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Evaluation of DCF National work plans
for 2017–2019 (STECF–16–25)

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Abstract

Commission Decision of 25 February 2016 setting up a Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries, C(2016) 1084, OJ C 74, 26.2.2016, p. 4–10. The Commission may consult the group on any matter relating to marine and fisheries biology, fishing gear technology, fisheries economics, fisheries governance, ecosystem effects of fisheries, aquaculture or similar disciplines. This report deals with the evaluation of DCF National work plans for 2017-2019.

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SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEE FOR FISHERIES (STECF)

Evaluation of DCF National work plans for 2017 – 2019 (STECF-16-25)

THIS REPORT WAS REVIEWED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE IN NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2016

Request to the STECF

STECF is requested to review the report of the STECF Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting 16-16, evaluate the findings and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

Background provided by the Commission

Under the EMFF, the Member States Operational Programmes must be supplemented by a work plan for data collection (Reg. 508/2014, Article 21), which will replace the National Programme. The content of those plans shall be consistent with Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No199/2008. The deadline for submission of work plans by Member States to COM for the first time was on 31st October 2016 in a specified format. The STECF EWG 14-17 (Hamburg, 20-24 October 2014) carried out preliminary work on the basic elements of National Work Plans, reviewed in the STECF Plenary (PLEN 14-03, Brussels, 10-14 November 2014). This was followed by STECF EWG 16-01 (Hamburg, 07-11 March 2016) reviewed in the STECF Plenary (PLEN 16-07, Brussels, 11-15 April 2016). The basic principles of the template were presented in the Expert Group on Fisheries Data Collection, held on the 12th of February in Brussels, followed by a second Expert Group on Fisheries Data Collection, held on the 2nd of May in Brussels. The Work Plan template was adopted on 19 August 2016. The evaluation criteria for the Work Plans were discussed in relevant DCF groups (Regional Coordination Meetings, Liaison Meeting) and were compiled by a number of ad-hoc contracts. In addition, the COM compiled the general principles to be followed during the evaluation.

Observations of the STECF

The EWG 16-16, chaired by E. Sabatella and C. Stransky, met in Ispra, Italy, from 7-11 November 2017 to evaluate the National Work Plans (WPs) of Member States for 2017-2019 in terms of conformity and scientific relevance.

STECF observes that supporting material to perform the analyses the EWG was provided in addition to the WP tables and documents of all MS: the results of the pre-screening of WPs, an overview document by the Commission on the evaluation procedure (EWG 16-16 doc. 2), the ad-hoc expert reports on evaluation criteria and STECF Plenary 16-03 observations, STECF reports on the evaluation of Annual Reports and Data Transmission, a FAQ document by the Commission, reports of regional grants (MARE/2014/19) and ad-hoc expert reports on socio-economic variables.

Pre-screening of Work Plans

The pre-screening output was provided in the evaluation form as provided by DG MARE, as individual files per MS by WP section groupings (Commercial fisheries, Recreational fisheries and bycatch, Anadromous catadromous species, Research surveys and coordination, Transversal and socio-economic parts).

STECF notes that the WP pre-screening took place only shortly before the STECF EWG 16-16, from 31 October to 7 November 2016. Therefore, the documents from pre-screeners were available from the second day of the EWG meeting through a web FTP platform.

STECF notes, however, that the pre-screening exercise was affected by a lack of standardisation among the different sections of the evaluation forms and in some cases were incomplete. In addition, pre-screeners were asked to use categories similar to those being used for the evaluation of DCF Annual Reports (yes, no, mostly, partly, etc.), but there was no clear procedure yet for the use of such categories since for the WPs it was not clear if the categories were just the level of compliance with the template or even the scientific relevance of the data to be covered and/or the quality of proposed methods and procedures.

Evaluation procedure

STECF notes that the EWG 16-16 followed a two-stage approach:

- 1st part: technical evaluation on the basis of the pre-screening process taking place before the EWG 16-16, dealing with the evaluation criteria identified by the ad-hoc expert reports;
- 2nd part: overall evaluation on the basis of the general principles and specific checkpoints.

STECF notes that regarding to the technical evaluation of WPs, the EWG 16-16 produced one evaluation results sheet for every Member State, addressing both stages listed above

STECF observes that regarding the overall evaluation of WPs, the EWG decided to:

- include at the beginning of the evaluation form, an "overall compliance" to address the issues of compliance with the EU MAP and of the presentation of the Work Plan in accordance with the template;
- set up a table with a link between the checkpoints and the corresponding part of the evaluation form applied under the 1st part of the evaluation;
- delete all the checkpoints that relate to coverage, quality issues, fulfilment of end-user needs, etc., which cannot be quantified at the moment or are subject to future regional co-ordination (Regional WPs).

STECF acknowledges this approach.

STECF notes that the EWG 16-16 also considered the checkpoints for the 2nd part of the WP evaluation, proposed by DG MARE and commented them with respect to EWG use with the respective links to the evaluation form used (Table 2). STECF finds the EWG conclusions on use or not-use of proposed checkpoints justified and well commented. STECF finds the EWG 16-16 comments useful for future improvement of the AWP evaluation process.

EWG 16-16 Comments for future improvements of the evaluation procedure and Work Plan Template

STECF acknowledges that the EWG 16-16 provided a number of comments/proposals for future improvements of the evaluation procedure and Work Plan Template.

With respect to **general comments**, STECF agrees with the EWG stating that the questions put together by ad-hoc experts with regard to the evaluation criteria were missing a full review for consistency across all sections, and were too many. For example, the first objective could be to evaluate if all sections of the EU MAP were addressed for all regions. The second objective could be linked to the availability of details of the WPs enabling the subsequent filling of the same metrics for the evaluation of Annual Reports. The third objective could be linked to the quality of the proposed actions. STECF notes that the objectives of the evaluation process should be better specified and the questions drafted accordingly.

Furthermore, STECF notes that the inconsistencies in the naming convention between the tables, and even within the same table, complicated and lengthened the evaluation process. The filling of these tables with fixed entries in a database(-like) system would ease the evaluation process and enable multi-year analyses of MS's WPs.

Also, it became obvious that parts of the WP tables have to be prepared in the regional context (by Regional Coordination Groups = RCGs).

With respect to **biological sections**, STECF acknowledges the initiative to develop an internationally standardized filling of Table 1A should be continued and tested for the benefits of all MS. An R script has been developed and used for this purpose by the EWG and should be further explored and checked for consistency.

STECF notes that where low numbers of individuals are reported for a species in the tables, it is unlikely that this will be sufficient for any end-user assessment. STECF agrees that only those stocks representing sufficient statistical robustness should be reported in WP. Any numbers should be agreed regionally and mentioned as such.

STECF further agrees that if MS are sampling under **statistically sound sampling schemes**, the **numbers from commercial sampling are not useful**, and should be replaced by the 'effective sample size', which remains to be defined explicitly.

In Tables 1A–1C, species should be listed at the species level and not aggregated at higher taxonomic levels, since the EU MAP requires that these are reported at species level. This will allow easier comparison between plans and sampling performed during the evaluation of Annual Reports.

