



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Conference Room 01, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh

Thursday 7th of July 2016

13:45 – 16:00

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chairman, Bertie Armstrong, welcomed the members and observers to the meeting and noted his intention to complete the business of the Executive Committee as quickly and efficiently as possible in order to facilitate the travel arrangements of some members. The full list of participants is included as an annex to these minutes. Apologies for absence were received from Patrick Murphy, Phil Taylor and Daniel Lefèvre.

The chair introduced the new Financial Administrator and Events Manager at the NWWAC Secretariat: Aoibhín {Aveen} O'Malley. Aoibhín is Irish, and a University College Dublin graduate (History and French). She worked for the Irish Government as office manager and as events liaison officer, as well as liaison officer for Belgium throughout the Irish Presidency in 2013. She was then appointed "Events and Communications Officer" at the Department of Finance working on change management – towards a paperless office. Aoibhín speaks conversational French and looks forward to learning Spanish.

The chair informed the meeting of two changes to the agenda: Item 3f, Working group proposals for adoption by ExCom, would be discussed at the start of the meeting, and the chair proposed to open the meeting with a discussion on the implications of the recent result of the UK referendum (23rd June) to leave the EU ("Brexit") under point 1. The agenda¹ was adopted with these changes.

Brexit

The chair introduced the subject highlighting the points noted at the start of the meetings on Wednesday morning². It was clear that until Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union was enacted, there would be no change in the UK's EU status. The result of the UK referendum and a subsequent political decision to invoke Article 50 would, however, have consequences for the NWWAC, with the negotiation of an exit agreement introducing a conflict of interest for UK members. The discussion on Wednesday morning concluded that, it would not be in the best interest of the NWWAC for UK members to hold office bearing positions and also noted that the AC should prepare for organisational change within the AC, should the UK exit the EU. . The chair restated his offer to resign as Chairperson whenever the Executive Committee saw fit, indicating that he was prepared to continue as Chairperson until the General Assembly meeting in Dublin, in September.

¹ All relevant documents to the meeting can be found on the NWWAC website: [link](#)

² Relevant documents can be found at the NWWAC website: [link](#)

The Chair noted that until such time as the UK triggered Article 50 and a formal agreement to exit the EU had been concluded, UK organisations would remain as members of the AC and that input from UK members on advice relevant to UK interests would be both important and necessary. The chair indicated the need for a more detailed discussion on the organisational consequences for the AC when a UK decision was clear.

Marc Ghiglia (MG) commented that the chair's offer to resign from his position at the September meeting was correct and agreeable. The input of UK members would have to be considered in the context of Brexit, for agenda items that would apply to future legislation in North Western Waters. He agreed with the chair that this was a very complex matter and that the outcome depended on the negotiated agreement concluded by the Council with the consent of the European Parliament influenced by choices made by the Member States (MS). Specific attention should be paid to NWWAC advice relating to the introduction of the Landing Obligation, for example where the definition of choke species depended on traits of specific national fleets. The influence of stakeholders on items of legislation that would not apply to them (in future) should be carefully noted. Johnny Woodlock agreed with the proposal to discuss the consequences of Brexit for the Advisory Councils. He noted that this would have financial consequences for the ACs that would need to be discussed. The chair agreed with both speakers.

Sean O'Donoghue (SO) agreed with the proposal to defer a decision on the chairmanship of the Executive Committee until September. For short-term decisions he suggested that the ExCom consider the option for UK members to abstain from voting on topics where this would be relevant. He agreed with the previous speakers that UK members should not decide on advice that would not apply to their members. Most importantly he noted that Brexit could adversely affect the long term survival of Advisory Councils as without UK stakeholders the current organisation framework would no longer be fit for purpose and would need to be reconsidered. It may be timely to reconsider a proposal for coastal state cooperation that was in discussion before the Advisory Councils were introduced in order to establish a Coastal States stakeholder organisation under NEAFC, that would involve all current members.

Barrie Deas (BD) agreed with previous speakers. He also observed that the timeframe for the UK leaving the EU had not been set and that CFP rules could still be relevant to UK members for a number of years. In the very near future the UK would be involved with Advisory Council work as the chair the NWW Member State group and was also scheduled to hold the EU presidency from 01 July to 31 December 2017.

Hugo González also agreed with the sentiments put forward by the other members but on an optimistic note he considered that the UK will still be in the European Economic Space.

