

PROGRESS REPORT 1992/93

by the

ICES Fishery Secretary

1 FISHERY STATISTICS

1.1 Data Reported

Two sets of catch statistics are received and maintained by the ICES Secretariat: 1) data officially reported by national statistical offices and 2) data brought to assessment working group meetings by members.

The official data are reported to ICES on three separate forms:

- 1) The ICES Report of Preliminary Nominal Catches of Selected Species is used for reporting preliminary annual catches by fishing area within 30 days of the end of the year.
- 2) The STATLANT 27A Form is used to report final annual catches by area (sub-area, division or sub-division) within 5 months of the end of the year.
- 3) The STATLANT 27B Form is used to report final monthly catch and fishing effort data by area, gear type, vessel size category and target species within 8 months of the end of the year.

The preliminary data reported on 1) are available for use by the assessment working groups. The STATLANT 27A and 27B data are published annually in *ICES Fishery Statistics* (formerly *Bulletin Statistique*) and are also available to the working groups prior to publication.

The catch data brought to working group meetings by members may or may not correspond to the officially reported statistics. These unofficial data are maintained in computer files, usually in the form of total international catches by year for each stock, and are used in the stock assessment analyses. The catch data used by the work

ing groups are published in the working group and ACFM reports.

1.2 Adequacy of Data

Catch statistics officially reported on all three forms by some member countries continue to differ, in some cases substantially, from those provided by scientists to the working groups. There are sometimes perfectly valid reasons why these differences occur; for example, working group data may be collected on a stock basis rather than on an area basis. Quite often, though, the two sets of data are conflicting and usually the unofficial data are accepted by the working groups and ACFM as being the more accurate estimates. ICES expressed its concern about the large discrepancies between the officially-reported data and working group data in 1986 (C.Res.1986/4:13). A list of these discrepancies was last published in the Progress Report for 1988/1989 (CM 1989/D:21). No further updating of this list has been carried out because the official statistics are not complete for 1989 and onwards.

The catch data reported by national statistical offices are as a rule "landings" data, ie they do not include fish caught which are discarded at sea. Where possible, working groups also provide estimates of quantities discarded. In the catch tables published in working group reports and the ACFM report, a distinction is drawn between officially-reported landings, landings provided by working group members and discards. Any landings data that cannot be attributed to a particular country are combined as "unallocated landings".

1.3 Timeliness of data submission

1.3.1 Preliminary catch data

Table 1 summarises the status of the reporting of preliminary annual catch data for 1992 compared to that for 1991. Five reporting offices failed to submit these data for 1992 (Finland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and UK (Isle of Man), two fewer than in 1991. Ten returns for 1992 were made on or before the 1 February deadline, compared to five in 1991.

One problem concerning the preliminary reports for some countries is that ICES Sub-areas or Divisions are grouped, with the result that such data are of little use to the working groups. For example, France reports by TAC areas whereas the Federal Republic of Germany uses other groupings.

1.3.2 STATLANT 27 data

Table 2 summarises the status of the reporting of STATLANT 27A and 27B data for 1989-1992. The number of national statistical offices submitting data to ICES was 23 in 1989 and 1990, 24 in 1991 and 25 in 1992.

Adherence to the deadline of 31 May for the STATLANT 27A data has been poor.

For 1989, 10 offices reported STATLANT data within a month of the deadline and two were over a year late (France and Ireland). No STATLANT 27A report for 1989 has yet been received from Spain.

For 1990, 10 offices reported STATLANT 27A data within a month of the 31 May deadline and three were over a year late (France, UK (Guernsey) and UK (Jersey)). No STATLANT 27A data for 1990 have so far been received from Ireland, Netherlands or Spain.

For 1991, 10 offices reported STATLANT 27A data within a month of the 31 May deadline. No final STATLANT 27A forms for 1991 have yet been submitted to ICES from France, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway or Spain although data from France have been made available via EURO-STAT.

As at 1 September 1993, 14 offices have submitted STATLANT 27A data for 1992.

The reporting of STATLANT 27B data continues to be incomplete (Table 2). Only 12 offices have submitted data for 1989, 10 for 1990, 8 for 1991 and 2 for 1992.

