

The North Sea Regional Advisory Council



NSRAC

**Demersal/Flatfish Working Group
June 15th 2006, Den Helder, the Netherlands**

Funding for scoping study Plaice Box evaluation

From: Nathalie Steins

At the meeting between the Commission and the Flatfish Working Group Chair following NSRAC's advice on the evaluation of the Plaice Box (February 9th), it was agreed that the Commission would investigate the possibilities of funding such a scoping study as part of a thorough examination of the Focus Group progress report and inform NSRAC late March. In May, I contacted the Commission on their progress in finding funding for a Plaice Box evaluation scoping study. Peter Hopkins had looked into funding possibilities but requested some further information on ToR's and breakdown of costs.

I have subsequently asked Adriaan Rijnsdorp of IMARES (who was the lead scientist assisting the FFWG Focus Group on the Plaice Box) to provide me with an outline of the requirements for a scoping study and estimation of costs (May 29th). This outline is on page 2. In order not to cause any further delays I have taken the liberty - on my own judgement - to forward this two-page document as a draft to Peter Hopkins so that he could start a directed search for funding immediately. At the same time I have informed him that I would distribute the outline of the scoping proposal to the Focus Group for comments and submit it to the June 15th Demersal/Flatfish WG meeting for finalisation.

I have not received comments from the Focus Group. My questions to the DWG/FFWG:

1. Is the list of issues to be addressed in the scoping study complete or are there any additional issues?
2. Can the DWG/FFWG agree with formally submitting the scoping study outline to the Commission to assist the further investigation of European funding possibilities?

Developing a research programme to evaluate the Plaice box

In order to further develop a research project to assess the effectiveness of the plaice box building on the results of the expert consultation meeting on Schiphol (summer 2005) and the discussion at the North Sea RAC we propose to organize a workshop with a restricted participation of the key scientist involved (UK, G, DK, NL).

The tasks of the workshop are as follows:

- (i) formulate the research questions that need to be addressed to evaluate the effectiveness of the plaice box in terms of reducing the discard mortality of plaice
- (ii) develop a research programme to tackle the questions comprising the methodology, time schedule, estimate of the costs (personal, equipment, ship time). The research programme should be formulated in terms of separate tasks.
- (iii) describe how the fishing industry could participate in the research tasks
- (iv) review the legal implications of experiment approaches that require a modification of the plaice box management regulation
- (v) prioritize the research tasks in terms of their importance to the overall goal of the project.
- (vi) present the results of the workshop to the stakeholder
- (vii) prepare a final report to the RAC and the European Commission

Time schedule of Workshop

day 1	day 2	day 3	day 4	day 5
workshop scientist			stake holder consultation	workshop scientist

The costs involved are estimated to be in the order of 70.000 Euro's. The break down of the costs are given in Table 1

Adriaan Rijnsdorp
IMARES (formerly RIVO)
IJmuiden, 1/6/2006

