CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES SEPTENTRIONALES | NORTH WESTERN WATERS ADVISORY COUNCIL | CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA LAS AGUAS NOROCCIDENTALES

Draft minutes

WORKING GROUP 2 (CELTIC SEA & West of Scotland)

Ghent | 02 July 2024

1 Welcome & introductions

The Vice-Chair welcomed all participants and sent the Chair's apologies as he was unable to join today. No other apologies were received. The agenda was adopted.

Action points from the last meeting

1	In response to DG Vitcheva's request at the last Inter-AC meeting in February 2024 and following up on the STECF EWG 23-15 meeting, the NWWAC should prepare advice on technical measures in the Celtic Sea. This advice should also include a request to receive results from the data collection campaign recently carried by the UK.
	Done, letter sent on 3 May – Response received on 24 June available here: https://www.nwwac.ie/publications/dg-mares-response-to-nwwac-advice-on-technical-measures-in-the-celtic-sea.4901.html
2	A webinar should be organized by the NWWAC in June 2024 on scientific assessment of the Celtic Sea cod stock and the impact of climate change, inviting involved scientists, NWW Member States representatives and DG MARE.
	Webinar held on 12 June – follow up under agenda item 2
3	The WG will continue following the work by BIM on spurdog and consider the final report of the ongoing campaign for advice to the NWW Member States.
	Joint recommendation postponed until 2025
4	Issues and concerns regarding VMEs to be raised with DG MARE at ExCom meeting on 20 March.
	Done. Further discussions on the topic with Donatella at ExCom on 3 July. In addition, DG MARE want to arrange further discussions with the AC which will be scheduled for the next WG meeting in October.
5	The WG will continue following ongoing work on the Nephrops fishery in the Porcupine Bank. Aodh O'Donnell will share the report from the first assessment from 2023 and additional information when available.
	Agenda item 4
6	Follow up on Celtic Sea whiting recovery (proposed and agreed by ExCom based on dialogue with DG MARE)
	Address under agenda item 2

Emiel Brouckaert noted the Commission's response to the AC's advice on technical measures in the Celtic Sea and that this topic needs to be kept on the agenda.

ACTION: The Secretariat will keep members informed regarding the organisation of an update session on VMEs by DG MARE. This could also be organized as part of the next WG2 meeting.

2 ICES advice for the Celtic Sea and West of Scotland– Joanne Morgan, ICES ACOM Vicechair

The Chair welcomed Joanne Morgan and added that questions can be asked after every stock.

List of acronyms

DLS	data limited stocks
CHR	constant harvest rate
Rfb	Equation: r = biomass ratio (survey trend), f = fishing proxy (length data, target), b = biomass safeguard
CAA	catch at age
SAA	survey at age
SR	Stock recruit
B	biomass
BMSY	biomass at maximum sustainable yield
XSA	Extended survivor analysis
SAM	Stock assessment model
SCAA	statistical catch at age
SPiCT	Surplus production in continuous time
SS	stock synthesis
SSB	spawning stock biomass
Blim	Limit reference point for spawning stock biomass (SSB)
Btrigger	Value of spawning stock biomass (SSB) that triggers a specific management action
F	Instantaneous Rate of Fishing Mortality
AAP	Aarts and Poos assessment

- Guide to ICES advisory framework and principles (link)
- List of ICES acronyms and terminology (link)
- ICES fisheries management reference points for category 1 and 2 stocks (link)
- ICES technical guidance for harvest control rules and stock assessments for stocks in categories 2 and 3 (link)
- ICES reference points for stocks in categories 3 and 4 (link)

Links to all ICES technical guidelines can be found here.

ACTION: Comments made following presentation of ICES advice will be taken into account in the preparation of the AC advice on Fishing Opportunities by the FG Landing Obligation. Members are invited to send any other contribution via email before the FG meeting on 24 July.

Morgan reminded participants that the ICES website is still not fully functional since last week's cyber attack and that some of the advice sheets may have minor editorial issues. However, there should be no major issues with the advice sheets and the ICES library is fully accessible.

