

DRAFT MINUTES

Joint NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group Social Aspects

Virtual meeting via Zoom

11 April 2022 | 14:00 – 16:00 CET

Participants

Name	Organisation
David Curtis	EAA
Pauline Caumont	DGMARE
Bruno Dachicourt (Chair)	ETF
Mo Mathies	NWWAC Secretariat
Norah Parke	KFO
Kenn Skau Fischer	Danmarks Fiskeriforening
Tamara Talevska	NSAC Secretariat
Matilde Vallerani	NWWAC Secretariat
Jasmine Vlietinck	Rederscentrale
Johnny Woodlock	ISS

1 Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed participants and extended his welcome to Pauline Caumont from DG MARE who will be presenting on the blue economy gender equality dimension. The agenda has been adopted. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2 The Blue Economy gender equality dimension (Pauline Caumont, DG MARE)

The presentation can be found [here](#).

Pauline Caumont introduced herself to the participants and outline the new political context for gender equality which is enshrined in the EU treaty. It is a core principle of the EU but not yet a reality as stated by President von der Leyen. In May 2021, DG MARE adopted a new approach for the sustainable new economy including several of points on gender equality providing continuity from previous actions taken.

DG MARE's Equality Action Plan (2021-2024) is an internal document, approved by MARE management July 2021, with external policy dimensions, e.g., in relation to the functioning of the Advisory Councils. As part of this, the Commission organised a lunch conference on gender equality with external experts focused on event management on 09 March addressing gender equality in meetings, how to get women on board and more. It also includes the public outreach campaign "Ocean series on Women in the Blue Economy" which aired 29 March 2022 and is available online [here](#).

In March 2020 the Commission announced its call on “Women in Blue Economy” as part of the gender equality strategy. This call will be publicly launched in May at the European Maritime Day in Ravenna. Among its aims are increasing representation and participation of women in the different sectors of the blue economy and overcoming existing constraints in all aspects of the maritime sector, in particular recruitment, training, capacity building, technical cooperation and promotions. The call will be presented on 20 May 2022 during the European Maritime Days in Ravenna, Italy.

Johnny Woodlock thanked Caumont for her presentation and asked in relation to EMFAF funding if there would be any requirements for FLAGS to entail certain percentages of women leaders. Caumont stated that there would be no requirements per se but that this was something to be encouraged.

Referring to the policy dimension and the inclusion of promotion of gender balance in the functioning of ACs, Mo Mathies asked if Caumont could provide any additional details. She stated that in relation to the functioning of the ACs, it could either mean within secretariats or membership. Membership constitution is not up to the Secretariats. As there is no gender balance in fisheries, the ACs cannot make something happen that is not there. When organising events the ACs we pay attention to speakers, but if there are no women in the organisations, it is difficult to promote this in the functioning. Mathies also enquired if DG MARE will provide tools to the ACs to encourage this, and if there was going to be a concerted effort from MARE with the ACs. Caumont stated that this aspect is looked after directly in MARE D3 which has seen a stronger interest in the ACs regarding promoting balance in ACs. Balanced representation and participation was not easy and not happening today. Raising awareness is the first step followed by evaluating what can be done. Encouraging more women to join the work would be a start, and it is likely that DG MARE will provide guidance and assistance.

Peter Breckling stated when looking at AC membership, women are more represented in NGOs than in fisheries. He felt it would make more sense in the current state to look at the obstacles and why women do not decide to take up these kinds of jobs. Caumont agreed that an analysis of the obstacles is important and stated that this would be included in the call in order to make women more visible and to empower them to make them enter the sector.

The Chair recalled that there are different forms of fisheries, for example offshore and small scale, and it would be interesting to identify the reasons in each sector even though we think we understand. Woodlock stated that though the gender balance is often at least 50/50 amongst graduates, in the end women mostly decide to work for NGOs. He felt that there were a lot of opportunities for science graduates in the fisheries sector that could be explored further.

Caumont agreed that the discussion was exactly about opportunities and ways to improve same, for example through better security onboard, better working conditions, changing the type of vessels used at sea. Strong change is needed, and we need to establish how we can help, what we can do. Opportunities should be equally open to men and women. Woodlock wondered if monetary incentives might be a way forward and stated the need for more observers in fully documented fisheries is important.

Tamara Talevska pointed to the importance of using adequate language, for example, some women do not like to be called fisher women or fishers. She enquired if the Commission is going to conduct interviews to test the sentiment around this.

Caumont stated that the COM encourages MS to use gender neutral names/roles in their National EMFAF Programme while funding will also be provided to answer some of the questions through this call.

Kenn Skau Fischer stated that a large part of fleets is family driven business, and though the man goes to the sea, the women are in charge of many other parts of the business onshore. He felt that social relationship is what covers the fishing sector, not gender issues.

Caumont explained that 15% of the small-scale sector are family driven, including unpaid work of women. Skau Fisher felt that Denmark and Sweden had a higher degree of family setup (more than 15%). Talevska recalled that this also relates to the issue ownership/licences, where women may be holders of licenses and not just doing invisible work. David Curtis related this to the way fishing opportunities are handled, as fishing rights were given for free to the people that were there at that point, thus discriminating against new entrants as well as women if they were not there when the licences were distributed.

Caumont felt that though she was not an expert in fishing rights, the question of identifying obstacles comes into play.

3 Draft Terms of Reference

The draft was circulated to all members prior to the meeting. Mathies presented final changes proposed adoption. The TOR were approved.

4 Review and discussion of questionnaire

Members discussed the scope and content of the questionnaire and if it should cover the entire EU fishing sector including recreational. It was agreed that the processing sector should not be covered by the questionnaire and that the questions should relate to the ToR. It was recalled that the ACs provide advice to the Commission on aspects of commercial fisheries as stated in the CFP, and that the results from this questionnaire are to be used as a basis for such an advice.

ACTION: Members to review the questionnaire and contact the Secretariat with specific proposals for inclusion.

5 Next steps

As the work agreed in the Terms of Reference is quite extensive, members agreed to extend the working period of the FG by one year to September 2023.

Members agreed that the next meeting of the FG should be held six weeks from this date to allow sufficient time for review and redrafting of the questionnaire.

Curtis suggested that each member could check TOR and provide comments on each objective and how these could be achieved in order to advance the FG's work. Skau Fischer agreed with extended deadline and the suggestion for members to look at objectives one by one and identify what signal/conclusions/advice members would like to provide regarding some of the matters.

The Chair concluded that a period of 4 weeks would be set to develop the questionnaire and the next meeting to be scheduled in 6 weeks. Members should review and develop comments on the objectives and how to achieve them for each of the topics/objectives in the TOR.

6 Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted by the Chair

Next meeting: **23 May 10.00-12.00 CET meeting**

Deadline for submissions on the questionnaire: **09 May**