



**NAFO HOLDS 45<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING IN VIGO AND CONTINUES TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND ECOSYSTEMS IN THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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