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Report on Statistical Activities during the Year 1973/74

by Assistant Executive Secretary

1. Advance Release of Statistical Bulletin Tables 1, 2 and 3

As soon as possible after the 1973 Annual Meeting, 1972 nominal catch statistics as supplied on STATLANT 21A forms were compiled and a revision of Summ.Doc. 73/17 was issued on 4 July 1973 in the format of Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the Statistical Bulletin.

A similar revision of Summ.Doc. 74/38 (Provisional Nominal Catches in the Northwest Atlantic, 1973) will be issued as soon as possible after the 1974 Annual Meeting, when all of the STATLANT 21A submissions are received.

2. Statistical Bulletin, Vol. 22

At the 1973 Annual Meeting, the Subcommittee recommended a number of significant changes in the format of presentation of the Statistical Bulletin and every effort was made to incorporate the changes in the current issue, i.e. Vol. 22 for the year 1972. The rearrangement of the tabular material and the inclusion of additional tables in Vol. 22 necessitated the complete reorganization of the data-processing procedure used previously to compile the tables for Vol. 20 and 21. The new programs utilize magnetic tape and disc storage facilities and all of the basic tables may now be produced from a common data source (i.e. STATLANT 21B catch and effort statistics) using computer sorting routines. Despite the considerable amount of time required to reorganize the data-processing system in the latter months of 1973, data from two Member Countries were still outstanding in early December when the programs were ready to compile the tables. Consequently, Vol. 22 was not issued until February 1974.

3. Sampling Yearbook, Vol. 17

The presentation of sampling data in Vol. 17 was also changed considerably from that in previous issues, in accordance with recommendations of the 1973 Annual Meeting. Much of the reorganization involved the standardization of the format used to present length and age frequencies and the accumulation of all age-length keys in an appendix. As for Statistical Bulletin, the compilation of tables for Sampling Yearbook was hampered by the late receipt of national submissions, the use of forms other than those specified, the improper application of age-length keys to length frequencies, and, in general, the apparent inattention to instructions for completing the forms. It is planned that future issues, if necessary, will be compiled by automatic data-processing methods after a number of further problems have been resolved.

4. Submission of Advance Monthly Statistics of Selected Species for Assessments

An attempt by the Assessments Subcommittee to initiate the provision of preliminary monthly nominal catch data in time for consideration at the January 1974 Meeting was not very successful, as only a few countries reported in advance of the Meeting, some provided data during the Meeting and about one-third of those fishing in the Northwest Atlantic provided no data at all.

A further request that the 1973 provisional monthly catch data for selected species be sent to the Secretariat by 31 March 1974 to enable assessment scientists to update stock assessments prior to the 1974 Annual Meeting was equally lacking, in that only one-half of the Member Countries had provided the required data by 30 April, one month after the deadline. The data for some countries were still lacking even at the start of Assessments Subcommittee Meetings on 22 May 1974, and the very preliminary statistics from the January 1974 Meeting had to be used.

Computer listings of available data were issued to assessment scientists on 14 April 1974 and again on 9 May. A third compilation was made on 17 May and issued as a Working Paper for the Assessments Subcommittee.

5. Advance Submission of 1973 Sampling Data

The deadline, established some years ago for the submission of sampling data is 31 July. The response to the recommendation (January 1974 Meeting) that 1973 sampling data be provided well in advance of the 1974 Annual Meeting was much more encouraging than the submission of monthly catch statistics, in that most of the countries which normally submit sampling data for inclusion in the Sampling Yearbook had submitted a considerable quantity of data well in advance of the Annual Meeting. However, a major drawback to assessment scientists was the absence of monthly catch data from several of those countries.

Listings of the available sampling data were circulated on 4 April 1974 and again on 30 April (Circular Letters 74/19, 74/20), and photocopies of selected data were forwarded to assessment scientists on request.

6. Other Statistical Activities during 1973/74

- a) Documentation of nominal catches in Stat. Area 6 for the years 1963-65, which were not previously published in Statistical Bulletin, and their inclusion in Statistical Bulletin, Vol. 22 (p. 218-219).
- b) Preparation of a report on discards and industrial fish for inclusion in Redbook 1973, Part III.
- c) Documentation of amended catch and effort data for Japan 1967-69, Bulgaria in 1969-70, and German Democratic Republic in 1969-71, and their inclusion in Statistical Bulletin, Vol. 22 (p. 220-239).
- d) Tabular presentation of finfish and squid catches in SA 5 and 6 for 1963-72 (Summ. Doc. 74/4).
- e) Documentation of historical catches (1963-72) by country for about 60 stocks proposed for regulation at the 1974 Annual Meeting (Summ.Doc. 74/25 Revised).
- f) Documentation of flounder catches by species and division for the years 1963-72, following receipt from Canadian, Polish and Soviet scientists of species breakdowns of the large quantities of flounders reported as "Flounders (NS)" prior to 1970 (Summ.Doc. 74/34).
- g) Participation in meetings of CWP ad hoc Working Group at Paris, Madrid and Lisbon with French, Spanish and Portuguese statistical officers concerning the collection of national statistics and reporting to international agencies (Summ.Doc. 74/15).
- h) Summary of information on discards and industrial fish for 1972 (Summ.Doc. 74/16).
- i) Summary of trawl materials and mesh size sampling, 1973 (Summ.Doc. 74/18).
- j) Provisional sealing statistics for 1973 (Summ.Doc. 74/23).
- k) Provisional nominal catches in the Northwest Atlantic, 1973 (Summ.Doc. 74/38).
- l) Nominal catches in 1973 by country for fish stocks proposed for regulation in 1975 (Summ.Doc. 74/7 Revised).
- m) Dissemination to assessment scientists of copies of a considerable quantity of statistical and sampling data prior to the Commission Meetings in October 1973, January 1974 and May-June 1974.
- n) Preparation of detailed catch/effort data submitted for Div. 5Z Pilot Study for automatic data-processing.
- o) Preparation of Cohort Analysis and Stock Prediction computer programs for use by assessment scientists during the 1974 Annual Meeting.

