

The Irish Sea Sole-stock A “sole” Belgian problem?

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Agriculture and Fisheries Policy Area

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Set up research project for sole Irish Sea
 - ✓ Restore and secure the sole stock
- ✓ Achieve sustainable fisheries in the Irish Sea

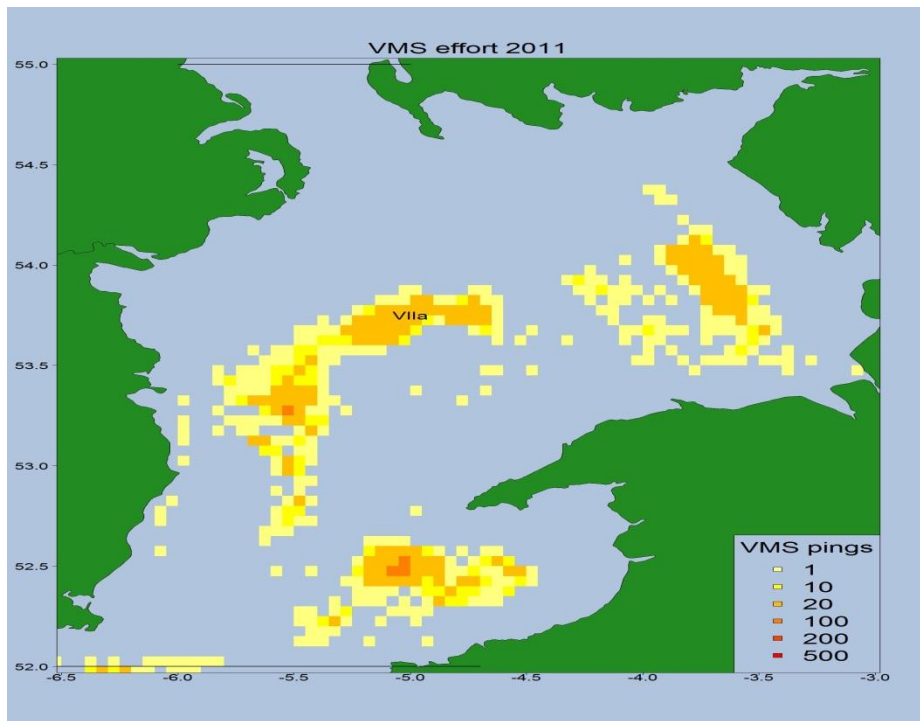
ULTIMATE AIM

Fisheries Science Partnership within regional approach (NWWRAC)

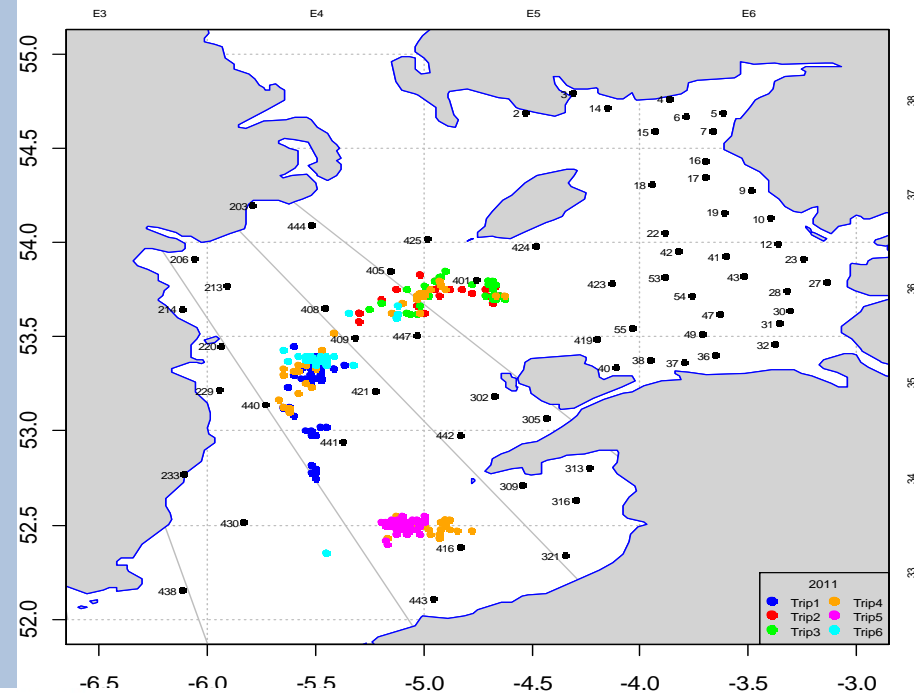
to develop a management plan preferable on mixed fisheries basis within an ecosystem approach

