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Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF)

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Evaluation of DCF 2016 Annual Reports & Data Transmission to end users in 2016 & preparation for the new assessment of Annual Reports and Data Transmission (STECF-17-10)

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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 presents the STECF findings based on the Report of the Expert Working Group (EWG 17-07) which was held from 26-30 June 2017 in Gavirate, Italy to evaluate MS Annual Reports on data collection for 2016, the MS's data transmission to the end users during 2016 and to advise on potential changes and improvements needed to conduct future reviews under the recently revised data collection framework regulation (Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 – recast). The report of the EWG was reviewed by the STECF during its 55th plenary meeting.

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SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEE FOR FISHERIES (STECF) - Evaluation of DCF 2016 Annual Reports, Data Transmission to end users in 2016 & preparation for the new assessment of Annual Reports and Data transmission (STECF-17-10)

Request to the STECF

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

STECF response

Background for the EWG 17-07

The STECF Expert Working Group (STECF EWG 17-07) met in Gavirate, Italy, from the 26th to the 30th of June 2017 to assess Annual Reports (AR) for the data collected in 2016 by the 23 non landlocked Member States submitted as part of the Data Collection Framework and to evaluate Member States (MS)' transmission of DCF data collected in 2015 (and submitted according to data calls in spring 2016) based on information from end users and Member States' clarifications & explanations in response to the end users feedback.

Under the process of evaluation and approval of the outcomes of the National Programmes (NP), the European Commission is consulting STECF about the execution of the NP approved by the Commission and about the quality of the data collected by the Member States in accordance with articles 7.1 and 7.2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008.

In addition, the EWG 17-07 was requested to discuss how the methodologies used for the evaluation exercises of AR and DT (data transmission) failures can be simplified and streamlined in light of the new legislative framework and on-going technological developments.

Ten independent experts pre-screened the MS annual reports (AR) and the data compliance feedback from the end users before the EWG meeting. As an output of the evaluation of ARs and DT issues, the EWG was requested to produce for every MS: a) an evaluation of the AR in a table template provided by the Commission (EWG 17-07 Doc 1); b) an evaluation of the DT issues, commented by MS and pre-screeners, including an STECF judgment on whether the MS comments are acceptable. The evaluation process at the EWG was set up to focus 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.

STECF observations

As a general comment, STECF observes that the assessment of DT issues and the evaluation of AR should be better aligned. To date for instance, the EWG 17-07 evaluated AR on data collection activities performed in 2016, but assessed the DT issues of the data call from the previous year, which means e.g. 2015 biological data and 2014 economic data. This alignment would be needed to link data transmission failures with the corresponding annual reports, and to link those directly with any subsequent necessary amendment required in the Work Plans for the following period. .

Evaluation of Annual Reports

STECF acknowledges that despite the very tight deadline between the EWG 17-07 and the STECF plenary, the EWG report was finalized in time to be presented and reviewed.

STECF acknowledges that the EWG was able to address the terms of reference with regard to Annual Reports (AR) and Data Transmission (DT) evaluation and analysis, resulting in a list of follow-up actions to be addressed by MS.

STECF notes that the AR and DT pre-screening, as in previous years, has proven to be an important and very helpful preparation for the evaluation process. To undertake the pre-screening exercise the COM provided the pre-screening experts with an updated version of the evaluation template previously used. The updated evaluation template included new columns: (i)

'Issues addressed', (ii) 'Minor/Major Issue'. In the case of minor issues, the pre-screeners were requested to give a final judgement.

STECF observes that overall, the level of compliance of the 2016 Annual Reports with National Programs shows an improvement compared with previous years. This improvement refers both to the achievements attained by MS and to the reporting procedures. The ARs of 7 MSs reached a "mostly" (50-90%) overall compliance and ARs of 16 MSs were assessed with a "yes" (>90%) overall compliance. Last year, the overall compliance for 3 MS was "partially" (10-50%), the ARs of 6 MSs reached a "mostly" (50-90%) overall compliance and ARs of 14 MSs were assessed with a "yes" (>90%) overall compliance.

STECF observes that there is a need to improve the communications between STECF and the other bodies involved in the implementation of the DCF. So far, outcomes of ARs evaluations have mainly be used into bilateral discussions between COM and MSs. But STECF considers that the outcomes of the evaluation process are also useful to identify gaps in data collection at the regional level, comparing activities and achievements among MSs fishing in the same region. STECF suggests thus that the outcomes of the evaluation could also be addressed with the appropriate regional groups such as the RCG's, PGECON and others.

Evaluation of data transmission (DT) issues

Regarding the assessment of data transmission issues, STECF notes that, as in previous years, the online compliance platform provided by the JRC on the DCF website facilitated the work of the experts. Some improvements to this platform are suggested in the conclusions.

STECF notes that, compared to previous years, the number of DT issues has decreased. This trend was due to improvements in MS data collection and transmission but, also, to a different approach applied by ICES in 2016. ICES has increased the direct communication with MS's on DT failures, and filtered out miscommunication or inappropriate failures prior to the STECF-EWG 17-07. STECF agrees with EWG that this has been a useful approach for improving data transmission as the number of outstanding DT failures was much reduced, and all failures could be evaluated. STECF also observes that in some cases the DT issue identified by an end-user is not always clearly and explicitly described.

STECF observes that no feedback on data transmission was received from the GFCM Secretariat. Representative of the GFCM Secretariat informed EWG that within the context of the new Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF), the implementation of tentative data quality indicators (i.e. conformity, stability and consistency indicators for data quality checks with preliminary thresholds) have been approved by the GFCM Compliance Committee (CoC) in January 2016; once consolidated these will allow a more comprehensive assessment of the submitted data.

STECF conclusions

STECF concludes that the EWG 17-07 report adequately addresses all Terms of References. STECF endorses the findings presented in the report.

In addition, the STECF discussed the following:

Evaluation of Annual Reports

- The overall AR evaluation process has improved over the past years through the use of pre-screeners and the progressive evolution of the evaluation sheets. In particular, the new columns added in 2017 evaluation template were considered useful. However, the process still requires various manual cross-checks between tables and checks on formatting and editorial issues. STECF again (cf. EWG 14-17, 15-10, PLEN 16-02) concludes that there is an urgent need for online reporting and automatic checking tools for effective and efficient compilation and monitoring of ARs;
- The evaluation procedure for the AR under the EU MAP 2017-2019 has to be revised according to the new amended regulation framework. STECF suggests that the format and guidelines for Annual Reports be revised before the end of 2017 to allow for implementation by Member States during early 2018;

- A traffic light table by regions could be added in the EWG evaluation report in order to introduce a regional component in the evaluation, which would ease the communication of the AR assessment results to the Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs).

Evaluation of data transmission (DT) issues

- The online platform for data transmission issues should continue to be used and if possible improved according to the proposals in the EWG 17-07 report (adding an extra column to flag recurrent issues, better identification of data call names). The platform should be used by end users to upload DT issues, as a tool for communication with MS;
- Data transmission issues should only relate to actual data collection failures (data/variables not collected, data/variables not transmitted at all or not transmitted according to deadlines, incomplete coverage of the fleet, poor data quality). DT issues that relate to file consistency and format/coding requirements (cross checking of variables in different tables, decimals, small divergences in average values, etc.) should not be flagged as DT failures but should be addressed and solved with MS soon after the submission of data;
- The number of data transmission issues for the 2016 Mediterranean data call was very high (95). Several of them are flagged as "low severity" and the majority of them have been assessed by the EWG as "satisfactory", meaning that MSs' replies on each individual issue have been considered appropriate and the data issues do not refer to actual data collection failures. It remains however unclear whether these issues are addressed and corrected in future data collection. The overall process should be streamlined because at present MS are informed on the DT issues emerged during the quality checks performed by JRC, but it would be more beneficial to communicate DT issues that actually impacted the work of the stock assessment WGs. The present process is not useful to identify drawbacks in data collection activities and it does not allow MS in identifying gaps to be addressed and corrected. STECF considers the need to improve the dialogue between MS and end users at regional level. STECF suggests to establish an ad-hoc working group within the Mediterranean & BS RCG (as specified in article 9 of EU Reg. 1004/2017) to deal with data transmissions issues. This group could be established during the forthcoming MED&BS RCG meeting in September. The group could then meet or hold web conferences every year to assess the data failures identified by end users in stock assessment meetings and when appropriate discuss the data needs for the next year(s). MED&BS MSs and regional end-users (namely GFCM and STECF/JRC) should be part of this dialogue;
- Regarding the Fleet Economic Data Call, the process of identification of the DT issues starts right after the data calls and MS are initially informed of any problems in data transmission. MS are allowed to resubmit the data if some errors have to be corrected. In this case, the list of still pending DT issues should be updated by the second AER EWG (and not by JRC), for the MS who proceeded with resubmission. This task does not happen at present, and should be explicitly be added to the ToRs for the AER group. Actual data failures should be separated from coding and format issues. Such an approach will also allow any DT issues for a given data year and the AR on data collected in that year to be assessed simultaneously.
- The procedure to identify and to assess DT failures should follow a step by step process as illustrated in Figure 1 to ensure consistency among end-users and to guarantee a systematic consultation among end users and MSs.

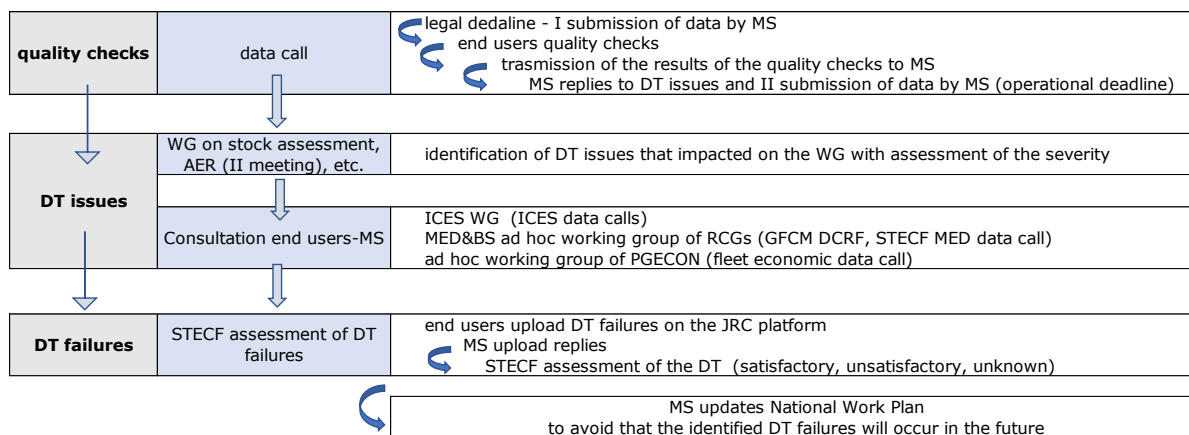


Figure 1. Process for identification and assessment of DT failures

Future improvements in methodologies used for the evaluation exercises of AR

Article 11 of EU Reg. 2017/1004 requires Member States to submit to the Commission on an annual basis a report on the implementation of their national work plans (NWP), following guidelines and format provided by the Commission. In accordance with Article 10, STECF shall evaluate: (a) the execution of the national work plans; and (b) the quality of the data collected by the Member States.

a) Evaluation of Annual Reports (AR) - execution of the national work plans

STECF suggests that the present evaluation procedure with the pre-screening exercise should continue to be used but one additional consultation with the MS could be introduced between the pre - screening and the EWG, as suggested by EWG 17-07. This additional step would allow MS to respond to pre-screener’s comments and clarify any issues raised. Such an approach is likely to reduce the number of outstanding issues to be addressed by the STECF EWG.

STECF considers that the time schedule proposed by EWG 17-07 is too tight and therefore suggests following the schedule reported in Figure 2.

The revised DCF does not prescribe any deadline for submission of AR. Therefore, on the basis of suggestions from EWG 17-07 and according to the proposed annual cycle for reporting and evaluation given in Figure 2, STECF proposes to anticipate the delivering of the AR to the middle of May.

STECF considers that the present evaluation procedure should be adjusted to allow a more efficient evaluation of ARs. This could be done if the format of ARs is simplified as follows:

- AR text should only report a) deviations from NWP planning and the reasons for these deviations, b) follow up of recommendations from Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs) and PGECON
- AR tables should be aligned to NWP tables and should be maintained in a online tool to allow for comparison, cross-checking and assessment of the level of execution.

The simplification of AR formats will also help in anticipating the presentation of the AR, as proposed above.

b) Evaluation of Annual Reports (AR) – evaluation of the quality of the data collected by the Member States

Conclusions and suggestions are reported in section 4.6 of this plenary report (EWG 17-04 Quality assurance for DCF data).

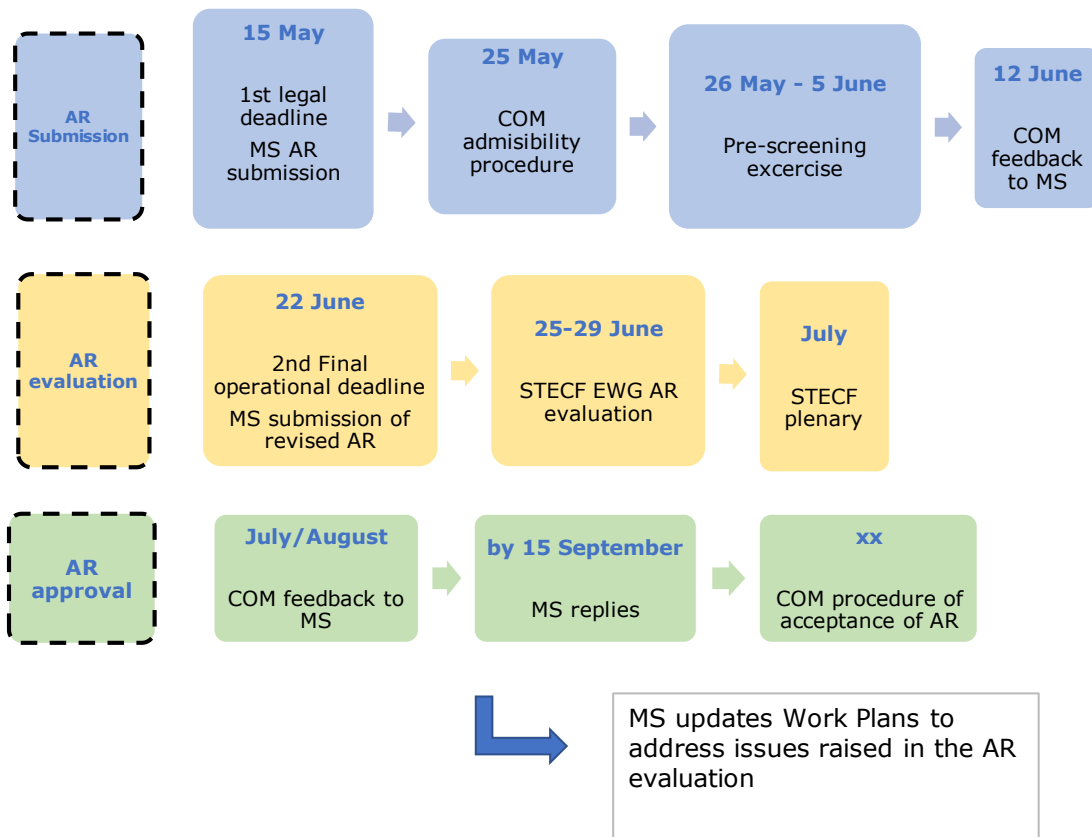


Figure 2. AR annual cycle for reporting and evaluation (dates reported in the figure refers to AR2017 to be submitted, evaluated and approved in 2018)

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REPORT TO THE STECF

EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON Evaluation of DCF 2016 Annual Reports, Data Transmission to end users in 2016 & preparation for the new assessment of Annual Reports and Data transmission (EWG-17-07)

Gavirate, Italy (VA), 26-30 June 2017

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 (STECF-EWG 17-07) met in Gavirate, Italy (VA), from the 26th to the 30th of June 2017 to assess Annual Reports (AR) of the 23 non landlocked Member States. Under the process of evaluation and approval of the outcomes of the National Programmes (NP), the European Commission is legally bound to consult STECF about the execution of the NP approved by the Commission and about the quality of the data collected by the Member States (MS) in accordance with Articles 7.1 and 7.2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008.

