



## North Western Waters Regional Advisory Committee

### Working Group 3 (Channel – VIId)

Thursday 7 November 2013

09:00 - 10:30 h

CNPMEM PARIS

Chairman: Daniel Lefèvre

Rapporteur: Jim Portus

#### 1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members, observers and invited guests to Paris for the NWWWRAC Working Group 3. The full list of participants is appended (Annex I).

- Apologies:  
Noted and listed (Annex I).  
*Anton Dekker (Dutch Fisheries Organisation) represented today by Pieter Louwe van Slooten; Luc Corbisier (SDVO – Belgium).*
- Introductions: A round the table was made.
- Adoption of Agenda: The Agenda was adopted.
- Adoption of Report from last meeting (Dublin, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2013): the meeting report was circulated beforehand among all WG3 members and approved without changes.

#### 2. Management Framework for the Channel (*introduced by Chairman, Daniel Lefèvre*):

##### 2.1. EC Proposal on Fishing Opportunities for 2014

The meeting of WG3 had received in July an ICES briefing about the science and proposals for TACs and Quotas for 2014. The NWWWRAC had then tabled representations to the Commission and received responses.

The Chairman asked for comments from the floor. He expressed concern with the proposal of 20% reduction in the TAC for all rays and skates stocks. He voiced the question of displacement of fishing effort from other higher regulated areas to the Channel and overcapacity of some fishing vessels.

WG3 members were very concerned about the proposed reductions in TACs for the following stocks:

- Sole VIId and a proposed 45% TAC reduction.

- Ray stocks proposed reduced quota not matching with scientific evidence: cuckoo ray (raie brunée) was given as a specific example;
- Sole VIIe 7% cut inconsistent with trends and the MSY target has been met for 3 years;
- 75% TAC reduction proposed for 7bk Haddock is most unsatisfactory.

The representative of DG MARE (Laurent Markovic) assured the meeting that the EC follows strictly scientific advice coming from ICES, but she was happy to hear if there are any recommendations and new evidence from the industry.

Several fishing industry representatives complained that most proposed reductions seem to refer to 20% for Data Limited Stocks (DLS), following the precautionary approach. The EC seems to accept automatic 20% reductions rather than a biannual stable state.

Members opined that the CFP reforms offer the possibility in certain cases where it is not possible to reach MSY for 2015 it can be reached by 2020. The DG MARE representative (Roy Griffin) confirmed that the EC proposals are based on reaching MSY by 2015 “where possible”; the EC has no intention of doing forecast calculations based on 2020.

#### Rays

Members voiced serious concerns about Ray stocks that are classified as Data Limited Stocks (“DLS”). They sought explanation of how the -20% TAC reduction works in relation to composition and mixes of different species; setting a too low TAC will increase discards; need also to study survival rates of such discards.

The Commission representative explained that ICES considers that one single TAC is not the most suitable management tool for combined Rays stocks; however, it is not possible to propose separate TACs and/or advice for each individual Rays stocks; if there is an alternative management solution the Commission is willing to consider the options but will need to take the precautionary approach; for three ray species here the scientific advice suggests a 20% increase by local area but the TAC is managed overall.

#### VIIe Sole

VIIe Sole which has been under MAMP since 2007; the proposed reduction of 7% is only due to uncertainty in the recruitment; B is high and F is at its lowest historical level. The NWWRAC would like to seek comments from ICES or the EC and will ask for an increase.

The DG MARE representatives acknowledge that, for Sole VIIe, F is stable and B also; but if R is weak there will be less population in the future. We need to look at the longer term and exercise precaution.

#### Haddock

There has been a spike in recruitment (R) well observed by scientists. The UK fishery was closed effectively this year because 100% uptake; the industry ordinarily asked UK government for an in year increase of TAC but they say the EC would not count with this increase given the advice of 45% decrease for 2014.

