



**NEAFC
PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT**

25 - 26 April 2007 – Bergen

1 Opening

The Chair, Mr Martin Newman, EU, opened the meeting welcoming everybody. All Contracting Parties were present. Some delegates had not been able to reach Bergen because of problems at Copenhagen Airport. He invited the Norwegian representative to inform participants about practical arrangements. The Norwegian representative did so and informed the meeting about a reception taking place at 6 pm at the invitation of the Director General of the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries at the Bergen Aquarium.

2 Appointment of the rapporteur

The Secretariat was appointed rapporteur

3 Discussion and adoption of the Agenda

The agenda PE2007/01 version 2 was adopted. The EU representative suggested that under agenda item 4 the status of the Cook Islands and Bahamas was discussed before the status of the vessels under their flag on the lists. The Norwegian representative agreed. With respect to agenda item 7, he pointed out that he had spotted minor misprints and editorial amendments and earlier sent two lists of corrigenda to the text of the Consolidated Scheme adopted by the NEAFC Commission in November 2006 to the Secretariat. He would like to submit further corrigenda to the Secretariat. The EU representative could accept a list of simple corrigenda, but he would have problems with changes in substance. The Chair suggested that the Secretariat would receive corrigenda from all delegations, and develop a corrected version of the consolidated Scheme by Thursday morning.

4 Non-Contracting Party Scheme

4.1 A List – Ocean Explorer - AVIOR

As PECCOE would agree to maintain its proposal to the NEAFC Commission to grant the Cook Islands cooperative non-Contracting Party status, it was also agreed to maintain the proposal from October 2006 to take the OCEAN EXPLORER off the A-list, with the proviso that there will be no fishing opportunities for the vessel in the NEAFC Regulatory Area.

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The AVIOR has been de-listed by Georgia. There was no information on its whereabouts. It was agreed to propose that it is moved to the B-list..

4.2 B list – Murtosa, Thorgull

The Chair noted that the owners of THORGULL had made very serious efforts to fulfil all requirements for information in order to get the vessel removed from the list (Docs. 03 and 04).

4.3 Status of the Cook Islands and Bahamas

The Chair drew attention to submissions from the Cook Islands with respect to cooperative non-Contracting Party status. He referred to discussions in October 2006. PECCOE had then concluded that the Cook Islands fulfilled the requirements in the Scheme and accordingly proposed to the Commission that the Cook Islands be granted cooperative status. The Commission had not agreed. He asked if PECCOE wanted to go back on its decision last year. The EU representative pointed out that the Commission had required assurances that the Cook Islands would not initiate fisheries in the NEAFC Regulatory Area, without specific permission. In a submission last night, the Cook Islands had given that assurance. The Chair pointed out that it would, therefore, be difficult for PECCOE to change its decision from last year, which had the same proviso. He suggested that PECCOE maintained its decision from October 2006. This was procedurally the correct thing to do. The Norwegian representative did not feel convinced that the information received last night had changed much.

The Chair went on to describe the situation with respect to the Bahamas which is quite different. The Bahamas had submitted documents, which showed that they had taken serious steps to fulfil the requirements of the Scheme. He felt that these were very positive steps. The EU representative welcomed this. He noted the changes in legislation allowing de-registering and penalties to be introduced in the case of IUU activities. He would like to see the actual text of the proposed legislation and know when it would be introduced. The Norwegian representative agreed, but stressed the need to let the Bahamas know precisely what information NEAFC needed. The Chair informed that the Secretariat had asked for more detail from the Bahamas, but it had not been received yet. He suggested that, if this was documented, PECCOE should be open for granting Bahamas cooperative non-Contracting Party status.

The Chair concluded that PECCOE had to wait for the actual Bahamian legislation, but when that has been received PECCOE would recommend non-Contracting Party status for the Bahamas. Moreover he felt that when the legislation was in place it was appropriate, with reference to paragraph 44 subsection 4 of the Scheme, to remove Thorgull from the B-list, pending the reception of the legislation from Bahamas. The Norwegian representative found references to the Scheme entering into force on 1 May a bit confusing. He did not want to discuss the delisting of Thorgull in relation to the discussion on the status of the Bahamas. He wanted to discuss a delisting of THORGULL together with other proposals for delisting.

The Chair agreed that THORGULL should be treated on its own. It could be done when information had been received from the Bahamas. The steps would be:

- Consideration of the submission of the Bahamas
- Consideration of the status of Thorgull

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- Consideration of different types of cooperative status.