STECF notes that it was not clear to the EWG if information on **Research Surveys at Sea** (in the tables and text boxes) should be provided only for the surveys a MS plans to carry out itself or also for surveys that a MS plans to contribute to (financially or offering manpower). Therefore, the EWG recommends that MSs add a line in Table 1G and refer to MS(s) conducting the actual survey for detailed information (e.g. number of samples). All MSs participating in a survey should also add a text box, at least stating the MS contribution to the survey and a reference to WP of MS(s) conducting the survey. Consequently Table 1G, the column 'Participation of MS' should include the other MSs participating in the survey and their respective contribution. STECF agrees with these proposals.

Fisheries-based biological sampling

STECF observes that some countries reported on-shore and at-sea sampling in the same frame, as authorized by the WP template guidelines, but this prevented the EWG the appropriate evaluation of the proposed plan.

For Table 4A, the WP template allows for including a combination of both 'at market' and 'at sea' sampling in the same row. The EWG recommends that these are separated into different rows.

The STECF notes there is an inconsistency in the planned deadlines for delivery of fishery-dependent (catch) data (Tables 1, 4 and 6A of Member States' 2017-2019 National work plans) for the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean and Black Seas. The planned deadlines for such data are 31st March for the North Atlantic and 30th June for the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Furthermore, the availability of fishery independent (survey data) for surveys in the Mediterranean are planned for 31st March (MEDIAS acoustic survey) or 30th April (MEDITS) of the following year.

The Commission will wish to be aware that the planned deadlines for delivery of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and survey data will inevitably affect the ability of the STECF to provide timely and reliable short-term catch forecasts for stocks in these sea areas, especially those for short-lived small pelagic stocks such as sardine and anchovy. To provide such forecasts and advice, the Mediterranean fishery-dependent data and survey results would need to be made available earlier (i.e. 31st of March) than currently specified in Member States' National work plans, thus allowing all STECF assessments to be performed and reviewed within the year. This issue is also commented in details in STECF-16-14 (section 6)¹.

Fishing activity and socio-economic variables

STECF observes that the EWG 16-16 proposed a number of amendments to the respective WP tables that should be considered when improving the Work Plan template in future. As a general comment, most common problems were inconsistent coding, sometimes missing or inappropriate variables. These issues could be easily solved with a database(-like) system to allow the filling of tables with fixed entries.

STECF also notes that the present design of the work plan does not allow for checking whether MS adequately cover all existing fleet segments including number of vessels, and aquaculture segments.

Conclusions of the STECF

STECF concludes that the EWG-16-16 fully addressed all terms of reference. STECF endorses the findings and conclusions presented in the EWG 16-16 report and in the electronic annex (the Work Plan evaluation sheets by Member State).

The STECF considers that pre-screening process has been a useful tool helping in highlighting problems like non-compliance with the WP template and missing information.

STECF concludes that the objectives of the evaluation process should be better specified and the questions drafted accordingly.

¹ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Methodology for the stock assessments in the Mediterranean Sea (STECF-16-14); Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg; EUR 27758 EN; doi:10.2788/227221

STECF concludes that the initiative to develop an internationally standardised filling of Table 1A should be continued and tested for the benefits of all MS. An R script has been developed and used for this purpose and should be further explored and checked for consistency.

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EXPERT WORKING GROUP EWG-16-16 REPORT

REPORT TO THE STECF

**EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON
Evaluation of DCF National work plans for 2017 -
2019
(EWG-16-16)**

Ispra, Italy, 7-11 November 2016

This report does not necessarily reflect the view of the STECF and the European Commission and in no way anticipates the Commission's future policy in this area

1 INTRODUCTION

The STECF Expert Working Group (EWG) 16-16 met in Ispra, Italy, from 7 to 11 November 2016 to evaluate Member States' (MS) national Work Plans (WPs) under the Data Collection Framework (DCF) for the years 2017-2019.

The work was conducted by 33 independent experts (30 invited plus 3 JRC; the list of participants is included in section 4. The Terms of Reference are presented below and the agenda is included in Annex 1.

1.1 Terms of Reference for EWG-16-16

The aim of this EWG is to evaluate the national Work Plans 2017-2019 in terms of conformity and scientific relevance.

Background

Under the EMFF, the MS Operational Programmes must be supplemented by a work plan for data collection (Reg. 508/2014, Article 21) , which will replace the National Programme. The content of those plans shall be consistent with Article 4(2) of Regulation (EC) No199/2008 . The work plan will be submitted by Member States to COM for the first time on 31st October 2016 in a specified format. In case a WP is submitted, the Commission shall approve it by implementing act (Article 21). The STECF EWG 14-17 (Hamburg, 20-24 October 2014) carried out preliminary work on the basic elements of National Work Plans, reviewed in the STECF Plenary (PLEN 14-03, Brussels, 10-14 November 2014). This was followed by STECF EWG 16-01 (Hamburg, 07-11 March 2016) reviewed in the STECF Plenary (PLEN 16-07, Brussels, 11-15 April 2016). The basic principles of the template were presented in the Expert Group on Fisheries Data Collection, held on the 12th of February in Brussels, followed by a second Expert Group on Fisheries Data Collection, held on the 2nd of May in Brussels. The Work Plan template was adopted on 19 August 2016. The evaluation criteria for the Work Plans were discussed in relevant DCF groups (Regional Coordination Meetings, Liaison Meeting) and were compiled by a number of ad-hoc contracts. In addition, the COM compiled the general principles to be followed during the evaluation. Both documents will be discussed in the STECF Plenary (PLEN16-03, Brussels, 24-28 October 2016), in order to produce a final version to be used in this EWG.

Tasks for the EWG

The evaluation of Work Plans will make use of a 2-stage approach.

1) Technical evaluation: a pre-screening exercise will take place between 1-7 November, using the reports of the ad hoc contracts

2) Overall evaluation: The EWG will finalize the technical evaluation, where needed, and will evaluate the Work Plans, based on the general principles and specific checkpoints provided.

Experts are invited to evaluate Member States Work Plans for 2017-2019 in accordance with Article 6.1 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/20082, taking into account:

- the conformity with the contents of Articles 4 and 5 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008

- the scientific relevance of the data to be covered by member States Work Plans for the purposes laid down in Article 1 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008. In addition, experts are invited to pay particular attention to the new data requirements as set in the EU MAP
- the quality of the proposed methods and procedures

The EWG should produce for every Member State: (i) an evaluation of the work plan in the two templates provided by the Commission (technical and overall evaluation) (ii) Member State-specific issues relating to data collection as described in the Work Plan.

The evaluation will be based on the evaluation criteria as finalized during STECF PLEN16-03.

1.2 Structure of the report

Sections 2 and 3 present the results produced by the STECF-EWG 16-16. Section 2 contains a description of the preparation and evaluation process of the EWG, while in section 3, future improvements for the WP template and evaluation are proposed, based on the EWG observations. The detailed evaluation results by MS are given in Annex 3.

2 EVALUATION OF MEMBER STATES' WORK PLANS FOR 2017-2019

The Work Plan (WP) evaluation criteria have been developed by ad-hoc experts during October 2016 (see section 2.1), endorsed by STECF Plenary 16-03 (24-28 October 2016) and used by the pre-screeners (see section 2.2).

2.1 Preparation of evaluation criteria

Based on Article 6 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008, STECF is responsible for evaluating the Work Plans of Member States, in terms of conformity to content set by this Regulation, scientific relevance of the data to be covered and quality of proposed methods and procedures.

