



NAFO MEETS FOR THE FIRST TIME UNDER MODERNIZED CONVENTION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONTREAL, QC, 22 SEPTEMBER 2017- The 39th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) took place from 18 to 22 September in Montréal, Canada. Over 180 delegates from 11 NAFO Contracting Parties were welcomed to Montréal by NAFO President, Stéphane Artano, and the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard. The meeting marked a NAFO milestone, being the first Annual Meeting held under the amended NAFO Convention, which came into force 18 May 2017. These amendments to the Convention modernize NAFO, particularly by incorporating an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. This approach includes safeguarding the marine environment, conserving marine biodiversity and minimizing the risk of long term adverse effects of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem. The amendments also streamline NAFO's decision-making process, strengthen the obligations of Contracting Parties, Flag States and Port States, and institute a formal dispute settlement mechanism.

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

- **NAFO agreed to a management strategy for Greenland halibut.** This management plan shall be in force from 2018 to 2023 and the TAC for this stock will be adjusted annually depending on the agreed Harvest Control Rule (HCR).
- **NAFO agreed to relaunch its second performance review.** This performance review will be completed by the next Annual Meeting in September 2018 and will address: conservation and management; compliance and enforcement; governance; science; international cooperation; financial and administrative issues. The previous NAFO performance review took place in 2011, with all of its recommendations having been addressed.
- **NAFO agreed to protect the entire New England Seamount chain,** amending the boundary of the area closed to bottom fishing to include all peaks in the chain. The protection of the entire chain as a whole will help in sustaining the biological connectivity and function of seamount communities at all depths. In addition, procedures leading to these closures were further streamlined.
- **NAFO agreed to a benchmark assessment of cod on the Flemish Cap in 2018.** This benchmark assessment will explore the robustness of the current assessment model and evaluate alternatives including multi-species models, with a number of international experts being invited to review. This assessment aims to improve confidence in future assessments of this stock.
- **NAFO re-elected current President, Stéphane Artano** (France in respect of Saint Pierre and Miquelon), for his second term, and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation) was elected as vice-Chair.

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

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