



THE NWWRAC MEETS IN SANTIAGO TO REVIEW THE MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR ATLANTIC HAKE

-----*Press release of 4th of June: FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION*-----

The North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council (NWWRAC) will be holding its first official meeting in Galicia in order to examine the biological and socio-economic impact of the proposal for Regulation submitted by the Commission in March regarding a management plan for Northern hake, which is planned initially to come into force by 1 January 2010. Northern hake is a target species of great economic value for many EU vessels carrying on its fisheries activities in Grande Sole waters.

This meeting is sponsored by the Galician Regional Government Sea Department (Consellería do Mar de la Xunta de Galicia) and will take place in Santiago de Compostela on Wednesday, 17 June (Hotel Puerta del Camino, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Rosa Quintana, the Regional Ministry in charge of this Department, will be responsible for opening a meeting which will be attended not only by the main Galician producers organizations, but also managers of the main producer organizations of six Member States (Spain, France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Belgium and The Netherlands), NGOs and other interest groups, besides DG MARE personnel, representatives of National Authorities and national and ICES scientific experts.

Hugo González, second vice chair of the NWWRAC and Chairman of Working Group 2 on Celtic Sea, expects that this meeting will help to clarify the doubts arisen in 2008 in relation to the state of the stock in terms of biomass levels reached in precedent years, together with the target biomass set by the Commission and the timescale to be reached for achieving a maximum sustainable yield. Mr. González wonders if it might be feasible to reach a MSY biomass in 2015 at a slower speed than that proposed by the Commission on its proposal of Regulation for a LTMP, considering the decommissioning schemes in motion leading to reduction of fleet size and a possible improvement on exploitation patterns –mesh sizes, areas for closure- for this fishery.

The NWWRAC is an organization that was established formally in September 2005 and recently declared of European interest under the Common Fishery Policy reform. It is the main European Commission advisory body in the area of fishery management in waters adjoining Ireland (Celtic Sea, Irish Sea), United Kingdom (West of Scotland and Western Accesses) and France (English Channel).

In essence, the NWWRAC is a forum for open dialogue in which representatives of the fishing industry and the environment NGOs, consumer associations and other interest groups take part in order to develop proposals on their own initiative or issue opinions in response to consultation procedures initiated by the Commission on questions relating to the management of Community fishery resources.

*CCR-ANOC Secretariat - Board Iascaigh Mhara (BIM)
Crofton Road - Dun Laoghaire – Co. Dublin
Telephone: 00353 1 214 4100 / E-mail: nwwrac@bim.ie*



Those interested in knowing further details about this meeting (agenda, working documents, practical aspects) may do so at the meetings section of the NWWRAC website: www.nwwrac.org

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