



DRAFT Minutes

WORKING GROUP 1 (Irish Sea)

Wednesday 14 September 2022
15:30 – 17:00 CET

1 Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed all participants. Apologies were received from Patrick Murphy, IS&WFPO. The agenda was adopted.

- Action points from the minutes of the last meeting (4 July 2022)

1	Secretariat to share written responses from ACOM Vice-Chair to pending questions from the meeting Shared with members on 06/07
2	Members to send comments on ICES advice and recommendations to be included in fishing opportunities advice to the Secretariat Done – FO advice delivered to COM on 25/08
3	Secretariat to share 2022 Choke ID tool following an update on exemptions on technical measures for members to provide comments to feed advice preparation by the FG LO Item 2 of this agenda
4	The WG will review the bycatch measures in place for whiting in the <i>Nephrops</i> fishery and get in touch with the MSG to progress on the matter. Item 3 of this agenda

2 Discussion on Choke risks in the Irish Sea

The Secretariat presented the traffic light choke tool and recalled its functionalities.

Cod 7a

The Chair felt that it might be useful to elaborate on the spatial and temporal measures. Cod now being under 0 TAC advice a bycatch TAC will need to be put in place to allow for the various fisheries to proceed. He asked if the AC should ask for a review for the Irish sea cod closure and establish if it is still of use, or a different approach may be needed?

Johnny Woodlock added that space is limited due to the progression of wind farm developments and MPA designations as well.



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

Whiting 7a

The Chair mentioned the continued search for technical improvements in the *Nephrops* fishery to avoid catches of juvenile whiting.

Haddock 7a

The Chair mentioned the new TM introduced last year.

Sole 7a

The Chair stated that the beam trawl and *Nephrops* fisheries caught most of the sole and was wondering if there was anything of relevance from a Belgian point of view.

Plaice 7a

Rihan commented that the uptake of the plaice TAC is still around 40%, hence still suggested as low risk.

Nephrops 7

Rihan recalled that Ireland's uptake of the prawn quota is up to levels that have not been seen much in previous years and feels that quota will become short. With no tie up scheme in place next year this can become difficult for the Irish fleet.

Woodlock added that large areas of *Nephrops* grounds could be off limits when ORE are introduced.

Rihan did not feel that this would be an issue in 2023.

ACTION: Discussion to be held at March meeting on the Irish Sea cod closure

3 Review of whiting bycatch measures

The Chair asked the Member States Group representative if any discussions have been held on this.

Rihan stated that this has not been discussed. He felt that without the UK the discussion is very one sided and concentrated on the Irish side as the trawl fisheries is the main issue thought the Belgians also have a limited interest. He added that because the Commission's TAC approach to UK suggestions which have not impacted many, there have not been any discussions. He suggested that if members wanted to get this on the MSG agenda a letter could be submitted.

The Secretariat recalled that in the NWWAC response to the JR a request to review the whiting measures was included, however, this was addressed to the old presidency and should possibly be addressed at the upcoming MSG meeting.

Rihan added that if the COM was approached the topic would be referred into the SCF and the EU



are interested in avoiding unilateral approaches.
The Chair added work was being carried out in the North of Ireland.

Rihan stated that a lot of the TMs have been around the Celtic Sea, but that the TAC discussions would start very soon and the 0 TAC species will attract discussions at the positions were no likely to be aligned. This means that TM may become part of the discussions then. He added that the UK has pushed for a rollover of the TACs over the past couple of years.

The Chair felt that if a bycatch quota was made available this should not be too much of an issue.

Rihan added that it seems that there will be a bycatch quota for 0 TAC advice stocks, however, this will be very precautionary.

ACTION: Secretariat to forward this topic of bycatch measures for whiting to the presidency of the NWW MSG for further discussion

Oisín Kelly confirmed that Ireland will hold the presidency of the NWW MSG for the first six months of 2023.

ACTION: Secretariat to raise the issue of the cod closure with the NWW MSG

Woodlock asked if Northern Ireland would cooperate with Ireland regarding TM.

Rihan stated that work had been carried out in previous years which could be useful in this context.

4 Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted by the Chair

The Chair asked members if this group should carry out more work on the developments of OREs in the Irish Sea.

Aodh O'Donnell felt it was one of the most important issues for the fishing industry in the Irish Sea as it will likely lead to a lot of displacement. This must be kept on the agenda.

Brouckaert asked if there was any information available regarding the locations planned and the impact regarding displacement of the fishing industry.

The Chair stated that a request has been made to the Seafood ORE group to provide a full and accurate map of all Phase 1 developments.

The Secretariat added that this issue was also discussed at the Horizontal Working Group yesterday and this topic would be followed up as agreed. The NWWAC Fisheries Management Chart displays the area of wind farms in the Irish Sea.

Brouckaert asked if the sites were already determined or if this was not part of the consultation.

Lynch stated that the sites have been determined already and consultations were only started after



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN
WATERS
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA
LAS AGUAS
NOROCCIDENTALES

the fact.

Norah Parke added that it was vital to be aware what was coming as Phase 2.

The Secretariat explained that according to the new legislation Ireland, sites for offshore wind developments are designated prior to engagement with stakeholders which presents a major difficulty and the question arises as to how can the industry can influence site designations. This is an important point to raise with the Irish Department for their presentation once this has been agreed. Some of the sites that are currently being developed were designated and approved up to 20 years ago, however, development is only taking place now due to the urgent need for additional renewable energy in view of the current energy crisis.

Sean O'Donoghue stated that there is a "need to ensure that applications are done with prior consultation of fisheries stakeholders". The AC should try to ensure that no applicant can move forward to get public permission without having the sector involved and properly consulted. When the Department makes the decision, the applicant will submit its application in 1-2 months. The sector should get in touch with the applicants asking for consultation before any application is submitted.

Brouckaert asked whether developments under the marine planning act has been approved by the EU authorities.

O'Donoghue explained that the legislation covers Ireland's area up to the 200-mile limit. There has been no notification to the EU until there is actual application. When those applicants apply to the Department there should be a special provision ensuring stakeholder consultation.

Aodh O'Donnell added that EIS is another important part of the process where the sector should be involved.

O'Donoghue mention the modelling project work being carried out by ICRA: <https://www.icrag-centre.org/> which takes into account all of the interactions, including biodiversity, fishing, sea bed, shipping, and other developments.

ACTION: Keep the topic of offshore wind energy developments on the agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION: Members will keep an eye on the Department's announcement of which applicants have been selected to ensure the AC has opportunity to provide advice.

ACTION: Secretariat to share link for La Tene maps on ORE distribution

1	Discussion to be held at March meeting on the Irish Sea cod closure
2	Secretariat to forward this topic of bycatch measures for whiting to the presidency of the NWW MSG for further discussion
3	Secretariat to raise the issue of the cod closure with the NWW MSG
4	Keep the topic of offshore wind energy developments on the agenda for the next meeting.
5	Members will keep an eye on the Department's announcement of which applicants have been selected to ensure the AC has opportunity to provide advice.



6	Secretariat to share link for La Tene maps on ORE distribution
---	--

Participants

NWWAC members	
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
John Lynch	IS&EFPO
Aodh O'Donnell	IFPO
Sean O'Donoghue	KFO
Norah Parke	KFO
Johnny Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary
Experts and Observers	
Juan Antonio Espejo Lena	Spanish administration
Oisín O'Kelly	DAFM
Dominic Rihan	Bord Iascaigh Mhara
NWWAC Secretariat	
Mo Mathies	Executive Secretary
Matilde Vallerani	Deputy Executive Secretary