Executive Summary

It was agreed that the Secretariat should ensure that PECMAS and WG STATS consider the issue of different scientific and common names used for certain species.

There was a discussion on the issue of clarifying the language of Article 13 of the Scheme. It was agreed to postpone further discussion until the October meeting of PECCOE.

There was a discussion on the issue of giving coastal States an explicit opportunity of rebutting the IUU listing of a NCP vessel operating in its waters, provided the vessel was authorised to conduct such operations. A new proposal in this context may be presented to the October meeting of PECCOE.

The implementation of the Scheme was discussed on the basis of documents prepared by the Secretariat. Among the things that were noted were some persistent problems regarding implementation.

Contracting Parties introduced their respective annual reports under Articles 32 and 33 and discussed the substance and form of the reports, and the issue of inspection presence.

It was agreed that a wrong reference in Recommendation 9:2012 to an annex could be corrected as an error.

There was a discussion on the difficulties of implementing Recommendations 10:2012. It was agreed to ask AGDC to look at these issues.

There was a discussion on the implementation of the PSC system, in particular the implementation of the digital forms and procedures. Contracting Parties were encouraged
to use the new system, which has been used in 22% of cases during the first three months of 2012. It was agreed that the Secretariat would present another report on the extent to which the digital forms and procedures have been used to the October meeting of PECCOE.

There was discussion on the issue of compliance by cooperating NCPs. The initial phase of St Kitts and Nevis as a cooperating NCP looks promising, but the real test will come when their vessels begin operations in the Regulatory Area.

It was agreed that Contracting Parties would consult among themselves before the October meeting of PECCOE, in an informal friends-of-the-Chair group, to work on restructuring the PECCOE agenda and on the purpose and wording of individual agenda items.

The IUU B list was presented, unchanged since the PECCOE meeting in October 2011. It was agreed that in future, when the IUU B list is presented to PECCOE, a clear distinction should be made between, on the one hand, cases where a vessel had last been seen in a particular place on a particular date and, on the other hand, cases where a vessel is known to have been in a particular port since a particular date. When the Secretariat receives information from a Contracting Party that an IUU vessel is in its port, it will work on the assumption that the vessel will remain in that port until it is notified otherwise.

In response to a question from AGDC, on AGDC continuing its work regarding data security and confidentiality in the manner suggested, it was agreed that the answer should be “yes”, with the caveat that PECCOE would work on points 1, 2 and 3 of Appendix 1 to Annex 1 of the Scheme. The Secretariat will address points 1, 2 and 3 and present a report to the October meeting of PECCOE.

In response to another question from AGDC, on the need for a special Recommendation for a fallback procedure for Port State control, it was agreed that the answer should be “no” since the fax based system would be used as a backup.

It was noted that compliance problems in the redfish fishery are primarily related to operational issues at FMCs rather than vessels. It was agreed to postpone further discussion on compliance in the redfish fishery until all Contracting Parties have provided the relevant information.

It was noted that the Secretariat will participate in technical workshops for FMCs organised by the EU and the Russian Federation respectively.

There was a discussion on the possible expansion of the PSC system and its relationship to the FAO PSMA. Different opinions were presented on the appropriateness of expanding the scope to include fresh fish. It was agreed to hold a meeting of the AHWGPSC in June to take the matter further, and prepare clear suggestions for the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting should be briefed on the consequences of the
scope being extended; inspection levels changed; and/or different levels set for fresh and frozen fish.

There was a lengthy discussion on the issue of ERS, where several points were made. In order to ensure that significant progress is made before the NEAFc Annual Meeting in November, it was agreed to hold an extraordinary PECCOE meeting in June which would focus only on this issue.

There was a discussion on the review of the regulation on bottom fishing. It was noted that no particular difficulties had been identified regarding the implementation of the regulation. It was agreed to postpone further discussions in this issue until the October meeting of PECCOE.

There was a discussion on the possibility of making AGDC a joint body of NEAFc and NAFO. It was recognized that AGDC is not a subsidiary body of PECCOE, and that PECCOE would therefore only be providing advice rather than making a decision. It was agreed to advise the NEAFc Commission that it should aim to make AGDC a joint group of NEAFc and NAFO, and that a joint working group of the two organisations might be set up to look at any practical and procedural issues that needed attention in that context. It was agreed to ask the Chair to present the NEAFc Commission with this advice in time for a possible reaction being finalised before the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September.

Information was presented regarding the Interpol working group on fisheries crime.

Information was presented regarding the International MCS Network, including the change to its arrangements which will allow RFMOs to become full members of the Network. It was agreed to discuss this issue, including the possibility of NEAFc seeking to become a full member of the Network, further at the October meeting of PECCOE.

1. Opening of the meeting
The Chair, Mr Gylfi Geirsson, Iceland, opened the meeting welcoming everyone. All Contracting Parties were present. No Contracting Party wished to make an opening statement.

2. Appointment of the rapporteur
The Secretary was appointed rapporteur.

3. Discussion and adoption of the Agenda
The Chair tabled the agenda, document 1. A draft agenda was circulated before the meeting. The Chair noted that minor amendments had been made to the original draft agenda, mainly specific points under the agenda item on any other business.
In a discussion under agenda item 4.4 it was agreed that Contracting Parties would consult among themselves before the October meeting of PECCOE, in an informal friends-of-the-Chair group, to work on restructuring the PECCOE agenda and on the purpose and wording of individual agenda items.

4. Scheme of Control and Enforcement

The representative of the EU introduced document 23. This is a paper for information to inform the other Contracting Parties regarding how the EU has transposed the Scheme into its legislation from the outset. New legislation has been introduced to cover the scheme with all amendments.

The Secretariat raised the issue of how the scientific names of fish species used can vary, and whether there was a need to review that matter. The representative of the EU confirmed that this had been an issue that the EU’s Translation Service had noted, but the names used in the Scheme had been maintained in the EU instruments.

The Secretariat pointed out that, when species are added in NEAFC, the FAO and ICES names are generally used, which are not in all cases used in all other fora. He pointed out that PECMAS could look at what scientific and common names should be used for different species.

The representative of the EU agreed with that, and suggested that the issue also be raised with WG STATS, as it has also implications for the Recommendation in force concerning monthly statistics.

It was agreed that the Secretariat should ensure that PECMAS and WG STATS consider the issue of scientific and common names used for the different species.

The representative of Norway thanked the EU for the information on their domestic legislation and noted that the EU has, due to its nature, a bigger challenge in this context than others. The representative of Iceland echoed that and added that all Contracting Parties face, in essence, the same challenges in implementing domestically what is agreed in NEAFC.