7. Action on Recommendations from the 1973 Annual Meeting

- a) Discards and industrial fish (Rec. 3(ii)). Information was requested for 1973 by Circular Letter 74/9 on a new form (Appendix A). The deadline for receipt of these data is 31 July 1974.
- b) Timeliness and adequacy of reporting statistical data (Rec. 4, 5). The statistical and sampling submissions of Member Countries were reviewed in some detail early in 1973, and reports outlining the major deficiencies in reporting were prepared and countries were individually informed. The complete report was presented to the 1973 Annual Meeting as Summ.Doc. 73/2. Subsequently some improvement was noted in the submission and quality of national reports from some countries.

Since the 1973 Annual Meeting all Circular Letters requesting statistical and sampling data have

stressed the importance of following instructions in completing the forms and submitting the data by airmail to reach the Secretariat not later than the specified deadlines. Responses to such requests have continued to be rather poor for some countries, as noted in Items 2, 3, 4 and 5 above, as has also been experienced at the January 1974 Meeting and at this Annual Meeting. For example, at the start of this Annual Meeting, STATLANT 21A reports were available for only about one-half of the countries reporting, even though the deadline was 15 April 1974. Reports from three countries were still outstanding on 28 May 1974.

- c) Advance monthly catches of selected species (Rec. 4(11); 8). See Item 4 above.
- d) Improvements in Statistical Bulletin format (Rec. 6, 7). See Item 2 above.
- e) Streamlining of Sampling Yearbook (Rec. 13, 14). See Item 3 above for reference to Sampling Yearbook format. Rec. 14 was covered in Circular Letter 74/7 requesting the 1973 sampling data.
- f) Large quantities of Flounders (NS) prior to 1970. See Item 6(f) above.

8. Action on Recommendations from the January 1974 Mid-term Meeting

- a) Advance monthly catches of selected species and relevant sampling data. Circular Letters 74/7 and 74/11 requested that these data be airmailed to reach the Secretariat by 31 March 1974. The status of national reporting is generally covered in Items 4 and 5 above.
- b) ICNAF Data Base Improvement. Statistical data and other information required in accordance with six recommendations of the ICNAF Data Base Working Group were requested in Circular Letter 74/12. Detailed consideration of these matters will be taken in meetings of the Working Group.
- c) ICNAF List of Vessels for 1974 and subsequent years. Implementation of recommendations that the complete list be published for 1974 and updated annually thereafter will be carried out in early 1975, following requests for such information in late 1974 by Circular Letter.

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES

ANNUAL RETURN OF INFORMATION ON DISCARDS

(for reporting weights of whole fish thrown overboard at sea)

Year:	Country:	Gear:	Tonnage Class:
Check (✓) method used to get information:		<input type="checkbox"/> Logbook	<input type="checkbox"/> Port Interview
		<input type="checkbox"/> Boat Observer	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____

TOTAL WEIGHT FOR YEAR BY SPECIES AND/OR SPECIES GROUPS (metric tons round fresh)

Species	Div.:		Div.:		Div.:		Div.:		Div.:	
	Nominal catch	Dis-cards	Nominal catch	Dis-cards	Nominal catch	Dis-cards	Nominal catch	Dis-cards	Nominal catch	Dis-cards
Cod										
Haddock										
Redfish										
S. hake										
R. hake										
Pollock										
A. plaice										
Witch										
Yellowtail										
Other Flo.										
RN grenadier										
Other gro'fish										
Herring										
Mackerel										
Other Pelagics										
Argentine										
Capelin										
Other Fish										
Squids										
Sampling Rate* (%)										

* Percentage of catch sampled, or percent of trips or vessels, etc.

Discards Form (02/74)

Reported by: _____

(see over for explanatory notes)

200

Explanatory Notes and Instructions

1. STATLANT 21A and 21B provide statistics on the nominal catches - the sum of the live weight equivalent of the fish landed and of those whole fish turned into fish meal at sea on board factory vessels. However, for their assessment studies, scientists should know the actual catch - the nominal catch plus the quantities of fish thrown overboard at sea, i.e. the so-called "discarded fish". Estimates of the discarded portion of the catch may be obtained from various sources, e.g. logbook, boat observer, port interview, etc.

2. This form is provided for countries to report the quantities of discards (and the related nominal catches) for all TAC species and other species groups as indicated in the first column. Five columns are provided on each sheet for listing the information by ICNAF divisions (or subdivisions, where applicable). For each type of gear (and tonnage class, if possible) enter at the top of each column the division, and list for each species or species group the annual nominal catches and the estimated quantities discarded. The statistics provided should cover the entire fleet of vessels of the particular tonnage class and gear type. On the last line of each column (i.e. Sampling Rate) give an estimate of the fleet coverage (in percent) based on the portion of catch sampled, portion of trips or vessels sampled, etc.