**The North Sea Advisory Council**

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**Draft Report of the NSAC Demersal Working Group**

**Park Hotel Den Haag**

**Molenstraat 53**

**2513 B J Den Haag**

**Netherlands**  
**19th April 2018, 10.30-15.30hrs**

**Rapporteur: Tony Hawkins Draft (2)**

**1 Welcome & Introductions**

1.1 Participants were welcomed to the Demersal WG Meeting by the Chairman Barrie Deas. A particular welcome was extended to Ian Kinsey of the Norwegian Fishermen, Line Groth Rasmussen of DG Mare, Linda Plantof of the North Sea Foundation, and Frederieke Vlek from Our Fish. Apologies had been received from Carolyn Gamblin, Geert Meun, Ned Clark, Kenn Skau Fischer, and Jan Birger Jorgensen.

1.2 The agenda for the meeting was adopted, with no new items included.

**2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

2.1 The draft report of the last meeting, held in London on the 7th February 2018 had been circulated. It was approved as a correct record without any further changes.

**3 Matters Arising/Action Points from the Last Meeting**

3.1 The Secretary Lorna Duguid went through the Action Points:

1. The report of the previous meeting in Brussels had been approved with a small number of amendments and the updated version was now on the website.
2. The NSAC Workshop on saithe had taken place in Hamburg on the 29th March 2018. Feedback from the workshop was on the agenda. A report on the Workshop was available but had been issued at short notice.
3. The ICES benchmark meeting on seabass had taken place in February. The advice had not yet been published. The management of sea bass was on the agenda for today’s meeting
4. Participants from the NSAC, including Barrie Deas, Peter Breckling and Henrik Semmler had attended the meeting of the Scheveningen Technical Group held in Hamburg on the 21st February 2018. The deadline for the Joint Recommendation had been extended. An update on the meeting was included in the agenda for today’s meeting.
5. The NSAC had agreed in November that meetings were needed with ICES scientists to discuss aspects of fisheries science. However, before such a meeting is held we need to agree the purpose of the meeting, and who to invite. The meeting needs to be targeted at particular issues.
6. The NSAC intends to produce a document outlining what the setting of TACs should achieve and what conditions should apply if TACs were to be removed. A draft had been produced by Irene Kingma and was on the agenda for today’s meeting.
7. The NSAC will continue to monitor progress with the North Sea MAP, and this topic was included in the agenda for today’s meeting.
8. No further information on the proposal for a new Control Regulation had yet come forward from the Commission. We would be discussing this later today.
9. Spatial aspects of fishing had been discussed at the Ecosystem Working Group on the 22nd February and actions on this were ongoing.
10. A draft letter had been prepared by the NSAC for submission to the Commission, dealing with advice on Technical Measures. It had been discussed at the ExCom Meeting in March but had not been approved and the draft had been withdrawn. The topic will be discussed at the next ExCom Meeting.
11. NSAC Members had been invited to submit suggestions to the Secretariat for any new advice topics to be addressed. This is ongoing.
12. The Scheveningen Technical Group had been contacted and asked if they could meet in Gothenburg at the time of the ExCom Meeting in March. However, they had not made the requested changes to their meeting location.

3.2 Barrie Deas added that the issue of meetings with ICES scientists to discuss aspects of fisheries science should be placed on the agenda of the next ExCom Meeting.

**4 Landing Obligation**

4.1 Barrie pointed out that work was continuing on the Landing Obligation. A Focus Group Meeting had been held in London on the 27th March to prepare further advice. It was thought that it made sense to phase future work:

1. Advice on the Joint Recommendation (JR) (by end of April)
2. Issues relating to the LO for the December Council (advice by June)
3. Residual issues that may require co-decision, or which cannot be dealt with in the JR advice, or in the advice for the December Council (to be completed in the second half of the year).

4.2 It had not been possible to fully complete advice on the JR in time for the meeting of the Scheveningen Technical Group in Hamburg on the 11th April. Kenn, Jenni and Barrie had attended that meeting and were able to present a clear idea of where we had got to, and where we had already reached a consensus. The Group had been pleased to accept our comments. Lorna had provided a helpful summary sheet of the advice for those Members attending the Hamburg meeting. However, it was now time to develop the advice further.