The representative of the Russian Federation introduced doc 31. This is a proposal for a new version of Article 13. The representative of the Russian Federation explained that there had been many cases where reports were not received in line with the current version of this Article. He stated that the text needed to be clarified if the intention was to have receiving vessels in transhipment send port reports.

The representative of the EU thanked the representative of the Russian Federation for the proposal, but stated that it needed more factual background regarding what types of landings are to be addressed. It was not clear what the problems were that it was the
intention to solve. He further noted that the proposal included legal aspects which would need to be considered more carefully. He pointed out that proposals for amending the Scheme should be available at least four weeks before a PECCOE meeting to give people time to study them.

The representative of the Russian Federation reiterated that there was a need for a clearer text, so that masters of vessels could be in no doubt that these provisions of the Scheme apply in situations where catches have been taken in the Regulatory Area, even when the present location of the vessels is not in the Regulatory Area.

The representative of Norway thanked the representative of the Russian Federation for the paper, which showed a potential hole in the system. There might be situations where some masters do not apply the Scheme when they are outside the Regulatory Area. However, this did not seem to be a big problem in practice. The representative of Norway was hesitant to agree to amending the Scheme in this way at the present time, as it was not clear that this was something that has to be done. He stated that he did not see that there would be very negative consequences if the Scheme was unchanged in this regard.

The representative of the Russian Federation pointed out that all ports are outside the Regulatory Area. He considered it important to make it clearer that port reports must be sent upon leaving the Regulatory Area.

The Chair pointed out that the current text of Article 13 says “any landing”. This should be understood as applying regardless of where a vessel intends to land.

The representative of the EU stated that Contracting Parties were already required to send the reports, although the representative of the Russian Federation seems to be suggesting that the text may be interpreted in a different way. He stated that even if there were problems in this regard, it was uncertain that the proposed amendments would actually solve them. He further reiterated that the lateness of the submission of the proposal meant that it could not in any case be agreed to at this meeting. He suggested that PECCOE come back to this at its meeting in October.

The Chair asked if there was agreement on postponing further discussion on this proposal and coming back to it in October. **This was agreed.**

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) introduced document 34. He provided an explanation of the background of this proposal to amend the Scheme. He reminded delegates of the situation that arose last year when NCP vessels operating in Faroese waters were placed on the IUU list. They were then removed from the list following an extraordinary meeting of PECCOE. He pointed out that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) had subsequently presented a proposal to amend the Scheme to the October meeting of PECCOE. The proposal was not agreed, but the conclusion was that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) would present another proposal to the next PECCOE meeting, taking account of the discussions that had taken place.
The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) explained that the current proposal was the result. It would provide an opportunity for rebutting the assumption that a vessel is engaged in IUU fishing when its activities are within the national jurisdiction of a Contracting Party. A coastal State would have two business days to respond, but the assumption of IUU activities would remain unless the Secretariat received a response from the coastal State within the time limit. He noted that this would provide the coastal State with the important possibility of preventing vessels that are engaged in legal activities from being placed on the IUU list.

The Chair pointed out that a key strength of the current system was that it worked in a speedy manner. A delay of two business days could result in an IUU vessel receiving the services it needs to continue its IUU activities before a listing became effective. He wondered if this proposal would weaken the Scheme, which had been very successful in fighting IUU fishing in the NEAFC area.

The representative of the EU thanked Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) for the presentation. He noted that PECCOE had not concluded that there were flaws in the Scheme, rather that the Scheme did not foresee all possible situations. He stated that PECCOE had concluded that information on authorisations for NCP vessels to operate within the waters of a Contracting Party should be shared. He considered that the improved sharing of information was the most appropriate way to deal with cases such as the one the proposal was intended to address. He also noted that two business days could in fact constitute a period of a number of days, as weekends and public holidays could extend that period way beyond 48 hours. Furthermore, the representative of the EU pointed out that the proposal had been submitted too late for him to be in a situation to agree to it at this meeting in any case.

The representative of Norway stated that the extraordinary PECCOE meeting had concluded that it might be necessary to make amendments to the Scheme. He noted that ensuring that Contracting Parties inform each other of authorisations for NCP vessels was perhaps originally seen as a short term solution. However, he also considered this to be a better long term solution than changing the Scheme in the manner Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) was suggesting. The representative of Norway stated that what happened last year had occurred because the situation was very unusual. For such unusual situations, he considered it appropriate that anyone doing something unusual would inform others, rather than making it more complex and time consuming to add a vessel to an IUU list, and thereby weaken the Scheme.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) acknowledged that the proposal had not been presented more than 30 days before the meeting, and that it should therefore be looked at as a working paper. This should not prevent a constructive and substantive discussion. He expressed a willingness to make amendments to the proposal to make it acceptable. For example, the reference to two business days could perhaps be changed to 48 hours to prevent excessive delays.
The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that the key point was that it was not satisfactory that a third party could cause a vessel that is operating legally in waters under national jurisdiction to be IUU listed without the coastal State having an opportunity to prevent the listing. He noted that the proposal only envisaged the possibility of rebutting a listing in cases where the vessel had been licensed by the coastal State. If necessary, the wording could be changed to make this more explicit.

The Chair noted that the Scheme would not be formally changed until the Annual Meeting in November. PECCOE could therefore come back to this issue in October. He stated that incidents like the one last summer were quite unique, and should not be repeated.

The representative of Norway stated that the main question is whether the Scheme should be made more complex by including the text proposed by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland). His conclusion was that it was not necessary as this would not happen again. He stated that he was sure that Contracting Parties would inform each other if they authorised NCP vessels to operate in their waters, and consult the coastal State on whether a vessel is authorised before action was taken to notify a vessel operating within national jurisdiction as a potential IUU vessel. For this reason, the representative of Norway concluded that the proposed change was not needed.

The representative of the EU agreed with the representative of Norway that the Scheme should not be weakened. He considered it inappropriate to have to wait 48 hours before an IUU listing became effective. He also agreed with the representative of Norway that the proposed amendment was not needed.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) reiterated that one of the reasons for bringing this forward was that IUU operations must not cause difficulties for legal operators. He noted that, although IUU A listing was not a confirmation of a vessel being an IUU vessel, it still had significant consequences which vessels that are operating legally must not be subjected to unnecessarily. He noted that if there had been a telephone call to the coastal State before the notification to the Secretariat had been made last summer, then the problem would not have arisen.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that there was a reluctance to amend the Scheme. He stated that he would reflect further on whether the proposal should be reintroduced at the October meeting. If that was done, it would possibly be a revised proposal e.g. including a provision on a requirement to inform others of authorisations to NCPs.

