



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

## MINUTES

### HORIZONTAL WORKING GROUP

**Tuesday 10 March 2020**

**Madrid 14:00 – 17:30**

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all participants and informed them that the Secretariat was notified only around 1pm that the Spanish government is looking at severe measures regarding the Coronavirus outbreak which apparently is not under control in Madrid. There was high uncertainty around the availability of the meeting room tomorrow, and even now the NWWAC is the only group that still is allowed to meet in this building, thus the meetings scheduled for Wednesday 11 March are all cancelled. The Chair informed participants that they can change their flight schedules and that any additional charges incurred will be reimbursed by the Secretariat subject to Commission rules.

Prior apologies for this meeting were received from Enda Conneely (Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation), Gerald Hussenot (Blue Fish). However, several NWWAC members have already left to catch rescheduled flights following the announcement.

Remotely connected are Irene Kingma (NSAC), Jean-Christophe Vandeveld (The Pew Trusts) and Matilde Vallerani (NWWAC), as well as Jonathan Shrivess and Caroline Alibert (DG MARE) at a later stage during the meeting.

The agenda was approved as drafted.

#### a. Action points from the minutes of the last meeting (06 September 2019, Dublin)

1	NWWAC is asking membership directly to respond to the consultation on the Review of the State Aid Framework
The Secretariat prepared a letter to the COM stating that the AC wouldn't have provided a detailed response. Sent 16 September 2019, available on website.	
2	NWWAC members to supply Secretariat with additional information on the choke identification tool.
Final advice sent on 18 October 2019, available on website. No response received to date.	
3	COM to discuss possibility of deadline extension for Choke advice. Based on this, the Secretariat to contact all members with exact deadline.
Final advice sent on 18 October 2019, available on website. No response received to date.	



## 2. COM overview on ongoing dossiers and upcoming advice requests

Jonathan Shrives (DG MARE) stated that France asked the COM for STECF to evaluate the current measures in Article 13 of TAC and quota Regulation (remedial measures for cod and whiting in the Celtic Sea) but also any other potential measures that might provide an equal result in terms of protection of cod and whiting. The COM had to introduce remedial measures under the TAC and quota Regulation, the intention for this year is that this is done through regionalisation. STECF technical experts are looking at those measures in comparison with other measures. A plenary meeting is scheduled next week (might be a written procedure plenary due to Coronavirus) to review all the proposed measures. The AC and the MSG can then consider them and make informed decisions on what to include in the Discard Plan.

The COM always highly values the advice from the AC and it is key that the AC puts forward proactively any suggestions that they have.

**Question** by Hugo Gonzales (ANASOL):

For some MS that have fleets with trawlers, a 100 mm mesh has to be used according to Article 13. There is an exception saying that if STECF issues a report certifying that certain fleets are catching less than 1.5% of cod, these trawlers may use a 80mm mesh, on the condition that there is a square mesh of 160mm (as established by Technical Measures for Celtic Sea before the TAC and Quota Regulations). Could the COM please give feedback on this?

JS replied that this gear has been previously to the STECF for assessment. A lot of the work done concerning selectivity is about technical characteristics and also using historical data (i.e. when there was cod). The COM asked STECF to look at the different gear options in Article 13 and compare them. Moreover, STECF was also asked to consider the percentage catch composition of the different fleets to understand how much room for manoeuvre is there. The COM proposal did look different to the Council outcome and the COM needs to understand which vessels are impacted by this, how many vessels are caught or exempted by the legislation. These questions are being submitted to the STECF as well.

**Question** by Julien Lamothe (FROM Sud-Ouest):

He believes the AC needs to reassert the role that we play regarding regionalisation and the importance of our contribution to the establishment and implementation of management measures. Both AC and MS contributions were not considered in the preparation of the COM proposal for discussion at December Council.

Furthermore, he asked for clarification on the reply given to Mr. Gonzales. It looks like the COM requested for evaluation of measures that were proposed in December, does this mean measures were taken without being assessed beforehand?

