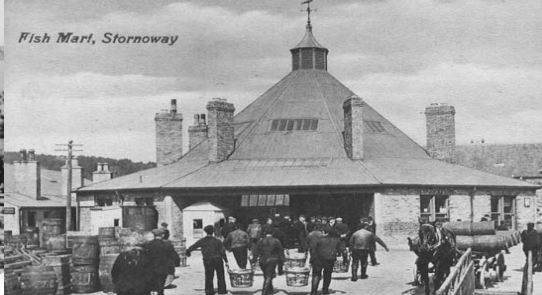


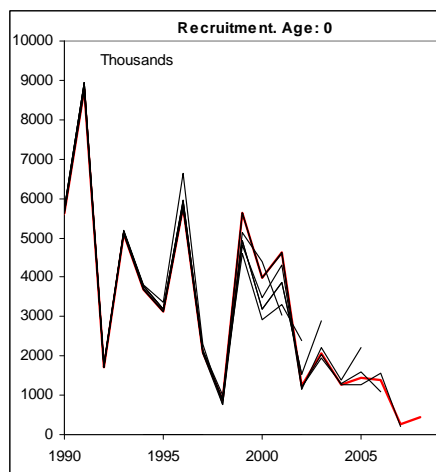
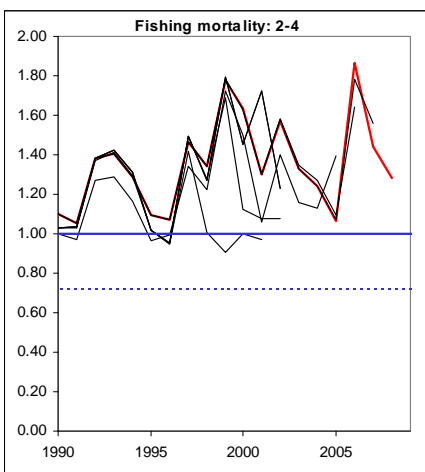
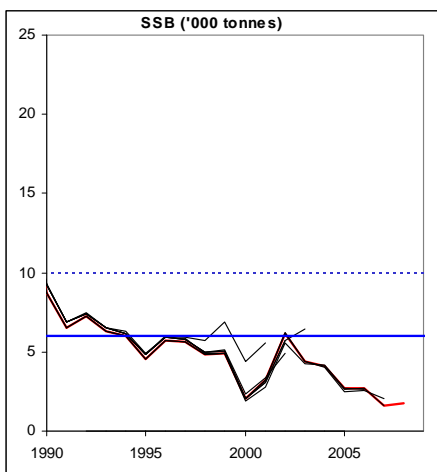
The Science on Irish Sea Stocks

Norman Graham,
Marine Institute





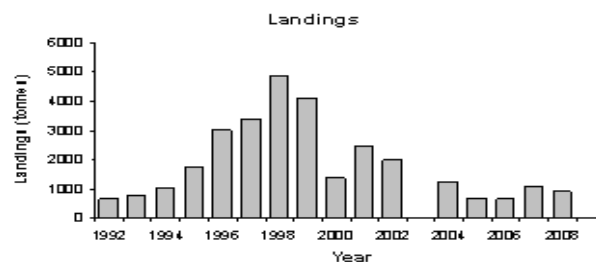
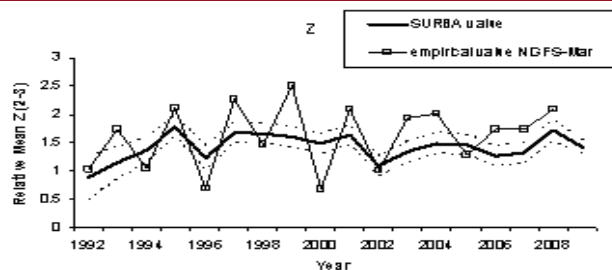
Scientific View - 'Key' Roundfish



- Cod
 - High mortality – low stock size and low recruitment
 - Discarding
 - Survey based
 - Historical tracking of stock is reasonable
 - Long term plan a key management driver



