

North-East Atlantic Commission

NEA(11)3

***Development of a Risk Framework for Providing Catch Advice for
the Faroese Salmon Fishery***

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1. In order to progress the development of a risk framework for providing catch advice for the Faroese salmon fishery, ICES was requested to provide for the Commission's 2010 Annual Meeting an assessment of the issues that would need to be resolved before they could provide quantitative catch advice. The response was presented in the report of the ICES ACOM, CNL(10)8, and indicated that ICES would require feedback from the Commission on the management units to be employed; the management objectives for each unit and a sharing agreement.
2. This advice from ICES was discussed at the Commission's 2010 Annual Meeting and, while no consensus was reached, it was agreed to try to progress this matter inter-sessionally. In this regard, the Chairman of the Commission, Raoul Bierach, wrote to the members of the Commission on 1 October 2010 seeking feedback on the following three questions:
 - 1) Do the Parties agree that stocks at the country/region level be defined as the management units for the purpose of developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery, or are there alternative proposals?;
 - 2) Do the Parties agree that the management objectives used in developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery should be that there is a 75% probability of simultaneously achieving the conservation limits for each of these management units, or are there alternative proposals?;
 - 3) Do the Parties agree that the allocation of any harvestable surplus used in developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery should be on the basis of the average share of catches harvested at Faroes and in homewater fisheries during the period 1986 - 1990, or are there alternative proposals?
3. The responses from the Parties are contained in Annex 1. In summary, the EU, Norway and the Russian Federation could agree to the proposals made in questions 2 and 3. With regard to question 1, Norway and Russia suggested that the four regions used within each of these countries to calculate pre-fishery abundance be used as management units for the purpose of developing a risk framework. The EU noted that it was important that the selection of management units respect the application of the Precautionary Approach rather than the large stock complexes currently used which ICES indicated could mask changes in a substantial proportion of stocks. The EU, therefore, proposed that ICES be requested to provide a more detailed evaluation of the appropriate choice of management units including, if possible, worked examples of catch advice.
4. This proposal was acceptable to the Commission which agreed on the following supplementary request to ICES:

“Provide a more detailed evaluation of the choice of appropriate management units to be used in a risk based framework for the provision of catch advice for the Faroese

salmon fishery, taking into account relevant biological and management considerations and including, if possible, worked examples of catch advice”

5. It was recognised, in developing this request, that possible future management measures for the Faroese fishery should be addressed during the Annual Meeting rather than by correspondence and that the objective was to ensure that a sufficient scientific basis for management decisions was in place to inform those discussions. While the other Parties could accept the proposal that the allocation of any harvestable surplus used in developing a risk framework for providing catch advice for the Faroese salmon fishery should be based on the average share of catches harvested at Faroes during the period 1984 - 1990, the Faroese delegation considered that the period 1984 - 1988 would be more appropriate. ICES was accordingly advised of these different views regarding an appropriate period on which to base a sharing agreement in order that it could take them into account if it is able to develop worked examples of catch advice.
6. The response from ICES will be presented in the ACOM report for 2011, CNL(11)8, and the Commission will then be able to further discuss this issue under item 5 of its Agenda for our meeting in June.

Secretary
Edinburgh
7 April 2011

*Responses by the Parties to the Chairman's Proposals regarding the
Development of a Risk Framework for Providing Catch Advice for the
Faroese Salmon Fishery*

Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands)

The Faroe Islands can support your suggestion to forward the proposed question to ICES regarding the evaluation of appropriate management units to be used in a risk based framework for the provision of catch advice for the Faroese salmon fishery, including worked examples of catch advice. However such examples should be based on historical catches in the period 1984 to 1988 rather than 1986 to 1990 as suggested by ICES. In this early period the only limitation on the Faroese fishery was that the vessels had to operate inside the Faroese EEZ. Therefore this period would most likely reflect the "free" fishery in terms of natural catch rates, size/age distributions in the catches, fishing strategy and movement of the fleet during the fishing season. After this period an increasing number of limitations were imposed on the Faroese fishery, such as limiting number of fishing days, limiting number of vessel licenses, and quota limitations, all factors that are thought to bias the catch rates and therefore not reflect the share on a fair basis.

