



North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council

REPORT

FOCUS GROUP ON CELTIC SEA MIXED DEMERSAL FISHERIES

Thursday 18 April 2013

11:00-13:30

Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC)

Chairman: Jacques Pichon

Rapporteur: Paul Trebilcock

1. Welcome

The Focus Group Chairman, Jacques Pichon, welcomed all participants and gave a brief introduction and background to the meeting. He emphasised that there are two strands of work in this group: one short term related to improvement of selectivity and reduction of by-catches and discards; and a medium/long term one related to the development of a mixed fisheries multi annual management plan for the Celtic Sea.

- Apologies

No apologies were received in this occasion. The list of attendees is annexed to the report.

- Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

- Adoption of the Report of Last Meeting

The Report of the previous Celtic Sea Focus Group meeting, held in Dublin on 22 March 2012, was adopted by consensus.



2. Overview of the work developed by the NWWRAC at the Celtic Sea Focus Group

Alex Rodríguez (Secretariat) gave a brief presentation summarising the progress, the work undertaken and work completed by the Celtic Sea Mixed Demersal Fisheries Focus Group (henceforth, FG). The presentation also outlined future challenges and potential areas of work. It is available for consultation on the NWWRAC website¹.

3. Coordination and Funding of Research Initiatives in Celtic Sea Mixed Fisheries

Colm Lordan (Marine Institute Ireland) gave a detailed presentation covering the following key areas:

- An update and summary on progress in GEPETO project;
- A summary of the evolution of thinking in this project area;
- Review of relevant scientific projects including DG MARE project: 'Scientific support for the development of a management plan in the Celtic Sea'.

The main purpose of the presentation was two-fold:

- 1) To seek thoughts on how the NWW RAC and in particular the FG might engage and offer input into the GEPETO project; and
- 2) To explore the possibility of adapting GEPETO work plan to reflect needs of the NWWRAC FG work programme in this area.

The full presentation is available on the NWW RAC website for information².

There were a number of comments and concerns raised from the floor:

- Integration between data collection (logbook, VMS...), through a DCMAP, and Control Regulation would help to improve the knowledge on the state of the stocks by informing what are the specific fishing patterns and dynamics.
- It remains essential that fishermen “buy-in” to an agreed assessment of the various stock statuses. There are still perceived issues with some stock assessments, in particular the current Celtic Sea Haddock assessment;

¹

http://www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/NWWRAC_Overview_Work_CS_MAMP_BILBAO_17April2013_EN.pdf

²

www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/GEPETO_WP3_CS_MIXED_FISHERIES_BILBAO_April2013_CL.pdf



- The project launched by DG MARE should build upon and take advantage of the outcomes of GEPETO's study case on the Celtic Sea;
- GEPETO can assist in properly developing agreed high level objectives particularly in developing the required supporting materials/tool box (e.g. atlas of fisheries). However it is essential that a practical implementation of the objectives and the consideration of economic reality is reflected as we move forward;
- It was recognised that a lot of impressive work under the GEPETO Project has already begun and that this should be built on;
- It was felt that GEPETO and subsequently the 'Scientific support for the development of a management plan in the Celtic Sea' project could provide the FG with a useful set of tools to assist in its work as it develops a LTMP for the Celtic Sea;
- It was felt that in moving from a single species towards a mixed fisheries advice and management it is essential to understand that MSY is a range described by a range of values or a curve rather than a single number or a fixed point. Only then is there a possibility of achieving an agreed MSY-based target in the context of mixed fisheries;
- Port meetings during the development of a LTMP were seen as important. It was noted that they are costly both in time and effort. However it is regarded as very important to genuinely engage with real stakeholders, people who would potentially be affected by the changes as a result of a new legislative or management approach;
- The question of how GEPETO relates to present regulations and short-term objectives and existing policies implemented at EU-level;
- The difficulty in assessing economic scenarios and objectives across different Member States would present a significant challenge as there are many variables that can be looked at and indeed are Member State-specific.

It was confirmed that the Commission had received within the deadline established one tender under the Lot 1 call for tender MARE/2012/22 – Scientific support for the development of a management plan in the Celtic Sea. This tender was currently under internal review within the DG MARE relevant units.

Members of the Focus Group expressed in the strongest terms this issue should be dealt with as a high priority and the project work awarded as soon as possible from the perspective of the fishing industry.