Scientific View - 'Key' Roundfish

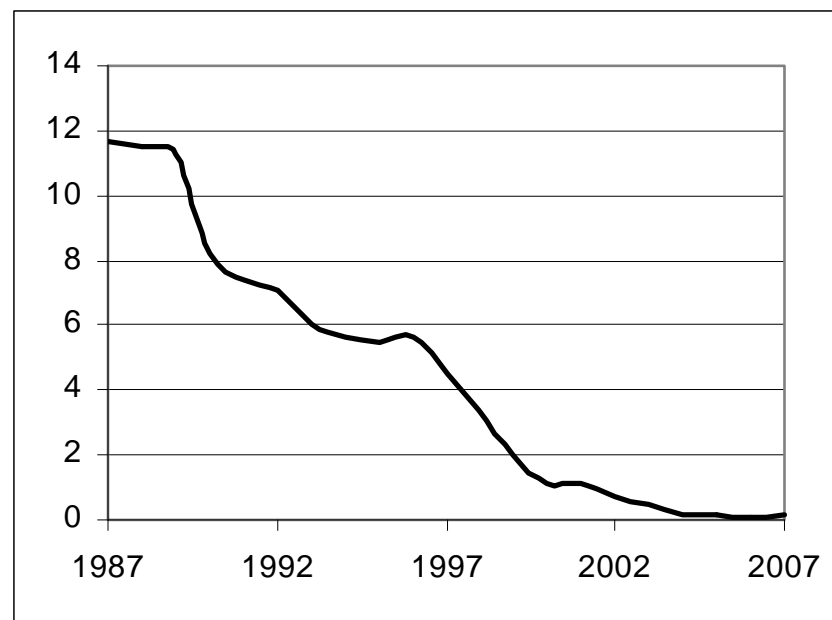


- Haddock
 - Assessment indicative of trends
 - Discarding
 - Survey based



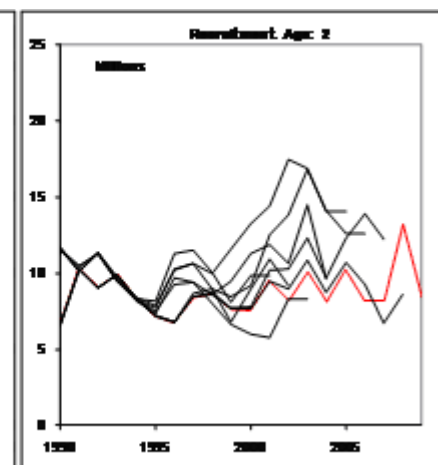
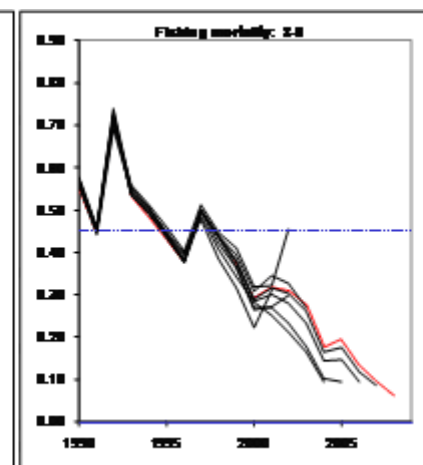
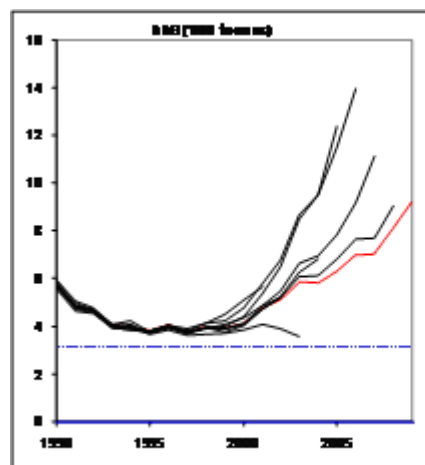
Scientific View - 'Key' Roundfish

