



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

MINUTES

WORKING GROUP 4 - IRISH SEA

Virtual

Thursday 03 September 2020

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair John Lynch welcomed all participants. Apologies were received from Javier Lopez, Oceana. The agenda was adopted.

Action points from the minutes of the last meeting (07 July 2020, virtual)

1	WG Group to participate in further projects regarding Irish Sea that arise out of WKIRISH.
	The Secretariat proposes a regional workshop on the topic of WKIRISH possibly in conjunction with BIM and the Marine Institute.
2	The Secretariat will collect and collate any further queries on the ICES advice from the Working Group members and send them to Ghislain.
	Questions were forwarded and Ghislain's replies were communicated to members.
3	Members to send their comments/input to feed the drafting of the NWWAC advice to the Commission's TAC & quotas proposal
	See point 3 below
4	Members to inform the Secretariat if they want to continue with the current Chair and Vice-Chair and delay the elections until next year September, or rather wish to see elections this September.
	See point 2 below

Discussion on the follow up on WKIRISH

The ecosystem approach that was developed by the WKIRISH project is of great importance to the Irish Sea. ACOM is looking at how to best integrate the ecosystem approach into the advice actively during September. This was also brought up by the PELAC when in discussions with ICES. This Working Group should really emphasize this approach is incorporated into the Irish Sea assessment going forward. This group should review the work of WKIRISH and study it in more detail.

An offer was made to all participants of the WKIRISH group to be named co-authors on the final paper for publication. Paper has been submitted and is currently being reviewed prior to publication. ICES and the COM seem to be keen to adopt the ecosystems-based approach to fisheries management.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

As a number of members of the NWWAC Working Group 4 have been active in the WKIRISH project, a follow-up should be organised and ICES (Ghislain Chouinard or Colm Lordan) should be invited to participate and present the outcomes of the ICES internal discussions regarding the inclusion of the WKIRISH process in the assessment process. Due to the COVID crisis, these discussions have not been concluded and the WKIRISH approach was not included in the preparation for the 2021 advice. This follow-up could either be included in the next WG 4 meeting, but preferably as a small Focus Group style meeting later in the autumn.

ACTION: Secretariat to prepare proposal for virtual Focus Group style meeting for WKIRISH discussion for late autumn.

2. Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair

On August 11, the Secretariat distributed an information note on the proposal for a 1-year extension of the current NWWAC structures. At the virtual NWWAC meetings held in July, the Secretariat proposed a one-year extension of the current structures due to the extraordinary circumstances this AC faces, mainly the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis and the uncertainties of Brexit.

The Secretariat has not received any comments following the meetings. Thus, it is proposed that Working Group 4 confirms the proposed arrangements as per below in the upcoming September meetings.

The members of this group confirm the extension of the Chair and Vice-Chair positions for one year.

3. Input on the draft advice 'Fishing Opportunities 2021'

Inputs were received from Oceana, The Pew Charitable Trusts and ClientEarth forwarded to WG members prior to the meeting. ClientEarth also shared three briefings which were distributed prior to this meeting including the NGO response directly on the Commission consultation. These do not address specific stocks individually but contain a section addressing bycatch stocks with 0 catch advice for example.

The Secretariat shared the stocks spreadsheet (which was circulated before the meeting) for discussion with members. Outcomes from this discussion would feed the preparation of the advice on Fishing Opportunities 2021 by the Advice Drafting Group on 04 September. It is envisaged that the ExCom will approve the final document on 11 September. The deadline for submission to the Commission is 20 September.

All comments from members were included in the spreadsheet to then be reflected in the final advice. Overall, these were the main points discussed:

- The importance of incorporating the ecosystem approach developed by WKIrish into the ICES Irish Sea assessment.
- Stock identity issues that still need work on (cod, haddock, plaice), particularly in the division



line between the Irish Sea and the Celtic Sea.

ACTION: Follow up letter to the COM mentioning that catches of cod, whiting and haddock in the two Irish Sea statistical rectangles, 33E2 and 33E3, are included in the relevant assessment for the Celtic Sea, not in the Irish Sea assessment. It is not clear how this translates into setting the TACs for these stocks in the Irish Sea and Celtic Sea.

In the letter, mention this had been already pointed out in the NWWAC advice on Fishing Opportunities for 2020, under the Irish Sea paragraph.

- Revision of the cod assessment: the group recognises that ICES has put quality assurance as a priority in its work, but members wondered whether the other stocks had gone through the same rigorous assessment in terms of quality assurance.

4. Input on the draft advice 'Addressing Choke Risk in NWW after exemptions' for WG4 stocks

The Secretariat shared the Choke ID spreadsheet (which was circulated before the meeting) for discussion with members. Outcomes from this discussion will feed the preparation of the Choke advice by the Focus Group Landing Obligation.

All comments were directly included in the spreadsheet. Main points discussed included:

- Discard information remains very imprecise for both cod and whiting stocks: request that greater effort is made to improve the understanding of discard estimates and the effectiveness of the selectivity measures that have been in place in the Nephrops fishery.
- Need to assess/review the effectiveness of the cod closure in the Irish Sea. The topic will be further discussed at the next WG meeting.

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

1	Secretariat to prepare proposal for virtual Focus Group style meeting for WKIRISH discussion for late autumn.
2	Follow up letter to the COM mentioning that catches of cod, whiting and haddock in the two Irish Sea statistical rectangles, 33E2 and 33E3, are included in the relevant assessment for the Celtic Sea, not in the Irish Sea assessment. It is not clear how this translates into setting the TACs for these stocks in the Irish Sea and Celtic Sea.

6. List of participants

Name	Organisation
John Lynch	IFO
Norah Parke	KFO
Sean O'Donoghue	KFO
Hugo Boyle	ISEFPO



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

**NORTH WESTERN
WATERS**
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Jenni Grossmann	Client Earth
Fintan Kelly	Birdwatch Ireland
John Ward	IFPO
Johnny Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary
Jan Kappel	EAA
Mo Mathies	Secretariat
Matilde Vallerani	Secretariat