



## NAFO CONTINUES TO MOVE FORWARD

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The 34th Annual Meeting of NAFO concluded successfully today, making positive decisions for the management of fish stocks and protection of ecosystems in the Northwest Atlantic Area.

NAFO continues to address issues raised in the Performance Review conducted in 2011 by setting priorities and timelines to implement the recommendations contained in the report and took action to implement them.

Taking into account the scientific advice, Total Allowable Catches (TAC) were set for fishing on ten stocks while a further ten stocks remain under moratoria, including the shrimp on the Flemish Cap.

NAFO has moved to strengthen its protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VME) by introducing a raft of measures aimed at clarifying existing provisions, strengthening others and introducing new catch limits for fragile organisms, such as sea pens, on the seabed.

NAFO continues the closure of 11 areas of coral/sponge concentrations and six seamounts to bottom fishing. These areas contain significant concentrations of VME indicator species.

Drawing on the latest scientific information, NAFO expanded the list of VME indicator species (now recognizing 67 species which signal a potential VME) and adopted a new list of VME elements in line with the FAO International Guidelines.

NAFO continues to develop Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies frameworks for commercially important stocks, such as American plaice and Cod on the Grand Bank. When the objectives of the Rebuilding Plan are met these stocks can again be fished by the international community. Efforts will continue to develop frameworks for Witch Flounder on the Grand Bank, and the initial development of CPRS for both northern Grand Bank Redfish and Flemish Cap Cod, which have only recently been re-opened for directed fishing.

NAFO took steps to ensure the quality of its scientific advice for fish stocks by engaging in an independent peer review of the way catches are estimated in stock assessment. This examination will continue with further investigation into the reasons for the discrepancy between official catch figures and scientific estimates.

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

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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 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held during 17-21 September 2012 at the Pribaltiyskaya Park Inn Hotel, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation. The meeting was attended by 160 delegates from all 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 meeting was also attended by observers from the Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), North Atlantic Marine mammal Commission (NAMMCO), International Commission Conservation of the Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Southeast Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) and Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and Pew Environment Group.

The three bodies of NAFO, General Council (chaired by Veronika Veits, EU), Fisheries Commission (chaired by Sylvie Lapointe, Canada) and Scientific Council (chaired by Carsten Hvingel, Norway) and their subsidiary bodies met over the course of a week to deliberate on management measures and scientific assessment regarding the international fisheries of the Northwest Atlantic. The scientific advice and a quinquennial review of environmental conditions were presented.

Five NAFO Contracting Parties have now ratified the amended NAFO Convention and others were strongly encouraged to continue their efforts to do so in their respective governments.

The main function of NAFO is to regulate fisheries in the Northwest Atlantic consistent with advice from an international panel of scientists. Total allowable catches (TACs) are set in accordance with the precautionary principle. NAFO agreed on management measures for the 20 fish, shrimp and squid stocks. For the recently reopened stock of Redfish in the northern Grand Bank caution was considered for this slow-growing species. While shrimps on the Flemish Cap remain below their precautionary threshold and are closed to fishing, the latest data on the Grand Bank Shrimp stock suggests the decline in this stock has been halted and a TAC of 8 600 tons was set. For Thorny Skate on the Grand Bank, catch limits were reduced to be more in line with recent catches to encourage stock rebuilding.

Stocks which until recent years have been depleted and closed to fishing are now performing well. Yellowtail Flounder on the Grand Banks was closed to fishing between 1995 and 1997, but is now well above precautionary thresholds and a TAC of 17 000 tons was set. Cod on the Flemish Cap (Div. 3M), which was at very low levels and under a moratorium to fishing between 1994 and 2009 continues to grow at a remarkable rate, and a TAC of 14 113 tons was set. Other stocks are recovering at a slower rate, and fishing on stocks such as American Plaice and Cod on the Grand Bank remains suspended.

NAFO has been amongst the most proactive of RFMOs when it comes to protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems which can be harmed by fishing, closing over 360 000km<sup>2</sup> to bottom fishing since 2006. At their latest meeting NAFO took steps to enhance this protection, in accordance with UNGA Resolution 61/105, by lowering the catch of sponges and corals needed to trigger "move-on" rules, requiring fishing vessels to move





away from areas where there may be high densities of these creatures. Positions of these vulnerable marine indicators must be reported.

