

NWWAC workshop on hake – 6 June 2023

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Rationale

Hake fisheries in the North Western Waters are regulated by the Commission Regulation (EC) No 494/2002, also called the hake plan, and the technical measures regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/1241).

The hake plan sets out a number of provisions, including the establishment of a “hake box” with specific mesh size limitations off the coast of Ireland. The plan was established to help rebuild the northern hake stock, however, according to the latest ICES assessment, the stock’s spawning biomass has been above $MSY B_{trigger}$ since 2009 and fishing pressure has declined and has been around F_{MSY} since 2013.

In light of this, the North Western Waters Advisory Council has agreed to organise a workshop involving ICES and representatives from national research and development institutes and the NWW Member States representatives to review recent research on the northern hake stock and consider whether and how the 2002 hake plan should be reviewed.

Purpose

To bring together NWWAC members and representatives from the scientific community to discuss the following issues:

- a. Review and understanding of the most recent scientific research on hake and in particular the new ICES assessment methodology for hake biomass and implications for catch distribution in terms of sex and size.
- b. Review and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of 100 mm Vs 120mm as regulatory mesh size for hake gillnets fisheries, regarding their hake catches composition, including sex ratio, as well as other bycatches, in particular sensitive ones (TAC 0)
- c. Review of the measures set by the 2002 Hake Plan (Commission Regulation (EC) No 494/2002), also considering the articulation with the Technical Measures Regulation, in terms of mesh sizes, gears and spatial management.

Proposed outcomes

- Workshop report
- Advice with recommendations to the European Commission and relevant EU Member States on the review of the hake plan (possible joint advice with the South Western Waters Advisory Council) and clarification regarding the Technical Measures Regulation

Workshop participants

- Members of NWWAC Working Group 2 Celtic Sea & West of Scotland
- European Commission (DG MARE)
- Representatives from national research and development institutes, including AZTI
- NWW Member States

Working languages

- English, French, Spanish

Location

- Online workshop on Zoom
- Distribution of information and documents electronically

Resources, inputs and external sources

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 494/2002 of 19 March 2002 establishing additional technical measures for the recovery of the stock of hake in ICES sub-areas III, IV, V, VI and VII and ICES divisions VIII a, b, d, e
- Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures
- Benchmark workshop on anglerfish and hake (WKANGHAKE; outputs from 2022 meeting)