The Executive Committee agreed that the development of any future advice or decision regarding legislation that would not apply to UK members, would be discussed without UK input, and that UK members would abstain from voting where relevant. The Executive Committee accepted the Chair's proposal to remain in office until further discussion of the matter at the meeting of the General Assembly in September, in Dublin.

Action points from the last meeting

Members were informed that the following action points from the last meeting in Paris (2nd February 2016) had been completed:

- 2 Secretariat to seek the opinion of AC members on the need for input or the requirement for a specific meeting to prepare NWWAC input for ICES, prior to the ICES Celtic Seas WG.

- 3 Secretariat to include 'Preparation for AC meetings with ICES' on September agendas.
- 4 Secretariat to ask ICES representative to explain the basis for 'F-range' advice, in July.
- 5 Secretariat to ask NWWAC WGs if information on the Pulse Trawl in July, would be of interest.
- 6 Working Groups to be asked to discuss input on the NWW MAP during meetings in July.
Although scheduled, this point was not actioned in the Working Groups due to time restrictions and was rescheduled for discussion under item 3 of the ExCom agenda.
- 7 Secretariat to forward information to all members on the experiences and progress made on the Baltic MAP. *The Secretariat had not received any additional information on this subject.*
- 8 Secretariat to set up a correspondence process to update *Nephrops* advice
- 9 FGsole in VIIIfg will be organised by the Secretariat
- 10 The NWWAC WGs to discuss the drafting of advice for catch opportunities for stocks relevant to their area at the NWWAC meeting in July
- 11 The Secretariat to update the description and detail of the Executive Committee on the NWWAC website, recognising the requirements of the Commission Delegated Regulation.

The following action remained in progress:

- 1 The Secretariat to draft a letter to Member States requesting that the AC receive as much support as possible from MS through 'Benefit in kind'.
This letter is drafted and in the process of approval.

3. f) Working group proposals for adoption by ExCom

The Working Group Chairs were asked to present the results of their meeting and presented a list of points for adoption by ExCom.

All Working Groups had discussed specific, sub-regional input for the NWWAC response to the EC TAC Consultation and the EC technical measures proposal. This detailed response would be used as input by the respective drafting groups.

West of Scotland [WG 1]

Ross Dougal presented the results of the meeting and asked ExCom to endorse the following items:

1. The NWWAC to request the EC to consider an in-year increase for saithe in the light of the changed assessment, in order to reduce TAC changes between years;
2. The NWWAC to ask ICES to investigate the genetic background of cod in areas 4, 6 and 7, to see if the stock boundaries are correct and how the different stocks and speed of recovery influence each other;
3. The Secretariat was asked to forward information on the EU agreement on Deep Sea access rules to members.

ExCom was informed that the Working Group would look for members to take part in the Mareframe meeting in Aberdeen (25 August).

West of Ireland and Celtic Sea [WG2]

Jesús Lourida Garcia presented the main action points of the group, drawing specific attention to the point made in the context of the TAC consultation, that although the TACs were based on ICES advice for single species, mixed fisheries scenarios indicated where the main problems would occur. The WG reasoned that this information should be taken into account in the NWWAC response to the consultation document. The following points were proposed for endorsement:

1. That the Focus Group on Sole 7fg be asked to update its advice, once scientific feedback is received;
2. That the Focus Group on *Nephrops* be asked to update the AC advice for Porcupine bank (FU16) once scientific feedback is received.

The WG expressed concern about the activities taking place on fishing grounds due to hydrocarbon (oil and gas) exploration and mining and indicated the need to consult the fishing sector when proposals were discussed. The group also noted that there were corrections needed to the EC proposal on the Technical Conservation Measures in order to align the proposal with the current state of affairs.

English Channel [WG3]

Jim Portus presented the results of the WG3 meeting, summarised as follows:

1. The Focus Group on Seabass, should reconvene once the EC response to the NWWAC framework advice (sent 16th May 2016, [link](#)) was received;
2. The NWWAC should inform Member States and the EC about the situation regarding MPAs in the Channel and ask for a combined socio-economic impact assessment of the patchwork of protected areas.

It was also noted that although the group had not met for one year it had been active on issues such as seabass and sole in the relevant focus groups and advice drafting groups instead.