Anglerfish in subareas 4 and 6 and divisions 3a

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 30726t (+211%)
- Advice for black bellied and white combined
- Benchmark – moved from category 3 to 1
- SS3 – length based
- New and revised indices
- Stock synthesis

Black bellied anglerfish in subarea 7 and divisions 8a-b and 8d

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 25317t (-1%)
- F has been decreasing below FMSY
- SSB has been increasing since 2002: above Btrigger
- Exploitable biomass (not = SSB) levelling off as lower recruitment since 2020 enters
- Stock synthesis
- Under combined TAC with white anglerfish – could lead to overexploitation of either species

White anglerfish

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 34983t (-1.5%)
- F decreasing below FMSY
- SSB above MSY Btrigger
- Small downward revision in SSB
- Length based age structured stock synthesis
- Under combined TAC with white anglerfish – could lead to overexploitation of either species

Cod North 4, 6a, 7d, 20

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 19321t

- Southern, MSY: catch ≤ 3074t (-22%)
- Benchmark in 2023
- Multi stock SAM
- Below Btrigger,
- F above FMSY
- SSB retro

- North western, advice for 2025 precautionary: catch ≤ 12158t (-10.1%)
- Benchmark in 2023
- F above FMSY
- SSB above trigger
- Decrease in stock size, lower recruitment, lower F (adjusted due to status of southern stock)
- Multi stock SAM

- Viking advice 2025 precautionary: catch ≤ 4089t (-22%)
- Benchmark 2023
- Multi stock SAM
- F above FMSY
- SSB above trigger
- Retro in stock size, lower recruitment, lower F (adjusted due to status of southern stock)

Cod 7e-k

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch = 0t (no change)
- F above FMSY
- SSB below Blim
- Recruitment low
- No catch scenario bring stock above Blim
- Some tendency to overestimate SSB and recruitment
- Caught in mixed fishery with haddock and whiting
- Stock includes south of division 7a (rectangles 33E2-33E3)
- SAM assessment

The Chair commented that links may be drawn between the discussions from the webinar and this advice. He added that the report from the webinar will be available soon and invited all participants to review the document over the summer. He mentioned the research that was presented which may seem complicated but provides a lot of detail that could be used for management. He referred specifically to the Norwegian research on reproduction and increased water temperature. Looking at the ICES advice he wondered if a recovery of this stock is actually possible, and that the AC could potentially develop a request to the Commission based on the results from the webinar and the latest ICES advice.

ACTION: The Secretariat will circulate the report from the webinar on cod and climate change held on 12 June. Members are invited to go back to the Secretariat with any comment/suggestion on actions to follow up on that meeting.

Patrick Murphy recalled the presentation made the previous day on cod migration and wondered if there are other areas with higher sea temperatures where cod remain to breed so that potentially such stocks could be introduced into other areas.

Morgan was uncertain if cod are breeding in areas with higher temperatures and mentioned research on eggs and larvae showing that these do not survive in higher temperatures. She provided details on an additional research project which showed that cod were very adaptable in their behaviour and can

rapidly evolve for example if there is a strong directional selection. In this case that could mean they could evolve to adapt to these temperatures where the eggs survive the higher temperatures, however, it is unknown if the fish have the capacity to do so. Current studies seem to not be pointing to this positive outcome. She commented that detailed water temperature measures are needed as cod rise to spawn and the eggs float in a specific salinity layer.

Jonathan White agreed that 12 degrees seems to be the acknowledged cut off point for cod egg survival.

Haddock 4, 6a and Subdivision 20

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 112 435t (-25%)
- F below FMSY
- SSB above MSY Btrigger
- Decrease in FMSY reference point with new natural mortality
- SAM model

Haddock at Rockall (6b)

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 31565t (+674%)
- Benchmark Category 3 to 1
- SAM
- F below FMSY
- SSB above Btrigger
- Catch sampling sparse

Haddock 7b-k

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 4644t (-44%)
- F<FMSY
- SSB declining: above MSY Btrigger
- Recruitment low – if continues will be steep stock decline
- Decrease in advice: decreasing stock size and low recruitment and upward revision of F (retrospective)
- SAM assessment

Hake – northern stock 3a, 4, 6, 7, 8abd

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 52446t (-28%)
- F below FMSY
- SSB above MSY Btrigger
- Recruitment lower than forecast
- Retrospective in SSB
- No survey that covers entire stock distribution
- Stock area does not correspond to the TAC areas
- Length based stock synthesis, disaggregated by sex

Megrim 4a and 6a

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 7550t (-4.4%)
- F below FMSY
- Stock size above MSY Btrigger
- Decline in stock size
- Bycatch in mixed demersal trawl in 6a and 4a
- Advice for 2 species: *L. whiffiagonis* and *L. boscii* comined
- *L. boscii* negligible in catches
- Bayesian production model specifically designed for this stock

