

Press corner

Fisheries: Commission welcomes progress in the reform of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation

The European Commission has welcomed the important progress made at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the North-West Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) to strengthen the functioning and effectiveness of this organisation. "The progress made in addressing the issues of monitoring and control of the fisheries and the follow-up of alleged infringements is particularly to be commended" commented Joe Borg, European Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs. He added that it gives a clear signal that NAFO Parties will pursue those vessels not respecting the key conservation and enforcement measures. The European Commission proposed a series of measures which were adopted by NAFO to improve controls, focusing in particular on by-catch requirements, vessels' stowage plans and flag state action against serious infringements perpetrated by vessels flying their flags. At the meeting, held in Halifax, Canada, on 18-22 September 2006, outstanding issues in the revision of the Convention were also discussed. These included the objection and dispute settlement procedures, observer requirements, and financial contributions. NAFO decided to roll-over the management regimes in place for stocks of shrimp, yellow-fish flounder and redfish. A further important decision was to permit exploratory fisheries on four sea mounts in the NAFO area only on condition of rigorous monitoring conditions and the collection of scientific data. Established in 1979, NAFO is a Regional Fisheries Organisation devoted to the rational management and conservation of fisheries resources in the North-West Atlantic. NAFO has 12 members, including the European Union.

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