Irish Sea [WG4]

The Secretariat (Barbara Schoute) presented the results from the group on behalf of the chair Hugo Boyle (who deputised for Francis O'Donnell). The group noted that it had decided not to continue with a Focus Group on the Irish Sea, as previously decided, because it was concluded that this Focus Group was superseded by the ICES working groups WKIrish and HWGLO. The following action points were brought to the attention of ExCom:

1. The NWWAC was asked to support an industry-science partnership on sole in the Irish Sea by writing a letter to MS requesting that research be enabled in the whole area.

The group also supported the development of cooperation with ICES Working Groups and benchmark workshops. The Secretariat was asked to inform the Irish national regional inshore fisheries forums (RIFFs) about the ICES benchmark workshop on the Irish Sea.

ExCom endorsed the action points put forward by the Working Groups.

ACTION: The Secretariat to inform the Irish RIFFs about the ICES benchmarks in the Irish Sea.

2. Cooperation with Member State groups

The chair presented a short evaluation of the cooperation between Member States and the AC in the period, during which the Joint Recommendation for 2017 was drafted. The AC had been consulted and well informed on the progress made on the Landing Obligation, as well as on the recently established "Article 11 Subgroup" dealing with proposals for Marine Protected Areas.

The chair commended the French presidency of the MS group on being very inclusive and open towards representatives of the AC. The sharing of documents and technical discussions was helpful in creating understanding and sharing information.

It was clear that regionalisation was still learning-by-doing. Based on experiences to date a number of points were highlighted as being essential for proactive cooperation with future presidencies:

- Transparency is key;
- Timely information on meeting planning and advice deadlines is needed;
- The use of Workshops to involve more stakeholders is welcomed and considered a very good tool to develop stakeholder confidence in new legislation;

New processes, established for a particular purpose, such as the Article 11 meeting on the 26th of April, should be considered separately to the Landing Obligation with the AC being kept informed on progress, both at a national level and at the time when the relevant Member States draft a Joint Recommendation, on which the AC should be consulted. The AC will work with the MS group to continue improving cooperation on all issues.

The chair noted that the representation of the AC at different meetings had been the subject of enquiry from AC members and that this issue required discussion.

- AC representation at Member State (MS) meetings:

a) Landing Obligation: High Level and Technical meetings

To date, the NWWAC had been represented at MS meetings by the Executive Committee Chair and one Vice-Chair (Liane Veitch). The representatives explained that at meetings with Member States, they would both communicate the consensus advice, but in cases where there were different industry and OIG opinions, contributions would be made by the relevant representative. It was noted that since ClientEarth is a European wide organisation, it would not be influenced by the consequences of Brexit.

Following discussion, members indicated that they considered it necessary for the ExCom chair to be neutral, and therefore reasoned that the representation of both stakeholder groups should be ensured at MS meetings.

ExCom decided to request the NWW MS group to allow three AC representatives: the (independent) Chair of ExCom, one fisheries sector and one other interest groups.

ExCom agreed that Emiel Brouckaert would represent the fisheries sector, and Liane Veitch would represent the other interest groups.

As Liane Veitch was not available for the next NWW MS Technical Group meeting on the 19th of July, Debbie Crockard volunteered to replace her and there were no objections from ExCom.

b) Article 11 meetings (MPAs)

The meeting was informed that the ExCom meeting in Paris (2nd February 2016) had decided that Jim Portus and Phil Taylor would be the representatives of the AC at meetings concerning MPAs. ExCom agreed that no change to this arrangement was required.

ExCom agreed that whenever representatives appointed by ExCom were not available for MS meetings, that replacements would be sought, with the assistance of the Secretariat.

- AC representation at MS Workshops:

The chair explained that once an invitation to a MS workshop was received, the representative appointed by ExCom (above) would be invited to attend.

If this representative was not available, or if there was room for more representatives, an open call would be made to the General Assembly requesting those interested in representing the AC to contact the Secretariat. The ExCom chair would then choose the

replacement/s from the nominees, based on relevant experience, potential to input to the meeting, representativeness of stakeholder groups and national balance.

ExCom agreed with this procedure regarding representation at MS workshops.

Sean O'Donoghue added that he considered representation at ICES benchmark working groups and Advice Drafting Groups was also important. Contact with ICES Working Group members has helped to advance the discussion on many issues. The positive experience this year was noted, and it was considered this can be improved upon in future.

