



REPORT

North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council Working Group 2 (WG2) West of Ireland and Celtic Sea

**Wednesday 17 April 2013
09:00-11:00
Bilbao Exhibition Centre
Bilbao**

**Deputy Chairman:
Rapporteur:**

**André Gueguen
Paul Trebilcock**

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened and participants welcomed by the Vice-Chair, André Gueguen, who acted as Deputy Chairman for this meeting in the absence of Jesús Lourido.

- Introductions

Mr. Gueguen invited all attendees to introduce themselves in a *tour de table*, indicating their name, organisation they belong to and status. The full list of participants is appended to this report.

- Apologies

There were apologies received from Jesús Lourido, Caroline Gamblin, René-Pierre Chever, Antón González and Jeremy Percy.

- Adoption of Agenda

The agenda previously circulated was approved without amendment.

- Adoption of Report of the Last Meeting

The report of the meeting held in Paris on 30 January 2013 was approved as a true and correct record.



2. Use of Gillnets in EU and NEAFC Waters

Juan Carlos Corrás from PESCAGALICIA-ARPEGA-OBARCO gave a detailed presentation on current regulatory framework restricting the use of gillnets in certain depths of water, both in EU waters (600m) and NEAFC area (200m). The presentation highlighted both the regulatory constraints and the difficulties and challenges facing the different types of fleets that operate this type of fishing gear as a result of it (i.e. gillnets targeting hake, monkfish and sharks).

The presentation pointed to several scientific reports and the ultimate objective of the presentation was to seek the support of WG2 in the first instance and subsequently the NWWRAC Executive Committee for a proposal to allow gillnet fisheries at depths up to 800m in EU waters and that same be applied in waters within NEAFC area.

The full presentation is available on the NWWRAC website for information¹.

Members of WG 2 made the following comments and observations:

- There was a need to digest the detailed information received from the presentation;
- There was a need to reflect about the details of such a proposal particularly the interaction with other fisheries such as trawl or long-line;
- It was felt that, given the recent publication of EC Regulation no 227/2013, establishing transitional Technical Conservation Measures, and the emergence of the hugely problematic EU deep-sea fisheries access and management proposals that sought to prohibit deep-sea trawling and gillnetting, this would be a particularly difficult issue to tackle at this time;
- It was noted that the reason of the timing of this proposal was in fact to allow time for credible assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of these measures that were introduced from 2007;
- The function of the NWWRAC is to produce robust, credible and evidence based advice;
- These restriction on gillnetting were introduced under the precautionary approach and are extremely blunt;
- It is correct to revisit the original rationale for these regulations and reassess the appropriateness of these management measures in the context of delivering sustainable fisheries in deep-sea areas whilst providing necessary protection to vulnerable species. It was agreed that there was merit in looking again at depth limitations for the use of gillnets.

ACTION: Juan Carlos will re-draft the proposal taking into account the comments and observations made by members of WG2. The revised proposal will reflect the context and political reality of the emerging EU proposals on regulation of deep-sea fisheries.

¹ “Las redes de enmalle de fondo en aguas de la UE” – Juan Carlos Corrás (PESCAGALICIA-ARPEGA-OBARCO): http://www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/GT2_Presentacion_Problematica_Redes_Enmalle_Fondo_JCC_Bilbao_Abril2013_ES.pdf



3. Nephrops Management in Area VII

Eibhlin O'Sullivan, in her capacity as designated data coordinator for Nephrops stocks, gave WG2 a summary of the last ICES Nephrops Benchmark Workshop meeting (WKNEP) held in Sweden in February. Ms. O'Sullivan participated as NWWRAC representative in the meeting.

The main conclusions of the ICES WGNEP 2013 were:

- UWTV survey was accepted as valid methodology for estimating the abundance of this stock;
- There is a problem with time series from fishing industry in trawl commercial fisheries surveys;
- The maturity size for this stock was revised downwards and this has resulted in an effective increase of spawning stock biomass (SSB);
- This stock has been reclassified under Category 1 with reference points, moving away from the data limited categories.

