



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

MINUTES

WORKING GROUP 2 (CELTIC SEA)

Room 21.04 “Jacob Van Artevelde” - Virginie Lovelinggebouw (VAC)
Koningin Fabiolalaan, 9000 Gent

Tuesday 3rd of July 2018
14:00 – 16:00

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair, Jesús Lourido Garcia, sent his apologies. The vice-chair, Paul Trebilcock, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. Other apologies were received from Javier Lopez (Oceana), and Luis Francisco Marín (OPPAO).

The agenda was adopted as drafted.

The Secretariat updated the meeting on the action points from last meeting in Madrid (7th March 2018):

1. The NWWAC is to revisit the advice on Celtic Sea haddock

A reference to this advice and further updates provided in the AC advice on the LO (17th April [link](#) – [lien](#)- [enlace](#)).

2. The Nephrops advice to be sent to the EC to request ICES evaluation

The letter has been sent to the COM on 13th June 2018 ([link](#) – [lien](#) –[enlace](#))

3. The Secretariat to collate a comprehensive bibliography on the effects of seismic surveys on the marine environment

This action point resulted from the NWWAC meeting in Edinburgh in 2017. A list has been sent to the chair and vice-chair in advance of the meeting and is uploaded as background information to this meeting ([link](#), English only). The meeting discussed if further actions were required under agenda item 3.

4. Revisit previous advice on the removal of Plaice in 7.hjk from the TAC regime and ask further information from the COM

A reference to this advice was included in the AC advice on the LO (17th April [link](#) – [lien](#)-



[enlace](#)). An ICES working group has been set up to provide a response to the EU request on the role of the Total Allowable Catch instrument for fisheries management and conservation. The advice for deep sea stocks is available on the website ([link, English only](#)).

5. The Secretariat to distribute:
 - a. The report from Fishing into the Future on 'Guidelines for Industry-Science data collection'.
 - b. A report on selectivity studies provided provided by Mr Kelly
 - c. The previous economic assessment on Celtic Sea haddock, provided by the COM

The documents have been uploaded as background information to the WG 2 meeting (7th March, Madrid, [link-lien -enlace](#))

6. The Secretariat was to follow up with ICES on a potential benchmark meeting for Celtic Sea haddock

The ICES Working Group on the Celtic Seas Ecoregion met in May 2018 to draft advice on the Celtic Seas stocks and discuss potential benchmark meetings in 2019 (haddock in the Celtic Sea included). Before formalising the benchmark, terms of reference (ToR) need to be drafted and put forward for approval of the ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM). The NWWAC will be informed if a benchmark meeting is planned.

7. Ms Fernandez to assist the Secretariat to write a request to the COM to provide data for an analysis on the underutilisation of quota by Member State.

Following the ACs request, the COM has shared the raw data. The procedure and potential analyses of this data was discussed at a meeting with the Chair, vice-chairs and Secretariat. Ms Fernandez has provided an update to the WG under agenda item 3.

2. Introduction to the ICES advice for the North Western Waters

Mr Ghislain Chouinard (ACOM Vice-Chair) presented a general introduction to the ICES advice this included a summary of the work done by the ICES WKIrish and WKLife8 and the progress made by ICES on Fmsy ranges. All presentations are available on the website ([link](#), in English only).

3. ICES advice for the Celtic Sea

Mr Ghislain Chouinard (ACOM Vice-Chair) presented the advice for Celtic Sea stocks on behalf of ICES.

After the presentation, the chair opened the floor for questions and invited members to provide specific feedback that will form the basis of the NWWAC response to the fishing opportunities for 2019.

In response to questions raised by members, Mr Chouinard clarified:

- ICES provides advice on mixed fisheries at the request of the COM, for example for the Celtic



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Sea in 2017 ([link](#), in English only). Mixed-fisheries considerations are based on the single-stock assessments combined with information on the average catch composition and fishing effort of the various fleets and fisheries. For the different scenarios included the associated potential consequences are discussed. Mixed-fisheries projections are presented in terms of catch. A “range” scenario is included, where the potential TAC mismatch in 2018 are minimized by setting target fishing levels within the FMSY ranges. This scenario returns a fishing mortality by stock which, if used for setting single stock fishing opportunities for 2018, may reduce the gap between the most and least restrictive TACs, thus reducing the potential quota over- and undershoot.