Megrim in Rockall 6b

- Advice for 2024, MSY: catch ≤ 1115t (+3%)
- Advice released in autumn 2023
- New advice in autumn 2024

Megrim 7b-k, 8abd

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 21144 (-9.3%)
- F below FMSY
- SSB MSY Btrigger
- Stock size and recruitment revised downwards compared to last year (retrospective)
- Reference points revised – error in input data corrected
- A4A statistical catch at age

Plaice in 7h-k

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, MSY: catch ≤ 130t (-1.4%)
- Category 3 data limited stock
- F proxy below FMSY proxy
- Biomass index: above Itrigger
- Biomass index has declined
- Rfb rule, stability clause not applied

Plaice in 7f, g

- Advice for 2025 and 2026 catch ≤114t (-72%)
- Fishing pressure above FMSY proxy
- Stock size below trigger
- Decline in stock size
- Biomass safeguard as below trigger
- Caught in mixed fishery with sole – high discards
- Rfb rule

Pollack in 6 and 7

- Advice for 2025, MSY: 0 catch (no change)
- Landings have declined since the late 1980s
- Recreational catch unknown but thought to be substantial
- F above FMSY
- Stock size very low, below Blim
- Much work to improve assessment – benchmark planned for 2024/2025
- SPiCT assessment

Saithe 4,6,3a

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 79071t (+7%)
- F just above FMSY
- SSB above MSY Btrigger
- Benchmarked in 2024
- Still SAM but changes to model, improved survey indices and biological data
- Recruitment 23% of projected catch
- In 2024, quota in 6 is 9.4% (6939t) of TAC for the stock

Sole in 7f, g

- Advice 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 1149t (-9.3%)
- F above FMSY
- SSB above MSY Btrigger
- Decrease in advice: downward revision in stock size (retrospective)
- Discard sampling incomplete but minimal impact
- SAM assessment

Whiting in 6a

- Advice for 2025, MSY: catch ≤ 5116t (+32%)
- Catches have been low since early 2000s
- F below FMSY
- SSB just below MSY Btrigger
- Increased recruitment leading to increased exploitable biomass
- SAM assessment
- TAC includes Division 6b for which advice is given separately. ICES recommends, therefore, that the TAC area corresponds to the assessment area.

Whiting in 6b

- Advice for 2025, 2026, 2027, PA: catch ≤6t (-20%)
- Only landings data are available
- Catch of 49t in 2023
- There is uncertainty on the accuracy of historical landings
- Discards uncertain
- PA buffer applied

Whiting 7b-c and 7e-k

- Advice for 2025, MSY: 0 catch
- F below FMSY
- No catch scenario brings SSB above BLIM with 50% probability
- Incoming recruitment is low
- Tends to overestimate SSB and underestimate F
- SAM assessment
- Assessment and advice are for divisions 7b-k, including rectangles 33E2
- Fished under a common TAC with whiting in Division 7.d
- ICES recommends, that the TAC area corresponds to the assessment area

Greater silver smelt 5b, 6a

- Advice for 2025, MSY: ≤ 18966t (+7%)
- F below FMSY
- SSB above MSYBtrigger
- Forecast assumes same over run in TAC since 2010
- SAM assessment
- Management measures are set independently by the Faroe Islands in 5b and by EY and UK for subareas 5-7. Since 2016 the sum of unilateral quota has exceeded recommended catches except in 2022 and 2023

Black Scabbard Fish

- Advice for 2025, PA: catch ≤ 4214t (no change)
- Cannot assess status
- "roll-over" of previous advice
- Previously used effort series but considered unreliable – decrease in directed fishing
- Stock seems stable - stable length frequencies in French fishery, stable abundance trends
- Benchmark planned

Alfonsinos 1-10, 12 and 14

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, PA: landings ≤ 179t (no change)
- Two Beryx species, most catch in Azorean EEZ and in Mid-Atlantic Ridge
- Cannot assess stock status
- PA buffer last applied 2022 so not applied again

Blue ling 6-7 and 5b and 12

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, MSY: catch ≤ 11197t and ≤11170t (+2%)
- Fishing pressure is below FMSY
- Spawning stock above MSY Btrigger
- Advice applied only to 5b, 6, 7 and 12b (revised stock area 12b added)
- No advice 12a and 12c

