



ANNEX 1

North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council

Work Programme

Year 8

October 2012 to September 2013



1. Introduction

The North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council (NWWRAC) was established in accordance with Commission Decision 2005/668/EC on the 22nd of September 2005 as one of the seven Regional Advisory Councils, proposed under Council Decision 2004/585/EC, establishing Regional Advisory Councils under the Common Fisheries Policy.

In its eight year of operation, which runs from October 2012 to September 2013, the NWWRAC wishes to apply for grant-aid from the EU Commission, in accordance with Council Decision 2004/585/EC, as amended by Council Decision of 2007/409/EC.

2. Objectives of the NWWRAC

The principal aim of the RACs is to bring together European stakeholders, including fishermen, representatives of producer's organisations, environmentalists, recreational anglers, processors, consumers and women's networks, amongst others, to provide evidence-based advice to the EU Commission, Member States and the European Parliament on matters of fisheries management within the geographical limits of its remit (i.e. the community waters of areas Vb, VI and VII).

The proposal, presented by the NWWRAC, aims to achieve the sustainable exploitation of the fish stocks within the geographical remit of the NWWRAC (ICES sub-areas VI and VII), in compliance with the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy.

It is also within the scope of the proposal to address the sustainable, biological and economic management of fish stocks in the wider context of the marine biodiversity policy and an integrated maritime policy.

Given the mixed nature of the fisheries within the geographical remit of the NWWRAC, an ecosystem-based approach will provide the foundation for advice, which will contribute to the achievement of good environmental status of the marine environment by 2020 at the latest, as articulated in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.



3. General Work Programme: Main Areas of Work

The work programme of the NWWRAC (2012/2013) will address the following issues:

3.1. Reform of the CFP

The NWWRAC will continue to work, on its own and through cooperation with other RACs, on the analysis of the core aspects of the proposals launched by the Commission in 2011 in relation to the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), namely; the “Regulatory packages” of July (CFP reform) and December 2011 (EMFF) as well as the “Non-papers” issued in November 2011 addressing five key areas of CFP reform: transferable fishing concessions; discards and technical measures; maximum sustainable yield; socio-economics of fisheries management; and regionalisation. Regarding the latter, the RACs have placed special focus on governance and regionalisation aspects of the reform process, with a specific insight on the role of the RACs and the interaction of the RACs with other bodies and institutions under any new regionalised or decentralised decision-making framework. By illustration, an example of this work is the Inter-RAC position paper on the role of the RACs within a reformed CFP, which was coordinated by the NWWRAC, and publicly presented at the public hearing of the European Parliament held in Brussels on the 21st of March 2011.

Taking into account the work of the NNWRAC on this issue to date, it is intended to continue analysis and constructive comment on this issue in Year 8. In this context, the NWWRAC will provide a position paper to the European Parliament (Fisheries Committee and Plenary) and the Council (COREPER) in the last quarter of 2012 containing suggestions of amendments to those articles dealing with the role and funding of the RACs in the Proposals of Basic Regulation on CFP reform and the European Maritime Fisheries Fund, respectively. This paper will be circulated to other RACs with a view to seeking a common position and any subsequent agreement will be submitted as consolidated advice from the RACs for consideration in the ongoing discussions between the European Commission, the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament.

The NWWRAC will also contribute by giving feedback to the consultation from the Commission on the best means of making the CFP operational at a regional level, as well as options and opinions on the future role, composition, functioning and funding of the RACs within the ongoing discussions on CFP reform.



Finally, the NWWRAC has been entrusted to coordinate the development of an Inter-RAC position on how to improve the functioning of the RACs under the present CFP. This position will be submitted to the Commission for discussion at future coordination meetings.

3.2. Development and implementation of long-term management plans for fish stocks in North Western Waters

The development and implementation of long-term management plans for demersal fish stocks in North Western Waters has become the main focus of NWWRAC's work.

This has been the result of two years of preparatory work held at both Geographical Working Group and technical focus group meetings, together with fruitful dialogue with scientists from ICES, national scientific and economic institutes and members of STECF.

The process will continue in Year 8 and substantial progress is expected to be achieved.

