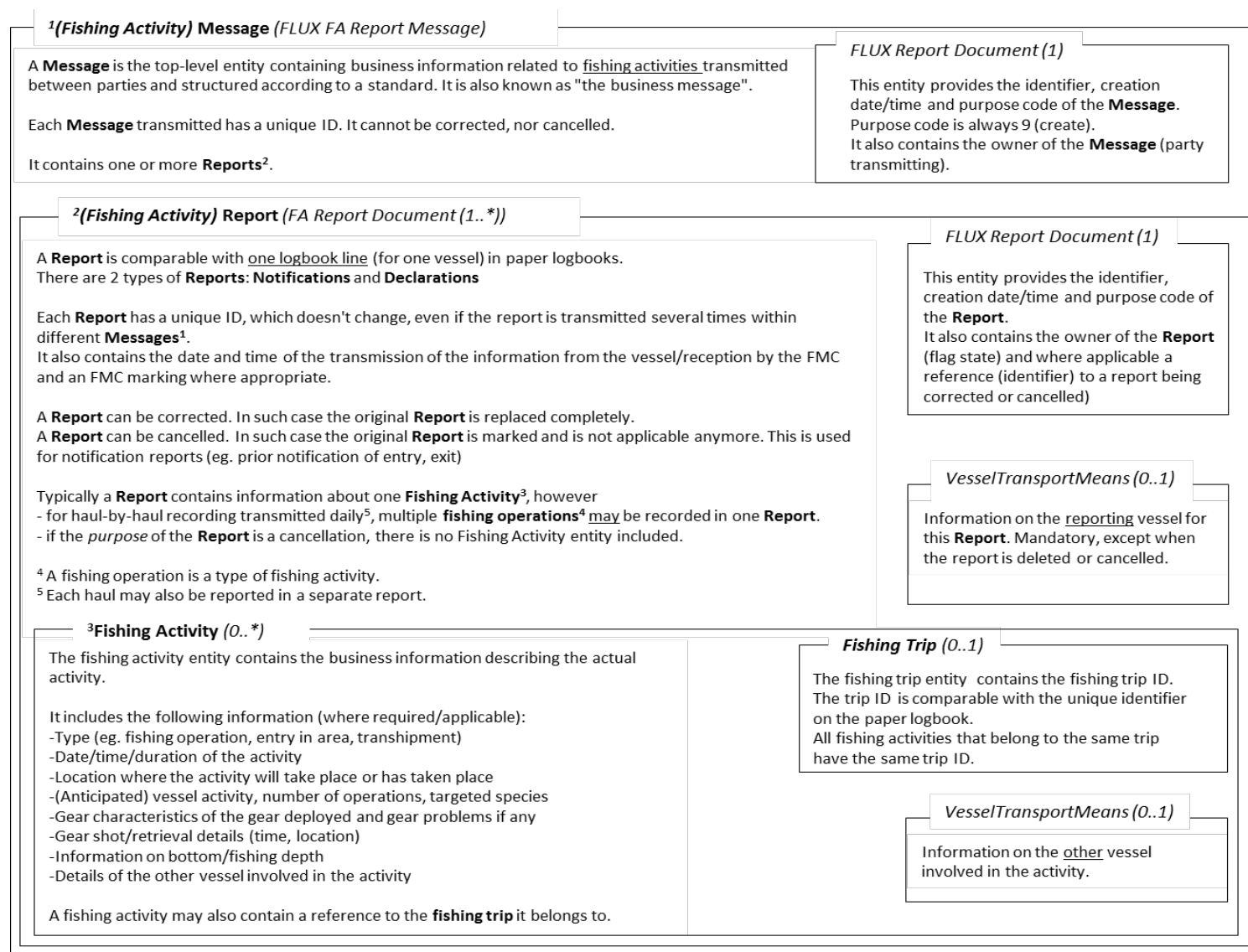
A **Report** would usually contain information about one Fishing Activity. Examples of Reports are a prior notification of entry report (currently COE report), declaration of fishing operations report (currently CAT report), transshipment notification or declaration report (currently TRA report), prior notification of exit report (currently COX report) and port of landing notification report (currently POR report). Declaration means a report of a fishing activity that is taking or has taken place at the time of its recording and transmission. Notification means a report on the intention to perform an activity in the future.

Each **Report** is given a unique ID, which doesn't change, even if the report is transmitted several times within different **Messages**. The **Report** also contains the date and time of the transmission of the information from the vessel and the reception by the FMC. A Report can be corrected. In such case the original Report is replaced completely. A **Report** can be cancelled. In such case, the original Report is marked as cancelled in the system and is not applicable anymore. This is used for notification reports (e.g. prior notification of entry, exit).

The diagram in figure 3 illustrates how fishing activity business information is reported as part of **Reports** and how these reports are grouped into a **Message** for transmission.



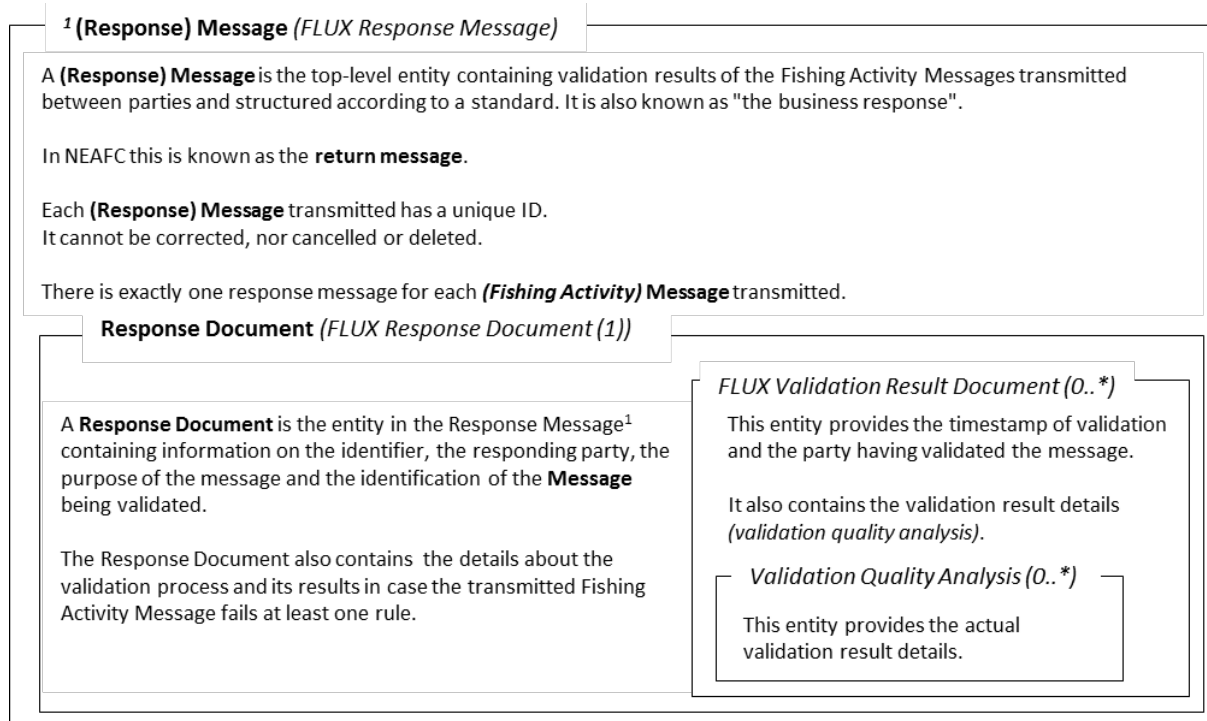
**Figure 2.** Diagram showing how a business message is exchanged in FLUX Message



**Figure 3.** Diagram showing contents of a FLUX FA Report Message

After receiving a Fishing Activity **Message** and validating the Fishing Activity **Reports** it contains, the receiver of the Reports (NAFO Secretariat) informs the Contracting Party of the status of the **Reports**. This status is communicated in a **Response Message**.

The diagram in Figure 4 illustrates how a response message is structured. It contains the information of a return message.



**Figure 4.** Diagram showing contents of a FLUX Response Message

A **Response Message (FLUX Response Message)** is used in the UNFLUX standard to report validation results about Fishing Activity Messages (FLUX FA Report Message). It contains all problems detected during the validation process. There is one FLUX Response Message for each FLUX FA Report Message. All reports in the message are either accepted or none of the reports are accepted.

**Annex 28. Contracting Party's Self-Assessments of Flag State Performance**

[STACTIC WP 24-28 (Revised) now COM Doc. 24-23]

NAFO Commission mandate for STACTIC to coordinate the CP's self-assessments of flag State performance:

The NAFO Commission agreed that all NAFO Contracting Parties shall carry out self-assessments of flag State performance. NAFO Contracting Parties shall submit their self-assessment reports to the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting at the latest. The reports shall cover all the criteria set out in the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance, focus on the current NAFO framework and identify room for improvement of the NAFO CEM. STACTIC is requested to prepare a summary report to be presented to the NAFO Commission at its 2026 Annual Meeting.



**Annex 29. Re-convene the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity for the purpose of considering the current definition of directed fishery and associated bycatch provisions**  
[COM WP 24-12 (Revised) now COM Doc. 24-19]

The concept and definition of directed fishery in the NAFO context is central to the management of all regulated stocks. As such, it is at the heart of the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEMs), with the deliberate intent of strictly controlling bycatch, in particular of moratoria species. Given evolutions in both NAFO fisheries and CEMs over the past two decades, a re-assessment of this central theme, with the view to evaluating its alignment with the current needs of the organization and modern fisheries management practices, is warranted.

Noting that at the Annual Meeting in 2022, the Commission decided to maintain the option to reconvene the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) if Contracting Parties determined it to be necessary, it is recommended this ad hoc working group be reconvened for this purpose.

The ad hoc working group will consider NAFO's current measures relating to directed fisheries and mitigating bycatch of moratoria species; consider updates or alternate approaches; consider recent specific bycatch, move-along, and directed fishing measures relating to 3LNO Yellowtail flounder, 3M cod, and 3+4 squid; in order to develop recommendations to clarify and/or update the definition of directed fishing and/or associated by-catch measures for consideration by the Commission at its 2025 Annual Meeting. The working group will continue to take into account the work already done or ongoing by NAFO on these matters, especially in STACTIC.

These discussions would benefit from a broad range of management, enforcement and science expertise. Contracting Parties are strongly encouraged to include managers, scientists, compliance experts, and industry advisers in their delegations.

Invitations to participate will be extended to the chair of the Scientific Council and the chair of STACTIC. The chair of the Commission will serve as the Chair of BDS. Recognizing workload concerns, the ad-hoc working group could meet in conjunction with other meetings.

To enable effective and productive discussions, CPs are encouraged to submit working papers 30 days in advance of the meeting date.

### **Annex 30. Extension of Timeline for Yellowtail flounder Measures (NAFO CEM Article 6)**

[COM WP 24-14 now COM Doc. 24-12]

#### **Background**

At the 45th Annual Meeting of NAFO in 2023, the Commission adopted a measure related to bycatch of American Plaice in the 3LNO Yellowtail flounder fishery. This measure was meant to be reviewed by STACTIC in 2024 to “assess if the provisions in paragraphs 6.3(g) and 8 bis led to an increase on American plaice bycatches or directed fishery on American plaice”.

Canada notes the very limited level of fishing activity for 3LNO Yellowtail flounder over the past year. Therefore, it is Canada’s view that the measure should be rolled over for one year, and that the review should be instead undertaken in 2025, if and when there is more data to be considered. To affect this change, minor amendments are proposed.

#### **Amendments (noted in red)**

#### **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:

(...)

(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, **2025**, if a vessel is conducting a directed fishery for yellowtail in Divisions 3LNO, and 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 bycatch of American plaice retained on board during the first 9 fishing days in the Regulatory Area provided that American plaice bycatch 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.

##### ***Exceeding Bycatch Limits in Any One Haul***

- 8 bis. Until December 31, **2025**, 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.
- 8 ter. Until December 31, **2025**, 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 tows 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).

***Implementation***

11. In **2025**, STACTIC shall:

- (a) assess if the provisions in paragraphs 6.3(g) and 8 bis led to an increase on American plaice bycatches or directed fishery on American plaice; and
- (b) review paragraphs 6.3(g) and 8 bis.

**~~12. — 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 31. Control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish**

[COM WP 24-22 now COM Doc. 24-15]

#### **Background**

ICES advice for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters is for zero catch over more than a decade. Maintaining fishing activities on the stock in these circumstances jeopardizes its long-term sustainability.

In order to prevent adverse effects on the sustainability of shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in the Irminger Sea deriving from the continuation of high-level targeted fishing activities on these stocks (REB 1F\_2\_3K) when NAFO has established a zero TAC in Subarea 2 and Divisions 1F+3K, the Contracting Parties should not contribute the unsustainable high-level targeted fishing activities by providing port, transshipment or support services.

#### **Proposal**

Amend Article 5 of the NAFO Control and Enforcement Measures as follows:

- **New paragraph 5(k):**

*5. Each Contracting Party shall:*

***(k) as appropriate, deny the landing or transshipment, including at sea, of catches of shallow or deep pelagic beaked redfish, or other port services to vessels with catches of shallow or deep pelagic beaked redfish onboard that have been taken in a directed fishery in Subarea 2 and Divisions 1F + 3K when the TAC in these areas is set at zero in Annex I.A, except in the case of force majeure, distress, for the purposes of inspection, or for taking appropriate enforcement action.***

- **New paragraph 16:**

**Implementation**

**16. STACTIC will revise paragraph 5(k) in 2027.**



## Press Release

### NAFO HOLDS 46<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING IN HALIFAX AND MAKES ANNUAL TAC DECISIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HALIFAX, CANADA, 27 September 2024**—The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) held its 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Halifax, Canada. NAFO's Contracting Parties continued to collaborate to advance the Organization's stewardship of the fisheries of the Northwest Atlantic, including implementing a groundbreaking revised precautionary approach framework. The NAFO delegates were welcomed to Halifax at the start of the meeting, 23 September, by the Chair of the Commission, Deirdre Warner-Kramer, and Deputy Mayor for the Halifax Regional Municipality, Cathy Deagle Gammon.

"NAFO remains a leader in ensuring the sustainable management of both the fisheries and the broader ecosystem in the Regulatory Area. NAFO Contracting Parties continue to work in a spirit of collaboration and consensus to manage these vital resources," remarked NAFO President, Deirdre Warner-Kramer.

During the meeting, NAFO furthered its progress on its precautionary approach to fisheries management, adopting a comprehensive revision to its Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF). This PAF underwent comprehensive simulation testing by the NAFO Scientific Council. It will be applied to NAFO's fisheries management decision-making, setting a clear structure to ensure the long-term sustainability of NAFO resources grounded in strong science.

NAFO agreed to a revised management strategy for Greenland halibut in Subarea 2+Divisions 3KLMNO. This management strategy shall be in force from 2025 to 2034 inclusive, or until such a time that the Commission adopts a revision.

Following Canada's reopening of the fishery for Northern cod in Divisions 2J3KL for the first time in over 30 years, NAFO also reopened the fishery in the Regulatory Area and adopted strong measures to support the sustainable management and growth of the stock. These included a seasonal closure for directed fishing, gear requirements, and an increased minimum fish size.

NAFO adopted additional control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish.

NAFO agreed to initiate a new process for the next performance review of the Organization, beginning in 2025. The last performance review of NAFO took place in 2018, with all recommendations having since been addressed.

NAFO furthermore agreed to assess all necessary changes and technical preparations needed to consider the introduction of the international standard UN/CEFACT "Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange" (FLUX).

Additionally, NAFO agreed to continue work on addressing the impacts of climate change on NAFO managed stocks, non-target species, and associated ecosystems in the Convention Area.

The 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will take place 15-19 September 2025, in Halifax, Canada.

The total allowable catches and quotas for 2025 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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E-mail: [dbell@nafo.int](mailto:dbell@nafo.int)

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**Annex 33. Summary of Decisions and Actions of the Commission  
from the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO**

<b>ANNEX #</b>	<b>NAFO WORKING PAPER #</b>	<b>DOCUMENT TITLE</b>	<b>NAFO DOCUMENT #</b>
1		Opening Statement from the NAFO President and the Chair of the Commission	
2		Participant List	
3		Opening Statement by the Delegation of Canada	
4		Opening Statement by the Delegation of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)	
5		Opening Statement by the Delegation of the European Union	
6		Opening Statement by the Delegation of Japan	
7		Opening Statement by the Delegation of the United Kingdom	
8		Opening Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America	
9		Agenda	
10	COM WP 24-21	Initiation of a Performance Review of NAFO	COM Doc. 24-20
11	COM-SC RBMS-WP 24-01 (Revised)	REVISED Terms of Reference – NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS)	COM-SC Doc. 24-05
12	COM-SC EAFFM-WP 24-08 (Rev. 2)	REVISED Terms of Reference – NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM)	COM-SC Doc. 24-04
13	COM WP 24-11 (Rev. 3)	The Commission's Request for Scientific Advice on Management in 2026 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters	COM Doc. 24-18
14	COM WP 24-08 (Rev. 7)	NAFO Quota Table 2025 – NAFO CEM Annex I.A and I.B including a summary of the Scientific Council advice on NAFO fish stocks and the management measures decided by the Commission	COM Doc. 24-11
15	COM WP 24-17	Review of NAFO CEM Article 5.5(j)	COM Doc. 24-14
16	COM WP 24-23	Changes to the NAFO CEM resulting from the revised Management Strategy for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut	COM Doc. 24-16
17	COM WP 24-16	Review of NAFO CEM Article 7.12	COM Doc. 24-13
18	COM WP 24-18 (Rev. 4)	Re-opening of the fishery for Cod in Divisions 2J3KL in the Regulatory Area	COM Doc. 24-17
19	STACTIC WP 24-12 (Revised)	Publication of the NAFO register of fishing vessels and authorizations	COM Doc. 24-05
20	STACTIC WP 24-13 (Revised)	Surveillance procedures	COM Doc. 24-06
21	STACTIC WP 24-16 (Rev. 2)	Amending NAFO CEM Article 13.11 (c) Lost or Abandoned Fishing gears	COM Doc. 24-07
22	STACTIC WP 24-22	Squid Fishery	COM Doc. 24-08
23	STACTIC WP 24-24 (Revised)	Data Collection on Marine Pollution in the NAFO Regulatory Area	COM Doc. 24-09
24	STACTIC WP 24-25 (Rev. 2)	Establishment of New Measures in the 3M Cod Fishery (Article 6)	COM Doc. 24-10

25	STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 8)	Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2024 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2023)	COM Doc. 24-21
26	STACTIC WP 24-09 (Revised)	NAFO IUU List Update	
27	STACTIC WP 24-18 (Rev. 2)	To introduce electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)	COM Doc. 24-22
28	STACTIC WP 24-28 (Revised)	Contracting Party’s Self-Assessments of Flag State Performance	COM Doc. 24-23
29	COM WP 24-12 (Revised)	Re-convene the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity for the purpose of considering the current definition of directed fishery and associated bycatch provisions	COM Doc. 24-19
30	COM WP 24-14	Extension of Timeline for Yellowtail flounder Measures (NAFO CEM Article 6)	COM Doc. 24-12
31	COM WP 24-22	Control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish	COM Doc. 24-15
32		Press Release	
33		Summary of Decisions and Actions of the Commission from the 46 <sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO	





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

46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO, 23-27 September 2024  
Halifax, Canada

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**Report of the Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC)**

46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO, 23-27 September 2024  
Halifax, Canada

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

The STACTIC Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America), opened the meeting at 14:02pm (UTC-3) on Monday, 23 September 2024 at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel in Halifax Canada 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, Norway, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, 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).

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 nominations for in-camera sessions for agenda item 4 (limited to STACTIC WP 24-01 and STACTIC WP 24-02 including associated revisions and discussions), agenda item 6 (if the NAFO Secretariat was intending to display any information from the MCS Website), and agenda item 7 (limited to STACTIC WP 24-05 and associated revisions and discussions, depending on the data included). The United States of America respectfully objected to the nomination of STACTIC WP 24-05, which included information related to the observer program. The Contracting Parties agreed that the information could be shared in open session. Further, the Secretariat noted that they would not be presenting any detailed information from the NAFO MCS Website under agenda item 6. 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 highlighted the Draft 2023 Compilation of Fisheries Reports table in STACTIC WP 24-01 (Rev. 6), and the summary of inspection information for 2023 in STACTIC WP 24-02 (Rev. 5) and noted that comments and corrections received since the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting have been incorporated. Participants discussed how differing domestic legislation and prosecutorial discretion impacts the ability of Contracting Parties to prosecute serious infringements in the context of the NAFO CEM.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the draft annual fisheries and compliance review (STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 5)). Contracting Parties offered some clarifications throughout the draft Compliance Review and representatives from Canada, the European Union, and the United States of America worked on the conclusions and recommendations sections.

Through the development and drafting of the conclusions, the Contracting Parties noted that one Contracting Party set a unilateral quota for pelagic redfish REB (1F\_2\_3K). The United States expressed concern that the notification for the unilateral quota did not constitute a formal Objection under Article XIV of the NAFO Convention. First, the notification was time barred. Contracting Parties have 60 days after the date of the Secretariat's transmittal of adoption. The Secretariat transmitted the adoption of measures on October 3, 2022 (NAFO 22-263). A notification of fishing beyond the TAC set for pelagic redfish was not received until December

20, 2022 – nearly three weeks after the established deadline of December 2, 2022. Furthermore, the notification failed to articulate with any particularity what measures the Contracting Party was objecting to; rather, it formally objected to a NEAFC measure and mentioned in passing that it intended to fish 5000 tonnes of pelagic redfish within the NAFO Regulatory Area. Under the Convention, a Party must present a clear objection to a specific measure and “an explanation for its reasons for taking this action,” among other things. The Contracting Party failed to do so; instead, it tendered an objection to NEAFC measures and a conclusory statement of its intention to prosecute the fishery in NAFO. Finally, a Contracting Party that invokes the objection process may submit the matter to an ad hoc panel review. Where a Contracting Party does not submit the matter to the ad hoc panel, the Commission shall decide by simple majority mail vote, whether to submit that Contracting Party’s explanation to the panel. Art. XIV. 8. This process was not undertaken. Because the rules governing the NAFO Objection Procedures were not followed, the United States maintains there was no formal objection to the pelagic redfish TAC within NAFO. One Contracting Party disagreed and others abstained from the discussion.

The recommendations were reviewed and revised by all Contracting Parties and the final version of the draft Compliance Review is outlined in STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 8).

In respect of the follow-up to non-compliances in cases listed in STACTIC WP 24-03, the European Union noted the need to ensure that the same rules on serious infringements are treated equally by all Parties, investigated and subject to proceedings (without this prejudging the outcome of those proceedings) for level playing field and to ensure compliance with the CEM.

The European Union stated their intention to host the next NAFO Inspectors Workshop, scheduled for 2025.

The NAFO Secretariat highlighted the overview of chartering arrangements and compliance document outlined in STACTIC WP 24-17.

Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) presented a proposal for a CPUE analysis to be added to the NAFO compliance review in STACTIC WP 24-27. Contracting Parties noted that this proposal may be better suited in the discussions on the Compliance review template, agenda item 5. Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) requested that Contracting Parties provide comments to the proposal for a two-week period following the Annual Meeting, and that the discussion could continue in the virtual working group to review the compliance review template.

Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) presented a comparative analysis, during an in-camera session, of the fishing vessels with and without observers onboard. The presentation showed catch levels of individual vessels broken into various components. Contracting Parties thanked Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) for the presentation, noting the benefit of this type of analysis in understanding observer coverage. The document will be distributed to the Contracting Parties with restricted circulation. Canada mentioned that it would be interesting to see a comparative analysis with Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) on board.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The draft annual fisheries and compliance review outlined in STACTIC WP 24-03 (Rev. 8) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

## 5. Annual compliance review format

The NAFO Secretariat presented STACTIC WP 24-19 outlining information from other RFMOs compliance reviews. The United States and Canada, expressed interest in reviewing the compiled information in a separate meeting to identify potential elements that could be adopted within NAFO. Canada will work with the Secretariat to coordinate a virtual meeting and the outcome of this work will be presented at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. STACTIC WP 24-27 will also be considered during this exercise.

As work is underway on this matter, the existing format will continue to be used for the 2024 Compliance Review.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada and the Secretariat will coordinate a virtual meeting with interested Contracting Parties prior to the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting to review other RFMOs compliance reviews and identify key elements that could potentially be adopted within NAFO.**

## 6. NAFO Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Website

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. Contracting Parties were also reminded to send the Secretariat any enhancements suggestions.

## 7. NAFO Observer Program – Article 30 of the NAFO CEM

The Secretariat presented the summary of observer information STACTIC WP 24-05 (Rev. 4) and highlighted the revisions made since the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Calculations from Part II were revised, and the document was finalized in STACTIC WP 24-05 (Rev. 5).

The Chair of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) (Brent Napier, Canada) provided a summary of the meeting that took place in July 2024 (COM Doc. 24-04). STACTIC thanked the WG-OPR Chair for the summary of the meeting discussions and adopted the meeting report.

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 24-01 (Revised) outlining potential revisions of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM to create minimum standards for a NAFO electronic observation program (i.e. Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM)). The proposal is based on the recommendations established in STACTIC Working Paper 22-48 (Rev. 2) and WG-OPR 23-19 (Rev. 4). Contracting Parties discussed the importance of developing uniform standards for REM within NAFO, including a collective knowledge of the purpose of REM. Canada noted the importance of reviewing the rules of confidentiality and domestic programs, to implementing REM within NAFO. Some Contracting Parties raised concerns with data confidentiality and storage, technological requirements, and cost. The European Union clarified that the purpose of the proposal is to develop minimum specifications for advancing REM and the expectation is that the data received through REM can be used for control purposes. The United States of America respectfully disagreed and highlighted that the NAFO Observer Program has evolved beyond control-only purposes, noting the 2019 Art. 30 reconstruction. “The purpose of this observer program is to collect reliable, independent information and data on activities in the NAFO regulatory area.” Art. 30.1. Therefore, it becomes critical to identify the purpose and goals of REM within NAFO. This involves working with technical experts to identify what data fields from the current observer report (Annex II.M) and other reports can be completed through review of REM, and then, identify baseline standards to ensure the necessary information is collected and useful.

The European Union expressed that the observer program is mainly for control purposes and that observers have data confidentiality obligations and if there is a different view on this topic, the same understanding should be used by all Contracting Parties.

The European Union reminded that the document on REM standards was already presented at the last STACTIC Annual Meeting and discussed during the July WG-OPR meeting at the request of some Contracting Parties. The European Union regretted that Contracting Parties that did not provide any comments to the document during the entire process and propose now to carry out again the same process as last year. Iceland and the United Kingdom supported the EU and invited the other Contracting Parties to confirm if their will is to move forward with the discussion. Contracting Parties agreed to defer STACTIC OPR-WP 24-01 (Revised) to the WG-OPR for further discussion and action.

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 which proposes amendments to Annex II.B. The United States of America indicated that a more fulsome review of the Annex II.B is necessary. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for the proposal and agreed to defer STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 to the WG-OPR for further discussion and action.

The European Union presented amendments to the Article 30 Reporting Template through STACTIC OPR-WP 24-03 (Revised) in order to include information on the results of the investigations on cases of verbatim data. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for the proposal and agreed to adopt the changes to the Article 30 reporting template.

Canada presented a proposal for additional control measures relating to derogations from observer coverage in STACTIC WP 24-23, with the addition of three control measures for vessels operating under derogation, noting that the current reasons for derogation are broad and undefined. Iceland and Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) noted that they were not in a position to support the proposal at this stage. Contracting Parties thanked Canada for the proposal and agreed to defer STACTIC WP 24-23 to the WG-OPR for further consideration.

The United States of America presented a proposal on data collection on marine pollution in the NAFO Regulatory Area by observers in STACTIC WP 24-24. The proposal is designed to be a first step in managing Contracting Parties' obligations to minimize pollution and waste originating from fishing vessels. Once more information is collected on the scope of the problem, then Contracting Parties hopefully will be better situated to develop clear measures to stop and enforce marine pollution. Contracting Parties expressed support for the proposal and offered comments regarding specific observations related to waste or other marine debris. The proposal was revised to reflect these changes in STACTIC WP 24-24 (Revised) and STACTIC agreed to forward the proposal to the Commission for adoption.

The Secretariat updated STACTIC on the status of the observer application development; two multi-media videos have been created to demonstrate how the application can be used. The application has successfully undergone a few at-sea trials. The Secretariat would like to trial the application on a complete trip in the near future and have the observer add the haul information to the application.

STACTIC will continue to review the implementation of the observer program in 2025, and the text of Article 30.11 of the NAFO CEM will be updated reflect this.

STACTIC discussed STACTIC WP 24-05 (Rev. 5), which includes a summary of the 2023 implementation of the NAFO Observer Programme. It was noted that some information reported in the summary table need to be revised by Contracting Parties. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) request a deadline after the Annual Meeting to revise this document. It was agreed that Contracting Parties would revise their data and provide comments to STACTIC WP 24-05 with a deadline of four weeks following the Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Article 30 reporting template be updated in accordance with the revisions outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-03 (Revised).**
- **The proposal for changes to Annex II.M of the NAFO CEM for data collection on marine pollution outlined in STACTIC WP 24-24 (Revised) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **STACTIC will continue to review the implementation of the observer program in 2025, and that the text of Article 30.11 of the NAFO CEM be updated to state: STACTIC will review the implementation of this observer program in 2025. To support this review, the mandate of the WG-OPR would be extended to allow for key matters, such as REM, to be further discussed and actioned.**

- **Contracting Parties will provide comments on STACTIC WP 24-05 (Rev. 5) with a deadline of four weeks following the Annual Meeting.**

## **8. 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. Canada and the United States of America provided minor comments to the proposed amendments to Article 25.13 of the NAFO CEM, to the European Union. STACTIC agreed to forward the proposal outlined in STACTIC WP 24-12 (Revised) to the Commission for adoption.

Japan presented a proposal for the squid fishery in STACTIC WP 24-22 outlining an extension of the derogation that was adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting, noting that no squid has been caught so far this year, and that there was not enough information available at this time to review the provisions. Contracting Parties expressed support for the proposal and STACTIC agreed to forward the proposal outlined in STACTIC WP 24-22 to the Commission for adoption.

The United Kingdom presented a proposal for the establishment of new measures in the 3M cod fishery in STACTIC WP 24-25. The European Union provided comments to the proposal and suggested to work in a horizontal manner with regard to the derogations on bycatch rules, in particular in respect of directed fisheries instances of serious infringements, and requested to include a provision in the proposal limiting it to 2025, similar to the derogations for squid and American plaice, until there is more information on the impact and need for this derogations and a broader discussion takes place on bycatch rules. The United Kingdom noted the proposal is seeking a more measured approach to unintentional directed fishing for 3M Redfish. Contracting Parties expressed support for the proposal and offered revisions. STACTIC thanked the United Kingdom for the proposal and agreed to forward the STACTIC WP 24-25 (Rev. 2) to the Commission for adoption.

The European Union presented a proposal for amendments to the surveillance procedures outlined in Article 33 of the NAFO CEM in STACTIC WP 24-13. Contracting Parties discussed the requirements of the proposed Sighting Report and the potential to create a standardized template for recording information. STACTIC will consider whether a standardized template is required at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. STACTIC thanked the European Union for the proposal and agreed to forward STACTIC WP 24-13 (Revised) to the Commission for adoption.

The European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Norway, and the United Kingdom presented a joint proposal on control measures for shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish in STACTIC WP 24-29. The proposal offers amendments to Article 5(5) of the NAFO CEM, in order to prevent adverse effects on the sustainability of shallow and deep pelagic beaked redfish. Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands) expressed support for the proposal. One Contracting Party could not accept this proposal, noting that the proposal is beyond the scope of the NAFO Convention and beyond the mandate of STACTIC, therefore no consensus was reached.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The proposal for the publication of the NAFO register of fishing vessels and authorizations outlined in STACTIC WP 24-12 (Revised) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The proposal on the squid fishery outlined in STACTIC WP 24-22 be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**
- **The proposal on the establishment of new measures in the 3M cod fishery outlined in STACTIC WP 24-25 (Rev. 2) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

- **The proposal for amendments to the surveillance procedures outlined in Article 33 of the NAFO CEM in STACTIC WP 24-13 (Revised) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

## 9. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM

The NAFO Secretariat presented a detailed summary of the research plans that have been received to date in 2024 (STACTIC WP 24-06 (Rev. 3)). The Secretariat responded to questions regarding the process of reviewing research plans, including the role of the Scientific Council. Canada requested that an additional column be added to the table in STACTIC WP 24-06 (Rev. 3) that would advise STACTIC on the status of a research plan pursuant to the duties of the Scientific Council outline in Article 5. Canada further proposed that this document would be updated and presented each year at the NAFO Annual meeting. Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for preparing the summary. It was agreed that the exercise should be repeated, including information of research plans that need approval by the Scientific Council and if that approval had been given.

It was noted that the provisions of Article 4.7 of the NAFO CEM pertaining to the review of Article 4, required updating, and STACTIC agreed that NAFO will review these measures in 2025 and that the NAFO CEM be updated accordingly.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The review of the measures of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM take place again in 2025, and that the text of Article 4.7 of the NAFO CEM be updated to state: NAFO will review these measures in 2025.**
- **STACTIC WP 24-06 (Rev. 3) would be amended to include Scientific Council opinion, where warranted, on research plans and this document would be presented annually at the NAFO Annual meeting for STACTIC's consideration.**

## 10. Review of the new measures in the yellowtail fishery

The Chair opened the agenda item noting the discussions from the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting and the tasking for the NAFO Secretariat, with assistance from Canada, the European Union and the United States of America, 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. Canada noted that there is a proposal being discussed at the Commission level to extend the measures for an additional year, noting that the data is insufficient to draw conclusions on whether the measures resulted in an increase on American plaice bycatches or directed fishery on American plaice. Other Contracting Parties noted that there was merit in reviewing the data analyses that had been prepared, and the NAFO Secretariat presented the results in STACTIC WP 24-26.

The European Union noted that the mandate for STACTIC to revise the measures and therefore the need for the discussion regardless of if a Contracting Party decides to table a proposal on the same topic at the Commission on the same topic. It highlighted that the compromise reached last year on this derogation included that mandate for STACTIC and therefore the need to carry out the revision. On STACTIC WP 24-26, the European Union noted the very limited use of the derogations introduced last year (one vessel in one instance), while also considering the limited fishing activity on yellowtail in the Regulatory Area. In its view, the extension of the measures in yellowtail fisheries and squid or the adoption of derogations for 3M redfish need to be evaluated in a horizontal manner, to avoid more ad hoc rules. The United Kingdom noted that horizontal rules have the potential for unintended consequences.

## 11. Discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches

The Chair noted that discussions on this topic occurred at the 2024 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting and opened the floor for comments. The United States of America provided a summary of a proposal being discussed in the

Commission, COM WP 24-12, which proposes the establishment of an ad-hoc working group on NAFO directed fishing policy.

## 12. Closure of Others quota - Article 5.5(h)

The Secretariat presented a summary of the Others quota where the NAFO Secretariat issued closure notifications in accordance with Article 5.15(d)(ii) from 2021-2024 in STACTIC WP 24-21. There have been a few cases of quota transfers being cancelled, which can impact the closure of the Others quota fisheries. The European Union and Canada noted that Contracting Parties must be extra diligent when handling quota transfers. Contracting Parties briefly discussed the 5-day notification period and concluded that this period would remain unchanged. STACTIC agreed that the Secretariat should continue to closely monitor the Others quota closures and present a summary to STACTIC at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Secretariat will present an updated summary of the Others quota closures at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

## 13. Practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO

The Secretariat presented the summary of the Contracting Party responses to the questionnaire on the calculation of the percent difference in the PSC3 forms, and what conditions are considered to decide on the enforcement of discrepancies in STACTIC WP 24-20 (Rev. 5). Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Canada, the European Union and the United States of America noted that Contracting Parties should work to develop a uniform approach to calculating the percent differences in the PSC3 forms and the conditions considered to decide on the enforcement of discrepancies, recognizing that electronic forms is a preference for the future. Iceland and Norway noted that the process does not necessarily need to be the same for each Contracting Party, but the process must be transparent and open. Contracting Parties agreed to revisit this discussion at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat also provided an update on the status of the ePSC application, noting that a demonstration was provided to interested Contracting Parties on 10 September 2024. The Secretariat intends to have a working prototype of the application available by the end of the year.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Prior to the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, Contracting Parties reflect on STACTIC WP 24-20 (Rev. 5) and consider whether a uniform approach to the calculation of the percent in the PSC3 forms in NAFO is needed.**

## 14. Marking of gears

Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) presented a proposal for amending NAFO CEM Article 13 relating to gear requirements in STACTIC WP 24-11 (Rev. 2). Contracting Parties thanked Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) for the proposal, but raised some concerns when using AIS transponders, including battery life and AIS spoofing, and also noted potential required changes to domestic laws as a result of this proposal. Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) thanked Contracting Parties for the discussion but opted to withdraw STACTIC WP 24-11 (Rev. 2), with an option to revisit the proposal in a future meeting. Contracting Parties noted that, currently, vessels may opt to use AIS transponders in addition to established gear marking practices.

Denmark (in respect to Faroe Islands and Greenland) presented a proposal for amending NAFO CEM Article 1 – Definition and Article 13.11 (c) Lost or Abandoned Fishing gears in STACTIC WP 24-16. Contracting Parties



offered editorial comments, which are reflected in STACTIC WP 24-16 (Rev. 2), and agreed to forward this proposal to the Commission for adoption.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The proposal for amending NAFO CEM Article 1 – Definition and Article 13.11 (c) Lost or Abandoned Fishing gears in STACTIC WP 24-16 (Rev. 2) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

#### **15. To introduce electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)**

Norway, the European Union, and the United Kingdom presented a joint proposal to introduce electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX) in STACTIC WP 24-18 (Revised). An ad-hoc Working Group is proposed to examine the feasibility of introducing UN/FLUX to NAFO.

Some Contracting Parties expressed concerns around the utility of the system, including technical concerns, domestic implications, and cost. Contracting Parties noted that consultations with technical experts would be required to help address concerns with the FLUX system, however it was noted that the current proposal reflects a commitment to evaluate the UN/FLUX approach, rather than adopt it.

It was agreed that STACTIC should seek a mandate from the NAFO Commission to assess the necessary preparations to consider the introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT FLUX.

It was agreed to request the NAFO Commission to request STACTIC to assess all necessary changes and technical preparations needed to consider the introduction of the international standard UN/CEFACT FLUX for the VMS and ERS domains, giving priority to the VMS domain. STACTIC will be requested to carry out any necessary consultations with other NAFO bodies and the NAFO Executive Secretary and present its conclusions to the NAFO Commission at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** to:

- **Request the NAFO Commission to request STACTIC to assess all necessary changes and technical preparations needed to consider the introduction of the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX) for the VMS and ERS domains, giving priority to the VMS domain.**

#### **16. Review of Current IUU list Pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53**

The Secretariat presented the NAFO IUU list update in STACTIC WP 24-09 (Rev.) and it was agreed to forward it to the Commission for adoption.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The changes proposed to the IUU List in STACTIC WP 24-09 (Rev.) be forwarded to the Commission for adoption.**

## 17. Implementation of the 2018 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. STACTIC reviewed the recommendations and made the following updates, which are reflected in STACTIC WP 24-10 (Rev. 3):

- **Recommendation 18** – STACTIC marked this item as – Completed-Ongoing noting that it was agreed to adopt a proposal for observers to collect data on marine pollution as part of their duties in STACTIC WP 24-24 (Revised) with a view to monitor the outcomes of this proposal to inform future STACTIC actions. The work done on bycatches and directed fisheries was noted, as well as proposed action relating to the Bycatch and Discards discussions are ongoing in various NAFO bodies and working groups, including STACTIC
- **Recommendation 20** – STACTIC marked this item as complete noting that STACTIC agreed that all Contracting Parties will complete the self-assessments of flag State performance in accordance with the criteria set out in the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance for initial presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. A summary report will be prepared by STACTIC to be presented to the NAFO Commission at its 2026 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **All Contracting Parties will complete the self-assessments of flag State performance in accordance with the criteria set out in the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance for initial presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. A summary report will be prepared by STACTIC to be presented to the NAFO Commission at its 2026 Annual Meeting.**

## 18. Other business

No other business was discussed.

## 19. Time and Place of next meeting

The next STACTIC Intersessional meeting will take place in May 2025 and will be hosted by NAFO Secretariat in Halifax, Canada, unless another Contracting Party offers to host.

## 20. Adoption of Report

The report was adopted on 26 September 2024, prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

## 21. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 (UTC-3) on 26 September 2024. The Chair thanked meeting participants for their cooperation and input. The participants likewise expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chair for his leadership as well as to the NAFO Secretariat for their arrangements/technical work.

## **Annex 1. List of Participants**

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23–27 September 2024

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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. Annual compliance review format
6. NAFO Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Website
7. NAFO Observer Program – Article 30 of the NAFO CEM
8. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM
9. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM
10. Review of the new measures in the yellowtail fishery
11. Discussion on the definition of directed fisheries and bycatches
12. Closure of Others quota - Article 5.5(h)
13. Practical application of Port State Measures in NAFO
14. Marking of gears
15. Introducing Electronic Reporting System (ERS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) in NAFO
16. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53
17. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review recommendations
18. Other Business
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)**

46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO, 23-27 September 2024  
Halifax, Canada

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

46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NAFO, 23-27 September 2024  
Halifax, Canada

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

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Robert Fagan (Canada) at 14:00 hours (UTC/GMT -3 hours) on Monday, 23 September 2024. 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, United Kingdom, United States of America and the NAFO Secretariat (Annex 1).

The prioritization of the agenda continued to allow 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/24-180 of 24 July 2024 was modified to include “*Scientific Council Additional Requests to the 2025 Budget Estimate*” under agenda item 12 “*Budget Estimate for 2025*” and the “*Review of NAFO Resolutions*” under agenda item 15 “*Other Business*”.

The revised agenda was adopted as presented in Annex 2.

**4. Audited Financial Statements for 2023**

As previously agreed, Baker Tilly Nova Scotia Inc. performed the audit for the 2023 fiscal year, in accordance with the NAFO Financial Regulations. The draft audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 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 2023 was \$78,336 while the previous year’s deficiency was \$20,641. It should be noted that although the financial statements show annual deficiencies, excess funds in the operating fund from the prior year and other revenue help finance annual operations.

Total expenditures incurred for the fiscal period ending 2023, as shown in the draft financial statements, amounted to \$2,519,533, which was \$130,467 under the approved budget of \$2,650,000. Overall savings for the year can be attributed to the postponement of the internship program, reduced travel and meeting costs with meetings being held virtually and some recruitment and relocation costs being deferred until 2024.

The operating fund had a balance of \$517,343 at the beginning of the year which was used to reduce contributions from Contracting Parties in 2023. As approved at the September 2023 Annual Meeting, the contingency fund remained at \$285,000; funds of \$62,426 were transferred from the relocation fund to the operating fund to cover relocation expenses incurred during the year; the relocation fund was increased by \$12,000 to \$49,574 and the performance review fund was increased by \$15,000 to \$75,000. The balance of the operating fund at the end of the year was \$474,433 which was available to reduce contributions from Contracting Parties in 2024.

**STACFAD recommends that:**

- **The Audited Financial Statements for 2023 be adopted.**

**5. Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat**

The Administrative and Activity Report was reviewed by the Committee. All Contracting Parties were encouraged to share it among their delegation as it provides a comprehensive summation of Secretariat activities for the period September 2023 to August 2024 (COM Doc. 24-03).

**6. Projected Financial Statements for 2024**

Financial Statement estimates for 2024 (projected to 31 December) have been provided by the Secretariat in COM Doc. 24-03.

**Operating Expenses for 2024**

The operating budget for 2024 was approved at \$2,636,000 while expenditures for the year are projected to come in at \$2,658,000, or \$22,000 over the approved budget.

The departure of the Scientific Council Coordinator early in 2024 resulted in a vacant staff position while the recruitment process commenced. A direct savings of salary and benefits has stemmed from the vacancy however relocation costs for the outgoing and the future incoming international staff member have offset any salary savings.

Costs associated with hosting an annual meeting in Halifax continue to evolve with the limited availability of suitable venues, ongoing inflation, increased cost of audio/visual equipment and technical support required for hybrid meeting formats, etc.

The 2024 budget included \$26,000 of relocation costs deferred from 2023 for the incoming NAFO Executive Secretary. Additional relocation funds have been incurred for the outgoing Scientific Council Coordinator and it is also anticipated that relocation costs will be incurred in 2024 for the incoming Coordinator. The relocation fund established in 2017 had \$49,574 available in the fund as of 01 January 2024 to offset recruitment and relocation expenses.

**Assessed Contributions**

At the beginning of 2024, the accumulated surplus was \$474,434, which was deemed to be in excess of the needs of the Organization and was allocated towards the 2024 operating budget. As the 2024 budget included a \$26,000 provision for recruitment and relocation costs, funds will be transferred from the recruitment and relocation fund to offset these expenses. Therefore, to meet the 2024 operations budget of \$2,636,000, Contracting Parties were assessed contributions in the amount of \$2,135,566.

**Balance Sheet**

The Organization's cash position on 31 December 2024 is estimated to be \$658,814 while contributions of \$91,244 is currently outstanding from one Contracting Party. The cash balance should be sufficient to finance appropriations in early 2025 pending the receipt of annual payments. In recent years, significant outstanding contributions were concerning for the Secretariat's ability to meet its future financial obligations. With only one contribution currently outstanding, these concerns have eased although the Secretariat will monitor the situation.

## 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 2024 budget included \$26,000 of relocation costs deferred from 2023 for the incoming NAFO Executive Secretary. The departure of the Scientific Council Coordinator in 2024 resulted in relocation costs and it is also anticipated that relocation costs may be incurred for the recruitment of the new Coordinator. The relocation fund established in 2017 had \$49,574 available in the fund as of 01 January 2024 to offset recruitment and relocation expenses.

