

U.S. Fisheries Gain at ICNAF Meeting

All major United States proposals before the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF) were accepted during the special Commission meeting that ended 28 September 1975 in Montreal, Canada. David H. Wallace, Chairman of the U.S. delegation and Associate Administrator in the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, characterized the special meeting as "one of the most successful in the Commission's 25-year history from the standpoint of the United States."

The Commission acted to: 1) reduce substantially the 1976 overall catch quota for all finfish species off the northeast coast of the United States, while at the same time providing an increased quota for the U.S. which will allow expansion by our fishermen; 2) close most of the Georges Bank area to large vessels capable of catching valuable and depleted groundfish stocks; 3) approve a system for registering fishing vessels of every nation in the area; and 4) establish more enforceable exemption provisions for trawl net fisheries conducted off the U.S. and Canadian coasts. Also, the U.S. quota was increased to 230,000 tons from 211,600 tons in 1975.

The seventh special meeting of the 17-member-nation body was called at the request of Canada and the United States to obtain reduction of fishing effort and quotas in the convention area. The Commission had failed to require these reductions at the annual meeting of ICNAF in June even though the United States and Canada had pressed for immediate action. The United States consequently had filed formal objection to the quotas then set, in conformity with the rules of the Commission.

A principal U.S. objective at the September meeting was to obtain an overall fishing quota for the area off the U.S. coast that would make possible rapid recovery of the overfished and depleted species. This was accomplished through a "second tier quota" system. In addition to establishing quotas for each species of fish and for each nation—the "first tier quotas"—the

agreement establishes a tonnage quota for each nation that is less than the total of quotas for individual species—the "second tier quotas." The "second tier" system penalizes fishing vessels for the incidental groundfish catches they make, impelling them to concentrate on the species of most interest to them.

The total quota for 1976 was established by the special meeting as 650,000 metric tons, including squid. At the June meeting the Commission had established a total quota of 724,000 metric tons, excluding squid, which was the basis of the U.S. formal objection. The new level, say U.S. fisheries scientists, provides a high probability of recovery of depleted species within a reasonable period of time.

The Montreal meeting also agreed to close a large area on Georges Bank to larger vessels that use gear capable of catching seriously depleted groundfish such as flounder and haddock. Smaller vessels, or larger vessels that do not have groundfish gear, can continue to fish the area. This agreement effectively rules out foreign fishing in the area by vessels with groundfish gear.

Marine Game Fish Tournament Data Published

Detailed information on the catch results of 33 big-game fishing tournaments held in 1974, highlight the third annual edition of the Oceanic Game Fish Investigations Newsletter, produced under the auspices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Scientists from NOAA's Southeast Fisheries Center at Miami, Fla., compiled and analyzed the extensive data appearing in the newsletter. They also served as scientific observers at many of the fishing tournaments. Additional data were obtained in cooperative sampling arrangements with the Florida Department of Natural Resources, the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

The publication by the Commerce Department agency results from a cooperative program between oceanic

The new vessel registration provisions require that fishing vessels planning to fish in the regulated area must give advance notice of their intentions and when and where they are going to fish. This system will assist member governments and international enforcement personnel to achieve more effective monitoring of fishing in the area.

Canada was successful in obtaining approval for a regulation designed to reduce substantially fishing effort on groundfish stocks in five portions of the convention area off the Canadian coast. The Cuban observer announced that action required for Cuba to become an ICNAF member would be immediately initiated by his government.

"Second tier" quotas established at the special meeting are as follows:

Country	1975 quota	1976 quota
Bulgaria	24,650	14,400
Canada	26,000	18,000
France	2,950	2,950
West Germany	24,850	14,900
East Germany	82,850	48,750
Italy	4,150	6,800
Japan	21,250	18,000
Poland	129,250	76,500
Rumania	3,850	3,850
Spain	14,800	16,000
Soviet Union	301,800	177,250
United States	211,600	230,000
Others	2,000	1,600
Cuba	—	21,000
Totals	850,000	650,000

game fishermen and National Marine Fisheries Service scientists. In general, it presents synopses of billfish catches (blue marlin, white marlin, and sailfish) in the northwest Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean Sea. Fishing effort is compared to catches, the most productive time of day for billfish catches is noted, and historical data about weights and distribution patterns for the fish are presented.

In 1974, game fish tournaments north of Cape Hatteras, N.C., were sampled for the first time. A 50 percent increase in the number of white marlin hooked over 1973 reflects this additional coverage of the great white marlin fishing grounds off the mid-Atlantic coast. Data in the newsletter are supplemented by listings of billfish catches in the western Atlantic Ocean from 1957 to 1972, obtained from the Japanese longline fishing fleet.

