



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
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MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Main Conference Centre – Dublin Castle

Friday 06th September 2019

08:30 – 10:00

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all ExCom members and observers to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Barrie Deas NFFO, Mike Park SWFPA, Delphine Roncin and Manon Joguet FROMNORD, Mrs Dominique Thomas CMEOP, Julien Lamothe (ANOP).

The agenda was adopted.

Action points from the minutes of the last meeting

| Executive Committee | |
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| | The Secretariat to initiate the advice drafting process on the fishing opportunities for 2020 and to request an extension to the 20 th of August deadline. The process includes the nomination and election of Chair and the inclusion of input from the discussion held in the Working Groups 1 to 4 over the two days in Ghent. This advice to include the sustainability dimension of the marketing standards |
| | DONE: First email sent out looking for participants on 12 July. The Secretariat developed draft material. Group met yesterday, process will be discussed under point 3. |
| | The Secretariat to initiate the process of setting up of an Advice Drafting Group including selection of Chair and timeline on the finalisation of consensus advice on the Discard Plan and the BCRep. This also includes an update of the Choke Identification Tool (previously Choke Mitigation Tool). |
| | DONE: following some discussion it was agreed to continue work on advice regarding choke avoidance after Discard Plan. The Secretariat updated the Choke ID tool and the four WG discussed these today. BCRep Discussed at ADG for fish opps 2020. |
| 1 | The Secretariat to assist in setting up the programme for the Focus Group Marine Plastics and to set timing for presentation of first draft advice to the ExCom. |
| | DONE First video conference was held on 17 July, first face to face meeting yesterday. Progress will be discussed under point 6. |
| 2 | The Focus Group Control to continue under the Chairmanship of Sean O'Donohue, KFO, to draft new Terms of Reference and to establish a timeline for draft advice to be sent to ExCom |
| | DONE. Meeting held yesterday, progress update under point 6. |



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Actions arising from the Working Groups

| Working Group 1 – West of Scotland | |
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| 1 | Secretariat to forward the agreement for managing fisheries in the Whitesock MPA to members. Members interested in supporting this agreement should then follow this up with Kenny Coull. |
| Working Group 2 – Celtic Sea | |
| 2 | Pursue the request to ICES recommending an ICES working group to look at the effects of seismic activity on fish stocks and review the potential to harmonize exploitation patterns in protected areas. |
| Working Group 3 – English Channel | |
| 3 | Establish a Scallop Focus Group aiming at the preparation of a joint management plan for scallops in the channel. |
| Working Group 4 – Irish Sea | |
| 4 | Request to identify, out of the work of the Advice Drafting Group on stock ID issues, a list of species for which the ICES advice is characterised by a quality assurance issue. This list should be then communicated to the Commission which in turn advises ICES. |
| Horizontal Working Group | |
| 5 | Choke Advice: Members to provide inputs to the Secretariat to complete and improve the Choke ID tool. COM to discuss possibility of extension, based on this Sec to contact all members with specific deadline. |
| 6 | State Aid Framework: NWWAC is asking membership to respond directly. NWWAC will not put forward specific input overall. |

The action points from the geographical working groups were approved by the ExCom.

The action points from the HWG will be addressed later under the relevant agenda points.

2. Work plan for Year 15 (2019 – 2020)

There was no presentation by the NWW Member States Group, and the Chair apologised on behalf of the Belgian Presidency who had contacted him at latest moment and are unable to attend.

The NWWAC has been informed informally that on 17 September the next meeting of the MSG Technical Group will be held. The Secretariat will contact the Chair about NWWAC attendance and if the AC is invited we will ask for a discussion about the MSG workplan.

The Chair then asked if there was any input from the COM as to what they expect from the MSG and



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AC in the coming year.

The COM stated that a lot of issues were touched on during the meetings and work from the AC is very important to the COM. Reminder of comment for Discard Plans that it would be quite useful if the MS would have information from the AC of what the AC members would find useful to find in the Discard Plans for next year. That might resolve some of the issues if there is not enough time to react, it would be more proactive.