The process for the evaluation of the Work Plans was discussed in STECF Plenary 16-02 and a timeline for the evaluation procedure was proposed. According to this timeline, the preparation of evaluation criteria for the workplans included the following steps:

- Regional Coordination Meetings (RCMs) and Liaison Meeting (LM) 2016 provided input on key elements for evaluating the workplans;
- Six experts were requested by DG MARE through ad-hoc contracts to compile the relevant technical elements for the evaluation of the WP, based on input from RCMs/LM 2016 and available scientific information;
- DG MARE compiled general principles and specific check points to guide the Commission for adopting the workplans.

The ad-hoc contracts covered the relevant sections of the WP and were issued according to the following blocks of contents:

- Stock-based biological sampling: Tables 1A, 1B, 1C
- Recreational fisheries and bycatch: Tables 1D and 1F; Pilot studies 1 and 2
- Anadromous catadromous species: Table 1E and Text Box 1E
- Research surveys at sea: Tables 1G and 1H, Text Box 1G
- Transversal and socio-economic part: Sections 2 and 3, Table 5B
- Commercial fisheries sampling: Section 4 and Table 5A
- Data availability and coordination: Sections 6 and 7

STECF Plenary 16-03 reviewed the evaluation criteria and evaluation form for the DCF Work Plans.

As a result of this process, the evaluation criteria as suggested by the ad-hoc contracts were used by DG MARE to compile the evaluation template applied during the pre-screening of Work Plan (see section 2.2). The final evaluation forms applied by EWG are presented under section 2.5 and in Annex 2.

2.2 Pre-screening of Work Plans

Prior to the STECF EWG 16-16 evaluation, the WP issues have been evaluated by a pre-screening group that worked on ad-hoc contracts issued by DG MARE.

20 experts pre-screened the WPs. The task allocation among the experts was split by sections as follows:

- Commercial fisheries: Tables 1A, 1B, 1C; Section 4 and Table 5A
- Recreational fisheries and bycatch: Tables 1D and 1F; Pilot Studies 1 and 2

- Anadromous catadromous species: Table 1E and Text Box 1E
- Research surveys and coordination: Tables 1G & 1H, Text Box 1G; Tables 6A and 7A
- Transversal and socio-economic part: Sections 2 and 3, Table 5B

The WP pre-screening took place directly before the STECF EWG 16-16, from 31 October to 7 November 2016. Therefore, the documents from pre-screeners were available from the second day of the meeting to all the experts through a web FTP platform.

The pre-screening output was provided in the evaluation form as provided by DG MARE, as individual files per MS according to the section groups listed above.

The EWG considers that pre-screeners provided useful comments to help in the final evaluation. They helped in highlighting problems like non-compliance with the WP template and missing information.

However, the pre-screening exercise was affected by a lack of standardisation among the different sections of the evaluation forms (some sections being more detailed in terms of evaluation criteria and other sections being more generic). In addition, pre-screeners were asked to use categories similar to those being used for the evaluation of DCF Annual Reports (yes, no, mostly, partly, etc.), but there is no clear procedure yet for the use of such categories. In the Annual Report evaluation, the categories are based on the level of implementation of the National Programme, while for the WPs, it is still to be clarified if the categories are just the level of compliance with the template or even the scientific relevance of the data to be covered and/or the quality of proposed methods and procedures.

2.3 Formation of sub-groups and task allocation

The evaluation of WP 2017-2019 was split by sub-groups and experts were allocated to each sub-group according to their expertise. Each sub-group was tasked with the assessment of particular sections of the WP according with the table below.

Table 1 – Allocation of sections by sub-group and expertise

Sections	Sub-group	Expertise
Biological sampling of stocks and fisheries (sections 1A, 1B, 1C; sections 4, 5A and 7B&7C)	1	Biologists
Recreational fisheries, anadromous & catadromous species, by-catch (sections 1D, 1E, 1F; Pilot studies 1 & 2)	2	Biologists
Research surveys at sea (sections 1G and 1H), Data availability (section 6A) and meetings (section 7A)	3	Biologists
Transversal data (section 2); economic & social data on fisheries (sections 3A and 5B; Pilot study 3)	4	Economists
Economic & social data on aquaculture and fish processing (sections 3B, 3C and 5B; Pilot study 4)	5	Economists

2.4 Background information

To carry out the evaluation, the EWG was provided with the WP tables and documents of all MS, the pre-screening results and access to supporting information, such as the overview document by the Commission on the evaluation procedure (EWG 16-16 doc. 2), the ad-hoc expert reports on evaluation criteria and STECF Plenary 16-03 observations, STECF reports on the evaluation of Annual Reports and Data Transmission, a FAQ document by the Commission, reports of regional grants (MARE/2014/19) and ad-hoc expert reports on socio-economic variables.

For a full list of background documents, see Section 7.

2.5 Evaluation forms

Based on the ad-hoc expert reports on evaluation criteria (see Section 7), an evaluation form for WPs was prepared by the Commission and further developed during the EWG. From the >100 checkpoints proposed, the EWG selected those that are in the scope of the STECF and that could be evaluated with the available expertise and information within the given timeframe.

The actual checkpoints that have been used by the EWG are listed by section in Annex 2.

The following compliance classes have been used:

Compliance class	Compliance level
No	<10%
Partly	10-50%
Mostly	50-90%
Yes	>90%
NA	not applicable

2.6 Evaluation procedure

Based on the summary document provided by the Commission and revised by STECF Plenary 16-03, the evaluation of Work Plans (WP) followed a two-stage approach:

- 1st part: technical evaluation on the basis of the pre-screening process taking place before the EWG 16-16, dealing with the evaluation criteria identified by the ad-hoc expert reports;
- 2nd part: overall evaluation on the basis of the general principles and specific checkpoints.

The EWG finalized the first step (technical evaluation) according to the following procedures:

- preparation of the evaluation forms, as described in section 2.5;
- review of the pre-screening results, focusing on topics where the pre-screeners have raised a problem/or where the pre-screeners' final assessment of a particular point has revealed to be contentious;
- development of an overall evaluation by section with the indication of: a) the judgement (yes/mostly/partly/no), b) comments to explain the judgment and c) actions needed to address the issues.

Regarding the second part, specific checkpoints suggested by DG MARE were reviewed and discussed. As a result of this revision, EWG decided to:

- include, at the beginning of the evaluation form, an “overall compliance” to address the issues of compliance with the EU MAP and of the presentation of the Work Plan in accordance with the template;
- set up a table with a link between the checkpoints and the corresponding part of the evaluation form applied under the 1st part of the evaluation (see below).
- delete all the checkpoints that relate to coverage, quality issues, fulfilment of end-user needs, etc., which cannot be quantified at the moment or are subject to future regional co-ordination (Regional WPs).

On the basis of this procedure, EWG produced the detailed evaluation results by MS that are given in Annex 3.

Table 2: Checkpoints for the 2nd part of the WP evaluation, proposed by DG MARE, with comments on their EWG use and links to the evaluation form used (Annex 2).

1-3 GENERAL PRINCIPLES	
1	The Work Plan should reflect the legal obligations of the concerned Member State.
1.1	Is the Work Plan in line with the EU MAP?
1.2	Is the Work Plan in accordance with the template?
1.3	Is the Work Plan in accordance with international obligations of the Member State and the EU?
2	Does the Work Plan satisfy regional specificities and management needs (eg. long-term management plans, international obligations, structure of fleets and fisheries, discard plans, ecosystem-based management etc.)?
3	The Work Plan should document a situation that is at least the same or improved compared to the past. No stepping back.
3.1	Does the Work Plan show improvement in areas where a Member State has shown difficulties in the past ?
3.2	Does the quality assurance framework describe accurately the current situation in the Member State?
3.3	Does the quality assurance framework foresee an improvement of the current situation within the next 3 years?
4 COLLECTION OF BIOLOGICAL DATA	

Used as overall evaluation question on top of the evaluation form (Annex 2).

