



Draft Minutes

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Virtual Meeting

Wednesday 16 March 2022

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair Emiel Brouckaert welcomed all participants. Apologies were received from Anaïs Mourtada (CNPMEM), Caroline Gamblin (MSC, Observer).

The Chair advised that together with the NSAC, the NWWAC wrote to the Commission regarding the society and market consequences arising from the Ukraine/Russia situation. Input on this topic would be sought from this AC and discussed during the meeting by linking to the Action Points requiring approval from the Working Groups' meetings. The Chair stated a draft letter regarding the fuel crisis and its repercussions would be presented to ExCom members for approval after the actions arising from the Working Groups are addressed during the first agenda point.

The agenda and the minutes from the last meeting (24th September 2021) were adopted.

a) Action points from last meeting (24th September 2021)

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
	Emiel Brouckaert confirmed as Chair and Patrick Murphy as Vice Chair on Monday 14 March 2022.
2	Secretariat to contact all member for input to MIAC and MIACO meetings
	The above was carried out and finalized and the meetings were planned for January 2022. ICES postponed the meetings until June 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation in Denmark at the time. The contents of the meeting have not yet been reviewed and the members will be contacted if an update of the agenda points are required.

The Chair stated that many action points from the Working Groups were discussed and approved at the last ExCom meeting. The reporting on these action points had been completed and would also apply to upcoming action points from the Working Groups that would be discussed shortly.

Discussion on ICES deferrals and MIAC/MIACO meetings

Sean O'Donoghue queried the impact of ICES deferring meetings until April due to the Ukraine/Russian situation with the result that decisions would not be taken. O'Donoghue felt that this could affect the work regarding action point 2 and ICES should be contacted to discover if the



meetings would go ahead in June.

Mo Mathies remarked that the current suspended meetings are not impacting the advice for the NWW stocks but felt it would be worthwhile having written confirmation from ICES in time for the July meetings. The Chair advised this would be discussed in the action points for WG 2.

O'Donoghue further commented on the knock-on effect on stocks due to the rollover of advice. He added the importance of finding out ICES advice for 2023 stocks should the meetings be deferred.

ACTION: Secretariat to contact ICES regarding MIAC/MIACO meetings in Copenhagen in June.

ACTION: Secretariat to check with Commission regarding potential delays to ICES advice for NWW stocks.

b) Action points arising from Working Groups (14 & 15 March 2022)

Action Points Working Group 1 Irish Sea (15/03/2022)	
1	Secretariat to draft a letter to the NWW MSG on the need for new technical measures in the Irish Sea Nephrops fishery to mitigate whiting bycatch.
2	Secretariat to report members' input on discussion on Discard Plan to the Focus Group Landing Obligation for drafting of advice on the topic.
3	The WG supports the NWWAC initiative to write to the Commission with recommendations on the current fuel crisis and particularly highlights the need of having fuel storage and the importance of the fishing sector as it provides food security

All WG1 action points were approved.

Action Points Working Group 2 Celtic Sea and West of Scotland (15/03/2022)	
1	Preparation of NWWAC advice on Celtic Sea Technical Measures following report from STECF to be done through dedicated Advice Drafting Group or through existing Focus Group Landing Obligation.
	Secretariat to issue a request for interest, to all members, to be a part of a dedicated Advice Drafting Group
2	Secretariat to follow updates from ICES considering the possible delays in publication of advice. Once more information is available, the NWWAC could consider preparing a list of priorities to submit to ICES.
	Action approved by ExCom
3	In relation to EU-UK TAC setting, NWWAC should identify a list of key stocks on which the AC could focus its effort to provide advice in time before the Commission discusses its proposal in negotiations with the UK
	Action approved by ExCom

All WG2 action points were approved.

A discussion followed on Action Point 1 "Preparation of NWWAC advice on Celtic Sea Technical Measure following report from STECF", and members voiced their belief that due to the specific nature of the of the issue an ADG should be set up to address the matter.



In relation to Action Point 3 “Key stocks / Socio-economic aspects”, Robert felt it would be better to issue stock recommendations earlier in the year and also include socio-economic aspects which was not currently considered in the decision-making process. He acknowledged this goes beyond the scope of Working Group 2 and is related to the general methodology of how the AC worked. The Chair agreed and added that all Working Groups should review if there are specific stocks to be brought forward for prioritization and consideration in the EU-UK TAC setting procedure. Alexandra Phillippe proposed for it to be addressed in the Inter-AC meeting on Brexit.

Mathies advised that the FG Social Aspects had nearly finalised the draft Terms of Reference and there is an objective included regarding the consideration of socio-economic aspects in all of NWWAC advice in future.

