



North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council

MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DUBLIN CASTLE, 18 September 2013

14:00 - 15:00

Chairman: Bertie Armstrong

Rapporteur: Alexandre Rodríguez

1. Welcome

The Chairman of the NWWWRAC, Bertie Armstrong, welcomed members, Commission representatives and observers to the meeting. He gave a special welcome to Liane Veitch, representative of Client Earth, an NGO that will become a new member of the NWWWRAC from the 1st of October; and Purificación Fernández, the ANASOL-ARVI representative for this meeting, replacing Hugo González.

The full list of participating organization representatives is detailed in Annex I.

The Chairman informed that there was quorum for the purposes of decision making (voting) as 17 members of the Executive Committee were present (without counting the Chairman and the Honorary President).

- **Apologies:** Apologies were received from the following members and key observers: Víctor Badiola (OPPAO - Spain), Jacques Bigot (ETF - France), Anton Dekker (DFO – The Netherlands), Alan McCulla (ANIFPO – WG4 Chair), Sean O’Donoghue (KFO - Ireland) and Michael Keatinge (BIM – NWWWRAC Director).
- **Adoption of the agenda:** The agenda was adopted with the addition of one discussion point and one information point under item 2 and one information point in an additional item 5:
 - Discussion on Regionalisation and role of the Advisory Councils in the CFP (2.1).
 - Update from the Secretariat on development of new NWWWRAC website (2.5).
 - Announcement of IUCN Congress on Marine Protected Areas (Despina Symonds)

It was also agreed that some of the existing sub-items might need to be adjusted to the time requirements of the discussions and that the report on the outcomes of the STECF EWG on Landing Obligation (sub-item 4.1) would be removed as it will be part of discussions at the Discards Horizontal WG later on.



The agenda was deemed adopted with the above mentioned changes.

- **Adoption of the minutes of the last meeting (Dublin, 24 July 2013):**
The minutes were considered to be a true record of the meeting and were formally adopted without comment or change.

2. On-going actions pending of completion

The Chairman introduced the following topics:

2.1. Regionalisation – future role of the Advisory Councils:

The Executive Committee members resumed discussions initiated at the General Assembly by agreeing that the NWWWRAC should produce regular evidence based advice but it was needed to decide exactly what structure was going to suit bet

It might be worthwhile to explore the different possibilities in a dedicated Focus Group and/or Horizontal Working Group on this subject matter. Volunteers are sought amongst membership for advancing with work through Steering Committees – each Working Group must consider nominating a number of members via the Chair or by their own interest. The Secretariat will circulate a call for papers (1 page long) on regionalisation.

- Debate from the floor

Emiel Brouckaert (Rederscentrale) asked who proposes the topics for the Focus Group to be included in the meetings calendar. Is it the Working Groups the ones that propose and the Executive Committee the one who decides? The Chairman replied affirmatively to both questions.

The European Commission representative (Laurent Markovic) asked if the NWWWRAC had already suggested proposals for regional cooperation between Member States and Advisory Councils.

The Chair replied that, as mentioned in the GA, a letter was sent by the NWWWRAC on 15 March 2013 addressed to MS offering our cooperation but no reply was received. This is still exploratory work but we aim to be able to present a proposal for a process or procedure to work upon before the end of the year.

Eduardo Míguez (EAFPO) asked the representative of the Spanish Administration to clarify where Spain stands regarding regionalisation. Borja Velasco replied that the Spanish administration was very supportive of the work of the RACs to date. This is proved by the fact that Spain actively participates in 6 out of the 7 RACs currently established. He also emphasized that it is the intention of Spain to facilitate exchange of views and open to engage in collaborative work in future regional models; and he is looking forward to receiving a proposal from the NWWWRAC.



Barrie Deas suggested to set up a small drafting group composed by the Secretariat and 2-3 members and then call for written contributions from as much people as possible. This would allow speeding up the consultations and be more streamlined in terms of generating advice.

Marc Ghiglia and Bertie Armstrong agreed with Barrie's proposals. Those members interested in participating in the drafting must send a 1 page document with the views of the organisation they represent and send it to the Secretariat within the shortest delay (i.e. 1-2 weeks' time). A discussion paper would be drafted by Barrie to ensure some structure and coherence between aspects covered under regionalisation.