Catch thresholds for "sea-pens", a long, frond-like type of soft coral, have been introduced for the first time. NAFO also revised its rules on fishing outside of currently fished areas, requiring national administrations to submit a plan of any bottom fishing in exploratory and new areas to be submitted for review by NAFO's scientific and management bodies, which can result in permission to fish being granted, prohibited or requiring specific measures to protect marine life.

Conservation Plans and Rebuilding Strategies (CPRS) were developed and established in order to bring or maintain the stocks at levels that can support sustainable fishing. Stocks under CPRS are constantly assessed and monitored. Harvesting strategies are determined and adjusted accordingly. Currently two stocks on the Grand Bank, American Plaice and Cod, which have been under moratoria since 1995 are managed under CPRS. The moratoria continue on these stocks.

NAFO also established priorities for developing CPRS for other stocks: continuing efforts for southern Grand bank Witch Flounder which has been under moratorium since 1995, and initial development for both northern Grand Bank Redfish and Flemish Cap Cod which were re-opened in 2010 after a decade of closure.

NAFO has continued the process of reforming itself following the 2011 Performance Assessment Report. Following a working group session, which looked into the best way forward in March 2012, the General Council of NAFO adopted its plans, particularly endorsing those which enable closer working relationships between scientists and managers and ensuring best data and science are available. Consequently, a number of working groups on conservation and rebuilding of fish stocks, management strategies and vulnerable marine ecosystems, which were previously held under the auspices of the Fisheries Commission, will become joint working groups of the Scientific Council and Fisheries Commission.

The number of fishing vessels in the Regulatory Area has recently increased but still remains much lower than historical numbers. The inspection rate has remained stable since 2006.

NAFO has established a fund to continue to support mapping vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) in the NAFO Regulatory Area (**NAFO PotEntial VulneRable Marine Ecosystems - Impacts of Deep - seA Fisheries - NEREIDA**).

NAFO Secretariat updated its website with a modern look and feel. A new "Data" section has been created to provide easier access to statistical and geo-spatial information. Material on frameworks, such as the Precautionary Approach, Ecosystem Approach, CPRS and MSE has been added. A new ICNAF section includes a history of the predecessor of NAFO and the ICNAF publications which have been digitized. ICNAF meeting and research documents are also being scanned and will be uploaded as they are finalized.

A new secured area for NAFO Inspectors was also introduced to allow comprehensive access to important official fisheries documentation.

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will be held in Halifax, NS, Canada,





## Meetings:

Prior to the Annual Meeting, the following NAFO meetings were held: Scientific Council/NIPAG Meeting on Shrimp Assessment, Dartmouth, NS, Canada, 19-26 October 2011; Scientific Council WGEAFM, Dartmouth, NS, Canada, 30 November-09 December 2011; Scientific Council Ad hoc Working Group on Exceptional Circumstances (by correspondence), January-March 2012; GC Working Group on the Development of Plans of Action for the Implementation of the Recommendations of the NAFO Performance Review Panel, Halifax, NS, Canada, 20-22 March 2012; Joint NAFO/ICES Working Group on Deep-water Ecology (WGDEC), Copenhagen, Denmark, 26-30 March 2012; International Fisheries Commissions Pension Society Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, USA, 19-20 April 2012; Standing Committee on International Control (STACTIC), Brussels, Belgium, 2-4 May 2012; Scientific Council Working Group on Reproductive Potential (by correspondence and ad hoc meetings); Scientific Council and its Standing Committees, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada, 1-14 June 2012. Reports of all NAFO meeting are finalized following the meeting end and are posted on the public NAFO website. Reports from General Council and Fisheries Commission (and Standing Committees) can be accessed at <http://www.nafo.int/publications/frames/fish-proc.html> and Scientific Council Reports at <http://www.nafo.int/science/frames/sci-rep.html>.

The table of NAFO TACs and quotas agreed at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting can be found at <http://www.nafo.int/fisheries/quota.pdf>

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## Annex I.A - Annual Quota Table

