

REPORT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
CNPMEM HQ – PARIS
7th of July 2010
09:00-11:00 h

Chairman: Sam Lambourn
Rapporteur: Alexandre Rodríguez

1. Welcome

The Chairman of the NWWRAC, Sam Lambourn, welcomed the Members to the meeting, and introduced Eibhlin O'Sullivan, newly appointed CEO of Irish South and West of Ireland FPO as a new Member of the Executive Committee replacing Gerrard O'Flynn (retiring CEO). Apologies for absence were received from Víctor Badiola (OPPAO), Iwan Ball (WWF) and Emiel Brouckaert (Rederscentrale); and for the late arrival of Miss Candela Castillo from the European Commission.

The Chairman commented that this shortened Executive meeting had been set between the Working Groups because of the cancellation of the previous meeting, initially scheduled to be held in Brussels the 7th of May (due to the Icelandic volcanic ash cloud and subsequent closure of part of the European airspace). This meeting was necessary to allow the business of the RAC to continue, and had been arranged between the Working Groups so that most Executive Members attending one or more WGs need not stay longer than two days.

The Chairman also announced that any travel and subsistence costs incurred by the Executive Members as a result of non-refundable expenditure would be reimbursed attending to real costs and in accordance with the reimbursement rules of the NWWRAC for maximum amounts.

The following representatives acted as substitutes of the usual seat holders on behalf of their respective organizations:

- Rory Crawford replacing Kara Brydson (RSPB Scotland / BirdLife International)
- Paul Trebilcock replacing Barrie Deas (NFFO - UK)
- Ted Breslin replacing Sean O'Donoghue (Kyllibegs Fishermen's Organisation - IE)
- Alan Coghill replacing Bertie Armstrong (Scottish Fishermen's Federation – UK)
- Bruno Dachicourt replacing Jacques Bigot (European Transport Federation - EU)
- Stéphanie Tachoures replacing André Gueguen (CNPMEM – France)

The full list of participants is detailed in Annex I.

- Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the following changes:

“Presentation on Evaluation of RAC financial framework” was removed because the Commission had not yet finalised the report.

Lorcan O’Cinnéide, Chairman of the Irish Sea Working Group, asked to include, as point for discussion, an analysis of the current structure and mode of operation of the NWWRAC and think about options for its review. This addition was accepted.

Finally, a suggestion to draft a letter similar to North Sea RAC in relation to the extension of cod management practices and regulation to Celtic Sea Cod was dismissed and recommended to be raised at the Celtic Sea Focus Group to be held later in the day.

- Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting (Paris, 29th of January 2010)

The meeting report was adopted in full and without changes.

The Chairman recorded his disappointment with the lack of consideration given to the NWWRAC by the Commission when they scheduled an important CMO Seminar in Brussels for today, in spite of being aware that the NWWRAC was holding a key set of meetings at this time as well. Several Executive Members present were unable to attend the Seminar whilst other Members, who also held positions in other organizations, were unable to attend the RAC meetings.

It was noted that the absence of Members could hamper the functioning and working of the NWWRAC as organisation.

It was agreed that a note of protest would be submitted to DG MARE services.

Conor Nolan, Executive Secretary of the NWWRAC, informed the members about administrative and financial aspects of the NWWRAC. He announced that, as last year, the invoicing of membership subscriptions for financial year 6 will be sent by post in the following weeks so the NWWRAC could ensure its co-financing part of contributions for the members at the beginning of the next financial year (October 2010).

The mid-term report and current state of the accounts was available for consultation in the meeting site. Currently, the Secretariat is working on the present year budget amendment and the preparation of the next year budget. A formal presentation is expected to be given at the forthcoming Executive Committee meeting by Pádraig Gordon, financial advisor of the NWWRAC. This meeting is scheduled the 9th of September in Madrid.

