



## COFI 29 31 January – 4 February

### A note by the NEAFC Secretariat

#### 1. Introduction

The FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held its Twenty-ninth Session at FAO HQ, Rome 31 January to 4 February. The session was attended by 155 Members of the Committee, observers from two FAO Member Nations, one Associated Member, the Holy See. Representatives from 5 specialised UN agencies and 64 intergovernmental and international non-governmental organisations.

Mr Zbigniew Karnicki chaired the session. He congratulated the new Assistant Director-General, Mr Árni M. Mathiesen upon his appointment and thanked the former Assistant Director-General, Mr Ichiro Nomura, for his good leadership of the Department from 2000 – 2010.

The President of NEAFC, Mr. Jóhan Williams, was elected as First Vice-Chairperson of COFI.

#### 2. Main themes of the meeting

The Committee reviewed the progress in **the implementation of the Code of Conduct and related instruments.**

Disappointment was expressed that only 36 percent of FAO members had responded to the questionnaire. The Committee repeated that it was very important that the principles of the Code were incorporated in domestic policy and legislation. It encouraged members to apply the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) (and aquaculture) and the precautionary approach widely.

The Committee reviewed the reports of the COFI Sub-committees on **Trade** and on **Aquaculture.**

The Committee expressed the view that



- (a) technical aspects related to trade and management should be considered by the FAO Expert Advisory Panel for Assessment of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) listing proposals for commercially-exploited aquatic species in accordance with the existing terms of reference;
- (b) FAO should initiate work to develop international best practices guidelines for traceability of fish and fishery products in order to facilitate coherence of different traceability systems;

The Committee approved the FAO Technical Guidelines in Aquaculture Certification. The Committee noted that the implementation of the guidelines should be graduated and the guidelines set by international organisations and instruments, such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) for aquatic animal health and welfare, CODEX Alimentarius Commission for Food Security and ILO for social and economic aspects.

The Committee reviewed progress with regard to measures against IUU fishing, including Port State Measures, Flag State performance, market related measures and the development of a comprehensive global record of fishing vessels. It noted the recommendation of the November 2010 Technical Consultation on the Global Record and reiterated its support for the Record. It should be developed as a voluntary initiative under FAO supervisions with a phased approach to implementation. The Global Record should be developed in a cost efficient manner taking advantage of existing systems and technology. To achieve efficiencies the Committee proposed that FAO further consult IMO, IHS–Fairplay and RFMOs (NEAFC assisted FAO in the initial trials in 2009 and 2010.)

The Committee considered **fisheries and aquaculture** in a **changing climate**, and possible adaptation and mitigation measures.



The Committee recommended:

- (a) that Members should intensify their efforts to assess environmental and anthropogenic factors affecting aquatic ecosystems including changes in migratory patterns of fish species and other adverse impacts including ocean acidification, and should consider these in management approaches;
- (b) that FAO should continue efforts to keep Members informed about the implications of climate change for fisheries and aquaculture, based on the best available scientific information and the needs of vulnerable nations and developing countries;
- (c) that emphasis should be placed on the ecological and economic resilience of fisheries and aquaculture operations and the communities that depend on them;
- (d) that FAO should provide Members with information on possible fishing industry contributions to climate change and on technologies and ways to reduce the sector's reliance on, and consumption of, fossil fuels, respecting the principles embodied within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- (e) while recognizing the global nature of climate change, it is necessary to downscale the analysis of, and responses to, climate change impacts at the national and regional levels. Regional bodies and organizations should play a leading role in coordinating actions by countries in their region;

The Committee considered FAO's role for improved integration **of fisheries and aquaculture development and management, biodiversity conservation and environmental protection.**

- (a) collaborates with relevant international organizations, for example, CITES, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Environment

Programme (UNEP) to build and share information, create synergies and provide coherent guidance;

- (b) continues its efforts to work with and strengthen RFBs; and
- (c) continues to collaborate with non-governmental organizations.

The Committee adopted the report on technical consultation on developing the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards and endorsed the



International Guidelines in Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards contained therein. FAO should provide support in capacity building and ensure that they do not become barriers to international trade. The Committee thanked the Government of Norway for its leadership in this process.

