

STECF PLENARY MEETING 14-02

7-11 JULY, COPENHAGEN

Terms of Reference – version 30 June 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION

Does not belong to the ToRs and is listed here to avoid confusion when editing the plenary report (section numbering...).

2. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Does not belong to the ToRs and is listed here to avoid confusion when editing the plenary report (section numbering...).

3. INFORMATION TO THE PLENARY

3.1. Feedback on STECF proposals since last plenary

4. STECF INITIATIVES

Terms of Reference

5. ASSESSMENT OF STECF EWG REPORTS

5.1. STECF EWG 14-04 and 14-05: Economics-AER of EU fleets

STECF is requested to review the report of the STECF Expert Working Group meeting, evaluate the findings and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

Terms of reference of the WG: [See Annex A](#)

5.2. STECF EWG 14-06: Fishing effort part1

STECF is requested to review the report of the STECF Expert Working Group meeting, evaluate the findings and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

Terms of reference of the WG: See Annex B

5.3. STECF EWG 14-07: Evaluation of 2013 MS DCF Annual Reports & Data Transmission

STECF is requested to review the report of the STECF Expert Working Group meeting, evaluate the findings and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

Terms of reference of the WG: [See Annex C](#)

5.4. STECF EWG 14-08: Review of scientific advice for 2015 - part 2

STECF is requested to review the report of the STECF Expert Working Group meeting, evaluate the findings and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

Terms of reference of the WG: [See Annex D](#)

6. ADDITIONAL REQUESTS SUBMITTED TO THE STECF PLENARY BY THE COMMISSION¹

6.1. Advice on relevant elements of joint recommendations (Baltic Sea, North Sea, industrial fishing in the North Sea, North Western Waters, Southern Western Waters, Mediterranean Sea)

Background

Joint recommendations for discard plans have the purpose to provide the Commission with the agreement among Member States cooperating at sea-basin level on the elements for the preparation of Union law (Commission delegated Act) in accordance with Article 15.6 of the CFP Regulation. The five potential elements that can be contained in a discard plan are the following: definitions of fisheries and species, provisions for survivability exemptions, provisions on *de minimis* exemptions, the fixation of minimum conservation reference sizes and the documentation of catches.

STECF is requested to review and assess individually the supporting documentation underpinning the first four elements mentioned above in the joint recommendations submitted by regional groups of Member States. STECF is not requested to consider the issue of documentation.

The joint recommendations apply to the following fisheries:

- a) Baltic Sea: fisheries for cod, herring, sprat and salmon
- b) North Sea: pelagic fisheries
- c) North Sea: industrial fisheries
- d) North-western waters: pelagic fisheries
- e) South-western waters: pelagic fisheries
- f) Mediterranean pelagic fisheries

Terms of Reference

STECF are requested to:

- a) Review the identification of the fisheries and species to be covered in the discard plans.
- b) Review the supporting documentation for exemptions on the basis of high survivability. In data poor situations, assess what further supporting information may be available and how this be supplied in the future (e.g. survival studies, tagging experiments).
- c) Review the supporting documentation (biological, technical and/or economic) for *de minimis* exemptions on the basis that either increases in selectivity are very difficult to achieve, or to avoid handling unwanted catches would create disproportionate cost. In data poor situations, assess what further supporting information may be available and how this could be supplied in the future (e.g. discard data collection, selectivity studies).
- d) Review whether there is sufficient information to support proposed minimum conservation reference size(s) that deviate from existing minimum landing sizes, and whether they are consistent with the objective of ensuring the protection of juveniles.

In the absence of a joint recommendation, STECF is asked to consider the advice of the relevant Advisory Council. Where no advice from an Advisory Council is available, STECF is requested to review and assess the supporting documentation provided by the Commission. In both these cases only (c) above is relevant and STECF should only consider the supporting information relating to possible *de minimis* exemptions in line with Article 15.7 of the CFP Regulation.

6.2. Request for scientific advice on the sprat fishery in the Black Sea

Background

In accordance with Article 15 of the CFP (Regulation (EU) 1380/2013), all fisheries for small pelagic species which are subject to catch limits will fall under the landing obligation as from 1 January 2015. For the Black Sea effectively this will apply to pelagic fisheries for sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*). Catches of turbot caught in such fisheries will also fall under the landing obligation from 1 January 2015 given this species is also subject to catch limits in the Black Sea.

So far, the Member States concerned in the sprat fishery for the Black Sea (i.e. Bulgaria and Romania) have not submitted any joint recommendation for a multiannual plan or a discard plan as provided for in Article 15. Under Article 15(7) where no such plan is in place the Commission must adopt a delegated act setting a *de minimis* exemption subject to the conditions set out in Article 15(5c) (i.e. increases in selectivity are very difficult or to avoid handling unwanted catches would create disproportionate costs)..

Terms of Reference

Based on the assumption that no joint recommendations from the relevant Member States will be forthcoming and to assist the Commission to set a *de minimis* provision for the sprat fishery in the Black Sea STECF is requested to:

1. Provide, where possible, estimates of discard rates for sprat and turbot in the sprat fisheries in the Black Sea for Bulgarian and Romanian vessels.
2. Taking account of (1) above, comment on whether there is sufficient biological, technical and/or economic evidence to support a *de minimis* exemption on the basis that either increases in selectivity are very difficult to achieve or to avoid handling unwanted catches would create disproportionate costs.

6.3. Alternative modelling approaches supporting the 2015 Atlantic Skipjack stock assessment

Background:

Skipjack is one the three topical tuna species caught by EU purse seiners in the Atlantic Ocean. As highly migratory species, management measure constraining fishing activities deployed in the Atlantic Ocean on these species falls under the scope of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and are based on scientific advice and management recommendations released by the ICCAT Scientific Committee.

Traditional stock assessment models (SA) have been difficult to apply to skipjack because of certain key aspects of its biology. Skipjack spawns in an opportunistic manner throughout the year and over large areas, so recruitment is continuous but heterogeneous in space and time. This explains why cohorts cannot easily be identified. Furthermore, skipjack growth parameters vary with latitude. The catch-at-age matrix will, therefore, not be consistent because fish of the same age will exhibit different sizes depending on their past movement patterns. Another difficulty arises from the fact that skipjack tuna is often a secondary species, depending on the price differential and catchability of other target species such as large yellowfin. Consequently, estimation of the effective effort exerted on skipjack (e.g. effort proportional to fishing mortality) remains problematic, and catch rate may sometimes depict a different trend than abundance.