Used as overall evaluation question on top of the evaluation form (Annex 2).

Not used, as this is covered by the EU MAP.

Not used, as this is subject to agreements on a regional level.

Not used, as the structure of the National Programmes following Decision 2010/93/EU is not comparable with the structure of the Work Plans.

Not used, as checked under section 5 of the evaluation form used (Annex 2).

Not used, as checked under section 5 of the evaluation form used (Annex 2).

4.1	Does the sampling design reflect regional specificities and needs, international obligations and management needs ?	Not used, as this is covered by the EU MAP and subject to agreements on a regional level.
4.2	Is coverage in the sampling of stocks consistent across Work Plans of the same marine region ?	Not used, as this is subject to agreements on a regional level.
4.3	Is sampling through observers on board sufficient and multi-purpose and does it allow for collection of biological data on stocks, data on discards and data on by-catch?	Not used, as checked under sections 1 and 4 of the evaluation form used (Annex 2).
4.4	Are the thresholds for collection of biological data correctly applied? Is the source of data used for the calculation of thresholds in Table 1A of the Work Plan clearly stated by the Member State?	Not used, as the provision of the data source was not requested in the WP template (see report section 3.1).
4.5	Are the thresholds for participation in research surveys correctly applied? Is the source of data used for the calculation of thresholds in Table 1A of the Work Plan clearly stated by the Member State?	Not used, as subject to regional arrangements (see report section 3.2 on research surveys, „Thresholds for carrying out/participating in a survey at sea“). The provision of the data source was not requested in the WP template (see report section 3.1).
5	SPECIFIC SEGMENTS OF THE FLEET	
5.1	Recreational fisheries: Are all mandatory species of Table 3 of the EU MAP included in the Work Plan? If not, are the reasons for not sampling clearly stated and accepted?	Not used, as checked under section 1D of the evaluation form used (Annex 2).
5.2	Recreational fisheries: Will the Work Plan deliver, in two years from now, information on all existing recreational fisheries , based on the list of mandatory species of Table 3 of EU MAP and the pilot studies of the Work Plan?	Not used, as checked under section 1D of the evaluation form used (Annex 2).
5.3	Small scale fisheries: Does the collection of data for small scale fisheries show improvement in terms of coverage and quality , compared to the past?	Not used, as the structure of the National Programmes following Decision 2010/93/EU is not comparable with the structure of the Work Plans.
6	AQUACULTURE AND PROCESSING	
6.1	Are the thresholds for aquaculture correctly applied?	Used in the evaluation form (Annex 2) under section 3B.

3 COMMENTS FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND WORK PLAN TEMPLATE

3.1 General comments

The **data sources** for filling the WP tables should be requested in the WP template, preferably in a separate table and/or Text Box providing details on the data sources.

During pre-screening of the WPs, it became obvious that parts of the WP tables have to be prepared in the **regional context** (by RCGs).

The **questions put together by ad-hoc experts** with regard to the evaluation criteria were missing a full review for consistency across all sections, and were too many. **The objectives of the evaluation process should be better specified** and the questions drafted accordingly. For example, the first objective could be to evaluate if all sections of the EU MAP were addressed for all regions. The second objective could be linked to the availability of details of the WPs enabling the subsequent filling of the same metrics for the evaluation of Annual Reports. The third objective could be linked to the quality of the proposed actions. The inconsistencies in the naming convention between the tables, and even within the same table, complicated and lengthened the evaluation process. **The filling of these tables with fixed entries in a database(-like) system** would not only ease the evaluation process but also to enable multi-year analyses of MS's WPs to be conducted.

The experience gained from this first evaluation of the WPs should be used to **review the set of reporting tables and text boxes** (WP template) for the future.

Future evaluation criteria questions should be worded so that Yes is always positive (good), and No is always negative (bad).

3.2 Biological sections

Tables 1A, 1B and 1C (Stock-based biological sampling)

Particular attention was given to the **list of selected species**, compared to known international databases and agreements (Eurostat, MARE/FIDES TAC, RCM Med & LP landings compilation). Consistencies between the three tables were checked.

The initiative to develop an internationally standardised filling of Table 1A should be continued and tested for the benefits of all MS. An R script has been developed and used for this purpose and should be further explored and checked for consistency.

Where **low numbers of individuals** are reported for a species in the tables, it is unlikely that this will be sufficient for any end-user assessment. It should be noted that this is usually related to data collected from surveys and can be as a result of species scarcity within the survey area, selectivity of the gear used or a standard survey protocol being used as the collection strategy. To a more limited extent, this could also be the case for commercial samples. The group was of the opinion that only those stocks with sufficient statistical robustness should be reported. Any numbers should be agreed regionally and mentioned as such.

If MS are sampling under **statistically sound sampling schemes** (4S), the **numbers from commercial sampling are not useful**, and should be replaced by the 'effective sample size', which remains to be defined explicitly. Concerning the surveys, several countries reported that they are sampling according to a protocol rather than putting in target minimum numbers of fish. Reporting with just the sampling strategy makes it very difficult to ascertain the effective sample size. Further discussions on the correct metrics to use for these variables is required and should be discussed in one of the statisticians' fora of ICES or in an STECF EWG on data quality.

In future, all MS should separate out the collection of biological variables by commercial fisheries and surveys and not combine as a single line in the Table 1C.

Regional sampling plans for **ICATT species** are to be developed during forthcoming Regional Co-ordination Groups (RCGs), so it was acceptable to have zero sampling numbers in Table 1C, but the stocks were to be selected for sampling in Table 1A and a plan put in place in Table 1B.

The **naming convention for the regions** was found problematic, probably due to the confusing reference to EU MAP Table 5C in the WP template. A clear naming convention should be developed.

In the FAQ document (see Section 7), the **merging of the years** in the 3-year period 2017-2019 was authorised, but this is thought to be problematic when comparing with the tables of the Annual Report, if some coding was to be used for the analysis.

When MS listed **additional stocks (below thresholds) to be sampled**, this is acceptable and welcome, as end-users sometimes expect to continue sampling. The threshold is meant to prioritise sampling and MSs should be allowed to sample all stocks that are relevant in the end-user context.

For Table 1C, improvements for the future would be to **insert the end-user needs** for biological data on the different biological parameters in this table and report on planned number on a regional scale. The Number of individuals sampled for the biological parameters by MS should only be presented in the Annual Report.

In Tables 1A–1C, **species should be listed at the species level** and not aggregated at higher levels, since the EU MAP requires that these are reported at species level. This will allow easier comparison between plans and sampling performed during the evaluation of Annual Reports. Moreover, MS should check for misspelling of species names.

It is not clear in guidelines (WP template) how “**Threshold Y/N**” should be dealt with, since there are inconsistencies across MS. The guidance in the WP template has to be clarified or the column to be deleted. E.g. when thresholds have been used to identify stocks that a MS can justify no sampling requirement, the actual threshold rule applied should be given in the comments field. Only EU MAP thresholds should be applied.

If there is a **bilateral or RCG agreement** that covers the Region/species/stock, it would be helpful if this was also given in the comments field for evaluation needs.