4.3 At Hamburg we were promised a draft JR, which had subsequently been sent to us, so that we were now able to take that into account when preparing our advice. However, there was also more to do today. The JR on its own is not going to resolve the problems with chokes in the North Sea demersal fisheries. The Commission has asked Member States to provide, along with the JR, some notes on where chokes will occur and what the solutions might be. So, today we needed first to develop further our advice on the JR. We might then turn to the next stage of our work on the steps that Member States might take at the December Council to mitigate chokes by utilising the provisions of the TACs and Quotas Regulation. A Focus Group would take place in Den Haag the following day to draft some advice for the December Council but would also discuss the advice on the JR. Comments were now invited on the draft JR advice, given in paper 4.1, including the additional comments already received and included in the draft advice. The advice on the JR was needed by the Scheveningen Group by the 26th April.

4.4 An intense and lengthy discussion of the details of the draft advice on the JR then followed. A number of key issues were raised, and different members were asked to redraft sections of the advice following the discussion, to allow the document to be revised at tomorrow’s meeting. There was some consensus on the draft but there were still some outstanding issues. The key issues that were raised in the subsequent discussion included:

We should point out that chokes and some other issues would not be resolved by the draft JR. The Commission would like advice on choke stocks from Member State Regional Groups and from the Advisory Councils. Some choke analysis had already taken place. However, there was still some uncertainty about the way that chokes had been categorised. Additional text would be added to our draft advice and we would flag up where we thought chokes would arise, but with due caveats. Jenni Grossman had produced an overview of the the data underpinning the JR that might be used at tomorrow’s Focus Group. Further analysis of chokes was still taking place. We could identify and list the issues we saw as problems with the JR and could seek a response from the Scheveningen Group.

There were some elements that were outside the scope of our initial draft advice that needed to be dealt with. There was an issue over changes to the quotas. It had been suggested that Relative Stability should not be undermined. Quota allocations should not be changed. Voluntary quota swapping might resolve some problems, but there was often no currency for exchanging quotas. The draft text on this issue would need to be revised.

Additional comments on selectivity, especially for Cod, would be added to the draft. Much new work on selectivity was being carried out and fishers are doing their best to ensure that the LO works for them. The NSAC could reference appropriate documents, which were needed in order to reach consensus on some issues. However, much of the work being carried out had not yet been published or reported upon. It was also recognised that, because of the mixed nature of fisheries, selectivity improvements would not solve all of the choke problems. There were economic as well as technical problems associated with improving selectivity. The Commission was especially interested in knowing where selectivity poses problems. The comments made by the Other Interest Groups would be addressed in the document where possible.

The text on Cod in the Kattegat needed to be revised to reflect Swedish as well as Danish interests.

Problems with the categorisation of chokes were evident also where there was TAC transferability between areas. The document would emphasise this point and would attempt to argue the basis for categorising a stock. The TAC deficit is especially difficult to deal with in the North Sea. It would be pointed out that categorisation of a stock as a choke may well be different between areas.

The text on ICES areas relating to the Ling would be revised. Further changes would also be made to the rest of the text concerning Ling.

The text on Plaice would be revised to reflect a number of points made during the discussion.

The text on Saithe would also be revised to reflect the points made during the discussion. In particular, the Conclusions would be revised.

Although there is currently no TAC set for the Seabass, it is currently under discussion. The issue of what happened to Seabass that were retained and landed was discussed. All of them have to be landed - but not used for human consumption. All Seabass measures may have to be overhauled to deal with the LO. Solutions are not fully dealt with by the JR, and some the issues may have to be dealt with at the autumn Council Meeting.

Changes to the text on Skates and Rays were discussed and amendments would be made.

With respect to Whiting, a number of points were raised. The text in relation to De Minimis provisions would be revised.

4.5 Barrie concluded that the text of the draft advice would now be revised and the new version discussed at tomorrow’s Focus Group Meeting. A number of significant points had been made during the discussion that would be addressed. Any amendments to the text should be sent to Lorna today. Erin Priddle added that specific references would be needed in a number of cases. Barrie suggested that that the Annexes might be covered by a general statement at the beginning of the advice document. Once our advice was completed we might also need to amend the text of the Annexes. Michael Park said that there was a need to define the term “donor stock”. Line Groth Rasmussen from the Commission pointed out that, in relation to the Inter Species Flexibility tool, that the regional groups had discussed criteria for its application, however in the end it was up to Member States to decide whether to use the 9 % ISF. There was no legal requirement that those stocks should remain within safe biological limits, following the use of the 9 %.

