



North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council

Work Programme

Year 6

October 2010 to September 2011



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1. Introduction

The North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council (NWWRAC) was established in accordance with Commission Decision 2005/668/EC on the 22nd of September 2005 as one of the seven Regional Advisory Councils, proposed under Council Decision 2004/585/EC, establishing Regional Advisory Councils under the Common Fisheries Policy.

In its sixth year of operation, which runs from October 2010 to September 2011, the NWWRAC wishes to apply for grant-aid from the EU Commission, in accordance with stipulations set out in Council Decision 2004/585/EC, as amended by Council Decision of 2007/409/EC.

2. Objectives of the North Western Waters RAC

The principal aim of the RACs is to bring together European stakeholders, including fishermen, the representatives of producer organisations, environmentalists, recreational anglers, processors, consumers and women's networks, amongst others, to provide evidence-based advice to the EU Commission, Member States and the European Parliament on matters of fisheries management within the geographical limits of its remit (i.e. the community waters of areas Vb, VI and VII).

The proposal, presented by the NWWRAC, aims to achieve the sustainable, biological and economic management of fish stocks, within the geographical remit of the north western waters RAC, in compliance with the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy.

It is also within the scope of the proposal to address the sustainable, biological and economic management of fish stocks in the wider context of an integrated maritime policy.

Given the mixed nature of the fisheries within the geographical remit of the NWWRAC, an ecosystem-based approach will provide the foundation for advice, which will contribute to the achievement of good environmental status of the marine environment, as articulated in the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.



3. General Work Programme: Main Areas of Work

The work programme of the NWWWRAC (2010/2011) will address the following issues:

3.1. Reform of the CFP

In October 2010, the NWWWRAC will convene a scoping meeting on governance and regionalisation [of the RACS under the reformed CFP], gathering all information produced to date, in order to inform discussions on this matter.

The NWWWRAC will prioritise this area over the first quarter of year 6 (October-December 2010) in order to submit an opinion before the Commission releases the regulatory proposal regarding this issue.

The NWWWRAC will also work in conjunction with other RACs, to bring proposals on other topics of common interest (e.g. capacity, allocation of fishing rights, technical measures, definition of fleets, socio-economics, etc.) to the attention of the Commission.

3.2. Development and implementation of long term management plans for fish stocks in North Western Waters

The Development and implementation of long term management plans for fish stocks in North Western Waters is the main work priority for 2010/2011 (Year 6).

Initially, the NWWWRAC will establish a clear set of objectives in order to develop a long-term management plan for the demersal fisheries of the Celtic Sea.

This will be achieved by the implementation of a pragmatic and stepwise approach that takes into consideration environmental, biological, economic and social factors. The process will be agreed and validated by scientists, control authorities and relevant experts, before being presented to the Commission.



The NWWWRAC will also address inputs to long-term management plans for other species in the following manner:

Northern hake:

The NWWWRAC will continue to work with ICES, STECF and the South Western Waters RAC, to produce evidence-based recommendations and opinions, in response to discussion papers and regulatory proposals from the Commission.

Haddock (West of Scotland):

The NWWWRAC will continue to work closely with ICES to develop a proposal for the implementation of a long-term management plan, as requested by the Commission. Further work will be subject to the results of the socio-economic impact assessment being made available and a formal proposal from the Commission being provided to the RAC for comment.

The NWWWRAC will also address:

- The most appropriate management measures on the review of a LTMP for Sole in the Western Channel;
- Proposing measures for the management of Nephrops in area VII; and
- Developing practical and functional opinions for the management of Irish Sea stocks.

3.3. Fishing Opportunities and the improvement of the quality of scientific and economic data for 2011 and 2012

The NWWWRAC is committed to improving professional networks and strengthening relationships with scientists (i.e. National Institutes and ICES), representatives of Member States and the Commission.

3.3.1. Regional Task Force

In conjunction with specific professional support, the NWWWRAC will establish a regional task force whose remit will be to improve the quality of data and to mitigate uncertainty in the knowledge of stocks in the medium-term.



The Regional Task Force will:

- Assess the quality of existing data, available in national and European sources;
 - As a priority for Year 6, the NWWRAC will seek to enhance collaboration with ICES scientists to identify useful data that can be used for key stocks, that are planned to be benchmarked in 2011 and 2012 (e.g. Vla anglerfish, cod, megrim).
- Identify data deficiencies in the evaluation process; and
- Provide reliable and valid data from the fishing industry that can be input into scientific assessment.

