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Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



Report of the NAFO Commission – 2nd DRAFT

40th Annual Meeting of NAFO
17-21 September 2018
Tallinn, Estonia

NAFO
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada
2018

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Tallinn, Estonia

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PART I.
Report of the Commission – 2nd DRAFT

40th Annual Meeting of NAFO, 17-21 September 2018
Tallinn, Estonia

I. Opening Procedure

1. Opening by the Chair, Stéphane Artano (France-SPM)

The 40th Annual Meeting of NAFO was convened on Monday, 17 September 2018 at 9:30 hrs at the Radisson Blu Hotel Olumpia with over 175 delegates present from 11 NAFO Contracting Parties (Annex 1). The NAFO President and Chair of the Commission, Stéphane Artano (France-SPM), welcomed delegates to the Meeting and invited the Honourable Siim Kiisler, Minister of the Environment of Estonia, as the host of the 40th NAFO Annual Meeting, to welcome Contracting Parties. The Chair then made his opening statement (Annex 2).

Consistent with past practice, Contracting Parties agreed to submit their opening statements in writing for inclusion in the report. Opening statements from Canada, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union, Japan, Russian Federation and the United States of America (USA) are attached (Annexes 3-8).

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

The NAFO Secretariat (Fred Kingston, Executive Secretary, and Ricardo Federizon, Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator) was appointed as co-Rapporteurs.

The summary of decisions and actions taken by the Commission is presented in Annex 9.

3. Adoption of Agenda

Under item 22 of the provisional agenda that was previously circulated, four (4) fish stocks were added: Redfish in Divisions 3LN, Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO, Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO, and Greenland shark. The adopted agenda reflects the addition (Annex 10).

4. Admission of Observers

In accordance with the NAFO Rules for Observers and in advance of the meeting, the Executive Secretary formally invited the following States and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) to attend:

- Government of Bermuda
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat
- Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)
- Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)
- International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES)
- International Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (IMCS) Network
- North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)
- North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)
- North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)
- North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)



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- North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC)
- North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)
- Sargasso Sea Commission
- South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization (SEAFO)
- South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA)
- South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO)
- United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC),
- Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC).

The IGOs that attended were:

- Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) – represented by the USA
- North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) – represented by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)
- North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) – (Opening Statement – Annex 11)
- South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) – represented by European Union
- South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) – represented by the USA

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) accredited with NAFO Observer Status that attended the 40th Annual Meeting were:

- Conseil de Bande de la Nation Innue de Nutashkuan
- Ecology Action Centre (EAC)
- Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (Opening Statement – Annex 12)
- Shark Trust (Opening Statement – Annex 13)

5. Publicity

In accordance with established practice, Contracting Parties agreed that no public statements would be made until after the conclusion of the meeting when a press release would be prepared by the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the Chairs of the Commission and Scientific Council.

II. Supervision and Coordination of the Organizational, Administrative and Other Internal Affairs

6. Review of Membership of the Commission

The membership of the Commission has not changed since the 2017 Annual Meeting and is currently comprised of twelve (12) Contracting Parties: Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), European Union (EU), France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine and United States of America (USA).

7. Administrative and Activity Report

The Administrative Report and Financial Statements (COM Doc. 18-05 Revised) was referred to STACFAD.

8. NAFO Headquarters Agreement

Canada presented COM Working Paper 18-32 introducing a revised draft text of a proposed headquarters agreement between the Organization and the Government of Canada, as the host Contracting Party. This revised draft text is intended to update the text of the headquarters agreement adopted by NAFO in 2009. The Working Paper also contained a table comparing the provisions of the 2009 text with the 2018 text. Canada explained that the 2018 proposed revisions to the 2009 text reflect both current domestic practices and are consistent with the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. Canada added that the immunities NAFO enjoys in Canada would remain unchanged by this 2018 text. Canada proposed that the 2018



text be adopted by Contracting Parties as the text of the Headquarters Agreement between Canada and NAFO. The matter was referred to STACFAD.

Following the Report of STACFAD (agenda items 30 and 31), the revised draft text of a proposed headquarters agreement was **adopted**.

9. Review of the list of experts to serve as panelists under the NAFO Dispute Settlement provisions

The Executive Secretary introduced COM Working Paper 18-08 that listed, as of 31 July 2018, the experts nominated by Contracting Parties to serve as possible panelists in any ad hoc panel established under the settlement of disputes provisions of the NAFO Convention (Article XV). He added that several Contracting Parties had not yet nominated any experts. Iceland and Japan said that they intend to nominate their respective experts shortly.

10. Guidance to STACFAD necessary for them to complete their work

The issue of the proposed NAFO Headquarters Agreement (as discussed under agenda item 8 of the Commission's Agenda) and a proposal by Norway to amend the Commission's Rules of Procedure (STACFAD Working Paper 18-07) were added to STACFAD's provisional Agenda. The Chair of STACFAD, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (USA), was invited to prepare a report before the closing session.

11. Guidance to STACTIC necessary for them to complete their work

The Chair of STACTIC, Judy Dwyer (Canada), presented the results of the STACTIC May 2018 intersessional meeting, which was held at the NAFO Secretariat in Dartmouth, Canada (COM Doc. 18-02). The Chair reported on the status of the proposal on changes to the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NCEM). The Chair advised that STACTIC will continue the discussions and deliberations on its work related to, among others, the enhancement of the Annual Compliance Review, measures concerning repeat non-compliance of serious infringements, Observer Scheme, stowage plans, move-along provisions for smaller longline vessels, the NAFO Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) Website, reporting of haul by haul catches, bycatches and discards, data classification and access rights, Joint Advisory Group on Data Management (JAGDM), garbage disposal and labour conditions onboard vessels.

The Commission commended STACTIC for its hard work and encouraged STACTIC to continue working on the pending issues.

The Commission **accepted** the report. The formal adoption of the recommendations contained therein was done under agenda item 28.

The Commission forwarded to STACTIC the task of reviewing the charter arrangements (agenda item 25) and the (Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) proposal concerning the definition of *bycatch* in the NCEM. The Commission also instructed STACTIC to examine the issue of American plaice bycatch in the yellowtail flounder fishery in Division 3LNO for a possible re-instatement of the current footnote 14 related to the bycatch provision as an article in the NCEM.

III. Coordination of External Affairs

12. Report of Executive Secretary on External Meetings

The Executive Secretary referred to section 12 of the Administrative and Activity Report (COM Doc. 18-05 Revised) and highlighted some of the external meetings that members of the Secretariat participated in since the last Annual Meeting, such as:

- Our Ocean Conference, Malta, 05–06 October 2017;

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- The 5th Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, 29 November–01 December 2017;
- Second meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating the Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, Seoul, Republic of Korea, 09–13 April 2018;
- The thirteenth round of Informal Consultations of State Parties to the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement Meeting, "*Science-policy interface*", New York, New York, United States of America, 22–23 May 2018;
- NASCO Annual Meeting, Portland, Maine, United States of America, 11–12 June 2018;
- Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) and the 33rd Meeting of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Rome, Italy, 09–13 July 2018;
- The First Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), New York, New York, United States of America, 04–05 September 2018; and
- Second Global Fishery Forum & Seafood Expo 2018, St. Petersburg, Russia, 14-15 September 2018.

13. International Relations

a. Relations with other International Organizations

The Executive Secretary introduced COM WP 18-09 which outlined contacts the NAFO Secretariat has had with other international organizations since the last Annual Meeting. He recalled that Contracting Parties had agreed that the NAFO Secretariat should maintain dialogue with relevant organizations and explore mechanisms to improve the exchange of information. In this context, he reported that, in addition to already-established links with the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS), NAFO has participated in a number of initiatives of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). These include a member of the Scientific Council participating in a CBD expert workshop concerning marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures for achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 in marine and coastal areas and the Executive Secretary participating in the 2nd Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets organized by the CBD. The Executive Secretary also highlighted some of his contacts with Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) and Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) since the last Annual Meeting. These include participation in the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats' Network (RSN) meeting in the margins of the 33rd Meeting of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), a meeting of the so-called Deep Sea RFMOs under the ABNJ Deep Seas Project (see agenda item 13.c), attendance as an observer at the NASCO Annual Meeting and separate visits to the Secretariat from the General Secretary of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) and from the Compliance Manager of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFCC).

The Executive Secretary also introduced COM WP 18-10 concerning the recently-convened Intergovernmental Conference under the auspices of the United Nations to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, the so-called *BBNJ negotiations*, with a view to developing the instrument as soon as possible. He reported that he attended the first two days of the first negotiating session (4 to 17 September 2018) and participated as a panelist in side events organized by the FAO on both days. The second and third sessions will take place in 2019 – 25 March to 5 April 2019 and 19 to 30 August 2019 respectively -- and the fourth session in the first half of 2020 -- all at the UN Headquarters in New York. The Executive Secretary noted the importance of these negotiations, the results of which could significantly affect high seas fisheries and the role of RFMOs. He encouraged Contracting Parties to participate



actively in these negotiations to ensure these interests are adequately taken into account. Several Contracting Parties expressed support for this position.

b. NAFO Members as Observers to External Meetings

At the last Annual Meeting (September 2017), it was agreed that the following NAFO Contracting Parties would represent NAFO at meetings of the following organizations during 2017/2018:

- Canada would represent NAFO at the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC).
- Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) would represent NAFO at the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC).
- European Union (EU) would represent NAFO at the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and South Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).
- Norway would represent NAFO at the South East Atlantic Fishery Organisation (SEAFO) and the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO).
- USA would represent NAFO at the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC).

The reports by these Observers were presented (COM WP 18-11 to 18-19). The same Contracting Parties agreed to represent NAFO at the same meetings for 2019 and the USA agreed to represent NAFO at the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO).

c. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Seas Project

In 2013, NAFO was invited to be a partner in the FAO-Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project “*Sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation of deep-sea living marine resources and ecosystems in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep Seas Project*”. NAFO’s participation has been guided by the activities table which was jointly prepared by FAO and the NAFO Secretariat, in which NAFO support to the project would be an estimated in-kind contribution over the period of 2014-2018. This in-kind contribution represents staff time for activities and meeting expenses for work on deep sea fisheries, as well as administrative expenses for NAFO’s current core activities and operations which are of direct relevance to deep sea fisheries. Almost all the costs that have been implemented or are being planned are part of the regular work of NAFO.