LINKS TO NWWRAC-PROJECTS

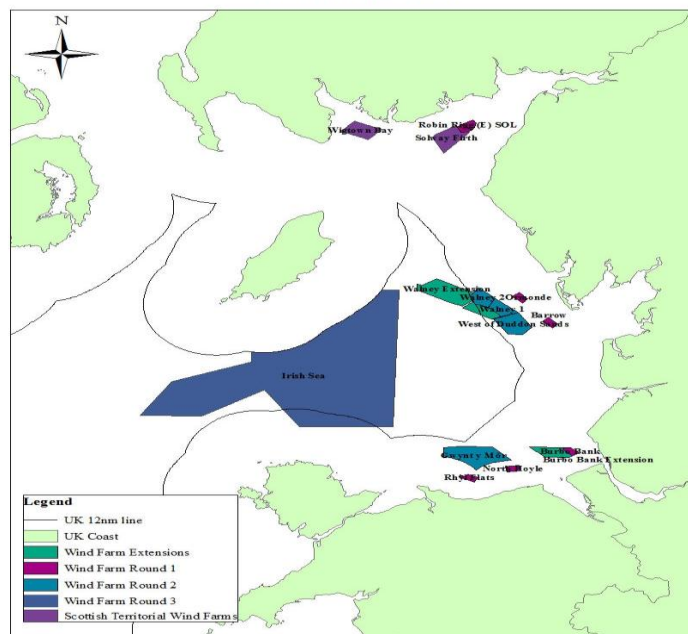
- Long-term management plan for mixed demersal fisheries in the Celtic Sea (Lot 1-project MARE/2012/22 – DST for Celtic Sea)
- Review of Cod Management Plan VIIa
- Focus Group Mixed fisheries VIIa: “EAFM in the Irish Sea”
- Pilot closure skates, rays and sharks April – June
- Collaborative work with scientists and MS to improve data quality for stock assessments – ILVO wants to join



UK survey (Irish Sea prime station positions)



West Coast Windfarms



Needs to be investigated

- Have only survey results of the “Eastern Irish Sea” been used for abundance calculations, while Belgian commercial index uses mainly data from the Western part?

Needs to be investigated!

- A suggestion is to calculate separate indices (by age class and combined) for the eastern and western Irish Sea, or even by ICES statistical rectangle.

Needs to be investigated!

- Fishing possibilities in Eastern part of Irish Sea **could be** heavily influenced by e.g. windmillfarms over last decade.

Needs to be investigated!

BELGIAN QUOTA MANAGEMENT IN THE IRISH SEA

2013

- Initial Belgian quotum decreased with 73 % to 36 tonnes + swap of 37 tonnes = 73 tonnes
- National closure of fisheries in VIIa in January 2013
- February–end of August 2013: **12 vessels admitted**
- Two conditions: no sole in VIIe and **obligation to take scientific observers on board.**
- **Obligation to notify on time.** ILVO puts observers on board, WHERE POSSIBLE
- IF NOT: consequences for quota 2014

OBSERVERTRIPS Q1

8/12 vessels active in VIIa (7 TBB – 1 OTB)