### **STACFAD recommends that:**

- **Up to the remaining balance of \$49,574 from the recruitment and relocation fund be transferred to the operating fund to offset recruitment and relocation costs incurred in 2024, as necessary.**

The accumulated surplus account is estimated to have \$733,573 on 31 December 2024 as shown in STACFAD WP 24-02 (Revised).

### **STACFAD recommends that:**

- **The amount maintained in the contingency fund shall be set at \$285,000 of which \$200,000 would be sufficient to finance operations during the first three months of 2025, and of which \$85,000 would be available to be used for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.**
- **The recruitment and relocation fund be increased by \$12,000 for future recruitment and relocation costs of internationally recruited staff.**
- **The performance review fund be increased by \$15,000 for future costs associated with having an external performance review.**
- **The balance remaining, estimated to be \$346,573, 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 an update on the recruitment process of the vacant Scientific Council Coordinator position in STACFAD WP 24-09.

The NAFO Scientific Council Coordinator resigned in March 2024. As a result of the departure, the Secretariat conducted a six-week recruitment process but received few qualified applicants, particularly from outside Canada. The recruitment was ultimately unsuccessful.

In light of the ongoing conversations within the *NAFO Informal Group to Reflect on Workload of the Scientific Council*, and in consultation with the Scientific Council Executive Committee and Contracting Parties, it was agreed that the Scientific Council Coordinator position be restructured to include more direct scientific work in support of the Scientific Council. It is hoped that this realignment could address some of the workload issues the Scientific Council has voiced, and to potentially attract more applicants to the position.

The restructuring of the job description duties would result in the position going to the next higher pay classification and some administrative tasks previously managed by the Coordinator be transferred internally within the Secretariat. The impacts of adding this additional workload to the Secretariat, will need to be monitored, and may require a reclassification of existing position(s) within the Secretariat.

A new recruitment process was initiated in September 2024 reflecting this change.

## **9. Internship Program**

As agreed at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO, the internship program was suspended for 2024 and the funds of \$14,000 were reallocated to scientific purposes. The funding supported a contract to assist the Scientific Council, and its Precautionary Approach Framework Working Group members, in developing and implementing general and specific approaches for the testing of the revised Precautionary Approach Framework.

The NAFO Secretariat has not hosted an intern since 2019, In recent years, the Halifax area has experienced a significant increase in living costs as well as a significant decrease in the availability of affordable accommodations. In response to the recent COVID-19 pandemic and staff changes, the focus of work at the Secretariat has shifted to accommodate the increase in hybrid meetings and to integrate new staff members, ensuring smooth and efficient operations.

A review of the NAFO internship program has not been undertaken in a number of years, a comprehensive review of the internship program may be required to ensure the program remains mutually beneficial for the NAFO Secretariat and interns.

### **STACFAD recommends that:**

- **The NAFO Secretariat undertake a comprehensive review of the internship program, including the monthly stipend and meaningful work projects available to interns, to ensure it remains be mutually beneficial for the NAFO Secretariat and the intern.**
- **The results of the comprehensive review be presented to STACFAD for consideration and review at the 2025 Annual Meeting of NAFO.**

## **10. Report on the Annual Meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), 16–18 April 2024**

The annual meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS) was hosted by the Government of Canada 16–18 April 2024 in Ottawa, Canada, 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 IFCPS 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 24-04.

The next annual meeting of the IFCPS will be hosted by the Government of the United States of America (USA) during the week of 28 April 2025 in Washington, DC, USA. It was agreed that the meeting would provide a virtual/hybrid option for those not able to attend in-person.

## 11. Creation of an Annual Meeting Funding Model

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, it was agreed 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.”*

The Secretariat presented STACFAD WP 24-05 for consideration and review.

The NAFO Secretariat considered various funding models considering NAFO’s financial practices and feedback received from similar organizations. The cost of hosting an Annual Meeting continues to evolve as requirements change and ongoing inflation. The increased use of hybrid meeting formats has increased the costs for audio/visual equipment and technical support.

During the discussion, it was reiterated that the establishment of an annual meeting fund may increase opportunities for more Contracting Parties to extend an invitation to host a NAFO Annual Meeting. This would also help to secure a meeting venue further in advance as the hope is that Contracting Parties may provide notice of their intention to host more than one year in advance with the availability of these funds.

The members of STACFAD supported the creation of an annual meeting funding model, set at a predetermined amount, available to Contracting Parties when an invitation to host the NAFO Annual Meeting is extended and accepted by the Organization. These funds would offset the costs of hosting an Annual Meeting, with any expenses beyond this baseline being the responsibility of the host.

The establishment of an annual meeting funding model, set at a predetermined amount, would ensure the funding remains consistent each year, whether the meeting is hosted by the Secretariat or a Contracting Party thus minimizing fluctuations in the annual budget and Contracting Party billings. The funding model would be set at an amount equivalent to the cost of hosting meetings in Halifax, currently budgeted at \$200,000.

To ensure the funding model provides sufficient incentive for Contracting Parties to extend an invitation to host the Annual Meeting, the predetermined amount may be revisited as needed.

While the establishment of the funding model was supported, it was noted that flexibility may be required in the disbursement of the funds to the host Contracting Party. For instance, some Contracting Parties may be unable to receive funds directly from NAFO and instead payment may be required to a third-party vendor, such as a meeting venue, on behalf of the hosting Contracting Party. Additionally, deposits may need to be made in the year(s) preceding the meeting to secure a venue and other necessary arrangements. The Secretariat will establish appropriate guidelines in line with NAFO’s financial practices to disburse the funds from the funding model.

### STACFAD recommends:

- **To establish a funding model for hosting of the NAFO Annual Meeting. The funding model would be set to a predetermined amount equal to the cost of hosting meetings in Halifax, currently budgeted at \$200,000 and would be made available for hosting of the 2027 Annual Meeting of NAFO and onwards.**
  - **If the NAFO Secretariat hosts the Annual Meeting, up to \$200,000 would be allocated for venue rental, audio-visual equipment, refreshments, dinner, reception, signage, security, etc.**
  - **If a Contracting Party hosts the Annual Meeting, up to \$100,000 would be allocated for secretariat travel (airline tickets, hotel, per diem), shipment of meeting supplies, etc. while the remaining balance of the \$200,000 fund would be available to the hosting Contracting Party to help offset the costs of hosting an Annual Meeting. Any costs above this amount would be the responsibility of the host.**

## 12. Budget Estimate for 2025

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

The 2025 budget estimate, as prepared by the Secretariat, was provided in COM WP 24-02 (Revised). Additional details and highlights on the 2025 budget estimate were provided in STACFAD WP 24-06.

Budget Estimate 2025	Approved Budget 2024
\$2,746,000	\$2,636,000

The 2025 budget estimate of \$2,746,000 represents an increase of \$110,000, or 4.1%, over the prior year's approved budget.

The personnel services budget has risen by \$114,000 from the previous year. NAFO adheres to the salary scales of similar positions in the Public Service of Canada, which include routine economic and salary step increases. The most recent Public Service of Canada contracts that NAFO follows were renegotiated in 2024, resulting in higher-than-anticipated economic increases in NAFO budgets. Additionally, the restructuring of the Scientific Council Coordinator position to include more direct scientific work in support of the Scientific Council has elevated the position to a higher pay classification. Costs associated with international recruitment have also contributed to the 2025 budget increase.

The Secretariat has endeavored to maintain the remaining budget items at the levels of previous years or within the current year's average inflation rate of 3.0%.

### a. Scientific Council Additional Requests to the 2025 Budget Estimate

At the June 2024 Scientific Council Meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Scientific Council considered the draft budget for 2025 provided by the Secretariat ([NAFO/SCS Doc. 24-16 Revised, pg. 80](#)).

The Scientific Council noted two significant additions to their routine budget requests, specifically:

1. Increase funding to support participation in the joint FAO/ICES/NAFO Symposium
2. Funding to hire a dedicated analyst for one year

The Secretariat presented STACFAD WP 24-11 reflecting the two budget requests to the 2025 budget estimate and impact on the preliminary billing forecast.

#### *Increase funding to support participation in the joint FAO/ICES/NAFO Symposium*

Further clarification was sought from the SC Chair and vice-Chair regarding the anticipated roles and responsibilities of the Scientific Council members identified in the request. STACFAD was advised that: NAFO, as one of the three organizers of the Symposium, must ensure the participation of scientists from the SC; that some SC members may be invited to serve as speakers; and that, as the Symposium aims to provide guidance to RFMOs on implementing an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM), and strong representation of the SC is crucial.

The Committee supported the participation of both scientists and fisheries managers from NAFO to the joint Symposium, noting that it saw such participation as part of NAFO's support and co-sponsorship of the meeting. The 2025 Budget Estimate was amended to include an additional \$15,000 under the Intersessional Scientific Meetings budget item to accommodate the travel costs for the 11 representatives identified by Scientific

Council. If required, additional funding may be available under the Intersessional Meetings (Other) budget item to accommodate participation by fisheries managers.

*Funding to hire a dedicated analyst for one year*

The Scientific Council requested funding be made available to hire a dedicated analyst to contribute both to the Management Strategy Evaluation for 3LN redfish and other analytical work of the Scientific Council for one year. In response to the Committee's request for clarification, the SC Chair and vice-Chair explained that the dedicated analyst was further intended to assist in development of assessment models for stocks without a model and development of Reference Points for the new PAF. STACFAD discussed that the upcoming hire of the scientific coordinator should further assist with these tasks.

The Committee noted a number of updates to address the SC workload received during this Annual Meeting and supported allowing time for these additional initiatives to take effect.

It was noted that while STACFAD continues to fully support the objective of alleviating the workload of SC, it could not support the request from the Scientific Council to include funding to hire a dedicated analyst for one year. STACFAD also noted that any future requests for additional funding should include a reasonable level of detail on the specifics of the request, e.g., on the responsibilities of any consultant(s) that might be proposed. Such information would greatly facilitate the Committee's deliberations, and that a formalized process may assist in these efforts. It was further reiterated that that some Contracting Parties do not see increased funding as the only solution to alleviate the workload of SC and noted concern about significant increases to annual contributions. It was further noted that additional options continue to be explored in other NAFO bodies. There was discussion of the recent decision to reprofile the responsibilities of the science coordinator position. It was suggested that this person participate in the planned review of the Scientific Council workplan, including the budget process.

**STACFAD recommends that:**

- **The budget for 2025 of \$2,746,000 (Annex 3) be adopted.**

A preliminary calculation of billing for the 2025 financial year is included in Annex 5.

**13. Budget Forecast for 2026 and 2027**

The preliminary budget forecast for 2026 (\$2,803,000) and 2027 (\$2,883,000) (Annex 4) was provided in COM WP 24-02 (Revised). The forecasts were approved in principle, and it was noted that the budget for 2026 will be reviewed in detail at the next Annual Meeting.

**14. Adoption of 2024/2025 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 2024–September 2025: Robert Fagan (Canada), Ignacio Granell (European Union) and Kathy Sosebee (United States of America).



**STACFAD recommends that:**

- **The Commission appoint the three Staff Committee nominees for September 2024–September 2025: Robert Fagan (Canada), Ignacio Granell (European Union) and Kathy Sosebee (United States of America).**

**15. Other Business**

The following other matter was discussed under this agenda item, namely:

**a. Review of NAFO Resolutions**

During the Annual Meeting, the Secretariat presented COM WP 24-05, *“Review of NAFO Resolutions,”* summarizing NAFO Resolutions from 1979 to 2023. It was noted that while it is important for NAFO Resolutions to be available on the public website, it may be beneficial to review and identify any resolutions that are no longer relevant or have been overtaken by events. Additionally, reviewing the mechanism for including and archiving NAFO Resolutions on the public website may be beneficial.

The Commission requested STACFAD to complete this review. The Secretariat will work intersessionally to conduct an initial review and provide a summary for presentation to STACFAD at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

**It was agreed that the Secretariat work intersessionally:**

- **To identify NAFO Resolutions that may no longer be relevant and/or overtaken by events for consideration and review of STACFAD at the 2025 Annual Meeting of NAFO.**
- **To develop a formalized procedure for the adoption and archiving of NAFO Resolutions for consideration and review of STACFAD at the 2025 Annual Meeting of NAFO.**

**16. Election of 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 Chair, Robert Fagan (Canada), was nominated and re-elected for a two-year term.

The current vice-Chair, Imogen Gibbins (United Kingdom), was elected in September 2023.

**17. Time and Place of 2025–2027 Annual Meetings**

It was previously agreed that the dates for the 2025–2026 Annual Meetings be as follows:

2025	-	15–19 September in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
2026	-	21–25 September in Lithuania

STACFAD reviewed and recommended the dates for the 2027 Annual Meeting as follows:

2027	-	20–24 September
------	---	-----------------

**STACFAD recommends that:**

- **The 2027 Annual Meeting be held 20–24 September 2027 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 13:52 hours (UTC/GMT -3 hours) on 25 September 2024. 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**

<b>CHAIR</b>	Fagan, Robert (Canada)
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>In-person</b> Marsden, Dale
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF THE FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	<b>In-person</b> Nygård Bak, Rebekka
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	<b>In-person</b> Granell, Ignacio
<b>FRANCE (IN RESPECT OF ST. PIERRE ET MIQUELON)</b>	<b>In-person</b> Thiam, Mafal
<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>In-person</b> Takehara, Toya
<b>NORWAY</b>	<b>In-person</b> Hinchliffe, Kristi Veierød
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	<b>In-person</b> Tairov, Temur
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	<b>In-person</b> Gibbins, Imogen
<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<b>In-person</b> Emmert, Samantha Mencher, Elizabethann Tyhach, Lea
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	<b>In-person</b> 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 2023
5.	Administrative and Activity Report by the NAFO Secretariat
6.	Projected Financial Statements for 2024
7.	Review of Accumulated Surplus and Funds
8.	Personnel Matters
9.	Internship Program
10.	Report on the Annual Meeting of the International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society (IFCPS), 16–18 April 2024
11.	Creation of an Annual Meeting Funding Model
12.	Budget Estimate for 2025
	a. Scientific Council Additional Requests to the 2025 Budget Estimate
13.	Budget Forecast for 2026 and 2027
14.	Adoption of 2024/2025 Staff Committee Appointees
15.	Other Business
	a. Review of NAFO Resolutions
16.	Election of Chair
17.	Time and Place of 2025–2027 Annual Meetings
18.	Adjournment

**Annex 3. Budget Estimate for 2025**

## NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

## Budget Estimate for 2025

(Canadian Dollars)

	Approved Budget 2024	Projected Expenditures 2024	Preliminary Budget Forecast 2025	Budget Estimate 2025
1 Personnel Services				
a) Salaries	\$1,302,000	\$1,261,000	\$1,357,000	\$1,390,000
b) Superannuation and Annuities	450,000	450,000	456,000	457,000
c) Medical and Insurance Plans	112,000	112,000	115,500	115,000
d) Employee Benefits	99,000	81,000	109,500	115,000
Subtotal Personnel Services	1,963,000	1,904,000	2,038,000	2,077,000
2 Additional Help	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
3 Communications	28,000	28,000	28,000	29,000
4 Computer Services	71,000	71,000	71,000	72,000
5 Equipment	27,000	26,000	27,000	26,000
6 Fishery Monitoring	46,000	46,000	48,000	48,000
7 Hospitality Allowance	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
8 Internship	14,000	14,000	14,000	14,000
9 Materials and Supplies	32,000	32,000	32,000	32,000
10 NAFO Meetings				
a) Sessional	240,000	261,000	243,000	241,000
b) Inter-sessional Scientific	30,000	26,000	30,000	50,000
c) Inter-sessional Other	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Subtotal NAFO Meetings	320,000	337,000	323,000	341,000
11 Other Meetings and Travel	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
12 Professional Services	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000
13 Publications	14,000	12,000	14,000	12,000
14 Recruitment and Relocation (Note 1)	26,000	93,000	0	0
	\$2,636,000	\$2,658,000	\$2,690,000	\$2,746,000

Note 1: Recruitment and relocation expenses shall be paid from the available funds in the Recruitment and Relocation Fund. Balance in the fund as of 01 January 2024 was \$49,574.

Notes on Budget Estimate 2025  
(Canadian Dollars)

Item 1(a)	<b>Salaries</b> Salaries budget estimate for 2025.		\$1,390,000
Item 1(b)	<b>Superannuation and Annuities</b> Employer's pension plan which includes employer's contributions, administration costs, actuarial fees and the required annual payment towards previous pension plan deficits.		\$457,000
Item 1(c)	<b>Group Medical and Insurance Plans</b> Employer's portion of Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance, Group Life Insurance, Long Term Disability Insurance and Medical Coverage.		\$115,000
Item 1(d)	<b>Employee Benefits</b> 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.		\$115,000
Item 2	<b>Additional Support</b> Other assistance as required.		\$2,000
Item 3	<b>Communications</b> Phone and internet services Postage and Courier	\$23,000 6,000	\$29,000
Item 4	<b>Computer Services</b> Computer hardware, software, supplies, support and website hosting.		\$72,000
Item 5	<b>Equipment</b> Leases (print department printer, photocopier and postage meter) Purchases Maintenance	\$13,000 10,000 3,000	\$26,000
Item 6	<b>Fishery Monitoring</b> Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) annual maintenance fee including programming changes as required due to changes to CEM. Oracle database annual maintenance	\$45,000 3,000	\$48,000

Item 10(a)	<b>NAFO Sessional Meetings</b> Annual Meeting, September 2025 SC Meeting, June and October 2025		\$241,000
Item 10(b)	<b>NAFO Inter-sessional Scientific Meetings</b> 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.		\$50,000
Item 10(c)	<b>NAFO Inter-sessional Other</b> General provision for Commission inter-sessional meetings.		\$50,000
Item 11	<b>Other Meetings and Travel</b> 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	<b>Professional Services</b> Professional Services (audit, consulting, legal fees, and insurance) Professional development, training and public relations.	\$29,000 16,000	\$45,000
Item 13	<b>Publications</b> Production costs of NAFO publications, booklets, brochures, posters, etc.		\$12,000

**Annex 4. Preliminary Budget Forecast for 2026 and 2027**NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANIZATION  
Preliminary Budget Forecast for 2026 and 2027  
(Canadian Dollars)

	Preliminary Budget Forecast 2026	Preliminary Budget Forecast 2027
1 Personnel Services		
a) Salaries	\$1,450,000	\$1,506,000
b) Superannuation and Annuities	463,000	470,000
c) Medical and Insurance Plans	120,000	126,000
d) Employee Benefits	119,000	124,000
Subtotal Personnel Services	2,152,000	2,226,000
2 Additional Help	2,000	2,000
3 Communications	29,000	29,000
4 Computer Services	72,000	73,000
5 Equipment	23,000	23,000
6 Fishery Monitoring	50,000	52,000
7 Hospitality Allowance	3,000	3,000
8 Internship	14,000	14,000
9 Materials and Supplies	32,000	32,000
10 NAFO Meetings		
a) Sessional	244,000	247,000
b) Inter-sessional Scientific	30,000	30,000
c) Inter-sessional Other	50,000	50,000
Subtotal NAFO Meetings	324,000	327,000
11 Other Meetings and Travel	45,000	45,000
12 Professional Services	45,000	45,000
13 Publications	12,000	12,000
14 Recruitment and Relocation	-	-
	\$2,803,000	\$2,883,000



**Annex 5. Preliminary Calculation of Billing for Contracting Parties for 2025**

**Preliminary calculation of billing  
for the 2025 financial year  
(Canadian Dollars)**

Budget Estimate	\$2,746,000
Deduct: Amount Allocated from Accumulated Surplus	-\$346,573
<b>Funds required to meet 2025 Administrative Budget</b>	<b>\$2,399,427</b>

**Part A**

Contracting Parties	2022 nominal catches (metric tons)	Catch %	NAFO Convention Article IX.2.a,b,c			
			10%	30%	60%	Subtotal
Canada	112,706	31.68%	\$88,019	\$55,371	\$456,083	<b>\$599,473</b>
Cuba	-	0.00%	-	\$55,371	-	<b>\$55,371</b>
Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) (Note 2)	175,384	49.29%	\$136,967	\$55,371	\$709,607	<b>\$901,945</b>
European Union	38,465	10.81%	-	\$55,371	\$155,627	<b>\$210,998</b>
France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)	26	0.01%	\$20	\$55,371	\$145	<b>\$55,536</b>
Iceland	-	0.00%	-	\$55,371	-	<b>\$55,371</b>
Japan	1,257	0.35%	-	\$55,371	\$5,039	<b>\$60,410</b>
Norway	2,115	0.59%	-	\$55,371	\$8,494	<b>\$63,865</b>
Republic of Korea	-	0.00%	-	\$55,371	-	<b>\$55,371</b>
Russian Federation	6,735	1.89%	-	\$55,371	\$27,211	<b>\$82,582</b>
Ukraine	-	0.00%	-	\$55,371	-	<b>\$55,371</b>
United Kingdom	-	0.00%	-	\$55,371	-	<b>\$55,371</b>
United States of America	19,127	5.38%	\$14,937	\$55,371	\$77,455	<b>\$147,763</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>355,815</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$239,943</b>	<b>\$719,823</b>	<b>\$1,439,661</b>	<b>\$2,399,427</b>

**Part B**

Contracting Parties	Subtotal from Part A	NAFO Convention Article IX.2.d (Note 1)						Total contribution
		% Contribution	Catch % minus DFG	10%	30%	60%	Subtotal	
Canada	\$599,473	24.98%	62.47%	\$52,482	\$15,350	\$230,148	\$297,980	\$897,453
Cuba	\$55,371	2.31%	-	-	\$15,350	-	\$15,350	\$70,721
Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) (Note 2)	\$901,945	37.59%	-	-\$61,401	-\$184,200	-\$368,414	-\$614,015	\$287,930
European Union	\$210,998	8.79%	21.32%	-	\$15,350	\$78,547	\$93,897	\$304,895
France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)	\$55,536	2.31%	0.01%	\$12	\$15,350	\$36	\$15,398	\$70,934
Iceland	\$55,371	2.31%	-	-	\$15,350	-	\$15,350	\$70,721
Japan	\$60,410	2.52%	0.70%	-	\$15,350	\$2,579	\$17,929	\$78,339
Norway	\$63,865	2.66%	1.17%	-	\$15,350	\$4,310	\$19,660	\$83,525
Republic of Korea	\$55,371	2.31%	-	-	\$15,350	-	\$15,350	\$70,721
Russian Federation	\$82,582	3.44%	3.73%	-	\$15,350	\$13,742	\$29,092	\$111,674
Ukraine	\$55,371	2.31%	-	-	\$15,350	-	\$15,350	\$70,721
United Kingdom	\$55,371	2.31%	-	-	\$15,350	-	\$15,350	\$70,721
United States of America	\$147,763	6.16%	10.60%	\$8,907	\$15,350	\$39,052	\$63,309	\$211,072
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,399,427</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,399,427</b>

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 1,229 metric tons  
Greenland 174,155 metric tons





Serial No. N7611

NAFO/COM-SC Doc. 24-06

## **Report of the NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) Meeting**

02 December 2024

Virtual

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## **Report of the NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) Meeting**

02 December 2024  
Virtual

### **1. Opening by the Chair, Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir (NAFO Secretariat)**

The Chair, Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir (NAFO Secretariat) opened the meeting on Monday, 02 December 2024 at 09:02 hours (UTC -4 hours, Time in Halifax) and welcomed the Chairs and co-Chairs of the NAFO subsidiary bodies, standing committees and 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 2025 (COM-SC WP 24-02 Rev. 2)**

The working group reviewed the tentative schedule of 2024–2025 NAFO Meetings as presented in COM-SC WP 24-02 (Rev. 2). The discussions of the working group are reflected in the COM-SC Working Paper 24-02 Rev. 3 (Annex 3); however, additional discussion was had for some of the meeting scheduling, as outlined below.