As stated in our email dated 24 November 2010, we do not wish to enter into detailed discussions about a risk framework for the Faroese salmon fishery through email correspondence.

For this reason we do not believe it is either possible or appropriate to give definitive answers to the management-related questions contained in your email of 8 December without the further evaluation of management units and their level of precision which is now being proposed to request from ICES.

We therefore look forward to a further response from ICES, after which we will hopefully be in a better position to assess how best to proceed with discussions on future approaches to management.

European Union

The EU broadly supports the approach proposed by ICES, as outlined in the letter from the chairman of NEAC. However, in relation to the specific questions:

- 1) The ACOM advice was least clear with regard to the establishment of appropriate management units, and we note that the country/regional units that ICES currently uses for the NEAC assessment were not established as units for providing catch advice. It is important that the selection of management units respects the application of the precautionary approach by taking into account the wide range of levels of conservation throughout the full range of NEAC, rather than the current large stock complexes which ICES has indicated could mask changes in a substantial proportion of stocks. But more work is required to establish the most appropriate units.

- 2) For the Management Objectives we agree that NEAC should follow the precedent of the WGC, which seeks to achieve the conservation limits simultaneously for each management unit at a probability level of greater than 75%. This provides for consistency in approach across the management regimes in NASCO.
- 3) Regarding the sharing arrangement, we agree that NEAC should adopt the same process for allocating the harvestable surplus as is used for West Greenland, and that the allocations be based on the average catches by weight for the period 1986 to 1990.

We therefore suggest that NEAC accepts the proposals in para's 2 & 3, but request ICES to provide a more detailed evaluation of the choice of appropriate management units based on relevant biological and management considerations (e.g. EU River Basin Districts, etc), including, if possible, worked examples of catch advice for historic years.

Norway

We have the following comments to the questions:

- 1) *Do the Parties agree that stocks at the country/region level be defined as the management units for the purpose of developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery, or are there alternative proposals?;*

We calculate pre-fishery abundance for the following four Norwegian stock complexes, and we propose the same regions for this purpose:

- Russian border - Vestfjorden, Nordland county
- Vestfjorden - Møre og Romsdal county
- Sogn og Fjordane county and Hordaland county
- Rogaland county - Swedish border

- 2) *Do the Parties agree that the management objectives used in developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery should be that there is a 75% probability of simultaneously achieving the conservation limits for each of these management units, or are there alternative proposals?;*

We agree

- 3) *Do the Parties agree that the allocation of any harvestable surplus used in developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery should be on the basis of the average share of catches harvested at Faroes and in homewater fisheries during the period 1986-1990, or are there alternative proposals?*

We agree

Russian Federation

1. *Do the Parties agree that stocks at the country/region level be defined as the management units for the purpose of developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery, or are there alternative proposals?*

- The Russian Federation provides data to ICES to calculate the pre-fishery abundance for four regions:
 1. Kola Peninsula Barents Sea
 2. Kola Peninsula White Sea
 3. Archangelsk and Karelia
 4. Pechora river

 - We suggest that these units are used for the purpose of developing a risk framework for quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery.
- 2). *Do the Parties agree that the management objectives used in developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery should be that there is a 75% probability of simultaneously achieving the conservation limits for each of these management units, or are there alternative proposals?*
- We agree to this and do not have any alternative proposals.
- 3) *Do the Parties agree that the allocation of any harvestable surplus used in developing a risk framework for providing quantitative catch advice for the Faroese fishery should be on the basis of the average share of catches harvested at Faroes and in homewater fisheries during the period 1986-1990, or are there alternative proposals?*
- We agree to the proposal to use the average share of catches at Faroes and in homewater fisheries in the period 1986-1990 for allocation of harvestable surplus.