

Report of meeting and main outcomes of NWWRAC meeting on Development of Long-Term management Strategies for Demersal Fisheries in Area VII.

Key words: LTM measures; MSY; fishing units and groups; métiers; approaches.

Participants	
John Casey	Chair (CEFAS)
Steve Warnes	CEFAS
Julien Lamonthé	NWWRAC
Alain Bisseau	IFREMER
Elodie Chene	French Ministry for Fisheries
Hugo Gonzalez	NWWRAC
Borja Velasco	MAPA
Marina Santurtun	AZTI
Alex Rodriguez	NWWRAC
Ian Napier	NAFC
David Vale	NAFC
Lorcan O'Ceinnede	NWWRAC
Sarah Davies	Irish Marine Institute
Paul Trebilcock	NWWRAC
Trevor Hutton	CEFAS
Patricia Comiskey	NWWRAC Secretariat

Welcome

John welcomed participants and thanked them for attending. He informed the meeting that the main objective of this workshop was to discuss the current CEFAS and NWWRAC project which is looking at the definition of fisheries groups for the development of long-term management plans for demersal fisheries in ICES Area VII. As part of these discussions John stated that he wished to garner opinions from the NWWRAC on how they wished to see this project moving forward.

He also stated that this meeting should consider the work being conducted in other member states relevant to this project and to consider future input of these member states into this project. Finally he asked participants to feel free to ask any questions or make comments during presentation as he felt the meeting should be kept quite informal.

Aim of the project and context

Trevor Hutton of CEFAS introduced this item with a presentation on the project so far and the reasoning behind it.

In summary the premise for the project is to assist the NWWRAC in its early stages of setting out possible long-term management plans for fisheries in area VII. The NWWRAC recognised that there was a real gap in its knowledge on how to proceed with the development of Long term Management Plan. In an effort to assist the NWWRAC, DEFRA provided the funding for this project and CEFAS were asked to do the work.

This project aims to inform that process of developing the LTMs by providing appropriate descriptors for fisheries in ICES Sub-area VII. It is the first stage of the process and the report and funding deadline is September 2007. At this meeting CEFAS would like to ascertain the criteria which the NWWRAC would like to use to define individual fisheries.

General discussion on objectives of the workshop

The NWWRAC generally welcomed the initiative and the project but felt it was difficult at this point to comment on the appropriate criteria to define fisheries and asked to consider some of the examples of how fisheries have been defined in Member States before discussing these.

However at this juncture the following two issues were raised and discussed

Why it is important to develop such a research study? It was agreed by the participants that the NWWRAC should seek to have a well-grounded basis to advice and assist in the development of Long Term Management Plans, which the Commission aim to formulate and implement by 2015.

Why it is necessary to define fishery groupings? It was agreed that NWWRAC need to appropriately define the fisheries and fleets that they wish to manage. These fleets target different stocks having different control measures on exploitation patterns. The identification of fishery groupings and of the interactions between them would also allow the NWWRAC to provide a subsequent assessment about the socio-economic effects a LTM plan might have on various stakeholders.

The present segmentation of fleets under the data collection regulation (DCR).

Steve Warnes of CEFAS informed the meeting of the proposed changes to the Data Collection Regulation (DCR). It was generally felt that the proposed changes would allow adequate flexibility to analysis data in whatever format is required. It was agreed that the criteria used to collect data under the new DCR should be considered in the afternoon as possible criteria to define a fishery. (Presentation is available).