- **NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting**

The Scientific Council discussed during its meetings in 2024 that there may be an opportunity to review the current CESAG method for the inclusion of the logbook (haul by haul) data, as well as updates to include all species to facilitate the TCI work. The CESAG co-Chair (Katherine Sosebee) noted that a virtual meeting would be needed to consider and identify potential refinements to the Catch Estimate Strategy. It was noted that a revised methodology for estimating catches would have to be adopted by the Commission, before being applied.

The working group further discussed if an additional meeting might be required. It was proposed that the first meeting take place earlier in the year (February) while the second meeting, if required, would be scheduled later in the year (sometime between June and September).

To prepare for the meeting, the Secretariat circulated the Terms of Reference for the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) ([COM-SC Doc. 17-09](#)), as well as the current catch estimation strategy (Annex 1 of [COM-SC Doc. 17-08](#)) to the working group.

- **NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting and NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

The Chair of the Scientific Council informed that the European Union expressed interest in extending an invitation to host the WG-RBMS and WG-EAFFM meetings subject to the meeting dates. It is proposed to schedule the two meetings back-to-back during the week of 14 July 2025, with each meeting to be 2 to 2.5 days each, with the WG-EAFFM scheduled earlier in the week.

The Secretariat will coordinate with the European Union to confirm venue availability for the proposed dates.

- **NAFO Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area**

As adopted at the 2024 Annual Meeting of NAFO and outlined in [COM Doc. 24-19](#), the *NAFO Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area* will reconvene to consider NAFO's current measures relating to directed fisheries and mitigating bycatch of moratoria species, as well as revisiting any still-unresolved elements of the Action Plan.

The working group discussed options for holding the WG-BDS meeting in conjunction with another meeting, such as holding a one-day meeting prior to the STACTIC Intersessional meeting in May; between the WG-EAFFM and WG-RBMS meetings in July; or directly prior to the Annual Meeting in September.

The timing of the meeting should be scheduled to ensure that key participants are able to participate. For example, scheduling the WG-BDS meeting in-between the WG-EAFFM and WG-RBMS meetings may be ideal for timing, but it might not enable key participants to attend.

Taking into account these elements, the Commission chair proposes holding a one-day virtual meeting in early April to scope the key tasks and questions related to advancing the directed fishing discussion as well as the remaining work under the Action Plan. Elements identified for the action of STACTIC and SC could then be taken up at their respective meetings in May and June, leading into a hybrid WG-BDS meeting in conjunction with the meetings of WG-EAFFM and WG-RBMS in July.

Some co-Chairs expressed concern that this option would make it difficult to appropriately consider the participation and expert input of STACTIC members who typically do not attend either of these meetings. STACTIC members would be asked to participate in technical discussions in a hybrid format which is not optimal. For this reason, the Commission Chair requested additional time to explore options and possible next steps.

To prepare for the meeting, the Secretariat circulated the Terms of Reference for the NAFO Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area to the working group ([FC Doc. 13-25](#)).

## 5. **Consider the three two-week periods during the NAFO year for scheduling of possible intersessional meetings in 2026 (COM-SC WP 24-07)**

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 three two-week periods during the NAFO year, proposed for scheduling possible intersessional meetings in 2026, was presented in COM-SC WP 24-07; however, it was noted that the second two-week period falls during Easter 2026. The proposed two-week periods were revised as follows, as reflected in COM-SC WP 24-07 (Revised):

**The Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process recommends that:**

- **For the 2026 NAFO year, the following two-week periods, be considered for NAFO intersessional meetings:**
  - **16 – 27 February 2026;**
  - **13 – 24 April 2026; and**
  - **10 – 21 August 2026**

## **6. Recommendations to forward to the Commission and Scientific Council**

The three two-week periods, as presented in COM-SC WP 24-07 (Revised), will be forwarded to the Commission for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Annual Meeting of NAFO.

## **7. Other matters**

### **a. Meeting formats and participation**

The working group reviewed meeting formats and participation noting that meeting formats (in-person, virtual, hybrid) have been discussed by several NAFO bodies, standing committees, and working groups.

The Chair of the Scientific Council noted that the preference of the Scientific Council is that the June meeting format is in-person, with virtual participation for those presenting under specific agenda items.

The Chair of the Commission suggested referring these discussions to the Commission at the next Annual Meeting to discuss potential formats for the upcoming meetings. This would allow a broader discussion among Contracting Parties about the format (in-person, virtual, or hybrid) and scheduling of each meeting.

## **8. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting to be scheduled virtually in November 2025.

The exact date and time(s) to be determined following the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September 2025.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 hours (UTC -4 hours, Time in Halifax).

**Annex 1. List of Participants**

<b>CHAIR OF COMMISSION</b>	Warner-Kramer, Deirdre (USA)
<b>CHAIR OF SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL</b>	González-Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
<b>VICE-CHAIR OF SC</b>	Simpson, Mark (Canada)
<b>CHAIR OF STACFAD</b>	Fagan, Robert (Canada)
<b>CHAIR OF STACTIC</b>	Moran, Patrick (United States of America)
<b>CO-CHAIRS OF CESAG</b>	Sosebee, Katherine (USA) Warner-Kramer, Deirdre (USA)
<b>CO-CHAIRS OF WG-EAFFM</b>	Mencher, Elizabethann (USA) Sacau Cuadrado, Mar (European Union)
<b>CO-CHAIRS OF WG-RBMS</b>	González-Costas, Fernando (European Union) Walsh, Ray (Canada)
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana Bell MacCallum, Dayna Goodick, Stan Guile, Sarah 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 2025 (COM-SC WP 24-02 Rev. 2)
5. Consider the three two-week periods during the NAFO year for scheduling of possible intersessional meetings in 2026 (COM-SC WP 24-07)
6. Recommendations to forward to the Commission and Scientific Council
7. Other matters
  - a. Meeting formats and participation
8. Date and Time of Next Meeting
9. Adjournment



**Annex 3. 2024–2025 NAFO Meeting – Tentative Schedule\*\***  
(COM-SC Working Paper 24-02 Rev. 3)

The following NAFO Meetings are scheduled, or are to be scheduled, for 2024:

Date	Title	Venue
02 Dec.	NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) Meeting	Virtual
05 Dec.	NAFO Scientific Council Intersessional and Precautionary Approach Working Group (PA-WG) Meeting	Virtual

The following NAFO Meetings are scheduled, or are to be scheduled, for 2025:

Date	Title	Venue
TBD	Performance Review Working Group to develop Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the 2026 Performance Review of NAFO	Virtual
Jan./Feb. TBD	NAFO Scientific Council Intersessional Meeting: 3LN Redfish MSE (and other matters if needed). <b>Proposed:</b> In consultation with the SC Chair, a doodle poll is to be circulated to identify a suitable date for a one-day virtual meeting during the weeks of 27 Jan. and 03 Feb.	Virtual
22–24 Jan.	NAFO STACTIC Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) Meeting	Boston, Massachusetts, USA
17–28 Feb.	<i>* First period for the scheduling of Working Group meetings</i>	
11–13 Mar.	FAO/ ICES/NAFO Joint Symposium “Applying the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management in ABNJ”	Rome, Italy
11–12 Mar.	Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM) Meeting	TBD
31 Mar.– 11 Apr.	<i>* Second period for the scheduling of Working Group meetings</i>	
Spring 2025	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting (if required) <b>Proposed:</b> This meeting will be dependent on outcomes of the Jan./Feb. SC Meeting. If the meeting is required, it will be held virtually.	Virtual
Prior to 30 Apr.	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting <b>Proposed:</b> A virtual meeting to consider and identify potential refinements of the Catch Estimate Strategy. The Secretariat to circulate Terms of Reference to the E-WG members.	Virtual
Prior to STACTIC May Mtg.	STACTIC Ad hoc Meeting to discuss the compliance review template	Virtual
05–07 May	NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting	Bergen, Norway

Date	Title	Venue
05 or 06 May (TBC)	NAFO Scientific Council STACREC Data Review Meeting <b>Proposed:</b> The 05 May or 06 May to be confirmed with the Designated Experts (DEs)	Virtual
May TBD – Prior to June SC Mtg.	NAFO Scientific Council Intersessional and Precautionary Approach Working Group (PA-WG) Meeting	Virtual
29 May–12 Jun	NAFO Scientific Council and its Standing Committees Meeting	Halifax, Nova Scotia
14– 25 Jul.	<i>* Third period for the scheduling of Working Group meetings</i>	
Week of 14–18 Jul. (TBC)	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting <b>Proposed:</b> 2 to 2 ½ days for the meeting during the week of 14 Jul. The Secretariat to confirm with the European Union venue availability and meeting dates.	Estonia (TBC)
Week of 14–18 Jul. (TBC)	NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting <b>Proposed:</b> 2 to 2 ½ days for the meeting during the week of 14 Jul. The Secretariat to confirm with the European Union venue availability and meeting dates.	Estonia (TBC)
09-11 Sep.	NAFO Scientific Council and STACFIS Shrimp Assessment Meeting	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Prior to the Annual Meeting	NAFO Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area <b>Proposed:</b> To be held in conjunction with another meeting. The Secretariat to circulate Terms of Reference to the E-WG members.	Hybrid
15–19 Sep.	NAFO 47 <sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting The Secretariat to confirm venue availability for either Friday or Saturday for potential scheduling of the WG-BDS Meeting.	Halifax, Nova Scotia
24 Sep.	Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM) Meeting	TBD
Oct./Nov. TBD	NAFO STACTIC Editorial Drafting Group of the NAFO CEM (EDG) Meeting	Virtual
04–13 Nov.	NAFO Working Group on Ecosystem Science and Assessment (WG-ESA) Meeting	Halifax, Nova Scotia
Nov. TBD	NAFO Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process (E-WG) Meeting	Virtual

\* 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.

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

22–24 January 2025

Boston, United States of America

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

22–24 January 2025  
Boston, United States of America

### **1. Opening of the Meeting**

The Chair (Brent Napier, Canada) opened the meeting at 08:57 (UTC/GMT -5 hours) on Wednesday, 22 January 2025 at the Mariners House in Boston, United States of America and via Webex, and welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (in Respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, France (in Respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, 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 agenda was adopted, as outlined in Annex 2.

### **4. NAFO CEM Article 30 - 2024 Implementation**

Canada presented STACTIC OPR-WP 25-03 which proposed amendments to the language in Articles 30.3 and 30.7 to better align with the language in Annexes II.G. and II.M, which was updated in [COM Doc. 23-23](#) from “*discrepancies with the NAFO CEMs*” to “*potential non-compliance with the NAFO CEM.*” Canada proposed that this update be carried over to the text of Article 30. One delegation noted they were not able to make decisions at this meeting on this or any other issue; however, they would not block proposals from being sent to STACTIC for final consideration. The working group agreed with the changes proposed by Canada and incorporated them into STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 3).

#### **a. Observer coverage levels**

The NAFO Secretariat prepared STACTIC OPR-WP 25-01, which provided an updated summary of the use of the derogation from 100% Observer Coverage. The WG-OPR reflected on the current derogation from 100% observer coverage as outlined in Article 30.4 of the NAFO CEM, allowing vessels to carry observers not less than 25% of the fishing trips or the days present in the NRA. The European Union expressed content with the minimum 25% but also a preference to limit the derogation to the use of the electronic observation program. The WG-OPR noted that no new information had been presented to warrant changing the current observer coverage levels at this time.

Canada presented a proposal on the addition of control measures relating to derogations from observer coverage (Articles 27, 28 and 30 and Annex II.F.4) in STACTIC WP 24-23, which was previously discussed at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting. The proposal suggests the addition of three control measures for vessels operating under derogation: labelling with the date of capture, use of Catch on Crossing Boundary (COB) reports when changing divisions, and the requirement for an observer to be deployed for the remainder of the calendar year following serious infringement or an infringement that has been deemed serious. Contracting Parties provided initial comments to Canada on the proposal and discussed the implications of the additional control measures to the observer program and noted that additional time would be required to reflect and provide comments on some of the specific elements. Canada thanked the participants for their initial comments and welcomed receiving further written comments on the working paper in advance of the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties will provide written comments to Canada by 11 April 2025, on STACTIC WP 24-23 with the intention of presenting a revised version of the paper at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**

#### **b. Observer application**

The NAFO Secretariat provided an update on the development of the observer application. The application is undergoing testing with the European Union and Canada. The European Union shared initial feedback with the group, indicating that the application is user friendly and will help facilitate the work of observers on board. Contracting Parties discussed whether trip information would be available on the MCS Website daily or at the end of the trip, and how the observer app will function to replace the use of the daily OBR messages that are being sent via NAF string. The European Union noted that the NAFO CEM enables flag State Contracting Parties to make use of the software developed by the Executive Secretary (Observer App) to transmit the information contained in OBR messages and observer trip reports. The App's template for daily reporting includes detailed information which should be available for control purposes (e.g. MCS website) without this meaning aggregating or formatting back the information into an OBR message. The Secretariat noted all comments and concerns and will continue to make progress on the app.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Interested Contracting Parties engage with the NAFO Secretariat if there are any further questions or comments regarding the observer app.**
- **Contracting Parties would support the Secretariat with the ongoing development and implementation of the observer application.**

#### **c. Electronic observation program**

The United States of America presented a discussion paper on Electronic Monitoring in NAFO in STACTIC OPR-WP 25-02. The paper outlined topics for consideration and discussion, including the purpose of the electronic monitoring program; details on the electronic monitoring data review; data ownership, access, storage, and costs; how violations are handled, and the requirements for data sharing. Norway expressed alignment with the United States' concerns, noting that significant issues remain to be addressed. Contracting Parties exchanged experiences with electronic monitoring, and discussed costs, data ownership and confidentiality, and data review process.

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 which outlined potential revisions of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM to incorporate an electronic observation program. Contracting Parties engaged in a fulsome discussion on the working paper and provided revisions to narrow the scope of the electronic observation program. Some Contracting Parties expressed their position that the program be primarily used to support control purposes and enhance compliance rather than for scientific purposes. Other Contracting Parties noted that the scope of the electronic observation program should be broader. In discussions of the number of trips to be fully reviewed under the program, Canada noted that 25% may be too high for a minimum, but supported a review of other RFMOs and jurisdictions to inform minimum coverage. Canada also noted that any established minimum does not prevent Contracting Party control authorities from implementing a higher standard of review. Editorial revisions and alignment of language and definitions were also provided by Contracting Parties. These revisions are reflected in STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 3) (Annex 3).

The WG-OPR agreed that more discussion was required in STACTIC on the adoption of electronic observation programs generally, with a particular item for discussion on the percentage of trips in which analysis would be sent to the secretary, as described in paragraph 9 (i) of STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 3) (Annex 3).

It was **agreed** that:

- **The WG-OPR will forward STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 3) to STACTIC for further consideration.**

#### **d. Data collection – Sharks**

Canada provided an update on the collaboration with a non-governmental organization to develop a shark identification and safe handling practices guide. Canada plans to present a draft of the guide at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Canada also noted that an important element to consider in observer work is the frequency of measuring events, which can be burdensome for observers.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada will present the draft shark identification and safe handling practices guide at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**
- **Discussions on the frequency of measuring events, continue at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**

#### **e. Data collection – Quality control**

The United States of America, the United Kingdom and the European Union provided an overview of their practices on observers' data quality control, some of which included a species verification program, randomized calls to the master, observer policies and codes of conduct, and observer training. Contracting Parties were encouraged to submit any documentation and information on best practices related to quality control of the data provided by the observer program to the Secretariat in advance of the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. It was noted that, depending on the type of information that is provided by Contracting Parties, an in-camera session may be required for these discussions.

Iceland also noted that the 11<sup>th</sup> International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference will be held in Reykjavik, Iceland in May 2025 (more information can be found here: [19 – 23 May 2025 Harpa, Reykjavík, Iceland](#)), which may also provide information on best practices for quality control.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties submit information on best practices related to quality control to the Secretariat in advance of the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting.**

### **5. Data collection – Data confidentiality**

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02, which proposes amendments to Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM. This working paper was previously discussed at the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting. The United States agreed with the need to revise the Rules on Confidentiality, but questioned whether all Articles included in the proposal should be included in the amendments. It was noted that the Annex refers to electronic reports and messages, so the scope would be limited to those specific electronic messages, and that the overall revision of the Rules on Confidentiality would not be an OPR-WP task but for STACTIC to consider. The Chair suggested a more in-depth analysis of the proposed Articles and the Secretariat agreed to prepare a summary of the provisions that fall under the Rules on Confidentiality to help guide these discussions and determine the necessary changes to Annex II.B.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Secretariat will develop a summary of the provisions that fall under the Rules of Confidentiality to support discussions on changes to Annex II.B to support a discussion at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting**

#### **6. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

#### **7. Adoption of the Report**

The report was adopted via correspondence.

#### **8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:52 (UTC/GMT -5 hours) on 24 January 2025.

**Annex 1. List of Participants**

<b>CHAIR</b>	Napier, Brent (Canada)
<b>CANADA</b>	Barbour, Natasha Browne, Dion Hickey, Jenelle Walsh, Jerry Warren, Genevieve
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	Holm, Jannik
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	Babcionis, Genadijus Belmonte, Luis Chamizo, Carlos Dybiec, Leszek Grossmann, Meit Head, François Jonaitis, Arūnas Näks, Liivika Okas, Reemet Quintans, Miguel Tubío, Xosé
<b>FRANCE (IN RESPECT OF ST. PIERRE ET MIQUELON)</b>	Larrat, Clémence
<b>ICELAND</b>	Bragi Bragason, Agnar Ragnarsson, Njáll
<b>JAPAN</b>	Iwano, Taisuke Morishita, Joji Moronuki, Hideki Takehara, Toya Onodera, Ryo
<b>NORWAY</b>	Frotvedt, Kristin Wangensten, Per
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	Tairov, Temur
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	Murphy, Paul Sharples, James Smith-Devey, Imogen White, Amelia
<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	Bleifuss, Thomas Fitzgerald, Jake Jaburek, Shannah Jackson, Kimberly Hale, Bo McBride, Holly Mencher, Elizabethann Moran, Pat Pohl, Katie Provencher, Eric
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	Aker, Jana Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Kendall, Matt Laycock, DJ Thompson, Catherine



**Annex 2. Agenda**

1. Opening by the Chair, Brent Napier (Canada)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. NAFO CEM Article 30 - 2024 Implementation
  - a. Observer coverage levels
  - b. Observer application
  - c. Electronic observation program
  - d. Data collection – Sharks
  - e. Data collection – Quality control
5. Data collection – Data confidentiality
6. Other Business
7. Adoption of the Report
8. Adjournment

### **Annex 3. NAFO electronic observation program** STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 3)

This paper outlines a possible revision of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM in order to incorporate an electronic observation program. The paper is based on the recommendations established in STACTIC Working Paper 22-48 (Rev. 2) and STACTIC WP 23-01 Rev1.

- In Article 1, the following definition is added:

**“Electronic Monitoring System (EMS)” means a system on board a fishing vessel that acquires, stores and, as appropriate, transmits data from sensors and video camera footage that can be analysed using a data analysis software;**

- Article 30 is amended as follows:

#### **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.
- 2 bis. All observers’ data, electronic reports and the data collected under the electronic observation program under this Chapter and supporting documentation shall be treated as confidential, in accordance with Annex II.B.**

###### ***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;
    - (i) utilize the data originating from the observer program for control, inspection, enforcement, and as appropriate scientific purposes;
    - (ii) 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
    - (iii) 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 potential non-compliances 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 potential non-compliances 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 utilizes an electronic observation program **compliant with the requirements established in paragraph 9. approved by the flag State Contracting Party and;**

- (i) ~~***the Contracting Party provides the Executive Secretary 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 the derogation referred to in paragraph 4(a), at the time of the notice, the infringement shall be deemed a serious 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 potential non-compliances 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 potential non-compliances 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 potential non-compliances 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).

**Electronic observation program**

**9. Each Contracting Party making use of the derogation in paragraph 4(b) shall ensure that:**

- (a) the EMS installation and components of each fishing vessel are approved by the competent authorities and correspond to a EMS Vessel Monitoring Plan (VMP);
- (b) the VMP includes at a minimum the following information:
  - (i) the fishing vessel details and the identification of the owner;
  - (ii) pictures, the technical characteristics and specifications and the location on board of the EMS components, including cameras, sensors, antenna and control box;
  - (iii) pictures and the measurement details of sorting and discard areas;
  - (iv) the obligations of the master of the fishing vessel relating to
    - (1) the use of designated discard areas;
    - (2) the maintenance and cleaning of the EMS and its components;
    - (3) the testing and system diagnosis of the EMS; and
    - (4) the fallback procedures to be followed in case of system or power failures.
- (c) the EMS includes cameras in all designated discard areas placed in such a way as to allow the identification and quantification of discarded catch, the main deck or the area where the catches are hauled on board and the processing area;
- (d) the EMS includes, at a minimum, sensors providing information on the position, speed, winch or power block usage, and hold temperatures;
- (e) the EMS has a minimum data storage capacity sufficient to store the EMS data for the duration of the fishing trip;
- (f) the footage and sensor data collected by the EMS follows a specified format allowing that all sensors and video footage data can be analysed using an EMS analyser software to identify and quantify the catch and discards from all fishing operations;
- (g) a copy of the VMP and changes thereof are submitted to the NAFO Executive Secretary for any vessels not carrying an observer before the beginning of a fishing trip in which the vessel will be subject to the electronic observation program referred to in paragraph 4(b);
- (h) the period during which a vessel will be subject to the electronic observation program referred to in paragraph 4(b) is notified at least 72 hours in advance to the NAFO Executive Secretary; and
- (i) a fishing trip report based on the template of Annex II.M and fulfilled using the results of the EMS data analysis is sent to the NAFO Executive Secretary within 3 months after the end of the trip without human observer on board for at least [25] % of the fishing trips subject to the electronic observation program.

***Obligations of the Master***

**10.** 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-~~and~~
- (h) **comply with the obligations and conditions established in the VMP of a vessel subject to electronic observation program in accordance with paragraph 4(b).**

***Duties of the Executive Secretary***

**11.** 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; ~~and~~.
- (g) posts without delay the information received in accordance with paragraph 9(g), (h) and (i) in this Article to the NAFO MCS website.

### ***Implementation***

**12.** STACTIC will review the implementation of this observer program in 2026.

## **Article 38 – Additional Procedures for Serious Infringements**

### ***List of Serious Infringements***

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

[...]