2. Reports from the Working Groups

Working Group 1 - West of Scotland and Western Approaches (ICES VIa - EC Vb)

In absence of the Chairman of Working Group 1 (Bertie Armstrong), Alan Coghill provided the meeting with a brief overview of progress made in relation to the actions arising from the Working Group on the following topics:

- Regional task force to address data deficiencies for stock assessments
- Long term management plan for West of Scotland Haddock
- EC Policy Statement: consultation on fishing opportunities for 2011
- Consultation on by-catches of seabirds in European waters

The members discussed these items and agreed the following:

- Regional Task Force on data deficiencies:

This topic was given high priority and there was a summary of the letter submitted to the Commission by the NWWRAC on the 1st of April and the Commission's response encouraging the RAC to tackle this issue within its own remit.

Action:

Barrie Deas to develop the terms of reference for a regional task force consisting of the fishing industry, scientists, relevant MS administrations and the Commission , with the main aim of identifying existing gaps in knowledge and data for selected stocks in north western waters.

- LTMP Haddock:

It was noted that ICES Advice on LTMP was still under discussion and a socio-economic impact assessment is still outstanding. It is likely therefore that the Commission will probably set next years TAC for this stock in line with the catch option table.

- EC Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2011:

A thorough discussion took place about the need to define MSY precisely and its range of values and how this might apply in a mixed fishery. Concern was also shown on the uncertainty of assessments for many stocks leading to adoption of precautionary approach.

Action:

Bertie Armstrong to draft, in co-ordination with the Secretariat, a proposal for advice in response to the EC Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2011.

- Consultation on seabirds:

Action:

A paper drafted by Rory Crawford will be circulated for comments among the members in order to develop a NWWRAC response to be submitted to the Commission before the agreed deadline (9th of August)

- Overcapacity: European Court of Auditors (ECA) to prepare an audit of EU measures to reduce overcapacity in EU fishing fleets.

A representative of ECA presented a series of questions that were included in the Annex of the letter, of 3rd of June, addressed to the NWWRAC, asking to give its views on overcapacity. Some Members considered that most of the questions should be directed at MS administrations.

Action:

It was agreed that the NWWRAC would prepare a paper for discussion and endorsement before the end of the current year. Members were invited to submit their contributions to the Secretariat.

Working Group 2 - West of Ireland and Celtic Sea (ICES VII bcfghjk)

Hugo González, Chairman of Working Group 2, provided the meeting with a brief overview of progress made in relation to the actions arising from the Working Group on the following topics:

- LTMP for Northern Hake:

Although a focus group meeting was initially planned to take place before the end of September, members felt that it is still premature to fix a date given the current uncertainties on defining reference points (SSB and F) for northern hake stock. Furthermore, the Commission announced that in view of ICES advice to its request on effectiveness and validity of the current harvest control rules, the previous Regulation proposal has been dropped and a new proposal will be developed in the second half of the year.

Action:

It was agreed to postpone the Focus Group meeting until after STECF has given their advice and the Commission presents a consultation paper.

- Focus Group on Celtic Sea Cod and demersal fisheries in VIIfg:

The terms of reference and objectives of this Focus Group were summarized and further discussion was postponed until the Focus Group meeting to be held in the afternoon.

- Proposal of alternative management measures for sharks, skates and rays:

No progress had been made on this action since the previous meeting.

Action:

Paul Trebilcock would resume the action from WG2 and draft one or more letters proposing a review of the current management measures for spur dog, porbeagle, and rays and sharks.

- Technical Conservation Measures and Discards Policy:

The Commission representative was asked to clarify the timetable for extension of the TCM interim regulation currently in force. Miss Candela precised that the current legislative act will run until 30th of June 2011 (it was adopted in 1/1/2010 for an initial period of 18 months). Some work has begun in the Commission for the preparation of a new TCM Regulation but it is expected to take at least two more years to be completed following co-decision procedure.

Action:

Julien Lamothe to draft a letter to the Commission concerning the practical problems that implementation of a high grading ban could have in relation to by-catches with market value.

