## Online webinar on

## The application of WKIrish approach (ecosystem approach) to other areas in the North Western Waters

**Terms of Reference**

### Background

Irish Sea fisheries have undergone considerable change in recent years following the decline of commercially important finfish stocks and their slow response to management's recovery plans. Recognizing that the failure to sustainably manage depleted stocks could have stemmed from the inability of the recovery plan to deal with the impact of environmental or food web dynamics, WKIrish, the first International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Integrated Benchmark Assessment, faced the challenge of integrating ecosystem information into the evaluation and analytical assessment of commercial stocks.

Ecopath with Ecosim (EwE) was selected as one of two multi-species modelling approaches to better understand the drivers underpinning stock dynamics and provide advice for an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management in the Irish Sea. The now fully developed EwE model includes parameters co-created using fisheries data and fishers' knowledge shared during a series of WKIrish workshops. The capacity for the Irish Sea EwE model to advance ecosystem-based fisheries management was strengthened by engaging management and stakeholders during model design, development, and delivery.

The EwE model was used to provide ecosystem indicator(s) for individual stocks (cod, whiting, haddock, sole, plaice, herring, and Nephrops) in the Irish Sea. The selection of the indicator aimed to cover a range of possible ecosystem processes on each stock. Through this approach, WKIrish has identified a route by which ecosystem information can be incorporated into the current single species assessment process.

### Purpose of the webinar

The aim of the workshop is to provide an overview of WKIrish approach to members in the Advisory Council and learn about the opportunities of applying this model to other fisheries in the North Western Waters. Members will be able to hear from scientists involved in the development of the model and learn about the outcomes of recent ICES internal discussions regarding the inclusion of the WKIrish approach in the assessment. Overall, the meeting will be an opportunity to:

1. Exchange information on the WKIRISH process and outcomes
2. Review of what was learned and what were the benefits.
3. Discuss the next steps, including the continuing drive to operationalize EBM, and stakeholder engagement.

This will aid NWWAC members in the production of advice to the European Commission on how to expand the use of the WKIrish approach to other areas, such as the Celtic Sea.

## Proposed Outcomes

- Report of the webinar
- Strategic advice to the European Commission

## Speakers/panelists

- ICES representatives (Ghislain Chouinard, Colm Lordan or Mark Dickey-Collas)
- Scientists involved in the WKIrish Expert Group (Mathieu Lundy, Agri-Food and Bioscience Institute; David Reid, Marine Institute; and Jacob Bentley, Scottish Association for Marine Science)

## Target Audience

- Members of the North Western Waters Advisory Council
- European Commission and other relevant/interested (EU) institutions (e.g. EP)
- Experts and other stakeholders including other Advisory Councils and Member States representatives.

## Schedule and Deadlines

- Draft Terms of Reference to be adopted by mid-March 2021 by NWWAC Horizontal Working Group
- Date and time for Workshop: date to be confirmed (in the last two weeks of April), webinar of two hours
- Meeting Platform: Zoom, Teams or similar; webinar style, with speakers/panelists to discuss questions from the moderator. Participants can pose questions during the meeting via the chat.
- Meeting Languages: English, French, Spanish, simultaneous interpretation provided
- Report from the webinar to be published in its final version by June 2021
- The recommendations from this webinar will feed into advice produced by the Horizontal Working Group

## Resources, inputs and external sources

- Foreseen budget: approx. €5000 for interpretation and platform usage