

North East Regional Inshore Fisheries Forum
Via Teams
Thursday 29th April 2021
Action Points

1. Minutes from the last NE RIFF meeting and matters arising

Proposed and Seconded

2. Discussion with MI re 2021 Razor Biomass survey

The Marine institute joined the meeting and gave an overview of the results of the 2020 NIS biomass survey. Members engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the methods used to estimate the biomass, their level of accuracy, how the survey vessel were selected and how the figure for efficiency of the fishing equipment was ascertained. As the survey results are given as the reason for introducing a TAC in the NIS, members asked that they be kept in the loop at all stages of preparing the 2021 biomass survey.

The members then asked what the MI's position on the introduction of the TAC levels suggested in the 2020 report. The MI stated that it was their job to give the Minister the best scientific data and suggestions of measures based upon that. However, it was stated that the MI data were only one component of decision making and that should alternative proposals come directly from industry, these would be taken into account in any final decision regarding management measures. It was pointed out that any proposal from industry would be assessed by the Inshore Management Group and should contain realistic measures based upon the stock situation as it currently stands.

The members thanked the representative of the MI who then left the meeting.

The members then discussed how to proceed. It was decided that, due to the serious nature of the changes proposed, that the views of all active Razor fishers in the NIS should be sought via electronic survey before any proposal should be considered.

Action Point: Secretariat to draft a survey questionnaire and circulate to members for comment within one week. A brief statement on this meeting to be distributed to all active razor fishers via WhatsApp within 24 hours informing them of the proposed survey.



3. Update on Draft Natura Fisheries Plan progress

It was reported to members that the draft plan had been submitted to the Department and that it was currently going through the appropriate assessment process before going to public consultation.

Action point: None

4. Items arising from NIFF Meeting 14/04/2021

- i. **ORE Engagement policy**
Passed with no comments
- ii. **Inshore Management Group observations on the SW RIFF proposal supported by the NIFF on lobster v-notching**
Noted
- iii. **Revised proposal on “Supporting responsible fishing and handling of brown crab**
Seeking input from potting fishers in Northeast and none present in meeting
- iv. **NIFA/SW RIFF proposal on increasing the minimum mesh size for gill netters targeting HAKE in the BSA to 120mm**
Supported with no comment
- v. **Revised draft protocols for opening a new fishery for bivalve**
Supported with no comments

Action Point: Forward to NIFF Secretariat

5. NERIFF communication to industry (Discussion topic)

An update was given on the development of the Razor fisher WhatsApp group and the continuing efforts to develop channels for direct communication to all fishers in the NERIFF area.

Action point: Further updates to be provided when available.