- OMEGA net gauge:

Members agreed that the NWWRAC should write to the Commission, Member States, and the CFCA, asking for a degree of tolerance to be shown for a limited period only by control authorities with respect to the use of the Omega net gauge. In particular some fishermen and net manufacturers are experiencing problems with shrinkage whereby nets that were measured as legal when new and dry, are subsequently found to be undersize when wet and after very little use.

Members also hoped that some of the problems experienced with the introduction the Omega net gauge could be avoided with the forthcoming introduction of electronic log books.

Action:

Paul Trebilcock and Hugo González will work in co-ordination to draft a letter with the above mentioned content and circulate it among the Executive Committee members for endorsement by consensus.

Working Group 3 – English Channel (VIIde)

The Chairman of Working Group 3 (Daniel Lefèvre) provided the meeting with a brief overview of the progress on actions arising from the Working Group on the following topics:

- Consultation on management of stock for Plaice VIIde
- Technical Conservation Measures for Channel Scallops
- Management of 7e Sole: review of LTMP
- Discard survival rates for VIId Cod and Plaice stocks; and Rays in area VII.

The members discussed these items and agreed the following:

- Management of Channel Plaice stocks:

The paper prepared by Jim Portus available on the NWWRAC website will be discussed in detail at WG3 the day tomorrow. A revised version of this document would then be drafted and circulated among WG3 and Executive Committee members for signing off and submission to the Commission by the end of July.

- Rays and cod in VIId:

* *Cod VIId*

The French members were not in favour of separate management in IV and VIId. Concerns were expressed with uncertainties in F and recruitment, and also with the inclusion of some gears such as longliners within the special fishing permits for cod.

* *Rays VIId*

The French members were also very worried about the landing ban on undulate ray, and hoped that discussion being held between IFREMER and fishermen will feed into the Commission's advice to be presented in September to see if the opportunity to reopen this fishery is possible.

It was stated that both undulate ray and porbeagle were two species of high commercial value in the Channel.

- Review of Sole VIIe:

Jim Portus to give a report at Working Group 3 tomorrow morning (8th of July).

- Technical Conservation Measures for Channel Scallops:

The Chairman included this topic to remind those present of the importance of maintaining the current MLS for scallops (11 cm. for VIIe; 10 cm. for VIId) in the forthcoming new Regulation.

- Other items:

Finally, the Secretariat reported briefly on two ecosystem based presentations at the WGs: INTERREG project CHARM3 coordinated by IFREMER, and PISCES project coordinated by WWF.

Stéphanie Tachories briefed the members on the recent progresses made at meetings between fishing industry representatives of France, Ireland and UK in relation to initiatives for the production and commercialisation of crustaceans in the European market. The NWWRAC will be regularly informed on the outcomes and actions agreed at these meetings.

Action:

The Secretariat to resume an ongoing action coming from last Working Group 2 / Horizontal Working Group on Marine Spatial Planning and draft a letter to the Commission seeking a comprehensive overview of all such projects with an element of EU funding, including how they impact with one another, a clear breakdown of objectives and outputs along with participants. This would enable a better understanding of how the various projects fit together in the context of EU fisheries management.

Working Group 4 – Irish Sea (VIIa)

The Chairman of Working Group 4 (Lorcan O’Cinnéide) provided the meeting with a brief overview of progress on the following topics:

- Review of management measures for Irish Sea stocks
- Management measures for Nephrops stocks

- Review of management measures for Irish Sea stocks:

A paper presenting alternative measures to be proposed for the Irish Sea is in process of elaboration and will be presented by Sean O’Donoghue and Lorcan O’Cinnéide.

A paper from the Irish Seal Sanctuary proposing a temporary closure of trawling fishing activity in the Irish Sea, to allow stocks to recover, it was highlighted as an issue to be discussed at WG4.

