1 ADVISORY GROUP FOR DATA COMMUNICATION
16 February 2011
NEAFC HQ London

1. Opening
The Chair, Ms Ellen Fasmer, Norway called the meeting to order on 16 February at 10 am in the meeting room of NEAFC HQ. She welcomed everybody. All Contracting Parties and most reporting parties were present. NAFO has been invited, but had not been able to participate. The Chair reminded that this was a group of technical experts and everybody can speak freely in his or her technical capacity.

2. Appointment of rapporteur
The Secretariat was appointed rapporteur.

3. Discussion and adoption of the Agenda
The Chair went through the agenda. There were no further comments and the agenda was adopted.

4. The implications for the Scheme of the use of electronic logbooks
Agenda point 6.3 from the AGDC 2010-01 postponed to be handled as the only agenda point in a one day AGDC meeting, originally from PECCOE.

The Chair referred to the two working documents tabled. Norway apologised for the late circulation of the document. He had prepared a slide presentation. He had found it quite difficult to write the two papers AGDC 2011-01-03 and -04. It had not been easy to understand from the PECCOE Summary Records what PECCOE required. He referred to a Norwegian working paper from the April 2010 PECCOE meeting (this is the same document as AGDC 2011-01-03). The presentation is attached. He described steps 1 and 2 in the Norwegian process introducing electronic logbooks. He proposed that in step 3 the information should be used to make standard reports meeting the requirements of Contracting Parties and NEAFC, making it easy for fishermen to meet reporting requirements.
Iceland noted that they had not advanced as far as Norway, reporting frequency was lower, but the intention was to go in the same direction as Norway. Greenland liked this approach, but saw a need to look very carefully into harmonisation with respect to NAFO and individual NEAFC Contracting Parties. There should be a distinction between what is nice to have and what is needed. He referred to last year’s discussion on the cross boundary data element in NAFO. That may become obsolete with the introduction of daily catch reports.

Norway informed that Norwegian vessels would report electronically from the NAFO area, but noted that the Norwegian approach would make special arrangements, such as the one for redfish in the Irminger Sea, obsolete. He wondered if this issue is more a question for PECCOE than AGDC. He then went on to discuss the consequences for the Scheme. He asked how to meet the requirements of inspectors inspecting at sea. He noted that there may be a difference between logbook data on board and data in official logbook databases in flag states. The inspectors may lose the valuable paper logbook source of information. One important suggestion in the Norwegian paper is to introduce a daily catch report, DCA, with mandatory gear and duration of fishing operation information.

He then went on to the methods for communicating to the NEAFC Secretary. He suggested using either the DCA report or the “old” NEAFC report, which is supplemented by the paper logbook. The EU has a DCA report, reporting in XML. Access to information is another problem. A new reporting system would require changes in how CPs receive the data.

Norway suggested a stepwise approach:

1. A new Detailed Catch and Activity report (DCA) is defined in Annex VIII of the Scheme.
2. A method for correction of DCA reports and cancellation of other reports is established.
3. CPs that have introduced electronic logbook to their fleet are allowed to start sending DCA reports.
4. A process is started to modernize the other reports defined in Annex VIII with the aim to more precisely point to intended activity. RC must be mandatory in the RET report. A new report must be defined and replace the “Catch on Exit” (COX) report.
5. A process is started to modernize the method for data exchange between the CPs and Secretary.
6. Annex IV – Recording of catch and fishing effort and the corresponding Article 9 is removed from the Scheme.
7. A method on how to access data from CPs prior to the entry into the RA must be developed.

Greenland thought XML will be the future in data exchange and a conversion to that format will happen. He asked about the indication of “intent” of a vessel. Does that
require a new report? Norway responded that the intent was only modernising the COE report moving from reporting the position of the vessel, when sending the report, to reporting the position where the vessel intended to fish.

Sweden asked the opinion of the Secretariat with respect to the workload if there is a transition from NAF to XML. The Russian Federation found that the proposed field was excessive. A two alpha ISO code for ports is not appropriate, a tri-alpha code would be more appropriate.

Norway responded the UN standard was 2-alpha for country and 3-alpha for port. The Faroe Islands asked about a new data element in the CAT report. If the skipper changes his mind what should be done? Norway informed that they instructed the skippers in these cases to cancel the original report. UK noted that inspectors may not get access to true records. He suggested that AGDC started with the process and then moved on to the individual elements. Iceland saw it as more convenient to move towards daily catch reporting for all fisheries.

