



The NEAFC Performance Review

Information Update, March 2007

- **The Panel and its Report¹**

The NEAFC Performance Review Panel, which was formally established in March 2006, has produced a comprehensive review which provides NEAFC with a basis to consider ways in which its fisheries management in the Northeast Atlantic may be further improved.

The Performance Review Panel consisted of three external experts: a fisheries management expert appointed by the Fisheries Division of FAO; a legal expert appointed by the UN Division for Oceans Affairs and Law of the Sea; and a marine scientific expert from a non-NEAFC Party (Canada). In addition, two expert NEAFC officials as well as the NEAFC Secretary, participated in the Panel.

In their Foreword to the Report, the three externally appointed members of the Panel underline the value of the Review approach adopted by NEAFC and in particular the combination of internal and external expertise –

“Overall the Panel believes that the approach adopted was effective and the outputs unbiased by the construct and conduct of Panel members. In principle, we would recommend that the inclusion of both internal and external Panel members is a successful approach that could be adopted in future exercises of this kind, particularly where resources are limited” (Performance Review Panel, p. iii).

- **Review follow-up in NEAFC**

The Report of the Performance Review Panel was presented to the NEAFC Commission at its 25th Annual Meeting in November 2006. The Commission requested the Working Group on the Future of NEAFC to consider the Panel’s conclusions in detail and make proposals for follow-up action. The Working Group met from 30 January – 1 February 2007, and its report and recommendations will be dealt with at an extraordinary meeting of the NEAFC Commission in June 2007.

¹ <http://www.neafc.org/news/docs/performance-review-final-edited.pdf>



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• **Recent developments in NEAFC**

Since the NEAFC Performance Review was completed in October 2006, there have been a number of important developments in NEAFC which have addressed most of the major concerns identified by the Panel.

- Conservation and management measures have been adopted for all major fisheries in the NEAFC Regulatory area. These fisheries are:
 - Blue Whiting
 - Deep-sea species.
 - Mackerel
 - Norwegian Spring Spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring
 - Pelagic redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in the Irminger and adjacent areas and Norwegian Sea;
 - Redfish in ICES Sub-areas I and II
 - Rockall haddock;
- The role of coastal states arrangements and their distinction from, yet basis for, NEAFC measures on straddling stocks, should be noted, given the high proportion of catches of these stocks taken in waters under the national jurisdiction of Contracting Parties. The respective roles of NEAFC and that of the coastal states in fisheries management are complementary.
- NEAFC has adopted new Port State Control measures as a part of the existing comprehensive NEAFC Control and Enforcement Scheme. The new measures will enter into force on 1 May 2007. This new Scheme will effectively close Contracting Party ports to landings of frozen fish which have not been certified by the Flag State of the vessel intending to land.
- NEAFC has joined forces with its sister organisation in the Northwest Atlantic, NAFO, to create a pan-North Atlantic list of IUU vessels. The two RFMOs have decided that vessels on their respective lists of IUU vessels are transferred from the list of one organisation to the list of the other.
- NEAFC agreed November 2006 that bottom trawling and fishing with static gear shall be prohibited in three further areas in the Regulatory Area to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems, in addition to the five areas closed since 2005. Criteria and objectives for using closed areas as a tool to minimise the ecological impacts of fisheries on marine habitats and biodiversity will be more closely examined in NEAFC's Permanent Committee on Management and Science.