The Executive Secretary, on behalf of the FAO, presented the latest project update from the ABNJ Project (COM WP 18-20 and COM WP 18-35). He added that the Project will close operationally in August 2019, but that a Phase Two of the Project is being considered. A Global Symposium is also scheduled for late June/early July 2019, which will bring together the Project’s various strands. The Executive Secretary also mentioned that the Project has been used as a means to bring together and coordinate the so-called *Deep Sea RFMOs* with regard to issues of mutual interest, including developments in the BBNJ negotiations (see agenda item 13.a).

14. Oil and Gas Activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area

The Executive Secretary presented COM WP 18-21 (Revised) on oil and gas activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA) and activities under the proposed information exchange arrangements, including an update on the use of the new provision to the NCEM that were adopted at the 2016 Annual Meeting to allow, under certain circumstances, the provision of a five-year monthly snapshot of fishing activity in the NRA on the basis of VMS data. The Executive Secretary also mentioned that, since the last Annual Meeting, Canada has sent six notifications to the NAFO Secretariat about petroleum-related activities on Canada’s continental shelf in the NRA for onward transmission to Contracting Parties.

Canada then presented COM WP 18-33, which details the measures that Canada has in place to ensure minimal impacts of oil and gas exploration activities on the marine ecosystem in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA). This information was already sent to Contracting Parties earlier in the month. Canada noted that NAFO has no regulatory authority over oil and gas activity, that there has been good cooperation by the oil and gas industry in providing information and that the current information exchange arrangement is complete. In the ensuing discussion, the European Union (EU) said that there is still scope for further fine-tuning of the information exchange arrangement. The EU noted an increasing trend recently in seismic activities in the NAFO Regulatory Area, particularly in Division 3L, and some of these activities were within VME closed areas. The EU would like to understand better the efforts by Canada to ensure that oil and gas activities were not unduly affecting fishing activities, such as catch rates and fishing times. Canada replied that much of the information the EU is requesting has already been shared. Canada said that the information exchange arrangement also envisages a two-way exchange of information, noting Canada's outstanding request that Contracting Parties share their respective annual fishing plans. Canada added that it was not aware of any conflicts between the industries this year. The EU agreed that there were no such incidents this year because the fishing vessels complied with requests from seismic vessels to leave the area. The EU added that it was not aware of the legal basis for seismic vessels to make such requests.

IV. Joint Session of Commission and Scientific Council

15. 2018 Performance Review

The Coordinator of the 2018 NAFO Performance Review Panel, Jane Willing, presented a summary of the Performance Review Panel Report and its 36 recommendations. In her presentation she noted many of NAFO's recent positive achievements including increased transparency, the protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME), improvements in data collection, compliance based on control measures and greater internal and external co-operation.

In addition, the Coordinator noted that a Contracting Party had commented that there should have been an added recommendation related to addressing the cumulative impacts of human activities on the marine environment. This comment was made after the Panel had distributed the provisional final Report to Contracting Parties. She said that the Panel saw merit in this comment but decided not to include it in the final Report, since the Panel was only considering factual changes to the Report at that stage in the Review process. Instead the Panel agreed that the issue would be raised at the time the Report was officially presented.

Contracting Parties **agreed** to accept the Report and thanked the Coordinator and the rest of the Panel for its work.

After discussion concerning the follow up to the Performance Review Panel's recommendations, Contracting Parties **agreed** to form a Working Group to develop an action plan to address these recommendations. It was also agreed that the Working Group would include in its action plan as an addendum the issue highlighted by the Panel related to the cumulative impact of various human activities beyond the mandate of NAFO on the marine environment. At the same time the Commission noted a related recommendation had already been adopted at this meeting. The terms of reference of this Working Group are set out in COM WP 18-46 Rev. 3 (Annex 14).

16. Presentation of scientific advice by the Chair of the Scientific Council

a. Response of the Scientific Council to the Commission's request for scientific advice

The Chair of the Scientific Council (SC), Brian Healy (Canada), presented this year's advice. The presentation included a report on the catch and survey data used in the stock assessment, environmental and ecosystem trends (COM WP 18-22). The scientific advice was formulated during the SC meeting in June 2018 (SCS Doc. 18-19). It represents the response of SC to the request from the Commission (COM Doc. 17-22). The specific advice or response is outlined below (according to request item number):

1. Assessment of Fish Stocks
 - Cod in in Div. 3M. For 2019, a catch of no more than 20 796 tonnes.
 - American plaice in Divs. 3LNO. No directed fishing for 2019-2021.
 - Thorny skate in Divs. 3LNO. No increase in catches (approximately 4 060t, 2013-2017).
 - Yellowtail flounder in Divs. 3LNO. Catches of 24 900, 22 500 and 21 100 tonnes in 2019 to 2021, respectively have a less than 30% risk of exceeding F_{lim} .
 - Cod in Divs. 3NO. No directed fishing for 2019-2021.
 - Capelin in Divs. 3NO. No directed fishing for 2019-2021.
 - Splendid alfonsino in SA6: Unable to advise on an appropriate TAC for 2019, 2020, 2021.
 - Fishing should not be allowed to expand above current levels in *Kükenthal Peak (Div. 6G, part of the Corner Rise seamount chain)*
 - Monitoring of stocks 3M Redfish, 3M American plaice, 3NO White hake, 3O Redfish, 2J3KL Witch flounder, SA 3+4 Squid: No change to stock status or previously issued advice.
2. HCR for 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut: The TAC for 2019 derived from the HCR is 16 521 tonnes.
3. HCR for 3LN Redfish: Stock decreasing towards B_{msy} but no warning signs that catches adopted under management plan are problematic with respect to stock status. [The stock is currently in the safe zone of the NAFO Precautionary Approach \(PA\) framework and is estimated to be at \$1.5 \times B_{msy}\$. There is a very low risk of the stock being below \$B_{lim}\$.](#)
4. Defining Exceptional Circumstances – MSE for GHL 2+3KLMNO: [Condensed] Expert judgement is applied in annual monitoring, five survey indices will be monitored, recruitment indices at age 4 will be compared to series mean, discrepancies between TAC and catch.
5. Benchmark and MSE work plan – 3M Cod: Benchmark assessment is completed. A new assessment model was adopted in providing advice for 2019. Work on the MSE must be prioritized if completion is anticipated in September 2019.
6. Impact of scientific surveys on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) in closed areas: SC reiterates its 2017 recommendation that scientific bottom trawl surveys in existing closed areas be avoided if possible.
7. Bycatch and Discard Action Plan: SC discussed the Action Plan developed by Working Group on Bycatch, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS) and noted that most of the items will be worked on over the next few years and noted where work has been done in the past.
8. Assessment of 3M Golden Redfish in 2019: SC will conduct a full assessment on 3M golden redfish in June 2019, consistent with the timing of the Commission Request.
9. Implementation of Ecosystem Approach/application of Roadmap: [condensed]: SC notes that Total Catch Ceilings (TCCs) aim to provide information for ecosystem-level strategic management advice. Formation of an ad hoc COM-SC Working Group consisting of subgroup of Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) to identify a mechanism or framework by which ecosystem considerations could be integrated into fisheries management advice and which would provide a basis for SC (WG-ESA) to investigate further options for the implementation of the NAFO Ecosystem Roadmap.
10. 2021 Re-assessment of NAFO bottom fisheries: [Condensed] Four tasks for SC – a) assess the overlap of NAFO fisheries with VME and examine fishery specific and cumulative impacts, b) consideration of ranking processes and objective weighting criteria for the overall assessment of SAI and the risk of future impacts, c) maintain efforts to assess all of the six FAO criteria; and d) continue work on non-sponge and coral VMEs.

Comentado [RF1]: CANADA's insertion.

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11. Review of Precautionary Approach Framework: No progress since 2017 due to heavy workloads and limited capacity. SC encourages participation of additional quantitative experts in an effort to make progress.
12. Greenland shark – biology and management advice: Longevity = 392 ± 120 years, age at maturity = 156 ± 22 years, low fecundity. SC recommends that retention and landings be prohibited, requiring live release. SC also suggest that where appropriate, gear restrictions and modifications, and/or spatial and temporal closures.
13. SWOT analysis/strategic plan: SC accomplished the first part of the request in 2017, completing the analysis. Due to heavy workload, SC was unable to start to develop a strategic scientific plan. It awaits the results of the Performance Review which would give more insight as to what the plan should include.

In addition, SC, on its own accord, provided advice pertaining to:

- Sea pen closure area (Area 14): Following an updated analysis with additional sea pen biomass records (2014-2017), SC concludes there is very little change in the overall distribution of sea pen VME found on the eastern area of the Flemish Cap.
- Witch flounder in Divs. 3NO: No directed fishing in 2019 and 2020.

b. Other issues as determined by the Chairs of the Commission and Scientific Council

The SC Chair highlighted the following issues that would require further reflection of the Commission:

- Ad-hoc committee to produce next year's request for advice,
- Precautionary Approach Review – workplan and timelines,
- Implementation of ecosystem approach to fisheries management,
- Prioritization, resourcing, and reasonable timelines.

Discussions, follow-up actions, and decisions pertaining to the issues are reflected in various sections of this report (see agenda items 17 b. and c. and 18).

c. Feedback to the Scientific Council regarding the advice and its work during this meeting

The Commission noted the SC Reports and the presentation of advice. They engendered questions and inquiries for further clarification to which SC provided responses during the meeting. The Commission noted the response.

The Commission questions and SC responses were compiled in COM WP 18-50 (Annex 15).

17. Meeting Reports of the Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Groups

a. Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process, 2018

The Executive Secretary presented the report and recommendations of the Joint Commission-Scientific Council Efficiency Working Group (COM-SC WP 18-02) which was **accepted** by the Commission.