**5 Skate and Ray LO Exemption**

5.1 Irene Kingma gave a slide presentation on the Future for North Sea Skates. Currently Skates and Rays are managed through a group TAC, with some species on the prohibited list of the TAC & quota regulation. These are not efficient management tools. The Dutch Government has proposed a temporary high survival exemption under the Landing Obligation for Skates and Rays in the North Sea, and is funding work on this. The UK was adopting a similar approach for Skates and Rays in North Western Waters.

5.2 There was potential for Skates and Rays to become choke species under the LO. The TAC is restrictive and these fishes are part of the by-catch in almost all North Sea fisheries. Many fishers have indicated that Skates and Rays will present a mayor challenges from January 1st, 2019. Management options are being explored by STECF. Selectivity is an option in some fisheries, but needs further work. Quite high survival has been proven for a few species in some fisheries. The correct use of the survival exemption can lead to filling in the data gaps, leading to long term management solutions.

5.3 To get high survival exemption many questions need answering:

* Which métiers / species would need to be covered?
* Are they comparable with those that have been studied?
* Can we predict what survival will be for unstudied species?

To get high survival exemption some conditions need fulfilling

* Filling in the (data) gaps,
* Technical measures,
* Understanding the need to manage stocks of rays and skates,
* Optimizing the survivability of the species,
* Tailored monitoring & control.

5.5 A two track approach may need to be adopted. The first is filling in the data gaps. Is it possible to fill the gaps using expert opinion? The biology of most species is quite well understood. The second track is optimising survival. Survival in some gears has been well documented for a few species. There is a good understanding of what measures could help to increase survival. There is still a lot of unused tagging data that can be analyzed and used. There is a need to work with fishers on filling the gaps and letting them become a part of the management solution. Optimising survival requires prompt release, handling fish with care and keeping them wet. Improving selectivity might involve the use of deterrents (light/necro/magnets), raised fishing lines, and escape panels or grids. Avoidance might involve avoiding spawning areas, real time communication between vessels, and moving-on rules. A range of measures may need to be adopted.

5.6 To reach a solution for the 1st January 2019, when the LO is fully implemented, there is a need for a preliminary high survival exemption for all species under the group TACs – with conditions set out on research and technical measures. A workplan for research is required in the coming years to fill data gaps, including data coordination. There is also a need to work with stakeholders on possible measures and their merits. There is now clearly a need for Member States and/or the Commission to organise the next steps that are needed should this proposal be taken up.

5.7 Michael Andersen thought that Irene’s approach was very constructive. Barrie thanked Irene for her presentation. It would help us in preparing our advice and would also be useful to the Scheveningen Group.

**6 TACs**

6.1 A workshop had been held on TACs between the NSAC and ICES at Copenhagen in November. There had been a perennial inability on the part of the NSAC to agree advice on TAC levels, but we could perhaps agree some advice on the principles that should be taken into account when setting TACs, that might be useful to the December Council. Those principles included:

* The rationale for setting TACs
* Target species only
* Treatment of bycatch
* Use of MSY ranges
* Changes to accommodate the LO
* Mixed fisheries issues
* Eco-system trade-offs

It had been agreed that Irene Kingma would start this process by drafting a short paper on what the setting of TACs should achieve and what conditions needed to be met for TAC removal to be considered for any stock. Irene’s paper (6.1) had been circulated to all Members for comments. This was only the start of the process, however, and we may need to discuss this topic at future meetings.

6.2 Irene introduced her paper and remarked that several people had collaborated in producing it. TAC removal was discussed, together with alternative measures. The LO advice paper would benefit from advice on TACs. Barrie Deas sought comments on the paper from Members. Michael Andersen said that he did not agree with all of it. There were some points that needed to be corrected. There is a particular need to reconsider why TACs are set, as in some areas (like the Mediterranean) TACs are not set. Michael Park added that there was no point in setting MSY targets unless stocks were fully exploited. Barrie thought that the paper was a good start and it would inform the next stage of the debate. Any comments on the text should be sent to Lorna.

6.3 Line Groth Rasmussen remarked that the Commission was looking at what alternative solutions could be found. TACs are good conservation tools but the Commission was discussing with ICES whether all the TACs were needed. Barrie concluded that TAC issues were pertinent to the chokes issue, and some of the points made in the paper should be taken into account at tomorrow’s meeting. Work would continue on the TAC document during this year.

**7 Norway Update**

7.1 Ian Kinsey from Norway thanked the NSAC for inviting him to this meeting. Lots of things were happening in Norway. A new quota system was in consultation which was aimed at making things easier for fishers and fishery managers. There was also an ongoing consultation about consolidation of the small boat (˂11mtr) group. Winter fishing for Cod had been good. Work had been done on Cod spawning and there had been a record number of eggs this year, which would be good for the future. There had recently been discussion with the oil industry over the conduct of seismic surveys, which have adverse effects upon Mackerel and other fisheries.

