



NWWRAC COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Background

The current Communications Strategy for the NWWRAC is the result of identifying the need for a pro-active approach when disseminating information to target audiences about NWWRAC meetings and actions. A first outline of a NWWRAC Communications Proposal, stating the main steps to be followed, was presented at the Executive Committee meeting held in Dublin the 27th of September 2007. It was agreed there that a further Communications Plan would be submitted to the next Executive Committee taking place in Brussels the 22nd of November 2007, for its debate and endorsement. The final NWWRAC Communications Strategy was adopted there, to come into effect the 1st of January 2008.

Aims

- To increase the awareness of the NWWRAC's work regarding sustainable fisheries management and make it more accessible to the relevant audiences.
- To pro-actively engage in communication with relevant audiences and stakeholders,
- To develop communications and information channels to reach interested third parties
- To enhance and improve the existing dialogue between NWWRAC and audiences with an established relationship.

A coherent NWWRAC Strategy will help to achieve these aims.

Initial Duration: 1 year (January-December 2008), renewable on an annual basis following its approval by the respective Executive Committee.



Target Audiences:

- Fishing Industry / Grassroots
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Other Groups of Interest.
- European Commission
- Other EC Institutions and Bodies (e.g. European Parliament, STCEF, Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions, ACFA...)
- National Administrations of Member States
- Scientific Community (ICES, IFREMER, IEO, AZTI, BIM, MI, CEFAS...)
- Academia (University Research Institutes, Departments, Chairs, etc)

Key messages:

- The NWWRAC is a useful, reliable, non-political organisation that provides evidence-based advice, and plays an effective role within the EU Common Fisheries Policy.
- The NWWRAC has proved to be a successful forum in putting together different views from a wide range of stakeholders (fishermen, producers' organisations, shipowner's organisations, eNGOs, etc) and has achieved a high degree of consensus when giving advice to the European Commission and/or the Member States.
- The NWWRAC requires an on-going involvement and participation from the scientific and academic community in order to support its advice with sound evidence.
- NWWRAC members and observers enjoy the benefit of having accurate and timely information about EC consultation procedures, NWWRAC strategic actions and own-initiative projects (such as improvement of collection of joint data between fishermen and scientists or development of LTM plans) within ICES areas VI and VII.



Actions

- Updated information about action points and topics being dealt with by the NWWRAC must be regularly submitted to the relevant audiences, through relevant communication channels, at least on a bi-monthly basis.
- Information within the press releases will vary depending on the NWWRAC activities at the time. The secretariat will review progress of the NWWRAC over this period to ensure the most relevant and interesting work gets promoted.
- Information on advice given to the Commission and Member States; outcome of meetings and meetings planned should be included in the press releases.
- A general standard presentation of the North Western Waters RAC will be made available by the Secretariat, to be presented upon request at different institutions or fora. This presentation will be updated on a regular basis and uploaded in the NWWRAC website.
- The News archive should be regularly updated in NWWRAC website, under the section “Press”. Thus, NWWRAC members and public in general will be able to view published and official press releases coming from the NWWRAC.

Procedure

General press releases will be drafted by the **Secretariat** and circulated to the Communications Review Board for comments and endorsement.

The **Communications Review Board** is an ad hoc body set up in May 2009 by mandate of the Executive Committee to deal with public relations. It is composed of the NWWRAC Chairman and four members of the Executive Committee (with at least one seat for environmental NGOs/Other Group of Interest representative). This Board is entrusted with assisting the Secretariat in the production of press releases and has the following tasks:

- Review and Sign off on press releases
- Provide quotes for articles
- Be available to speak and/or be interviewed on behalf of the NWWRAC (if and when required)



Procedures for adoption of news:

- a) For press notes of mere informative nature or stating a generally agreed NWWRAC position, they will be deemed as adopted after decision of the Review Board without necessity of further consultation to the Ex Co members.
- b) For press releases or notes containing minority positions or potentially controversial information, they will be circulated among all the Executive Committee members following the ordinary NWWRAC timeline procedures for comment and endorsement (2 weeks ordinary / 1 week emergency).

Once the press release is endorsed it will be sent to a pre-defined contact list of relevant media (i.e. European Fisheries Trade Press, national specialized fishing magazines and newspapers, institutional websites)

Members and observers will be encouraged, whenever possible, to circulate final press releases to their regional or local newspapers or magazines, and also to distribute them to associates through their own internal publications (circulars, announcement in bulletin boards)

Permissions / authorizations:

The NWWRAC Secretariat will coordinate all the press releases to be sent by the members to any media, giving its previous and express authorization for each particular case. The Secretariat will also be entrusted with the drafting, management and update of the media communications distribution list.

No member will be entitled to give its opinion on behalf of the NWWRAC, whether on a general or specific issue, without previous knowledge and authorization by the NWWRAC Secretariat and/or the Review Board.

The protocol for all internal and external NWWRAC communications will be considered as document of reference for this point.

Adoption

The NWWRAC Communication Strategy is considered as the core internal rule of procedure for the NWWRAC in relation to Public Relations and Communications.