



Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

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In all correspondence,
please refer to:

NAFO/24-141

06 June 2024

TO: All Contracting Parties;
Representatives of SC; and
Representatives of WG-EAFFM

Dear Colleagues,

Subject: Provisional Agenda – *NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting*

Further to NAFO/24-122 of 06 May 2024, and pursuant to Rule 4.2 of the *NAFO Rules of Procedure: Commission*, please find enclosed the provisional agenda for the *NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting*, 05–07 August 2024 in Bergen, Norway.

All relevant meeting documentation will be accessible on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint at <https://meetings.nafo.int/wgs/eaffm> as it becomes available.

As adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO, the guidelines for classification of working documents reads “*The Contracting Party submitting a Working Paper is responsible to designate that Working Paper as “open access” and made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting. If the Contracting Party does not make such a designation, then it will not be made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting.*”

For logistical purposes, we would appreciate receiving from Contracting Parties the names of delegates planning to participate in the meeting.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Brynhildur Benediktsdóttir
Executive Secretary

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Enclosed: Provisional Agenda; Tentative Timetable and General Information (05 pgs.)

NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting

05-07 August 2024

Bergen, Norway

Provisional Agenda

- 1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Mar Sacau Cuadrado (European Union) and Elizabethann Mencher (United States of America)**
- 2. Appointment of Rapporteur**
- 3. Adoption of Agenda**
- 4. Presentation of Scientific Council responses to Commission requests for advice (COM Doc. 23-09) relevant to WG-EAFFM**
- 5. VME and SAI Assessments**

a. Update on the centralized data repository (COM Request 5.a)

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Commission requested that the Scientific Council support the Secretariat in developing a centralized data repository using ArcGIS online to host the data and data-products for scientific advice (COM Doc. 23-09).

b. Update on reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2026 (COM Request 5.c)

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Commission requested that the Scientific Council work towards the reassessment of VMEs and impact of bottom fisheries on VMEs for 2026.

6. Ecosystem Roadmap (COM Request 4)

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Commission requested the Scientific Council to continue work on tiers 1 and 2 of the Roadmap, specifically to provide catch information in relation to 2TCI and develop stock summary sheets for NAFO managed stocks that are evaluated using HCR or MSE processes. An update will be provided under this agenda item to inform a discussion amongst the working group.

7. Development of operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA (COM Request 5.b)

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Commission requested that the Scientific Council continue working with WG-EAFFM towards developing operational objectives for the protection of VMEs and biodiversity in the NRA. At the 2023 WG-EAFFM meeting, the working group reviewed and discussed the draft framework developed by the Scientific Council in COM-SC EAFFM WP 23-11, and agreed to continue work on the development of the draft framework document for presentation at this meeting.

8. Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)

At the 2023 WG-EAFFM meeting, the working group recommended that the Secretariat, in consultation with the Scientific Council as required, to submit the seamount closure areas and the sponge VME fishery

closures 1 to 6 to the CBD Secretariat and to the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP WCMC) for inclusion in the World Database on OECMs, which was adopted by the Commission at the 2023 Annual Meeting. An update will be provided. Further, the Commission adopted WG-EAFFM's recommendation that the working group continue to review the other NAFO area-based management measures in relation to the CBD OECM criteria. The working group will discuss the path forward to consider if any additional measures should be considered as OECMs.

9. Implementation of the 2018 Performance Review Panel Recommendations

As agreed at the 2019 Annual Meeting, the NAFO Secretariat will provide an update on the progress in addressing the "Action Plan for the Implementation of the Recommendations from the 2018 Report of the NAFO Performance Review Panel" (COM Doc. 19-32). There are two remaining recommendations addressed to WG-EAFFM, Recommendations 1 and 37, and these will be discussed under this agenda item.

10. Scientific Council workload

An update from the Informal Group to Reflect on the Workload of the Scientific Council will be provided to inform a discussion of the working group.

