

Joint MAC/NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group on Brown Crab Minutes

Thursday, 19 March 2021

10:00 - 12:30 CET

Zoom online meeting

Welcome from the Chair, Norah Parke

Adoption of agenda and the last meeting's minutes (21.01.21): adopted

Questionnaire on National Information

- Presentation of additional information provided by the members
- Exchange of views

Click [here](#) to access the compilation document.

The Chair presented the information provided, which was compiled into one document. Presently, the scientific advisors of the different Member States are quite busy with Brexit mitigation measures. Nevertheless, information on landing trends is available.

In relation to France, the Chair commented that the situation was quite worrying. The situation is likely due to a bacterial disease that weakens the crab, such as a flair-up of the parasitic dinoflagellate *hematodinium* in the English Channel. Around twenty years, there was a virulent case of these, but it disappeared by itself after a while. The infection cycle might have restarted, since it seems to be endemic to the west area of the Channel. The Chair was not aware of cases in the North Sea or the Northwest of Ireland and Scotland. It is important to ensure that the transport of live crab does not spread the problem into further fisheries. The FG could consider recommending an investigation into the extent of the problem.

Hematodinium causes the “bitter crab disease”. Even though the meat is safe for consumption, it becomes unpalatable, which can have negative impacts on the industry's reputation. It is also important to prevent any potential problems exporting to China. In comparison with the UK and Ireland, the Chair stated that there was no significant change in landings. The percentage drop was quite small, so unlikely to be a stock problem there.

In relation to the dumping of the crab bodies after landing in Denmark, the Chair wondered if the industry investigated other potential uses for these. In the UK and in Ireland, crab bodies have been used for whelk bait. In these countries, brown crab is sometimes specifically targeted for bait, which



is not good to maintain the quality of the brown crab fishery, since individuals that should be returned to the sea are instead diverted for bait. There is substantial price available for whelk bait, so it could be relevant for the crab bodies landed in Denmark and a good example under the landing obligation.

The Chair agreed that the increase in landing of crab in Denmark was indeed likely due to pot fishery activities by Polish operators. Based on feedback from Irish operators in the North Sea, she commented that there was likely a grading issue in the activities of the Polish operators, which might require returning lighter crabs to sea, so that it can grow after a few more weeks. This is important to maintain and increase the fishing effort of brown crab.

Jarosław Zieliński (PSPR) informed that the Polish Ministry is in the process of consulting the catching and processing industries, so he will be able to provide a summary report on the catch data quite soon. Brown crab is a new fisheries segment for Poland, so it requires wide consultations by the Ministry.

The Chair stated that the existing operators would be available to share their knowledge with the new entrants in Poland.

Jarosław Zieliński (PSPR) asked the Chair to provide the contact information of these operators.

The Chair offered to organise a meeting between the interested parties in the near future.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) explained that there were some attempts by Danish operators to find a market for whole crab. Mr Andersen was not aware of Danish operators engaging in whelk fishing. Brown crab is a bycatch and there is market value for the claws, but not for the rest. The process to remove the whole bodies out of gillnets is too difficult. These are usually smashed and no longer economically relevant. He knew of some attempts to use the smashed crab leftovers for fertiliser, but not much else.

The Chair offered to discuss with Irish operators looking for whelk bait. Through a sample, it would be possible to assess the feasibility of used brown crab by-products. If the crab bodies were frozen in a block and transported, there could be a market outlet for them. In relation to the use as fertiliser, the ACRUNET projected concluded that it was a good fertiliser, but that, in the long-term, it causes problems of imbalance in the soil nutrients.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) explained that there is a significant demand for brown crab to be used as whelk bait. Some operators participate in the brown crab fishery with the purpose to gather whelk bait.

The Chair, in relation to the information provided on the Netherlands, highlighted that, when Chinese authorities approved a Dutch health certificate for brown crab exported from the Netherlands, it is



based on testing in the ICES statistical rectangles. Sampling takes place three to four times per year. These samples are analysed for cadmium levels. There are no other heavy metal issues.

Mike Turenhout (Visfederatie) explained that, in the Netherlands, brown crab is mainly a bycatch. Recently, there has been an increase in fishing vessels specifically targeting brown crab. In Mr Turenhout's opinion, the increase of interest in the fishery is mainly due to the Chinese market, thanks to the approved health certificate.

