



2011 Annual Meeting Press Release

NAFO Performing Well

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Halifax, NS, Canada, 23 September 2011

An independent review by an international panel of experts assessed the performance of Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) and their findings and recommendations were presented at NAFO Annual Meeting in Halifax this week. NAFO has been commended for its performance, particularly in recent years with the introduction of the Precautionary Approach, Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management and protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).

The Panel's recommendation for further improvements to the effectiveness of NAFO as a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO) will be addressed in a working group which will formulate Plans of Action for the short-, medium- and long-term.

At this week's annual meeting of NAFO a range of conservation and fisheries management measures were adopted for twenty commercial fish stocks managed by NAFO in international waters and straddling national fishing limits based on the precautionary approach. Moratoria were continued for eight stocks and TACS established for all others. TACs have been reduced for five NAFO stocks.

To ensure the implementation of effective measures to prevent significant adverse impacts of bottom trawl activities on vulnerable marine ecosystems in the NAFO Regulatory Area based on the best available scientific information, closures of 18 areas to bottom fishing including seamounts and coral and sponge protected areas and review dates have been extended to 2014. The NAFO Scientific Council continues its work to improve knowledge on marine ecosystem in the Northwest Atlantic.

NAFO has refined Conservation Plans and Stock Rebuilding Strategies (CPRS) for protected and recovering fish stocks, Cod Div. 3NO and American plaice Div. 3LNO, based on collaborative work between fishery managers and scientists. Witch flounder in Div. 3NO will be reviewed with a potential to develop a rebuilding plan in the coming year. Under CPRS bycatch issues, which take into consideration interactions between species, will be addressed.

NAFO has implemented an agreed management strategy for fishing on Greenland halibut stocks. This strategy is based on abundance trends in surveys carried out by several Contracting Parties and aims to promote the sustainable exploitation of the resource while removing the year-to-year uncertainty from the fishery.

NAFO continues the implementation of modernizing its information and data sharing platform by developing a new secure Inspector's website and digitizing all NAFO archives and documents.

A NAFO Internship program has been established to give an opportunity for early-career individuals or students from NAFO members countries to gain experience with an international organization.

This year an election of Chairs took place. General Council will be Chaired by Veronika Veits (EU), Fisheries Commission by Sylvie Lapointe (Canada) and Scientific Council by Carsten Hvingel (Norway).

Dr. Vladimir Shibanov, NAFO Executive Secretary

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Additional highlights of the meeting can be found in the attached backgrounder.

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Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

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Backgrounder

NAFO is an international intergovernmental fisheries science and management body that manages the fishery in the international portion of the Northwest Atlantic. The 33rd Annual Meeting was held during 19-23 September 2011 at the Westin Hotel Nova Scotian, Halifax, NS, Canada and was attended by 180 delegates from all 12 Contracting Parties - Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Norway, Russian Federation, Ukraine and United States of America. The three bodies of NAFO, General Council (chaired by Terje Lobach, Norway), Fisheries Commission (chaired by Kate Sanderson, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) and Scientific Council (chaired by Ricardo Alpoim, EU-Portugal) and their subsidiary bodies met over the course of week to deliberate on management measures and scientific assessment regarding the international fisheries of the Northwest Atlantic. The scientific advice was presented. The meeting was also attended by observers from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), and Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Ecology Action Centre (EAC), the Sierra Club of Canada (SCC) and Pew Environment Group.

The NAFO Performance Review Panel was established with external and internal experts. The external panel members were experts in the fields of fisheries management (Dr. Fábio Hazin, Brazil), fisheries science (Prof. Denzil Miller, Australia), and the law of the sea (Mr. Milton Haughton, Belize). The internal experts were nominated by NAFO Contracted Parties as follows: Canada (James Baird), Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland) (Einar Lemche), the European Union (John Spencer) and the Russian Federation (Olga Sedykh). In addition, the Chair of STACTIC (Gene Martin, USA) acted as an information resource for the Panel. The Panel assessed the performance of NAFO against the objectives set out in the NAFO Convention and other relevant international legal instruments addressing the conservation and management of marine living resources and made recommendations on how NAFO can further improve. Positive outcomes were noted by the Panel. Some recommendations made by the Panel were addressed during the meeting and an internal Working Group has been established by NAFO to develop Plans of Action necessary for the implementation of the other recommendations of the Panel.

Contracting Parties that had not yet ratified the amended NAFO Convention were encouraged to continue their efforts to do so in their respective governments.