In order to overcome these difficulties, in addition to conventional SA models (surplus production model, may be integrated models as SS3, data-poor approaches) and to support the SA to be carried out in 2014, the European Union would like to contribute to a discussion on alternative SA approaches and, with this aim, to propose the use of size-structured models and length-based Reference Points, commonly used for of hard-to-age species.

Request to the STECF:

However, such integrated size-structured SA models are not used by tuna RFMOs and the STECF would be then asked to explore, to discuss and to suggest possible ways to support such approaches.

SKJ stock structure:

- A two-stocks assumption (East and West) as adopted until now by SCRS
- An alternative five-stocks assumption (based on spatial distribution of catch and tagging data) with 2 components in the West and 3 in the East.

The STECF will be asked to explore, to model and to discuss the SKJ SA for the two candidate stock structures and to write a scientific document to be considered as a contribution of the EU to the SA process carried out by the ICCAT Scientific Committee.

As results of this ad hoc contract, a report will have to be delivered for the 23.06.2014 at the latest by the selected expert in integrated size-structured SA models. She or he will have obviously to work in coordination with the EU scientist in charge of the SKJ SA in the ICCAT context, Daniel Gaertner from IRD.

References:

Cope, J. M., Punt, A. (2009) Length-Based Reference Points for Data-Limited Situations: Applications and Restrictions Marine and Coastal Fisheries: Dynamics, Management, and Ecosystem Science 1:169–186,

Gaertner, D., Delgado de Molina, A., Ariz, J., Pianet, R., and Hallier, J.-P. (2008) Variability of the growth parameters of the skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) among areas in the eastern Atlantic: Analysis from tagging data within a meta-analysis approach. *Aquat Living Resour.* 21: 349-356

Gaertner, D. (2010) Estimates of Historic Changes in Total Mortality and Selectivity for Eastern Atlantic Skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) from Length Composition Data. *Aquat. Living Resour.* 23: 3-11

Punt, A. (2003) The performance of a size-structured stock assessment method in face of spatial heterogeneity in growth. *Fisheries Research*, 65: 381- 409

Punt, A., Huang, TC., Maunder, M. (2013) Review of integrated size-structured models for stock assessment of hard-to-age crustacean and mollusc species. *ICES Journ. Mar. Sci.* 70(1): 16-33.

Smith, M. T., and Addison, J. T. (2003) Methods for stock assessment of crustacean fisheries. *Fisheries Research*, 65: 231–256.

6.4. Sea bass fisheries and their management

Background information

ICES have provided assessments of the stock of seabass for 2013 identifying 4 potential stock areas. The stock distribution has increased; ICES identifies that there is evidence of local depopulation despite increasing incidence of the species. Considering the life cycle of this species there is a need to ensure that management measures are appropriate to the stock and can provide the necessary protection to limit mortality to prevent a decline in regional and local populations.

In 2012 and 2013 through expert meetings the Commission and Member States have been considering the introduction of a TAC for seabass. ICES have previously identified that a TAC may not be the most suitable means to effectively control mortality for this stock. Some Member States have also mentioned the CFP reform (landing obligation) as an argument against the introduction of a new TAC.

In addition recreational fisheries play a significant part in the total outtake. Member States have identified the existing various direct and indirect fishery national management measures that impact on both recreational and commercial activity.

Member States have been asked to consider their national controls on this species and identify possible management measures they could adopt. However there remains a need to evaluate the combined impact of these various management measures on the stock and to explore how these measures can be co-ordinated to effectively conserve the stock; the setting of particular catch limits for various fisheries should be considered.

Request to the STECF

STECF is requested to assess and comment on the national management measures of the Member States to determine their impact on the current stock distribution of Seabass. In particular STECF are asked to:

- Identify the contribution to mortality from the direct and indirect fisheries on a Member State basis;
- Identify for directed fisheries potential limits, and management indicators and possible avoidance/ technical measures for indirect fisheries.
- STECF are asked to identify management measures that can be considered precautionary or would allow for the management of the stock at MSY.

In addition STECF are asked, considering the latest advice for these stocks to comment on:

- the effectiveness of the current national measures in controlling catches and in preventing an increase in fishing mortality and/or a decline in biomass for each stock;
- the likely effectiveness of existing national measures, under the current stock situation, in maintaining the stock at MSY levels if
 - existing commercial effort levels remain constant;
 - or if existing catches are maintained
 - If possible comment on the potential impact on the stock if this situation is maintained over a 3-5yr timescale;
- Lastly STECF are asked to recommend measures that could be applied now to ensure that the stock is maintained within MSY levels.

6.5. Update of the STECF assessment of closed areas

Background

As part of a previous review of the technical measures, in 2007 the Commission requested STECF to evaluate the utility and effectiveness of existing measures limiting fishing activity in an area (closed areas).

The original analysis followed a two-step approach. First, an overview was made of existing closed areas within EU waters and of any existing material that could be used to evaluate their effectiveness. This first meeting of the STECF subgroup on Management of Stocks (SGMOS-07-02) was held in March 2007; it prepared an inventory of closed areas and identified a process and the data requirements for an evaluation of the closed areas in the inventory, considering maximum use of existing evaluations and information. Second, most of the closed areas in the North Sea and Atlantic identified at the first meeting were evaluated during a second meeting of SGMOS-07-03 held in October 2007.

The Commission is now in the process of a further review of the technical measures in light of the new CFP and in this context would like to update the advice provided by STECF. The review should take account of relevant ICES and STECF advice since 2007 and also be expanded to several closures that have been introduced since then. Closures that have been deleted should not be included.

To support this request the Commission STECF commissioned an ad hoc contract to

- Review and update the earlier evaluation carried out by STECF of the efficiency of the closed areas on conservation of marine organisms; and
- Using the framework used by STECF extend this analysis to closed areas introduced since the STECF assessment.

Terms of Reference

STECF is requested to review the report prepared under an ad hoc contract, evaluate the findings and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

6.6. Extension of the current deep-sea sharks TAC to CECAF area around Madeira

Background

Council Regulation² fixing fishing opportunities for EU vessels for certain deep-sea stocks lists a number of deep-sea sharks for which a TAC is set. These sharks are considered to be highly vulnerable to exploitation as they are long-lived, late maturing and low fecundity species. It is generally accepted that there is an urgent need to protect deep-sea sharks from fishing even if sharks are taken as by-catches in relative small quantities.

² See Council Regulation (EU) No 1262/2012.