- (r) failure to carry on board an EMS compliant to the VMP approved by the flag State Contracting Party if required;
- (s) failure to comply with the obligations of the master established in the VMP in a manner that prevents the EMS on board from being fully operational;
- (t) tampering with the data collected by the EMS or with the EMS on board;



**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council  
Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting**

26 February 2025  
via Webex

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**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council  
Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting**

26 February 2025  
via Webex

**1. Opening by co-Chair, Kathy Sosebee (United States of America)**

The co-Chair, Kathy Sosebee (United States of America), opened the meeting at 09:01 hours (UTC -4 hours) on Wednesday, 26 February 2025 via Webex, and welcomed representatives from Canada, European Union, Japan, Russian Federation, and Ukraine (Annex 1).

**2. Appointment of rapporteur**

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur.

**3. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted, as outlined in Annex 2.

**4. Review of the current CESAG method**

The co-Chair opened the discussions by reflecting on informal conversations that have been held in recent Scientific Council meetings relating to possible enhancements to the current CESAG method outlined in Annex 1 of [COM-SC Doc. 17-08](#).

**a. Possible inclusion of logbook (haul by haul) data**

The terms of reference for CESAG include a specific duty to consider and identify potential refinements of the catch estimate strategy, including the incorporation of haul-by-haul data within the strategy ([COM-SC Doc. 17-09](#)). Based on discussions in the Scientific Council and WG-ESA, it was noted that since the submission rates for the haul-by-haul data have improved in recent years, it could be included in the CESAG method. The NAFO Secretariat noted that the current timeline for the submission of the haul-by-haul data is 60 days following the end of a trip. This could make it difficult to have all the data available to meet the 01 May submission deadline to submit the CESAG data to the Scientific Council. CESAG agreed to recommend that the Commission review the timeline for the submission of haul-by-haul data.

Additionally, CESAG requested the NAFO Secretariat explore the inclusion of the haul-by-haul data into the CESAG method for presentation and discussion at the next CESAG meeting, with potential options for further aggregating / anonymizing the data, along with an update of the various data sources that are available at the NAFO Secretariat for estimating catches. It was noted that some Contracting Parties submitting data through part 4 of the CESAG method (Annex 1 of [COM-SC Doc. 17-08](#)) will have issues providing higher resolution data based on domestic privacy requirements.

**b. Possible inclusion of all species in the CESAG method**

The Scientific Council Chair, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) highlighted the Scientific Council discussions around the need for catches for all species to facilitate the total catch index (TCI) calculations in the Scientific Council. The NAFO Secretariat noted that CESAG has been including all species for the catches in the NAFO Regulatory Area starting in 2020 ([COM-SC Doc. 20-02](#)), but that all species are not included for those Contracting Parties submitting data through part 4 of the CESAG method (Annex 1 of [COM-SC Doc. 17-08](#)). It was reiterated that those Contracting Parties submitting data through part 4 of the CESAG method will be unable to provide data for all species based on domestic privacy requirements.

CESAG also reflected on the importance of the STATLANT 21 data, noting it is a long-standing data source with the official catch statistics that are used for various purposes throughout the organization and encouraged Contracting Parties to ensure STATLANT data is submitted within the specified timelines and to work to address the existing data gaps identified by the Scientific Council at its June 2024 meeting.

## **5. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

## **6. Recommendations**

**CESAG recommended that:**

- the NAFO Secretariat explore the haul-by-haul data to determine the feasibility of its incorporation in the CESAG method.
- the NAFO Secretariat continue to provide catch estimates for all species, based on the CESAG method protocol as outlined in Annex 1 of [COM-SC Doc. 17-08](#).
- the Commission review the 60-day timeline for the submission of haul-by-haul data, outlined in Article 28.8(c) of the NAFO CEM.

## **7. Date and time of next meeting**

The CESAG catch estimates from 2024 will be finalized through correspondence. The next meeting will be held in autumn 2025.

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:04 hours (UTC -4 hours).

### Annex 1. List of Participants

<b>CO-CHAIRS</b>	Sosebee, Kathy (United States of America)
<b>CANADA</b>	Fagan, Robert Johnson, Kate Krohn, Martha Rowsell, Nicole Simpson, Mark
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	Alpoim, Ricardo Garrido, Irene Gonçalves, Patrícia González-Costas, Fernando González-Troncoso, Diana
<b>JAPAN</b>	Kenji, Taki
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	Tairov, Temur
<b>UKRAINE</b>	Honcharuk, Ihor Varetska, Hanna
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	Aker, Jana Bell MacCallum, Dayna Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur LeFort, Lisa Perreault, Andrea

**Annex 2. Agenda**

1. Opening by co-Chair, Kathy Sosebee (United States of America)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Review of the current CESAG method
  - a. Possible inclusion of logbook (haul by haul) data
  - b. Possible inclusion of all species in the CESAG method
5. Other Business
6. Recommendations
7. Date and time of next meeting
8. Adjournment



**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on  
Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

08 April 2025  
via Webex

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## **Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

08 April 2025  
via Webex

### **1. Opening by co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada)**

The Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada) opened the meeting at 09:03 hours (UTC -3 hours) on Tuesday, 08 April 2025 via Webex, and welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, and the United States of America, as well as an accredited observer (Annex 1).

### **2. Appointment of rapporteur**

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur.

### **3. Adoption of agenda**

The agenda was adopted, as outlined in Annex 2.

### **4. Progress on the MSE process for 3LN redfish**

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) provided an overview and update on the progress of the management strategy evaluation (MSE) for redfish in NAFO Divisions 3LN from the 2025 January Scientific Council meeting ([SCS Doc. 25/02](#)) where new dynamic factor analysis (DFA) and updated SURBA models were presented. DFA models identified two common trends, one that described 3LN redfish adult survey indices and one that described juvenile indices that were related to a combination of lagged ocean climate drivers. However, it was noted that how to integrate the ocean climate drivers into existing models remained difficult given a lack of understanding of the mechanisms driving these processes. Updates to the existing SURBA models were also discussed and, in all cases, uncertainty estimates on the population processes remained high, indicating the model formulations did not appear to capture underlying population processes.

Scientific Council conclusions from the January 2025 meeting noted that given the updated results, moving forward with an MSE may not be worth the time and capacity required; however, it was agreed that simulation testing of example candidate management procedures may be helpful. It was also suggested at the January meeting that a viable way forward would be to produce a management procedure that complies with the revised Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF; Annex 4 of the [COM-SC Doc. 24-03](#)). It was flagged that the Designated Expert (DE) position for the stock was currently vacant and was not expected to be filled before the upcoming 05 May 2025 STACREC meeting. As such, it was noted that since January 2025 no progress has been made in addressing the Scientific Council conclusions and this would most likely not allow for enough time to address them before the June meeting. The progress that can be made on this matter will continue to be uncertain until a new DE is appointed and becomes familiar with the stock. The working group asked the Secretariat if the new Senior Science Coordinator would have the capacity to contribute to the MSE work; the Secretariat noted that discussions within the Scientific Council are still required before the Senior Science Coordinator projects and workload capacity are finalized.

It was also noted that the Scientific Council provided advice for two years for 3LN redfish in June 2024, whereas a TAC was set by the Commission for 2025 only, and a TAC decision for 2026 will be required by the Commission in September. It was noted that an issue exists since the Commission has not requested a full assessment for June 2025, therefore an interim monitoring report (IMR) will inform that decision. After some discussion on possible options and mechanisms to facilitate a request for a new assessment in June, the working group agreed to not pursue any action at this stage and wait until the Scientific Council finalized the IMR in June. The IMR will help determine if there is a significant difference in stock status, and Contracting Parties



could subsequently submit questions to the Scientific Council if necessary to inform their consideration of the Commission's decision on the 2026 TAC in September.

Doug Butterworth (Japan) provided a brief update on ongoing work to develop a simple production model for use as an operating model for the 3LN redfish MSE. A preliminary document was circulated, and details will be presented and discussed at the upcoming Scientific Council Meetings. The working group thanked Japan for their contribution and look forward to seeing the outcomes from the Scientific Council discussions at the July meeting.

## **5. 2+3KLMNO Greenland Halibut MSE exceptional circumstances**

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) reflected on the management procedure (MP) and revised exceptional circumstances protocol that were adopted by the Commission at the 2024 Annual Meeting ([COM Doc. 24-25](#)). It was noted that as in last year (2024), there are more than two survey values missing in a five-year period from a survey used in the MP (resulting from gaps in the EU-Spain 3L survey), as such, exceptional circumstances are occurring. The WG-RBMS noted the exceptional circumstances and agreed that the Scientific Council move forward with sensitivity tests (as in the previous year) to determine the impacts to the MP outputs and provide advice for 2026 following a similar approach to the one used last year ([COM-SC Doc. 24-03](#)).

## **6. Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF) reference points**

The Chair of the Precautionary Approach Framework Working Group (PA-WG), Fernando González-Costas (European Union), presented an update from the meeting that took place in December 2024 ([SCS Doc. 24/21](#)). In moving forward with applying the revised PAF, it was agreed that the DEs with a full assessment in a given year would work towards the development of reference points that can be used in the PAF that year. It was noted that the preference would be to use different methods to estimate the reference points based on available data and knowledge. The intention is to discuss and approve the final PA reference points at a meeting of the Scientific Council / PA-WG scheduled for 06 May 2025.

The working group thanked the PA-WG Chair and the Scientific Council for the update on this work. It was noted that the adoption of the PAF at the 2024 Annual Meeting was the result of considerable hard work by the Scientific Council and the WG-RBMS, and the working group looks forward to reviewing the results of the implementation of the PAF that are provided by the Scientific Council meeting in June 2025.

## **7. Other Business**

### **a. Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0**

The WG-RBMS co-Chair, Ray Walsh (Canada), provided an updated in relation to recommendation 5 from the August 2024 WG-RBMS meeting ([COM-SC Doc. 24-03](#)). The recommendation was for the Commission to *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*. Following the adoption of the recommendation by the Commission at the 2024 Annual Meeting, correspondence was sent to the MSC from the Chair of the Commission (NAFO/25-049) in February 2025. A response was received from the MSC acknowledging the receipt of the letter and noting that a detailed response will be provided; however, no further updates had been received at the time of this meeting.

### **b. PAF outreach**

The WG-RBMS co-Chairs provided an update on some outreach activities related to the adoption of the revised PAF in NAFO.

The co-Chairs participated in the FAO Deep-sea fisheries project (DSF) webinar on the *Application of the precautionary approach to the management of deep-sea fish stocks* that took place on 15 October 2024. The co-Chairs provided a presentation outlining the challenges with the original PAF in NAFO, the conclusions of the PA workshop that was held in August 2022, the work that went into the development and testing of the revised PAF, and information on the PAF that was adopted at the 2024 Annual Meeting. It was noted that the response from webinar participants was positive, and there was recognition of NAFO as a leader in this work.

The co-Chairs also noted that they have been invited to participate in another webinar being hosted by HarvestStrategies.org titled *Expanding the Reach: Management Procedures at General RFMOs* scheduled to take place on 29 April 2025. The presentation will be titled *The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization's Leadership: First International MSE-Tested Management Procedure and New Precautionary Approach Framework* and will follow a similar structure to the presentation that was provided at the FAO-DSF webinar.

## 8. 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 3LN redfish:

The working group took note of the updates on the progress for the 3LN redfish MSE, and the Scientific Council conclusions from the January 2025 meeting, as well as other ongoing related work. The working group encouraged the Scientific Council to continue to explore next steps towards an MSE, as capacity allows.

In relation to the exceptional circumstances for the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut MSE:

The working group noted that exceptional circumstances are occurring due to recent gaps in the EU-Spain 3L series. The group encouraged the Scientific Council to proceed with sensitivity testing as in the previous year and work to provide advice on the total allowable catch for 2026 following a similar approach to the one used last year.

## 9. Adoption of report

The report was adopted via correspondence following the end of the meeting.

## 10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:17 hours (UTC -3 hours).

The working group acknowledged and thanked the Scientific Council for their work and noted that the next WG-RBMS meeting will take place during the week of 14-18 July 2025 in Tallinn, Estonia, with the WG-RBMS being tentatively scheduled to start on the afternoon of 16 July 2025.

It was also noted that this would be the last NAFO meeting for Katherine Sosebee (United States of America), who has worked with the NAFO Scientific Council, including as past Chair of the Scientific Council and of other working groups, for many years. The working group participants thanked Katherine for all of her work in NAFO and wished her the best in her retirement.

**Annex 1. List of Participants**

<b>CO-CHAIRS</b>	González-Costas, Fernando (European Union) Walsh, Ray (Canada)
<b>SC CHAIR</b>	González-Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
<b>CANADA</b>	Burridge, Angela Byrne, Vanessa Fagan, Bob Johnson, Kate Koen- Alonso, Mariano Krohn, Martha Simpson, Mark Varkey, Divya
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	Nygård Bak, Rebekka Svarrer Wang, Ulla
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	Alpoim, Ricardo Belmonte, Luis Blazkiewicz, Bernard Fernández, Francisco Garrido Fernández, Irene Lopes, Luis Sommer, Tanja Tuvi, Aare Vielmini, Ilaria
<b>JAPAN</b>	Butterworth, Doug Rademeyer, Rebecca Taki, Kenji
<b>NORWAY</b>	Sandberg, Per
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	Fomin, Konstantin
<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	Jaburek, Shannah Kelly, Moira Sosebee, Kathy Warner-Kramer, Deirdre
<b>OBSERVERS</b>	<b>Ecology Action Centre:</b> Isnor, Holly
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana Bell MacCallum, Dayna LeFort, Lisa Perreault, Andrea

## **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. Progress on the MSE process for 3LN redfish
5. 2+3KLMNO Greenland Halibut MSE exceptional circumstances.
6. Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF) reference points
7. Other Business
  - a. Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0
  - b. PAF outreach
8. Recommendations
9. Adoption of report
10. Adjournment

## Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting

05-07 May 2025

Bergen, Norway

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## **Report of the NAFO Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC) Intersessional Meeting**

05-07 May 2025  
Bergen, Norway

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

The Chair, Patrick Moran (United States of America), opened the meeting at 9:00 hours on Monday, 05 May 2025. The Chair welcomed Frank Bakke-Jensen, the Director of Fisheries of the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries, who provided an opening address. The Chair welcomed representatives, both in person and virtually, from the following Contracting Parties (CPs): Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, 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**

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 25-02, STACTIC WP 25-03, and STACTIC WP 25-08), and agenda item 6 (if the NAFO Secretariat intends to display MCS website information that should be available only for control purposes). Following a brief discussion, Contracting Parties agreed that STACTIC WP 25-08 could be discussed in an open session, and only STACTIC WP 25-02 and STACTIC WP 25-03 were to be discussed in in-camera sessions.

The European Union proposed the addition of two items under agenda item 18 (Other business). First, an update on the NAFO Inspectors' Workshop, and secondly, a discussion on the implementation of the 2018 Flag State Performance Review Recommendations.

The agenda was adopted, with the changes highlighted above, as outlined in Annex 2.

### **4. Annual Compliance Review 2024**

The NAFO Secretariat presented the draft Compilation of Fisheries Reports 2024 in STACTIC WP 25-02 (Rev. 2). Contracting Parties thanked the Secretariat for the work and provided initial comments and clarifications.

The NAFO Secretariat also presented the Summary of Inspection Information for 2024 in STACTIC WP 25-03 (Rev. 3). One Contracting Party noted that the majority of infringements at-sea involve directed fishery violations, noting a concern with the definition of directed fishery. It was also noted that several vessels have repeated violations, and it would be interesting to review the information also in different formats, such as by vessel. The European Union highlighted the information by vessel is already included in STACTIC WP 25-03. Contracting Parties agreed to provide written feedback on the working paper prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the first draft of the Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review in STACTIC WP 25-04 (Rev. 2), and Contracting Parties provided initial comments and clarifications. Canada suggested that interested Contracting Parties meet to review the working paper further and draft the conclusions and recommendations sections in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting. The European Union, the United Kingdom, and other Contracting Parties expressed interest in participating in such a meeting and the Secretariat agreed to support meeting coordination.

The NAFO Secretariat presented the Summary of Observer Information for 2024 in STACTIC WP 25-08 (Rev. 2). The Secretariat noted that Contracting Parties raised some questions regarding the report. First, Contracting Parties are asked to provide in Part III of the template: *a summary of fishing trips where the figures of the observers in Part 4.B of the observer trip report are the same or very similar to the figures reported by the master; however*, there is no definition for “very similar” as it relates to the figures reported by the observer and the master. Second, Contracting Parties expressed confusion if Contracting Parties were required to report on whether the measures have been fully implemented or whether they were required to report specific occurrences where the measures were implemented. Several contracting parties highlighted their interpretation that Part I of the report aims at assessing the alignment of Contracting Parties’ internal procedures with the requirements of Article 30.

Contracting Parties discussed the utility of the Article 30 reporting template section comparing observer and master figures, and noted that Contracting Parties may need to provide additional information on how the observer and master figures are derived, and evaluate the instances of verbatim data. For example, some Contracting Parties included specific rationale for why the figures reported by the observer and the master are equal. It was noted that in some cases the estimates between the observer and the master are the same. While this alone, may not indicate a direct copying of the figures, the importance of having independent observer estimates was stressed. The European Union stressed that information relating to several infringements identified by inspectors could have been reported by observers.

It was stressed that possible non-compliances listed in the Article 30 reporting should be only those stemming from observer reports. Contracting Parties agreed to defer STACTIC WP 25-08 (Rev. 2) to the WG-OPR for further discussion and potential amendments to the Article 30 reporting template.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Contracting Parties provide any necessary revisions to STACTIC WP 25-02 (Rev. 2), STACTIC WP 25-03 (Rev. 3), and STACTIC WP 25-04 (Rev. 2) by 15 June 2025.**
- **Canada and the Secretariat to coordinate a meeting with interested Contracting Parties to review STACTIC WP 25-04 (Rev. 2), with the aim of drafting the conclusions and recommendations sections, prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **STACTIC WP 25-08 (Rev. 2) be forwarded to the WG-OPR for further discussion and potential amendments to the template of the report on the implementation of Article 30.**

## 5. Annual compliance review format

In March 2025, Canada and the Secretariat coordinated a virtual meeting with several Contracting Parties to review other RFMOs’ compliance reports and identify best practices that could be considered for adoption within NAFO. As a result, Canada presented questions for STACTIC’s consideration, accompanied by a draft outline of potential changes to the Annual Compliance review template in STACTIC WP 25-10. Contracting Parties provided initial comments pertaining to confidentiality of compliance information, the addition of quota uptake information, and the possible addition of case studies to the annual compliance review. The European Union suggested to include Electronic Monitoring information and highlighted the importance to evaluate the purpose of effort-specific information in the report, such as catch per unit effort (CPUE). Contracting Parties supported the concept of a revised compliance review process that would better inform mitigation measures STACTIC could recommend to the Commission. The Chair noted that the compliance review was an iterative process that would evolve to support the needs of NAFO and emerging and developing compliance issues. Canada welcomed further comments on the working paper prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada committed to working with Contracting Parties to evolve the proposal and will present a revised version of STACTIC WP 25-10 at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting. Contracting Parties are asked to provide any comments by 15 June 2025.**

## 6. NAFO MCS website and application development

The NAFO Secretariat noted its continuing work on the MCS Website, the Observer application, and the ePSC application. The Secretariat has received feedback from Contracting Parties on the MCS Website, and any potential updates will be presented at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The NAFO Secretariat will continue to work on the MCS Website and application development, with the intention of presenting updates at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**

## 7. Report and recommendations of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)

The Chair of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) (Brent Napier, Canada) provided a summary of the meeting that took place 22–24 January 2025 ([COM Doc. 25-02](#)).

At this meeting, the WG-OPR discussed the 2024 implementation of NAFO CEM Article 30, noting significant discussion on the use of observer derogation, and that clearer rules regarding the use of derogation from 100% observer coverage would be beneficial. The Secretariat provided an update on the development of the observer application, which is currently undergoing at-sea trials. The Secretariat is incorporating feedback from Contracting Parties into the application and finalizing all of the Annex II.M reporting fields.

The WG-OPR reviewed a proposal for amendments to Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02, and requested the NAFO Secretariat to develop a summary of the provisions that fall under the Rules of Confidentiality in the NAFO CEM to support a discussion at the 2025 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. The summary was presented in STACTIC WP 25-05. Some Contracting Parties noted that there is a need to review the provisions of Annex II.B. Specifically, one Contracting Party expressed reservation about expanding the scope of the terms of the Rules of Confidentiality without performing a full overhaul of the Rules to ensure textual alignment. Furthermore, several Contracting Parties noted that the Rules need to be updated to match current protocols. It was therefore agreed to forward the proposal outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 to the WG-OPR for continued discussion. The European Union highlighted that extensive discussions on STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 had been already held in the WG-OPR and invited parties to submit any proposed change to or questions on the proposal with the aim of finalizing the exercise by the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The European Union presented STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 4), which outlines a possible revision of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM to incorporate minimum standards for the electronic observation program. The paper is based on the recommendations established in STACTIC WP 22-48 (Rev. 2) and STACTIC WP 23-01 (Rev. 1). The European Union, noting the extensive discussions that have already taken place in the OPR WG, welcomed additional comments from Contracting Parties, which were incorporated during the meeting. Contracting Parties discussed several elements of electronic monitoring, such as the minimum standards outlined in the proposal, the process for reviewing video footage, and requirements for data storage and retention. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for their work on the proposal and agreed to provide additional comments on the proposal in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Canada presented the draft Shark Identification and Safe Handling and Release Guides in STACTIC WP 25-14. The guide was developed in collaboration with Oceans North (NGO) to improve shark species identification and handling practices by at-sea observers, masters, and inspectors operating in the NAFO Regulatory Area



(NRA). Canada welcomed comments from Contracting Parties on the draft guides ahead of the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The NAFO Secretariat noted that the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Deep Seas Fisheries (DSF) Project is developing a shark identification application, and any updates on that work will be presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The Chair of the WG-OPR also provided a progress update on the status of the work of the WG-OPR in STACTIC WP 25-11 and recommended extending the mandate of the WG-OPR to continue working on outstanding items, such as the use/implementation of the observer application and the observer reporting requirements. Contracting Parties agreed that an additional virtual WG-OPR be scheduled in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting to continue these discussions and report back to STACTIC at the NAFO Annual Meeting 2025.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The proposal outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 be forwarded back to the WG-OPR for further discussion on the basis of additional comments or questions to be submitted to the European Union by the other Contracting Parties by 31 July 2025.**
- **Contracting Parties would provide additional comments on STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 4) for further discussion at the STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties would provide comments to Canada on the draft Shark Identification and Safe Handling and Release Guides, outlined in STACTIC WP 25-14, by 04 July 2025.**
- **The Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR) to meet prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting to finalize the outstanding items identified in STACTIC WP 25-11.**

## **8. Report and recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)**

The Editorial Drafting Group (EDG) met in November 2024 to review the 2025 draft NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) (STACTIC WP 24-30). The EDG forwarded a few items to STACTIC for consideration, which were addressed under other agenda items.