The Fisheries Commission agreed on management measures for the 20 fish, shrimp and invertebrate stocks managed by NAFO. The scientific advice was elaborated at meetings held since the last Annual Meeting. Scientific Council fully assessed the status of ten stocks and monitored the status of other fish stocks. Ongoing growth of some stocks poses challenges to managers and scientists, with the continuing recovery of cod on the Flemish Cap being reflected in declines in species on which cod prey, such as redfish and shrimps. Other stocks continue on their long road to recovery, for example although American plaice remain under moratorium, they show promising signs for the future, with indications of improved recruitment being seen in the surveys. Scientific advice was also provided to Coastal States based on their specific requests.

Moratoria are continued for eight NAFO stocks and TACs have been reduced for five stocks. Amendments to the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures were reviewed to enhance organization and structure and clarify existing NAFO Measures.

Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (CPRS) for important resources within the NAFO Convention Area, including cod in Div. 3NO and American plaice in Div. 3LNO were confirmed in 2011. The plans set out objectives, identify reference points, define re-opening criteria and establish Harvest Control Rules. In 2012 witch flounder in Div. 3NO will be added. Greenland halibut in SA 2+3 will continue to be managed using a management strategy that takes into account trends in survey abundance to determine the direction and size in any quota change. Changes are constrained to 5% per year to ensure stability in the fishery.

The closures of Orphan Knoll, Corner Seamounts, Newfoundland Seamounts, New England Seamounts and Fogo Seamounts (1 and 2), the large coral protection zone in Div. 3O and the eleven areas of higher sponge and coral concentrations near the Flemish Cap and the Flemish Pass will remain closed until 2014. One zone on the Flemish Cap has been expanded. The closed areas will be reviewed in 2014 based on the best available scientific information by the Fisheries Commission. NAFO will take into account the guidance provided by the FAO in the framework of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and any other internationally agreed standards, as appropriate.

NAFO continues to address the protection of VMEs from significant adverse impacts of bottom fishing. In order to provide the best basis for deciding on appropriate measures to protect VMEs, the NAFO Scientific Council continues its work to improve knowledge on marine ecosystem in the Northwest Atlantic.

Commitment by EU and Canada remains for the NEREIDA programme. Further processing of specimens and samples and data analyses are ongoing.

The Fisheries Commission conducts an annual compliance review and this year noted that the same level of inspections is taking place but there are fewer infringements than in the past. Improvements to the analysis of compliance made this report more comprehensive.

NAFO is in the process of developing a data sharing platform for NAFO Fishery Inspectors to access fisheries data in a centralized location on the NAFO Website. The vessel monitoring system continues to provide real-time fisheries information.

The NAFO Secretariat completed a project aimed at digitizing all NAFO meeting documentation and publications back to 1979. The majority of this material is now available on the NAFO web-pages. This project will continue with the digitization of all ICNAF's documentation (NAFO's predecessor).

Elections for most of the bodies were held this year. The General Council Chair will be Veronika Veits (EU). The Fisheries Commission Chair will be Sylvie Lapointe (Canada). For Scientific Council the Chair will be Carsten Hvingel (Norway); Chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries Science (STACFIS) will be Jean-Claude Mahé (EU-France); Chair of the Standing Committee on Publications (STACPUB) remains Margaret Treble (Canada); Chair of the Standing Committee on Research Coordination (STACREC) and Vice-Chair of Scientific Council will be Don Stansbury (Canada); and Chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries Environment (STACFEN) remains Gary Maillet (Canada).

The 34th Annual Meeting will be held in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation 17-21 September 2012.

