1. Opening of the meeting
The Chair, Gylfi Geirsson, Iceland, opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates. All Contracting Parties were represented.

The meeting was held in two sessions, on 30 September - 1 October and 11 November 2013.

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

3. Discussion and adoption of the agenda
Following discussions, minor amendments were done to the agenda. The agenda was adopted, as amended.

In this context, it was noted that the EU was of the opinion that discussing a letter from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea was not within the Terms of Reference for PECCOE unless the NEAFC Commission specifically asked it to deal with it. As other Contracting Parties were in favour of a proposal by Norway to discuss this issue under “any other business”, the EU requested that its opinion was duly noted.

There was a discussion on the need to have three-day meetings for PECCOE, rather than the traditional two day meetings. There was no conclusion to this discussion at this time.

4. Scheme of Control and Enforcement

4.1. Overall compliance evaluation

4.1.1. New format for the compliance review by the Secretariat
The Secretariat presented documents PE 2013-02-39 and PE 2013-02-40, which are drafts of a new format for reporting on compliance. The content was not new, or intended to be examined substantively, but this represented a different format that was being developed with the aim of reporting in the new format from next year.

It was agreed that the draft format was in general a positive development and that a further developed version of it could be used from next year. It was agreed to ask the Secretariat to continue the development of the format, taking account of points raised at the meeting and any additional points that Contracting Parties may submit in writing to the Secretariat following the meeting.

Among the points raised at the meeting were:
• The Scheme requires inspection presence for Contracting Parties that have 10 vessels in the Regulatory Area, and this should be reflected without dividing the Regulatory Area into different segments.
• Only cases where clear provisions of the Scheme or Recommendations are not followed, including matters under the responsibility of the Secretary, can be presented as non-compliance, regardless of decisions of Annual Meetings that are not formally reflected in legally binding form, e.g. decisions on an online application for Port State Control.
• The Secretariat should study the NAFO compliance review and see if there are points from that which would usefully be incorporated into the draft.

4.1.2. Implementation review by the CPs
The EU noted that document PE 2013-02-14 did not contain new information, but that it explained how the EU has transposed the Scheme into EU legislation. He considered it useful to continue to share this information with the other Contracting Parties.

4.2. Port State Control

4.2.1 Overall implementation evaluation
Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) presented document PE 2013-02-32, regarding Port State Control. He raised some questions regarding the need to use the PSC system in cases where a non-Contracting Party vessel was being used to process fish products in waters under Faroese jurisdiction, under a charter arrangement. His conclusion was that if the vessel making the original catches was from the port State, it served no purpose to use the PSC system even if it was a non-Contracting Party vessel that landed the products in the Faroe Islands following transhipment.

There was a lengthy discussion on whether the case described by Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) actually was one of a Faroese vessel making catches and transhipping to a Chinese vessel, or a Chinese vessel making the catches in a joint fishing operation. The point was made that the latter was consistent with the definitions in the Scheme. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) pointed out that this was a moot point. The activity in question was not in the Regulatory Area but in an area under Faroese jurisdiction. Faroese rules, including regarding the definition of “transhipment” therefore applied. Accordingly, the vessel making the catches was clearly the Faroese one and the Chinese vessel received transhipments.

Not all Contracting Parties agreed with Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), and some considered that the Faroese practices were not consistent with the Scheme. However, some noted that the aim of the Scheme was not to limit what Contracting Parties can do in waters under their own jurisdiction. The EU stated that the NEAFC labelling rules shall be complied with as well. It was noted that Chinese vessels also operated in Greenlandic waters under a chartering arrangement.

On the issue of cases where the catching vessel is from the port State, but tranships to a foreign vessel before landing, it was agreed that this should not be something that the PSC system should be involved with. Otherwise, the port State would in practice be asking itself to confirm that its catches were legal. It was noted that the Russian Federation was also already using this approach in practice. It was furthermore noted that the Russian Federation treated vessels flying the flag of a cooperating non-Contracting Party the same as Contracting Party vessels for the purposes of inspections in port. Given that they had been granted this
status, they did not inspect them in the same manner as vessels flying the flag of a non-Contracting Party that did not have cooperating status. The EU stated its opinion that according to the Scheme each non-Contracting Party landing had to be inspected.

The Secretariat presented document PE 2013-02-37, on the implementation of the Port State Control. It was noted that some of the issues identified as needing to be addressed were subject to proposals under agenda item 4.4.5.

