



## DRAFT MINUTES

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Virtual meeting

24 September 2021

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all participants. Apologies were received ahead of the meeting from Despina Symons (EBCD), who nominated Jacopo Pasquero (EBCD) as proxy, and Puri Fernández (ANASOL), who nominated Hugo Gonzalez (ANASOL) as proxy. The agenda and the minutes from the last meeting (09 July 2021) were adopted.

#### 2. Action points

##### a. Action points from last meeting (09 July 2021)

The chair reminded that draft minutes are on the website under the relevant date of the meetings calendar. As no comments have been received, he suggested to remove the indication 'draft', so approval of the minutes is reflected.

Secretariat to analyse action points and identify which can be combined and/or included in the advice on Fishing Opportunities 2022.
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Done

Members are encouraged to visit both <a href="http://www.fisheriesmanagementchart.ie/">http://www.fisheriesmanagementchart.ie/</a> and <a href="https://www.geofish.be/">https://www.geofish.be/</a> to review these applications and to identify what features and tools would be the most useful for inclusion in an NWWAC application.
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Scoping study was assigned to Mindfully Wired and a presentation regarding this is on the agenda for the GA

Secretariat to contact Monica Negoita on behalf of the ExCom members and thank her for her contributions over her years of employment.
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Done

Secretariat to submit grant application for Year 17.
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Submitted on 17 July

Secretariat to include a full update on requirements under Irish company law in September agenda for GA.
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Included in GA agenda

##### b. Actions arising from Working Groups

At the meetings on 09 September, the following Working group Chairs and Vice-Chairs were appointed:

Working Group	Chair	Vice-Chair
1 – Irish Sea	John Lynch (Irish South & East FPO)	Norah Parke (Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation)



2 – Celtic Sea & West of Scotland	Jésus Lourido Garcia (OPP 77 Puerto de Celeiro)	Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne)
3 – English Channel	Pascale Coquet (France Pêche Durable et Responsable)	Mathieu Vimard (OPN)

During the meeting of the Horizontal Working Group on 13 September, no candidacies were received. Emiel Brouckaert has agreed to remain as Chair until the next meeting in March 2022, at which point a new Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed.

**ACTION:** Chair and Vice-Chair for HWG to be elected at the next HWG meeting, Secretariat to organise nomination procedure.

Working Group 1 Irish Sea	
1	Secretariat to explore if any progress can be made on the WKIrish approach together with the MSG <i>The topic was raised at the last Technical Group meeting of the NWW Member States. The Secretariat will contact the MSG with a list of all relevant topics on which there could be collaboration with the MS.</i>
2	Secretariat to raise the attention of the MSG on issues raised in the advice on Fishing Opportunities 2022 on haddock in 7a (re-evaluation of ICES advice following new survey results in the autumn + stock ID issue with Celtic Sea & TAC setting) <i>The topic was raised at the last Technical Group meeting of the NWW Member States. The Secretariat will contact the MSG with a list of all relevant topics on which there could be collaboration with the MS.</i>

During the meeting the new choke tool was discussed and members asked if they wished to contribute to the development of this.

Working Group 2 Celtic Sea & West of Scotland	
1	Secretariat to follow up on the revision of the hake plan and clarification of legal interpretation with the MSG before progressing with the letter to STECF on evaluation of mesh sizes in the Irish box <i>At the last Technical Group meeting, the MS reported that DG MARE confirmed that the Technical Measures regulation prevails on the hake plan regulation, also outside of the Irish Box. The COM will circulate a written communication on this.</i>
2	Secretariat to bring the main issue raised in our advice Fishing Opportunities 2022 to the attention of the MSG at the next Technical Group meeting and follow up <i>The topic was raised at the last Technical Group meeting of the NWW Member States. The Secretariat will contact the MSG with a list of all relevant topics on which there could be collaboration with the MS.</i>
3	Secretariat to refer comments on request from the PelAC on sprat and greater silver smelt to the ExCom

Discussion on the PelAC request regarding sprat and silver smelt

The Chair felt that by accepting the PelAC request, the NWWAC might lose competencies as they would become the responsibility of the PelAC even if for many fleets these are not targeted species but bycatch species, which could be problematic in the framework of the LO. He suggested that a gentleman's agreement could be drafted with the



PelAC regarding sharing responsibilities and items that relate to follow up on scientific advice. The fishing opportunities could be referred to the PelAC with a clause that the NWWAC wishes to retain its competencies regarding these two species.

