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**Report from meeting of the  
Working Group of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission on  
allocation keys for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock**

25-28 August 2008, Murmansk

According to the Protocol of the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission (JRNFC), item 8.1.3, the parties agreed to establish a Working Group of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission on allocation keys for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock.

The Working Group met during 25-28 August 2008 in Murmansk co-chaired by Vladimir Shibanov from Russia and Peter Gullestad from Norway. The members of the delegations are presented in Appendix 1.

The Parties agreed on the Agenda of the meeting (Appendix 2).

**1. Discussion of the understanding of the Working Group mandate.**

The Parties have found differences in the understanding of the Working Group mandate that was given by JRNFC related to the Russian or Norwegian versions of the Protocol of the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the JRNFC.

Last part of the sentence in the second paragraph of item 8.1.3. have different meaning in the Russian and Norwegian languages. The full text of this paragraph is presented in the appendix 3 in both languages.

Translations with marked differences are presented below.

From Russian

“The Parties agreed to establish as soon as possible a joint Working Group with participation of representatives of the management authorities, economists and scientists to develop principles which could be taken as a basis for a distribution key for the Greenland halibut stock in connection with its joint management, **as well as the elaboration of proposals on the TAC distribution key.**”

From Norwegian

“The Parties agreed to establish as soon as possible a joint Working Group with participation of representatives of the management authorities, economists and scientists to develop principles which could be taken as a basis for a distribution key for the Greenland halibut stock in connection with its joint management, **and prepare a proposal for the TAC.**”

The Parties agreed that the main body of the sentence is very clear and that the Working Group have to discuss the criteria and principles which can be used to establish an allocation key for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock.

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The Parties agreed to ask the JRNFC to explain the last part of the sentence clarifying the mandate of the Working Group. At the same time the Norwegian Party accepted that the Working Group can use the Russian understanding at the present meeting.

The Parties agreed to ask the JRNFC whether representatives from the fishing industry should be invited to participate in future meeting of the Working Group.

**2. Exchange of views on the current state of the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock. Progress of the 3-years Research Program.**

The Parties examined the current state of the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock. The common view of the present stock situation is positive, with indications of increase in spawning stock as well as in recruitment of several of the recent year-classes. It is especially important that the abundance of large females has increased, resulting in 2-3 times increase in the total egg production over the last 10-15 years. The moratorium seems to have had a positive effect on the stock.

Norwegian scientists noted that the dynamic mechanisms behind the increase in spawning stock is not clear, due to uncertainties regarding age determination. Norwegian scientists view the Greenland halibut as a slow-growing, late maturing and highly concentrated deep-sea resource that will need special protection to prevent overexploitation.

The Russian scientists take the view that the Greenland halibut is not a slow-growing and late maturing species and this opinion should be taken into account when management measures for Greenland halibut fisheries are established.

In 2007-2008 Russia has conducted a trawl survey in the northern and eastern Barents Sea and adjacent waters. In the areas between the Franz Josef Land and the northern extremity of the Novaja Zemlja concentrations of Greenland halibut were found, mainly juveniles, which possibly drifted into these waters with branches of warm currents from their spawning areas. The northern and eastern boundaries of concentration were not revealed due to hard ice situation.

Several field experiments have been made with two different Norwegian sampling trawls, and estimates of gear selection properties and conversion models are being developed. Several field and laboratory experiments have also been made to gain more insight about seasonal migrations between the slope and the shelf, and about the pelagic dimension of Greenland halibut distribution. For each month of the year, estimates have been made of the mean percentage of time that individual fish utilize shelf and slope environments respectively. Estimates are also made of the percentage of time that is used away from the bottom.

Norwegian age studies indicate that the age reading method used by both Norway and Russia up to 2006 strongly underestimates the age of Greenland halibut. A refined method has been developed which is supported by results from tagging experiments, morphometric analyses, length mode progression in the stock, as well as Canadian studies based on Bomb radiocarbon analyses of the otolith core.

The Russian scientists believe that the method used by Russian and Norwegian age-readers during the whole previous period allow obtaining reliable and representative age composition of the Greenland halibut stock.

