



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Focus Group Landing Obligation

Virtual meeting
23 March 2022, 11:00 – 12:30 CET

MINUTES

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair, Emiel Brouckaert, welcomed all the participants to the meeting, including Michael Keatinge (independent consultant). Apologies were received from Sean O'Donoghue and Luis Francisco Marin. The agenda was adopted as drafted.

2. Development of Choke Tool

The Chair welcomed Michael Keatinge, who had been working to update the Choke Tool.

Keatinge asked for clarification on the purpose of the tool. The Chair explained that the tool is aimed at establishing the choke risk category for each stock in the NWW and at assessing if and which mitigation measures can solve the problem. John Lynch gave concrete examples saying that the choke risk for stocks in the Celtic Seas is resolved through technical measures. The tool will identify that whiting bycatch in the Irish Sea Nephrops fishery remain a choke risk.

Mo Mathies explained her understanding of the tool: the calculations that were included based on the data that was available would show where there might be difficulties regarding quota fulfillment and where swaps might be possible. The main reason why the format of the tool needs to be updated is because it should reflect the post-Brexit landscape to enable the tool to predict difficulties and opportunities across the range of species the NWWAC is dealing with.

The Chair added that there are two main choke categories (closing a target fishery because the quota of a bycatch species in that fishery is exhausted) the tool can identify:

- When the TAC is not sufficient and every single Member State and fishery is affected.
- When a single MS's quota of a stock is zero or insufficient.

Then, at the bottom of the sheet there is space to provide suggestions on solutions, for example technical measures or exemptions to the landing obligation.

In terms of data needed to update the tool, the following was agreed by participants:

- 2022 initial quota share;
- Most recent landings and discards data (available on 2021 ICES advice sheets), also per fishing gear (available on ICES advice sheets and STECF AER data);



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- Most recent swap data.

ACTION: Michael Keatinge to populate the Choke Tool tables. Keatinge will liaise with the Secretariat to agree on a delivery date.

Keatinge added that the landing obligation was a big feature of the last review of the Common Fisheries Policy, so this year the Commission should be reviewing how this massive change worked in practice. This is an opportunity for the NWWAC to review the landing obligation since it was introduced and present this to DG MARE.

The Chair agreed with Keatinge, mentioning that while the NWWAC has already submitted its reply to the targeted consultation on the functioning of the CFP, there will be occasions to discuss the results of the consultation with DG MARE in the coming months. This point on the landing obligation could be raised in that context.

Keatinge made a suggestion for NWWAC advice in light of the massive increases in fuel prices that are now being experienced. He advised that the AC puts forward a specific request to the Commission and STECF, recommending that, while recognizing that there will not be 2022 up to date data for two more years, the most recent available AER data are updated with realistic fuel prices. This would allow to predict at what point fisheries become insolvent. *“It is important that the sector is told not just what happened two years ago. Fishers are interested in what will be happening this year and the next year”*, he added.

The Chair agreed with Keatinge and thanked him for his proposal. Stakeholders are indeed looking forward to getting actual up-to-date data that allow for predictions.

ACTION: Secretariat to draft advice on AER data and submit for review from FG members.

3. Update on MSG work on Discard Plan 2023

The Secretariat reported on the recent NWW MS Technical Group meeting. Referring to the 2022 JR Discard Plan, the MSG Chair reported that a first draft has been prepared based on last year’s JR. MS were asked for comments before end of March. The AC can expect receiving the draft in the beginning of April, however it should be noted that the collection of the necessary supporting scientific information will still be in progress when the draft is circulated. The MS will do their best to send the final draft JR in due time to the ACs.

The FG Chair added that the NWWAC can still start working on a draft advice as there are a couple of points that could be included already. For example, the advice should recommend continuing all the exemptions that are in the current Discard Plan. Moreover, the importance of article 14 of the CFP should be highlighted as well. Then, he asked whether members had identified any new exemptions since the experience last year that the AC could bring forward in the advice to the MS.

Anais Mourtada mentioned that the CNPMEM would recommend having the same JR as last year, but with the addition of a survivability exemption for sole in 7e, similarly to 7d. There is currently a scientific project going on, whose results will be shared with the AC in support of this proposal.



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ACTION: Members to send inputs to Secretariat by end of the month on proposals for new exemptions to be included in the advice on JR Discard Plan. The Secretariat will then start drafting the advice, taking into account the draft JR received by the MS.

4. Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted by the Chair

- 1) Michael Keatinge to populate the Choke Tool tables. Keatinge will liaise with the Secretariat to agree on a delivery date.
- 2) Secretariat to draft advice on AER data and submit for review from FG members.
- 3) Members to send inputs to Secretariat by end of the month on proposals for new exemptions to be included in the advice on JR Discard Plan. The Secretariat will then start drafting the advice, taking into account the draft JR received by the MS.

5. Participants list

Name	Organisation
Anais Mourtada	CNPMEM
Aodh O'Donnel	IFPO
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Irene Prieto	ARVI
John Lynch	ISEFPO
Matilde Vallerani	NWWAC Secretariat
Michael Keatinge	Independent consultant
Mo Mathies	NWWAC Secretariat