Johnny Woodlock pointed out that while having an agreement with the PelAC would be beneficial, the NGOs are concerned about the taking of forage fish within the ecosystem approach. He felt that the extraction of these should be considered carefully in the wider ecosystem approach, and also noted the large bycatch of marine mammals and PET species in this fishery which should be taken into consideration.

Sean O'Donoghue commented that sprat and silver smelt are scientifically assessed and part of the TAC and quota system and pointed out that the members of WG2 agree with writing to the PelAC expressing an interest in a gentlemen's agreement. This could be an informal arrangement identifying the aspects around the scientific assessment, and the directed fisheries would be dealt with by the PelAC. The issues around bycatch would remain for the NWWAC to provide advice on, possibly in a combined effort. If the PelAC makes recommendations a clear statement should be made that the NWWAC would fit this in the bycatch considerations.

**ACTION:** In relation to WG2's action point 3, the Secretariat can start drafting this agreement with the input from WG2 and WG3 members before this is sent to the ExCom for approval.

Working Group 3 Channel	
1	Secretariat to draft a letter to the Commission requesting that Brexit implications (in particular new UK technical measures) are taken into account when setting Fishing Opportunities for 2022 <i>Proposal from Secretariat this could be included as part of potential work when commenting on the table of the new UK technical measures as the AC has not yet provided any input at the time. MS indicated that input was very welcome so the AC could contribute to this. Reference needs to be made to the TCA and related consequences on fishing management.</i>
2	Raise importance of collecting information on the implementation of Art 12 of the NS MAP to the MSG <i>Done at the last Technical Group meeting on 16/09. MS reported that work is progressing.</i>
3	Set up meeting of Scallop FG for further work on technical measures
4	Secretariat to get in touch with the Commission for an update on seabass and the seabass catches allocation tool <i>Email sent to DG MARE inviting them to a meeting in the second week of October. COM confirmed participation, meeting in second week of October</i>

Horizontal Working Group	
1	Follow up on the DG MARE Action Plan to Conserve ecosystem and Fisheries Resources and the TM report putting forward actions around this. Check NWWAC involvement in DG MARE / DG ENVI cooperation around this
2	Secretariat to list all topics on NWW MSG agenda and clearly identify which NWWAC WG / FG is addressing which topic to prepare advice and the work plans around this
3	Members to review the CIBBRiNA work program and presentation to respond to the potential for the NWWAC to be present at the Advisory Board of this project
4	Set date for FG LO to address the preparation of the choke risk advice
5	HWG suggests to approve NWWAC participation in the SEAwisE project
6	Secretariat to submit the joint NWWAC/NSAC/MAC advice on brown crab to the ExCom for approval
7	Proposal to establish a joint FG with the NSAC on the review of the MSFD consultation
8	Proposal to the ExCom to set up a Focus Group on Social Aspects
9	Secretariat to distribute the Terms of Reference for the blockchain webinar for members to comment on



	prior to submission to ExCom
10	Proposal for the NWWAC to monitor the work on green claims initiatives and potentially develop advice on the PEFCR (Product Environmental Footprint Categorisation Rules), specifically in the FG Climate & Environment

The action points from the Working Groups were approved.

**3. Dialogue with DG MARE – Fabrizio Donatella (Director, Fisheries Policy Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic and Outermost Regions (MARE.C))**

The Chair welcomed the speaker and congratulated him on his recent appointment as Director of MARE C. He referred to the NWWAC advice on the fishing opportunities 2022 and the AC's outstanding questions in relation to the TCA implementation, specifically the stakeholder / NWWAC involvement in the SCF.

