

The North Sea Regional Advisory Council



NSRAC

PAPER GA4

NSRAC WORK PROGRAMME 2008– 2009

In 2008 and 2009 the primary role of the NSRAC will be to foster the development of a sustainable exploitation of the demersal fish and shellfish stocks in the marine environments of the North Sea and Skagerrak/Kattegat.

The NSRAC will do this by preparing and providing advice on the management of these fisheries to the European Commission, the Member States and the European Parliament.

The advice will be provided by and on behalf of all stakeholders involved in the NSRAC and with the aim to achieve the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Goals of the NSRAC

- By actively involving from the start all the interests directly or indirectly related to the fisheries of the NSRAC, the NSRAC advisory process will lead to real exchanges of thought and, hopefully, to real and feasible solutions in fisheries management, in which the ecological objectives are in balance with the economic needs in a long term perspective.
- The consequent involvement of the broader scientific community related, directly or indirectly, to fisheries management in the NSRAC advisory process, will lead to the improvement of the quality of the advice as well as to a better understanding between the scientific community and NSRAC's stakeholders.
- To work closely with the Community Fisheries Control Agency
- By continuing and further developing Inter-RAC co-operation to avoid duplication of effort and to save time and finance.

The scope of the NSRAC activities

In general terms the tasks of the NSRAC will be the following:

- To submit suggestions, on its own accord or at the request of the Commission or a Member State, on matters relating to fisheries management.
- To give an opinion on Commission or Member State proposals on conservation and management dealing with a fishery relevant for the region.
- To comment on and recommend improvements in the implementation of the Community legislation in the region.
- To conduct any other activities which are necessary to achieve its objective?

However, in order to determine the scope of activities the NSRAC and to make choices, the NSRAC will organize its advisory work along the following *guidelines*:

- The NSRAC shall only give advice on the various fisheries and conservation matters for demersal (i.e. non-pelagic) species
The NSRAC shall only deal with fisheries in the North Sea (area IVa, IVb and IVc) and Skagerrak/Kattegat (area IIIa)
The NSRAC shall in principle not advise on horizontal matters regarding the Common Fisheries Policy.
The NSRAC shall concentrate its advisory effort on:
 - the development of medium to long term management approaches
 - matters in fishery policy of a more principal nature
 - matters in fishery policy of a purely regional (i.e. North Sea and SK/KT) nature
 - other matters with an impact on the state of the resources
- The NSRAC will aim strongly at giving advice which is backed by science and for which the socio-economic impact has been assessed.

6. Structure and working of the NSRAC

The General Assembly made up of all members in NSRAC and with participation of observers. The GA. will meet once per year and appoint the Executive Committee to develop its proposals and act as focus for the activities in NSRAC.

NSRAC has established Standing Working Groups in order to examine specific issues and to prepare advice

Demersal WG

Skagerrak/Kattegat WG

NSRAC has put in place ad hoc groups to deal with specific issues e.g.

- 5 Development Groups, which look at the long term management of specific stocks
- 2 Development Groups , spatial planning and socio-economic
- 5 Focus groups

The Following are issues which NSRAC will consider in 2008-2009

- mapping of areas important to fisheries
- Offshore Natura 2000 network
- Offshore windfarms
- Science – fisheries partnership
- Data Workshop
- Cod Avoidance
- Control regulations
- Workshop which will include stakeholders, consumers and retailers.
- Technical measures & how to eliminate discards
- Review of CFP
- Carry out an internal review of our work and policies and plan our future work
- Continue Inter-RAC co-operation

For each NSRAC meeting an agenda will be made and a rapporteur appointed.