



## **Update on Progress of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council**

The work of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council is progressing smoothly as the NWWRAC moves into its second year of operation.

The last Executive Committee meeting of the NWWRAC for 2006 was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, in Brussels, where the future TACs and quotas featured largely on the agenda. In brief, the NWWRAC recommended a number of well-considered initiatives for the fisheries in ICES area VI and VII. These recommendations included the implementation of an internationally agreed management plan for Rockall Haddock, a long-term management plan for northern Hake, multi-annual management plan for Sole in the English Channel and an innovative programme to improve Cod stocks and monitor discards in the Irish Sea. All of these measures were presented to the European Commission on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November and were very much welcomed as sound and forward-looking measures.

However, the NWWRAC has also expressed extreme disappointed in the lack of apparent support for the Trevoise closure. This is a closure that was an initiative from the industry and has been implemented for the last two years in the Celtic sea. The fishermen feel it is really working and have seen good returns in juvenile fish in this area. Reports from IFREMER have confirmed the industry's claims and the Commission has agreed to consider this information as part of the up and coming TAC and quota negotiations.

The NWWRAC has also commenced work in 2006 on non-quota species such as Scallop and Crab and a workshop has already been held to review current management measures for Scallops. The NWWRAC has agreed to commission a number of studies and trials on various management measures for scallops over 2007. Work on crab management has just commenced and it is foreseen that a workshop to look at crab management should be put in place over the course of 2007.

In 2007, work will start with a bang. Working group meeting are planned for the end of January in Bilbao, where long-term measures will be discussed at length. The Commission's initial proposals for TCMs will also be considered early in the New Year.

Then in March 2007, the NWWRAC and the North Sea RAC will jointly host a symposium to review the Cod Recovery Programme: to look at why it hasn't worked and what should be done next. The Symposium is planned for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2007 in Scotland.

It is hoped that the Symposium will take a realistic look at possible causes for the reduction in cod stocks in the EU waters such as Fishing, Climate Change, Predation and Pollution. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this forum will encourage all stakeholders to come up with a practical way forward on how we should all appropriately manage these fisheries. The Symposium will take the format of an interactive meeting with keynote speakers, followed by working groups for each area affected (West of Scotland, Celtic Sea, Irish Sea and North Sea/Kattegat), which will each address the same question. This will provide the opportunity for participants to be fully engaged in the meeting and actively speak out.

For all details of meetings or any other information on the NWWRAC can be found on our website at [nwwrac@bim.ie](mailto:nwwrac@bim.ie) or by contacting the secretariat in BIM at (01) 2144278 or [nwwrac@bim.ie](mailto:nwwrac@bim.ie).

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