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COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

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REPORT OF CWP INTERSESSIONAL MEETING: SUB-GROUP ON PUBLICATION OF INTEGRATED CATCH STATISTICS FOR THE ATLANTIC

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REPORT TO CWP-19 OF THE MEETING OF THE CWP SUB-GROUP ON PUBLICATION OF INTEGRATED CATCH STATISTICS FOR THE ATLANTIC

10-11 FEBRUARY 2000, ICES HQ, COPENHAGEN

1. Opening

The CWP chairperson, D. Cross, opened the meeting of the Sub-group and outlined the background to the meeting and the recommendation in paragraph 89 of the report of CWP-18 which reads as follows:

“CWP found good grounds for further exploring the proposal of a single publication in electronic form of the entire database of North Atlantic catch statistics. CWP therefore recommended that Eurostat, FAO, ICCAT, ICES and NAFO investigate the possibility for producing a publication following the ICES proposal. ICES undertook to take the lead on this issue.”

H. Lassen welcomed participants to ICES.

Participants:

T. Amaratunga (NAFO)

W. Brodie (NAFO)

D. Cross (Eurostat), Chairperson

R. Grainger (FAO), CWP Secretary

H. Lassen (ICES)

P. Miyake (ICCAT)

H. Sparholt (ICES)

M. Zarecki (ICES)

2. Identification of data sets

It was agreed to proceed with a joint dissemination on CD ROM of catch statistics for the Atlantic Ocean comprising individual data sets from different agencies and a first attempt at an integrated data set.

ICES and ICCAT catch statistics have been loaded as test data sets into the Fishstat Plus dissemination database system which has been developed by FAO. A procedure which will allow agencies to update their data sets in Fishstat is under development and will be released soon. It was agreed that Fishstat, which allows different data sets with their own data structures to be accessed through a user-friendly interface, provides a convenient vehicle for dissemination of the Atlantic catch statistics on CD ROM and as a downloadable system on the Internet.

It was agreed that the following data sets would be included:

- FAO annual nominal catch statistics by country, species and major fishing area for all Atlantic areas for 1950-1998
- ICES annual nominal catch statistics by country, species and statistical division for major fishing area 27 for 1973-1998
- NAFO annual nominal catch statistics by country, species and statistical division for major fishing area 21 for 1960-1998
- CECAF annual nominal catch statistics by country, species and statistical division for major fishing area 34 for 1972-1998
- GFCM annual nominal catch statistics by country, species and statistical division for major fishing area 37 for 1972-1998

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- ICSEAF annual nominal catch statistics by country, species and statistical division for major fishing area 47 for 1970-1987 (ideally also data for years since 1987 if possible).
 - ICCAT quarterly nominal catch and discard statistics by country, fishing gear, species, FAO major fishing area, ICCAT statistical division and 5° x 5° rectangle for the ICCAT convention area for 1950-1998.
 - Subject to the agreement of CCAMLR, catch statistics for the Atlantic Antarctic in whatever form CCAMLR wished to present them, for the years 1977/78-1998/99.
- It was agreed not to include statistics of other agencies (e.g. IBSFC, NEAFC, NASCO, IWC) in this first trial integrated data set given that most of those statistics are potentially covered by the above-mentioned statistics. However, consideration should be given to including them in subsequent releases.

3. Development of trial integrated data set and elimination of overlaps

The above-mentioned data sets contain overlaps. It was agreed that the trial integrated data set with no overlaps in coverage would be developed comprising the following:

- ICCAT annual nominal catch statistics by country, species (for tuna and tuna-like species only), FAO major fishing area, ICCAT statistical division and, where available, by 5° x 5° rectangle for the ICCAT convention area for 1950-1998 (the first integrated data set will not include discards).
- ICES annual nominal catch statistics by country, species (with the exclusion of tuna and tuna like species) and statistical division for major fishing area 27 for 1973-1998. FAO nominal catch statistics for area 27 would be included for the years 1950-1972.
- NAFO annual nominal catch statistics by country, species (with the exclusion of tuna and tuna like species) and statistical division for major fishing area 21 for 1960-1998. FAO nominal catch statistics for area 21 would be included for the years 1950-1959.
- CECAF annual nominal catch statistics (including aquaculture production until these are separated) by country, species (with the exclusion of tuna and tuna like species) and statistical division for major fishing area 34 for 1972-1998. FAO nominal catch statistics for area 34 would be included for the years 1950-1971.
- GFCM annual nominal catch statistics (including aquaculture production until these are separated) by country, species (with the exclusion of tuna and tuna like species) and statistical division for major fishing area 37 for 1972-1998. FAO nominal catch statistics for area 37 would be included for the years 1950-1971.
- Subject to the agreement of CCAMLR, annual nominal catch statistics by country, species (with the exclusion of tuna and tuna like species) and statistical division for major fishing area 48 for 1978-1998 (split years 1977/78 -1997/98). FAO nominal catch statistics for area 48 would be included for the years 1950-77.
- FAO annual nominal catch statistics by country, species (with the exclusion of tuna and tuna like species) and major fishing area for all Atlantic areas not included above for 1950-1998.

