



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

MINUTES

WORKING GROUP 2 - CELTIC SEA & West of Scotland

Virtual

Thursday 09 September 2021

11:30 – 14:30 CET

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair Suso Lourido Garcia welcomed all participants to the meeting. Apologies were received by Emiel Brouckaert (Rederscentrale) and Alex Crowley (NIFA) before the meeting. The agenda was adopted as drafted.

Action points from the minutes of the last meeting (05 July 2021, virtual):

1	NWWAC to recommend the COM to request ICES that information on quality assurance is included in the advice sheet for each stock.
	Done, included in the advice on Fishing Opportunities 2022.
2	NWWAC to recommend the COM to request STECF evaluation on the use of 100mm vs 120mm mesh for gillnets for haddock in the Irish Box
	Instead of a separate letter, proposal to include this issue in advice on overall review of the hake recovery plan (waiting for next NWW MS Technical Group meeting on 16 September to see what MS are planning to do on the topic).
3	Members to send feedbacks to the Secretariat on the name for WG1+2 and send nominations for new Chair and Vice-Chair to be elected at the meeting in September
	No nominations received via email, to be discussed under item 2.
5	Secretariat to draft a letter to the COM recommending that the identity issue related to the 6a cod and the North Sea cod is resolved. In the Fishing Opportunities advice, include a comment on importance of genetic information for the 6a cod and in general as a tool for the ICES assessment.
	Done in advice on Fishing Opportunities 2022. To be mentioned at the meeting of the Horizontal Working Group in September as part of the review of the FO advice under agenda item 'Discussion with DG MARE'.
6	Secretariat to draft letter to the COM requesting to ask ICES whether the TAC constraints for haddock in the North Sea are also related to 6a haddock and, more in general, if there are differences in the mixed fisheries between the North Sea and area 6.
	Done in advice on Fishing Opportunities 2022. To be mentioned at the meeting of the Horizontal Working Group in September as part of the review of the FO advice under agenda item 'Discussion with DG MARE'.
7	NWWAC to submit question during ICES benchmark for hake this Autumn in relation to variations in growth rates between males and females and how this can impact the yield (Secretariat to contact Jean-Marie Robert for the exact wording).



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Separate letter to be prepared

ACTION: 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.

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Members agreed to confirm Suso Lourido Garcia and Jean-Marie Robert as Chair and Vicechair of Working Group 2 for the next 3 year term.

3. Feedback from the Commission on the Fishing Opportunities 2022 advice

The Secretariat reported on the main recommendations related to the West of Scotland and the Celtic Sea included in the advice:

- Further work on genetics is needed to solve stock identity issues for cod 6a.
- Need for clarity around the possible significant differences between mixed fisheries in the North Sea and West of Scotland, with specific mention to haddock in 6a.
- Re-assess haddock in 6b since, following the benchmark in 2020, the advice this year is characterised by a substantial retrospective difference.
- Importance of improving data collection and data quality for plaice and sole stocks in 7b-c and 7h-k, for example to investigate potential stock identity issues.
- NWWAC members note that there are very sensitive growth variations between hake males and females and are concerned that this might influence stock productivity if catches are not balanced. The NWWAC is aware that a benchmark is planned on this stock before the end of the year and recommends that this issue is addressed in that occasion, including how to account for the different growth rates in the management of this stock.

The Chair invited the Commission representative, Cristina Ribeiro, to take the floor. Ribeiro expressed the Commission's gratitude for the advice submitted by the NWWAC, which points out important issues. The Commission still had to agree on its internal position, therefore Ribeiro could not provide detailed feedback.

Sean O'Donoghue pointed out that among those recommendations made in the Fishing Opportunities advice there are some which the NWWAC should try and progress as a matter of urgency in collaboration with the NWW Member States Group, including those mentioned by the Secretariat on haddock, cod and hake.

ACTION: Secretariat to bring the main issue raised in the advice Fishing Opportunities 2022 to the attention of the MSG at the next Technical Group meeting and follow up.

The Member States Group representative, Pauline Joyeux DPMA, confirmed that the measures for hake in the Irish Box will be on the agenda of the next Technical Group meeting for discussion with the Commission, as there are legal uncertainties that need clarification. The AC will be invited to attend the last part of the meeting as usual and will get an update.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Jean-Marie Robert pointed out that it would be difficult for the AC to progress on the hake item until the legal interpretation issue regarding which regulation prevails between the technical measures regulation and the hake plan regulation, establishing which mesh size needs to be applied in the Irish Box, is clarified. Once legal interpretation is available, the AC can decide how to move forward.

