

Note on the state of consultation in relation to LTMP for Haddock Vb/Vla:

February 17 – Working Group 1 meeting: One of the actions agreed by consensus in Madrid was that WG1 does not endorse the Commission's draft request to ICES on a LTMP for Area VI Haddock. WG1 proposed that the NWWRAC should write a letter to the Commission asking to amend its draft request. The letter would clearly state that the Area VI plan should not use the template of the North Sea Haddock plan, and that ICES should consider the unique situation of the Area VI stock.

March 4 – Request for comments from the Commission: The Secretariat received an e-mail from the Commission asking for sending any comments in relation to amendments suggested to the EC request to ICES on LTM Plan for Haddock. Deadline was set for Monday 10th of March.

Given the urgent nature of this request, and as there was a clear position already agreed at WG1 level, the Secretariat asked WG1 Chairman, Bertie Armstrong, to prepare a brief note reflecting these ideas to be transmitted to the Commission within the given deadline. This note would exceptionally be presented to the Ex Co members for endorsement "*a posteriori*" during the Paris Executive Committee meeting.

March 10 – Extension of the deadline: The deadline could not be met due to extraordinary circumstances, but the Secretariat sent to the Commission an e-mail reflecting the position agreed within WG1 as stated in the draft meeting report: the members do not endorse the Commission's draft request and argue instead that it should state that the Area VI plan cannot be rolled over from the template of the North Sea Haddock plan. Furthermore, ICES should consider the unique situation of the Area VI stock and include additional measures other than mere harvest control rules.

The Commission announced that they had launched the formal procedure for ICES advice but accepted to consider possible amendments in the ToR attached to its request to ICES. Therefore, the Secretariat asked Bertie Armstrong once again to complete this note as soon as possible.

March 18 – Submission of note: The Secretariat sent the note drafted by Bertie including the agreed comments to the Commission's request, and with a suggestion to amend it accordingly by incorporating and forwarding them to ICES.

Note submitted to the Commission can be consulted in Annex I.

March 19 – Explanation from the Commission about Fisheries Council outcomes: The Commission explained the reasons why the Fisheries Council held in December took the sudden decision on elaborating a LTMP for haddock in EC waters of zones Vb and Vla without prior consultation to stakeholders. The explanation given by the CEC can be consulted in Annex II.

The Commission also committed to reply in a separate e-mail concerning the comments submitted by the Secretariat about the proposed ToR.

March 24 – Response from the Commission: The Commission informed the Secretariat that it had decided to send the comments about the ToR directly to ICES, to be considered in the context of RAC-ICES consultations foreseen.

ANNEX I. Note drafted by Bertie and submitted to the European Commission

The NWWRAC notes the draft request and proposes some amendments to it.

Firstly, as drafted, the request is explicitly based on that of the North Sea plan. This approach may be unnecessarily restrictive. It is also noted that the draft states that: "The Commission and Council considers....." May we have details of what Council decided, and when, please?

Regarding modifications to the request, we suggest that the background paragraph be altered to read: "It is considered appropriate that a management plan be developed for haddock in Area VIa & EC waters of Vb. This could be based *inter alia* on the approach used successfully for Area IV, but should be tailored to fit the different specific circumstances. It is noted that development of the North Sea plan has the benefit of a very much greater volume of data than exists for Area VI; in particular, survey data only will form the bulk of Area VI information. Unless special extra effort is applied, this relative uncertainty will remain, given the additional catching constrictions presently applied to the most relevant part of VIa. It is further noted that in the absence of appropriate data, assessment simulation will be made difficult. The relevant fishing sectors are keen and willing to participate in data collection from the outset."

ANNEX II. GROUNDS OF MOTIVATION FOR DEVELOPING A LTMP FOR HADDOCK

DECEMBER FISHERIES COUNCIL (EXTRACTED FROM THE MEETING REPORT)

- Council Statement: "Without prejudice to the right of initiative of the Commission in legislative matters, the Council invites the Commission to propose a long-term plan for the management of this stock as soon as practicable"

- Council and Commission Statement: "The Council and the Commission agree that until such a plan is adopted by Council it would be appropriate to set the TAC for this stock according to the same rule as applies concerning the stock of haddock in the North Sea, while adapting the precautionary spawning biomass and the limit spawning biomass as appropriate for this stock."

