



MINUTES

37th Meeting of LDAC Working Group 2 North Atlantic and Pacific RFMOs and Access Arrangements

**Wednesday, 15 October 2025 – 09:30-13:00h CET / GMT+1
Venue: NH Brussels Carrefour de l'Europe, Brussels**

Chair: Emil Remisz / Vice Chair: Tim Heddema

1. Welcome by the Chair.

The WG2 Chair, Mr. Emil Remisz, welcomed members, observers from Member States, and representatives from the European Commission to the meeting. He thanked participants for their attendance and highlighted the importance of continued dialogue between stakeholders and the Commission on issues related to the North Atlantic and Pacific RFMOs and bilateral fisheries relations. [The full list of participants is included in Annex I.](#)

2. Approval of the Minutes from previous Meeting (Brussels, 13 March 25).

The Chair informed members that the draft minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance and uploaded on the LDAC website.

DECISION: The minutes were approved without comments or amendments.

3. Approval of the Agenda.

The Chair invited members to comment on the proposed agenda.

DECISION: The agenda was adopted without modifications.

4. North West Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO).

The lead negotiator on NAFO, Mr. Stijn Billiet and DG MARE B2 representatives provided a briefing on the outcomes of the latest NAFO Annual Meeting and the relevance of these decisions for the EU fleet. Key elements included progress in stock management and scientific advice as well as continued work towards integrating ecosystem-based approaches into NAFO management frameworks.



ACTION: The LDAC Secretariat informed members that the next WG2 meeting (March 2026) will include a presentation by IEO-CSIC on NAFO work regarding the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management.

5. North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC).

Mr. Xosé Tubío (DG MARE lead negotiator) presented an update on preparations for the NEAFC Annual Meeting scheduled to take place in London in November 2025.

Key elements highlighted included governance issues, discussions on transparency and observer participation, and the relaunch of the NEAFC performance review process. Russia has resumed participation in NEAFC processes after paying its financial contributions and recover its suspended voting rights.

Scientific discussions within PECMAS continue on pelagic stocks such as mackerel, blue whiting and Atlanto-Scandian herring. Coastal States consultations will take place ahead of the Annual Meeting.

Members also discussed concerns regarding the lack of scientific data transmission by Russia to ICES and the implications this may have for stock assessments and management decisions.

Control and compliance issues were also discussed, including unmonitored transshipment activities involving Russian vessels and delays in the adoption of compliance reports for recent years.

ACTION: The LDAC draft advice on NEAFC is deemed as agreed at WG2 level and will be circulated for approval and submitted to the Executive Committee.

6. Bilateral and Trilateral Dialogues between the EU and North East Atlantic Third Countries.

Thomas Brégeon, Deputy HoU of C5, provided an update on the ongoing dialogues between the EU and third countries in the North East Atlantic.

- Norway and Svalbard FPZ:
Discussions continue regarding fisheries access and cod quota allocation in Svalbard waters (FPZ). Members highlighted concerns regarding outstanding cod quotas owed from previous years and suggested exploring possible solutions to address this issue while maintaining constructive dialogue with Norway.

Regarding snow crab, the MARE representative informed that a note verbale is in preparation, considering some new elements. The draft will be shared soon with the Council in order to formalize an agreed text.



- EU-UK relations: The Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) between the EU and the UK has been extended until 2038, providing long-term stability for fisheries relations. Annual consultations will continue focusing on fishing possibilities (TAC and quotas) and technical and control measures for sustainable management of the shared stocks both in UK and EU waters (EEZs).
- Iceland: Discussions are ongoing within the broader framework of the cooperation agreement. The EU has recently signed with Iceland a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation beyond fisheries management.
- Faroe Islands: nothing to report at this time as there are no ongoing consultations.

ACTION: Follow developments on negotiations between the EU and Norway, Iceland and Faroe Islands in future meeting keeping track on open discussions.

7. NEAFC Coastal States Negotiations.

Ms. Camille Galleuze (DG MARE) provided an update on the state of play of negotiations among NEAFC Coastal States for shared stocks.

The EU continues to advocate for TACs aligned with scientific advice from ICES. Negotiations are ongoing regarding the state and fishing opportunities of key pelagic stocks including mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring and blue whiting.

Members expressed concerns regarding unilateral fishing levels exceeding scientific advice self-allocated by some coastal states and emphasised the importance of achieving comprehensive and multilateral sharing arrangements including all fishing nations.

8. Pacific RFMOs.

The DG MARE representative, Mr. Stamatis Varsamos, provided an update on developments within Pacific RFMOs.

- South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO): Mr. Varsamos informed that he was not in a position to provide an update as the Commission is currently involved on negotiations with Council for preparation of its mandate which is confidential.
- North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC): Mr. Varsamos reported on the outcomes of the 9th NPFC Annual Meeting held in Japan in March 2025. The EU recently became a member of this organisation. Discussions focused on the management of the chub mackerel fishery, where recent stock assessments indicate declining trends.



