

By: Chief Fishery Officer

To: Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
– 31 January 2020

Subject: **SUMARiS Species ID training**

Classification Unrestricted

Summary:

This paper will provide Members with a summary of work undertaken in the SUMARiS project to help get better skate and ray species identification across the Southern North Sea and Eastern Channel.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to **NOTE** this report

Background

In order to implement a sustainable fishery and have reliable landings data to make informed decisions from, it is essential to identify skate and rays species correctly, both on board fishing boats and in the fish auctions. Currently five different skate and ray species are managed under one global quota. This has arisen because historically there was not a requirement to record landings at a species level but to record any skate and ray landings under a general code. To get better management at an individual species level better species identification and reporting are needed. Different countries in the North Sea have different fishing fleets and although there is the same requirement across the EU to identify skates and rays to a species level the old habits of either misidentification or landing of a specific species under the general code persist.

Developing a multinational training package

Across the Southern North Sea and the East of the Channel many of the skate and ray species look similar, and many mistakes are made during identification on board. Moreover, there is even more confusion about naming of skates and rays. Sometimes various species are designated under a collective name or are

identified with a local dialect name. Local dialect names in France and Belgium differ from the official names used in the European legislation. As part of the SUMARiS project English, French and Belgium fishermen have helped create and design a training package which is translated into French English and Dutch.

The training and species identification work package in the SUMARiS project has developed a common code of conduct, tools for optimal operations on board and in fish auctions, including an identification guide and training videos for optimal handling of all skates and rays that can be caught in the North Sea and VIIId zone.

Training materials

The common code of conduct and the identification support guide has been used during training sessions to teach fishermen (crew and skipper), future fishermen and auction staff how to identify and handle skates and rays correctly. The common code of conduct has been set up by Work Package leader Rederscentrale and the involved partners, including an overview of the various skates and rays in the North Sea and VIIId zone, the identification and optimal handling. The tools for the optimal on-board operations will be developed by partner organisations and Nausicaa.

Specifically, a clear and easy to use identification guide and training videos which demonstrate the identification and optimal handling of skates and rays on board and in the fish auction will be made. Some training sessions for the active fisheries professionals will be delivered. At first, ILVO will give one training session to train the Professional organisations using the code of conduct, identification guide and training videos. Then the partner organisations will provide a number of training sessions to fishermen and auction staff locally and in their local language.

Finally, the developed documents, identification guide and training videos will be converted into educational materials for the fisheries schools. A PowerPoint presentation in the local language will be made to deliver to the students. Belgium and France will give a number of sessions to students in the fisheries schools. The PowerPoint presentation will be a summary of the code of conduct and determination tools such as the guide and some training videos that will be realised. During these sessions at fishery schools, it will teach students how to identify the different skates and rays correctly and to distinguish species of commercial value from endangered ones. The students will be taught how to handle skates and rays correctly to protect themselves and to improve the survival of rays when put back at sea.

Delivering the training programme

This component of the SUMARiS project has taken over a year to develop and is now in the process of being rolled out across North France, Belgium and across the KEIFCA district and South East England. Within KEIFCA and working with some of our neighbouring IFCA's, KEIFCA officers have been trained as trainers and given the training materials so that rather than arranging local meetings, training can be given as part of regular port visits around the district.

Members are asked to **NOTE** this report