The Secretariat had no strong feeling on NAF or XML, until there was a decision, but pointed out that changes could lead to a major overhaul of the Scheme, with budget implications and transaction costs in efficiency in a run-in period. There were also security issues involved and there were already arrangements which were not completely in line with the confidentiality requirements. If multi systems are accepted, these systems have to be compatible. If not, it would not be possible to supply information that makes sense when needed. Greenland asked which breaches of security the Secretariat referred to in arrangements giving permanent access to VMS data, lack of control with FMCs deleting received data and the arrangement with ICES. Greenland suggested that confidentiality aspects have to be reconsidered. (Appendix 1 to Annex IX of the Scheme)

UK pointed out the distinction between regulated species and catches of other species. More information must always be better. Denmark felt that we may be placing ourselves between two chairs. It may better to choose one solution or the other. The EC pointed out the proposal was a simplification for the Contracting Parties compared with the old system. We should look very carefully at the reporting requirements in various areas and harmonisation before entering into details. The multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement is a good starting point. We should start with something that already exists. This would make adaptation for vessels and FMCs easier.

The Secretariat compared the need for data for inspectors and the need for management and scientific analysis. The latter requires transmission of much more data. There is an increasing pressure from the scientific community to get access to these data. The EC thought that the data should be compiled and made available to different users. He asked about the definition of effort. The EC accepted that the Scheme was originally made for inspection purposes and changes may affect the efficiency of inspections at sea. Daily reporting may, however, help here.
The Faroe Islands regretted that a reporting standard had not been set years ago. Now thing had moved and standards had been set outside NEAFC. The EU thought that this at least had led to something that could be used as a starting point for a standard. He mentioned that it should be possible to pull data from relevant computers for inspection purposes. The UK noted that the NEAFC paper logbook was already a standard, perhaps the most preferable.

**Coffee 11:25 - 11:50**

The Chair suggested that the group should discuss access to data for inspection vessels at sea. The UK was not sure about the amount of data pushed at the inspectors. Norway responded that this could be solved in a more modern way. The Secretariat noted that there were simple technical solutions. The Secretariat had advocated pulling rather than pushing because the volume of data could be much too voluminous. The Chair felt it would be possible to push positions and pull catch data but the FMCs wanted data to appear on their own maps. This should be kept in mind when introducing changes. The EC agreed with a two step approach, receiving pushed data for a short period and then a pull mechanism for the inspections. If a web service was available, accessible by a standard browser, there would not be a need to change systems at FMC and vessel level. The Chair pointed out that this would not make it possible to get data into own maps. Spain saw a need to clarify the difference between NEAFC control needs and detailed logbook data and also asked for clarification on the requirements for vessels in transit but not intending to fish in the Regulatory Area. The Secretariat informed that vessels in transit had a quite different VMS “signature”. A position will suffice, there is no need for additional information.

Iceland asked what should be reported with respect to transhipments. Norway and the EU have agreed only to send catch at entry if there is intention to fish. The Secretariat interpreted the Scheme as not demanding catch on entry for reefers, but only positions and notification information. Greenland accepted that Spain had a valid point. He found that vessels passing in transit have an obligation to report to assist inspection. The UK did not see the point, because there was no information. The Scheme was clear on access to information on earlier trips. The inspection vessel accordingly has no access. There was the issue of non-regulated species. Norway felt that everything has to be reported, irrespective of status as regulated or non-regulated species.