Results of the first full year of joint research on the tuna and billfish stocks in the Atlantic Ocean under the National Marine Fisheries Service-Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Program are included. Over 1,800 game fish were tagged; 673 of these were sailfish released off the southeast coast of Florida and off Cozumel, Mexico. Seventy-nine recoveries of tagged game fish were recorded in 1974. Amberjacks provided the most returns (25) with small bluefin tuna second (19). One giant bluefin tuna tagged off the Bahamas was recaptured off Norway 461 days later. An amberjack was recaptured by the same captain who tagged and released it exactly 365 days earlier at the same location in the Florida Keys.

Copies of the 1974 Ocean Game Fish Newsletter may be obtained from the Southeast Fisheries Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, 75 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, FL 33149.

King Crab, Salmon, and Lobster Fisheries Called "Conditional"

The Commerce Department has declared the American lobster in the Gulf of Maine; the salmon fishery in Washington, Oregon, and California; and the Alaskan King Crab fishery to be "Conditional Fisheries."

Commerce Department regulations consider a Conditional Fishery as one where there are already sufficient vessels to harvest the available catch. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service has determined that these fisheries have more than enough vessels involved in the harvest.

Being declared a Conditional Fishery means that the NMFS financial assistance programs cannot be used to add more vessels to the fishery's existing fleet, but can be used to assist the vessel owners in the fishery to upgrade existing vessels, or to replace vessels lost or withdrawn from the fleet.

NMFS financial assistance programs offer benefits to help commercial fishermen modernize their vessels. Under the Fishing Vessel Guarantee program, NMFS can now provide lend-

ers an attractive service, fully guaranteeing obligations incurred by fishermen to finance up to 75 percent of the cost of constructing, reconstructing, or reconditioning commercial fishing vessels.

The capital Construction Fund program may be used to obtain deferment of taxes on certain income derived from commercial fishing operations when such income is deposited in a special fund with the intention of using it for constructing, acquiring, or reconditioning a commercial fishing vessel. Notice of these declarations appeared in the Federal Register the week of 22 September 1975.

Director Named for NOAA OCS Environment Program

Rudolf J. Engelmann has been appointed director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Assessment Program in Boulder, Colo. The multimillion-dollar study seeks to determine the probable ecological impacts of oil exploration and development activities on Alaska's Outer Continental Shelf.

During the early years of the program, investigators will examine intensively the life forms and physical environment of the Outer Continental Shelf of Alaska, focussing on eight oil leasing areas spread among the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, Chukchi and Beaufort Seas. They will evaluate the roles that natural processes play in spreading contaminants from petroleum development

sites, how marine life would be affected, and what natural hazards face oil development activities in this region. The study is being conducted by the Commerce Department agency's Environmental Research Laboratories for the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management.

Before joining NOAA, Engelmann was Deputy Manager for the environmental research of the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration and its predecessor organization, the Atomic Energy Commission. Prior to that he led the agency's Fallout Studies Branch, concerned with planning and managing basic research programs in support of the nation's need for better knowledge of radioactive fallout processes.

Engelmann formerly was employed by Battelle Northwest in Richland, Wash., where he designed and conducted research projects and experiments in meteorology. In the Air Force during the 1950's, he was a weather observer and forecaster in various states and Labrador. Engelmann received a B.A. degree in mathematics from Augsburg College at Minneapolis, Minn., in 1950. He subsequently attended New York University and the University of Washington at Seattle, from which he received a Ph.D. degree in atmospheric physics in 1964. The Kenmare, N.D., native and his wife, Virginia, live with three children in Boulder, Colo. Three other children are in Pennsylvania and Maryland colleges.

Foreign Fishery Developments

Portugal, Canada Discuss Marine Fisheries

Portuguese and Canadian delegations met in Ottawa on 4 and 5 September 1975 to discuss fishery matters, and issued the following joint communique: (The Canadian and Portuguese delegations) "recognized that it was imperative to ensure strict fulfillment of obligations assumed under the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF), particularly in light of serious declines in the stocks." The Portuguese delegation indicated that they were taking measures to improve

their fishing vessel log-book to bring about a fuller reporting of discarded by-catches, and that they would be intensifying their sampling program to improve the assessment of the state of the stocks and the yields they can support. It was agreed that, under the ICNAF Scheme of Joint International Enforcement, steps would be taken to enable Portuguese fisheries inspectors to work with Canadian inspectors in securing improved compliance with ICNAF regulations.