3.2.1. Celtic Sea demersal stocks

The establishment of a technical expert group has involved stakeholders from the fishing industry and other interest groups, national authorities and relevant members of the scientific community. The Expert Group is currently being directed by a steering committee to ensure that work continues between meetings. The steering committee is composed of a small group of members of the NWWRAC and scientific experts, which allows an exchange of knowledge within the group on: fisheries exploitation patterns, population dynamics and biology and interactions between species.

The NWWRAC has successfully established an operational framework to develop a mixed demersal fisheries, multiannual, management plan (MAMP) for the Celtic Sea (ICES subdivisions VIIIfg). In Year 7, the NWWRAC approved the terms of reference, defined the areas of application and agreed a refined set of short and long term biological, economic and social objectives.



The NWWRAC is currently exploring all avenues and means of identifying resources to develop a mixed fisheries plan (MAMP) which adheres to broad ecosystem considerations, while considering economic and social objectives. The objective is to develop a bio-economic model that serves as a stochastic decision support tool for managers to forecast short and medium-term biological and economic impacts and trade-offs associated with changes in fishing patterns.

Extensive research work will be required to develop an analytical framework to test management options and examine trade-offs. Relevant biological (e.g. reference values) and economic data (e.g. value of landings by port and gear type) will need to be collected, processed and standardised. As a result, this proposal contains a number of essential components that will need to be resourced (e.g. outsourced) in order to maximise the work efficiency of the NWWRAC and dedicate appropriate technical and scientific expertise to the task.

The NWWRAC steering group has established contacts in the first half of 2012 with DG MARE staff and with potential partners from scientific and economic institutes in UK, Ireland, France and Spain in order to identify available sources of (co)funding from EU projects and future calls for tenders. The estimated duration of this project will be 18 months and the estimated cost is between €300,000 and €500,000 to carry out the necessary work for developing this tool. The NWWRAC will seek funding from available sources in the last quarter of 2012 and early 2013 with the aim of resuming work on this topic in 2013.

In October 2011, the NWWRAC submitted a proposal to the Commission for the introduction of technical measures to improve the selectivity of fishing gears for those fleets operating in an area of the Celtic Sea (VIIIfgj) targeting cod, haddock and whiting. The aim of this proposal, incorporating the best available scientific advice, was to reduce discards of whitefish and protect recent high recruitments of haddock. The NWWRAC proposal was used as a reference by the French Government to adopt its own national legislative measure in April 2012 and, in the light of the statement made at the December Council, the Commission subsequently adopted the proposal in July 2012 under the provision of article 45(1) of Regulation (EC) No. 850/1998.



3.2.2. Evaluation of Cod recovery plan (CRP) (West of Scotland, Irish Sea and Eastern Channel)

a. Short term approach: interim measures

In Year 7, the NWWRAC worked closely with the Commission and Member States on the review and evaluation of the cod recovery plan leading to amendments to improve the implementation of the Cod management plan currently in force - EC Regulation 1342/2008. The NWWRAC Focus Group produced a position paper suggesting some specific amendments relating mainly to five articles (9, 11, 12, 13 and 17). In Year 8, the NWWRAC will continue to contribute to the ongoing deliberations of the European Parliament and Council before a final legislative text is adopted by co-decision.

In Year 7, the NWWRAC also provided input to several Commission consultations, as well as workshops and meetings organised by STECF and ICES on a long-term strategic approach to fisheries management for demersal fisheries. The NWWRAC participated in several meetings with ICES and STECF (i.e. benchmark workshops, scoping meetings, review and expert groups), and conveyed the views of stakeholders on the review the CRP for the following areas: West of Scotland (VIa), Eastern Channel (VIId) and the Irish Sea (VIIa).

b. Long term approach: towards multiannual fishery management plans.

Three NWWRAC Focus Group meetings took place in Dublin in Year 7 (i.e. October 2011, March and July 2012). These meetings produced several position papers to inform ongoing discussions at ICES/STECF Expert working groups on the long-term evaluation of the cod management plan within the context of mixed fisheries. Some of these papers were presented at ICES/STECF meetings and included as Annexes of the STECF reports.