The integrated data set should have the following fields:

- Agency (data owner) – This field need not be shown in all screens.
- Country – A common country classification and coding will be required, but it may be necessary to allow different agencies to use different country names for the same entity (code). Alternatively, only ISO 3-alpha codes or abbreviated country names will be used. This requires further consideration.

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- Species – a common classification will be necessary and it is proposed to use the list with Inter-agency 3-alpha identifier maintained by FAO.
 - FAO major fishing area – ICCAT 5° x 5° rectangles will be assigned to FAO areas, and in ambiguous cases this will depend on where in the rectangle most catches are taken
 - Sub-areas/divisions according to agency classification
 - 5° x 5° rectangle – for ICCAT data only
 - Catch by year in tonnes – utilising existing Fishstat symbols (e.g. for data not separately available, negligible quantities)

It is recognised that this trial integrated data set will probably not be a harmonised and consistent record of nominal catches. However, it will be an important first step in the integration of regional (mainly STATLANT) and FAO NS statistics in a systematic way in pursuit of a data set which will be as complete, detailed and accurate as possible by utilising the best data available, in line with the development planned within the Fisheries Global Information System (FIGIS) project. It will be essential to include “read me” texts or notes within Fishstat explaining the purpose of the trial integrated data set and warning of the inconsistencies and lack of harmonisation in this first attempt. It is hoped that the first trial integrated data set will make more explicit the inconsistencies and thus focus attention on their resolution.

4. Publication policy

Each agency will be provided with a master CD ROM to disseminate as it wishes. Some agencies will require the approval of their governing bodies prior to dissemination. The possibility of publication as a joint initiative of the CD ROM (with logos of all contributing agencies on it) will be investigated by ICES, ICCAT, FAO and NAFO, including the related costs. This will be discussed and decided by correspondence. Agencies are responsible for the individual time series which originated with them and for which they are data owners. The responsibility for the design and structure of the integrated data set rests with the CWP Sub-group on Publication of Integrated Catch Statistics for the Atlantic, not with any one agency.

Eurostat reported that following the concern expressed at the CWP-18 Session that data available at no cost from responsible agencies were being compiled and sold by Eurostat, it had reviewed its policy on the dissemination of fishery statistics. Requests for data from privileged users (basically those national and international organisations contributing to Eurostat's programme of fishery statistics and journalists) are processed free-of-charge. Requests for other users of data are subject to a charge for the processing of the data. However, where it was known that the data were available free-of-charge from another agency, the customer is advised as to the other source of the data and is given the option of continuing with the processing by Eurostat with the appropriate charge or contacting the other agency for the information. The Sub-Group thanked Eurostat for this clarification of its dissemination policy and expressed satisfaction that it did not conflict with the policies of the other agencies.

The ICES Secretariat sought the advice of the other agencies on the policy to adopt with regard to requests for data from consultants. With the availability of data from several sources it was necessary for the agencies to adopt similar policies with regard to the availability of the data and the charges to be made for supplying the data. It was agreed that this would be a topic for inclusion in the agenda of the CWP-19 agenda."

