

United States Makes Gains at ICNAF Meeting

Substantial progress was achieved in meeting U. S. fishing quotas and international enforcement objectives at a special meeting of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF) earlier this year in Rome, Italy, according to David H. Wallace, Chairman of the U. S. Delegation and Associate Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Wallace said he was encouraged by the action taken

Florida Firm Joins NOAA Fish Quality Program

A voluntary inspection program, conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and aimed at assuring quality fisheries products, has been adopted by a Florida food processor. The inspection program is managed by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service.

Under the program, Harry H. Bell & Sons, St. Petersburg, will be permitted to place a "Packed Under Federal Inspection" (PUFI) mark on its products. The mark attests that the product has been statistically sampled at the time of processing and found to be safe, wholesome, and of good quality.

To meet the high standards required to display the PUFI symbol, a processor of fish products must agree to certification by a Department of Commerce inspector who insures that the conditions under which the products are processed meet high sanitary requirements. All costs of the inspection program are carried by the participating firm. A growing number of processors throughout the United States are joining the program, NOAA officials said.

The company, with a staff of 150, using modern equipment and fresh products, ships Spanish mackerel fillets, stuffed Florida lobster, Florida stone crab claws, and Florida sea trout throughout Florida as well as the southeastern, midwestern, and west coast states.

concerning quotas of northwest Atlantic herring stocks and refinements made in the international enforcement procedures.

At its meeting, the Commission acted to:

1) Reduce the 1976 overall catch quota for the overfished Georges Bank herring stock from 150,000 tons to 60,000 tons, and agreed to hold the quota at that level or lower until the stock has fully recovered.

2) Effectively prohibit large foreign vessels from fishing directly for herring between 1 January and 30 June 1976.

3) Increase the U.S. quota for the Georges Bank herring stock to 9,400 tons for the first 6 months of 1976, an increase of 1,000 tons over the entire U. S. quota for 1975. Allocations for the remainder of the year will be considered at the Commis-

Fur Seal Conservation Convention Extended

A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) official has termed "unfortunate" the failure of delegates to the Interim Convention on Conservation of North Pacific Fur Seals to adopt U.S.-proposed management concepts designed to give more protection to North Pacific fur seals.

Carmen Blondin, Assistant Director for International Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, said the group agreed to recommend to their governments that the Convention be extended for another 4 years but missed an opportunity to adopt the concept of optimum sustainable population which is included as a management objective in the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972.

Under the new concept proposed by the United States, consideration would have been given to the esthetic and recreational value of the fur seals and the necessity of maintaining the health and stability of the marine ecosystem. The present management concept provides for maintaining populations at levels which permit maximum produc-

tion's 1976 Annual Meeting scheduled for 8-23 June in Havana, Cuba. 4) Reduce the overall quota of Gulf of Maine herring from 16,000 tons to 7,000 tons, also subjected to review and possible adjustment at the 1976 annual meeting.

The members of the 18-member-nation body also acted to insure stricter compliance with the increasingly complex system of fishery regulations adopted for the northwest and middle Atlantic. If finally adopted, these recommendations would require nations with large fishing fleets in this area to provide someone in the area to respond to complaints of violations of these regulations and permit ICNAF inspectors to stop fishing which appeared to be contrary to major regulations.

The Commission also acted to provide for possible reductions in a nation's quota when that nation had overfished any of its catch quotas. Member nations also were encouraged to report more fully on inspections and dispositions of infringements of the regulations.

tivity, taking into account the relationship of fur seals to other marine resources.

The delegates will recommend to their governments that they approve a Protocol providing:

- 1) That natives, living on the islands where seals breed, be permitted to take seals for food when the meat obtained from the commercial harvest and research is not sufficient for their needs;
- 2) that the Parties ensure that the methods used to capture, mark, and harvest the seals, on land or at sea, spare the seals pain and suffering to the greatest extent possible;
- 3) for a suspension or reduction of the fur seal harvest on any island or group of islands where the total number of seals falls below the level necessary to maintain the population at maximum productivity;
- 4) for research on the relationship between fur seals and other living

- marine resources and the effect of commercial fisheries on fur seals;
- 5) for a termination of the Convention one year after any of the Parties gives written notice to the other Parties of any intention to end the Convention; and
 - 6) for representatives of the Parties to meet within 90 days of a request by any of the Parties to consider modifications of the Convention.