The text for proposed amendments to the Bahamas Merchant Shipping Act, PE2007/1/14, allowing de-registration of ships for IUU activities was received and circulated. He noted that it also allowed the imposition of penalties up to \$100,000. The act will be presented to the new Bahamas parliament after elections on 2 May.

He then went on to the MURTOSA. This was again a quite different case. It had originally been cited for fishing in the loophole. There had not been any meaningful answer from the flag state, Togo; only the owners have reacted. The Scheme requires flag states to take responsibility. He concluded that without any response from Togo the status of the vessel could not be changed. He contrasted this to the behaviour of the Bahamas. The EU representative agreed. The owners should get a strong signal that nothing can be done without the flag state. The Chair noted that this also called for a differential and fair treatment of flag states acting in a responsible way.

The Chair suggested NEAFC had to reflect on more sophisticated approaches when granting non-Contracting Party status taking into consideration aspects other than fishing opportunities. This could be cooperative status with respect to reefers, port state control etc. This should further investigated at the next PECCOE meeting. The representative of the Russian Federation agreed that the system should be refined to include other categories of non-Contracting Party status under the Scheme. The EU representative found the proposal for different cooperative status interesting, but thought it was difficult to deal with because of the implications for operations in other RFMOs. He doubted, therefore, that text could be developed for the October meeting. The Chair pointed out that the NEAFC experience was that we have to deal with realities not general principles perhaps applied globally. He would not like to rule out NEAFC developing text for the October meeting. He pointed out that the first big case as result of introducing the NEAFC lists was the SUNNY JANE, which was a reefer. He felt it made sense to develop a more sophisticated approach to non-Contracting Party Status.

4.3.1 Status of vessels reflagged in Russia

The Chair described the case of CEPHEY (a reefer that left the NEAFC Area at the end of October 2006 and has been observed in Ghana, Africa in March this year), the PAVLOVSK in Tallinn and ST. NICOLAS in the port of Kristiansund. The representative of the Russian Federation added the DOLPHIN which was granted a Russian flag last year in the port of Murmansk. Even if these vessels had been granted Russian flags, they are held back in port and have not received licences or permission to fish. Legislation has now been introduced to bring Russian regulations in line with international legislation on IUU fishing.

The EU representative asked what would happen with the vessels that have acquired Russian flags. The representative of the Russian Federation informed that the authorities were still investigating the three vessels DOLPHIN, PAVLOVSK and ST NICHOLAS. If it is found that they have not violated fisheries legislation, the Russian Federation will propose that the vessels be taken off the NEAFC IUU lists. Russia had the means to control vessels under their flag. The EU representative noted that under the Scheme a Contracting Party is not allowed to grant a flag to vessels on the B-list.

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The representative of the Russian Federation informed that they were not happy with the situation, but new legislation would prevent repetition of such cases.

The Chair informed, that according to reliable information, the “Rostock Five” in Kaliningrad have been granted Cyprus flags and been hauled by a Polish tug for scrapping in Latvia. The ULLA that has also resided in that port will be sent to India for scrapping. He thought this was a tremendous outcome although the procedures bringing them to scrapping were in contravention of the Scheme on all accounts, for example entering a port of a Contracting Party, granting of a Contracting Party flag and services by a Contracting Party.

This was an example where the operation of the Scheme had been adapted to reality. There was no doubt that the scrapping of these pirate vessels was a very good result of the NEAFC Scheme and its system of blacklisting vessels that undermine NEAFC regulations. The EU representative felt the Scheme could be formally amended by introducing special rules for the scrapping of IUU vessels. The Norwegian representative suggested that the rebuilding of vessels was another possibility if an IUU vessel was effectively rebuilt for a quite different use, for example an inspection vessel, it would also be a tremendous outcome.

The Chair referred to Article 44.4 c. setting out the rules on new owners. If a vessel is sold and it is re-flagged with a new owner which fulfils all requirements, can the new flag state (which can now only be a non-Contracting Party) then give the assurances required? There seems to be a conflict between Articles 44 and 45, especially with respect to transport vessels. The Norwegian representative was not in a position at this stage to discuss this in more detail. More time was needed for reflection. The EU representative pointed out that it was ultimately for NEAFC to decide that the requirements of Article 44 and 45 were fulfilled.