4.1 Overall compliance evaluation

4.1.1 Implementation review by the Secretariat
The Chair drew attention to documents 10, 12, 14 and 47.

The Secretariat introduced document 10. He noted that this was a follow-up to a document presented to PECCOE in October 2011, showing the correlation between transhipment reports. He noted that the same pattern as before continues. Most messages do not match. He noted that it would be normal for there to be some difference between exact numbers, but that the difference was often bigger than that.

The Secretariat further noted that all transhipment reports received were from Russia. He was aware of Norway also being engaged in transhipment, but no transhipment report had been received. There had been no reports either from the EU, although there was at least one vessel in operation.

The Secretariat pointed out that the missing reports were mainly from receiving vessels, although there had been three cases of messages being received from a receiving vessel, without there being a corresponding message from a donor vessel.

The representative of Norway thanked the Secretariat for the paper, which he considered very useful. He highlighted the problem that the lack of reports creates for inspectors. Furthermore, he noted that it was a problem how little information there tends to be available in receiving vessels. He stated that it sometimes took a very long time to get the relevant information, and having the wrong call sign can mislead inspectors.

The Secretariat concurred that there were cases where the information available was lacking. He mentioned, as an example, that call signs are sometimes misspelled, which created problems. The most common misspellings were e.g. switching “5” and “S”. He further noted that the fact that reports from vessels flying the flag of Belize had not been received had created problems.

The Chair noted that this concerned the topic of the quality control of the system. The system should be able to quality control the information. There should be a warning if there is not a match and transhipment reports should only be possible to a vessel that is a Contracting Party or cooperating non-Contracting Party vessel.

The Secretariat concurred, but pointed out that it depends on how individual databases are set up. Most FMCs do not have all the authorised foreign vessels in their databases. However, a port report being received without a transhipment report should lead to a flag being raised. In some cases though, the report may actually have been sent, but with bad syntax or another error. He noted that some FMCs send the reports without ensuring that they are accepted. He concluded that systems in many FMCs could be improved.

The representative of the EU stated that it was a useful exercise to look at this. He raised the issue of whether it would be useful if the donor vessel’s FMC was sent the relevant report. He noted that this could help the flag State control its vessels. The representative of the EU further noted that it was useful to cross check the information with actual sightings. Such an exercise could detect even more missing reports. He stated that it was
important that the record of the meeting reflects that all delegations accept that this remains a problem. However, the problem would be even worse without an inspection presence and increased presence would improve the situation further.

The Chair elaborated on the EU’s suggestion that the reports be forwarded to the flag State. He concurred that the existing information was not being used as well as it could. He noted that automatic procedures could be set up, so that computers would do a lot of the work and signal when necessary.

The Secretariat agreed that this could be looked at. If it is only a question of forwarding reports, than this would not be a problem. However, he stated that this could be problematic if it was necessary to create new types of messages or reports. He reiterated that if FMCs want to receive particular types of reports, the Secretariat could provide them.

The Secretariat introduced document 12. This was an update of a table that had been used in PECCOE for years, showing whether certain types of reports had been received or not and the type of communication. He noted that all Contracting Parties were working on https. He pointed out that some information had been received from Belize, but it was not consistent with the Scheme.

The representative of the EU noted that Iceland and Norway had sent surveillance entry and surveillance exit messages but no reports of having observed anything while present.

The representative of Norway stated that he had to admit that Norway had had a surveillance presence but had not reported any observations.

The Secretariat pointed out that with some surveillance, especially flights, there are sometimes no results. This was e.g. due to no identification being possible because of cloud cover.

The Secretariat introduced document 14, a table showing the number of messages received from different FMCs. Some messages that are sent do not arrive, or are discarded as unreadable. The table is intended to increase the understanding of delegates as to how things look from the Secretariat’s viewpoint.

The Secretariat noted that an error can in some cases cause the same message to be sent repeatedly, even if the message has been accepted. The most commonplace of these are authorisations for vessels. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the messages, but the routines of the databases must be improved. He noted that the only problem with authorisations now were duplications. There were no vessels operating without authorisations being received.

The Chair stated that those FMCs facing such problems should work directly with the Secretariat to solve them.
The Secretariat introduced paper 47. He noted that the problems that are mentioned in the paper do not necessarily still exist. Problems are usually solved relatively quickly. However, some problems remain for years.

4.1.2 Annual reports by CPs under Art 32 and 33

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) introduced document 18. He noted that, regarding the Faroe Islands, there had been two infringements reported, following inspections by the EU. The problems had been solved and no further action was necessary. Later inspections had shown that the problems had not continued.

The representative of the EU pointed out an inconsistency between document 18 and the relevant inspection reports. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) acknowledged this and agreed to revise the document.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) introduced document 8. He noted that, regarding Greenland, one incident was reported where a vessel had caught mackerel in the Regulatory Area without being authorised to do so. The case had been forwarded to the public prosecutor and the case was pending. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that the vessel had gone into an Icelandic port and that the Greenlandic authorities had asked the Icelandic authorities to inspect the landing. They had done that and the information they had gathered was being used in the case.

The representative of Norway noted that the Greenlandic paper was a good example of a correct and good paper. However, papers submitted by others sometimes included the wrong references to Articles 32 and 33 of the Scheme. He pointed out that there seemed to be an error in the form as it is presented on the NEAFC website. This should be looked at.

The representative of the EU introduced document 9. He noted that the report had been sent two months before the meeting and that some follow up procedures were still ongoing. He pointed out that one difficulty was the issue of action taken against vessels on a basis other than third party inspection. The Scheme did not cover cases where a Contracting Party inspects its own vessel. There are cases that the EU has which do not relate to inspections that have been reported under the Scheme. He noted that Contracting Parties should consider what to do regarding infringements that they themselves record. He clarified that it was the understanding of the EU that such cases should be included in the annual report. However, in such cases it was not necessary to inform any external flag state, nor the Secretariat.

The representative of the Russian Federation noted that the report showed that two vessels were still under investigation following an inspection that took place four years ago. He pointed out that this was a long period for an investigation.
The representative of the EU agreed that the time had been long. However, the EU continued to report the cases until confirmation is received that the cases have been concluded.

The representative of Iceland introduced document 6. He noted that the three cases that were reported had been concluded with written warnings. Subsequently, a change had been made to domestic legislation to prevent this happening in the future.