A tentative calendar was suggested by the Secretariat as follows:

- Two weeks period of call for papers to receive initial draft positions;
- 1 week period for collation of contributions received by the Secretariat;
- 1 week to convene a drafting group;
- 1 week to draft advice.

ACTION: A general call for written contributions will be launched by the Secretariat asking the members organisations of the NWWRAC to submit a 1-2 page document with their views on the role of the Advisory Councils (and the NWWRAC in particular) in a regional CFP. The Secretariat will subsequently collate and put together the arguments received and convene a speedy drafting group for presenting a draft proposal for advice to be dealt at the relevant forum.

2.2. Proposals from GA for Focus Groups in the second half of 2013

This topic has been already discussed at GA and there are not specific proposals for new Focus Groups for this period other than the ones already agreed, i.e. Nephrops (November), and possible on non-quota species, discards or regionalisation.

2.3. Cooperation with ICES on data deficiencies

Kara Brydson (RSPB – Birdlife) submitted a draft letter requesting an increase on EMFF funding for data deficiencies proposed by Kara Brydson, This was an idea initiated by the SWWRAC and it aims to secure EMFF funding on data collection. Given that the EP Plenary vote on this topic is expected to take place the 23rd of October, the NWWRAC should react quickly.

There is a certain degree of uncertainty about the amount that is going to be dedicated to funding data collection and, although there are ongoing discussion between the Parliament and the Council, this needs to be clarified.



Action: The Chair and members of the Executive Committee agreed with the idea expressed by Kara and approved in principle sending this letter following a one week circulation by the Secretariat.

2.4. NWWRAC Response to EC Communication on Fishing Opportunities for 2014

Bertie Armstrong reported the members on its participation on his capacity as NWWRAC Chairman at the discussion panel held at the EC Workshop on State of the Stocks in Brussels the 17 September. He highlighted the positive message and trends for most stocks in the North East Atlantic waters. He also showed the concern about the gap between the political decisions made on several elements of CFP reform (e.g. implementation of MSY and landing obligation) with the reality of the fisheries and practical plans. He also stated that individual stock objectives cannot be met separately. The ongoing work on data deficiencies was praised at the EC Communication and this recognition is appreciated by the NWWRAC.

He concluded saying that the Director General Lowri Evans encouraged industry representatives to *redouble/intensify* efforts in developing initiatives to improve catch selectivity.

Despina Symonds explained the concept of balanced harvest which is linked to selectivity, and it has become an essential policy driver at the international arena to move towards and Ecosystem Based Approach to fisheries management (including multispecies considerations).

Action: Based on the feedback and contributions received by members in summer, the Chairman and the Secretariat will put together a NWWRAC Response to the EC Communication of Fishing Opportunities for 2014, which is aimed to be circulated for adoption through fast track procedure before the end of the month so it can be included in the explanatory memorandum of a future EC Proposal for Regulation which is expected to be released at the end of October / early November.

2.5. Report on participation in EU Projects

Alexandre Rodríguez (NWWRAC Secretariat) updated the members on the following topics:

2.5.1. North Western Waters Fisheries Atlas – Publication of third edition:

Leonie Dransfield (Marine Institute) contacted the NWWRAC Secretariat and submitted a proposal seeking support by the NWWRAC Executive Committee for the publication of a third edition of the Fisheries Atlas for North Western Waters Atlas, firstly published in 2009 as part of the EU funded MEFPO project.

The NWWRAC was invited to add his logo and formally, while the production and publication costs will be met by the Marine Institute. Ms Dransfield volunteered to make a presentation on the new features and contents of the third edition atlas at a future RAC meeting.



Decision: At request of the Chairman, the members of the Executive Committee unanimously supported this initiative of a joint publication by the Marine Institute and the NWWRAC in 2014 of a third edition of the Fisheries Atlas for North Western Waters.

Action: The Secretariat will invite Leonie Dransfield to provide a presentation on the new features of a revised Fisheries Atlas for 2014.