- Multiyear catch curves

Roundnose grenadier 6 and 7, 5b and 12b

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, PA: catch ≤ 2542t (-20%)
- Landings (2023) =32 t
- Cannot assess status
- Ban on fishing with bottom trawls in EU waters deeper than 800 m
- Less fishing activity
- PA buffer not applied in 2022, applied this time

Greater forkbeard 1-10, 12, 14

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, PA: catch ≤573t, landings 435t (-30%)
- Rb rule
- Index has increased but advice is less due to change in method
- Stability clause applied since change in advice would be more than -30%

Blackspot seabream in subareas 6-8

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, PA: o catch (no change)
- Cannot assess status
- No information clearly indicating exploitation level

Tusk 6b

- Advice for 2025 and 2026, PA: catch ≤224t (no change)
- Category 5 stock
- Precautionary buffer not applied (last applied 2022)
- No directed fishery
- Catch 2023: 32t

Nephrops

- Advice for 2025 released in autumn
- Correction released in May 2024 for Porcupine Bank

The Chair thanked Morgan for her presentation and opened the floor to questions.

Franck Le Barzic expressed his concern regarding exploitation in the Celtic Sea in relation to the 0-catch advice for certain stocks or the decrease in advice for example for haddock. He asked for clarification on the mortality rate as he felt it does not have any impact on the biomass trend so adjusting the variable is remote from what fishermen would like to see. He wondered what the share of catchability in F and share of fishing effort was and if the decline in number of vessels over the last couple of years is taken into account. He wondered if parameters influencing the whiting population in the Celtic Sea that are impacting the stock could be identified, similar work as for cod, for example regarding temperature changes.

Morgan specified that F is derived from how much catch is taken from how much biomass. Referring to production models she specified that these have only a biomass index which is not separated out by length or age making F a simple ratio of catch over biomass. She stated this is essentially true for more complicated models as well but in that case the ratio is estimated for each age. So talking about a stock with multiple ages, F will always be indicated over the specific age group. Catch is driving F in all models, and if selectivity of vessels changes for example in age structured models this will be reflected in the catch at age as the number of fish at each age in the catches would also change. This would be reflected in the assessment model by the distribution of catch numbers and catch weights at age. A decrease in vessels or a decrease in fishing effort would be reflected in the model if that led to a decrease in catch or if one of the indices in the model was a catch per unit effort or similar index.

Regarding whiting she added that there were no known parameters affecting the stock. The recruitment is lower as well as SSB which could play a role, but she was unsure whether the productivity of the stocks has changed or if this is being investigated. She stated that each species has its own temperature tolerance and that what may be important for one species may not be important for another.

Murphy expressed his concern regarding the advice reductions and felt that this was not fully understood. He asked for clarification regarding the advice formulation as the stocks do not seem to recover despite the fishermen at sea implementing technical measures and sticking to the advice. His mentioned the specific example of hake where the advice was reduced from 140 000t previously to 50 000t over just a couple of years which has led to fewer boats being able to fish this stock. He mentioned changes due to climate change and added that changes in fishing areas were not included in the model and possibly should be. He called for appropriate advice in aid of rebuilding the stocks and support for temporary measures so that vessels can remain in the fishery.

The Chair thanked Murphy for his intervention and agreed with the concern regarding the hake advice. He commented that with climate change the boreal species do not seem to find the right conditions.

Dominic Rihan commented on the advice for cod in 6a and 7d where last year for the first time there was catch advice for 6a cod after 0 catch advice for the previous 15-20 years. He referred to the scientific work carried out on the identification of the sub-stocks including genetic work. He added that this TAC was lower than when 0 TAC advice was given. The advice is actually lower now than when there was 0 catch advice because of 7d cod. He explained that the F is below FMSY, the stock biomass is increasing, yet the fishermen end up with less cod again. From a fisheries perspective 0 catch advice would be more beneficial here as it would be more manageable at sea. He felt that bringing the cod TAC down for the 6a cod because of Channel cod seems strange as there would be extremely little mixing. Mentioning the whiting stocks, he outlined the fact that these are classed as two stocks, one with 0-catch advice and the other with increased advice. In his opinion this shows a lack of consistency. Regarding haddock in 4 and 6a he asked for clarification regarding to the mentioned change in natural mortality and wondered what this was based on. Regarding plaice in 7f,g he wondered if discard survivability is included in the stock assessment. On Pollack he felt that the 0-catch advice creates a choke situation for every single stock in the mixed demersal fisheries in the Celtic Sea and West of Scotland. He added that as part of the advice ICES recommends work to improve the assessment. "*Is it wise then to issue this advice in the first place?*"

The Chair felt that the impact of the Pollack advice is very severe, and fishermen have already suffered this year from this advice. He added that even comparing the recommendation given in last year, it was different of what the Commission had in mind and how the results from the benchmark were used. The advice actually mentions that this index that is used for this assessment does not cover some of the favourite areas for pollack. He agreed that improvements to the advice were needed and acknowledged that these seemingly are underway. However, he felt that the 0-catch advice did come as a surprise.