5. Publication plan and timescale

Each agency will provide its data as listed in 2 above to FAO for inclusion in Fishstat as separate data sets and to Eurostat for updating the Fame¹ database. ICCAT needs to revise its Catdis data extensively before preparing the data for inclusion in the trial integrated data set and this is expected to be completed by the end of May 2000. ICCAT also needs to assign some data to statistical divisions (e.g. for some small tuna and for Mediterranean tunas). Eurostat will prepare the trial integrated data set as described in 3 above with the exception of the ICCAT data and provide it to FAO for loading into Fishstat by mid April for initial testing. Eurostat will add in the ICCAT data to the integrated data set when available and provide this to FAO. FAO will prepare a test version of Fishstat containing all the data sets and provide this to all agencies by late June 2000. Following feedback from all agencies, a final version will be prepared in late August in time for release at ICES, ICCAT and NAFO annual meetings in the autumn.

FAO will investigate the possibility of including statistical maps and explanatory notes within Fishstat.

6. Other business

Elasmobranch statistics

Developments in agency programmes in relation to elasmobranch statistics were reported.

Eurostat reported that it intended to present to the next meeting of its Working Group "Fishery Statistics" proposals to add to the corresponding EU legislation the Elasmobranch species being added to the STATLANT 21A, 27A, 34A and 37A questionnaires. There is a simplified European Council procedure for achieving this but the large number of species being proposed for adding to the three latter questionnaires might be an obstacle to the use of this procedure. Other members of the Sub-Group shared the concern as to the large number of species involved, the resultant impact on the national data collecting systems and the difficulty of identification of the species. The Sub-Group recommended that the agencies concerned should give careful consideration to the necessity for such extensive species lists."

ICCAT started collecting catch, effort and biological data on sharks caught incidentally to the tuna fisheries since 1994. It identified species of sharks caught by tuna fisheries, selected 8 pelagic sharks and 15 coastal shark species for reporting. The reporting forms have been developed and sent to over 80 countries. At present, the data have been collected from over 20 countries. The estimates of historical catches have also been tried. Good catch and CPUE series data are now available on some oceanic shark species from several fisheries.

Some assessments have been tried. However, as ICCAT has mandate only on by-catch fishes of tuna fisheries, it resolved that FAO should take initial role as the center of the data collection. At the same time, since 1994, ICCAT has been asking that all the regional agencies take serious consideration in collecting data on sharks. Scientists involved in ICCAT research also took active role in participating process of developing FAO International Plan of Action for Management of Sharks and actually implementing the duties of regional agencies defined in the IPOA.

¹ Forecasting, Analysis and Modelling Environment

ICES will adopt the species coding for Elasmobranch fishes as described in the Report of the Study Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (ICES CM 1997/G:2, ICES CM 1998/G:12, ICES CM 1999/G:11 (Section 6.2) following ICES resolutions (C.Res. 1997/4:4, C.Res. 1998/4:3, and C.Res. 1999/4G02). The ICES General Secretary has informed FAO asking to have these coding added to the Statlant 27A form.

Identification posters for sharks has been produced by Bundesforschungsanstalt für Fischerei, Germany, NAFO, EC, FAO, New England Aquarium, Boston, USA, Centre for Marine Conservation, Washington D.C. USA and ICES. This has been done to enable the various reporting institutions in the ICES member countries to identify the various Elasmobranch fishes to the level given in the Statlant 27A addendum. A similar poster for rays and skates is also being produced.

For discussions at CWP-19 there are two questions regarding these new codes. The first one is on overlap between old and new Elasmobranch codes. For instance, the definition of the codes SKA and RAJ seem to overlap. The second question is to initiate a discussion on the response ICES receives to these new data requests, i.e. whether the reporting units in ICES member countries are able to assign the necessary effort for reporting Elasmobranch catches in details as requested.

FAO made an addendum to STATLANT 27A including 37 new codes according to the ICES resolutions. These new codes have after some discussion internally in ICES and between ICES and FAO been agreed to be appropriate. The addendum to Statlant 27A was sent out for the first time in January 1999 for reporting 1998 catches. In January 2000 a slightly revised addendum was sent out for reporting 1999 catches.

Similarly FAO sent an addendum with an expanded list of shark species for the STATLANT 21 questionnaires. Similar expanded lists will be attached to the STATLANT questionnaires for areas 34 and 37 that will be despatched in April 2000. Some concern was expressed about the large number of elasmobranch species which are proposed for inclusion in the STATLANT inquiries for some areas, and for areas 34 and 37 in particular. It would be desirable to consult relevant agencies for their advice on this. It was noted that there are overlaps in classification of several elasmobranch species items such as SKA, RAJ, SRX, BAI. Proposals for rationalisation should be discussed at CWP-19.

