

Document for the preparation of the Horizontal Working Group - Landing Obligation

Tuesday, 02 February 2016 [link](#)

The North Western Waters Group is now preparing a joint recommendation for a discard plan for 2017 and possibly 2018. You are invited to take note of the amended work programme of the NWW Group for 2015 and 2016 (enclosed). This programme encompasses, amongst others, the preparatory work necessary to form and agree the joint recommendations. To enable us to progress this work we kindly seek the advice of the North Western Waters Advisory Council on the following issues:

1. Phasing of the landing obligation:

Based on Regulation 1380/2013 the landing obligation will be phased in between 2016 and 2019 using a fisheries based approach. The Regulation specifies the target species or clusters of target species for fisheries that come under the landing obligation in 2016. In the demersal JR the North Western Waters Group has, following consultation with the NWWAC, defined the fisheries in the North Western Waters. Every fishery starts in 2016 with the landing of all catches of at least one of the target species from the clusters mentioned in article 15.c(ii) of Regulation 2013/1380. In 2019 all regulated species will be brought under the landing obligation.

To ensure a progressive implementation of the landing obligation and to avoid a “big bang” in 2019, the North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on how to phase in the landing obligation in 2017 and 2018 in the different fisheries to include more species. You may wish to take into account the thresholds introduced in the first year of the landing obligation and the relationship with the cod recovery plan.

- [Reply sent 18th December 2015](#)

Deadline 28 February 2016 for advice on the following points:

2. **De minimis:** The North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on specific *de minimis* proposals for species that will be brought under the landing obligation in certain fisheries in 2017 (or 2018) in accordance with the conditions as set out in Article 15.5(c).
3. **High survivability:** The North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on specific cases for an exemption based on high survivability in accordance with the conditions as set out in Article 15.4(b).
4. **Documentation of catches:** It is important that the actual species and quantities caught are documented accurately, both for target and by-catch species. This will need to be done in accordance with the control regulation as amended. The North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on specific cases where such documentation is hampered. Any advice should bear in mind the Commission’s recent clarification that recommendations for documenting catches in regional discard plans may include provisions relating to control and enforcement measures as far as they concern the proper recording of catches.
5. **Minimum conservation reference sizes:** The North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on specific requests regarding adjusting, removing or introducing minimum conservation reference sizes for certain species. It should be

noted that the MCRS are set for the protection of juvenile fish and deviations should be scientifically supported. Any changes to MCRS should be considered alongside any exemption requests.

6. **Choke species:** The North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on which species you expect to 'choke' first and possible solutions to mitigate the effects, taking into account the instruments offered, such as the quota uplift, exemptions, interspecies flexibility, quota swaps and others.

7. **Technical Measures:** The North Western Waters Group seeks advice from the NWWAC on possible technical measures which are strictly linked to the implementation of the landing obligation and which aim to increase selectivity and reduce unwanted catches as much as possible.