TACs for deep-sea sharks are based on ICES advice for ICES sub-areas. Zero TACs are set for a growing group of 18 sharks caught in most ICES sub-areas (V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XII) but not in CECAF area. Although its abundance may vary across areas, in the absence of detailed information on stock identity, stock structure and stock dynamics, for a number of species ICES considers the existence of a single stock in the whole North-East Atlantic area. The STECF notes³ that there is no available information on stock structure, catch trends or fisheries catching deep-sea sea species in general and in particular deep-sea sharks for CECAF areas 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2. These include EU waters adjacent to Madeira, the Canary Islands and Azores. Knowing that deep-sea sharks are widely distributed and migratory species it follows that it may be appropriate to extend management measures applied in ICES sub-areas to CECAF adjacent area.

In 2014 the Commission requested⁴ the STECF to collect available information on deep-sea sharks and relevant fisheries catching these species and advise on whether there is a need to introduce management measures such as setting TACs for individual stocks in CECAF areas 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2. Based on a study (Morato 2012) the STECF concluded that a zero TAC for deep-sea sharks caught in waters around Madeira (CECAF area 34.1) has been established since 2008 and discards, mainly from the black scabbard fishery, are known to be low. These findings are somehow inconsistent with information provided by Portugal on catches of deep-sea sharks. Portugal confirmed catches and landings of 160 tonnes of deep-sea sharks in CECAF area 34.1.2 in 2012. In the Portuguese report on the activity of its fleet in 2012, landings of leafscale gulper shark (a species considered endangered in the NE-Atlantic, under 0 TAC and one of the main by-catch species in the black scabbard fishery) are among the top 5 landings by the Madeira fleet.

Terms of Reference

On the basis of the information provided by Portugal on landings of deep-sea sharks in 2012 in Madeira and on any other relevant information⁵ the STECF is requested to advise on whether it is appropriate from a conservation point of view to extend the TAC area for deep-sea sharks to CECAF areas, in particular to area 34.1.2 around Madeira.

6.7. Modification of legal size of Japanese clam

Background

The Japanese or Manila clam (*Ruditapes philippinarum*) stock in the Bay of Arcachon is the largest in France, estimated by IFREMER at more than 7000 tonnes with landings of 400 to 600

³ STECF 45th Plenary meeting report (24-28 March 2014).

⁴ STECF 45th Plenary meeting report (24-28 March 2014).

⁵ Such as the STECF report on the Evaluation of Fishing Effort Regime in European Waters - Part 2 (STECF-13-21).

tonnes per year The minimum landing size for Japanese or Manila clam (is currently set at 35 mm by Regulation (EU) No 227/2013 which amended Regulation (EC) No 850/98.

The Commission has received a request from the French authorities to modify this minimum size to take account in differences in growth rates of the stock of Japanese clam in the Bay of Arcachon. Based on studies conducted by IFREMER it appears that the clams in this area have much slower growth rates than in other areas. According to this view, the fishing industry in the area assert that it would be appropriate to lower the minimum landing size (30cm) for the Bay of Arcachon reflecting differences growth rates and prevailing environmental conditions.

Terms of Reference

STECF is requested

- To review the supporting study from IFREMER and evaluate whether the differences in growth rates and environmental conditions may justify the introduction of a lower minimum landing size for the Bay of Arcachon and whether this would have an impact on the stock of Japanese clam in the area.
- Comment on whether for sedentary shellfish species like Japanese clams it is more appropriate to set minimum sizes at local level rather than at a European level reflecting differences in stocks.

6.8. STECF opinion on assessment of the Member States annual reports whether the conditions for exclusion in accordance with Article 11(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 remain fulfilled

Background

Council Regulation 1342/2008 establishes a long-term plan for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting these stocks. Under Article 11(2) the Council may, acting on a proposal from the Commission and on the basis of information provided by the Member States and on the Advice of STECF, exclude certain groups of vessels from the application of the effort regime.

The current exclusions for groups of vessels from Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Poland are described in Council Regulation (EC) No 754/2009, as amended. Member States must submit annually, appropriate information to the Commission and STECF to establish that the conditions for any exclusion granted remain fulfilled. Reports on Art 11 are due 31st March.

Ireland have identified that sampling has not occurred for the exempted vessels in 2013 , but that on the basis of previous comparative examinations between the use of grids and the use of an inclined panel in the same fishery that there is a high probability that the terms of the exclusion have been met.

Poland reported to COM that in 2013 management period polish group of vessels exempted under Art11 did not fish for saithe in the area concerned. Nevertheless, Poland would like to maintain in force the exemption from the effort regime for its group of vessels.

Terms of Reference

Based on the information provided by the Member States in support of the continuing exclusions granted under Article 11 in their annual reports, the STECF is requested to assess whether the groups of vessels concerned have been complying with the conditions set out in the decision on exclusion. In carrying out its assessment, the STECF is requested to:

a) advise whether the data on catches and landings submitted by the Member State support the conclusion that during the preceding fishing season (from the date of the exclusion), the vessel group has (on average) caught less than or equal to 1,5% of cod from the total catches of the vessels concerned;

In this instance STECF is asked to additionally consider the background paper provided by Ireland in relation to the sampling of the excluded vessels in 2013. STECF is asked to comment on the assumptions made in the calculation of the possible impact of the use of grids in 2013 and if the paper presents a reasonable indication of the likely catch of the vessels in the 2013 year.

b) specify the reasons, if the information presented gives indications on the non-fulfilment of the conditions for exclusion.

In carrying out its assessment, the STECF should consider the rules on vessel group reporting established in Article 4 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 237/2010 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008.

6.9. Evaluation of national measures taken under Art 13(6) of the cod plan

Background

In accordance with Article 13.2 of Council Regulation 1342/2008 establishes a long term plan for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting these stocks the Member States may increase the maximum allowable fishing effort within applicable effort groups. Member States are required to notify the Commission of any planned increase of the fishing effort allocation by April 30 of the year during which such compensation for effort adjustment shall take place. The notification shall include details of the vessels operating under the special conditions referred to in Article 13 (2) (a-d), the fishing effort per effort group that the Member State expects to be carried out by those vessels during the year and the conditions under which the effort of the vessels is being monitored, including control arrangements.

Under Article 13.7 the Commission shall request STECF to compare annually the reduction in cod mortality resulting from the application of point (c) of Article 13 (2) of the cod plan with the

reduction it would have expected to occur as a result of the effort adjustment referred to in Article 12(4).