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**3. Report of the Working Group on elaboration of proposal on joint management measures for Greenland halibut (4-6 October 2006, Kirkenes, Norway).**

The Working Group on elaboration of proposal on joint management measures for Greenland halibut met for the second time in Kirkenes during 4–6 October 2006 (Appendix 4).

In 2006, the Working Group reviewed the available data from fisheries and scientific surveys on the geographical distribution of Greenland halibut, by exclusive economical zones and international waters. Greenland halibut catches were tabulated by country, years and ICES areas I, IIa and IIb.

The present Working Group acknowledge the scientific contribution by both parties over many years, evident from Table 6 in the protocol from the Kirkenes-meeting in 2006, and from subsequent activities reported to the present Working Group. There is no obvious method to weight the significance of the individual contributions, and the present Working Group therefore suggests weighting the total contribution equally between the Parties. The Working Group asks that the Research Program present a full reference list of Norwegian and Russian research on Greenland halibut in the Final Report of the Research Program.

Distribution of Greenland halibut is such that during the year and its life cycle, it forms concentrations in all economic zones of the Barents Sea, thereby indicating that the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut is a transboundary stock.

The catches for the period from 1973–1991 are characterized by relatively high quality of the catch data and is not hampered by the fishing moratorium.

The present Working Group pointed that the WG made as much as possible for the data before year 2006.

The Parties found that some new information about geographical distributions and stock structure are available for recent years. The Working Group asks the scientists to convene a working meeting during spring 2009 to update and improve estimates of zonal attachment from the Kirkenes report. The scientists should evaluate all available survey data, as well as results from the research program, and produce distribution maps and tables based on a common understanding of the new information. All survey and research data that will be used as basis for the analyses should be available to all participants so that the same methods may be applied to all data sources.

**4. Analysis of international practice in the establishment of national allocation keys for commercial species of marine bioresources (JNRFC, NEAFC, NAFO etc.).**

The Parties exchanged views and experiences with regard to the establishment of allocation keys for shared and straddling stocks in the North Atlantic.

Allocation keys established in the early days of the 200-mile zone regime where based mainly on political agreements with limited scientific input, while based on the history of fishery. Barents Sea Capelin and Northeast Arctic Cod and Haddock, are examples of such stocks.

Later on more sophisticated scientific input and models describing the distribution of the stock, supplemented by data on historical catches, national contributions into the research and conservation of

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the stocks, has been developed and utilized as a basis and starting point for decisions of allocation keys for shared and straddling stocks in the North Atlantic. Allocation keys for Irminger Sea Redfish, Norwegian Spring Spawning Herring, Blue Whiting, and 2J3KL Cod are examples of such stocks.

**5. Discussion of criteria and principles which can be used for establishment of an allocation key for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut TAC.**

The Parties agreed that the TAC for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock should cover all catches, i.e. all commercial, traditional as well as scientific catches in the whole area of distribution of the stock, including all of ICES Subareas I and II.

The Parties agreed that the following elements are of relevance when establishing an allocation key for the Greenland halibut stock:

- zonal distribution of the stock
- history of the fishery
- contribution to the research on the stock
- contribution to the conservation (monitoring, control and surveillance) and the rebuilding of the stock

The order of criteria does not necessarily reflect their value and weight.

The Parties did not reach a conclusion with regard to how these criteria and principles should be applied, and have therefore put forward their respective proposals.

Proposals of the Russian Party

In opinion of the Russian party, the quota allocation algorithm may be based on the following principles:

