

Northwest Atlantic



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On the Formulation of Scientific Advice by the NAFO Scientific Council
for Stocks in the Regulatory Area (Exclusive or Overlapping)

by

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1. In the Convention of NAFO a distinction is drawn as regards formulating requests for scientific advice between stocks

- a) exclusively within the fisheries jurisdiction of a coastal state,
- b) stocks overlapping the fisheries jurisdiction of a coastal state and the Regulatory area and
- c) stocks exclusively within the Regulatory area.

In the case of a) scientific advice is exclusively provided on the basis of a request formulated by the coastal state concerned (Article VII).

In the case of c), it is provided on the basis of either a request by the Fisheries Commission, or on the Scientific Council's own initiative (Article VI and VIII).

In the case of b), both solutions are possible, i.e. the coastal state, the Fisheries Commission or the Scientific Council, on its own initiative, can specify the terms of reference for an advice. (Articles VI, VII and VIII).

2. For stocks exclusively in the Regulatory area, the Fisheries Commission has not asked the Scientific Council for advice, nor has it specified any request for overlapping stocks.
3. It is one of the functions of the Scientific Council, in the absence of a Fisheries Commission request, to provide scientific advice "on its own initiative" as required for the purposes of the Commission (Article VI 1 d).

With a view to the preparation of the Fisheries Commission meeting in September, it should be provided with scientific advice for the stocks occurring in the Regulatory area. The Scientific Council has no choice but to determine itself the terms of reference for such advice. Insofar as this may require a modification of the provisional agenda of the Scientific Council, Rule 4.3 of the rules of procedures provides for the necessary ways of action.

4. In deciding how this advice should be given, the Scientific Council should try to foresee the type of information which the members of the Fisheries Commission will need in order to take management decisions. In this context, it is useful to examine the procedures adopted by ICES, which provides a wide range of management options. This presentation is accepted as useful by the "customers" of scientific advice.

The "Revised Guidelines for Reporting STACFIS Assessments" (Annex I of the NAFO Scientific Council Reports 1984) already provide the necessary basis but, importantly, they do not give in their section (5c) the range of values of "Catch or F" which should be considered by STACFIS.

5. In order to be in line with the useful presentation of scientific advice as provided by ICES it is proposed to the Scientific Council at the first day of its meeting, when adopting its agenda, to extend the range of options for the stocks in the regulatory area and for the overlapping stocks.

6. In particular the Scientific Council should agree to examine

for stocks in the NAFO Regulatory Area :

- cod (3M)
- Redfish (3M)
- American plaice (3M),

and for stocks and groups of stocks overlapping partly the Canadian 200-mile fishery zone in Subarea 2, 3 and 4 and the Regulatory area :

- Cod (2J+3KL, 3NO)
- Redfish (3LN)
- Silver hake (4VWX)
- American plaice (3LNO)
- Witch flounder (3NO)
- Yellowtail flounder (3LNO)
- Greenland halibut (2+3KL)
- Roundnose grenadier (2+3)
- Capelin (3L, 3NO)
- Squid - Illex (3+4),

the following options in assessing and projecting future stock levels for those stocks listed above :

- a) for stocks for which analytical dynamic-pool type assessments are possible :

- a graph of catch options for the year 1986 over a range of fishing mortality rates (F) at least from -25 % to 25 % of F in 1984,
- a graph showing spawning stock biomasses at 1.1.1987 corresponding to each catch option,
- graphs showing the long-term average catches and catch per unit effort against fishing mortality rate,

- b) for stocks for which advice is based on general production models, the relevant graph of production on fishing mortality rate,

In both cases the three reference points, actual F, F_{max} and $F_{0.1}$ should be shown.

Other options requested by Canada, if not included above, should also be considered.

7. If the Scientific Council agrees to these ideas, it is proposed that in the introduction to the Scientific Council report the following wording be inserted : "The Scientific Council decided to formulate on its own initiative the terms of reference for scientific advice for stocks in the NAFO Regulatory area (exclusive and overlapping) in the absence of a request by the Fisheries Commission on the basis of the options mentioned in the document.