Most countries are now complying with the recommendation made in 1986 (C.Res.1986/4:9) that STATLANT 27A and 27B reports for Sub-areas VII and VIII should be made by Divisions rather than groupings of Divisions. Some countries continue to report by the groupings as follows: Divisions VIIb,c, Divisions VIIg-k and Divisions VIIla-e. All countries are reminded that the reporting of catches by individual Divisions in these and other Sub-areas is required to obtain the necessary information for use by the working groups.

1.4 *ICES Fishery Statistics* (formerly *Bulletin Statistique*)

The latest issue is Volume 73 (data for 1988) which was published in November 1992.

Volume 74 (data for 1989) is currently being prepared for publication but must await STATLANT 27A data from Spain and a more complete area breakdown of the data supplied by France which have been supplied under areas used for Total Allowable Catch legislation (TACs).

Volume 75 (data for 1990) awaits submission of STATLANT 27A data by Ireland, Netherlands and Spain.

The Advance Release of Tables 1-6 of *ICES Fishery Statistics*, Volume 77 (data for 1992) has been issued as C.M.1993/Gen:5. Data from 10 national statistical offices had not been supplied by the date of preparation of this report (1 September).

1.5 The Future of the STATLANT 27A and 27B Reporting Systems

At its January 1992 meeting, the Statistics Committee Liaison Working Group was asked to consider the future existence of the STATLANT 27B reporting requirement. The Working Group considered that the heavy demands at the national

level and within the ICES Secretariat in providing and maintaining the 27B returns could no longer be justified given the low level of usage of the data in the 27B form, and therefore recommended that the STATLANT 27B reporting requirement be discontinued forthwith (ICES C.M.1992/D:1). This recommendation was endorsed by the Coordinating Working Party on Atlantic Fishery Statistics (CWP) but CWP also recommended that the scheme be replaced by some form of reporting of catches by month. A review of the STATLANT reporting system for the ICES and NAFO areas will take place before the next CWP meeting in July 1994.

At the 80th Statutory Meeting held in Rostock in 1992, it was resolved that:

(C.Res 1992/4:1) The STATLANT 27B reporting requirement for fishery statistics will be discontinued with effect from 1 January 1993. It is, however, essential that ICES Member Countries continue to collect catch and effort data and provide these to participants in ICES assessment Working Groups in the highly disaggregated form required for stock assessments.

(C.Res 1992/4:2) The ICES Fishery Secretary will make proposals for any modifications to the STATLANT 27A reporting system, or for any additional reporting system which is considered necessary to accommodate the present needs of ICES (taking into account the cessation of STATLANT 27B reporting) and which will be reasonably assured of complete reporting by all ICES Member Countries. The views of national statistical offices should be taken into account. The proposals will be considered by the Coordinating Working Party (CWP) on Fishery Statistics at its *ad hoc* Inter-Agency Consultations during the 1993 Statutory Meeting as part of a review of the STATLANT reporting system for the ICES and NAFO areas.

National statistical offices have been invited to comment on these resolutions.

The main objectives of the STATLANT 27A and 27B reporting systems are twofold:

- a) to provide the ICES community with the data needed to assess fish stocks;
- b) to fulfil obligations to member countries, intergovernmental commissions and the wider scientific community to provide official fishery statistics both in published form and on request.

To carry out their assessments, ICES working groups require landings data often within a few months of the end of the year to which the data apply. As described in Section 1.3, STATLANT 27A data for the previous year are in many cases not available in time for the working group meetings and the working groups therefore have to use preliminary data. Since even these are in some cases not available or available in insufficient area detail, working groups often have to find means of circumventing the lack, or incompleteness, of the officially-reported landings data by making their own estimates. This is not a satisfactory solution, however, because the data used by the working groups in these cases cannot be made available in a form that can be verified or subjected to independent scrutiny. It is therefore important for the credibility of the assessments made by ICES that ICES be provided with accurate fishery statistics in a timely fashion.