3.3.2. Annual allocation of resources (TAC and quotas) and related management measures

A large part of the first quarter of Year 6 (2010/2011) will be dedicated to the production of professional advice for the Commission on the annual allocation of resources (TAC and quotas) and related management measures (e.g. effort regime) for demersal species.

Within the third quarter of Year 6 (2010/2011), the NWWRAC will provide the Commission with its opinion on the proposals for Fishing Opportunities for 2012, with special emphasis placed on the principles upon which the Fishing Opportunities are structured, the range and timing of achievement of MSY values and the rules referring to stock status categories used to determine the TACs.

Following a specific request from the Commission, the NWWRAC will provide further advice on access regimes and fishing opportunities for deep sea species in 2011-2012 during Year 6 (2010/2011).

3.4. Marine Protected Areas and Marine Spatial Planning

The NWWRAC will continue to be involved in the identification of sites of fishing activity and/or the development of management plans for different types of protected areas (e.g. MPA, MCZ, SAC) in North Western waters that are to be adopted under both national and Community legislation. A particular insight will be given to the ongoing consultation being carried out in United Kingdom and France.



In this respect, the NWWWRAC will re-convene the Horizontal Working Group on Marine Spatial Planning, led by eNGOs representatives of the NWWWRAC (Chairman and rapporteur), with a wide representation of experts including those from appropriate, EU projects (e.g. MEFPO and CHARM III in 2009/2010).

The NWWWRAC has overcome past difficulties in the exchange of information with national institutes and intends to work, in Year 6, with the designated agencies from the Member States and the Commission in the following manner:

- Participate in national debates and occasional stakeholders' forums;
- Organize follow-up meetings and invite relevant experts to communicate current status reports and present timetables for consultations, where relevant;
- Circulate newsletters, maps and questionnaires provided by consultants to stakeholders and provide feedback.

3.5. Technical Conservation Measures and Discards Policy

Since its creation, the NWWWRAC has dedicated a considerable amount of time and effort addressing the critical areas of Technical Conservation Measures and the development of policy regarding discards.

Given the importance of these issues, the NWWWRAC will continue to work on these areas if required by the Commission.

3.5.1. Technical Conservation Measures

The NWWWRAC will address TCMs if there is any development of legislative proposals on the subject in North Western Waters and will provide the Commission with timely, professional opinion, where necessary.

Given the complexity of the issues involved and the regional specificities of each fishery, the NWWWRAC requires a reasonable period for consultation (i.e. at least three months) from the Commission. It is also essential that proposed measures for consultation are made available, by the Commission, in all the working languages of the RAC, in order that the membership may adequately prepare their professional opinion.



3.5.2. Discards Policy

The NWWRAC plans to hold Working Group discussions to consider discarding in area VII in certain fisheries and the effects of mitigating measures.

This NWWRAC will address this issue in the first half of 2011, depending on the work priorities of the NWWRAC and additions to the work programme emanating from the Commission.

3.6. Other topics of interest

The Executive Committee of the NWWRAC will instruct working groups to address specific topics for discussion, as considered necessary and appropriate, throughout the course of the year and dependent on the availability of existing resources.

3.7. Working procedures

The NWWRAC will continue to refine working procedures to ensure efficient and effective work practices.

The NWWRAC will work closely with other relevant RACs, the industry, NGO representatives, scientists and the Commission to develop appropriate work programmes to progress issues of common and specific concern.

3.7.1. Timetable

- Annex I details the timetable for discussion of key issues within the NWWRAC;
- Annex II details issues of specific interest that the Commission has proposed for the 4th quarter of 2010, which are relevant to the NWWRAC and which require the professional opinion of the NWWRAC.



4. Operational Structure; Meeting types and frequency

The largest budgetary expenditure incurred by the NWWRAC is associated with meetings. The NWWRAC is liable for all costs associated with meeting room hire, interpretation services and technical equipment, in addition to the travel and accommodation costs of members and experts attending NWWRAC meetings.

In order to achieve the objectives of the work programme, the operational hierarchy of the NWWRAC is currently organised in the following, three-tier structure¹:

4.1. Executive Committee

All decisions, relating to the NWWRAC, are made by an Executive Committee (ExCom) of 24 members. Currently, there are 21 members on the Executive Committee and three vacant seats. Executive meetings are held at least three times a year and normally address high level policy issues, debating the recommendations of Working Groups and reaching consensus in the form of RAC advice and opinion.

Each member (plus the Chairman of each Working Group presenting the recommendations to the ExCom) is reimbursed for attending the meeting, and full interpretation is provided, in the three working languages of the NWWRAC (i.e. English, French and Spanish). Commission and EP representatives are also formally invited to attend.