The Chair commented that the Netherlands has become a hub for Chinese and other East Asia countries, which imposes significant pressure on Dutch authorities to certify these exports, since other European countries have experienced difficulties with exports. The Chair highlighted that operators should be cautious, since the Chinese authorities have a past practice of allowing health certificates from one country and suddenly rejecting these, in favour of another country. Therefore, supply chains based in the Netherlands and dependent on the health certificates should be aware.

Stock Sustainability

- **Exchange of views on potential issues and the most recent scientific available data**

This agenda item was addressed together with the previous item.

Animal Welfare

- **Presentation on crustacean sentience**

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) informed that an expert could not be present due to focused on COVID-19 and Brexit matters. Experts will be able to present their findings in the near future. The projects have been concluded, but still need to undertake the peer review process. Ms Horsfall explained that there is a growing public interest in the UK on crustacean welfare. There is also growing public interest in North America, but that does not seem to be the case in the rest of Europe. Once there are developments in the UK and the USA, these are likely to also take place in the EU, so operators should try to prepare in advance. The increased interest in the UK is being driven by several animal welfare NGOs, particularly Crustacean Compassion. These NGOs have successfully lobbied the government and held several meetings on the issue. The UK government has also invested the industry to participate in these meetings with NGOs on animal welfare.

The need to consider fish welfare is based on the premise that fish do feel pain, fish sentience. Presently, scientific opinions are still divided on the matter. Increasingly, the opinion is that fish do feel pain. In 2009, EFSA issued a scientific opinion that concluded that some fish species to have the capacity to feel pain. There is evidence of the neural component of sentience in some fish species.



If fish and shellfish feel pain, then these should be protected under animal welfare legislation. In the UK Animal Welfare Act, a duty of care is established for the animal owners and keepers. Most of the legislation focuses on farmed species, particularly handling and slaughter. The duty of care is comprised of the so-called “five freedoms”: 1) need for a suitable environment to live in, 2) the need for a suitable diet to thrive on, 3) the need to exhibit normal behaviour, 4) the need to be with companions, and 5) the need to be protected from pain, injury or disease.

Wildlife caught shellfish is granted less protection under the mentioned legislation, since the activities under the normal course of fishing are excluded. Welfare provisions do apply to wild caught shellfish in relation to the need for appropriate transport of live animals. Ms Horsfall highlighted that there are other countries with animal welfare legislation applicable to brown crab. In 2018, New Zealand imposed provisions that animals must be rendered insensible before being killed, which is applicable to crustaceans.

In the UK, there does not seem to be sufficient scientific evidence for legislative intervention, but there is growing public interest, which might translate into the adoption of animal welfare guidelines. In the UK, DEFRA commissioned scientific research to evaluate whether the existing evidence supports the premise that crustaceans can experience pain, suffering, and distress. This will be a worldwide scientific literature review. It focuses on the currently available evidence on the issue of sentience, while critiquing the robustness of the research and methodologies.

SEAFISH also commissioned research on animal welfare considerations in the context of handling and slaughter after fishing, particularly focusing on industry practices. This report is also awaiting peer review. The research identified that the sector is quite diverse and that the animals are treated differently in the different businesses. Any requirement, even good practice guidelines, will have an impact on the sector, meaning less profitability and/or flexibility. In March 2020, the Humane Slaughter Association was awarded almost 2 million £ of public funding to for research and development to improve the slaughter conditions for crustaceans and cephalopods. The grant will fund three research projects, including testing to electrically stun and kill crabs and lobsters. This is being conducted by the Norwegian Research Institute.

As for next steps, the SEAFISH research report and the DEFRA report are expected to be published at the same time in 2021. Once the research is publicly available, a fish welfare working group will be established in the UK by the industry to discuss the findings. Interested NGOs will likely be invited to participate in the working group. SEAFISH is also assessing animal welfare issues in wild capture fisheries. There has been research into trawl fisheries to investigate the extent to which new practices, such as electrical stunning, could be implemented by the sector. Electrical stunning would not be optimal for the brown crab industry, since it is a live trade. It is an area of growing consumer interest, so it is important for the industry to be engaged, particularly in the context of increasing NGO campaigns.