4.2.2. Norwegian presentation on PSC
Norway noted that a recent case had raised awareness of the fact that there might be a loophole in the Port State Control System. Vessels could avoid NEAFC Port State Control by going to ports outside the Convention Area. In such cases, there were no legal obligations to use the system and a vessel which does not want the catches it has on board to be subjected to the system can legally avoid it in this way. This was an issue that PECCOE should look at, to try to close this loophole. One of the several issues that might be looked at in this context would be to invite cooperating non-Contracting Parties to designate ports in the system. It was pointed out that the ports of the current cooperating non-Contracting Parties were not the main ports of concern in this context.

It was noted that for catches taken in the Regulatory Area, a POR report had to be submitted, albeit not within the PSC, even if catches are landed outside the Convention Area. The Scheme had been amended to that end in 2012. However, for catches within national waters in the Convention Area, this did not apply, and there did indeed seem to be a loophole.

It was agreed that now that the issue had been identified, PECCOE might come back to this and discuss possible additional ways to address the issue at a later meeting.

4.3. Non-Contracting Parties

4.3.1. NCP activities in the RA
The Chair noted that this agenda item was included to enable PECCOE to react if any information becomes available soon before a meeting, or even at a meeting.

The EU pointed out that two years before, there had been an extraordinary meeting of PECCOE following activities of non-Contracting Party vessels in the EEZ of a Contracting Party. One of the outcomes of that process had been that Contracting Parties would inform each other, through the NEAFC Secretary, about NCP vessels authorised in their EEZ. He noted that both the Faroe Islands and Greenland had done this last year, but that this year they had not done so although there had been NCP vessels operating in their waters. Given the recent history, he considered it to be of concern that this has not been notified this year.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) supplied a list of non-Contracting Party vessels operating in the Greenlandic EEZ. Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) stated that regarding the Faroe Islands he would not respond to this at this meeting. All questions on this issue should be taken up with the Head of the Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) NEAFC delegation.
4.3.2. Cooperative NCP activities in the RA

4.3.2.1. Compliance evaluation of St Kitts and Nevis
The Secretariat presented document PE 2013-02-41, regarding St Kitts and Nevis’ compliance with NEAFC’s Recommendations. He noted that this was an overview over the first 8 months of the year and that there were no problems to report.

4.3.3. Cooperative NCP status

4.3.3.1. Application by New Zealand
The Chair presented document PE 2013-02-09, New Zealand’s application for renewal of cooperating non-Contracting Party status. He noted that this was similar to the document presented the year before.

It was agreed to recommend to the Annual Meeting that the cooperating non-Contracting Party status of New Zealand be renewed for the year 2014.

4.3.3.2. Application by Canada
The Chair presented document PE 2013-02-34, Canada’s application for renewal of cooperating non-Contracting Party status. He noted that Canada mentions that their fleet maintains an interest in fishing in the Regulatory Area.

The Secretary stated that there had been some informal contact with the Canadian authorities, where it had been pointed out to them that, according to the Scheme, cooperating non-Contracting Parties were expected to inform NEAFC before the end of October of an intention of utilising cooperation quotas for regulated resources. The Contracting Parties would presumably only consider the appropriateness of setting such quotas if they received such a notification.

It was agreed to recommend to the Annual Meeting that the cooperating non-Contracting Party status of Canada be renewed for the year 2014.

4.3.3.3. Application by St Kitts and Nevis
Norway presented, for information, document PE 2013-02-10, regarding activities of St Kitts and Nevis vessels in Norwegian waters. He noted that the experience had been good. There had been one violation, not related to the NEAFC Scheme, which had been dealt with appropriately by the flag State.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) noted that a St Kitts and Nevis vessel had also operated within Faroese waters, without any violations.

Norway noted that he had been somewhat critical of St Kitts and Nevis last year, and that it seemed to him that they had improved since then. In this context it was positive to receive an annual report from them, which was not formally required although there was a proposal before this meeting to make it mandatory in the future.

The Chair noted that it should be pointed out to St Kitts and Nevis that their application for renewal of cooperating non-Contracting Party status, document PE 2013-02-29, included in an annex the wording “in the event that the IDP690 is not installed on the vessel”. The provision referred to there only applied if there was a fault. Deploying a vessel that did not have this installed would not be acceptable, and had in fact not happened.
It was agreed to recommend to the Annual Meeting that the cooperating non-Contracting Party status of St Kitts and Nevis be renewed for the year 2014. The EU noted that due to issues being reviewed by its IUU team, they may have to revisit this recommendation at the Annual Meeting.

