



## Draft MINUTES

### HORIZONTAL WORKING GROUP

Virtual meeting | 01 July 2021

#### 1 Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all participants and specifically the representatives from DG MARE and the NWW Member States Group. Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Caroline Gamblin, CNPMEM. The agenda was adopted. The Secretariat was given the floor to go through the action points from the last virtual meeting in March 2021. As there were 18 action points and the agenda for this meeting is very tight, a full update was uploaded to the Members Area on the website prior to this meeting and the Secretariat only addressed three specific items.

#### Action points

<b>3</b>	Secretariat to liaise with the COM on Inter-ACs meetings follow-up and preparation
	An Inter-AC meeting was held on 05 May and the COM presented on the revision of the Delegated Act regarding the functioning of the ACs. The COM has asked for submissions from the AC on questions/topics that need to be discussed. Members were contacted on 16 March for input and the Secretariat submitted the suggested NWWAC agenda points on 26 March. The next Inter-AC meeting will be held on 15 July and the COM will give an update on these. Updates from 5 May were made available to all members, who were also asked for input on the proposed templates, and a response was submitted on these to the COM on 28 May. Members were contacted for additional input for the meeting on 15 July by email on 26 May, no replies were received.
<b>7</b>	Secretariat to send a reminder to members regarding cetaceans bycatch project and further work on the topic.
	The Secretariat attended both NSAC and PelAC meetings where presentations on this project were made. The latest communication from the organisers was received on 18 June in which the proposed meeting for 01 July was postponed to 09 September due to a delay in the EC publishing the new LIFE call. Regarding direct participation in this project it was established that this is up to individual member organisations and that the ACs/Secretariats will act as distributors of information.
<b>11</b>	ExCom to approve the list of questions on control issues TCA as distributed by the Control Focus Group.
	The list of questions was circulated on Tuesday 09 March. An additional query arose from the meeting of WG4 regarding the management of closed areas in relation of the TCA. A response was prepared by the Focus Group, circulated to the HWG and finally approved by ExCom before being submitted to the Commission on 18 March. No reply has been received.



## 2 Dialogue with DG MARE: overview on ongoing dossiers and upcoming advice requests

- EU-UK negotiations state of play (Erik Lindebo)

The consultations with the UK on the TAC were concluded with a political agreement arrived at on 02 June and the written record published on 12 June following internal analysis. The commission is now preparing the TAC amendments which will hopefully be adopted by the Council later this month. Once this legal basis is adopted this will allow for quota swaps with the UK. The Commission has been in ongoing discussions on potential swaps with the UK but also critically with the member States and it is envisaged that the proposed swap pattern and processes are likely to mirror the current ones in place. The Commission will remain open to discuss any challenges in this regard but the emphasis is on making swapping possible, as soon as we have a legal base in form of a TAC amendment.

Following the conclusion of the consultations we can now focus on the Specialised Committee on Fisheries (SCF). The first meeting with the UK on this is scheduled for the third week of July. We are currently discussing the setting of the agenda for this meeting with the UK. What will be discussed in that first meeting includes issues such as timelines for our work, and what specific actions we need to be looking at for 2021, what working groups we would like to set up, including the formation of delegations on both sides, both for the SCF itself, but also regarding working groups once these eventually start working.

At the same time, before we could start formally the consultations with the UK, we had to have a mandate from the Council. We are still discussing the scope of this mandate with the Council which will guide our work for the SCF, so this is a parallel process. We will hopefully have more information on these two points in September after the summer break.

Finally, we will of course also prepare for the consultations later this year, for which we need to agree a specific timeline with the UK as well. DG MARE is reviewing the ICES advice that was published yesterday in relation to the consultation on fishing opportunities and we are looking forward to the AC contribution.

Chair: Is there any new information regarding the participation/involvement of ACs in the SCF?

EL: There is nothing new to report yet, only informal discussions were held with the UK about the setup of delegations. The overarching guideline is that experts are allowed to be part of these delegations. These experts could also be from the ACs. This still needs to be discussed also internally as to how the EU delegation will be best formed to perform efficiently while still respecting the views of all stakeholders.