JS replied that the list of measures that are going to STECF to be looked at are the results of Council. One of the main reasons to do so is that the raised fishing line now applies in a different way and to a different group of vessels than was in the COM proposal. It is important to understand the change in selectivity that will occur because of that and the economic consequences. In the COM proposal, the raised fishing line was mostly for TR1 which had historically targeted haddock, cod and whiting combined, but the result of Council is way wider. Moreover, most of the work on the raised fishing line in the Celtic Sea was done looking at 80mm mesh, while there are different gear options and combinations in the Discard Plan, which might change the selectivity.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

In terms of both AC and MS involvement in regionalisation, the initial proposal had been based on Technical Measures from the Discard Plan and COM limited number of options. The current DP has a range of different gears to choose from based on historic analysis and previous assessments by STECF. Council disagreed with COM proposal of 120mm and now least selective measure is in place only for six months. It should still be the case that stakeholders, such as the AC, inform the COM on the measures to be included. Last year neither the Bycatch Reduction Plan from the MS, of which the evaluation by STECF was not positive, nor the AC advice included remedial measures. DG MARE would like to see meaningful remedial measures coming from the AC through regionalisation.

**Question** by Jean-Christophe Vandeveld (The Pew Charitable Trust):

Concerning the legality of the process of discussing among MS and COM regarding Art 13. This Regulation has been adopted by Council and now we are discussing alternative measures to be adopted, which is the way to do this from a legal point of view?

A remark on the alternative measures to be proposed: there seems to be an idea of hotspots for cod where there should be no fishing. This has been attempted for cod in the North Sea without any monitoring on its effectiveness. Outcomes need to be measured and it is important to have a monitoring system in place before actually implementing such a measure.

Caroline Alibert (DG MARE) replied that it is not about replacing what is currently in the Regulation, rather about implementing it. Article 13 paragraph 1b sets some options: raised fishing line, or any means proven to be at least selective for the avoidance of cod. This is what STECF has been asked to look at to establish what can be proven to be effective.

JS clarified that there are two parallel tasks to work on: one is the implementation of Article 13, the other is looking forward to 2021 to see what will be in place then. Measures need to continue to preserve cod and whiting and it is preferred that these are established through the Discard Plan, i.e. through regionalisation.

JCV expressed a remark on timing: we have decisions taken in December 2019 on measures to be implemented from 1 January 2020, but we are just now discussing about alternative measures, which will potentially be implemented in September 2020. It's a temporal gap between the agreed TACs and the measures accompanying them.

CA replied that some dispositions are being applied since 1 January and regard mesh sizes. Starting on 1 June, there will also be the raised fishing line. In 2021 JR will be implemented to improve the situation even more and this will allow the fleet to adapt. Time is needed for the sector to adapt and for measures to be evaluated by the STECF.

The Chair pointed out the AC intention to have a closer look at the different legislation on cod and whiting stocks in the Celtic Sea and to come up with a solution to the problem at hand. The AC has already started collecting input for advice.

**Question** by Caroline Gamblin (CNP MEM):

Is it possible to get a copy of the COM request to STECF for clarification on the questions posed by the COM?



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

JS will need to check regarding the timing of publication on STECF website. The COM will also keep the Secretariat updated on any developments concerning STECF work on this.

### **3. Collaboration with the NWW MSG**

#### **a. Joint Recommendations Discard Plan 2021**

Emiel Brouckaert attended the MS High Level Group meeting in the morning. One of the main topics discussed was the Joint Recommendation to the Discard Plan 2021.

In particular, there was a discussion on the need for high survivability exemptions for sole, which is a new one, and for plaice (extension of existing exemption). Other temporary exemptions were also considered in need of being renewed.

DG MARE is working with STECF to avoid complicated work with the MS, which took place over the past two years in August. Therefore, the JR deadline has been amended (1 of May 2020). An STECF working group is planned on 18-22 May to consider the JR and a plenary will occur in written procedure to approve the findings. STECF advice will be available by the end of June and the new Delegated Act should be then finalised by the end of July. Their experts meeting on the STECF report is planned on 6-7 July.

