



## **Working Group 1 West of Scotland and Western Approaches**

**Wednesday 4 July 2012**

**11:00 - 12:50**

**Dublin Castle, Dublin**

### **Summary of Recommendations and Actions**

Chairman: Jane Sandell  
Rapporteur: Kara Brydson

#### **1. Welcome**

The WG1 Chairman, Jane Sandell, welcomed the members and the attendees to the meeting. The full list of participants is included as an annex to these minutes.

- Apologies for absence were received from Delphine Roncin, but it was noted that Luc Ramet was attending in her place.
- The agenda was adopted without changes.
- The report of the last meeting held in Paris the 28<sup>th</sup> of February was adopted without comments.

#### **2. Review of the Cod Recovery Plan**

WG1 heard a report of the actions from the Cod Focus Group held on 22 March by the Chairman, Sean O'Donoghue. This focus group delivered two key position papers both on interim measures to amend the current cod management plan (EC Reg. 1342/2008) and on long term proposals (NWWRAC position paper called '*Breaking the Cycle of Decline for West of Scotland Fisheries*'). Both papers are available for consultation in the NWWRAC website.

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There was also an update from the STECF scoping meeting on management plan for mixed fisheries including a review of the existing cod recovery plan in Edinburgh in late June. The Commission representatives clarified that any amendments to the Management Plan would be subject to co-decision procedure.

The outcome of ICES Benchmark Workshop on Roundfish (WKROUND 2012) was discussed. Some members were disappointed with the results of the benchmark, for example that seal predation issues were not fully integrated or assessed as one of causes of total mortality. The benchmarking process will take a number of years and the zero TAC is creating a bigger discarding problem. It is therefore important to continue with the NWWRAC work and engage relevant scientists to be able to produce sound recommendations and evidence-based advice.

**ACTION: WG1 recommends** that the NWWRAC continues the work at the cod focus group for both the West of Scotland and the Irish Sea. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Focus Group for Cod management in West of Scotland, and the Focus Group on Irish Sea Fisheries would remain separate although coordinated. A scoping document will be set out for the WoS cod focus group, further developing the 7 principles outlined within the RAC position paper, and WG1 asks that a meeting is arranged within the following weeks as a matter of urgency (and not waiting until the next NWWRAC meetings in September).

During this agenda item, Víctor Badiola requested that the Spanish fleet should not be affected by the implementation of any measures arising from this Group (such as reductions in effort or adoption of new technical measures), since it does not target nor have catches of cod in VIa and for that reason they have been made exempted from the effort regime currently in force under Regulation 1342/2008. Furthermore, Mr. Badiola raised a concern about how their minority position on this issue had been reflected in past NWWRAC documents.

The Secretariat replied that objections and/or minority positions are put at the end or at the beginning of documents as laid out in the NWWRAC rules of procedure. These rules can be modified if members wish to put forward an alternative proposal to the Executive Committee. In any case, the NWWRAC statutes make clear that a minority view must be duly reflected.

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### 3. Technical Measures in Western Waters: West of Scotland

The Chairman of the NWWRAC, Bertie Armstrong, noted that the ICES advice still points to the TR2 (nephrops) fleets as a main source of discards. He asked the Commission to note that in Areas VI and IV Scotland has projects for universal adoption of highly selective gear, and two gear types have gone to STECF for assessment.

In the discussion, WG1 highlighted concerns that the Commission proposal for the roll over of technical measures (EC Reg. 850/98) is in fact not a simple duplication or consolidation of existing rules but in fact has some fundamental changes. For example, there is a discrepancy in Art 19a which some members felt was a deliberate change in line with the Commission's current position on the introduction of a discards ban. The Commission's representatives clarified that if the European Parliament and the Council do not agree and adopt these proposed measures, the current Regulation will no longer be in force after 31 December 2012.

In addition, the long disputed catch composition rules, which had been altered using emergency measures, seem to have been reintroduced for Area VI in the Commission's proposal. The Commission's representatives clarified that it intends to extend the transitional derogation of haddock from the catch composition rules for an additional period of 6 months, i.e. February 2013. After that date, it will revert to Reg. 850/1998, and cannot be amended. To make these emergency measures permanent requires following the ordinary legal procedure. As yet there is no information on whether the emergency measures have been effective in reaching their objective.

The Commission's representatives clarified that the Haddock MAMP is still stuck in the ongoing institutional deadlock between the European Parliament and the Council.

