



NAFO CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

At the 45th Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
September 18-22, 2023 | Vigo, Spain

NAFO has often been a leader in advancing fisheries management measures that protect vulnerable marine ecosystems from bottom fishing activities and implementing the commitments found within the UNGA Sustainable Fisheries Resolutions with respect to bottom fishing. Additionally, NAFO has made recent progress on advancing an ecosystem approach with the groundbreaking agreement of an ecosystem threshold in 2022.

With the December 2022 adoption of the Kunming Montreal Agreement on a Global Biodiversity Framework and the adoption and imminent signing of the new High Seas Biodiversity Treaty (with ratification expected by June 2025), NAFO's biodiversity related measures will be increasingly relevant in efforts to reduce biodiversity loss in the global ocean. In addition, there are increasing impacts

of climate change, with the North Atlantic experiencing the warmest temperatures ever in summer 2023.

Within this context, the DSCC continues to advocate for full protection of all known VME areas as well as areas where VMEs are likely to occur. To date, NAFO has not followed scientific advice or eliminated the risk of significant adverse impacts on VMEs. In keeping with the goal of sustainable management of deep sea fish stocks, we expect NAFO to follow scientific advice for stocks under its jurisdiction and further advance the ecosystem road map.

To this end the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, and its 100+ member organizations recommends the following for NAFO during its 45th Annual Meeting:

VULNERABLE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

- Adopt all recommendations of the WG - EAFM, with a focus on:
 - Maintaining the closures of VME areas 7a, 11a and 14b until at least 31 December 2026 (considering the review cycle) and adopt the proposed changes to the NAFO CEM.
 - Minimizing impacts of research surveys within VME closures, with a strong preference to avoid these areas.

DEEP SEA SHARKS

- Contracting parties undertake research to identify ways to make fishing gear more selective for the protection of sharks.
- Directs the SC to conduct research on key biological and ecological parameters, life-history, behavioural traits and migration patterns, as well as on the identification of potential mapping, pupping and nursing grounds of key shark species.

SCIENCE BASED QUOTA DECISIONS

- Adopts precautionary quota decisions for all managed stocks in line with science advice for all NAFO managed species.

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

- Requests the Scientific Council to annually provide information on ecosystem overfishing in relation to the TCI.
- Including recent cumulative catch levels and a scoping of expected cumulative catch levels.
- Requests the Scientific Council to develop stock summary sheets for all NAFO managed stocks.

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Advance NAFO commitment to addressing climate change in all of its activities, including reducing emissions from fishing activity.
- Include climate vulnerability in all stock summary sheets, and integrate into the decision making of the WG EAFM.

PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH

- Endorse the Provisional Draft Precautionary Approach (PA) framework.
- Endorse the updated PA workplan.

SCIENTIFIC CAPACITY

- Contribute the additional scientific expertise needed to on ecosystem approach, impacts of activities other than fishing, and ensure that Scientific Council is supported to successfully deliver on the requests approved by the Commission.