The chair noted the importance of contact with scientists but also highlighted the costs involved with representation at ICES (multi-day) meetings. If budget were available, support for the attendance of members or experts representing the AC at these meetings should be considered.

3. Planning of NWWAC advice

The chair asked the meeting to consider prioritising the list of items of interest on the agenda and asked members to balance the need for regional stakeholder advice with the time constraints of NWWAC members and the Secretariat.

a) Landing Obligation; Planning for 2018

ExCom agreed on the process recommended by the Horizontal Working Group on the Landing Obligation³ that took place on Thursday 7th July, on the morning prior to the ExCom meeting:

- The Secretariat will draft a formal response letter for the Control Expert Group (CEG) based on the output of the meeting which will be finalized by correspondence before the 23th of August.
- The Secretariat will look into options to set up a Focus Group on control and compliance that will examine the CEG report.
- Mr O'Donoghue will help the Secretariat to write a letter to the EC for clarification on the implication of Art. 39 (previously known as Art. 37) of the Treaty to resolve apparent contradictions with Art. 15 of the CFP in the context of choke situations where all mitigation measures are exhausted.
- The Secretariat will distribute the report of the 'Access to Quota' workshop drafted by the Organisers, once permission has been granted. Deadline: after the meeting: action completed
- The Secretariat will establish an ADG LO in the second half of 2016, after the next technical meeting of the MS to make progress on providing AC advice on a choke species toolbox.

b) EC Consultation on fishing opportunities for 2017

The EC presented the [EC Consultation on the fishing opportunities for 2017](#) on the 5th of July. The NWWAC Working Groups discussed the consultation topics in the light of the ICES advice on the 7th of July and provided relevant input for feedback on the consultation. Members were reminded that at the previous meeting of ExCom (2nd February 2016) it was decided to provide a

³ Relevant documents can be found at the NWWAC website: [link](#)

comprehensive response on the Consultation document over the summer, rather than a response on the final proposal on the TACs, in December.

The chair proposed to provide a response to the consultation by the deadline of the 1st of September (for those stocks that ICES has advised on already). This would require an Advice Drafting Group (**ADG**) to be set up to draft text by correspondence or webinars (working language English), to conclude before July 22nd. The text would then be made available to ExCom in all three languages for comments before August 24th.

ExCom agreed with the proposed schedule and the chair thanked the Working Groups for their input. The following members volunteered to join the ADG: Paul Trebilcock, Vera Coelho, Julien Lamothe, Jesús Lourido and Sean O'Donoghue.

c) EC Proposal on the Technical Conservation Measures ([COM\(2016\) 134](#))

On the basis of a presentation by the EC (Norman Graham) on the EC proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on the conservation of fishery resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures, the Working Group meetings had prepared input and comments on sub-regional points and proposed that the NWWAC could provide these as feedback on this proposal.

Sean O'Donoghue suggested that the input from the Working Groups should be compiled by the Secretariat in order to see if an advice drafting process, by correspondence or webinar, would be needed.

The meeting agreed with this proposal and asked the Secretariat to compile these data. The Secretariat asked all members to send specific comments and details to improve the drafting process.

ACTION: Secretariat to compile the input from Working Groups on the EC proposal on Technical Measures.

ACTION: All members to send detailed comments on the EC proposal on Technical Measures to the Secretariat.

d) Multi-Annual Plans (MAP)

The EC (Robert Griffin) informed the meeting about the status of the proposal on an MAP for North Western Waters. In light of the accepted MAP for the Baltic and the imminent proposal for the North Sea, the EC intended to finalise the proposal for the NWW in November 2016, depending on the progress made with the impact assessment, which would be general and not specific to the NWW. The NWW MAP would deal with those stocks, for which an F-range has been defined by ICES on a basis similar to that used for the Baltic plan.

Members discussed the options for providing input to the process. Barrie Deas indicated that Brexit was very relevant with regard to such long-term plans. It would be unclear how an MAP would be applied if part of the management region could possibly move to different management rules. He questioned whether it would be possible for the AC to provide useful comments under such uncertainty. Sean O'Donoghue agreed with this reasoning and proposed that the AC put this subject on hold until more was known of UK intentions regarding membership of the EU.

The EC noted that while the proposal was in inter-service consultation within the European institutions, there would not be much scope for input from the AC, in any case.

ExCom agreed to put the MAP discussion on hold until the proposal was made available and more was known on the development of a UK position regarding membership of the EU.