- Nephrops Stocks in Area VII:

The Commission representative stated that if the NWWRAC response to the Commission proposal to manage this stock by FU is to be taken into consideration in the final Commission proposal, it will have to be received by the end of July. Failing this, any NWWRAC advice will have to be input via the relevant Member States as part of Council negotiations

3. Update on Work Programme for 2010 – European Commission

The Head of Unit C2, María Fuensanta Candela, summarized the main items for consultation and proposals to be adopted during the second half of the year.

- General Opportunities for 2011 (incl. discussions with EU-Norway) → proposal to be submitted in October for adoption at Nov/Dec. Council
- Adjustments to effort ceilings under cod recovery plan.
- Discard studies in UK for improving assessment of sole in West Channel (legislative changes to allow extra 5% quota incentive to participant vessels)
- Deep sea fishing opportunities for 2011 and 2012 → September
- Implementation of control rules in NEAFC

Mrs Candela also highlighted two Commission events with stakeholder participation:

- Seminar on state of stocks → Brussels, 14th of September
- Joint meeting ACFA-RACs: presentation of the implementation of criteria set in Communication on Fishing Opportunities → Brussels, 14th of October

The Commission's representative gave also a brief update in relation to topics of specific interest for the NWWRAC:

- ❖ Northern Hake: last year proposal for a long term management plan has been withdrawn following ICES advice for 2011. There is a clear need to re-evaluate this stock. The Commission is waiting for STECF advice before working on a new proposal of LTMP. The Commission invites the NWWRAC to re-engage with scientists and be closely associated with developing ideas and management proposals for this stock. The Commission will keep the NWWRAC informed when submitting a formal request to ICES/STECF to validate or propose a new LTMP.
- ❖ West of Scotland haddock: The process of developing a LTMP for this stock is currently held up because the Commission has been unsuccessful in finding external experts to carry out the socio-economic assessment. A lack of data provided by Ireland has also been a constraint on progress.

- ❖ Sole VIIe: an evaluation of the current recovery plan has been carried out: STECF have held a scoping meeting to examine socio-economic impacts of possible management options for a future plan. An impact assessment for a revised plan is expected to be produced in the second half of the year.
- ❖ Western waters regime for 2011: A report is to be published by the end of year, which will examine options for a new framework regime.

The members and the Commission exchanged views from the floor:

All consultations and relevant scientific papers should be translated into French and Spanish to ensure all stakeholders engagement in the process. This RAC will not function as well as it could without this.

- Concerns were expressed about the proliferation of consultant private companies that are hired by the Commission to carry out specific studies on socio-economic data. There is a high degree of uncertainty about the accuracy and reliability of these data and the lack of transparency and knowledge about how they obtain them. This work should be done at Member State level where this data already exists at macro level.
- The Commission representatives encouraged fishing professionals and the RACs to collect and provide the necessary socio-economic data at micro level (i.e. profitability ranges, composition of salaries, crew size...) to assess the impact that any measure may have for the fleets for each management option proposed.
- The Commission was asked if there was any change to the original timetable presented of the CFP reform process. The Commission is not aware at the moment of any change in the timetable for adoption of a CFP Regulation. They are currently working on the Impact Assessment and a proposal of Regulation is expected to be launched at the beginning of 2011.
- In response to a query on the state of play of the implementing rules of the framework Control Regulation in force, the Commission noted that they had been submitted and discussed at the management committee and that a legislative text is intended to be adopted before the end of the year under the form of a Commission's regulation. It will include some rules establishing transition from the existing special fishing permits to a new concept of fishing authorisation.

4. Review of current structure and functioning of the NWWRAC

Lorcan O’Cinnéide affirmed his view that an “autocritic” evaluation was needed so the NWWRAC could enhance its role as advisory body constituted to give a voice to the stakeholders and provide ongoing feedback to the Commission, Member States, European Parliament, and other institutions. This could be a good opportunity for a review of the structure and functioning of the NWWRAC: is the present structural format the best one to be effective and deliver results? Are there other more flexible ways?

