



DRAFT Minutes

WORKING GROUP 3 (ENGLISH CHANNEL)

Wednesday 13 September 2023

Zoom

1 Welcome and introductions

The Chair Manu Kelberine welcomed all participants. No apologies were received ahead of the meeting. The agenda was adopted with the deletion of item 2 as no Commission representative was available to address this item.

Action points from the last meeting (3 July 2023)

1	Comments from members following the presentation of the ICES advice will be taken into account in the preparation of the advice on fishing opportunities by the FG landing obligation. In particular, the impact of new possible TACs (brill, lemon sole, witch) should be considered.
	Included in advice on Fishing Opportunities submitted on 9 August
2	The CNPMEM proposal on red mullet has been approved by WG3 and will be submitted in the form of AC advice to the ExCom for approval.
	The issue will be discussed on 27 September at national level in France. ACTION: The CNPMEM will get in touch with the Secretariat following the meeting in France on red mullet with an updated proposal.
3	The NWWAC will consider the possibility to revise and update its advice on whelk following internal discussions in France.
	A meeting is scheduled for beginning of October in France at national level.
4	Once trials on new ring size by Irish vessels are complete, the FG Scallop will meet in person to finalise its advice. In the meantime, the Secretariat will continue liaising with the Commission on developments on the topic within the specialized committee on fisheries.
	To be addressed under agenda item 5.

2 Discussion on choke risks in the Channel

The Secretariat introduced the NWWAC traffic light tool approach to the choke advice and reminded participants on its workings.

Emiel Brouckaert stated that on Whiting 7d it is difficult to only consider it as medium risk if the TAC is affected by the TAC in 7b-k and suggested to increase the risk to high.

Franck Le Barzic was unsure if the high risk also related to the Eastern Channel as the 0 TAC scenario should not apply there.

Brouckaert stated that this was not about 0 TAC risk but rather a choke situation in 7d, which this table is showing. Though the situation has improved, there is still a high risk even if the exemption was maintained.

Le Barzic agreed with this but mentioned that there is no visibility about management in 2024. This may change towards the end of the year, so a moderate risk may exist for French fisheries, a higher risk for other fisheries if the TAC is individualised.

Kelberine added that decisions will be made at the end of the year which will affect this stock, but for now he agreed with a high risk for this stock.

John Lynch felt that the 0 TAC for whiting has implications into the Celtic Sea and that at minimum a TAC for unwanted catch will be needed. The Eastern Channel management may be brought into the Celtic Sea depending on the separation of the TAC as proposed in the Commission paper.

On plaice 7d, Brouckaert felt that selectivity work is continually being carried out on this stock and the recommendation on improving effort on selectivity should reflect that.

Geert Meun mentioned that there seems to be a discussion in the EU to split the TAC in 7d and 7e which may be implemented next year.

Regarding plaice 7e, Le Barzic stated that there is a difficulty for planning ahead taking into account the Eastern and Western Channel. If the two TACs are separated, then France and other countries won't be covered by the ICES advice. It would be useful to align management areas and set risk to medium in both.

Brouckaert agreed that for the time being the TAC covers plaice 7d and e. However, he reported a comment from Defra regarding TAC alignment between EU and UK that this work may take a long time, so the split may not be seen next year.

The advice for cod 7d is due to be published on 19 September by ICES. Focus Group on the Landing Obligation will review it and include it in the discussions for drafting advice.

The Chair commented that pollack was not included in the species table which was discussed in WG2 earlier. He expressed his surprise that pollack was not addressed by this WG since the 0 TAC advice will likely affect fisheries in the Channel as well.

The Secretariat presented the comments received during WG 2. The Chair proposes to include these in for the Channel as well.

Gérald Hussenot-Desenonges suggested to consider whether 0 TAC restrictions are implemented for recreational fisheries.

ACTION: Inputs from members on the choke risks will be collated by the Secretariat and reviewed by the Focus Group Landing Obligation to prepare advice. The Secretariat will share an updated version of the spreadsheet with members for further comments if necessary.

3 UK consultations on fisheries management plans

The Secretariat introduced those FMPs for which no Focus Groups exist in the NWWAC.

- Seabass



- Channel demersal non-quota species
- Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel mixed flatfish.

The deadline for these consultations is 01 October.

The Chair felt that the deadline is very tight especially for non-English speakers. He felt a general response may be a good solution instead of answering the consultation point by point. He volunteered to be involved in the drafting process for seabass and asked for volunteers for the other two FMPs.