A discussion of the NWWAC work plan followed.

Proposed work plan includes all the topics that have been discussed in the past. – slide.

- Should horizontal working groups or focus groups be set up to address the large number of environmental issues? These topics are not a threat but can be used for positive representation of industry.
- Social sustainability: two topics suggested. AC should take a lead on labour supply and migrant workers and show that we take this seriously and work with the relevant groups.

The agenda proposed is broad and needs to be approved by ExCom.

One point to make is that a new Commission is expected to come in, so any work programme being put forward could be influenced by the new Commission and the new Commissioner.

An observer added two additional topics that are more of a strategic nature: the quality of water and pollution. If the water quality is not good we cannot protect the environment. In addition, the loss of containers at sea creates a risk to safe navigation in the high seas. 1600 containers were lost off the coast of Brittany.

Also, the social aspect is very interesting, so we have level playing field for fishermen in the EU. Another point is attractiveness of jobs in the fishing industry and to ensure that these jobs are accessible. If we want to modernise the various jobs these need to remain accessible.

These points can perfectly be covered under the proposed work programme.

It was pointed out that the point included in the proposed work programme relating to the CFP revision might be pre-empting, as it is unsure if there will be a revision. What is sure is that the COM has to report to the Parliament and the Council by the end of 2022 but it has not been decided as to how or if a revision will be carried out. It might be more useful to get a head start on identifying the things that work and that don't work.



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The COM agreed that in fact the new Commissioner is not yet in place. However, if the AC wants to allot time to discuss the functioning of the CFP so far and provide advice on this that would be part of the remit. But there is certainly no guarantee whether there will be a reform of the CFP or not.

This is linked to the Chair's comment regarding the influence of the new Commissioner on the AC's work programme and we will consider the wording accordingly.

An additional observer comment was made thanking the Secretariat for the great workplan that is proposed and stating that everything is very interesting but also very worrying. In Spain there are problems with crew and turnover of staff, but indeed that is a problem for everyone, as people prefer to work on land instead of going to sea. We have decided to train those who want to go to sea or want to go part time.

A comment on the other expected meetings was made regarding the MIACO meeting and that the formalised MIAC meeting which needs to be added to the list. We need to a mechanism to draw up the list of issues for both MIAC and MIACO meetings prior to meetings as this is the last ExCom prior to those two meetings. Maybe one of the Focus Groups or the HWG can look at this? These meetings are very important, and in this member's personal experience these two meetings were some of the best he has had.

This comment refers to point 7 on the agenda, and as soon as we get the planning for those two meetings we will distribute the planning and request for input to all members at that time.

The COM provided some additional information about ICES participation in these meetings and how the mechanics work. The reason they can't come to every AC meeting is that there is a grant agreement in place between ICES and COM, and that the COM only pays ICES to attend a limited number of meetings. If the AC wants ICES to attend more meetings than the AC has to request this from the COM.

The July attendance at the NWWAC meetings by ICES is already agreed. If the members decide that they need more ICES presence, the Secretariat will contact the COM.

The work programme for year 15 was approved by the ExCom.

3. Approval of NWWAC Advice Fishing Opportunities 2020

Discussion was held about the work in process about this advice, and a final version has been suggested.

The paragraph on sea bass is subject to review following the Webex meeting of the FG sea bass next week. The reference for the French scientific study on sole in 7d has also been received.



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The advice will then go to translation with a deadline of 10 September and then be sent to ExCom members with a deadline for comments 13 September. This is all on track for the 20 September deadline.

The representative of the European Anglers' Alliance noted that last year when the sea bass advice was provided it did not contain the opinions of the EAA. It simply noted that the EAA didn't agree with the advice. It is hoped that this won't be repeated, and that consensus can be achieved, however, if not, all opinions should be reflected.