3.2.2.1. West of Scotland (VIa)

In June 2012, the NWWAC produced an information paper entitled “Rebooting fisheries management in the West of Scotland and Irish Sea Demersal Fisheries: Breaking the Cycle of Decline”, which addressed key management issues in these fisheries. Further work was carried out by a NWWAC Focus Group over the period from July to September 2012 which advanced this debate and resulted in the development of a discussion paper on how best to achieve fully documented fisheries in the West of Scotland and the Irish Sea areas.

In Year 8, this Focus Group will continue to work with relevant scientists and economists to progress in the identification of elements for a future management plan for this area, focusing in particular on those priority areas where refined work (transition to Fmp, discards reduction, etc.) is required. Through the efforts of this Focus Group, the NWWAC will build upon previous advice and dialogue with key stakeholders in order to provide more directed advice to the Commission, Member States and the European Parliament.

3.2.2.2. Irish Sea (VIIa)

A separate Focus Group will develop a stepwise approach for the development of a mixed fisheries plan for Irish Sea demersal fisheries driven by a fishing industry-science partnership similar to the Northern Irish joint initiative of ANIFPO (Anglo-North Irish Fish Producers Organisation) and AFBINI (Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute Northern Ireland). This approach will initially examine the single stock assessments of the main commercial species in the Irish Sea. It will subsequently consider technical interactions between gears and target species and the mapping of the fishing areas. Once this information has been collated it will be possible to identify the priorities and to set the biological objectives of the plan. The understanding the main economic drivers of these fisheries will also be important and will be incorporated into the plan subject to the availability of appropriate resources.



3.2.2.3. Eastern Channel (VIId)

The NWWRAC is waiting for a reply from STECF regarding biological and management considerations for VIId Cod within a mixed fisheries plan. The NWWRAC has also written to the Commission asking for clarification of the current uncertainties regarding this stock in terms of effort and management measures.

The two Focus Groups dealing with cod in the West of Scotland and the Irish Sea will be coordinated and exchange information on their findings. These Focus Groups will revert to the sub-regional Working Groups to present their outcomes and proposals for endorsement by the NWWRAC Executive Committee.

3.2.3. Northern Hake, Anglerfish and Megrin VI-VII

In Year 8, the NWWRAC will convene a Focus Group in the first quarter of 2013, to discuss the key management issues in hake, anglerfish and megrim fisheries. The initial basis of discussion will be to improve the knowledge of the stocks and to identify areas requiring refinement or improvement and thereafter the group will address, amongst other items, collaboration between the NWWRAC and ICES/national scientists, data deficiencies and industry-led (technical) measures to improve management and conservation of these stocks.

In Year 8, the NWWRAC has no plans to develop a specific management plan for these species but will discuss management options with all stakeholders as a constituent part of the proceedings of the Focus Group.

Given their common interest in these stocks, members of the South Western Waters RAC may be invited, as observers, to technical or Focus Group meetings that might be established. Likewise, the NWWRAC will observe meetings and follow the progress of discussions on the development of a methodology and procedure for the adoption of management measures in relation to the southern hake stock.



3.2.4. Other stocks

The NWWRAC will also carry out extensive discussions and undertake some exploratory work, either at the request of the Commission or under its own initiative, on future management measures for the following stocks:

Nephrops (VII)

The NWWRAC has officially asked the Commission to submit a request to ICES/STECF for a review of the effectiveness of the seasonal closure of the nephrops fishery on the Porcupine Bank and the sub-TAC established for the area for the rebuilding of the stock.

The NWWRAC is waiting for a proposal from the Commission on the management of Nephrops stocks by area or functional units in 2013.

West of Scotland Haddock (VIa)

The NWWRAC has worked closely with ICES to develop a proposal for the implementation of a long-term management plan for VIa haddock, as requested by the Commission. This proposal is pending adoption by EU legislators, until a decision on the extent of co-decision powers is made. Further work might be carried out, subject to the decision of the EU institutions and the outcomes of the socio-economic impact assessment.

In the meantime, the NWWRAC will work on identifying interim technical measures to protect strong, incoming year classes and recruitment, in order to allow the stock to rebuild towards MSY levels.

