The Permanent Committee on Monitoring and Compliance (PECMAC) has held two meetings in 2018. In addition the ERS Implementation Group has held 7 meetings, of which 5 have been virtual. The reports from the PECMAC meetings and the last report from the ERS Implementation Group are presented as documents to the Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission.

PECMAC has had extensive agendas and has considered more than 85 documents during its meetings. In this Summary I will highlight the main issues.

**Implementation of the Scheme of Control and Enforcement (the Scheme)**

PECMAC has continued to evaluate the implementation of the Scheme of Control and Enforcement (the Scheme) by both Contracting Parties (CPs) and Cooperating Non-Contracting Parties (CNCP). PECMAC has deliberated a number of issues to identify possible improvements on the implementation of the Scheme. The results of this evaluation have been presented in the Compliance Report by PECMAC.

In 2018 a total of 38 infringements of CP vessels were reported, an increase from 22 in 2017, mostly linked to article 22 of the Scheme regarding Prior Notification of Entry into Port. A total of 31 CNCP vessels were notified. The Secretariat received 30 TRA messages, from five receiver vessels (none from donor vessels) and eight POR messages. However, when a more detailed analysis was made, the data indicated that all of these transhipments took place outside of the NEAFC RA but inside the NEAFC Conventional Area and in port.

A more detailed presentation of the Compliance Report and proposed amendments to the Scheme will be presented under Agenda item 15.

PECMAC has also updated the Annual Report template to further improve the basis for evaluating the implementation of the Scheme. The updated template is available on the NEAFC website and as previous each Contracting Party shall report this to the Secretary by 1 March.

**CNCP applications**

Last year there was no consensus in PECMAC on the recommendation of CNCP status for Bahamas and Liberia. However, they were granted status as CNCP by vote at the Annual Meeting. This year PECMAC has considered the reports provided by the CNCPs describing their activity in the Regulatory Area in 2018. A number of issues in their reports needed to be clarified.

PECMAC has also considered applications on renewed CNCP status in 2020 from Bahamas, Canada, Liberia, New Zealand and Panama. In addition, PECMAC has considered the first
time application on CNCP status from Curaçao. St Kitts and Nevis has not applied for CNCP status in 2020. However, since Denmark (in Respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the Russian Federation indicated a general reservation on all applications until the Annual Meeting, no consensus was reached by PECMAC on any of the applications. However, the discussions in PECMAC concluded with the European Union, Iceland and Norway supporting the applications of Bahamas, Canada and New Zealand. In the cases of Curacao, Liberia and Panama, the same Contracting Parties did not support the applications.

Furthermore, Article 34 of the Scheme describing the terms of the applicants was amended at the Annual Meeting last year. However, PECMAC has noted that further consideration would be needed to clarify and further define what kind of information applicants should provide and the terms that the applicants are assessed against. Further work on this will be initiated by PECMAC in 2020.

PECMAC has also considered a questionnaire provided by the Secretary to be used to make sure the CNCP applicants understand the more technical requirements of being a CNCP and ensure they are able to meet these requirements. PECMAC will follow the implementation of this questionnaire.

During the considerations of the CNCPs, PECMAC also discussed if it would be appropriate to establish an “Observer” status for States that apply for CNCP status but do not want to carry out any fisheries activities in the Regulatory Area. PECMAC seeks further guidance on this issue from the Commission.

**Self-assessments on flag-state performance**

Regarding the request from the Commission, to carry out self-assessments on flag-state performance in accordance with the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State performance, most Contracting Parties indicated their intentions to have their reports finalised by the end of the year. To follow up these reports, PECMAC agreed to set up a working group to prepare a first draft of a Flag State Performance Review summary before the first PECMAC meeting next year. The Vice Chair of PECMAC, Mindaugas Kisieliauskas (European Union) will Chair this working group.

**Electronic Reporting Systems**

At the last Annual Meeting the Commission adopted (REC 19 2019) a new NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement (AM 2018-98 Annex I and AM 2018-98 Annex II) to facilitate the implementation by NEAFC of a new Electronic Reporting System (ERS) based on the FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard. The Annual Meeting also adopted amendments to the current Scheme (AM 2018-98 Annex III) that would apply during the transition period.

REC 19 2019 also included a framework for the implementation of the new Electronic Reporting System (ERS) including provisions for a transition period.

Furthermore, at the time of adoption of ERS, it was recognised that there were still some remaining issues to be solved. Therefore, the Annual Meeting also agreed to establish an ERS Implementation Group organised under PECMAC to finalise technical documentation.
The ERS Implementation Group has finalised the ERS FLUX (AM 2019-33) and VMS FLUX (AM 2019-34) Implementation Documents version 1.0. These documents represent important technical documentation as basis for testing and implementing both ERS and VMS based on the FLUX UN/CEFACT Standard. The intention from last year was that the finalises implementation documents should be inserted in Annex IX of the new Scheme, cf. REC 19 : 2019. PECMAC agreed that the finalised implementation documents should be sent to the Annual Meeting of the Commission for consideration for adoption, with a reservation from the Russian Federation on the ERS document.

However, it should be noted that the ERS FLUX Implementation Document version 1.0 do not completely fulfill the adopted requirements in the new Scheme outlined in Annex II of document AM 2018-98 (REC 19 2019). Therefore, the ERS Implementation Group will continue the development of version 2.0 of the ERS FLUX Implementation document. The Group has also identified a number of additional improvements that should be covered by version 2.0. Further efforts on this are detrimental, as two of the Contracting Parties has noted that they will not implement ERS FLUX before version 2.0 is ready.

The ERS Implementation Group has also established a set of Criteria to be used when assessing whether the technical preparations for the adoption of the FLUX standard are completed. These Criteria are presented as document AM 2019-35 and in short establish that:

a) The Implementation documents should be finalised
b) The process of conducting tests with the Secretariat has been agreed.
c) The Contracting Party taking part in the tests can confirm that the requirements related to the exchange of information are implemented in their test IT-system.
d) The NEAFC Secretariat has systems in place in the environment, able to:
   - Receive messages, validate the data and send return messages.
   - Circulate the fishing activity information for inspection purposes with the same level of detail as available in the exchanges using the NAF format, during the transition period.
e) The communication between the Secretariat and the EU using the UN/FLUX standard has been set up, tested and documented and there are no blocking functional or technical failures.
f) “A fall-back procedure” for masters in case of communication problems between the CPs and the Secretariat has been agreed.

The ERS Implementation Group is still considering the process of conducting tests between CPs and the Secretariat. Furthermore, the issue of fall-back procedures has been forwarded to PECMAC and is still being considered by the Contracting Parties. However, these issues will not delay the development of ERS FLUX.

The agreed framework implies that when the ERS Implementation Group receives the documentation listed in the Criteria confirming that the above mentioned implementation and testing have been sufficiently completed with positive results, the test can be
considered finalized and thereafter the ERS Implementation Group can give their advice to the Commission.

Following the advice from the ERS Implementation Group and confirmation of an implementation date from the European Union, the Commission shall decide, by written procedure if appropriate, on the implementation date of the ERS. This date shall also be the start date of the two year transition period.

To end my Summary of the work in PECMAC, I would thank the Contracting Parties for their constructive efforts this year and thank the Secretary for their efforts before, during and after our meetings in PECMAC and the ERS Implementation Group.

Thord Monsen
Chair of PECMAC