Le Barzic agreed that the deadline is extremely tight. He felt that the decision process in the UK enables them to move faster than the EU. He expressed his concern regarding the Channel demersal non-quota species on some temporary closure which may be in the pipeline and cuttlefish management. He agreed that a general answer may suffice and point out that these are shared stocks and approaches need to be harmonised. He suggested that the three consultations could potentially be addressed with the same answer.

Arthur Yon was wondering who the final recipient might be for these consultation and if it would be more useful to send responses to the Commission and the Member States.

Kelberine suggested that the response could be sent to the Commission and the Member States as well as the UK.

Le Barzic felt that a statement should be made, and the Commission may need to be kept in the loop anyway.

The Secretariat suggested that certain aspects of the FMPs may be useful to be put forward to the Commission for consideration as well when develop the multi-annual management strategies, for example for scallop.

The Chair felt that some technical aspects especially for the non-quota species could be a major issue for some vessels which are fishing for 60% in UK waters. A detailed answer may be necessary and better than a general answer. He suggested that members have one week to send comments to the Secretariat from which advice will be drafted.

Lynch confirmed that he was available to address the FMP Scallop.

ACTION: Members to send comments on FMPs to Secretariat by 20 September. One response to be prepared for Seabass/Channel demersal non-quota species/Southern North Sea and eastern Channel mixed flatfish, and one additional each on scallops and whelk.

4 Focus Groups update

- Scallop

Lynch stated that the trials are imminent. Gear has been delivered and vessels have applied for tender. BIM are in the process of identifying a vessel to carry out the trial and have also committed to



carrying out additional trials next year.

Kelberine asked for clarification on the timescale.

Lynch stated no date was set yet but is hopeful that the start would be within the next month.

- Whelk

The Chair stated that the CNPMEM has a Working Group in place and work is being done. The Secretariat will be contacted once there is a position agreed in France.

5 AOB

Mathieu Vimard suggested to address the UK Highly Protected Marine Areas. He felt that this was an important topic and the first prohibitions will be seen soon. He was wondering if the AC should point the attention of the European Commission towards the number of closures and potential overlap. In France political support is sought and he felt that the AC could draw the decision makers attention as well. This might require a general letter from the AC.

The Chair agreed and highlighted that all the FMPs talk about temporary closures in several areas which is concerning especially in the Channel. *“Will there be any room left for us doing our job?”*

The Secretariat stated that a letter would be the best format for this and suggest that Vimard send suggestions that could help with the drafting.

The Chair suggested that the ACFishMap could be used for this tasked to overlay all the areas for protection that are being planned.

ACTION: Secretariat to draft a letter on impacts of UK HMPAs to the Commission.

6 Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted by the Chair

1	The CNPMEM will get in touch with the Secretariat following the meeting in France on red mullet with an updated proposal.
2	Inputs from members on the choke risks will be collated by the Secretariat and reviewed by the Focus Group Landing Obligation to prepare advice. The Secretariat will share an updated version of the spreadsheet with members for further comments if necessary.
3	Members to send comments on FMPs to Secretariat by 20 September. One response to be prepared for Seabass/Channel demersal non-quota species/Southern North Sea and eastern Channel mixed flatfish, and one additional each on scallops and whelk.
4	Secretariat to draft a letter on impacts of UK HMPAs to the Commission.

Participants



NWWAC members	
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Kenatea Chavez-Hey	ANOP
Gérald Hussenot-Desenonges	Blue Fish
Margaux Jourdainne	CRPMEM
Franck Le Barzic	COBRENORD
Manu Kelberine (Chair)	CRPMEM de Bretagne
John Lynch	IS&EFPO
Geert Meun	VisNed
Anais Mourtada	CNPMEM
Aodh O'Domhnaill	IFPO
Corentine Piton	France Pêche Durable et Responsable
Jean-Marie Robert	LPDB
Dominique Thomas	OP CME MMN
Matheiu Vimard (Vicechair)	OPN
Arthur Yon	FROM Nord
Experts and observers	
Michael Keatinge	NWWAC Director
Marie Lecomte	MSC
Kylie Kronal	Departement Landbouw en Visserij Vlaamse Overheid
NWWAC Secretariat	
Mo Mathies	NWAC Executive Secretary
Matilde Vallerani	NWWAC Deputy Executive Secretary