The Chair commented that this was more related to work of the FG on sea bass and not directly related to the advice on fishing opportunities. The work by the FG will hopefully take this comment into account.

The EAA felt that the ExCom did not conform with the correct procedure last year.

This was surprising to the ExCom Chair, however, this relates to past advice, and this comment will be taken on board for future advice.

ExCom members will receive a copy of the draft advice in the three languages next week for quick consent so that it can be sent by the deadline of 20 September.

The COM confirmed that any advice should still be sent to the Director General. While Mr Machado is moving on, the AC should keep sending any advice to him. The COM will inform the AC of the new Secretary General as soon as possible.

4. Approval of NWWAC Advice Review of State Aid Framework applicable to the fishery and aquaculture sector

The presentation at HWG on this topic was reviewed, as some ExCom members were not present the day before.

The proposed action was for the AC to send a letter to the COM, and if the AC should put the view forward what the best option would be.

The HWG decided that there was not enough time. The action proposed by the HWG was to advise the COM that there would not be a response from AC, but that the AC advised its members and they would respond directly.

Action approved.

5. Approval of NWWAC Advice on 'Addressing Choke Risk in NWW after exemptions'

Input for this advice was discussed in the regional working groups and then again in the HWG. The Secretariat has invited comments from all members on this advice.

The question was asked if there were any additional topics to be added but no comments had been made.



The COM suggested for industry members to focus on mitigation for chokes and not to ask for additional quota. They would also advise the Secretariat on what the deadline is for AC advice who will in turn contact AC members.

All input will be consolidated which will have to go through written procedure to get to the COM in time according to the deadline that will be provided by the COM.

The advice is not ready to be approved as yet, but ExCom members will in time receive a comprehensive draft for approval.

6. Information points

i. Control and Compliance (Sean O'Donohue)

A face to face meeting was held on Wednesday, prior to which a Webex had been held. The group followed the mandate that arisen from the NWWAC meetings in Ghent. The FG has worked very well in the past. It has taken the discussions from Ghent on board and has defined clear ToRs for going ahead.

4 Objectives:

- 1 Follow progress of the COM draft control proposal as it is going through Parliament and Council - Parliament has decided to start from scratch, and all previous amendments have been scrapped; the FG will ensure that agreed recommendations will be pursued.
- 2 LO and control and enforcement: examination of REM in detail;
- 3 risk-based analysis and how this is carried out;
- 4 other control issues that may arise.

Two other issues came up, one is the new TCM which the FG will examine in terms of control and enforcement. In addition to this, Brexit could have implications for control and enforcement.

A time table has been arranged up to the NWWAC meetings in March. Meetings will be held both face to face as well as via video conference.

Good progress has been made since the Ghent meetings.

ii. Marine Plastics (Johnny Woodlock)

The Focus Groups appointed a Chair and Vice Chair at the meeting on Wednesday. Huge implications can be seen as the public reacts to plastics in seafood. The FG enjoyed a detailed presentation by Catherine Barret from BIM on the Clean Oceans Initiative. ToRs have been drawn up, but it seems most important that there are no barriers for landing Fishing For Litter material, which is just one of the points for the FG.

The ToRs were agreed by the FG reviewed by the ExCom.

This is a very ambitious programme. Apart from approving these ToRs, an approval in



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principal is being sought from ExCom regarding for budget support for NWWAC cooperation and participation in MAC workshop.

A member commented that the issue of plastics is not a directed fishing stock but very important in terms of its negative repercussions. There is a trend of younger people eating less fish because of the plastics issue, with negative publicity in TV, magazines, news programmes. The industry is being accused of being responsible for 17% of marine plastics. However, it is true that a large amount is coming from land. By way of reflection for the COM, the fishing industry is being criticised and considered to be the main actors for marine litter (which is true to a certain extent), so we are continuing to contribute to taking plastic out of the sea and bringing to land. So, all landing should be free because the industry is part of the solution. The fishing industry should not have to pay to land plastic. The COM and the MS need to bear in mind that the industry might need a financial contribution to carry out this work as FFL material is taking up space on board of vessels and the crew is working for the benefit of society. Help is needed as well as financial contributions not just for this FG.