## **9. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM**

Canada proposed additional control measures relating to vessels engaging in non-compliant activities while employing the derogation from observer coverage (Article 30) in STACTIC WP 25-12. Contracting Parties provided initial comments, and some concerns were noted, including potential due process issues, challenges with deploying an observer for an entire year after a vessels derogation eligibility had been temporarily revoked, and the differences in trip lengths between Contracting Parties. Canada presented a revised proposal in STACTIC WP 25-12 (Rev.), and Contracting Parties agreed to provide any further comments to Canada in advance of the 2025 Annual Meeting.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and Iceland pointed out, that they can not support the proposal as it stands, and they would like to further discuss it at the STACTIC Annual Meeting 2025.

The European Union proposed the addition of a new article in the NAFO CEM obligating all vessels with length overall >15 meters operating in the NRA to be equipped with and to maintain continuously operational an Automatic Identification System (AIS) in STACTIC WP 25-13, recognizing the usefulness of the tool for inspection planning and monitoring and control purposes and stressing the already existing obligation stemming from other international instruments for the currently authorized vessels to be equipped with AIS. Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for their proposal and shared experiences with AIS to support an ongoing conversation about AIS implementation in NAFO, noting that other RFMOs are discussing and adopting specific measures on AIS. Contracting Parties discussed various aspects of AIS, such as cost, reliability, resolution, frequency of signals, and the implications of satellite services being in the public domain. One

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Contracting Party outlined areas of concern with using AIS, questioning how the data would be received, stored, and for how long. Another Contracting Party noted that potentially not all vessels fishing in the NRA meet the IMO AIS carriage requirement of 300 GT. Following a specific question by a Contracting Party, the European Union clarified that the intention was not to replace the current Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) but rather provide inspectors with an additional monitoring, control and enforcement tool.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Canada will present a revised version of STACTIC WP 25-12 (Rev.) at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties provide any additional comments to the European Union on STACTIC WP 25-13 ahead of the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Contracting Parties to consider sharing experiences on the use of AIS as monitoring, control and surveillance tool.**

#### **10. 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 25-06, noting that three research plans have been received to date in 2025.

#### **11. Review of specific measures in Article 6 of the NAFO CEM**

##### **a. Measures relating to the cod fishery**

In accordance with Article 6.11 of the NAFO CEM, Contracting Parties reviewed the measures referred to in paragraphs 8 (i) and 8 (ii), adopted in COM Doc. 24-10. It was noted that, to date, the new measures have not been utilized, but that a fulsome discussion on the measures should take place at the 2025 Annual Meeting and requested that the Secretariat conduct a similar analysis to the yellowtail flounder analysis in preparation for those discussions. The United Kingdom welcomed further comments on Contracting Parties' experiences in using the measures, prior to the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

##### **b. Measures relating to the yellowtail flounder fishery**

In accordance with Article 6.12 of the NAFO CEM, STACTIC is required to review the provisions in paragraphs 6.3(g) and 8 bis. It was noted that there has been insufficient fishing activity to inform an analysis of measures at this time, and that further information would be required to complete the review. It was agreed that the Secretariat will provide an update to the analysis that was presented in STACTIC WP 24-26 for presentation at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

The European Union noted the importance of continuing the discussion on the opportunity to remove several derogations not actually used, and invited other Contracting Parties to consider looking at derogations in a horizontal manner, to avoid more ad-hoc rules creating confusion and lack of clarity for inspectors.

##### **c. Numbering of Article 6.8 of the NAFO CEM**

Contracting Parties discussed the numbering of Article 6.8, as recommended at the November 2024 EDG Meeting. The United Kingdom proposed re-numbering of Article 6.8 in STACTIC WP 25-15 (Rev.). Contracting Parties agreed that Article 6.8 requires re-numbering, but noted that the text of the articles will also be under review at the 2025 Annual Meeting. As such, it was agreed to continue discussions at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **With guidance from interested Contracting Parties, the Secretariat will conduct an analysis of the available data to facilitate the review of the measures outlined in Article 6.8(i) and 6.8(ii) of the NAFO CEM.**
- **The NAFO Secretariat will update the analysis on the yellowtail flounder fishery, outlined in STACTIC WP 24-26, for presentation at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.**
- **Article 6.8 of the NAFO CEM requires re-numbering, and that discussions on the re-numbering will continue at the 2025 Annual Meeting.**

## **12. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures**

Following the adoption of the changes in the NAFO CEM relating to surveillance procedures (COM Doc. 24-06), it was agreed that STACTIC will consider whether a standardized template for sightings reports is required. Canada noted that the current process was the most practical at this time, but will evaluate whether a standardized template would improve the process. The European Union offered to engage with Canada on a possible way forward, if needed.

Norway raised a question on whether the amendment of Article 38.3(c)(i)(5), that was adopted in COM Doc. 24-17 was intended to prohibit directed fishing for cod in Division 3L without the use of a sorting grid when there is no observer on board, noting that it is not prohibited under Article 13.9. Norway, together with Canada agreed to review this issue with the potential to bring a proposal forward at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **Norway, together with Canada, agreed to review this issue with the potential to bring a proposal forward at the 2025 Annual Meeting.**

## **13. Discussion on the definition of directed fishery and bycatches**

It was noted that the Ad hoc Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing on Bycatch, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area has not yet taken place, and the Secretariat agreed to keep STACTIC informed on the outcomes of the discussion in the working group.

The NAFO Secretariat presented instances of the use of terms other than “directed fishery” in the NAFO CEM in STACTIC EDG-WP 24-02. It was noted that a review was required of these instances to determine if there is a need for alignment of terms, and it was agreed to forward this to the EDG for discussion at their next meeting.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The EDG will review the identified cases in STACTIC EDG-WP 24-02 where similar terms to “directed fishery” were used in the NAFO CEM with the view to standardize the terms in alignment with the established definition within the NAFO CEM.**
- **The Secretariat will inform STACTIC on the progress of the discussions in the WG-BDS.**

## **14. Introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)**

The United Kingdom proposed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Working Group on the Introduction of Flux UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX) in STACTIC WP 25-01. This was a joint proposal from the United Kingdom, the European Union and Norway. Contracting Parties thanked the United Kingdom for the proposal and offered some comments on the draft ToRs to ensure the scope did not presuppose a commitment to adopting FLUX. Contracting Parties wanted to ensure an objective analysis is

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performed and proper endorsements are received from the Commission throughout the process. Comments from Contracting Parties were incorporated into the proposal to address procedural concerns, and STACTIC agreed on the final draft of the ToRs outlined in STACTIC WP 25-01 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that the FLUX standard was agreed in NEAFC, and thus encouraged Contracting Parties to implement the same format in NAFO, since several Parties in NAFO are also Parties in NEAFC and some vessels operate in both RFMOs.

Gareth Norman, the Head of Fisheries Systems for the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS), provided a presentation on Using FLUX for International Fisheries Data Exchange. Contracting Parties engaged in a conversation on the presentation and thanked Gareth and the United Kingdom for their efforts.

It was **agreed** that:

- **To move forward with the Working Group on the Introduction of FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX) as outlined in the Terms of Reference in STACTIC WP 25-01 (Rev. 2) (Annex 3).**

## 15. Practical application of port State measures in NAFO

At the 2024 STACTIC Annual Meeting, it was agreed that Contracting Parties reflect on STACTIC WP 24-20 (Rev. 5) and consider whether a uniform approach to the calculation of the percent difference in the PSC3 forms in NAFO is needed. It was noted that Contracting Parties have two different ways of completing this calculation. There was discussion on whether Contracting Parties need to have the same method for calculating percent differences in PSC3 forms, as the enforcement rules are different in each Party, and that there are many factors that need to be considered, such as quantity of species, if selecting a threshold.

Some Contracting Parties expressed concern with maintaining two different models, and while agreement could not be reached on a uniform approach at this meeting, all Contracting Parties committed to further reflection on a way forward.

To assist in further discussion on this matter, the NAFO Secretariat, with assistance from interested Contracting Parties, will conduct an analysis of the port inspection data to facilitate the review of the frequency of the instances where the difference between declared weight and landed weight identified in PSC3 reports.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The Secretariat, with assistance from interested Contracting Parties, will conduct an analysis of the port inspection data to facilitate the review of declared catches versus inspected landed catches and the impacts of using two different denominators.**

## 16. Review and evaluation of practices and procedures

The NAFO Secretariat presented the latest list of Contracting Party practices and procedures in STACTIC WP 25-07.

## 17. 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 25-09, noting that there are no vessels on the NAFO Provisional IUU List as of 10 April 2025, and noted that an updated version of the working paper will be presented at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

The Secretariat noted that the current process of the IUU cross-listing can be cumbersome, and that data is manually extracted from multiple sources to create the list, therefore the margin for error is large.

The workload of this process is not a concern for the Secretariat. Canada suggested that tools, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), could be explored to potentially support this process. Canada acknowledged the significant workload, but highlighted the importance of this as a deterrent to IUU activity.

## **18. Other business**

### **a. Inspectors' Workshop**

The European Union offered to host the next Inspectors' Workshop in 2026, noting that workload issues have delayed the meeting.

### **b. Flag State Performance Review**

The European Union highlighted the agreement from the 2024 Annual Meeting for Contracting Parties to complete the self-assessments of flag State performance for presentation at the 2026 STACTIC Intersessional Meeting. Canada noted that it had begun the scoping exercise and advised Contracting Parties of the significant effort that will be required to complete the process, further noting that although Canada remained committed to completing the task, the current deadline of 2026 may be somewhat ambitious and an extended timeline may need to be considered in the future to allow all Contracting Parties to complete the exercise.

### **c. Methods for transmitting fishing information to the NAFO Secretariat**

The Delegation of Ukraine reported that they are preparing for one vessel to begin fishing activity in the NRA, but noted technological challenges related to transmittal of fishing data, as electronic communication channels have not been established in Ukraine. Ukraine is exploring the option of connecting one vessel directly to the Secretariat on a temporary basis to transmit fishing data. The Secretariat noted that this approach has not been used before, therefore challenges are unknown. Canada and the European Union noted they may be able to explore the possibility to offer assistance and will discuss internally whether they can support the Ukrainian vessel through their Fisheries Monitoring Center (FMC).

## **19. Time and place of next meeting**

The next STACTIC meeting will be held in Halifax, Canada from 15–19 September 2025.

## **20. Adoption of report**

The report was adopted on 07 May 2025, prior to the adjournment of the meeting.

## **21. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 hours on 07 May 2025. Contracting Parties expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Chair for his leadership. The Chair and Contracting Parties thanked Norway 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 2024
5. Annual compliance review format
6. NAFO MCS website and application development
7. Report and recommendations of the Observer Program Review Working Group (WG-OPR)
8. Report and recommendations of the Editorial Drafting Group (EDG)
9. New and pending proposals on enforcement measures: Possible revisions of the NAFO CEM
10. Discussion on the review of Article 4 of the NAFO CEM
11. Review and specific measures in Article 6 of the NAFO CEM
  - a. Measures relating to the cod fishery in Division 3M
  - b. Measures relating to the yellowtail flounder fishery
  - c. Numbering of Article 6.8 of the NAFO CEM
12. Half-year review of the implementation of new NAFO CEM measures
13. Discussion on the definition of directed fishery and bycatches
14. Introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the international standard UN/CEFACT “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (FLUX)
15. Practical application of port State measures in NAFO
16. Review and evaluation of practices and procedures
17. Review of current IUU list pursuant to NAFO CEM Article 53
18. Other business
  - a. Inspector Workshop
  - b. Flag State Performance Review
  - c. Methods for transmitting fishing information to the NAFO Secretariat
19. Time and place of next meeting
20. Adoption of report
21. Adjournment

Report of STACTIC,  
05-07 May 2025

### **Annex 3. STACTIC Working Paper 25-01 (Rev. 2) “Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Working Group on the Introduction of FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard for fisheries data exchanges in NAFO (WG-FLUX)”**

#### **Background**

At the NAFO annual meeting in September 2024 the NAFO Commission agreed to request STACTIC to review the potential necessary changes and technical preparations needed to consider the introduction of the international UN/CEFACT standard “Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange” (UN/FLUX).

The UN/FLUX standard may be used for all data exchanged between FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat. UN/FLUX can be introduced stepwise, focusing first on vessel position reports (Vessel Monitoring Systems – CEM article 29) and fishing activities data (Monitoring of Catch – CEM article 28).

STACTIC has been requested to carry out any necessary consultations with other NAFO bodies and the NAFO Executive Secretariat and present its conclusions to the NAFO Commission.

#### **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 an understanding of data exchange and the required technical knowledge to input into this group. Participation of JAGDM representatives and experts with experience in implementing UN/FLUX standard in other RFMOs or domestically is also encouraged.

The WG should consult JAGDM and other NAFO subsidiary bodies when deemed necessary.

The group will be chaired by Imogen Smith-Devey – UK.

#### **Objective**

To assess the necessary preparations to allow the appropriate NAFO bodies and the Commission to consider the introduction of electronic communication between FMCs and NAFO using the UN/FLUX standard.

#### **Tasks**

The working group will be tasked with identifying and assessing the necessary preparations to allow the appropriate NAFO bodies and the Commission to consider the introduction of electronic communication between NAFO Contracting Parties’ FMCs and the NAFO secretariat of position and fishing logbook data based on UN/FLUX standard. Conclusions of each task will be reported to STACTIC:

1. Identify technical developments, and the administrative and economic consequences to allow the NAFO Secretariat and Contracting Parties to receive, handle, and reply to data, and present that data for conservation and enforcement purposes using UN/FLUX standard.
2. Consider technical specifications of the system architecture and data flow requirements, as well as assessing the suitability of existing implementation in other RFMOs.

Following the assessment on items 1, and 2, and subject to endorsement from the necessary NAFO bodies and the Commission, the working group will seek to review the following tasks:

3. To explore and to establish testing regimes, and implementation timelines, as appropriate.
4. To consider transition arrangements, as appropriate.

5. Identify necessary amendments to the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement (CEM) to establish requirements to use UN/FLUX as the format for electronic communication between the Contracting Parties FMCs and the NAFO Secretariat.

**Meetings**

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

A first meeting should be organised before September 2025.

**Reporting**

At each STACTIC meeting, the WG chair should inform STACTIC of the WG progress and conclusions.

Additionally, the WG will report the conclusions of these tasks to the necessary NAFO bodies and the Commission once complete.



**Report of the interim virtual meeting of the NAFO Commission *Ad hoc* Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area**

Wednesday, 09 July 2025  
via Webex

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**Report of the interim virtual meeting of the NAFO Commission *Ad hoc* Working Group to Reflect on the Rules Governing Bycatches, Discards and Selectivity (WG-BDS) in the NAFO Regulatory Area**

Wednesday, 09 July 2025  
via Webex

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

The Chair, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America), opened the meeting at 09:04 hours (UTC -3 hours) on Thursday, 09 July 2025 via Webex, and welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and the United States of America (Annex 1).

**2. Appointment of Rapporteur**

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted, as outlined in Annex 2.

**4. Overview of NAFO's current measures relating to directed fisheries and mitigating bycatch of moratoria species**

The Chair opened the discussions by inviting the NAFO Secretariat to present a working paper that was prepared to outline the existing bycatch and move along provisions that are included in the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM). Contracting Parties thanked the NAFO Secretariat for the compilation, noting that it would be beneficial to include the specific CEM article references in the diagrams. The NAFO Secretariat agree to work to update the documents to include the relevant references.

It was noted that many of the measures were put into place to meet specific goals of protecting moratoria species, managing bycatch, and overall quota management, and that it would be important that any changes proposed to the measures ensure that those goals are still being met. In line with that, the NAFO Secretariat was requested to draft a working paper with a review the history of the implementation of each of the measures, including any available scientific and management rationale for assigning the specific percentage limits. It was also noted that many fisheries in NAFO are mixed fisheries, and the quotas for each Contracting Party need to be taken into consideration when doing any sort of analyses of the bycatch measures. Discussions were also had on the importance of noting the differences between the discussions on the directed fishing policy in NAFO in general and the bycatch management provisions.

**5. Review of NAFO's Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards**

The Chair provided a summary on the work that has been done to date in relation to the BDS Action Plan ([COM Doc. 17-26](#)) and highlighted a compilation of the relevant documents and reports that was prepared by the NAFO Secretariat. The Chair reflected on the number of actions that have been completed in items 1-3 of the action plan, but that there had not been much progress on task 4 relating to the development of management options. Contracting Parties agreed that the action plan is still a relevant document and that NAFO should continue to work towards completing the specific actions outlined in the plan. It was noted that it would be beneficial to update the data analyses that were completed within tasks 1-3 of the action plan to include the most recent data, as the previous analysis included acknowledged data gaps. There were discussions on whether the entire analysis should be re-done, whether specific species / stocks should be looked into, or whether just those stocks that have had recent derogation measures introduced in the NAFO CEM should be analyzed. It was highlighted that STACTIC will be reviewing some of the recent measures that were introduced in the NAFO CEM relating to derogations from the existing bycatch rules, as per the provisions in Articles 6.11 and 6.12 of the NAFO CEM, and while it would be beneficial to have the results of these STACTIC discussions,



expected to occur at the Annual Meeting to facilitate continued discussions in WG-BDS, it was also flagged that the WG-BDS discussions could be more broadly focused on policy and management. In relation to any updated data analyses, the NAFO Secretariat noted that it would not have the time required to have this work completed in advance of the NAFO Annual Meeting.

## **6. Framing of key issues and decision points for the next meeting of the Working Group**

The importance of taking a holistic look at the bycatch measures and the discard policy in NAFO was noted during the discussions, and the NAFO Secretariat was tasked with updating the summary documents to include specific article references, as well as preparing a comprehensive review of the history of the implementation of each of the measures to facilitate discussions at the next WG-BDS meeting. Contracting Parties were encouraged to review the previous analysis that was presented to the WG-BDS meeting in 2021 (COM BDS-WP 21-01 and [COM Doc. 21-04](#)). It was agreed that an updated analysis would be beneficial to facilitate the discussions, but there was no agreement on specific tasks for the NAFO Secretariat with (re-doing the previous analysis, focusing on specific species / stocks, etc.). It was also noted that some analyses are being completed in other bodies (e.g. STACTIC) and that efforts should not be duplicated. The Chair of the Scientific Council noted that members of the Scientific Council are interested in participating in the work of the WG-BDS, and that there could be benefits from converting the working group to a joint Commission–Scientific Council working group. There was also some discussion on a potential questionnaire to be completed by Contracting Parties to obtain feedback on specific experiences with the measures, however there was not an agreement to develop such a questionnaire.

Contracting Parties agreed to continue discussions bilaterally, and during the upcoming joint working group meetings to determine if there would be enough updated information available by 14 September 2025 to merit moving forward with the additional meeting, or if it will need to be rescheduled at a later date. A decision on this will be communicated via correspondence in the coming weeks.

## **7. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

## **8. Time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the WG-BDS is tentatively scheduled to take place on 14 September 2025, however this will be confirmed via correspondence in the coming weeks.

## **9. Adoption of Report**

The report was adopted via correspondence following the end of the meeting.

## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 hours (UTC -3 hours).

### Annex 1. List of Participants

<b>CHAIR</b>	Warner-Kramer, Deirdre (USA)
<b>SC CHAIR</b>	González-Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
<b>CANADA</b>	Brown, Dion Fagan, Robert Marsden, Dale Napier, Brent Williams, Todd Zegarmistrz, Justyna
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	Gaardlykke, Meinhard Holm, Jannik Wang, Ulla S.
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	Blazkiewicz, Bernard Babcionis, Genadijus Casarotto, Edoardo Tuvi, Aare Vielmini, Ilaria Wysocka, Malgorzata
<b>JAPAN</b>	Batori, Koji Iwano, Taisuke Mitome, Haruki Moronuki, Hideki Suzuki, Hyoue Taki, Kenji
<b>NORWAY</b>	Bakke, Gunnstein
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	Fomin, Konstantin
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	Gawlyk, Joe Sharples, James Smith-Devey, Imogen
<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	Jaburek, Shannah Kelly, Moira Mencher, Elizabethann Pohl, Katie Provencher, Eric Tyhach, Lea
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana LeFort, Lisa Perreault, Andrea Thompson, Catherine

**Annex 2. Agenda**

- 1. Opening by Chair, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (United States of America)**
- 2. Appointment of Rapporteur**
- 3. Adoption of Agenda**
- 4. Overview of NAFO's current measures relating to directed fisheries and mitigating bycatch of moratoria species**

*What is the context and structure of NAFO's general bycatch management approach, including specific bycatch limits, move-along provisions, and directed fishing measures? Is there information about changes in NAFO fisheries, implementation challenges, or gaps in the current scheme?*
- 5. Review of NAFO's Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards**

*How has NAFO progressed against the overarching goals in the Action Plan? Is there new information that would warrant revisiting the actions and priorities specified in the plan? Are the management options listed in section 4 still relevant, and is there interest in revisiting options?*
- 6. Framing of key issues and decision points for the next meeting of the Working Group**

*What are the priority issues to take up at the September meeting? What additional information, analysis, or actions are needed in advance of that meeting?*
- 7. Other Business**
- 8. Time and place of next meeting**
- 9. Adoption of Report**
- 10. Adjournment**



## Report of the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting

14–16 July 2025

Tallinn, Estonia

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## **Report of the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting**

14–16 July 2025  
Tallinn, Estonia

### **1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America)**

The meeting was opened by the co-Chairs, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America), at 09:32 hours (UTC +3 hours) on Monday, 14 July 2025. The Scientific Council Chair acted as co-Chair for this meeting. 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, United Kingdom, and the United States of America, and the Chair of the Scientific Council (Annex 1).

### **2. Appointment of Rapporteur**

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur of this meeting.

### **3. Adoption of Agenda**

The working group agreed to add two agenda items under “Other Business”, progress on addressing the Scientific Council’s workload and planning of the upcoming Performance Review. The working group further agreed that the BDS Action Plan discussions under agenda item 9 were no longer necessary since the WG-BDS has been reinstated, and the item was removed from the agenda.

The agenda was adopted following the revisions above and is outlined in Annex 2.

### **4. Presentation of Scientific Council Responses to Commission Requests for Advice (COM Doc. 24-18) Relevant to WG-EAFFM**

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented a summary of the Scientific Council advice relevant to the WG-EAFFM ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)), noting that the specific items would be explored in greater depth in subsequent agenda items.

The Scientific Council Chair presented an update on the work relating to Commission Request 10 ([COM Doc. 24-18](#)) regarding the consultancy for including climate variables into NAFO’s stock assessment processes. The Scientific Council reviewed the report and case studies from the consultant and noted that the short duration of the contract limited the scope of the analysis. The Scientific Council noted the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to address the impacts of climate change and reiterated the 2024 recommendation to organize a dedicated in-person meeting to evaluate the options and design an approach for integrating climate variables throughout Scientific Council operations ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)). The working group noted it required more information on resource implications for such a meeting for Commission consideration. Accordingly, the WG-EAFFM recommended that the Commission task the Scientific Council, as capacity allows, to draft a document scoping the details of what the dedicated meeting would entail, including information on the scope of the meeting, the scientific and workload capacity requirements, and potential financial implications, noting that, if it is to be held, such a meeting should be scheduled at a time that best fits the Scientific Council schedule. Decisions on next steps, including whether or not to hold such a meeting, will be informed by this document.

A WG-EAFFM member asked how other RFMOs are addressing the impacts of climate change. The NAFO Secretariat noted that the FAO [Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network \(RSN\)](#) is organizing a workshop in October 2025 titled *Mainstreaming climate change into international fisheries governance: The case of Regional Fisheries Bodies in the Atlantic Region* and that the information will be shared with participants.

