



NWWRAC Communications Strategy

Background

The current Communications Strategy for the NWWRAC is the result of identifying the need for a pro-active approach when disseminating information to target audiences about NWWRAC meetings and actions. A first outline of a NWWRAC Communications Proposal, stating the main steps to be followed, was presented at the Executive Committee meeting held in Dublin the 27th of September 2007. It was agreed there that a further Communications Plan would be submitted to the next Executive Committee taking place in Brussels the 22nd of November, for its debate and endorsement. The final NWWRAC Communications Strategy was adopted there starting to apply in January 2008.

Aims

The Aims of this plan are:

- To increase the awareness of the NWWRAC's work regarding sustainable fisheries management and make it more accessible to the relevant audiences.
- To pro-actively engage in communication with relevant audiences and stakeholders,
- To develop communications and information channels to reach interested third parties
- To enhance and improve the existing dialogue between NWWRAC and audiences with an established relationship.

A coherent NWWRAC Strategy will help to achieve these aims.

Initial Duration: 1 year (January-December 2008), renewable on an annual basis following its approval by the respective Executive Committee.



Target Audiences:

- Fishing Industry / Grassroots
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Other Groups of Interest.
- European Commission
- Other EC Institutions and Organs (European Parliament, STCEF, ACFA...)
- National Administrations
- Scientific Community (ICES, IFREMER, IEO, AZTI, BIM, CEFAS...)
- Academia (University Research Institutes, Departments, Chairs, etc)

Key messages:

- The NWWRAC is a useful, reliable, non-political and evidence-based organisation, and plays an effective advisory role within the EU Common Fisheries Policy.
- The NWWRAC has proved to be a successful forum in putting together different views from stakeholders (fishermen, producers' organisations, NGO etc) and has achieved a high degree of consensus when giving advice to the European Commission.
- The NWWRAC requires an on-going involvement and participation from the scientific and academic community in order to support its advice with sound evidence.
- NWWRAC members and observers enjoy the benefit of having accurate and timely information about EC consultation procedures, NWWRAC strategic actions and own-initiative projects (such as improvement of collection of joint data between fishermen and scientists or development of LTM plans) within ICES areas VI and VII.

Actions

- Updated information about action points and topics being dealt with by the NWWRAC must be regularly submitted to the relevant audiences, through relevant communication channels, on a bi-monthly basis starting in Jan 2008.
- Information within the press releases will vary pending on the NWWRAC activities at the time and the secretariat will review progress of the NWWRAC over this period to ensure the most relevant and interesting work gets promoted. Information on advice given to the Commission; outcome of meetings and meetings planned should be included in the press releases.



- Press releases will be drafted by the Secretariat and circulated to the Executive Committee with a given timeline for comment and endorsement. Once the press release is endorsed it will be sent to a pre-defined contact list of relevant media (i.e. European Fisheries Trade Press, national specialized fishing magazines and newspapers, institutional websites)
- Members and observers will be encouraged, whenever possible, to circulate press releases to their regional or local newspapers or magazines, and also to distribute them to associates through their own internal publications (circulars, announcement in bulletin boards)
- A general standard presentation of the NWWRAC will be carried out by the Secretariat, to be presented upon request at different institutions or fora. This presentation will be updated on a regular basis and uploaded in the NWWRAC website.
- The News archive will be regularly updated in NWWRAC website, under the section "Press". Thus, NWWRAC members and public in general will be able to view published and official press releases coming from the NWWRAC.

Permissions / authorizations:

The NWWRAC Secretariat will coordinate all the press releases to be sent by the members to any media, giving its previous and express authorization for each particular case. The Secretariat will also be entrusted with the drafting, management and update of the media communications list.

No member will be entitled to give its opinion on behalf of the NWWRAC, whether on a general or specific issue, without previous knowledge and authorization by the NWWRAC Secretariat.

The protocol for all internal and external NWWRAC communications will be considered as document of reference for this point.

Adoption

The NWWRAC Communication Strategy will be considered, once formally adopted by endorsement from the Executive Committee members, as an internal rule of procedure for the NWWRAC in relation to Public Relations and Communications.