



# Draft MINUTES

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Virtual

Wednesday 28 September 2022

14:00 – 16:00 CET

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair Emiel Brouckaert welcomed all participants to the meeting. Apologies were received from Dominique Thomas, Geer Meun, John Lynch and Johnny Woodlock in advance of the meeting.

Mo Mathies informed that attendance at the meeting was very low, making it impossible to reach the quorum allowing the General Assembly to fulfil its task. Approval of documents and actions will be done via written procedure.

The agenda was adopted as drafted. There was one action point from the last meeting held on 6 July 2022:

1	Reschedule FPDR presentation on application for “other” industry category for next General Assembly
	<a href="#">A meeting is scheduled regarding the potential re-classification of FPDR with the OIG college for 04 October.</a>

#### 2. Annual report from the NWWAC Chair (Emiel Brouckaert)

The Chair gave an overview of the work completed in Year 17, including submissions to the Commission and the Member States, meetings organised and meetings attended by NWWAC representatives. A comprehensive list is available on the presentation shared on screen during the meeting.

The presentation included an overview of NWWAC members participation at meetings, comparing levels of participation at online and in-person meetings. It is clear from this analysis that active participation is quite low compared to each group’s membership. Mo Mathies highlighted the need to improve this situation and better engage members to attend meetings, both live and online.

In Jean-Marie Robert’s opinion, members are disappointed as they don’t see feedbacks and results from the work carried in the AC. “*Why attending ACs meetings if we don’t have the impression the Commission is listening and taking into account the results of our work?*”, he explained. This is not an internal organisational problem in the AC, it’s a matter of motivation and need for recognition of members’ work.

Mathies agreed that transparency on the impact of AC advice is still a big issue that has been raised several times, including in the response to the CFP consultation, by many ACs. She reported that the



Commission is aware of the issue and is working on this. Hopefully there will be more details on the impact of previous advice in the CFP report. She also mentioned that the issue will be surely raised by the results of the NWWAC performance review, which will be public and shared with DG MARE. Mathies added that the topic is also on the agenda for the next Inter-AC Secretariats meeting with DG MARE planned on 11 October.

Jose Beltran added that it is important not to lose contact and interaction with the Commission, especially with the increase of virtual meetings. The VMEs case is an example of unsatisfactory interaction with stakeholders, as the consultation carried out by the Commission was not appropriate, and this shouldn't become the new normal.

Mathies explained that ACs have been asked to cut their in-person meeting by 30% and that DG MARE's budget for travelling has also been cut by 50%. She mentioned a meeting proposal to be presented to members later in the meeting, including the possibility to have NWWAC plenary meetings in Brussels to facilitate in person participation from the Commission.

**ACTION:** The Secretariat will continue to pursue Commission's participation in NWWAC work and meetings and feedback to AC advice.

The Chair presented an overview of the NWWAC Work Programme and proposed submissions for Year 18. A complete list can be found on the presentation slides.

He then presented a proposal for meetings calendar in Year 18, as sent to the Commission, also available on the slides. In this regard, he mentioned that the ExCom had agreed on a new meeting policy to be presented to the GA for approval. However, quorum couldn't be achieved at this meeting and the policy will have to be approved by the GA via written procedure.

### **3. Report on the budget (Secretariat)**

Mathies presented a review of the income and expenditure for Year 17 and included a reminder of the financial timeline until December 2022. She then presented on the income for Year 18, explaining that the €6,700 discrepancy between proposed total income and actual total income is due to an actual decrease in membership numbers and no new member applications following the membership drive. The Commission income is agreed at €330,000 under the new lump sum approach.

Details are available on the slides shared on screen at the meeting.

### **4. Report on membership (Secretariat)**

Mathies presented an overview of changes in NWWAC membership, explaining that two Spanish industry members were lost, due to internal restructuring of organisations. Moreover, one French member decided not to renew its membership.

Unfortunately, no additional members were yielded following the membership drive. Mathies explained that the Secretariat has already asked for support by the Commission to promote the role of ACs and thus help increasing their membership. This will also be mentioned at the meeting in



October between Secretariats and DG MARE, as this is an issue affecting many other ACs. She proposed that an official request for support be sent to the Commission.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to draft letter to DG MARE asking for support in promoting the role of ACs.

#### **5. NWWAC Company update (Secretariat)**

Mathies explained that the NWWAC Company Directors for Year 18 will be the same as Year 17: Sean O'Donoghue, Michael Keatinge and Mathies herself. She then mentioned that the Financial Statement will be approved towards the end of the year following successful audit by the NWWAC AGM and Management Team.

#### **6. NWWAC Performance Review 2022- 2023 (Sara Vandamme)**

Mathies explained that ACs are required by the Commission to carry out an external performance review every 5 years. The Secretariat developed a scope and a tender document to direct recipients and invited responses to the quotations with details on how they would see a review going ahead. Terms of Reference were agreed by ExCom prior to quotation procedure. Mathies introduced Sara Vandamme, whose proposal won the tender, and who had previously worked as NWWAC Executive Secretary. She will be assisted by a team of 3 people, skilled in science-fisheries partnership projects and in policy-oriented research on the management and functioning of public sector organizations designed to support governments and policy stakeholders.

