



For the attention of:

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Proposal for Data Gathering to assist with evaluation of the Cod Recovery Plan

1. Background

- 1.1 The NSRAC appreciated being invited to the STECF/ICES WG meeting for scoping the impact assessment of L-T Management Plans, which began on February 28th 2011 in Copenhagen. Stakeholders were made welcome and were encouraged to play a full role at the meeting. It was subsequently suggested that a sum of €5,000 might be made available to assist stakeholders in gathering data to assist with impact assessment.
- 1.2 At the Meeting of the NSRAC Cod Recovery Focus Group, which took place on the 8th April 2011 in London it was agreed that the NSRAC would provide two papers for the next meeting of the STECF/ICES WG on 20-24th June in Hamburg. The first would be a NSRAC Position Paper on the Cod Recovery Plan. The second would be a paper presenting information gathered from the fishing fleets on the impact of the Cod Recovery Plan. Both papers would be intended to assist the STECF/ICES WG in its task of evaluating the Cod Recovery Plan.
- 1.3 The NSRAC is currently preparing its Position Paper. To assist with the preparation of the second paper, illustrating impacts of the plan upon fishing fleets, the NSRAC is seeking €5,000 to employ a researcher to analyse and compile the relevant information. This note sets out the scope of that second paper.

2. Data to be gathered

- 2.1 The NSRAC proposes to collect information on the impact of cod recovery in terms of changes to the operation of fishing vessels, and their response to the plan, as an

indication of the social and economic consequences of implementation of the plan and the overall effectiveness of the plan

- 2.2 The paper will bring the WG up to date on what has happened within the different fisheries, and will consider what might also take place if the Cod Recovery Plan is extended into the future in its present form. The STECF analysis of the impact of the Cod Recovery Plan by the WG is widely based; considering the impact of the plan as a whole. The NSRAC suggests that with such a global approach there is a risk of missing some of the more specific impacts on fleet sectors. Moreover, some of the complexities of the management measures that have had to be introduced by Member States may also be missed. Different Member States have responded to the plan in different ways, in particular with respect to the allocation of both effort and quotas. The impact of cod recovery measures has been different from one Member State to another, and some classes of vessel have been affected more than others, not always in foreseeable ways. The response of individual fishing companies has also differed. Some have moved into fisheries where the catch of cod is minimal. Others, including those engaged in mixed fisheries, have adopted cod avoidance measures. In some cases the response has been to adopt fishing strategies (e.g. high grading) that impede cod recovery. The Cod Recovery Plan has therefore affected different vessels in different ways. In some cases the impact has been minimal; in other cases fishers have found it difficult to maintain economic viability.
- 2.3 The NSRAC wishes to present to STECF/ICES a series of case studies demonstrating the effects of the Cod Recovery Plan on different fleet sectors, in terms both of impact upon the vessel and the contribution to cod recovery. Each case study will begin with a brief description of the specific measures of the plan that concern the vessel, and the subsequent impact upon the sector concerned. Each case study will then consider three scenarios:
 1. The consequences for the particular vessel, and the business decisions taken by the vessel operator as a result of the past implementation of the Cod Recovery Plan.
 2. What is expected to happen for that vessel if the Cod Recovery Plan continues along its present course?
 3. What might be done to alleviate economic and social impact of the plan in the future, while still maintaining the objective of achieving cod recovery?
- 2.4 The principle purpose of this data gathering exercise will be to provide examples of the impact of the plan upon particular vessels and to illuminate what has happened in terms of changes in the behaviour of fishers in response to the plan.
- 2.5 The data will be collected in an agreed format, to be set out by the scientist commissioned to carry out the study in consultation with STECF and the NSRAC. Data will be acquired with the assistance of fishers' representatives and Member State officials, who will be able to undertake some of the groundwork. The scientist concerned will concentrate on collating the data and presenting it in the most appropriate way to illustrate the impacts of the Cod Recovery Plan. It is suggested that a minimum of 5 case studies be collected from each Member State. Where

resources permit the number may be increased. Some of those case studies might be taken from areas outside the North Sea to illustrate impacts in the fisheries covered by the NWWRAC. Comments will be invited from STECF/ICES both on the nature of the information they would like to see collected, and the class of vessel from which information should be sought.

- 2.6 The NSRAC recognises that the data presented will be illustrative and indicative. It will aim to keep anecdotal information to a minimum and to present the data in a form that will prove of greatest utility in terms of further analysis by the STECF/ICES WG.

3. The way forward.

- 3.1 The NSRAC is presenting this proposal for evaluation and consideration by the STECF/ICES WG. Should agreement be reached on the provision of €5,000 for the data collection proposal to go ahead then the NSRAC will submit the name of an appropriately qualified scientist to collate the data, for approval by STECF, and will then contact fishers representatives and Member States to begin the process of data collection. Data collection will need to begin soon to meet the deadline of June 20th.