Minutes of Irish Saithe & Haddock FIPs Meeting

Location: Virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams

Date: 26th November 2020

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**Meeting Minutes and summary of Actions**:

Mike Fitzpatrick of Verifact updated the group and outlined the documentation for registration of both FIPs which have been submitted to Fishery Progress.

For both Saithe and Haddock Mike Fitzpatrick of Verifact presented summaries of the MSC pre-assessment reports, the current status of the stocks and the workplans (some of the slides from the presentation are included below for information).

**Issues arising:**

1. **Rockall Haddock MSC.**  
   The issue was raised about whether it could be feasible to achieve MSC certification for Rockall Haddock ( 6b). The point was made that while the stock currently has good biological status there may be a barrier to certification due to autonomous quota setting for the fishery. Brexit uncertainty is further complicating the management context for the fishery.

**Action:** Verifact will write a short description of the issues with 6b Haddock which will be circulated to FIP members for further discussion.

1. **Landing Obligation and Sustainability Assessments.**  
   The issue of potential noncompliance with the Landing Obligation was mentioned in the pre-assessment reports for both species and the risks this issue posed to sustainability certification for the fisheries were discussed. It was agreed that there was a necessity to communicate this clearly to the fleet. The FIPS will work more closely with BIM staff who are working on the issue and on gear trials and to encourage increased uptake of TCMs.

**Action:** The FIPs, through Verifact, will work with BIM’s Conservation team and will also develop an industry engagement strategy with the assistance of BIM staff.

1. **Self-sampling programs and Observer coverage.**  
   COVID has put extra pressure on observer and sampling programmes with an associated risk to the quality of stock assessments for many fish stocks. The FIPs will continue to work and meet with the Marine Institute fishery liaison team leader in order to improve participation in the MI’s existing self-sampling program. The FIP will produce clear guidance for fishers which will cover all elements where vessels can contribute data necessary to the achievement of FIP workplan actions.

**Action:** Verifact to continue meeting with MI fishery liaison team leader and with BIM staff and to develop a FIP self-sampling guidelines.

1. **Engagement with fishermen.**

All of the Irish FIPs place a strong emphasis on vessel membership and participation in FIP activities. In order to maintain this emphasis and where necessary improve on it two actions were agreed.

**Action:** Verifact plan to run a number of port workshops with the catching sector directly as early as Covid restrictions will permit in 2021. The emphasis will be on activities that are the responsibility of the vessels and their crew across all FIPS such as addressing key data gaps, documenting unwanted catches etc. BIM will work closely with Verifact to set up the workshops and develop targeted communications for fleet segments.

**Action:** A register of who is in each FIP will continue to be maintained by Verifact. Sales agents including co-ops will be asked to assist with increasing FIP membership among fishing vessels. Many fishermen will be members of more than 1 FIP and thus the workshops need to be streamlined with clear guidelines for requirements across FIPs.