Meetings

Prior to the Annual Meeting, the following NAFO meetings were held: (1) Scientific Council and NAFO/ICES (NIPAG) Meeting on Shrimp Assessment, Copenhagen, Denmark, 20 – 27 October 2010; (2) Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (WGEAFM), Dartmouth, NS, Canada, 1-10 December 2010; (3) NAFO Performance Review Panel (First Meeting), Dartmouth, NS, Canada, 28 February-4 March, 2011; (4) Joint NAFO/ICES Working Group on Deep-water Ecology (WGDEC), Copenhagen, Denmark, 28 February - 4 March 2011; (5) Scientific Council Working Group on Reproductive Potential, Aberdeen, Scotland, 12-14 April, 2011; (6) STACTIC Intersessional Meeting, London, UK, 9-10 May 2011; (7) Fisheries Commission Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (WGFMS-CPRS), by WebEx, 7 April 2011; (8) NAFO Performance Review Panel (Second Meeting), Dartmouth, NS, Canada, 31 May - 3 June, 2011; (9) Scientific Council and its Standing Committees (June Meeting), Braunschweig, Germany, 3-16 June 2011; (10) Fisheries Commission Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (WGFMS-CPRS), Halifax, NS, Canada 26-28 June 2011; (11) Fisheries Commission Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems(WGFMS-VME), Halifax, NS, Canada, 29-30 June 2011; (12) Joint NAFO/ICES WG on Harp and Hooded Seals (WGHARP), Aberdeen, Scotland, 15-19 August, 2011; (13) FC Working Group of Fishery Managers and Scientists on Management Strategy Evaluations (WGFMS-MSE), by WebEx, 7 September 2011; (14)) Scientific Council and STACFIS for update on shrimp advice, by Sharepoint and WebEx, 1-12 September 2011.

The table of NAFO TACs and quotas agreed at the 33rd Annual Meeting is attached.

Dr Vladimir Shibanov

NAFO Executive Secretary - 23 September 2011, Halifax, NS, Canada

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Annex I.A. - Annual Quota Table

QUOTA TABLE. Total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons) for 2012 of particular stocks in Subareas 1-4 of the NAFO Convention Area. The values listed include quantities to be taken both inside and outside the 200-mile fishing zone, where applicable.

Species	Cod				Redfish					American plaice		Yellowtail
	3L	3M	% of 3M Cod TAC	3NO	3LN	% of 3LN Redfish TAC	3M	3O	Sub-Area 2 and Div. 1F+3K	3LNO	3M	3LNO
Canada		74	0.80	0	2556	42.60	500	6000	0 ^{2,4}	0	0	16575 ⁵
Cuba		343	3.70	-	588	9.80	1750		0 ^{2,4}	-	-	-
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)		2074	22.35	-	-		69 ¹⁹		0 ^{2,3}	-	-	-
European Union		5292 ²⁵	57.03	0 ¹¹	1094 ²⁶	18.23	7813 ¹²	7000	0 ^{2,3} 0 ^{2,15}	0	0 ¹¹	-
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-	-		69 ¹⁹		0 ^{2,4}	-	-	340 ⁵
Iceland		-		-	-		-		0 ^{2,3}	-	-	-
Japan		-		-	-		400	150	0 ^{2,4}	-	-	-
Korea		-		-	-		69 ¹⁹	100	0 ^{2,4}	-	-	-
Norway		859	9.25	-	-		-		0 ^{2,3}	-	-	-
Russian Federation		601	6.47	0	1726	28.77	9137	6500	0 ^{2,3}	-	0	-
Ukraine								150	0 ^{2,4}			
United States of America		-		-	-		69 ¹⁹		0 ^{2,4}	-	-	-
Others		37	0.40	0	36	0.60	124	100	-	0	0	85 ⁵
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	* ⁹	9280 ²³	100.0	* ^{20,9}	6000 ²⁴	100.0	6500 ^{8,16}	20000	0 ^{10,17}	* ^{16,21}	* ^{9,29}	17000 ^{21,22}

Species	Witch		White hake	Capelin	Skates	Greenland halibut	Squid (Illex) ¹	Shrimp	
	3L	3NO						3NO	3NO
Canada		0	1470	0	1417	1814	N.S. ⁶	10000	
Cuba		-		0		-	510	133	
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)		-		-		210	-	133	
European Union		0 ¹¹	2940	0 ¹¹	5352	7093 ¹⁸	N.S. ⁶ 611 ¹³	670 ¹⁴	
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-		198	453	133	
Iceland		-		-		-	-	133	
Japan		-		0		1240	510	133	
Korea		-		-		-	453	133	
Norway		-		0		-	-	133	
Russian Federation		0	295	0	1417	1543	749	133	
Ukraine						-		133	
United States of America		-		-		-	453	133	
Others		0	295	-	314	0 ⁷	794	0	
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*9,20	*9	5000	*9,20	8500 ²⁸	12098	34000 ²⁰	12000 ²⁷	*9

* Ban on fishing in force.