Going forward, this will link also to the specific work that will be done by the working groups, for example on specific areas such as technical measures, where it is in our interest to bring in the appropriate experts who could be both from Member States or an Advisory Council for example. However, nothing has been decided, and this is still very much an open and ongoing discussion.



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- Technical Measures Regulation (Cristina Ribeiro)

We have the measures in place by the TAC regulation, one JR in 2020 and one in 2021 that have not been implemented. We received news from the UK about their implementing new measures as of September this year. The Commission has been working on implementing the JRs. Our intention is to implement the technical measures and the Discard Plan in one delegated act that will be in place until the end of 2022. In the best case scenario, the DA will be ready by November. Then there is the UK dimension of it, to be addressed under the SFC. Those results will have to be implemented by amending the DA. In terms of content, JR 2021 is very similar to JR 2020 except some modifications for CS and IS. We have requested STECF advice on these 2 modifications.

- Discard Plan (Cristina Ribeiro)

The Commission received the Joint Recommendations Discard Plan from the Member States, and STECF completed its report on this. The Commission is finalising its position and will contact the MS requesting to prepare a new version of the JR. The MS experts' group will be discussing this on 16 July.

Chair: What is the legal process regarding the Technical Measures brought forward by the UK for September?

CR: The Commission is now preparing a response to the UK notice, based on the input from the MS.

Sean O'Donoghue: What happens when a vessel crosses the borderline between management areas when fishing? Would this vessel have to change gears when crossing an imaginary line at sea? This cannot be done in practice. Has the COM considered this?

CR: I have no specific reply at this stage and would advise that this query is raised in writing.

**ACTION:** Preparation of a written request to the Commission asking about the procedure when different TMRs are in place in UK and EU waters, and vessels are crossing the line in between.

**ACTION:** Members to inform the Sec of any other questions on today's presentation to eventually include in the above written request.

### 3 Dialogue with the NWW MSG: overview on work programme

Pauline Joyeux: This first semester has been relatively dense for the NWW MSG, with a number of documents which were adopted by the High Level Group and submitted to the Commission for STECF evaluation. On the draft Joint Recommendation Discard Plan, as Cristina already said, we are



waiting for the STECF evaluation and the Commission's feedback on the exemptions proposed. We also submitted a Joint Recommendation on Red Seabream and one on Technical Measures (which my colleague Marianna will address later). For the JR on Scallop, the STECF has done an evaluation a priori which resulted quite positive. This JR should be further discussed in the Specialised Committee on Fisheries. In parallel to this work on JRs, the MS started discussions on important issues, such as the Danish seine fishery and the cohabitation issue in the Eastern Channel. We also addressed the possible future collaboration with the SCF, in relation to the regionalisation context. Finally, we are discussing the new Technical Measures adopted unilaterally by the UK. The MS are working on a feedback to the Commission on all those rules which will be also applicable to EU vessels. I also take this opportunity to thank the AC for the quality of the advice provided and the Secretariat for its regular attendance at the Technical Group meetings.

Marianna Monneau: On the Technical Measures Joint Recommendation, I would like to add to what Cristina said that this is going to be a priority topic for the MS in the context of the SCF, even if we still do not know exactly how the SCF and the CFP regionalisation process will be coordinated. The Commission is currently developing an answer to the notification from the UK on the Technical Measures that they are proposing, which will include the MS comments. Finally, in the first semester the Technical Group worked a lot on recovery of data and will focus now on the Celtic Sea. The next meeting of the Technical Group is scheduled for Monday 05 July.

Mathieu Vimard: Regarding the application of Art. 12 of the MAP for the North Sea on fishing authorisations in specific areas, I was wondering if the Commission is aware of this article about the contingency capacity and have they addressed this with the MS? Is there more information from the Commission? Has this been discussed, as it is not very clear how to apply this regulation.

Chair: Such a request was addressed in the NWWAC letter to the Commission on 12 April to which the Commission's reply was received on 13 May. This should be followed up in WG 3.