Elsa Tudal, representing the French delegation to the MSG, added that two more main points resulted from the HLG meeting which will need the contribution of the AC:

- Definition of directed fisheries. France has suggested in the different MSG (South Western Waters, North Sea and North Western Waters) to review some percentages which had been already discussed in 2017 and on which MSG agreed. A draft of Joint Recommendation must be submitted by MS by 15 August, which will then be evaluated by STECF.
- A letter sent by DG MARE regarding conservation measures for cod and whiting in the Celtic Sea (Article 13 of TAC & quota Regulation). The COM invited the MS to elaborate Joint Recommendations to define medium-terms measures to preserve these stocks. At this stage, there have only been discussions at MS level, but regionalisation will be a key element to define such technical measures. The MS will reply next month to the COM to know which devices will be kept, which new ones will be introduced on top of those already in place in the Discard Plan 2020, to assure proper measures are taken for both cod and whiting.

At the previous Technical Group held on February 6, the MSG asked the AC to provide additional information on the existing temporary exemptions and also information or even simply identification of possible new exemptions/of modification of current ones that may be needed.

Input has already been received from OIGs (ClientEarth, Pew, Dutch Elasmobranch Society, BirdWatch Ireland, Irish Sea Sanctuary, Fundacion ENT and Oceana) who sent an overarching opinion based around the input provided last year.

Also, Pescagalicia-Arpega-Obarco sent their input to the Secretariat, recommending eliminating the Boarfish from the TAC and quotas as it would facilitate the fulfilment of this “choke species” for those countries with quota 0 of this species.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

The MSG has not been in the position to prepare a draft to share with the AC for comments at the moment. Discussion on the AC input on the JR was planned in the WGs, however with the meetings tomorrow being cancelled, WGs Chairs were urged by the Chair to implement members consultation via written procedure, with the support of the Secretariat. The Secretariat also distributed a document with an overview with all the exemptions in place and members comments on it are expected.

**ACTION:** WGs Chairs to implement members consultation via written procedure, with the support of the Secretariat.

Sean O'Donoghue (KFO) pointed out that the UK leaving the EU is a key issue to address in the preparation of the DP for 2021, especially with consideration of area 6, the Channel and the Irish Sea.

JS replied that at the moment UK is not involved in the MSG group and current negotiations are relatively high-level. The COM will keep the AC informed on any update on this.

#### **b. Implementation of Technical Measures and Landing Obligation**

Article 31 of Technical Measures Regulation states that by 31 December 2020 and every third year thereafter, and on the basis of information supplied by MS and the relevant ACs and following evaluation by STECF, the COM shall submit a report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of this Regulation.

**ACTION:** The AC should look at this at its next meeting in Ghent, together with a discussion on the implementation of the Landing Obligation (questionnaire received last year and there was no AC response, members were invited to reply individually).

#### **c. EFCA report on Landing Obligation**

EFCA prepared an evaluation of compliance with the LO in the NWW region over the period 2016 and 2017. The AC had asked for an EFCA representative to attend this meeting and provide an overview on the report main findings, unfortunately it was not possible. However, EFCA informed the Secretariat on the intention to plan a workshop with the AC on the LO, tentatively in summer 2020.

Sean O'Donoghue (who is chairing the FG on Control) added that EFCA is running a number of workshops, for example one was held with the PelAC on 5 March. The intention is to deal with the control and enforcement of LO. The FG Control was looking at July 2020 (around the Ghent meeting) for organising the workshop which should involve the whole membership of the AC.

An issue to point out is that EFCA only published a four-page summary of the evaluation report, while the full-length, more detailed report has not been published, even though it includes very serious conclusions. He added that this is not acceptable in terms of corporate governance of an EU body. EFCA has to give the AC the opportunity to be well prepared and informed about the topic.