It should be clarified whether Tables 1A-C in the WP are for commercial fisheries in all waters, or only marine waters. Otherwise, there could be overlaps and conflicts with e.g. section 1E.

Tables 1D, 1E, 1F and associated Text Boxes

The EWG considered the pre-screening questions but as there were 47 questions in total for these three sections, the EWG selected a subset that were thought to most importantly reflect the principles of the relevant section(s) of the EU MAP, along with new questions that merged some of the other pre-screener questions.

The EWG then made judgements for each MS entry by reviewing the pre-screening answers, cross-referencing to WP tables and text boxes where necessary for further information. The EWG made comments on issues identified, and flagged these plus suggested actions that could resolve these issues. The EWG concluded by making a general judgement for the MS for each section, and providing comments on issues and suggesting actions where necessary.

The EWG also compiled a list of suggestions for how the work plan template and guidelines could be improved to make the drafting and evaluation process more efficient in the future – see below. Some clarifications were received from the DG representatives during the meeting and these are listed as follows:

- Pilot Study 1 should be obligatory for MS that do not already survey recreational fisheries, and this pilot study should be designed to identify all species caught by recreational fisheries that could have a significant impact on stocks fished by commercial fisheries and for which there are catches and landings, or stock assessment, and therefore data needs. For MS which already conduct recreational fisheries surveys, a pilot study may be also needed to identify species caught by recreational fisheries which are not in Table 3 of the EU-MAP, but could have a significant impact on stocks fished by commercial fisheries and

for which there are catches and landings, or stock assessment, and therefore data needs. This question is pending for clarification by DG MARE.

- Pilot Study 2 should relate to PETS only, not including more general effects of fisheries on the ecosystem.

Section 1D and Pilot Study 1 (recreational fisheries)

Table 1D was designed to inform on the sampling planned by MS to cover recreational fisheries. However, the information provided by many MS is very brief and it is of limited use for a scientific evaluation of the sampling plan. In order to evaluate that the recreational surveys in place are designed in a statistically sound way, guidance is needed on the elements of the sampling plans that should be described. ICES WGRFS 2013 developed a set of guidelines for "best practice" in the design, implementation and analysis for recreational survey sampling programmes. The first column of these guidelines indicates different processes that should be described (target population, primary sampling units, sampling frame, etc.). It is recommended that the description of MS's sampling programmes for recreational fisheries include all these elements, or that a link to a manual including all the information is provided in the table. WGRFS also developed a scorecard of questions to guide the evaluation process with the main aims to capture survey improvements and highlight key issues in national surveys. This scorecard can be also useful for MS and evaluators in the process of designing, documenting and evaluating a recreational fisheries sampling plan.

It has to be clarified for MS that Pilot Study 1 should be obligatory for MS that do not already survey recreational fisheries, and this pilot study should be designed to identify all species caught by recreational fisheries that could have a significant impact on stocks fished by commercial fisheries and for which there are catches and landings, or stock assessment, and therefore data needs. For MS which already conduct recreational fisheries surveys, a pilot study may be also needed to identify species caught by recreational fisheries which are not in Table 3 of the EU-MAP, but could have a significant impact on stocks fished by commercial fisheries and for which there are catches and landings, or stock assessment, and therefore data needs. This question is pending for clarification by DG MARE.

MS should not have to complete table entries for circumstances that make no sense. Some MS completed Table 1D for all mandatory species in all areas but then added comments that they had no recreational fisheries in certain regions. It would have been simpler if MS had limited their entries to relevant circumstances.

Section 1E (anadromous and catadromous species)

It should be clarified that EU MAP chapter III.2.c applies not only to stocks where there are fisheries but to all relevant stocks/areas regardless whether there is a fishery or not. Sea trout (*Salmo trutta*) should be included in chapter III.2.c (the section on abundance of parr, smolts, adults).

It appears from their comments that the pre-screeners thought that sea trout applied everywhere, whereas sea trout only apply in the Baltic according to Tables 1A and 1E.

It would be easier to describe (and review) the WPs for anadromous and catadromous species within a single table covering commercial and recreational fisheries, and fishery-independent requirements.

Eurostat is not the most appropriate source of catch data for anadromous and catadromous species, so auto scripts for completing Table 1A do not work well for these species. The ICES WGs

for salmon and sea trout (WGBAST, WGNAS, WGTRUTTA) and for eel (WGEEL) should be asked to recommend the most appropriate data sources.

Section 1F (incidental bycatch)

Data collection for Protected, Endangered and Threatened Species (PETS) should be described (protocols etc.). This is not explicitly requested in the tables if the MS is doing it already through existing surveys.

Tables 1G and 1H and Text Box 1G (Research surveys at sea)

Section 1G:

- 'Threshold applies' is not clear, and it is not clear what you have to report on. Guidelines should be more specific in what to do, e.g. by having some examples.
- 'Agreed at RCG level' is sometimes (correctly) interpreted as agreed on coordination group level
- Clarity is needed on whether all EU MAP Table 10 surveys have to be listed in Table 1G, or only the surveys carried out by MS.
- Following the guidelines, Area covered and Sampling period should be in line with Table 10, but often MSs only report on the area and period covered by the MS that may be more specific than defined in Table 10.
- Column header 'MS participation' should be changed into 'Type of other MS participation'
- For question 4 in Text Box 1G (*Where applicable, describe the international task sharing (physical and/or financial) and the cost sharing agreement used?*) seems that it is not well understood by some MS. They report 'Not applicable' even when a regional coordination is in place and several MS are participating in the survey
- It is recommended that for internationally coordinated surveys, there is an agreement on which are the core variables (i.e. CTD sampling activities in the same international survey, are reported as core by some MS, and as additional by other MS) – see proposal below-
- Some countries report in table 1H only biological variables for some species. It is not clear if any basic information (i.e. weight) will be collected in the survey for the species different than the ones reported.

It was not clear to the EWG if information (in table and text box) should be provided for every survey a MS plans to contribute to or for every survey a MS plans to carry out itself? E.g. should all MSs contributing to ASH and IBWSS provide a text box on these surveys? It is recommended that MSs add a line in Table 1G and refer to MS(s) conducting the actual survey for detailed information (e.g. number of samples). All MSs participating in a survey should also add a text box, at least stating the MS contribution to the survey and a reference to WP of MS(s) conducting the survey.

In Table 1G, the column 'Participation of MS' should include the other MSs participating in the survey and their respective contribution. Recommended format: type of participation followed by the MSs participating in that way. Example (F=financial contribution, C=conducting the survey): F: DEU, ESP, FRA, GBR; C: IRL, NLD.

Currently, the MS should state the name of the international database. If no international database exists, MS should be asked to describe how survey data are being made available for the end-user.

Suggestions for improvement of evaluation exercise and table consistency

Survey planning groups (ICES area: WGBIFS, IBTSWG, WGMEGS, WGBEAM, WGIPS, WGIDEEPS//MEDBS: MEDIAS and MEDITS WGs) should be asked to supply standard information for:

- Table 1G:
 - MS participation; type of participation indicated by MSs participating in a survey
 - Type of core sampling activities
 - Relevant international planning group
 - International database
- Text Box 1G:
 - Reference to manual(s)
 - International task sharing and cost sharing agreement
- Table 1H:
 - Core variables
 - Used as basis for advice

Suggestions for improvement of WP template tables

Table 1G:

- Additional column stating the location of the manual (hyperlink)
- Column for the actual year(s) the survey will be carried out. If that is not possible, then it is recommended that MS add the survey year(s) between brackets. This is especially relevant for biennial and triennial surveys.