Pauline Joyeux: In the last meeting of the NWW Technical Group it was decided that this should be discussed in the Scheveningen Group. Similarly, it is recommended that the NWWAC approaches the NSAC on this topic.

#### **4 Update from the Focus Groups**

##### **a) Landing Obligation (Emiel Brouckaert):**

1. It is proposed to have this FG address the consultation on Fishing Opportunities 2022 based on the following work plan:
2. Before the first meeting, the Secretariat would collect the inputs from the WGs meetings and prepare a draft for discussion.
3. A first meeting of the LO FG on 15 July PM.
4. A second meeting of the LO FG between the 26 and 30 of July
5. The draft advice from the LO FG could be finalised by electronic procedure if needed.
6. The final draft advice should be sent to the HWG no later than 10 August.
7. After the HWG has reviewed the document, it would be sent to the ExCom for approval no later than 20 August.



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8. Deadline for ExCom approval would be 30 August.

b) Climate & Environment (Jacopo Pasquero)

This FG had only two meetings, but a lot of written correspondence, especially with the Secretariat, which is very kind to always help and facilitate our work. The FG finalised the terms of reference and the draft advice on the workshop that we had back in November on the impacts of climate change on fisheries in the NWW. These were both approved by ExCom, and the advice was submitted to DG MARE with DG ENV and DG CLIMA in cc. The FG finalised the consultation on the evaluation of the Biodiversity Strategy from 2011 until 2020. This consultation included input on the new Biodiversity Strategy, especially in relation to the restoration targets and invasive species. We also discussed the consultation on CO2 emissions from fishing vessel engines and the methodology that needs to be used for their reduction. As the consultation is extremely technical, we asked an expert to give a presentation during the last meeting. The reply is currently being drafted by the Secretariat based on the inputs that we received during the presentation of the expert from the shipping sector as there is very little knowledge about CO2 emissions of fishing vessel engines. The question is how we can translate the efforts of the efficiency of the shipping sector in the fishing sector. And finally, we discussed the national consultation in Ireland on Irish MPAs. A draft response was put together by the Secretariat and comments are currently being gathered via electronic procedure.

We are going to finalise the reply to the consultation on CO2 emissions of fishing vessel engines and on the Irish MPAs which will both be done before the summer due to tight deadlines.

Regarding future work, a few days ago ICES published its advice on the impact of bottom trawling and the FG discussed producing a potential reply to this advice, and a final decision is still to be made. This could be done in collaboration with the NSAC as the ICES advice on bottom trawling is currently being discussed there as well.

And finally, we need more members, so if any NWWAC member would like to join this FG, please contact the Secretariat.

c) Brown Crab (Norah Parke)

The purpose of this joint NWWAC, NSAC and MAC Focus Group Brown Crab is to prepare a joint advice on brown crab supply chain issues for the consideration of the working groups and potential adoption by the Executive Committees.

The composition of this rather complex FG includes representatives from Ireland, the UK and France, which represent the traditional crab fishing industry. In addition, there are the Netherlands, Denmark, Germany and Poland which are all the new entrants and largely based in the North Sea. Of these, the Netherlands is the major hope for exports to China, and is being used for exporting particularly live crab. Denmark has a bycatch of crab claws though the bodies are also landed as part of the regulations, and the group has discussed the possibility of using those bodies which are currently going to landfill as waste. Germany would like to explore the future for pot fisheries. Poland already has two or more quite large vessels fishing crab and are looking for alternative fishing



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for displaced fishers from the Baltic. All these sum up to quite a large ramp up of effort in the North Sea.

The FG held its first meeting in November last year, with four further meetings since, and the next meeting will be on 09 July. The presentation and final report for the two corresponding working groups and executive committees should be made by September this year.

The draft advice will include a series of recommendations to the Commission and relevant EU Member States on the problems with crab supply chain issues, such as the lack of management measures in the EU regulations for the minimum landing size and crab claws in the North Sea, whereas there has been quite considerable additional regulation that built up over the years in the Western Waters countries.