The FG identified that financing would be addressed by the FG. As an action from its first meeting the FG requested from its members information on how FFL and treatment of gear is addressed across the countries, so the FG is aware of the issues in the various countries.

An additional observer comment was made regarding the term 'Fishing for Litter' FFL. Fishermen collect litter, they don't fish for it. They fish for fish.

Proposal of FG approved by ExCom incl. making budget available for MAC workshop.

iii. Sea Bass (Mathieu Vimard)

Unfortunately, Chair is unavailable to provide an overview, and the Secretariat will report with all members of this FG invited to add their comments.

The FG could not address all points on agenda. The discussion focused on the ICES advice and on the perception that AC members have of the state of the stock.

It was tried to reach consensus on the removal of the TAC. However, there were many different opinions around the table and some asked for a more precautionary approach while others noted that the bycatches are still very high in this species.

Due to this, a Webex will be organised for Monday afternoon so that relevant information can be provided for the ADG. Several other points have also got to be addressed, including the management measures that the FG would like to propose, for example measures to eliminate bycatch or to develop an information system on catches and discards, and how to optimise the efficiency of the measures the AC might propose.

A very interesting presentation was given by Nicolas Michelet (CNP MEM) on how sea bass was managed in the southern Bay of Biscay and the French licensing system.

The FG will try to stay within the deadline of the 20 September. The COM has been asked for an extension.

The COM has contacted Brussels regarding an extension of the deadline and will inform the



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Secretariat accordingly.

An observer commented on sea bass in Bay of Biscay and thanked Nicolas' and the CNPMM for the presentation which highlighted the exemplary framework in place managed by a Member State and backed up by the industry. One of the recommendations on this was for the COM to consider not using the traditional calendar year as a basis of management of this species. A request regarding this has been made in the past to the COM but no response was received. So, the question to the COM is if it would be possible to review the COM approach on this despite the knowledge gap issue that IFREMER is currently addressing. Management from April to April would be easier and more efficient.

The COM asked a question of precision as to which stock was being referred to, the northern or the southern stock, as there is no quota management for the South as yet.

It was stated that the French administration was in discussion with the COM and made a request to move the calendar in terms of the Bay of Biscay stock.

The COM stated that other than the recreational bag limit there are no limits on the southern stock, there is no quota for the southern stock.

The Chairman stated that this might better be addressed through bilateral talks.

An additional observer comment was made on behalf of the sea bass group. The bone of contention was not the level of removals, the precautionary approach is agreed by all. What was discussed was the distribution/share-out of the discards and what can be done with the discards. In addition and in reply to the EAA's comment earlier, this observer believed that a minority position was reflected in last year's advice.

This comment was followed by another clarification which disagreed with the previous comment. It would be difficult in terms of the diverging opinions to give a figure in terms of total removals as there was no agreement that these were relevant. However, everyone was in agreement in terms of the way forward and that not everything needs to be reviewed. There is no need to significantly increase the catches. There were doubts around the possibility to provide a specific answer, but specific measures could be agreed upon.

The Secretariat stated that the NSAC has been contacted regarding this work.

As this work had been approved at last ExCom, this overview was just an information point.

A final clarification was added regarding last year's advice on fishing opportunities in which a minority position was put forward by the eNGOs which did not include EAA position.

iv. Brown Crab (Norah Parke)



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The FG Brown Crab has been in existence for some years, but the approach has changed due to the change in pressure on the fishery specifically driven by the very big increase in the Asian market which is driving prices and thereby effort.

Wednesday was the first opportunity to meet face to face. The group had a very productive meeting including appointment of the new vice-chair Patrick Murphy (IS&WFPO).