NB: After this point in the meeting, the number of ExCom members was reduced to a level below the quorum required for decisions to be valid. From this point forward, items requiring the decision of ExCom would be finalised by correspondence. (ExCom members chose to leave the meeting before its scheduled completion time in order to satisfy travel arrangements).

e) ACRUNET – Brown crab management

The Chair indicated that a decision was needed on how to model further input from the NWWAC on brown crab management. Following the correspondence request on the ACRUNET policy document, French members indicated that there was interest within the AC to form a Focus Group on brown crab. The chair thanked the French members for their initiative and their draft Terms of Reference was made available on the meeting website.

ACTION: ExCom would be asked, by correspondence, for their decision on the proposal to establish a Focus Group on brown crab (FGCrab). Should the FGCrab be approved, ExCom would be asked to agree on the Terms of Reference and to provide members and a chair for the group.

f) Proposals from the Working Groups

This point was moved to and addressed at the beginning of the meeting.

4. EFCA meetings

The chair introduced this short information point, and explained that the European Fisheries Control Agency in Vigo currently has an Advisory Board that meets biannually with representatives of all Advisory Councils. The EFCA Administrative Board meets two to three times a year and invites one representative from the Advisory Board. For the period March 2016 to February 2017, the NWWAC fulfils the role of Alternate representative, and for the period March 2017 to February 2018, the NWWAC acts as the AC representative to this meeting.

Members were reminded that the NWWAC representatives for the EFCA meetings were appointed by ExCom and were two vice-chairs of ExCom: Jacques Pichon and Hugo González (sometimes replaced by Purificación (Puri) Fernández).

The chair indicated that he had been informed that Jacques Pichon had changed his position within his organisation and that Hugo González would also be less frequently available for NWWAC activities. Hugo González informed the group of changes in his organisation, which would mean that he would be needed at his organisation more often. It was, therefore, decided within ANASOL that Puri Fernández would become the main representative of this organisation to the NWWAC.

The chair thanked Hugo and Jacques for their professional and valuable input to the work of the AC and indicated that in cases where Vice-chairs step down, it would be necessary for ExCom to appoint new Vice-chairs of ExCom at the Executive Committee meeting in September.

Sean O'Donoghue indicated the need for more emphasis on AC input on Control matters. The request from the Member States Control Expert Group during the Horizontal Working Group on

the Landing Obligation for a formal response on the their report, emphasised the need for a Focus Group on Control issues.

ACTION: ExCom would be asked, by correspondence, for their decision on the proposal to establish a Focus Group on Control and Enforcement.

5. Application processes for the General Assembly and the Executive Committee

The Secretariat (Barbara Schoute) made a brief presentation on the current application process for membership of the NWWAC following the implementation of the Delegated Act 242/2014 and informed the meeting of recent applications to the General Assembly.

The CFP (Article 45.1) defined the composition of members of the Advisory Council as:

- (a) *organisations representing the fisheries and, where appropriate, aquaculture operators, and representatives of the processing and marketing sectors;*
- (b) *other interest groups affected by the CFP (e.g. environmental organisations and consumer groups).*

Annex III, 2. (h) states that:

European and national organisations representing the fisheries sector and other interest groups may propose members to the Member States concerned. Those Member States shall agree on the members of the general assembly.

The Secretariat had received EC interpretation of this article, which explained that the purpose of this text was to ensure that the application is from an existing organisation that represents the fisheries sector or another interest group affected by the CFP. Consultation and agreement of the Member State, in the territory of which the applicant organisation is established, is sufficient for their accession to the AC.

In this light, the Secretariat had forwarded completed applications from prospective members to the relevant Member State(s) requesting agreement that the organisation was an existing and legitimate organisation affected by the CFP.

Where such agreement was received, ExCom would be informed about the application and asked to endorse the fact that the correct procedure had been followed in the membership process.

The Secretariat indicated that in correspondence about questions that arose with ExCom members about new applicants, it had become clear that there was a need for more transparency about (new) AC members. The Secretariat, therefore, put forward a proposal to include the requirement that all applicants be registered on the [EU transparency register](#) and submit details of this registration as part of the required application procedure.

This register was set up to provide information on organisations representing particular interests at EU level, and provide up-to-date information about:

- The organisational structure and budget;
- The interests that are being represented and
- The representatives.