- **Exchange of views**

The Chair emphasised the importance of the industry being proactive on the matter. The Chair wanted to know if the research on the nicking of crabs and the storage in vivier tanks.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) responded that those had not been perceived as an issue.

The Chair mentioned that, in the UK and in Ireland, most processing plants use electrical stunning. It increases the costs, but it also ensures quality when compared to other methods. The Chair expressed her interest in the research projects and wondered if other countries were also undertaking research.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) stated that he was not aware of any scientific project. In Denmark, animal welfare concerns are considered a niche topic, but growing in popularity. As an example, under the eel legislation, there is an obligation to decapitate eels and to immediately throw the head into a mincer. This was based on scientific research on the brain's electrical impulses when the eel sees its decapitated body. Therefore, it is important to be aware of potential impacts on legislation.

The Chair highlighted the influence of social media and potential impacts on the industry. It is important to continue monitoring the topic, including the UK's reports.

The MAC Secretary General highlighted that, under the European Green Deal, the Commission is reviewing the existing animal welfare rules. At present, rules apply mostly to aquaculture, but that the Commission is also exploring the possibility of extending the rules to wild caught fisheries. It is still unclear what the next steps will be from the Commission's side.

The Chair underscored the importance of the industry being proactive, particularly to demonstrate that the issue is taken seriously and that mitigation measures are undertaken.

Brexit

- **Exchange of views on supply chain issues**

The Chair highlighted that Brexit is an immediate problem for operators transporting live crab. The land bridge from Ireland via the UK to continental Europe is completely unworkable. The Chair expressed that the situation will be resolved in the future. The border officials and the industry need to have a better understanding of applicable requirements. There are different interpretations on the necessary documentation and formalities. The situation is quite difficult for a live trade. At present, the Irish industry prefers to transport products through ferry. This added an extra layer of uncertainty for business operators. In winter months, due to weather conditions, transport by ferry might not be possible. Therefore, the situation needs to be sorted.



Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) explained that, in the beginning of January, there were massive problems with exports to the EU. Businesses followed the preparations indicated by the government and were confident that they undertook the necessary preparations. When faced with the situation, the trade stopped almost completely in the first weeks of January. A few businesses took the risk and saw their consignments delayed up to 96 hours. The economic losses were catastrophic. This was essentially caused by a lack of awareness on the paperwork and differences of interpretation. The UK's customs charging system was not working properly with the EU's system, which meant that information needed to be submitted in several databases. The UK has been working with the French, Dutch and Spanish governments and the situation improved significantly. The delays are reduced to 3 to 4 hours.

The cost of the administrative burden to export will not be reduced. The cost to employ people to deal with paperwork will also be maintained. This means that prices will increase for the final consumer and lower catch prices for producers, since exporters will not be able to fully absorb the new costs. Ms Horsfall warned that the volumes of live trade is low due to seasonality. Volumes are expected to increase in the Spring and in the Summer. Therefore, operators are concerned with the potential delays once the volume increases. Ms Horsfall recalled that not all administrative requirements are already applicable to EU operators exporting to the UK. She urged EU operators to prepare in advance and to exchange information with border control officials and UK customers. The UK government recently postponed the entry into force of the new administrative requirements.

The Chair emphasised the importance of the industry preparing in advance and not being overly confident on technological solutions. There are different interpretations being followed by different port authorities.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) exemplified that there is an increasing number of Scottish operators landing in Danish ports, since it is quicker to transport the products to EU customers. Brexit had a very negative impact on the Danish industry.

The Chair emphasised the importance of finding solutions. The situation is extremely serious in Ireland. The Chair expressed her hope that the fishing industry will be inventive and face the crisis.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) informed that her association had no new information on COVID-19 restrictions to exports imposed by the Chinese authorities. The UK Government provided information to the Chinese authorities on the full chain of custody, but opposed other measures. The UK Government worked together with other like-minded countries, such as Canada and Norway. The UK Government is still waiting to hear from the Chinese authorities on their proposals. Crab continues to be exported from the UK to China under the positive release system. No consignments have been rejected. The COVID-19 measures apply only to processed crab.



The Chair commented that live crab exported from the Netherlands is not facing problems. There are problems with the air freight availability, but this is expected to improve in the future.