Dominic Rihan pointed out that other RACs have been recently approached by the Marine Institute and other national scientific institutes to work on the elaboration of fishery discards atlas and that is a topic that could be addressed at inter RAC level. He also mentioned that GEPETO Project will include a Fisheries Atlas for the Celtic Sea (VIIIfg).

2.5.2. ICES WGMARS (Stockholm, 4-5 November 2013)

The RACs have established a frank and constructive dialogue with ICES and national scientists to improve knowledge and management of stocks at different levels. The annual coordination meetings between ICES and the RACs (MIRACs) have proven to be very helpful in terms of exchanging views on work agendas but a further involvement and input from stakeholders in identifying their scientific research needs is desired. Following recent discussions among ICES scientists, senior policy advisors and the RAC Secretariats, a need for establishing a forum within the ICES Working Groups' structure was identified to facilitate stronger working relationships between scientists and stakeholders. As a result of this, an invitation has been issued by ICES to all RACs to build the initiative through participation in the ICES WG on Marine Systems (WGMARS) annual meeting. The aim is that the RACs might provide advice on shaping the terms of reference (ToR) C - "*Stakeholder integration*".

Action: The NWWRAC will send a delegation of 1-3 representatives to this meeting and will report on the discussions / outcomes at the next Working Groups.

2.5.3. Update on the NWWRAC website

A mandate was given by the Executive Committee to the Secretariat at the last meeting in July, to submit an amendment for the NWWRAC budget for Year 8 in order to allocate an existing surplus of around 13,000 euros towards the upgrade and development of the NWWRAC website – www.nwwrac.org and www.nwwrac.eu

As a result of this mandate, a call for tender for IT web developing, maintenance and security services was prepared and launched on 31 July 2013. In compliance with the EU grant aid rules and the procurement guidelines set by the Commission, the NWWRAC Secretariat issued an invitation to apply to six companies identified on the basis of their proven experience with IT website design and work with EU and governmental bodies.



Three replies were received within the designated deadline (i.e. 26 August 2013) and assessed by the evaluation committee. **A Dublin-based IT company, Webtrade Ltd., was awarded as it had the best ratio quality/price.** Negotiations took place and the final contract was agreed and signed on 6 September 2013.

Four main areas for improvement were identified in the tender specifications:

1. Content Management System (“Back Office”), i.e. Administrators’ site;
2. Visual Display and Website layout (“Front end”);
3. Development of new functionalities;
4. Security features (including backups, hosting and IT support 24/365)

The new NWWRAC website will have a custom responsive design that will allow to mobile and tablet devices. The categories with the core sections (particularly publications and meetings) will remain as they are in the current website, ensuring no loss of information and ease of use for members.

The new website will also allow the insertion of additional extra features such as virtual calendars, forums and web conferencing system, online registration for meetings, video clips or dynamic links to social media, amongst others.

The NWWRAC Secretariat has already started working with the IT project managers with the aim of having the final version of the website live before the end of the year.

4. DG MARE work priorities for the second half of 2013

The DG MARE representative (Roy Griffin) provided an overview of the EC work priorities for the remainder of 2013, highlighting the following areas:

- Fishing opportunities

The EC proposal of Regulation is expected to be launched before the end of October. A second amendment has been done to the EC Regulation on Fishing Opportunities for 2013 currently applicable and it contains effort regime exemptions to the Cod Management Plan for certain French and Spanish fleets.

- Technical measures:

The Commission’s “*Omnibus regulation*” is expected to be adopted within matter of weeks.

- European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF):

A vote on the Proposal of Regulation is expected to take place at the European Parliament Plenary Session in Strasbourg the 23rd of October 2013.



- CFP Reform / Discards:

The EC Basic Regulation on the CFP has been agreed and will be in force the 1st of January 2014.

Regarding the implementation of the landings obligation (“discards ban”), the RACs are expected to play a major role with Member States to discuss management measures and fishery discards plans.

- Management and Access Regime for Deep-sea Species:

The EP Fisheries Committee vote has been now postponed until October.

