



Executive Summary of the NAFO report to UNGA 66/68, April 2012

In line with existing international instruments, NAFO and its Contracting Parties continue their efforts to maintain international cooperation in the northwest Atlantic. In 2007 NAFO adopted amendments to its Convention which expand beyond a sustainable use of the commercial resources by committing to protect the associated marine ecosystems from adverse fisheries effects. To date 3 Contracting Parties have ratified the amended Convention and the process is ongoing.

NAFO conducted a Performance Review in 2011 and the Panel commended NAFO for its performance, particularly in recent years.

In the context of developing an ecosystem approach towards fisheries management, NAFO has prohibited bottom trawling on sensitive habitats (18 areas have been closed), banned shark finning and improved sea turtle protection. NAFO has adopted a number of measures to assess and minimize the impact of fisheries on bycatch species, particularly benthic fauna such as corals and sponges. Encounter protocols have been developed and thresholds have been reviewed and reduced. NAFO continues with the Roadmap for Developing an Ecosystem Approach to NAFO Fisheries. NAFO has established its fishing footprint. As well, NAFO Contracting Parties conduct ongoing research applicable to stock assessment requirements and VME initiatives.

In 2004 NAFO adopted the Precautionary Approach framework and since then precautionary reference points have been established for eight stocks of twenty under NAFO responsibility. Two stocks presently under moratorium are being recovered under a Conservation Plan and Rebuilding Strategy and one stock uses a management strategy evaluation to set the TAC.

NAFO has a Joint Inspection and Surveillance Scheme that allow on-board inspections of fishing vessels and a comprehensive Observer Scheme which are outlined in the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (NCEM). Fishing regulations contained in the NCEM are reviewed and updated annually. In 2009 comprehensive Port State measures were implemented. VMS has been in use at NAFO since 2003 and position and catches are reported on a regular basis.

NAFO continues to work with NEAFC on the maintenance of an IUU list. This information is also shared with other RFMOs. As well one stock of pelagic redfish is managed in cooperation with NEAFC.

NAFO maintains good international cooperation with other RFMOs and agencies such as CWP, FIRMS, ASFA. NAFO has participated at UN conferences, Deep Sea Guidelines, D4 Science and the VME Database Workshop. NAFO is considering becoming a member of the International Network of MCS. NAFO collaborates with ICES with several joint working groups, participates in the NEAFC AGDC and is an observer at other RFMO meetings and other IGOs.