- Before TAC allocation to national quotas a share for the third parties is reserved. This quota may be determined in % as the portion of catches of the third parties.
- The Joint Russian-Norwegian fisheries Commission will give the fishing opportunities to third parties in the ICES area IIb (around the Spitzbergen archipelago).
- Greenland halibut TAC without the share of the third parties shall be distributed between Russia and Norway.
- All 4 parameters agreed upon by the parties at this WG meeting will participate in the distribution key. The total statistical weight (the sum of shares) of all the parameters is 100%. The statistical weight (portion) of every parameter should be specified additionally.
- **The zonal stock allocation** is considered as ratio (in %) of Greenland halibut distribution in the exclusive economical zones of Russia and Norway estimated both by biomass and abundance. Both parameters have the equal weight (50:50) that will allow us to average % of the portion of biomass distribution and abundance in the above mentioned economical zones. Stock distribution in the Barents Sea enclave and so-called Grey or disputable zone is taken as 50:50. Since the status of fishery protection zone around Spitsbergen has not been finally agreed halibut stock distribution in this area is not taken into account when estimating a parameter of zonal stock allocation (possibly it will be discussed at the coming 37 Meeting of the Commission).
- **History of fishing.** Ratio of Russian and Norwegian catches in the period 1973-1991, recommended by the WG-2006 is the basis to estimate this parameter.

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- **Contribution to study of the stock.** The Parties have concluded that it is difficult to have a quantitative estimate of that parameter. Possible indicators in estimating may be (without keeping the order of significance): number of cruises, number of Greenland halibut surveys, number of fishing days during research cruises, number of publications etc. Possibly, the shares of parties in this parameter may be taken as 50:50.
- **Contribution to conservation and recovery of the stock.** It is possible to consider this parameter in details or estimate it in regard to the number of monitoring and control cruises, ratio of catches in moratorium period (as a negative component), to establish these or those conservation measures (closure of areas, regulation of bycatches in other fisheries).

Thus, when using the above mentioned algorithm, having statistical weights of each parameter agreed by the parties as well as the agreed ratio of the party shares for each parameter the share of each party in Greenland halibut TAC may be determined.

#### Proposals of the Norwegian Party

The Norwegian Party proposed the following procedure for the establishment of an allocation key:

- a. The Parties should take as a starting point the zonal distribution of biomass on the basis of updated information from the 2007-2009 Scientific Program on Greenland halibut.
  - b. Norway will grant fishing opportunities to other countries in The Fisheries Protection Zone around Svalbard based on zonal attachment and historical catches in a period prior to the moratorium in 1992. Eventual catches of third parties in international waters are expected to be covered by this allocation.
  - c. Zonal attachment to The Grey Zone should be shared equally between Russia and Norway.
  - d. The allocation to Russia and Norway resulting from the calculations described in point a.-c. should be subject to adjustment, as appropriate, according to the elements listed under item 5 paragraph two.
  - e. Eventual quotas to third parties in the Russian and Norwegian economic zone should be deducted from the Russian and Norwegian allocations respectively.
  - f. Mutual access to waters should be decided upon as part of a final agreement on the allocation key. Transparent reporting between the parties of catches from all areas should be decided upon as part of an agreement.
  - g. A Management Strategy and a Harvest Control Rule for Greenland halibut should be agreed upon simultaneously.
6. [Development of proposals for national allocation keys of the Greenland halibut total allowable catch (TAC). ]
  7. [ Development of a Management Strategy and Harvest Control Rules for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock. ]
  8. Preparation of the WG report for the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission.

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The Parties agreed that the report of the Working Group meeting will be presented for the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission in English and that the report will be presented to the co-chair of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission as soon as possible.

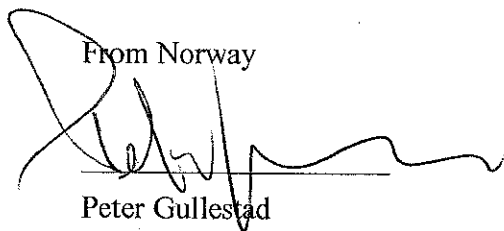
Signed by

From Russia



Vladimir Shibanov

From Norway



Peter Gullesstad

Murmansk, 28 August 2008

**Russian delegation:**

SHIBANOV Vladimir	Deputy Head, Department of Science and Education, Russian Federal Agency for Fisheries, Moscow. Head of Delegation
GORCHINSKY Konstantin	Leading expert, Barents and White Sea Territorial Department of the Russian Federal Agency for Fisheries, Murmansk
ONISKEVICH Oleg	Deputy Director, Department of Fishing Industry of the Murmansk Region, Murmansk
ALEKSEEV Andrey	Adviser, Department of Fishing Industry of the Murmansk Region, Murmansk
BORISOV Vladimir	Head of Laboratory, VNIRO, Moscow
LEPESEVICH Yury	Research Director, PINRO, Murmansk
SHAMRAY Evgeny	Head of Laboratory, PINRO, Murmansk
ZHIVOV Boris	Chairman of Scientific and Technological Council, Association of Fishing Companies of the North, Murmansk
CHUMAKOV Alexander	General Director, OOO "Persey", Murmansk
SHERSTOVA Natalia	Interpreter, PINRO, Murmansk