The Norwegian representative saw more problems than solutions at the moment. The question of ownership is not easily investigated because of the difference in transparency between flag states. The Chair noted that it might simply be too difficult to find answers, but that was a decision for NEAFC. He then went on to the question of whether legislation allowed the impounding of vessels in ports, which were left to rot by the quayside. There are at present no exit strategies. There are vessels in Spanish and Portuguese ports, which may sink in the harbour. He invited delegations to reflect and come back with ideas addressing practical problems. The EU representative was not aware of any Community law dealing with this problem, but there might be national laws. The Norwegian representative found that these were questions of national law. It should be possible as a matter of insurance to bring the vessels from point a to b in national waters.

The EU representative asked who was going to make decisions on scrapping? If the vessel owner had disappeared, should the flag state be involved? He found it an interesting but open question as to whether the port state has legislation in place. The Norwegian representative noted that there may be national laws on payment or environmental risk in ports that allow the port state to get rid of a vessel, but initially it was a decision for the owner. The Chair reminded the meeting of the situation of the Rostock five in the winter of 2005. They received services and were allowed to leave later because of the safety of the port traffic. There should be a difference if they were

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allowed to leave for scrapping. The EU representative did not think that the present rules prohibited the vessel from leaving a harbour, if it was able to do so on its own.

The Chair again called for reflection and ideas. Contracting Parties should try to imagine all the circumstances that it would be necessary to address. It was noted that the scrapping of the Kaliningrad 6 vessels may solve the IUU problem in the NEAFC Regulatory Area to a large extent.

Actions arising: PECCOE concludes that the Cook Islands has fulfilled the requirements in the Scheme and accordingly proposes to the Commission that the Cook Islands be granted cooperative status. The same is the case for the Bahamas, pending proposed amendments to the Bahamas Merchant Shipping Act being ratified by the Bahamas Parliament. In line with this PECCOE propose that the OCEAN EXPLORER is taken off the A-list and the THORGULL is taken off the B-list. It is proposed that the AVIOR be transferred from the A-list to the B-list. There are no other changes to the lists.

At its next meeting PECCOE will consider text that open up the possibility of more sophisticated approaches to the granting of cooperative non-contracting Party Status.

The Russian Federation may, after having investigated the operations of DOLPHIN in the port of Murmansk, PAVLOVSK in the port of Tallinn and ST. NICHOLAS in the port of Kristiansund, propose that these vessels are brought under the control of the Russian fisheries authorities under the Russian flag and taken off the B-list.

The Contracting Parties will reflect on exit strategies for vessels held back in ports, rotting away and causing port safety problems.

5 Compliance of Contracting Parties to the measures in the Scheme concerning IUU, in particular Article 11 of the Non-Contracting Party Scheme

This item had been postponed from 25 April at the request of the Icelandic delegation, which wanted to be fully manned when discussing it. The Chair noted its link with agenda item 4.4.

The Chair invited the Icelandic representative to introduce two letters, PE2007/1/09 and 12 - one to the Secretariat asking for the addition of agenda item 5 to the PECCOE agenda and one to the Russian Head of Delegation on compliance. He referred to the discussions in Tallinn in October 2006 and Iceland's concern about IUU activities in the Irminger Sea. He listed the major effort to tighten and enhance the framework of the Scheme and cooperation with other RFMOs and governments. The letter encouraged Russia to combat all aspects of IUU activities. The representative of the Russian Federation responded that he had taken note of the Icelandic concerns, which are also concerns of the Russian authorities. He repeated his statement on the situation given to PECCOE earlier

The Icelandic representative thanked him for the explanation. He assumed that the three vessels on the B-list that had been granted Russian flag would be maintained on the B-list. The representative of the Russian Federation accepted this. NEAFC

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procedures would be followed to get these vessels off the list if there was a case. The Icelandic representative pointed out that there are procedures in the Scheme to remove a vessel from the IUU lists, but that must be done before a Contracting Party could grant such a vessel its flag. These procedures had not been followed. The Scheme prohibited flagging vessels on the B-list. The representative of the Russian Federation agreed that this was the case.

The Chair noted that at least two of the vessels were immobilised in ports and thought there was reason to note that the effect of the B-list had been impressive. He pointed to the scrapping of the 'Kaliningrad 6' and the tracking of POLESTAR to Hong Kong in 2006.

6 Port State Control – implementation evaluation

The Chair asked the EU representative to introduce his report, PE2007/1/13, on tests of the port control system carried out. The EU representative informed that the European Commission had conducted a series of tests playing the role of vessels intending to land by sending a series of port state control 1 and PSC 2 forms to various port States.