4. Input on the draft advice 'Addressing Choke Risk in NWW after exemptions' for WG2 stocks

The Secretariat shared the Choke ID spreadsheets for discussion with members. Members' comments were recorded directly on the spreadsheet. Outcomes from this discussion will feed the preparation of the Choke advice by the Focus Group Landing Obligation.

The Secretariat introduced the work done on the draft traffic light table including risk categories and proposed measures to solve the choke risk. Mo Mathies recalled that the choke advice was previously also made of another spreadsheet, which was reporting specific data on Member States quota shares and swaps. Mathies explained that the Secretariat had been discussing this old tool with Michael Keatinge and Dominic Rihan on how to make it relevant regarding the new post-Brexit landscape and how available data can be used to predict the choke risk. *"Previously, we would have used data from previous years to populate the sheet and the tool was always looking backwards. What we are doing now is trying to turn it into a predictive tool"*, said Mathies. The best way forward seems to be using Union shares for 2021, which are available. Then, by including the landings and discards from last year, it might be possible to predict where bottlenecks may arise regarding quotas. Mathies added that the Secretariat had written to the Commission to ask for any available data on quota swaps from this year. Mathies concluded asking for comments and suggestions from members on how to improve the spreadsheet.

Members agreed that the work on updating the tool should continue and that the Focus Group Landing Obligation would follow its progress.

5. AOB

The Chair introduced a request received by the Chair of the Pelagic Advisory Council to deal with pelagic stocks under NWWAC remit, namely sprat in ICES subareas 6 and 7a-k and greater silver smelt in ICES areas 6 and 7. The PelAC requested whether the NWWAC could agree that the PelAC informally covers these stocks while awaiting the next reform of the CFP, where Annex III can be amended formally to reflect this change.

The Chair invited members to express their views on this proposal, which would then be communicated to the NWWAC Executive Committee.

Robert explained that these species mostly represent bycatch for NWWAC members fleets and as bycatch they can provoke important management and choke issues. If the NWWAC agrees that the PelAC covers these stocks, members wouldn't have the opportunity to produce recommendations on those anymore. He pointed out that the PelAC should abstain to provide advice on those two stocks, but at the same time the NWWAC should have the opportunity to prepare recommendations



when needed.

O'Donoghue replied that over the years the NWWAC has not provided advice on the TAC related to greater silver smelt and sprat, however bycatch provisions on these stocks are very important to the NWWAC. Therefore, the NWWAC could informally allow the PelAC to make comments on TACs and quotas in relation to these species, but there needs to be a clear understanding that the NWWAC still has the remit of these stocks when it comes to bycatch provisions. The two ACs could consider drafting a gentlemen's agreement specifying these details.

Robert and the Chair supported O'Donoghue proposal. Puri Fernandez added that also for Spain these species are relevant in the context of the landing obligation as they constitute bycatch. She agreed with the proposal to have a collaboration with the PelAC but pointed out that the NWWAC shouldn't surrender stocks and areas in its remit to other ACs as a general rule, as it might be too premature in view of a CFP reform.

Mathies added that the NWWAC should also consider the possibility to provide joint advice with the PelAC on the two stocks, establishing specific terms of reference.

ACTION: Secretariat to refer comments on request from the PelAC on sprat and greater silver smelt to the ExCom.

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

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
2	Secretariat to bring the main issue raised in the advice Fishing Opportunities 2022 to the attention of the MSG at the next Technical Group meeting and follow up
3	Secretariat to refer comments on request from the PelAC on sprat and greater silver smelt to the ExCom.

7. Participants list

NWWAC members	
José Beltran	OPP-Lugo
Juan Carlos Corrás Arias	PESCAGALICIA-ARPEGA-OBARCO
Puri Fernández	ANASOL
Caroline Gamblin	CNPMEM
Gérald Hussenot Desenonges	Blue Fish
Manu Kelberine	CRPMEM Bretagne
Julien Lamothe	ANOP
Jésus Angel Lourida Garcia (Chair)	OPP 77 Puerto de Celeiro
John Lynch	IFO, IS&EFPO
Kiko Marin	O.P.P.A.O.
Sander Meyns	Rederscentrale



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Patrick Murphy	IS&WFPO
Sean O'Donoghue	KFO
Jean-Marie Robert	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Delphine Roncin	FROM Nord
John Ward	IFPO
NWWAC Observers	
Enda Conneely	IIMRO
Experts and Observers	
Juan Antonio Espejo Leña	Ministerio De Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación
Pauline Joyeux	Direction des pêches maritimes et de l'aquaculture
Marianna Monneau	Direction des pêches maritimes et de l'aquaculture
Cristina Ribeiro	DG MARE
Maeve White	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
NWWAC Secretariat	
Mo Mathies	Executive Secretary
Matilde Vallerani	Deputy Executive Secretary