



Ministry of Economic Affairs

> P.O. Box 20401 2500 EK The Hague The Netherlands

European Commission (attn.: [redacted])  
 DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries  
 Rue de la Loi 200  
 B-1049 BRUSSELS  
 BELGIUM

**Netherlands Enterprise  
 Agency (RVO.nl)**  
 Fishery regulations

**Visit address**  
 Prinses Beatrixlaan 2  
 2595 AL Den Haag  
 The Netherlands

**Postal address**  
 P.O. Box 20401  
 2500 EK Den Haag  
 The Netherlands

**Organisation Code**  
 00000001003214369000

T [redacted]

**Dealt with by**  
 [redacted]

T [redacted]  
 F +31 (0) [redacted]@rvo.nl

**Our ref.**  
 RVO-VIR / 17168746

**Your ref.**

Encl.

Date **27 OKT. 2017**

Re Notification Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment Project 2016-2019

Dear Sir or Madam,

In accordance with Article 43 (1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98, I hereby inform you about the fishing operations the Netherlands is carrying out for the purpose of scientific research.

Under the authority of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Wageningen Marine Research (WMR), in cooperation with Wageningen University (WU), the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ) and the Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research (ILVO), the scientific research project "Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment" will be carried out from 2016 till 2019. The project aims to assess the effects of the use of electric stimulation on marine animals. The results of this research are needed to evaluate the transition of beam trawl fisheries with tickler chains towards pulse trawl fisheries in relation to sustainable flatfish fishery.

For more detailed information on this scientific research project I would like to refer to <https://pulsefishing.eu/nl/node/323> and the attachments to this letter. They include:

Attachment I:	Description of the research project
Attachment II:	List of participating vessels
Attachment III:	Permission and exemption granted to participating vessels

I trust this letter provides you with sufficient information.

Yours sincerely,

Netherlands Enterprise Agency – Fishery Regulations  
 On behalf of the Minister of Economic Affairs

### Participation in the project

You and your vessel <VESSEL> participate in the Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment Project 2016-2019.

### Scope of permission and exemption

On the basis of the permission and exemption, during the project the following activities are permitted:

- For the Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment Project 2016-2019, undersized marine organisms of the following species may be retained on board; Cod (*Gadus morhua*), Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*), European seabass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), Saithe (*Pollachius virens*), Pollack (*Pollachius pollachius*), Ling (*Molva molva*), European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*).

### Provisions

The following rules apply to the permission and exemption:

- The permission and exemption apply during the period 29 October 2017 till 28 October 2018, as far as needed to collect sufficient (up to a maximum of 2000) specimen of the species concerned;
- Fish samples that are collected on board your fishing vessel are put up in distinguishable labelled bags or containers
- All catches, including fish that are selected for scientific samples, shall be recorded in the fishing logbook as described in (EC) 1224/2009 article 14;
- All other applicable fisheries regulation will be fully complied.
- The project is being carried out in the ICES areas IVb and IVc;
- This exemption document is present on board the vessel for the duration of the project period;

### Appeal

You, or another party affected by this decision, may appeal against this decision within six weeks of the date postmarked on this letter. Appeals accompanied by a copy of this letter should be sent to the following address:

Ministerie van Economische Zaken  
Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland  
afdeling Juridische Zaken  
Postbus 40219  
8004 DE Zwolle.

On behalf of the Minister of Economic Affairs,

Netherlands Enterprise Agency

### **Attachment III**

#### **The permission and exemption granted to participating vessels**

Dear Sir, Madam,

On 11 October 2017, Wageningen Marine Research (WMR) has requested permission and exemption on your behalf to carry out a several research trips with your fishing vessel for the scientific research project Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment Project 2016-2019.

The project aims to assess the effects of the use of electric stimulation on marine animals.

The results of this research are needed to evaluate the transition of beam trawl fisheries with tickler chains towards pulse trawl fisheries in relation to sustainable flatfish fishery.

A part of the research project concerns the assessment of damages done to different marine organisms that are caught in pulse trawls. For this purpose randomly selected fish from catches are sampled. The research covers the full length range of concerned species. This means that individual organisms of species for which a minimum conservation reference size (MCRS) applies may be retained on board for scientific sampling. Undersized marine organisms of a species not subject to the landing obligation may not be retained on board without permission and exemption.

The research project is carried out under the supervision of Wageningen Marine Research (WMR). From October 2017 till October 2018 fish samples may be selected on board your fishing vessel.

#### **Permission**

Having regard to Article 55, paragraph 1, of the *Uitvoeringsregeling zeevisserij* (hereafter the Regulation) in conjunction with Article 43, paragraph 1, of Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98, I have decided to grant permission for this project to be carried out, subject to the condition that, in deviation of Article 43 (1), only article 19 (3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98 does not apply.

#### **Exemption**

Having regard to Article 6d of the Sea and Inshore Fishing Regulations 1977 (*Reglement zee- en kustvisserij 1977*), to enable the project to be carried out, I will grant you an exemption from the prohibitions laid down in the Regulation in Articles 10(1), 21(1), 53(1), as far as this subsection refers to article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98, and insofar as this is necessary to be able to carry out the activities described under 'scope of permission and exemption'.

**Attachment II**  
**List of participating test vessels**

Name of the vessel	CFR	External marking	Vessel Capacity		Length Overall
			GT	Kilowatts	Metres
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	549	1115	43,99
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	494	1471	42,21
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	494	1124	42,21
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	424	1471	40,00
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	426	1471	40,73
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	366	1471	39,00
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	496	1470	42,37

## **Attachment I**

### **Description of project "Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment"**

#### **Introduction**

The overall aim of this project is to assess the long term impact of the commercial application of pulse trawls in the North Sea flatfish fishery. In order to fulfil the overall aim, predictive models of the effect of electric pulses on organisms and on different ecosystem components will be developed and applied. The results will be integrated to assess the consequences of a transition in the flatfish fishery from using tickler chain beam trawls to pulse trawls on the bycatch of undersized fish (discards) and the adverse impact on the North Sea ecosystem.

These aims lead to the following research questions:

1. Marine organisms: what is the response of selected marine organisms representing different groups of fish and invertebrate species (such as roundfish, flatfish, rays and sharks, bivalves, crustaceans, polychaetes) to the exposure by a range of pulse parameters representative for the commercial pulse trawls?
2. Benthic ecosystem: what is the effect of pulse trawling on the functioning and biogeochemistry of benthic ecosystems (short-term and long-term effects)?
3. North Sea: what is the effect of pulse trawling on the fish stocks and the benthic ecosystem at the scale of the North Sea? Does a transition in the flatfish fishery from conventional beam trawling to pulse trawling contribute to a reduction in bycatch and adverse impact on the benthic ecosystem?
4. Synthesis: what is the effect of the transition of the tickler chain beam trawl fleet to a pulse trawl fleet on the bycatch of undersized fish and on the adverse effects on the benthic ecosystem?

#### **The research**

The Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment Project includes the following research activities for which permission and exemption is requested:

- Collection of marine organisms to a maximum of 2000 specimen per species, both above and below MCRS where applicable. Samples of organisms shall be taken randomly from catches.

The Netherlands has given permission for the research project to be carried out in accordance with Article 43 of Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98 and Article 55, paragraph 1 of the Dutch national regulation *Uitvoeringsregeling Zeevisserij* (hereafter the Regulation). The research project is carried out under the supervision of WMR.

#### **The project period**

The Pulse Trawl Impact Assessment Project is a 4-year research project (2016 - 2019). The project will take place in ICES areas IVb and IVc.