

CVO management strategy: pulse fishery

CVO

Version 1, May 2015 (determined in the CVO meeting on the 27th of May 2015)

The Dutch demersal fishery has been working towards a transition from beam trawl to pulse trawl, to increase selectivity for sole and reduce fuel costs – and so costs and emissions - and reduce bycatch while maintaining catches. The following is designed to provide management measures above and beyond those currently required by Dutch and EU legislation and applies to all vessels within the CVO pulse fishery for flatfish. The strategy laid down in this document is translated into practical (behavioural) rules in the ‘code of conduct CVO pulse fishery for flatfish’, acknowledged by the CVO pulse fishermen individually.

The CVO management strategy is administered by the CVO. An updated version of this document will be available on the website www.cvo-visserij.nl, including a document that lists the adjustments between the different versions.

The CVO aims to sustainably manage the pulse fishery by implementing the following strategies:

1. By-catch management strategy:

- a. The pulse gear has a scientifically proven higher selectivity for sole than the traditional beam trawl gear. Catches of plaice (landings and discards) and benthos are considerably lower.
- b. The CVO pulse fishery is committed to further decrease discards and will continue to engage in projects aimed for discards reduction.
- c. The CVO will collaborate with scientific institutes to continue to provide representative data on the catch composition and discards in the pulse fishery.

2. ETP management strategy:

- a. According to MSC methodology, ETP species are defined as those that are recognised as such by national legislation and/or binding international agreement (e.g. CITES) to which the jurisdictions controlling the fishery under assessment are party. The CVO will keep a list of relevant ETP species up-to-date on the website www.cvo-visserij.nl
- b. The CVO aims for a robust and meaningful record of catches of ETP species by running an ETP monitoring program in the following stages:
 - i) 25% of the CVO pulse trawl flatfish fleet to record ETP catches on every fishing trip during the whole trip, starting from the 1st of May of 2015 onwards. Species that are taken into account: ETP recognized by MSC and additional species of interest.
 - ii) 50% of the CVO pulse trawl flatfish fleet to record ETP catches on every fishing trip during the whole trip, starting from the 1st of May of 2016 onwards. Species that are taken into account: ETP recognized by MSC and additional species of interest.
- c. The CVO will verify the data from the ETP-registration with independently collected scientific data on the interaction of the pulse trawl in relation to ETP species.
- d. The CVO will collect the data from the participants in the program named under b) on a monthly basis and will publish the data every year on www.cvo-visserij.nl
- e. The CVO will actively inform the CVO pulse fleet on measures to increase survival of ETP species and where possible facilitate implementation of these measures for all fishermen within the CVO scheme, by means of for instance training and/or supplying materials.

3. Retained species strategy:

- a. The CVO will publish detailed landings data of the CVO pulse fishery on a yearly basis on the website www.cvo-visserij.nl
- b. The CVO will continue to engage in projects aimed at better selectivity of retained species.

4. Habitat management strategy:

- a. The CVO will continue to liaise with relevant authorities to allow for a separate gear code that reflects the use of the pulse trawl in the electronic logbooks (EU logbooks).
- b. Until it is possible to separately register the use of the pulse trawl in the electronic logbook (see 4a), CVO will facilitate this registration and the collection of equivalent data itself.
- c. The CVO will publish yearly anonymised data on the fishery spread of the pulse fishery on www.cvo-visserij.nl
- d. The CVO will review the data published as a result of 4c on a yearly basis, and link this to the most recent scientific evidence on habitat impact of the pulse trawl gear. If the current fishing activity of the pulse trawl fleet reveals a risk to certain special areas of interest (such as VME's) the CVO will take additional habitat management measures to limit the impact.

5. Strategy on control and enforcement of the pulse characteristics:

- a. The CVO will continue to liaise with relevant authorities to encourage the speedy implementation of the official control and enforcement of the pulse characteristics on pulse vessels.
- b. Until the official control and enforcement process on the pulse characteristics (named in 5a) has successfully been implemented, the CVO will appoint an external inspector to inspect the compliance of CVO pulse fishermen on the official pulse specifications, as set out in the Code of Conduct for the CVO pulse fishery. Once the official control and enforcement process has successfully been implemented, CVO will no longer appoint external inspectors for this purpose.
- c. The inspectors will use a standardized inspection protocol, which will be published on the website www.cvo-visserij.nl
- d. The CVO will keep, and review, a record of completed inspections
- e. Violation of the rules regarding the pulse characteristics will be sanctioned according to the 'Penalty regulation MSC pulse fishery'.

6. Strategy on control and enforcement in general

- a. All CVO pulse fishermen are obliged to sign and comply with the rules as set out in the 'Code of Conduct CVO pulse fishery for flatfish'
- b. Violations of the rules as set out in the 'Code of Conduct CVO pulse fishery for flatfish', with specific reference to article 2 and 8, will be sanctioned according to the 'Penalty regulation MSC pulse fishery'
- c. Violations of all relevant national and international regulations will be handled by the Management Authority. In the case of severe violations of relevant (inter-)national regulations which could potentially harm the sustainable characteristics of the CVO pulse fishery, these will also be sanctioned according to the 'Penalty regulation MSC pulse fishery'.