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NAFO HOSTS 42nd ANNUAL MEETING VIRTUALLY AND WELCOMES UNITED KINGDOM AS A NAFO CONTRACTING PARTY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Halifax, Canada, 25 September 2020- The 42nd Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) took place from 21-25 September. Due to the current global pandemic, NAFO conducted the Annual Meeting virtually for the first time in its history. During the opening session, delegates from all the NAFO Contracting Parties were welcomed to the meeting by NAFO President, Stéphane Artano. The NAFO President also formally welcomed NAFO's newest Contracting Party, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which joined NAFO earlier this month. The United Kingdom is NAFO's 13th Contracting Party.

Despite the limitations imposed this year by the current global pandemic, NAFO continued to have a productive meeting. NAFO further advanced its revision of its Precautionary Approach (PA) Framework with the adoption of a detailed three-year workplan. Under this workplan, it is expected that NAFO's revised PA Framework will be finalized by September 2023. NAFO also adopted a number of decisions related to the further development of its ecosystem approach framework to fisheries management and the upcoming review of its measures to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) from bottom fishing activities. In particular, these decisions include a rollover of the current VME closures in the NAFO Regulatory Area for an additional year, pending a more comprehensive review in 2021.

In addition, to the traditional total allowable catch (TAC)* and quota decisions, significant decisions were made regarding the following:

- Additional conservation measures were agreed for cod in Div. 3M including a closure of the directed fishery from January until March 2021; increased port inspection requirements; and introduction of sorting grids to protect juvenile fish.
- Streamlined vessel authorization process.
- The term of the Executive Secretary, Fred Kingston, was extended for an additional year until the end of 2022.

NAFO is also planning intersessional work to review the current management approach for shrimp in Div. 3M and a workshop to identify ecosystem level objectives in advance of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

The 43rd Annual Meeting will take place 20-24 September 2021, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

* The 2021 TACs and quotas can be found [here](#).

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The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) is an international fisheries and scientific organization founded in 1979. Since its inception, NAFO aims to conserve and sustain fishery resources in the northwest Atlantic. More information on NAFO can be found at <https://www.nafo.int/>.



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