ACTION: Secretariat to issue a request for expressions of interest to all members for participation in dedicated ADG preparing advice on Celtic Sea Technical Measures following the report from STECF.

Action Points Working Group 3 Channel (15/03/2022)	
1	Secretariat to collect comments from members on fuel crisis and collate them in the letter for discussion at ExCom
2	Members to propose experts for STECF EWG on non-quota species. The Secretariat will send an email informing on the application procedure and deadlines.
3	A reminder should be sent to the Commission on the recommendations made by the NWWAC on the use of the seabass catches allocation tool

All WG3 action points were approved.

Action Points Horizontal Working Group (14 March 2022)	
1	Members to send any questions for the Commission on the topics discussed to the Secretariat for written submission to DG Mare
2	Secretariat to contact Hugo Gonzalez to arrange a presentation of Spanish skates & rays research to the NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group Skates & Rays
3	Secretariat to consult with the MAC and NSAC regarding the potential establishment of a new Focus Group Brown Crab
4	ExCom to approve the organisation and running of the NWWAC PelAC workshop on impacts of seismic and offshore wind energy developments
5	ExCom to approve additional NWWAC submission on the current fuel crisis
6	Secretariat to circulate Commission response to the joint AC letter on AC advice and evaluate if the need arises for follow up submission
7	Secretariat to set up Doodle for meeting of the Focus Group Landing Obligation to discuss the update of the NWWAC Choke Tool
8	Secretariat to make proposal for a written procedure regarding emergency advice development in the NWWAC

All HWG action points were approved.

O'Donoghue asked if there had been a discussion between PelAC and NWWAC regarding Argentine and Sprat. He felt it was important for ExCom to action this as it related to WG 2 and additional stocks, and it should be included on NWWAC's July agenda.



The Chair advised that a gentleman's agreement had been prepared between PelAC and NWWAC and was currently being finalised. The Chair confirmed the consultation for the NWWAC prioritization of important stocks was on the agenda for July provided ICES advice was not delayed.

Letter on fuel crisis

The Chair read the letter to the Commission regarding the fuel crisis. Members comments and suggestions were incorporated in the draft document which would be finalised by the Secretariat directly following the meeting and circulated for fast-track approval to all ExCom members.

ACTION: Secretariat to finalise letter on fuel crisis and circulate for ExCom fast track approval.

2. Nomination and confirmation of second ExCom industry Vice-Chair

Mathies introduced the nomination and confirmation of the second ExCom industry Vice Chair. González acknowledged that replacing Purificación Fernández was difficult. He introduced Irene Prieto who provided a brief overview of her background stating that she was a marine biologist and had been working as an observer on fishing vessels for 3 years, as well as working with the Spanish Oceanographic Institute.

The Chair thanked Prieto. ExCom members approved the nomination and the Chair welcomed Prieto to the management team of this Advisory Council.

3. Update on the Year 17 Work Programme (Secretariat)

The Secretariat presented an update on the Work Programme. The presentation can be found [here](#). The full text of the work programme can be found [here](#). Specific questions from ExCom members could be forwarded to the Secretariat.

Mathies discussed the next Inter-AC meeting with the Commission on the 29 April for which agenda points needed to be proposed. She proposed an update on the following: the review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the NWWAC advice on the implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive and the Fishing for Litter initiative. She pointed out these updates were asked for at the last meetings and not provided. An update on the Multi-AC Blue Economy advice will also be requested. She requested any suggestions from members to add to the agenda be sent by email.

Mathies mentioned the MIAC/MIACO meetings scheduled for June, and a recommendation made by NWWAC in the Fishing Opportunities advice for 2022 regarding the *“Information on the level of quality assurance that a stock has gone through, more specifically on whether an assessment has gone into the ICES Transparency Assessment Framework or not, should be included in the ICES advice sheet. This should be located at the upfront of the advice page and in a very simple and direct format, for example with a coding system”*. Mathies said that the response from the Commission was that the NWWAC should address this directly with ICES. The Secretariat asked if members would like this to be included on the MIAC agenda or should a letter to ICES be prepared.

Action Point: Secretariat to initiate written procedure for MIAC/MIACO meeting content updates.



4. Budget Update

Financial Report Year 17 - the presentation can be found [here](#).

Commission proposed lump sum approach

Mathies explained the background to the Commission lumpsum approach which were not implementable as originally envisaged. While the Commission is still envisioning a move from ex-post to ex-ante evaluation and the elimination of the annual assessment of actual expenditure, and annual proposed budget will still have to be submitted. Payment of the end-of-year balance will be based on deliverables achieved in the technical work programme (i.e., number of meetings, number of submissions.) The ACs were required to submit draft budget proposals in January, and the NWWAC Secretariat submitted four separate proposals covering financial years 18, 19, 20, 21. This was done in detail and the AC was informed of the proposal.