The Chairman thanked Mr Griffin for his update and opened the floor for questions among members.

Barrie Deas (NFFO) asked when the proposal of Regulation on Fishing Opportunities (TAC and quotas) for 2014 will be available. He also asked what was the state of the “Omnibus Regulation”.

Roy Griffin answered that the proposal on Fishing Opportunities should be adopted in November. The Omnibus Regulation is currently in internal discussions with the Commission’s legal services so the proposal will not be ready before mid-October as it needs to be validated and translated.

5. IUCN Congress on Marine Protected Areas (Marseille, 21-25 October 2013)

Despina Symonds took the floor to encourage NWWRAC members to follow and attend the forthcoming IUCN Congress in Marine Protected Areas. This major event (held every four years) will take place in Marseille and Corsica (France). More information is available on IUCN website¹:

6. Summary of actions agreed and concluding remarks by the Chair of the meeting

The Chairman thanked all participants for their attendance, the Irish Government for hosting the NWWRAC meetings in such a nice venue, Dublin Castle staff for their professionalism and competent services, the Secretariat for looking after the content and logistics and the interpreters for their excellent level.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 15:00

¹ Direct link to IUCN Congress website: <https://www.iucn.org/about/union/members/?12953/International-Marine-Protected-Areas-Congress-27-28-oct-2013>



ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS		
FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANISATION
Bertie	Armstrong	NWWRAC Chairman
Marc	Ghiglia	NWWRAC GA Chair / Honorary President
Emiel	Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Kara	Brydson	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds / Birdlife
Alan	Coghill	Scottish Fishermen's Federation
Luc	Corbisier	SDVO
Debbie	Crockard	MCS UK (representing Seas at Risk)
John	Crudden	European Angler's Alliance
Bruno	Dachicourt	CFTC-ETF (<i>replacing Jacques Bigot</i>)
Barrie	Deas	National Federation of Fishermen's Organisation
Lyndsey	Dodds	WWF UK (<i>replacing Iwan Ball</i>)
André	Gueguen	Comité National de Pêches Maritimes
Purificación	Fernández	ANASOL-ARVI (<i>replacing Hugo González</i>)
Eduardo	Míguez	European Association of Ports and Auctions
Geert	Meun	Dutch Fisheries Organisation
Eibhlín	O'Sullivan	Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation
Jacques	Pichon	Association Nationale Organisations Producteurs
Despina	Symons	European Bureau for Conservation Development
John	Woodlock	Irish Seal Sanctuary



OBSERVERS		
Richard	Brouzes	Copeport Marée OPBN
René-Pierre	Chever	CRPMEM du Finistère
Dave	Cuthbert	New Under Ten Fishermen's Association
John	Daly	Irish Seal Sanctuary
Evangelia	Georgitsi	RAC Coordinator - DG MARE - Commission
Robert	Griffin	DG MARE – European Commission
Francois	Hennuyer	FROM NORD
Daniel	Lefèvre	CRPMEM Basse Normandie – WG3 Chair
Jesús A.	Lourido García	Puerto de Celeiro – WG2 Chair
John	Lynch	Irish Fishermen's Organisation
Laurent	Markovic	DG MARE – European Commission
Rémi	Méjécaze	DPMEM – France – MS
Jennifer	Mouat	Scottish Whitefish Producer's Association
Mike	Park	Scottish Whitefish Producer's Association
Dominic	Rihan	DG MARE – European Commission
Mercedes	Rodríguez	OPP-07-LUGO
Jane	Sandell	Scottish Fishermen's Organisation – WG1 Chair
Paul	Trebilcock	Cornish Fish PO
Caitlín	Uí Aodha	Irish South & East FPO
Liane	Veitch	Client Earth
Borja	Velasco Tuduri	Ministerio Agricultura - Gobierno de España – MS
Ilaria	Vermi	AquaTT
John	Ward	Irish Fish Producers' Organisation



SECRETARIAT		
Conor	Nolan	NWWRAC Executive Secretary
Alexandre	Rodríguez	Executive Assistant - Policy and Communications and Rapporteur
Joanna	McGrath	Executive Assistant – Administration and Finances