

# Brown Crab Working Group Feedback



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Có-mhainithe ag an  
Aontas Eorpach  
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European Union



# BCWG Feedback

- Responses to 5 questions on brown crab stocks;
- Do you agree that the brown crab stock has declined since 2015?
- Does you agree that there is a need for new management measures to protect the stock
- Should the brown crab working group develop a fishery management plan for the Irish crab stocks?
- Do you agree with the suggested Irish brown crab stock boundaries on the map?
- If you believe they are not correct what changes would you make?

# BCWG Feedback

- Responses to 8 questions on potential management options;
  - What is your preferred approach to managing the Irish crab stock? Technical measures, restrictions on the amount you can fish or restrictions on the amount you can catch or a combination of these?
  - Would you support the introduction of managed access to the crab fishery?
  - If you believe additional management measures are needed, which approach do you prefer - restrictions on the amount you can fish (Input controls i.e. pot limits, closures etc) or restrictions on the amount you can catch (Output controls i.e. TAC)?
  - If you would support restrictions on the amount you can fish, which specific measures do you believe would work best and why? If you believe some measures will not work state why.
  - If you would support restrictions on the amount you can catch, which specific measures do you believe would work best and why? If you believe some measures will not work state why.
  - Which technical measures, if any, would you introduce?
  - Which secondary support measures should be prioritised?
  - Should the Brown Crab Working Group continue its work in order to better manage the brown crab stock?

# Brown Crab Stock Questions

## Brown Crab stock Decline?

- Majority of those that responded (8/9) agreed stocks had declined;
- One respondent said we need more data;

## Need new management measures?

- Majority (7/9) agreed more measures required
- Also stressed need find ways to enforce existing measures more effectively
- One respondent said more data needed, one disagreed

# Brown Crab Stock Questions

BCWG needs to develop management plan?

- Most (5/9) supported this, others (3/9) were more conditional (data, consultation, membership), one disagreed;

Proposed stock boundaries appropriate?

- Majority (5/8) agreed with proposed stocks, others felt they should reflect RIFF boundaries or there was inadequate data. One disagreed.

If stock boundaries not correct how should they be changed?

- Only one respondent who felt defining stocks was inappropriate given the limitations of the data

# Brown Crab Management Measures

## Technical/Input/Output Controls to Manage Crab Stock

- Majority (7/9) supported combination of existing, technical and input controls. One felt it was too early to discuss potential measures, the other felt data was insufficient;

## Managed Access?

- Mixed opinions ranging from support to opposition. Those in support were mainly conditional on appropriate model, 3/9 were against

## Restrictions on amount you can fish?

- Small majority in favour, mainly suggesting pot limits. Others opposed, one citing impossibility of implementing such controls

# Brown Crab Management Measures

Restrictions on amount you can catch

- Majority opposed to introduction of TAC;

Which Technical Measures?

- 150mm MCRS, ban on berried females most popular. Some also suggested ban on soft crab, no use as bait, no clawing, use of escape gaps, seasonal closure

# Brown Crab Technical Measures

## Increase MCRS

- All respondents support increase

## Ban on landing berried crab

- All respondents in support, one suggested support using 'v-notching' scheme

## Restrict clawing

- Generally supported, issues with the detail

## Restrict landing of soft crab

- Generally supported in principle however issues with definition



# Brown Crab Technical Measures

## Escape Gaps

- Broadly in favour if can be done without losses of other target species, details important;

## Seasonal closures

- Very varied responses, some when not fishing, some suggest tie up scheme, need to be staggered

# Brown Crab Working Group

## Secondary Support Measures

- Improved marketing of crab
- Support processors getting catch from smaller ports
- Training on landing quality product
- Access to alternative fisheries
- Financial supports

## Should BCWG continue work?

- All support continuation in some form, particularly to monitor impact of any management changes;