Fabrizio Donatella thanked the AC for the invitation and the kind words of welcome. He said he considered that interacting directly with the ACs is very important for stakeholder consultation, but there are also other sources. He noted that the Commission greatly appreciates the work of the ACs, and that there have been a lot of interactions between the Commission and the NWWAC in particular. He felt that the Commission benefitted from the AC's knowledge and expertise particularly when looking ahead at possible future developments.

In relation to the Fishing Opportunities consultation 2021, the Commission was pleased with the outcome that was achieved with the UK regarding the joint stocks, which were good both for the industry and the environment. Special conditions and the mixed fisheries management in the Celtic Sea remain a challenge and are part of the items for which there is no blueprint for 2022. He expressed his satisfaction with the interim solutions for the quota swaps on which the feedback has been positive so far. The Commission maintains a commitment on resolving all outstanding issues in relation to licensing. The Commission is also working intensively both at a technical and politically level on addressing some of the remaining issues and understands the frustration and the fact that there have been situations that have not been resolved.

Donatella noted that the timetable is tight for the various consultations (EU-UK, EU-UK-NO), as well as the annual NEAFC and Coastal States meetings. All consultations have to take place in a very short space of time with a lot of ground to cover. The interrelation between these consultations is complex. His feeling is that all parties are willing to move to a certain normality, however the EU will not make any agreement on the timetable. There is no intention to change the EU baselines on scientific advice, choke species and zero TAC advice.

The Commission continues its work regarding the Specialised Committee on Fisheries (SCF) in cooperation with the UK. This mandate is still being discussed and it is hoped that adoption in the Council is imminent. Also, the UK is eager to start. The Commission will be in touch when there is more news on this. Donatella expressed his intention to be as efficient as possible.

The Chair thanked Donatella for this update. He pointed out that the AC is aware of the complex situation and stands by to assist in any way the Commission sees necessary.

David Curtis enquired what provisions will be there for stakeholder participation in the SCF bearing in mind the Aarhus Convention. He also referred at the mackerel overfishing and asked if a discussion is planned around this.



Sean O'Donoghue asked if different negotiations will take place in parallel or if there was a roadmap. He also pointed out that the TCA identifies that planning for the subsequent year needs to be completed by 31 January. Would the Commission and the UK adhere to this? He finally enquired if there was a clear understanding of what the priority topics for the SCF will be on both sides, and if it was likely that both will be dealt with before the end of 2022.

Donatella responded that there is a clear timetable indicated in the TCA which should be considered as a deadline for the EU and UK to finalise the consultation. Regarding the various consultations taking place sequentially or in parallel, the Commission is going to propose a tentative schedule that would allow consultations of stakeholders and Member States. What the Commission cannot anticipate is if the partner, for example Norway, may have completely different views on how to approach these negotiations.

On mackerel he commented that the problem is a consequence of Norway and the Faeroes not having access to UK waters, which is a zonal attachment issue. The UK, like the EU, is looking for stability since the 2014 agreement as reconfirmed in 2018, but this turned out not to be possible. The EU mantra to use 2020 references/stability as a basis has failed. The EU will keep working on this, but this year will not be possible.

On the SCF questions Donatella said there is a possibility for experts to attend, though their affiliation still needs discussion with the UK. The Commission has already agreed with the UK which topics will be easier to address.

The Chair expressed his appreciation for these explanations and enquired if there were any items that needed to be addressed in the SCF which need to be taken into account for the Fishing Opportunities 2022?

Donatella outlined that some of the issues that have been referred to the SCF may be transferred back to the consultation. The 2022 framework may still not be perfect as there may still be some items that will need to be addressed during the negotiations in the sense of problem-solving without bypassing any processes. He proposed that at some point in time a more detailed presentation could be given to the NWWAC.

O'Donoghue pointed out that the NWWAC has written to the Commission and the MS specifically regarding the difference in Technical Conservation Measures between the UK and EU zone. He felt that "a divergence in the TM could make life impossible for fishers" and asked if this could be made a priority item to the SCF. He also expressed the view that physical meetings in the consultations are important.

Donatella explained that the TM divergence is a recognised priority in the SCF, noting that the UK is an independent coastal state meaning that the UK is entitled as much as the EU to take independent action. The SCF is about working together in order to minimise problems as much as possible. He felt that it is necessary to watch out for political hampering and to avoid that someone is pushed into a corner.