11. Bycatch

a. BDS Action Plan

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Commission reflected on the work of the Ad hoc Working Group on Bycatches, Discards, and Selectivity (WG-BDS) and agreed that elements of the BDS Action Plan continue to be addressed in the other working groups. An update will be provided to inform a discussion of the working group.

b. Greenland Shark Bycatch

At the 2023 Annual Meeting, the Commission agreed to add Greenland Sharks to the WG-EAFFM's 2024 meeting agenda for EAFFM to consider other appropriate management options for the bycatch of Greenland sharks in the NRA, to inform the Commission's consideration of additional measures for their conservation.

c. Directed Fisheries

Last year, the Commission noted the need to advance broader efforts to address issues related to bycatch and discards as part of NAFO's overall ecosystem approach to fisheries management. This should include taking a holistic look at how the organization can differentiate and manage directed fishing from bycatch from all angles, rather than just as a narrow enforcement issue. When the measures surrounding directed fishing were first implemented, the primary motivator was a need to stop the act of "topping off" of moratoria species under the bycatch limits applicable for a fishing trip. Since then, however, new technology and requirements have been implemented to help identify more readily when this is occurring. STACTIC has approved several carve outs from the CEMs with regards to directed fishing, three of those approved in the last two years alone. However, the United States of America proposes that the WG-EAFFM is the more appropriate body to discuss the underlying policy issues and approaches.

12. Review of the Terms of Reference for WG-EAFFM

The WG-EAFFM, at its July 2023 meeting, reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference for the working group in COM-SC EAFFM-WP 23-14 (Rev. 3), and the review will continue under this agenda item.

13. Other Business**14. Recommendations****15. Adoption of the Report****16. Adjournment****Tentative Timetable***

Monday, 05 August	
08:30 – 09:00 hrs	Registration
09:00 – 12:00 hrs	Meeting
12:00 – 13:30 hrs	Lunch Break
13:30 – 18:00 hrs	Meeting
Tuesday, 06 August	
09:00 – 12:00 hrs	Meeting
12:00 – 13:30 hrs	Lunch Break
13:30 – 18:00 hrs	Meeting
Wednesday, 07 August	
09:00 – 12:00 hrs	Meeting
12:00 – 13:30 hrs	Lunch Break
13:30 – 18:00 hrs	Meeting (closing)

**times are subject to change at the decision of the meeting*

NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) Meeting

05–07 August 2024
Bergen, Norway

General Information

This meeting is being held back-to-back with the *NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Risk-Based Management Strategies (WG-RBMS) Meeting*.

1. Meeting Venue

The meeting will be held at:

Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries
Strandgaten 229
5004 Bergen, NORWAY

2. Hotel Accommodations

There are a number of hotels in close proximity to the meeting venue. Reservations are to be made by participants directly with your preferred hotel.

3. Virtual Participation

For those Contracting Parties that are unable to attend the meeting in-person, virtual capabilities will be provided.

4. Registration of Delegates

In accordance with the *NAFO Rules of Procedure*, Contracting Parties are requested to notify the NAFO Secretariat, as far as possible in advance of the meeting, the names of their delegates who will attend.

This allows adequate time to create personalized SharePoint accounts and circulate virtual meeting invitations.

5. Submission of Meeting Documentation

To allow sufficient time to review before the meeting and to focus discussion during the meeting, Contracting Parties are strongly encouraged to provide meeting documentation **in advance** of the meeting for inclusion on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint.

As adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting of NAFO, the guidelines for the classification of working documents reads:

The Contracting Party submitting a Working Paper is responsible to designate that Working Paper as “open access” and made available to the general public on the NAFO website prior to the meeting. If the Contracting Party does not make such a designation, then it will not be made available to the general public on the NAFO website before the meeting.

6. NAFO Meetings SharePoint

As adopted at the 2023 Annual Meeting, NAFO utilizes a paperless approach to meeting documentation. All meeting documentation is distributed exclusively by electronic means, unless requested otherwise.

Meeting documentation, before and during the meeting, will be available for registered participants on the NAFO Meetings SharePoint at <https://meetings.nafo.int>.

A personalized username and password are required to access the SharePoint. We ask any Contracting Party requiring log-in details to please contact the NAFO Secretariat by e-mail: info@nafo.int.

7. Digital Media

Photos

The NAFO Secretariat regularly takes photographs during NAFO meetings. Photographs may be used by the NAFO Secretariat on the NAFO websites and publications, intended to showcase NAFO activities.

Recordings

The NAFO Secretariat regularly records meetings of the organization. All recordings are securely stored by the Secretariat and used for documentation purposes only.