4.2. Working Groups

Working Group meetings are held 2 to 3 times a year and are the main drivers of the NWWRAC. All issues necessary for debate are tabled at these meetings. A number of experts, as well as Commission members, are often invited to attend and make presentations at these meetings. There are currently 4 Working Groups in the NWWRAC, which are geographically based. Additional Horizontal, Working Groups are also convened, as required, to discuss issues, which are of common interest to all NWWRAC members (e.g. Marine Spatial Planning, CFP Reform). Working Group meetings are normally held over 2-3 days.

¹ Note: A review of the current operational structure is the subject of ongoing discussions within the NWWRAC.



Membership of Working Groups varies from 25 to 40 participants depending on the subject matter and full interpretation is provided (i.e. English, French and Spanish).

4.3. Focus Groups and Workshops

Focus Group meetings and Workshops are specialist meetings, which are convened as required when issues of urgent concern require an immediate response from the NWWWRAC. These groups are formed from within the general membership and consist of a small group of members with specific professional experience and expertise.

Such meetings have a specific function and outcome requirement, such as the drafting of response papers (e.g. Nephrops Management Group); the development of a draft opinion with relevant experts (e.g. Celtic Sea Fisheries) or to form a NWWWRAC opinion, by consensus, which is contentious or where there are divergent positions within a working group (e.g. Deep water Focus Group).

In order to incorporate the flexibility required to accommodate these meetings, the NWWWRAC has budgeted for 5 Focus Group or Workshop meetings, with a maximum of 8 participants, in Year 6. Interpretation services for these meetings is assessed and provided as and when necessary and contributions-in-kind are sought from Member States to maximise cost efficiency.

5. Improved Communications and Transparency

The NWWWRAC Communications Strategy aims to promote the work of the NWWWRAC and improve public and professional awareness of RAC outputs and opinions. In Year 6, this will be achieved by improving transparency and the level of communication with all stakeholders by producing regular e-newsletters as well as press releases posted in the Press section of the NWWWRAC website (i.e. www.nwwrac.org).

In addition, the Secretariat will maximize the functionality of the website so that members can continue to work between meetings using the interactive forum and meeting space options, which it has developed.



Recognising the important role of NGOs and other interest groups in the functional balance of the NWWRAC, the Secretariat will also continue to encourage new members to join this grouping and fill the vacant seats available.

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Annex I. NWWRAC Meetings Timetable for Year 6

The Proposed Work Programme for the NWWRAC for the period 01 October 2010 to 30 September 2011.

Please note this work programme is subject to formal adoption at the General Assembly meeting of the NWWRAC to be held on the 27th October 2010, in Dublin.

Focus Groups, listed here, are based current knowledge. Dates and issues for discussion are subject to change, and will be directed by the requirements of the Commission and proposals coming NWWRAC members.

The information presented below is indicative of the NWWRAC operation in Year 6.



NWWRAC					
Indicative WORK PROGRAMME Year 6 (01 October 2010 – 30 September 2011)					
Meeting Type	Actual Proposed dates	Venue	Work Priorities		
General Assembly	27 th October 2010	Dublin	Agree Proposed Work Programme and RAC structure	Ratify Accounts for Year 5 and Budget for Y6	
Focus Group on Review of the CFP	27 th October 2010	Dublin	Governance and regionalisation: role of the RACs		
Workshop on Socio-economics aspects of fisheries management	28 th October 2010	Dublin	Economic studies on value chain and GDP of socio-economic tissue;	Development of regulatory impact assessments	Socio-economic diversification: EU projects and funding
Focus Group on Northern Hake	1 st half of 2011	TBA	Response to EC Non-Paper on Hake management		
Focus Group on Celtic Sea demersal fisheries	4 th quarter 2010 / 1 st quarter of 2011	TBA	Template for integrated LTMP for VIIIfg	Definition of objectives, structure and allocation of tasks	
Horizontal WG Regional Task Force on Data Deficiencies	4 th quarter 2010 / 1 st quarter of 2011	TBA	Identification of key stocks to work with	Methodology and work structure with ICES/EC/STECF	

Annex 1
NWWRAC Grant Application Y6
Work Programme



Indicative WORK PROGRAMME Year 6 (01 October 2010 – 30 September 2011)					
Meeting Type	Actual Proposed dates	Venue	Work Priorities		
Executive Committee	End of January (Week 4)	Paris	Review Work Programme to date		
Working Groups	March / April	<i>Paris / Spain</i>	Relevant topics		
Executive Committee	Mid May (Week 20)	Brussels	Review Work Programme to date	Discuss budget and work programme for year 6	
Working Groups	Beginning of July (Week 27)	<i>Paris / Madrid</i>	Presentation and overview of ICES advice	Prepare advice for Commission on TACs and quotas	
Executive Committee	Mid-September (Week 37)	Madrid	Agree advice from working Groups on TACs and quotas	Prepare for General Assembly and new budget year.	
3 Additional Focus Groups meetings	2 nd -3 rd quarter 2011	TBA			