The representative of Norway introduced document 3. He noted that there had been two infringements, which related to a lack of catch reporting and to the labelling of boxes.

The representative of the Russian Federation introduced document 15. This included six cases from 2011 which had all been investigated. Some had been solved on the spot, while others had resulted in written warnings.

The representative of the EU pointed out that the Russian Federation had not had inspection activities. The EU had observed Russian vessels in the area, sometimes more than 10 vessels at the same time. He noted that there should therefore be a Russian inspection presence. He stated that this was a shortcoming.

The representative of the Russian Federation responded by pointing out that a reorganisation was underway in Russia regarding who will carry out such inspections. He stated that the Russian coast guard would now become responsible for inspecting the areas.

The representative of the EU stated that he could consider the possibility of inviting Russian inspectors to be present on EU inspection platforms. However, he stressed that all Contracting Parties must fulfil their duties to control and enforce. He pointed out that this was expensive and must not be left to one or two Contracting Parties. All Contracting Parties must contribute to carrying this out to help fulfil the aims of NEAFC. He reiterated that he was open to exploring the possibility of pooling resources to reach economies of scale.

4.1.3 Implementation of Recommendations 9 and 10:2012

The Secretariat introduced documents 44 and 45. He noted that the issue revolved around two minor problems that the Secretariat could not solve.

The Secretariat further noted that there was a minor issue in document 44 (Recommendation 9:2012) regarding what seemed to be a misspelling, where the document from the Annual Meeting said “Annex IV” where it should say “IX”. He asked if PECCOE agreed that this could be corrected as an error. This was agreed.
The representative of the EU stated that the document could be presented in a way that would make it clearer exactly how the Scheme would be changed, and reiterated that all proposals for amending the Scheme should be circulated in good time before PECCOE meetings.

The Secretariat drew attention to the table in document 45 (Recommendation 10:2012) and noted that the headings under the column “error” did not match what is in the Scheme. The Secretariat is not in a position to change a heading in the Scheme, and also cannot change the text that was agreed by the Commission. The Secretariat was therefore seeking clarification from PECCOE. The Secretariat also pointed out that the issue of what should be considered a duplicate had been discussed before, and was an issue in this context.

The Secretariat revised the document and further introduced document 50, an overview over what constitutes a duplicate.

The representative of Norway stated that perhaps the best way forward would be to have AGDC look at these issues. After AGDC has looked at them, the Chair may be in a position to ask the President of NEAFC to initiate a postal vote to agree on the amendments.

The representative of the EU agreed that it would be appropriate to have AGDC look at this. He suggested that the Secretariat might put a title on document 50 and perhaps write a short text to explain to AGDC the issue.

The Chair asked if there was agreement on asking AGDC to look at these issues. It was so agreed.

4.2 Port State Control

4.2.1 Overall implementation review

The Secretariat introduced document 33. She noted that this was the same type of table as had been presented last year. Previously there had been different formats for such tables. She pointed out that the document contained a summary of activity.

4.2.2 Implementation review of digital forms and procedures

The Secretariat introduced document 41. She pointed out that PSC digital forms had been discussed thoroughly before they were implemented. There had not been significant problems compared to the previous application. 22% of cases in the first three months of the digital system had used the digital forms. Some small issues have been encountered, and she pointed out that they were listed in the document. She stated that if there were problems in using the system, the Secretariat was not hearing about them.
The representative of Norway noted that three months is not much time to find out how the system works. He noted that there had been interest in digitalisation, but use does not seem to be overwhelmingly high in practice, at least not at this initial stage. He stated that one problem could be internet access for masters onboard vessels. He asked if the Secretariat had got the impression that this was a big issue.

The Secretariat pointed out that they do not see whether it is masters or agents who fill in the forms. She was aware of it being agents in many cases. She pointed out that agents had been allowed to initiate the process partly due to possible lack of internet access for masters.

The representative of the EU noted that the document had only percentages of cases using the digital forms, but not the overall number of cases.

The Secretariat responded by stating that there had been around 300 cases during the three months covered by the document, which was a normal number compared with previous years.

The Secretariat reiterated the importance of it receiving information on any specific problems that operators may have in using the system. The Contracting Parties were encouraged to pass on the request to responsible parties to inform the Secretariat of any issues where a change or an improvement to the system could make their life easier.

The Chair encouraged Contracting Parties to use the new system. This would result in much less work, both for the Secretariat and for the Contracting Parties themselves. He also stated that PECCOE should start thinking about an end date for the fax system, other than as a backup system.

The representative of Norway pointed out that there had been a discussion on the fax and digital systems running together for a period of six months, but nothing had been decided in that regard.

The Chair noted that when PECCOE meets in October the main fishing seasons will already be over and it would therefore be possible to get a clearer picture of how extensively the system was being used. He encouraged all Contracting Parties to promote the use of the digital system in the coming seasons, e.g. the redfish season that would begin soon.

It was agreed that the Secretariat would present an updated version of the paper to the October meeting of PECCOE, which would include both the proportion of cases which had used the digital system and the actual number of cases.

4.3 Cooperating non-Contracting Party Status

4.3.1 Compliance review of St Kitts and Nevis
The Secretariat introduced documents 46 and 48. He noted that vessels flying the flag of St Kitts and Nevis had not yet taken part in transhipments in the Regulatory Area. However, they had been authorised to operate in Norwegian waters and had steamed through the Regulatory Area in the context of operations there. The Secretariat pointed out that St Kitts and Nevis had so far done everything that is expected of them. He noted that they were likely to begin operations in the Regulatory Area in May. He stated that the Secretariat would raise any problems when they happen, and not accept at face value any notifications that problems will soon be solved as had at times been the response from Belize. He stated that the Secretariat would inform Contracting Parties in the event of such a situation.

The Chair stated that the initial phase of St Kitts and Nevis being a cooperating non-Contracting Party looked promising, although the real test would be when they begin operations in the Regulatory Area.

The representative of Norway noted that, according to information he had, all the vessels flying the flag of St Kitts and Nevis had previously been registered in Belize. He confirmed that the vessels had been operating in Norwegian waters and that their operations had been in accordance with Norwegian rules. However, Norwegian rules differed significantly from NEAFC rules regarding the form of reports. Vessels report transhipment by fax unless Norway has an ERS agreement with their flag state. He noted that the Norwegian experience was therefore not 100% relevant for NEAFC. He stated that, regardless of that, it was noteworthy that St Kitts and Nevis had clearly put an effort into ensuring that their vessels complied. This sends a positive signal to others that in order to operate well in the NEAFC area one must be fully compliant.

