



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

## MINUTES

### WORKING GROUP 3 (ENGLISH CHANNEL)

**Nuevos Ministerios – Paseo de la Castellana, 63. Madrid**

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2018**

**10:30 – 11:30, 17:00-18:30**

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

Due to technical problems, the meeting took place in two parts and the agenda was re-arranged to take the item on scallop first.

The full list of participants is included as an annex to these minutes.

The following action points from the last meeting in Dublin (13<sup>th</sup> September 2017) were completed:

1. The Focus Group on sole had reconvened and produced advice on sole in area 7.d ([link](#) – [lien - enlace](#))
2. The Focus Group on Seabass explored possibilities to organise an inter-AC meeting (to be discussed under item 4 of the agenda)
3. The Secretariat sought clarification on the intention to include non-quota species in the assessment, e.g. with flounder, dab.

This question was included in the AC response to the European Commission (EC) policy statement but no response had been received.

4. The members to be updated on the proposals for NATURA 2000 sites.

The Secretariat informed the members that following a request from the French administration for consultation on new NATURA 2000 sites, the Secretariat had asked for a deferral of the deadline as the NWWAC cannot reply to a consultation request in 2 weeks. No progress could be made with this after several failed attempts to get in touch with the French administration, and an intervention at the NWW High Level Group meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

## 2. Feedback from previous advice and meetings

Due to the lack of time, this agenda item was not discussed. Members were informed that an overview will be given on the progress of the Focus Group on sole at the ExCom meeting tomorrow.

## 3. Strategy for scallop management

Dr Bell from CEFAS was introduced to the meeting and gave an overview of the ongoing work in the UK on king scallops, followed by an assessment of the French joint-management proposals for the Bay de Seine scallop fishery (as first presented at the WG in Edinburgh 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017). This includes seasonal closures, a minimum 92mm diameter for the ring size and a minimum landing size of 110mm. CEFAS concluded there are still a lot of scientific uncertainties e.g. there is a perceived risk of area and seasonal displacement that may have knock-on consequences, so together with IFREMER they will try to provide.

The vice-chair, Mr Portus, indicated it was unfortunate that there was no representative from Ifremer available to assist evaluation. From an UK perspective a seasonal closure of the eastern channel during August and July would be agreeable, as well as a closure of the Bay de Seine in October. Agreement for vessels under 15m was less likely as those vessels are managed differently in the UK and they are not part of a Producer Organisation. The UK administration would not accept new measures without seeing more and better supporting scientific evidence, for example, in relation to the impacts of selectivity measures on the survival rate of scallops and the size at maturity in both Eastern and Western Channel.

Mr Boyle agreed that biological differences between the Eastern and Western Channel which influences the required management measures and lack of data need to be addressed before agreement could be reached. For example there is not enough data to support survival rate increases through increasing the ring diameter to 92mm. He agreed that what applies to one Member State should apply to all, but confirmed that the Irish have not yet initiated a trial using 92mm rings. Mr Trebilcock asked Dr Bell about the impact of the under 15m vessels in the Bay de Seine. Dr Bell responded that CEFAS had no evidence to support their removal from the fishery.

The French members referred to a STECF report which evaluated that increasing the ring diameter to 92mm increased gear selectivity positively. UK members commented that the STECF report was inconclusive about scallops survival changes using larger rings. The report states "A change...to a 92mm ring size...in the Baie of the Seine may result in a substantial reduction of catches of undersized scallops, but some losses of commercial scallop catches may occur as well."

The participants agreed that there is a need for a regional management plan for all vessels and discussions should continue, if possible at the NWWAC meetings in July. In the meantime, the chairs indicated that the French and UK administration will continue their discussions.

**ACTION:** The NWWAC to continue discussion on King Scallops to develop a regional management proposal.

#### 4. Seabass

- Overview of the ICES Benchmark meeting (21<sup>st</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018)

Ms Crockard presented an overview of the discussion at the ICES Benchmark meeting. The general conclusion of the meeting was that there is still a lack of scientific data. The Secretariat will distribute the report to the General Assembly.

The discussion highlighted the frustration of the industry with the management system in place for this species, as the perception of abundance differs between observations at sea and in surveys and the efforts to bring this to the attention of the Commission. The Commission recognises the frustration and the difficulties around managing the species. Alternative means are required to control fishing mortality. The AC was invited to bring forward ideas.

Due to the lack of progress of the ICES Benchmark meeting, the meeting decided that any further discussion on Focus Group level would be postponed till after the ICES advice.