The Working Group recommends three (3) two-week periods where intersessional meetings by STACTIC and other Working Groups can be held (COM-SC WP 18-08, Annex 16). In this regard, the Tentative Schedule for 2018/2019 NAFO Meetings was developed (COM-SC WP 18-10 Rev. 2). This will serve a guide for the Working Groups in determining exact dates of the meetings.

The report and recommendations of the Working Group were **adopted**. It was also agreed that the Working Group should continue its work for the next year under its current terms of reference.

b. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), August 2018

The co-Chair of WG-RBMS, Jacqueline Perry (Canada), presented the report of WG-RBMS 2018 (COM-SC Doc. 18-02).

There was discussion of the proposed Greenland halibut Exceptional Circumstances protocol, the work plan for the development of a management strategy evaluation (MSE) for cod in 3M and the review of the Precautionary Approach framework.

Norway requested clarification on whether the Exceptional Circumstances protocol would take account of biological parameters, such as recruitment failure. The SC Chair noted that low recruitment scenarios had been tested in the Greenland halibut Management Strategy Evaluation, however, monitoring of recruitment will continue to be included in annual monitoring for Exceptional Circumstances.

Regarding the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for 3M cod, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) enquired whether consideration had been given to what would happen if the work is not complete by next year. The SC Chair noted that during the 2018 Greenland halibut MSE process, SC developed one-year advice during the June meeting to guard against the possibility that the MSE could not be completed in time. Such contingency could be built into the 3M cod timeline.

Regarding the Precautionary Approach review, the Chair of the Scientific Council Precautionary Approach Working Group acknowledged the problems associated with the development of the Precautionary Approach approach but urged SC to continue to make efforts. The SC will consider appropriate responses to alleviate the situation.

The report was **accepted** and all the recommendations of WG-RBMS were **adopted** (COM-SC WP 18-06, Annex 17). The major recommendations pertain to Exceptional Circumstances protocol, calendar for the development of the 3M Cod MSE and the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework.

The SC Chair informed the plenary that Carmen Fernandez Llana (EU) agreed to serve as co-Chair of the Working Group, replacing Carsten Hvingel (Norway) who stepped down from this capacity last year.

c. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), August 2018

The WG-EAFFM co-Chair, Elizabethann Mencher (USA), presented the 2018 report (COM-SC Doc. 18-03) and the recommendations.

There were discussions on the major recommendations.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that stopping trawl surveys in VME closed areas would result in lost survey data. An alternative must be found in obtaining comparable data without trawling. The SC chair responded that SC has done work on this issue and the difference from eliminating the survey stations within the protected areas was found to be minimal.

The EU inquired as to what work will be required to re-assess all 6 FAO criteria, (particularly the missing ones including those relating to ecosystem function). The co-Chair of SC Working Group on Ecosystem Science and Assessment (WG-ESA), Dr. Pierre Pepin (Canada) responded that functionality of VMEs is being assessed through literature review. This aspect of the FAO criteria is challenging and WG-ESA has come up with a protocol (decision tree) to deal with this. Other Contracting Parties emphasized the importance of application of the precautionary approach in NAFO's VME work.

Comentado [RF2]: USA: None of the criteria were missing per se, but rather 3 were not included in the previous iteration of the VME review. We do not believe that EU wanted to stress these other criteria over the rest of the FAO guidance, which the word particularly implies.

Comentado [RF3]: USA's insertion.

Noting that the closure of Area 14 was scheduled to expire at the end of 2018, Contracting Parties expressed differing views on the question of whether area 14 should remain closed following the expiry. Contracting

Parties noted the recent SC advice and there was no consensus on extending the current term of this closure. Contracting Parties noted that the Area 14 polygon would be included in NAFO's 2020 review of the VME closures.

~~Dr. Pepin elaborated on~~ the recommendation pertaining to the implementation of the ecosystem approach and application of the EAF Roadmap to fisheries management, Dr. Pepin elaborated on the sample ecosystem-level advice contained in the Ecosystem Summary Sheets (ESS) which was developed by SC and the WG-ESA.

Several Contracting Parties commented that they were impressed with the work that has been done but more work will be required to integrate the ecosystem-level advice into the management decisions. For coastal States, there will be additional challenges in considering how this is going to be implemented domestically as well as in the NAFO context.

Several Contracting Parties commented that it will be important to use appropriate terminology to avoid using words that may have set legal meanings. The co-Chair and Dr Pepin reported that a WebEx meeting is planned for October to discuss terminology used in the EAFM recommendation and this discussion is expected to continue in the coming year.

All the recommendations were **adopted** (COM-SC WP 18-07, Annex 18). The major recommendations pertain to, among others, scientific trawl surveys and their impact on VMEs in closed areas, implementation of the Ecosystem Approach Roadmap and Ecosystem Summary Sheets, Area 14 and the assessment of significant adverse impacts.

d. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), 2018

CESAG co-Chair, Katherine Sosebee (USA) presented the report of this Working Group (COM-SC Doc. 18-01). The Commission **accepted** the report and the recommendations were **adopted** (COM-SC WP 18-05, Annex 19).

The recommendations pertain to forwarding the catch estimates to SC for consideration in its fish stock assessment work and to the improvement of haul by haul data submissions from Contracting Parties.

18. Formulation of Request to the Scientific Council for Scientific Advice on the Management of Fish Stocks in 2020 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3, and 4 and Other Matters

In accordance with the procedure outlined in FC Doc. 12-26, a steering committee was formed to assist in the drafting of the Commission request. The committee was comprised of the SC Coordinator, Sandra Courchesne (Canada), Élise Lavigne (Canada) and Cristina Almendra Castro Ribeiro (EU).

The Commission, as requested by SC, prioritized the request items, placing the 3M Cod Management Strategy Evaluation and Precautionary Approach Framework as top priorities.

The Commission request is presented in COM WP 18-51 Rev. 2 (Annex 20).

V. Conservation of Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area

19. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), August 2018 (if more discussion is required)

There was no further discussion on the WG-RBMS recommendations as they have been addressed under agenda item 17.b.

20. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area, 2019

The Quota Table for 2019, presented in Annex 21, incorporates the TAC decisions, updates of the relevant footnotes, and the footnote edits recommended by STACTIC (see agenda item 28).

Comentado [RF4]: USA's insertion.

Comentado [RF5]: CANADA: Consider commenting further on the text of the recommendation.

New text from the rapporteur (RF).

Comentado [RF6]: CANADA: As above, consider commenting further on the content of the report, reflect recommendations.

New text from the rapporteur (RF).

a. Cod in Division 3M

Noting that the scientific advice recommends no more than 20 796 tonnes and that a Harvest Control Rule is anticipated to be applied next year, the Commission **agreed** on a 17 500 tonnes Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for 2019. Consequently, footnote 15 of the 2018 NCEM would be deleted.

Norway expressed that all CPs having a quota allocation in the 3M cod fishery agreed to the consideration made by SC (see Annex 15) that the starting points (2020 TAC) to be evaluated in the upcoming MSE process would be independent from the 2019 TAC.

b. Shrimp in Division 3M

It was **agreed** the moratorium continues in 2019 and 2020.

Some Contracting Parties expressed disappointment that the shrimp assessment meeting is scheduled after the Annual Meeting with the consequence that the scientific advice for this stock will not be available for the Annual Meeting. The SC was urged to re-consider its meetings calendar to be able provide a more timely advice on this short-lived species.

EU noted that, with the improvement of the 3M shrimp situation (it is slightly above B_{lim}), it would be necessary to get advice on a yearly basis. Therefore, an update is needed in 2019.

Iceland expressed that, notwithstanding the moratorium, it maintains its objection to the effort allocation scheme traditionally applied to this stock.

c. Pelagic *Sebastes mentella* (oceanic redfish) in the NAFO Convention Area

It was **agreed** to rollover the TAC which is set at zero, noting that the TAC might be adjusted in accordance with the footnote 3 of the Quota Table.

The Russian Federation read the following statement:

*The Russian Federation adheres to its position that there is a single stock of pelagic *Sebastes mentella* in the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters, including the NAFO Convention Area. Russia reiterates its standpoint that studies into the redfish stock structure should be continued using all available scientific and fisheries data as a basis. Until new data on the stock structure are available, Russia will continue to regulate the pelagic fishery for *Sebastes mentella* based on the concept of the single stock structure of this stock.*

d. Splendid alfonsino (*Beryx splendens*)

Norway referred to the SC advice for 2019-2021 stating that in order "to prevent extirpation of entire subpopulations of *Alfonsino*, fishing should not be allowed to expand above current levels" which according to the SC correspond to the average catch for the years 2012-2017, i.e. 139 tonnes. Norway noted that the Performance Review Panel had recommended that the unregulated alfonsino fisheries be regulated at the earliest opportunity. Norway was therefore of the opinion that, to prevent extirpation of alfonsino, a precautionary TAC of 139 tonnes should be set and expressed their concern that NAFO is not willing to set catch limits for these fisheries as effectively recommended by the SC. Norway further noted that the alfonsino fishery is conducted within one of the NAFO seamount closures. EU stated that the alfonsino fishery is not an unregulated fishery, since there are already measures in the NCEM that apply to this fishery, e.g. haul by haul reporting product labelling requirements, and 100% observer coverage.

No consensus was reached on a new management measure for this stock.

In consideration of the scientific advice pertaining to this stock, a request was made to SC to provide the map and coordinates of the Kükenthal Peak in Division 6G, a part of the Corner Rise seamount chain, where alfonsino fishing occurs (see Annex 20).

21. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks Straddling National Jurisdictions, 2019

a. Cod in Divisions 3NO

Contracting Parties **agreed** to maintain the moratorium for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

b. American plaice in Divisions 3LNO

Contracting Parties **agreed** to maintain the moratorium for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

c. Yellowtail flounder in Divisions 3LNO

Noting the SC advice, and in particular taking into consideration impacts on other fisheries, particularly bycatch of 3NO cod and 3LNO American plaice, the Commission **agreed** to rollover the TAC for one year at 17 000 tonnes.

d. Capelin in Divisions 3NO

Contracting Parties **agreed** to maintain the moratorium for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Article 7.10 of the NCEM was **updated** in view of the extension of the moratorium.

e. Thorny Skates in Divisions 3LNO

The Commission **agreed** to rollover the TAC for one year, i.e. at 7 000 tonnes for 1 year. Footnote 13 of the Quota Table was **updated**.

f. Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO

As calculated by SC and consistent with the MSE and Harvest Control Rule, it was **agreed** to set the TAC at 16 521 tonnes in 2+3KLMNO, 12 242 tonnes of which is allocated to the fishery in 3LMNO.