Ireland, the UK and France are reporting quite a significant fall in catches since reporting started around 2016/17, and anecdotal information from the North Sea indicates a similar fall. There may be possible difficulties with access to certain areas going forward, and requirements under COVID have brought up quite a series of interruptions. The supply chains for all seafood having been affected including crab, though probably not to a huge extent as it is such a seasonal business.

Live crab exports became a focus for animal welfare concerns in the UK. There is a very strong lobby group in the UK called Crustacean Compassion that has been trying to have crustaceans included on the animal welfare bill which is apparently now in law. The animal welfare concerns are not very significant, but this group will continue to campaign, which can have a knock-on effect for the likes of Irish exporters as they are sending their live crustaceans over the UK land bridge.

The group also looks at the regulatory alignment with other countries, and this, of course, relates to the difference between regulations on cadmium levels between the EU countries and China. China made some progress on this itself, and launched a consultation on raising the minimum permitted level of cadmium from point five milligrams per kilo to three milligrams per kilo. No results have been announced on this consultation by China as yet.

In Ireland a crab market analysis was carried out by the senior economist in BIM which will be made available on the website. We hope to have the work completed by September and will update you then again.

d) Skates & Rays (Paddy Walker)

This joint NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group had a meeting on 30 March in which we updated the best practice tables and used these as input into the regional groups by the end of April conforming to the agreements in the roadmap.

The roadmap of course is new, with the landing obligation and the exemption for skates and rays, which is still valid and is being completed by research and best practices from fisheries. There are quite a lot of new and innovative things happening. The group also prepared a request for updated scientific information based on discussions for the progress in SUMARIS, which was a collaborative project primarily on the skates and rays in the Channel looking at different ways of management and





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maybe different sizes, as well as based on the work of STECF in 2017 and, of course, a very valuable work carried out by the ICES assessments. The Commission reacted to the request by the FG on prohibited species list, regarding the criteria for putting species on the list and taking others off. The group would like to discuss with this ICES but the Commission has postponed this due to the ongoing discussions with the UK. The FG will obviously follow up on this.

Secondly, the Commission replied to our request on the scientific information on skates and rays which we received just a couple of days ago., In that they refer very much this STECF report in 2017 and put the onus on the Member States to actually take action, which is something we will have to discuss within FG.

The group also discussed TAC management and possibly moving towards species specific management. This is a question that keeps coming up which is dependent on discussions with the UK and has been postponed until the Specialised Committee on Fisheries establish.

The FG will formulate a response in the coming weeks and months, and we will have another meeting after the summer, probably in September.

e) Control (Sean O'Donoghue)

The Focus Group Control reported at the last HWG in March and has not had a meeting since February, though we have been trying to follow up on the action items. A huge amount of work has gone on over the last number of years in terms of the revision of the control regulation, on which we submitted significant recommendations. The FG is now looking at the implementation of the new proposed regulation which has not yet been agreed by the Council or Parliament.

There are two outstanding issues, one in relation to organising a meeting on Article 27 in the Technical Measures Regulation and its contradiction, or otherwise, with Article 15 in the CFP, which is the Landing Obligation. During the workshop held last year it was agreed that the NWWAC would organize a separate discussion with the Commission, EFCA and with the Member States Control Expert Group. The Secretariat has been very active, and we had intended to hold this meeting in June, but with the COVID situation and the limited availability of people involved, this proved to be impossible. We are now looking towards 29 September as a suitable date.

Given the situation with the TCA, we know we could have a situation where the technical measures and catch composition rules in UK waters are different to EU vessels fishing across the line, so we really do need to try and come to an answer on that.

The other issue that is outstanding relates to the joint deployment plans in the NWW. We are trying to arrange a meeting with EFCA and again are looking at September for a suitable date. The reason for this meeting is the issue around the summary report being released on the Landing Obligation in relation to the NWW and the Baltic. More importantly, the Commission and the Member States have refused to release the data behind that, and I think we have exhausted all avenues both via the NWWAC and the PelAC. The meeting is to make sure that this does not happen in the future.