A response from the Commission to individual ACs is expected soon with clarification if the proposals are accepted fully or only partially. The Secretariat will advise members when the letter is received and engage with the Commission should they provide less money. Mathies shared that DG Mare had their travel budget cut internally in line with the Green Deal and the Commission is recommending this for all ACs. She expressed an issue with this due to an inability to form a market price on the likes of flights. The Commission also expects future meetings to be hybrid which can add € 8, 000-15, 000 to the cost of a meeting. This needed to be reflected in the budget but the Commission would like ACs to reduce these costs. Opinions have been expressed to the Commission that the Green Deals aims to reduce the impact of meetings and not the cost.

Mathies advised that the Commission were changing the way they evaluate the AC's achievements. The Commission had not given a template to report or propose these deliverables. The Commission had informed the Secretariats that any response to public consultations is not counted in the Work Programme proposal, which has led to some confusion as a lot of time and effort was spent on public consultations. The Commission had assured the AC would receive the balance payment unless 50% of what we had set out was not achieved.

Mathies informed the group that it had been proposed to reduce the number of physical meetings and to make the September meetings virtual in line with the requirements of the Green Deal to reduce the impact of travel.

ACTION: Secretariat to initiate a written consultation regarding the move of the September meetings from physical to virtual.

5. NWWAC Membership Drive – Katrina Ryan, Mindfully Wired Communications

The Chair welcomed Katrina Ryan (MWC) and noted that approval was required from ExCom members for the Secretariat to carry out actions as identified as part of the membership drive strategy. The presentation can be found [here](#).

Ryan re-enforced that the real value in this Advisory Council was personal networks. She asked if there was an awareness of other organisations whether international or national who may be interested in membership or willing to receive the specifically designed marketing materials to contact Katrina or the Secretariat.

The Chair thanked Ryan and opened the floor for questions.



O'Donoghue remarked that the presentation was very useful and hoped it would yield some benefits. He thought that when outlining the advantages of the NWWAC it was important to say all the recommendations made were factual, and scientifically or technically based. He suggested a personal contact approach and to informally seek the Commission's support in contacting people.

Woodlock commented that as an OIG member the suggested people to be targeted were previously members of the AC. Woodlock felt it vitally important that the work of the NWWAC is publicised. He felt that there was a general lack of awareness in the public about the ACs and what they do and so suggested not restricting press releases to industry alone.

Philippe added that she supported the initiative and felt it very important to increase the balance in the membership. She felt this would add more weight to NWWAC's advice to the Commission.

Ryan thanked everyone for their input. She noted what Sean said about factual, scientifically, or technically based recommendations, which can be incorporated into key messages in the strategy and the deck. Ryan also explained that the Press Release was the broad public approach followed by a letter which was a more personal approach where direct contacts would be relied upon. In response to Woodlock Ryan advised that it was the intention to target previous members and to stipulate that the NWWAC had evolved, changed its rules of procedure and its programme of activity for the year ahead to focused more on large scale environmental issues than ever before.

Mathies reported that support for the NWWAC's membership drive had been repeatedly requested from the Commission, which had not been very forthcoming. She stated that there would be a report on this drive in the Work Programme Report at the end of the year. It would report on the answers, responses, and non-responses to show everything that can be done to attract new members and especially OIG members into this AC was being done.

The actions proposed in the membership drive were approved.

6. European Parliament report on the "state of play in the implementation of the CFP and perspectives after 2020" – MEP Gabriel Mato

The Chair thanked Mr Mato for joining the meeting and the invitation to contribute to the review. The AC's response was in development and would be sent once finalised.

MEP Gabriel Mato thanked everyone for the invitation today and stated this was an extremely important report and would like to collect as many comments from stakeholders as possible. The main goal was to reflect upon the implementation of the CFP so far to find out if the tools of the CFP were appropriate to face current and future challenges and to understand which aspects should be revised or improved. He explained that the questionnaire was flexible and that stakeholders were welcomed to address any extra topic they deemed important to consider.

Mr Mato pointed out that the CFP objectives are one of the main elements to be debated in this context. He felt that some of the goals and deadlines established in 2013 have been proved to be too rigid, ambitious and not very realistic. He particularly mentioned the MSY goal and highlighted the difficulty of implementing the landing obligation. *"We need more operational and pragmatic goals that can be achieved"*, he said.



Moreover, debates and discussions on objectives are usually only focusing on environmental aspects, but the success of the CFP shouldn't be measured on those only. Having healthy fish stocks and marine ecosystem is clearly a condition sine qua non for an economically viable fishing sector. However, the social and economic dimensions also need to be featured in the equation. In particular, he highlighted the vital role fisheries play for society and coastal communities.