The work was developed by 30 independent experts; the list of participants is included in Section 7. The agenda is included in Annex 1. The assessment of Annual Reports (AR) and Data Transmission Compliance (DT) was undertaken by subgroups to which experts were allocated according to their expertise. Prior to the EWG assessment, the AR and DT issues were pre-screened by several experts under contract to DG MARE.

1.1 Terms of Reference for EWG-17-07

The role of this EWG is three-fold: 1) to evaluate the Annual Reports (AR) submitted by Member States by 31st of May 2017, describing national data collection in 2016, 2) to evaluate the apparent data transmission (DT) failures as reported by end users for the data obligations/data calls launched during 2016, for the data collected by Member States until 2015, 3) to discuss how the methodologies used for the evaluation exercises of AR and DT failures can be simplified and streamlined in light of the new legislative framework and on-going IT developments.

Before the EWG, a pre-screening exercise will take place to facilitate the work of the EWG. In that respect, the EWG evaluation should be developed as a second level assessment, focusing on topics where the pre-screener's final assessment of a particular point has revealed to be contentious. This type of assessment may take the form of specific questions addressed to the EWG, based on the outcomes of the pre-screening exercise.

In particular, the EWG is asked to:

1. Evaluate Member States Annual Reports for 2016 in accordance with Article 7.2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008, taking into account:
 - The execution of the National Programmes for 2016
 - The quality of the data collected by the Member States

The EWG should produce the following:

- A. Overview of the assessment and overall evaluation of AR, including performance of Member States, major issues and recurring issues across many Member States.
- B. Per Member State: (i) an evaluation of the AR in the template provided by the Commission, which will already include the result of the pre-screening exercise. Recurring issues from previous years should be highlighted (ii) Member State-specific issues relating to data collection.

In their feedback, 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.

2. Evaluate Member States transmission of DCF data to end users in 2016 based on information from end users and Member States' clarifications & explanations in response to the end-user feedback.

Particular attention will be paid to:

- Response by MS to calls for data launched by the Commission in order to feed into scientific advice provided by STECF
- Data transmission to other end-users in 2016 with a focus on feedback on data availability, quality, gaps and the data used in the scientific advisory process provided by RCMs, ICES, GFCM, ICCAT, IOTC, WCPFC, NAFO and other RFMOs to which scientific fishery data is mandatorily submitted by MS.

The EWG should produce the following:

- A. Overview of the assessment and overall evaluation of DT failures, including performance of Member States, main issues per end user and recurring issues across many Member States
- B. Per Member State: (i) an evaluation of the DT failures to end users, via the online IT platform, (ii) Member State-specific issues relating to data transmission. Recurring issues from previous years should be highlighted.

In their feedback, the EWG should identify the comments that require a reaction by the MS and those that are 'for information' only.

All produced files, from both Annual Report and DT failures exercises, will be communicated to Member States in order to help them improve data collection, reporting and transmission for next year.

Background Information:

The EWG should take into consideration the relevant files produced from previous relevant STECF EWGs (e.g. STECF EWG 15-10, STECF EWG 15-15, STECF EWG 16-08). Particular attention should be paid to the Evaluation Guidelines and Guidance for submission documents produced by STECF EWG 15-15. For the data transmission evaluation, the EWG should also consider the JRC report entitled 'The DCF Reporting and Implementation Cycles and the Data End-user Feedback'.

3. Evaluation of AR and DT failures.

The existing AR template describes the implementation of data collection, data processing and reporting under the DCF for the previous year (2016), in line with the planning of data collection as described in the National Programmes. With the publication of Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1701 a new format for the planning of data collection in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors has been approved, in the form of Work Plans. These Work Plans are valid for the period 2017-2019 and replace the National Programmes as of 2017. In October 2016, the Member States submitted the national Work Plans which were adopted by the Commission. The change from the National Programmes to the Work plans requires concomitantly the proper adaptation of the AR template. In 2018, the AR will refer to the first year of implementation of the Work Plans (2017).

In addition, the current procedure on the evaluation of AR and DT does not provide for a timely improvement of data collection. It currently takes longer than one year to finalize the cycle from submission of reports/ communication of end user feedback to MS, to final decision taken by the Commission.

The EWG is requested to revisit the procedure implemented so far for the evaluation of AR and DT failures that is relevant for STECF and come up with suggestions for improvements. This is not

a request to produce a new template, rather to discuss on content and methodologies used. Quality issues will be elaborated during STECF EWG 17-04, so they do not form part of these TORs.

The contractors of MARE/2015/04 'Availability and dissemination of DCF data' will participate for this specific point in order to present and discuss the outputs of Work Package 3 relating to AR2.

More specifically, **the EWG is asked to provide an opinion on the following:**

- A. revisit the methodology currently used for the evaluation of AR and DT failures by STECF and propose performance indicators and criteria to categorize major, minor and recurring issues, taking into account influence on stock assessment and socio-economic evaluation processes
- B. propose, where applicable, links between Annual Reporting and DT failures evaluation
- C. propose information to be included in the Annual Report, that would be useful for COM, end users, RCMs/ PGECON
- D. propose improvements in the procedure of AR and DT failures evaluation, in order to improve timeliness and usage.

Background Information:

The EWG should take into account relevant information from previous STECF EWGs (EWG 15-10, EWF 15-15, EWG 16-08, EWG 16-16), relevant ICES WGs (e.g. WGCATCH), JRC reports, PGECON reports, ESTAT relevant work and other end users.

1.2 Structure of the report

A description of the pre-screening exercise undertaken prior to EWG 17-07 is included in Section 2 of this report and Sections 3 to 5 present the Expert group's main findings. Section 6 summarises the discussions held under 'Any Other Business'. Each assessment of AR and DT, Sections 3 and 4 respectively, are subdivided into 'Setting the scene', a description of how the work of the EWG was organised and 'Results' which presents an overview of the EWG findings. The detailed evaluations for each MS are included as electronic annexes (EWG-17-07 – E-Annex 1 and EWG-17-07 – E- Annex 2) and the summary by MS ('MS specific issues') in Annex 4.

The EWG responses to Tor3 are presented in Section 5 of this report.

To ease navigation and comprehension, an overview of the structure of MS' Annual Reports is given in Text box 1 below. For a more detailed description, please consult the Guidelines for submission of Annual Reports (https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/267735/1760444/DCF_Guidance_AR_2015.pdf)

- I.General framework
- II.National data collection organisation
 - II.A National correspondent and participating institutes
 - II.B Regional and International coordination
- III.Module of the evaluation of the fishing sector
 - III.A General Description of the fishing sector
 - III.B Economic variables
 - III.C Metier-related variables
 - III.D Recreational fisheries
 - III.E Stock-related variables
 - III.F Transversal variables
 - III.F.1 Capacity
 - III.F.2 Effort
 - III.F.3 Landings
 - III.G Research surveys at sea
- IV.Module of the evaluation of the economic situation of the aquaculture and processing industry
 - IV.A Collection of data concerning the aquaculture
 - IV.B Collection of data concerning the processing industry
- V.Module of evaluation of the effects of the fishing sector on the marine ecosystem
 - V.1 Achievements: Results and deviation from NP proposal
 - V.2 Actions to avoid deviations
- VI.Module for management and use of the data
- VII.List of acronyms and abbreviations
- VIII.Comments, suggestions and reflections
- IX.References
- X.Annexes

Text box 1 - resumed version of the DCF Annual Report Structure.

2 PRE-SCREENING EXERCISE

Prior to the STECF-EWG 17-07 assessment, the AR and DT issues were evaluated by a 10 independent experts under contract to DG MARE.

Pre-screener results (one AR assessment template per MS and the data transmission issues stored in the Data Transmission platform - <https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/compliance>) were available to EWG participants via a dedicated ftp site (<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/ftp>) on 22 June.

To undertake the pre-screening exercise the COM provided the pre-screening experts with an updated version of the evaluation template previously used (EWG-17-07 – Doc 1). The updated evaluation template included new columns: (i) 'Issues addressed', (ii) 'Minor/Major Issue'. In the case of minor issues, the pre-screeners were requested to give a final judgement. Where a module was pre-screened by two experts they were asked to provide an agreed final judgement. Pre-screeners were requested to flag 'Major' issues, for further scrutiny and final judgement by the EWG. Such an approach was intended to allow the EWG meeting to devote more time to assess the major issues that impact DCF data quality.

The pre-screening output on the AR and DT compliance were provided in the assessment template and in the IT tool Compliance Platform, respectively. MS comments (Module VIII - **Comments, suggestions and reflections** of the MS) are compiled and presented in Annex 3.

3 **EVALUATE MEMBER STATES ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2016 IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 7.2 OF COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) NO 199/2008, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT:**

- THE EXECUTION OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR 2016
- THE QUALITY OF THE DATA COLLECTED BY THE MEMBER STATES

3.1 Setting the scene

3.1.1 Formation of subgroups and task allocation:

The assessment of Annual Reports (AR) and Data Transmission Compliance (DT) was undertaken by subgroups to which experts were allocated according to their expertise (Table 1). In each subgroup one expert was identified as group facilitator. Each subgroup was tasked with the assessment of different modules of the AR (Table 1).

Table 1 – Allocation of Modules by subgroup and expertise.

Module	Subgroup	Expertise	Subgroup facilitator
Modules IIIB Fleet Economic variables Module V - Evaluation of the economic situation of the aquaculture and processing industry	Subgroup 1	Economists	Evelina Carmen SABATELLA
Module I - General framework ModuleII - National data collection organisation Module III: III.A General Description of the fishing sector), IIIF Transversal variables, Module IV - Management and use of the data	Subgroup 2	Economists and Biologists	Ireneusz WOJCIK
Modules IIIC Metier-related variables Module IIIE - Stock-related variables	Subgroup 3	Biologists	Gráinne NÍ CHONCHÚIR
Modules IIID - Recreational fisheries Module - IIIG Research Surveys at Sea Module V - Evaluation of the effects of the fishing sector on the marine ecosystem	Subgroup 4	Biologists	Ingeborg DE BOOIS

Modules I to VI of the annual reports were comprehensively reviewed and an overview of the EWG findings is provided Under 'Results' below. Sections VII to X (VII List of acronyms and abbreviations; VIII Comments, suggestions and reflections; IX References; X Annexes) were not assessed since they are not relevant for the evaluation.

As for the 2015 ARs (STECF-EWG 16-08), the specific questions in the evaluation sheet listed below were not taken into account due to a current lack of alignment between the assessment sheet and what can effectively be verified in the evaluation exercise:

- Modules IIIC/IIIE: There is a mismatch between most MS National Programmes (submitted for 2011 – 2013 and rolled over for 2014 – 2016) and the Annual Reports on data collected in 2016. This mismatch is largely due to the implementation of Statistically Sound Sampling Schemes (4S-sampling) which took place over this period following recommendations from International working groups, such as WGCATCH. 4S-sampling reflects current best practice in sampling design, and has been endorsed by the EU Commission. For practical, operational reasons, MS were not obliged to resubmit updated programmes for the most recent years. As a result, it was not always possible to make a direct comparison between existing National Programmes and MSs Annual Reports on data collected in 2016.

In Module VI, again two questions were not assessed since the procedure to assess the content of the newly integrated AR table – AR table VI.1 - that supports the information for that Module is not clear. Responses to those questions are marked with NA (not applicable) throughout all MS assessment templates.

3.1.2 Background Information:

To carry out the evaluation, the group was provided with access to supporting information such as the AR evaluation templates from previous years (2015), a guidance document for the assessment of the AR (background document: EWG-17-07 – Doc 4) and the assessment grid for each MS, resulting from the assessment of the Work Plans for data collection for 2017-2019.

3.1.3 Tools and Criteria for the Assessment:

The evaluation template used for the assessment is provided as a background document (EWG-17-07 – Doc 1). This is an improved version of the evaluation form used in previous assessments.

Four main categories are used to judge AR achievements. These four categories are shown in Table 2 and are the same as those used previously.

Table 2 – Compliance levels for the assessment of Annual Reports.

Compliance class	Compliance level	Score
No	<10%	N
Partly	10-50%	P
Mostly	50-90%	M
Yes	>90%	Y

In order to ensure a comparable and coherent approach across subgroups, a first assessment of one Annual Report was done in plenary. The group assessed together the AR from ITALY. During this joint exercise, the criteria to settle a common ground for the assessment were agreed by the group and then used to support the subgroup assessments. The rules agreed upon are presented in Annex 2.

In addition, each subgroup had to consider and provide answers to seven questions, five related to the Annual Report and two with Data Transmissions in response to data calls. These questions to the sub groups were highlighted at the beginning of the meeting. These questions are designed to address ToR 1 and ToR 2 and provide an overview of the reflections from each subgroup on the assessment exercise.

The questions are:

1. Overall comments on the pre-screening exercise. How does the new approach affect the process? Any relevant comments for future improvements?
2. Overall performance of Member States on your Modules. Overview - of the 23 MS, How many were YES, Mostly, Partly, NO?

3. Overall what were the four major issues that arose in your evaluation across MS? How would you resolve these? – Provide recommendations.
4. Any specific issues (max. 4) that arose that you would like to highlight. How would you resolve these? Provide recommendations?
5. What MS would you cite as good examples of how to complete these modules?
6. What are the recurring issues across many Member States, relating to data transmission?
7. Identifying the issues per end user, in order to improve the way in which they provide data transmission feedback to the Commission in future.

3.2 Results

The overall evaluation shown in Table 3 is the summary evaluation of each MS based on the traffic light system and on the assessment categories given in Table 2. Overall, the level of achievement of the 2016 Annual Reports shows an improvement compared to previous ARs; there are significant improvements in both the achievements attained by MS and their reporting procedures.

Nevertheless, the following general remarks arise from the evaluation of the modules:

1. In general, pre-screening has proved to play a key role when it comes to efficiency and effectiveness of the EWG work. The possibility to have minor issues identified in advance, allows the EWG to focus on major issues identified for data collection and Data transmission. However, to be successful, the pre-screening exercise needs to be launched well ahead of the EWG to allow the experts sufficient time to deliver their assessments after revising and correcting for inconsistencies. This is particularly important for those modules of the AR with double pre-screening; i.e. the parts of the AR for which two experts undertake independent assessments, but are required to reach consensus before sending their assessments to the EWG. During the current evaluation, the EWG had to revisit both Major and Minor issues.
2. The information provided in MS' ARs on the quality of the data collected, is sometimes missing and the tables are completed in a non-systematic fashion (no consistent approach in the way information is provided across tables); Further dialogue between the Commission and MSs and between MS and some refinement of the guidelines might lead to improvements in reporting;
3. All MS should make more use of the Comment fields in the AR Tables where achievements in data collection are not in line with their National Programmes. Such information can be crucial in providing the pre-screener or EWG the reason for any discrepancies, thereby aiding the experts' assessment and avoiding requests for further clarification or module resubmissions.

