

DRAFT

DRAFT WORKING PAPER

Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Advisory Group for Data Communications

TERMS OF REFERENCE¹

- 1) The functions of the Advisory Group shall be to:
 - a) Monitor developments in data communication in relation to NEAFC, NAFO and other RFMOs;
 - b) Promote harmonisation of communications protocols used in NEAFC, NAFO, by Contracting Parties and other Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs);
 - c) Ensure the standardization of the North-Atlantic Format and act as repository of the format;
 - d) Examine any relevant issues related to the functioning of the VMS;
 - e) On request from NEAFC, NAFO, or other RFMOs, or from Contracting Parties provide advice on proposals for amendments to message formats or other matters concerning data communications;
 - f) Present recommendations to NEAFC, NAFO, or other RFMOs or to Contracting Parties for amendments to message formats or other improvements in the field of data communication.
- 2) In performing its functions, the Advisory Group shall:
 - a) Invite Contracting Parties of NEAFC, NAFO and other RFMOs to participate in its meetings;
 - b) Develop a close cooperation with the secretariats of NEAFC, NAFO and other RFMOs.
- 3) The advisory group shall elect a chairman and a vice-chairman and draw up its own rules of procedure.

¹ Recommendation adopted by the NEAFC at its Annual Meeting on 12 November 2004

RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. Contracting Parties and Contracting Party Flag States may appoint to the Advisory Group experts in the field of Data Communications, and shall inform the NEAFC Secretary of the names of their appointed members of the Group.
2. Contracting Parties to NAFO or other RFMO's, which are not Contracting Parties of NEAFC, shall be invited to appoint to the Advisory Group, experts in this field, and shall inform the NEAFC Secretary of the names of their appointed representatives. Such representatives, as well as the secretariats of the RFMO's concerned shall be invited to participate in those discussions of the Advisory Group which do not concern NEAFC only.
3. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be elected from among the members for a term of two years and shall be eligible for re-election. The Chairman may resign at any time. In the event of the office of Chairman falling vacant the Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of Chairman until a new chairman is elected at the next meeting.
4. The chairman shall have the following responsibilities:
 - (a) convene a meeting of the Advisory Group at least once a year;
 - (b) chair each meeting of the Advisory Group;
 - (c) approve a provisional Agenda for the meeting after consultation with members of the Advisory Group and the Secretary and, as appropriate, with representatives of non-NEAFC Contracting Parties and secretariats of other RFMO's;
 - (d) open and close each meeting of the Advisory Group;
 - (e) agree the reports of each meeting for transmission to its members, and other interested persons as official documents of the proceedings;
 - (f) between meetings, confer by electronic means with members of the Advisory Group and as appropriate, with representatives of non-NEAFC Contracting Parties and secretariats of other RFMO's, in order to provide advice or recommendations on proposals on which the Advisory Group has been consulted.
5. The Advisory Group shall provide a response to requests for advice or recommendations within 30 days of receiving such requests. Any advice or recommendations shall only be given with the agreement of all those that participated in the discussions. If the Advisory Group fails to achieve a consensus on an issue on which it is consulted this shall be reflected in the report of the meeting.