

Brown Crab Working Group

Day 1 Recap



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Có-mhainithe ag an
Aontas Eorpach
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- Probably 4 Irish stocks – Malin shelf, SW, SE & Celtic Sea, N Irish Sea;
- Genetically single stock, high connectivity;
- Implications for management measures – proportion inside 12nm and outside;
- Data from logbooks >10m, sales notes, SVP;
- Landings peak 2004, slow decline accelerated from 2015;
- LPUE declines of 50% or more in Malin, SW and SE;
- Also data from observer sampling, skipper sampling, port sampling.

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- Assessment difficult, trends apparent in data;
- Surplus Production model shows F above F_{msy} and SSB below B_{msy} ;
- If F remains at current levels SSB will continue to decline;
- Probably growth overfishing;
- Concern over recruitment, $DPUE$ declining;
- Clear decline has accelerated since 2015
- Confident assessment is robust

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- Other European stocks:
 - Scotland all areas bar one declining landings and survey indices
 - England & Wales similar with exception of central and southern North Sea
 - Jersey & Isle of Man declining landings and indices
 - France sharp decrease in LPUE for western channel viviers since 2015, fishery ceased, landings also declining across fisheries
 - Norway stable
 - Sweden stable and increasing landings, LPUE increasing
- Need more Data!

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- 700 vessels landing crab, 220 >5t, 400 >1t
- Crab catch can be the difference in profitability
- Well spread around coast, hotspots in NW, SW & SE
- Inshore Census – really interesting data set
 - 760 returns <18m , 358 targeted crab – 47%, median age 50 yrs
 - Brown crab lobster most common catch
 - 1400 pots/vessel 10-12m
- Heavy dependence on brown crab across inshore vessel sizes
- Decline in live crab exports since 2029 despite small COVID recovery – reasons myriad – marketing, convenience?

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- Need future focus on marketing
- NW Crab survey 2020
 - Declines observed in all data sets 2016-2017
 - 130 vessels 1997, 60 in 2020, pots from 30,000 to 90,000 in 2020
 - Negative sentiment from skippers matched observed decline
 - Profitability badly impacted

