



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO PARA  
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# MINUTES

## Focus Group Landing Obligation

### Virtual meeting

Friday 22 November 2024, 14:30 – 16:30 CET

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair Emiel Brouckaert welcomed all participants to the meeting. Apologies were received from Irene Prieto in advance of the meeting and the agenda was adopted as drafted.

The Chair mentioned that the last FG meeting was held on 24 July and focused on drafting advice on fishing opportunities for 2025, which was successfully delivered on 21 August. Therefore, the action points from the meeting on 29 January are still pending and in need for update:

1	The Focus Group will continue following issues related to the implementation of the new Control Regulation, the upcoming evaluation of the Landing Obligation, the evaluation of the Technical Measures Regulation and the development of Joint Recommendations on the new Discard Plan by the NWW MS.
2	The issues raised in the NWWAC letter to the COM on the input provided to the UK discard consultation and the Commission's response will be followed up in the upcoming Inter-AC Brexit Forum meeting on 5 February.
3	Secretariat to update choke traffic light spreadsheet and advice paper and share with FG members for review.

The Chair noted that updates related to the control regulation should now be handled by the Control Focus Group. He suggested removing this item as an action point unless new issues arise.

Regarding the evaluation of Landing Obligation, Matilde Vallerani said that contractors were finalizing their study, expected by January 2025, and stakeholder meetings would occur in Q1 2025. She mentioned that the Commission had not yet requested further input from the Advisory Councils. The Chair proposed that this action point remains on the agenda for future updates, possibly as a separate follow-up item rather than an action point.

There were no significant updates on technical measures as the topics seems to be on hold in the Commission's work program. Vallerani pointed out that the report from this year's evaluation had been published in July, suggesting that future follow-ups could involve Working Group 2.

The Chair asked for updates on the two recent Joint Recommendations by NWW Member



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States on lemon sole and squid. Vallerani said that the Member States were awaiting updates from the Commission regarding the STECF evaluation of these joint recommendations. She added that relevant updates should be available in the STECF report expected within 10 days.

Regarding the UK Discard Consultation, the Chair reported that the response to the UK discard consultation had been addressed by the Inter-AC Brexit Forum, with no further follow-ups required for this Focus Group.

Finally, the Chair confirmed that the traffic light spreadsheet for 2024 would not be updated. Instead, the group would focus on finalizing the 2025 version to align with the negotiation process.

**ACTION:** The Focus Group will continue to follow developments on the evaluation of the landing obligation.

## 2. NWWAC draft letter on priority stocks for ICES benchmarks

The Chair explained that this letter was drafted following an action point from the last NWWAC plenary meetings in October and that comments were received during the draft review by the Horizontal Working Group. He proposed to address these comments with FG members. The Secretariat shared the draft letter on screen and members' inputs were directly recorded in the text.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to circulate updated version of the letter on priority stocks for ICES benchmarks to the FG for final review before starting the approval procedure.

## 3. Review of ICES advice released in Autumn – need for AC advice?

The Chair invited members to review the ICES advice released in Autumn to consider whether further AC input was needed, also in view of the roundtable on fishing opportunities between the ACs and Commissioner-designated Kadis on 3 December.

Dominic Rihan suggested taking into account EAPO advice for *Nephrops*.

The Chair noted the work done within the Skates and Rays Focus Group and no immediate updates seem necessary. Mo Mathies added that a workshop on skates and rays is planned for next year. John Lynch, chair of the FG Skates & Rays, said that the Commission has adjusted TAC-setting methodologies for group TACs, resulting in an increase for 2025. He mentioned the ambition to manage stocks with species-specific TACs, adding complexity to the process. The Chair proposed that bilateral updates between the EU and UK be monitored closely for further developments.

## 4. NWWAC advice addressing choke risk in the NWW in 2025



The Secretariat shared the updated traffic light spreadsheet on screen, including some comments received via email by FG members. Members reviewed the spreadsheet, and further input was directly recorded in the document.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to share updated version of the choke spreadsheet, as well as an updated advice document, for FG members to review.

## 5. AOB

No AOB was raised during the meeting.

## 6. Action points and closure of the meeting

1	The Focus Group will continue to follow developments on the evaluation of the landing obligation.
2	Secretariat to circulate updated version of the letter on priority stocks for ICES benchmarks to the FG for final review before starting the approval procedure.
3	Secretariat to share updated version of the choke spreadsheet, as well as an updated advice document, for FG members to review.

## 7. Participants

Name	Organisation
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Franck Le Barzic	Cobrenord
John Lynch	ISEFPO
Mo Mathies	NWWAC Secretariat
Louis Montperrus	CNPMEM
Patrick Murphy	ISWFPO
Greagoir O'Cathasaigh	ISWFPO
Aodh O'Donnell	IFPO
Dominic Rihan	KFO
Matilde Vallerani	NWWAC Secretariat
Arthur Yon	FROM Nord