Not all Member States have allocated additional effort only on the basis of Article 13 (2) (c) and have identified additional allocation on the basis of Article 13 (2) (a,b and d). Member States are required to submit by March each year a report on the amounts of effort used within the actions during the previous year.

Information on the respective measures has now been submitted by FR, IR, UK.

Terms of Reference

Based on information provided by the United Kingdom, France, Ireland, Germany and Denmark justifying fishing effort increases for 2013 under the conditions laid down in article 13.2 (c) of the cod plan (Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008), and the reports of effort allocated under these measures, STECF is requested to assess the effectiveness of the relevant cod avoidance measures undertaken pursuant to Article 13.2 (c). In carrying out its assessment, the STECF is requested to compare the impact on cod mortality which results from the application of this provision (cod avoidance or discard reduction plan) with the reduction it would have expected to occur as a result of the fishing effort adjustment referred to in article 12.4 of the cod plan.

In light of its conclusions of the assessment referred to above, STECF is requested to advise the Commission on any appropriate adjustments in effort to be applied for the relevant areas and gear groupings as laid down in article 13.7 of the cod plan as a result of the application of Article 13.2 (c).

Additionally, based on any relevant information obtained from the EWG 14-06 and in conjunction with the information provided by Member States justifying fishing effort increases for 2013 pursuant to Article 13.2 of the cod plan Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008) under conditions other than paragraph 13.2 (c), STECF is requested to assess the additional effort applied by the Member States concerned in terms of its compatibility with the conditions and objectives of the plan and in terms of its impact on cod mortality. STECF is requested to identify instances where this assessment is not possible and to indicate specific information for each action that should be provided to enable such assessment.

STECF is requested to identify where possible any cumulative or in combination impact as a result of the actions undertaken under Article 13 (2).

6.10. Evaluation of the effectiveness of Highly Selective Gears being used by English administered vessels

Background

At its November 2013 and March 2014 plenaries STECF commented on the performance of two variants of a NetGrid which were tested through a Fisheries Science Project. This Project tested two variants of a NetGrid trawl design being used in the North Sea nephrop fishery to avoid catches of whitefish. At its March plenary STECF concluded that if the raw haul by haul data had been included in the report they would have been able to provide a much more comprehensive informed opinion of the effectiveness of the Net Grid trawl on reducing catches of cod and other species except Nephrops, for which it is clear that catches by both the Net Grid and control trawls were unaffected, and that no other additional data is required.

This raw data is now attached which includes haul by haul information for the trials of both variants of the NetGrid.

Terms of References

STECF is asked to evaluate the final set of results of scientific trials on variants of a NetGrid Nephrops trawl design submitted by the UK and in particular to assess the extent that both variants of the design can be expected to reduce the catches of whitefish that are frequently caught and discarded from the North Sea nephrops fishery. In particular STECF are asked to comment on the overall reduction in the catches (both landings and discards) of other commercial species likely to be achieved by this trawl and on the extent to which both variants of the design can be expected to retain catches of nephrops.

6.11. Additional management measures for the Baltic cod stocks

Background

In 2014, ICES provided the assessment of the Baltic cod stocks indicating that additional specific measures are needed to address the poor state of the Baltic cod stocks.

As regards Baltic cod in subdivisions 22-24, ICES stated that different reproductive units exist in different subdivisions. There is a need to reduce the risk of local depletion of the western Baltic population spawning in subdivision 22. To this end, ICES recommended several possible approaches to reduce fishing mortality for the spawners in subdivision 22. These are:

- "a) a temporal and spatial spawning closure in Subdivision 22, with the appropriate timing (i.e. February–April) and area (deeper than 20 m);
- b) a separate (sub-)TAC for Subdivision 22 (as for the Downs component in North Sea herring);
- c) additional effort restrictions in Subdivision 22."⁶

As regards Baltic cod in subdivisions 25-32, ICES stated that there may be a need for additional measures to protect the older cod stock, therefore it advised to reduce the fishing pressure on pelagic stocks in subdivisions 25-26.

In addition, ICES highlighted uncertainties in the assessment of the cod stocks caused by e.g. mixing between eastern and western cod stock in subdivision 22 and pointed out that a separate resident stock in subdivision 22 might exist.

Request to the STECF

⁶ ICES Advice, May 2014, 8.3.2. Cod in Subdivisions 22-24, p 5

STECF is requested to assess, comment and elaborate on the above measures recommended by ICES. In particular STECF is asked to:

- For the period of 2007-2013 to identify catch and effort levels of relevant stocks in relevant subdivisions where additional measures are to be applied. The catch and effort levels have to be presented by month and by gear;
- Identify the percentage of cod caught in area deeper than 20 m and area shallower than 20 m of subdivision 22 on the basis of 2013 data and further specifying the most common gears used and the months when the catch was made;
- Identify the best timing for fisheries closure in Subdivision 22 in order to protect cod spawners;
- Provide for a possible separate (sub-)TAC level for cod to be established for 2015 in subdivision 22;
- Provide for a specific effort levels restricting cod fishery in subdivision 22 for 2015;
- Comment on the appropriateness to change the definition of eastern and western cod stocks, as well as to quantify the catches (in tonnes) of eastern cod in subdivisions 22, 23 and 24 made in 2013.

Also, STECF may propose any other alternative measures, if any, that it deems appropriate in order to improve the state of the Baltic cod stocks.

6.12. Dutch proposal to amend the timing of the triennial North Sea Mackerel egg-survey, from 2014 to 2015

Background:

The EC guidelines on NP modifications sets out: 'Member States wishing to make the following type of amendment to their National Programme for the year N+1 should submit their proposed amended National Programme to the Commission:

- Modification of surveys or pilot studies that have an effect on the temporal aspects (continuity of survey series), spatial aspects (coverage), technical aspects (change in gear, technology) or financial aspects of the National Programme.

(...)In their amended National Programme, Member States should provide a justification for each proposed amendment and a description of the impact this will have on the data quality and coverage.'

The Netherlands has requested to amend the timing of the triennial North Sea Mackerel egg-survey, from 2014 to 2015 with the following justification:

'This year, the triennial North Sea Mackerel egg-survey was scheduled in the Dutch National Programme for the duration of 3 weeks, starting early June. Due to the Norwegian withdrawal from this survey, The Netherlands scheduled a 4th week to sufficiently cover the entire spawning period. This matter has been discussed with DG MARE support at various occasions. However, while under way, the Dutch Research vessel had to call port in Norway due to severe technical problems. Despite hard work by the vessel's engineers as well as experts from the vessel's shipyard, the technical problems could not be solved within the timeframe the survey had to be

executed. As the survey has to take place during the spawning season, the timing of this survey is crucial to its success.