- Mixed-fisheries scenarios are based on central assumptions that fleets’ fishing patterns and catchability in 2017 and 2018 are the same as those in 2016 (similar to procedures in single-stock forecasts, where growth and selectivity are assumed constant). The scenarios do not take into account what happens with MS that have zero quota. ICES recognize that other scenarios are worthwhile looking into especially in light of mitigation choke issues. Feedback from stakeholders is appreciated.
- The French survey (EVHOE), which collects data on whiting, was unavailable in 2017. The assessment working group considered that the lack of this one data point in the whole time series would not harm the assessment, as there are other surveys to cover for 2017.
- The perception of the cod stock has changed drastically, especially in the forecasts of the recruitment and catches. Catches of cod have been lower, while effort remained constant, then previously predicted. This assumes a lower biomass, estimated to be below Blim.
- Currently the ICES advice does not take into account specific avoidance measures. The ICES Working Group TAC-MAN is looking into alternative management measures that would probably be equally efficient as TAC. To use avoidance as a management measures would only work for species that are very area specific or aggregate in certain areas. ICES can look at such scenarios following a specific request.
- The cod management areas are very big and the distribution of cod is heterogeneous. Observations for cod in area 7.d are very low. Although the cause for the decreased abundance is uncertain, and other factors than fisheries could have an effect, this is the only factor we can control/change. Hence the catch advice is very low.
- The method used to estimate recruitment for Celtic Sea haddock was the same as in the previous year. The ASAP model is used to estimate population parameters including recruitment for the historic series and the long-term geometric mean (1993-2015) is used in the projection. For Celtic Sea cod there was a change in the assumed recruitment used for the projections. There is a strong retrospective pattern in the estimated recruitment for Celtic Sea cod. Given the fast growth, recruitment constitutes a significant portion of catches for the advice year. Recruitment has been particularly poor in recent years and, given that SSB is one of the lowest in the time-series, the 25th quantile of the recruitment time-series (as opposed to the geometric mean used in the previous assessment) was considered to be more in line with recruitment that could be expected. The 25th quantile was also used in projection in the 2016 assessment.
- In 2017, ICES provided advice for Pollack for 2018–2020. The advice was updated in June 2018 following a request by the EU to provide new advice for 2019 considering the most recent information.
- The assessments of White anglerfish and Black-bellied anglerfish (White anglerfish in Subarea 7 and in divisions 8.a–b and 8.d and Black-bellied anglerfish in divisions 7.b–k, 8.a–



b, and 8.d) along with other stocks of anglerfish were examined in a benchmark held in February 2018.

The assessments are conducted separately for each of the stocks. The type of assessment (e.g. analytical assessment (MSY approach) vs survey-trends and others (precautionary approach) depends on the information available and the appropriateness of an assessment model. For white anglerfish, because of strong cohort signals present in the catch data and survey indices, a statistical catch-at-age model (analytical approach) was considered to be most appropriate for this stock. However for black-bellied anglerfish, the landings length distributions of the period 2002-2016 appear to be poor at tracking cohorts and the benchmark concluded that a survey-trends assessment to provide precautionary approach advice was the best approach to provide advice for this stock. More information can be found in the benchmark report¹.