**ACTION:** After publication of the ICES advice on seabass, the need for a Focus Group on Seabass would be evaluated.

#### 5. Undulate Ray

Ms. Gamblin introduced the topic to the meeting. The industry did not understand the decision of the Commission to maintain the level of the TAC for undulate ray, despite the high discards levels. Mr. Leblanc added that the ban on this species originated from misperception between scientists on the status of the stock. Scientific observation on commercial fishing vessels have confirmed the information provided by industry that undulate ray can be locally abundant. This abundance is not reflected in the advice, and has resulted in significant discards.

French industry members proposed to send a letter to the Commission to remind them about their commitment at the December Council to request ICES to provide earlier scientific advice on all stocks of undulate ray.

The Commission explained that the sub-TAC for undulate ray was set up based on industry recommendations and following subsequent ICES advice. This advice combines both the east and west Channel (ICES area 7.de), whereas the sub-TAC separates both areas. To the EC request, ICES responded that the earliest they can assess the advice is September, unless STECF can re-assess the stock status.

Due to the limited time, it was decided that the draft letter by Ms Gamblin, requesting earlier scientific advice, would be finalised by correspondence.

**ACTION:** A draft letter, provided by the French industry, will be distributed to support the EC request to ICES to provide earlier advice on undulate ray.

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

1	The NWWAC to continue discussion on King Scallops to develop a regional management proposal.
2	After publication of the ICES advice on seabass, the need for a Focus Group on Seabass would be evaluated.
3	A draft letter, provided by the French industry, will be distributed to support the EC request to ICES to provide earlier advice on undulate ray.

## Annex 1 – List of Participants

<b>NWWAC members</b>		
Pascal	Coquet	France Pêche Durable et Responsable
Jim	Portus	SWFPO
Anna	Szczodrowska	European Anglers Alliance
Bruno	Dachicourt	European Transport Federation
Caroline	Gamblin	CNPMEM
Debbie	Crockard	Seas at Risk
Dominique	Thomas	CMEOP
Emiel	Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Emmanuel	Kelberine	CRPMEM de Bretagne
Geert	Meun	Stichting van de Nederlandse Visserij / Dutch Fisheries Organisation (2)
Gerald	Hussenot Desenonges	Bluefish
Guy	Le Moigne	CDPMEM du Finistère, Comité Départemental des Pêches Maritimes et des Élevages Marins 29
Heather	Hamilton	ClientEarth
Hugo	Boyle	Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation
Irene	Kingma	Dutch Elasmobranch Society
Javier	López	Oceana
Jean-Marie	Robert	Association Nationale des Organisations de Producteurs
John	Lynch	Irish Fishermen's Organisation
John	Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary
Lionel	Bottin	CDPMEM du Calvados, Comité Départemental des Pêches Maritimes et des Élevages Marins 14
Lydia	Chaparro	Fundació ENT
Manon	Joguet	FROM Nord
Mathieu	Vimard	OPN
Maué	Air	European Bureau for Conservation and Development
Mike	Park	SWFPA
Nicolas	LeBlanc	CRPMEM de Normandie
Oliver	Lepretre	Fundació ENT
Paul	Trebilcock	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations
Paul	MacDonald	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Stéphane	Pinto	CRPMWM Hauts-de-France
Victor	Bouvard	Fédération des Organisations de Producteurs de la Pêche Artisanale
<b>Observers</b>		
Jonathan	Shrives	European Commission
Marta	Garcia	Spanish administration
Ana	Maurer	Spanish administration
Juana	Posa Posa	Spanish administration
Glenn	Quelch	EFCA
Alex	Kinninmonth	Stichting BirdLife Europe, represented by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Andrew	Lawler	CEFAS
Enda	Conneely	IIMRO
Ewen	Bell	CEFAS

Fintan	Kelly	Birdwatch Ireland
Francis	O'Donnell	Irish Fish Producers Organisation
Jean Christophe	Vandavelde	PEW
José Manuel	Beltrán	OPP-LUGO
Juan Carlos	Corrás Arias	Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco
Karen	Vanstaen	CEFAS
Luís Francisco	Marin	OPPAO Ondarroa
Oscar	Sagué	IFSUA
Patrick	Murphy	Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation
Peter	Lovie	SWFPA
Purificación	Fernández Alvarez	Asociación Nacional de Armadores de Buques de Pesca de Gran Sol
Sean	O'Donoghue	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation
Vera	Coelho	PEW
<b>NWWAC Secretariat</b>		
Conor	Nolan	Executive Secretary
Sara	Vandamme	Deputy Executive Secretary
Deirdre	Hoare	Executive Assistant
Rachel	Maher	Finance and administration Executive Assistant

NWWAC Document  
 Chairman: Pascal Coquet  
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