The list of recommendations (outcome from the Liaison Meeting), the list of derogations and the future thresholds and the impact on the MS Work Plan, the list of data calls, are fundamental to support MS' Planning and Reporting and to support the STECF-EWG assessment of MS' ARs. The STECF-EWG therefore suggests these groups of information be made available to the DCF community through the DCF Website.

An overview of the overall assessment of MSs ARs for 2016 is given in Table 3. Overview tables on the MS DCF performance for the years 2010-2015 can be found in the following

STECF reports; STECF12-01¹; STECF-OWP-12-05²; STECF13-14³; STECF14-13⁴, STECF15-13⁵ and STECF16-12⁶.

Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.5 present the replies provided by each subgroup to the six questions. The detailed spread sheet for each Member State is presented in the electronic annex of this report (EWG-17-07 – E-Annex 1 – Annual Report Assessment by MS – template sheet (.xls)) and organised in alphabetical order. Also the compilation from Section IX – “Comments, suggestions and reflections” provided by the MS in their Annual Reports is presented in this report under Annex 3.

¹ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries. Analysis of the DCF Annual Reports for 2010 (STECF-12-01). 2012. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EUR 25250 EN, JRC 69389, 251 pp.

² Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries. Evaluation of MS Annual Reports for 2011 of the DCF (STECF-OWP-12-05). 2012. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EUR 25450 EN, JRC 73248, 239 pp.

³ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Evaluation of 2012 MS Technical Reports under DCF (1) (STECF-13-07). 2013. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EUR 26090 EN, JRC 83658, 183 pp.

⁴ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Evaluation of 2013 MS DCF Annual Reports & Data Transmission (STECF-14-13) 2014. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EUR 26811 EN, JRC 91550, 257 pp.

⁵ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) Evaluation of 2014 MS DCF Annual Reports & Data Transmission (STECF-15-13). 2015. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, EUR 27410 EN, JRC 96975, 287 pp.

⁶ Reports of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – Evaluation of DCF 2015 Annual Reports & Data Transmission to end users in 2015 Quality assurance procedures (STECF-16-12); Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg; EUR 27758 E; doi:10.2788/352294

Table 3 – Summary of the assessment of Member State’ 2016 Annual Report of the Data Collection Framework.

Module	BEL	BUL	CYP	DEN	SPN	EST	FIN	FRA	GBR	GER	GRE	HRV	IRL	ITA	LAT	LTU	MAL	NLD	POL	POR	ROM	SVN	SWE
OVERALL COMPLIANCE	Y	M	Y	M	M	Y	y	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y
Module I	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Module II	Y	P	M	M	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	M	Y	M	M	M	M	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y
Module III.A	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Module III.B	Y	M	Y	M	M	Y	M	M	M	Y	Y	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	M	Y	M
IIIC	Y	P	Y	Y	y	Y	Y	p	y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y
IIID	Y	NA	NA	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NA	M	Y
IIIE	Y	P	Y	Y	y	Y	Y	P	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
IIIF	Y	Y	Y	M	M	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
IIIG	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y
Module IV.A	Y	M	Y	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Module IV.B	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Module V	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y
Module VI	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	Y	Y	Y
Module VII																							
Module VIII																							
Module IX																							
Module X																							
Module XI																							

Note 1: Module VII to XI, marked in grey, have not been assessed this year. NA cells are due to the absence of recreational fisheries in the respective MS.

3.2.1 Subgroup 1

Modules dealt with: IIIB, IV

3.2.1.1 Overall comments on the pre-screening exercise. How does the approach affect the process? Any relevant comment for future improvements?

- Pre-screening proved to be highly useful in allowing the EWG to complete its work. Double pre-screening for modules III.B, IV.A and IV.B makes the evaluation process highly-efficient.
- There were a few cases where double pre-screening resulted in different comments. In such cases, the comments between the two pre-screeners were reviewed and an agreed assessment was provided by the EWG.
- Pre-screeners were asked to assess the importance of the issues (minor or major) and to provide a final evaluation for the minor ones. However, SG1 considered it important to review all issues and to provide an agreed EWG evaluation. Consequently, SG1 suggests that for future evaluations, pre-screeners should continue to flag issues as major or minor but that a final evaluation will be the responsibility of the EWG.
- In some cases, comments from pre-screeners on ARs did not relate to discrepancies but merely points of clarification. SG1 considers that on the evaluation template, pre-screeners should only report comments that relate to genuine issues and that points of clarification should be communicated to the EWG by alternative means.
- SG1 considers that comments by pre-screeners should clearly indicate whether they relate to issues reported in tables of the AR template or to the text of the AR.
- Pre-screeners were requested to cut/paste comment from the preceding year's evaluation in this year's evaluation template. This is a useful tool to assess if there are recurring issues that remain unresolved. However, the development and implementation of an online database of AR tables would greatly improve the efficiency of making such assessments.

3.2.1.2 Overall performance of Member States on your Modules. Overview - of the 23 MS, How many were YES, Mostly, Partly, NO?

Module	Yes	Mostly	Partly	No	SUM
III.B	11	12	-	-	23
IV.A	18	5	-	-	23
IV.B	20	3	-	-	23

The overall performance of the economic modules is quite high. All MS achieved "Yes" or "Mostly" for all modules.

3.2.1.3 Overall what were the four major issues that arose in your evaluation across MS? How would you resolve these? – Provide recommendations.

- Tables III.B.3 helps in detecting if some data have not been collected. However, in some cases the text comments do not provide a clear description of the reasons why data were not collected. The linkage between the AR and DT should be improved. One option to

achieve this goal is to develop a database with all the metadata currently available in the present AR and in the official data calls launched by the Commission. Another option could be to revise AR tables in order to add additional fields with a more direct link to DT issues. The latter option would be only possible if a database for AR tables can be developed and implemented.

- In some cases, reference years in text of the ARs do not match with reference years in tables. This is probably due to errors arising through updating the previous year's ARs. MS should review their ARs for such inconsistencies and correct them before submission.
- Guidelines for classification of segments to be clustered ([I]mportant segments with distinct characteristics; [S]egments similar to other segments; [N]on-important segments with distinct characteristics) is subject to different interpretations by MS. According to guidelines, important segments with distinct characteristics, should not be clustered unless strictly necessary in data reporting for confidentiality reasons. However, some MS still cluster important segments with other segments. In addition, classification of segments which have been clustered is not always provided in the table III.B.2 and in some cases information about clustering is not provided in AR text.
- There is an inconsistency in the guidelines for module IV.B. Table IV.B.2 allows reporting of the segmentation by number of employees as used in SBS. However, a footnote in the excel table allows MS to report data by "all segments" in cases where the sampling strategy is the same for all segments.

3.2.1.4 Any specific issues (max 4) that arose that you would like to highlight. How would you resolve these? Provide recommendations?

- Pre-screeners and SG1 compared the population at 01.01.2015 in the Fleet Register with the target population reported in the AR table III.B.1 as well as with the population reported in the 2016 Fleet Economic Data Call (see Annex 5). Minor deviations or no deviations have been identified for 16 MS. For the remaining MS, deviations are reported in the evaluation sheet. Some MS provide reasons for these deviations in the NP text or in the previous answers to the COM.
- A very common minor issue refers to wrong naming of variable groups and variables names that are not provided according to the Comm. Dec. 2010/93/EU Appendix VI. This is a minor issue that is most probably due to the fact that JRC facilities to produce AR tables are still reporting wrong names and codes. SG1 suggests that JRC facilities should be amended in line with the codes given in Comm. Dec. 210/93/EU. For the future, the fleet economic data call could require MS to provide additional information on planned sample size and achieved sample size (per variable/fleet segments). In doing so, table III.B.1 could be produced by data provided under the fleet economic data call.
- Guidelines require MS to provide descriptions regarding their assessment of the quality of the data collected. However, this provision should be better specified. At present reporting by MS is inconsistent, some of them being clear and exhaustive, some others being too concise and uninformative. SG1 considers that future AR reporting should improve the section on quality reporting following the suggestions from PGECON 2017.
- MS should list deviations from their Aps and justify them. However, evaluators sometimes have difficulty to assess if all deviations are listed and above all, whether any justifications are appropriate. A database for AR tables would facilitate detecting deviations and combining deviations and justifications.

3.2.1.5 What MS would you cite as good examples of how to complete these modules?

Most of the ARs were of good quality and complied with guidelines. Therefore, SG1 considers it inappropriate to single out any particular MS.

3.2.2 *Subgroup 2*

Modules dealt with: Modules I, II, IIIA, IIIF, and VI.

3.2.2.1 Overall comments on the pre-screening exercise. How does the approach affect the process? Any relevant comment for future improvements?

- The new approach to pre-screening in 2017 proved to be efficient in the context of EWG’s tasks. In case of no issues and minor issues, the pre-screeners already suggested final evaluation. Repetitive issues were highlighted in the pre-screening exercise which was valuable and time saving information for EWG evaluation.
- In the future, the pre-screeners should be given more time for a more in-depth analysis of ARs, cross-checking with other documents and to allow exchange of findings and comments between pre-screeners.

3.2.2.2 Overall performance of Member States on your Modules. Overview - of the 23 MS, How many were YES, Mostly, Partly, NO?

Module	Yes	Mostly	Partly	No	SUM
I.	20	3	-	-	23
II.	11	11	1	-	23
III.A.	23	-	-	-	23
III.F.	18	5	-	-	23
VI.	21	2	-	-	23

It is worth noting the overall improvement in the MS performance in 2016 and assessment results of Annual Reports.

3.2.2.3 Overall what were the four major issues that arose in your evaluation across MS? How would you resolve these? – Provide recommendations.

- In many cases recommendations from the LM listed in MSs AR are not relevant – either not addressed to given MS or do not apply to the reference year. Having the list of relevant recommendations for ARs subject to evaluation publicly available and circulated to MS would greatly facilitate reporting by MS and evaluation process.
- DCF data quality requirements have not to be addressed for data which are mandatory for collection under other EU regulations. However, MS apply a different approach in providing accuracy indicators in table III.F.1., which can cause confusion in the evaluation process. Guidelines on table III.F.1., should clearly state how to provide information for those variables that are collected under other EU regulations.
- In cases where transversal variables are estimated from data collected under other EU regulations, data sources and achieved response rate for vessels < 10 m should be clearly identified in standard Tables and sufficient information on methodologies for estimation of such variables should be provided in AR text.
- Module II.B: as no list of recommended meetings was provided by DG MARE for 2016 and as MSs are free to select which meetings they will attend under EMFF

funding, it was not possible to assess whether planned objectives are fully achieved. Only meetings attended need be mentioned in table II.B.1.

- 3.2.2.4 Any specific issues (max. 4) that arose that you would like to highlight. How would you resolve these? Provide recommendations?
- In some cases insufficient information on estimation methods is provided by MS in cases where transversal variables are estimated from sales notes for vessels <10m.
 - In the case of only one body implementing the national programme, there is no requirement to organize a national coordination meeting or provide a report of the meeting. **Evaluation template should reflect this specifically.**

3.2.2.5 What MS would you cite as good examples of how to complete these modules?

- I. – Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Italy
- II. – France, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia
- III.A. – Belgium, Cyprus, Portugal, Sweden, UK
- III.F. – Cyprus, Finland, Ireland
- VI. – Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands

3.2.3 Subgroup 3

Modules dealt with: *Modules IIIC and IIIE*

3.2.3.1 Overall comments on the pre-screening exercise. How does the approach affect the process? Any relevant comment for future improvements?

- Overall the new pre-screening approach has been very useful and helped to speed up the final evaluation process within the EWG 17-07 meeting.
- However there were situations where the pre-screener comments were difficult to understand. Pre-screeners should try to make their comments very clear in the future.
- In a minority of cases the pre-screeners provided conflicting assessments, with no final agreement. Pre-screeners are asked to discuss areas of disagreement and come to a final assessment during the pre-screening process.
- In some MS evaluations the pre-screeners identified deviations from the NP, but did not highlight if these were major or minor issues, and did not include any comments. (e.g. Pre-screener 1 "Yes", pre-screener 2 "Partly" and no comments were provided by either pre-screener to explain). In this instance the EWG 17-07 experts had to review the text and tables again. Pre-screeners are asked to please ensure that comments and an assessment of major or minor issues are provided to aid the final assessment.
- There does not seem to be consistency across pre-screeners on what constitutes a "major" or "minor" issue. A "major" issue could be defined as an issue which requires resubmission of text and tables, or an issue that substantially affects the ability to complete stock assessments on a stock/area etc.

3.2.3.2 Overall performance of Member States on your Modules. Overview - of the 23 MS. How many were YES, Mostly, Partly, NO?

Module	Yes	Mostly	Partly	No	SUM
III.C	17	3	3		23
III.E	19	2	2		23

3.2.3.3 Overall what were the four major issues that arose in your evaluation across MS? How would you resolve these? – Provide recommendations.

- Inconsistencies between the III.C tables was relatively common, and also between the tables and the supporting text. MSs should ensure that the data provided is consistent across tables and text.
- Data quality text was often incomplete or not provided. MSs should ensure relevant information on data quality is provided.

3.2.3.4 Any specific issues (max. 4) that arose that you would like to highlight. How would you resolve these? Provide recommendations?

- For MS with very small numbers of vessels operating or minor landings in a fishery/region, the EWG evaluation of that MS's achievement of biological variables should take into account their overall importance in that fishery or area. For example, when a MS fails to meet its sampling targets for one vessel operating in an area, this should only be considered a minor issue. Where many other MS have significant levels of activity in the region, a solution could be discussed at a regional level in the relevant RCG.

3.2.3.5 What MS would you cite as good examples of how to complete these modules?

- Module III.C: UK, Germany, Sweden (good use of table comment field).
- Module III.E: UK, Germany, Sweden (good use of table comment field).

3.2.4 Subgroup 4

Modules dealt with: Modules IIID, IIIG and V.

3.2.4.1 Overall comments on the pre-screening exercise. How does the approach affect the process? Any relevant comment for future improvements?

Pre-screening was helpful to pick out issues in the ARs. The differentiation between Minor and Major issues was not used by the subgroup as only few issues arose for the modules dealt with leaving time to work on both types of issue.

Inconsistencies between pre-screeners due to limited time for pre-screening. As pre-screening is important to fulfill the evaluation by STECF-EWG effectively, it is recommended that:

- a. The Commission starts the search for pre-screeners as soon as possible, preferably in the beginning of April, so more people may be able to reserve time to carry out pre-screening.
- b. The Commission provides pre-screeners with (i) guidelines for screening (AR and DT), and (ii) the MS AR, (iii) link to the DT platform at the first working day after the deadline of AR delivery.

3.2.4.2 Overall performance of Member States on your Modules. Overview - of the 23 MS, How many were YES, Mostly, Partly, NO?

Module	Yes	Mostly	Partly	No	NA ⁷	SUM
IIID	18	2	0	0	3	23
IIIG	21	2	0	0	0	23
V	21	2	0	0	0	23

Over-all performance was good, and reports have improved over the years.

3.2.4.3 Overall what were the four major issues that arose in your evaluation across MS? How would you resolve these? – Provide recommendations.

