



CONSEIL CONSULTATIF  
RÉGIONAL POUR  
LES EAUX OCCIDENTALES  
SEPTENTRIONALES

**NORTH WESTERN  
WATERS**  
REGIONAL ADVISORY  
COUNCIL

CONSEJO CONSULTIVO  
REGIONAL PARA  
LAS AGUAS  
NOROCCIDENTALES

Dublin, 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2012

**Subject: Clash of dates between Commission and NWWRAC meetings**

Dear Director General Evans,

With regret, as President and Chairman of the North Western Waters RAC, we must approach you with a serious complaint about procedure.

As you may know, the Commission's Seminar on effort control on 5<sup>th</sup> of July was held on the middle day of a 3-day round of NWWRAC Working Groups, Focus Groups and Executive Committee meetings. There was an exchange of emails at the end of May on this matter, the facts of which were basically: the NWWRAC dates were known well in advance to the Commission; the NWWRAC financial commitments on bookings made for these meetings were effectively immovable. Despite efforts to decouple the meetings, the Commission's decision was to allow the Seminar on fishing effort to go ahead.

Although there was a substitute private meeting with a DG MARE delegation headed by Mr. Penas Lado, which was appreciated by the NWWRAC members, the point made strongly then was that the main EC Seminar could not meet its aim of properly exploring its subject if attendance by one of the major players at stake was precluded or minimised by failure to take account of already existing arrangements.

We now find, amazingly, that this process has been repeated at the very next NWWRAC meeting round. This time the clash is with the NWWRAC General Assembly/AGM, Executive Committee and a Focus Group. The Commission has arranged its annual Seminar on the "State of the Stocks" (fishing opportunities for 2013) for the same date. Again an early exchange of emails made the constraints clear and seemed to identify alternative dates.

You will perhaps not be surprised that we have received very angry responses from several members of the NWWRAC General Assembly and Executive Committee. An unfortunate occurrence such as this may be unavoidable once, or very occasionally, for well understood reasons of administrative difficulties. For it to happen on two successive RAC meeting rounds seems to us to be dismissive.

We note that the Commission will be consulting coincidentally on the role and functioning of the Advisory Councils in a reformed CFP and that the RACs are expected to have an enhanced advisory role in the future CFP. We believe that the NWWRAC has demonstrated its willingness and ability to play a cooperative and active part now and under the results of the reform. However, we find ourselves excluded from several events where the presence of both fishing industry representatives and RAC members is required. With the above in mind, we are afraid that we cannot guarantee the participation of any NWWRAC member at this meeting.

We are sure that your staff will defend the decision as an unavoidable administrative fait accompli. We are equally sure that you will understand why our representation to you is made in such uncompromising terms: the NWWRAC members feel undervalued and undermined. In a recent email from the NWWRAC Secretariat, the possibility of a substitute meeting was raised; you may feel that under the circumstances a resetting of the date might be more appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Bertie Armstrong  
Chairman of the NWWRAC – Executive Committee

Marc Ghiglia  
President of the NWWRAC – General Assembly

North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council  
c/o Bord Iascaigh Mhara  
Crofton Road  
Dun Laoghaire, Ireland

Tel: 00 353 1 2144 126  
Fax: 00 353 1 2300 564  
Email: [nwwrac@bim.ie](mailto:nwwrac@bim.ie)  
Web: [www.nwwrac.org](http://www.nwwrac.org)

Chairman: Bertie Armstrong  
President: Marc Ghiglia  
Co. Reg. No.: 403877