From the point of view of the needs of ICES working groups, it is clear that priority needs to be given to the submission of reliable landings statistics disaggregated by ICES Division and Sub-division as soon as possible after the end of the year. Ideally, final data as supplied on the STATLANT 27A form should be made available, although the preliminary data supplied on the "ICES Report of Preliminary Nominal Catches of Selected Species" are used if these are not available.

The ICES working groups also need fishing effort data which have up to now been supplied on the STATLANT 27B forms. These data are still required, but it is clear from past experience that it is too demanding to expect official effort data to be provided in time for working group meetings. The present arrangements whereby effort data disaggregated in the form required by individual working groups are provided to working group members on an unofficial basis is in general working satisfactorily. National statistical offices are urged to maintain their provision of data in

this way as requested in Council Resolution 1992/4:1.

The other major requirement for fishery statistics that have the weight of official authority behind them is to enable ICES to provide a data service to its customers, ie the International Fisheries Commissions, Member Governments, the Commission of the European Community and the wider scientific community. These data are supplied on request as they become available to ICES, but it has not been the practice to issue "ICES Fisheries Statistics" until all countries have submitted their final data. Since ICES is rapidly being put in a position where it cannot provide an up-to-date service, because of the delays in submission of data, there is a clear need for improvement. Since any requirements for national statistical offices to provide additional official data (eg monthly landings data) may have the effect of delaying the provision of final annual statistics, the present requirement to provide STATLANT 27A data by the agreed deadline of 31 May should remain unaltered for the time-being and the need for adherence to the deadline should be given full attention at an official level. If the Committee can agree to this, then no further action is required with respect to C.Res 1992/4:2.

It is also clear that the groupings of species and areas used in the submission of STATLANT 27A data are not uniform in all countries. This is particularly noticeable in the case of species that have not traditionally been exploited, such as a number of deep water species, for example. There is also some ambiguity in the provision of data by ICES and national species codings and resolution of ambiguous information is an additional reason for delays in the production of "ICES Fisheries Statistics".

The ICES codings were last published in 1979 (C.M. 1979/D:2) and a number of changes and additions have been made to the list of codings since then. Since a number of deep water species are concerned, it is proposed by the Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) that one of the terms of reference of a proposed "Study Group on the Biology and Assessment of Deep-Sea Fisheries Resources" should be to "advise on additions to the list of species for which national catch data are required." In the light of any suggestions made, it is proposed that

a revised and updated list should be prepared and published in due course.

2 AQUACULTURE STATISTICS

The status of the reporting of aquaculture production statistics for 1989-1992 on the FISHSTAT AQ form is as shown in Table 3. Reports have been received from 10 offices for 1989 but only 5 offices for 1990, 1991 and 1992.

3 DISCREPANCIES IN INTERNATIONAL DATA BASES

Following a Council Resolution in 1990 (C.Res-1990/3:2), a meeting was held from 22-25 July 1991 with representatives from ICES, FAO and EUROSTAT to try to resolve discrepancies among the data bases of the three agencies, and the progress made in reducing the large list of discrepancies for the period 1973-1988 was reported in the Progress Report for 1990/91. No further exercises have been made. The Statistics Committee Liaison Working Group and the Coordinating Party on Atlantic Fishery Statistics recommended that such exercises should be held at regular intervals of about every two years. At the 1992 Statutory Meeting it was resolved (C.Res. 1992/3:2) that

"a 3-day meeting of an expert group, including at least representatives of ICES, FAO, and EUROSTAT, will be held at ICES Headquarters in late 1993 at the agencies' own expense to resolve discrepancies between databases on international catch statistics held by different agencies. The discrepancies will be identified and circulated to participants by EUROSTAT prior to the meeting."

Delays in the preparation of lists of discrepancies and in the investigations needed to resolve them are likely to mean that this meeting will have to be postponed until 1994.

4 COMPUTER FACILITIES, ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS AND DATA BASES

The full set of STATLANT 27A data for the years from 1973 onwards is now stored in SAS on the new computer at ICES as well as at the Uni-

versity of Copenhagen Computer Centre (UNI.C). STATLANT 27B data are still only stored on the UNI.C computer, as are the COBOL programs for extracting the data. This facility at UNI.C is not being maintained after the end of 1993 and arrangements are being made to transfer the programs and database to the ICES Secretariat.