Recommendations

- **Exchange of views on where FG advice would be best placed**
- **Way forward**

The Chair highlighted that the draft advice would likely have different threads and several recommendations. Under the Terms of Reference, the FG's work is expected to be completed ahead of the September, so the draft advice should be completed around July.

The MAC Secretary General informed that the MAC WG1 was expected to meet at the end of May and then again in September.

The Chair recalled that the FG would need to report back to the MAC WG1. The Chair wondered if the scientific reports undertaken by DEFRA and SEAFISH would be available before the conclusion of the FG's work.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) responded that the scientific reports were expected to be available during the Spring. At the latest, beginning of May. If the reports are not available, a summary might be possible.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) wanted to know if these scientific reports would point to management actions or would it only focus on the scientific questions of sentience.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) responded that the DEFRA scientific report is trying to establish the level to which crustacean sentience exists. The SEAFISH scientific report is looking at the current industry practice, so how the animals are treated across the supply chain. At that point, the UK will need to work on guidance to the industry, in order to address specific issues in the chain. The Shellfish Association of Great Britain will be fully involved in the development of the guidance. Ms Horsfall offered to circulate the guidance, once it is available.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) wondered the connection to the UK's regulatory autonomy.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) explained that they expect the UK Government to support the development of best practices guidance. Guidance does not have a regulatory character. Nevertheless, once best practice guidance is available, clients, such as supermarkets, will demand producers to comply with the non-regulatory guidance. The UK industry does not expect that the guidance would be rolled out to the EU, but there will be market pressure. Supermarkets with branches in other countries might start requesting producers to follow the same practices. There can also be pressure from NGOs and



social media. Therefore, European industry should also prepare and develop best practices guidance in advance.

The Chair wondered if it would be useful to prepare an overview of literature on animal welfare. This could help the development of a best practices statement for EU industries. It could be tailored to the individual countries.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) suggested for the FG to wait for the DEFRA report, since it will collate all the information on existing literature.

The MAC Secretary General mentioned that the ACs could recommend to the European Commission to undertake similar studies on crustacean sentience and industry practices. Plus, that a code of best practices might be needed at a later stage.

The Chair emphasised that the EU industry cannot ignore the issue of animal welfare. The Chair asked members to express their views on working on the topic.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) stated that his organisations did not have a positive experience when the EU institutions got involved in similar topics in the past. The issue is not the Commission, but the participation of the European Parliament. It is important for the industry to keep track of animal welfare developments and to discuss the matter. Mr Andersen expressed a reservation, adding that he was not willing to endorse the Commission's involvement on the topic.

Jarosław Zieliński (PSPR) agreed with DFPO's reservation. Mr Zieliński suggested that the FG should wait until the UK scientific reports are published. He was not sure that the NGOs in the EU would have the same position as those in the UK. He recalled that there is the FAO's Codex Alimentarius.

Geert Meun (VisNed) also agreed with DFPO.

The Chair stated that the consensus was to wait for the publication of the UK's reports, which would allow a more detailed discussion and potential recommendations.

Lucile Toulhoat (CNPMEM) agreed that the FG should wait for the publication.

The Chair asked for the members' views, taking into account the Terms of Reference, on the topics for the recommendations under the draft advice. The Chair highlighted that there is a growing industry in the North Sea, which is relatively unregulated when compared to the UK, Ireland, and France, the countries traditionally engaging in the brown crab fishery. Therefore, it was important to know if the draft advice should cover fisheries management. In the past, the UK, Ireland, and France were not able to agree on the same measures. The three countries agreed to have different



management measures, as long as these are adequate. The fishery seems to be in a good shape. Nevertheless, there are now new players in the North Sea.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) stated that, from the Danish industry's perspective, there was no clear benefit in having scientific management in a fishery that is in good state. In the past, it led to situations where regulations would be applied without proper scientific insight. Therefore, DFPO would be hesitant to accept any recommendation to introduce further measures until these are necessary. The fishery has been working quite well for 50 years. There might be an increase, but the industry will continue to monitor it. He exemplified that there was also a good bycatch fishery of crab claws in Kattegat and Skagerrak, which is a good income for fishers.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) stated that the UK industry was worried about the market pressure from China. Without the market pressure from East Asia countries, the fishery tends to regulate itself and does not require management measures, even though, in the UK, a group was established to explore potential management measures for brown crab. Once the Chinese market reopens, the economic value of brown crab increases significantly, which means that more vessels will fish for it. Therefore, the UK industry believes that management should be in place for when demand from the Chinese market increases again.

