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Joint Report on Portugal/Spain Exchange of Enforcement Officers, 8-25 May 1966

The Portuguese officials extended an invitation to the Spanish officials to exchange enforcement officers as recommended at the 14th and 15th Annual Meetings of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries.

An informal bilateral agreement with appended instructions was signed and, at the end of April, the Portuguese H/S *Gil Eannes* sailed from Lisbon for the Assistance Mission in the Convention Area carrying a Spanish and a Portuguese officer.

Notwithstanding the bad conditions of weather, it was possible to inspect, between 8-25 May, in Subareas 2 and 3, the Portuguese trawlers *Joao Corte Real*, *Comandante Tenreiro*, *Rio Alfusqueiro*, *Santa Maria Madalena*, *Joao Martins*, *David Melgueiro*, *Alvaro Martins Homen*, *Maria Teixeira Vilarinho*, and the Spanish trawlers *Santa Regina*, *Santa Paula*, *Santa Celia*, *Santa Amalia*, *Reganon* and 3 pair trawlers *Alona-Igaratza*, *Izaro-Agona* and *Santa Eliza-Santa Marinha*.

Although all ICNAF recommendations in respect of mesh size and chafers are not yet in force, the inspectors verified that the nets of the vessels visited correspond with all the recommendations.

All measurements were made with the "ICNAF type mesh measuring gauge", and the table of equivalents recommended by ICNAF in 1964 was used.

Conclusions

1. The inspections were difficult because of bad weather and the dispersal of cod vessel groups.
2. On the 19 vessels inspected, no infringements to the ICNAF recommendations were found.
3. The mesh size was checked, according to the ICNAF instructions and using the ICNAF gauge. It was not practical to measure 50 meshes consecutively in each net because it interferes with the normal work on board. Consequently it was found best to measure only 20 meshes, except where there was any doubt, in which case 50 consecutive meshes were measured.
4. Some of the vessels inspected used topside chafing gear, and even if they were of the type recommended previously by ICNAF, a slight change in the selectivity was verified. This is the reason for which the Spanish and Portuguese authorities will recommend to the captains of trawlers that they do not use any type of topside chafing gear, taking into consideration that its use is unnecessary as confirmed for the pair trawlers and for some side trawlers.
5. It has been demonstrated that this exchange of enforcement officers provides knowledge of the enforcement system used by each country and each country can then improve its own enforcement system.
6. Equally, the exchange leads to a better contact with the difficult problems that each member country is now facing.
7. And also it represents a very important step for an international enforcement system.
8. The task of the Portuguese and Spanish officials was carried out in close collaboration and both the Portuguese and Spanish captains of the vessels inspected showed the greatest interest and cooperation.
9. In the light of this first experience, it seems advisable that in any system adopted for an international inspection the enforcement officer should be accompanied by an officer of the same nationality as the vessel visited, as has been practiced in the provisional agreement between Portugal and Spain.