



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

**Main Conference Centre – Dublin Castle  
Wednesday 6th of July 2011  
09:00 - 11:00**

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

Chairman: Bertie Armstrong  
Rapporteur: Kara Brydson

#### **1. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed the members. There were no apologies for absence.

The full list of participants is available in Annex 1

The agenda was adopted without comment.

The report of the last meeting (Bilbao, 13th April 2011) was adopted without comment.

The Chair announced there would be elections for Working Group officers at the first NWWRAC Working Group 1 meeting after the General Assembly. The term of the office for these positions will be 3 year, in line with the other NWWRAC positions. Both the Chair and Vice Chair informed members that they would be pleased to stand for re-election for these positions, if members agreed. The Vice Chair highlighted his wish to maintain regional balances and nationalities for the Working Group officers.

#### **2. NWWRAC response to the EU public consultation on fishing opportunities in 2012**

The Chair summarised up the main aspects of the consultation document issued by the Commission as well as the presentation made by Ken Patterson (DG MARE) the previous day. Mr Patterson explained that the Commission's proposal aimed to simplify working methods, progress quickly to MSY in order to meet the 2015 deadline and resolve the problems of poor data.

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The need to articulate a NWWRAC formal response to the EU public consultation within the established deadline (20 July 2011) was identified as a priority action for this RAC to be completed in the following weeks.

**Action:**

The WG1 Chair and the NWWRAC Secretariat to draft a response to the consultation for circulation to the Executive Committee, highlighting the following statements agreed by WG1:

- The NWWRAC hopes that the Consultation is exactly that and not a statement of intent, and that the NWWRAC advice will be taken into due consideration. This is particularly important as the current proposal departs from previous years in that its effects will be fit for many years rather than just the follow 12 months.
- The NWWRAC welcomes the definition of overfishing and the recognition of a generalised improvement on the state of the stocks made by the Commission in the paper. However, the NWWRAC strongly disagrees with the Commission's statement that there has not been an overall reduction in fishing effort in European waters, as this is in contradiction with the trends shown in the graphics per fishing areas included in the consultation paper.
- The NWWRAC does not resist the 25% auto reduction outright, and believes it may have a place for some stocks. However, this is deemed to be a blunt tool which in some circumstances may undermine efforts to reduce discards and therefore the NWWRAC believes that it is not acceptable for all stocks where there are other forms of data available. It must be recognised that the term 'bad data' covers a broad spectrum of problems with different types of data deficiencies that cannot be dealt with under a simplistic "one size fits all" approach.
- The NWWRAC agrees with the Commission's statement that Member States (MS) should devote sufficient resources to data collection and strongly urge them to deliver the necessary information, using EU funding provided to reduce data deficiencies rather than to replace national expenditure. MS who are making efforts to collect data must not be prejudiced by those who are not. The NWWRAC questions whether the current national scientific bodies are fit for purpose in terms of its functioning and resources.
- That the NWWRAC offers the Commission its help and support to the maximum extent possible to tackle and reduce data deficiencies in cooperation with ICES, Member States and national scientific institutes, and emphasizes the importance of availing of industry data.

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### 3. Data deficiency issues

The Chair recalled that Commission representatives acknowledged that the 25% automatic cut to data deficient stocks would receive criticism from the industry, but they had exhausted alternatives and action was required. The Commission also stated that they would welcome constructive suggestions from the NWWRAC.

The Chair gave the floor to Barrie Deas, who presented an alternative approach to the Commission proposal for setting TACs for data deficient stocks. This includes:

- Identification of 'data deficient' stocks for which ICES can only provide qualitative assessments
- Identification of the specific assessment problems
- Identification of the parties responsible for resolving the assessment problem
- Provide advice on appropriate remedial action
- Provide advice on the principles that should underpin TACs for "data deficient" stocks

The following Working Group 1 Members were appointed as NWWRAC 'data coordinators' for a number of stocks in VIa:

- Anglerfish and Megrin VIa → Mike Park
- Cod VIa → Sean O'Donoghue
- Haddock VIa → Sean O'Donoghue and Alan Coghill
- Whiting VIa → Bertie Armstrong
- Northern Hake (VI&VII) → Víctor Badiola and Jacques Pichon

The NWWRAC data coordinators will ensure to keep momentum and liaise with ICES data coordinators, fishing representatives and Member States to identify and, where possible, carry out remedial actions for stocks without population estimates. The NWWRAC data coordinators will work in close cooperation with the Secretariat and report periodically on their progress.

There followed a discussion that the above approach may be a return to the Commission's approach of using categories to set TACs. However, it was agreed that the alternative proposed by the NWWRAC would not be as rigid as the previous rules, as stocks could be dealt with on a case by case basis rather than being forced to be classified into one category.

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#### **Actions:**

- The appointed NWWRAC data coordinators to initiate work by liaising with relevant parties and assisting them to provide to ICES the required type of data and information for each data deficient stock.
- Barrie Deas to draft the terms of reference which will serve as guidelines for all coordinators.

**WG1 recommends that the Executive Committee** supports this proposal of an alternative approach to the 25% automatic cut, and writes to ICES outlining the steps the NWWRAC is taking to develop this. Fisheries identified as appropriate for this alternative approach should be considered for fisheries-science partnership projects.

#### **4. ICES-STEFCF review of the cod recovery plan for the West of Scotland – Reg. 1342/2008**

Barrie Deas provided an oral report of the work progress made within the NWWRAC on this topic since Bilbao meetings. The main achievement was the drafting of a position paper by a steering group lead by Sean O'Donoghue that was discussed and amended at the Focus Group meeting held in Dublin on the 31 May. Barrie also summarised the main outcomes of the ICES-STEFCF EWG meeting held in Hamburg the 20-24 June, where he acted as NWWRAC and NSRAC representative and presented the NWWRAC Position Paper (available in the NWWRAC website).

