

Report from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the NEAFC observer to the annual meeting of The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)

The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization held its 29th Annual Meeting from the 24th to the 28th of September, 2007. The Ministry of Fisheries of Portugal hosted the meeting in Lisbon, Portugal. The meeting focused on the protection of the environment in the Northwest Atlantic and the establishment of stock management measures.

NAFO Modernizes its Convention

Outstanding NAFO reform issues have been successfully concluded and revisions to the NAFO Convention were adopted. They include an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management, improvement of the decision making process and strengthening of the obligations and duties of NAFO Member States, Port States and Flag States. The timely conclusion of the NAFO Reform is regarded as a great success and will ensure that NAFO remains in the forefront of regional organizations managing international fish stocks.

NAFO Closes Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VME)

Further to the 2006 precautionary closure of four seamounts in international waters, this year NAFO decided to also close to bottom fisheries a large area on the Grand Banks for the next five years. During this time a coral monitoring and research program in this area will deliver much needed data to devise future strategies for the protection of corals.

NAFO also decided to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Fisheries Commission in Montreal, Canada in Spring 2008 dedicated to a comprehensive consideration of strategies and measures to address vulnerable marine ecosystems particularly in the deep seas.

NAFO Expands Joint Actions Against IUU Vessels

NAFO has further expanded its IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) vessel list to include a number of other regional organizations managing straddling fish stocks in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The "black" list has already proven to be a useful tool since its introduction in 2006.

New NAFO Measures Against Over-fishing

NAFO has decided on a special catch communication and inspection scheme for vessels fishing Greenland halibut. This measure will strengthen the fight against over-fishing in the Northwest Atlantic.

NAFO Launches Grand Banks Cod Recovery Program

NAFO adopted a conservation plan and rebuilding strategy for Atlantic cod on the southern Grand Banks to promote recovery of this important species. Despite being under a fishing moratorium for over twelve years the status of cod is still of concern and it is hoped that the new measures which include by-catch limitations and separator grates will help the stock to rebound.