MINUTES NORTH SEA CASE STUDY: WEBEX PELAGIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
11/03/2015 14:00-15:00 CET

Agenda	1. Update of the North Sea Case Study.
	2. Dialogue on the following topics:
	    - priorities for the Pelagic Advisory Council (PAC)
	    - models, prototypes and next steps

Attendees	Ian Gatt, Claus Reedtz Sparrevhon, Gerard van Balsfoort, Marting Pastoors and Verena Ohms (PAC), John Pope (NRC) Paulina Ramirez (IFM), Jose L. Santiago and Marta Ballesteros (CETMAR)
Support material	- Presentation: File Pres-10.0-Mareframe-NS-Update (.ppt) - MAREFRAME-questionnaire (.docx) - Simple model (green) prototype: file APPROXColliesquared (.xlsx)[1]
Actions	Please send John Pope (popejg@aol.com) your comments and suggestions Any further requests regarding the overall MareFrame project are truly welcomed.

- John Pope (JP) presented an update of the North Sea Case Study. Main milestones: launching in May 2014 (NSAC and PAC involved), meeting with the NSAC (12/11/2014).
- Verena Ohms (VO) has ensured the information flow about both the project and the case study through emails and newsletters (1-2014; 3-2014))
- Following main concerns identified by stakeholders (need to achieve Fmsy, landing obligations and risk of incompatible regulations) the case study proposes three different models designed for different purposes and target audiences.

1. **Simple interactive overview (Green model)**. Designed to be used by the stakeholders, prioritizing simplicity and allowing them to "play around" to identify issues/questions that need to be analysed in more detail.
   - Claus Reedtz Sparrevohn (CRS) wondered about recent changes that might affect the model robustness (e.g. the herring SSB change at ICES). The model could include some new variables: SSB up/down, abundance/scarce herring periods, mackerel stock size and proportion entering the NS, etc. JP stated that there is a tension between complexity (adding more variables) and simplicity (to ensure understanding).
   - Martin Pastoors (MP) suggested the paper Regional trade-offs from multispecies maximum sustainable yield (MMSY) management options (free access).
   - Gerard van Balsfoort (GB) acknowledged that the model will be useful for users far away from the ecosystem knowledge. The added value is "what is in it for me" going down to details and translating what happens at country level (TAC allocation), as well as in terms of economic trade-offs between Member States.
   - Additional topics to be included: small-scale fisheries issues and fishing communities (not priority for the PAC but relevant in the policy agenda).
   - Ian Gatt (IG) stressed the need of having a realistic model (e.g. western stock of mackerel). JP replied that the model is tied to the outputs from the ecosystem model, but those could be extra features to explore. MP remarked the constraints of the models building on historical records vs. current situations (e.g. large abundance of mackerel in the NS).
   - Focus on species fishing mortality and trade-offs among species instead of fleet fishing effort (which seems more relevant for demersal fisheries), including some multispecies constrains. MP pointed out the need to link the model to the type of decisions to be made (e.g. MSY range).

2. **Area explicit and size-based (Amber model)**. Designed to address the spatial dimension (multi-species, multi-fleet model).

---

[1]. This is a prototype based upon a 2003 Multispecies model of the North Sea. The prototype is intended for discussion; please, do not use it for real.

- There was a general consensus on the spatial dimension as being less relevant for the PAC. JP explained its potential application in relation to closed areas and suggested to come back with more specifics on this model.
- MP expressed his concerns about the knowledge base for this model (historical background). Using some examples (cod in 2001) he mentioned that the only value of this type of models may well be the outcome of a calculation.
  JP pointed out that it might be an issue of scale, depending if you use a rectangle or large areas (e.g. North NS or South NS); however MP stated that large areas could not be considered if we are thinking about closed areas for fishing.

3. **Regulation Grid Lock Detector (Red model)**. Designed to analyse when the regulations governing fishing in the NS are likely to become mutually incompatible.

- GB explained that this issue may be less relevant for the pelagic than for the demersal fisheries. New technical measures are still in the pipeline, having an impact on catch composition, etc., but it may be too early for this model. JP stated the idea of anticipation, using the model to identify potential conflicts before they do arise and cause economic inefficiency for the pelagic fisheries.
- IG mentioned the review of technical measures done by the PAC in 2008 (http://www.pelagic-ac.org/media/pdf/0809PRAC12%20Recommendation%20TCM%20regulation.pdf)
- MP linked the red to the green model to explore trade-off and mismatch with regulations.

- General comments:
  - GB mentioned that if you are ambitious in management (CFP, GES within the MSFD) you could somehow "freeze" the ecosystem; for instance, if you froze it when the pelagic is dominant, you may freeze economic effects for years. The central question is "what do we want" and "do we know it already", which implies making choices that could expand the current domination of some species.
  - JP replied that we are doing it but not in a clear way, we are not considering multispecies. The suggested models will allow to search for "the best for my country and my fleet" but having the arguments on the table on the same page.
  - MP pointed out the relevance of the case study to the forthcoming PAC Ecosystem group; it addresses the need to understand trade-offs, issues related to MSY, etc., providing tools to use.
  - JP asked about sensitive issues, particularly bycatch of mammals. GB referred to the landing obligation as a way to confirm which species are linked to the pelagic fishing activity. Currently it seems that those species are mainly mammals –birds less- and sharks. IG mentioned that seals are a minor issue in the NS.

- Next steps:

  - On-going dialogue with John Pope on the models and the case study.
  - Test of the Decision Support Tool (Prototype I) for the North Sea Case study (date to be confirmed soon).

- Take-home message:

  - The North Sea Case study and the MareFrame project have being designed as an on-going iterative process until 2017. Our goal is to produce outputs well founded and accurate (scientific validity), useful for action (policy relevance) applicable and acceptable (socially robust). Only active engagement and smooth dialogue will ensure the success.

The PAC, as member of the MareFrame team, is involved in the collective effort to remove the barriers for the EAFM implementation in the European Union.