19 fisheries trips

102 days at sea in VIIa

18 TBB

1 OTB

4 trips not notified

3 trips notified too late

12 trips notified on time (63%)

6 not observed

6 with observer (50%)

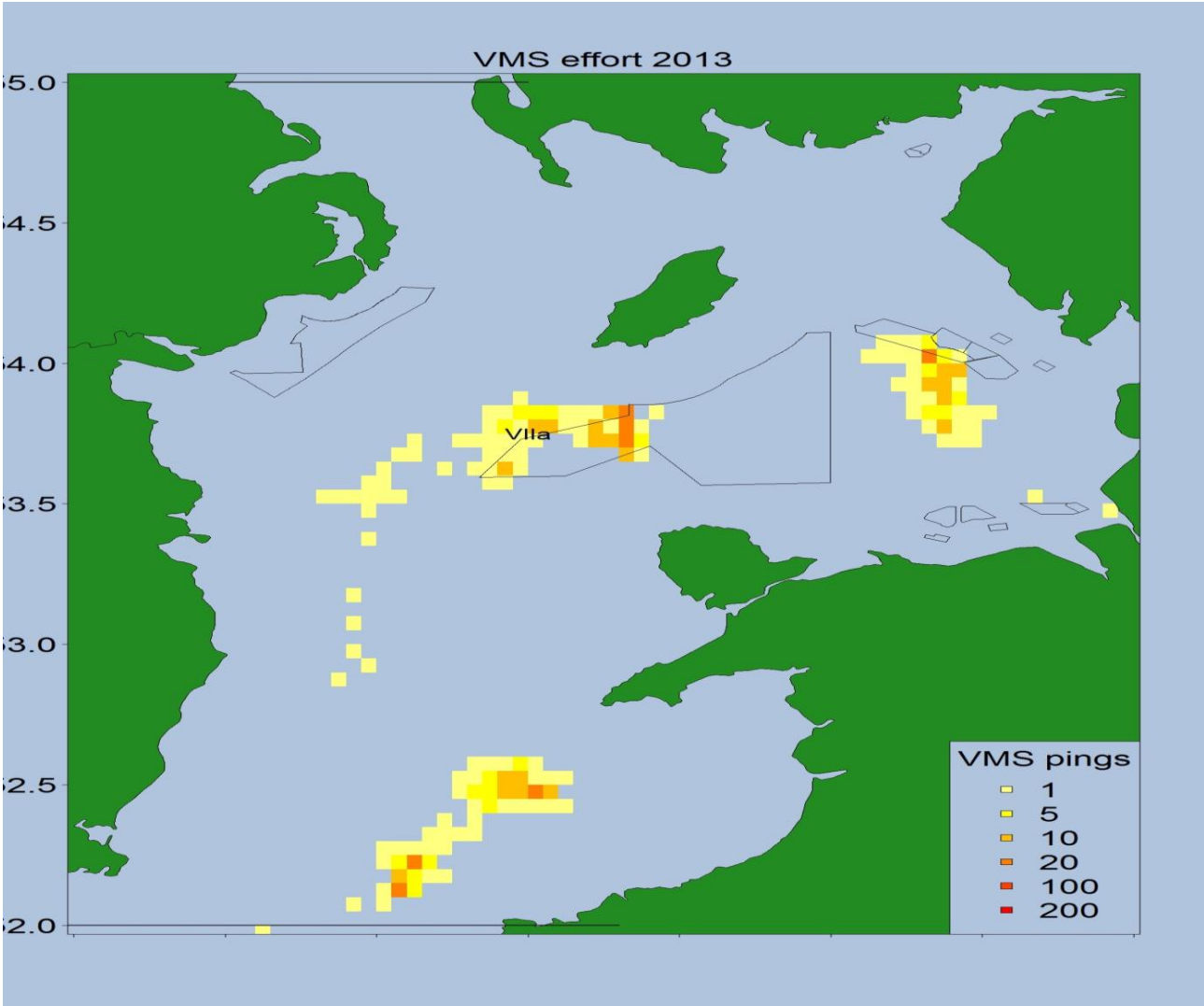
= 1/3 days at sea

Mean sole catch per day at sea: 367 kg

QUOTA UPTAKE Q1

In tonnes	Initial	Swaps	Effective	Uptake (tonnes)	Uptake (%)
Sole	36	+37	73	37,5	51
Plaice	42	+100	142	24	17
Cod	4	+10	14	4	28
Haddock	19	+15	34	1,5	4
Whiting	0		0	1	

