

## EU NAFO observer scheme a fiasco

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The Harper govt made much ado in 2009 about revisions to the NAFO Convention that it claimed would improve conservation and enforcement. Four former DFO executives (including myself) fought these amendments "tooth and nail" because we knew that NFO would remain a toothless tiger. We succeeded in getting the House of Commons to pass a majority resolution calling on the Harper govt to reject these amendments. Thumbing its nose at Parliament, in a now only too familiar gesture, the Harper govt responded by announcing that Canada would ratify the amended Convention.

What has been happening since then? A few days ago the UK Guardian newspaper reported the results of an investigation into the EU observer scheme in the NAFO Area. It reported that observers monitoring European [fish](#) quotas are being regularly intimidated, offered bribes and undermined by the [fishing](#) crews they are observing. More than 20 former and current observers on Portuguese and Spanish ships said that they had experienced tactics such as being put under surveillance, deprived of sleep, or threatened with being thrown overboard, or having their official documentation stolen by fishing crews to conceal a culture of overfishing. More here <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/may/18/fishing-inspectors-intimidated-bribed-crews?intcmp=122>

TAGS: sustainable, fisheries, overfishing, EU fisheries observers, Spanish fleet, observers intimidated

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