Deep-water species (VI and VII)

In the first quarter of Year 8 (October-December 2012), a NWWRAC Focus Group will meet to begin the process of determining appropriate advice on management measures for the sustainable exploitation of deep-water species. There will be three key items for discussion at this meeting:



1. The preparation of a NWWRAC response to the Commission's proposal of Regulation on the review of the access regime and specific conditions to fishing for deep-sea stocks in the North East Atlantic, repealing Council Regulation No 2347/2002;
2. Consideration of the advice on fishing opportunities for deep-water species 2013-2014;
3. Collaboration with scientists on the development of management measures for deep-sea stocks in line with the conservation of deep-water habitat and benthic ecosystems: outcomes of EU FP7 projects DEEPFISHMAN and CORALFISH.

Given the shared interest in this item, the NWWRAC will invite the South Western Waters RAC and the North Sea RAC to participate and contribute to this meeting.

Skates and Rays (VI and VII)

The NWWRAC has had two Focus Group meetings in Year 7 (February and September 2012) in relation to sharks, skates and rays. The aim of these meetings was to improve knowledge in relation to the biology and stock status of elasmobranchs in areas VI and VII, particularly skates and rays and to identify all the scientific surveys and pilot projects (including fisheries-science partnerships) carried out at Member State level for a sustainable management of the main commercial stocks.

The NWWRAC also discussed a proposal for a management plan for skates and rays submitted by the Irish fishing industry. The original proposal was revised several times and it is pending adoption. An agreed proposal is expected to be ready before the end of 2012.

Western Channel Sole (VIIe)

The data coordinator appointed by the NWWRAC contributed to the mitigation of data deficiencies by providing data from fishing industry sources to be used in the ICES benchmarking process for this stock in 2011 and 2012.



This led to an improvement in the available knowledge on the stock to the extent that Western Channel Sole (Vlle) is no longer considered to be a data limited stock.

The NWWRAC has been engaged in working with the Commission, ICES and STECF in the review of the management plan currently in force. The NWWRAC will follow the legislative course and will provide advice in any amendments to Council Regulation No. 509/2007 within the review of the effort regime.

Non-quota species

The NWWRAC will follow recent developments from the Commission, Member States and ICES WGNEW regarding the potential adoption of management measures for a number of non-quota species, for example scallops, seabass, Pollock and red mullet.

A consultation document proposing the development of a TAC for seabass was circulated by the Commission to Member States in June 2012 for frontloading in 2013. The NWWRAC has also been invited to participate in an ICES benchmark workshop on seabass and to contribute new datasets relevant to the stock assessment of this species for the purposes of contributing to the formulation of ICES advice.

3.3. Fishing Opportunities and the improvement of the quality of scientific and economic data for 2012 and 2013

In Year 8, the NWWRAC will continue its successful collaboration with ICES scientists and Member States to identify useful data to improve assessments for key data-limited stocks. In Year 7 the NWWRAC reached a milestone in this initiative by participating in two data deficiency coordination workshops between ICES, the North Sea RAC, the North Western Waters RAC and national authorities from Member States (ICES WKDDRAC1 and WKDDRAC2). These meetings took place in Copenhagen in January and March 2011, respectively. The objective was to agree the terms of reference and a common framework for a collaborative approach in tackling weak assessments caused by data deficiencies and to suggest remedial measures. Regional Task Forces for data deficient stocks were formally established by the NWWRAC in July 2011 to maintain a permanent dialogue and collaboration between ICES Working Groups and Data Coordinators.



3.3.1. Regional Task Force for data deficient stocks

In conjunction with specific, professional support, the NWWRAC has established a regional task force whose remit is to improve the quality of data for stock assessments and to mitigate uncertainty in the knowledge of stocks in the medium term. This task force is working within each of the geographical (i.e. sub-regional) Working Groups of the NWWRAC. During NWWRAC Working Group meetings, a number of stocks were identified as priority data deficient stocks within North Western waters and one or more NWWRAC members were appointed as data coordinators for each of these stocks. The two main tasks of these co-ordinators are to assess the quality of existing national and European data and to provide reliable and valid data from the fishing industry that can be input into scientific assessments.

As a result of the work undertaken by the NWWRAC data coordinators in 2012, through participation at ICES benchmark workshops on roundfish (WKROUND) and flatfish (WKFLAT), contact with scientific counterparts and periodical reports provided to Working Groups in February and July 2012, the first annual work progress report (July 2011-July 2012) on data deficiencies for north western waters stocks was produced and submitted to ICES ACOM.