- Whiting
 - Large reduction in landings
 - Stock collapse
 - High Discarding likely to impact on recovery
 - No analytical assessment
 - Key 'discard' indicator





Scientific View – ‘Key’ Flatfish

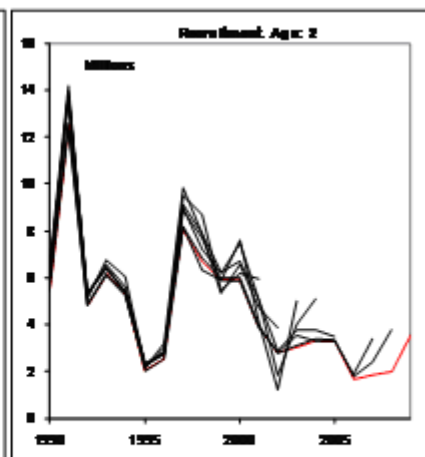
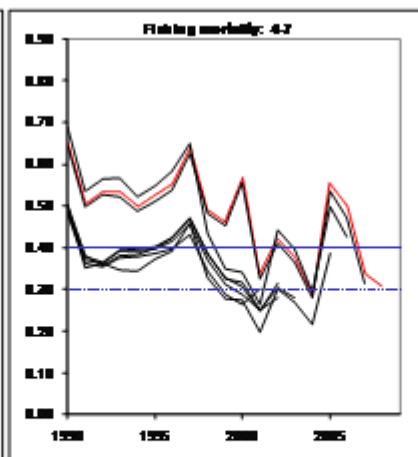
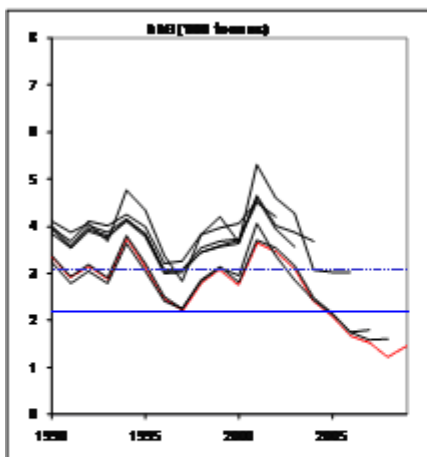


Plaice

- High stock levels, low mortality but;
- Very high discards



Scientific View – ‘Key’ Flatfish



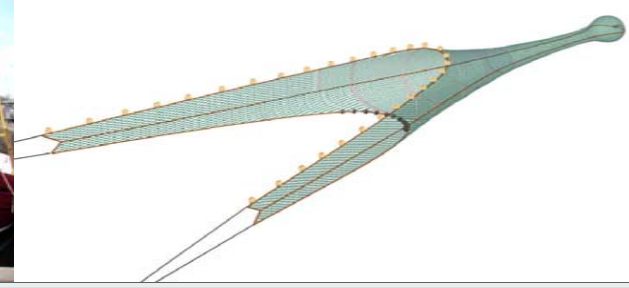
Sole

- Low stock levels, mortality declining but;
- Poor recent recruitment



Scientific Issues for Consideration

- Very limited use of recent commercial catch data in assessments
- Assessments heavily reliant on scientific survey data
- Desirable to re-introduce commercial catch data but requires substantial improvement in accuracy of landings data and methods to adjust historic information
- Cooperation with industry can help achieve goals and develop additional streams of information e.g. surveys using commercial vessels; self-sampling; diary information; cod avoidance and discard mitigation plans but:
 - Need to be realistic about delivery timelines; human/financial resources; maintaining participation
 - More precise assessments will not necessarily improve the prognosis!



Critical Issues for Irish Sea

- Long Term Management Plan for Cod – required different approaches to avoid cod in order to avoid substantial cuts in effort and TAC
- Lack of or poor assessments result in more punitive management
- Develop cod avoidance plan – what can be done now?
- Discard levels high and require introduction of measures to reduce
- Development of a fishery management plan through collaboration essential