22. Other matters pertaining to Conservation of Fish Stocks

a. Redfish in Divisions 3LN

According to the SC advice, there are no warning signs that the catches adopted under the management plan are problematic with respect to stock status. In this regard, the Commission **agreed** to continue to apply the Harvest Control Rule outlined in Annex I.H of the NCEM resulting in a TAC of 18 100 tonnes for 2019.

b. Witch Flounder in Divisions 3NO

In 2017, SC provided TAC advice of 1116 tonnes and 1175 tonnes for 2018 and 2019, respectively. The advice came with a caution that “because of the uncertainty and proximity to limit reference points the next full assessment is rescheduled for 2018”. The Commission adopted the advice, including the 2019 TAC of 1 175 tonnes.

In 2018, SC conducted a full assessment of its own accord and provided updated advice of “no directed fishery” for 2019 and 2020.

[Based on a question posed to SC on the impact of various harvest levels of the stock, some Contracting Parties noted that there was negligible impact on the resource between no directed fishing and the TAC at the previously agreed level, and the two-year decision taken in 2017 should be maintained.](#)

Some Contracting Parties, particularly those with quota allocations, expressed disappointment and concern that the timing in providing a change of advice (from 1 175 tonnes TAC to no directed fishery in 2019) poses

Comentado [RF7]: CANADA's insertion.

considerable challenge for the fishery managers in applying the updated measure to the stakeholders which have already made their fishing plans for 2019.

The Commission **agreed** to maintain its decision that was made in 2017, i.e. 1 175 tonnes TAC for 2019.

Norway issued a statement: *The Norwegian delegation referred to the advice provided by the SC stating that in all tested scenarios the probability of the stock being below B_{lim} in 2021 ranges between 15 % and 24 %. In accordance with the PA Framework, there should be a low probability (5 % - 10 %) of the stock being below B_{lim} . Hence Norway could not support setting a TAC when the SC advice was no directed fishing in 2019 and 2020.*

c. Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO

It was **agreed** to continue the moratorium in 2019.

d. Greenland shark

Consistent with the SC advice, the Commission strengthen the conservation measures by **revising** Article 12 "Conservation and Management of Sharks" of the NCEM (COM WP 18-38 Rev. 4, Annex 22).

VI. Ecosystem Considerations

23. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), August 2018 (if more discussion is required)

The proposal to extend the Area 14 closure to 2020 did not attain consensus and was eventually withdrawn by the proponents (Canada, Norway, and the US). Consequently, reference to Area 14 in the 2019 NCEM will be deleted. It was agreed that the Area 14 closure would be included in the scheduled review of the current closures in 2020.

24. Other matters pertaining to Ecosystem Considerations

There was no further matter discussed under this agenda item.

VII. Conservation and Enforcement Measures

25. Review of Chartering Arrangements

The annual review of chartering arrangements was tasked to STACTIC (see Part II).

26. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), 2018 (if more discussion is required)

Acting on the recommendation pertaining to the haul by haul data submission requirements (see agenda item 17 d.), the Commission **adopted** the proposal outlining follow-up procedure to improve compliance (COM WP 18-37, Annex 23).

27. Meeting Report and Recommendations of the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS), May 2018

The Working Group Chair Temur Tairov (Russian Federation) presented the meeting report (COM Doc. 18-04) and the recommendations (COM WP 18-23, Annex 24). The Commission **accepted** the report and **adopted** all the recommendations.

The Chair also presented, and the Commission noted, the WG-BDS/Secretariat work plan (COM BDS WP 18-02) in support of Task 1.3 of the *Action Plan in the Management and Minimization of Bycatch and Discards* which

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was adopted last year (Com Doc. 17-26). The Chair indicated that a coordinated work plan is being developed with the STACTIC Chair (see Part II).

28. Report of STACTIC from this Annual Meeting and Recommendations

The STACTIC Chair Judy Dwyer (Canada) presented the STACTIC Meeting Report (see Part II), and highlighted the following amendments to the NAFO CEM that were forwarded to the Commission for adoption:

- STACTIC WP 18-18 *Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) (Article 29 and Annex ILE)* (Annex 25),
- STACTIC WP 18-21 Rev. *NAFO CEM Article 10 – Stowage plan requirement at checkpoint* (Annex 26)
- STACTIC WP 18-22 Rev. 2 *NAFO CEM Article 35 – Collection of DNA samples by inspectors* (Annex 27),
- STACTIC WP 18-27 Rev. 3 *Amendments to stowage of catch (Article 28.5)* (Annex 28),
- STACTIC WP 18-31 Rev. *Proposal for amendments to the NCEM – Chapter VII -- Port State Control* (Annex 29),
- STACTIC WP 18-35 Rev. 2 *Distribution of Notification of Infringements (Article 37.4)* (Annex 30),
- STACTIC WP 18-41 *Reinstatement of Footnote 14 into Article 6.3 for American plaice bycatch provisions in the 3LNO directed yellowtail fishery* (Annex 31),
- STACTIC WP 18-43 Rev. 3 *CEM Article 12 – Catch reporting of individual sharks* (Annex 32),
- STACTIC WP 18-45 Rev. *Proposed revision of the NAFO Observer Program* (Annex 33),

The STACTIC Chair also forwarded other recommendations for adoption:

- STACTIC WP 18-28 Rev. 4 *Action Plan to minimize or eliminate discards in NAFO* (Annex 34),
- STACTIC WP 18-29 Rev. 2 *Draft Annual Compliance Review 2018 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2017)* (Annex 35),

The Commission accepted the report and **adopted** all the recommendations from the 2018 intersessional meeting (COM Doc. 18-02) and this meeting (see Part II),

STACTIC requested guidance from the Commission on how to move forward with regards to the pending proposals on bycatch definition and garbage and labour conditions on fishing vessels. Likewise, STACTIC sought guidance on the issue of participation of other stakeholders in STACTIC meetings from the Heads of Delegation. The issue still needs to be resolved. STACTIC should be receiving guidance from the Heads of Delegation or from the Commission. The Commission encouraged STACTIC to continue its discussion and deliberations in seeking resolution of the issues.

Comentado [RF8]: EU's text suggestion.

29. Other matters pertaining to Conservation and Enforcement Measures

There was no further matter discussed under this agenda item.

VIII. Finance

30. Report of STACFAD from this Annual Meeting

The report of STACFAD (see Part III) was presented by the Chair, Deirdre Warner-Kramer (USA). The report contained recommendations for the adoption of the budget for 2019, the Auditor's Report for 2017, financial matters as well as an update on the Headquarters Agreement and office relocation.

31. Adoption of the 2019 Budget and STACFAD recommendations

It was agreed that the report and recommendations of STACFAD be adopted by the Commission.

STACFAD recommends that:

- Rule 4.5 of the NAFO Financial Regulations be amended to allow for the establishment of a recruitment and relocation fund within the accumulated surplus account, as follows:

The Standing Committee on Finance and Administration and the Commission shall review the amount available in the accumulated surplus account during each annual meeting. Insofar as possible, the Commission shall anticipate unforeseen expenditures during the succeeding three years and shall attempt to maintain the accumulated surplus account at a level sufficient to finance operations during the first three months of the year plus an amount up to a maximum of 10% of the annual budget for the current financial year for use in an emergency in accordance with Rule 4.4. In addition, the Organization shall also maintain a recruitment and relocation fund to pay recruitment and relocation costs for incoming and outgoing internationally recruited staff. The recruitment and relocation fund balance shall be kept at a maximum of \$100,000.

- The 2017 Financial Statements be adopted.
- The amount maintained in the accumulated surplus account be set at \$285,000 of which \$200,000 would be sufficient to finance operations during the first three months of 2018, and of which \$85,000 would be a contingency fund available to be used for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses.
- The recruitment and relocation fund be set at \$48,000 to pay for future recruitment and relocation costs for incoming and outgoing internationally recruited staff.
- The internship period be maintained for six (6) months during 2019.
- The budget for 2019 of \$2,274,000 (Annex 3) be adopted.
- The Commission appoint the three Staff Committee nominees for September 2018–September 2019: Justine Jury (EU); Joanne Morgan (Canada) and Deirdre Warner-Kramer (USA).
- The Commission adopt the revised Headquarters Agreement and request that the Government of Canada proceed with the next step of its domestic process to sign and ratify the revised Headquarters Agreement
- NAFO sign the memorandum of understanding with Fisheries and Ocean Canada, following the ratification of the revised Headquarters Agreement.
- Rule 2.7 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure be amended, as follows:

~~The result of a vote taken by e-mail or other electronic means shall be ascertained by the Executive Secretary at the end of a period of at least thirty (30) days after the date of the initial request for the vote and such period shall be made clear in the text of that request.~~

When requesting a vote referred to in Rule 2.6, the Executive Secretary shall advise the Contracting Parties of the closing date to submit a vote. This date shall be at the end of a period of at least 30 days after the initial request for the vote.

- Rule 2.8 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure be amended, as follows:

ba) Contracting Parties shall promptly acknowledge receipt of any request for vote by e-mail or other electronic means. If no acknowledgement is received from any particular Contracting Party within one week of the date of transmittal the Executive Secretary ~~will~~ **shall** retransmit the request, and ~~will~~ **shall** use all additional necessary means available to ensure that the request has been received. Confirmation by the Executive Secretary that the request has been received shall be deemed conclusive regarding the inclusion of the Contracting Party in the quorum for the purpose of the relevant vote by e-mail or other electronic means.

ab) If no reply from a Contracting Party, in the case of a vote taken by e-mail or other electronic means, reaches the Secretariat within the period established under 2.7, that Contracting Party would be recorded as having abstained and it shall be considered part of the relevant quorum for voting purposes.