The Secretariat (Alex Rodriguez) and the Chairman (Bertie Armstrong) of the NWWRAC reminded that the NWWRAC task should be to issue opinions and advice based on scientific evidence solely and on principles setting the fishing opportunities and should avoid lobbying, i.e. asking simply for increasing TACs. They suggested focusing on what the NWWRAC can give advice upon: 20% reductions are not justified as a matter of principle or there is no scientific explanation, but precautionary approach applies so we have to be careful and provide reliable advice.

Members agreed that Working Groups must make their recommendations based on principles and science; Specific comments were made on Rays stocks: Council concluded last year about a biannual reduction of -10% and, without new evidence it should be simply a “roll-over”; whilst acknowledging concern to avoid lobbying. Vlle Sole issue is also important and cannot be disregarded; the ICES advice is about interpreting the MAMP; the Fmsy target has been bettered than proposed by the MAMP; members asked to include these two points in a future NWWRAC advice to be put forward for adoption by the Executive Committee.

The DG MARE representative (Roy Griffin) said he fully appreciated this last comment on Rays. The aim of the Commission is to follow ICES advice and they aim to implement ICES MSY framework over the next 2 years (2014-2015). Advised -20% last year became -10% for 2 years.

**ACTION: The Secretariat will compile the views and comments made here and will put together a position paper on fishing opportunities for 2014 including following comments for specific Channel Stocks:**

- Wider transition period for MSY until 2020 (rather than 2015) for certain species;
- Different treatment for Ray species in local populations, plus alternative and sensible measures for management of these stocks;
- Seek scientific evidence to include in the paper;
- Include comments on Vlle Sole on good F and B signals about state of the stock and interpretation of R as it affects the MAMP.
- Include comments on no justification for 20% reduction of rays as roll over from last year.

## 2.2. Discussion on a mixed fisheries perspective

This sub-item was not dealt with specifically but as part of the discussions held under 2.1.



### **3. NON-QUOTA SPECIES**

#### 3.1. Update on the ACRUNET Project on Brown Crab Management - Ian Lawler (BIM)

ACRUNET is an EU project that commenced in July 2012 and seeks to achieve a sustainable and economically viable European brown crab industry. It is composed of three pillars all interlinked: 1. Management; 2. Quality; and 3. Market; it is divided in 7 strategic actions to achieve progress.

The last ACRUNET meeting took place in Vigo 2 weeks ago – good progress was achieved on all activities. Two new partners joined in, namely Marine Science Scotland for Activity 3 and Hull University for Activity 6.

An important change was highlighted: The project end date is to be extended to June 2015 – This has not been confirmed officially yet but it is very likely to happen.

#### Activity 2 - Communication

ACRUNET website up and running now [www.acrunet.eu](http://www.acrunet.eu) – Multilingual website in EN-FR-PT-ES

Fact sheet is available in ALL project languages;

Newsletters also will be in several languages and press releases will be issued regularly.

#### Activity 3 – Industry/Science Interface

Industry engagement in UK and Ireland;

Industry partners will be given a set of questions for their members to ask what they want;

Principles of MSC rather than certification; utilizing as a driver.

#### Activity 4 – European Quality Standard

Agreement on content of standard – need to be in accordance with national agencies; standard should be capable of being audited to ISO 65 but then is up to the members to decide if they want to pursue this at their own national levels;

Great work done, great agreement, lot of buy-in from participants;

Producing training materials: guide and manual.

#### Activity 5 – Characterization of European Crab Industry

Complete picture of how it's composed;

How much material goes; how flows happen;

Potential opening for process in particular.

The full PPT presentation provide by Dr Lawler is available for consultation in the NWWRAC Website:

[http://www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/WG3\\_ACRUNET\\_Update\\_7Nov2013.pdf](http://www.nwwrac.org/admin/publication/upload/WG3_ACRUNET_Update_7Nov2013.pdf)

### 3.2. Management Measures for Seabass– Update by Roy Griffin (DG MARE)

The last meeting of the Member States Expert Group was held on 29 October 2013. Consideration was given by concerned MS for short term and long term measures to improve management of the stock. No common agreement has been yet reached on measures to be put forward.

The TACs implications are in line with landing obligation. MAMP would have to be done by co-decision. The Commission reserves the right to propose a TAC but not until there is an allocation key for MS; report of Council WG again on the 28 of November.