José Beltran felt that overall, there was a negative trend across the ICES advice with only a few stocks remaining in a similar situation as the previous year. Regarding northern hake he felt that the situation is uncertain around this stock and that patterns for this species have changes. He referred to the VME areas where vessels cannot fish so that vessels have to move to other areas and was wondering what the specific assessment for this species was, if data of catches was gathered from vessels. *"What is the most important criteria?"*

Morgan responded to the issues raised regarding hake that vessel movement is ok within an assessment model as long as the population is adequately covered by a survey. In some models assumptions can be included regarding selectivity which may lead to issues. The stock synthesis used for hake is quite flexible so there should be no issues. Good sampling of catch at age and good surveys will make the outcome of the assessment appropriate. The catch advice is based on total stock, not just spawning females, and the model is run on the whole stock. *"Males and females are separated in sampling."* Should the SSB go below a certain trigger, than F would be adjusted based solely on the SSB of the female stock. She added that commercial catches are included in the assessment and there are five surveys, French southern Atlantic bottom trawl survey, Spanish Porcupine bottom trawl survey, Irish groundfish survey, Irish Anglerfish and Megrim Survey, and French Survey in the Bay of Biscay. She felt that between all of the surveys the area is thought to be well covered. The maturity is not changed, and the natural mortality included in the model is both sex and age dependent. She was unable to say which of these things would be the most important but felt that the commercial catches carried a heavy weight, whereas the relationship between survey indices and total population size is generally unknown without commercial catch.

The Chair felt that there was also the spatial aspect that needed to be taken into account. Regarding northern hake's distribution he felt there was different trends that could be seen between the different areas.

Murphy explained that with observers on board have seen juvenile fish caught with a different mesh size in specific areas while the clean fishery for hake is in a different area. He felt closer collaboration is needed between fishermen and scientists to obtain the correct data. He added "*the implication of less boats also has an implication on what the previous data would be. The model would have to change*." Murphy felt the model does not reflect the reality seen on the ground which would make it difficult to introduce new technical measures.

Morgan agreed that this was a broadly distributed stock so different trends can naturally be seen and need to be taken into account depending on the mixing. She was unsure how much was known for this stock regarding mixing.

Morgan stated that there are a number of stocks that get their natural mortality estimates from the

ICES working group on multispecies assessment, including haddock in 4 and 6a. Data gathered here leads to an estimate of mortality that can be divided into fishing mortality and natural mortality. Data is only updated every couple of years following which results are fed to the single species assessment groups. This was done this year, and in the case of haddock, the effect on fishing mortality reference points was to lower FMSY. To calculate FMSY, the population is forecast for a number of years until it reaches equilibrium, i.e., the age structure and population size are not changing. Then the catch is calculated for a series of Fs. The F that gives the maximum sustainable yield is FMSY. This would have been done with the new mortality estimated.

Regarding plaice in 7f,g she stated that survivability is not included and that ICES is working on developing a survivability roadmap to establish how to include these estimates into the assessments. One of the upcoming benchmarks includes plaice so that survivability of discards will be updated which will hopefully lead to more consistency of these estimates.

On Pollack she stated that a lot of work had been done to improve the assessment. It is a Category 2 stock using a production model for assessment. Work is being done on stock identification and recreational fisheries. An age structured model is also being developed.

She commented that assessments depend a lot of what information is available for stocks, but that data may be lacking on connections between various stocks, for example whiting. If there is sufficient information it can be incorporated in the model so that population size could be informed. ICES is trying to work towards better incorporation of stakeholder information into the assessments which ACOM is still following up on. She added that the last related workshop (WKSTIMP) produced a lot of recommendations.

The Chair concluded that it can be very frustrating when fishermen can demonstrate the changes that have taken place but not see this reflected in the advice.