4. Collaborative Work between the NWW RAC and GEPETO Project - WP3

Colm Lordan and Alex Rodriguez introduced this agenda item. A brief summary of the framework and objectives for a management plan (already developed by the FG and adopted in 2011) was followed by a detailed discussion. It was agreed that a review of the objectives described was required.

The objectives cannot be reviewed in isolation and must reflect the regulatory context of a reformed CFP. This includes MSY targets, landing obligations and governance issues that will become clearer as the reform process concludes.

It is also important to ensure that the review should reflect the ICES advisory framework and capacity recognising that ICES evaluation will be regarded as very important.

These important points were exactly the areas where the collaborative approach to work of GEPETO and the FG would be extremely useful.

ACTION: **A small steering group should be set up soon to review the objectives of the management plan and progress with work. A suggested time could be after the GEPETO project coordination meetings in Paris in late May.**

5. Technical Measures and Implementation of Prohibition of Discards

Lionel Pawlowski (IFREMER) presented the preliminary findings from IFREMER work on the assessment of the effects of the implementation of Square Mesh Panel (SMP) in trawl fisheries in the Celtic Sea. Initial findings indicate positive effects on Haddock and Whiting selectivity however it has only been a relatively short time period over which the effects have been looked at.

The sources are the combined French data available since April 2012 and the Irish data since October 2012, when the EU regulation came into force.

The full presentation is available on the NWW RAC website for information³.

³ www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/IFREMER_Review_Implementation_SMP_Celtic_Sea_LP.pdf

ANNEX I. LIST OF ATTENDEES

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS		
1	Jacques Pichon – Chairman	Pêcheurs de Bretagne – France
2	Paul Trebilcock - Rapporteur	Cornish Fish Producers' Organisation - UK
3	Víctor Badiola	OPPAO-CEPESCA - Spain
4	Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale – Belgium
5	Alan Coghill	Scottish Fishermen's Federation - UK
6	Luc Corbisier	SDVO - Belgium
7	Juan Carlos Corrás	PESCAGALICIA-ARPEGA-OBARCO - Spain
8	John Crudden	European Anglers' Alliance - EU
9	Barrie Deas	NFFO – United Kingdom
10	Caroline Gamblin	CNPMEM - France
11	Hugo González	ANASOL/ARVI - Spain
12	André Gueguen	OPOB / Pêcheurs de Bretagne - France
13	Julien Lamothe	ANOP / Pêcheurs de Bretagne - France
14	Francis O'Donnell	Irish Fish Producer's Organisation – Ireland
15	Sean O'Donoghue	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation – Ireland
16	Eibhlin O'Sullivan	Irish South & West FPO - Ireland
17	José Luis Otero	Lonja de A Coruña - Spain
18	Caitlín Uí Aodha	Irish South & East FPO - Ireland

INVITED EXPERTS AND OBSERVERS		
19	Bertie Armstrong	NWWRAC Chairman
20	Richard Brouzes	OPBN Copeport - France
21	José Castro	IEO - Spain
22	Ramón de la Figuera	MAGRAMA MS – Spanish Administration
23	Carmen Fernández	ICES Vice-Chair
24	Grant Fulton	European Fisheries Control Agency
25	Marc Ghiglia	NWWRAC President
26	Robert Griffin	DG MARE - European Commission
27	Daniel Lefèvre	Chair of the Channel Working Group
28	Colm Lordan	Marine Institute – Ireland
29	John Lynch	Irish Fishermen's Organisation - Ireland
30	Laurent Markovic	DG MARE – European Commission

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31	Alan McCulla	Chair of the Irish Sea WG
32	Rémi Méjécaze	Member State – French Administration
33	Jennifer Mouat	Scottish Whitefish FPA - UK
34	Norah Parke	Killybegs FO / ACRUNET - Ireland
35	Lionel Pawlowski	IFREMER – France
36	Jim Portus	South West FPO - UK
37	Brendan Price	Wildlife Consultant – Ireland
38	Marina Santurtún	AZTI Tecnalia - Spain
39	Pieter-Jan Schon	Agri Food and Biosciences Institute – NI
40	Hilde Vanhaecke	ILVO - Belgium

NWWRAC SECRETARIAT		
41	Michael Keatinge	Director
42	Joanna McGrath	Executive Assistant
43	Conor Nolan	Executive Secretary
44	Alexandre Rodriguez	Executive Assistant – Policy and Information