Japan proposed a significant reduction in fishing opportunities. Despite the reduction, the EU secured approximately 6,000 tonnes of fishing opportunities for its fleet.

The LDAC WG2 members thanked DG MARE representative for his report and noted the importance of continued monitoring of the stock and sustainable management measures.

ACTION: LDAC Secretariat to invite DG MARE to provide regular briefings and updates on Pacific RFMOs in forthcoming WG2 meetings.

9. Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) between EU and UK.

The LDAC Secretariat provided an oral update on the work of the Inter-AC Brexit Forum, including the meeting held on 7 July 2025.

ACTION: The LDAC will continue participating actively in this forum and reporting to WG2 members. The next meeting is scheduled for 21 October 2025.

10. Information Point – LDAC Advice on Level Playing Field in RFMOs.

The WG2 Chair informed members about the recently adopted LDAC advice on ensuring a level playing field in RFMOs, highlighting the need for fair competition between EU fleets and fleets from other countries operating under different regulatory conditions.

Closure of the Meeting

The Chair thanked participants for their contributions and constructive discussions, interpreters and technicians for their work and Secretariat team for preparation of logistics and working documents for these meetings.

The next WG2 meeting will take place in March 2026 in Brussels.

END OF REPORT



SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

- **NAFO** – The next WG2 meeting (March 2026) will include a presentation by IEO-CSIC on ecosystem-based management in NAFO.
- **NEAFC** – The LDAC draft advice on NEAFC is deemed as agreed by WG2 will be circulated for approval and submitted to the Executive Committee.
- **Pacific RFMOs** – Updates on SPRFMO and NPFC will be included in the agenda of the next WG2 meeting.

- **Bilateral and Trilateral Dialogues between the EU and North East Atlantic Third Countries** - The LDAC WG2 will follow developments on negotiations between the EU and Norway (including Svalbard), Iceland and Faroe Islands in future meeting keeping track on open discussions.
- **EU-UK Trade Cooperation Agreement + Inter-AC Brexit Forum** – The LDAC will continue participating in the Inter-AC Brexit Forum and report updates to WG2 members.
- **NEXT LDAC WG2 MEETING** - The next WG2 meeting will take place in March 2026 in Brussels



ANNEX I – LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

WORKING GROUP 2 MEMBERS

1. Emil Remisz. WG2 Chair. High Seas Fish Producers Organization
2. Tim Hedemma. WG2 Vice Chair. Pelagic Freezer trawler Association
3. Iván López. LDAC Chair. AGARBA/CEPESCA
4. Vanya Vulperhorst. LDAC First Vice Chair. OCEANA
5. Edelmiro Ulloa. Opana / OPP3/ Acemix / Agarba
6. Javier Garat. CEPESCA
7. Julien Daudu. Chair WG5. EJF
8. Francisco Fernández. OPROMAR
9. Aivaras Labanauskas. Lithuanian Long Distance Fisheries Association
10. José Ramón Fontán. ANEPAT
11. Juan Manuel Trujillo. ETF
12. Rob Banning. PFA
13. Despina Symons. EBCD
14. Sergio López. OPP Burela
15. Renee Heal. DeepSea Conservation Coalition
16. Marc Ghiglia. CNPMM
17. Xavier Leduc. UAPF
18. Luis Vicente. ADAPI
19. Iris Ziegler. Seas at Risk
20. Daniel Voces. EUROPECHE
21. Margot Angibaud. EUROPECHE
22. Amanda Heitmann. Danish Pelagics PO
23. Dominic Rihan. Killybegs FO



REGISTERED OBSERVERS

24. Xose Tubio. DG MARE NEAFC
25. Cannelle Beauchesne - DG MARE - NEAFC
26. Kerstin Heck. DG MARE - NEAFC
25. Pawel Swiderek
26. Camille Gaouze. DG MARE NEAFC Coastal Negotiations
26. Thomas Bregeon. DG MARE. UK/Faroe/Iceland
27. Aoife Martin. NAPA(Zoom)
28. Rob Blythe-Skyrme. NAPA(Zoom)
29. Stephanie Czudaj. GIZ
30. Yago Rosado. OCEANA
31. Teresa Molina Schmidt. SGP España
32. Margarita Mancebo. SGP España(Zoom)
33. Árni Mathiesen. Global Roundtable on Marine Ingredients

LDAC SECRETARIAT

34. Alexandre Rodríguez. LDAC Executive Secretary
35. Manuela Iglesias. LDAC Deputy Secretary – Policy and Information
36. Marta de Lucas. LDAC (Zoom) – Administration and Finances