Beltran stated that regarding hake the usual TAC advice has been given and that an upward trend can be seen in recruitment. However, he felt that one interesting aspect is the population and the differentiation between males, females and juveniles. He was wondering what was more important, protecting females or juveniles. He felt that different management measures may need to be adopted to protect the stock, either juveniles or spawning stock

The Chair felt that this was a recurring question and was unsure if an answer could be provided. He pointed out that this was connected to the management strategies in place. He felt that over a long period of time at EU level the aim was to reduce catches of juveniles so that these could reach the minimum size for reproduction and that at the same time large adult individuals could also be protected. He agreed that these important questions should be discussed further, especially regarding hake.

Morgan agreed that the ICES framework is based on spawning stock biomass, however, if something happens to juveniles there may be no adults.

The Chair stated that the WG will keep this topic on the agenda as it is an important stock and also linked to the STECF work.

ACTION: The WG should continue to address the management of the hake northern stock as a priority topic.

3 *Nephrops* Survey FU 16 - Update / Outcomes – Jonathan White, Marine Institute

John Lynch introduced the background to this work. A survey (an enhanced summer sampling programme, sampling and data collection of commercial catch) was carried out in 2023 which will be repeated in 2024 but with a slightly different structure. The Marine Institute will analyse the data collected by the vessels.

Jonathan White introduced the survey area FU16 before summarizing the management history based on the ICES advice. He raised that there is a decline in the mean weight and that there is a variation of size across the ground as well as in the proportion of male to female. To protect the reproduction, fishing pressure needs to be reviewed as well as the proportion of females. A summer closure was set in place to protect the stock when females are most prevalent, which has meant that no sampling has been available.

The enhanced summer sampling programme was proposed by the industry and helps to understand stock dynamics.

While abundance is increasing, the general size is decreasing. This is not limited to the overall weight, but the change can be seen between males and females with the latter seemingly showing an increase.

White referred to the implementation of management and the difference between monthly and annual measures. He added that observations are necessary to understand change and that sampling needs to be maintained.

The Chair thanked White and opened the floor to questions.

Murphy wondered if *Nephrops* were territorial and if large amounts are caught does that make room for smaller individuals which otherwise may be eaten at larval stage.

White commented that the early life stages are planktonic, and the stock structure is FU driven. He added that if they land on habitable ground they will settle and forage from their burrows. He felt that an area that had been fished hard would allow for juveniles to settle which if allowed to grow would grow to a larger size, but if fished quickly again, smaller individuals would be caught.

The Chair felt that very complicated management measures seem to be needed in order to protect the stock.

Murphy asked that females are more likely to feed in the summer to sustain themselves for the spawning season.

White was not sure if this was the case.

The Chair felt that this topic can be included on one of the future agendas once results are available.

ACTION: Updates on the ongoing work on the *Nephrops* fishery in the Porcupine Bank are expected at the next WG2 meeting in March 2025.

4 Summary of actions agreed and decisions adopted by the Chair

1	The Secretariat will keep members informed regarding the organisation of an update session on VMEs by DG MARE. This could also be organized as part of the next WG2 meeting.
2	Comments made following presentation of ICES advice will be taken into account in the preparation of the AC advice on Fishing Opportunities by the FG Landing Obligation. Members are invited to send any other contribution via email before the FG meeting on 24 July.
3	The Secretariat will circulate the report from the webinar on cod and climate change held on 12 June. Members are invited to go back to the Secretariat with any comment/suggestion on actions to follow up on that meeting.
4	The WG should continue to address the management of the hake northern stock as a priority topic.
5	Updates on the ongoing work on the *Nephrops* fishery in the Porcupine Bank are expected at the next WG2 meeting in March 2025.

Participants

NWWAC members	
José Beltran	OPP-7 Burela
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Gérald Hussenot Desenonges	Blue Fish
Franck Le Barzic	COBRENORD
John Lynch	ISEFPO
Patrick Murphy	ISWFPO
Aodh O'Donnel	IFPO
Philippe Perrot	CRPMEM Bretagne
Alexandra Philippe	EBCD
Irene Prieto	OPPF4
Erwan Quemeneur	CDPMEM 29
Dominic Rihan	KFO
Jean-Marie Robert	Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Pauline Stephan	CNPMEM
Arthur Yon	FROM Nord
Experts and Observers	
Kylie Kronal	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
Joanne Morgan	ICES

Dirk van Guyze	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
NWWAC Secretariat	
Mo Mathies	
Matilde Vallerani	