NAFO Scientific Council agreed it was important that the species for which data are required be printed on the STATLANT 21 A and B questionnaires. The list of elasmobranchs forwarded to CWP Secretariat for reprinting the STATLANT forms for year 2000 is shown in Table 1.

The Scientific Council reviewed distribution information from surveys on sharks in NAFO Sub-area 3. It was noted shark species are by-catches of the Greenland halibut fishery and the total catch is small. The main retained species is the black dogfish, the main discard is the boreal shark. Since 1996 the retained proportion of black dogfish has increased noticeably, as well as the proportion of total sharks. Black dogfish is the species with the highest biomass index and is found in the deepest waters. Its length range was mainly between 50 and 80 cm, with a mode around 62-63 cm. There was no evident geographic pattern in the length distribution observed during the studied period.

The Scientific Council noted that a manual for elasmobranch identification prepared by the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans for the use by fishery observers would be useful for wider application. With the development of the Precautionary Approach, collection of data on the elasmobranch fisheries, distribution and biology should be accorded particular attention. It was agreed past and current data on these species should

be reviewed at the June 2000 Meeting of the Scientific Council and a Designated Expert for elasmobranchs was appointed.

Effort definition

Paragraph 106 of the report of CWP-18 unfortunately contains an error. The text should read:

“NAFO inter-sessionally had proposed a new definition for the measure of effort for boat seines. CWP noted responses from regional organisations had suggested minor editorial changes. Accordingly, NAFO presented to CWP the new definition for adoption. CWP recommended acceptance of the new global definition which should read as follows: “Boat seines (Danish etc). Effort measure: hours fishing. Definition: number of times the gear was set or shot, times the estimated mean set or shot duration.”

This will be officially noted at CWP-19 and the correct definition included in the report of that session.

CWP-19 planning meeting

The possibility of holding a planning meeting for CWP-19 immediately prior to the planned meeting of regional fishery bodies in February 2001 will be investigated.

Items which might be included in the agenda for CWP-19 include the following:

- Elasmobranch statistics – Overview of agency activities and coordination of activities in relation to CITES and the IPOA-SHARKS²
- Aids to elasmobranch species identification
- Elasmobranch species classification
- Joint dissemination of fishery statistics
- Charging and dissemination policies for supply of data
- Discard data availability and dissemination

² The FAO International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks

Table 1: The list of elasmobranchs forwarded by NAFO to the CWP Secretariat for reprinting the STATLANT 21 form for year 2000.

CODE	SHORT NAME CATEGORY	COMMON NAME	LATIN NAME	ABBRE.	
462	PORBEAGLE	PORBEAGLE	<i>LAMNA NASUS</i>	POR	3
464	SHORTFIN MAKO	SHORTFIN MAKO SHARK	<i>ISURUS OXYRINCHUS</i>	SMA	3
470	SHARPNOSE SHARK	ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE SHARK	<i>RHIZOPRIONODON TERRAENOVAE</i>	RHT	3
472	BLACK DOGFISH	BLACK DOGFISH	<i>CENTROSCYLLIUM FABRICII</i>	CFB	3
473	BOREAL SHARK	BOREAL (GREENLAND) SHARK	<i>SOMNIOUSUS MICROCEPHALUS</i>	GSK	3
474	BASKING SHARK	BASKING SHARK	<i>CETORHINUS MAXIMUS</i>	BSK	3
452	SPINY DOGFISH	SPINY (PICKED) DOGFISH	<i>SQUALUS ACANTHIAS</i>	DGS	3
480	LITTLE SKATE	LITTLE SKATE	<i>RAJA ERINACEA</i>	RJD	3
484	BARNDOR SKATE	BARNDOR SKATE	<i>RAJA LAEVIS</i>	RJL	3
487	WINTER SKATE	WINTER SKATE	<i>RAJA OCELLATA</i>	RJT	3
488	THORNY SKATE	THORNY SKATE (STARRY RAY)	<i>RAJA RADIATA</i>	RJR	3
489	SMOOTH SKATE	SMOOTH SKATE	<i>RAJA SENTA</i>	RJS	3
490	SPINYTAIL SKATE	SPINYTAIL (SPINETAIL RAY)	<i>RAJA (BATHYRAJA) SPINICAUDA</i>	RJQ	3