Of the 19 PSC forms sent, 10 replies were received within the time limit prescribed, but two of these were not posted on the website. Of the remaining 9 faxes, 4 further replies were received late; no reply was received in the remaining 5 instances. A total of 11 notification faxes completed the circuit and were posted on the NEAFC website. During the exercise a number of problems were identified.

The Chair noted that there was room for improvement in all parties and these should be done in time so legally caught fish would not be barred from landing. On 1 May vessel owners would come into the equation and that could create new problems.

The Icelandic representative found the exercise very useful and all parties should learn from it. Iceland had had problems because of confusion of safety control with fisheries control, which is integrated operationally in Iceland. He expected that the involvement of owners and agents would lead to improvements. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) informed that the problem in Greenland had been a mistaken fax number. He suggested starting immediately to consider more efficient means of communication than faxes. The Icelandic representative agreed. The EU representative concurred that we should go down the road of electronic communication.

The Chair suggested that AGDC could start to look into the problem of more efficient communication, but limitations of some vessels in communication may be a problem. He mentioned the need for training the people involved. The NEAFC Secretariat - by placing information on the website - delivers the only full overview. Therefore submission of information to NEAFC and its swift transfer to the website are important. The representative of the Russian Federation reminded the meeting that he had earlier pointed out the need to indicate the port state not only the port. The Icelandic representative concurred. This would be even more necessary if electronic communication was introduced. The representative of the Russian Federation had

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earlier indicated in a letter that they had not been able to give a fax contact number, but that is now in place. He stressed the need to approach the right contacts.

The Chair suggested that the forms were scrutinised. The Icelandic representative complimented the Secretariat on their amendment. He raised the question of requiring information about the “ICES Area”. He recalled earlier discussions of this with respect to catch reporting and wondered what was really needed. The Chair listed possibilities and accepted that this could be a problem for skippers. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) informed that there could be catches both from the NAFO and ICES Area and from the Regulatory Area and EEZs. The EU representative reminded delegates that the system only applied to the NEAFC Convention Area. The Norwegian representative agreed with the Icelandic representative that referring to the ICES area was not precise. The ICES statistical areas were a scientific issue. The Icelandic representative noted the statistical setup of the logbooks. The Norwegian representative pointed out that 1 May was only a few days away – we should stick to what was there now and not change anything. The EU representative agreed. This was a matter of substance that should not be discussed now. The representative of the Russian Federation concurred. The Icelandic representative agreed, but wanted the discussion recorded in the report of the meeting so discussion can be continued in October. He asked what response the skippers could expect on “ICES Areas”. The Norwegian representative would advise ICES Sub-areas. The Secretariat suggested that what should be reported were the stocks from which catches had been taken, not statistical areas.

The Icelandic representative asked how supply vessel like tankers should be handled under the more rigorous rules of the new Scheme. They could be operating legally supplying Contracting Party vessels. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that this had been discussed at the North Atlantic Fishery Minister Meeting in 2006. If the supply vessels were non-Contracting Party they were now assumed to be undermining NEAFC measures. The Icelandic representative asked if fishermen were aware of the changed rules. The Norwegian representative felt that the authorities knew what to do and would include the new rules in national legislation, but he acknowledged the need to inform fishermen. The Chair listed some scenarios and did not see that a Contracting Party vessel taking oil from a Bahamas tanker was an infringement. This was linked to the discussion yesterday on the need to make a distinction between fishing vessels and transport and supply vessels. This could be considered in more detail in October, with a view of clarifying the legality of different scenarios more explicitly in the text. Delegations should reflect on this and come up with ideas. It was suggested that the Scheme covered fishery and transshipment operations, not supply operations.

Another more serious question was if the Scheme precluded transshipments of legally caught fish to non-Contracting Party reefers in harbours. This is probably illegal according to the new Scheme. The Norwegian representative agreed that, in the light of experience gained, it was important to rethink the regulation of transshipment in the not too distant future. The Chair compared the situation where fish passed a cold store with transshipment from vessel to vessel in a harbour. What was the real difference?

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He also suggested that the Secretariat made a list of scenarios experienced in practical inspection and control and relate that to the Scheme.

