

## **North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission**

**Contracting Parties: Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland),  
Estonia, the EU, Iceland, Norway, Poland and the Russian Federation**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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The NEAFC Commission continues its development as a 21<sup>st</sup> century Regional Fisheries Management Organisation at its 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting by obtaining further tools to address fisheries management, biodiversity and ecosystem concerns.

- Agrees on substance of updating the Convention in the light of developments in international law since 1992 with respect to biodiversity, ecosystem and precautionary approach;
- Addresses the problem of managing pelagic sharks and proposes no fishery for basking shark in 2006;
- Maintains 30% reduction in effort in fisheries for vulnerable fish species in deep water;
- Notes the success of its naming and shaming of IUU vessels;
- Agrees that strengthening of cooperation, through Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, is the way forward to improve ocean governance in the high seas;
- Agrees on management measures for four fisheries in the high seas for 2006;
- Breakthrough in coastal state negotiations may bring NEAFC measures for blue whiting in place before the end of the year;
- Heads of Delegation of the NEAFC Commission meet their environmental counterparts (OSPAR) at NEAFC Headquarters and exchange information.

The NEAFC Commission agreed on substance to amend the Convention giving a clearer mandate to pursue the ecosystem approach, protection of biodiversity and applying the precautionary approach. Final adoption will take place when two Contracting Parties have finalised internal procedures. The Contracting Parties have agreed to apply the amendments provisionally until ratification procedures have been finalised.

The NEAFC Commission maintained the reduction in fishing pressure in deep waters for a number of vulnerable fish species by 30 % in 2006. Advice on managing specific deep sea fisheries individually is expected next spring.

The NEAFC Commission recommended that no fisheries for basking shark take place in 2006 and calls for compilation of data to better assist assessments of stock status and advice on this and other pelagic shark species.

The NEAFC Commission adopted further amendments to its Scheme of Control and Enforcement and noted an upward trend in inspection presence.

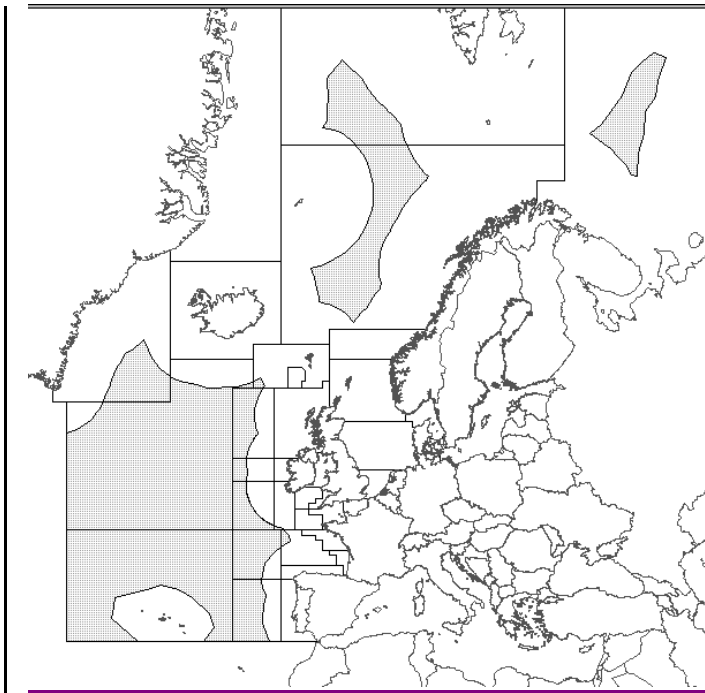
Blacklisting vessels from non-Contracting Parties which undermine the effectiveness of NEAFC regulations had a distinct effect in 2005. One non-Contracting Party with a history of flag of convenience to IUU vessels in the North East Atlantic applied for cooperative non-Contracting Party status, which means that it will have the same obligations as Contracting Parties. Another has de-flagged and de-listed a large part of the IUU vessels on the NEAFC blacklist. IUU vessels have been effectively blocked from landing in NEAFC Contracting Party ports.

There has been a breakthrough in negotiations between Coastal States with respect to the TAC and allocations of blue whiting. NEAFC measures can be brought into place when some outstanding problems between Coastal States bilaterally have been sorted out bilaterally.

Coastal States of Norwegian spring spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring continue their negotiations to find a solution that can form the basis for NEAFC measures in 2006.

