

NEAFC TECHNICAL MEETING TO EXAMINE THE COMMUNITY'S PROPOSAL AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT SUBMISSIONS

13 – 14 May 2004

At NEAFC headquarters - 22 Berners Street, London W1T 3DY

Final Report

1. Opening of the meeting

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Zbigniew Karnicki, Poland, who had sent his apologies because of illness, Mr Lachlan Stuart (EU) was elected to chair the meeting. He opened the meeting at 10 am in the conference room, Ground Floor, 22 Berners Street and welcomed everyone to the 4th NEAFC Working Group meeting of relevance to the management of deep-sea fisheries. All Contracting Parties were represented.

2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of rapporteur

The Chairman informed delegates that he would keep agenda item 4 open for the duration of the meeting, allowing the formation of subgroups to look into specific problems. With these remarks the agenda was adopted and the Secretariat was appointed rapporteur

3. Arrangements for the meeting

The Secretariat informed the meeting that it would be possible to cater for up to four sub-groups at the time. It was agreed to call a meeting of Heads of Delegations to set up a timetable for meetings of the different groups.

4. Examination of the issues listed in Annex D of the Report of the NEAFC Technical Meeting April 2003

On 2 February 2004 in HOD letter 05/04, Contracting Parties were invited to review the list in advance of the meeting and indicate if there have been any changes in their position. No Contracting Party has indicated any change in position.

Representatives from the EU, Iceland and Norway made opening statements (Annexes B, C and D). The representative of the Russian Federation welcomed a more detailed discussion of the proposals presented.

Iceland placed a general reservation on the remainder of the text in this report. Information on the position of Iceland will be provided in writing within one month from the date of the closing of the meeting.

The EU representative proposed dealing with the controversial matters in Annex D in a number of bilateral meetings. He also proposed establishing a technical/scientific group convened by Ciaran Kelly (EU). This technical group would discuss the EU proposal for data collection.

The EU representative reported back on the outcome of bilateral deliberations as follows

4.1 Review of Current Management

Current situations and assessments are summarised in Table 1 and in more detail below.

4.2 Implementation of the Effort Freeze

The EC applies an overall limit on the size of the fleet authorised to fish for the main commercial deep-sea species in the NEAFC Convention Area. Norway and the Russian Federation implement a days-at-sea limitation for a restricted number of vessels that catch deep-sea species in the NRA. DK(FAR) has a defined deep-sea fishing fleet that is permitted to fish for deep-sea species. Iceland applies a TAC for Greenland halibut in its own EEZ. Iceland applies a TAC for all commercial exploited species in its EEZ including Greenland halibut, tusk, ling, blue ling, greater silver smelt and monkfish. Furthermore, only a limited number of vessels can apply for authorization to fish for those species outside the Icelandic EEZ.

4.3 Species under Regulation

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the Russian federation expressed reservations on the inclusion of Greenland halibut, ling, tusk and argentine in the list. Iceland considers that applying the same approach to the management of all the species listed in Annex A does not result in the most efficient management for all the species considered.

4.4 Reference Periods for Effort Limitation

These are as given in Table 1. Contracting Parties agreed on the need to harmonise reference periods. Iceland is of the opinion that an effort management system is not the best solution in this regard.

4.5 Definition of Authorisation

Contracting Parties agreed on the need to develop a definition of "Authorisation" to fish for deep-sea species in the NEAFC Regulatory Area as an amendment to the scheme of Control and Enforcement. The present criteria for defining the authorisation are listed in Table 1.

4.6 Data Collection

Contracting Parties agreed on the need to improve and to standardise the collection and transmission of deep-sea data. A draft protocol for data exchange was developed

and is given as Annex A. There is general agreement on the report between the scientists present. It was agreed to establish an inter-sessional scientific- technical group, convened by Ciaran Kelly (EU), to finalise the protocol and report back to the 23rd Annual Meeting of NEAFC in November.

4.7. Next Steps

Key issues, and a timetable for resolving them, are summarised in Table 2. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested that Heads of Delegations mandated PECCOE to look into the matter of an authorisation to fish for deep-sea species via a mail procedure.

5. New information since the last meeting of the Working Group

1. Temporal and spatial distribution of vulnerable deep-sea aggregations and vulnerable habitats;

ICES responded October 2003 to a request by NEAFC from the 21st Annual Meeting, to ...*Provide information on temporal and spatial distribution of vulnerable deep-sea aggregation, and to identify habitats especially vulnerable to fishery activities.* The Chairman of ACFM, ICES, presented this information at the 22nd Annual Meeting.