The working group thanked the Scientific Council for their work and the SC Chair for the presentation.

## **5. VME and SAI Assessments**

### **a. Update on the Centralized Data Repository (COM Request 6.a)**

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 6.a on the ArcGIS Data Repository. It was noted that a trial version of the data repository website, along with administrative tools and an interactive mapping application, was successfully demonstrated at the WG-ESA meeting in 2024. It was highlighted that a number of topics were the focus of discussion at the June meeting, including i) financial planning, ii) licensing, iii) privacy, iv) data storage, v) metadata and vi) accessibility ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)). The WG-EAFFM thanked the Scientific Council for the update.

The working group discussed the Scientific Council recommendation for the NAFO Secretariat, Scientific Council, and each of the relevant Contracting Parties' data-providing institutes to develop a comprehensive data-sharing agreement for VME and SAI assessments, on a five-year rolling basis. The working group thanked the Scientific Council for the presentation and asked for additional information including whether there was a specific need for the Commission to be involved in the process, and if a five-year arrangement was necessary or if the current system of requesting data on a yearly basis was sufficient. It was clarified that the main driver for the request was motivated by the potential increase in efficiency of needing to request data once every five years instead of on a yearly basis. The working group encouraged further conversations between the parties involved in the agreement (i.e. NAFO Secretariat, Scientific Council and the data-providing Contracting Parties), noting there was no need for the Commission to be involved in these discussions, at this time.

### **b. Update on Reassessment of VMEs and Impact of Bottom Fisheries on VMEs for 2027 (COM Request 6.b)**

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 6.b regarding the progress on the reassessment of VMEs, including updates on the impacts of bottom fisheries on VMEs scheduled to be completed in 2027 ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)). It was noted that work is progressing on the revised schedule. At its November 2025 meeting, WG-ESA will review the VME polygons, with further review by the Scientific Council in June 2026. The Scientific Council will present its conclusions and recommendations at the 2026 WG-EAFFM meeting. Subsequently, WG-ESA will finalize the SAI analysis and the management options at its 2026 meeting and present those findings to the Scientific Council and WG-EAFFM in 2027.

In relation to the work on SAIs, a working group member questioned if information other than fishing activities will be included in the review, and the Scientific Council reported that the analysis is only considering fisheries impacts, reflecting the FAO Deep Sea Fisheries Guidelines and the information that been made available to the Scientific Council. The working group encouraged relevant Contracting Parties to provide technical expertise and information on fishery and non-fishery-based information to the Scientific Council to inform the SAI review and the development of potential management options. The working group discussed that engaging managers early in the process would be useful to inform any potential management options. Delegations were encouraged to share relevant information and to have managers potentially participate in upcoming WG-ESA meetings.

## **6. Ecosystem Roadmap**

### **a. Ecosystem Roadmap Document (COM Request 5)**

Mariano Koen-Alonso (Canada) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 5 on the development of a reference document detailing the ecosystem roadmap. The Scientific Council expedited the production of a draft of the detailed document given recent challenges in communicating the roadmap outside of NAFO. The Scientific Council requested feedback from managers on the content and structure of the document, specifically whether the document delivers on managers' expectations, contains an appropriate level of detail, and otherwise flag any major issues. Contracting Parties agreed to submit additional

comments to the draft document outlined in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 25-01 to the NAFO Secretariat by 29 August 2025. The NAFO Secretariat will compile the comments received and forward them to the Scientific Council for continued discussion at the September 2025 Scientific Council meeting.

#### **b. Ecosystem Sustainability of Catches (COM Request 1)**

Mariano Koen-Alonso (Canada) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 1 on providing annually the catch information in relation to 2TCI, including recent cumulative catch levels and a scoping of expected cumulative catch levels. The Scientific Council reported that scoped catch levels for 2025-2026 remain below the 2TCI Ecosystem Reference Point for the Grand Bank. However, piscivore guild catches in the Flemish Cap (3M) are scoped to exceed the 2TCI boundary in 2026, indicating a high risk of ecosystem overfishing. This is the first time that scoped catches are above the 2TCI. The working group, while noting that discussions would take place at the Annual Meeting, discussed some of the factors that could be contributing to the potential 2TCI and some of the assumptions in the modeling process. The working group also noted that 2TCI is a signal that both informs and reflects management decisions. The working group discussed whether the scoped catch levels warranted the development of advice or other information to the Commission but agreed that this was not necessary.

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) additionally raised that the Scientific Council considered that the updates on the Ecosystem Summary Sheets (ESS) were best reported along with the 2TCI information, as part of Commission Request 1, Annex A (Guidance for providing advice on Stocks Assessed). The WG-EAFFM supported the Scientific Council request that the ESS be included in Annex A of Commission Request 1, monitored annually and to be updated on a five-year cycle. Additionally, the WG-EAFFM recommends the Commission support the Scientific Council request to delay the next update of the ESS, currently scheduled for 2027, to 2028.

### **7. Development of Operational Objectives for the Protection of VMEs and Biodiversity in the NRA**

As agreed at the 2024 WG-EAFFM meeting, the co-Chairs provided an update on the continued work towards the development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity. The working group noted that NAFO has adopted and implemented several new or updated initiatives since the original request for operational objectives, such as the adoption of the revised Precautionary Approach, and the work on the document outlining the Ecosystem Roadmap. The working group discussed that these efforts may be duplicative, or may in the future, achieve the original goal of the operational objectives process. As such, the working group agreed that work on the operational objectives should be paused. The working group may revisit this work in future, if deemed necessary and appropriate by the Commission. If so, such work should take account of the implications of these other relevant efforts in NAFO.

### **8. Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) (COM Request 6.c)**

Andrew Kenny (United Kingdom) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 6.c on the development of materials for the potential submission of NAFO coral bottom fishing closed areas as OECMs. It was noted that the Scientific Council recommended to include the VME fisheries closures 7, 7a, 8-11, 11a, 12, 13, 14a and 14b in the next submission to the CBD Secretariat and to the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre for inclusion in the World Database on OECMs. The working group supported the Scientific Council, with assistance from the NAFO Secretariat, in continuing its efforts to develop the materials for the OECM submission for review at the 2026 WG-EAFFM meeting.

### **9. Greenland Shark Bycatch**

The NAFO Secretariat provided a summary of the observer data related to Greenland sharks, noting that various changes have been made to the observer reporting templates since 2019. The Scientific Council noted that it would be useful for Contracting Parties and WG-EAFFM to review [SCR Doc. 19/037](#), which provides an overview of sources of uncertainty in reported catches of Greenland shark within the NAFO Convention Area. The Scientific Council thanked the NAFO Secretariat for the presentation and work completed to date. The WG-



EAFFM reviewed and continued to support its work plan on Greenland Sharks, as approved in 2024 ([COM-SC Doc. 24-02](#)), including continuing relevant discussions at its 2026 meeting.

In line with the timeline adopted in 2024, the WG-EAFFM recommends that the Commission request Contracting Parties to provide updates on their efforts to implement the relevant provisions of the NAFO CEM, including any independent relevant research or data, in time for consideration by the Scientific Council at its June 2027 meeting and WG-EAFFM at its 2027 meeting.

## **10. Other Business**

### **a. Scientific Council Workload**

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented a review of the Scientific Council workplan and surrounding discussions that took place at the June 2025 Scientific Council meeting. It was flagged that Scientific Council identified a continued increase in requests from the Commission, coupled with an increase in the number of Scientific Council and working group meetings in recent years, despite a decrease in actively participating Scientific Council members, and a lack of Designated Experts and Scientific Council Chairs. It was noted that the workplan has shown a limited capacity to solve repeated concerns about the Scientific Council workload. It was also highlighted that an additional day was added to the June 2025 meeting to have dedicated discussions about the structure and function of Scientific Council. After these discussions, Scientific Council concluded that the structure of SC works well when properly resourced, however decreased capacity has prevented the Scientific Council from functioning as intended. It was also flagged that Scientific Council is deeply concerned about unfilled Chair positions for working groups and standing committees and noted that starting in September 2025 there will be three committees without Chairs (STACFEN, STACFIS and STACREC), four working groups without Chairs (WG-RBMS, WG-CESAG, PA-WG and climate change subgroup) and four Designated Expert positions vacant (3NOPs white hake, 3LNOs thorny skate, squid in Subareas 3+4 and 3LNO EPU).

The WG-EAFFM noted the dire situation with the lack of Chairs and Designated Experts, expressed the WG's strong concern, and recommended the Commission encourage Contracting Parties to find ways to ensure the positions are filled by the close of the September 2025 Annual Meeting.

### **b. Establishment of an ad hoc Virtual Working Group to Discuss a Potential Third NAFO Performance Review**

The Chair of STACFAD, Robert Fagan (Canada), provided an update on the virtual working group that will be established to discuss the scope and timelines for the next NAFO Performance Review ([COM Doc. 24-20](#)). The virtual working group will work intersessionally to develop draft Terms of Reference and criteria for the review. The working group will present the results of its work to the Commission at the 2026 Annual Meeting with a recommendation on whether to launch the next Performance Review of NAFO, if deemed appropriate.

In preparation for the establishment of this working group, Contracting Parties will be invited to submit representatives to participate in the working group as well as any matters that should be included in the scope. The WG-EAFFM thanked the STACFAD Chair for the update.

## **11. Recommendations**

The WG-EAFFM agreed to forward the following recommendations to the Scientific Council and the Commission for consideration and adoption at the 2025 Annual Meeting of NAFO:

- 1. In relation to discussions on the results of the climate change consultancy, the WG-EAFFM recommends that the Commission request the Scientific Council, as its workload allows, and in collaboration with the Secretariat, to draft a scoping document for a potential in-person meeting to explore approaches for further integrating information related to these issues throughout Scientific Council operations. This scoping document should identify the scientific expertise needed both within and outside Scientific Council and potential financial and workload implications.**

2. In relation to the updates of the Ecosystem Summary Sheets (ESS), the WG-EAFFM recommends the Commission support the Scientific Council request to delay the next update of the ESS, currently scheduled for 2027, to 2028.
3. In relation to the management of bycatch of Greenland sharks, the WG-EAFFM recommends that the Commission request Contracting Parties to provide updates on their efforts to implement the relevant provisions of the NAFO CEM, including any independent relevant research or data, in time for consideration by the Scientific Council at its 2027 June meeting and the WG-EAFFM at its 2027 meeting.
4. In relation to the Scientific Council's workload, WG-EAFFM notes the dire situation with the lack of Chairs and Designated Experts, expresses the WG's strong concern, and recommends the Commission encourage Contracting Parties to find ways to ensure the positions are filled by the close of the September 2025 Annual Meeting.

## **12. Adoption of the Report**

The report was adopted via correspondence following the end of the meeting.

## **13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 17:01 hours (UTC +3 hours) on Tuesday, 15 July 2025.

**Annex 1. List of Participants**

<b>CO-CHAIR</b>	Mencher, Elizabethann (United States of America)
<b>SC CHAIR and ACTING CO-CHAIR</b>	González Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>In-person</b> Byrne, Vanessa Fagan, Robert Kenchington, Ellen Koen-Alonso, Mariano Marsden, Dale Rayner, Gemma Simpson, Mark  <b>Virtual</b> Burridge, Angela Fuller, Susanna Zegarmistrz, Justyna
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Wang, Ulla S.
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	<b>In-person</b> Alpoim, Ricardo Blazkiewicz, Bernard Demblon, Jessica Garrido Fernández, Irene Gonçalves, Patricia Märtn, Kaire Teixeira, Isabel Tuvi, Aare Vielmini, Ilaria  <b>Virtual</b> Belmonte, Luis Mancebo, C. Margarita
<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>In-person</b> Bragi Bragason, Agnar
<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Butterworth, Doug Morishita, Joji Taki, Kenji
<b>NORWAY</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Bakke, Gunnstein Hallfreðsson, Elvar H.
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Fomin, Konstantin
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	<b>In-person</b> Gawlyk, Joe Gibbins, Imogen Sharples, James  <b>Virtual</b> Kenny, Andy

<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<b>In-person</b> Kelly, Moira Warner-Kramer, Deirdre  <b>Virtual</b> Jaburek, Shannah
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	<b>In-person</b> Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana LeFort, Lisa Perreault, Andrea

**Annex 2. Agenda**

1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Diana González-Troncoso (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. 24-18) relevant to WG-EAFFM
5. VME and SAI Assessments
  - a. Update on the centralized data repository (COM Request 6.a)
  - b. Update on reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2027 (COM Request 6.b)
6. Ecosystem Roadmap
  - a. Ecosystem Roadmap document (COM Request 5)
  - b. Ecosystem sustainability of catches (COM Request 1)
7. Development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA
8. Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) (COM Request 6.c)
9. Greenland shark bycatch
10. Other Business
  - a. Scientific Council workload
  - b. Establishment of an ad hoc Virtual Working Group to discuss a potential third NAFO Performance Review
11. Recommendations
12. Adoption of the report
13. Adjournment





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NAFO/COM-SC Doc. 25-04

**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on  
Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

16–18 July 2025

Tallinn, Estonia

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**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on  
Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting**

16–18 July 2025  
Tallinn, Estonia

**1. Opening by co-Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada)**

The Chairs, Fernando González-Costas (European Union) and Ray Walsh (Canada) opened the meeting at 14:10 hours (UTC +3 hours) on Wednesday, 16 July 2025, and welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Chair of the Scientific Council (Annex 1).

**2. Appointment of Rapporteur**

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur of this meeting.

**3. Adoption of Agenda**

The working group agreed to include the following items under agenda item 7 – Other Business:

- a. Scientific Council updates
- b. Establishment of an ad hoc Virtual Working Group to discuss a potential third NAFO Performance Review
- c. Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0
- d. NPFC PA workshop

The agenda was revised and adopted, as outlined in Annex 2.

**4. Application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland Halibut Management Strategy (COM Request 2)**

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union) presented the Scientific Council response ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)) to Commission request 2 (from [COM Doc. 24-18](#)). The Scientific Council Chair noted that exceptional circumstances are occurring due to gaps in the EU-Spain 3L survey series. Sensitivity analysis indicated that the application of the management Procedure (MP) adopted in 2024 was still appropriate. The WG-RBMS thanked the Scientific Council Chair for the presentation, and the Scientific Council for their work. Consistent with the Scientific Council advice, WG-RBMS agreed to recommend to the Commission that the Management Procedure be applied to set the TAC for 2026.

The working group discussed the timing of the review of the MSE, noting that the agreement at the 2024 meeting ([COM-SC Doc. 24-03](#)) was to complete an “update” assessment every three years, and a more in-depth MSE review after six years. 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. There was some confusion as to whether the three-year review would take place in 2026 or 2027, and the WG-RBMS, taking note of the considerable workload of the Scientific Council in 2026, clarified that three-year review will occur in 2027 and six-year in-depth review would take place in 2030.

**5. Progress on the MSE Process for 3LN Redfish (COM Request 3)**

Mariano Koen-Alonso (Canada) provided an update on the Scientific Council response to Commission request 3 relating to the MSE process for 3LN redfish. It was noted that during the January 2025 intersessional Scientific Council meeting, it was agreed that moving forward with an MSE at that stage may not be worth the time and



capacity required given the results shown. At the June 2025 meeting, the Scientific Council examined the results of the most recent modelling effort carried out by Japan to develop a simple production model for use as an operating model for the 3LN redfish MSE. While the additional work presented at the meeting was useful to inform potential paths forward, further work is required before operating models suitable for the MSE of this stock can be established. It was noted that the Scientific Council at its June 2025 meeting agreed to continue to explore the development of operating models taking into account the previously highlighted challenges. Progress on this work will be reviewed and discussed at the June 2026 Scientific Council meeting. In addition, there will be a parallel process to assess and estimate the reference points to provide the advice to 2027, as the 3LN redfish is scheduled to undergo a full assessment in 2026. The WG-RBMS thanked the Scientific Council for the update and the efforts made to date. It was noted that the Scientific Council has many full assessments to be completed at their June 2026 meeting, and that the Commission should be very aware of this workload when formulating the requests to the Scientific Council for 2026

## **6. Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF) Reference Points (COM Request 7)**

The Chair of the Precautionary Approach working group (PA-WG), Fernando González-Costas (European Union), provided an update on the progress towards the development of reference points for the stocks that had a full assessment at the June 2025 Scientific Council meeting ([SCS Doc. 24/21](#); [SCS Doc. 25/10](#); [SCS Doc. 25/13](#)). It was noted that due to the lack of a designated expert, the reference points for white hake in Divisions 3NOPs were not developed, and the same issue will occur with squid in Subareas 3+4 in September 2025. The PA-WG Chair also noted a series of general and stock specific choices that the Scientific Council took to implement the new PAF, such as  $B_{msy}$  proxies for stocks assessed with survey indices and how to set F levels for projections in the new PAF. The WG-RBMS took note of these choices and thanked the PA-WG Chair and the Scientific Council for the presentation and the work that went into applying the revised PAF. It was remarked that, when applying the PAF in future for other stocks, further assumptions may need to be made and reviewed by the WG-RBMS and the Commission.

As part of the discussions, it was observed that the Scientific Council advice from the draft June 2025 meeting report for redfish in Division 3O included very prescriptive language in the advice text (grey box). The revised PAF (Annex 4 of [COM-SC Doc. 24-03](#)) notes that the Scientific Council should not be prescriptive when providing the options in its advice. As such, the WG-RBMS agreed to recommend that the Scientific Council reconsider the prescriptive language in the latest advice on redfish in Division 3O and provide the Commission with additional information at the September 2025 Annual Meeting for consideration of a range of management options aligned with the PAF. It was also discussed the need or not to include in the summary sheets the grey box under the new PAF and the WG-RBMS conclusion was that it is convenient to keep the grey box in order to highlight the main considerations of the advice.

The Scientific Council Chair, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), highlighted that the previous PAF was contained within a stand-alone Fisheries Commission Document ([FC Doc. 04-18](#)), and that the revised PAF is currently contained within Annex 4 of the 2024 WG-RBMS report. It would be beneficial for it to be contained within a stand-alone document for easy reference and consultation. It was flagged that there were some changes to the risk table that was included in the Commission requests to the Scientific Council ([COM Doc. 24-18](#)) that would need to be included. As such, the WG-RBMS agreed to recommend that the Commission adopt a standalone Commission document containing the revised Precautionary Approach Framework, including the modifications to the risk table that were incorporated in the 2024 Commission requests, as outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 25-01 (Annex 3).

## **7. Other Business**

### **a. Scientific Council Updates**

#### *Scientific Council Workload*

The Chair of the Scientific Council, Diana González-Troncoso (European Union), presented an update on the current state of the Scientific Council workload and the discussions that took place at the June 2025 Scientific

Council meeting ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)). The Scientific Council identified an increase in requests as well as an increase in the number of Scientific Council and working group meetings in recent years in parallel to a decrease in Scientific Council members actively participating at the June meeting. It was stressed that the workplan has shown a limited capacity to solve repeated concerns about the Scientific Council workload. It was also highlighted that an additional day was added to the June 2025 meeting to have dedicated discussions about the structure and function of Scientific Council. After these discussions, Scientific Council concluded that the structure of SC works well when properly resourced, however decreased capacity has prevented the Scientific Council from functioning as intended. The Scientific Council Chair presented some options that were discussed when considering the workload, such as prioritizing benchmark assessments over MSEs and extending some of the scheduling of the full assessments. The WG-RBMS thanked the Scientific Council Chair for the presentation but noted that managing the stocks in NAFO is the core of the work of the organization, and that reducing the stock assessment frequency would not be the area to start looking at for ways to reduce workload. It was noted that discussions on this would continue at the 2025 NAFO Annual Meeting.

The Scientific Council Chair also highlighted the dire situation in relation to the number of vacant positions for Scientific Council Chairs and Designated Experts. Starting in September 2025 there will be three Scientific Council committees without chairs (STACFEN, STACFIS and STACREC), four working groups without Scientific Council co-Chairs (WG-RBMS, WG-CESAG, PA-WG and the Climate Change subgroup) and four Designated Expert positions vacant (3NOPs white hake, 3LNOPs thorny skate, squid in Subareas 3+4, and 3LNO EPU). Scientific Council noted that individuals are already facing heavy workloads, leaving little motivation to take on leadership roles. It was noted that this concern was also discussed during the WG-EAFFM meeting, and the WG-RBMS agreed to reiterate the recommendation that was made in relation to this issue during the WG-EAFFM meeting.

#### *Advice for redfish in Divisions 3LN*

The Scientific Council Chair provided an update on the advice for redfish in Divisions 3LN, noting that in 2024 the Scientific Council provided advice for two years (2025 and 2026), and the Commission decision at the 2024 Annual Meeting was to set the TAC for 2025 only. This stock is not included in the Commission request with the list of full assessments for the year 2025. The SC provided in June 2025 an update of the advice for 2026 based on the results of the Interim Monitoring Report. The advice for 2026 provided in 2024 was reiterated at the June 2025 Scientific Council meeting ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)) based on the previous PAF. The main reasons for applying the previous PAF to produce the 2026 advice at the June 2025 meeting were that this stock was not fully assessed and did not have a Designated Expert until June 2025 and therefore the reference points for applying the new PAF could not be developed. The WG-RBMS thanked the Scientific Council Chair for the update and noted that there may be additional questions from Contracting Parties on this stock at the 2025 Annual Meeting.

#### *Advice for white hake in Divisions 3NOPs*

In addition to the update provided by the PA-WG Chair, the Scientific Council Chair noted that, where the Designated Expert position for white hake in Divisions 3NOPs was vacant at the June 2025 Scientific Council meeting, a full assessment could not be performed for this stock. As such, an Interim Monitoring Report was completed, and it was noted that there was no significant change in the status of this stock ([SCS Doc. 25/13](#)).

### **b. Establishment of an ad hoc Virtual Working Group to Discuss a Potential Third NAFO Performance Review**

The Chair of STACFAD, Robert Fagan (Canada), provided an update on the virtual working group that will be established to discuss the scope and timelines for the next NAFO Performance Review ([COM Doc. 24-20](#)). The virtual working group will work intersessionally to develop draft Terms of Reference and criteria for the review. The working group will present the results of its work to the Commission at the 2026 Annual Meeting with a recommendation on whether to launch the next Performance Review of NAFO, if deemed appropriate. In preparation of the establishment of this working group, Contracting Parties will be invited to submit

representatives to participate in the working group as well as any matters that should be included in the scope. The WG-RBMS thanked the STACFAD Chair for the update.

Reflecting on the discussions around the Scientific Council workload, it was noted that there may be benefit in having an external review of the issue, that could be included as part of the Performance Review. It was highlighted that the current timeline for the Performance Review would not be able to address the short-term needs of the Scientific Council. With that in mind, it was agreed that in addition to the process outlined by the STACFAD Chair, the WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission also consider, as a first step, to expeditiously launch an external Performance Review with a focused assessment of the scientific process within NAFO. It was remarked that the scientific process would include the work of the Scientific Council, as well as how the Commission interacts with the Scientific Council when formulating its requests for advice.