7.2 The TAC for North Sea Shrimp had been cut on the basis of discards. Fishers did not understand this as they have recently improved selectivity and the timing of the fishery. A working group had been set up with scientists to look into this issue. There were also problems with the management of the fisheries for autumn-spawning Herring, Haddock and Saithe. Norway wished to suggest alternatives to the current system of management, and was seeking a meeting with the EU to discuss this.

7.3 With BREXIT there would be a need to establish an international group of scientists to look into the zonal attachment of stocks. There had been some discarding this winter because of the amounts of fish being caught. The Norwegian Directors of Fisheries were trying to investigate controls to deal with this. There was a particular dilemma with respect to Hake. Changes in management are needed for North Sea Hake. There are now data showing that Hake spawn in the North Sea, Kattegat and on the East Coast of Norway.

7.4 Ian was asked about discarding by small boats. Ian replied that there were lots of small vessels in Norway, but discarding was an isolated event. Large mesh gill nets were used in many small boat fisheries and the problem was not discarding but possible injuries to larger fish. Management of mixed fisheries was also a problem, with lots of splitting of quotas. Cod, Haddock and Saithe were being caught in a fishery that was focussed upon Cod. Norway was not always allocated sufficient quota. More clarity was needed on the zonal attachment of fish stocks, as fish swim about quite a lot. Fishing was now seen as a financial opportunity in Norway, and on the whole the industry was doing well. There was a strong drive to invest in fishing vessels.

7.5 Barrie thanked Ian for attending the meeting and for updating us on Norwegian fisheries.

**8 Saithe Workshop Feedback**

8.1 The NSAC Saithe Workshop had taken place in Hamburg on the 29th March 2018. The report on the workshop was now available online. Michael Park summarised the workshop.

8.2 There were some weaknesses in the assessments of saithe, especially for those caught in mixed rather than targeted fisheries, leading to many uncertainties about the saithe stocks. There was a mixing of populations which added uncertainly to the assessment. Also, lots of juvenile saithe were found in inshore waters, which also leads to uncertainty in the assessments. The bycatches in targeted French and German fisheries had been discussed, as well as the discarding taking place in UK fisheries for other species. Differences between the targeted and bycatch fisheries had created problems. There had been consideration at the workshop of what is being done to improve selectivity. Saithe will be included in the LO from January 2019. One major issue for saithe, however, is the lack of information on how big the discards are in different fisheries. The Workshop had discussed the range of measures that could be applied to avoid a choke situation, and it was noted that Shetland College had completed a research project on this, and a UK paper on interspecies flexibility had also been produced.

8.3 It was agreed that the Workshop had proved to be highly interesting. There had been useful discussions between fishers and scientists. The major issue was to determine how big the discards of saithe were in the different fisheries, so that the importance of saithe as a choke species could be evaluated, and measures to reduce discards developed.

**9 Control and Enforcement**

9.1 Kenn Skau Fischer, who was to introduce this topic, was unfortunately not able to attend the meeting. Barrie Deas remarked that there was really nothing new that could be said about control and enforcement at this stage. We are still awaiting the proposal from the Commission for a revision of the Control Regulation. It may be published at the end of May, but that could easily be delayed. Line Groth Rasmussen remarked that the Commission was still working on the proposal.

9.2 Barrie asked Line about the consultation paper issued by the Commission on SCIPS. The aim of the consultation is to collect the views and opinions of Advisory Councils in order to inform the proposal of the Commission to establish Specific Control and Inspection Programmes (SCIPs) for fisheries, including demersal fisheries in the North Sea. SCIPs are an instrument defined by the Control Regulation, which sets objectives, priorities, procedures and benchmarks for inspection activities in priority fisheries. Line remarked that a new plan of SCIPs will need to be in place by January 2019, also to allow for new Joint Deployment Plans from EFCA. There is a need for better targeting of fisheries by that time. The new Control Regulation might not be in place for a few years, but the gap needs to be closed, also in relation to the LO. SCIPs will be used to close that gap. Discussions are still under way with Member States in relation to the proposal for a new Control Regulation.