Iceland referred to the statement by the Faroe Islands. She found it useful to look at the full use of data and the whole dataflow. A small group could look at that. Greenland agreed and pointed out the increased demands from different users. PECCOE should look into the logbook requirements. The Chair agreed. AGDC should concentrate on how to do it. There are enough problems in that. She noted that there was some success in harmonising the NAFO and NEAFC approaches. Denmark referred to the data elements in the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement. He suggested that a web service should be adopted. The UK noted that the Norwegian proposal used haul by haul information and daily catch reports. This is not in the NEAFC Scheme at present. There is a difference between control and scientific aspects. Iceland did not see this as a problem.
The Chair referred to the problems of harmonisation, a process that seemed to go on and on. However, we have to do it. She asked if any CP other than Norway and the EU use the XML format. The Faroe Islands has proposed a reporting format in XML between vessels and the FMC, but no decision has been made yet. Denmark had found that the implementation of the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement had not caused much disruption. The EC had not noted any glitches either. It is a fully operational system. There is nothing that stops other CPs reporting in the same format. Iceland said that the problem of frequency had to be solved. Some vessels go for the e-logbook others have chosen paper logbooks. The EC said technically it would possible to start now. The UK pointed out that the EU situation was not so simple. at the flag state level there were huge differences. Harmonisation could solve this. Greenland noted that NAF had been invented because there was nothing else. Migrating to XML would come. The Chair pointed out that the important part of the NAF was the two letter codes and XML could follow NAF in this. The Secretariat noted that Article 9 sets a minimum standard. Catch reports are different. The reporting system may take advantage of the e-logbook without radically changing the Scheme. While we wait for harmonisation we should maintain minimum standards. He saw the simple way to proceed, minimum standards and a new daily report.

The Chair asked AGDC to consider error codes, cancellations and corrections during the lunch break.

Lunch 1 pm to 2 pm.

After lunch the Chair suggested that the Group looked at the mandate from the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting adopted the following mandate for the Permanent Committee of Control and Enforcement (PECCOE):

*Vessels from Contracting Parties fishing in the NEAFC Regulatory Area may, as from 2010, record catch and fishing effort either in a bound logbook with numbered pages or an electronic logbook.*

*The 2009 annual meeting therefore mandates PECCOE to identify which articles in the Scheme relating to recording of catches, communication of catches and transshipments will be affected by this development and recommend to the 2010 annual meeting such changes to the Scheme as may be deemed necessary. In fulfilling its mandate PECCOE should consider the reporting system as a whole with the aim of developing a harmonized*
approach as regards types of reports, their content and the time limits for their transmission to avoid duplication of reporting. PECCOE should also evaluate and propose clear procedures for the correction and cancellation of reports sent to the Secretary including time limits as appropriate.

The AGDC should concentrate on proposing clear procedures for the correction and cancellation of reports sent to the Secretary, including time limits as appropriate. The Russian Federation at the last AGDC meeting proposed cancellation procedures. That was one way to do it. She asked for comments. She also asked for comments on time limits for daily reports, which could affect the need for correction procedures. The EC suggested using the procedures in place in the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement. There has been involvement from many parties in the process of establishing the agreement. By default this should be the simplest approach. If there are valid reasons to deviate, this can be looked into.

The Chair noted that PECCOE had asked for details of the Agreement for their next meeting. Greenland pointed out that PECCOE had decided that there should be cancellation procedures. Norway could simply describe the procedures in place and make it available to PECCOE. The UK noted that the correction procedure in the EU was different from the arrangements in the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement with respect to time limits.

The Chair thought that PECCOE took care of the time limits Iceland informed that in the Icelandic system the original stamp can be seen after corrections. The Chair stressed there should be the possibility of following the track of reports and corrections.

The Chair referred to error codes and return messages. She suggested that AGDC recommended that return messages should be made mandatory. There would be a need to have more error codes in a more complex system. She would like more comments on that, analysing experiences in the Norwegian and EU agreement. The EU-Commission noted the discussion at the October 2010 PECCOE Meeting. The conclusions should be taken on board in the EU-Norwegian agreement. The Chair stressed the need to have clear cut information to the vessels on errors, but at the FMC and NEAFC levels the error codes could be more flexible. The present NEAFC error codes are very inflexible. Could the EU Norway ERS codes be of use or could they be interpreted differently in the two systems. EU-Denmark found that the EU Norway ERS codes were linked to the web service. It was not possible to compare the two systems with respect to error codes. EU-Sweden found that there was a difference between quality check and legal concerns. EU Commission noted that the ret message was very different between the NAF system and XML based multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement. The Chair did not agree. There was not a real difference in the use of error codes. There are two levels in the EU-Norway system, one similar to the NEAFC system one similar to XML level. Are all the codes needed in the NEAFC system? Iceland called for good error codes, but we should not confuse skippers. The Secretariat referred to the history in NEAFC. He asked how many FMCs send error codes to vessels. Quality control depends on this.
The Chair asked if there was any possibility of reaching agreement at this meeting or whether decisions should be postponed until we have more experience. Norway thought the group should report on this issue to PECCOE. EU-Sweden felt that there was a limit to validation real time. It was necessary to determine main areas before going into too many details. The Chair would like to take up the question of error quotes at the next AGDC meeting.