Vandamme took the floor and explained that two main challenges had been identified in the ToR, the post-Brexit landscape, in terms of membership and area of competence, and the 60/40 balance of stakeholders in the AC membership. Overall, the performance review aims at:

- Perform an external and objective assessment of the functioning of the internal bodies
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement
- Develop recommendations on AC organisation, quality of advice, collaboration and others

Vandamme illustrated the approach she will employ for the performance review, which will consist of 3 phases:

- 1) Meeting with AC management team, literature study and development of the data collection tools
- 2) Survey to members (December 2022-January 2023), organisation of Focus Groups (2, March 2023) and in-depth interviews (from March 2023 onwards)
- 3) Identification of good practices and recommendations

Vandamme highlighted the importance of members participation and engagement, especially in the second phase.

Preliminary results will be presented at the ExCom meeting in July 2023 and the final report will be published in September 2023, with a presentation to the General Assembly.



Mathies encouraged members to engage in this exercise: *“This is vital for the exercise to be successful and effective. This performance review is going to be a very important piece of work and the results will be shared with the Commission”*. The Secretariat will support the team in engaging with members, but members support is needed the first place. Members need to raise their voice and participate with their views.

## **7. NWWAC WebGIS tool update (Jacob Ashton, MWC)**

Before giving the floor to Jacob Ashton, Mathies explained that the General Assembly will need to approve the logo usage as proposed by MWC as well as the name/domain name for the tool.

Ashton share the tool on screen presenting the recently implemented features. He reminded that the tool will be available in three languages. He showed the data layers that have been included in the map so far as well as the functions and features that can be operated. He shared a link to the prototype for members to check.

He added that more items to be included are the 6-12 miles limit and the ICES statistical rectangles. The idea is to link technical measures in place with statistic rectangles, which will allow to show where a specific measure applies. In this regard, he mentioned the work of the Focus Group on the tool, which met on 20 September and agreed to draft a letter to the Commission asking for support on regulatory/legislative data standardisation.

Regarding the name of the tool, “AC Fish Map” seemed to be the leading option. Moreover, he explained that the NWWAC logo takes too much space on the top banner and proposed to change it by moving the text on the side of the icon.

The floor was opened for questions and feedback. Members asked about other topics of interest discussed during the FG meeting.

Mathies explained that indeed data sharing and accessibility had been discussed, with the decision to draft a letter to DG MARE on harmonisation of data available to allow the translation into data layers. There was also a request to make the files compatible to be downloaded for plotters on the boats. Potential individual access by members for individual usage had also been discussed, in particular the possibility for individual members to upload their own information on the tool for their own benefit was raised. It is the Secretariat opinion that this would be a commercial access and AC funding cannot be used to benefit individual members. The interested members should pay for this access and facilitation separately. Referring to the domain name, Mathies pointed out that it needs to be short and catchy and the same for all three official NWWAC languages. As there is interest from other ACs and having one landing page would be preferable, the name shouldn't be NWWAC specific.

Beltran commented that he sees the tool as a wonderful output that everyone would be interested in. He understood that the tool can be improved with new/more information when needed but felt that it should already include bathymetry information. He also suggested to add detail with local names for geographical areas at a later stage.

Ashton invited Beltran to send his comments in writing to the Secretariat for follow up.



Mathies replied that indeed a service level agreement is going to be put in place to continue the update of the tool. *“Many improvements needed will emerge as members use the tool. We want to keep it up to date and we rely on our members for the information they want to see there and for the information we need”*, she explained.

The Chair asked about the validity of the logo in case it has to be changed for spatial issues on the tool interface.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to check validity of NWWAC logo following modifications proposed by MWC.

**ACTION:** Domain name and logo proposals should be put forward for approval to NWWAC members via written procedure.

## 8. Meeting policy

The Secretariat presented the proposal agreed by the ExCom to have two plenary meetings in person in March and July, while September plenary will be virtual. Mathies proposed to keep Madrid as the venue for March 2023 plenary and move it to Dublin in 2024 (the venue has already been booked by the Secretariat to ensure its availability). Regarding plenaries in July, members agreed that moving the venue from Ghent to Brussels would facilitate travel arrangements and Commission participation.

Anais Mourtada recalled the importance of coordinating with other ACs, to avoid meetings overlapping. Mathies ensured Secretariats are doing their best and use a shared meeting planner to inform each other.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to share meeting proposal agreed by the ExCom with the General Assembly for approval via written procedure.

## 9. Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted (President)

1	The Secretariat will continue to pursue the Commission’s participation in NWWAC work and meetings and feedback to AC advice.
2	Secretariat to draft letter to DG MARE asking for support in promoting the role of ACs.
3	Secretariat to check validity of NWWAC logo following modifications proposed by MWC.
4	Domain name and logo proposals should be put forward for approval to NWWAC members via written procedure.
5	Secretariat to share meeting proposal agreed by the ExCom with the General Assembly for approval via written procedure.



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## 10. Participants

<b>Members</b>	
Jose Beltran	OPP Lugo
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Enda Conneely	IIMRO
Gerald Hussenot	Blue Fish
Jan Kappel	EAA
Manu Kelberine	CRPMEM de Bretagne
Franck Le Barzic	Cobrenord
Anais Mourtada	CNPMEM
Patrick Murphy	ISWPO
Aodh O'Donnel	IFPO
Mikel Ortiz	OPPAO
Alexandra Philippe	EBCD
Corentine Piton	FPDR
Maura Power	ISEFPO
Irene Prieto	ARVI
Jean-Marie Robert	Pecheurs de Bretagne
Arthur Yon	FROM Nord
<b>Experts</b>	
Sara Vandamme	Independent consultant
Jacob Ashton	MWC
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Mo Mathies	Executive Secretary
Matilde Vallerani	Deputy Executive Secretary