VMS effort Belgian fleet 2013 - Q1



SCIENTIFIC PROJECT

Phase 1

- (Full) observer coverage BE vessels 2013 – 2014
- Collaboration with NWWRAC (WG 4)
- Collaboration between scientists for survey and assessment
- Explore possibilities to follow UK autumn survey and fishing by Belgian fishing vessel on sampling stations
- Exchange of results and communications NWWRAC and all stakeholders

SCIENTIFIC PROJECT

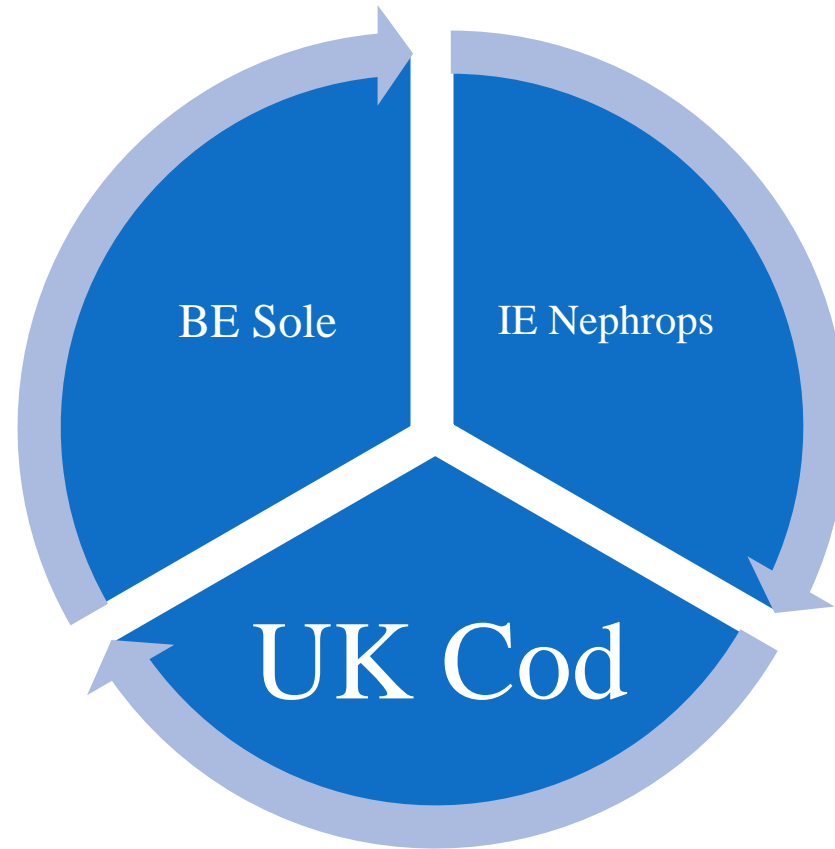
Phase 2

- Data processing
- Finalize survey and assessment in collaboration
- Give adequate advice to sector and authorities
- Develop management plan, if possible for mixed fisheries within ecosystem approach
- Rapportage to EC, authorities, RAC's and industry

EXPECTED RESULTS

- ❖ Reinstall credibility in scientific advice
- ❖ Develop a strong FSP supporting scientific advice
- ❖ Develop scenario's for implementing regional management from a bottom up approach
- ❖ Ensure a stable and sustainable activity for part of the Belgian fleet as part of a management plan in the Irish Sea

Integration of three concerns



Thank you!

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