Table 1H:

- Additional column for what advice data is used.

Thresholds for carrying out/participating in a survey at sea

The threshold for carrying out a survey is not easy to determine, as many surveys target multiple species, for some of which thresholds may apply, while for other species, no threshold applies. The risk of strictly applying thresholds without any cost-sharing model arranging participation of all MSs having to sample a stock will be that MSs not having to sample certain species may decide not to contribute to a survey without clear appointments about MS contributions in surveys. Therefore, the continuity and/or (spatial/temporal) coverage of the surveys is at risk. The Liaison Meeting 2016 recommendation LM 16 mentions an intersessional group that is going to propose a cost-sharing model for surveys. It is recommended that for future work plans (2018 onwards), this aspect can be evaluated in relation to the cost-sharing agreements.

Tables 4A-D and Text Box 4A (Fisheries-based biological sampling)

A particular attention was given to the **consistencies of information** between all tables. The **move towards 'Statistically Sound Sampling Schemes' (4S)** was assessed through the existence of a list of PSUs upon which random samples can be drawn, the existence of a sample selection procedure in the Text Box 4A and a sound stratification developed (no over-stratification or spreading of small numbers of samples across many strata).

Some countries reported **on-shore and at-sea sampling in the same frame**, as authorized by the WP template guidelines, but this prevented the appropriate evaluation of the proposed plan. When this issue occurred, this was not marked negatively, but the statement was made that the evaluation could not be carried out entirely, even though MS had followed the guidelines.

The principal difficulty of evaluating the **consistency between these tables** came from the scattered information of different statistics in Tables 4A, 4C and 4D. It would be preferable to concentrate the numbers of PSUs in the total population in one table, the target population and

the planned samples, together with the PSU type. A second table with the total landings would also be informative, with the disaggregation types to be discussed.

For Table 4A, the WP template allows for including a combination of both 'at market' and 'at sea' sampling in the same row. The EWG recommends that these are separated into different rows.

Where MS go into detail when describing sampling plans, they should try to ensure that the **information provided is clear and unambiguous** to aid the assessment.

Sampling frames should not be based on a list of only cooperative vessels – this introduces bias and loses data on refusal rates.

Table 4A and 4B should be merged into one single table. This would allow for a better overview of the sampling frame and sampling plan and ease the preparation and evaluation of the information.

To aid comparison between Tables 4A and 4B, Tables 4C and 4D should contain a column giving sampling frame as a link to Fleet segment / métier.

Table 5A

The questions on **data quality** were relatively easy to evaluate: accessible documentation, recording of non-response rates and storage in national and international databases. In case documentation was indicated as being available in internal networks or user-restricted websites, the EWG demanded to put it on a public website within the 3-year period. Also the non-response rates should be implemented during the 3-year period if not available. MS should specify a year when missing documentation will be available in the 3-year period. The EWG feels that priority should be given to providing documentation relating to sampling design, data capture and data processing where this is currently not available.

For international **databases**, the EWG acknowledged that there was no such database in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. It was not considered compliant when a MS reported uploading their data to an aggregated international database (e.g. InterCatch). It is also recognised that when uploading to the RDB, data checks are in place which is not taken into consideration by some MS in the WP table submission. At national level, storage in Excel files was not considered a database. Several countries referred to international workshops or expert groups and this was not considered sufficient. In this case, the comment was to develop their own protocol and make reference to these international fora in the protocols. The exception to this rule was the reference to ICCAT manuals and rules.

Table 6A (Data availability)

The WP template guidance only asks for data listed in tables 1B, 1E, 2A, 3A, 3B (and 1I-but that's a non-existing table). It is however recommended to also report on 1D (recreational fisheries) and 1H (surveys).

In the WP template, the guidance for the column "Reference year" is: 'MS shall refer to the year of the foreseen collection of data'. Is this correct or should it be 'MS shall refer to the year the sampling is based upon'?

Table 7A

To evaluate if MS have listed all "relevant expert groups related with sampling of biological variables", a list of groups related with sampling of biological variables in all areas should be made available. For the ICES area, WGCATCH, WGBIOP and WGRFS have been given priority. For all areas, the relevant RCMs/RCGs and PGECON are to be listed.

3.3 Fishing activity and socio-economic variables

Amendments of Work Plan template

Table 2A

The WP template for Table 2A should include also a “variable” column, not only “variable group” (WP is meant to be the standard against which the Annual Report (AR) is compared and the AR will probably contain data by variable).

The Métier column is questionable; it should not be mandatory to be filled as not all MS sample by métier, but also by fleet segment.

Data collection schemes may change within a length class (mainly logbooks that are available for vessels >8m in the Baltic); in this case, it should be clarified how the differing sampling schemes are reported. Should it be reported using the standard length class from the Regulation (“0-<10m”) with some additional explanatory text in the comment and/or text box, or should it be reported using the actual threshold (i.e. “0-<8m”)? It would be preferable to allow the use of length classes which differ from the standard segmentation (i.e. using thresholds which refer to the Control Regulation, like 8m for logbooks in the Baltic).

The header “Planned coverage of data collected under complementary data collection (% of fishing trips)” in Table 2A does not appear to be applicable in all cases, e.g. when sampling is performed on a vessel basis. “% of fishing trips” should be changed in “% of fishing trips or % of fishing vessels”.

Table 3A

Table 5A of EU MAP (Reg. 1251/2016) requests data related to fleet capacity (variable group “Fleet”). These data are available under the Control Regulation and are reported in WP table 2A, therefore they might not be requested under WP table 3A.

Whenever we suggest excluding certain variables from the NWP, this does not mean they are not to be provided by MS. As long as variables are listed in Reg. 1251/2016 MS has to collect them. It is just that for some variables no further details on the collection are required as these details are covered under different legislation (mainly Control Regulation).

In the same line, data collected under other legislation i.e. Control Regulation or EUROSTAT, should not be addressed in Table 5B (quality).

Table 3B

According to EU MAP, there are different levels of threshold that could have different implications in data collection. In particular, the following types of threshold are allowed:

- total production of the Member State is less than 1 % of the total Union production volume and value
- for species accounting for less than 10 % of the Member State's aquaculture production by volume and value
- simplified methodology for Member States with a total production of less than 2,5 % of the total Union aquaculture production volume and value
- no environmental data on aquaculture where the total aquaculture production of the Member State is less than 2,5 % of the total Union aquaculture production volume and value

In addition, freshwater aquaculture is optional. This situation creates different interpretation by MS and it is difficult to verify if thresholds are correctly applied. Table 3B should allow to discriminate different types of thresholds.

Table 3C

Table 3C should allow to identify variables already available under Structural Business Statistics (SBS). This could be possible by adding a specific column requiring if for each segment the variable is already collected and available within SBS.

Text Boxes 2A, 3A, 3B

It is recommended to revise the questions stated in the text boxes as they are ambiguous and do not necessarily address the intended issues.

Some headings are misleading. For example: "Description of methodologies used to choose the different sources of data" should be changed into "Description of the different sources of data".

The order of the headings should also be changed. For instance, information on type of data collection should be requested before the information on data sources.

Text box 3B should include an ad-hoc section to inform if a threshold is applied and to justify it according to the EU MAP.