#### Comments from the floor:

This topic on Bass has been discussed at this WG previously. UK industry reiterated its view that a TAC is not an appropriate management response, as TAC would likely lead to higher level of discards than now. Discards are already a significant component of mortality and other measures should be first considered to rebuild this stock (e.g. technical measures, spatial measures, etc.).

Contrary to UK, the French industry thinks that TAC is a good and suitable management measure as bass is a target mono specific fishery with catch limits set by vessel.

The DG MARE representative (Roy Griffin) precised that Bass is caught in a wide range of fisheries, gears, geographical areas, and species. It is important therefore to differentiate between targeted and non-directed bass fishery and occasional hits of large amounts.

### 3.3. Proposal for a dedicated Focus Group on Seabass: Terms of Reference

Caroline Gamblin and the WG3 Chair proposed to organise a workshop or Focus Group specifically on this topic and perhaps comprising several RACs given the widespread nature of bass fisheries. The workshop would include scientific presentations of knowledge and data for bass populations. It would also aim to discuss specific management measures proposed by Member States and industry. And it would gather together each Member States' existing management measures in place already and work in advance of the RACs making recommendations to the European Commission.

Roy Griffin provided further background and explained that the Commission – MS Expert Group on Sea bass met 3 times last year. The Expert Group is composed of attachés of each national administration + an ICES correspondent + an EC-DG MARE focal point; the purpose is to make a proposal for 2014 – each MS should consult with the fishing industry to know their views. There was general agreement to establish such a working group on Bass to include commercial sector, recreational and eNGOs.

The Commission asked in preparation of the meeting two key questions:

1. List of current national measures for bass management;
2. Proposals of what to do in the future;

A LTMP would aim to include recreational fisheries and manage them if needed. An important component of this fishery to be tackled is the Fishing Mortality ( $F=0.8?$ ). The directed fishery is not the main source of mortality. Control and enforcement is also a challenge in such by-catch fisheries; the Commission is still undecided as everyone else.

The EC envisages making a proposal on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November but not sure about the outcome;

**ACTION: The NWWRAC Secretariat to contact with other RACs to agree ToR for a future INTER-RAC Workshop on Seabass Management, including the content suggested by Caroline Gamblin.**

#### **4. SCALLOPS MANAGEMENT – Report from Jim Portus**

##### 4.1. Report on work progress: follow up of UK-FR fishing accord

The Chairman introduced the topic, noting the importance of this “non-TAC” fishery to France and the UK in particular, with Ireland and Belgium also having a relevant interest on it.

The 2013 Accord had secured transfer of surplus unused effort from France in exchange for closure of the entire Area 7d and part of Area 7e to UK scallop fishers above 15m, thus there was very little fishing except legitimately by a small number of Irish boats and by one UK <15m vessel, who had been detained and punished wrongfully. For the area below the “Barfleur/ Antifer Line”, the Accord had been extended into November in exchange for a little more effort.

The French industry would be meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November to analyse and discuss the benefits of the Accord and to consider whether or not to repeat the exercise in 2014. The plan would be to invite the UK and other MS fishermen representatives to a discussion and planning meeting in Paris in January.

##### 4.2. Proposal for funding for a workshop - GAP2 Project

Giles Bartlett of WWF UK had been invited to this WG3 to propose a GAP2-funded initiative to bring together partners in this prized scallop fishery seeking to serve ecological goals while providing better social and economic outcomes. The seminar he proposed would be held in first half of 2014, with all interested parties invited to design a management model for Channel Scallops (ICES VIId,e) that would have agreed goals and measurable outcomes. He offered to bring professional facilitators and speakers to cover up to 2 days duration in London or some other suitable venue. Among the invitees would be the representatives of the national Governments; Marine Conservation Agencies; NGOs; and of course industry and stakeholders.

Some ideas or items that could be discussed at this Workshop:

- Highlight examples of well-managed scallop fisheries in other parts of the world such as Spencer Gulf in Australia, Georges Bank in US and Shetland (Scotland);
- Promote a bottom up approach and a transparent co-management process;
- Set specific objectives for a sustainable management of the fishery.