Annex II. Areas of interest to the NWWWRAC from the DG MARE Work Programme

Latest update: DG MARE Work Programme received on the 6th of September 2010

Full title	Scope and objectives	Foreseen adoption
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1288/2009 of 27 November 2009 establishing transitional technical measures from 1 January 2010 to 30 June 2011.	As the 2009 November Council couldn't agree on permanent technical measures in the Atlantic (COM(2008)324), a transitional regulation was agreed ensuring that urgent technical measures provided in Annex III of Regulation No 43/2009 for TACs and quota continue to apply as from 01.01.2010 for a validity period of 18 months. The proposed amendment to the transitional regulation will extend its validity for another 24 months, until 30.06.2013. The reason is that the proposed regulation on permanent technical measures, which shall incorporate the transitional provisions, will not be adopted before the expiring date of the latter. Hence, a legal vacuum must be avoided while in light of recent scientific advice some provisions could be amended.	3rd quarter 2010
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - Cetacean incidental catches in Fisheries: Report on the implementation of certain provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004.	The Commission, after receiving Member States second annual report, has the obligation to report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the operation of Council Regulation (EC) No 812/2004 on incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries. This report shall be updated following the submission of the fourth annual report by Member States. The Commission will present a new Communication on the implementation of this Regulation based on the 2007 and 2008 Member States' reports and on recent scientific information. This evaluation will also serve as the basis to develop any further initiative as appropriate.	4th quarter 2010



Full title	Scope and objectives	Foreseen adoption
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1185/2003 on the removal of fins of sharks on board vessels.	One option is to amend the ratio allowing for 5% of fin weight relative to the live weight (before processing) of the shark catch so that in no case the weight of the fins will exceed 5% of the dressed (gutted and beheaded) weight of the shark catch. However, Member States having set up and implemented data collection programmes justifying an increase of this %, in certain cases, could be allowed to land up to 5% of the live weight of the shark catch. Member States' vessels having been exempted from the obligation to land sharks with fins attached will be required to land shark fins and carcasses simultaneously in the same port. Another option would be to implement a "fins attached" policy whereby the fins would remain attached to the body.	1st quarter 2011
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the Common Fisheries Policy replacing Council Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 of 20 December 2002.	The current basic regulation stipulates that the Commission shall report to the European Parliament and the Council on the operation of the Common Fisheries Policy before the end of 2012. For that purpose, after a broad consultation in 2009 and on the basis of its results, the Commission will now proceed to an in-depth reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. The reform will include a new basic regulation for the CFP.	April 2011
Commission Communication on a Community Plan of action for reducing incidental catches of seabirds in fishing gears.	In ways to integrate environmental protection requirements into the Common Fisheries Policy, one of the Community objectives is to improve the fishing methods with a view to reduce the incidental and unwanted catches, and the impacts on the marine environment.	2nd quarter 2011
Proposal for a Regulation of the EP and of the Council on the European Fisheries Fund.	According to Article 105 of Council Reg. (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006, the Council shall review this Regulation by 31/12/2013	2nd quarter 2011

Annex 1
NWWRAC Grant Application Y6
Work Programme



Full title	Scope and objectives	Foreseen adoption
Proposal for a Council Decision on the approval of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing.	Port State measures have been identified as a key tool in the fight of the international community against IUU fishing. The fight against IUU fishing constitutes an essential component of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the EU should be able to foster international cooperation on this matter by participating actively and constructively in the adoption of the international Agreement on Port State measures.	4th quarter 2010
Report from the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 734/2008 on the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in the high seas from the adverse impacts of bottom fishing gears.	The report describes the developments in the international context, particularly at the UN, since the adoption of UN General Assembly Sustainable Fisheries Resolution 61/105 in 2006, which was the basis of Council Regulation (EC) N° 734/2008. The report includes details on the implementation of the Regulation by the concerned Member States as well as proposals to amend the Regulation in view of current scientific advice and the new obligations included in the 2009 UN GA Sustainable Fisheries Resolution 64/72.	4th quarter 2010
Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for the 2011 fishing year the guide prices and Community producer prices for certain fishery products pursuant to Regulation (EC) n° 104/2000.	Fixing the guide prices and the Community producer prices is an annual exercise and a regulatory obligation under the Common Market Organisation (CMO). The guide prices are the essential parameters for the CMO intervention mechanisms. A Council Regulation is required to ensure direct and uniform implementation throughout the EU.	November 2010