The remaining ExCom members agreed to add the EU transparency register as a requirement to becoming a member of the AC, and also extending this requirement to the current members of the General Assembly.

ACTION: The Secretariat will ask ExCom for agreement by correspondence to add the EU transparency register to the application process and in case of agreement will contact all GA members to ensure that current members are also registered.

The Secretariat informed the meeting of the following applications for the General Assembly that had been agreed by Member States and that were sent to ExCom:

- Plateforme de Petite Peche Artisanale Française (PPPAF, France)
- Oceana (International, based in Spain)
- Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO, Ireland)

There were no comments from the meeting on these applications.

The chair concluded that the correct procedure had been followed, and that the new members could be welcomed to the General Assembly NWWAC with immediate effect.

The Secretariat noted that the letter of application from the IIMRO included a request for the compensation of fishermen attending meetings and favourable membership fees in accordance with Article 4 and 6 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/242 regarding small-scale fleet organisations and that this matter would need to be discussed at the September meeting of the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee was also informed that an application for membership of ExCom, for the vacant seat for a Belgian industry member, was received from the Belgian organisation Rederscentrale VZW and that this application was under consideration by the General Assembly, by correspondence.

Liane Veitch asked about the composition of ExCom with regard to the balance between industry and other interest groups (60%:40%). The Secretariat reminded members that this issue had been the subject of discussion in Paris where it was acknowledged that the number of seats on the ExCom would be in accordance with that specified in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/242 and that seats would be available to allow the rules relating to composition to be observed. The meeting was informed that ExCom consisted of 21 members (14:7), fewer than the maximum of 25 members (15:10) specified in the regulation. Seats remained available and the NWWAC could apply to increase the maximum number of members to 30 (18:12) to ensure appropriate representation of small-scale fleets.

Liane Veitch noted that it would be difficult to fill additional seats by other interest groups and that maintaining the proportion between the different groups within ExCom was more relevant than increasing the number of members.

The meeting concluded that the composition and size of ExCom would be reviewed at the General Assembly meeting in Dublin in September.

6. Information points

The meeting was updated on the progress of different meetings

- a. Focus Groups
 - i. Skates and Rays

The Secretariat (Conor Nolan) updated the meeting on the progress of this group on behalf of the chair, John Lynch. At the last meeting on the 3rd of February 2016 it was decided to provide input for evaluation of different alternative management scenarios for

the combined TAC management. This input was delayed and it was suggested that a meeting be organised around the September meeting in Dublin.

ii. Nephrops

The Secretariat (Barbara Schoute) informed the meeting about the need to update the annual NWWAC advice on Nephrops on the Porcupine Bank (FU16). Since the former chair of the Focus Group on Nephrops, Eibhlín O'Sullivan, had left her organisation, a new chair would be needed. Sean O'Donoghue agreed to take up the chairmanship.

Based on scientific input from the Irish Marine Institute, which was expected soon, updated advice would be drafted for the consideration of ExCom.

iii. Seabass

The chair of the Focus Group on Seabass, Barrie Deas informed the group that the NWWAC Framework advice had been sent to the EC, requesting a scientific evaluation of a number of proposed management measures. The EC informed the meeting that a reply to the request would be sent to the AC soon. Barrie Deas suggested that a meeting should be planned once the reply from the EC had been received.

iv. Sole VIIIfg

The chair of the Focus Group on sole in division 7fg, Emiel Brouckaert, informed the meeting that NWWAC advice had been sent to the EC and that a reply from the EC had been received indicating that an evaluation of the scenarios suggested by the AC was planned for November. He intended to reconvene the Focus Group to finalise advice when the results of the evaluation were available.

The meeting agreed with the proposals from the Focus Group chairs.

b. NWWAC Communication strategy (Secretariat)

The Secretariat (Sara Vandamme) informed the meeting on the progress of the Communication group, which mainly aims to provide guidance on the updated version of the communication strategy. This document will map:

1. The target audience for the AC,
2. The messages the AC needs to communicate and
3. The options for communication tools.

A webinar was organised with the Group in June and an informal meeting took place during the Edinburgh meetings to discuss a new email format, updates for the website, and the communication messages.

Additionally, ExCom was informed on the progress to provide interpretation options during webinars. The Secretariat had been asked to identify interpretation options but found the number of companies providing such services limited. So far, the Secretariat had organised a trial with software providing automated subtitles, which could be used as a support tool, but could not replace live interpretation. One company was found that could organise interpretation via a virtual interpretation booth, a trial of this service could be organised if members are interested.