Table 5B

In Table 5B instead of "Name of data collection scheme" the "Name of the section" should be provided (fleet, aquaculture, fish processing).

Table 5B should be regarded a preliminary starting point for further development on quality assurance, being amended by relevant bodies, e.g. PGECON. Over time a number of reference documents should be developed serving as a standard reference for quality assurance which is applicable to all MS (e.g. for statistical procedures <the repeatedly recommended handbook on statistics>, raising/estimation procedures, sampling schemes etc.).

Suggestions for improvement of the evaluation form and evaluation procedure

- As a general comment, most common problems were inconsistent coding, sometimes missing or inappropriate variables. These issues could be easily solved with a database(-like) system to allow the filling of tables with fixed entries.
- Individual questions for section 2 and section 3A are considered appropriate and allow an efficient evaluation of the WP.
- A specific question should be added for section 3B to evaluate if a MS applied a threshold according to the EU MAP.
- A specific question should be added for section 3B to evaluate if all variables are included in the respective table.
- A specific question should be added for section 3C to verify if only variables not collected under SBS are included. Some Member states did not explicitly specify if processing data collection is planned. MS should include all possible variables, for completeness, listed in Table 11 (Reg. 1251/2016) and indicate which variables they plan to collect to assist with work programme evaluation. According to WP template, only data not covered by SBS should be included. However, it cannot be easily evaluated at the moment. Table 3C should allow to identify variables already available under SBS.
- The second question in 5B has to be deleted because it is not appropriate.
- A row with overall judgement for the whole sector has to be included.
- The work plan does not allow for checking whether MS cover all existing fleet segments including number of vessels.

The work plan does not allow for checking whether MS cover all existing aquaculture segments incl. number of vessels.

4 CONTACT DETAILS OF EWG-16-16 PARTICIPANTS

¹ - Information on EWG participant's affiliations is displayed for information only. In any case, Members of the STECF, invited experts, and JRC experts shall act independently. In the context of the STECF work, the committee members and other experts do not represent the institutions/bodies they are affiliated to in their daily jobs. STECF members and experts also declare at each meeting of the STECF and of its Expert Working Groups any specific interest which might be considered prejudicial to their independence in relation to specific items on the agenda. These declarations are displayed on the public meeting's website if experts explicitly authorized the JRC to do so in accordance with EU legislation on the protection of personnel data. For more information: <http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/adm-declarations>

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5 ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Draft agenda for EWG 16-16 (4 Nov 2016)

Daily timetable

Morning session: 9h – 13h (Tue, Wed, Thu and Fri)

Afternoon Session: 14h – 18h (Mon, Tue, Wed, and Thu)

Breaks: 10h45 and 15:45h

Monday, 07 November

Afternoon Session (14h-18h):

Welcome and housekeeping

Presentation & discussion on ToR and agenda

Introduction from the Commission (Venetia Kostopoulou)

Subgroup formation

Perform a joint assessment of a chosen WP, by 2 sub-groups:

1) biological data; 2) transversal, economic & social data

Plenary: set a common assessment ground, calibration of criteria and principles across subgroups.

Tuesday, 8 November

Morning Session:

Sub-groups

Afternoon Session:

Sub-groups

17h00 – 18h00: Plenary session

Wednesday, 9 November

Morning Session:

Sub-groups

Afternoon Session:

Sub-groups

17h30 – 18h00: Plenary session

Thursday, 10 November

Morning Session:

Plenary: Report by Sub-groups (expected final results to be presented by SG).

Afternoon Sessions:

Parallel sessions:

MS final overview and collation of SG outputs (Each expert work individually on the assigned MS).

Friday, 11 November

Morning session (9h-12h)

Plenary: Presentation & Discussion on the results

Draft Report

Annex 2 – Evaluation template for National Work Plans, with specific and general checkpoints

Member State:

WP year: 2017-2019

Version:

Column headings: EWG judgement / Comments / Action needed

OVERALL COMPLIANCE

- **Is the Work Plan in line with the EU MAP?**
- **Is the Work Plan in accordance with the template?**

TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE

SECTION 1 BIOLOGICAL DATA

1ABC. Commercial catches

Table 1A:

- Compared to the common agreed reference tables, are all stocks required to be sampled by MS identified in Table 1A?
- Are justifications provided for not sampling a required stock? are these justifications acceptable?
- Is there one or several supplementary stocks, not identified in DC-MAP Table 1A, identified for sampling? Are justification for the addition of these stocks acceptable?
- Did MS follow the guidelines for filling Table 1A?

Table 1B:

- Are all stocks selected for sampling in Table 1A listed for a sampling plan in Table 1B?
- Are all necessary required parameters ticked?
- Did MS follow the guidelines for filling Table 1B?

Table 1C:

- Are all stocks, years and parameters planned for sampling in Table 1B listed in Table 1C?
- Are the data sources acceptable?
- Are the planned number of individuals or alternative indicator proposed acceptable?
- Did MS follow the guidelines for filling Table 1C?

1D. Recreational fisheries (incl. Pilot Study 1)

- Are all mandatory species, found in Table 3 of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1251, included in Table 1D of the work plan?
- Where a mandatory species is not sampled, is a rigorous scientific explanation to support this decision, provided and documented?
- Are all sectors contribution to the total catch, harvest or release well-known and documented?
- Are the aims, duration, methodology and expected outcomes of the Pilot Study well described and scientifically acceptable?

1E. Anadromous and catadromous species data collection in fresh water

- Are there any circumstances where the MS has indicated Not Applicable but the species ought to be present?

- If the species is present but not sampled, is a reason provided and does this seem reasonable based on expert opinion?
- Column Life stage: Are data to be collected from commercial fisheries of eel, salmon and sea trout in freshwaters, listed?
- Is the sampling scheme appropriate or is a Pilot study proposed?

1F. Incidental by-catch of birds, mammals, reptiles and fish; Level of fishing and impact of fisheries on biological resources and marine ecosystem (incl. Pilot Study 2)

- Is the stratum ID code and scheme in this table matching tables 4A and 4B?
- Is there PETS sampling included in the table?
- Are the aim, duration, methodology and expected outcome of the pilot study well described and scientifically acceptable?

1GH. Research surveys at sea

Table 1G:

- Do the name and acronyms match the official naming as in table 10 of EU MAP?
- Is the area and period described? Does it match table 10 of EU MAP?
- Are the different sampling activities included in a clear way? Are they disaggregated in different rows?
- If there is an international data base, is it well referenced?

Text Box 1G:

- Have all surveys carried out by a MS a textbox?
- Is the text box within the limits (450 words)?
- Is the design of the survey documented? Is the document accessible for the reviewer?
- Has the design of the survey been approved by an international Working Group?
- Does the map match the areas described in the table (area corresponding to the part of the survey performed by the MS)?

Table 1H:

- Are all surveys carried out by the MS included?
- Are core variables the same as in table 1G?

SECTION 2 FISHING ACTIVITY DATA

Fishing activity variables

Table 2A:

- Are all three variable groups (capacity, effort, landings) listed?
- Are all fleet segments (Fishing technique X Length class) listed which appear in table 3A of the Work Plan?
- Is the proper codification used?
- Does the “comment” column (maybe in combination with text box 2A) provide sufficient information in case of “no métiers” or coverage <100%?

