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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES

Report on the Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission

The Sixth Session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission was held in Paris between 2 and 13 September 1969. The following items of business are of interest to ICNAF:-

1. Long-Term and Expanded Programme of Oceanic Exploration and Research:

The Commission approved the outline of this programme as drawn up by one of its working groups and it is intended that it should be published by UNESCO in the IOC Technical Series. A copy has been sent to the UN Secretary General in compliance with various UN resolutions.

A group of experts on Long-Term Scientific Policy and Planning will be established in order to (a) develop the long-term programme (b) keep under review and stimulate the development of national and international programmes relevant to it (c) identify fields of research requiring increased emphasis (d) develop criteria for the assignment of priorities to various elements of the programme (e) find ways of inter-relating projects which are relevant to the programme and which are being carried out by various international and regional bodies.

This group of experts will be selected from nominations by member governments of IOC and by SCOR, ACMRR and by the Advisory Committee on Oceanic Meteorological Research (ACOMR) set up by WMO. Its members will act in their individual capacities and the group will not have any executive powers but will make recommendations to the Bureau and Consultative Council of IOC.

2. Integrated Global Ocean Station System

The Commission adopted the General Plan and Implementation Programme of IGOSS for Phase I, urged member governments to implement it, and invited other international organizations to support its development. It emphasized the need for more detailed studies of the requirements of users of the ocean for oceanic environmental information.

3. Cooperative Systematic Studies in the North Atlantic

The Commission recommended that a start be made on the tasks listed in a resolution passed at the Fifth Session, namely

- a. compilation and dissemination of detailed information on plans for investigations and observational programmes in the North Atlantic;
- b. co-ordination of the Commission's Caribbean and Mediterranean programmes with existing ICES and ICNAF programmes in the North Atlantic region, with the programme for the study of the dynamics and hydrology of the North Atlantic, and with other new programmes which may develop in the region;
- c. development of future joint programmes among IOC, ICES and ICNAF, WMO and other interested organizations with a view to ensuring the development of a systematic programme of investigations of the North Atlantic.

4. Legal Questions related to Scientific Investigations of the Ocean

The Commission agreed that it should assist members to obtain the consent of coastal states so that they can carry out fundamental scientific research in areas over which the latter exercise jurisdiction. A set of principles governing this assistance was laid down.

5. Legal Status of Ocean Data Acquisition Systems

The Commission took steps to allow an international preparatory conference of governmental experts to be convened shortly in order to prepare a draft convention on the legal status of ocean data acquisition systems ie moored oceanographic buoys etc.

6. Marine Pollution

The Commission decided to wind up its Working Group on Marine Pollution and to rely on the advice of the UN Agencies' Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution (GESAMP).

A J Lee

14 May 1970