



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF
RÉGIONAL POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

**NORTH WESTERN
WATERS**
REGIONAL ADVISORY
COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO
REGIONAL PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Norman Graham
Marine Institute
Rinville, Oranmore
Galway - Ireland

Subject: Review of Assessment Anglerfish stock Area VII

Dublin, 22 October 2012

Dear Dr. Graham,

On behalf of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council (henceforth, NWWRAC), I am addressing to you, in your capacity as team leader on demersal fisheries in the Marine Institute, for a reassessment of the Anglerfish/Monkfish stocks ("*lophius piscatorius*" and "*lophius budegassa*") in ICES Area VII.

This request is the result of a letter submitted by the Chairwoman of the Federation of Irish Fishermen and the NWWRAC Executive Committee member, Ms. Eibhlín O'Sullivan, to the attention of the NWWRAC Chairman in early September. This letter was initially presented at the Executive Committee meeting held in Dublin Castle on the 26th of September and subsequently endorsed by the Executive Committee of the NWWRAC by written procedure.

The 2013/14 Advice issued by ICES for this species is based on the ICES approach to data limited stocks that have survey indices and looks at the relative change in the survey indices between 2010-2011 relative to 2007-2009. In the advice ICES notes that lack of ageing and growth information prevent the development of an analytical assessment. The ICES advice also notes that the long term trend from surveys is stable over the time series and gives no indication as to stock biomass or fishing mortality relative to MSY but goes on to recommend a 37% reduction in the TAC for this stock for 2013.

The NWWRAC is aware that an alternative method of carrying out the assessment was discussed at the Working Group but not utilised. For example, the ageing issue is also a problem for Megrim in Areas IV and VIa but none the less an analytical assessment using a biomass production model has been developed for this species and the 2013/2014 ICES Advice for this species is based on same.

The NWWRAC would, therefore, invite the relevant national scientific laboratories in Ireland, France and Spain to explore the use of a similar assessment method as is currently used for Megrim in IV and VIa for Monk in Area VII and thereby provided an analytical basis for the advice for this species.

We understand that there are no guarantees that such an approach would result in a more favourable assessment but from a Stakeholder's perspective it would allow more confidence in relation to the basis of the ICES Advice and Scientific Advice in general. As this is a matter of urgency, the NWWRAC would be obliged if you could have the assessment revisited before the December Council negotiations.

Yours sincerely,

Bertie Armstrong
NWWRAC Chairman

North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council
c/o Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Crofton Road
Dun Laoghaire, Ireland

Tel: 00 353 1 2144 126
Fax: 00 353 1 2300 564
Email: nwwrac@bim.ie
Web: www.nwwrac.org

Chairman: Bertie Armstrong
President: Marc Ghiglia
Co. Reg. No.: 403877