Members of WG2 welcomed the Commission's indication that they agreed with the NWWRAC position regarding the timing of the Nephrops VII assessment advice and it was likely that the advice now be released in the Autumn (September/October) rather than July (subject to ICES agreement).

Regarding the Porcupine Bank (FU16), there was recognition that there were signs of improvement in the Nephrops assessment. However, the Commission will not propose any new management measure until STECF provides its advice in 2013.

WG2 recognized that it was appropriate to wait for the most up to date advice from both ICES and STECF before further development of management measures in the Nephrops fishery.

ACTION: Eibhlin O'Sullivan will draft an updated position paper for WG2 to consider on Nephrops management in Area VII once the advice appropriate from ICES and STECF had been released.

4. Terms of Reference of Forthcoming Focus Groups

4.1. Northern Hake, Monkfish and Megrin

Víctor Badiola (FG Chair) and Alex Rodriguez (FG rapporteur) gave a brief overview of the agenda and terms of reference of the Northern Hake, Monkfish and Megrin focus group. Both are available on the NWW RAC website for information².

² http://www.nwwrac.org/Meetings/Meetings_ENG/Navigation.php?id=662&language=English



Members of WG2 made two observations:

1. It was felt that the two key issues that the FG needs to address were data deficiencies for these stocks and problems with the scientific assessment models used;
2. There was an onus on scientists to improve assessment methodologies and address data deficiencies but this must be done in collaboration with the fishing industry, fisheries managers and fisheries scientists;

There was a clarification from Alex Rodríguez in response to a question from Víctor Badiola that the role of the NWWRAC in data deficient stocks like these was help to coordinate and prepare both data compilation workshops and benchmark workshops where new data can be provided either on an informal or formal basis to the scientists to test assessment methods and models. This should be viewed as a window of opportunity for the fishing industry to provide these data and have an input into the ICES machinery.

4.2. Celtic Sea (VIIIfg)

A meeting of the Celtic Sea Mixed Fisheries focus group was due to be held tomorrow and no new information was available at this stage. The Focus Group Chair, Jacques Pichon, gave a brief update on work of the FG to date. Information about this meeting is available on the NWWRAC website³.

It was confirmed that the Commission had received one tender proposal under the LOT 1 call for tender MARE/2012/22 – Scientific support for the development of a management plan in the Celtic Sea and that this was currently under internal review.

5. Coordinators Report on Work Progress on Data Limited Stocks

Barrie Deas gave a brief summary of the Annual Coordination Meeting between ICES and the RACs (MIRAC) that he had attended on January in Copenhagen. Key points were that the benchmark meetings and data compilation workshops were very important in addressing the issues surrounding data limited stocks. The feedback from ICES was that the efforts of the NWWRAC on this issue were recognised and appreciated.

ACTION: It was agreed by the WG2 that data coordinators, with the assistance of Barrie Deas and the NWWRAC Secretariat, should progress with work and continue contacting with relevant ICES scientists dealing with specific stock issues as these are identified. In order to facilitate their task, Barrie Deas and the NWWRAC Secretariat will circulate a reminder addressed to all appointed NWWRAC data coordinators and prepare a summary sheet on the work to date.

³ http://www.nwwrac.org/Meetings/Meetings_ENG/Navigation.php?id=611&language=English

6. Action From Previous WG2 Meeting Held in Paris

The NWW RAC Secretariat (Alex Rodríguez) gave a brief update on progress on actions from the previous WG2 meeting held in Paris in January 2013. The issue that require urgent attention was the drafting of a letter asking the Commission for an in year review of the Haddock VIIb-k TAC. If this action was not completed urgently there would be no in year review.

ACTION: Sean O'Donoghue and Paul Trebilcock to urgently draft a letter asking the Commission for an in year review of the Haddock VIIb-k TAC with the aim of being approved by fast track procedure.