**ACTION:** AC to write to EFCA asking for the detailed full-length analysis.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

#### d. TM directed fisheries definition

Direct fisheries definition must be given by 15 August. This has already been discussed previously in the meeting. Secretariat to ask for input on this advice to the membership. Members can have a look at the relevant article in the Regulation and communicate what in their opinion the AC should put forward.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to disseminate relevant information and ask for input from membership.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to prepare a timeline including the different tasks, contributions needed and deadlines for the AC.

#### 4. Brexit and future functioning of the ACs

The AC sent a letter to the COM requesting for clarification on NWWAC UK membership after 31 January 2020. The COM replied that, until the end of this year, no change is expected for the membership.

Negotiations on a high-level are in process between EU and UK targeting a fisheries agreement, expected by 1 July, and a free trade agreement by 31 December. The AC will keep an eye on these items, but all is depending on the outcomes of the ongoing high-level discussions.

Julien Lamothe (FROM Sud-Ouest) commented that the AC needs to think in more detail than it has been doing so far on the future functioning of the AC. There is uncertainty on what is going to happen in 2021: UK colleagues are still members of the AC and are taking part in the AC work, but this will change in 2020. As a matter of fact, this is already happening with UK institutions no longer taking part in EU work. Of course the AC would like to continue working with UK partners, however, the question on how this will work from an operational point of view needs to be considered. Moreover, with UK members leaving the AC membership, there will be important consequences on the budget to take into account as well.

The Chair asked members to share any specific suggestions on how the AC can approach these issues.

Olivier Le Nezet (Comité des Pêches du Morbihan) pointed out that Brexit has consequences for the AC not only in terms of budget, but also in terms of organisation of fisheries in Europe. It is important to remember that the role of the EU is to maintain the unity of those that remain. The final decision on the approach to take rests of course in the hands of the legislators.

The AC will only continue with those that remain in the EU and there must be improved trust. Clear rules are needed, and it is important that COM has a transparent discourse on this. The AC is going to have different budget and the COM will have to adopt exceptional measures, but most importantly the AC will have to redefine its role and ask for transparency on who has a stake in the UK, as there needs to be a unified position on this.

According to Sean O'Donoghue (KFO), there are three main points to consider:

- High level trade negotiations: the AC doesn't really have a role in these, and according to him they are not an issue for the AC.
- As confirmed by the COM, from here to the end of the year, the UK are full members.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

- AC position after 1 January 2021: there will have to be legal amendments to the CFP to allow this AC to continue in the future. Recommendation should be put forward on how the AC could be operating from 1 January. This could also be done in collaboration with other ACs. Even though the final decision is in the hands of legislators, the AC should have an input in the legal change.

According to Dimitri Rogoff (CRPMEM Normandie), the UK should not depart definitively from the AC. There will still be the need to work with UK, beyond political and trade aspects. The place for the UK in the AC is strictly linked to the agreements resulting from the negotiations between the EU and the UK. If these agreements include co-management arrangements for example, they could have a place in the AC, even if most likely very different from the current one. Communication with the UK cannot be stopped completely, it is important to have a good relationship with them, to avoid conflicts, and there should be a space available for these communications.

JL pointed out that it was not clear to him why the AC should be concerned about the regulatory aspects. ACs are not going to disappear, they are going to continue operating under the CFP. The AC needs to find the right framework to work with the UK but cannot include UK representatives as it cannot include members from outside the EU to decide on EU matters. Therefore, it is important to define how the AC will function from an operational point of view without UK members, and at the same time figure out a way to include the UK in the discussion on the management of areas of shared interest. The COM also needs to provide guidelines.

**ACTION:** A Focus Group should be set up to work on AC functioning after Brexit. The Secretariat to forward an email requesting for expression of interest in being part of the group.

Patrick Murphy (ISWFPO) proposed “collaboration” and “partnership” as the terms to be used when referring to the relationship between the UK and the AC.