**ACTION: WG1 recommends** that the NWWRAC prepares a letter to the Commission asking for clarification on its proposal on Technical Measures in Western Waters, i.e. whether it goes beyond the current measures or is simply a roll over of EC Reg. 850/98. Concerns will be reflected about an implied discard ban in Art 19a, as well as content of articles 29.a on % by catches and Annex 14 on requirements for square mesh panels. The letter should also ask for clarification on the reintroduction of the catch composition rules which had been removed earlier in the year by Emergency Measures.

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#### 4. EC Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2013

WG1 discussed the recent publication of the Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2013 and the elements to include in the NWWRAC response. The formal proposal of Regulation will come later in the year (end of August/September) but the tone of this Communication is an indication of what is to come.

There was concern from the Working Group regarding the application of a precautionary margin leading to a resurgence of automatic reductions for data limited stocks lacking of analytical assessment, as well as working methods for setting TACs. The Commission representatives clarified that until the formal proposal is published later in the year there is no an actual decision on automatic reductions nor on working methods.

Working Group 1 was disappointed that appendices in the Communication were inadequate in highlighting trends of improvements in European fisheries. For example, in Annex Ia they use tables showing averages over a ten year period. WG1 believes this should be rectified in future proposals.

WG1 members asked if draft Long Term Management Plans would provide the basis for proposals. The Commission clarified that it would not be making proposals based on draft Long term Management Plans as these draft plans have not undergone a process of evaluation.

**ACTION: WG1 recommends that** the NWWRAC write to the Commission asking for clarification on the rationale and methodologies for the implementation of automatic reductions to take into account uncertainties in data limited stocks for which full quantitative assessments are not available. The NWWRAC should also request an assessment of the impact that such approach might have in real terms on the fishing opportunities for 2013.

**ACTION:** WG1 and the NWWRAC will consider the document on fishing opportunities for 2013 further, and respond, when the Commission publishes its formal proposal later this year.

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## 5. Data deficiency issues for stock assessments

WG1 data coordinators reported on progress made on the following data deficient stocks:

### Northern Hake

The coordinator, Victor Badiola, advised the group that he was unable to continue this work. The chair thanked Victor for his work and the secretariat will now seek a new data coordinator for this species.

### Anglerfish and Megrin

Mike Park reported on the ICES WKFLAT 2012 meeting in Bilbao and the background work undertaken on both stocks by Dr Paul Fernandes, formerly scientist at the MarineLab Scotland and now professor at Aberdeen University. He has not established so far formal contact with the relevant ICES data stock coordinator.

On Anglerfish, there are a lot of uncertainties surrounding the biology and population dynamics, and particular problems with ageing. Scientists raised concerns that some member states are not providing the proper information they are legally obliged to by the DCF Regulation.

On Megrin, there seems to be very little to do from the industry perspective. It is hoped that an initiative to organise training courses for individual vessels to measure number of young females caught will be in place by spring 2013. This is something that should be done not only in Scotland-UK but also in other Member States. Finally, a paper published by Dr. Paul MacDonald was quoted for reference to improve the understanding of the megrim stock in the northern part of the North Sea.

### Cod and Haddock

Sean O'Donoghue affirmed that there was no new information on these stocks besides the benchmark workshop held this year (ICES WKROUND) with very little progress achieved. Sean has established a prolonged dialogue with scientific correspondents from the Marine Institute.

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Whiting – Bertie Armstrong stated that there was no news since last meeting in February.

There was a discussion on Fully Documented Fisheries. It was suggested that FDF should have a broader focus than CCTV, and that reference fleets and observers were interesting additions to the options.

**ACTION:** The Secretariat will send ICES an update of the work progress achieved in the data coordination initiative in 2012, and follow up with ICES Secretariat the possibility of arranging a coordination meeting (WKDDRAC3) before the end of the year.

**ACTION:** The NWWRAC will consider next steps for collaboration with Commission / ICES / STECF on achieving fully documented fisheries.

## **6. Update on the MPA process in the West of Scotland area**

WG1 heard an update from Kara Brydson, as NWWRAC designated representative before JNCC, on the various UK projects to develop a network of Marine Protect Areas, and fisheries management measures for these areas.

### Fisheries management measures for offshore EMS - Haig Fras and Stanton Banks:

By the end of 2012, fisheries management proposals for these sites should be put forward to the European Commission. As these sites are part of the Natura 2000 network, under the Habitats Directive, there is legal requirement for management measures to be put in place for Natura 2000 sites within 6 years of notification to the Commission. Any fisheries management measures should be implemented under CFP within the same timeframe.