**Norwegian delegation:**

GULLESTAD Peter	Director General of Fisheries, Directorate of Fisheries, Bergen. Head of Delegation
LIABØ Synnøve	Adviser, Directorate of Fisheries, Bergen
ALBERT Ole Thomas	Research Group Manager, IMR, Tromsø
VOLLEN Tone	Research Scientist, IMR, Tromsø

**AGENDA of the**

**Working Group of the Joint Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission on  
allocation keys for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock**

25-28 August 2008, Murmansk

1. Discussion of the understanding of the Working Group mandate.
2. Exchange of views on the current state of the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock. Progress of the 3-years Research Program.
3. Report of the Working Group on elaboration of proposal on joint management measures for Greenland halibut (4-6 October 2006, Kirkenes, Norway).
4. Analysis of international practice in the establishment of national allocation keys for commercial species of marine bioresources (JNRFC, NEAFC, NAFO etc.).
5. Discussion of criteria and principles which can be used for establishment of an allocation key for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut TAC.
6. [ Development of proposals for national allocation keys of the Greenland halibut total allowable catch (TAC). ]
7. [ Development of a Management Strategy and Harvest Control Rules for the Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut stock. ]
8. Preparation of the WG report for the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Joint Norwegian-Russian Fisheries Commission.



## Russian Version of the Working Group mandate

### 8.1.3. О совместных мерах регулирования запаса синекорого палтуса как трансграничного запаса

На основании данных трехлетней совместной программы исследований (2002–2004 гг.) Стороны согласились с тем, что запас синекорого палтуса распространяется на всей акватории Баренцева моря.

Стороны согласились в возможно короткий срок создать совместную Рабочую группу с участием представителей органов исполнительной власти, экономистов и ученых для разработки принципов, которые будут заложены в основу ключа распределения запаса синекорого палтуса в связи с его совместным регулированием, а также для разработки предложений по ключу распределения ОДУ.

Для выполнения этой задачи Рабочая группа должна основываться на следующих документах:

1. Отчет заседания Рабочей группы по выработке предложений по мерам совместного управления запасом синекорого палтуса, которое состоялось 4-6 октября 2006 г., в г. Киркенес.
2. Отчет по трехлетней совместной программе исследований в 2007 – 2009 гг.

Рабочая группа начнет свою работу в 2008 году и будет представлять свой ежегодный отчет на Смешанной Российско-Норвежской комиссии по рыболовству. Окончательный отчет будет представлен в 2010 году.

## Norwegian of the Working Group mandate

### 8.1.3 Om felles tiltak for regulering av blåkkeite som grenseoverskridende bestand

Basert på data fra det treårige felles forskningsprogrammet for 2002-2004, erkjente partene at blåkkeitebestanden er utbredt i hele Barentshavet.

Partene var enige om, så snart som mulig, å opprette en gruppe av forvaltere, økonomer og forskere til å utrede prinsipper som kan danne grunnlag for fordelingsnøkkel i forbindelse med felles reguleringstiltak for fiske etter blåkkeite, samt utarbeide forslag til TAC.

Til dette arbeidet skal gruppen benytte følgende grunnlag:

1. Rapport fra møtet i arbeidsgruppen i Kirkenes 4.-6. Oktober 2006 vedr utarbeidelse av forslag til felles reguleringstiltak for bestanden av blåkkeite
2. Rapport fra det felles norsk-russiske treårige blåkkeiteprogram 2007-2009

Gruppen skal begynne sitt arbeid i 2008 og levere en årlig rapport til fiskerikommisjonen. Den endelige rapporten skal leveres i 2010.