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North Western Waters Advisory Council Response to the questionnaire on the Deep-Sea Access Regulation (EU) 2016/2336

8th of May 2020

Background

On 16 April 2020 the North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC) was contacted by COFFEY International Development Ltd as part of their study supporting the evaluation of the Deep Sea Access Regulation (EU) 2016/2336 on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME).

In 2016, the EU adopted Regulation (EU) [2016/2336](#) (the so-called Deep-Sea Access Regulation) to replace Regulation (EC) [2347/2002](#). The Deep-Sea Access Regulation applies primarily to fishing activities taking place in EU waters. It pursues three main objectives: i) improving scientific knowledge on deep-sea stocks and habitats, ii) preventing significant adverse impacts on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) and ensuring conservation of stocks of deep-sea species, and iii) ensuring consistency of EU measures with UN recommendations.

Responses to the questionnaire provided were invited by 6 May 2020. The short timeframe of 3 weeks did not allow for the Advisory Council to provide consensus advice in response to this questionnaire. Instead, four NWWAC members (ClientEarth, Oceana, The Dutch Elasmobranch Society and Organización Productores Pesqueros de Lugo) provided each an individual response to the questionnaire which they will forward directly to COFFEY International Development Ltd. (Mr. Caillart, b.caillart@fs-marine.fr).

Response

The NWWAC would like to refer to advice previously submitted to the European Commission on the issue of deep-sea species and fisheries access, in particular:

- NWWAC advice on Addressing Choke Risk in NWW after exemptions. November 2018 ([link](#))
- Discussion paper of 4 Regional Advisory Councils: North Sea, North Western Waters, South Western Waters and Long Distance. State of debate and views on management measures and access regime for deep-sea fisheries. February 2013. ([link](#))
- NWWAC Letter on Review and assessment on seasonal closures for blue ling stocks in West of Scotland. July 2011 ([link](#))



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North Western Waters Advisory Council
c/o Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Crofton Road
Dun Laoghaire
Ireland

Tel: +353 1 2144 126
E-mail: info@nwwac.ie
Web: www.nwwac.org
Co. Reg. No: 403877



- NWWRAC Advice in response to Commission's consultation document in relation to review of the deep-sea access regime [Council Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002]. March 2010 ([link](#))
- Opinion of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council on the proposed TACs and quotas for deep-sea species for 2007 and 2008. August 2006 ([link](#))
- Discussion Paper on the reopening of the Deepwater Gillnet Fishery - Presented to the EU Commission on the 7 of March 2006 ([link](#))
- NWWRAC Opinion on the Commission non paper establishing emergency measures to protect deep-sea species in waters west of Scotland and Ireland. December 2005 ([link](#))

Looking ahead, previous advice submitted by the NWWAC and others is still relevant today. In its 2013 joint discussion paper the four Advisory Councils stated:

“A multiscale habitat (i.e. seabed) mapping with high resolution would be very important to have refined and accurate information on the regional description of deep-water fisheries.

It should also take into consideration the fishing footprint (VMS data, plotters...) for an improved management of areas identified as vulnerable marine ecosystems, enabling where possible and scientifically based the continuation of fishing activity with the conservation of deep-sea habitats, with control and enforcement measures in place to guarantee that it is feasible and properly implemented.” (page 6)

For further information, please contact Matilde Vallerani, NWWAC Deputy Executive Secretary (matilde.vallerani@nwwac.ie).

