



REPORT

Working Group 2 (WG2)

West of Ireland and Celtic Sea

Tuesday 28 February 2012

CNPMEM – Paris

Chairman: Jesús Lourido

Deputy Rapporteur: Barrie Deas

1. Welcome

1.1. Introductions

The meeting was opened and participants welcomed by the Chairman, and invited to introduce themselves in a *tour de table*.

1.2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Caroline Gamblin, Hugo González and Paul Trebilcock. It was agreed that Barrie Deas should substitute as rapporteur in Paul's absence.

1.3. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda previously circulated was approved without amendment.

1.4. Adoption of the report of the Last Meeting

The report of the meeting held in Dublin Castle on 28th October 2011 was approved as a true and correct record.

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2. Exchange of Correspondence with the Commission

An update on recent correspondence with the Commission was received by the Working Group. All referred documents are available for consultation both in the WG2 meetings site and in the publications section of the NWWRAC website¹.

- Fishing Opportunities for 2012: It was resolved to make no further comment on the Commission's response on the NWWRAC advice on this subject but rather to concentrate on preparing for this year's advice and TAC proposals.
- Gear Marking: A response from the Commission on the NWWRAC letter was awaited.
- Nephrops VII: The Commission had indicated that further work on the management of the nephrops fishery in Area VII was anticipated on the basis of new ICES advice and the RAC's position paper would be taken into account in this context.
- Celtic Sea: The NWWRAC's letter seeking funding for the scientific underpinning for the development of advice on a *long term management plan for demersal stocks in the Celtic Sea* had been received. By contrast with the impression previously given by the Commission, the letter suggested that limited funding was available and tight qualifying criteria would apply.

¹ http://www.nwwrac.org/Meetings/Meetings_ENG/Navigation.php?id=536&language=English

3. Celtic Sea Demersal Stocks: interim technical measures and management plan

The Working Group considered two aspects of management measures for the demersal stocks in the Celtic Sea. The first was the introduction of urgent measures in response to scientific advice confirming high incoming year-classes in the haddock, whiting and cod stocks leading to a potential increase in discards. The other was how to proceed in the development of a long-term management plan for demersal stocks, against the background of the need to undertake important preparatory work.

3.1. Interim technical Measures:

Víctor Badiola restated the dissenting opinion expressed in the NWWRAC proposal submitted in October 2011, whereby additional technical measures should not apply to the Spanish trawl fleet for the following reasons:

- They have not availed of the 150% increase in the interim TAC;
- They do not target whiting or haddock fishery, the two fisheries that currently are having problems with discards.
- The NWWRAC proposal lacks an impact assessment. We should be coherent with our demands to the Commission and the evidence provided in the NWWRAC advices;

Therefore, Mr. Badiola defended that the additional technical measures should be applied on a voluntary basis for those national fleets that agree to introduce more restrictive measures (i.e. France, Ireland and UK), in line with article 10 of Council Regulation (EC) 2371/2002 and article 45.2 of Council Regulation 850/1998.

After extensive discussion it was agreed that the NWWRAC should welcome and encourage initiatives in the relevant member states (i.e. France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Belgium) to introduce technical measures in line with the NWWRAC advice previously submitted.

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It was recognised that these national measures could require derogations for vessels below 15metres in length dependent on targeted squid and red mullet fisheries but agreed that avoiding the waste of resource through high levels of discards was an over-riding priority.

It was agreed to prepare a brief statement reaffirming the NWWRAC position taking into account the comments made. The Group did not consider that the existing provisions of EC Regulation 850/98 provided an obstacle to national measures because the latter would introduce measures more restrictive than the current EU technical conservation regime.

3.2. Development of a Long Term Management Plan:

It was noted that the focus group established to progress work on a LTMP for mixed demersal fisheries in the Celtic Sea (VIIIfg) had made good progress in defining biological, economic and social objectives and that this initial work provided foundations for more detailed work. A meeting would be held in Dublin on 22nd March 2012 to continue this work.

Given the importance of obtaining funding to undertake the scientific underpinning for a LTMP it was resolved to redouble efforts to secure the necessary financial support. The Commission agreed to help clarify the situation *vis-à-vis* funding. It was agreed that in its work the focus group should pay particular attention to emerging work in ICES and STECF on the practical implementation of multi-species models and management of mixed fisheries.

4. Data Deficiency for stock assessments

A report on the annual meeting between ICES and the RACs (MIRAC 2012) was received. ICES had warmly welcomed the work undertaken by the NWWRAC on addressing the problem of data deficient stocks.

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ICES was working on a means to provide quantitative advice on those stocks for which it was not possible to provide an analytical assessment (WKPOOR, WKLIFE...). This could mean a more differentiated approach from both ICES and the Commission in the future.

It was also noted that the South Western Waters RAC has also joined the initiative to engage closely with ICES on the data issue.

The NWWRAC had appointed named data coordinators for specific data deficient stocks to liaise and coordinate with the appropriate assessment scientists in ICES. Reports on progress made and future engagement with ICES were received from the Data Coordinators on stocks relevant to WG2.

