

International Commission for



the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries

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US proposal on improved statistical reporting

Since its inception, the effectiveness of the Commission's increasingly complex quota system has been limited by inadequacies in statistical reporting. Variations in the quality and regularity with which statistics are reported by Member Countries continues to pose serious problems, both in terms of the data required for adequate biological assessments, and that required to formulate equitable catch regulations and ensure their enforcement. One of the major weaknesses has been that of inadequate detail in gathering catch and effort data. The United States believes that an important step in solving this problem was taken by STACRES at its 1974 Annual Meeting. Through its Special Working Group on ICNAF Data Base, the Committee recommended that the Commission adopt a statistical reporting system based on 30 x 30 minute areas and twice-monthly time periods. The Working Group stated that such a need was related to the goals of the Commission and the accuracy of assessments necessary to achieve them. It was noted that the assessment of the total finfish regulation in Subarea 5 and Statistical Area 6 required estimation of overall fishing mortality based on such a time-area breakdown. The Working Group also emphasized that, while the need for more detailed data was particularly critical in the southern portion of the Convention Area where the mixed fishery problem was the greatest, such a measure would provide needed improvement in the accuracy of assessments in single species fisheries, such as the silver and red hake, herring, and mackerel fisheries in Subareas 4, 5 and Statistical Area 6.

(over)

Accordingly, it is the view of the United States that the Commission adopt the following Resolution based on the recommendation of STACRES contained in the Report of the Special Working Group on ICNAF Data Base (Redbook 1974, Appendix IV, p. 131-132):

The Commission

Noting Article VI, paragraphs 1 and 3 of the 1949 International Convention for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries;

Recognizing the need to further improve the collection of data required for adequate stock assessments and to increase confidence in the ICNAF Quota Regulation Scheme;

Resolves

1. That Member Governments shall for 1976 and succeeding calendar years report to the Secretariat final annual catch and effort statistics for Statistical Areas 0 and 6 and Subareas 1-5 based on twice monthly time periods and 30 x 30 minute areas by 30 June for each preceding calendar year;
2. That all such final data be reported to the Secretariat through the existing STATLANT Reporting System;
3. That the Secretariat shall incorporate the more detailed data in the present Statistical Bulletin format, and produce working reports of the finer detail as required by STACRES.