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REPORT

Meeting between the NWWAC and the NWW Technical Group Meeting

Dublin
24th April 2018

Introduction

Heather Hamilton (HH) and Purification Fernandez (PF), both vice-chairs of the NWWAC Executive Committee, attended the NWW Member States Technical Group as invited NWWAC representatives, in Dublin on 24th April 2018.

Summary of the meeting

The chair informed the meeting that every Member State representative has been working on proposals for the Joint Recommendation. These proposals still required discussion and agreement.

The exemptions under deliberation were:

- High survivability:
 - Nephrops area 7, in combination with the use of highly selective gears, sorting grid, cod end
 - Fish caught in pots, traps and creels
 - Nephrops area 6
 - Otter trawl gears
 - Skates and rays – all gears in NWW
 - Plaice otter trawls 7d and e, trammel nets
 - Consideration being given to high survivability for plaice in f and g
- *De minimis*, possible options being looked at:
 - Combined de minimis for cod, haddock, whiting Celtic Sea
 - Single species DM for cod and haddock in Celtic Sea
 - Whiting in nephrops fisheries in Irish Sea
 - Haddock in the Irish Sea

The Member States Group (MSG) had also been looking into additional technical measures but there has been no agreement. Suggestions from the NWWAC were appreciated.

The MSG was looking to incorporate AC's suggestion on a high survival exemption for skates and rays. Due to the lack of scientific data for all species in each fishery in each region, the MSG would request a temporary exemption for 3 years. The AC could have a specific role in reporting the efforts of the industry regarding improving selectivity and avoidance and filling data gaps on survivability. Further, they hoped to work closely with the NWWAC to investigate alternative management measures.

On the *de minimis* exemption, the MSG informed the AC that there was an evaluation of the combined *de minimis* for gadoids by STECF, but they had not yet received a response. They were also looking into a *de minimis* exemption as a solution to deal with pelagic bycatches in demersal fisheries.

The chair highlighted that the MSG shares the frustration on the difficulty in achieving consensus on solutions to deal with choke species, however they would appreciate if the AC tries to find a compromise position. The Chair expressed the disappointment regarding the OIG position on the use of the Fmsy ranges and the industry suggestion to postpone the landing obligation.

The EC representative highlighted the risk associated with not providing any advice, and so thanked the AC for their efforts.

Conclusions and Actions

The chair informed the NWWAC representatives that the next meeting of the NWW High Level Group would take place on the 17th May and the NWWAC would be invited. This meeting aims to focus primarily on the Joint Recommendation which would be submitted to the Commission in May.

The Dutch administration were to take over the presidency of the NWW Member States Group for the second half of the year and stressed the importance of working together with the NWWAC to find solutions to resolve remaining choke problems.