4.3.3.4. Application by Serbia

The Chair presented document PE 2013-02-42, Serbia’s application for cooperating non-Contracting Party status.

There was a discussion on the application where it was noted that many issues remained unclear. Serbia stated that they did not have fishing vessels, and it was both unclear what activities they anticipated in the Regulatory Area and how Serbia would ensure that its NEAFC obligations would be fulfilled. It was not clear whether Serbia had a functioning FMC.

It was agreed at the first session of the meeting that PECCOE could not at this time recommend to the Annual Meeting that Serbia be granted cooperating non-Contracting Party status. The Secretary was asked to write to Serbia to ask for more information, bringing to Serbia’s attention the requirements of the Scheme and what is expected of cooperating non-Contracting Parties. Further consideration of Serbia’s application would be made on the basis of any response received.

Before the second session began, a response from Serbia was received. It was noted that the Contracting Parties had had very little time to consider the letter before the second session began. It was also noted that the letter did not respond to all the issues that had been raised by the letter from the Secretariat. Furthermore, it explicitly mentions some points where Serbia is not able to fulfil its responsibilities as a non-Contracting Party, e.g. Serbia not having an FMC.

It was agreed that the new letter did not alter the conclusion of the first session, to recommend to the Annual Meeting that Serbia not be granted cooperating non-Contracting Party status at this time. For subsequent years, this could be reconsidered following further information from Serbia, including confirmation that Serbia has established all the necessary infrastructure to fulfil its obligations as a cooperating non-Contracting Party.

4.3.4. IUU activities in the RA

4.3.4.1. Review of NAFO, SEAFo and CCAMLR IUU lists

The Secretariat noted that there had been no formal notification from these organisations regarding changes to IUU listing. Furthermore, he noted that he was not aware of CCAMLR having decided to have reciprocity with NEAFC in IUU listing.

It was agreed that NEAFC should continue to share amendments in the IUU B list with these organisations on the basis of reciprocity and trust in each other’s internal process.

Before the second session of the meeting, a letter was received from IATTC containing its IUU list. It was agreed that before any action would be taken within NEAFC on this list there would be a need to formalise NEAFC’s relations with IATTC. This would include making both organisations familiar with the procedures used by the other regarding the IUU
listing of vessels, and ensuring that any relationship between the two organisations was based on reciprocity.

4.3.4.2. Possible amendment of IUU Lists A and B
The Chair noted that there was no vessel on the IUU A list. He noted that document PE 2013-02-45, a letter from Panama, was relevant to the IUU B list.

The Secretariat presented document PE 2013-02-45, and noted that it was only relevant regarding Alboran II. The IUU B list presented it as flying the flag of Panama, which the letter confirmed was no longer the case. The letter states that the vessel Eros Dos is “in a state of cancellation” and this is not a confirmation that it no longer flying the flag of Panama.

It was agreed to change the presentation of the IUU B list so that Alboran II would be considered as having an unknown flag. It was agreed to present the IUU B list to the Annual Meeting, as amended, noting that there was no proposal at this time to add or remove a vessel from the list.

The Secretary was asked to write to Panama and seek further information on the circumstances relevant to the changed status of the four vessels they mention in their letter.

Norway noted for information that he now had confirmation that a vessel that had previously been on the NEAFC IUU list (IMO 8421937), had now been scrapped.

4.4. Possible amendments of the Scheme
The Chair of AGDC presented document PE 2013-02-30, proposals by AGDC regarding error codes and identification of duplicates.

It was noted that these were highly technical proposals, and that it would be more appropriate for AGDC to propose this directly to the Annual Meeting, as this would result in the appropriate people making the presentation and responding to any questions.

In this context, it was noted that it was appropriate for PECCOE to consider all amendments to the Scheme. It was agreed to formally approve the proposals by AGDC, and encourage AGDC to present them to the Annual Meeting along with the information that they had been approved by PECCOE.

4.4.1. Possible amendment of species list
The Secretariat noted that the EU had before the meeting pointed out an inconsistency in the presentation of one species between the species lists in the Scheme and in the Recommendation on statistics. This would be addressed in the context of the Recommendation on statistics, as the presentation seemed to be appropriate in the Scheme.