2. Report of the ICES Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep Sea Resources;

ICES has released the Report of the Working Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep Sea Resources, which met between 18-24 February 2004. The report has not been discussed in ACFM.

The information from ICES was noted without comment.

6. Data on catch and effort by Contracting Parties

As at 18 March 2004, only Spain has submitted data since spring 2003. The Chairman asked the Secretariat to inform the meeting on the status of the database. It was reported that, apart from updates from Poland, the Faroe Islands and the Russian Federation, there was no substantial change in the state of the database since the first meeting.

7. Report to NEAFC

Based on the summary records of the meeting and in cooperation with the Chairman, the Secretariat prepared the draft report.

8. Any other business

There was none.

9. Closure of the meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting thanking everybody for their contributions and collaborations. The representative of the EU expressed his appreciation of the spirit of collaboration at the meeting. This gave a basis for making progress in the process bringing permanent measures into place.

Table 1. Summary of key elements in the management of deep-sea species in the NEAFC RA.

Contracting Party	Implementation Method	Species covered	Reference period for effort limit	Definition of authorisation
EC, POL, EST	Limit on fleet capacity in Convention Area. TACs for main commercial species.	Full Appendix A list of species	1998-2000; vessels having caught over 10t/year.	Any vessel with more than 100Kg of deep-sea species on board
DK(FAR)	Limit on fleet size	Reservation for GHL, ling, tusk and argentine	1980-2000 (RP)	The same number of vessels are permitted to fish for deep-sea species. Effort managed in kW.GT.days
DK(GRN)	Not presently fishing in the NRA	As DK (FAR)	No track record	
ISL	TAC for GLH,LIN,USK,B LI,ARG and monk fish	GHL,LIN,US K, BLI,ARG and monk fish		Not to be considered at this stage.
NO	Days-at-sea for a limited fleet in the NRA	Full Appendix A list of species	1998-2002; vessels having caught over 5t/year (RP).	A licence system allowing vessels to catch any quantity of deep-sea species listed in Appendix A
RUS	Days-at-sea for a limited fleet in the NRA	Reservation for GHL, ling, tusk and argentine	1970-2002	A licence system allowing vessels to catch any quantity of deep-sea species listed in Appendix A

Appendix A: the following Deep-sea species shall be recorded for scientific purposes

Stock (common name)	FAO code	Scientific name	Geographical area/ICES Area
Baird's smoothhead	ALC	<i>Alepocehalus bairdii</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Risso's smoothhead	PHD	<i>Alepocephalus rostratus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Blue antimora (Blue hake)	ANT	<i>Antimora rostrata</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Black scabbardfish	BSF	<i>Aphanopus carbo</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Iceland catshark	API	<i>Apristuris spp</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Greater silver smelt	ARG	<i>Argentina silus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Alfonsinos	ALF	<i>Beryx spp.</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Tusk	USK	<i>Brosme brosme</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Gulper shark	GUP	<i>Centrophorus granulosus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Leafscale gulper shark	GUQ	<i>Centrophorus squamosus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Black dogfish	CFB	<i>Centroscyllium fabricii</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Portuguese dogfish	CYO	<i>Centroscymnus coelolepis</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Longnose velvet dogfish	CYP	<i>Centroscymnus crepidater</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Deep-water red crab	KEF	<i>Chacon (Geyron) affinis</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Rabbit fish (Rattail)	CMO	<i>Chimaera monstrosa</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Friiled shark	HXC	<i>Chlamydoselachus anguineus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Conger eel	COE	<i>Conger conger</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Roundnose grenadier	RNG	<i>Coryphaenoides rupestris</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Kitefin shark	SCK	<i>Dalatias licha</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Birdbeak dogfish	DCA	<i>Deania calceus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Black (Deep-water) cardinal fish	EPI	<i>Epigonus telescopus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Greater lanternshark	SHL(*)	<i>Etmopterus princeps</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Velvet belly	SHL(*)	<i>Etmopterus spinax</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Blackmouth dogfish	SHO	<i>Galeus melastomus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Mouse catshark	GAM	<i>Galeus murinus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Bluemouth (Blue mouth redfish)	BRF	<i>Helicolenus dactylopterus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Blondnose six-gilled shark	SBL	<i>Hexanchus griseus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Orange roughy	ORY	<i>Hoplostethus atlanticus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Silver roughy (Pink)	HPR	<i>Hoplostethus mediterraneus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Large-eyed rabbit fish (Ratfish)	CYH	<i>Hydrolagus mirabilis</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Silver scabbard fish (Cutless fish)	SFS	<i>Lepidopus caudatus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Eelpout		<i>Lycodes esmarkii</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV

Roughhead grenadier (Rough rattail)	RGH	<i>Marcrourus berglax</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Blue ling	BLI	<i>Molva dypterigia</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Ling	LIN	<i>Molva molva</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Common mora	RIB	<i>Mora moro</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Sailfin roughshark (Sharpback shark)	OXN	<i>Oxynotus paradoxus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Red (blackspot) seabream	SBR	<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Red Seabream	SBR	<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Forkbeards	GFB	<i>Phycis spp.</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Wreckfish	WRF	<i>Polyprion americanus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Round skate	RJY	<i>Raja fyllae</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Arctic skate	RJG	<i>Raja hyperborea</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Norwegian skate	JAD	<i>Raja nidarosiensus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Greenland halibut	GHL	<i>Rheinhardtius hippoglossoides</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Straightnose rabbitfish	RCT	<i>Rhinochimaera atlantica</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Knifetooth dogfish	SYR	<i>Scymnodon ringens</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Small redfish (Norway haddock)	SFV	<i>Sebastes viviparus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Greenland shark	GSK	<i>Somniosus microcephalus</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV
Spiny (Deep-sea) scorpionfish	TJX	<i>Trachyscorpia cristulata</i>	ICES Divisions I to XIV

(*) SHL is the FAO 3-Alpha code for *Etmopterus spp*

Table 2. Action points for development of deep-sea management.

Action	Date
Data-exchange system for deep-sea fisheries.	Agreement November 2004 An inter-sessional working Group will sort out the protocol and report to the 23 rd Annual Meeting Implementation 1 January 2005
NEAFC Control and Enforcement scheme amended to include an “authorisation to fish” for deep-sea species.	Consultation with PECCOE, October 2004. Agreement November 2004 Implementation 1 January 2005
Reservations to Appendix A list of species	Agreement November 2004
Closed areas for selected sea-mounts	Review in November 2004
Definition of reference period for management of effort	November 2004
Compatible measures to be put in place in national waters	2005
Contracting parties might request NEAFC to recommend conservation measures also for their national waters	2006

ANNEX A Provision of scientific information concerning deep-sea fishing

Among the general principles of the UN agreement on straddling stocks the states party to this agreement undertake to; adopt measures to ensure long-term sustainability of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks and to promote the objective of their optimum utilization; to ensure that such measures are based on the best scientific evidence available and to collect and share, in a timely manner, complete and accurate data concerning fishing activities. In the spirit of this agreement the following elements are proposed to augment existing data collecting regimes among the contracting parties.

1. Contracting Parties shall communicate to ICES, for each half calendar year, information (listed below) recorded in either or both logbooks and reports presented by observers. This information shall be communicated within six months of the expiry of the reporting period.
2. Fishing effort shall be measured in the following units according to the type of fishing gear deployed

Type of fishing	Effort measurement
Trawlers	a. Kilowatt*Fishing days b. Vessel*fishing days
Longliners	a. Gross tonnage*Fishing days b. Average number of hooks deployed*Number of deployments
Netters	a. Gross tonnage*Fishing days b. Average length of nets deployed*total soak time

3. Information shall be provided from logbook for:
 - Each quarter of the year
 - Each ICES statistical rectangle
 - Each type of fishing activity described in par. 2
 - Each economic zone
 - Depth of fishing
 - Landings and discards (discards where not collected by sampling scheme)
4. Contracting Parties shall develop sampling plans for deep-sea species (including discards where necessary), and shall communicate them via NEAFC to ICES. ICES shall review the sampling plans and provide feedback to Contracting Parties via NEAFC.
5. Contracting parties shall take account of evaluations of sampling efficacy and data quality made by ICES and shall modify their sampling programmes in order to attain a high standard of supply of scientific data for purposes of managing the fish stocks and the marine ecosystems and habitats.
6. Data shall be communicated in the following electronic format separated by commas:

- a. A three-letter code indicating the flag state of the vessel;
- b. The year in question, in four numerals;
- c. The quarter of the year, as Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4 (two characters);
- d. The ICES rectangle in question (Four characters);
- e. The type of fishing activity, as "T" for trawling, "L" for longlining, "G" for netting (one character);
- f. The corresponding total effort deployed, in the units described in paragraph 2 (Two numeric fields, separated by a comma);
- g. The deepest depth fished, in metres (numeric field);
- h. The shallowest depth fished, in metres (numeric field);
- i. The average depth of fishing, in metres (numeric field);
- j. A three-letter FAO code identifying a species in the catch, as in Annex I;
- k. The quarterly total catch of the species identified in field j, in tonnes live weight.
- l. The quarterly total catch of the species identified in field j, in tonnes live weight.
- m. an ASCII "carriage return" code.