- IIID: for a number of MS (BG, CY, RO) a ban on recreational fisheries for the species mentioned exists but the MS do not have an approved derogation not to report under the DCF. An up-to-date inventory of derogations (requested, approved and rejected) would have helped the EWG to evaluate this module.
- IIIG: some MS had problems to fulfil their planned spatial or temporal survey coverage due to weather circumstances or technical issues and did not report on effect on the time-series of data or the survey indices. MS should include information on the potential effect on the survey time-series, and also provide information explaining whether other MS were able to take on the missing fishing stations, or whether an international expert group evaluated the shortfalls with respect to the effect on the time-series or indices.

3.2.4.4 Any specific issues (max. 4) that arose that you would like to highlight. How would you resolve these? Provide recommendations?

- Portugal had issues in survey spatial and temporal coverage and did not explain why this happened and the potential effects of the lower coverage were not documented in paragraph III.G.3 of the AR.
- France has recurrent issues in the AR and does not seem to provide and response to comments in previous ARs.

3.2.4.5 What MS would you cite as good examples of how to complete these modules?

- Spain and Netherlands, for covering multiple regions within the programme;
- Romania and Bulgaria, for the improvements in AR over the past years, and so, following up STECF-EWG comments.

⁷ Three Member States that don't have recreational fisheries nationally. These MS are Bulgaria; Romania and Cyprus,

4 **ToR 2 - EVALUATE MEMBER STATES TRANSMISSION OF DCF DATA TO END USERS IN 2016 BASED ON INFORMATION FROM END USERS AND MEMBER STATES' CLARIFICATIONS & EXPLANATIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE END-USER FEEDBACK.**

4.1 **Setting the scene**

Under ToR2, the EWG was requested to evaluate the compliance of the data transmission (DT) by Member States to the end users over 2016 based on information from end users and MS' clarifications & explanations in response to the end user feedback. For ICES, a second feedback from the end-user after the MS input was also provided.

There were 184 issues from 9 different end users addressed to the EWG for evaluation. The EWG was requested to evaluate each DT issue individually, and decide if the feedback/explanation from the MS was scientifically valid or not. Each DT issue response was finally judged to be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory

The assessment of the DT issues was carried out in subgroups, related to the expertise in the group, and in relation to the time available in the subgroups. Distribution of the DT issues by subgroups is shown in Table 4 below together with a summary of the number of DT issues by end-user and by levels of severity.

As for the Annual Reports, the DT issues have undergone a pre-screening assessment prior to the EWG. The pre-screeners were requested to run a first assessment of the issues, propose draft comments to be adopted by the EWG, highlight major issues and in case of LOW severity issues to provide the final judgment. However, as not all pre-screeners attributed a final judgment, the groups decided it was best to reassess all DT issues.

4.1.1 *Background Information:*

While performing this assessment, DG MARE requested the EWG to identify whether the issues were recurrent issues by taking into consideration information associated with the 2016 assessment of the Data Transmission, namely:

- For 6 MS (Portugal, Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, France and Romania), DGMARE made available to the EWG, the letters exchanged with the MS about the 2014 and 2015 exercise. These are letters relevant to identify repetitive issues but are not public and therefore are not included in the annexes of this report.
- For the remaining MS, previous EWG reports (STECF and STECF) were consulted in order to take into account information related to DT issues raised for each country in recent years.

4.1.2 *Tools and criteria for the assessment*

The data Transmission assessment was carried out directly using the online compliance platform provided by the JRC on the DCF website. As in previous years, the compliance platform has proved to be an important tool to facilitate the work of the experts. However, there is still scope for further improvement which will require only minor adjustments to the online display (further detail on the improvements is given while discussing ToR3).

In order to ensure comparable and coherent assessments of DT issues raised, the EWG has adopted numerous assessment criteria which are presented below:

Issue	EWG Assessment and associated comments
Unclear MS comment in reply to the issue flagged by the end-user.	Unknown
The DT issue identified by an end-	Unknown

Issue	EWG Assessment and associated comments
user is not clearly and explicitly described (End-user must always provide a self-sufficient comment/feedback to the EWG.)	+ a comment: "The end-user should be more specific in defining the deficiencies"
Information provided by end-users and MS is contradictory and there is no evidence to allow the EWG to give an assessment.	Unknown
MS mistaken on data transmission.	Unsatisfactory
The issue raised relates to lack of data collection and not data transmission. Hence, data will not be available but situation must be flagged.	Unsatisfactory A standard comment must be included. " Failure concerning data collection and not data transmission "
Data exists but MS fails to submit.	Unsatisfactory
When the issue raised is related to lack of punctuality on data transmission:	
1. If flagged by the End-user with "HIGH" or "Impact on the WG".	Unsatisfactory
2. If flagged by the End-user with LOW/MEDIUM severity and it proves to be a repetitive issue from past years.	Unsatisfactory
3. If flagged by the End-user with LOW/MEDIUM severity and it proves not to be a repetitive issue from past years.	Expert should judge according to the MS justification. (no fixed rules agreed)
If MS according to the agreed NP, plans to collect additional data beyond DCF requirements and does not transmit these data in response to a data call (this additional collection must be however clearly stated in the NP)).	Unsatisfactory
If the issue relates to data collected and called for in the past and data transmission has previously been evaluated.	Unknown. The Standard comment "Issue is assumed to be closed since it relates to the past and data transmission has previously been evaluated."

4.2 Results

In summary, the evaluation of the 184 transmission issues concluded that 102 issues were justified as **satisfactory** by the MS, 39 **unsatisfactory** and for 43 the EWG was not able to make an assessment, therefore these were classified with **Unknown**.

The complete list of the issues for each MS, together with EWG comments and assessment, is included in the electronic annex to this report (EWG-17-07 – E-Annex 2 – Data Transmission Results.xls). This task was fully accomplished by the group.

Table 4 – Summary table of the data transmission issues addressed to the STECF EWG17-07 for assessment.

Data Issues to be assessed by the EWG		Total Nr. of DT Issues in 2016
End-user/Data Call	Subgroup to assess the Data issue	Nr. Flagged Issues
IATTC	SG3/SG4	1
ICES - 2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_HAWG	SG3/SG4	2
ICES - 2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGBFAS	SG3/SG4	3
ICES - 2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGCSE	SG3/SG4	1
ICES - 2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGWIDE	SG3/SG4	1
ICES - VMS data call	SG2	1
IOTC	RCM LP	8
JRC - Med and BS	SG3/SG4	4
RCM LP data call	RCM LP	1
RCM LDF data call	SG2	5
RCM NA data call	SG3/SG4	2
RCM NS & EA data call	SG3/SG4	4
STECF - FDI	SG2	25
STECF - Fleet economics	SG1	29
STECF - Med and BS	SG3/SG4	95
WCPFC - 2015 aggregated catch and effort data	SG3/SG4	1
WCPFC - 2015 operational catch and effort data	SG3/SG4	1
Total		184

4.2.1 General comments

Overall, performance in MS data collection and transmission has improved. Compared to previous years, the numbers of DT issues decreased. Recurring issues are related to missing variables for some years and missing coverage for some fleet segments. Very few DT issues relate to poor quality data.

As previously stated in the [STECF16-12](#) and [STECF15-13](#), the EWG considers that DT issues based on administrative information (e-mail exchange; letter exchange;; legal decisions; contradictory information from end user and MS; etc.), to which the EWG has no access, should not be included in the list for pre-screening DT issues handled by the EWG as such issues fall outside the expertise of the experts and of the pre-screeners.

Additionally the STECF-EWG notes that several DT failures refer to minor issues not related to data collection or data submission, but to “calculation” or “file preparation”. Such DT issues should not be flagged by end users in the scope of this DT process, but instead should ideally be resolved with MS during the phases of data transmission and data use.

In general, MSs are asked to be as specific as possible in their response to DT failures. Therefore in order to facilitate evaluation the STECF-EWG suggests the following standard approach:

- **End-user:** ‘MS has not delivered data on species XXX for year YYYY for data type ZZZ’

- **MS response:** 'MS (has submitted)/(has not submitted) data for species XXX for year YYYY for data type ZZZ on date DDMMYY to database/end-user EEE'. When MS actually has submitted data, if possible include reference to submission email/upload confirmation date and time.

4.2.2 *Specific questions*

- In case of the FDI Data Calls, there is a recurring issue related with insufficient coverage (spatial effort, landings); This matter should be further analyzed by the end-user with MSs to understand the reasoning.
- France:
 - MS often promises to submit data in future. Promises on DT cannot be evaluated and are assumed to be unsatisfactory.
 - MS has not delivered 2015 data to RDB due to the lack of juridical documents on the obligation for data delivery. MS specifically refers to RDB data policy not being reviewed by MSs in European context.
 - In order to carry out the evaluation as thorough as possible, MS is kindly requested to respond to DT failures in English.
- During the course of DT assessment three issues related with Lithuania data transmission have been identified as non-issues. The ICES observer supported the experts with this analysis and has confirmed that the issues were wrongly raised. These were disregarded by the STECF-EWG in the assessment. The presence of an observer from the end-user at the meeting helped to identify this situation, which otherwise would have led to additional work for all the actors (MS, end-user and Commission).

4.2.3 *Feedback to end users*

In some cases, comments by end users are too generic. Every comment by each end user should contain all the following elements:

- Data call to which the DT issue refers
- Reference year of the data (very often the end user comment does not contain the reference year to identify which data they are referring to)
- Level of severity and type of impact of the DT issue
- Reference to the final report which contains the analysis of the data provided (e.g. AER 2015, ICES WG xxx, RCMLP xxx, STECF MED assessment xxx, etc.)
- In case of poor quality data, an indication of the method used to assess the quality (time series consistency, average parameters, outside predefined thresholds, etc.)
- An indication if MS was asked to correct/integrate the DT issue (a DT issue should have been communicated to MS and only in case of no response/no action by MS it should be flagged as DT failure)

If any of the above elements are not included, it will not be possible to provide an assessment.

DT issues that relate to file consistency and format/coding requirements (cross checking of variables in different tables, decimals, small divergences in average values, etc.) should not be flagged as DT failures because that could and should be addressed and solved with MS soon after the submission of data. Data transmission failures should only relate to:

1. Data/variables not collected

2. Data/variables not transmitted at all or not transmitted according to deadlines
 3. Incomplete coverage of the fleet
 4. Poor data quality assessed on the basis of robust statistical analysis (average parameters, time series consistency, etc.)
- ICES has communicated DT failures to MSs and resolved many miscommunications or incorrect failures (due to administrative issues) with MSs for DT 2016 prior to the STECF-EWG. MSs, end-user as well as STECF-EWG find this a useful approach for future DT evaluations as the number of DT failures was limited, and all failures were relevant for evaluation.

STECF Med&BS

- The number of DT failures was relatively high for this end-user. It would help the evaluation process if the end-user follows the ICES approach and communicates the DT failures with the MSs prior to the evaluation meeting in order to limit the number of DT failures.
- End-user is asked to only require data transmission for only species to be assessed.
- End-user is asked to check data completeness for all species soon after the submission to prevent data transmission failures deriving from the past.
- End-user is asked to be more accurate in SEVERITY. Severity Unknown (e.g. 2016 issue record \IDs 2489, 2882, 2880) could not be evaluated. Furthermore, inconsistency in severity occurred for identical DT failures.
- Many DT failures were difficult to evaluate. Main reasons were:
 - End-user comments should be more specific. Examples: IDs 2520, 2883
 - Often end-user comments replying to the MS comment often refer to a different issue than the first comment (and the MS response). Examples: ID 2787, ID 2482
 - Minor issues like measurement units (tonnes vs kilos, cm vs. mm), or subsampling factor. The EWG considers that such issues should be resolved between the End-user (STECF EWG) and MS soon after data submission and not put on the DT platform.
 - Different transmission failures were listed for similar data. Examples: ID 2786, 2763, 2880, 2882

Note to the Commission on DT:

For STECF Med&BS data call not all assessments may contain the standard comments as agreed upon by STECF-EWG 17-07 on 28 June 2017, due to the fact that evaluating DT failures was well on its way and re-opening the evaluation would have been too time-consuming. Unsatisfactory and Unknown have been re-evaluated following the STECF-EWG agreed criteria.

Additions to current DT evaluation Framework

- It is recommended that next to a plenary discussion on the AR evaluation also a plenary discussion on DT evaluation takes place on the first day of the STECF-EWG meeting evaluating AR and DT, in order to agree on standardised comments and provide those comments to all participants prior to the DT evaluation. Agreement on evaluation criteria and terminology for AR and DT evaluation is also crucial for pre-screeners.
- Since the search functionality of the DT compliance platform does not show the full data call name (length restriction), and the DT platform does not facilitate searching on 'Data requested', it is recommended that the data call names can be distinguished based on approx. the first 10 characters.

Example: for below it is mention working

data calls as listed proposed to first group and year.

DATA CALL	DATA REQUESTED
2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGBFAS	Data to conduct the update assessment_WGBFAS
2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGBFAS	Data to conduct the update assessment_WGBFAS
2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGBFAS	Data to conduct the update assessment_WGBFAS
2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_WGWIDE	Data to conduct the update assessment_WGWIDE
2016 Update assessments (issued 16 February 2016)_HAWG	Data to conduct the update assessment_HAWG

5 TOR 3 EVALUATION OF AR AND DT FAILURES.

The EWG is requested to revisit the procedure implemented so far for the evaluation of AR and DT failures that is relevant for STECF and put forward suggestions for improvements. This in the light of the new legal framework and on seeking to overcome some systematic problems that might have hindered the process of evaluation (e.g. Tight time frames for pre-screening and assessment, overloading of more administrative/formatting issues rather than question on the substance of implementation of the DCF, to be assessed, etc.).

Several presentations were given at the beginning of the discussion so as to support setting the scene. Observers from ICES and GFCM explained the group how the data calls are dealt by in their organizations. Also the Project Manager gave an overview of the Project MARE/2015/04 'Availability and dissemination of DCF data' entitled "FishHub: Requirements for facilitating the monitoring of Annual Work Plans and Annual Reports" briefly introduced the group on Work Package 3 of Tender Specifications of project MARE/2015/04 ('Monitoring and matching data requirements from Annual Work Programmes (AWPs) and data collection in Annual Reports (ARs)') and how it can be related to TOR 3. DG MARE introduced the topic via a discussion document (EWG-17-07 – Doc 3) together with an explanation to the EWG in plenary. The four presentations are included in this report under Annex 6, in the same sequence as they are listed in the meeting agenda.

Four breakout sessions in three subgroups were organised to answer the set of questions raised by the COM in the discussion document. The answers were discussed in plenary on a question-by-question basis. The results of the discussion and the group conclusions are provided below and are organised according to the order of the questions in the discussion document. (EWG-17-07 – Doc 3)

Question 1. What should be the goal of the Evaluation of AR and DT failures?

EWG response:

- to assess the overall execution and quality of MS data collection achievements with respect to the EUMAP and MS-AWP;
- to identify gaps at regional levels in relation to the end users' needs;
- to inform end users on type of data collections and methodologies applied by each MS;
- Identify areas that deserve further work with MS and amongst MS.