He agreed that certain issues can only be addressed in physical meetings and confirmed that negotiating behind a screen is not possible.

The Chair thanked Donatella for this dialogue and for the offer of a specific meeting with the NWWAC in the future. He also extended an invitation to Donatella and his team to participate at this AC's meetings anytime.

#### **4. Work Programme overview Year 16**

The Secretariat presented the Work Programme report as well as the budget for Year 16. The presentation can be found [here](#).



The members of the ExCom approved the work programme report and budget for presentation to the General Assembly.

## 5. Work Plan for Year 17 (2021 – 2022)

The Secretariat presented the Work Programme report as well as the budget for Year 17. The presentation can be found [here](#). The full text of work programme can be found here ([link](#)). The ExCom approved this work programme and preliminary budget in July 2021 prior to submission to the Commission on 17 July as part of the grant application for Year 17.

In the preliminary budget the Secretariat included cost for an additional technical staff member. The finance and administration items were absorbed mainly into the tasks for the Executive Secretary so the Secretariat would benefit from additional technical support. However, discussions now include a possible service contract with a scientific organisation based in one of the MS within the NWWAC area. Possibilities around this are still being investigated.

Woodlock expressed his gratitude for the working of the Secretariat.

## 6. Upcoming meetings

Details of the upcoming meetings can be found in the presentation on the work programme Year 17 ([link](#)).

Jean-Marie Robert enquired what the mandate was for the NWWAC in participating in the LDAC FG Deepsea mining meeting?

The Secretariat recalled that members of the NWWAC agreed in July that this AC should participate in an observer capacity at this FG in order to potentially support the advice developed by the LDAC on this topic. The LDAC Executive Secretary presented this work on 13 September to the members of the NWWAC Horizontal Working Group.

The Secretariat also added that in October Seabass, Whelk and Scallop FGs are planned and the meetings with the MSG are not shown.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to contact all members for input to MIAC and MIACO meetings.

## 7. Nominations for the Executive Committee Year 17 – Year 19

Details of the nominations for Year 17 can be found [here](#).

The Secretariat recalled the restructuring of this AC regarding the number and affiliation of seats in the industry college which was approved by the General Assembly on 01 July.



The Secretariat reported that Bluefish applied for a seat in the OIG college and that this application was turned down again by the NWWAC OIG members.

Confirmation from the ExCom is needed prior to approval by the General Assembly for:

- The appointment of Emiel Brouckaert as Chair of the NWWAC for years 17, 18 and 19 (2021 – 2024)
- The appointment of ExCom industry Vice-Chairs Purificación Fernández (ANASOL) and Julien Lamothe (ANOP)

Nominations are invited for the position of OIG ExCom Vice-Chair following the departure of Stavroula Kremmydiotou (EBCD).

Robert reminded participants that the ACs need to strike a balance between the industry and the OIG membership and expressed concern as to the rejection of Blue Fish's application for an ExCom seat.

Pascale Colson recalled that the amendment to the delegated act in 2017 was adopted in order to avoid discontent among AC members from the two different colleges regarding ExCom nominations. Each college autonomously decides on the organisations representing the members in the ExCom. She noted that it is vital that this AC appoints an OIG ExCom Vice-Chair and encouraged those OIG organisations present to come forward and volunteer for this position.

Jacopo Pasquero identified that the EBCD is currently in the recruitment process for a successor to Stavroula and it is likely that once the position has been filled, this new team member will apply for the position of NWWAC OIG ExCom Vice-Chair.

The Chair welcomed the new members to the Executive Committee and thanked those members who are leaving the ExCom for their work over the past years.

The Secretariat recalled that all AC members can participate in all of the work without being ExCom members. Not being a member of the ExCom does not mean that the opinion is not heard. This was implemented in the new Rules of Procedure which were adopted in July by the General Assembly. The Secretariat felt that it was unfortunate that the NWWAC does not have the 60/40 balance overall, but that this AC is looking at organising a membership drive across both colleges. The Secretariat will be looking at the members for support on this.