1. Any quota listed for squid may be increased by a transfer from any “coastal state” as defined in Article 1, paragraph 3 of the NAFO Convention, provided that the TAC for squid is not exceeded. Transfers made to Contracting Parties conducting fisheries for squid in the Regulatory Area shall be reported to the Executive Secretary, and the report shall be made as promptly as possible.
2. The Executive Secretary shall notify without delay all Contracting Parties the dates on which accumulated reported catch taken by vessels of Contracting Parties estimated equal to 50% and then 100% of that allocation.
3. Quota to be shared by vessels from Denmark (Greenland and Faroe Islands), European Union, Iceland, Norway and Russia. Catches in the NAFO Convention Area shall be deducted from the quotas allocated in the NEAFC Convention Area.
4. Quota to be shared by vessels from Canada, Cuba, France (St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Korea, Ukraine and USA.
5. Contracting Parties shall inform the Executive Secretary before 01 December 2011 of the measures to be taken to ensure that total catches do not exceed the levels indicated.
6. The allocation 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 (= 29.458 tons).
7. In 2005, the previous 935 t “Others” quota was assigned to three Contracting Parties. When the TAC exceeds 30,000 t the next 1,300 t beyond 30,000 will be allocated to an Others quota which can be accessed by those who do not hold Greenland halibut allocation. In deciding the relevant contributions of Contracting Parties to the 1,300 t Others quota, the Fisheries Commission will take into account the fact that some Contracting Parties received a benefit from the 935 t quota which was reassigned in 2005.
8. Not more than 3250 tons may be fished before 01 July 2012. The Executive Secretary shall notify without delay all Contracting Parties of the date on which, for this stock, accumulated reported catch taken by vessels of the Contracting Parties is estimated to equal 50% and then 100% of the TAC.
9. The provisions of Article 12, paragraph 1.b) of the Conservation and Enforcement Measures shall apply.
10. In the case of the NEAFC decision which modifies the level of TAC in 2012 as compared to 2011, these figures shall be accordingly adjusted by NAFO and formalized through a mail vote.
11. Including fishing entitlements of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania following their accession to the European Union and in accordance with sharing arrangements of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission at its Annual Meeting in 2003 (FC Working Paper 03/7).
12. Including allocations of 1571 tonnes each for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania out of a sharing of 20,000 tonnes, following their accession to the European Union.
13. Allocations of 128 tonnes each for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well as 227 tonnes for Poland out of a TAC of 34,000 tonnes, following their accession to the European Union.
14. Including allocations of 133 tonnes each for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland out of a TAC of 12,000 tonnes, following their accession to the European Union.
15. Allocation of 17.9% to Lithuania and 2.1% to Latvia following their accession to the European Union.
16. Applicable to 2012 and 2013.
17. The quota shares in footnotes 4 and 15 can only be fished in the NAFO Regulatory Area. If an increase in the overall TAC as defined in footnote 10 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 4.
18. Including an allocation of 397 tonnes for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania following their accession to the European Union.
19. Notwithstanding the provisions of footnote 8 and without prejudice to future agreements on allocations, these quotas may be fished in their entirety by these Contracting Parties.

20. Applicable until at least 2013.
21. In lieu of Article 12.1 (a) and (b) of the CEM, the following by-catch provisions for American plaice only in the 3LNO yellowtail fishery shall apply: Contracting Parties fishing for yellowtail flounder allocated under the NAFO allocation table will be restricted to an overall Am. plaice by-catch harvest limit equal to 15% of their total yellowtail fishery as calculated in accordance with Article 12.1 (c). If a Scientific Council projection indicates that this rate is likely to undermine stock recovery or cause an unreasonable delay in reaching B_{lim} , this rate may be subject to a reassessment by the Fisheries Commission.
22. Following the NAFO annual meeting and prior to January 1 of the succeeding year, at the request of the USA, Canada will transfer 1000 tonnes of its 3LNO yellowtail quota to the USA.
23. The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1998 Quota Table. In 1999, a moratorium on cod in Division 3M was declared.
24. The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1997 Quota Table. In 1998, a moratorium on redfish in Division 3LN was declared.
25. Including fishing entitlements of 103 tons each for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in accordance with sharing arrangements of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission at its Annual Meeting in 2003 (FC Working Paper 03/7) and allocation of 352 tons for Poland following their accession to the European Union.
26. Including fishing entitlements of 297 tonnes each for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in accordance with sharing arrangements of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission at its Annual Meeting in 2003 (FC Working Paper 03/7) following their accession to the European Union.
27. For 2013, the TAC will be reduced to 9,350 tonnes. This TAC will be reviewed based on available Scientific Council advice on this stock.
28. This TAC will be reviewed in 2012 in line with the available scientific advice on this stock.
29. Applicable to 2012, 2013 and 2014.