9.3 Barrie thought that we needed to establish a Focus Group to work on Control issues. The SCIPs consultation states that closed-circuit television (CCTV) has been identified as the only effective control tool to ensure control and enforcement of the LO at sea and to provide a deterrent to illegal discarding. However, in the absence of common legislation, Member States were unwilling to unilaterally apply this control tools to their vessels. Barrie thought that we needed to resolve choke issues before considering CCTV as a control measure. However, we did need to develop advice on the new control arrangements. Michael Andersen said that we needed to talk about the use of CCTV. The Commission must get a new set of technical rules through before CCTV measures were adopted. Peter Olsson remarked that fishers were trying to avoid discarding, and they were achieving a great deal in terms of improving selectivity. However, If CCTV is introduced by the Commission, then fishers will be very upset. He later added that cameras were now used everywhere but nobody wanted them on their boats. Fish stocks were already going in the right direction.

9.4 Barrie said that Kenn would chair the NSAC Focus Group on control issues and would arrange the next meeting to discuss these issues. Advisory Councils had to reply to the proposal of the Commission for implementing SCIPs by 30th June 2018 at the latest. However, it may be difficult to reach a consensus on the advice. Irene Kingma thought that we should consider where we could reach agreement. We do need to try to produce some agreed advice. Michael Park was concerned that there was already conflict between the industry and the NGOs on these issues. Pim Visser pointed out that the SCIPs paper was specifically an Advisory Council consultation, and it is essentially a box-ticking exercise, with a series of specific questions to be answered. We should try to come up with some answers to these questions, as our voice needed to be heard. Erin Priddle agreed, this was an important topic and we needed to work together on this.

9.5 Ian Kinsey thought that the NSAC needed to turn this proposal around. The primary function of cameras should be to collect wider data. Some fishers might volunteer to collaborate on data collection. Any plan to use cameras should come from the industry. Michael Park agreed. Cameras were needed to collect data, rather than to implement a regulation. What is currently being proposed is unfair. Michael Andersen added that fishers did not want cameras to secure punishment. Barrie thought that regulations should provide a pathway leading to compliance. He went on to say that we would provide the Commission with advice and would answer their questions, taking account of all views in the room. Ticking boxes was not really the way to respond. Lorna reminded Members that the ExCom is meeting on the 19-20th June, and we would need to draft our response by the end of May, so that it could go out for comment before it was approved by the ExCom. It was agreed that Kenn, Barrie and a volunteer from the NGOs would work on a draft response, adhering to the timing that Lorna had suggested.

**10 NS Multi Annual Plan Update**

10.1 Pim Visser reported that the MAP had now been approved. We were now awaiting the implementation plans. Line Groth Rasmussen added that the EP was expected to vote on the final compromise (take it or leave it) in May, where after the Council would vote. The regulation was expected to be in place by the summer. .

**11 Technical Conservation Regulation Update**

11.1 Michael Park reported that a trialogue on the Regulation was due to take place in April. Compromises would probably be reached. Line Groth Rasmussen added that there was still hope for an agreed, meaningful outcome. The focus was on ensuring that whatever flexibility and simplification is introduced does not weaken existing conditions. It was important that quantitative targets allowed to monitor progress. The Commission would work with Council and Parliament to find alternatives to their divergent views . Input from the Advisory Council would be useful and could contribute to progress. Barrie pointed out that advice from the NSAC on technical measures had been discussed at the ExCom Meeting in March but had not been approved and the draft had been withdrawn. The topic will be discussed at the next ExCom Meeting.

**12 Review of NSAC Advice Forward Plan**

12.1 Lorna pointed out that a document had been circulated setting out a timetable for the preparation of NSAC advice. If anyone had any further suggestions, they should forward them to her.

**13 Any Other Business**

13.1 Barrie raised the issue of Seabass conservation measures in the context of the LO. There needed to be an overhaul of the EU’s conservation strategy, including the current catch limit approach to reducing fishing mortality, to make it compatible with the LO. This overhaul would be required at the December Council at the latest, as the LO will apply to Seabass from the 1st January 2019. We needed to set up a Focus Group on Seabass in the second half of this year, once the advice from ICES was made available in June, including the outcome of the ICES benchmark exercise. Ideally we should send advice before the December Council. We would look into the possibility of holding a Focus Group Meeting in September/October. Ian Kinsey thought that the suggestions for improving selectivity included in Irene’s presentation on Skates and Rays might also be applicable to Seabass.

