

NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES

The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) held its 19th Annual General Meeting on September 15-19, 1997 in St. John's, Newfoundland. Canada achieved its priority objectives for the meeting: extension of the pilot observer/satellite tracking program for 1998, acceptance of the Scientific Council advice to ensure the conservation of straddling stocks and a renewed ban on shrimp trawling on the Nose and Tail of the Grand Bank.

NAFO agreed to continue the current pilot observer/satellite tracking project for one year, beginning on January 1, 1998. The Parties agreed to consider, at the 1998 Annual Meeting, implementing such a scheme on a permanent basis effective January 1, 1999.

NAFO adopted a scheme to deter Non-Contracting Party vessels from fishing in the NAFO Regulatory Area contrary to NAFO conservation rules. The scheme seeks to halt the landing, transshipment and sale of fish from "flag-of-convenience" vessels.

The Fisheries Commission endorsed an action plan for the implementation of the "precautionary approach" to fisheries management in the NAFO Regulatory Area. The Scientific Council, which will meet in June 1998, will provide advice, using the precautionary approach, for consideration by NAFO at its next Annual Meeting in September 1998 in Lisbon.

On straddling stocks, NAFO continued its moratoria on cod and flounder on the Nose and Tail of the Grand Bank. Moratoria were also introduced for the first time on redfish and witch flounder outside Canada's 200-mile limit.