1) Opening of the meeting
The Secretary opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates. The list of participants is Annex 1 to this report. The meeting was held in two sessions, on 19-21 March and 4-5 September 2013.

2) Election of Chair
The Secretary pointed out that the Chair of the Working Group, Kate Sanderson, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), had resigned her position.

Bjørn Kunoy, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), was elected as Chair.

3) Adoption of the agenda and appointment of rapporteur
It was agreed to add a new item to the agenda, on the formulation of NEAFC Recommendations.

The agenda was adopted, as amended.

4) Review of the work by correspondence in 2012
The Secretary presented document WGFN 2013-01-03. He explained that this document constituted the original document drafted a year before, at the request of the Working Group’s Chair, and the comments to that document by the Contracting Parties that had been received.

5) Review of the NEAFC Rules of Procedure
There was a discussion, on the basis of document WGFN 2013-01-04, on possible amendments to the NEAFC Rules of Procedures. The EU introduced the need to address the approach taken to observers and in particular NGOs. There was significant progress in the discussions by all Contracting Parties. It was agreed that further work would be needed to reach a conclusion on a revised version of the Rules of Procedure.

It was agreed to mandate the Chair to consult informally with the Contracting Parties following this meeting, in an effort to reach a conclusion on the unresolved issues. If the Chair’s efforts would prove to be fruitful, the Working Group would then adopt through correspondence a proposal to the Annual Meeting for a revised version of the Rules of Procedure. It was agreed that if the Chair’s efforts would not prove fruitful, another meeting of the Working Group would be needed to resolve the issues.

In discussions under this agenda item it was noted that according to Rule 43(c) of the current Rules of Procedure, the NEAFC Commission should adopt rules of procedure regarding dispute settlement panels. It was pointed out that these rules have not yet been formulated. It was agreed that the Working Group should take on the task of formulating the rules and proposing the conclusion to the NEAFC Commission.
Norway presented a first draft, document WGFN 2013-01-07, for these rules of procedure. There was a discussion, on the basis of document WGFN 2013-01-07, which resulted in a revised draft. It was agreed that the best placement of these rules would be as an annex to the NEAFC Rules of Procedure.

6) Formulation of a proposal to the NEAFC Annual Meeting
As the revised version of the NEAFC Rules of Procedure was not finalised, no proposal to the Annual Meeting of NEAFC was formulated in that context. However, as reflected under agenda item 5, a proposal to the Annual Meeting may be adopted through correspondence.

It was agreed to propose to the Annual Meeting of NEAFC that it adopt the rules concerning the ad hoc panel on dispute settlement, as presented in WGFN 2013-01-07rev1, which is Annex 2 to this report.

7) Formulation of NEAFC Recommendations
Norway presented document WGFN 2013-01-06, on a standard heading for NEAFC recommendations. He explained that the traditional NEAFC heading was quite unintelligible and included several elements that were not necessary and which in practice contributed to inaccessibility rather than clarity.

There was a discussion on this issue, where it was agreed that there was a need to change the traditional NEAFC heading for recommendations. The discussions led to some amendments being made to document WGFN 2013-01-06.

It was agreed to propose to the NEAFC Annual Meeting in November 2013 that the format outlined in document WGFN 2013-01-06rev1 should be used as a standard for headings of NEAFC recommendations. This document is Annex 3 to this report.

8) Any other business
The Secretary presented document WGFN 2013-01-08, an invitation from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea to present a written statement to the tribunal. He noted that NEAFC had been given until 29 November 2013 to respond, and a decision on whether to submit a written statement could therefore be taken at the Annual Meeting. He pointed out that he was raising this at this meeting to make members of the Working Group aware of the invitation so they would be in a position to conclude on it at the Annual Meeting.

There was a short discussion where all delegations agreed with the suggestion that the best way forward would be for the document to be formally circulated to Contracting Parties, asking them for comments on how to respond to the tribunal.

9) Future Meetings of the Working Group
As reflected under agenda item 5, the Working Group may have to have another meeting to conclude on the unresolved issues regarding a revised version of the NEAFC Rules of Procedure.

10) Report of the meeting
The report was adopted on 5 September 2013.

11) Closing of the meeting
The Chair thanked members of the Working Group for a fruitful meeting and wished everyone a safe journey home. He then closed the meeting.