

Serial No. 402Document No. 35ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 1958INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES CONVENTION, 1946MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COMMISSION

By Klaus Sunnanaa, ICNAF Observer

The Fifth Meeting of the Permanent Commission set up under the International Fisheries Convention of 1946 took place in London between 8th and 11th May, 1958. Delegations attended from all thirteen of the Member Governments, namely, Belgium, Denmark, the Federal German Republic, France, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Observers were present from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, which was there represented for the first time.

Attending the meeting also were observers from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, and the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries.

Much of the Commission's discussion was devoted to the report of an ad hoc Scientific Committee set up at the previous meeting to review available information and to advise the Commission on minimum mesh sizes and minimum size-limits for fish, and to say whether any changes were required. The Commission recognized that this report, the conclusions of which were based upon all the scientific knowledge arrived at after many years of fisheries research, was a most important and valuable document. The Commission resolved to provide for the publication of the Report, and it was agreed to recommend that the Member Governments should have the Report translated for the information of their fishermen; should seek the views of their own fishing industries; and should report back with their recommendations and proposals by 31st December, 1958. These will be taken into consideration, with the main Report, at the next meeting. It was decided that in the meantime the 75 mm. minimum mesh for ordinary trawls should be continued for a further year until 4th April, 1959.

The Commission also gave further attention to the problem of mixed fishing for protected and for other species. The Commission appointed a Committee composed of representatives of the six countries most concerned - Iceland, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, the Federal German Republic, Poland and Sweden - to study this problem further for the next meeting.

Arrangements for ensuring the uniform enforcement of the provisions of the Convention were again discussed. A Committee of the Commission examined the reports of infractions submitted by all Member Governments and the Commission unanimously agreed to recommend to Member Governments suggestions designed to make more uniform enforcement possible. The Commission expressed its thanks to the Netherlands Government for making available an officer for the Commission's employment to visit those Member

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Countries which might so desire in order to advise upon the enforcement of the provisions of the Convention.

Finally, the Commission received reports from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea on the question of a definition of the light trawl, and the problem presented by the capture of undersized whiting in the industrial fisheries. The Commission decided to take no further action at present on these problems since the International Council was still continuing its investigations.

Mr. Klaus Sunnanaa (Norway) was elected President for the next three years in succession to Mr R. G. R. Wall (United Kingdom) whose term of office had expired, and M. A. Alloy (France) was elected Vice-President in succession to Dr. G. Rollefson (Norway).

The Commission will hold its next meeting in London beginning on 14th May, 1957.