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f) Brexit (Sean O'Donoghue)

The FG Brexit has concluded its work and presented its recommendations to the HWG in March. There is one small but important outstanding item which I would like to ask the Secretariat to give an update on, and that is the development of the digital map which was approved by ExCom.

Secretariat: There are two items, the first relates to the print map which we are still working on and currently finalising. This is nearly finished, and we are only waiting for the TACs and quotas. We are currently translating the text. Since the translations are very technical, we will send these to select members who have kindly helped us in the past. We hope that we can utilize their skills again to proofread this for us, and then we will be able to go ahead with printing and distribution.

The second item is the online chart that has been approved by ExCom. The Secretariat has just identified a suitable organisation that would be able to carry out a scoping study to identify exactly what is the value of for the members of the NWWAC. We will present this at the ExCom because I am hopeful that we will get an idea of the costs involved for the scoping study which we believe is essential for this work as we are looking at a very large, very costly project, and we need to identify prior to the start of the project what we actually want and not change directions in the middle of the project, which could increase the cost considerably.

## 5 Introduction to the ICES Advice for the North Western Waters (Ghislain Chouinard, ACOM-Vicechair)

Please see the presentation available on our website [here](#).

The ICES advice for 2022 was released yesterday, with additional advice to be released in autumn, for example for whiting in 7e-k, *Nephrops* all areas, megrim in 6b, anglerfish in 3a, 4, 6, and for some ray species in the English Channel.

This is an introduction to the advisory process and not to any of the advice, which will be done in each of the NWWAC working groups meetings. ICES received a request to provide advice both from the EU and the UK. The preparatory work for the assessments underpinning the advice was carried out remotely again this year during the first few weeks in May. For all fisheries' advice, the peer review takes place largely in the benchmarks, and audits are also conducted during the working groups. The draft advice was then looked at and discussed by the advice drafting groups in the week of 08-12 June and approved by the ACOM last week.

The rules for developing advice on fishing opportunities depend on two things, firstly, the main management strategies agreed by the relevant management bodies, and secondly, the information and knowledge available for the stock. This year, all the advice will be based on the MSY approach and on the precautionary approach. This is because we have a hierarchy in terms of providing advice. If a stock has a lot of information and we can produce biomass estimates (categories 1 and 2), we first look at whether there is a management plan that has been reviewed by ICES and has been assessed to be consistent with the precautionary approach. If that is the case, then we look at whether this plan has been agreed by the relevant management authorities. With Brexit, we have





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two management authorities for most of the stocks in the NWW. In that case, if there is agreement, we will provide advice on a management strategy, but if the parties do not concur on how the advice should be produced, ICES would provide it based on the MSY approach. For other stocks where information is less, we provide advice based on the ICES precautionary approach.

The ICES MSY approach for category 1 and 2 is provided once we have estimates of the biomass. We provide advice based on  $F_{MSY}$ , that has been shown to be precautionary, when the stock is above  $MSYB_{trigger}$ . If the stock is above  $Blim$ , the advice is provided on ramping down scale in terms of  $F_{MSY}$  (the closer you are to  $Blim$ , the lower the  $F$  used to provide advice).

Finally, if with a given catch the stock will not reach  $Blim$  by the end of the forecast, then ICES will provide zero catch advice for those stocks.

For more details please see the [Guide to ICES advisory framework and principles 2021](#).

The  $F$  ranges in the EU MAPs are consistent with the ranges that were provided by ICES in 2015 ( $F_{MSY}$  lower and  $F_{MSY}$  upper), and these reference points are updated whenever there is a benchmark. These ranges are evaluated to be precautionary to result in no more than 5% reduction in long-term yield compared with MSY. Finally, these ranges are considered to be precautionary, and a check is carried out to ensure that there is less than 5% probability that the stock size will fall below  $Blim$ .