The Secretariat agreed that the attitude that St Kitts and Nevis had shown was very positive. They had gone beyond the absolute minimum duties to ensure that things are as they should be. They took part in tests regarding messages and reports in December and January. The IT company that works for them had also been in direct contact with the Secretariat, with a copy to St Kitts and Nevis. He noted that the attitude was completely different from that of Belize.

### 4.4 Non-Contracting Party activities in the RA

The representative of the EU raised the issue of what points should be discussed under each of agenda items 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5. He noted that non-Contracting Party activities in the Regulatory Area were presumably either the activities of cooperating non-Contracting Parties (which would fall under agenda item 4.3) or IUU activities (which would fall under agenda item 4.5). He therefore concluded that the purpose of this agenda item was not clear.

After some discussion, the Chair summarised that it had been agreed that Contracting Parties would consult among themselves before the October meeting of PECCOE, in an
informal friends-of-the-Chair group, to work on restructuring the PECCOE agenda and on the purpose and wording of individual agenda items.

4.5 IUU activities in the RA

4.5.1 Annual reports by CPs under Article 43

The Chair noted that none of the documents relevant to this agenda item had any substantive content. There were no further discussions under this agenda item.

4.5.2 Review of IUU lists A and B

The Secretariat introduced document 30 and noted that no vessels had been added to the IUU A list, and that the IUU B list was the same as it had been in October.

No new information on IUU listed vessels was introduced. However, there was some discussion on the presentation of the list. It was agreed that in the future, when the IUU B list is presented to PECCOE in documents comparable to document 30, a clear distinction should be made between, on the one hand cases where a vessel had last been seen in a particular place at a particular date and on the other hand, cases where a vessel is known to have been in a particular port since a particular date. When the Secretariat receives information from a Contracting Party that an IUU vessel is in its port, it will work on the assumption that the vessel will remain in that port until it is notified otherwise.

4.6 Update of Appendix 1 to Annex IX

The Secretariat introduced documents 37, 38 and 39. He noted that updating and improving points 1, 2 and 3 of Appendix 1 to Annex IX would be a task for PECCOE. These are the points that refer specifically to the confidentiality of data that is relevant for the Scheme. He noted that point 4 is more general and AGDC will produce an overarching recommendation on data security covering not just the Scheme.

The Chair posed the question of what would be the best way to proceed. He asked if the Contracting Parties wished to ask the Secretariat to address how points 1, 2 and 3 could be updated and present its conclusions to another meeting of PECCOE, and asked the Secretariat if it would be able to do that if asked.

The Secretariat stated that it would do whatever it was asked to do. He noted that this work could, inter alia, consist of deleting paragraphs that are unnecessary, and updating the language of others. He further noted that several types of data that are not mentioned in the current text are now in use. He stated that the Secretariat could have something ready in time for the October meeting of PECCOE if that was the wish of this meeting. It was so agreed.
The Secretariat pointed out that, in document 37, PECCOE is asked two specific questions. He noted that AGDC does not need specific validation from PECCOE, but had considered it useful to get a response on these issues.

The representative of the EU stated that the answer to the first question, on AGDC continuing its work in the manner suggested, should be “yes”, with the caveat that PECCOE would work on points 1, 2 and 3 in the way that had just been agreed. The Chair noted that other delegations agreed with this and it was therefore so agreed.

Regarding the second question, on the need for a special Recommendation for a fallback procedure for Port State control, the representative of the EU stated that the answer should be “no”. He noted that the electronic system could break down, but when that was unavailable the fax based system would be used as a backup. He furthermore noted that when more experience had been gained of the implementation of the electronic PSC form and procedures there might come a time when it would be appropriate to develop a contingency plan. The Chair noted that other delegations agreed with this and it was therefore so agreed.

5. Compliance review of the redfish fishery

The representative of Iceland noted that the relevant information had not been received from all Contracting Parties. Only Iceland and Norway had submitted papers in this context. He suggested that the discussion be postponed until all Contracting Parties have provided the information.

The representative of the EU noted that he had provided the relevant information already for the first PECCOE meeting of last year. The representative of Iceland acknowledged that the EU had provided references to the relevant regulations, but stated his preference that the EU should submit a document for the next PECMAS meeting which explains them for the benefit of PECCOE. He further noted that the information was missing from Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the Russian Federation.

It was agreed to postpone the discussion on this issue until all Contracting Parties have provided the relevant information.

The representative of Norway raised the issue of the form of such reports. He noted that Iceland and the EU had provided more detailed information than Norway mainly due to the relevant Norwegian regulations only being available in the Norwegian language.

The representative of Iceland stated that he would be happy regardless of whether the information was provided in a detailed manner or the more general manner that Norway had used, provided that the relevant information was included.
The Secretariat introduced document 49. He noted that this was an attempt to evaluate whether the major issues are compliance by vessels, or organisational issues in FMCs. He stated that the Secretariat’s perception was that the compliance problem is primarily related to operational issues at FMCs rather than vessels. He pointed out that some FMCs do not have the right software, and some have personnel problems. Sometimes no reports are received during weekends, followed by a batch of reports from a few days on the following Monday or Tuesday. Sometimes the Secretariat continues to get position messages after vessels have left the Regulatory Area, even in some cases after they have entered port.

The representative of Iceland stated that he agreed that the underachievement of some FMCs was the core problem. He noted in this context that in the redfish regulation it was stated that the authorisation to fish is only valid if reports are received as they should be. He pointed out that the relevant FMCs were doing the vessels’ masters a huge disfavour as their underachievement resulted in the vessels fishing without a valid licence.

The representative of the EU pointed out that a seminar for EU FMCs to review the functioning of the reporting will be held in Brussels on 8 May. He noted that the Secretariat would attend the seminar.

The Secretariat noted that the Russian Federation is also planning such a seminar, with participation by the Secretariat, in September. He pointed out that the Secretariat would be happy to cooperate with other Contracting Parties interested in holding such a seminar for its FMCs.

6. Annual Meeting issues referred to PECCOE

6.1 Results of the AHWGPSC meetings

The Chair introduced documents 20 and 19. He noted that the scope of the Port State control system was the main issue on which PECCOE needed to conclude.