- Insert a new Rule 2.9 in the NAFO Rules of Procedure, as follows:

The Executive Secretary shall communicate the result of a vote taken by e-mail or other electronic means to all Contracting Parties, without delay following the end of the period referred to in Rule 2.7.”

- Rule 3.5 of the NAFO Rules of Procedure be amended, as follows:

The Chairperson, or Vice-Chairperson when acting as Chairperson, ~~shall not act as a Representative, Alternate Representative, Expert or Adviser of a Contracting Party. shall not vote and another representative of his or her delegation shall exercise this function.”~~

- A practice be implemented that, unless otherwise requested by a delegation, each Contracting Party will receive three (3) sets of printed meeting documentation produced at NAFO meetings and meeting documentation will also be available electronically.
- The 2021 Annual Meeting (to be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, unless an invitation to host is extended by a Contracting Party and accepted by the Organization) be held 20–24 September 2021.

To increase transparency of its documentation:

- An exclusive STACFAD Username and Password will no longer be required to access STACFAD documentation on the NAFO Members’ pages.
- STACFAD documentation will be available in the NAFO Meetings SharePoint (<https://meetings.nafo.int/>) with the exception of Working Papers deemed restricted (e.g. personnel matters).
- Following a meeting, STACFAD Working Papers will be made publicly available on the NAFO website (<https://www.nafo.int/>) with the exception of Working Papers deemed restricted (e.g. personnel matters).
- General Council (GC) and Commission Documents will be made publicly available on the NAFO website (<https://www.nafo.int/>) with the exception of documents deemed restricted (e.g. personnel matters).

IX. Closing Procedure

32. Other Business

There was no further matter discussed under this agenda item.

33. Time and Place of Next Annual Meeting

An invitation to host the next Annual Meeting was extended by France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon) and accepted by the Organization. The 41st Annual Meeting will be held in Paris, France during the dates of 23-27 September 2019.

34. Press Release

The Press Release of the meeting was developed by the Executive Secretary, Senior Fisheries Management Coordinator, Scientific Council Coordinator through consultations with the Chairs of the Commission and Scientific Council. The agreed Press Release (Annex 36) was circulated and posted to the NAFO website at the conclusion of the meeting on Friday, 21 September 2018.

35. Adjournment

The Chair thanked Contracting Parties for their collaboration and contributions through the course of the meeting. He also expressed his thanks to the EU and Estonia for hosting the meeting and to the NAFO Secretariat for their support throughout the week.

The meeting adjourned 11:00 hrs on Friday, 21 September 2018.

Annex 1. Participant List

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2018 NAFO Performance Review Panel

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Annex 2. Opening Statement by the NAFO President

Dear Minister, Distinguished colleagues and friends,

I am honoured to welcome all of you to Tallinn for the 40th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. I wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Estonia for hosting this Meeting and for the outstanding support and facilities provided. As you all are aware, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia and I am very happy that we are here in beautiful Tallinn for these celebrations. But for now we have work to do!

One of the key issues we will have to address this week is the recommendations of NAFO's second Performance Review. The Performance Review Panel's Chair will present the report and its recommendations on Tuesday morning.

I believe we can take some comfort from the Performance Review Report. We have come a long way since 2011 following our first Performance Review and the current Report acknowledges that NAFO has made great efforts to address the previous Review's recommendations. However, the Panel has also found some areas that still need further attention and has highlighted a number of significant external challenges for the Organization. I expect these recommendations will provide a focus for NAFO's work in the coming years and I look forward to the discussion on this Report later this week.

With regard to significant external challenges, I should note the increasing attention to the work of RFMOs by the public and the international community. Today, for instance, at the UN Headquarters, the first substantive session of the intergovernmental conference on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction – the so-called BBNJ process – closes. The result of these negotiations, in areas such as governance structure, environmental impact assessments, area-based management tools and even capacity building, could affect the future functioning of NAFO. As I mentioned last year, I believe that NAFO is a model for best practices in international regional fisheries governance and it is incumbent on all of us to get this message out.

As I reflect on the past year, we have once again had a very busy year. We have met over 25 times since the last Annual Meeting, both virtually and face-to-face, to prepare for this Meeting. Besides the recommendations of the Performance Review, some of the issues we should address this week include:

- An exceptional circumstances protocol for the Greenland halibut Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE);
- A workplan for the 3M cod MSE;
- Further implementation of NAFO's ecosystem approach roadmap; and
- A possible overhaul of the observer programme.

We will indeed be very busy. However, I am confident that Contracting Parties are ready to meet the challenges ahead of us.

Finally, I would also thank the Secretariat for all its work throughout the year and its preparations for this meeting.

I now declare the 40th Annual Meeting of NAFO officially open!

Annex 3. Opening Statement by Canada

Canada is pleased to be a part of the 40th Annual Meeting in Tallinn. Those of us that were fortunate to be here for the 2005 Annual Meeting remember fondly the warm hospitality of this beautiful and historic city and hopefully those who are here for the first time will have an opportunity to discover this for themselves in the days ahead.

We extend our warmest thanks to the European Union and the people of Estonia for hosting us this year as they celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia.

We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of the NAFO Secretariat in organizing this year's meeting. Their careful attention to meeting logistics and continued expertise in support of the Commission, the Scientific Council and other NAFO bodies is appreciated by all Contracting Parties.

In recent years, the co-operation of Contracting Parties has resulted in significant gains and we are confident that this will continue during what is expected to be a busy and productive week.

The recently completed second NAFO Performance Review detailed some of these recent gains and we are pleased with the overall positive tone of the report. We are keen to join with others on working to advance these recommendations in the years ahead.

NAFO's Scientific Council deserves recognition for another busy year. Their work is critical to inform management decisions in support of the sustainable management of stocks. We, along with other Contracting Parties, share the concern about the continued heavy workload of the Council and urge all Contracting Parties to make every effort to expand their participation and increase the overall capacity of the Council.

2018 was also marked by significant progress by each of the NAFO Working Groups. Consensus was reached on the exceptional circumstances protocol for the 2+3KLMNO Greenland halibut management strategy, a revised calendar for the development of the 3M Cod MSE and a commitment to try and make progress the review of the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework. It was very encouraging to see agreement on continued dialogue between scientists and managers on the implementation of the Ecosystem Road Map. Further, efforts continued to refine catch estimates and advance the Action Plan on Bycatch and Discards.

Each of these elements contributes significantly to achieving NAFO's overall objectives and serve to promote and protect our ocean resources. We need to ensure that they remain healthy for future generations, while providing important economic opportunities to Canadians and its coastal communities and all Contracting Parties of NAFO.

Annex 4. Opening Statement by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland)

Mister Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Faroe Islands and Greenland would first of all like to thank Estonia for their hospitality to host this Annual Meeting in Tallinn. We appreciate the hard work you have put in the practical preparations of this meeting.

The DFG will present two working papers on how a part of the by-catch and discard problems may be solved in those fisheries where we encounter considerable by-catches.

It is our hope this can contribute constructively to better selectivity in the fishing gears and to a more appropriate way to look at by-catches.

The Second Performance Review of NAFO is finalized and the Panel will present the report. The DFG will continue to work constructively with our NAFO partners to address the recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review. The cod stock of 3M is of high importance to the DFG. A full benchmark evaluation was performed in 2018 and the scientific advice from the Scientific Council of NAFO for the cod stock of 3M is a significant increase in the total quota. This quota is only $\frac{3}{4}$ of $F(\text{lim})$, with less than 1% probability for the stock to be affected by the fisheries. Furthermore, we look forward to the Management Strategy Evaluation for cod in 3M which will be performed in the coming year.

Furthermore, the biological advice on NAFO stocks for the next year and beyond is, as usual, a mixed advice of stocks to be maintained under moratoria, of stocks in decline and of stocks that are healthy and growing.

Working groups take important tasks on their shoulders. However, it is increasingly a challenge to find time to participate in the various numbers of working groups, especially for Contracting Parties with limited resources in terms of staff.

Our delegation would like to take this opportunity to convey our appreciation and warm thanks to the Secretariat for once again having prepared this annual meeting so well.

The Faroe Islands and Greenland (DFG) can assure you that we are looking forward to working constructively with all delegations in the week ahead of us to bring the many points on our agenda to successful conclusion.

Annex 5. Opening Statement by the European Union

Mister Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, we would like to thank the Government of Estonia for hosting the 40th Annual Meeting of NAFO in this beautiful city, which hosted the tallest building in the world 400 years ago!

Secondly, I would like to congratulate all of us for the preparatory work carried out ahead of this meeting which should allow us to reach consensus in several important areas. In particular, the setting of TACs for fish stocks under the purview of this organisation will favour their sustainable management in the years to come. In this regard, the EU will continue to seek solutions based on the best available scientific advice, aiming to ensure long-term sustainability for the stocks and predictability for the industry that depend on exploitation of these stocks.

I would also like to highlight our strong support for long-term management approaches to key stocks such as Greenland Halibut and cod in the Flemish Cap.

In addition, the EU will continue supporting the protection of VMEs and will strive to ensure that NAFO's VMEs protection policy is based on the latest and best science available. To this end, the EU has, for example, contributed substantially over the years to the NEREIDA seabed mapping project, which aims at improving knowledge on the sea bottom. Moreover, the EU will support the ongoing efforts to pave the way towards an efficient implementation of the ecosystem approach.

The EU will also promote concrete protective measures for the Greenland sharks, taking into account the latest scientific advice.

Last and not the least, we are keen to review the conclusions of the new Performance Review exercise for the organisation carried out this year and to work towards implementation of many of its recommendations.

Regarding control and enforcement, the EU will continue to promote compliance of the EU fleet with the NAFO rules in force, both at sea and in port, and measures that increase the efficiency of NAFO's control and inspection systems.

The EU delegation looks forward to working with all Parties around the table in order to achieve the best possible result for NAFO stocks and ecosystems and to make this Annual Meeting in Tallinn a joint success.

