

International Commission for



the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries

Serial No. 3492
(A.c.4)

ICNAF Comm.Doc. 75/18

ANNUAL MEETING - JUNE 1975

Memorandum by the United States -

Reconciliation of interpretations presented in Commissioners Documents 74/41 and 74/44
- Spanish fisheries in Subarea 5 and Statistical Area 6

At the November 1974 ICNAF Meeting, Miami, the United States presented documentary evidence of apparent infringements by the combined Spanish fleet in Subarea 5 and Statistical Area 6 (Comm.Doc. 74/41). This document estimated the 1974 squid and cod catches, as well as the overall catch taken by Spanish fishing vessels. The estimates were based on cumulative vessel sighting data obtained by aerial overflights and catch/effort and species composition obtained through inspection under the ICNAF scheme of inspection. The results of these observations, which formed the basis for stating that 75 Spanish vessels were engaged in the squid fishery, are given in the attached table.

US enforcement personnel have carefully re-studied all data obtained by various US personnel in 1974 and have concluded reluctantly that actually only 40 vessels were used in the squid fishery instead of the 75 originally charged with having fished for squid in Subarea 5 and Statistical Area 6. We have adjusted to the lower number by accepting that the sighting of a vessel on only one occasion was insufficient to verify its presence in the Convention Area. These regretful errors resulted in large part from poor marking of Spanish vessels.

As was indicated in discussions at Miami, registration numbers on Spanish vessels are long - the longest of any nation in ICNAF. The numbers are printed in small letters and colors that contrast poorly with the color of the hull and are located forward under the flare of the vessel's hull. Considering the location, size, and color contrast, vessel numbers are most difficult to read, particularly from the air. The Spanish fleet was subject to intensive surveillance during the months of January-July 1974. During this period, most vessels were sighted several times. Unfortunately, errors occurred. Some numbers were incorrectly recorded, resulting in creation of spurious vessels engaged in the squid fishery. There was no reliable information, i.e., specific listing of national vessels furnished by the flag state and available in all Member Governments, to check the validity of sightings. The United States has learned from experience gained during 1974. Henceforth, data on vessel sightings will be audited in such a manner as to eliminate erroneous reporting of vessels on the part of US officials.

The discrepancies, although substantial in the total number of Spanish vessels engaged in the squid fishery, do not change the conclusion by US officials that the combined fishing effort by Spanish fishing vessels in 1974 resulted in a catch substantially above the species total allowable catch as well as the overall second-tier quota allocated to Spain. We maintain that the average daily catch rate for squid of 5.5 metric tons (data from Comm.Doc. 74/41, Appendix I) is valid. Thus, if we use 40 vessels in lieu of 75 and assume that each vessel spent an average of 55 days each on the fishing grounds, the catch of squid was 12,100 metric tons.

The addition of the by-catch (using a conservative estimate of 20% even though ICNAF Working Paper No. 3 submitted by Spain indicates a probable higher by-catch) bring the total catch by the vessels fishing primarily for squid to 14,520 metric tons. Although less than that originally estimated by US officials, it is still well above the Spanish quota of 13,000 metric tons for the squid fishery. Data provided in Comm.Doc. 74/44 (Comments of the Spanish delegation on the US memorandum annexed to ICNAF Commissioners' Document 74/41) indicates that the Spanish squid catch in 1974 was 16,341 metric tons from Subarea 5 and Statistical Area 6. Adding a by-catch of 20% (3,268 metric tons) raises this total catch to 19,609 metric tons for this segment of the Spanish fleet alone.

When considered with the total fish taken in the Spanish cod fishery, it remains obvious to US officials that the total allowable catch allocated to the Government of Spain of 17,200 metric tons was exceeded by a substantial margin.

The United States regrets whatever inconvenience and embarrassment it may have caused officials of the Republic of Spain as a result of the errors contained in Comm.Doc. 74/41. The evidence presented in that document was made in an honest effort to monitor total catches to meet the intent of ICNAF and the commitments of the Government of Spain and the United States. We are hopeful that the steps initiated by Spanish officials will correct these deficiencies.

(over)

TABLE - continued

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	AREA 5 6											
VIS 8944 **		3										
VIS 8971 *		1										
VIS 9118 *			1									
VIS 9137 **	1	2			1	2						
VIS 9140 *		1										
VIS 9197 *				1								
VIS 9226 *				1								
VIS 9229 **	1	2		2								
VIS 9238 *				1								
VIS 9287 **	1											
VIS 9301 **	2	3			3		1	6	2			
VIS 9302 **	2		3	1								
VIS 9305 *			1									
VIS 9306 **		1	2	1	2	1	2	1				
VIS 9315 **		2	2		4	2		4	2			
VIS 9317 *	1											
VIS 9325 *			1									
VIS 9534 *			1		1							
VIS 9336 **	1											
VIS 9338 **		1	2		2	2	1					
VIS 9340 **	2	1	1	3	1	1	2					
VIS 9379 **	1	1										
VIS 9380 *			1									
VIS 9387 **	2	2	1	2	1	3		3	3	2		
VIS 9388 *			1									
VIS 9390 *				1								
VIS 9422 **						1	1	3				
VIS 9447 *			1									
VIS 9452 **									1	6		
VIS 9537 *		1										
VIS 9542 *										1		
VIS 9651 *			1									
VIS 9881 *			1									

TOTAL SIGHTINGS 79

* UNITED STATES GOV'T COMM. DOC. 74/41 APPENDIX I
 ** SPANISH COMM. DOC. 74/44

1/ Does not include the following vessels:

- AMARANTE - GI4-1777
- BENIGNO MONTENEGRO VI5-8543
- CAMPA DE TORRES VI5-9407
- TITO MARQUEZ VI5-9452**

The above were reported by Spanish officials as having fished SA 5-6 in 1974.

