

Informal Fisheries Consultations Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Canada

Basic Instrument

None

Authorities

Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1822(a), which authorizes the Secretary of State to negotiate international fisheries agreements, and 16 U.S.C. 1855(d), which authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate regulations necessary to carry out the Magnuson Act.

Member Nations

United States and Canada

Meetings

Parties meet annually, alternating meetings between the United States and Canada. This meeting generally takes place in late July or early August.

Description

The Parties have agreed that informal consultations on bilateral, multilateral and global fisheries conservation and management issues are of benefit to both Parties. These consultations are designed to provide broad coordination on issues of concern as opposed to negotiation of final agreements.

In recent years, these bilateral consultations have evolved into a two-day meeting. One day of the meeting is generally dedicated to bilateral and multilateral fisheries management issues of mutual interest. Discussions on bilateral issues generally focus on improving communication and coordination with regard to conservation and management of shared stocks (such as Pacific albacore, Pacific hake, and species of mutual concern in the Gulf of Maine). In many cases, separate negotiations are underway on these species, and this meeting allows officials on both sides to discuss avenues for future progress. Discussions on multilateral issues have recently focused on issues of mutual interest within the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and broader issues associated with tuna RFMOs.

The second meeting day is devoted to global fisheries/policy issues. These discussions tend to touch on international fisheries agreements and initiatives (such as on-going FAO work, implementation of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, and development of the annual UN General Assembly Fisheries Resolution). The consultations are used to trade information on the status of implementation of these instruments and initiatives, as well as to discuss ways to encourage their implementation by other countries. In addition, Parties discuss fisheries- and oceans-related developments in economic organizations such as APEC, the OECD Committee on Fisheries and the FAO Subcommittee on Fish trade. Finally, these consultations are used for discussion of species of mutual concern at the global level, such as sea turtles, sea birds and sharks.

Recent Activities

Representatives of the United States and Canada met in Silver Spring, Maryland during 23-24 June 2011, to discuss a range of fisheries and oceans issues of mutual interest. The U.S. Delegation included representatives of the Department of State, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Canadian delegation included representatives from the Departments of Fisheries and Oceans and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

The meeting agenda included specific topics within the following categories: national and international developments and priorities; regional issues and regional fisheries management organizations; bilateral issues; United Nations issues; and other for a.

Upcoming Meeting:

The next informal consultation will take place in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, during July 2012.

Staff Contacts

NOAA Fisheries:

Patrick E. Moran
Office of Sustainable Fisheries (F/SF4)
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Telephone: (301) 427-8370
Fax: (301) 713-2313
E-mail: pat.moran@noaa.gov

Department of State:

Deirdre Warner-Kramer
Office of Marine Conservation (OES/OMC)
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW, Room 5806
Washington, D.C. 20520-7818
Telephone: (202) 647-2883
Fax: (202) 736-7350
E-mail: Warner-KramerDM@state.gov