The current uncertainty in the future role of the RACs in the new scenario of fisheries management in Europe and the several consultations that will have a great effect on fishermen’s lives (MSY, control measures, TCMs, CFP reform...) were also perceived as influential factors explaining this feeling of being overwhelmed by the work required. Members felt that they could make further efforts to integrate RAC work into their daily activities and tasks other than by attending meetings. If the RACs are going to have an enhanced role, this should be accompanied by adequate funding and resources to develop initiatives.

It was acknowledged that RAC Secretariats had made efforts in recent years to propose options to reorganise the current regional structure of the Working Groups and set up issue based topic Focus Groups that have proven to be satisfactory in general terms.

Alexandre Rodríguez recalled that the NWWRAC had a forum ready to use in the website and encouraged members to register and use it so they can follow up discussions and exchange views on key topics.

Finally, Kenneth Patterson invited the members to look at the Nephrops advice given last year by the NWWRAC as a successful example of evidence-based advice supported by science. There is still important work to be done in improving data deficiencies and quality.

Action:

This subject will be formally incorporated as item for discussion at the next Executive Committee meeting with the aim to explore and agree on options for improving the work performance and functioning of the NWWRAC. The Secretariat and the Chairman will prepare some guidelines to introduce and guide the debate.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 h

ANNEX I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS TO THE MEETING

NWWRAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING – PARIS 7 JULY 2010			
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Status</u>
Manuela	Azevedo	ICES ACOM	Scientific observer
Ted	Breslin	Kyllibegs Fishermen's Organisation (KFO)	Ex.Com. Member (replacing S O'Donoghue)
María Fuensanta	Candela	DG MARE	European Commission
Luc	Corbisier	Stichting voor Duurzame Visserij Ontwikkeling	Ex.Com. Member
Alan	Coghill	Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF)	Ex Com. Member (replacing B. Armstrong – WG1 Chairman)
Rory	Crawford	RSPB Scotland - Birdlife	Ex Com. Member (replacing K. Brydson)
John	Crudden	European Anglers Association	Ex.Com. Member
Bruno	Dachicourt	European Transport Federation	Ex Com. Member (replacing J. Bigot)
Hugo C.	González García	ARVI-ANASOL	Ex.Com. Member - WG2 Chairman
Sam	Lambourn	Skipper	Ex. Com Member - NWWRAC Chairman
Julien	Lamothe	FROM Bretagne	Ex. Com Member (replacing J. Pichon)
André	LeBerre	CRPMEM Bretagne	Ex. Com Member – GA & Honorary Chairman
Daniel	Lefèvre	CRPMEM Basse Normandie	Observer - WG3 Chairman
Colm	Lordan	Marine Institute	Scientific observer
Jesús	Lourido	Puerto de Celeiro, S.A.	Observer
Joseph	Maddock	Irish Fishermen's Organisation	Observer
Eamon	Mangan	Ministère de l'Agriculture de France	Member State
Eduardo	Míguez López	European Association of Fishing Ports and Auctions	Ex.Com. Member

NWWRAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING – PARIS 7 JULY 2010

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Status</u>
Conor	Nolan	NWWRAC Secretariat	NWWRAC Secretariat
Lorcan	O’Cinnéide	IFPO	Observer - WG4 Chairman
Eibhlin	O’Sullivan	Irish South & West FPO	Ex.Com. Member
Kenneth	Patterson	DG MARE	European Commission
Brendan	Price	Irish Seal Sanctuary	Ex. Com. Member
Alexandre	Rodríguez	NWWRAC Secretariat	NWWRAC Secretariat
Pieter-Jan	Schon	AFBNI	Scientific observer
Stéphanie	Tachoures	CNPMEM	Ex. Com. Member (replacing A. Gueguen)
Paul	Trebilcock	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations	Ex.Com. Member (replacing B. Deas)
Borja	Velasco	SGPM – MAMRM Spain	Member State