**QUOTA TABLE. Total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons) for 2013 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 Division/Contracting Party	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		113	0.80	0	2769	42.60	500	6000	0 <sup>2,4</sup>	0	0	16575 <sup>5</sup>
Cuba		522	3.70	-	637	9.80	1750		0 <sup>2,4</sup>	-	-	-
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)		3154	22.35	-	-		69 <sup>19</sup>		0 <sup>2,3</sup>	-	-	-
European Union		8049 <sup>25</sup>	57.03	0 <sup>11</sup>	1185 <sup>26</sup>	18.23	7813 <sup>12</sup>	7000	0 <sup>2,3</sup> 0 <sup>2,15</sup>	0	0 <sup>11</sup>	-
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-	-		69 <sup>19</sup>		0 <sup>2,4</sup>	-	-	340 <sup>5</sup>
Iceland		-		-	-		-		0 <sup>2,3</sup>	-	-	-
Japan		-		-	-		400	150	0 <sup>2,4</sup>	-	-	-
Korea		-		-	-		69 <sup>19</sup>	100	0 <sup>2,4</sup>	-	-	-
Norway		1305	9.25	-	-		-		0 <sup>2,3</sup>	-	-	-
Russian Federation		913	6.47	0	1870	28.77	9137	6500	0 <sup>2,3</sup>	-	0	-
Ukraine								150	0 <sup>2,4</sup>			
United States of America		-		-	-		69 <sup>19</sup>		0 <sup>2,4</sup>	-	-	-
Others		57	0.40	0	39	0.60	124	100	-	0	0	85 <sup>5</sup>
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	* <sup>9</sup>	14113 <sup>23</sup>	100.0	* <sup>20,9</sup>	6500 <sup>24</sup>	100.0	6500 <sup>8</sup>	20000	0 <sup>10,17</sup>	* <sup>21</sup>	* <sup>9,16</sup>	17000 <sup>21,22</sup>

1.

Species	Witch		White hake	Capelin	Skates	Greenland halibut	Squid (Illex) <sup>1</sup>	Shrimp	
	3L	3NO	3NO	3NO	3LNO	3LMNO	Sub-areas 3+4	3L	3NO
Canada		0	294	0	1167	1724	N.S. <sup>6</sup>	7160	
Cuba		-		0		-	510	96	
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)		-		-		199	-	96	
European Union		0 <sup>11</sup>	588	0 <sup>11</sup>	4408	6738 <sup>18</sup>	<u>N.S.<sup>6</sup></u> 611 <sup>13</sup>	480 <sup>14</sup>	
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-		188	453	96	
Iceland		-		-		-	-	96	
Japan		-		0		1178	510	96	
Korea		-		-		-	453	96	
96*10Norway		-		0		-	-	96	
Russian Federation		0	59	0	1167	1466	749	96	
Ukraine						-		96	
United States of America		-		-		-	453	96	
Others		0	59	-	258	0 <sup>7</sup>	794	0	
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*9,20	*9	1000 <sup>27</sup>	*9,20	7000 <sup>16</sup>	11493	34000 <sup>20</sup>	8600	*9

\* Ban on fishing in force.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Quota to be shared by vessels from Canada, Cuba, France (St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Korea, Ukraine and USA.
- Contracting Parties shall inform the Executive Secretary before 01 December 2012 of the measures to be taken to ensure that total catches do not exceed the levels indicated.
- 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 2013.
9. The provisions of Article 6, 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 2013 as compared to 2012, 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 96 tonnes each for Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland out of a TAC of 8,600 tonnes, following their accession to the European Union.
15. Allocation of 17.85% to Lithuania and 2.15% to Latvia following their accession to the European Union.
16. Applicable to 2013 and 2014.
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 377 tonnes for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania following their accession to the European Union.
19. Notwithstanding the provisions of footnote 8 and Article 5.2 (b) 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 6.1 (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 6.1 (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 157 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 536 tons for Poland following their accession to the European Union.
26. Including fishing entitlements of 322 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. Should a Contracting Party experience higher than normal catches per unit of effort (CPUE) and conclude that a shift to high availability levels of white hake during the fishing season - such as what apparently was the case in 2002 and 2003 – is taking place, then that Contracting Party shall notify the Executive Secretary. Upon this notification, the TAC is increased to 5,000 metric tons. The Executive Secretary shall notify all Contracting Parties of the increased TAC. Within one month that Contracting Party shall submit a summary of evidence for its conclusion (higher than normal CPUE and any other additional relevant information). On this basis, a mail vote will be submitted to the Fisheries Commission as to whether an exceptional increase in the availability of fish occurs. In case of a positive vote, the TAC is confirmed to be 5,000 metric tons. In case of a negative vote, the TAC is 1,000 metric tons and catches between the notification of high availability and the notification to Contracting Parties of the result of the vote will not be accounted for the catch limitation provided in Article 5 of the NCEM.