



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Dublin, 21 June 2016

Subject: Request for the scientific evaluation of alternative management strategies for marginal bycatch quota species under the Landing Obligation

Dear Mr Machado,

In light of the latest discussions on the next stage of phasing of the Landing Obligation for the North Western Waters, the Advisory Council has welcomed the Member States' efforts to bring together experts and stakeholders in a number of workshops. A comprehensive list of solutions to deal with choke species was discussed during these meetings. Some of the solutions presented were extensions of current features of quota management, whereas others were more radical and would require more thorough evaluation and development of appropriate safety nets.

The NWWAC considers that quota flexibilities and exemptions, allowed for in the CFP, may not be sufficient to prevent choke species from jeopardising the economic viability of the fleets concerned. This alone is not a reason to forsake the landings obligation but it is strong reason to proceed with caution and continue using an adaptive approach. It is the NWWAC's opinion that this imposes a responsibility on all parties to work together in order to identify solutions to potential choke problems.

As indicated in recent advice¹, the NWWAC acknowledges the importance of scientific evaluation before new management measures are implemented. In order to ensure that the targets detailed in the CFP are met, the NWWAC has agreed that there is a need to find alternative management options to develop incentives for the implementation of the Landing Obligation that can safeguard both the stock and the fisheries.

In this context, the NWWAC requests the European Commission to consider the evaluation of an alternative management measure for marginal bycatch species and as such, provides a proposal for inclusion in the STECF Terms of Reference, for consideration at their July meeting (Annex I). The North Western Waters Member States have also received this request.

Yours sincerely,

Bertie Armstrong

Chairman of Executive Committee of the North Western Waters Advisory Council

¹ [NWWAC Advice on the implementation of the Landing Obligation for 2017 in the North Western Waters](#)
(13 May 2016)



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North Western Waters Advisory Council
c/o Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Crofton Road
Dun Laoghaire
Ireland

Tel: +353 1 2144 126
Fax: +353 1 2300 564
E-mail: nwwac@bim.ie
Web: www.nwwac.org
Co. Reg. No: 403877

ANNEX I

NWWAC suggestions for measures to be evaluated by STECF

Consideration of alternative management strategies for marginal bycatch quota species under the Landing Obligation

In exploring different options to reduce the potential for fisheries to be choked by bycatches of marginal, quota species under the landing obligation, the NWWAC requests the evaluation of the effects of removing such stocks from the TAC regime.

The NWWAC suggests that the EC ask STECF to consider the effect of removing marginal bycatch, quota stocks from the TAC regime, with specific reference to:

- a) Fishing mortality of the stock itself;
- b) Fishing mortality of other species in the fisheries;
- c) What other management measures might be appropriate.

The NWWAC suggests that this evaluation could be based on decision support tools such as those developed in the DAMARA project or those used to deliver mixed fisheries forecasts by ICES², for example by considering the removal of bycatch quota stocks, such as sole in Division VIIh-k, from the TAC regime.

² ICES Mixed-fisheries advice for Divisions VIIb,c,e-k (Celtic Sea) - Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2015, Book 5, [Section 5.2.2.1](#).