Annex 6. Opening Statement by Japan

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Japanese Delegation, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Government of Estonia for hosting the 40th Annual Meeting of NAFO in this beautiful city, Tallinn. We also thank the NAFO Secretariat staff for the excellent preparation and arrangements, and wish all the best to our Chair, Mr. Artano.

As the Japanese Delegation expressed in the past meetings, NAFO has played an important role for fisheries management. NAFO, as the historic and leading RFMO, should develop conservation and management measures for sustainable use of fishery resources and the measures should be based on scientific advice. We should bear in mind that the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) would be taken into account by other RFMOs.

Mr. Chairman, on this occasion, I would like to address two concrete issues and explain our thought for this year's NAFO Annual Meeting, namely (1) development of criteria for the identification of Exceptional Circumstances under the Greenland halibut 2+3KLMNO management strategy and (2) reviewing the closure of the area 14 in accordance with the paragraph 3 of the Article 17 of the CEM.

At the Annual Meeting last year, the new management strategy for 2+3 KLMNO Greenland halibut was adopted and it was decided that the total allowable catch would be adjusted annually from 2018 to 2023 according to the harvest control rule. It was the significant step for modernizing the fishery managements of NAFO. This year's Annual Meeting will address Exceptional Circumstances (EC) protocol which is outside of the range of possibilities considered within the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE), based on the recommendation by the NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS). Japan strongly believes that the EC should be applied for very limited cases, and that will contribute to stable operation of the Management Strategy and the fisheries.

I also would like to touch upon the closure of the area 14 (Eastern Flemish Cap), which is going to expire at the end of December this year. In our view, the area 14 should be opened from 2019 because the closure does not meet all of the six FAO criteria (Article 18 of the FAO International Guidelines for the Management of Deep Sea Fisheries in the High Seas) at this moment. Japan support the idea that development of any area-closure must be carefully considered with a universal standard.

Mr. Chairman, the Japanese Delegation is ready to work closely and cooperatively with other delegations to find good solutions and sincerely hopes that this Annual meeting will be successfully and fruitfully concluded.

Thank you.

Annex 7. Opening Statement by the Russian Federation

Good morning Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates, Observers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, as the Russian Representative, on behalf of the Russian Delegation I would like to thank the Government of Estonia for hosting the 40th Anniversary Meeting of NAFO in Tallinn. We look forward to visiting historical and cultural heritage sites in this beautiful city. I would also like to thank the NAFO Secretariat for all their preparatory work they have done to set up this meeting.

We attach great importance to the findings by the Performance Review Panel, which assessed NAFO's performance in 2011-2017, with special attention being given to the follow-up to the recommendations from the 1st Performance Assessment Report. As you know, NAFO established a Performance Assessment Working Group in 2009 to set up a performance review tasked with addressing NAFO's strengths, weaknesses, challenges and successes, using specifically identified criteria and identified areas for improvement. Looking back at the 1st performance assessment, we emphasize with a sense of deep satisfaction the enormous scope of work done based on those recommendations. The Working Group has largely contributed to identifying the key focus areas of NAFO activities over recent years, and now we clearly see the results. We would like to thank the members of the new Panel for their work and hope that their findings and recommendations will define new ways for improvement of NAFO and provide new capabilities for achievements in future.

We would like to note the progress by the Joint Commission-Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group in addressing the improvement of catch estimation accuracy. In our opinion, the use of haul-by-haul data and implementation of relevant technical measures in fisheries represent an important step forward to increased accuracy of fisheries data and stock assessments.

In our opinion, the precautionary approach in fisheries and development of fisheries management strategies for commercial stocks give tangible results. Each year we approach closer, though not as fast as we wish, to ensuring the maximum sustainable yield in the NAFO Regulatory Area. This will allow a more efficient use of fishing efforts and sustainability of the stocks. However, there is a concern that this process is of infinite nature because the more information we get about general factors influencing interactions among species, with environment and human activities, the more factors need to be taken into account in fisheries management. We do hope that the efforts put to achieve this goal will be commensurate to the benefits the fishing industry will obtain.

We should note the progress in assessment of risks associated with the vulnerable marine ecosystems. The evolution of perception about the VMEs has gone from an abstract concept, which was largely neglected in fisheries management, to a set of certain grades and criteria. This allows a gradual transition from the binary management logic, when the fishery in a certain area is either open or closed, to a more flexible scheme when the degree of benthic community vulnerability is evaluated depending on the type and severity of the impact. We believe that it will be possible to establish the more accurate conservation measures in the near future so that different types of fisheries are treated individually and scientific research is completely separated from commercial fishing activities.

In conclusion, we are assured that the work during this meeting will be efficient. We hope for a fruitful cooperation between all the Contracting Parties based on joint efforts by managers, scientists and observers.

Annex 8. Opening Statement by the United States of America

The United States is pleased to be here in beautiful, historic Tallinn once again, and we thank the Government of Estonia for hosting the 40th NAFO Annual Meeting. We also thank the NAFO Secretariat for their excellent organization of this meeting, and continuing efforts to ensure that our work is efficient and productive. We look forward to a successful week.

I would like to begin by introducing myself. My name is Michael Pentony, and I am the new U.S. Federal Commissioner to NAFO. At home, I serve as the Regional Administrator of the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office of NOAA Fisheries, which is charged with ensuring the sustainable use of fisheries and other living marine resources, conservation of marine habitats, and protection of endangered and threatened marine species in the U.S. waters of the NAFO Convention Area, off of New England and the mid-Atlantic. Although I am new to the NAFO world, I have spent a large part of my career focusing on sustainable management of Northwest Atlantic fisheries, and I look forward to participating in the international side of these efforts.

With regard to U.S. priorities for the 40th annual meeting and the U.S. goal for NAFO in the long term, the United States will continue to promote consistency between the management decisions of the Commission and the advice of the Scientific Council to achieve science-based management. We believe this approach will result in sustainable benefits from healthy fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems. As a NAFO coastal State with centuries of fishing history in the Northwest Atlantic, and a commensurate commitment to collection of reliable fisheries data, fisheries research, and sound management including enforcement, the United States has a strong stake in seeing those benefits realized – in our own waters, and in the Regulatory Area.

To achieve our goal, we must also recognize our role in ensuring that the needs of the Scientific Council are adequately addressed, so that its products are of the highest quality and utility in the management process. In recent years, the demands on the Scientific Council have increased substantially, while its resources -- especially its human resources -- have not kept pace. Thus, during this meeting the United States would like to have a practical discussion in the Commission on how to best meet the resource needs of the Scientific Council, in light of the priorities of the organization.

In addition to a significant number of stock management considerations before us this week, we look forward to deliberations on a number of broader ecosystem related issues. It is our hope that progress can be made on implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries framework. Additionally, the Commission will be deliberating on the future status of the Area 14 closure, and it is our hope that the Commission will follow the advice of the Scientific Council to maintain this status until the comprehensive review of VME's in NAFO in 2020.

Another key U.S. priority for the upcoming week will be initiating a process to implement the recommendations of NAFO's second External Performance Review. We welcome the Review Panel Chair, Ms. Jane Willing, and we look forward to her presentation. The Panel's report tells a good story about NAFO's successes since 2011, but it is also clear we have more work to do. So, the United States supports immediate action by the Commission to begin categorizing and assigning the task of responding to the recommendations to the various NAFO bodies.

Regarding conservation and enforcement measures, the United States has some concerns regarding the impact of the bycatch mitigation protocols, as currently written, on different gear types. We would proposing possible changes to the measures that will address these negative impacts, while at the same time ensuring that the conservation intention of the management measure remains intact. We will also be proposing to increase transparency for STACTIC working papers.

Finally, we note that NAFO's Scientific Council has advised that Greenland sharks warrant precautionary consideration due to their unknown stock status in NAFO waters, and their long lifespan (estimated to be in the 300-400 year range), extremely delayed maturity, and low fecundity which make them more susceptible to overfishing. The Scientific Council further recommends prohibiting the landing of Greenland sharks and increased data collection for these animals. The United States feels strongly that NAFO must take steps to

protect vulnerable species in NAFO waters. Thus, we will seek to have a discussion on adequate measures consistent with these recommendations.

In closing, I look forward to working with you all and to a productive week ahead. Thank you very much.



**Annex 9. Summary of Decisions and Actions of the Commission
from the 40th Annual Meeting of NAFO**

ANNEX #	NAFO WORKING PAPER #	DOCUMENT TITLE	NAFO DOCUMENT #
14	COM WP 18-46 (Rev. 3)	NAFO Working Group to Address the Recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review Panel	COM Doc. 18-21
15	COM-WP 18-50	SC Response to Feedback Questions regarding its Scientific Advice	
16	COM-SC WP 18-08	Recommendations of the E-WG to forward to the NAFO Commission and Scientific Council, 2018	COM-SC Doc. 18-07
17	COM-SC WP 18-06	Recommendations of the WG-RBMS to forward to the NAFO Commission and Scientific Council, August 2018	COM-SC Doc. 18-05
18	COM-SC WP 18-07	Recommendations of the WG-EAFFM to forward to the NAFO Commission and Scientific Council, August 2018	COM-SC Doc. 18-06
19	COM-SC WP 18-05	Recommendations of the CESAG to forward to the NAFO Commission and Scientific Council, 2018	COM-SC Doc. 18-04
20	COM WP 18-51 (Rev. 2)	The Commission's Request for Scientific Advice on Management in 2020 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters	COM Doc. 18-20
21		2019 Quota Table	
22	COM WP 18-38 (Rev. 4)	Amendments to NAFO CEM - Measure to Conserve Greenland Sharks	COM Doc. 18-17
23	COM WP 18-37	Follow-up Procedure Regarding Haul-by-Haul Submissions	
24	COM WP 18-23	Recommendations of the WG-BDS addressed to the NAFO Commission, May 2018	COM Doc. 18-22
25	STACTIC WP 18-18	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 29 and Annex II.E – Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)	COM Doc. 18-06
26	STACTIC WP 18-21 (Rev.)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 10 – Stowage Plan Requirement at Checkpoint	COM Doc. 18-07
27	STACTIC WP 18-22 (Rev. 2)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 35 – Collection of DNA samples by inspectors during sea Pilot project on DNA Analysis	COM Doc. 18-08
28	STACTIC WP 18-27 (Rev. 3)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 28.5 – Stowage of Catch	COM Doc. 18-09
29	STACTIC WP 18-31 (Rev.)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Chapter VII – Port State Control	COM Doc. 18-10
30	STACTIC WP 18-35 (Rev. 2)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 37.4 – Distribution of Notification of Infringements	COM Doc. 18-11
31	STACTIC WP 18-41	Reinstatement of Footnote 14 into Article 6.3 for American Plaice bycatch provisions in the 3NO directed Yellowtail fishery	COM Doc. 18-12
32	STACTIC WP 18-43 (Rev. 3)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 12 – Catch reporting of individual sharks	COM Doc. 18-13
33	STACTIC WP 18-45 (Rev.)	Amendments to NAFO CEM Article 30 – Revision of the NAFO Observer Program	COM Doc. 18-14
34	STACTIC WP 18-28 (Rev. 4)	Action Plan to minimize or eliminate discards in NAFO	COM Doc. 18-18
35	STACTIC WP 18-29 (Rev. 2)	Annual Compliance Review 2018 (Compliance Report Fishing Year 2017)	COM Doc. 18-19