The representative of Norway noted that, during discussions in AHWGPSC, PECCOE and at the Annual Meeting, the large number of fresh fish landings had been a major concern regarding extending the scope beyond frozen fish. He pointed out that having a lower level of application had been mentioned as one option in that context. He pointed out that Norwegian vessels land less than five tons hundreds of times every year in Denmark alone. Landings of less than one ton were also very numerous. He noted that the WG had pointed out that the small landings represent a small proportion of the overall tonnage landed and constitute a relatively small risk to the overall picture. The representative of Norway stated that it is important to include fresh fish in the NEAFC Scheme. If all fresh fish could be included, this would be preferred by Norway. However, in order to find a practical solution in relation to control and enforcement of the large
number of fresh fish landings with small volumes, PECCOE should consider introducing a lower level of application.

The representative of the EU pointed out that the EU has already ratified the FAO Agreement, which applies to individual states rather than RFMOs. Through legislation which is in place, the EU is already meeting the obligation of the FAO Agreement. He stated that it was not necessary to transpose all the obligations of that Agreement into the NEAFC Scheme as the Contracting Parties will implement them individually anyway. He considered it to be most important to look at how NEAFC should go beyond the FAO obligations, rather than focusing on implementing through NEAFC all the provisions of FAO.

The representative of the EU noted that no one had pointed out any problem regarding fresh fish that this would be addressing. PSC was set up to deal with a particular problem, which it addresses by including frozen fish.

The Chair noted that the point had been raised before that it could be confusing for inspectors to inspect according to different schemes depending on the type of product, even possibly more than one type from the same vessel in the same landing. He pointed out that PECCOE had to make progress on this, and in the absence of consensus on the scope it could be a way forward to work on both options and present the Annual Meeting with conclusions on how both options would look in practice. The Annual Meeting would then be in a position to choose between clearly worked-out options.

The representative of the EU reiterated that he preferred the scope to remain limited to frozen fish, and wished to know from all delegations both their preference regarding the scope and the progress they had made in ratifying the agreement.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that Greenland expects to complete the ratification process this autumn, but the delegation had not been able to get information regarding the status of the ratification process in the Faroe Islands during the meeting, and had not asked for that information before. The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) further stated that he would prefer the inclusion of all fish rather than just frozen fish.

The representative of Iceland stated that his preference was for the scope to include all fish, that the ratification process is ongoing in Iceland and it is hoped that it will be concluded in the current session of parliament.

The representative of Norway stated that Norway has ratified the FAO Agreement already, and would prefer all fish to be included in the PSC.

The representative of the Russian Federation stated that he would prefer the scope to extend to all fish, with differing levels of inspections. He stated that he did not have confirmed information on the ratification process, but stated that Russia had either already ratified or was in the final stages of completing the ratification process.
The representative of the EU stated that if fresh fish was included, which he preferred not to do, it would have to be all fresh fish. He noted that the only reason that PECCOE was even considering including fresh fish was the fact that it was covered by the FAO Agreement. He therefore did not see the point in including some landings of fresh fish while others would be excluded due to a cut-off point. He stated that NEAFC should either fully implement the FAO Agreement or not include fresh fish at all. He noted that there seemed to be agreement on there not being sufficient capacity to control all landings. The best way to respond to that fact would be to focus the NEAFC PSC on addressing actual problems rather than on implementing provisions of the FAO Agreement which the Contracting Parties would implement regardless of what was agreed within NEAFC. If the intention was to use NEAFC to implement all the provisions of the FAO Agreement he could not see the sense in doing it in a way which would exclude landing that were not excluded in that Agreement.

The representative of Norway stated that this was not a question of excluding some landings, but rather of prioritising resources.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that he agreed in principle with the representative of Norway. NEAFC should extend the scope of its PSC to include all fish, but do so in a way that would not divert resources from high risk landings to lower risk landings. He further noted that landings of fishmeal were currently outside the PSC system.

The representative of the EU stated that including all fish in the scope would create a huge administrative burden without actually addressing any identified particular problem.

The representative of Iceland noted that two differing views on the scope remained in place. He stated that the task of PECCOE was to decide on the policy of the scope. In the absence of consensus on the policy, PECCOE would have to take both paths and do its work accordingly. PECCOE would then put the results in the hands of the Annual Meeting to decide. He noted that there were pros and cons for both and that PECCOE should assess them and present them to the Annual Meeting.

The representative of Norway pointed out that work was also needed on the issue of inspection levels.

The Chair noted that the WG had concluded that experience and risk assessment led to the conclusion that threshold could be lowered without lowering the effectiveness.

The representative of the EU reiterated that he did not want to include fresh fish in the scope. However, if that was nevertheless the conclusion of NEAFC, the number of landings covered would be increased drastically. Under such circumstances there would be a need to lower the inspection benchmark. He further noted that thresholds tend to affect behaviour. If there was a threshold, fishermen may try to be below the threshold to avoid inspection. This can then encourage discards and misreporting.
The representative of Norway understood the position of the EU, even if he did not agree with it. He stated that it would be useful to discuss the theoretical possibility of thresholds in the context of the option of fresh fish being included.

The representative of the EU pointed out that it would, in that context, also be useful to consider the possibility of a single inspection benchmark with the application of risk analysis.

The Chair noted that it might be appropriate to hold another WG meeting before the October meeting of PECCOE. Such a meeting could hopefully take the matter further, and prepare clear suggestions for the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting needed to know the consequences of the scope being extended; inspection levels changed; and/or different levels set for fresh and frozen fish.

The representative of the EU agreed that it would be useful to hold such a meeting. He further stated that the EU would be willing to contribute constructively to all options that were worked on. However, the EU would have to revisit the issue of what options could be supported for presentation to the Annual Meeting in October.

After a brief discussion, the Chair noted that all delegations agreed to hold another meeting of the AHWGSPC on 26-27 June in Reykjavik, Iceland. He noted that the meeting would take two full days and that delegations should therefore not anticipate travelling back until the day after the meeting.

6.2 Implications for the Scheme of the use of electronic logbooks (ERS)

The representative of the EU made a Power Point presentation, explaining the EU ERS. He noted that the EU has vessels operating all over the world, and was therefore very aware of the need for harmonisation of electronic reporting requirements, including ERS. It would be financially impossible to develop and operate several different systems for each requirement or for each RFMO. He noted that a major difference compared to previous systems was that the logbook was not on board the vessel, but in the flag State database. The EU system included a mechanism to pull the information that was needed from the system, rather than have all possibly relevant information pushed to e.g. the inspectors. He also explained the FLUX project, which would provide a single language for all data exchanges. He noted that work on standardisation in this context had already been initiated within UN/CEFACT. He explained the use of Data Exchange Highway envelopes which would enable data communications without the need to set up very complex connections between all users.