The EU referred to document PE 2013-02-14 and explained that whatever amendment to the Scheme that is not stemming from a Recommendation of the Commission cannot be transposed in EU legislation. As the Scheme is a Recommendation in itself, only amendments based on subsequent Recommendations amending the Scheme can be transposed.

4.4.2. Proposed amendment of Art. 12 by the Russian Federation
The Chair noted that the document that had been intended as the basis for discussions under this agenda item had been withdrawn. Consequently, no points were raised under this agenda item.
4.4.3. **Proposed amendment of Art. 35 by Norway**
Norway presented document PE 2013-02-07, regarding amending Article 35 of the Scheme. He noted that this was intended to reflect discussions at the last PECCOE meeting, where there had been support for making amendments along these lines. The purpose was to provide a better basis for evaluating if the cooperating non-Contracting Parties were doing what is expected of them.

There was a discussion on the proposal, where some suggestions for amendments were made. Following the discussions, a revised version of the document was made.

**It was agreed** to propose to the Annual Meeting that Article 35 of the Scheme be amended as presented in document PE 2013-02-07 rev1.

4.4.4. **Proposal by Russia**
The Russian Federation presented document PE 2013-02-12, regarding only permitting registered users in the electronic Port State Control system.

There was general support for this initiative, but it was noted that at this time this could not be done through an amendment to the Scheme. This is due to the fact that the electronic system is not reflected at all in the Scheme. It was noted that the proposal to be discussed under agenda item 4.4.5 would address presenting the electronic system in the Scheme, and that the Russian proposal should be dealt with once a conclusion had been reached under item 4.4.5.

Following discussions under agenda item 4.4.5, **it was agreed** to propose to the Annual Meeting that it agree that the electronic PSC system should only be available to registered users from 1 February 2014.

4.4.5. **Practical issues relating to Port State Control**
The Chair presented document PE 2013-02-06, regarding presenting the electronic PSC system in the Scheme. He noted that this was based on the Secretariat’s experience of implementing the system.

The Secretariat explained each individual item in the proposal. The Secretary pointed out that the NEAFC Commission had formally agreed that only the online application should be used in the Port State Control, with the fax-based system being only used for back-up. However, there was no mention of an electronic system in the Scheme, which only reflected the fax-based system that the NEAFC Commission had agreed should no longer be used. This created a contradiction that needed to be addressed.

In discussions on the proposal, there was a general expression of support for the proposal. There was a need for the electronic system to be properly reflected in the Scheme.

However, some amendments were considered appropriate. It was considered appropriate to explicitly limit the opportunity of port states to make cancellations to specific circumstances, such as the presence of errors and the document becoming obsolete.

There was a lengthy discussion on the issue of only the author of the original document being able to amend it, rather than the master of the vessel or his representative being able to do this at all times. In this context, the Secretariat noted that the latter would require the Secretariat
to have up to date information on who should be considered a representative, which would certainly not be a simple task and could have significant legal implications.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) pointed out that this part of the proposal simply reflected the current functioning of the online application, and emphasised that it was working very well in practice and that there was no need to change this part of the proposal.

The EU noted that this could be seen as the online application not being fully in line with the system described in the Scheme, and that this could be of concern. It should be clarified further why the electronic PSC system could not be aligned with the Scheme as it is. In this context, it was pointed out that the online application by its nature did not fully go along the current wording of the Scheme. An obvious example would be that the Scheme stated that documents should be stamped, which was clearly not done when there were no paper documents to stamp. This had generally been seen as an improvement, rather than an inappropriate deviation from the Scheme, as could be seen from the Annual Meeting’s decision to use only the electronic system and not the system as described in the Scheme.

It was also pointed out that it caused some confusion that the presentation of the proposal was based not on the current Scheme, but on top of the proposal by the AHWGPSC.

The conclusion of the discussions was that a revised version of the document should be made, based on the current Scheme and taking account of comments made in these discussions. The revised document would be considered at the second session of the meeting. Contracting Parties wishing to make drafting suggestions would make them in writing in good time before that meeting.

At the second session of the meeting it was agreed that while there was agreement in principle on the need to present the electronic PSC in the Scheme, further work was needed on the exact drafting of language in that context. PECCOE should continue to work on this with the aim of making a formal proposal to the Annual Meeting in 2014.