A full proposal will be presented to ExCom from the Communications Group for decision in due course.

c. Project proposals (Secretariat)

The Secretariat (Sara Vandamme) informed the meeting that project involvement as a full partner, as opposed to involvement as a project observer, could be beneficial to the AC as the AC could steer projects and receive external funding. Networking with potential project leaders would be required if the AC agrees to search for projects as a full partner. In order to

achieve this, networking could be undertaken through the AC members with their national scientists or through the Secretariat. The latter would require a better knowledge of the areas of interest and experience of the various AC members. The Secretariat, together with the Communication Group, is working on an information sheet for all AC members to inform the search for appropriate projects. This new fact sheet will be presented at ExCom in due course for decision.

d. Update of the Rules of Procedure (Secretariat)

The Secretariat (Barbara Schoute) informed the meeting about the update of the Rules of procedure for the NWWAC to take into account the CFP (EC 1380/2013) and the Commission Delegated Regulation 2015/242, and where possible, the potential effects of the UK leaving the EU. The updated text of the Rules of Procedure will be presented to the General Assembly, as soon as possible.

The chair thanked the chairs and Secretariat for this information.

7. Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted by the Chair

Action	
1	The Secretariat to draft a letter to Member States requesting that the AC receive as much support as possible from MS through 'Benefit in kind'.
2	The Secretariat to inform the Irish RIFFs about the ICES benchmarks in the Irish Sea.
3	The Secretariat to compile the input from Working Groups on the EC proposal on Technical Measures.
4	All members to send detailed comments on the EC proposal on Technical Measures to the Secretariat.
5	ExCom would be asked, by correspondence, for their decision on the proposal to establish a Focus Group on brown crab (FGCrab). Should the FGCrab be approved, ExCom would be asked to agree on the Terms of Reference and to provide members and a chair for the group.
6	ExCom would be asked, by correspondence, for their decision on the proposal to establish a Focus Group on Control and Enforcement.
7	The Secretariat will ask ExCom for agreement by correspondence to add the EU transparency register to the application process and in case of agreement will contact all GA members to ensure that current members are also registered.

NWWAC Document
 Chairman: Bertie Armstrong
 Rapporteur: Barbara Schoute
 Contributions: Sara Vandamme
 Review and editing: Conor P. Nolan

Annex 1 – List of Participants

NWWAC members		
Armstrong	Bertie	North Western Waters AC
Meun	Geert	Coöp. Kottervisserij Nederland
Brouckaert	Emiel	Rederscentrale
Crockard	Debbie	Seas at Risk
Crudden	John	European Anglers Alliance
Deas	Barrie	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation
Dougal	Ross	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Ghiglia	Marc	Le Comité national des pêches maritimes et des élevages marins
González García	Hugo	Asociación Nacional Armadores Gran Sol
Lourido García	Jesús	Puerto de Celeiro S.A. OPP-77
O'Donoghue	Sean	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation
Lamothe	Julien	Association Nationale des Organisation des Producteurs
Symons	Despina	European Bureau for Conservation and Development
Veitch	Liane	ClientEarth
Woodlock	John	Irish Seal Sanctuary
Observers		
Egan	Siobhán	Birdwatch Ireland
Baxter	Emily	UK Wildlife Trust
Bigorgne	Matthias	Head of Fisheries Control Unit
Bryan-Brown	Tom	Mallaig and North West Fishermen's Association
Coelho	Vera	The Pew Charitable Trusts
Coghill	Alan	Orkney Fish Producers Organisation
Gamblin	Caroline	CNPMEM
Griffin	Roy	European Commission
Grossmann	Jenni	Client Earth
Hennuyer	Francois	From Nord
Portus	Jim	SWFPO
Quelch	Glenn	European Fisheries Control Agency
Stansted	Anna	Marine Scotland
Trebilcock	Paul	Cornish Fish Producer's Organisation
Young	Iain	The Scottish White Fish Producers Association
Ward	John	IFPO
NWWAC Secretariat		
Conor	Nolan	Executive Secretary
Barbara	Schoute	Deputy Executive Secretary
Sara	Vandamme	Project Development and Communications Manager
Aoibhín	O Malley	Financial Administrator and Event Manager