The representative of the Russian Federation raised the question about which designated ports had boarder inspection posts, BIPs. He had earlier raised this matter with the EU. The Chair acknowledged that in a sense there were two classes of designated ports, the ones with BIPs and the ones with none. This could be indicated on the NEAFC website, or by indicating where Greenlandic and Russian vessels cannot land. The EU representative pointed out that BIPs were outside the scope of the PSC. The Norwegian representative and the Icelandic representative informed that all ports in their designated list had BIPs. The Chair felt that it would not be fair to inform vessels that they can use the designated ports if they are turned away because of other rules. It was just a question of giving the information on the NEAFC list of designated ports. The Committee will return to proper wording and a correct list after lunch.

The Chair summed up that the system should be kept simple to be manageable. In the light of experience modifications may need to be made in October.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked if PSC-1 should be signed by the skipper or perhaps by an agent. The Chair said that it had been the idea to avoid this problem by not including a signature, because it did not really matter at that stage. This was a matter of substance that could be discussed later. It was agreed to take it up later in an adaptive fashion when more experience had been gained. The Icelandic representative informed that they accepted agents signing when Schengen notifications were the issue. He noted that, with respect to PSC 2, there were inconsistencies that had to be looked at later, for example with respect to where the forms were sent. Why send it to the flag state of a reefer? The Chair referred to Article 22, but agreed to some extent. The flag state of the receiver vessel was irrelevant - it was simply information. The Norwegian representative noted that some member states of the EU had given more than one fax number and it would be preferable to have only one point of contact per flag state. The representative of the Russian Federation reminded that they had raised the same question at the last meeting. The Chair pointed out that member states handled matters in different ways, but they would attempt to follow up and reach a more streamlined system.

The representative of the Russian Federation asked what should be done if a fax broke down. Could they use other means of communication? The Chair thought it would be difficult to include this in the rules, but a pragmatic solution was by some means to communicate with an agent and get him to fill in the form.

Actions arising: Contracting Parties will reflect on the reference to ICES Areas in the PSC forms, regulation of operations of supply vessels and transhipments in ports in light of the experience gained operating the PSC. The Secretariat will compile a list of scenarios experienced by Contracting Parties. PECCOE proposes that AGDC starts to consider electronic communication to come instead of reporting with faxes.

7 New Scheme of Control and Enforcement - Corrigenda

The Secretariat had not produced a new revised version of the Scheme, but would like to draw the attention of PECCOE to some misprints, editorial amendments etc. in order to be able to prepare a corrected version before 1 May 2007. The Scheme was carefully scrutinised and the edited version will be published after the meeting.

8 Lost and abandoned gear

The Chair informed that this is a request from the Annual Meeting in 2003¹. At the Annual Meeting in 2005, following a presentation of the consequences of ghost fishing, a proposal for the regulation of gillnets was adopted². At the same meeting a ban on the use of gillnets at depths below 200m in the Regulatory Area was adopted. Measures to control lost and abandoned gear is a political imperative and something has to be done about it.

One aspect is to recover lost gear and fund such a project. PECCOE has earlier pointed out that this is a decision for the NEAFC Commission both as a policy and a financial matter. There was also the aspect of regulating and deterring activities that led to loss of gear. There are basic requirements for marking gear in the Scheme in Article 7. There are no obligations to report or recover lost gear. The Chair suggested that this should be introduced along with the right to confiscate unmarked gear.

¹ Adopted at AM2003 proposal by Norway:

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PECCOE ON THE ISSUE CONCERNING LOST AND ABANDONED GEAR IN THE CONVENTION AREA:

Lost fishing gear – especially gill nets – and the subsequent “ghost fishing” constitutes a potential major problem, which should be addressed in order to promote sustainable fishing practices in the NEAFC Convention Area.

The Commission thus mandates PECCOE to collate data on lost and abandoned gear in the Convention Area. PECCOE shall advise on possible initiatives to be taken on this issue, in particular concerning the period of time which should be permitted for such gear to be left in the sea. In this regard, PECCOE shall consider possible control mechanisms such as the marking and monitoring of static gear, the reporting of lost gear and the action to be taken when gear is abandoned.

² Adopted at AM2005:

Proposal by Norway for Terms of reference for PECCOE on the development of technical measures for gill net fisheries in the Regulatory Area

Lost and abandoned fishing gear, and the subsequent "ghost fishing", constitutes a major problem, which has to be addressed in order to promote sustainable fishing practices. In order to reduce the problem of lost and abandoned gear, the Contracting Parties recognize the importance of technical regulations for gill net fisheries.