The Chair thanked the EU for the presentation, which he said had provided a good overview and would be helpful for the PECCOE discussions on ERS. He further asked the EU to elaborate on the main differences between the EU and Norwegian systems.
The representative of the EU stated that the EU and Norway used different approaches although they were similar in many respects. The key issue was that the Norwegian system was limited to sending (pushing) messages to the flag State and, when relevant, to the coastal state or RFMO. The EU system included many aspects that were not included in the Norwegian system. This included a trip log sent by the vessel at the end of each day and a pulling mechanism that allows access to the complete logbook e.g. for coastal states or inspectors. The Norwegian system was basically limited to the vessel pushing messages about individual events to the flag state, and did not include pulling data. The EU system contains also other data elements, including for sales notes, transportation documents and Blue Fin Tuna reporting. The EU system is designed to allow new data streams (e.g. inspection reports, scientific data, fleet, licences and authorisations data) to be integrated where and when needed. Several projects, according to specific business domains, are underway.

The Chair introduced document 21 and also drew attention to documents 24 and 26. He noted that ERS has been discussed for some years and several papers had been submitted in that context. Document 26 includes a list of these documents. He stated that the papers and presentations that had been presented to PECCOE had been very helpful. However, he did not consider it likely that firm conclusions could be reached at this meeting. He suggested that it would be helpful to make good progress to hold an extra meeting focused on this issue. The current meeting would then be used primarily to establish the basic positions of the Contracting Parties.

The representative of the EU pointed out that document 24 was a fact sheet for one of the building blocks of the system: the reporting system for EU fishing vessels. This applies to EU vessels of 12 metres and more in length. The document provides references to legislation that is relevant, and some technical aspects.

The Chair pointed out that the Annual Meeting had given specific instructions regarding specific points that PECCOE must respond to. He noted that PECCOE may have to consult PECMAS and WG STATS regarding some aspects, but that it was important to get the ball rolling with the work of PECCOE.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that although PECCOE was primarily interested in control and enforcement, it should be kept in mind that ERS could be useful to get information that was useful for other purposes, such as improving scientific knowledge.

The representative of Norway agreed that ERS could be useful for other purposes, but stated that PECCOE had to begin by working on control and enforcement aspects before eventually adding points from PECMAS and WG STATS. Other delegations agreed with that.

The Chair raised the issue of what data requirements would be included in a NEAFC ERS. He asked if there would be a need for additional elements from those currently in the system, and if it was possible to take away some of what is in the current system.
The representative of the EU stated that the information needed would by and large be the same as we have in the current system. The point was to achieve this in an efficient way through the technology of today, rather than to change drastically what type of information is needed.

The representative of Norway stated that the issue was not how information is pushed or pulled, but what information was needed. He stated what was needed was mainly four types of information: firstly the situation upon entry, secondly catches in the area, thirdly the situation upon exit, and fourthly transhipment information. He stated that the main point was “what” rather than “how”.

The representative of Iceland stated that he agreed with Norway. He considered the mandate from the Annual Meeting to be clear and the emphasis of PECCOE should be on fulfilling it.

The Chair agreed that the mandate was clear, but stated that the information that the EU had presented was still very useful as it showed what could be done regarding ERS.

The representative of the EU pointed out that it has now very useful experience with establishing an ERS system. Things were much more concrete than not that long ago. He reiterated the importance of preventing a situation where many different systems are developed when only one is necessary. He agreed that the four types of information that the representative of Norway mentioned would be important. The key issue was how that information was delivered.

The representative of Norway reiterated that the priority now should be on responding to the five bullet points that the Annual Meeting had directed to PECCOE in the context of ERS.

The representative of Iceland agreed with Norway that this should be the priority and stated that the work should not be delayed at the progress of the work on ERS had not moved fast enough recently.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) also supported what the representative of Norway had said, and wished to focus the work on responding to the five bullet points.

The representative of the EU stated that he also wanted to make progress on this.

The representative of the Russian Federation stated that he agreed with what the representative of Norway had said. PECCOE should solve the issues that NEAFC is immediately faced with rather than only look to the future.

The Chair pointed out that any system would have to ensure that the relevant information was available. He suggested that the way ahead was probably not to focus on exactly
what system should be used. Many different types of information can be taken from the EU system. The Norwegian system also makes it possible to get all the information we currently require.

The representative of Iceland reiterated that the Contracting Parties were moving ahead on ERS, regardless of what happens in NEAFC. He stated that it was important to ensure that there is harmony. The key point for NEAFC was what information was needed, rather than the exact system used to get the information.

The representative of Norway reviewed the five bullet points and concluded that it should be possible to have constructive discussions on them all. He stated that it would be possible to make good progress on these specific points in time for the Annual Meeting.

The Chair stated that PECCOE must have answers to the bullet points before the Annual Meeting. He stated that the most realistic way to achieve that was to hold an extra meeting before the October meeting of PECCOE. This could be an extraordinary meeting of PECCOE, with only one substantive agenda item, or a meeting of an ad hoc working group, which PECCOE can establish if the NEAFC Commission does not disagree. He noted in this context that it would be important to have the relevant experts present at any such meeting and that the principle of the larger the meeting the slower the process applied here as it does elsewhere. A small meeting would therefore be preferable. Finally, he pointed out that work regarding the five bullet points could be done in advance of such a meeting.

The representative of the Russian Federation stated that he would prefer an extraordinary PECCOE meeting to a WG meeting.

The representative of the EU stated that he would be open to both options, but would have a slight preference for an extraordinary PECCOE meeting. This preference was not least due to the fact that the mandate of PECCOE was clear in this context, but to establish an ad hoc working group it would be necessary to set out a mandate that did not already exist.

After some discussion the Chair noted that there was agreement on holding an extraordinary PECCOE meeting on the issue of ERS between 18-20 June in London. The meeting would begin at 14:00 on 18 June.

### 6.3 Review of the NEAFC Regulation on bottom fishing

The Secretary introduced document 11 and indicated the points that were directed at PECCOE. The Secretary further gave a brief overview over the consolidated text of the bottom fishing regulation.

The representative of the EU stated that there was some confusion regarding the relationship between the consolidated text and Recommendation 8:2012. The Secretary
stated that the latest version of the consolidated text should take full regard of the Recommendation, but agreed to look more carefully at this matter and bring it to the attention of PECMAS if necessary.

The Chair noted that PECCOE was hardly in a position to make a final conclusion on this issue at this meeting. The important point for now would be to ensure that everyone was aware of what the task was and to prepare for a more in-depth discussion in October when conclusions would be reached.