Geert Meun (VisNed) expressed agreement with DFPO. Developments must be monitored, but, at present, the industry should wait. In Mr Meun's perspective, the priority should be the management of the available space for fishing grounds. There are initiatives to ensure contact between fishers on the availability of fishing grounds.

The Chair wondered how that contact would take place. This issue would need to be addressed, particularly if an increase in operators is expected.

Geert Meun (VisNed) stated that, in the Netherlands, fishers that operate with pots have been contacted. There is a group to exchange information about the location of the pots on the fishing grounds. There are also exchanges of information through WhatsApp and other means.

The Chair wanted to know about the response to these initiatives, including if there was full cooperation from the operators.

Geert Meun (VisNed) responded that the initiative started a few months ago and that there is acknowledgement from both parties that the matter is being dealt with in the correct manner.

Jarosław Zieliński (PSPR) agreed with DFPO and VisNed. In the view of PSPR, more time is needed to see how the situation develops. This fishery is fully monitored, and the landings are reported. The fishery should continue to be unregulated. In Poland, the brown crab fishery is developing as a new



alternative for fishers, especially small-scale fishers, who are suffering with the closure of the East Baltic Cod. The idea is to support this segment with principles inspired by the Irish system on capacity, so that licenses would be for small-scale fishers and could not be sold or marketed. If the license is not used, then it would be returned to the Ministry, or it could be passed to a family member.

The Chair explained that, in Ireland, there were also large offshore vessels engaging in the brown crab. In relation to the family licenses, it was a solution, taken around twenty years ago, for a number of unregistered vessels. These were small-scale fishers that were not able to buy the necessary capacity and tonnage. A special group was set-up called as a “potting sector” with a “P-license”. Out of the 2000 operating vessels in Ireland, there are around 400 P-licenses in existence. These are confined to families and cannot be sold in the open market. These licenses are gradually being phased out. The transmission of these licenses is closely monitored. The original holders of the licenses are now quite elderly. In the near future, the “P-licenses” will cease to exist, so these should not be considered to be the Irish model.

Jarosław Zieliński (PSPR) expressed openness to discuss suggestions on how to develop this new industry segment in Poland. A ceiling on the number of licenses is expected.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) wanted to know if there is an actual need for enhanced management in the UK fishing grounds. Mr Andersen wondered about the number of stocks in the North Sea and the breeding aggregations, plus if there were exchanges with stocks from other areas.

The Chair stated that, in the UK, DEFRA researched brown crab populations. In FAO Area 4, there is a population that might interact with the English Channel, particularly on spawning. The bulk of the brown crab population seems to be on the eastern side of the Baltic Sea. There is no significant fishery in the UK’s coast. Some investigation would likely be relevant. Most of the research was undertaken before there was a big pressure. Scientific research could open the situation for more legislation. If scientists determine that the stock is in danger, then limits will be placed. The Chair argued that, by monitoring landings, the industry could manage it by itself. It is also important to take into account the new economic activities, such as offshore windfarms, developing on the sea.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) explained that the UK is looking into management matters. There are different fisheries targeting different geographical areas. Still, there is interaction due to spawning and individuals wandering. The UK will develop management measures, since there is the view that the brown crab fishery needs to be better managed.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) stated that, from the Danish industry, there would be no support to increase management measures in the North Sea. There is a good cooperation between Danish and Polish operators. It is not a targeted fishery for Danish operators, so the current situation is appropriate.



The Chair wondered if, at a later stage, Danish fishers could conclude that brown crab is a lucrative fishery and undertake pot fishing. In Ireland, the developments happened very quickly.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) responded that, if the fishery develops, the Danish industry prefers it to develop without management plans and capacity rules restricting the fleet.

Lucile Toulhoat (CNPMEM) agreed with the Chair. In the north of France, a new fishery was developed, in the past four years, following problems with flat fish. Fishers were pleased that there was already a national management framework for brown crab, since it only required small adaptations to the local context. The development of a new fishery segment can happen very quickly, so a prior establishment of a management framework allows the industry to react promptly.