Several solutions were investigated, including replacing the vessel by another vessel. Despite various options, no adequate solution could be found within the required time frame. This left no other option but to cancel the survey for 2014. As this survey is crucial to the perception of the North Sea component of the mackerel stock, The Netherlands plans to postpone the entire survey to 2015 as was discussed with and agreed upon by the mackerel assessment and data experts. The vessel owner indicated to be able to facilitate the survey in 2015. The relevant ICES groups have been informed on this situation as well.'

Terms of References

STECF is requested to evaluate whether such a shift will have scientific implications and whether carrying out this survey with 1 years delay still has value compared to not doing it at all. The remaining question from the DCF and National Programme point of view is whether this postponement requires a resubmission of the Dutch multi-annual programme for 2015-2016.

6.13. Fishing effort ceilings allocated in Sole and Plaice fisheries of the North Sea

Background

In accordance with Article 9 of the Council Regulation (EC) No 676/2007 establishing a multiannual plan for fisheries exploiting stocks of plaice and sole in the North Sea the maximum level of fishing effort available for fleets where either or both plaice and sole comprise and important part of the landings or where substantial discards are made should be adjusted to avoid that planned fishing mortalities rates are exceeded.

The Commission has to request STECF advice on the maximum level of fishing effort necessary to take catches of the plaice and sole. When preparing the advice STECF should take into consideration TAC advice and follow the Regulation (EC) No 676/2007. Similar advice was requested from STECF in the previous years.

Terms of References

STECF is requested:

1. to advise on the maximum level of fishing effort necessary to take catches of the plaice and sole equal to the EU share of the TACs adopted according to the multiannual plan for plaice and sole in the North Sea (R (EC) No 676/2007);
2. to report on the annual level of fishing effort deployed by vessels catching plaice and sole, and to report on the types of fishing gear used in such fisheries;
3. to provide the ranking of the gear groupings as provided in Annex IIa of the FO regulation according to contributions of those gears to plaice and sole (separately) catches and landings in 2013.

6.14. Design of at sea surveys on Mauritanian octopus fisheries

The STECF is requested to review and to provide its advice on the report released under the STECF *ad hoc* contract with EU internal reference on the design of at sea surveys on Mauritanian octopus fisheries.

This report should provide for:

- establishing an inventory of indicators facilitating the monitoring and the evaluation of such a spatiotemporal management strategy. Among others, these indicators should inform the scientists on:
 - a. the status and the changing conditions of the West African upwelling,
 - b. the recruitment level and its variability (Recruitment Index),
 - c. the abundance level of the population and its fluctuations (Abundance Index).
- describing the methods and means – including the means at sea - which would be needed to collect data directly related to the establishment of these indicators, taking more particularly into account:
 - a. the access to remote sensing data and the possible use of scientific and / or professional naval resources,
 - b. the different components of the white cape octopus population, inshore and offshore,
 - c. the possibility of establishing both fisheries dependent and fisheries independent indices.

6.15. Request to the STECF to rank the effort groups under the cod plan fishing effort regime according to their contribution to cod catches in 2013

Background

Article 12 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 establishing a long-term plan for cod stocks sets out the rules for adjusting each year the maximum allowable fishing effort.

In accordance with paragraph 4 of the aforementioned article 12, the annual adjustment should apply to the effort groups where the cumulative catch calculated according to paragraph 3(b) of the same article is equal to or exceeds 20%. It is therefore necessary to compile a list of the aggregated effort groups and their corresponding cod catches, including discards. This list should be arranged in ascending order of cod catch in each effort group.

Terms of References

The STECF is requested to provide the Commission with the absolute and percentage cumulative catch calculated in accordance with article 12(3) of the cod plan. The effort groups should be ranked according to their contribution to cod catches, including discards, in 2013.

ANNEX A: EWG 14-04 AND 14-05- AER OF EU FLEETS

1. Background

Following the 2014 DCF call for economic data on the EU fishing fleet, EWG 14-04 and 14-05 are requested to analyse and comment on the economic performance of the EU and national fishing fleets between 2008 and 2012; and 2013 where relevant.

The two main objectives for the 2014 AER are to increase qualitative interpretation of all data outputs and bring the report more "up to date".

- Quality of data remains essential. Data quality checks and data validation tools will be applied by the JRC. Experts will receive the data tables for the national and regional analyses, already validated where possible, on the first day of the meeting. Past experience suggests that some quality issues will remain (errors that can only be identified by those with specific knowledge of the data) and therefore experts are requested to check for further errors and report on these whilst carrying out the various tasks.
- Time saved by the experts as a result of not having to carry out specific quality checks on MS DCF data submissions will enable an increased qualitative interpretation of the economic data analysed in the report.
- The 2014 AER will follow a more analytical approach and contain qualitative information and analysis on the drivers and trends in fleet economic performance and other aspects of policy relevance. For this, questions on the major drivers and issues affecting fleet economic performance, such as market prices, capacity imbalance, decommissioning, discards/high-grading, poor stock recruitment/stock recovery situations, ITQs systems, certification, MPAs, etc., should be asked consistently at all levels of analysis, i.e. fleet segment level, national level, regional level, and overall EU level. Furthermore, trends will be based on longer data series: generally 5 years of DCF data including DCR data, prepared previously by the JRC, where applicable.

Increased qualitative interpretation of the data outputs requires sufficient attendance of experts knowledgeable in Member State specific fleet economic performance issues, while a more 'up-to-date' report requires that MS provide the data necessary to successfully undertake the calculations.

- The regional analysis will be further improved, particularly in terms of the level of disaggregation (in some instances it may be necessary to make assumptions about the allocation of costs and earnings for fleet segments operating in two or more sea basin areas).
- Another improvement will be bringing the report more 'up-to-date' by providing, where possible, robust estimates of 2014 economic performance using the latest available data (2014 agreed quota and effort restrictions).

- EWG 14-04 must prepare a long summary of the AER report 2014 to be included at the beginning of the report but which can also be published as a stand-alone STECF document if necessary⁷.
- EWG 14-04 is requested to quality check, analyse and summarise economic, social and technical balance indicators produced by JRC for the period 2008-2012/13. The procedure will be as follows:
 - 1) JRC calculates the economic, technical and social indicators plus the number of inactive vessels⁸
 - 2) Under an ad-hoc contract, the SHI and SAR indicators are calculated and checked using the methodology used by the balance group
 - 3) The figures produced in step 1 are provided to the first EWG 14-04 in order to check these before being submitted together with the provided step 2 to STECF for written procedure on 11 April (or shortly after).
 - 4) DG MARE sends the estimates, if endorsed by STECF, to Member States to be used in the fleet reports.