13.2 Barrie raised the issue of advice on European Eels. At the December Council Meeting it was decided that efforts would be stepped up to protect eel stocks. There is to be an evaluation of the Eel Regulation. Those with an interest in eel stocks need to be aware that there is currently an open consultation. Members can make their own responses to this consultation. Is there a need for a NSAC response? If the advisory council has to work on this, it will need to hold a specific meeting.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

15.1 The next meeting of the Demersal Working Group will take place on the 11th July at the Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh.

**16. Action Points**

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| **Actions** | **Responsible** |
| 1. The report of the last meeting, held in London on the 7th February 2018, was approved without any further changes. It is available on the website. (2.1). | Secretariat |
| 1. The issue of whether there should be meetings with ICES scientists to discuss aspects of fisheries science will be placed on the agenda of the next ExCom Meeting. (3.2). | Secretariat  Members |
| 1. Future work on the Landing Obligation will involve three phases: 2. Advice on the Joint Recommendation (JR) (by end of April) 3. Issues relating to the LO for the December Council (advice by June) 4. Residual issues that may require co-decision, or which cannot be dealt with in the JR advice, or in the advice for the December Council (to be completed in the second half of the year). (4.1) | Secretariat  Members |
| 1. Advice on the JR will be needed by the 26th April, and the text will be finalised at the LO Focus Group meeting on the 20th April. Any comments on the existing draft will be required before this meeting (4.3). | Members  Secretariat |
| 1. The presentation by Irene Kingma on Skates and Rays will be used to formulate advice on the LO and will also be useful to the Scheveningen Group (section 5). | Barrie Deas  Secretariat |
| 1. Members should send comments on the TAC paper to the Secretariat. Points made in the paper by Irene Kingma on TACs will be taken into account in formulating advice on the LO. Work will continue to develop advice on TACs. (6.2, 6.3). | All Members  Secretariat |
| 1. A Focus Group will be established to work on Control issues, to be chaired by Kenn Skau Fischer, who will arrange the next meeting. (9.4). | Kenn Skau Fischer  Secretariat |
| 1. Kenn Skau Fischer, Barrie Deas, and a volunteer from the OIGs will draft a response to the Commissions consultation paper on SCIPs. The response will need to be approved at the ExCom meeting on the 19-20th June, and will need to be submitted to Members by the end of May. (9.5). | Kenn Skau Fischer  Barrie Deas  OIG Members  Secretariat |
| 1. The possibility that advice will be prepared on Technical Measures will be discussed at the next ExCom Meeting on the 19-20th June. (11.1). | Secretariat  Members |
| 1. A document has been circulated setting out a timetable for the preparation of NSAC advice. If Members have any further suggestions, they should forward them to the Secretariat. (12.1). | Members  Secretariat |
| 1. A Focus Group Meeting on Seabass will be held in September/October once the advice from ICES is made available in June. Ideally, NSAC advice will be submitted to the December Council. (13.1). | Barrie Deas  Secretariat |
| 1. Those Members with an interest in Eel stocks should be aware that there is currently an open consultation by the Commission on changes to the Eel Regulation. Members can make their own responses to this consultation. The NSAC may need to hold a specific meeting to discuss Eels. (13.2). | Members  Secretariat |
| 1. The next meeting of the Demersal Working Group will take place on the 11th July at the Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh. (13.1). | Secretariat  Members |

**16 Attendance**

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| **Family Name** | **Given Name** | **Organisation** |
| Andersen | Michael | Danish Fishermens’ PO |
| Berends | Derk Jan | Nederlandse Vissersbond |
| Birnie | Anne | NESFO |
| Brouckaert | Emiel | Rederscentrale |
| Coull | Kenney | SWFPA/SFF |
| Deas | Barrie | NFFO |
| Duguid | Lorna | NSAC Secretariat |
| Grossmann | Jenni | ClientEarth |
| Groth Rasmussen | Line | DG Mare |
| Hawkins | Tony | NSAC Secretariat |
| Kingma | Irene | Dutch Elasmobranch Society |
| Kinsey | Ian | Norwegian Fishermen’s Association |
| Kruse | Thomas | DFPO |
| Lindberg | Fredrik | Swedish Fishermens’ PO |
| Park | Michael | SFF |
| Plantof | Linda | North Sea Foundation |
| Priddle | Erin | EDF |
| Ronelov Olsson | Peter | Swedish Fishermen’s PO |
| Le Semmler | Henrike | Oceana |
| Van Tuinen | Durk | Nederlandse Vissersbond |
| Visser | Pim | VisNed |
| Vlek | Frederieke | Our Fish |
| McDonald | Paul | SFO |