7. Chair's Summary of Actions and Recommendations Agreed to be put Forward for Adoption at the Executive Committee

- **Use of gillnets in EU and NEAFC waters:**
Juan Carlos Corrás will re-draft the proposal taking into account the comments and observations made by members of WG2. The revised proposal will reflect the context and political reality of the emerging EU proposals on regulation of deep-sea fisheries.
- **Focus Groups meetings: Hake, Monkfish and Megrim; and Celtic Sea demersal fisheries**
Have the meetings and submit report / communicate arising actions to WG2 for comments and endorsement.
- **Nephrops management VII:**
Eibhlin O'Sullivan will draft an updated position paper for WG2 to consider on Nephrops management in Area VII once the advice appropriate from ICES and STECF had been released.
- **Data limited stocks:**
NWWRAC data coordinators, with the assistance of Barrie Deas and the Secretariat, will progress with work and continue contacting with relevant ICES scientists dealing with specific stock issues as they identified. To facilitate this task, Barrie Deas and the NWWRAC Secretariat will circulate a reminder addressed to all appointed NWWRAC data coordinators and prepare a summary sheet on the work to date.
- **Fishing Opportunities for 2013 – TAC for Haddock VIIb-k:**
Sean O'Donoghue and Paul Trebilcock to urgently draft a letter asking the Commission for an in year review of the Haddock VIIb-k TAC, with the aim of being adopted by fast track procedure.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00h.



ANNEX I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MEMBERS		
Name	Surname/s	Organization
André	Gueguen	WG2 Deputy Chairman <i>(replacing Jesús Lourido)</i>
Paul	Trebilcock	Cornish FPO - Rapporteur
Bertie	Armstrong	NWWRAC Chairman
Victor	Badiola	OPPAO-CEPESCA
René-Pierre	Chever	CDPMEM Finistère
Luc	Corbisier	SDVO
Juan Carlos	Corrás Arias	Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco
Debbie	Crockard	Seas at Risk
John	Crudden	European Anglers Association
Barrie	Deas	NFFO
José Manuel	Fdez. Beltrán	OPP-07-LUGO
Marc	Ghiglia	NWWRAC President
Hugo	González	ANASOL/ARVI
Julien	Lamothe	ANOP/PMA
John	Lynch	Irish Fishermen's Org.
Jennifer	Mouat	SWFPA Ltd.
Francis	O'Donnell	Irish Fish PO
Sean	O'Donoghue	Kyllibegs FO

MEMBERS (cont.)		
Name	Surname/s	Organization
Eibhlin	O'Sullivan	Irish South West FPO
José Luis	Otero	Lonja de la Coruña S.A.
Jacques	Pichon	ANOP-PMA
Caitlín	Uí Aodha	ISEFPO

OBSERVERS / EXPERTS		
Name	Surname/s	Organization
Paco	Araújo	OPPAO
Emiel	Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Richard	Brouzes	OPBN
Alan	Coghill	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Ramón	De la Figuera	MAGRAMA - Spanish Administration
Arnelle	Denoize	Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Thomas	Díaz	CAPSUD / PMA
Santiago	Etxebarria	OPPAO
Paul	Francoise	FFSPM
Grant	Fulton	European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)
Roy	Griffin	DG MARE - Commission
Daniel	Lefèvre	CNPMEM Basse Normandie – WG3 Chair



OBSERVERS / EXPERTS		
Name	Surname/s	Organization
Colm	Lordan	Marine Institute / ICES
Laurent	Markovic	DG MARE - Commission
Alan	McCulla	ANIFPO – WG4 Chair
Michael	McLeod	Scottish Government
Rémi	Mejcaze	DPMEM France - MS rep.
Brendan	Price	Wildlife Consultant
Pieter-Jan	Schon	AFBI/ICES
Declan	Tobin	JNCC
Hilde	VanHaecke	ILVO
Johnny	Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary

NWWRAC SECRETARIAT		
Michael	Keatinge	Company Director
Conor	Nolan	Executive Secretary
Joanna	McGrath	Executive Assistant – Administration & Finances
Alexandre	Rodríguez	Executive Assistant – Policy Coordinator