All Fields are repeated for each of the species in the catch.
 Numeric fields shall be written so that they can be read in FORTRAN "freefield" format, notably the decimal identifier shall be the period "." and not the comma.

ANNEX B

European Community - Speaking Note 1
Opening of Meeting on Deep-Sea Species
NEAFC
13-14th . May 2004

This is the fourth meeting convened by NEAFC since 2002 specifically to address the topic of managing deep-sea species. We have examined fundamental aspects of these fisheries, we have examined the existing data, we have examined the biological advice.

It is perhaps time to examine, in turn, our own achievements before we start this meeting.

We have failed to agree what is deep-sea fishing, in terms that can be enforced and controlled.

We have failed to agree on what data should be reported, in order to develop a fair sharing of the resources and a sustainable exploitation therefrom.

We have even failed to develop a timetable or plan to achieve these necessary objectives.

Although we have agreed a statement of intent concerning effort limitation in deep-sea fisheries, it is not either equitable or effective. It is too vague to be useful.

This should give us each a little pause for thought. Among other duties, we are all here to defend our national interests: that is a proper ask. But we also have obligations to safeguard the interests of future generations that may exploit these stocks after us.

I will not belabour the point. I simply want to assure you at the start of this meeting that the delegation of the European Community will make every effort to help develop a workable, equitable and effective deep-sea management system at this meeting, even if it entails short-term costs and annoyances. This is our proper work here, and our proper responsibilities. I hope and trust that you and other contracting parties will join me in this endeavour.

In the first instance, I believe it is essential to develop a working data-exchange system and to agree a definition of deep-sea fishing that is usable in day-to-day practice.

We trust in the Regional Fisheries Organisations, in this case NEAFC, as the best forum for the discussion and regulation of this difficult issue.

However, should we not be able to reach agreement on these basic points, it may require in turn an examination of the value of continuing these discussions within NEAFC, and indeed an examination and assessment of fisheries management in the NEAFC context.

ANNEX C Opening Statement by Norway

The Working Group on the Future of NEAFC yesterday agreed that NEAFC should play a more proactive role in international processes addressing problems of overall ocean management.

To move forward on the management of deep-sea resources in NEAFC one option to protect vulnerable habitats like seamounts by closing areas for deep-sea trawling. Norway proposes that this possibility is explored.

The UN General Assembly has invited the relevant international bodies at all levels, in accordance with their mandate, to consider urgently how to better address, on a scientific and precautionary basis, the threats and risks to vulnerable and threatened marine ecosystems and biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.

Seamounts are rich and unusual deep-sea biological communities that support highly unique and endemic faunas, representing large pools of undiscovered biodiversity in the oceans.

The biology and ecology of seamounts has been discovered and studied only in recent years. Although relatively few seamounts have been sampled comprehensively, this research has shown that seamounts may be sites of speciation, refuges for rare species, and stepping-stones for distribution. Many characteristic species on seamounts are very long-lived, and their biological communities can take numerous years to develop.

Deep-sea trawling on seamounts destroys complex, long-lived and poorly-known benthic communities in the process of catching fish.

There is an urgent need to protect seamount environments now before too many more are devastated. Norway thus urges NEAFC to consider mechanisms to protect these most vulnerable habitats including deep-sea species by prohibiting bottom trawling on identified seamounts in the Regulatory Area..

ANNEX D - Opening Statement by Iceland

Iceland notes with concern that NEAFC has failed in a number of issues pertaining to the management of deep-sea fisheries in the Regulatory Area. There is a need to consider measures in addition to those explored with a view to putting into place permanent measures regulating fishing effort going into the deep-sea fisheries.

One option to advance NEAFC's role is to implement measures closing areas to certain fishing gears in order to protect vulnerable habitats and conserve biodiversity. The extent of the areas should be carefully considered and based on scientific evidence, in order not to overshoot and close areas which do not add to the protection of vulnerable habitats.

Iceland proposes that this option is explored as a way to break the deadlock in the management of the deep-sea fisheries in NEAFC.