### 3. NEAFC interventions

The NEAFC Secretariat had an intervention. It is found in Annex 1.

The NEAFC Secretary chaired the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Regional Fishery Body Secretariats Network, RSN. RSN arranged a side event at COFI presenting the work of the network and the around 50 regional bodies that are partners to the Network. (<http://www.fao.org/fishery/rfb/search/en>).

The NEAFC Secretariat was also invited to make a presentation at a side-event arranged by CBD. The NEAFC intervention is found in Annex 2.

#### Annex 1 Intervention by NEAFC at 29 COFI.

##### Combating free riders and IUU fishing

The NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement requires that a Contracting Party which sights a non-Contracting Party vessel shall attempt to inform such a vessel without delay that it has been sighted or by other means identified as engaging in fishing activities in the Convention Area and unless its flag state has been accorded the status of co-operating non-Contracting Party is consequently presumed to be undermining the Recommendations established under the Convention.

If no satisfactory answer is received from the flag state of a presumed IUU vessel it is transferred from the observation list to the permanent list. This effectively closes all NEAFC ports to these vessels and no services can be rendered in the NEAFC Area. NEAFC, NAFO and SEAFO share IUU lists, so ports will also effectively be closed in the NAFO and SEAFO Contracting Parties in North America, Japan and Korea and parts of West Africa.

Since 2005 26 vessels have been on the B-list. With the knowledge to hand no vessel has positively been identified as having undertaken IUU fishing in recent years. Vessels certified as being scrapped or sunk have been taken off the list and some have been removed having fulfilled requirements set by NEAFC.

	Vessel category	
	Transport	Fishing vessels
Removed from the lists	2	1
Scrapped		7
Retained in harbours	1	4
Probably sunk	1	1



Observed recently		1
Fate unknown		5
Operating outside NEAFC Area	1	2
Sum	5	21
Total		26

It should be noted that blacklisting hits transport vessels as well as vessels fishing. Indeed the targeting of transport vessels was the major breakthrough, which in all practical terms eradicated IUU fisheries in NEAFC Area.

In 2007 NEAFC introduced a Port State Control system, very similar to the binding instrument agreed by FAO, without major problems and the flag state and port state authorities involved have carefully followed the timelines set out, thus avoiding impeding the flow of legal fish to European processors. The measure has been deemed to have had dramatic effect on the amounts of illegal frozen fish in Europe, reducing levels of IUU fish into European markets significantly. There is at the moment work going on to align the NEAFC Port State Scheme and EU IUU regulation. This is expected to be concluded this year.

#### **Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels**

NEAFC been actively involved in discussions of a Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels with FAO and IMO and supplied a data set for technical considerations and test runs.

#### **Annex 2 NEAFC presentation at a CBD sideevent at COFI 29**

## CBD/GOBI side event in FAO COFI

Are we doing the same under different headings?



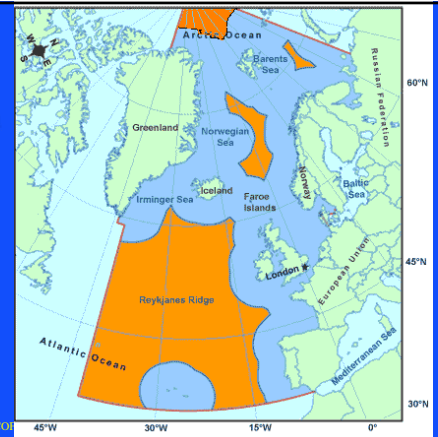
Kjartan Hoydal  
North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

FAO Ethiopia Room, Thursday 3 February,  
between 12:45 and 14:30

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NEAFC  
Convention  
Area  
Regulatory  
Area as in  
the future



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## The NEAFC pelagic stocks

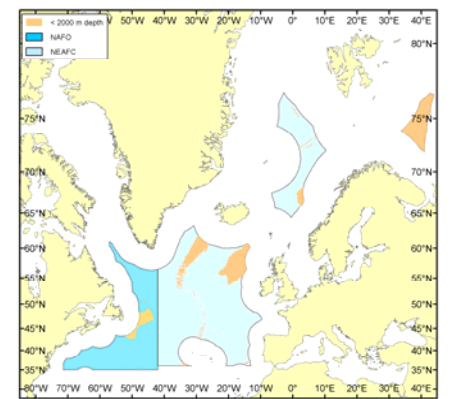
Table 3. Landings 2007 (Unit: 1000 tonnes)  
Source: NEAFC Fisheries Status Report 1998-2007  
Landing value 3 major fisheries app. total 681million US\$