In accordance with Article 5 of the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in North-East Atlantic Fisheries, NEAFC, the Commission requests PECCOE to recommend technical measures for gill net fisheries in the Regulatory area, i.a.:

1. The maximum permitted soak time for gill nets.
2. Technical vessel and gear requirements.
3. Obligations with respect to retrieval of lost gear.
4. Reporting procedures for lost gear.
5. Regulations regarding marking of gear.

NEAFC further reiterates the mandate to PECCOE to collate data on lost and abandoned gear in the Convention Area. PECCOE shall recommend to the Annual Meeting in 2006 on management measures to be taken.

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Funding of the recovery of gear had to be preceded by measures deterring the loss of gear.

The EU representative noted that it was very difficult to defend the loss and abandonment of gear to the public and adopted measures would improve the reputation of gillnet fisheries. Enforcement of the marking of gears would have an effect, but this had to be supplemented with the other measures. The issue is related to the gillnet ban under the next agenda item. The Norwegian representative did not know how the situation was in the Regulatory Area. If the problem was vessels using number and length of gears which they were not able to take aboard, the number of nets by vessel was a central issue. Soaking time was also an issue, but the numbers of nets may be an easier starting point. The EU representative agreed that both the length of nets and soaking time was an issue, but that may be more a scientific aspect to be dealt with by PECMAS at the request of the NEAFC Commission. The Chair agreed that there should be a distinction of the control measures, which were the concern of PECCOE and technical measures of concern to PECMAS.

The Chair suggested that control could include confiscating nets that were set illegally below 200 m. If technical measures like mesh size and length were introduced that would also make nets not meeting the requirement illegal. The definition of illegal gear would then be expanded as technical advice is forthcoming. The reality of the situation is that more than one vessel is used to retrieve gear standing and reset it. Loss of gear should be reported and unmarked gear should be confiscated. If marked gear is found that has not been reported, the vessel involved should be obliged to pay the cost of retrieval. These measures could be brought in sooner rather than later. PECCOE should suggest that the NEAFC Commission asks PECMAS to advise on length of gear, soaking time etc. He asked for comments.

The Norwegian representative agreed with the summing up by the Chair. He pointed out the two mandates are linked. The older was on lost and abandoned gear and thus 'ghost fishing'. He noted that some reporting had been expected from Irish and other investigations. The newer mandate on technical regulations (soaktime/number of nets) has also to be addressed and he supported that PECMAS was asked for technical advice. The EU representative noted that if everybody agreed it should be possible to draft text to cover this. The Chair informed that there was a specific request from the UN General Assembly to report on progress in this matter this year. The EU representative considered the matter politically very important as also noted by FAO-COFI in March this year. Something should be in place for decision in November and a text ready for the October meeting of PECCOE. It was agreed to proceed in this manner by all parties. It will be recommended to the Extraordinary Meeting in June 2007 that PECMAS is asked to start work on the technical aspects.

<p>Actions arising: Based on the discussions PECCOE will aim to prepare concrete proposals for measures to control abandoned and lost gear and the use of gillnets at its October meeting for decision by the NEAFC Commission in November 2007.</p>

9 Gillnet ban

The Chair noted that the control measures under agenda item 8 would be relevant to controlling the ban, so amendments would also address this issue.

10 Conversion Factors

This is a mandate from 2002^{3,4}. The Chair felt that clarification was needed of what the Commission wanted before proceeding with this matter. The EU representative indicated looking closer at the original mandate. The Chair asked if this was a drive towards having a list of standardised conversion factors. The EU representative noted that harmonised standards would be fine, but this was very difficult to achieve and would probably not be achieved in the immediate future. The Norwegian representative noted that redfish conversion factors were the major problem of NEAFC. The Secretariat had earlier been asked to compile a table with conversion factors, but he was not aware of any result of that.

The EU representative noted that the EU did not operate harmonised conversion factors, but made the factors available on their website. The Chair found that these factors were not needed for control purposes. If landings were in a foreign harbour it would be caught by port state control. The Norwegian representative agreed that harmonised conversion factors had not been included in the port control system, which was based on production weight. However scientists needed estimates of round weight, so this could be a problem for PECMAS. The representative of the Russian Federation agreed that this may be a problem for scientists and it should be brought to their attention. The EU representative agreed The Chair felt that this could be brought to the attention of PECMAS without necessarily asking that they be given a mandate. It was not needed for control purposes. This should allow this item to be taken off the PECCOE agenda.