Regarding the advice progress as it relates to the NWW, there were a number of stocks that were benchmarked, including North Sea cod with a small impact for the Eastern Channel, as well as Whiting in 6a, plaice in 7h-k, sole in 7d, megrim in 6b, spurdog and gurnards. For these stocks, the new assessment will use the methodology and reference points that have been adopted in the benchmarks.

ICES continues to strive to improve its quality assurance. This year the ICES data management was accredited by CoreTrustSeal regarding its practices for data management and documentation of data flows to ensure that things are clear and the number of errors that can occur are reduced. There is also an emphasis on the transparent assessment framework which basically documents the whole code used for the assessment. This is publicly available to anyone to look at it and rerun the assessment if they wanted to.

The advice on *Nephrops*, Celtic Sea whiting, megrim in 6b and anglerfish is expected on 29 October. The fisheries overviews and the mixed fisheries advice, which was formerly either standalone or included within the individual stocks, will come out on 30 November. The ecosystem overviews will be released on 12 December. In terms of workshops coming up, there will be a number of benchmarks, which will be announced this summer/ early fall. Two reference points workshops are coming up, to review the approach to limitations and methodology around the current reference points and discussions as to whether these need to be updated. WKREF1 is scheduled for 02-04 November and will look at the reference points themselves and how they are derived and ensure that any new knowledge is incorporated. WKREF2 is scheduled for 11-13 January 2022 and will examine the guidelines for determining these reference points.



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Regarding the impacts of COVID on ICES' operation and the science underpinning the advice, as well as the advice itself, i.e. in terms of data collection and preparation, ICES observed that, in general, there was some reduction in observer and market sampling during 2020 to varying degrees. A few surveys were cancelled, or were partly affected or delayed, for example, the Channel groundfish survey, where only the French side could be conducted. There have been some delays with data transmission particularly, but no major impacts.

All ICES meetings have been conducted online, and no meetings were cancelled though the benchmarks were particularly challenged due, for example, to working in different time zones and under different levels of local restrictions. Though restrictions are being lifted in various countries around the world, ICES will continue holding online meetings will continue until at least 31 October. The situation is being reviewed every few months.

In terms of impact on the advice, reduced sampling may have affected some estimates, e.g. discards, catch distribution and weights at age). The impacts of missing surveys were examined through sensitivity analyses. These basically redid some of the previous assessments and excluded the last point for the survey that was missing this year and looked at how the assessment would have been impacted last year if that point was not available. So in general, there was no serious impact because there are always several surveys to assess the stocks, which means that one point missing in that survey will not have a big effect. This could though be quite different if the entire series was actually missing. There is one exception to that and that is sole in the Irish Sea where there is only one survey that was used. The assessment was conducted with the updated catch which is basically more or less a projection from last year's assessment with a bit more information.

All of the impacts of COVID 19 are documented in the advice and ICES returned to a modified full advice sheet which excludes stock status, which will be included in the fisheries overviews, and information from stakeholders.

In terms of Brexit, ICES and the UK signed a Memorandum of Understanding that became effective on 01 January 2021 which specifies the type of advice that the UK desires. There has also been good continued collaboration of UK scientists with the ICES work in 2021, as well as continued coordination of research surveys through the ICES expert groups and working groups. I would say that the major impact is that the headline advice on stocks, where we added a new MAP last year, and now the headline advice is based on the MSY approach. Again, the EU map scenarios are included in the catch scenarios.

Finally, you can find the latest advice on the ICES website both by ecoregion, or by species.

## **6 STECF Social Dimension of the CFP (Mike Fitzpatrick)**

([Link](#) to presentation)

In the last two years I was asked by the Chair of STECF to chair two Working Groups on the social data collection, and this presentation is just a short summary of the two reports. The first one was from the first round of reporting under the first collection of social data as part of the Data



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Collection Framework, and the second report was from the working group which we held last year in an attempt to look at how that data collection could be improved, for example, if we have enough information to look at the social impact of some new policies. I feel that this collection of social data is definitely a welcome development, because I know when I was working for the Fish Producers organization here, we would often try to make the case for the social importance of fisheries and very often we did not have the supporting information which would allow us to do that.