Text Box 2A:

- Is a cross-validation of different sources of data sufficiently described (where applicable)? If not, what is missing?
- Is the estimation of the value of landings clearly described (where applicable)? If not, what is missing?
- Is the estimation of the average price clearly described (where applicable)? If not, what is missing?
- Is it comprehensively explained why data collected under the Control Regulation are not sufficient (where applicable)? If not, what is missing?

Only in case of collection of complementary data (Additional data collection = “Y” in table 2A):

- Is the collection of complementary data clearly described?
- Is a description provided how to guarantee that regions and segments are sufficiently covered?
- Is a description provided how the MS determines the planned coverage? If not, what is missing?

SECTION 3 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DATA

Economic and social data for fisheries

Table 3A:

- Are the segments and supra-regions listed consistent with entries in table 2A of the Work Plan?
- Are all required variables listed?
- Does the sampling rate match the collection scheme (e.g. 100% for census, <100% for pss)?
- Is the proper codification used?
- Is the proper frequency provided (annually for economic data, every 3 years starting in 2018 for social data)?

Text Box 3A:

- Are all data sources which are used (see table 3A) described concisely and do they appear appropriate? If not, what is missing?
- Are the planned types of data collection described and is it mentioned why certain types are applied? If not, what is missing?
- Are sampling frame and allocation scheme described, where applicable? If not, what is missing?
- Are estimation procedures described to derive figures for the entire segment from the sample? If not, what is missing?

Pilot Study 3:

- Does the pilot study address “Data on employment by education level and employment by nationality” as described in EU DEC. 2016/1251?
- Is the aim of the pilot study sufficiently described? If not, what is missing?
- Are the methodology and expected outcomes sufficiently described? If not, what is missing?
- Does the duration appear appropriate?
- Are all required variables listed (ref. EU DEC. 2016/1251, tables 6 and 7)?

Economic and social data for aquaculture

Table 3B:

- Does the sampling rate match the collection scheme (e.g. 100% for census, <100% for pss)?
- Is the proper codification used (ref. EU DEC. 2016/1251 table 9)?
- Is the proper frequency provided (annually for economic data, every 3 years starting in 2018 for social data)?

Text Box 3B:

- Are all data sources which are used (see table 3B) described concisely and do they appear appropriate? If not, what is missing?
- Are the planned types of data collection described and is it mentioned why certain types are applied? If not, what is missing?
- Are sampling frame and allocation scheme described, where applicable? If not, what is missing?
- Are estimation procedures described to derive figures for the entire segment from the sample? If not, what is missing?

- **Are the thresholds for aquaculture correctly applied?**

Environmental data on aquaculture (Pilot Study 4)

- Does the pilot study address “Environmental data on aquaculture” as described in 1251/2016, Table 8?
- Is the aim of the pilot study sufficiently described? If not, what is missing?
- Are the methodology and expected outcomes sufficiently described? If not, what is missing?
- Does the duration appear appropriate?

Economic and social data for the processing industry

Table 3C:

- Are all required variables listed (ref. EU DEC. 2016/1251, Table 11)?
- Are the planned types of data collection described? If not, what is missing?
- Does the sampling rate match the collection scheme (e.g. 100% for census, <100% for pss)?
- Is the proper codification used (ref. EU DEC. 2016/1251 Table 11)?
- Is the proper frequency provided (annually for economic data, every 3 years starting in 2018 for social data)

Text Box 3C:

- Are all data sources which are used (see table 3C) described concisely and do they appear appropriate? If not, what is missing?
- Are the planned types of data collection described and is it mentioned why certain types are applied? If not, what is missing?
- Are sampling frame and allocation scheme described, where applicable? If not, what is missing?
- Are estimation procedures described to derive figures for the entire segment from the sample? If not, what is missing?

SECTION 4 SAMPLING STRATEGY FOR BIOLOGICAL DATA FROM COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Sampling plan description for biological data

Tables 4A and 4B and Text Box 4A:

- Are the sampling frames split into clearly explained, logical and mutually exclusive sets of identifiable units (e.g., lists of ports or vessels) that are consistent across Tables 4A and 4B? Are the at-sea sampling strata and their PSUs consistent with those given in Table 4C? (Table 4A)
- Are the PSUs appropriately defined, and are any non-standard PSUs explained? (Table 4A)
- Are the PSUs selected using probability-based methods (for example random selection from a list of vessels) rather than non-probability based methods (for example quota sampling). (Table 4B)
- Are all population segments sampled? If not, is a valid reason given? (Table 4A)

Table 4C:

- Is the whole National fleet represented by clear, logical and mutually exclusive sets of vessels? If not is the reason for this explained?

Table 4D:

- Is the Member State able to quantify the landings from foreign vessels by landing location?

SECTION 5 DATA QUALITY

Quality assurance framework for biological data

- Is all documentation (sampling designs, data checks, data analysis) publicly available, or there is a clear plan to improve the availability of documentation within the next three years, with a scheduled date for the provision of a webpage if one is not available and an annual schedule to provide increased documentation not currently available?
- Are non-response and refusal rates recorded?
- Are data stored in a National and a regional database?

Quality assurance framework for socioeconomic data

- Is all documentation (sampling designs, data checks, data analysis) publicly available, or there is a clear plan to improve the availability of documentation within the next three years, with a scheduled date for the provision of a webpage if one is not available and an annual schedule to provide increased documentation not currently available?
- Are data stored in a National and a regional database?

SECTION 6 DATA AVAILABILITY

Data availability

- Does Table 6A include all types of data reported in the Work Plan?
- Is it possible to link each data set with the corresponding part of the WP?

SECTION 7 COORDINATION

Planned regional and international coordination

- Has MS planned its participation in:
 - RCM in the regions where it has fishing activity,
 - Coordination groups for the research surveys at sea that MS is carrying out

Follow-up of recommendations and agreements

- Are all relevant recommendations listed?
- Do follow-up actions planned answer the recommendation?

Bi- and multilateral agreements

- Is the content, the coordination, description of the sampling, data transmission, access to the vessels and validity well described for each bi- multilateral agreement?
- Have all MS participating in an agreement included it in their Work Plans?

Annex 3 – Evaluation sheets by Member State

See section 6 - electronic annexes

6 LIST OF ELECTRONIC ANNEXES

Electronic annexes are published on the meeting's web site on:

<http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/ewg1616>

List of electronic annexes documents:

EWG-16-16 – Annex 1 – Work Plan evaluation sheets by Member State (Excel file)

7 LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background documents are published on the meeting's web site on:

<http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/ewg1616>

List of background documents:

EWG-16-16 – Doc 1 - Declarations of invited and JRC experts (see also section four of this report – List of participants)

EWG-16-16 – Doc 2 – NOTE TO THE STECF PLENARY 16-03 EVALUATION OF NATIONAL WORK PLANS ON DATA COLLECTION BY STECF EWG 16-16

Evaluation criteria (6 ad hoc contracts + general principles and checkpoints) and STECF observations:

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ewg1616>

Work Plan template:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016D1701&from=EN>

EU MAP:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:207:FULL&from=EN>

Past STECF reports on DT and AR: (i) MS-specific issues, (ii) surveys

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/dcf-dcr>

FAQ document provided by COM:

<https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/faq-wp>

Reports of regional grants:

<https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/docs-links/mare-2014-19>

Ad-hoc contracts on socio-economic variables:

<https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/docs-links/socio-eco-var>

ESTAT DB on the total Union production for aquaculture:

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=fish_aq2a&lang=en

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