- Nephrops VII: Eibhlin O’Sullivan
- Haddock VIIb-j: Sean O’Donoghue
- Anglerfish VIIb-j: Caroline Gamblin

Following helpful comments from Joel Vigneau (Co-chair of ICES WGCSE), it was agreed to nominate additional data coordinators for the following stocks:

- Plaice VIIfg – Emiel Brouckaert
- Pollock VII – Richard Brouzes and Paul Trebilcock
- Whiting VIIb-k

5. Exchange of views between WG2 and DG MARE

There was a productive exchange between the Working Group members, the invited scientific expert Joel Vigneau and the Commission representatives on:

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- Northern Hake: possible mid-year re-evaluation could carry implications for the TAC;
- Nephrops in Area VII: ICES recommend management on the basis of functional units in line with scientific advice. The Commission is considering management proposals but is aware of the prior discussion on this approach.
- Management plan for Celtic Sea: This item has already been discussed under item 3.

6. Update on MCZ Project in UK waters / MAIA Workshop on Haig Fras

Tom Blasdale and Sophie Elliott from JNCC provided presentations on the UK's Marine Conservation Zone Project and the Haig Fras Management workshop were received. The content of both presentations is available for consultation at the NWWRAC website².

The WG2 contrasted the open and transparent process of engagement by Marine Scotland for MPAs in Scottish waters with the flawed process in relation to marine conservation zones in English waters. Whilst the stakeholder groups had produced some useful work there were concerns about the rushed timeframe, weaknesses in the evidence base, failure to adequately address the issue of displacement of fishing activities and the failure to engage adequately with the international fleets that could potentially be affected.

In particular there had been inadequate attention to the obstacles involved in providing huge amounts of un-translated information with short time to respond. Concern was also expressed over the lack of clarity over legislative process through which candidate management measures would be applied to non-UK vessels.

² Direct link to the presentation:

http://www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/UK_MCZ_Project_MAIA_Haig_Fras_JNCC_NWWRAC_28Feb2012.pdf



Following a question from one member, it was noted that the NWWRAC had not received any information on Irish candidate MPAs.

7. Summary of Action Points by the deputy rapporteur

1. Management Plan for Celtic Sea Demersal Fisheries (VIIIfg): Seek clarification from the Commission on funding for scientific underpinning for work on a long term management plan for Celtic Sea demersal stocks;
2. Interim technical measures for the Celtic Sea (VIIIfg): Prepare a short paper endorsing voluntary national measures above and beyond EC Reg. 850/1998 to protect against high rates of discards on incoming year classes, and noting need for derogations for specific fleet segments;
3. Data Deficiencies: Express appreciation to the data coordinators for their work and report on work progress to ICES with the aim of setting up a follow up coordination meeting between ICES and NWWRAC on this matter (WDDRAC3);
4. Data Deficiencies: Appoint data coordinators for Plaice VIIIfg, Pollock VII and Whiting VIIb-k;
5. Northern Hake: Obtain more information on potential interim downward adjustment in TAC;
6. Nephrops VII: prepare for Commission's approach in 2012;
7. Marine Conservation Zones in UK waters: Express concern to UK authorities regarding MCZ process and language issues.

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Concluding remarks:

The WG2 Chairman, Jesús Lourido, thanked all the members and observers for attending the meeting, and the translators for their excellent work.

The meeting was adjourned at 13:00 h

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ANNEX I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<u>MEMBERS</u>		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Surname/s</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Jesús A.	Lourido García	Puerto de Celeiro S.A. - Chairman
Barrie	Deas	NFFO - Rapporteur
Bertie	Armstrong	SFF – NWWRAC Chairman
Victor	Badiola	OPPAO-CEPESCA
Luc	Corbisier	SDVO
Juan Carlos	Corrás Arias	Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco
Debbie	Crockard	Seas at Risk
John	Crudden	European Anglers Alliance
André	Gueguen	OPOB
Antón	González	Wales and West Coast FPA
John	Hermse	MNWFA / WSFPO
John	Lynch	Irish Fishermen's Org.
Francis	O'Donnell	Irish Fish PO
Sean	O'Donoghue	Kyllibegs FO

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<u>MEMBERS (cont.)</u>		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Surname/s</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Eibhlin	O'Sullivan	Irish South West FPO
José Luis	Otero	Lonja de la Coruña S.A.
Michael	Park	Scottish White Fish PA
Jacques	Pichon	ANOP-PMA
Jim	Portus	South West FPO
Mercedes	Rodriguez	OPP-07-LUGO

<u>OBSERVERS / EXPERTS</u>		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Surname/s</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Iwan	Ball	World Wildlife Fund
Tom	Blasdale	JNCC
Emiel	Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Richard	Brouzes	OPBN
Kara	Brydson	RSPB - Birdlife
Alan	Coghill	SFF
Therese	Cope	JNCC
John	Daly	Irish Seal Sanctuary

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OBSERVERS / EXPERTS (cont.)		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Surname/s</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Sophie	Elliott	JNCC
Cécile	Fouquet	EBCD
Paul	Francoise	FFSPM
David	Gatt	SWFPA Ltd.
Roy	Griffin	European Commission
John	Hermse	MWNFA
Luke	Jessop	DEFRA – MS rep.
Daniel	Lefèvre	CNPMEM Basse Normandie
Eamon	Mangan	DPMEM France - MS rep.
Laurent	Markovic	European Commission
Joel	Vigneau	IFREMER/ICES – Scientist
John	Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary

NWWAC SECRETARIAT		
Joanna	McGrath	Executive Assistant
Conor	Nolan	Executive Secretary
Alexandre	Rodríguez	Executive Assistant - Policy

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