The Chair wanted to sum up the discussion in order to be able to send something to PECCOE, even if there were no clear proposals from this meeting. She asked Norway if they could do that. EU-Denmark noted that the data elements in the two Norwegian papers (AGDC2011-01-03 and 04) are very similar to those in the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement XML format. We could investigate the similarity and if the difference was very small a decision could be made. One web service would then cover all data elements.

The Chair understood that this meant that it would be the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement format that will be the basis for the AGDC proposal. EU UK felt that that could be a concern as it may conflict with some of the NEAFC requirements and there would not be full coverage. Greenland saw a need for mapping the systems with respect to all users. That could be done by a smaller group. No decision was reached about what the mapping should cover but, as a basic minimum, the differences between the NEAFC, NAFO Schemes and the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement should be mapped. This should show the possibilities of aligning systems, not how the data should be used.

Responding to a question from EU-Sweden, the Chair suggested that the EU and Norway will map the differences and a small Group other user aspects. Greenland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and the EU volunteered to undertake the latter task. The first part will report to PECCOE in May, the second part to the next AGDC meeting.

Norway had prepared text to sum up the understanding in AGDC. It was distributed and presented on the screen. After considerable discussions the following understanding was agreed:

1. There is a common understanding that one of the implications for the Scheme is that the possibility for inspection authorities at sea has been weakened when inspecting vessels using electronic logbook in the RA. The reason is lack of access to official data from the logbook.
   a. Short term solution: To increase the frequency of CAT reports from weekly reports to daily reports.
   b. To define a template for a new report to be used in reporting daily of catch and fishing effort from a certain date in the near future to be used by CPs using electronic logbook (to enter into production from June 2012).
   c. Other reports should be modernized pointing more directly on the intended activity when active in the RA (to be used by CPs using electronic logbook from June 2012).
d. Articles relating to electronic logbook should be modernized (by Peccoe) to reflect the suggested changes in the Annexes.
e. There is a common understanding for modernization of the method for exchange of reports between CPs and secretary using xml, web service and NAF codes. The EU – NOR agreed method should be the basis for the proposal.

2. There is a common understanding that the methods for access to data for inspection authorities should be modernized. Methods were VMS and other reports are made available by logon to the secretary website or access to data by web service is considered to be a way forward. Such methods could be combined by pushing data using existing methods.
3. There is a common understanding that the introduction of electronic logbook calls for new error codes (RE).
4. There is a common understanding for the need of correcting reports and cancel reports. The method agreed upon by EU and Norway is regarded as a suitable method for handling cancellation and correction of reports.

The Chair asked if the Group could agree to send this document to PECCOE. This was agreed.

It was agreed that the result of the mapping by Norway and the EU should be considered intersessionally by the AGDC. The mapping will be finalised by mid-March 2011. Comments would be allowed to the end of March and the agreed text, together with the agreed result of the mapping, sent as a proposal to PECCOE. The NAFO Secretariat and Contracting Parties of NAFO should be invited to comment, both on the text and the mapping. One of the Contracting Parties of both NEAFC and NAFO should present the paper at the STACTIC meeting in May. It was also agreed that the EU and Norway will submit an educational description of the multiannual EU-Norway ERS Agreement to be presented at STACTIC and PECCOE meetings in May.

It was agreed that the NAF website should be updated with new codes used in the various systems.

5. Any other business

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) asked about a communication from Norway on submitting VMS data. He would like to discuss that. The Chair would allow this but there was no time during this meeting.

6. Report to the 2011 Annual Meeting

The Chair will send the main findings of the meeting to the Chair of PECCOE. The Report to the Annual Meeting will follow the established procedure.

7. Date and place of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 13 May 2011 at 10 at NEAFC HQ.
8. *Closure of the meeting*

The Chair closed the meeting at 4 pm, thanking all for a fruitful and productive meeting and wished everybody a safe trip home.