Stock	Landing Regulatory Area	Landings Convention Area
Norwegian Spring Spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring	168	1243
Blue whiting	302	1583
Mackerel	27	461
Sum	497	3287

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Bergstad &  
Hoines  
Symposium  
presentation



CBD/GOBI side event F

## OSPAR MPAs and NEAFC closures

- ❑ OSPAR aims at creating a joint network of well managed marine protected areas in the North East Atlantic, which is ecologically coherent.
- ❑ NEAFC closed 5 areas in AMBJ to bottom fishing and expanded these areas considerably in 2009.
- ❑ September 2010 OSPAR created 3 MPAs ANBJ to some extent overlapping the NEAFC 2009 closures.

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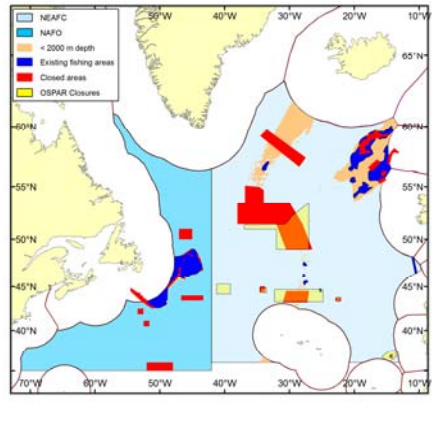
## OSPAR MPAs and NEAFC closures

- ❑ The basic scientific material was the same and ICES evaluated both OSPAR and NEAFC proposals.
- ❑ The name is different, "Areas closed to fisheries" and "MPAs", but the objective is the same to close areas to humane activities that the two organisations regulate.
- ❑ NEAFC and OSPAR have started discussions on management and alignment of the areas.

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**Bergstad & Hoines Symposium presentation**



**Size of Area and Closures**

Area	NEAFC	Existing Area	Fishing	New Area	Fishing	Total	Closure
Sq. km	Sq. km	Sq. km	%	Sq. km	%	Sq. km	%
S. of Iceland	4,900,000	42,500	0.9	4,502,200	91.9	355,300	7.3
Norwegian Sea	326,000			326,000			
Barents Sea	71,000	71,000					
Arctic ocean	275,000			275,000			
	Sq. km	%					
Fishable area S. Iceland	655,000						
All Closures	355,300	54.0					

**CONCLUSIONS Bergstad & Hoines symposium presentation**

- ❑ Fishing activity and exploitation has decreased significantly in ANBJ deep sea fisheries (for many reasons, not only regulations)
- ❑ All fisheries regulated.
- ❑ A significant proportion of fishable area closed to destructive practices.
- ❑ Incentives for IUU reduced.

**Cooperating with other organisations with a mandate to regulate human activity**

- In September 2008 NEAFC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with its environmental counterpart in the North East Atlantic, OSPAR.
- NEAFC has signed terms of Agreement with the IMO and is considering a MoU with the ISA.
- A network of agreements of cooperation and for the North East Atlantic for.ex. MoUs, between existing organisations with a mandate to regulate human activities in the ocean will in the short and medium term offer the best opportunity to achieve the correct balance between optimum utilisation and conservation in the North East Atlantic.
- NEAFC at its 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting decided to play an active role in supporting and organising a regional workshop for the North East Atlantic, as foreseen in the CBD COP-10 decision on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity.

**NEAFC Fisheries Status Report 1998-2007**  
 Edited by Kjartan Hoydal  
 NEAFC Secretariat



The map shows the five parts of the NEAFC Regulatory Area: the Arctic Ocean, the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the North East Atlantic Ocean.

NEAFC uses a public website (www.neafc.org) in which it publishes all relevant documents with regard to management measures, control and enforcement and general information from the NEAFC fisheries.

The end