ANNEX III. EC REQUEST TO ICES ON LTMP FOR HADDOCK IN ZONE VIa and EC WATERS OF Vb

Draft Request to ICES

Background

The Council and the Commission consider that it would be appropriate to set the TAC for haddock in zone VIa and EC waters of Vb according to the same rule as applies concerning the stock of haddock in the North Sea, while adapting the precautionary spawning biomass and the limit spawning biomass as appropriate for this stock.

Detailed Request

ICES is requested to evaluate the consequences of applying the following harvest rule for the management of haddock in zones VIa and EC waters of Vb:

1. For 2010 and subsequent years the TAC will be set consistent with a fishing mortality rate of no more than 0.3 for appropriate age-groups, when the SSB in the end of the year in which the TAC is applied is estimated to be above 30,000 tonnes (B_{pa}).
2. Where the rule in paragraph 1 would lead to a TAC which deviates by more than 15 % from the TAC of the preceding year, the TAC will be set that is no more than 15 % greater or 15 % less than the TAC of the preceding year.
3. Where the SSB referred to in paragraph 1 is estimated to be below B_{pa} but above 22,000 tonnes (B_{lim}) the TAC shall not exceed a level which will result in a fishing mortality rate equal to $0.3 - 0.2 * (B_{pa} - SSB) / (B_{pa} - B_{lim})$. This consideration overrides paragraph 2.
4. Where the SSB referred to in paragraph 2 is estimated to be below B_{lim} the TAC shall be set at a level corresponding to a total fishing mortality rate of no more than 0.1. This consideration overrides paragraph 2.
5. In the event that STECF advises that changes are required to the precautionary reference points B_{pa} (30,000t) or B_{lim} (22,000t) paragraphs 1-4 shall be reviewed.

The evaluation should address:

- the consequences of implementing the above rule instead of implementing ICES' current advice for this stock according to the precautionary approach;
- the extent to which the application of this rule would deliver management in conformity with the precautionary approach;

- the extent to which the application of this rule would deliver maximum sustainable yield from the stock;

- where possible, stochastic future time-streams of TACs and fishing effort necessary to catch those TACs should be made available to STECF for economic analysis. ICES is invited to liaise with STECF on this issue.

ICES is also invited to propose alternative rules or modified rules on its own initiative or in consultation with RACs and to evaluate these. Such alternative rules should lead to either or both higher or more stable catches and lower biological risks.

Draft Request to STECF

Impact assessments concerning haddock VIa, Vb(EC) and Rockall haddock

Background

ICES has been requested to prepare a biological assessment of long-term plan options concerning haddock in zone VIa and EC waters of Vb. It is also expected that a similar request will be agreed by NEAFC in respect of haddock at Rockall.

STECF is requested to assess economic consequences of implementing the various options advised by ICES compared to continuing to fish under current arrangements. STECF is particularly invited to liaise with ICES on the compatibility of evaluation systems.

This evaluation should apply to stocks of haddock in the North Sea, in zones VIa and EC waters of Vb, and at Rockall.

Detailed Request

Based on ICES biological assessments and stochastic future time-streams of TACs and fishing effort, STECF is requested to evaluate probable future trends in :

- catches and the value of those catches;
- fishing effort, in terms of vessel numbers, activity and kWh deployed, and the costs (both fixed and variable) of deploying such effort;
- employment associated with this activity
- net revenue from the resource
- if possible, additional incidental impacts on populations of other marine organisms.

Such trends should be contrasted with the probable consequences of continuing to fish the stock according to rates of fishing mortality as recently experienced, or according to ICES advice according to the precautionary approach.

A 20-year time frame should be used for the evaluations.