This report contains a proposal to set up a third coordination meeting (WKDDRAC 3) before the end of 2012. The aim is to maintain momentum and instigate steps at fishery level where necessary. Topics such as a mixed fisheries approach to fisheries management in waters to the West of Scotland, the Irish Sea and the Celtic Sea and fully documented fisheries, may also be placed on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.

3.3.2. Fishing Opportunities (“TACs and quotas”) for EU fish stocks

As in previous years, it is envisaged that a large part of the first quarter of Year 8 will be dedicated to the production of professional advice for the Commission, Member States and European Parliament in response to the proposal of Regulation on Fishing Opportunities for demersal species in Atlantic waters in 2013, including the annual allocation of resources (i.e. TACs and quotas) and related management measures (e.g. effort regime). NWWRAC advice will be submitted in due time to inform the discussions before the formal adoption of the Regulation on Fishing Opportunities by the Council in November/December 2012.

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During the third quarter of Year 8, the NWWRAC will provide the Commission with its opinion on the Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2014 (i.e. “EC Policy Statement”).

Special emphasis will be placed on the principles, upon which the Fishing Opportunities are structured, the timeframe and range of transitional values for achieving MSY and the rules referring to stock status categories used to determine the TACs.

4. Marine Protected Areas and Marine Spatial Planning

The NWWRAC will continue to be involved in the consultation process for the designation and management of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems, Natura 2000, OSPAR and national (MCZ, etc.) marine offshore sites where fishing activity by EU vessels takes place in Western Waters.

The NWWRAC will also assist, where required, in the development of management measures for different marine sites in North Western waters that are to be adopted under both national and Community legislation.

Particular attention will be given to the several ongoing consultations being carried out by JNCC and Natural England in the United Kingdom and by the Agence pour les Aires Marines Protégées in France, as well as the Irish Sea MCZ Project.

In this respect, the NWWRAC will re-convene the Horizontal Working Group on Marine Spatial Planning, which was successfully led by eNGO representatives of the NWWRAC and included a wide representation of experts, including those from appropriate, EU projects (e.g. MEFEPO, MAIA, PISCES, CHARM III in 2009/2010).

The NWWRAC has worked, and will continue to work to overcome difficulties concerning the exchange of information with national institutes. The NWWRAC will work with appointed officers, from designated agencies of Member States and the Commission, in the following manner:

- Participate in national debates and occasional stakeholders’ forums;



- Organise follow-up meetings and invite relevant experts to communicate current status reports and present timetables for consultations, where relevant;
- Circulate newsletters, maps and questionnaires provided by consultants to stakeholders and provide feedback.

5. Technical Conservation Measures and Discards Policy

Since its creation, the NWWRAC has dedicated a considerable amount of time and effort addressing the critical areas of Technical Conservation Measures and the development of policy regarding the escapement of juvenile fish and the reduction of discards. A fine example last year is the proposals of introducing technical measures to improve selectivity of whitefish fleet in the Celtic Sea.

Given the importance of these issues, the NWWRAC will continue to prioritise work in these areas and provide advice and opinion to the Commission on these matters.

5.1. Technical Conservation Measures (TCMs)

The NWWRAC is committed to addressing TCMs within the scope of long-term management plans. The NWWRAC will provide the Commission with timely, professional opinion, should there be development of legislative proposals on this subject relating to North Western Waters.

The NWWRAC will remain vigilant of the decision-making, timescale and procedure involved in the new Commission approach on TCMs in line with CFP reform and the discard ban in 2013. The NWWRAC will continue to contribute on this subject by providing formal opinion on Commission proposals on TCMs. Clarification will also be sought regarding the extension and implementation of interim rules prior to the adoption of a new technical measures framework regulation, and any amendment to Regulation 850/98.

Given the complexity of the issues involved as well as the regional specificities of each fishery, the NWWRAC will require a reasonable period for consultation (i.e. at least three months) from the Commission. It is also essential that proposed measures for consultation are made available, by the Commission, in all the working languages of the RAC, in order that the membership may adequately prepare their professional opinion.

