

Northwest Atlantic



Fisheries Organization

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New Regulations to insert in the  
Conservation and Enforcement Measures

by

the Executive Secretary

STACTIC passed in general at the annual meeting of 1989, with approval of the General Council, rules on:

- a) By-catch limits
- b) Ropes and reinforcements in trawls
- c) Measurement of meshes of different types of chafers

This paper is intended only to establish how far these questions have advanced, so that it will be easy for everybody to judge whether further measures or clarifications are needed.

- A. In relation to a) the question of incidental catch is regulated by Regulation A.4 of Part I - Incidental Catch Limits (See FC Doc. 89/5, Revised and GF letter 9.229 of 20 October 1989).

However it is felt there is a difficulty with this rule since it establishes a limit for the incidental catch of a Contracting Party based possibly on a percentage by weight, for each species, of the total catch retained on board.

It appears that only the Contracting Party, if at all, will be able to determine if that limit has been reached, as it probably is the only one to be able to ascertain at a certain time what is the total catch retained on board of all its vessels.

It also would probably be profitable to study a definition of "incidental catch". For as the Regulation is written may be it will make it difficult for a Contracting Party, for which no quota has been allocated in a subdivision (or division), to fish for an amount allocated to "Others" without being considered gathering an incidental catch.

- B. Ropes in reinforcements in trawls

It is not clear from the reports, although it should be so, that the Fisheries Commission adopted the following:

"Rule Part II.B.4 - Strengthening ropes, splitting straps and codend floats may be used on trawls within the Regulatory Area, as long as these attachments do not in any way restrict the mesh size authorized in the Conservation and Enforcement Rules".

It is important to note that a vessel has already been reported in violation of this rule.

C. Measurement of meshes of different types of chafers

The rules as they are, and were in ICNAF, define the mesh size of a net and not the mesh size of a chafer and the measuring gauge as scheduled in the Rules is to measure the meshes of nets, not the meshes of chafers. Furthermore, the large-mesh topside chafer, which is legal to use has a mesh size twice that of the codend and consequently cannot be measured with the gauge. In fact the trawl nets will normally either have minimum meshes of 120 mm or 130 mm, and the gauges will not measure above 150 mm.

It is suggested that a rule B.1(c) be added to the Part III of Conservation and Enforcement Measures, reading, similarly to Canadian regulations:

(c) in respect of any other case of netting, the distance between the extreme angles of a single mesh measured inside the knots after being stretched to form two parallel straight lines..

After the insertion of this section (c) the "and", now existing at the end of (a) should be placed at the end of (b) which should terminate with a semi-colon instead of a stop.