Full title	Scope and objectives	Foreseen adoption
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council "Marine knowledge 2020 - marine data and observation for smart and sustainable growth".	At present, responsibility for collecting data on Europe's seas and oceans is fragmented between regional, national, public and private organisations that collect data over open ocean and coastal, territorial and jurisdictional waters. The European Marine Observation and Data Network action plan will outline a set of steps enabling public and private operators to provide better services by: 1. Setting up a framework to determine the coverage and quality of marine data collected within the EU; 2. Supporting the integration of these data so as to develop complete pictures of maritime basins; 3. Encouraging the collection of further data where it will improve their fitness for purpose; 4. Facilitating access to these data by these operators.	8/9/2010
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Committee of the Regions and the Social Economic Committee on Integrated Maritime Policy for the Atlantic Ocean.	The Communication will concentrate on maritime policy objectives, actions and instruments specifically targeting Atlantic stakeholders. Their exact nature, objectives or impact will not be known until the mapping exercise is completed.	May 2011
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council to support growth and sustainability through better marine knowledge.	To finance a more effective European architecture for marine knowledge and thus 1. reducing operational costs and delays for those who use marine data 2. increasing competition and innovation amongst users and re-users of marine data by providing wider access to quality-checked, rapidly-available coherent marine data; 3. reducing uncertainty in knowledge of the oceans and the seas and so providing a sounder basis for managing future changes.	1st quarter 2013



Full title	Scope and objectives	Foreseen adoption
Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2011 and 2012 the fishing opportunities for EU fishing vessels for certain deep-sea fish stocks.	This Regulation will establish the fishing opportunities for deep-sea stocks for 2011 and 2012.	September 2010
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council concerning the review of the Western Waters' regime on fishing effort.	This Communication will inform the European Parliament and the Council about the Commission's assessment of the implementation of the effort regime established by Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and 1415/2004, including the Biologically Sensitive Area around Ireland. Articles 3(4), 5(2) and 6(3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003 oblige the Commission to report to European Parliament and Council.	October 2010
Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2011 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of stocks, applicable in Community waters and, for Community fishing vessels, in waters where catch limitations are required.	The Regulation will establish the annual fishing opportunities and the conditions functionally linked thereto.	4th quarter 2010
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002 on specific access requirements and associated conditions for fishing for deep-sea stocks.	The Regulation will update the current rules on the access requirements and associated conditions for fishing for deep-sea stocks, on the basis of experience accumulated in the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002.	4th quarter 2010
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual plan for the stock of haddock distributed in EC waters of ICES zones Vb and VIa (West of Scotland and North of Ireland).	The proposed plan will provide i.a. for setting TACs each year in such a way that the objective to exploit this stock according to maximum sustainable yield will be reached. Attaining that objective by 2015 was adopted by Member States at the 2002 UN World Summit on Sustainable Development.	March 2011
Proposal for a Regulation of the EP and Council amending Reg. (EC) 1954/2003 on the management of the fishing effort to certain EC fishing areas and resources	The proposal will amend the effort management system applicable in the Western Waters, with a view to simplification, more effective and transparent management.	April 2011



Full title	Scope and objectives	Foreseen adoption
Proposal for a Council Regulation fixing for 2012 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, applicable in Community waters, and, for Community vessels, in waters where catch limitations are required.	Regulation establishing the annual fishing opportunities and the conditions functionally linked thereto.	3rd quarter 2011
Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Draft Roadmap towards establishing the Common Information Sharing Environment for the EU maritime domain.	Integrating Maritime Surveillance across sectors throughout the EU requires interlinking the different sectoral surveillance systems. In its conclusions of 17 November 2009, the Council asked the Commission to present a Roadmap for the development of a system interlinking the different maritime surveillance user communities, be they civilian or military. The 'Roadmap' constitutes one of the steps towards developing a full Impact Assessment on the creation of the 'Common Information Sharing Environment for the EU maritime domain'. Such Roadmap normally remains a Commission internal document. However, in this particular case it shall be transmitted to the Council at that early stage on the latter's request.	4th quarter 2010
Commission Communication on Integrating maritime surveillance: The implementation of the Common Information Sharing Environment including its financial aspects.	The Commission has been requested to identify inter alia, the financial implications of creating a Common Information Sharing Environment.	4th quarter 2013
Communication from the Commission on Maritime Spatial Planning in the EU - achievements and future development.	Information and progress made on the stakeholder discussion process which took place during 2009.	3rd quarter 2010