Question (1a) to EWG: Propose same (i.e. 31st of May) or alternative deadline for Annual Report to COM with justification related to scientific assessment

EWG Response

- The 31st of May is assumed to be the optimal time for submission of the ARs from a MS perspective. It provides sufficient time to report on the previous year's activities and is soon enough for MSs not to forget issues that happened in the previous year. The STECF-EWG recommends that one additional consultation with the MS takes place between the pre - screening and the EWG. Figure 1. This additional step would allow MS to answer pre-screened comments and clear the document from mistakes or unclear contents. In order to facilitate this initial pre-screening, the COM would need to commit to completing their scan of the Annual Reports, directly after the submission deadline of the 31st of May. As this is a superficial scan of the reports, to detect that all tables and text are present and completed, it should be quite a quick process.
- STECF-EWG suggests that ARs are entered in an online facility and that the facility is open for entry by MSs from 1st January till 31st May.
- Nevertheless, the calendar of the process from the MS submission onwards must be assessed to check for the possibility of having an extended timeline for the process of

assessment and adoption of the ARs. The former legal framework (199/2008) foresaw specific deadlines for the report adoption which dictated timing of the entire evaluation process. Under the new legal framework (Regulation (EU) 1004/2017) this is no longer the case. This assessment should be done in close consultation with the National Correspondents to understand potential National constraints taking into account the current timeline for reporting.

- The template for Annual Reporting and the reporting guidelines should be made available to MS in the first week of January at the latest.

A proposed annual cycle for reporting and evaluation is given in Figure 1.

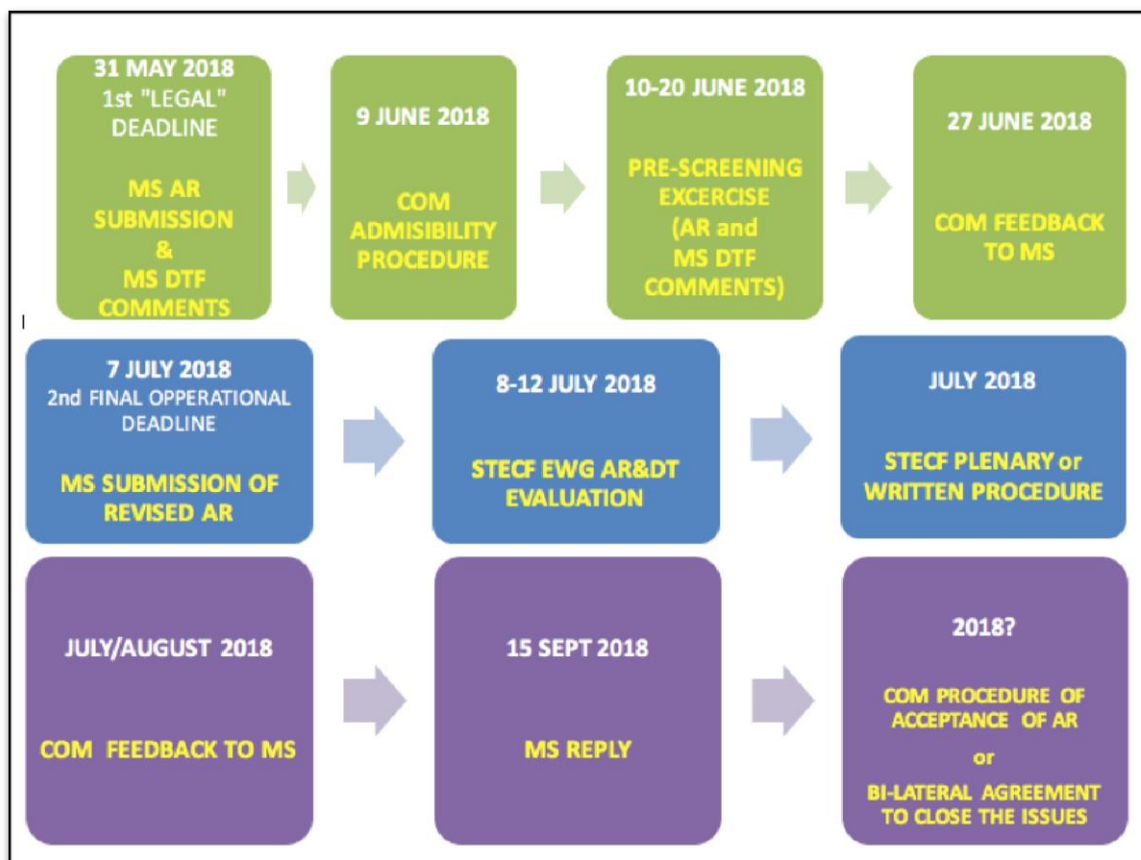


Figure 1: AR-DT procedure proposal (STECF-EWG1707)

Question (1b) to EWG: would it make sense to give different weight to evaluation every year: for example, focus on certain MS at a time (i.e. covering certain sea basins or specific data collection issues per thematic module) or have different level of detail on consecutive years, focus on specific end users etc.

EWG response

- The EWG advises to set up the evaluation exercise in a standardised manner: all MSs and all modules should be evaluated annually. STECF-EWG would like to dedicate specific time during the meeting (e.g. half a day) to issues that arise during the meeting or discussions on specific topics that will lead to either improved data collection or improved advice on over-all performance to the Commission. Automated screening for compliance is necessary to turn the current administrative evaluation into an evaluation of the quality of the data collection and data collected.
- STECF-EWG suggests the following improvements to the current setup:

- start with the evaluation of DT failures
- start with the most important things, to be highlighted by pre-screeners: rating of MSs by module will make prioritisation for STECF-EWG easier
- Communications between the EWG and the other bodies involved in (implementation of) the DCF should be improved. The outcomes of the evaluation process should be communicated by highlighting issues arising, or making recommendations from the EWG to the appropriate expert working groups, such as the RCG's, WGCatch, PGECON and others. This would allow issues with data collection and coordination to be tackled at a regional level.
- The results of the evaluation, currently summarised through the traffic light table on a MS basis, can also be organised on a regional basis i.e. by fishing regions. The results shown in this way can allow the EWG and other expert groups to identify issues in the AR's that are common to several MS in the same region, and in doing so, will promote cooperation and coordination at a regional level to solve common problems.
- The EWG is seen as an excellent opportunity for those who are new to the world of data collection to learn. With this in mind, EWG-17-07 recommends that it is made possible for a number of scientists to participate at the EWG AR evaluation meeting annually in an observation capacity, to allow them to benefit from the experience of the group and to learn how the AR's are reviewed. It is felt that this will support continued improvement in the execution of the data collection programmes in all MSs.
- Prior to the next evaluation, the EWG suggests that:
 - a straightforward way to link issues in AR and DT is developed such as an automated system that would allow a direct comparison between the data collected in a given year and the issues associated with the transmission of those data.
 - a framework is developed for the incorporation of DT in the current 'traffic light' system.

Question (2) to EWG: Our suggestion is the following: Automation of checking between numbers of Annual Reports and Work Plans, taken that they are in the same template. If checking is successful, execution (compliance) for the Annual Report is fulfilled [first step evaluation]. STECF is not involved in this part. If first step evaluation is not successful, STECF then comes into play and can assess the discrepancies. (2a) do you agree (with justification)? Is checking of numbers feasible, does it make sense? Do you have examples where it wouldn't work (from past experience)?

EWG response

- Automation of part of the evaluation is warmly welcomed by the EWG. It will reduce the administrative work load and free up time for evaluation of the quality of the data collection.
- It should be feasible for most variables but this requires updates/resubmission of the Annual Work Plan (AWP) (tables) each year (e.g. In many MS, sample intensity changes by default throughout the years due to fleet segment's evolution over time.)
- Automated compliance will not work for all modules/fields where free text has to be entered, like pilot studies, modules on quality assurance (5A and 5B) and the comments column (although a summarised print out of all comments per module may facilitate the evaluation). For some cases it is unclear if automated compliance checks can be carried out, e.g. for Recreational fisheries (only Y/N in WP) and anadromous/catadromous fish.
- STECF EWG-17-07 assumes that an IT solution like a database will be available to support this automation. If so, automatic checks on AR data entry can be implemented, by defining constraints on the range of values, by ensuring proper codes according to the AR vocabulary are used and by making mandatory the provision of comments to explain

situations where mismatches exist between what was planned in the AWP and what was achieved in the AR. Such explanatory text would be required at the point of upload as a validation step and the upload would be unable to be completed unless the comment field is filled out.

- This approach will allow the EWG to concentrate the analysis on matters of substance rather than format conformities.
- The detailed aspects of the automation procedure (what can be automated, are the results relevant, etc.) should be agreed by a small group of experts with knowledge appropriate to the type of data collected. Furthermore, the system should be checked before the AR evaluation on 2016 ARs, so the outcome of the automated compliance check can be compared with the STECF-EWG 17-07 evaluation. This can of course only be done with a MS who has provided an updated NP for 2016.

(2b) which scenario(s) of STECF evaluation you propose for the assessment of discrepancies (with justification):

EWG response

- Assuming that for all scenario's automated compliance checks are carried out prior to any other activity, the EWG prefers the first scenario (pre-screener, STECF-EWG, STECF PLEN - evaluation process as implemented over recent years, as it has proven to be effective and very informative for MS and has resulted in great improvements in MS performance regarding sampling implementation and reporting. This scenario is also consistent with the new pre-screening and evaluation approach suggested by the EWG when answering question 1.a.
- If the work-load for pre-screeners and/or the EWG decreases significantly due to the automated compliance checks, rather than taking out one of the evaluation steps, the length of the contracts with pre-screeners and/or the duration of the EWG undertaking the evaluations may need to be reviewed.

Question (4) to EWG: Our suggestion is the following: Quality of data should be the work attributed to STECF. We propose that STECF evaluates both (1) DT failures and (2) quality of AR [second step evaluation], given the following prerequisites:

EWG response

For (1): define DT failures, categorize DT failures (provide examples from past experience), agree on procedures, know total number of data calls, obtain overview of DT failures at regional/ EU level, in relation to obligations.

For (2): based on STECF EWG 17-04 outcomes, use produced indicators and requirements to assess quality.

Do you agree (with justification)? Should all parameters hold the same weight? Please comment (to be forwarded to STECF EWG 17-04)

EWG response

Quality Assessment:

- The EWG considers that (data) quality assessment should be part of the evaluation as it is defined in the legal framework (art. 11 of the Recast; Regulation (EU) 1004/2017). Collaboration with other bodies (biological: RCGs, economic: AER meeting and/or PGECON

and relevant data end-users) is necessary to evaluate, assure and improve data quality of data collected under the DCF in the most effective manner.

- The EWG considers itself as the appropriate body to evaluate procedural quality (as in modules 4B on method of PSU selection, 5A and 5B). Feedback on those modules can be sent to RCGs on a regional level, in order to align methodologies between MSs.
- On the quantitative quality of data collected under the DCF, the EWG suggests close collaboration with RCGs as well, where RCGs provide input to STECF-EWGs on the quantitative quality, so if the data quality is sufficient to be used by end-users for any purpose. Although serious issues will arise from the DT evaluation, improvements can always be made, and RCGs seem the logical focal point for that exercise.
- Indicators and requirements to assess quality were briefly discussed at PGECON 2017 Quality assurance session. The group provided recommendation to use ESS Standard for Quality Reports Structure. We suggest that EWG 17-04 make use of ESS quality report structure (PGECON Annex 7) as a guidelines and a reference point to develop DCF quality reporting. For now many of the criteria of AR text template listed in ESS structure are already covered. However, a number of important points could be included. Some of the criteria reflects the discussion points of EWG 17-07 concerning end-user needs, dissemination aspects etc. Furthermore quality reporting by ESS structure could be linked to NWP tables 5B for economic and 5A for biological variables.

Recurrent issues:

- adding an extra column to the DT platform to flag recurrent issues (to be done by end-user and to be revised and/or filled in by STECF-EWG) including the ID the recurrence refers to, will improve the evaluation of recurrent issues;
- in the development of the NWP-AR platform the possibility to flag recurrent issues (to be done by pre-screeners and/or STECF-EWG) should be incorporated.

Proportionality/severity:

- in the DT platform the end-user provides information on the severity of the issue. That is helpful provide that severity classifications are applied consistently within and between end-user feedback. Guidance and feedback to and perhaps dialogue with and between end-users is crucial to attain consistency in assessing severity;
- for the AR, pre-screeners in 2017 added 'Major' or 'Minor' to the discrepancies encountered. As there was no time to evaluate pre-screening results between pre-screeners due to time constraints, inconsistency could occur. Since the issues throughout were limited anyway, STECF-EWG looked at all issues highlighted by the pre-screeners. Also in this situation: validation of the issue is only useful when it is done consistently and based on clear criteria.

Allowed range of discrepancy:

- for DT it is hard to calculate a range of allowed discrepancy. DT should be carried out, and essentially 100% should be the goal. However, DT should be reviewed in a regional context, i.e. DT failure by a MS with a relatively small volume of catches of a single species at regional level or with TAC just above the threshold will have a different effect on overall data quality for a region and the assessment than DT failures by MSs that have a significant proportion of the catches;
- The STECF-EWG cannot advise at an absolute level of discrepancy since such discrepancies might be calculated in several ways, for example, by number of lines that match the NWP; total number of samples achieved in the AR compared to the number planned in the NWP, etc.;

- for ARs the allowed range of discrepancy may seem more straightforward to calculate, but even then the effect of any discrepancies varies. For example, if a MS has not been able to conduct a survey according to plan and stations have been taken over by another MS, the shortfall in coverage may not have affected the overall coverage.

Linkage between AR and DT:

- in order to evaluate DT in relation to ARs, ARs from the previous year should be easily accessible, and a link between the previous AR and the current DT issues should be established as this is crucial for the evaluation;
- not all data (and its quality) presented in the AR will be evaluated through the DT platform, e.g. additional data routinely collected on surveys like CTD data or stomach data.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)

At the end of the meeting the STECF-EWG found it relevant to allocate some time of the discussion to ask the four experts that have attended this type of EWG (AR and DT assessment) for the first time and one experts that have attended these meetings in the past (several years before when the process was firstly devised) about their views and opinion on the AR and DT evaluation process.

Four main points have emerged consistently from this feedback:

1. The attendance at the meeting allowed for a clearer understanding of the results of the assessment received by the MS and the whole process behind it. This understanding was found to be key in addressing the MS potential problems. (e.g. the EWG comments when sent to the MS were not always clear; this is mainly because they have a general formulation. Being involved in the process is considered to best comprehend the comments made by the EWG).
2. Experience in the evaluation process is highly relevant for the preparation of the MS Annual Reports, since it provides the experts with an EU overview/knowledge of the Annual Reports that allows them to understand and identify the differences across MS and across Regions and therefore the need of comprehensively describe the situation in their MS.
3. The meeting was considered by the new attendees to be well organized, with an easy to grasp supporting process, and the STECF-EWG experts were found to be very helpful in ensuring the proper knowledge transfer to the newcomers. However, additional work to better calibrate between and within groups and experts assessing criteria should be sought.
4. The importance of having a pre-screening process in advance of the meeting was also recognised by these experts since it helps to focus on those questions with higher importance and is certainly an important step to ensure efficiency and the effectiveness of the EWG work.