The representative of the EU noted that the EU had an extensive inspection presence in the Regulatory Area and that there had not been reports of difficulties in the context of the bottom fishing regulation. He noted that this could be seen as an indication that the measures are sufficient.

The Secretariat pointed out that the last instance of infringements regarding fishing in a closed area was in 2010.

The Chair encouraged Contracting Parties to discuss this matter between now and October to ensure that they are sufficiently prepared in October to reach conclusions and report on them to the Annual Meeting.

The representative of the EU raised the question of what more was needed than the knowledge that no specific problems had been noted in respect of the measures that are in place. He asked whether that could not constitute a basis for the report to the Annual Meeting.

The Chair agreed that that would be a major aspect of any answer to the Annual Meeting. However, he pointed out that there were various points that had been mentioned in the past that could usefully be discussed further in this context. For example, the issue of whether enforcement would be significantly improved by setting up buffer zones or other mechanisms for increased monitoring of vessels that were within a specific distance from a closed area.

The representative of Iceland agreed that it would be appropriate to dig a little deeper than simply respond that no specific problems had been identified.

The representative of Norway agreed that it would be useful to take more time to consider the issue and consult on this matter. He raised the point that, before he could present a concrete position, he would need to consider more carefully the point that the Annual Meeting had asked PECCOE to consider regarding the UNGA Resolution.

The representative of the EU reiterated that PECCOE had endeavoured for years to collect information regarding weaknesses in the implementation of NEAFC rules. There had been no indication that implementation was weak in this regard. Unless there was new evidence between now and October it was unclear what else PECCOE could add.
The Chair asked if there was agreement on Contracting Parties committing themselves to work on this matter before the October meeting of PECCOE and to revisiting it then. **It was so agreed.** The Chair asked the Secretariat to collect all infringements regarding area management into one document and present it in good time before the October meeting.

7. **Any other business**

7.1 **Making the AGDC a joint NEAFC / NAFO advisory body**

The Secretary introduced document 25, which had been prepared for the NEAFC Heads of Delegation and was being presented to PECCOE for information

The representative of Norway thanked the Secretary for the paper, which he considered to include a good analysis of the issue. He stated that the way to make progress on this could be very straightforward. What was needed was a conclusion on the formality regarding a decision which has been discussed before and everyone seems to agree is a good idea. He stated that PECCOE delegates were probably all in agreement on the substance of changing AGDC into a joint body of NEAFC and NAFO. The question was only on the formality of how the change should be done. He stated that it should be possible to do this in a way that would make the change effective from 1 January 2013. A decision made by postal vote in NEAFC would make it possible for NAFO to confirm their agreement at their Annual Meeting. Alternatively, there could be a process that would begin this year and be concluded next.

The representative of the EU pointed out that AGDC is not a subsidiary body of PECCOE and the role of PECCOE was therefore not to decide on this issue but to provide advice. He noted that there were synergies between NAFO and NEAFC, but there may nevertheless be problems that need to be overcome when the details of this matter are considered. He stressed the importance of ensuring that any change should not slow down the process within AGDC and it must not create any of the problems that are associated with serving two masters. In this context he mentioned that rather than simply continuing with the current Terms of Reference, it would be sensible to use the opportunity to update them. For example, the discussions that were taking place in PECCOE regarding ERS showed that the reference to the NAF in the current Terms of Reference could soon be outdated.

The Chair stated that the representative of the EU was correct in saying that the role of PECCOE in this matter was not one of decision maker but one of adviser. He stated that it would be useful for the decision makers to have a clear opinion from PECCOE when they make their decision.

The representative of Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that he was sure that all PECCOE delegations were in agreement on this. He confirmed that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) would support making AGDC a joint group of NEAFC and NAFO.
The representative of Iceland stated that he did not have a strong opinion on this matter.

The representative of the Russian Federation stated that he would prefer AGDC to become to be a joint group of NEAFC and NAFO.

The Chair pointed out that the internal procedures of AGDC would not change by becoming a joint group of NEAFC and NAFO, as AGDC already worked not only for NEAFC, but also for NAFO and individual Contracting Parties like the EU. He noted that when NAFO asks AGDC for advice, they are formally seeking advice from a NEAFC body and it was understandable that this could be sensitive.

The Chair agreed with the EU that it would be wise to go carefully over any relevant issues, including how a joint AGDC would elect a chair, how issues that concern only one party would be dealt with, etc. These issues would be looked at in the context of addressing the Terms of Reference for a joint AGDC. He suggested that PECCOE could advice the NEAFC Commission that it should aim at making AGDC a joint group of NEAFC and NAFO, and that a joint working group of the two organisations might be set up to look at any practical and procedural issues that needed attention in that context.

The representative of Iceland agreed that it would be sensible to set up a joint working group. He noted that there was a difference in how things were done in NEAFC and NAFO and it was best to do this carefully and ensure that the new Terms of Reference were well written.

The representative of the EU clarified that such a working group would not actually establish a joint AGDC, but rather develop Terms of Reference and other necessary documents with the intention of the Annual Meetings of the two organisations considering its conclusions and making the final decision.

With that clarification it was agreed to ask the Chair to present the NEAFC Commission with this advice in time for a possible reaction being finalised before the Annual Meeting of NAFO in September.

### 7.2 Information on Interpol Fisheries Crime

The Secretariat introduced documents 35 and 36. He noted these were presented for information to keep PECCOE informed about this development in the fight against IUU fisheries. The establishment of this working group within Interpol could lead to a different approach in this context, which would complement the existing efforts which will continue. He stated that the Secretariat expected to attend a meeting of the working group in the near future as an observer. Contracting Parties will be informed of the proceedings in due course.
7.3 Information on IMCS Network

The Secretariat introduced document 43. He noted that the Secretariat had been following the work of the International MCS Network for some years as an observer. However, the Network’s arrangements were being amended in a way that would make it possible for RFMOs to become full members of the Network, which was also setting up a full-time Secretariat. He stated that he was not asking Contracting Parties to present views on whether NEAFC should seek to become a full member, but rather that the issue was being flagged now so that they could be prepared in October to provide guidance to the Annual Meeting regarding what would be the appropriate route to take. As this regarded cooperation on control and enforcement it was appropriate for PECCOE to consider the issue before discussion at the Annual Meeting.

The Chair asked whether there was agreement on discussing this issue further at the October meeting of PECCOE. It was so agreed.

8. Report to the 31st Annual Meeting (November 2012)
The draft Report was open for comments until the end of the day on Monday 8 May, when the Report was finalised.

9. Closure of the meeting
The Chair closed the meeting and wished everybody a safe journey home.