2. OUTLINE OF THE 2014 AER

STECF is requested to provide the Annual Economic Report on EU fleets for 2014 including, the following sections:

- STECF OBSERVATIONS
- EXPERT WORKING GROUP REPORT
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (this should be a long, less technical version prepared in a way so that it can stand alone if necessary and of course based on the analysis conducted in the chapters below)

• EU FLEET OVERVIEW

- EU FLEET STRUCTURE
- EU FLEET FISHING ACTIVITY AND OUTPUT
- EU FLEET EMPLOYMENT AND AVERAGE SALARIES
- EU FLEET ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE
 - section on resource efficiency examining aspects such as energy use and labour productivity (key indicators)
 - section on EU small-scale fleet segments (key socio-economic indicators)
 - section on EU long distant water fleets (key socio-economic indicators)
- ASSESSMENT FOR 2013 AND 2014

⁷ See 2013 AER summary document as example

⁸ Confirmation on the calculation of RoFTA will be needed from MARE. Last year the procedure was to calculate RoFTA without considering the opportunity cost of capital and hence, RoFTA was compared to the risk-free long term interest rate

- REGIONAL ANALYSES
 - BALTIC SEA
 - MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA
 - NORTH ATLANTIC
 - NORTH SEA AND EASTERN ARCTIC AREA
 - OTHER REGIONS

- NATIONAL CHAPTERS
 - Section on small-scale fleet segments in each national fleet

- ANNEX (METHODOLOGIES, GLOSSARY, ETC)

3. ANNEX

Relevant documents

- The Economic Performance of the EU Fishing Fleet (AER)
[2013-09_STECF 13-15 - AER EU Fleet 2013_JRC84745.pdf](#)
- Summary of the 2013 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet
[2013-09_STECF 13-18 - AER Summary_JRC84741.pdf](#)
- Assessment of balance indicators for key fleet segments and review of national reports on Member States efforts to achieve balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities (EWG 13-11)
[2013-11_STECF 13-28 - Balance capacity_JRC86350.pdf](#)

ANNEX B: EWG 14-06: FISHING EFFORT PART1

ANNEX C: EWG 14-07: EVALUATION OF 2013 MS DCF ANNUAL REPORTS & DATA TRANSMISSION

Note that for items 1 and 2 below, a pre-screening exercise will take place to facilitate the work of the EWG.

1. Evaluate Member States Annual Reports for 2013 in accordance with Article 7.2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008, taking into account;
 - a. The execution of the National Programmes for 2013
 - b. The quality of the data collected by the Member States

2. Evaluate Member States transmission of DCF data to end users in 2013 based on information from end users and Member States' clarifications & explanations in response to the end-user feedback.

Particular attention will be paid to:

a. Response by MS to calls for data launched by the Commission in order to feed into scientific advice provided by STECF:

- Aquaculture data call,
- Annual Effort data call,
- Fleet economic data call,
- Processing industry data call,
- Mediterranean & Black Sea data call.

b. Data transmission to end-users in 2013 with a focus on feedback on data availability, quality, gaps and the data used in the scientific advisory process provided by ICES, GFCM, IOTC, WPCFC and other RFMO to where scientific fishery data is mandatorily submitted by MS; The EWG should produce for every Member State a) an evaluation of the annual report in the (excel) template provided by the Commission b) an evaluation of the data transmission to end users in the (excel) template provided by the Commission. In these two files, the EWG should identify the comments that require a reaction by the MS (resubmission of the annual report or clarification to the Commission) and those that are 'for information' only.

3. Evaluate how the exercise of Annual Report preparation and evaluation by STECF could be simplified in future, including through electronic filling in, and pre-screening of the Annual Reports, simplification of the Annual Report formats taking into account the achievements and conclusions from the STECF EWG 13-25.

Annex D: STECF EWG 14-08: Review of scientific advice for 2015 - part 2

1. Background

According to Article 2 of Commission Decision 629 of 26 August 2005 establishing a Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries, STECF shall provide annual advice on the situation of fishery resources relevant to the EU. The second part of the stock advice focuses on stocks and associated fisheries in the North Sea, North-Western Waters, South Western Waters, Deep Sea and Widely distributed and migratory stocks.

Terms of Reference

The STECF is requested to review and comment on the scientific advice released so far in 2014 in particular for the stocks specified below. The text of previous STECF reviews of stocks for which no updated advice is available shall be retained in the report in order to facilitate easy reference and consultation.

STECF is requested, in particular, to highlight any inconsistencies between the results of its assessment and the advice delivered by scientific advisory committees of ICES and RFMOs.

In addition, when reviewing the scientific advice from ICES, and any associated management recommendations, STECF is requested to take into account Harvest Control Rules adopted in any type of multi-annual management plan and rules and principles for the setting of TACs as

specified in the Commission Communication to the Council concerning a consultation on Fishing Opportunities for 2015 (COM(2014) XXX final – see supporting documentation.

ICES has been asked to provide advice option taking into account new regulations concerning landing obligations (Article 15 of CFP); STECF is requested, when reviewing this advice, to also comment on it.

Similarly, for data-limited stocks, ICES has been requested to use the available data, together with basic principles, information from comparable cases and expert knowledge in order to provide the best possible advice on the level of landings, or catches when possible, corresponding to MSY, using quantitative, semi-quantitative or qualitative methods as appropriate. Most of this advice is not expected to change in comparison with last year. As last year, STECF is requested to review this advice on data-limited stocks, in particular those which were re-examined or re-opened by ICES.