The International Bottom Trawl Survey (formerly the International Young Fish Survey) database has been moved from the UNI.C computer to the ICES HP-workstation. It remains in the SIR database system. Consideration has been given to moving the database to a different database system but it has been decided to postpone this for at least a few years both because of a lack of manpower at the ICES Secretariat and because of the uncertain benefits likely to be gained from such a change. Steps have been taken to make the present database more flexible so that it is easier to extract data. For 1991 and onwards data from quarters of the year other than the first quarter are now reported to ICES by most countries. Separate databases for each of the four quarters are in the process of being created on the basis of the existing database for the first quarter.

The ICES Fisheries Assessment Package (IFAP) has been developed further. The main change is the transfer of the whole system (programs and data base) from a DOS platform to a UNIX platform. The system is now running in SAS version 6.07 under UNIX on a HP 9000 workstation. This has resulted in a substantial improvement in the performance of the system, but also various new facilities have been added. In the present state, the system is reliable and incorporates most of the users' core tasks. However, it still lacks several facilities requested by the users, and further development is to be carried out to meet these requests.

5 CHANGES IN NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEMS

Some improvements in national statistical systems are apparently in progress, but the Secretariat is not aware of any major changes in the systems in use.

6 STATISTICS COMMITTEE LIAISON WORKING GROUP

The last meeting of this Working Group took place from 29-30 January 1992 (ICES C.M.-1992/D:1). No further meetings are planned at present.

7 COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

The CWP last met in July 1992 to consider a wide range of issues relating to fishery statistics for the Atlantic Ocean. CWP coordinates the collection and processing of statistics which is undertaken by seven agencies, and meets about every two years.

At the 1992 Statutory Meeting a proposal by CWP to rename the CWP was adopted (C.Res 3:3):

ICES, as a member agency of the Coordinating Working Party (CWP) on Atlantic Fishery Statistics, endorses the proposal to rename it as the Coordinating Working Party (CWP) on Fishery Statistics, so as to encourage participation by users and agencies from outside the Atlantic (as observers) and facilitate consideration of the majority of the agenda items which are of global significance (e.g., highseas fishery statistics).

The next meeting of the CWP is to be held in Madrid in 1994.

The *ad hoc* interagency consultations of the CWP are due to take place immediately before the Statutory Meeting in Dublin from 21-22 September 1993. One of the main items on the agenda relevant to the work of ICES is a review of the STATLANT 27 reporting system.

Table 1. Returns of the ICES Report of Preliminary Nominal Catch of Selected Species, 1991 and 1992 as of 1 September 1993 (Deadline: 1 February).

Country	1991	1992
Belgium	26.02.92	04.02.93
Denmark	30.01.92	03.02.93
Estonia		29.01.93
Faroe Islands	04.02.92	16.04.93
Finland	-	-
France	23.01.92 ¹	01.02.93 ¹
Germany, Fed. Rep.	04.02.92	10.02.93
Greenland	03.02.92	26.01.93
Iceland	07.02.92	01.02.93
Ireland	-	-
Latvia		14.01.93
Lithuania		28.01.93
Netherlands	23.01.92	14.01.93
Norway	07.02.92	12.03.93
Poland	20.03.92	02.04.93
Portugal	-	-
Russia		20.07.93
Spain	-	-
Sweden	04.02.92	14.04.93
UK (England & Wales)	05.03.92	25.01.93
UK (Ch. I. Guernsey)	-	08.03.93
UK (Ch. I. Jersey)	25.02.92	23.02.93
UK (Isle of Man)	-	-
UK (N. Ireland)	21.01.92	28.01.93
UK (Scotland)	13.01.92	28.01.93
USSR	-	

¹Preliminary report by TAC areas.

Table 2. Returns of STATLANT 27A and 27B forms as of 1 September 1993 (Deadlines: 31 May and 31 August, respectively).