5. Evaluation of the redfish fisheries special control measures

5.1. Irminger Sea
With a reference to the discussions on this issue at the April meeting of PECCOE, the Chair pointed out that he had realised that they had been largely based on a misunderstanding. The provisions requiring those who access data under the special control measures had been in earlier versions of the redfish management measures, but there were in fact no longer such provisions in the measures.

The Secretariat noted that following some study it had been realised that some of the “missing” messages that have been discussed in the past in PECCOE (i.e. messages that are sent to the Secretariat but do not arrive on the inspection platform) are the result of discrepancy between the delimitation of areas being used. The limits of the EEZ of Iceland by which significant redfish fisheries are conducted are in the form of a curved line. The NEAFC database presents this as a series of straight lines that sometimes cause messages to be considered by the database as being from outside the Regulatory Area. However, it was noted that this did not explain all the “missing” messages.
The Secretary pointed out that the WG on blue whiting had requested detailed information on the limits of the Contracting Parties EEZs, and that the coordinates that the Secretariat uses would be updated on the basis of the information received in this context.

The Secretariat noted that the areas that were closed to bottom fisheries used straight lines that should result in this not being an issue there.

It was noted that a way of minimising this problem would be to have the system accept messages from the Irminger Sea whenever a vessel sends them, even in cases where the database considers the message to be coming from outside the Regulatory Area.

The EU pointed out that fishing vessels only have to report when they are operating in the Regulatory Area and that when they do report one has to assume that they are in the Regulatory Area. Therefore the Secretariat should forward all reports and messages received without making a prior selection.

Iceland pointed out that from 20 May to 28 June, there had been 18 HOD letters regarding vessels from Spain, or the Spanish FMC, not performing in accordance with the Recommendation. He asked what the EU had done in this context. The EU responded by noting that a response had been sent to the Secretariat explaining that this had not been non-compliance, and that infringements should not be presumed. He notes that he would have no objection to the response being circulated.

Iceland stressed that for some years there had been a situation where the vessels are reporting as they should but some FMCs not functioning well enough for this to be forwarded according to the Scheme. This situation was noted in PECCOE reports going back to 2009. Much effort had apparently gone into rectifying this, including the Secretariat taking part in a training seminar, and it was disappointing that this did not suffice to solve the issue.

The EU pointed out that it had by far the biggest inspection presence in the Regulatory Area and realised that it was frustrating when the required information is not received. However, in its inspection activities the EU had noted such problems also from other Contracting Parties, and the EU should not be singled out as the only party with such problems to address.

Iceland also noted that pursuant to Article 7.f of the redfish measures, landed catches should be reported on a weekly basis. It was useful to compare this landings data with the weekly catch reports, but the landing data was not always available. In this context it was pointed out that not all Contracting Parties had catches landed every week, and that in many cases catches from several vessels were landed together following transhipments.

5.2. ICES I & II
No points were raised under this agenda item.

6. Annual Meeting issues referred to PECCOE

6.1. Results of AHWGPSC meetings
The Chair presented document PE 2013-02-23, which had the results of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Port State Control (AHWG PSC). He explained each proposed amendment to the Scheme in detail.
The document was generally welcomed, and it was acknowledged that AHWGPSC had done extensive work and overcome difficult obstacles to reach this conclusion.

Some issues were raised, which Contracting Parties considered as needing to be addressed before an agreement was reached on proposing the amendments to the Annual Meeting.

One such issue was the entry into force of the amendments. It was noted that the purpose of the amendments was to harmonise the NEAFC PSC with the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA). Although all Contracting Parties had either ratified the PSMA or declared their intention to do so in the near future, the fact remained that it had not entered into force and as some Contracting Parties had not yet ratified it they would not be formally bound by it even if it was in force. Some Contracting Parties stressed that it was not appropriate to use the NEAFC Scheme to make legally binding the provisions of an international agreement that had not yet gone through the domestic ratification process.

There was a lengthy discussion on this point where it was noted that the amendments would have to enter into force for all Contracting Parties at the same time. Some Contracting Parties preferred to set a fixed date for the entry into force, although there was not consensus on how far into the future that date should be, and other Contracting Parties stated that it might be sensible to link the entry into force directly with the PSMA becoming legally binding for all Contracting Parties.