✓ **Eco-Region 1: North Sea**

- **DG Mare focal person:** Peter Hopkins, Unit E2
- Stocks of
 - Anglerfish in ICES Divisions IIIa & Vb , Subareas IV, VI, XII & XIV
 - Brill in the North Sea
 - Cod in ICES Subarea IV, ICES Divisions VIID and IIIa (Skagerrak)
 - Cod in ICES Division IIIa (Kattegat)
 - Dab in the North Sea
 - Flounder in the North Sea
 - Grey Gunard in the North Sea
 - Haddock in ICES Subarea IV and ICES Division IIIa (Skagerrak & Kattegat)
 - Herring in ICES Division IIIa and Subdivisions 22-24 (Western Baltic Spring spawners)
 - Herring in ICES Division IIIa, Subarea IV and Division VIId (North Sea Autumn spawners)
 - Horse Mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus*) in ICES Division IIIa (eastern part), IVb, IVc & VIId
 - Lemon Sole in the North Sea
 - Mackerel in the North Sea
 - Megrim in the North Sea
 - *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Division IIIa (Functional Units 3 & 4)
 - *Nephrops norvegicus* in Norwegian Deep (Functional Unit 32)
 - *Nephrops norvegicus* in divisions IVa, Noup (Functional Unit 10) and Moray Frith (Functional Unit 9)
 - *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Division IVa, Fladen ground (Functional Unit 7)
 - *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Division IVb, Firth of Forth (Functional Unit 8) and Farn Deep (Functional Unit 6)

- *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Divisions IVb & IVc, Botney Gut / Silver Pit (Functional Unit 5) and Off Horn Reef (Functional Unit 33)
- Norway Pout in ICES Subarea IV & ICES Division IIIa (Skagerrak & Kattegat)
- *Pandalus* stocks
- Plaice in the ICES Subarea IV
- Plaice in the ICES Division VIIId
- Plaice in ICES Division IIIa
- Pollack in the North Sea
- Rays and skates in the North Sea
- Red Gurnard in the North Sea
- Red Mullet in the North Sea
- Saithe in the ICES Subarea IV, ICES Division IIIa and ICES Subarea VI
- Sandeel in ICES Division IIIa (Skagerrak & Kattegat)
- Sandeel in ICES Subarea IV
- Sandeel in the Shetland area
- Seabass in the North Sea
- Sole in ICES Division IIIa
- Sole in ICES Subarea IV
- Sole in ICES Division VIIId
- Sprat in the North Sea
- Spurdog
- Turbot in the North Sea
- Whiting in the ICES Subarea IV and ICES Division VIIId
- Whiting in ICES Division IIIa
- Witch in the North Sea

✓ **Eco-Region 2: Celtic Sea and West of Scotland**

- **DG Mare focal persons:** Laurent Markovic, Unit C2
- Stocks of
 - Anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius* & *L. budegassa*) in Divisions VIIb-k, VIIIa & VIIIb
 - Cod in ICES Division VIa
 - Cod in ICES Division VIb
 - Cod in ICES Division VIIa
 - Cod in ICES Divisions VIIb,c,e-k VIII,IX,X,CECAF 34.1.1 (EU)
 - *Galeorhinus galeus* in ICES Subareas VI & VII
 - Greenland Halibut in the Western waters
 - Grey Gurnard in the Western waters
 - Haddock in ICES Division VIa
 - Haddock in ICES Division VIb
 - Haddock in ICES Division VIIa
 - Haddock in ICES Divisions VIIb-k, VIII, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EU)
 - Northern stock of Hake
 - Herring in ICES Divisions VIIa-South & VIIb-k

- Herring in ICES Division VIa-North
- Herring in Celtic Sea and ICES Division VIIj
- Herring in ICES Division VIIa-North (Irish Sea)
- Megrims (*Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis* & *L. boscii*) in ICES Divisions VIIb, VIIc, VIIe-k, VIIa, VIIb & VIId
- Megrims (*Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis* & *L. boscii*) in ICES Subarea VI
- *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Divisions VIIb, VIIc VIIj & VIIk
- *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Divisions VIIf, VIIg & VIIh (Functional Units 20-22)
- *Nephrops norvegicus* in ICES Division VIa (Functional Units 11, 12, 13)
- *Nephrops norvegicus* in Functional Units 14 & 15
- Norway pout in ICES Division VIa
- Plaice in ICES Division VIIa
- Plaice in ICES Divisions VIIb & VIIc
- Plaice in ICES Division VIIe
- Plaice in ICES Divisions VIIf & VIIg
- Plaice in ICES Divisions VIIh-k
- Plaice in ICES Divisions Vb (EU waters), VI, XII, XIV PLE/56-14
- Pollack in ICES Division VII
- Pollack in in ICES divisions VI & VII
- Red Mullet in the Western waters
- Sandeel in ICES Division VIa
- *Scylliorhinus canicula* and *Scylliorhinus stellaris* in Subareas VI and VII
- Seabass in the Western waters
- Sole in ICES Division VIIa
- Sole in ICES Divisions VIIb & VIIc
- Sole in ICES Divisions VIId & VIIe
- Sole in ICES Divisions VIIf & VII
- Sole in ICES Divisions VIIh-k
- Sole in ICES divisions Vb(EC), VI, XII, XIV
- Sprat in ICES Divisions VIId & VIIe
- Whiting in ICES Division VIIa
- Whiting in ICES Divisions VIIe-k
- Whiting in ICES Division VIa
- Whiting in ICES Division VIIb
- Whiting in ICES Division VIII
- Rays and Skates in ICES Subareas VI & VII
- *Other demersal elasmobranches West of Scotland*

✓ **Eco-Region 3: Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters**

- DG Mare focal person: Rodrigo Ataide Dias, Unit C2
- Stocks of
 - Anchovy in ICES Subarea VIII
 - Anchovy in ICES Division IXa

- Anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius* & *L. budegassa*) in ICES Divisions VIIIc & IXa
- *Galeorhinus galeus* in ICES Subareas VIII, IX and X
- Grey Gurnard in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- *Horse Mackerel* in CECAF areas (Madeira Island)
- *Horse Mackerel* in CECAF areas (Canary Islands)
- *Horse Mackerel* in ICES subarea X (Azores Islands)
- Megrim (*Lepidorhombus boscii* & *L. whiffagonis*) in ICES Divisions VIIIc & IXa
- Norway lobster in ICES division VIIIc
- Norway lobster in ICES divisions VIIIa, b, d & e
- Norway lobster in ICES divisions IX and X; CECAF 34.1.1 (EU)
- Pollack in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- Plaice in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- Rays and Skates in ICES Subareas VIII & IX
- Red Gurnard in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- Red Mullet in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- Sardine in ICES Divisions VIIIc & IXa
- Saithe in ICES divisions VII, VIII, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EU)
- *Scyliorhinus canicula* and *Scyliorhinus stellaris* in Subareas VIII, IX & X
- Seabass in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- Sole in ICES Divisions VIIIa & VIIIb
- Sole in ICES divisions VIIIc, d & e, IX, X, CECAF 34.1.1 (EU),
- Southern stock of Hake in ICES Divisions VIIIc & IXa
- Southern Horse Mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus*) in ICES Division IXa
- Southern Mackerel component of NEA Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*)
- Whiting in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters
- *Other demersal elasmobranches in the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Waters*

