

Officials of the Spanish and Canadian Governments met at Ottawa on August 6 and 7 to discuss fisheries matters of mutual concern to the two countries.

Both sides recognized that it was imperative to ensure strict fulfillment of obligations assumed under the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF), particularly in light of serious declines in the stocks. The Spanish officials indicated that they had recently met with representatives of the Spanish fishing fleet to bring about improved compliance with ICNAF regulations and increased biological sampling of catches to help assess the state of the stocks and the yields they can support. It was agreed that under the ICNAF Scheme of Joint International Enforcement steps would be taken to enable Spanish fisheries inspectors to work with Canadian inspectors in securing improved compliance with ICNAF regulations. A new system of rapid communication between Canadian and Spanish fisheries officials will be put into operation to deal with possible violations. Early consideration will be given to designating a Spanish authority in the Northwest Atlantic with whom Canadian fisheries officials could deal on a day-to-day basis with regard to enforcement questions and other related matters.

Particular attention was given to the problem of discards of by-catches, and methods of dealing with this matter were explored.