7 CONTACT DETAILS OF EWG-17-07 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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8 LIST OF ELECTRONIC ANNEXES

The following electronic annexes are published on the meeting's web site on:
<http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/ewg17-07>

EWG-17-01 – E-Annex 1 - AR_Assessment

EWG-17-01 – E-Annex 2 -Data_Transmission_Issues

9 LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The following background documents are published on the meeting's web site on:
<http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/ewg17-07>

EWG-17-07 – Doc 1 – AR_evaluation_template_updated_2017

EWG-17-07 – Doc 2 - DCF_AR-DT_eval_guidelines

EWG-17-07 – Doc 3 ToR 3 Discussion document

EWG-17-07 - Declarations of invited and JRC experts (see also section 7 of this report – List of participants)

10 ANNEX 1: AGENDA

Attendance

Chair: Cristina Ribeiro

DG MARE: Venetia Kostopoulou (Mon-Fri);

JRC: John Casey (STECF focal point)

Experts: 30 independent experts

Observers: – Lotte Worsøe Clausen (ICES), Miguel Bernal (GFCM) and Jose Luis Cervera (Devstat)

Daily timetable

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

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

Breaks: 10h45 and 15:45h

Monday, 26 June

Morning Session

Welcome and housekeeping

ToRs and agenda (presentation and discussion)

Introduction to the ToRs from the Commission (Venetia Kostopoulou)

Subgroup formation

Perform a joint assessment of a chosen AR. Objective: set a common assessment ground, calibration of criteria and principles across subgroups.

Afternoon Session:

Subgroups: Tor 1 & 2 in SG

17h30 – 18h00: daily wrap-up in Plenary

Tuesday, 27 June

Morning Session:

Subgroups: Tor 1 & 2 in SG (cont.)

Afternoon Session:

Subgroups: Tor 1 & 2 in SG (cont.)

17h30 – 18h00: daily wrap-up in plenary

Wednesday, 28 June

Morning Session:

Subgroups: Tor 1 & 2 in SG (cont.)

Afternoon Session:

Plenary session ToR1 & ToR2: MS final overview and collation of SG outputs (Each expert work individually on the assigned MS).

Thursday, 29 June

Morning Session:

09h00- 10h45

Introduction of ToR 3 by the Commission

Presentation by ICES

Presentation by GFCM

Presentation from Jose Cervera (Project Manager of MARE/2015/04 'Availability and dissemination of DCF data') entitled: "FishHub: Requirements for facilitating the monitoring of Annual Work Plans and Annual Reports": how Work Package 3 of Tender Specifications of project MARE/2015/04 ('*Monitoring and matching data requirements from Annual Work Programmes (AWPs) and data collection in Annual Reports (ARs)*') can be related to TOR 3

11h15 – 17h30 Plenary with 4 Breakout sessions + 4 plenary sessions

17h30 – 18h00 Wrapping-up ToR 3 conclusions

Friday, 30 June

Morning session (9h-12h)

Plenary: Draft Report on ToR3 (cont)

AOB

Report adoption

Columns to be kept at the final AR template: EWG comments; EWG judgement and Action needed.

EWG: Focus on clarity, self-sufficient and self-explanatory comments.

EWG evaluation comments: all cells to be completed

EWG comments: if no comments, insert “No comments”

EWG judgment: “Yes”, “Mostly”, “Partly”, “No”

Action needed: if no action needed, insert “No action needed”

Although the EWG was requested by the Commission to evaluate issues identified by the pre-screeners as Major, the EWG agreed that Minor issues also require scrutiny since the EWG may not always arrive at the same conclusion as the pre-screeners.

Minor issues

In case of any action needed, the standard sentence should be:

“MS to address in future submission.”

III.C.

Métier-related variables

All métiers selected for sampling (Table III.C.1) should appear in the following tables.

Table III.C.4 has to be consistent with Table III.C.3

If evaluators consider that concurrent sampling is not being carried out as planned, ask MS for clarification.

III-F

Although data collected through other regulations are not required to be described in the AR (guidelines 2016), MSs should adopt a coherent approach to all transversal variables, and decide either to include all or none, and provide the description in the text.

DCF is not only for collection but also for use and management of data.

III G

In cases of OVER PERFORMANCE, e.g., if a MS achieves over and above its planned data collection activities e.g. carrying out additional survey stations to make up a shortfall by another MS, the EWG assessment should be YES.

12 ANNEX 3: COMPILATION OF MODULE VIII "COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS" FROM 2016 ARs BY MS

Belgium

- Page 12 of the Guidelines refer to 4 sections: 'sections III.B.1-4 should be given'. However, in the template, this is not present. This can create confusion.
- Table III.E.1: initially it was not clear what needed to be used as reference years (discrepancy between Guidelines and example in template), which led to confusion.
- Headings in chapter VI from Guidelines not consistent with rest of document
- It would more practical if the LM report with the recommendations is available in a Word document. Or alternatively, the list of all recommendations as endorsed by the LM, are sent to all the NCs.

Croatia

In regards to the evaluation of the Annual Report for 2016 it is important to emphasize that the NP 2014-2016 represents a modified NP 2012-2013, for which the data for 2011 was used. The modification of NP 2014-2016 relates only to derogations, while data had not been updated.

At the Workshops on transversal variables I and II, held in 2015 and 2016, it was concluded that DCF is not fully aligned with the coding in the latest Master Data Register lists available for the Control Regulation or the FAO code list. As most MS use control data for transversal variables, additional effort needs to be made to align the coding lists. This is important as discrepancies between the two lists create an additional burden to the MS, with implications also on funding as mapping procedures must be set to align the codes. For example, traditional Croatian gears which fall under the FAO category MIS (miscellanea) could not be included as such in the data call tables as the code is not available in the data call coding list, therefore NK for unknown had to be inserted.

Additionally, there is a need to further describe and give guidelines to MS as to calculation of effort variables for passive gears, in order to harmonize reporting across MS.

With regard to aging techniques, significant discrepancies reading the otoliths were encountered among readers due to uncertainty of false growth rings determinations. Additional exercise for harmonization of reading the otoliths for *E. encrasicolus*, *M. merluccius*, *M. barbatus*, *M. surmuletus*, *T. trachurus* and *T. mediterraneus* among readers is strongly advisable.

Cooperation with JRC, in terms of JRC data quality reports, has greatly aided in improving the establishment of a data validation system and improved data quality in general.

Overall, we find it difficult to comply with all requirements and data call obligations, therefore we support the development of a database and central access point for end-users.

Latvia

Latvia considers that the proposed indication of the landing values (<200 t) in Table III.E.1 could be quite misleading for several species which have much lower landing values but for which Latvia collects the biological data. Thus such species as salmon, sea trout, eel, common whitefish and turbot has annual landings below 10 t and some species even around 1 t. Latvia proposes to present the actual landing figure.

Netherlands

Comments to the tables

The pre-defined lists referring to RFMO/RFO/IO are not consistent with the guidelines. MS used the pre-defined lists. E.g. guidelines definition 'IO: ICES', drop-down list table 'ICES'.

The pre-defined lists in Table III.E.2 (columns A and C) did not provide the correct or incomplete information to fill in the sheet. MS put in the values as mentioned in the guidelines.

Other comments

As in previous years, NLD requests to make the LM recommendations available for all MSs well before the submission deadline for ARs. LM 2014 report states that 'The LM considers that recommendations on DCF issues from STECF and other relevant groups (e.g. PGMed, PGECON) should also be included in the ICES database. The LM agreed, however, that only those recommendations that have been approved by the LM should enter the database. The Commission informed LM members that it will contract a person to compile all recommendations approved by the LM by early 2015 so that MS can use this compilation when preparing their Annual Reports for 2014.'. The recommendations agreed upon by LM meetings are however not mentioned in the ICES recommendations database.

2016 is the last year to report in this format. From 2017 onwards a new format for reporting progress will be used. To facilitate timely delivery of the 2017 annual report by May 2018, The Netherlands requests to have the guidelines and templates (tables and text) for this new reporting format available in due time, preferably in January 2018.

Romania

After the 9th year of implementing such a programme, unfortunately, our comments, suggestions and reflections are all most as in the last year report for 2016; due to the fact, the basic issues for the programme implementation/execution encountered are:

- ▶ There is a strongly need EC to undertake all opportunities to stress to the national authorities responsible for fisheries and aquaculture to adopt the necessary legal measures to avoid delays on financing the Programme and to ensure the appropriate conditions to achieve the objectives of EC under its internal and international obligations/commitments;
- ▶ EC should have a decisive role on fulfilment of the international coordination actions of the MSs, as stated in the DCF provisions (i.e. common research surveys at sea in the EU waters – in this case BG failed to fulfil the surveys on the EU community waters of the Black Sea); this role should be preserved in the new Regulation for DCMAP for the period 2014-2020);
- ▶ Chairman of the groups/meetings should inform in due time the national correspondents to ensure the transmission of the invitation for participation in due time to the meetings; so that the specialists involved in the implementation of the programme to be fully informed;
- ▶ EC to improve actions and to use the good practice and experience spreading among MSs either a Regulation, either a Decision requesting the translation in national legislation, as a subsidiary principle application, by the authority in charge, together with other national bodies (e.g. National Institute for Statistics etc.) internal rules aiming better collection of data from domestic actors in fisheries, especially in aquaculture and processing industry (the super markets are playing a huge role in Romania and they almost ignore their duty .! on reporting in due time and without other special actions of the collectors);
- ▶ Also, there is a strong need to establish a list of types of data and/or metadata envisaged to be putted in regional data bases, the list of indicators for economic and social needs – Eurostat and DG MARE to strengthen and to accelerate their co-operation on this goal;
- ▶ EC should take decision on the establishing with GFCM the regional data base for Mediterranean and Black Sea, avoiding duplication of data transmission;
- ▶ Very important is: to be established the financial aspect related to the depository of regional data base– who is going to finance the running cost of such a data base;
- ▶ STECF should endorse the EWG recommendations on aquaculture and processing industry related to the all MSs to collect data to better be assessed those sectors at whole EU level, improving the reliability of analyses should be provide to the Conuncil and EP, as bases for political decision process.

Slovenia

It would be very useful that the forms for submission of the data for data calls will remain the same for a few consecutive data calls. Also because of the changes in forms for submission we have some extra costs related to preparation of data.

Sweden

In table VI.1 the achievement rate “F” was selected for most data since Sweden has delivered, in general all data requested for in the data calls within the timeframe given. However, in some cases there might be minor shortfalls in the data transmission but this was not the level of details that could be handled efficiently in the current table.

United Kingdom

In view of the substantial amount of expenditure spent on eels and salmon monitoring under the DCF and the Eels Action Plan (EC 1100/2007), Annex 2 to the UK AR provides details about such activities.

13 ANNEX 4: MS SPECIFIC ISSUES

Member state : Belgium

- Overall performance and compliance
The overall performance and compliance was very good without any major issue.
- Fleet-economic data collection
It was performed properly. Only some light comments on the filling of economic tables that MS should easily apply for future transmissions.
- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry
It was performed properly. Two issues, but which appear as repetitive over years, are however raised by the EWG about data collection on processing industry the missing number of enterprises (empty column in table IV.B.2) and the decreasing response rate for several variables in <10 segment. MS to address them in future submissions.
- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks
III.C The minor deviations from the sampling plan have all been satisfactorily explained however for future submissions more detailed text is required for section III.C.4.

III.E The minor deviations from the sampling plan have all been satisfactorily explained however text should be moved to the appropriate Region section from General comments and it would be more appropriate to have sampling level comments in the tables rather than being detailed in the body of the text
- Recreational fisheries sampling
It is not clear if AR text only refers to NS&EA, as Table III.D.1 suggests. MS is asked to clarify. There is however no data collection reported in table III.D.1. MS is also asked to clarify if recreational fisheries on eel have happened in 2016 (current text refers to 2015).
- Surveys-at-sea
Belgium met some difficulties to perform one of its two planned surveys (BTS), due to breakdown of the research vessel forcing to use of an alternative vessel. Only target species were then sampled. MS did not clarify in its AR if any effect on the time-series is to be expected by change of vessel. As the information of the Belgium survey is not yet used for stock assessment no indices are provided. But for future AR, MS is asked to investigate the effect of the vessel change on the time-series for stock assessment.

Several minor issues were also raised by the EWG : missing number of days from NP to AR 2016 in table III.G.1, map references between text and table.
- Data transmission to end-users
Belgium answered satisfactorily to all data calls MS received, except to FDI for which 3 data failures were highlighted, 2 of them with low severity and 1 with medium. This last one, regarding age data for sole and plaice, appears as repetitive since 2013. The EWG evaluated the MS reply as inadequate and assessed it as unsatisfactory.

Member State: Bulgaria

- Overall performance and compliance
Overall compliance was very much improved, but there are still some issues in the biological modules to be solved in the future NWP.
- Fleet-economic data collection
Bulgaria has been asked to re-submit tables IIIB1, IIIB2 and IIIB3
- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry
Overall compliance was good but only one variable is missing from tables IVB2. MS should also resubmit table IV.A.2.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

It is apparent that the MS has tried to provide the data in the required format but there are too many inconsistencies both between the Tables within both sections and also with the supporting text provided in the AR. For these reasons it was not possible to correctly assess these sections. MS should resubmit both sections (text and Tables) for III.C and III.E.

- Recreational fisheries sampling

Recreational Fisheries in Bulgaria do not include the eels, sharks and bluefin tuna, therefore no sampling scheme was planned for these species, however it should be checked why the derogation requested by the country was rejected.

- Surveys-at-sea

The surveys were performed properly and no issue arises.

- Data transmission to end-users

There no data transmission failures for Bulgaria in 2016.

Member State: Cyprus

- Overall performance and compliance

No comments

- Fleet-economic data collection

No significant issues were identified, only minor uncertainties in AR tables concerning quality indicators.

- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Recreational fisheries sampling

Based on the information present in the AR, it is not clear why derogation is still not considered.

- Surveys-at-sea

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Data transmission to end-users

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

Member State: Croatia

- Overall performance and compliance

Overall MS performed well but some minor issues remain.

Only those recommendations and agreements relating to the AR year submission should be listed. RCM Med.&BS recommendation endorsed by LM 2015 should be included

- Fleet-economic data collection

Table III.B.1 MS to provide and submit text clarification on the difference between the vessel population as detailed in the fleet register and that assessed under the AR (Data collection should cover all vessels in the fleet register) and resubmit table if necessary.

Table III.B.3 The Achieved sample rate and Response rate should be equal in cases when the data collection type is Census.

The corrected Table should be resubmitted.

There were no issues in MS submission in relation to transversal variables.

- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

AR text refers to aquaculture data for year 2014, while the reference year in the IV-A Tables is 2015. MS should check the text and tables and describe the data collection activities for the reference year 2015 and not 2014.

Both should be resubmitted.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

Module III.C: It is apparent that the MS has tried to provide the data in the required format but there are inconsistencies between the Tables and missing information (Missing sampling frames and numbers of trips for example) and not using internationally agreed naming conventions for métiers. The guidelines for filling the tables should be applied and the MS check for consistency between tables. This is particularly important in Tables III.C.3 – III.C.4

MS should resubmit all tables for Section III.C following the guidelines. Module III.E: MS to ensure Table III.E.1 is completed correctly in future reports.

MS is requested to clarify the inconsistencies between Table III.E.3 and AR text and resubmit both.

- Recreational fisheries sampling

There were no issues within this section

- Surveys-at-sea

There were no issues within this section

- Data transmission to end-users

There are no major issues but clarification is required for:-

Issue ID 2764 NEP in GSA 17 HRV. Parameters provided only for 2015. MS to inform STECF if any data are available for previous years

Member State: Denmark

- Overall performance and compliance

The overall performance and compliance was very good without any major issue. Information on national coordination meetings and main subject discussed is given in AR text but minutes from that meetings are missing.

- Fleet-economic data collection

The overall performance and compliance was good without any major issue.

- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

The overall performance and compliance was very good without any major issue.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

This module was performed properly and no major issues arose. However, there is a reoccurring issue. The text for section III.E.2 in the Baltic region should be provided in future reports. III.E.2 in North Atlantic region text has not been completed. III.E.2 data quality section is missing for the Baltic region.

- Recreational fisheries sampling

This module was performed properly. No major issues was raised.

- Surveys-at-sea

All planned surveys were performed.

- Data transmission to end-users
There are no data transmission failures for Denmark in 2016

Member State: Spain

- Overall performance and compliance
The MS has submitted a well-structured and, compared to previous years, much improved report. The compliance level is increased and should be related to the high diversity of the Spanish fishery.
- Fleet-economic data collection
Only one minor issue existing in all region concerning the format of the classification of the segments.
- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry
Only few minor issues concerning not reporting some parameters.
- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks
There are few minor issues particularly related to under-sampling of fisheries targeting large pelagic fish especially in "Other Regions" under the sampling frame codes T17 and T18.
- Recreational fisheries sampling
No significant issues identified
- Surveys-at-sea
No significant issues identified.
- Data transmission to end-users
There are a significant number of unsolved issues where the MS has not provided satisfactory answers to the data transmission failures identified. "Unsatisfactory" answers were provided for six issues, which were categorized as having high severity. The issues includes missing biological data (various species and sharks in particular) and discrepancy between catch and MEDITindex of Nephrops, unavailable VMS-data (confidentiality and format problems and recurrent), fleet economic and transversal data. Furthermore, length information for tuna was not available even though the data is to be collected according to IOTC. Three issues were identified as having medium severity and unsatisfactory answered by the MS. The main issue was the general discrepancy between landing value and the income of the landings.

Member State: Estonia

- Overall performance and compliance
The MS perform the program with no major issues observed.
- Fleet-economic data collection
No major issues identified. Reference year should be 2015.
- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry
No major issues observed. MS to follow the guidelines in future. Value of quota and other fishing rights not reported. According to guidelines, in case that a variable is not applicable in a MS, it should not be left blank, but marked as "NA" in Table III.B.3
- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks
No major issues identified for Estonia. A minor issue relating to Tables III.C.3 and III.C.4 was raised. Estonia must ensure they follow the guidelines when filling these tables in the future..
- Recreational fisheries sampling
MS is encouraged to make catch data available by quarter for the next AR.
- Surveys-at-sea

No major issues identified. MS is encouraged to make catch data available by quarter in the next AR.

- Data transmission to end-users
No issues raised

Member State: Finland

- Overall performance and compliance

The overall performance and compliance was very good without any major issue

- Fleet-economic data collection

It was performed properly, however some issues were reported regarding the sample rate calculation "number of vessels in the fleet register is 3179 while table III.B.1 reports 2717 vessels. In case the type of data collection is census, planned sample should be equal to the population, while for several segments it is lower"; and the clustering of inactive vessels and the name of clusters "According to the guidelines, IIIB3 should contain information on unclustered segments and clusters. Clustered segments should be marked with an asterix".

- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

Overall compliance was good but for almost variables the reference year is incorrect, only for two variables (turnover, subsidies) reference year 2015 is mentioned. The table should be resubmitted with correct reference year as reported in the text of AR.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

This module was performed properly and no issue arises

- Recreational fisheries sampling

This module was performed properly and no issue arises

- Surveys-at-sea

All planned surveys were performed. No issues raised.

- Data transmission to end-users

There no data transmission failures for Finland in 2016

Member State: France

- Overall performance and compliance

The overall performance for AR 2016 was assessed to compliance class "Mostly".

Six modules were evaluated as very good while five modules were good, but still would benefit from some improvements in future AR.

- Regarding the modules on Biological metier related variables and Biological stock-related variables; here further improvements would be beneficial in the future.

- Fleet-economic data collection

Number of variables is missing for some segments.

No data were collected for "Other regions" segments.

- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

No major issues.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

The MS has tried to provide the data in the required format but there are too many inconsistencies both between the Tables within both sections and also the supporting text provided in the AR does not give enough information or omits important information.

France should resubmit both sections (text and Tables) for III.C and III.E

- Recreational fisheries sampling

MS has not provided any information on sampling of eels and sharks for Mediterranean and Black Sea region.

- Surveys-at-sea

No major issues.

- Data transmission to end-users

In 2016 France had 39 issues with data transmissions to end-users. 15 of them were assess as satisfactory by the STECF, 14 as unknown and 10 as unsatisfactory.

The recurring issues for France, relating to data transmission are;

MS often promises to submit data in future. Promises on DT cannot be evaluated and are assumed to be unsatisfactory.

MS has not delivered 2015 data to RDB due to the lack of juridical documents on the obligation for data delivery. MS specifically refers to RDB data policy not being reviewed by MSs in European context.

MS should ensure consistencies between transmitted data to different data calls.

Non submission of some data.

In order to carry out the evaluation as thorough as possible, MS is kindly asked to respond to DT failures in English.

Member State: German

- Overall performance and compliance

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Fleet-economic data collection

No significant issues identified, and no actions required. Minor issue: the variable groups and variables names should be named according to the Comm. Dec. 2010/93/EU Appendix VI. In case of Census Response rate should be equal to the Achieved sample rate.

- Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

Excellent compliance, no significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Recreational fisheries sampling

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

- Surveys-at-sea

A vessel breakdown impacted a number of surveys. MS is asked to address the potential impact of missing data, especially for herring larvae survey (North Sea) and sprat acoustic survey (Baltic)

- Data transmission to end-users

No significant failures were identified, and no actions required.

Member State: Great Britain

- **Overall performance and compliance**

Very good overall performance. Only minor issues identified.

- **Fleet-economic data collection**
Only minor issues - some clarification is required (divergence in fleet numbers)
- **Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry**
Some clarification about reference year and changes in the type of data collection should be provided in the AR text.
- **Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks**
No significant issues identified
- **Recreational fisheries sampling**
No significant issues identified
- **Surveys-at-sea**
No significant issues identified
- **Data transmission to end-users**
Timeliness issue has been identified (AWG_spr-celt)
Lack of age samples from UK flag fleet landing into foreign harbors.

Member State: Greece

- **Overall performance and compliance:**
Overall Greece provided a very good report
- **Fleet-economic data collection**
No issues
- **Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry**
No issues
- **Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks**
Only one major issue related with quality. MS is asked to provide information related to quality under the III C 2 DATA QUALITY ISSUES section.
- **Recreational fisheries sampling**
No issues
- **Surveys-at-sea**
No issues
- **Data transmission to end-users**
Several DT failures were highlighted for Greece, 7 of them of high severity, 4 medium and 2 with low severity. 3 out of 13 cases were satisfactory. The rest of them were unknown.

Member State: Ireland

- **Overall performance and compliance**
No comments.
- **Fleet-economic data collection**

Not all variables were collected for the segments Beam trawlers VL2440 and Pelagic trawlers VL1218.

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

No comments.

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

No comments

Recreational fisheries sampling

No comments.

Surveys-at-sea

No comments.

Data transmission to end-users

For all fishing vessels effort and catches (landings and discards) disaggregated by area and gear type, as well for landings and discards disaggregated by age were requested in the frame of FDE data call. However, the catch data for 2015 was missing in the table A (GILL gears in area 5B EU, of DREGDE gears in area 7F, of OTTER gears in area 9A EU, of PEL_TRAWL gears in area 12 for vessels over 15 m length).

Member State: Italy

Overall performance and compliance

Overall performance was good with major issues in modules C and E that should be addressed by MS.

Fleet-economic data collection

Only minor issues

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

Only minor issues

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

Some major issues

One of the problems is that Italy has not resubmitted its NP since the beginning and the changes since then have been very important. Since then, Italy has modified not only the sampling intensity but also the sampling design and this is considered a major change that requires a resubmission of NP.

Other problem is related with the Italian fisheries in Other Regions. No information in tables and very few lines in text with reduced information only for CECAF area but nothing about IOTC. Although the number of vessels involved in those fisheries are small, the information on transversal variables should be collected and provided in any case. Regarding collection of biological variables, the issue should be rise at a regional level in the proper forum in order to reach an agreement to solve the situation.

Recreational fisheries sampling

No issues

Surveys-at-sea

No issues

Data transmission to end-users

Several DT failures were highlighted for Italy, 5 of them of high severity, 15 medium and 2 with impact on the working group and 17 with low severity. 65% of the replies from Italy were considered as satisfactory by the EWG.

Member State: Latvia

The performance of MS in general is rather positive, (YES) as there are no major problems in each module analyzed and evaluated. Specifically, follow the comments for each listed step below.

Overall performance and compliance:

The Latvian overall compliance is "Yes". One "Partly" in National data collection organisation, refers to poor information related to national coordination meetings, it is recalled some imprecision in Module II about meetings minutes.

Fleet-economic data collection

The overall execution of this module exercise was performed well. The module presents only minor issues, such as the fleet in AR is related to the lower number of vessels present in the national fleet register. For vessels > 40 (8 boats) the data is not transmitted in compliance with confidentiality. Some clarification will be requested from MS.

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

MS has improved its activity. No issues no comment

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

There are only a few comments, related to minor issues, about a more accurate description of future activities, related to the maturity and sex-ratios and age of some species.

Recreational fisheries sampling

No comment

Surveys-at-sea

No comment

Data transmission to end-users

There are no issues noted and reported by end users in relation to the year under review

Member State: Lithuania

Overall performance and compliance

The overall performance and compliance for Lithuania was very good (Compliance class for all modules is "Yes", apart for Modules II and III E, which is "Mostly"). Though, few issues arisen. The most important among them, consider the biological sampling scheme (not the sampling itself but the reading of otoliths), and recreational fisheries sampling scheme. EWG suggest solutions itself for these issues and comments that the MS should adopt these solutions or provide alternatives.

Fleet-economic data collection

EWG suggestion is "Yes" in all cases.

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

No comments have been made by the EWG

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

There is one issue with the reading of otoliths from Sebastes. MS should provide a solution on how to handle this issue.

□ **Recreational fisheries sampling**

One issue arisen by EWG concerning the absence of sample cod in weekends. MS is asked to clarify the reasons and investigate the possibility of cod sampling at weekends.

□ **Surveys-at-sea**

The sampling scheme is not completely consistent with the NP proposal as BITS had only 63% (Q1 and Q4) of target achieved. However, MS provides an explanation in the AR text and no action is needed.

□ **Data transmission to end-users**

7 data transmission failures were raised.

EWG assessed that seven of the answers are "satisfactory", one "unsatisfactory" with high severity and just one "unknown". Among the High Severity data transmission failures, only one has been assessed as "Unsatisfactory" by the EWG, considering missing or not available information for discards, due to technical reasons.

Member State: Malta

□ **Overall performance and compliance**

Overall, the compliance level has been evaluated as high. Two minor issues have been highlighted in the evaluation for consideration in future submissions.

Malta is requested to provide the link to the DCF-website. As such, the provided link to SharePoint deemed as incorrect. This is a recurrent issue. Also MS is requested to refer to relevant to MS and AR year recommendations.

□ **Fleet-economic data collection**

The overall execution of this module exercise was performed very well. Only one comment was noted: slight discrepancy between number of vessels in the fleet register and number indicated as a target population.

□ **Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry**

No significant issues identified

□ **Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks**

Achieved samplings were performed exhaustively. No issue raised.

□ **Recreational fisheries sampling**

Recreational fisheries were performed exhaustively. No issue raised.

□ **Surveys-at-sea**

All planned surveys were performed. No issues raised.

□ **Data transmission to end-users**

No issues raised.

Member State: The Netherlands

Overall performance and compliance

The overall performance and compliance was very good without any major issues.

Fleet-economic data collection

No significant issues were identified; however MS should clarify this divergence in fleet numbers between target population in Table III.B.1. and the fleet register. Minor issues are present in Table III.B.2 regarding clustering and Table III.B.3. regarding reference year form some variables.

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

MS is asked to clarify an issue on quality indicators regarding collection of data concerning the processing industry.

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

No major issues identified across modules C&E for the Netherlands. However some minor issues were highlighted to be addressed in future MS Annual Reports.

Recreational fisheries sampling

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

Surveys-at-sea

No significant issues identified, and no actions required.

Data transmission to end-users

There are no recurrent issues for The Netherlands. Four transmission failures were highlighted, three of which with low severity (FDI data-call) and one with unknown severity (Fleet economics data-call). EWG assessment of the issues raised is "satisfactory".

Member State: Poland

Overall performance and compliance

Poland had very good overall performance and compliance in 2016

Fleet-economic data collection

Very few issues. MS to note that in future the data for SPRMFO should be provided. Some fleet economic variables are not named correctly and clustered segments should be marked with an *. Classification of clustered segments is missing in the table.

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

No issues

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

Excellent effort in 2016

Recreational fisheries sampling

No issues

Surveys-at-sea

No issues

Data transmission to end-users

No data transmission failures.

Member State: Portugal

Overall performance and compliance

It was the opinion of EWG17_07 that Portugal widely complied in its achievements as submitted in the 2016 AR.

Problems associated with biological sampling and survey at sea as experienced in previous years were substantially reduced in the recent report, thus considerable progress has been achieved.

Continuing issues with the fleet economics section are mainly due to inconsistencies with guidelines and between tables, the amendment of which should be feasible straight away.

Fleet-economic data collection

As is the previous reports there are some issues with Tables III.B.2 and III.B.3 and MS is requested to resubmit these tables following the guidelines. There are inconsistencies between the tables with respect to sampling scheme, the number of vessels and the clustering scheme.

Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry

Both sections were well covered and no further action is required. The section has improved significantly.

Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks

Only minor issues were observed which would not require immediate action. Substantial progress could be observed compared to previous reports. Few double entries were observed, as well as some undersampling but only on a stock with minor EU contribution.

Recreational fisheries sampling

Both sections were well covered and no further action is required. The section has improved significantly.

Surveys-at-sea

All sections were completed in line with the guidelines and MS fulfilled all surveys as required except for the mackerel egg survey. Both temporal and spatial coverage were not fully achieved and no plausible explanation was provided.

Data transmission to end-users

No data transmission failures were filled.

Member State: Romani

Overall performance and compliance

Overall MS performed well but there are some re-occurring issues leaving room for improvement.

Romania and Bulgaria have to resolve the issues relating to the existing bilateral agreement.

Module I, II: Only up to date relevant recommendations addressed to MS shall be listed and the list of recommendations shall not be provided in the AR text but only in the tables. There is no requirement of a very extensive AR annex with repetitive information given already in the tables.

Fleet-economic data collection

There is missing information on segments which are not clustered or, in case of clustering, for clusters. EWG advises MS to resubmit tables III.B.2 and III.B.3 which is a re-occurring issue.

□ **Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry**

No issues regarding the modules III.F and IV.

□ **Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks**

Module III.C: It is apparent that the MS has tried to provide the data in the required format but there are too many inconsistencies both between the Tables and also with the supporting text provided in the AR. For these reasons it was not possible for the EWG to correctly assess this section.

Romania should resubmit both text and tables for Section III.C.

Module III.E: In general there were only minor issues within this section. MS has to ensure that the correct species groups are applied and also that species covered by bilateral agreements are identified in the text and tables in future AR submissions.

□ **Recreational fisheries sampling**

No issues regarding the module III.D. A ban on recreational fishery is in place in Romania.

□ **Surveys-at-sea**

No issues regarding the module III.G.

□ **Data transmission to end-users**

No issues regarding data transmission.