The first report is from the 2019 working group which looked at the first round of data collection and included findings for example on the age of EU fishers. There are some very big differences between Member States, for example, in Estonia 31% of fishers were over 65, whereas in Belgium and Germany that percentage is under 2%. In terms of nationality, 86% of fishers overall in the EU fleets are from that Member State, but again there is quite a big difference between some of the countries in terms of the proportion of the fishers in their fleets that are from that Member State. For example, in Ireland 27% of the fishers are not Irish and 36% in Belgium, whereas in Italy 94% of the fishers are Italian and in Portugal 99%.

Data was also collected on the education level among fishers as part of this, which was a bit of a controversial variable, as some people did not like to provide this information and were wondering why it was being asked. Certainly, in our Working Group last year we made some recommendations about how this variable could be improved in the way it is broken down, as it just looks at formal education and not vocational education, such as skipper's tickets for example. This category is certainly missing something, but again there are some very big differences between the Member States. In Portugal, for example, only 1% of fishers reported having a higher education level, whereas in Sweden that was 21%.

When it comes to employment status, the Working Group made recommendations on how this variable could be improved on, as it really just distinguishes between employee and owner. The group felt that there is a lot more information that could be collected, for example, there is no category here for share fishermen, which is obviously very common, or employment status or status within European fisheries.

For the first time, some information on gender in fishing was also collected. The main point here is on employment and full-time equivalent employment. There are approximately 3% of females employed, but when it comes to unpaid labour, which is a category for people who are contributing to fishing operations, whether that might be doing the books or driving vans, and all other kinds of different operations, this almost doubled for females in that category.

We are also able to look at a breakdown of this data across different fleet sectors, from small-scale coastal fleets to large scale and distant water fleets.

Here there are also quite big differences in terms of the age profile across those different fleet sectors. This is taken across the EU data collected as a whole, but you can see that the small-scale coastal fleet has a significantly older age profile than the other fleet sector with 72% of those involved in small scale coastal fishing over 40, while only 60% are over 40 in the large-scale fleet and only 35% for the distant water fleets.



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Looking at nationality profiles across those different fleet sectors, you can see very clearly that the small-scale coastal fleet has a very high proportion of nationals working in that area, which is not surprising, given that a large number of people involved in that fishery are the owner operators.

This is supported by the data on the employment status across the different fishing activities, where again the small-scale coastal fleet has a much higher proportion of owners than the large scale or distant water fleet.

While some of this information may not be very surprising, it is useful from the point of view of looking at the social importance of fishers.

Moving on to the Working Group report from last year, this was a very different type of Working Group because it was not reporting on data collected but reflecting on what had been found in the previous year's reporting and how it could be improved, and also to look at some issues of social importance. The Terms of Reference for this Working Group included:

1. Assessment of restrictions regarding Art. 5.2 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013
2. Assess for each MS whether and how social criteria are used (Art. 17)
3. Assess impacts of national quota allocation
4. Follow up work on EWG 19-03 regarding social data collection
5. National and community profiles – how could they be done?

Across the first three points of the terms of reference the group found it quite difficult to assess the impacts, particularly in the case of this regulation as those regulations governing access to coastal waters of Member States have been in existence for a long time, thus it is difficult to assess the impact of these without a comparable case.

It was also difficult to develop a clear assessment and, in some cases, definition of which criteria are used to assess social aspects, for example, historical fishing rights or historical catches could be social criteria.

There was a lot of useful information collected about the criteria used for allocation of quota. One thing that was found was that, since Article 17 was introduced, there has not been any major change in the allocations across Member States. In addition, there are no clear trends, and no two Member States use the same system or even mix of criteria. So, this is a very complex situation, and there are multiple tables on this in the report.

It was also identified, probably because the collection of this social data is still in its infancy, that there was the lack of quantitative and qualitative data available to carry out this kind of assessment of social impact. The assessment depended almost completely on the input of the experts involved in the working group and people who had particular knowledge of how quotas are allocated, or the impact of those allocation systems within particular Member States.