The NWWRAC paper essentially puts into question the two core assumptions upon which the plan is founded, i.e. the linkage between effort control limitations and reduction of fishing mortality; and the relation between reduction of TAC and its reflect into fishing mortality.

It also advocates for a regional approach, on a fishery by fishery basis, and along with the general remarks it makes specific comments for each of the areas of interest: West of Scotland (VIa), Eastern Channel (VIId) and Irish Sea (VIIa)

Lorcan O'Cinnéide, who was also representing the NWWRAC at the meeting, stated that the NWWRAC paper proved influential to broaden up the discussions held in Hamburg.

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The report from STECF EWG is expected to be presented to Plenary Session in July, and the NWWRAC Position Paper to be appended in the report. The Secretariat will follow up this item and report on any progress to the WG1 members.

Víctor Badiola complained about the fact that there was a short period of consultation to assess the proposal and criticised that the working paper was only circulated in English. The Chair and the WG members agreed that in the future all internal consultation papers will be available in due time in the three working languages of the NWWRAC.

**General Action:** The Chair and Secretariat will ensure that members of Working Group 1 will receive translated documents in sufficient time in relation to this topic, so that all WG1 members can contribute to the elaboration of relevant documents.

#### **5. West of Scotland Haddock: update on the current regulatory framework and impact assessment on fleet activity**

The Working Group discussed the issue that the current by catch provision leads to discarding and that the NWWRAC should highlight the unacceptable continuation of this problem. It was decided that the matter was too urgent to wait to convene a Focus Group.

**Action:**

Bertie Armstrong to lead and set up a Steering Group on V1a haddock, with the view to prepare groundwork for a possible future focus group.

**WG1 recommends that the Executive Committee** writes to the Commission highlighting the urgent problem of high recruitment clashing with catch composition rules, and asking for swift action to resolve this.

#### **6. DEFRA-Marine Scotland Pilot Project to develop fisheries management measures for offshore European marine sites in the UK**

Defra and Marine Scotland are undertaking a pilot project to develop proposals for fisheries management measures for two SACs in offshore waters: Haig Fras in South West waters and Stanton Banks in West of Scotland. The project will help to understand and deliver the process required to protect European Marine Sites under CFP.

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It is expected to demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages of the current system for adopting fishery measures for protecting sites, and provide an evidence base for any changes required to ensure sites are adequately protected. The project will take two different approaches to developing proposals. For Stanton Banks, Marine Scotland will develop options and refine them using feedback from stakeholders. For Haig Fras, Defra would like stakeholders to develop the proposals and present them at a workshop later in the autumn.

The NWWRAC was invited to propose representatives to join the project board. Bertie Armstrong and Kara Brydson have agreed to join the board and to feed back to WG1 in relation to Stanton Bank.

**Action:** Bertie Armstrong/Kara Brydson will attend the first meeting, scheduled for Friday 15 July. They will ensure that NWWRAC members from the South West of England with knowledge of Haig Fras are also able to join the project board.

## **7. Review of the effectiveness of seasonal closures for blue ling**

The Chair noted that a letter drafted by Víctor Badiola requesting an assessment of the seasonal closures for blue ling stocks in Vla was circulated among WG1 members and uploaded as background paper prior to the meeting.

The Chair asked if this letter could be endorsed and put forward to the Executive Committee for immediate adoption and submission to the Commission. This was agreed.

**Action:** To propose the Executive Committee to endorse this letter for submission to the Commission.

## **8. AOB**

The Secretariat advised that the Commission has now issued a summary report of responses from contributions received to its public consultation on an EU Action Plan for Incidental Catches of Seabirds in European waters. A formal EU Action Plan is planned to be released by the end of the year.

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 h**

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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>
Bertie	Armstrong	<b>Chair</b> - SFF
Víctor	Badiola	<b>Vice Chair</b> OPPAO-CEPESCA
Kara	Brydson	<b>Rapporteur</b> - RSPB / Birdlife International
Alan	Coghill	SFF / Orkney FPO
Juan Carlos	Corrás Arias	Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco
John	Crudden	European Anglers Association
Barrie	Deas	NFFO
José Manuel	Fernández Beltrán	OPP-07-LUGO
Caroline	Gamblin	CNPMEM
Hugo	González	ANASOL
Jesús A.	Lourido García	Puerto de Celeiro S.A.
Kevin	McDonnell	West of Scotland FPO
Lorcan	O’Cinnéide	Irish Fish PO

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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>
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
Jane	Sandell	Scottish F.O.
Caitlín	Uí Aodha	ISEFPO / IFO

<b>OBSERVERS</b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname/s</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Arianna	Broggiato	EBCD
Richard	Brouzes	OPBN
Alvaro	Fernández	MMARM Spain
Paul	Francoise	FFSPM
Grant	Fulton	CFCA
David	Gatt	SWFPA
Sam	Lambourn	NWWRAC Chairman

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<b>OBSERVERS (cont.)</b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname/s</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Eamon	Mangan	DPMAM - France
Eduardo	Míguez	EAFPA
Pieter - Jan	Schon	ICES – AFBI – Northern Ireland
Vincent	Toison	Agence des Aires Marines Protégés
Paul	Trebilcock	Cornish Fish PO
Héctor	Villa González	SEGEMAR – MMARM Spain

<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	Executive Assistant, Policy Coordinator
Joanna	McGrath	Executive Assistant, Administration and Finances
Christine	O'Connor	Clerical Assistant to the NWWRAC

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