Hugo Gonzales (ANASOL) intervened saying that the UK exports 70% of its products, including seafood. The EU fleets fish in UK waters. There are cross-cutting interests in our globalised world which we have to deal with. There is also the possibility that the two parties will reach an agreement which is not too harmful to anyone. The UK can't be member of the AC, but there is an international organisation, NEAFC, gathering in November each year in London discussing on matters of international waters. Maybe a supranational body of this kind could be a solution, maybe the AC could play this role.

SOD clarified that Annex 3 of the CFP will no longer be valid after 1 January, the AC area will change and Annex 3 will need to be reviewed. This is an opportunity to make the situation workable. Of course, a “neighbourhood” agreement needs to be put in place, something similar is already implemented with Norway. The NEAFC suggestion by Hugo could seriously be looked at, together with other option the AC needs to consider, with a view to bettering the post Brexit situation.

## 5. Collaboration with ICES

### a. Feedback from MIAC and MIACO meetings (16-17 January)

The Chair attended the two meetings on behalf of the AC. MIAC was chaired by the LDAC this year, the task will be taken by the NSAC for next year. Minutes from both meetings will hopefully be ready



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

soon (including presentations from MIACO) and will be distributed to members.

The main topics discussed at MIAC include:

- Discussion on rebuilding speed of stocks below  $B_{lim}$ , for which 0 TAC advice is given according to the rules ICES is following in their assessment. Also, impaired recruitment was mentioned. Reference was made to ICES WKREBUILD and one of the main outcomes was that the rebuilding speed should be managers' prerogative, instead of just going for 0 TAC advice.
- ACs commented that when an agreed reference point for stock advice is changed, the transition of the consequences to the fishing opportunities should be gradual. ICES commented that the benchmarking framework is reviewing that as part of the quality program.
- Climate change considerations in the stock assessment: the EU funded two climate fisheries projects and ICES is waiting for results to answer this question. By the end of this year able to say which groups will take these items into account. There is the possibility that a workshop will be organized on "reference points in a changing environment".
- ICES established a Working Group on Economics and the AC asked for information on its state of play and objectives. The Group is chaired by Hazel Curtis from Seafish and at the moment is up and running well. No further info available yet.
- Stakeholders' engagement in ICES Advisory Processes: ACs to follow up outcomes and decisions of ACOM to be held in March 2020 in order to develop an engagement strategy and identify the resources. No further info available yet.

The main topics discussed at MIACO include:

- ICES quality check and control of data / quality assurance of advice process. Suggestions to review the categorization of stocks for categories 5 and 6.
- Presentation on bycatch definition and roadmap internally in ICES to achieve this.
- Each AC should review the relevant ecosystem overviews.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to review the relevant ecosystem overviews to identify if it is worthwhile to have a further analysis. Each member is also invited to have a look and express their opinion on whether it is important to discuss them at the next AC meeting.

- Working with commercial data and stakeholders information: suggestion for ICES to form a small group with other interested parties to discuss what makes sense in respect of stakeholders' contributions. The objective of this group would be to convince the COM to accept and include more stakeholder information in the advice process.

Sean O'Donoghue (KFO) identified some relevant issues on these topics:

- Stakeholder information: some additional helpful measures, that would be done collectively, were agreed. One is that the stakeholder information can be provided as an AC unified submission and should be supplied in advance to the relevant working groups. This information was already circulated to members by the Secretariat
- In the past the stakeholder information given at advice drafting groups was significantly changed by ACOM. PelAC got answer that ICES has full editorial license. However, if ACOM is making significant changes to stakeholder advice, where the substance is changed or a key point is excluded, the AC must be informed prior to that case and has the right to remove all stakeholder information at that stage. Still no feedback from ICES or ACOM on this.
- Quality assurance issue: ICES have made this an absolute priority in their strategic plan and





CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

is moving forward.

- Action points from MIACO meeting should be issued within one month of the meeting, but nothing has been received yet.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to write to ICES to ask for issuing of action points from MIACO meeting as a matter of urgency.

**b. NWWAC participation in ICES meetings (WGMIXFISH, WKDem, WK FlatNSCS, WK Celtic, WKSHEAR)**

Members who attended the meetings were invited to provide a brief summary of the topics discussed and of the outcomes.