The Scallop Association agreed to support this event “in principle”, pending a fuller presentation of the design of such a workshop.

The members of WG3 gave nodding support and approval for GAP2 to organise such an event and Giles Bartlett would liaise with the NWWWRAC Secretariat to establish it.

**ACTION: NWWWRAC Secretariat to liaise with Giles Bartlett to establish the Terms of Reference and organization of a Scallop workshop to be entirely funded by GAP2.**

## **5. SUMMARY OF ACTIONS AND PROPOSALS TO BE PUT FORWARD TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

1. Draft a position paper on fishing opportunities for 2014 including following comments for specific Channel Stocks:
  - Wider transition period for MSY until 2020 (rather than 2015) for certain species;
  - Different treatment for Ray species in local populations, plus alternative and sensible measures for management of these stocks;
  - Seek scientific evidence to include in the paper
  - Include comments on VIIe Sole on good F and B signals about state of the stock and interpretation of R as it affects the MAMP.
  - Include comments on no justification for 20% reduction of rays as roll over from last year.
2. NWWWRAC Secretariat to contact with other RACs to draft ToR for a future INTER-RAC Workshop on Seabass Management with the content suggested by Caroline Gamblin.
3. NWWWRAC Secretariat to liaise with Giles Bartlett to establish the Terms of Reference of a Scallop workshop to be funded by GAP2.

The Chairman thanked the CNPMEM for providing the venue, local staff and technicians for their professional work, interpreters for the quality of the services provided and the NWWWRAC Secretariat for organising this meeting so efficiently.

**THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:45 AM.**

## **ANNEX I. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b><u>MEMBERS</u></b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname</u></b>	<b><u>Organisation</u></b>
Daniel	Lefèvre	CNPMEM Basse Normandie – <b>WG3 Chairman</b>
Jim	Portus	South West Fish Producers’ Organisation – <b>WG3 Vice Chair and Rapporteur</b>
Bertie	Armstrong	Scottish Fishermen’s Federation
Richard	Brouzes	Copeport Marée OPBN
René-Pierre	Chever	CDPMEM du Finistère
John	Crudden	European Anglers Alliance (EAA)
Dave	Cuthbert	New Under Ten Fishermen’s Association (NUTFA)
Barrie	Deas	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO)
Paul	Francoise	Fédération Française des Syndicats Professionnels Maritimes
Caroline	Gamblin	Comité National des Pêches Maritimes
Francois	Henuyer	FROM Nord
John	Hermse	Scallop Association
Pieter	Louwe van Slooten	Dutch Fisheries Organisation
John	Lynch	Irish Fishermen’s Organisation
Geert	Meun	Dutch Fisheries Organisation
Jennifer	Mouat	Scottish White Fish Producers’ Association
Delphine	Roncin	CRPMEM Nord / Pas de Calais / Picardie
Paul	Trebilcock	Cornish Fish Producers’ Organisation
Caitlín	Uí Aodha	Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation



<b><u>OBSERVERS</u></b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname</u></b>	<b><u>Organisation</u></b>
Giles	Barlett	World Wildlife Fund (WWF UK) / GAP 2
Emiel	Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Stephen	Cederrand	European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)
Alan	Coghill	Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF)
Marc	Ghiglia	UAPF / <b>NWWRAC GA President</b>
Robert	Griffin	DG MARE – European Commission
Ian	Lawler	BIM / ACRUNET Project - <b>Presentor</b>
Laurent	Markovic	DG MARE – European Commission
Rémi	Méjecz	Direction des Pêches – Administration Française
Liane	Veitch	Client Earth
Johnny	Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary

<b><u>NWWRAC SECRETARIAT</u></b>		
<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Surname</u></b>	<b><u>Organisation</u></b>
Conor	Nolan	Executive Secretary
Alexandre	Rodríguez	Executive Assistant – Policy and Information
Joanna	McGrath	Executive Assistant – Administration Finances