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5.2. Discards Policy

The NWWRAC plans to follow EP and Council discussions on the implementation of the discard ban included in the Framework Regulation Proposal on CFP reform launched by the Commission on the 13th of July, 2011, containing a stepwise proposal to ban discards in all fisheries over a period of three years.

6. Control and compliance

The NWWRAC will follow the operational activities of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) in Areas VI and VII and will participate in Advisory Boards and other fora where invited. The NWWRAC will be particularly interested in the outcomes of the first multispecies Joint Deployment Plan that has been set for Pelagic Species in Western Waters. The NWWRAC will also collaborate in the development of Regional Control Areas, in line with the conclusions agreed at the joint workshop on Control and Compliance in Western Waters held in Dublin in July 2012 between the NWWRAC and the EFCA.

7. Other topics of interest

The Executive Committee of the NWWRAC will instruct working groups to address specific topics for discussion, as considered necessary and appropriate, throughout the course of the year and dependent on the availability of existing resources and work priorities.

8. Working procedures

The NWWRAC will continue to refine its working procedures to ensure efficient and effective work practices.

The NWWRAC will work closely with the industry, NGO representatives, the Commission, Member States, Scientists and other RACs to develop appropriate work programmes to progress issues of common and specific concern.



8.1. Timetable

Appendix I details the NWWRAC meetings timetable for Year 8.

8.2. Operational Structure: meeting types and frequency

The largest budgetary expenditure incurred by the NWWRAC is associated with meetings. The NWWRAC is often liable for costs associated with meeting room hire, interpretation services and technical equipment, in addition to the travel and accommodation costs of members and experts attending NWWRAC meetings. On some occasions, public or private sponsorship may offer to cover part or all of these expenses as contributions-in-kind, which is duly reflected in the NWWRAC accounts.

In order to achieve the objectives of the work programme, the operational hierarchy of the NWWRAC is organised in the following three-tier structure:

8.2.1. Executive Committee (ExCom)

All decisions relating to the NWWRAC are made by an Executive Committee (ExCom) of up to 24 members. Currently, there are 22 members on the Executive Committee and two vacant seats to be filled by “other interest groups”.

Executive Committee meetings are held at least three times a year. These meetings normally address high level policy issues, debate the recommendations of Working Groups and reach consensus in the form of RAC advice and opinion.

Each member of the Executive Committee (plus the Chairman of each Working Group presenting the WG recommendations to the Ex.Com.) is reimbursed for attending ExCom meetings and full interpretation is provided in the three working languages of the NWWRAC (i.e. English, French and Spanish). Representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament and ACFA, as well as relevant experts or presenters from EU projects or scientific institutes, are also formally invited to attend Executive Committee meetings.



8.2.2. Working Groups (WGs)

Working Group meetings are held 2 to 3 times a year (budget depending) and are the main drivers of the NWWRAC. All issues necessary for debate are tabled at these meetings. A number of experts, as well as Commission members, are often invited to attend and make presentations at these meetings. There are currently 4 Working Groups in the NWWRAC, which are geographically based.

Additional, Horizontal, Working Groups are also convened, as required, to discuss issues, which are of common interest to all NWWRAC members (e.g. Marine Spatial Planning, CFP Reform). Working Group meetings are normally held over a period of 1-2 days.

Membership of Working Groups varies from 25 to 40 participants depending on the subject matter and full interpretation is provided as required (i.e. English, French and Spanish).

8.2.3. Focus Groups and Workshops

Focus Group meetings and Workshops are specialist meetings, which are convened, as required, when issues of urgent concern require an immediate and very technical response from the NWWRAC.

Focus groups are formed from within the general membership and generally consist of a small group of members with specific professional experience and expertise.

Such meetings have a specific function and require a particular outcome, such as the drafting of response papers (e.g. A Review of Cod Recovery Plans for the West of Scotland and the Irish Sea), the development of a draft opinion with relevant experts (e.g. Celtic Sea mixed demersal fisheries) or to form a NWWRAC opinion, by consensus where there are diverging positions within a working group (e.g. Deep water species, Sharks, Skates and Rays).

In order to incorporate the flexibility required to accommodate these meetings, the NWWRAC has budgeted for 5 Focus Group or Workshop meetings, with a maximum of 8 participants in Year 8.