In this context it was also pointed out that the proposals contained extensive amendments to the Scheme and that consequently it would not be a simple task for all Contracting Parties to transcribe the amendments into domestic rules. For that reason, in addition to the legal status of the PSMA, entry into force in the very near future was by some not considered as a realistic option.

The conclusion of the discussions on this was that there was no consensus in PECCOE regarding when the amendments should enter into force, but that this should not prevent PECCOE from making proposals on the substance to the Annual Meeting. It was agreed that it would be pointed out to the Annual Meeting that a decision would have to be made on when the amendments would enter into force, and that PECCOE did not have specific proposals in that context.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) suggested amendments to the proposals coming from AHWGPSC, regarding identifying the name of the relevant transport vessel and some related information into the PSC forms. There was a lengthy discussion on this issue. The conclusion was that Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) agreed to withdraw its proposal for now to prevent it from causing a delay in the proposals from AHWGPSC being proposed to the Annual Meeting. He stated that he would take this issue up again at a later PECCOE meeting.

The Russian Federation stated that it was not in agreement with Articles 20bis and 38bis as they were presented in the proposal from the AHWGPSC, and suggested amendments to these Articles. There were lengthy discussions on this issue, and a friends-of-the-Chair group was formed to produce a draft (PE 2013-02-49) of how Articles 20bis and 38bis could be presented in the document that would be proposed to the Annual Meeting. It was agreed that amendments should be made to document PE 2013-02-23 to reflect document PE 2013-02-49.
There was a discussion on the form of the proposal from the AHWGPSC. It was noted that the form was simply a “track changes” version of the Scheme, showing the proposed amendments. **It was agreed** that the formal proposal from PECCOE to the Annual Meeting should be in the form of a proposal that itemises the individual amendments proposed, with a “track changes” version of the relevant parts of the Scheme as an annex for information. **It was agreed** to instruct the Chair to make such a document, based on the revised version of document PE 2013-02-23.

At the second session of the meeting, the Chair presented document PE 2013-02-50. It was noted that the document still included square brackets, as there was still no consensus on when the amendments proposed should enter into force.

**It was agreed** to forward document PE 2013-02-50 to the Annual Meeting as a proposal by PECCOE. The Chair stated that in presenting the document to the Annual Meeting he would point out the remaining square brackets and explain why they are there.

The Chair pointed out that much work had been carried out to reach this conclusion, and he thanked all the Contracting Parties for their contributions to that work. In particular, he thanked the EU and Norway in this context.

6.2. Results of AHWGERS meetings

The Chair presented the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on an Electronic Reporting System (AHWGERS). He noted that there had not been as much progress as he had hoped for. He pointed out that the report listed the main achievements that had been made so far.

It was noted that the Contracting Parties were at varying stages in being ready to implement ERS, with some being already ready and others had on-going work to become ready. It is expected that all Contracting Parties will be ready to implement ERS not later than 2015 or 2016.

**It was agreed** that although there was no consensus yet on several key issues regarding ERS, the Secretariat would have to start preparing to ensure that whatever system would be decided upon could be implemented properly. For this to be possible, it would be necessary to give an indication of what the system will look like. Likewise, AGDC would need there to be conclusions on various issues in order to do the necessary work on technical solutions to make the system function.

Among the issues where a conclusion is needed was data storage, which is related to pull and push mechanisms, and was considered to be one of the main obstacles to moving forward.

**It was agreed** to propose to the Annual Meeting that the AHWGERS meet again next year to continue the work. The aim would be to get a result in 2014. The Chair was instructed to ensure that in his presentation to the Annual Meeting he highlight the issues where there is agreement in principle, and highlight the problem areas where instructions from the Annual Meeting would be helpful.

6.3. Discussion of the review of the regulation on bottom fishing

The Chair presented document PE 2013-02-03, a Chair’s proposal to amend Article 11 of the Scheme, and document PE 2013-04 (the annex to the proposal). He explained that this was done on the basis of previous discussions in PECCOE.
There was a lengthy discussion on this issue. Some issues regarding possible changes to the proposal were discussed, including whether FMCs would have to be specified as the actors or whether Contracting Parties could leave this to other agencies. Other drafting suggestions were also made.