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Summary of progress/expected timeline for these projects are as follows:

- Summer/autumn 2011: Pilot Project Steering Group set up (Defra, JNCC, MMO, Marine Scotland) to forward the identification of management measures for offshore Natura 2000 sites.
- October - November 2011: Stanton Banks and Haig Fras workshops held with NWWRAC and representatives of fishermen, fishing industry, UK and FR Govts. and agencies.
- December 2011-March 2012: Further information collected as follow up to workshops. Workshop reports published (link below).
- April 2012-current (note: deadline for delivery slipped, working on agreeing on a realistic new date): JNCC drafting fisheries management advice and options for sites. Options to feed into proposals for management measures and Impact Assessment to be discussed with Project Steering Group, followed by engagement with NWWRAC and more widely.
- Autumn 2012: Proposals revised and submitted for Ministerial approval.
- End of 2012: UK Government to propose management measures for these sites

Further information can be found at MAIA website: <http://www.maia-network.org/homepage>

#### Scottish MPA project:

On 27 and 28 June 2012, the Scottish Government held the fifth Scottish MPA Project stakeholder workshop to discuss the overall shape of the network and the 39 search areas and potential sites, and commented on options and alternatives for these. There was a presentation on Sustainability Appraisal process. The second day of the workshop focused on management of the proposed areas. Case studies of particular sites were used to illustrate how the process of identifying management requirements could be applied in practice.

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The list of proposed sites will be put to the Scottish Parliament by the end of this year, followed by a public consultation in spring 2013. Management options will also go out for consultation. JNCC is very keen to discuss these proposals with all relevant stakeholders and invites any parties who haven't done so already to get in touch with them.

**ACTION FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:** Any remaining NWWRAC members wishing to meet with JNCC to discuss these projects should contact JNCC within the shortest delay, as such meetings have to take place by early September.

## **7. Concluding remarks**

The Chairman thanked all the members and observers for attending the meeting, the Secretariat and the translators for their excellent work.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 h as planned**

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## ANNEX I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<b><u>MEMBERS</u></b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname/s</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Jane	Sandell	<b>WG1 Chair</b> – Scottish Fishermen’s Organisation
Víctor	Badiola	<b>WG1 Vice-Chair</b> - OPPAO
Kara	Brydson	<b>Rapporteur</b> – RSPB / Birdlife International
Bertie	Armstrong	NWWRAC Chairman
Alan	Coghill	SFF / Orkney FPO
Juan Carlos	Corrás Arias	Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco
John	Crudden	European Anglers Association
Barrie	Deas	NFFO
J. Manuel	Fdez. Beltrán	OPP-07-LUGO
Caroline	Gamblin	CNPMEM
David	Gatt	SWFPA
Marc	Ghiglia	UAPF
Hugo	González	ANASOL-ARVI

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<b><u>MEMBERS (cont.)</u></b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname/s</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
André	Gueguen	OPOB-Pêcheurs Bretagne
John	Hermse	MNWFA / Scallop Assoc.
John	Lynch	Irish Fishermen Organisation (IFO)
Alan	McCulla	ANIFPO Ltd.
Kevin	McDonnell	West of Scotland FPO
Francis	O'Donnell	Irish Fish PO
Sean	O'Donoghue	Kyllibegs FO
Eibhlin	O'Sullivan	Irish South & West FPO
José Luis	Otero	Lonja de la Coruña S.A.
Michael	Park	SWFPA Ltd.
Jacques	Pichon	ANOP-PMA
Luc	Ramet	CRPMEM Nord-Pas de Calais ( <i>replacing D. Roncin</i> )

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<b>OBSERVERS</b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname/s</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Emiel	Brouckaert	REDERSCENTRALE
Richard	Brouzes	OPBN
Debbie	Crockard	Seas at Risk
Helen	Dobby	Marine Lab / ICES WGCSE
Paul	Duane	SFPA Ireland
Ramón	De la Figuera	MAPA – Spain
Paul	Francoise	FFSPM
Grant	Fulton	SFPA Ireland
Roy	Griffin	DG MARE – Commission
Raphael	Gröllemund	FROM Nord
William	Hazel	Coastwatch
Jonathan	Lemeunier	DPMA - France
Laurent	Markovic	DG MARE –Commission
Pieter-Jan	Schon	AFBI Northern Ireland
William	Stewart	EFCA - Vigo
Paul	Trebilcock	Cornish Fish PO
Caitlín	Uí Aodha	Irish South & East FPO
Joel	Vigneau	IFREMER / ICES WGCSE

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<b>NWWRAC SECRETARIAT</b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname/s</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Conor	Nolan	Executive Secretary
Alexandre	Rodríguez	Policy and Communications
Joanna	McGrath	Administration and Finances

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