Country	STATLANT 27A				STATLANT 27B			
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1989	1990	1991	1992
Belgium	29.05.90	14.05.91	26.05.92	04.02.93	29.05.90	14.05.91	07.09.92	-
Denmark	12.10.90	04.11.91	24.09.92	-	-	-	-	-
Estonia			-	20.07.93			-	-
Faroe Islands	17.08.90 ¹	28.01.91 ¹	04.05.92 ¹	-	21.01.91	19.06.91	05.08.92	-
	04.12.90	23.04.91	14.07.92	-				
Finland	-	30.05.91 ¹	-	-	30.08.90	13.09.91	26.08.92	-
	09.05.90	14.10.91	15.06.92					
France	01.03.93	01.03.93	- ²	-	-	-	-	-
German Dem. Rep.	21.05.90	05.04.91	23.11.92	19.07.93	21.05.90	05.04.91	-	-
Germany, Fed. Rep.	20.11.90	09.10.91			20.11.90	02.01.92		
Greenland	24.09.90	24.05.91	07.05.92	14.05.93	17.09.90	24.05.91	07.05.92	27.05.93
Iceland	13.08.90	22.07.91	20.07.92	23.07.93	-	-	-	-
Ireland	03.02.92	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia			11.05.92	24.05.93			-	24.05.93
Lithuania			11.09.92	-			-	-
Netherlands	10.10.90	-	-	28.05.93	-	-	-	-
Norway	21.09.90 ¹	29.07.91 ¹	28.10.92 ¹		13.01.92	-	-	-
	13.01.92	06.08.92	-					
Poland	20.06.90	04.06.91	22.05.92	01.06.93	17.09.90	09.09.91	10.08.92	-
Portugal	21.05.90	11.09.91	04.08.92	05.07.93	30.08.90	29.08.91	05.08.92	-
Russia			-	20.07.93			-	-
Spain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	09.08.90	08.08.91	11.08.92	16.07.93	31.08.90	13.08.91	11.08.92	-
UK (Engl. & Wales)	06.06.90	19.06.91	05.06.92	-	-	-	-	-
UK (Ch. I. Guernsey)	05.09.90	11.03.93	22.06.93	01.06.93	-	-	-	-
UK (Ch. I. Jersey)	10.05.90	15.03.93	02.03.92	08.03.93	-	-	-	-
UK (Isle of Man)	28.09.90	14.06.91	04.06.92	-	-	-	04.06.92	-
UK (N. Ireland)	21.05.90	21.05.91	22.05.92	02.06.93	-	-	-	-
UK (Scotland)	08.06.90	19.03.91	19.11.92	-	09.11.90	-	-	-
USSR	06.06.90	08.07.91	29.01.93		30.07.90	30.07.91		

¹Preliminary.

²Data received via EUROSTAT 17.02.93

Table 3. Returns of the FISHSTAT AQ form as of 1 September 1993 (Deadline: 30 June).

Country	1989	1990	1991	1992
Belgium	16.07.90	19.08.91	29.07.92	-
Denmark	-	-	-	-
Estonia			-	-
Faroe Islands	-	-	-	-
Finland	13.09.90	08.07.91	25.06.92	08.06.93
France	-	-	-	06.08.93
German Dem. Rep.	03.07.90	-]	-
Germany, Fed. Rep.	03.09.90	-		-
Greenland	-	-	-	-
Iceland	27.09.90	-	-	-
Ireland	-	-	-	-
Latvia			-	-
Lithuania			-	-
Netherlands	-	-	-	-
Norway	14.09.92	14.09.92	-	-
Poland	-	-	-	-
Portugal	02.07.90	-	-	-
Russia			-	-
Spain	-	-	-	-
Sweden	06.08.90	09.08.91	12.08.92	27.07.93
UK (England & Wales)	-	-	-	23.06.93
UK (Ch. I. Guernsey)	-	-	-	-
UK (Ch. I. Jersey)	-	-	-	-
UK (Isle of Man)	-	-	-	-
UK (N. Ireland)	21.05.90	21.05.91	29.06.92	07.07.93
UK (Scotland)	18.02.91	-	18.05.92	-
USSR	-	-		