The EU questioned the need to make amendments along these lines at all, in light of there not being indications of a problem that needed addressing in implementing the bottom fisheries regulation. He stated that this should not be seen as a disagreement on whether a solution should be found, but rather on whether there was a problem to be solved. The EU stressed that the purpose of the VMS was to support at-sea inspections, and that the cost of amending VMS can only be justified if a significant inspection presence in the Regulatory Area can be guaranteed by Contracting Parties. Although he had no fundamental problem with the proposal, which would in any case need some redrafting, he could not support it as he did not see the need for it in the absence of clear cases showing an implementation problem.

Others considered the proposal useful in ensuring that the bottom fishing regulation is properly implemented. Although at-sea inspections were very useful, there could never be comprehensive presence of inspectors. The VMS system should be used to monitor vessels that could potentially breach the borders of relevant areas, and not only to support at-sea inspections.

The Chair pointed out that when he had presented the argument that the EU was putting forward to the Annual Meeting last year, he had been ridiculed by one NEAFC delegation and he did not wish to come back to the Annual Meeting with a repetition of that. He furthermore noted that his proposal was based on decisions that had already been made in previous PECCOE meeting, as reflected in the reports of these meetings. In light of previous PECCOE conclusions he had seen the task as being how this should be done rather than whether it should be done.

The Chair noted that this issue needed further discussion before any proposal could be made to the Annual Meeting from PECCOE on this. The draft documents would be revised on the basis of the drafting suggestions made at the meeting, and PECCOE would come back to this at the second session of this meeting. The Chair encouraged the Contracting Parties to send in written proposals for amending the relevant documents well in advance of the second session of this PECCOE meeting.

The Chair further noted that document PE 2013-02-36 was a draft response of PECCOE to the Annual Meeting on issues regarding the bottom fishing regulation. The draft was based on document PE 2013-02-11, and in the absence of consensus on how to deal with that document there would also be no consensus on how to deal with document PE 2013-02-36. He would therefore simply present to the Annual Meeting the fact that there was no consensus in PECCOE on these issues unless a consensus could be reached during the second session of the meeting.

At the second session of the meeting, the EU presented documents PE 2013-02-52 and PE 2013-02-53, which set out the EU’s comments to the previous documents by the Chair. In discussions on these documents, it became clear that there was no consensus on the EU’s proposals. Some Contracting Parties supported them, but others did not consider them appropriate.
Following further discussions, it was agreed to present a proposal to the Annual Meeting based on documents PE 2013-02-52 and PE 2013-02-53, but with some amendments. The time intervals were set at 4 hours. Furthermore, the need to have annual reports on the implementation of these provisions will be discussed at the next PECCOE meeting.

7. Proposal by Norway to introduce sorting grids on nets used on shrimp fisheries
Norway presented document PE 2013-02-08, a proposal to make sorting grids mandatory in shrimp fisheries. He noted that the proposal included square brackets where the distance between the bars was specified, and that he was flexible on this point.

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the Russian Federation supported the proposal.

The EU had some drafting suggestions, regarding both the distance between the bars and the mesh size to be used. He stated a preference for having these identical to the corresponding provisions in the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement measures (22 mm and 40 mm respectively). As the problem only occurs in the high seas of the Barents Sea, the geographical scope of the proposed measure should be limited to the part of the Regulatory Area situated in ICES subareas I and II.

Iceland stated that he had no substantive problem with the proposal. However, he noted that the proposal was aimed at addressing the impact of fishing activities on other components of the marine ecosystem than the target stocks. He therefore considered PECMAS to be the appropriate body to deal with the proposal. He did not find it appropriate for PECCOE to deal with it until such a time as PECMAS had first formally concluded that this would be useful. PECCOE could then address control and enforcement aspects before a proposal is made to the Annual Meeting.

Norway considered this to be a technical issue that could just as reasonably be dealt with by PECCOE as PECMAS. He considered the Icelandic position as causing an unnecessary delay in implementing these measures, which everyone seemed to support in principle.

The Chair noted that in the absence of consensus, no proposal to the Annual Meeting from PECCOE would be made on this issue.

8. Data security and confidentiality
8.1. Possible amendment of Appendix 1 to Annex IX
8.2. Possible amendment of recommendation 13:2005
8.3. Information and data classification

The Chair of AGDC presented documents PE 2013-02-31, PE 2013-02-35, PE 2013-02-38, PE 2013-02-24, PE 2013-02-25, PE 2013-02-26 and PE 2013-02-27. She explained that these were being presented primarily as it was important for PECCOE to be aware of their contents. AGDC would make proposals as appropriate directly to the Annual Meeting, but PECCOE could make comments to ask AGDC to make amendments to the proposals.

