

Chair's summary

At the invitation of the Norwegian Government, representatives of the five coastal States of the Arctic Ocean – Canada, Denmark/Greenland, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and Norway – met at the level of senior officials on 22 June 2010 in Oslo, Norway, to hold informal discussions. These concerned issues related to their particular responsibilities as coastal States under the comprehensive international legal framework that applies to the Arctic Ocean in the field of conservation and management of fish stocks.

The participants exchanged views on available scientific information and acknowledged that the current state of information does not allow for a full understanding of the status of fish stocks and the impact of climate change on such stocks in the Arctic Ocean. Though large-scale commercial fishing in the central Arctic Ocean is not imminent, participants stressed the need for further scientific research on the state and nature of fish stocks and their ecosystems.

This is necessary in order to assess emerging trends and their implications in light of the climate change and melting of ice in the Arctic Ocean. Bearing in mind the precautionary approach, as required by the relevant legal instruments, the participants noted the need to follow developments closely in order to prevent possible negative effects on fish stocks in the area.

They underlined the importance of enhanced scientific cooperation among the coastal states. To that end, they agreed on the need for their scientific experts to meet to evaluate current information and identify future research requirements and priorities and to invite other experts to participate as appropriate.