

For the attention of the NWW-RAC Executive Committee
21 April 2009, Paris

*French application for maintaining the minimum size for king scallop in the
Eastern English Channel at 11 cm*

The most urgent point in the king scallop management continues to be the maintenance of the minimum size for king scallop in the Eastern English Channel at 11 cm.

On 9 October 2008, in Paris, a note was submitted to the Executive Committee, drafted by Eric Foucher, from IFREMER.

Owing to the high primary productivity in the Eastern English Channel, king scallops in that sector are undergoing much faster growth than those in the Western English Channel (Saint Brieuc Bay), especially during their first two months of life.

The main conclusion of the IFREMER note is that the reduction of the minimum size from 11 to 10 cm in the Eastern English Channel would not be beneficial for a sustainable exploitation of the king scallop population. French scientists have been insisting ever since 1990 on the need to increase the minimum size, since 10 cm specimens are often immature and their exploitation gives rise to the disappearance of an age class which has not had time to reproduce for the first time and whose fertility is low in relation to that of older specimens.

Exploitation of the Eastern English Channel is focused mainly on two age classes (2 and 3 years), by implementing a «left-over» policy from one year to another. The reduction of the minimum size to 10 cm would give rise to an exploitation focused mainly around a single age class, the two-year class, which would go against the principles of a sustainable exploitation of the population.

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WG 3 Chairman

Document attached: IFREMER note – October 2008