The Chair drew particular attention to the fact that document PE 2013-02-31 included an overview of who was responsible for what and document PE 2013-02-27 covered the data classification, both of which was very relevant for PECCOE and should ensure clarity. She also noted that some of the documents would be presented to the Annual Meeting as parts of a large overarching document regarding data security and confidentiality.
It was agreed to support AGDC presenting the documents presented to the Annual Meeting, without making any comments by PECCOE.

9. International cooperation

9.1. AGDC as a joint NAFO/NEAFC working group
The Secretary pointed out, for information, that although he had not yet received a formal notification of this, his understanding was that the NAFO Annual Meeting had formally adopted the proposals of the joint NEAFC/NAFO Working Group, and thereby agreed to set up a joint group with NEAFC that would be a successor group to AGDC.

9.2. FAO – Global Record of Fishing Vessels
The Chair noted that the FAO had been invited to make a presentation to PECCOE on its work on the Global Record of Fishing Vessels.

FAO (represented by Alicia Mosteiro) made a presentation on this work. She noted that the global record would cover fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels. She noted that FAO was now developing a prototype of the global record, which would not become publicly available but would be presented to FAO COFI next year.

She pointed out that she was hoping that NEAFC could become a data provider for the prototype. This would involve providing data such as vessel ID, licensing information, PSC information, MCS information. Also, this could include information deriving from inspections (port, at-sea, in market), sightings, infractions, detentions, sanctions, IUU listing, etc. She stressed that FAO was not looking to gather confidential data. She referred to extensive work undertaken to examine ways of transferring relevant data from the EU fleet register to the Global Record.

FAO stated that the intention was to use NEAFC data to show how the system works, before it would be formally established next year. She noted that when the system had been established, the FAO members would become the data providers. It was for this preparatory stage that NEAFC was being approached.

There was a discussion on this issue. The conclusion was to ask the Secretariat to contact FAO and seek an exhaustive list of the types of data that was being asked for. NEAFC would then consider the response and make a decision on the possible provision of data.

At the second session of the meeting, the Secretariat presented document PE 2013-02-55 which contains a further response from FAO. Following some discussions, it was agreed that the Secretariat should be asked to continue working with FAO on this, with the aim of providing FAO with the appropriate data. The Secretariat will not transfer any data in this context until it has received a clear authorisation from the Contracting Parties to do so.

9.3. EU/FAO –iMarine Project
The Secretariat stated that due to the limited time available at the meeting, he would make due with simply informing PECCOE that the Secretariat continues to cooperate with the iMarine project, which had been introduced to PECCOE previously.

9.4. Cooperation with the International MCS Network
The Secretariat pointed out that it has been cooperating with the IMCSN for several years. Originally, membership of the IMCSN was limited to States only, with organisations such as NEAFC cooperating with it rather than being members. The IMCSN has since changed its statutes, making membership by organisations such as NEAFC possible. The Secretariat wished to get clarification on whether PECCOE preferred for NEAFC to maintain for now unchanged its relationship with the IMCSN, or whether PECCOE wished the Secretariat to start preparing for becoming a member of the network.

It was noted that the Fish Crime Working Group of INTERPOL had become a member of the IMCSN. Following some discussions, it was agreed that NEAFC’s relationship should for now remain unchanged, and PECCOE will discuss later the possibility of seeking full membership.

10. Any other business

10.1. Review of the agenda structure
Due to a lack of time, this issue was postponed until the next meeting of PECCOE.

10.2. Experience with discard ban in the Regulatory Area
Due to a lack of time, this issue was postponed until the next meeting of PECCOE.

10.3. Questions by ITLOS
The EU reiterated its opinion that discussing a letter from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea was not within the Terms of Reference for PECCOE. He further noted that this was already being dealt with by the Contracting Parties themselves.

The Secretary confirmed that the letter from ITLOS had been circulated as a HOD letter.

The Chair noted that there was no consensus on making any proposal by PECCOE on this issue, and that there was therefore no point in having further discussions on it at this time.

11. Report to the 2013 Annual Meeting
The report was adopted on 11 November 2013.

12. Closure of the meeting
The Chair thanked all delegates for their participation in the meeting, and wished everyone a safe journey home. He then closed the meeting.