Overview of work done to define Fisheries in Various Member States

Current approaches used by ICES/STEFCF

John Casey gave this presentation pointing out that the emphasis in the scientific approach has been to classify fleets according to their exploitation pattern. In practice this has usually meant a classification using criteria based on gear type, fishing area, and mesh size but at the same time taking into account the species mix. Such an approach has been adopted primarily because scientists are interested in estimating fleet partial F (the fishing mortality rate by a particular fleet) in order to evaluate the potential consequences of management regulations on catches and stock development. He also pointed out that such an approach has been undertaken largely without consultation with managers as to how they wish to manage the fishery and that this is where RACs can have an important input. Furthermore, this approach does not include an economic rationale for classifying the fleets, which is very important for management proposals and decision making. (Presentation is available)

Ireland

Sarah Davies gave an overview on the work done in the Marine Institute to define fisheries in the Irish Sea. Sarah told the meeting that the criteria used were landing profile, area, gear, mesh, vessel length, and month. The analysis resulted in 21 different métiers being selected in the Irish Sea alone. During general discussions it was agreed that this may be too much for the NWWRAC to handle as the RACs could not be expected to draw up a huge number of management plans for every fishery. It was agreed that this meeting should focus on the balance between definitions that are practical and which capture the characteristic of a fishery appropriately. (Presentation is available)

Spain

Marina Santurtun of AZTI gave a comprehensive overview of the work done to date in Spain to define Fisheries. This work has been ongoing since 2002 and Fisheries are currently being described based on trip-by-trip catch data profiles. Multivariate techniques are then used to obtain homogeneous groups of trips/vessels targeting the same species, fishing area, gear and period of the year for sub area VI, VII and VIIbd. It was agreed that this work should be considered as part of this process. (Presentation is available)

France

Alain Bisseau of IFREMER gave a detailed summary of the various ways in which the French have considered that métiers could be defined. He gave examples from the French fleets of methods using detailed description of all the vessels including length, power, main gears used and main fishing areas (coastal/offshore). Métiers can also be described based on activity calendars and fishing sequences. It was agreed that this information should be closely considered for this current project. (Presentation is available)

UK

Trevor Hutton from CEFAS gave an overview of work conducted in the UK on fleets based in the South West, comparing graphical and cluster analysis to define the fisheries. Results of the two methods were quite similar and it was useful to use the cluster analysis to verify the outcome of the more coarse

graphical method; however the cluster analysis defined units down to a finer level. It was agreed that this approach should form part of the current project, but it would be important for the RAC to provide feedback and comment on future evaluations. (Presentation is available)

A comparison across countries yields a consistency in the approaches used (that is multivariate techniques), along with similarities in the choice of the data (trip-by-trip), which is classified into fisheries groups based on landings profiles (in many occasions by landings value).

Discussion – Aiming for appropriate fisheries descriptions for the NWWRAC

The discussions were framed by the following three considerations:

- What is a sensible and practical way forward?
- What criteria should be used to describe fisheries that can form the basis for management proposals.
- What are the implications for data collection and analysis.

The following was agreed as a result of these discussions:

It was agreed that much of the work discussed today could be taken into consideration to develop definitions that are practical and which capture the characteristic of a fishery appropriately. RAC members acknowledged there was a tradeoff between fisheries defined with too much detail (that results in an unmanageable large number of groupings) and definitions that are too broad.

It was agreed that the CEFAS team would lead the project and would work closely with the other Member States to progress it. The other Member State Scientists agreed to make relevant results of their work available to CEFAS.

It was agreed that CEFAS would issue its first draft to members of the RAC in the coming weeks allowing them ample time for consideration and debate (at least 6 weeks) and to provide appropriate feedback on the fleet classifications resulting from the analyses.

It was also agreed that there is scope for further work beyond September and that there may be a need to look for further funding to develop this work. Two possible sources of funding were discussed:

- The proposal currently put forward by Barrie Deas to have access to longer-term funds from the Commission to assist the RACs in developing their Long-term Management Plans. This proposal has been put forward to the NWWRAC working groups by Barrie and will be discussed by the NWWRAC in June. It was recognized that it must be adopted by the NWWRAC in the first instance, but that it was an interesting proposal that was generally supported.
- The possibility that the Commission will issue a call for tender for projects relevant to the western waters in the coming weeks.