The new title of the FG is now "On the development of a crab fishing management strategy which takes account of new drivers in European brown crab fisheries".

The agreed objective is to develop recommendations on the development on an EU management plan for brown crab.

Originally a 12-month period for this work was proposed. As that was earlier this year, it is now hoped to have a final report available at the NWWAC meeting in July 2020.

Video conferencing facilities will mainly be used to achieve the outcomes. An interim report will be made available for the NWWAC meeting in spring.

4 action points

- 1 Ask STECF for evaluation of current drivers of brown crab fishery
- 2 Formally request the various scientific institutes for an evaluation of brown crab stocks
- 3 Evaluation of the age structure of those involved in the fishery
- 4 Better engagement between this FG and the actual fishing people on the ground.

All items for this had been approved by the ExCom previously, so this was just a point of information.

It was pointed out that when meetings are being held vis Webex no interpretation is available which prevents the French people from full participation, for example Erwan Quemeneur would like to attend but can't because he has no English.

This FG has two active French members who communicate perfectly in English and are happy to do so. The FG is of course delighted to have more input from France and the possibility of interpretation will be explored.

The ExCom Chair pointed out that members need to contact the FG in the first place to express their interest in participating and include the point that interpretation is needed.

a) update rules of procedure (Secretariat)

The Secretariat invited all members to put comments and suggestions into the available box at the back of the room. In order for the Secretariat to update the members' contact details, a second box was made available for business cards, however, emails and phone calls are also always welcome!

When it comes to meeting organisation, the Secretariat needs all the relevant information from participants, for example if people are attending and which particular meetings will be attended. For the Secretariat to provide the best experience to its members, we would appreciate if we can be informed.



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As a reminder regarding participation in any FG, observers need to be approved by the Chair of the relevant FG.

It was suggested by a member that it might be worthwhile to look at Rules of Procedure in particular in relation to the Focus Groups. There is confusion as to why NWWAC members can't be observers at a FG meeting, but more why they would want to be observers.

FGs should be small to carry out the required work effectively and efficiently. There is no problem with someone external observing the work, but for NWWAC members it is a question of either being an active member of the FG or not. For the FGs to function productively, it is not possible to have people changing at every meeting, continuity is needed.

ACTION: The Secretariat to review the rules and if necessary tidy these up, and to provide a proposal at the next meeting.

7. Upcoming meetings

There are two upcoming meetings:

- Inter-AC meeting Brussels 08 November 2019
- MIAC and MIACO Copenhagen 16-17 January 2020

As soon as input requests are known for these meetings, the Secretariat will distribute this information to all AC members. The intention is for the AC to be represented by ExCom Chair, OIG vice chair and the Secretariat.

Other meetings which are not on the agenda are the proposed FG meetings:

- Control Group meeting in November
- Plastics in October
- Seabass Webex next week
- Crab FG also has timeline in place.
- Next NWWAC meeting dates for Madrid, Ghent have been requested. Dublin Castle is confirmed for 02-04 September 2020.

All members should be informed about these.

As the dates for the NWWAC meetings in Dublin are totally inflexible due to the venue being Dublin Castle, it was suggested to look at a different venue. If these meetings are to be held in the first few days of September, there is very little time left for preparation.

This comment can be taken into consideration for future planning by the Secretariat.



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It was also suggested to possibly split the meetings and set different dates for producing the advice on Fishing Opportunities, like for example the PelAC does, as there might be more flexibility?

The COM stated that producing the advice for the NWW later than is currently being done by this AC may be a problem for the COM. This AC is dealing with so many more stocks and more detailed advice, so it would be a struggle if the NWWAC advice was produced later than now. The COM discussions are happening in the weeks ahead of the November agreements. Pelagic stocks are a bit simpler than NWWAC stocks. The time is already very tight for advice from this AC.

The AC will also take this aspect into account. Alternatives are available, and the AC is not linked to this location, or split FG away from meetings.

Action: It is suggested that the Secretariat look into this.