Specific comments raised by members include:

- The surveys included in the plaice assessments only seem to partially cover the fishing area. For example for plaice 7.hjk, catches mainly originate from UK and BE beam trawlers in 7.h whereas the Irish survey used in the assessments covers 7.j and 7.k
- The COM proposed to reduce the De Minimis exemption sole 7.fg. It is not yet clear to members how this will be taken forward.
- Considering ICES produces advice for the different anglerfish stocks according to the most appropriate assessment based on the data availability, the AC asks clarification how a joint TAC is determined for White anglerfish and Black-bellied anglerfish

ACTION: The working Group will draft advice for the COM on setting the fishing opportunities for 2019 based on the discussion

4. Follow-up on previous discussions

The meeting was informed that a bibliography on the effect of seismic surveys was uploaded as background information on the NWWAC website to this meeting. It was proposed to write a letter to the COM to request an ICES evaluation on seismic activities in NWW and the potential effects on e.g. zooplankton

ACTION: Write a letter to the COM requesting an independent ICES evaluation on seismic activities in NWW and the potential effects.

Ms Fernandez presented the results of the study on the underutilization of quota by Member States (see NWWAC website of this meeting). It was advised to translate the presentation in English and French. The chair informed the meeting that the results of the study and how the results could be used as a tool to mitigate choke will be further discussed at the next NWWAC meeting on the landing obligation (19th July 2018).

¹ ICES 2018b. Report of the Benchmark Workshop on Anglerfish Stocks in the ICES Area (WKANGLER), 12–16 February 2018, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2018/ACOM:31. In preparation <http://ices.dk/community/groups/Pages/WKAngler.aspx>.



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

1	The working Group will draft advice for the COM on setting the fishing opportunities for 2019 based on the discussion
2	Write a letter to the COM requesting an independent ICES evaluation on seismic activities in NWW and the potential effects.



Annex 1 – List of Participants

NWWAC members	
Rederscentrale	Emiel Brouckaert
Asociación Nacional de Armadores de Pesca de Gran Sol (ANASOL)	Purificación del C. Fernández Alvarez
Lonja de La Coruña S.A.	José Luis Otero Gonzalez
Organización de Productores Pesqueros de Lugo (OP-LUGO)	José Manuel Fernández Beltran
Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco	Juan Carlos Corrás Arias
Seas at Risk	Debbie Crockard
Comité Départemental des Pêches Maritimes et des Élevages Marins du Finistère (CDPMEM 29)	Erwan Quemeneur
Comité Départemental des Pêche Maritimes et des Elevages Marins du Morbihan (CDPMEM 56)	Emmanuelle Kilberine
Comité National des Pêches Maritimes et des Élevages Marins (CNPMEM)	Caroline Gamblin
Coopérative Maritime Bretagne Nord (COBRENORD)	Franck Le Barzic
Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne (LPDB)	Jean-Marie Robert
BirdWatch Ireland	Fintan Kelly
Irish Fish Producers' Organisation (IFPO)	Francis O'Donnell
Irish Fishermen's Organisation	John Lynch
Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation	Sheamus Bonner
Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation	Hugo Boyle
Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation	Patrick Murphy
Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation	Sean O'Donoghue
National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation (UK)	Barrie Deas
South Western Fish Producers Organisation Ltd.	Jim Portus
FREMSS	Jose Luis Otero Gonzales
Observers	
Fundació ENT	Lydia Chaparro
ClientEarth	Heather Hamilton
European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD)	Maria Aira
The PEW Charitable Trusts	Jean Christophe Vandeveld
Comité Départemental des Pêches et des Élevages Marins du Calvados (CDPMEM 14)	Lionel Bottin
Comité Régional des Pêches Maritimes et des Élevages Marins (CRPMEM) Hauts de France	Stéphane Pinto
France Pêche Durable et Responsable	Pascal Coquet
Organisation de Producteur Coopérative Maritime Etaploise Manche Mer du Nord (OPMEMMN)	Dominique Thomas
Organisation des Pêcheurs Normands (OPN)	Mathieu Vimard
Dutch Elasmobranch Society	Irene Kingma
Stichting van de Nederlandse Visserij (Dutch Fisheries Organisation) (2)	Geert Meun
Scottish Fishermen's Organisation	Paul McDonald



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| West of Scotland Fish Producers' Organisation

| Kevin McDonnell

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