Heads of Delegation of the NEAFC Commission met their environmental counterparts – OSPAR - at NEAFC Headquarters and exchanged information. The OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment in the North East Atlantic has approximately the same membership as the NEAFC Commission. There was a general feeling that integration of fisheries and environmental concerns should start at national level and spill over to regional organisations.

The high seas of the NEAFC Regulatory Area inside the NEAFC Convention Area in the North-East Atlantic are shown shaded on the map below.



For more details see below

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## Details

1. The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Commission of the **North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission** (NEAFC) took place in London between 14-18 November under the chairmanship of Mr. Einar Lemche, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland).
2. All Contracting Parties were represented: Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Estonia, the European Community, Iceland, Norway, Poland and the Russian Federation. Representatives from Canada, several international governmental organisations and two non-governmental organisations attended as observers.
3. The Commission reviewed scientific information from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) concerning the status of fish stocks in the North-East Atlantic. Specific attention was given to reports on stocks under NEAFC's regulatory competence (oceanic redfish, blue whiting, Norwegian spring spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring, mackerel, Rockall haddock and

deep-sea species). The Commission also reviewed updated scientific information on vulnerable deep-water habitats and shark species.

4. In 2003 NEAFC agreed on temporary measures to freeze effort in fisheries for fish species inhabiting deep waters in the Regulatory Area from 1 January 2004. This year NEAFC agreed to maintain the reduction in fishing effort in these fisheries by 30 % in 2006. NEAFC expects advice to be forthcoming that will allow the regulation of individual fisheries next year.
5. NEAFC agreed on amendments to the Convention giving NEAFC a stronger mandate with respect to the ecosystem approach and biodiversity protection. Formal adoption will take place when two Contracting Parties have finalised internal procedures.
6. NEAFC agreed on management measures to control the exploitation of major fish stocks in international waters (the NEAFC Regulatory Area). These measures include total allowable catches and effort for redfish, mackerel, Rockall haddock and deep-sea species. Consultations between Coastal States on Norwegian spring spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring and blue whiting continue. Final NEAFC measures for 2006 will be adopted when these negotiations are concluded. NEAFC recommended a fishing ban on the basking shark and the compilation of data on this and other pelagic shark species.
7. NEAFC reviewed recent trends in the international management of marine resources, including the ecosystem approach and cooperation with other regional and global organisations. In the light of this, it was decided to continue to examine how to strengthen the role of NEAFC in addressing overall ocean management in the Convention Area. There was consensus that strengthening of cooperation, through Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, is the way forward to improve ocean governance in the high seas,
8. The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting is scheduled to take place in London between 13-17 November 2006.

## NEAFC TACs and catches 1999 and onwards

**Table 1.** Total allowable catches adopted by the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission for 1999 to 2003 (for redfish and blue whiting for the Convention Area and for the two other stocks for the Regulatory Area). (Unit: tonnes)

<i>Stock</i>	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Norwegian spring spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring	102,000	102,000	76,500	76,500	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	*)
Blue whiting	650,000	650,000	650,000	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	*)
Oceanic Redfish ( <i>S. mentella</i> )	153,000	120,000	95,000	95,000	119,000	120,000	75,200	62,416
Mackerel	44,000	50,000	65,000	66,400	56,610	52,192	40,185	42,289

*n.a.* Allocations not agreed in NEAFC. National measures only

\*) Coastal State negotiations continue

**Table 2.** Landings from the NEAFC **Convention** Area (Unit: tonnes)  
Source ICES ACFM Reports

<i>Stock</i>	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Norwegian Spring Spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring	1,235,000	1,207,000	770,000	806,600	773,000
Blue whiting	1,261,033	1,412,449	1,771,805	1,556,954	2,365,319
Pelagic redfish ( <i>S. mentella</i> )	109,665	126,076	128,838	131,665	149,439
Mackerel	608,900	667,200	677,700	717,900	617,000
<b>Total- 4 major NEAFC stocks</b>	<b>1,979,598</b>	<b>3,412,725</b>	<b>3,348,343</b>	<b>3,213,119</b>	<b>3,904,758</b>

**Table 3.** Landings from the NEAFC **Regulatory** Area (Unit: tonnes) 2003  
Source: NEAFC Statistics.

<i>Stock</i>	Landings
Norwegian spring spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring	110,059
Blue whiting	883,130
Mackerel	30,439
Rockall haddock	4,656
Oceanic <i>S. mentella</i>	69,036
Total NEAFC Regulatory Area	1,097,320