Hugo Gonzales (ANASOL) reported on WGMIXFISH, held in Copenhagen on 3-5 March, attended by Angela Cortina (ANASOL) on behalf of the AC (Puri Fernandez couldn't attend unfortunately). The objective of the meeting was to define mixed fisheries, identify areas for improvement and establish a roadmap addressing the relevant constraints. More financial and human resources are needed, as well as more data. In particular, stakeholders would like ICES assessments to include also socio-economic data. Selectivity and choke species were also discussed, as well as the stakeholder contribution to the analysis of mixed fisheries. It was suggested that deadlines and objectives are clearly identified to properly organize the work to be done.

Jenni Grossmann (ClientEarth) attended two benchmark meetings in February in Copenhagen, WKDem and WK Celtic. Scientists were gathering to go through existing stock assessments to agree on a methodology and consider if previous assessments needed revisiting, if reference points should be changes for example.

Sander Meyns (Rederscentrale) attended two WKFlatNSCS, one in November 2019 (report provided and disseminated to members), and one in February 2020 (report expected).

Emiel Brouckaert attended WKSHEAR on 15 January. The meeting focused on how ICES manages risk and uncertainty in the advice framework. Risk and management strategy evaluation (MSE) was discussed as well. MSE involves conducting a large number of long-term simulations of the relevant fishery system (including the assessment and management procedures) under the proposed harvest control rule and properly taking into account the uncertainties.

SOD pointed out that the attendance at ICES advice drafting groups is very poor from the NWWAC. It is important that the AC attends these meetings. The person attending should have knowledge of the stocks concerned, so that he/she can have a significant input into stakeholder information.

**ACTION:** Members who attended the aforementioned meetings are expected to send a summary report to the Secretariat for dissemination.

**6. Collaboration with NSAC on skates and rays**

A request came in from the Scheveningen Group for a joint NSAC – NWWAC advice on measures for skates & rays in relation to the Landing Obligation exemptions. Irene Kingma (Dutch Elasmobranch Society), proposed on behalf of the NSAC to organize a joint ACs Focus Group to address this. This



advice should be ready by 1 May as it would be included in the Joint Recommendations MS need to submit. It should focus on three main aspects: selectivity, avoidance and survival.

Moreover, the discussion on possible management measures for skates and rays could possibly result in a new advice to the COM, also taking into account the recommendations coming from the SUMARIS project. The final advice should be planned for the beginning of July, so that it can be presented at the NWWAC meeting in Ghent. A starting point for this advice could be the previous work done by the NWWAC FG on Skates & Rays. John Lynch, who was chairing this FG previously, has already confirmed his intention to be involved.

Ms Kingma proposed to discuss these items in a NSAC & NWWAC face-to-face meeting to be organized around the end of this month (depending on how the coronavirus situation develops, a web meeting can be organized).

**Question** from HG:

His producer organisation is looking at asking ICES to review the biomass status of the Blue skate. This species is included in the prohibited species list. However, vessels from different fleets have been experiencing high abundance of this species for a few years now and it looks like the biomass is higher than expected.

**ACTION:** A Focus Group on Skates & Rays should be re-established. The Secretariat to circulate call for expression of interest to participate in the group.

**ACTION:** Hugo Gonzales to forward the relevant information to the Secretariat in order for the FG to include discussion on whether the blue skate should be taken off the prohibited species list.

IK replied that ICES cannot evaluate whether a species included in that list in the TAC & quota Regulation, it is rather a political list. The AC should ask clarification to the COM on that list and its purpose.

## **7. Administrative issues**

### **a. New reimbursement form**

The Secretariat reviewed the reimbursement rules and form. Updated information is available on the NWWAC website. Reimbursement from now on will be done electronically with scans attached.

### **b. Election of Chairs**

The Secretariat reminded that this year all NWWAC official positions are up for elections (chairs of WGs and ExCom, president of GA). Also, the OIGs and industry colleges need to agree on their designated ExCom members. A procedure will be ready with more details by the Ghent meeting and elections are planned September at the Dublin meeting.