He then mentioned the fuel crisis faced by the sector as a consequence of the war in Ukraine. *"The EU has to support fishers and the sector along the whole value chain. Social considerations should be even more prioritised in this moment and we need to consider how we can best integrate them in our decisions"* said Mato. He continued by stating that work a new equilibrium needs to be achieved between the different CFP objectives. Overall, it is important to reflect on the current goals and clarify if they are still up to date, realistic and reachable.

Mato added that governance is another key element in the debate on the implementation of the CFP. Specifically, what must be considered is how to achieve good governance in the EU and how the EU can contribute to ensure sustainable fisheries globally. He regrets seeing fisheries progressively losing their importance inside the European dimension, especially within the Commission. However, fisheries remain a strategic sector from both the socio-economic and the food security point of view. Therefore, it is vital to ensure that fisheries obtain the role they deserve inside the Commission.

Another important issue related to governance is the role of Advisory Councils. Mato spoke about the involvement of the ACs in the decision-making process and their ability to meaningfully contribute. *"ACs have a vital role and their advice is of crucial importance not just for the Commission, but for the European Parliament as well"*. Mato explained that the questionnaire triggers the reflection on how to best place the ACs in the decision-making process and on which responsibilities and powers could be given to ACs.

Mato then mentioned that equal conditions need to be ensured between EU and some foreign fleets which have lower socio and environmental standards, impacting competitiveness of European seafood. *"The stricter laws the EU is applying, the more it becomes depended of imported seafood"*, he explained. According to Mato, restrictions should be imposed on imported products, as the EU has the strictest regulations. The EU needs to defend its own sector interests on a global scale and at the same time promote the European sustainability model.

He concluded by giving information on the calendar of his work on the report. Contributions to the questionnaire are expected by the end of March and the report will be written across April. He also mentioned that a public hearing on the topic was organised in the PECH Committee the next day and invited all stakeholders to attend.

The Chair thanked Mr Mato for the extensive introduction of the topics to be addressed in response to the consultation and noted that the AC was working towards a unanimous input by the end of March deadline.

Mr Mato mentioned the difficulty of presenting online and would try as soon as possible to meet and discuss all the issues with everyone face to face. Mr Mato awaited the responses to be received and would endeavour to reflect the concerns of the AC's and the entire fishing industry.

ACTION: The Secretariat to initiate the setting up for an ADG for the following up of the CFP reporting



7. AOB

None

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

1	Secretariat to contact ICES regarding MIAC/MIACO meetings in Copenhagen in June.
2	Inter-AC 29 April: Secretariat to submit agenda items to the Commission including: MSFD, follow up on SUP Directive and FFL, follow up on Multi-AC blue economy advice. Members are invited to send further suggestions to the Secretariat by the end of March.
3	Secretariat to check with Commission regarding potential delays to ICES advice for NWW stocks.
4	Secretariat to issue a request for expressions of interest to all members for participation in dedicated ADG preparing advice on Celtic Sea Technical Measures following the report from STECF.
5	Secretariat to finalise letter on fuel crisis and circulate for ExCom fast track approval.
6	Secretariat to initiate a written consultation regarding the move of the September meetings from physical to virtual.
7	The Advice Drafting Group on the CFP will draft the response to Mr. Mato's questionnaire which will be delivered by the end of the month. Secretariat to follow up on the topic to ensure the ExCom is kept informed on any further action needed.
8	The Secretariat to initiate the setting up for an ADG for the following up of the CFP reporting

Participants

NWWAC ExCom members	
Emiel Brouckaert	NWWAC
Bruno Dachicourt	ETF
Hugo González	ANASOL/ARVI
Jan Kappel	EAA
Julien Lamothe	ANOP
Jesus Lourido Garcia	Puerto de Celeiro
John Lynch	Irish South & East Fish Producers Organisation Ltd
Geert Meun	VisNed
Anaïs Mourtada	CNPMEM
Patrick Murphy	Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation
Sean O'Donoghue	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation Ltd
Alexandra Philippe	EBCD
Irene Prieto	ANASOL/ARVI
Jean-Marie Robert	Le Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Johnny Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary
Experts and observers	
José Beltran	OPP-7 Burela
Enda Conneely	IIMRO
Gérald Hussenot Desenonges	Bluefish



Manu Kelberine	CRPM de Bretagne
Olivier Lepretre	CRPMEM Hauts-de-France
Gabriel Mato	MEP
Dominique Thomas	OP CME MMN
Katrina Ryan	Mindfully Wired COmmunications
Mathieu Vimard	OPN
NWWAC Secretariat	
Deirdre Hoare	Rapporteur
Mo Mathies	Executive Secretary
Matilde Vallerani	Deputy Executive Secretary

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