In addition, the next NWW TG meeting will be held on 17th in Ghent and the AC will be invited.

The Secretariat will check who is available to attend this meeting and when the invite is coming in to put forward that we would like to discuss MSG work plan and ask ExCom members if they have any input for this meeting.

8. Summary of actions agreed

Action points from last meeting were addressed, everything has been actioned from last meeting and is work in progress.

One action point has been approved from each regional working group.

The NWWAC workplan for year 15 has been approved.

The Choke ID toll is a work in progress, a lot of input is hoped for from the members of all four working groups for this advice.

Regarding the FG Marine Plastics, both the ToR and the budget request were approved.

Information on all meetings will be distributed.

The next ExCom meeting is likely to be held in March 2020 in Madrid.

Executive Committee

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| 1 | State Aid Framework consultation: Secretariat will prepare a letter to the COM stating that the AC |
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| | will not provide a detailed response. |
| 2 | Fishing Opportunities 2020: advice is being worked on. ExCom members will receive a final draft in three languages next week for quick approval. |
| 3 | The Secretariat to review, update when necessary and proposed rules for observers at FG meetings. |
| 4 | The Secretariat to review and identify opportunities for restructuring the upcoming NWWAC meetings including choice of venue specifically for Dublin. |

Annex 1 – List of Participants

| NWWAC ExCom members | |
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| Emiel Brouckaert (Chair) | Rederscentrale |
| Patrick Murphy | Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation |
| Hugo Gonzalez | Asociación Nacional de Armadores de Pesca de Gran Sol (ANASOL) |
| Jenni Grossman | ClientEarth |
| Debbie Crockard | Seas at Risk |
| David Curtis | European Anglers' Alliance |
| Alex Kinninmonth | RSPB |
| Marc Ghiglia | Comité National des Pêches Maritimes et des Élevages Marins (CNPMM) |
| Jesús Angel Lorida Garcia | Puerto de Celeiro S.A. OPP-77 |
| Sean O'Donoghue | Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation |
| Geert Meun | Stichting van de Nederlandse Visserij |
| Paul Trebilcock | National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation (UK) |
| Caroline Gamblin | Association Nationale des Organisations de Producteurs (ANOP) |
| NWWAC observers | |
| Norah Parke | Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation |
| Fintan Kelly | BirdWatch Ireland |
| Francis O'Donnell | Irish Fish Producers' Organisation |
| Jim Portus | South Western Fish Producers Organisation Ltd. |
| José Manuel Fernandez Beltran | OP-LUGO |
| Luis Francisco Marín | OPPAO |
| Jean-Christophe Vandeveld | The PEW Trusts |
| Kenny Coull | The Scottish Whitefish Producer Association (2) |
| Kevin McDonnell | West of Scotland FPO |
| Paul Macdonald | Scottish Fishermen's Organisation |
| Jean Marie Robert | LPDB |
| Olivier LeNezet | CRPMEM de Bretagne |
| Mathieu Vimard | L'organisation de producteurs de Basse-Normandie (OPBN) |
| Gérald Hussenot Desenonges | Blue Fish |
| Franck Le Barzic | Coopérative Maritime Bretagne Nord (COBRENORD) |
| Thierry Kerzerho | CDPMEM 56 |
| Dominique Thomas | Organisation de Producteur Coopérative Maritime Etaploise Manche Mer |



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| | du Nord (OPCMEMMN) |
| Dominique Thomas | CDPMEM 22 |
| Enda Conneely | Irish Islands and Marine Resources Organisation |
| Other observers | |
| Jonathan Shrives | DG MARE |
| Secretariat | |
| Michael Keatinge | Executive Secretary NWWAC |
| Mo Mathies | Deputy Executive Secretary NWWAC |
| Matilde Vallerani | Deputy Executive Secretary NWWAC |
| Monica Negoita | Executive Assistant (Finance and Administration) NWWAC |
| Dominic Rihan | BIM |