

Consensus to protect the central Arctic Ocean from unregulated fisheries.

Senior officials of the five coastal States surrounding the central Arctic Ocean – Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Kingdom of Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States of America – met on 24-26 February 2014 in Nuuk, Greenland. All participants recognized the unique opportunity to protect the central Arctic Ocean from unregulated fishing. Recognizing the responsibilities of Coastal States to conserve and manage fish stocks in their 200 miles zones, participants continued discussions relating to the conservation and management of fish stocks in the high seas portion of the central Arctic Ocean. This marine area is adjacent to the EEZ's of the five coastal States. There are currently no management regulations in place for fisheries in this high seas area. Based on available scientific information, commercial fishing is unlikely to occur in the high seas area of the central Arctic Ocean in the near future. Furthermore, the participants recognized the need for interim precautionary measures to prevent any future commercial fisheries without the prior establishment of appropriate regulatory mechanisms. The participants will work towards the establishment of such interim measures. Furthermore, they reviewed the outcomes of the 2nd Scientific Meeting on Arctic fish stocks held in Tromsø, Norway 28-31 October 2013. Recognizing the need for more scientific research, they decided to continue to advance scientific understanding, including local and traditional knowledge, of issues relevant to future fisheries in the central Arctic Ocean.