

## REPORT

Draft

Meeting: **MSFD Focus Group**  
Parties: **NSAC/NWWAC members**  
Date: **5 October 2021**  
Location: **Zoom**  
Chair: **Sofie Smedegaard Mathiesen**  
Rapporteur: **Tamara Talevska**

### 1. Welcome and introduction

The potential incoming Chair Sofie Smedegaard Mathiesen welcomed everyone and asked, given that her candidacy has not been accepted by the membership yet, whether anyone else would like to take over the chairmanship until she is elected. Pim Visser, VisNed, the former interim Chair explained that he had volunteered to chair the first MSFD FG meeting only to advance work and expressed certainty that the new Chair will be successful in her task with the help of the Secretariat.

Sofie Smedegaard Mathiesen agreed to continue. Apologies were given for Guillaume Carruel, CNPMEM, and Serena Rivero, North Sea Foundation. Pim Visser, VisNed, and Mo Mathies, NWWAC Secretariat, informed that they would be leaving early, at 10.00 CET.

Report of the previous meeting was approved without amends and actions were followed up.

### 2. Appointment of FG Chair

Members were asked if there were any objections to Sofie Smedegaard Mathiesen becoming a FG Chair. None were raised and Smedegaard Mathiesen was appointed as the Chair.

### 3. Review and finalisation of Terms of Reference

The Group went through the comments to ToR proposed by Serena Rivero. All suggestions were approved.

Henrik Lund, DFPO, stressed the importance of monitoring. He noted that while monitoring is part of the MSFD, it has proven to place a huge financial burden on administration thus rendering it non-viable for MSs to realize it. This is problematic as it hinders assessment of

the intended effect of the measures. Pim Visser added that some descriptors have proven difficult to measure and that there was a need for baseline against which these could be assessed.

Smedegaard Mathiesen suggested to include in the recommendations the call for the use of EMFAF funds for monitoring in order to ensure MSs ability to live up to the Directive. Generally she noted the recommendations to touch upon funding, descriptors and achievement/definition of Good Environmental Status.

Visser highlighted that fisheries policy is established by the CFP and that MSFD is secondary to that. He expressed concerns that concerns/will for fisheries have been limited in the Commission and that in addition to that, efforts put in fisheries restrictions are strong in DG ENV. He stressed that decisions should be science driven and that the role of MSFD should be complementary to the CFP. He raised concerns that MSFD revision will instead be used to raise the constrains/requirements for fisheries and for the environment, which will inevitably be detrimental to fishing industry. Smedegaard Mathiesen shared his concerns and acknowledged that the political atmosphere is changing.

#### 4. Discussion on joint work with NWWAC

Mo Mathies, NWWAC Secretariat informed the members that their FG on Climate and Environment is considering MSFD and will endeavour to provide advice based on the public consultation questionnaire. However, they believe that a more detailed advice should be produced and have thus considered joining forces with the NSAC. Seeing as the ACs already have some overlapping members (such as EBCD and Rederscentrale), the NSAC FG could easily be followed by the NWWAC. Mathies also suggested that the past NWWAC and NSAC advice on MSFD is reviewed and referenced, as relevant, in the new paper **(ACTION)**. In her conclusion Mathies stressed that the uptake and substantiated feedback to the advice from the Commission has been lacking and that this should be brought up as a joint AC position to the Commission. Members endorsed this proposal and Smedegaard Mathiesen confirmed that a similar discussion has been held at the Danish Fishermen PO, wondering whether the AC work has any influence left.

Smedegaard Mathiesen inquired whether the FG should be transformed to a joint group, with the current Terms of Reference approved in both ACs. Jacopo Pasquero, the Chair of NWWAC Climate and Environment FG, confirmed that and proposed to send NWWAC initial input to the MSFD FG for consideration once ready **(ACTION)**.

There was a further discussion on the need to involve external experts, e.g. from the Scheveningen Group (Mandy Doddema and Hans Nieuwenhuis were suggested) and/or NWW MS Group. Mo Mathies proposed to invite Richard Cronin, the Vice-Chair at OSPAR Commission. Visser agreed that MSFD and OSPAR are overarching and that OSPAR, especially in the Brexit aftermath, will gain influence. He also noted that there is a silos between fisheries and environmental departments, hindering the achievement of fisheries and environmental objectives through collaboration. The members agreed to invited mentioned experts to the next FG meeting. **(ACTION)**

It was agreed that the draft ToR will be circulated to members in a written procedure for adoption before the meeting on 18 October **(ACTION)**. NWWAC will launch their internal procedure for adoption. Smedegaard Mathiesen asked the Secretariat if information could be gathered on the timing of the MSFD Stakeholder Conference initially planned in November. This was agreed. **(ACTION)**

#### 4 Division of work and timeline

It was agreed that the Secretariat circulates finalized Terms of Reference for approval via written procedure. ToR would be shared with NWWAC as well. The Secretariat is to invite proposed experts to the next meeting.

#### 5 Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held online on **18 October at 10.00 CET**.

#### 6 Actions from the meeting

Action	Responsible
1. Secretariats to review past NWWAC and NSAC advice on MSFD and reference it, as relevant, in the new paper.	Secretariat
2. Once ready, the NWWAC initial input to the MSFD public consultation to be circulated to MSFD FG for consideration.	NWWAC Chair/Secretariat
3. Secretariat to invite external experts to the next FG meeting (suggested Mandy Doddema, Hans Nieuwenhuis, and Richard Cronin)	Secretariat
4. Draft ToR to be circulated to members in a written procedure for adoption before the meeting on 18 October	Secretariat
5. Information to be obtained on the timing of the MSFD Stakeholder Conference initially planned in November.	Secretariat
6. The next meeting to be held online on 18 October at 10.00 CET together with NWWAC.	Secretariat/Members

#### 7 Meeting participants

First Name	Surname	Organisation
Merel	Barbosa	NSAC
Henrik	Lund	DFPO
Mo	Mathies	NWWAC Secretariat
Sofie	Smedegaard Mathiesen	DFPO

Tamara	Talevska	NSAC
Pim	Visser	VisNed
Jasmine	Vlietinck	Rederscentrale
Jacopo	Pasquero	EBCD
Despina	Symons	EBCD

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