✓ **Eco-Region 4: Icelandic and East Greenland**

- **DG Mare focal person:** Frederik Schutyser, Unit C2
- Stocks of
 - Greenland cod
 - Greenland halibut
 - Herring in ICES subareas I & II (Norwegian Spring spawners)
 - Icelandic cod
 - Icelandic haddock
 - Icelandic saithe
 - Icelandic Capelin
 - Icelandic summer spawning herring
 - *Sebastes mentella* in ICES Subareas V, VI, X, XII & XIV, NAFO Subareas I & II
 - *Sebastes mentella*

✓ **Eco-Region 5: The Barents Sea and the Norwegian Sea**

- **DG Mare focal person:** Frederik Schutyser, Unit C2
- Stocks of
 - Capelin
 - Greenland halibut
 - Northeast cod
 - Norwegian coastal cod
 - Northeast Arctic haddock
 - Northeast Arctic saithe
 - *Sebastes marinus* in ICES Subareas I & II
 - *Sebastes mentella* in ICES Subareas I & II
 - Shrimp

✓ **Eco-Region 6: Faeroe plateau ecosystem**

- **DG Mare focal person:** Frederik Schutyser, Unit C2
- Stocks of
 - Cod in ICES Subdivision Vb1
 - Cod in ICES Subdivision Vb2
 - Haddock in ICES Division Vb (including extra catch option requested by Commission – see below)
 - Saithe in ICES Subdivision Vb

✓ **Widely distributed and migratory stocks**

- **DG Mare focal persons:** Frederik Schutyser, Unit C2
- Part 1
 - Stocks of
 - Alfonsinos / Golden eye perch (*Beryx* spp.)
 - Black scabbard fish in ICES Divisions Vb, XIIb and Subareas VI and VII
 - Black scabbard fish in ICES Subareas VIII and IX
 - Black scabbard fish in other areas
 - Blue Ling in ICES Division Va & ICES Subarea XIV
 - Blue Ling in ICES Division Vb & ICES Subareas VI & VII
 - Blue Ling in ICES Subareas I & II, ICES Division IIIa & IVa, ICES Subareas VIII, IX & XII
 - *Blue shark (Prionace glauca) in the North-east Atlantic*
 - Blue whiting in ICES Subareas I-IX, XII & XIV
 - Blue whiting in ICES Subareas IIa
 - Blue whiting in ICES Subareas Vb, VI, VII
 - Blue whiting in ICES Subareas VIIIabd
 - Blue whiting in ICES Subareas VIIIe
 - Blue whiting in ICES Subareas VIIIc, IX, X
 - Boarfish in ICES divisions VI, VII, VIII (EU)

- *Catsharks and nursehounds (Scyliorhinus canicula and Scyliorhinus stellaris) in the North-east Atlantic*
- Deep-water fish (several species) in IVA, IIIa, Vb, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and XII.
- European eel
- Forkbeard spp.
- Great silver smelt in ICES Division Va
- Great silver smelt in ICES Subareas I & II, ICES Division IIIa, ICES Subarea IV, ICES Division Vb, ICES Subareas VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XII & XIV
- *Horse mackerel in ICES Divisions IIa, IVa, Vb, VIa, VIIa-c,e-k and VIIIa-e*
- Kitefin shark in ICES Subareas I-XIV
- Leafscale gulper shark
- Ling in ICES Subareas I & II
- Ling in ICES Division Va
- Ling in ICES Division Vb
- Ling in ICES Divisions IIIa & IVa & ICES Subareas VI, VII, VIII, IX, XII & XIV
- Northeast Atlantic spurdog
- Northeast Atlantic portbeagle
- Northeast Atlantic basking shark
- Northeast Atlantic Mackerel - combined Southern, Western and North Sea spawning components
- Orange roughy
- Portuguese dogfish and leafscale gulper shark in ICES Subareas I-XIV
- *Rays and Skates in the North-east Atlantic*
- Red seabream in ICES Subarea IX
- Red seabream in ICES Subarea X (Azores)
- Red seabream in ICES Subareas VI, VI and VIII
- Roundnose grenadier in ICES Division Vb, Subareas VI & VII, ICES Division XIIb
- Roundnose grenadier in on the Mid-Atlantic ridge
- Roundnose grenadier in ICES Division IIIa
- Roundnose grenadier in all other areas
- *Thresher sharks (Alopias vulpinus & Alopias superciliosus) in the North-east Atlantic*
- *Tope (Galeorhinus galeus) in the North-east Atlantic*
- Tusk in ICES Subareas I & II
- Tusk in ICES Division Va and Subarea XIV
- Tusk in ICES Division IIIa, ICES Subarea IV, ICES Division Vb & VIa & XIIb, ICES Subareas VII, VIII, IX
- Tusk in ICES Division VIb
- Tusk in ICES Subarea XII excluding XIIb

2. Request for STECF opinion on the offshore cod stock in the Greenland area (ICES subarea XIV and NAFO Subarea 1)

Background

The ICES advice (June 2013) for the offshore cod stock in Greenland (ICES subarea XIV and NAFO subarea 1) indicates that based on precautionary considerations there should be no offshore fishery in 2014 to improve the likelihood of establishing offshore spawning stocks in West and East Greenland. This advice is the same as for 2013.

The government of Greenland established a TAC of 5000t for 2013 and adopted a management plan for 2014 with a TAC of 10000t. The fishery can only take place under exploratory conditions as defined by the plan. These conditions include a closed season and fishing activity is only permitted in the southernmost area of West Greenland and in East Greenland. Also, the plan contains technical measures to distribute the fishing effort between four geographical areas and has a mandatory biological sampling in close collaboration with the Greenlandic Institute of Natural Resources.

Regarding the stock definition, ICES and the Greenlandic Institute of Natural Resources have indicated that based on genetic studies the current stock delimitation might not correspond to the biological spawning populations.

Terms of reference

For the cod stock distributed in Greenland in the offshore area (ICES subarea XIV and NAFO subarea 1) STECF is requested to provide opinion on the management plan adopted by the government of Greenland, including:

- assessment on whether the proposed technical measures (permitting fishing in a limited area) are likely to have any impact on catches and exploitation rate
- assessment on whether the provisions of the plan for data collection are adequate for future scientific purposes to undertake assessments/evaluation of the plan