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Dun Laoghaire, 15 April 2021

RE: Draft (February 2020) Joint Recommendation of the North Western Waters High-level group on King Scallop fishery framework in the English Channel

Dear Mr Banel,

We refer to the NWW MSG's request to the NWWAC to provide advice on the above-mentioned draft Joint Recommendation, received on 4 March 2021.

NWWAC members definitely see the need for a good management plan that can benefit both fishermen and the scallop stock in the English Channel and would like to thank the MSG for progressing on this Joint Recommendation.

Members welcome the proposal to establish a stock recovery area in the intermediate zone of the Eastern Channel South of Parallel 49°42' N, prohibiting to conduct any King scallop fishing with dredges from 15 May to 15 October. They also support a closure of the fishery with dredges in the rest of ICES area 7d from 15 May to 30 September.

Regarding ICES area 7e, members agree to closing the fishery with dredges from 15 May to 30 September in the North Finistère area as detailed on the map in Annex 2 of the draft Joint Recommendation.

The NWWAC strongly advises that these effort limitation measures are applied to all vessels, without any distinction on the basis of their size. To ensure fairness and equality for the fleets involved, it is vital that also vessels of less than 15 metres length are involved in this management plan.

This draft Joint Recommendation is a good starting point for a better management of the scallop stock in the English Channel, but NWWAC members agree that it could be further improved with the introduction of specific technical measures. For example, members would like to propose that a limit of 12 meters is set for the length of the beam with dredges. Furthermore, discussions in the NWWAC are taking place regarding the size of rings in the dredges, aiming for a regionally harmonised solution. The outcome of these discussions will be communicated in due course.





However, discussions on further applicable measures should not jeopardise and delay the introduction of a regulatory framework managing the scallop fishery in the Channel, which is imperative to be implemented by July 2021, or at least before the start of the next King Scallop fishery campaign.

We wish to thank you for sharing this draft Joint Recommendation with us and look forward to a continued appreciated cooperation.

Best regards,

Emiel Brouckaert
Chairman NWWAC Executive Committee