The Interim Convention on the Conservation of North Pacific Fur Seals was entered into in 1957 by the United States, Canada, Japan, and the Soviet Union to regulate the harvest of fur seals in the North Pacific. Nearly 80 percent of the northern fur seal resource is currently associated with the Pribilof Islands of the United States, located off the coast of Alaska.

University Consortium Studies Marine Problems

A newly formed consortium of the University of Maine and the University of New Hampshire has received a \$860,000 Sea Grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), to support studies in aquaculture, ocean engineering, marine resource development, and marine education, it has been announced by Commerce Secretary Elliot L. Richardson.

Matching funds from the two states will raise the total amount of the grant to almost \$1,412,000. Although both universities have received individual Sea Grant support since 1970, this year's funding marks the first time the programs at both are combined.

Because both states share a significant portion of the Gulf of Maine, the two universities will be better able to make a major contribution to solving marine problems there by working together, said Frederick E. Hutchinson, the first director of the cooperative program and Vice President for Research and Public Services at the University of Maine.

Among the most promising of the on-going projects funded this year is a study of the culture of edible blue mussels. Aquaculture researchers at the University of Maine already have set out more than a dozen experimental

rafts along the Maine-New Hampshire coast for growing the mussels, a highly-regarded shellfish whose production world-wide exceeds 250,000 tons annually. In cooperation with Abandoned Farm, Inc., the Sea Grant-supported aquaculturists will examine the growth and survival of mussels on the experimental rafts and will monitor the development of mussels reared in the warm-water effluent of an electric power plant in Maine.

In related work at the University of New Hampshire, research will center around the rearing of coho salmon. Special strains of these salmon, adapted to northern New England waters, will be developed and work will continue on improving the diets and disease-resistance of the fish.

Other scientists will pursue work aimed at improving oyster aquaculture, evaluating commercial seaweed production, and understanding

Foreign Fishery Developments

Soviets Report Views on Law of Sea Issues

The United Nation's Law of the Sea (LOS) Conference convened its third substantive session in New York City on 15 March 1976. Many of the major issues of this Conference were presented in the Soviet daily *Pravda* in a February article entitled "Detente and the World's Oceans" by S. Pavlov.

According to Pavlov's article, the Soviet Union's official policy in regard to international law of sea stems from the increasing use of the oceans by all countries of the world. The development of international cooperation on the high seas depends largely on the procedure for law and order that is established to control the world ocean environment. To establish such a procedure is the main task of the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference.

Among the most important LOS issues is the problem of extension of the Territorial Sea. The Soviet Union, according to the *Pravda* article, advocates a 12-Mile Territorial Sea for every country. Worldwide claims of a 200-Mile Territorial Sea would result in 40 percent of the total ocean area being removed from general use by all

the cause of the so-called "red tide" outbreaks that threaten shellfish beds along the New England coast. This latter project is particularly important, since red tide poisoning has forced the closing of large numbers of commercially valuable shellfish areas several times in the past. Investigators so far have identified three of the poisons found in affected shellfish, and are attempting to develop a method to inactivate the poisons and detoxify tainted shellfish.

The combined University of Maine-University of New Hampshire Marine Advisory Service will continue to provide business management information to members of the fishing industry and other users of the marine environment. In addition, a series of seminars, meetings, and special demonstrations is planned this year for students, seafood processors, and the general public.

countries. However, the Soviet Union does support the concept of the so-called "200-Mile Economic Zone" under which the coastal states have sovereign rights to all living and mineral resources within their respective zones. By supporting this concept, the Soviets hope to show their concern for the developing nations of the world.

On the other hand, they are also concerned about the future of their high-seas fishing fleet, which takes the largest percentage of its catch off foreign shores. To reconcile these two concerns, the Soviet Union supports the idea that if a coastal state fishes only part of the resources within its 200-mile Economic Zone (EZ), then fishermen from other countries should be allowed to fish the unutilized portion. "Developing" coastal states, *Pravda* declares, should receive compensation for allowing foreign vessels to fish in their Economic Zones.

Concerning the 50 countries of the world which have limited access to the ocean (no coastline or very short coastline), Pavlov states that the Soviet Union advocates that these countries be granted certain rights