ANNEX #	NAFO WORKING PAPER #	DOCUMENT TITLE	NAFO DOCUMENT #
	Part III - STACFAD Report	Headquarters Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization	<u>COM Doc. 18-24</u>
	Part III - STACFAD Report	Amendments to the NAFO Rules of Procedure	COM Doc. 18-25
	Part III - STACFAD Report	Amendments to the NAFO Financial Rules	COM Doc. 18-26



Annex 10. Agenda

I. Opening Procedure

1. Opening by the Chair, Stéphane Artano (France-SPM)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Admission of Observers
5. Publicity

II. Supervision and Coordination of the Organizational, Administrative and other Internal Affairs

6. Review of Membership of the Commission
7. Administrative and Activity Report
8. NAFO Headquarters Agreement
9. Review of the list of experts to serve as panelists under the NAFO Dispute Settlement provisions
10. Guidance to STACFAD necessary for them to complete their work
11. Guidance to STACTIC necessary for them to complete their work

I. Coordination of External Affairs

12. Report of Executive Secretary on External Meetings
13. International Relations
 - a. Relations with other International Organizations
 - b. NAFO Members as Observers to External Meetings
 - c. Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Deep-Seas Project
14. Oil and Gas Activities in the NAFO Regulatory

IV. Joint Session of Commission and Scientific Council

15. 2018 Performance Review
16. Presentation of scientific advice by the Chair of the Scientific Council
 - a. Response of the Scientific Council to the Commission's request for scientific advice
 - b. Other issues as determined by the Chairs of the Commission and Scientific Council
 - c. Feedback to the SC regarding the advice and its work during this Meeting
17. Meeting Reports of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Groups
 - a. Working Group on Improving Efficiency of NAFO Working Group Process
 - b. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), August 2018
 - c. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), August 2018
 - d. Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), 2018
18. Formulation of Request to the Scientific Council for Scientific Advice on Management in 2020 and Beyond of Certain Stocks in Subareas 2, 3 and 4 and Other Matters

V. Conservation of Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area

19. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS), August 2018 (if more discussion is required)
20. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks in the Regulatory Area, 2019
 - a. Cod in Division 3M
 - b. Shrimp in Division 3M
 - c. Pelagic *Sebastes mentella* (oceanic redfish) in the NAFO Convention Area
 - d. Splendid alfonsino (*Beryx splendens*)
21. Management and Technical Measures for Fish Stocks Straddling National Jurisdictions, 2019
 - a. Cod in Divisions 3NO
 - b. American plaice in Divisions 3LNO

- c. Yellowtail in Divisions 3LNO
 - d. Capelin in Divisions 3NO
 - e. Thorny skates in Divisions 3LNO
 - f. Greenland halibut in Subarea 2 and Divisions 3KLMNO
22. Other matters pertaining to Conservation of Fish Stocks
- a. Redfish in Divisions 3LN
 - b. Witch flounder in Divisions 3NO
 - c. Shrimp in Divisions 3LNO
 - d. Greenland shark

VI. Ecosystem Considerations

23. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystems Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM), August 2018 (if more discussion is required)
24. Other matters pertaining to Ecosystem Considerations

VII. Conservation and Enforcement Measures

25. Review of Chartering Arrangements
26. Recommendations of the Joint Commission–Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG), 2018 (if more discussion is required)
27. Meeting Report and Recommendations of the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS), May 2018
28. Report of STACTIC from this Annual Meeting and Recommendations
29. Other matters pertaining to Conservation and Enforcement Measures

VIII. Finance

30. Report of STACFAD from this Annual Meeting
31. Adoption of the 2019 Budget and STACFAD recommendations

IX. Closing Procedure

32. Other Business
33. Time and Place of Next Annual Meeting
34. Press Release
35. Adjournment

Annex 11. Opening Statement by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC)

Dear Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen:

I am Vladimir Radchenko, Executive Director of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC).

I am honoured to be here on behalf of the NPAFC as observer for the NAFO 40th Annual Meeting. I would like to extend the NPAFC's appreciation to members of the NAFO Commission and Executive Secretary Dr. Fred Kingston for the invitation.

This particular NAFO Annual Meeting is an event of considerable interest to the NPAFC. Despite distinctions in areas of responsibility, there are several important fields, where NAFO and NPAFC work together at the inter-organizational level. More than eight years have passed since the 2010 UN Review Conference described a modernizing of regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) as a priority and noted that progress had been made in reviewing the performance of RFMOs against emerging standards. At this meeting, the final report from the second NAFO Performance Review will be presented that NAFO organized first among the Canada-based fisheries management organizations. A question of performance review periodicity is critically important for the long-term strategic planning of the NPAFC, and your experience in this matter is very helpful to us.

This year, the NAFO is celebrating its 40th anniversary. During celebration, it is a good opportunity to obtain important information on the NAFO impact and achievements, strategic messages, and the future plans, especially taking into account that all of the NPAFC member countries are also the NAFO states. NAFO's stability and great performance is a good example for the NPAFC, which recently celebrated 25 years from the establishment.

Because the NAFO Commission will consider an appointment of NAFO members as observers to external meetings, I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that NPAFC looks forward to seeing the NAFO representative at the NPAFC 27th Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

The NPAFC Committee on Enforcement (ENFO) resumed the workshop series to improve international cooperation in enforcement. In May 2018, there were discussions on how to operationalize organic Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) knowledge and tools to improve the real-time coordination, information sharing, and to help operational planning. Discussions will be continued in Portland in May 2019.

The NPAFC is currently implemented the International Year of the Salmon (IYS) project launched together with the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) and other partners. The IYS focal year will be 2019, with projects and activities starting in 2018 and continuing into 2022. The IYS is an international framework for collaborative research and outreach. Through the outreach efforts, the IYS will raise awareness of what humans can do to better ensure salmon and their varied habits are conserved and restored against the backdrop of increasing environmental variability. Despite NAFO does not deal with salmon, we expect that the model of implementation will be useful to our partners in development of similar programs.

Wishing the best of success and spirit of cooperation to the NAFO Annual Meeting,

Thank you for your kind attention.

Annex 12. Opening Statement by the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC)

Chair, Heads of Delegation, Delegates and fellow Observers, on behalf of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition and our 80+ member organizations, we are pleased this year to be attending as full observers to NAFO.

We have been actively engaged in NAFO for over a decade through our member organizations. We note that NAFO has made significant progress in the past 10 years on protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems in accordance with UNGA resolutions and in response to issues related to bottom fisheries that have been highlighted in the UNGA reviews of the implementation of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. We also commend NAFO for completing its second performance review in 2018. While NAFO has been among the leaders amongst RFMOs in terms of making progress to reduce the impact of destructive fishing practices on vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems, we note that continued progress must be made to protect these vital ecosystems upon which NAFO fisheries depend and to protect marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction – as is increasingly expected by the international community.

In keeping with making our recommendations clear and simple and in line with the ongoing work of the various working groups as well as Scientific Council, our expectations from this meeting include:

- NAFO close the remaining seamounts in the Corner Rise seamount chain to bottom fishing.
- NAFO add observer codes for VME indicator species to its observer protocol and begin assessment of observer data for VME encounters, as recommended by WG-EAFM.
- NAFO maintain closed area #14 until the full review of VME closures is completed in 2020.
- NAFO formally prohibit bottom trawling surveys in VME closed areas to minimize destruction of these fragile species and ecosystems and adopt non-destructive sampling in these areas.
- NAFO to direct Scientific Council to conduct a full assessment of bycatch of deep sea fisheries using the haul by haul data and take steps to restrict catches of deep sea sharks.
- NAFO formally address the unregulated Splendid Alphonsino fishery and adopt science-based catch limits.
- NAFO adopt quota decisions based on science advice for all NAFO managed species
- NAFO continue to make progress on adopting an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, including using ecosystem production and total catch ceilings as the basis for science advice on quotas.
- NAFO develop a workplan to implement recommendations of the 2018 Performance Review.

We look forward to this week's discussions and deliberations and urge Contracting Parties continue to make progress on ecosystem level fisheries management. Noting the ongoing negotiations of a new treaty under UNCLOS to conserve biodiversity on the high seas, we strongly urge NAFO to continue its collaboration and cooperation with other sectoral bodies and begin to identify mechanisms where biodiversity protection is achieved across these sectoral management organizations.

Matthew Gianni, Co-Founder, Political and Policy Advisor, DSCC
Susanna Fuller, Board of Directors, DSCC

**Annex 13. Opening Statement by the Shark League
(Represented by Ecology Action Centre & Shark Trust)**

Dear Distinguished Delegates:

The Shark League thanks the Government of Estonia for hosting this 40th Annual Meeting of NAFO in the enchanting city of Tallinn. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the deliberations and share our perspectives.