## **8. NWWAC communication strategy**

The Secretariat presented the update of the AC Communication strategy, prepared with the support of BIM communication officers. The strategy investigated the target audiences and the channels



available to reach them. For each audience, objectives and targets have been identified, as well as the action to take to reach these them. An evaluation of the accomplishments of the strategy should be done yearly and presented to the GA in September.

The strategy was distributed to the ExCom for comments on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, deadline for approval is in two weeks.

## 9. Review of progress, summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted (Chair)

1	WGs Chairs to implement members consultation via written procedure, with the support of the Secretariat.
2	The AC should look at Article 31 of the Technical Measures at its next meeting in Ghent, together with a discussion on the implementation of the Landing Obligation (questionnaire received last year and there was no AC response, members were invited to reply individually).
3	AC to write to EFCA asking for the detailed full-length report on evaluation of compliance to the Landing Obligation.
4	Secretariat to disseminate relevant information on directed fisheries definition and ask for input from membership.
5	Secretariat to prepare a timeline including the different tasks, contributions needed and deadlines for the AC.
6	A Focus Group should be set up to work on AC functioning after Brexit. The Secretariat to forward an email requesting for expression of interest in being part of the group.
7	Secretariat to review the relevant ICES ecosystem overviews to identify if it is worthwhile to have a further analysis. Each member is also invited to have a look and express their opinion on whether it is important to discuss them at the next AC meeting.
8	Secretariat to write to ICES to ask for issuing of action points from MIACO meeting as a matter of urgency.
9	Members who attended ICES meetings are expected to send a summary report to the Secretariat for dissemination.
10	A Focus Group on Skates & Rays should be re-established. The Secretariat to circulate call for expression of interest to participate in the group.
11	Hugo Gonzales to forward the relevant information to the Secretariat in order for the Skates & Rays FG to include discussion on whether the blue skate should be taken off the prohibited species list.

## 10. Participants list

### Members

Name	Organisation
Caroline Gamblin	CNPMEM
Dimitri Rogoff	Comité Régional des Pêches de Normandie (France)
Dominique Thomas	O.P. C.M.E. MMN
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Erwan Quemeneur	CDPMEM 29
Fintan Kelly	BirdWatch Ireland
Geert Meun	VisNed - Netherlands



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

Hugo Boyle	Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation
Hugo Gonzalez	ARVI
Irene Kingma	Dutch Elasmobranch Society (NEV)
Javier Lopez	Oceana
Jean-Christophe Vandevelde	The Pew Charitable Trusts
Jenni Grossmann	ClientEarth
John Lynch	Irish Fishermen's Organisation
Jose Luis Otero Gonzalez	Lonja de la Coruna S.A.
Jose Manuel Fernandez Beltran	OPP-LUGO
Juan Carlos Corras Arias	PESCAGALICIA-ARPEGA-OBARCO
Julien Lamothe	ANOP
Liborio Martínez Latorre	IFSUA
Lionel Bottin	CDPM Calvados
Luis Francisco Marin	OPPAO
Lydia Chaparro Elies	Fundació ENT
Marina Le Gurun	BLUE FISH
Mathieu Vimard	Organisation des Pêcheurs Normands
Olivier Le Nezet	CDPMEM 56
Olivier Lepretre	CRPMEM Hauts de France
Pascal Coquet	France Pêche Durable
Patrick Murphy	Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation
Sean O'Donoghue	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation LTD
Suso (Jesús) Lourido	OPP77 - PUERTO DE CELEIRO
Thierry Kerzhero	CDPMEM du Morbihan

#### Observers

Name	Organisation
Caroline Alibert	DG MARE
Elsa Tudal	French Administration
Jonathan Shrives	DG MARE
Marta Ballesteros	Cetmar
Sonia Muller	CRPMEM de Normandie

**Secretariat:** Mo Mathies, Monica Negoita, Matilde Vallerani