### **c. Marine Stewardship Council Requirements Under its Standard 3.0**

The WG-RBMS co-Chair, Ray Walsh (Canada), provided an update in relation to recommendation 5 from the August 2024 WG-RBMS meeting ([COM-SC Doc. 24-03](#)). The recommendation was for the Commission to *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*. Following the adoption of the recommendation by the Commission at the 2024 Annual Meeting, correspondence was sent to the MSC from the Chair of the Commission (NAFO/25-049) in February 2025. A response was received from the MSC and circulated to Contracting Parties on 17 April 2025 (NAFO/25-105, Annex 4) and the WG-RBMS noted that it would be beneficial for NAFO to be made aware of any ongoing progress on the review process focused on the MSC Fisheries Standard Toolbox, and agreed to send a follow-up correspondence to the MSC.

### **d. NPFC PA Workshop**

The WG-RBMS co-Chair, Fernando González-Costas (European Union), informed the WG-RBMS that NAFO has received an invitation to participate in a special session on the application of the precautionary approach that the Common Oceans Deep-sea Fisheries (DSF) Project are organizing for the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) in December 2025.

## **8. Recommendations**

The WG-RBMS agreed to forward the following conclusions and recommendations to the Commission:

- 1. In relation to the application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut Management Strategy (agenda item 4),**
  - a. WG-RBMS acknowledges that exceptional circumstances were occurring due to recent gaps in the EU-Spain 3L survey series. Nevertheless, sensitivity analysis indicated that the application of the Management Procedure adopted in 2024 was still appropriate.**
  - b. WG-RBMS recommends, consistent with the Scientific Council advice, the continued application of the harvest control rule (excluding the EU-Spain 3L survey series) to set the TAC for 2026.**
- 2. In relation to the Precautionary Approach Framework:**
  - a. WG-RBMS recommends that, when providing stock management advice to the Commission, Scientific Council follow the Precautionary Approach Framework and provide the Commission with the range of scenarios specified in ANNEX A (Guidance for providing advice on Stocks Assessed) of [COM Doc. 24-18](#).**

- b. **WG-RBMS recommends that the Scientific Council reconsider the prescriptive language in the latest Scientific Council advice (grey box) on 3O redfish and provide the Commission with additional information at the September 2025 Annual Scientific Council and Commission meeting to allow the Commission to consider a range of management options aligned with the Precautionary Approach Framework.**
  - c. **WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission adopt a standalone Commission document containing the revised Precautionary Approach Framework document outlined in COM-SC RBMS-WP 25-01 (Annex 3) including the modifications to the risk table that were incorporated in the 2024 Commission requests ([COM Doc. 24-18](#)).**
- 3. **In relation to the Scientific Council's workload, WG-RBMS notes the dire situation with the lack of Chairs and Designated Experts, expresses the WG's strong concern, and recommends the Commission encourage Contracting Parties to find ways to ensure the positions are filled by the close of the September 2025 Annual Meeting.**
- 4. **In relation to the Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0, WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission send a follow-up correspondence to the Marine Stewardship Council response dated 15 April 2025, requesting to keep NAFO aware of any ongoing progress on the review process focussed on the MSC Fisheries Standard Toolbox.**
- 5. **In relation to the discussions on the potential third NAFO Performance Review, it was agreed the process outlined in [COM Doc. 24-20](#) should continue. In addition, the WG-RBMS recommends that the Commission consider expeditiously launching in 2025, as a first step, an external performance review with a focused assessment of the scientific process within NAFO.**

## 9. Adoption of the Report

The report was adopted via correspondence following the end of the meeting.

## 10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 14:35 hours (UTC +3 hours) on Thursday, 17 July 2025.

It was noted that this would be the last meeting of the co-Chair Fernando González-Costas (European Union), and that his contributions as co-Chair to this working group since 2019 have been invaluable in progressing the work of the working group including the completion of two MSEs and the implementation of the revised PAF. To say he will be greatly missed in an understatement.

**Annex 1. List of Participants**

<b>CO-CHAIRS</b>	González-Costas, Fernando (European Union) Walsh, Ray (Canada)
<b>SC CHAIR</b>	González Troncoso, Diana (European Union)
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>In-person</b> Burns, Adam Byrne, Vanessa Fagan, Robert Koen-Alonso, Mariano Marsden, Dale Rayner, Gemma Simpson, Mark  <b>Virtual</b> Burridge, Angela Krohn, Martha Zegarmistrz, Justyna
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Wang, Ulla S.
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	<b>In-person</b> Alpoim, Ricardo Blazkiewicz, Bernard Demblon, Jessica Garrido Fernández, Irene Gonçalves Patricia Märting, Kaire Teixeira, Isabel Tuvi, Aare Vielmini, Ilaria  <b>Virtual</b> Belmonte, Luis Mancebo, C. Margarita
<b>ICELAND</b>	<b>In-person</b> Bragi Bragason, Agnar
<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Butterworth, Doug Taki, Kenji
<b>NORWAY</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Bakke, Gunnstein Hallfreðsson, Elvar H. Sandberg, Per
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Fomin, Konstantin
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	<b>Virtual</b> Fischer, Simon Gawlyk, Joe

<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	<p><b>In-person</b> Kelly, Moira Mencher, Elizabethann Warner-Kramer, Deirdre</p> <p><b>Virtual</b> Jaburek, Shannah</p>
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	<p><b>In-person</b> Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Aker, Jana LeFort, Lisa Perreault, Andrea</p> <p><b>Virtual</b> Bell MacCallum, Dayna</p>

**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. Application of the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut Management Strategy (COM Request 2)
5. Progress on the MSE process for 3LN redfish (COM Request 3)
6. Precautionary Approach Framework (PAF) reference points (COM Request 7)
7. Other Business
  - a. SC update (3LN Redfish, PA document, SC workload)
  - b. Establishment of an ad hoc Virtual Working Group to discuss a potential third NAFO Performance Review
  - c. Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0
  - d. NPFC PA workshop
8. Recommendations
9. Adoption of report
10. Adjournment

### Annex 3. Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework (COM-SC RBMS-WP 25-01)

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.

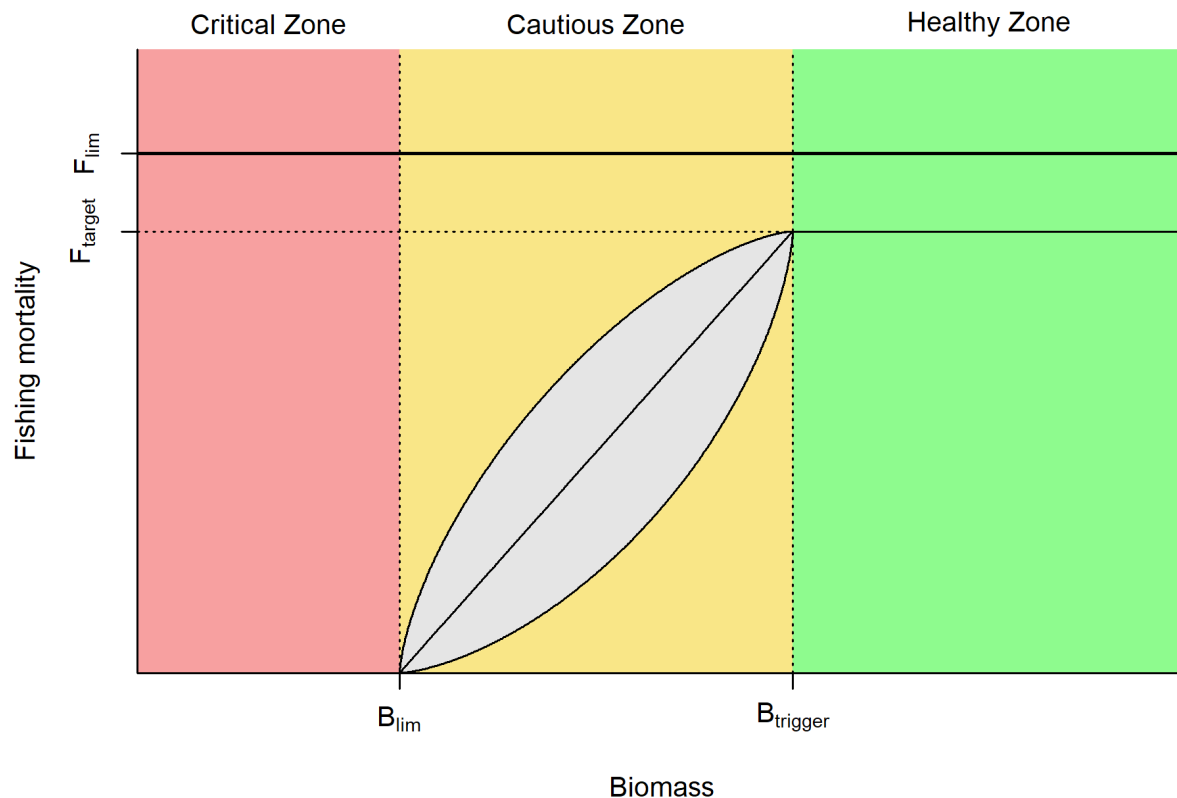
NAFO should apply this Precautionary Approach Framework in its fisheries management decision making. This framework defines three Zones (Healthy, Cautious, and Critical) to characterize the status of the stock. These zones are defined by two biomass reference points ( $B_{lim}$  and  $B_{trigger}$ ). 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  $F_{\text{target}}$ , 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  $B_{\text{lim}}$ . Overall, the intent is to avoid falling below  $B_{\text{lim}}$ .

### 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  $F > F_{lim}$
- Probability of  $F > F_{target}$

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.

**Table 2. The Revised NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework risk table.**y current year (year in which the assessment is made, data until year y-1)

	Yield			P(F>F <sub>lim</sub> )			P(B<B <sub>lim</sub> )				P(F>F <sub>target</sub> )			P(B<B <sub>trigger</sub> )				P(B <sub>y+3</sub> > B <sub>y</sub> )	(B <sub>y+3</sub> -B <sub>y</sub> )/B <sub>yfuture-current</sub>
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		
<b>Critical Zone</b>																			
F=0	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F=X% current*	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F current	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Cautious Zone</b>																			
F lower edge leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F midrib leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F upper edge leaf	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Healthy Zone</b>																			
F=0.75F <sub>msy</sub>	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F <sub>target</sub> =0.85F <sub>msy</sub>	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
F <sub>lim</sub> =F <sub>msy</sub>	t	t	t	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

\*X% may vary stock by stock. In the future, this framework may be modified to include F bycatch.

The number of years in the risk projections table will be the same as the years of advice.

## 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 4. MSC letter**  
(from NAFO/25-105)

1601 Lower Water Street • Suite 401  
Halifax • Nova Scotia • B3J 3P6 • Canada

Telephone: + 1 902 468 5590  
Email: [info@nafo.int](mailto:info@nafo.int) • Web: [www.nafo.int](http://www.nafo.int)

In all correspondence,  
please refer to:

NAFO/25-105

17 April 2025

TO: All Contracting Parties – Heads of Delegation

Dear Colleagues,

**Subject:** Communication regarding the Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0

At the *NAFO Annual Meeting* in September 2024, the following recommendation was adopted:

- 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.

In consultation with NAFO President, Deirdre Warner-Kramer, please find enclosed the following documentation regarding the above-mentioned subject for onward transmission to NAFO Heads of Delegation:

- The response received from the Marine Stewardship Council
- The original submission transmitted to the Marine Stewardship Council (NAFO/25-049 of 19 February 2025)

Yours sincerely,

Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir  
Executive Secretary

BB:ll

Enclosed: The response received from the Marine Stewardship Council (01 pgs.)  
NAFO/25-049 of 19 February 2025 (07 pgs.)

cc: Ray Walsh, WG-RBMS co-Chair (Email: [ray.walsh@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:ray.walsh@dfo-mpo.gc.ca))  
Fernando Gonzalez-Costas, WG-RBMS co-Chair (Email: [fernando.gonzalez@ieo.csic.es](mailto:fernando.gonzalez@ieo.csic.es))



Marine Stewardship Council

April 15, 2025

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization  
1601 Lower Water Street, Suite 401  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3P6

NAFO/25-049

Dear Deirdre,

**Re: Communication regarding the Marine Stewardship Council requirements under its Standard 3.0**

Thank you for your letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (NAFO/25-049) and for your patience whilst we drafted a response.

We want to acknowledge the issue with NAFO managed fisheries' ability to meet the MSC Fisheries Standard v3.1 with respect to harvest strategies tested using Management Strategy Evaluation. We have also heard of similar challenges in other settings, particularly in respect to non-tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organisations. We are taking this matter very seriously.

The MSC wants to ensure that our Standard works effectively for delivering on the promise of oceans teeming with life, and seafood supplies safeguarded for this and future generations. We wish to avoid placing unnecessary burden on management agencies as we reflect global best practice in setting our standard and processes. The MSC is currently undertaking a review process focussed on the MSC Fisheries Standard Toolbox. In addition to that, the issue you have raised with Fisheries Standard v3.1 Section SE for non-tuna RFMOs has also been prioritised internally for policy consideration. We will develop the details for that process over the next couple of months. We will keep partners informed on the next steps for that proposed policy process as details become available. [Kurtis Hayne](#), Programme Director for Canada will be your point of contact.

We recognize the challenges with the latest version of the Standard and are fully committed to learning from your ongoing feedback and making meaningful improvements. Please let us know if you would like to set up a meeting to discuss this further; we would be happy to.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Polly Burns".

Polly Burns, Head of Standard Implementation

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

27-28 August 2025

Via Webex

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

27–28 August 2025  
Via Webex

### **1. Opening by the Chair, Brent Napier (Canada)**

The Chair (Brent Napier) opened the meeting at 09:00 hours (UTC-3) on Wednesday, 27 August 2025 via Webex. The Chair welcomed representatives from Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the European Union, Iceland, Japan, Norway, 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 following additions were made to the agenda under item 5 – Other Business:

- a. Data Confidentiality
- b. Minimum standards for Electronic Monitoring
- c. Article 30 Reporting Template
- d. Observer Program Review (OPR) tasks update

The agenda was adopted, as amended (Annex 2).

### **4. Outstanding items for WG-OPR discussions**

#### **a. Observer application**

The NAFO Secretariat presented STACTIC OPR-WP 25-05 which outlined questions regarding the data flow for the observer application. Contracting Parties agreed that the data flow for the observer application should operate the same as the current Excel template process whereby the reports can be reviewed by the FMC prior to being posted to the MCS website, noting that changes to the application can be made in the future if necessary.

Contracting Parties discussed how the daily OBR messages should be transmitted through the app and agreed that the app should be able to summarize the daily catch for the OBR message and that the observer should be able to review and include the remaining fields from Annex II.G of the NAFO CEM before it is submitted to the Fisheries Monitoring Center (FMC) and the Secretariat. Contracting Parties agreed that observers should have the ability to update, cancel, resend and track OBR messages within the app. Further updates and discussion on the observer app will take place at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting.

#### **b. Observer reporting requirements**

The WG-OPR discussed the required frequency of observer tasks outlined in Annex II.M of the NAFO CEM. Canada is currently engaging with subject matter experts to determine specific frequencies for observer tasks, noting that standardized minimum thresholds would be helpful for observers. Many flag State Contracting Parties currently follow existing domestic thresholds. It was noted that a thorough review of the elements of Annex II.M would be required to identify the needs and priorities relating to the use of the observer data in



order to potentially develop minimum standards. The WG-OPR was not able to make substantial progress on this item, and agreed to report back to STACTIC on the discussions, noting they may continue in the future as required.

## 5. Other Business

### a. Data Confidentiality

The WG-OPR reviewed the proposal for amendments to Annex II.B. of the NAFO CEM outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02, which was previously discussed at the STACTIC Intersessional Meeting in May 2025 ([COM Doc. 25-03](#)). To support these discussions, the NAFO Secretariat compiled a summary of the provisions that fall under the Rules of Confidentiality in the NAFO CEM in STACTIC WP 25-05. The summary outlines the potential reports and messages that could be subject to the Rules of Confidentiality if the scope of Annex II.B. were to be expanded.

One Contracting Party expressed concern about expanding the scope of the terms of the Rules of Confidentiality without performing a full review of Annex II.B. Contracting Parties agreed that the Rules of Confidentiality need to be updated to reflect current protocols. It was agreed that the WG-OPR would recommend to STACTIC that there is a need to review the provisions of Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM. Once that review is completed, discussions on the proposed changes outlined in STACTIC OPR-WP 24-02 should continue.

It was **agreed** that:

- **The WG-OPR recommends that STACTIC undertake a comprehensive review of the data confidentiality measures outlined in Annex II.B of the NAFO CEM.**

### b. Minimum standards for Electronic Monitoring

The WG-OPR reviewed STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 4), which outlines a possible revision of Articles 1, 30 and 38 of the NAFO CEM in order to incorporate an electronic observation program. The European Union highlighted changes to the paper since the STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, based on feedback received from Contracting Parties. Contracting Parties provided further comments and clarifications during the meeting, which were incorporated through track changes.

Changes were made to the terminology in the paper to increase the lifespan of the document and to better align the language in the paper with that of the NAFO CEM. The WG-OPR discussed requirements for Electronic Monitoring Systems (EMS), including the minimum data storage capacity on board vessels using EMS, the costs associated with data storage, and whether data retention requirements are necessary. Parties also discussed the length of time that EMS must be operational while the vessel is at-sea. The Chair noted that having a greater understanding of EMS technology will help support these discussions and Contracting Parties thanked the European Union for their work on the paper. The WG-OPR noted that some language may require further review by the NAFO Editorial Drafting Group (EDG) to ensure clarity and consistency.

It was **agreed**:

- **To forward STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 5) to STACTIC for further discussion at the Annual Meeting, recognizing that significant work has been completed by the WG-OPR.**

### c. Article 30 Reporting Template

Canada highlighted discrepancies in the Article 30 Reporting Template, particularly with respect to Part III. In Part III of the template, Contracting Parties are asked to provide a *summary of fishing trips where the figures of the observers in Part 4.B of the observer trip report are the same or very similar to the figures reported by the*

Report of WG-OPR,  
27–28 August 2025

*master and a summary of fishing trips where the figures of the observer in Part 2 of the observer trip report are the same or very similar to the figures reported by the master for observed tows.* Canada noted that the language “very similar” is vague and creates uncertainty for Contracting Parties that are reporting the information. A suggested way forward was that a standardized metric for reporting could be developed, and Contracting Parties agreed with this approach. The European Union will consult with member States to reflect on what has been used in their reporting to help in the potential development of a metric that can be added to the template, to enhance clarity and consistency. Canada and the European Union will work with the Secretariat to edit the template for further discussions in STACTIC.

It was **agreed**:

- **That Canada and the European Union will work with the Secretariat to edit the template for further discussions in STACTIC.**

#### **d. Observer Program Review (OPR) tasks update**

The WG-OPR reviewed the Work Progress Update in STACTIC WP 25-11 and evaluated the tasks listed in the document. All items were marked as “complete”, and the updates are reflected in STACTIC WP 25-11 (Rev.) (Annex 3).

#### **6. Adoption of the Report**

The report was adopted via correspondence.

#### **7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:48 hours (UTC-3) on Thursday, 28 August 2025.

**Annex 1. List of Participants**

<b>CHAIR</b>	Napier, Brent (Canada)
<b>CANADA</b>	Barbour, Natasha Browne, Dion Harvey, Kyna Hickey, Jenelle
<b>DENMARK (IN RESPECT OF FAROE ISLANDS AND GREENLAND)</b>	Holm, Jannik
<b>EUROPEAN UNION</b>	Babcionis, Genadijus Grossmann, Meit Näks, Liivika Sanchhez-Mateos, Manuel Sanz Carrasco, Pablo Shrives, Jonathan Quintans, Miguel
<b>ICELAND</b>	Ragnarsson, Njáll
<b>JAPAN</b>	Batori, Koji Iwano, Taisuke Mitome, Haruki Moronuki, Hideki Suzuki, Hyoue
<b>NORWAY</b>	Aalén, Lene
<b>RUSSIAN FEDERATION</b>	Fomin, Konstantin
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	Murphy, Paul Smith-Devey, Imogen White, Amelia
<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	Jaburek, Shannah McBride, Holly Moran, Patrick Pohl, Katie Provencher, Eric
<b>NAFO SECRETARIAT</b>	Aker, Jana Benediktsdóttir, Brynhildur Kendall, Matt Thompson, Catherine

## **Annex 2. Agenda**

1. Opening by the Chair, Brent Napier (Canada)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Outstanding items for WG-OPR discussions
  - a. Observer application
  - b. Observer reporting requirements
5. Other Business
  - a. Data Confidentiality
  - b. Minimum standards for Electronic Monitoring
  - c. Article 30 Reporting Template
  - d. Observer Program Review (OPR) tasks update
6. Adoption of the Report
7. Adjournment

**Annex 3. Work Progress Update from WG-OPR (STACTIC 25-11 Revised)****Background**

Following the August 2025 meeting of the WG-OPR, the Chair, following discussions within the working group, updated the status of work for each task identified for the group.

**Update**

Green = Completed, no further work required by the WG-OPR

Yellow = Work largely completed or established as an ongoing item, and is not expected to require further work by WG-OPR

Orange = Further work required by WG-OPR

Task	Status
1. The minimum level of observer coverage required under derogation	Complete Discussed Jan. 2025, no change recommended
2. Use of the observer electronic application and its implementation	Complete The WG-OPR provided input to the NAFO Secretariat on the outstanding list of questions relating to data flow in the app. The Secretariat will continue to work towards the completion of the application. Decisions required by WG-OPR/ STACTIC regarding data flow No list of required decisions has been presented by NAFO Sec.
3. Use of electronic observation program and to recommend minimum requirements for those systems to be used as an alternative to Observers	Complete The WG-OPR agreed to forward STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 5) to STACTIC for further discussion at the Annual Meeting. See STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 Rev.3
4. Standardized reporting templates and reporting	
a. Observer reporting requirements	Complete The WG-OPR discussed the frequency of observer tasks, but noted a substantial review would be required before minimum thresholds could be developed. Frequency of Observer tasks yet to be determined
i. The possible inclusion of the collection of vessel's garbage disposal practices	Added to Part 3, effective Jan. 1, 2025
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"	Complete
i. Pursue development of standardized handling and release guidelines	Complete
ii. Pursue development of for a species identification	Draft was presented to STACTIC at the May 2025 intersessional meeting in STACTIC WP 25-14. Oceans

Task	Status
guide/observer handbook for Sharks	North will be invited to present an update at the 2025 STACTIC Annual Meeting. In development by Oceans North
6. Consider revisions of infringements relating to the Observer Program	Complete See STACTIC OPR-WP 25-04 (Rev. 5) Discussions to continue at 2025 STACTIC intersessional in multiple working papers
7. To discuss mechanisms to promote quality control for Observer and electronic observation data	Complete The WG-OPR had several discussions in relation to data quality control and Contracting Parties shared experience and best practices. In Progress

### Proposed Way Forward

At this time, the Chair of WG-OPR proposes to STACTIC that the WG-OPR hold an additional meeting before the 2025 Annual Meeting to work towards resolving Terms of Reference tasks 2 and 4.a. STACTIC may also wish to consider whether the WG-OPR is the appropriate group for continuing discussions surrounding EMS outside of regular STACTIC meetings, as may be necessary.