The members of Shark League (Shark Trust, Ecology Action Centre, Shark Advocates International, and Project AWARE) focus on conservation of sharks and rays (elasmobranchs) because low reproductive capacity leaves most species especially vulnerable to overfishing.

We are concerned about the status of **thorny skates** (*Amblyraja radiata*). The NAFO Scientific Council (SC) has noted this species' low resilience to fishing pressure and little improvement under NAFO management. The NAFO Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for skates, however, has been set significantly above advised levels since it was agreed in 2004. The SC is once again recommending that thorny skate catches not exceed recent levels (~4000t). In addition, more detailed catch data are needed for scientists to develop a robust thorny skate assessment.

Deep-sea sharks are exceptionally slow-growing, as evidenced by numerous cases of serious population depletion around the world. Scientists estimate that Greenland sharks (*Somniosus microcephalus*) mature at ~150 years of age and can live 400 years or more. This species, and smaller deep-sea sharks, are taken in NAFO fisheries, yet catch data are lacking. In special advice commissioned in 2016, the SC is recommending a suite of measures to protect Greenland sharks, the most straight-forward of which is a prohibition on retention.

Accordingly, we urge NAFO to:

- reduce the thorny skate TAC from 7000t to 4000t, and
- prohibit the retention of deep-sea sharks, particularly the Greenland shark, and adopt
 - other measures to minimize incidental mortality.

In addition, to improve elasmobranch management over the long term, we seek:

- significantly increased observer coverage and elasmobranch catch reporting detail, and
- further SC deliberation into means for:
 - minimizing incidental mortality of vulnerable elasmobranchs, and
 - establishing precautionary reference points for a thorny skate rebuilding plan.

We believe that these actions are consistent with amended Convention commitments to prevent overfishing, ensure long-term sustainability, heed scientific advice, apply the precautionary approach, minimize incidental catch, protect marine ecosystems, and preserve biological diversity.

We hope that important strides in elasmobranch conservation will be made this week in Tallinn.

Annex 21. 2019 Quota Table

DRAFT CATCH LIMITATIONS – Article 5. Total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas (metric tons in live weight) for 2019 of particular stocks in Subareas 1-4 of the NAFO Convention Area.

Species	Cod				Redfish					American plaice		Yellowtail
	COD 3L	COD 3M		COD 3NO	RED 3LN		RED 3M	RED 3O	REB 1F_2_3K (i.e. Sub-Area 2 and Divs. 1F+3K)	PLA 3LNO	PLA 3M	YEL 3LNO
Stock Specification			% of 3M Cod TAC			% of 3LN Redfish TAC						
Contracting Party												
Canada		140	0.80	0	7 710	42.60	500	6 000	0 ¹	0	0	16 575
Cuba		648	3.70	-	1 774	9.80	1 750		0 ¹	-	-	-
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)		3 911	22.35	-	-		69 ¹⁰		0	-	-	-
European Union		9 980 ⁵	57.03	0 ⁴	3 300 ⁴	18.23	7 813 ⁴	7 000	0 0 ⁷	0	0 ⁴	-
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-		-	-		69 ¹⁰		0 ¹	-	-	340
Iceland		-		-	-		-		0	-	-	-
Japan		-		-	-		400	150	0 ¹	-	-	-
Korea		-		-	-		69 ¹⁰	100	0 ¹	-	-	-
Norway		1 619	9.25	-	-		-		0	-	-	-
Russian Federation		1 132	6.47	0	5 207	28.77	9 137	6 500	0	-	0	-
Ukraine								150	0 ¹			
United States of America		-		-	-		69 ¹⁰		0 ¹	-	-	-
Others		70	0.40	0	109	0.60	124	100	-	0	0	85
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*	17 500	100.0 ¹⁴	* ¹¹	18 100	100.0 ¹⁵	10 500	20 000	0 ^{3,9}	* ¹¹	* ⁸	17 000 ¹²



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Species	Witch			White hake	Capelin	Skates	Greenland halibut	Squid (<i>Illex</i>)	Shrimp	
	WIT 3L	WIT 3NO	% of 3NO Witch TAC	HKW 3NO	CAP 3NO	SKA 3LNO	GHL 3LMNO	SQI 3_4 (i.e. Sub-areas 3+4)	PRA 3L	PRA 3NO
% of TAC										
Contracting Party										
Canada		705	60.00	294	0	1 167	1 836	N.S. ²	0	
Cuba		-			0		-	510	0	
Denmark (Faroe Islands and Greenland)		-			-		211	-	0	
European Union		156 ⁴	13.27	588	0 ⁵	4 408	7 177 ⁶	N.S. ² 611 ⁵	0 ⁶	
France (St. Pierre et Miquelon)		-			-		201	453	0	
Iceland		-			-		-	-	0	
Japan		-			0		1 255	510	0	
Korea		-			-		-	453	0	
Norway		-			0		-	-	0	
Russian Federation		302	25.73	59	0	1 167	1 562	749	0	
Ukraine							-		0	
United States of America		-			-		-	453	0	
Others		12	1.00	59	-	258		794	0	
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH	*	1 175	100.00 ¹⁶	1 000	* ¹¹	7 000 ^{13,8}	12 242	34 000	0	*



- * Ban on fishing in force.
- ¹ Quota to be shared by vessels from Canada, Cuba, France (St. Pierre et Miquelon), Japan, Korea, Ukraine and USA.
- ² The allocations to these Contracting Parties are as yet undetermined, although their sum shall not exceed the difference between the total of allocations to other Contracting Parties and the TAC (= 29.467 tonnes).
- ³ Should NEAFC modify its level of TAC, these figures shall be adjusted accordingly by NAFO through a mail vote.
- ⁴ Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in accordance with the sharing arrangement of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission in 2003 (FC WP 03/7), as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the European Union.
- ⁵ Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in accordance with the sharing arrangement of the former USSR quota adopted by the Fisheries Commission in 2003 (FC WP 03/7), and to Poland, as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the European Union.
- ⁶ Including allocations to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, as applied by NAFO since 2005 following their accession to the EU.
- ⁷ Allocation of 17.85% to Lithuania and 2.15% to Latvia following their accession to the European Union.
- ⁸ Applicable to 2019 and 2020.
- ⁹ If an increase in the overall TAC as defined in footnote 3 leads to an increase in these shares, the first 500 tonnes of that increase shall be added to the quota share referred to in footnote 1.
- ¹⁰ Notwithstanding the provision of Article 5.3 (b) and without prejudice to future agreements on allocations, these quotas may be fished in their entirety by these Contracting Parties.
- ¹¹ Applicable to 2019, 2020 and 2021.
- ¹² Following the NAFO Annual Meeting and prior to 1 January of the succeeding year, at the request of the USA, Canada will transfer 1,000 tonnes of its 3LNO yellowtail quota to the USA.
- ¹³ Should catches exceed 5 000 tonnes, additional measures would be adopted to further restrain catches in 2019.

Historical statements

- ¹⁴ The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1998 Quota Table. In 1999, a moratorium on cod in Division 3M was declared.
- ¹⁵ The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1997 Quota Table. In 1998, a moratorium on redfish in Division 3LN was declared.
- ¹⁶ The allocation key of this stock is based on the 1994 Quota Table. In 1995, a moratorium on witch flounder in Division 3NO was declared.

**Effort Allocation Scheme for Shrimp Fishery in the
NAFO Regulatory Area Div. 3M, 2019-2020**

Contracting Party	Number of Fishing Days¹	Number of Vessels¹
Canada	0	0
Cuba	0	0
Denmark		
– Faroe Islands	0	0
– Greenland		0
European Union	0	0
France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon)	0	0
Iceland	N/A	N/A
Japan	0	0
Korea	0	0
Norway	0	0
Russia	0	N/A
Ukraine	0	0
USA	0	0

¹ When the scientific advice estimates that the stock shows signs of recovery, the fishery shall be re-opened in accordance with the effort allocation key in place for this fishery at the time of the closure.





NAFO Northwest Atlantic
Fisheries Organization

PRESS RELEASE

Committed to **Conservation** and **Management** of **Fisheries** and **Ecosystems** in the Northwest Atlantic

Annex 36. NAFO Press Release

NAFO AGREES TO SECOND PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND CONTINUES ITS COMMITMENT TO CONSERVING MARINE BIODIVERSITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tallinn, Estonia, 21 September 2018- The 40th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) took place from 17-21 September in Tallinn, Estonia. Delegates from the 12 NAFO Contracting Parties were welcomed to Estonia by the NAFO President, Stéphane Artano, and the Honourable Siim Kuisler, Minister of the Environment of Estonia. Contracting Parties were also welcomed by the Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries from the European Commission, Mr. João Aguiar Machado, later in the week.

At the meeting, NAFO accepted the Performance Review Panel Report and its 36 recommendations to further improve its functioning. This second comprehensive Review addressed conservation and management; compliance and enforcement; governance; science; international cooperation; and financial and administrative issues. NAFO also established a working group to develop an action plan to address all the recommendations. A copy of NAFO's Performance Review Report and its recommendations can be found on the NAFO website (<https://www.nafo.int>).

In addition, to the traditional total allowable catch (TAC)* and quota decisions, significant decisions were made regarding the following:

- NAFO adopted an exceptional circumstances protocol for NAFO's Greenland halibut management strategy evaluation.
- NAFO continued its commitment to the conservation of marine biodiversity in NAFO waters by implementing measures to prohibit the directed fishing of Greenland shark and for Contracting Parties to report on efforts to minimize incidental catches and mortalities.
- NAFO adopted a comprehensive revision to the NAFO Observer Program to enhance the quality of data being collected by NAFO observers.
- NAFO agreed to a schedule for the management strategy evaluation (MSE) plan for cod in the Flemish Cap (Division 3M), including setting a Harvest Control Rule (HCR) for the stock, for the next Annual Meeting.
- NAFO continued its efforts towards further developing its ecosystem approach to fisheries management by requesting that the NAFO Scientific Council develop a 3 to 5-year workplan to ensure its prioritization and support. In this context, NAFO looks to further progress in the implementation of its Ecosystem Approach Roadmap.

*All of the TACs and quotas can be found [here](#).

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