Member State: Slovenia

□ **Overall performance and compliance**

The overall performance of Slovenia for AR 2016 was very good. (Compliance class for all modules is "Yes", apart for Modules IIIC and IIID, which is "Mostly"). This result shows a real increase over the reports of recent years. However, for the modules on the Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks and Recreational fisheries sampling this increase did not occur. Still, several inconsistencies and deviations were found and not explained.

□ **Fleet-economic data collection**

No issues.

□ **Economic data collection on aquaculture and processing industry**

No issues.

□ **Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks**

Achievements within these modules were only "Mostly" satisfactory. Several issues were raised for the "Métier related variables", mostly concerning explanation on deviations and inconsistencies. More detailed text in relation to deviations will be required in future AR submissions.

For the module "Biological stock-related variables" the deviations have all been satisfactorily explained. More detailed text in relation to data quality will be required in future AR submissions.

Slovenia is also requested to provide missing information in the future National Work Plan.

□ **Recreational fisheries sampling**

Concerning "Recreational Fisheries", several explanations are requested to Slovenia in order to clarify the situation for eel, tuna and sharks.

If eel is protected by Slovenian legislation, it is suggested address this issue in Slovenia Work Plan (NWP).

□ **Surveys-at-sea**

No issues.

□ **Data transmission to end-users**

No data transmission failures.

Member State: Sweden

□ **Overall performance and compliance**

The overall performance and compliance was very good without any major issue

□ **Fleet-economic data collection**

It was performed properly, however the reported number of vessels in the target population was not the same as in the fleet register. It was considered as a minor issue with a comment to MS to look into in future.

□ **Biological sampling of commercial fisheries and stocks**

This module was performed properly except for a minor issue in part C1, where MS achievements did not meet the WP. However, the issue could not be foreseen and therefore it was not avoidable.

□ **Research surveys at sea**

This module was performed properly. Hiring of a foreign research vessel caused a minor problem with survey coverage in MS's national area.

□ **Collection of data concerning the aquaculture**

There is a mismatch in census response rate and achieved sample rate. MS should resubmit the table IV A 3 with the correct response and achieved rates. However, this issue was considered minor with no action needed.

□ **Data transmission to end-users**

There no data transmission failures for Sweden in 2016

14 ANNEX 5: FLEET STATISTICS

MS	Fleet Register 1.01.2015.	AR 2016 table III.B.1 (reference year 2015)	Data call Fleet Economic JRC (reference year 2015)
BEL	79	79	79
BGR	2002	1979	1.979
CYP	949	904	905
DEU	1491	1496	1.478
DNK	2445	1851	1.851
ESP	9631	9686	9.686
EST	1515	1539	1.534
FIN	3179	2717	2.717
FRA	7065	6911	6.911
GBR	6278	6420	6.420
GRC	15569	15371	15.624
HRV	7736	4385	7.849
IRL	2156	2048	2.048
ITA	12427	12426	12.426
LTU	143	151	151
LVA	700	703	309
MLT	1020	1039	1.039
NLD	830	718	718
POL	873	873	873
PRT	8155	8205	8.205
ROM	158	151	151
SVN	173	169	169
SWE	1357	1298	1.298

15 ANNEX 6: TOR 3 - PRESENTATIONS

1. ICES

Data Calls and Transmission

ICES CEM
Science for sustainable seas

From data to advice

ICES CEM

Costs of producing ICES advice (2015)

Activity	Relative share of total cost
Data collection	> 90%
Data compilation and preparation of participation expert groups	+/- 5%
Participating expert groups	+/- 1%
ACOM	< 3%

MUST USE

ICES CEM
Science for sustainable seas

Current Data calls

- Time consuming
- Prone to errors as excel spreadsheets are updated by many people.
- Difficult to check due to the lack of standardization
- Data providers only have the first glimpse of the data call when receiving it.

ICES CEM
Science for sustainable seas

Data calls (using the new D module)

- No more excel spreadsheets or the data needs data entered directly into D
- Only designated people will be able to update the data needs (stock assessors, coordinators and chairs)
- Data providers will be able to see months in advance the data needs for each of the WG
- Data providers will be able to flag issues in the D regarding any data being asked.

ICES CEM
Science for sustainable seas

Data transmission issues

- Like most data...
- Isst bet...
- Alli upc...
- Sto...
- ICB...
- reaso...

ICES CEM
Science for sustainable seas

Data transmission feedback

- ICES feedback to GMARE on transmission failures with grading to be verified (need to align the category with WG standards)
- Data transmission failures are not identical to these data we'd like to have a better survey needed
- These issues will be addressed in benchmarks - where can ICES then transmit this information to? RCGs?

ICES CEM
Science for sustainable seas

2. GFCM

EWG 17-07: Evaluation of DCF 2016 Annual Reports, Data Transmission to end users in 2016 & preparation for the new assessment of Annual Reports and Data transmission

26-30 June 2017 (Gavirate - Italy)

GFCM - Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF): progress in the field of fisheries data quality indicators

By the GFCM Secretariat

GFCM - Collection of data in support of advice

GFCM receives data from all Mediterranean and Black Sea states through different channels:

- In reply to existing **GFCM Recommendations** (compulsory)
- Through **national reports** to the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) and the Working Group of the Black Sea (WGBS)
- Through **Stock Assessment Forms** (SAFs)

There was a mismatch between the data requested and received and the **data needed by the SAC and the WGBS to provide advice**: in 2013 a process to make the process of data submission more efficient and better suited to the provision of advice was initiated.

- The **GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF)** was adopted in 2014-2015 as a technical document providing guidelines on how to collect the data needed by the SAC and WGBS to provide advice
- Most GFCM recommendations were revised and made **in line with DCRF** in 2015
- The most comprehensive data collection recommendation was revised in 2016, and a **transitory recommendation** in line with DCRF was adopted. A consolidated recommendation expected in 2017.

Assessment (and reporting) compliance on data submission and data quality

As an RFMO, the process of assessing compliance with existing recommendation is very formal and complex:

- Dedicated Compliance Committee (CoC). Non-compliance have implications at the level of national administrations: **letter of identification submitted to national authorities**. Countries request to have some time – Compliance is only assessed two years after recommendations are adopted

Before DCRF, compliance on data submission **difficult to assess**, also process **slow** and not useful in the context of provision of advice in support of management.

In 2016, within the context of implementing the DCRF, the implementation of tentative **data quality indicators** approved by the CoC; once consolidated these will allow to have a **comprehensive assessment of yearly submitted data**

Data quality indicators in DCRF

INDICATOR	DEFINITION	OPERATIONAL	DEFINITION	VALIDATION CHECKS
COMPLETENESS	Length of time between the transmission of the data to DCF and the deadline as defined by the location recommendations. The establishment of the monthly submission regime is a small example used as the initial process of receiving data.			
CONSISTENCY	Errors in which the submitted data does not comply with the DCF data submission and format. It is measured as the percentage of data that is properly reported (code in accordance with format) against the total ones.	completeness	Check of individual values against values in other reports regarding the variable type, biomass, maturity, composition.	Number of invalid values for each data table
CONSISTENCY	The extent to which submitted data is within a range of possible values and common sense. These data analysis include the identification of possible outliers. Reported values are compared against historical information or generalised knowledge of the variable. Reported values are compared against historical information or generalised knowledge of the variable.	completeness	Check of values vs. values acceptable values against a limit that is variable against the time stability in the data series.	Number of values outside the range for each data table
CONSISTENCY	Check for changes in the temporal behaviour of the data submission.	completeness	Check for changes in which values are close to zero or against the (generalised) historical information.	Number of extreme values between data tables
PRECISION	The extent to which the transmitted data allows the SAC to provide its scientific advice on the request of the Commission. The adequacy of data will depend on the data submitted and reported levels. The SAC shall also work to improve the data delivery methods that are needed for the scientific advice to the Commission.	completeness	Check for changes in which values are close to zero or against the (generalised) historical information.	Number of extreme values between data tables

19th session of the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (16-19 May 2017)

The Committee agreed to temporarily adopt **conformity, stability and consistency** indicators for data quality checks (with preliminary thresholds)

Data quality indicators

Conformity, stability and consistency indicators for data quality checks (with preliminary thresholds) are being temporarily implemented on the **DCRF online platform** for data submission in the second half of 2017, during the transitional period of the Recommendation GFCM/40/2016/2 on the submission of data in line with the DCRF.

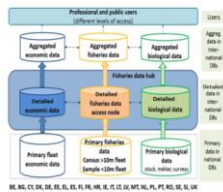
The results of this experience are expected to **facilitate the work of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC) and Compliance Committee (CoC) in defining quality indicators** (probably in 2018) to be proposed to the Commission for its final decision.

Thanks for your kind attention

3. DEVSTAT (FISHHUB)

<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">Study on Availability and Dissemination of DCF Data</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">MARE/2015/04</p> <p style="text-align: center;">José CERVERA, Christine ALBERTI-SCHMITT and Pavel SALZ</p> <p>Emails: jcervera@devstat.com, Alberti.christine@gmail.com and p.salz@framian.nl</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Generic email of the project: FishHubStudy@sogeti.lu</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Presentation to the STECF, Gavrirate, June 29th 2017</p>	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">PRESENTATION</h2> <p>Background - past projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring implementation of DCF (2011-2014) DC-MAP feasibility study (2013-2014) <p>FishHub project (January 2017- June 2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives – current proposal Support to AWP and AR preparation 		
<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">DCF Implementation Review (2011-2014)</h2> <p>Review in 12 MS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme monitoring Data storage and access Data completeness and quality Data transmission Data processing <p>General conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Significant progress in data availability in all areas + Very dedicated people - Variety of software applications and approaches for data collection - Efficiency and effectiveness through cooperation and streamlining - Administrative burden for planning, reporting and evaluating the implementation 	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">DCF Implementation Review (2011-2014)</h2> <p>Review in 12 MS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme monitoring Data storage and access Data completeness and quality Data transmission Data processing <p>General conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Significant progress in data availability in all areas + Very dedicated people - Variety of software applications and approaches for data collection - Efficiency and effectiveness through cooperation and streamlining - Administrative burden for planning, reporting and evaluating the implementation <p>Recommendations</p> <p>IT Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve interoperability between databases Ensure the security of the primary data and also of the backups Full documentation of the databases Users request management <p>Statistics (general)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality manuals Dissemination of metadata (info on data) Confidentiality: not unique to DCF (see Eurostat example) <p>Programming and reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional programming Automating the planning and reporting as much as possible Easing the work of evaluators 		
<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">DC-MAP FEASIBILITY STUDY (2014-2015)</h2> <p>4 Scenarios</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supra-regional database (Eurostat model) Regional nodes (ICES – FishFrame DB) Network (E-platform model, e.g. EMODnet) Fisheries data hub - FishHub (combination) <p>Differences</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic coverage Thematic specialization Functional scope </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional specialization Integration of data domains Division of tasks </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic coverage Thematic specialization Functional scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional specialization Integration of data domains Division of tasks 	<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> </div> <h2 style="text-align: center;">DC-MAP FEASIBILITY STUDY (2014-2015)</h2> <p>4 Scenarios</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supra-regional database (Eurostat model) Regional nodes (ICES – FishFrame DB) Network (E-platform model, e.g. EMODnet) Fisheries data hub - FishHub (combination) ✔ preferred option <p>Differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All regions DBs by themes (biological, transversal, economic) Functions by DB Upload: from push to pull Users: One point of access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic coverage Thematic specialization Functional scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional specialization Integration of data domains Division of tasks 		

FISHERIES DATA HUB - FishHub



FishHub principles

1. Detailed data AND confidentiality guarantees
2. Common nomenclatures and data exchange standards
3. Distinction between production and dissemination DBs
4. Thematic modules focus on marine fisheries
5. User scientists should be closely involved
6. Quality procedures in whole process
7. Documentation

FishHub project (Jan. 2017- Aug. 2018)

1. Analyse the current system
2. Specify the requirements for implementation and smooth transition.
3. Develop specifications for data exchange between supra-national databases.
4. Develop a working prototype to demonstrate the feasibility of data exchange.
5. Estimate costs, duration and benefits of the transition.
6. Align the proposal for FishHub with legal and policy requirements.
7. Investigate solutions for access to detailed data, while ensuring confidentiality.



WP3: Requirements from AWP and ARs

Formal aspects of AWP and ARs

- Text (Word) and ca. 20 tables (Excel)
- Manual completion, centralised (National Correspondents) or decentralised
- No automatic file linkage between AWP and AR
- Revision of rules as per Implementing decision (EU) 2016/1701 and the rules for the multiannual plans – Implementing decision (EU) 2016/1251

Contents of AWP and ARs

- Statistical data: information from national databases. No need for transmitting or using primary data to obtain it (if the supra-national database includes them)
 - Total effort, total catches, number of vessels per segments...
- Sample metadata: information about the achievements of the data collection, which can be transmitted together with the statistical data (as currently done) or found as metadata accompanying the statistical data.
 - Final sample size, coefficient of variation...
- Paradata: methodological information on data collection methods which can be eventually indicated in the AWP.
 - Planned sample rate, On shore/on board sampling, merging of segments, ...

WP3: Information for AR

National database

(V_1, V_2, \dots, V_n) vessels in segment b $b=1, \dots, B$
 (C_1, C_2, \dots, C_n) measurements of vessels in segment b
 (w_1, w_2, \dots, w_n) sampling weights of vessels in segment b

Data transmitted via calls (pooled by supra-national institutions)
 Statistical data: $\sum_{i=1}^n w_i C_i$, N_b

Data required for AWP and AR

Statistical data: $\sum_{i=1}^n w_i C_i$, N_b
 Metadata/quality indicators: n_b/N_b , $(\sum_{i=1}^n w_i C_i / N_b - \bar{C})^2$

Paradata: arguments j and f merged

WP3: Information for AR (example)

Table	Variable	Comments
Table III B.1 - Population segments for collection of economic data	Achieved Sample no.	Sample metadata
Table III B.3 - Economic data collection strategy	Achieved sample rate	Sample metadata
Table III C.1 - List of identified meters	Effort Days	Statistical data
Table III C.4 - sampling strategy	Planned no. trips to be sampled at sea by MS	From AWP

WP3: Specifications for AWP/AR tool

- Web-based data entry
- Possibility to decentralise the preparation (with supervision by NC)
- Automatic linkage between AWP and AR
- Based on Implementing decision (EU) 2016/1701 and the rules for the multiannual plans – Implementing decision (EU) 2016/1251
- Statistical data extracted from aggregated supra-national databases
- Metadata transmitted from AWP or obtained from detailed databases
- Paradata obtained from AWP and direct input

WP5: End user consultation (ongoing)

Section 1: Identification of respondents and purposes of use of Fisheries Data

1.1 Please indicate the type of respondents to which you are entitled:

- 1) National Correspondents (NC)
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1.2 Please indicate your use of Fisheries Data:

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https://ec.europa.eu/easurvey/runner/DCF_Data

- Addressed to regular professional users and general public
- Topics addressed:
 - Purpose of use
 - Identification of data used
 - Data validation and quality
 - Data integration
 - Data access and dissemination
 - Evaluation of proposed functionalities of the FishHub
- Results foreseen for September
- PLEASE FORWARD IT TO KNOWN USERS!

THANK YOU

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The Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) has been established by the European Commission. The STECF is being consulted at regular intervals on matters pertaining to the conservation and management of living aquatic resources, including biological, economic, environmental, social and technical considerations.

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