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Depending on budgetary availability, additional meetings may be held, if required. Interpretation services for these meetings are provided if required and contributions-in-kind are sought from Member States to minimise costs and maximise efficiency.

9. Improved Communications and Transparency

The NWWRAC Communications Strategy aims to promote the work of the NWWRAC and improve public and professional awareness of RAC outputs and opinions. In Year 8, this will be achieved by improving transparency and increasing the level of communication with all stakeholders by producing regular e-newsletters as well as press releases posted in the Press section of the NWWRAC website (i.e. www.nwwrac.org).

In addition, the Secretariat will maximize the functionality of the website so that members can continue to work between meetings using the interactive, website forum and meeting space options.

Recognising the important role of NGOs and other interest groups within the functioning of the NWWRAC, the Secretariat will also continue to encourage new members to join this group and fill the vacant seats available on the Executive Committee.

-END-



Appendix I

The Proposed schedule of meetings to achieve the objectives of the NWRAC work programme in Year 8 (1st of October 2012 to the 30th of September 2013)

Please note that this schedule is subject to formal adoption at the General Assembly meeting of the NWRAC, to be held in Dublin on the 26th September 2012.

Focus Groups, as listed below, are based on current knowledge. All dates and issues for discussion are subject to change, and will be directed by the requirements of the Commission and proposals coming from NWRAC members.

The information presented below is, therefore, only indicative of NWRAC operations in Year 8.



SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS (YEAR 8)

North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council					
Indicative Schedule of meetings in Year 8 (01 October 2012 – 30 September 2013)					
Meeting Type	Proposed dates/duration	Venue	Work Priorities		
Joint RAC Focus Group on Deepwater Species	1 day Late October or Early November 2012	TBC	EC Proposal of Regulation on Review of Access Regime	Fishing opportunities for Deepwater Species 2013-2014	Long term management measures: DEEPFISHMAN and CORALFISH
Focus Groups on Cod Recovery for West of Scotland/Irish Sea Mixed Demersal Fisheries	1 day October or November 2012	Dublin	Short term legal amendments to Reg. 1342/2008	Long-term approach: breaking the cycle of decline for WoS/IS fisheries	Fully documented fisheries
Focus Group on Celtic Sea Mixed Demersal Fisheries	Half a day October or November 2012	Paris or Dublin	Technical Measures	Bio-economic model as decision support tool for managers	Implementation of objectives set in a MAMP
WKDDRAC3 - ICES-NWWRAC-NSRAC-SWWRAC meeting on Data Deficiencies	2 days November or December 2012	Copenhagen	Review of Work progress of data coordinators / Regional Task Forces	Data needs: initiatives to integrate fishermen data in stock assessment process	Collaboration: Scientific surveys onboard fishing vessels, Self-sampling, FSP...



Indicative schedule of meetings in Year 8 (01 October 2012 – 30 September 2013)					
Meeting Type	Proposed dates/duration	Venue	Work Priorities		
Working Groups and Executive Committee	1-2 days January 2013	Paris or Madrid	<i>Relevant topics based on outstanding actions.</i>	Regional Task Forces on Data Deficient Stocks.	CFP Reform
Working Groups and Executive Committee	2-3 days April 2013	Bilbao	<i>Relevant topics based on outstanding actions.</i>	Regional Task Forces on Data Deficient Stocks.	CFP Reform
Focus Group on Northern Hake, Anglerfish and Megrin	1 day 1 st half of 2013?	TBC	Response to EC Non-Papers / Proposals of Regulations	ICES/STECF Considerations	Lessons learned from the Southern Hake LTMP
Focus Group on Marine Spatial Planning	Half a day Q3 2012	TBC	Implementation of MSFD to fisheries - CFP	Current consultations on designation-management of marine sites in VI-VII	Bottom-up initiatives to improve conservation of habitats/stocks
Working Groups and Executive Committee	2 days July 2013	Dublin	Presentation and overview of ICES advice for 2013	<i>Relevant topics based on outstanding actions.</i>	Regional Task Forces on Data Deficient Stocks.
General Assembly and Executive Committee	1-2 days September 2013	Dublin	Report from the Chairman on Year 8	Ratify Year 8 accounts and budget for Y9	Work Programme Y9