

DRAFT Minutes

Joint NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group Social Aspects

Virtual meeting via Zoom

13 October 2022

Participants.

Peter Breckling	
David Curtis	EAA
Bruno Dachicourt	ETF
Gérald Hussenot Desenonges	
Mo Mathies	NWWAC
Patrick Murphy	IS&WFPO
Norah Parke	KFO
Tamara Talevska	NSAC
Jasmine Vlietinck	Rederscentrale
Johnny Woodlock	

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all participants. Apologies were received from Alexandra Philippe, EBCD. The agenda was approved, as were the minutes from the last meeting.

2. Structural change of the FG

Mo Mathies explained that the NWWAC and NSAC currently have two joint Focus Groups with a third one being set up. All three are being facilitated by the NWWAC Secretariat and in order to share the work the NWWAC ExCom approved that that the facilitation and administration of this Focus Group could be transferred to the NSAC. The NSAC agreed with this proposal which may bring with it a restructuring and a potential review of the Terms of Reference.

Dachicourt asked members for comments. He then proposed to hand over the Chairmanship of this group to Kenn Skau Fischer.

Regarding the transformation of this FG Skau Fischer stressed that the group is doing important and useful work jointly between the two ACs. He explained that the NSAC is keen on facilitating the Focus Group and feels that the burden sharing between the ACs is important. He did not expect many changes regarding the workings of the group. He reflected that the Commission is still working on their report on the functioning of the CFP which has been delayed, and he felt that social aspects

would be an important part of the work especially regarding how to bring this into the discussions on the functioning of the CFP. He volunteered to assume Chairmanship and facilitate consensus building amongst members, thanking the previous Chair Bruno Dachicourt for his work. He proposed to review the Terms of Reference at the next meeting.

3. Draft advice document

Skau Fischer recapped that the document had gone into the NWWAC Horizontal Working Group, but that comments had been received needing an additional review in the Focus Group.

Curtis stated that he had expressed an interest in restructuring the document completely and felt that a line-by-line review would not be suitable. He also stated that the paper clearly covers now both commercial and recreational fisheries.

Parke added that this document had lost its focus as it has gone through various iterations and that it feels incoherent. She felt that the group needed to focus on identifying the focus of the advice.

Woodlock agreed that the document needed to be reviewed regarding its aim. In relation to recreational aspects, he felt that this only related to a small number of stocks. He stated that there were several former commercial ports especially around Ireland that rely on recreational fishing.

Breckling recalled that an initial comment referred to an overrepresentation of recreational fisheries in the document. As a representative of commercial fisheries he was asking if it is wise by the recreational fisheries to draw the attention of the Commission and regulators. He stated that the commercial fisheries in Germany are not interested entering into conflict with recreational fisheries and are not active in drawing attention to data collection or further regulations in recreational fisheries for example. But it is always in the hand of the representatives of the recreational sector to decide on this. He felt that an advice document does not always have to be straight and perfectly structured and can also be a collection of arguments and information if the recommendations are presented well. Key messages should be reviewed and agreed.

Gérald Hussenot stated that the text being discussed has been circulated many times and is a good basis to carry on with the work. He felt that it was very important that everyone brings forward their thoughts and opinions and that both commercial and recreational fishing must be taken into account.

Skau Fischer proposed that he would work with the Secretariats to restructure the advice document as he felt there was no content issue but a structural issue. He asked members if they had any additional comments regarding the latest additions.

Curtis thanked the Chair for addressing the restructuring but felt that some items were missing from the document. He referred to a paragraph on the fuel costs in the advice and felt it should not be included in this advice paper. He stated that the paper was addressing longer-term issues and that the fuel crisis is more of an immediate issue. He added that it was difficult to discuss social aspects without addressing economic aspects. The fuel crisis is obviously impacting also on social aspects in

fishing communities. He asked if by just focusing on social aspects would economic aspects be excluded from the discussion.

Skau Fischer felt that economic and social aspects are closely linked which follows from the CFP. He stated that if there was no social sustainability, economic sustainability would be hard to achieve and vice versa. Regarding the issue of fuel he felt that this was indeed an urgent issue and that the inclusion could be reviewed during the restructuring.

Patrick Murphy agreed with what had been said. He felt that currently prices for fish are not reflecting the cost of fishing which is impacting the welfare of fishers as well as legal requirements and social aspects overall. He stated that the regulations state what fishers' entitlements are and that these should be extended to boat owners and skippers for example. He added that some countries have implemented subsidies to address the fuel crisis while other countries have not which has led to boats being tied up for example. He felt the inclusion of recreational fisheries is up to them and would not wish to exclude them from the document.

Skau Fischer stated that the document could be reviewed several more times in order for members to fully digest the level and detail of the advice. He added that he had noticed economic values had been inserted for recreational fisheries and felt that this should then also be included for commercial fisheries. A balance should be struck here.

Curtis stated that the EAA is looking for formal inclusion of recreational fisheries in the CFP and is already involved in projects with the EU on data collection. He felt that there is a shortage of data regarding social aspects and how fishing impacts coastal communities. Changes in fishing activity impact especially smaller coastal communities and this needs to be collected and used properly. The EU needs to explain how this information could be used to assist fisheries management decisions.

Tamara Talevska felt that the document addressed overarching aspects that are important to the ACs and indicates issue that need to be addressed in future. She felt subsequent advice papers could address items individually and this could be identified in the ToR including timelines.

Parke stated that regarding the impact on social communities one aspect that could be looked at is the disparity in various Member States. This recommendation could be part of the advice.

Murphy commented that BIM carried out an assessment on how important fishing was for the local communities and that this data is very important.

Mathies warned that the Secretariats are unable to carry out detailed research on aspects as they are in place to facilitate the work of the ACs.

Woodlock commented that in Ireland two different bodies are responsible for collecting data, BIM for marine fisheries and aquaculture, and Inland Fisheries Ireland on recreational fisheries. He felt that a recommendation could be included that the whole extractive sector should be covered by one body. He added that the Secretariats have carried out good work so far and should not be overloaded.

Breckling stated that it was important to highlight who is doing what and stated that recommendations could be included regarding funding being made available for data collection. Regarding recreational fisheries and social aspects, a new methodology may be needed with additional competencies. Pilot studies are being carried out in Germany especially in relation to tourism and recreational fisheries, but this work is not easy. An investigation was carried out regarding how many times tourists in coastal areas eat fish. Tourists stated that they eat more than when at home as they felt there is a special competence in the coastal areas for handling fish. This was a new aspect for fisheries managers and creative research is needed in these aspects.

Murphy state that available reports need to be referenced and that data gaps should be indicated with a request to be addressed.

Skau Fischer recalled that the data collection regulation has become bigger over the years and that it is important to remind the EU of what is important. He felt that the effort spent on data collection continues on what has been done over the past 20 years and not much has changed though the political landscape and life in general have. He added that the advice paper should act as a guide for future discussions of the group. He stated that work will be carried out on the restructuring and balancing of the paper. This could then be circulated prior to the next meeting so that it can be finalised at the next meeting.

ACTION: NWWAC Secretariat to restructure the advice document with the Chair taking into account today's discussion and circulate before the next meeting.

4. Next steps

Skau Fischer explained that at the next meeting the group will look again at the Terms of Reference and try and finalise the draft advice.

Woodlock agreed that a prioritisation should take place regarding what issues the group wishes to address.

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

1	NWWAC Secretariat to restructure the advice document with the Chair taking into account today's discussion and circulate before the next meeting.
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Date of next meeting: **16 November 09:00 CET**

The Chair thanked all participants and closed the meeting.