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REPORT

Meeting between the NWWAC and the NWW High Level Group Meeting

Dublin
13th March 2018

Introduction

Emiel Brouckaert (EB, Chairman of the NWWAC Executive Committee) and Heather Hamilton (HH, NWWAC Executive Committee member; Client Earth) attended the NWW Member States High Level Group as invited NWWAC representatives, in Dublin on 13th March 2018.

Summary of the meeting

The EC representative provided an update on the important work that lay ahead for the landing obligation. The Advisory Councils were recommended to use the time after May to update the list of choke situations with the latest scientific information e.g. which stock are in safe biological limits relevant for inter-species flexibility, what options remain to improve technical measures, even when technical measures cannot fully resolve the choke risk by 100%. This should allow the creation of a final list of chokes species for 2019.

For residual choke species, the EC would appreciate if the AC would list measures already undertaken in previous years to make fisheries more selective. This information is critical for the EC to argue the case on how to deal with chokes as of 2019 and what further measures would be needed.

The Chair of the meeting explained that their focus lay on the joint recommendation in May and identifying what tools would assist with the introduction of the landing obligation. This includes high survival and *de minimis* exemptions as well as selectivity improvement for specific fisheries. After finalization of the JR, their focus would lie on finding solutions for residual problems together with the EC. The EC reinforced the need for additional material to illustrate the progress made on selectivity and environmentally friendly fishing methods.

The AC representatives outlined the advice procedure for the Advice Drafting Group on the landing obligation meeting, explaining that a first draft was completed by EB and HH last week. The members would be given a week to respond, after which the updated draft would be sent to Ex

Comm. The intent was to have a finalised draft by the next NWW Technical Group meeting (27 March 2018).

The Executive Committee decided last week (8th March 2018) that the ADG LO would continue their work. The next phase would be planned with the Secretariat and take into account today's discussions.

EB and HH outlined the contents of the draft advice which focused on high risk choke.

The Chair of the meeting asked in relation to the Fmsy upper ranges whether the OIGs will support the use of Fmsy ranges where the stock in particular is not included in a Multiannual Management Plan. HH confirmed that members of the OIGs are concerned about the use of Fmsy ranges and that they currently cannot agree with this proposal, for them the focus lay on improving selectivity.

A BE MS representative asked how the AC envisaged a TAC top up for haddock knowing that there is a lack of data? Filling data gaps required a lot of time. The UK responded that they have financially supported UK vessels to collect more data on haddock. EB referred back to the Celtic Sea haddock advice for more detail¹.

Conclusions and Actions

The Chair emphasised that the NWW Member States Group would not assist in taking on board AC advice if no consensus is achieved and advised the AC to continue the discussion on the draft advice to reach more consensus points.

The AC representatives confirmed there was a lot of consensus in this advice but highlighted the difficult topics. They have taken note of the comment.

¹ Celtic Sea Haddock: An incentivised data collection scheme to improve the management of the stock in the context of the Landing Obligation [Link](#)