Actions arising: PECCOE proposes that conversion factors are taken off the PECCOE agenda. However, Contracting Parties should still be encouraged to work towards more uniform conversion factors and this should be on the agenda when appropriate.

³ Report AM2002: With respect to conversion factors, this matter had been discussed for several years. Different approaches, seeking a single factor or a range, had been attempted but without success. PECCOE was not in the position to recommend anything because of lack of data. The President felt that this was an effect of Contracting Parties not informing NEAFC about the basis of their conversion factors. The Norwegian representative agreed that there seemed to be a lack of data for the most important NEAFC stocks, even if there was agreement that uniform conversion factors are desirable. Redfish was one problem, but work was not complete. The Chairman of PECCOE agreed that redfish in the Irminger sea was a problem even if the major part of catches were going to the same market and the same machinery was used. No Contracting Party had submitted data on the basis of conversion factors. Experiments would be required to make it possible for PECCOE to decide on which factor is correct.

² From the October 2003 report of PECCOE The Chairman asked the representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) to introduce doc. PE 05/16 on experiments aimed at establishing conversion factors for pelagic redfish. It was noted that there was a slight difference between the conversion factors in the NAFO Area (2.19) and Icelandic waters (2.08) and that the seasonal, geographical and national coverage in these experiments was limited. Earlier experiments had resulted in estimates close to Greenland's estimates. No other Contracting Parties had anything to report. These experiments are cumbersome but not to a degree that should prevent other Parties initiating experiments. The Chairman urged other parties to report results. Without these, no conversion factors could be established with any certainty.

11 Traceability of fish and fish products⁵

A proposal by Norway and the EU had mandated PECCOE to look into the problem. The Secretariat introduced the item, PE2007/1/11. At the meeting of the Regional Fisheries Body Secretariats Network in Rome on 12-13 March 2007, Dr. Grímur Valdimarsson, Director of FAO FII, Fish Product and Industry Division, drew attention to the difference in approach to information and traceability in the fish processing sector and the fish capture sector. The NEAFC port state control system allows for enhanced traceability in capture fisheries. In this context and also in the context of earlier involvement in the SHEEL and CEDER projects, the NEAFC Secretariat has received invitations to participate in two proposed traceability projects.

The EU representative thanked the Secretariat for the information in the paper but doubted it was possible to proceed much further at this stage. There was agreement that port state control increased the possibilities of traceability. The Norwegian representative suggested that NEAFC should support further works. The representative of the Russian Federation agreed, as did the EU. He drew attention to the need to coordinate with other RFMOs. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) reported industry initiatives to trace fish vis-à-vis consumers with respect to seafood quality. The Icelandic representative reported on the discussions in FAO-COFI.

The Chair summed up that systems have been developed, FAO is looking into the problems and systems are crucial in the market place. Port state control is an important element. He expected that the next steps will be quite complicated and lessons had to be learned from those systems already in place. He suggested that this could be looked at in October, but he did not expect to be in a position to give more than general ideas to AM 2007. Real work could start next year. At present the focus had to be on PSC.

Actions arising: PECCOE will continue to consider the matter in October. Real analysis of the issue could start next year.

12 Any other business

The matter of security was raised by the Secretariat. Entering the field of controlling criminal IUU activities required increased security for agencies and personnel involved. Some measures and rules should be observed. The Icelandic representative supported this approach. This should be discussed and reflected on by the parties

⁵ Adopted at NEAFC AM 2006

Joint proposal by Norway and the European Community for a Mandate to PECCOE
TRACEABILITY

PECCOE shall examine how systems might be developed for identifying fish in order to trace it on the market. In particular, PECCOE should consider the feasibility of establishing procedures that will allow the origin of the fish to be determined and for its identity to be verified at different stages of the marketing chain. In this regard, PECCOE should focus on methods that would be appropriate for tracking large bulk landings of the major fisheries resources caught in the Convention Area and report to the Commission at its Annual Meeting in 2007.

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involved. IUU measures hurt and the reaction from the parties hit would be commensurate. This matter will be discussed further

13 Report to the 2007 Extraordinary Meeting

A report based on the amended summary records will be available in May.

14 Closure of the meeting

The Chair thanked all for their contribution to an interesting and lively discussion. He thanked Norway for splendid facilities and extensive hospitality. The EU representative concurred. The participants thanked the Chair, who wished everybody a safe journey home.