The Chair pointed out that the representative from Bluefish has a technical issue with his connection and is invited to make his intervention this afternoon in the General Assembly meeting.

Hugo González intervened as replacement for Puri as she will be on sick leave for the next three months and asked that her candidacy for ExCom industry Vice-Chair is accepted in her absence.

The Chair asked González to pass on the AC's best wishes to Puri for her recovery and thanked him for standing in during her absence. Her candidacy is confirmed for going forward to the GA.

Robert conceded that the ExCom nomination procedure is fully legal. He expressed his concern that since 2017 at least the ACs have been criticised by several NGOs and many have left this AC. He felt that "it is a scandal as it shows the lack of interest in the consultative body that this AC represents and the link it represents between the industry sector and the various institutions."

Woodlock, who has been an OIG member since the start of the AC expressed his disappointment that seemingly the majority of OIG members have pulled out and pointed out that "there are many advantages of being at the table."



The Chair identified that the AC is contemplating measures to attract additional membership. He reminded participants that in the NWWAC advice to the Commission on the future functioning of the ACs and the review of the delegated act, this AC did ask the Commission for support on attracting new members.

The Secretariat outlined that following the internal restructuring of the AC and the full update of the statutes and Rules of Procedure, the six NGOs that left this AC were contacted with an update and asked to consider rejoining. Only one written reply was received, one NGO advised that they did not have the financial means nor the capacity to continue any AC work, and four NGOs made no contact.

The Chair commented that despite the low NGO membership, the AC has repeatedly received confirmation of the importance of the tremendous work that the Secretariat and the members of this AC are doing.

Patrick Murphy stated that he hoped that “the work of the Secretariat’s efforts in trying to bring back the OIGs is mentioned to the Commission, and I applaud the Secretariat for this work.”

Pascale Colson agreed that these efforts are very much appreciated. The Commission would appreciate the details regarding contacts made with the NGOs as it is important to know what is happening on the ground and if the problems of NGO participation are related to the functioning or to their own organisations’ scarcity of resources. “The Director-General is affording a lot of importance to this.”

The Chair expressed his certainty that the Secretariat will keep the Commission informed on this issue.

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

The action points from the WGs were approved. The AC appreciates the intervention of Director Fabrizio Donatella. The reporting to the General Assembly this afternoon on the work programme and budget for Year 16 were approved, as were the same items for Year 17. This also includes the structure and the members for the new Executive Committee. The Chair welcomed the new members to the Executive Committee and thanked leavers Caroline Gamblin and Stavroula Kremmydiotou for their active participation during the time they were members.

### Actions

1	Chair and Vice-Chair for HWG to be elected at the next HWG meeting, Secretariat to organise nomination procedure prior to its next meeting
2	Secretariat to contact all members for input to MIAC and MIACO meetings.





## Participants

<b>NWWAC ExCom members</b>	
Emiel Brouckaert (Chair)	Rederscentrale
David Curtis	EAA
Hugo Gonzáles	Anasol
Jésus Lourido Garcia	OPP 77
Geert Meun	VisNed
Anais Mourtada	CNPMEM
Patrick Murphy	IS&WFPO
Sean O'Donoghue	KFO
Jacopo Pasquero	EBCD
Johnny Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary
<b>NWWAC Observers</b>	
José Beltran	OPP LUGO
Gérald Hussenot Desenonges	Blue Fish
Manu Kelberine	Comité Régional des Pêches de Bretagne
John Lynch	IS&EFPO
Kiko Marin	OPPAO
Norah Parke	KFO
Jean-Marie Robert	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Dominique Thomas	CMEOP
John Ward	IFPO
<b>Observers and Experts</b>	
Pascale Colson	DG MARE
Fabrizio Donatella	DG MARE
Erik Lindebo	DG MARE
Marianna Monneau	Direction des pêches maritimes et de l'aquaculture
Conor Nolan	Consultant to the NWWAC
Egon Patteeuw	Vlaamse overheid Departement Landbouw En Visserij
<b>NWWAC Secretariat</b>	
Mo Mathies	Executive Secretary
Matilde Vallerani	Deputy Executive Secretary