The group made an attempt to address this shortcoming by proposing that profiles be developed as part of the social data collection and reporting in future, and that leads into a term of reference for which followed up on our 2019 report on how we could improve the data collection.



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Several recommendations were made regarding the age categories, for example that this should be broken down further as one of the age categories was much broader than the other, so obviously it will look like the biggest age category.

There were major arguments about how to define unpaid labour, and the economists and the social scientists certainly had very different ideas about how that should be defined, which hopefully will be clarified shortly. The group also recommended to improve the breakdown of employment status and include other categories, such as the share fisher. On the education level the group recommended the adding of vocational training and not limit this category to just formal school education. There will be a follow up workshop with PG ECON in 2021 which hopefully will resolve some of these issues.

The fifth term of reference looked at the development of national and Community profiles. The group felt that this was very important for a number of reasons as we need to put the social data that is being collected in context. We would like to use social data to build an understanding of what is happening at the Community level, because fisheries information is often lost or obscured at the national level which is where you see the effect of fishing policies. The group had quite a lot of recommendations about where to go in terms of collecting information at the Community level, which is obviously quite a long way from where we are in terms of the data that I just presented as this really is quite high level. Particularly, once we build up a time series of these Community profiles, I think we will have a much clearer understanding of what is happening within the fishing communities.

In the report last year, we provided a template for how these national profiles could be built up to provide some of this context. These national profiles are a very achievable goal. At our first meeting in 2019 we had the problem that we were supposed to interpret some of the data that was collected without even having somebody from that Member State at the working group, which is obviously very difficult. Putting together a national profile would help a lot here.

We also provided a template and guidelines for the building up of Community profiles details which can be found in the report from last year.

Finally, just a quick word on the PG ECON workshop on social variables that will be held on 30-31 August this year. The agenda is purely looking at social variables in this case and covers a lot of the issues addressed in this presentation, in an effort to improve on the first attempt that has been made at collecting data on social variables in EU fisheries and how to push forward these issues about development of national profiles and Community profiles.

Participants are invited to register by 20 July 2021. As the group consists mainly of economists, it is keen to get more social scientists involved. In addition, someone from the ICES working group on social indicators will also be involved in this workshop which is a welcome development as the ICES work is the whole parallel process going on regarding the definition of things like coastal communities' dependence on fishing for example.



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Chair: Thank you very much for this interesting presentation. Unfortunately, due to the tight timeline, can members please send their questions and comments on this presentation to the Secretariat which can then provide an action plan based on those questions and comments that we might receive for the possible development of advice.

**ACTION:** Members to send questions/comments on the presentation on the social dimension of the CFP to the Secretariat, as a basis for follow-up and eventual preparation of advice.

**ACTION:** RCG ECON workshop 30-31 August, registry by 20 July, chairs of WG looking for experts – Secretariat to follow up and circulate information to members.

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

Chair: In view of the timing, I suggest we provide this in writing and circulate it to the members.

### Action points

1	Preparation of a written request to the Commission asking about the procedure when different TMRs are in place in UK and EU waters, and vessels are crossing the line in between.
2	Members to inform the Secretariat of any other questions on today's presentation to eventually include in the above written request.
3	Question (and reply) on article 12 of the North Sea MAP, to be followed up in WG 3.
4	Set up Focus Group landing Obligation to prepare advice on Fishing Opportunities 2022 as suggested during the meeting.
5	The Focus Group Brexit has completed its tasks and is handing over the fisheries management chart follow-up to the Secretariat, while the other Focus Groups continue as presented.
6	The Secretariat to circulate information on other work in process in the NWWAC to the members.
7	Members to send questions/comments on the presentation on the social dimension of the CFP to the Secretariat, as a basis for follow-up and eventual preparation of advice.
8	PGCON workshop 30-31 August, registry by 20 July, chairs of WS looking for experts – Secretariat to follow up and circulate information to members
9	The Secretariat to schedule more time for the next meeting of the Horizontal Working Group in September.





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