The Chair argued that an overall management plan would not necessarily restrict growth for Danish fishers. It can actually provide more certainty. This has been an ongoing debate between the UK, Ireland, and France for many years. As time passed, the UK and Irish systems have been become more similar to the French system. It is divided by segments of the coasts, which allows you to know the sustained capacity. No one is forbidden from entering the brown crab fishery, but there is a limit to the amount of capacity based on the size and number of vessels. This avoids the overfishing of the species.

Michael Andersen (DFPO) emphasised that, for Danish operators, it is not a direct fishery. If the species is fished down, there will be no direct effect on the traditional Danish fisheries. Mr Andersen wondered how a decision on a capacity ceiling and its distribution could be reached. He argued against the establishment of further management in Denmark.

The Chair stated that there did not seem to be a mandate to recommend management measures in the North Sea. The Chair offered to provide an overview of the experience in the UK, Ireland, and France, particularly the consultations and discussions on the matter. This could help the new fisheries in the North Sea to avoid the same problems.

The MAC Secretary General asked members whether recommendations on stock sustainability, such as the presence of *hematodinium* in the English Channel, and supply chain issues, such as Brexit, COVID-19 restrictions, and restrictions to the Chinese market due to cadmium testing, should be covered.

The Chair, in relation to stock sustainability, informed that she could gather information from the scientific bodies of the UK, Ireland, and France. It might be too soon to request information from the regulatory authorities in Denmark, Poland, and the Netherlands.



Michael Andersen (DFPO) stated that he would be available to contact the Danish experts, but that he did not expect a significant amount of knowledge on brown crab to have been gathered. Mr Andersen offered to contact the relevant scientific experts.

The Chair encouraged members, particularly from Denmark, Poland, and the Netherlands, to contact the most relevant scientific officials in their national administrations about the status of the brown crab fishery. This could be discussed at the next meeting or through email.

In relation to supply issues connected to Brexit and exports to East Asia, the Chair stated that it could be relevant to have an overview of the situation and the developments, particularly for UK, Irish, and French operators. The Chair asked CNPMEM and CRPMEM whether they seek action from the Commission on the *hematodinium* situation, while also taking into account the potential negative commercial effect.

Lucile Toulhoat (CNPMEM) responded that, at the present stage, it would likely be too soon to propose for the Commission to take action. According to Ifremer, there is a recruitment problem and the cause unknown. *Hematodinium* is a possible cause, since some weak crabs have been reported. Ifremer is developing a protocol with UK scientists to proceed with an analysis. Martial Laurans (Ifremer) could potentially provide more precise information at the next meeting. In relation to Brexit, French fishers are worried about access and capture due to a more restrictive management of MPAs by the UK Government.

Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) recalled that export health certificates will be needed from September 2021 for EU exports to the UK. These are quite onerous. Interpretations vary across border control posts. Ms Horsfall encouraged operators to prepare in advance, including visits to the border control posts and exchanges of views with UK operators.

AOB

- **Date of the next meeting**

The Chair suggested holding the next meeting in mid-May. A poll would be sent out to the members to select the most appropriate date.



Summary of action points

- Stock Sustainability:
 - Martial Laurans (Ifremer) to be invited for the next meeting, in order to discuss the yields reduction in France
 - Members operating in Denmark, Poland, and the Netherlands to contact the relevant scientific experts in their national administrations, in order to gather information on stock status
- Animal Welfare:
 - Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) to contact an expert to present the DEFRA and SEAFISH scientific reports. Otherwise, she will provide a summary of the reports at the next meeting
- Management Measures:
 - Chair to present an overview of previous exchanges between the UK, Ireland, and France on management issues



List of attendees

Representative	Organisation
Anaïs Roussel	CRPMEM Hauts-de-France (NWWAC)
Claus Ubl	German Fishermen Association (NSAC)
Geert Meun	VisNed (NSAC)
Jarosław Zieliński	PSPR (MAC)
Lucile Toulhoat	CNPMEM (NWWAC)
Michael Andersen	DFPO (NSAC)
Mike Turenhout	Visfederatie (MAC)
Mo Mathies	NWWAC Secretariat
Norah Parke (Chair)	KFO (NWWAC)
Pedro Reis Santos	MAC Secretariat
Sarah Horsfall	EMPA (MAC)
Stavroula Kremmydiotou	MAC Secretariat

