



Dublin, 26 May 2016

Subject: Request for scientific evaluation of management options for sole in Divisions VIIIfg

Dear Mr Friess,

The NWWAC welcomed the European Commission's request for STECF to evaluate a possible management strategy for sole in Divisions VIIIfg in the last plenary meeting. The STECF conclusion¹ from that meeting offers to conduct a Management Strategy Evaluation in the early summer on the basis of updated ICES information and the management options as laid out in the ILVO report that was the basis for the STECF Terms of Reference.

The NWWAC would like to ask the European Commission for a wider scope of management strategies to be considered and hopes it is possible to incorporate the attached suggestions to the STECF Terms of Reference for consideration at the July meeting (Annex I). The NWWAC realises that although the proposal for a Multi-Annual Plan for the North Western Waters will be presented shortly, it is important to consider what single species management rules can be envisaged to safeguard the stock and the fisheries to ensure we meet the targets set in the CFP.

Yours sincerely,

Bertie Armstrong

Chairman of Executive Committee of the North Western Waters Advisory Council

¹ Section 5.3 of the Reports of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – 51 st Plenary Meeting Report ([PLEN-16-01](#)). 2016.



ANNEX I

NWWAC suggestions for scenarios to be evaluated by STECF

Management strategy evaluation (MSE) for sole in Divisions VIIg

In view of the recent update of the F_{MSY} value for this stock the NWWAC assumes that STECF will base the MSE on the latest agreed value.

Adding to the evaluation discussed at the STECF plenary meeting in April, the NWWAC would like to request evaluation of the following scenarios:

1. "Default option" as basis for comparison
Setting the TAC at F_{MSY} for TAC year 2017 and onwards.
2. "fixed TAC"
Setting a fixed TAC for 2017 – 2020, indicating the corresponding TAC that would deliver the MSY objective by TAC year 2020.
3. "Progressively reducing F"
Where F is reduced from TAC year 2017 onwards until F_{MSY} is reached in TAC year 2020.

Added to these options the following items could be considered:

- i. Include a biomass safeguard:

If at the start of the year for which advice is provided Biomass is assessed by ICES to be below B_{pa} ($B < B_{pa}$), then the TAC would be set at F_{MSY} .
- ii. Include a safeguard to avoid under fishing:

If $B > B_{pa}$ and a stable TAC produces $F < F_{MSY}$, then $TAC = TAC F_{MSY}$.
- iii. Include an Inter-Annual TAC constraint of 15% or 20%
- iv. Develop a clause that triggers a change in the management strategy if it seems that F_{MSY} is unlikely to be reached by TAC year 2020;
- v. Evaluate whether the management strategy will deliver the CFP Art 2.2 objective of restoring and maintaining populations of harvested species above levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield
- vi. Indicate how an evaluation of the management strategy could be conducted to measure effects on the objectives in Art 2.1 of the CFP, specifically of achieving economic, social and employment benefits.