STECF EWG 23-12

STOCK ASSESSMENT IN THE ADRIATIC, IONIAN AND AEGEAN SEAS

9 - 15 October 2023, Athens, Greece

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DG MARE focal point: Giacomo Chato Osio (D1)

For the stocks given in Annex I and in line with the General Guidelines in Annex II, the EWG 23-12 is requested:

ToR 1.   Data preparation for the stock assessments:

1. To compile and provide the most updated information on stock identification and boundaries, length and age composition, growth, maturity, feeding, essential fish habitats and natural mortality.

2. To compile and provide complete sets of annual data on landings and discards for the longest time series available up to and including 2022. This should be presented by fishing gear as well as by size/age structure.

3. To compile and provide indices of abundances and biomass by year and size/age structure for the longest time series available up to and including 2022 by GSA and Country.

4. To develop a clear and fully documented methodology for dealing with the missing 2022 data for all the demersal assessments in GSAs 16-17-18-19. This methodology should be a coherent approach with the modelling solutions to be implemented in EWG 23-09.

   Considering the issues with the DCF data collection in GSA 9-10-11-16-17-18-19 in 2022 and the possibly reconstructed time series, EWG 23-12 is asked to assess the data completeness as well as the methodology for the data reconstruction. EWG 23-12 should fully document the methodology for dealing with missing data. This methodology should be a coherent approach with the modelling solutions to be implemented in EWG 23-09.

ToR 2.   To assess trends in historic and recent stock parameters on fishing mortality, stock biomass, spawning stock biomass, and recruitment. Different assessment models should be applied as appropriate, including retrospective analyses. The selection of the most reliable assessment should be explained. Assumptions and uncertainties should be specified. Where a benchmark has been performed by GFCM (Hake GSA 17-18, Hake GSA 19, Sole GSA 17, deep water pink shrimp GSA 17-20) and the stock object is available, the benchmark should be considered in the updated assessment. In absence of the stock object and for robustness testing, other statistical catch at age models may be fitted.

ToR 3. Among the stocks listed in Annex, the EWG should specifically work on further development of an age based assessment of sardine in GSA 17-18. This should be based on the latest data preparations held in the GFCM WGSAD 15-18 May session, with a view of carrying out an age based stock assessment for the GFCM benchmark sessions in November/December 2023.

ToR 4. 1. For stocks in Annex I, using the report structure of 2021 (EWG 21-12), provide a synoptic overview of: (i) the fishery, (ii) the most recent state of the stock (spawning stock biomass, stock biomass, recruits and exploitation level by fishing gear); (iii) the source of data and methods and (iv) the management advice, including FMSY value, conservation and biomass reference points and effort levels.

2. For stocks under the GFCM demersal MAP (GFCM/43/2019/5) and marked by (^) in Annex I, provide a summary table showing the progress made in the transition towards MSY as well as the catch advice for 2024-25 and F to reach Fmsy by 2026.

3. For the other stocks in Annex I (except sardine) provide a short-term forecast for 2023-24 that will allow reaching Fmsy.

ToR 5. To ensure that all unresolved data transmission issues encountered prior to and during the EWG meeting are reported on line via the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool (DTMT) available at https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/dcf/dtmt. Guidance on precisely what should be inserted in the DTMT, log-on credentials and access rights will be provided separately by the STECF Secretariat focal point for the EWG.

ANNEX I

<p align="center">Table I – List of suggested stocks to be assessed by the EWG 23-12.</p>

	Area	Common name	Scientific name
1	GSA 17-18* (update benchmark and identify improvements for next benchmark)	Hake^	*Merluccius merluccius*
2	GSA 17-18 (update latest GFCM model)	Red mullet^	*Mullus barbatus*
3	GSA 17-18 (update SPICT)	Norway lobster^	*Nephrops norvegicus*
4	GSA 17-18-19-20* (update benchmark model)	Deep-water rose shrimp^	*Parapenaeus longirostris*
5	GSA 17* (update benchmark assessment model)	Common sole^	*Solea solea*
6	GSA 18-19-20 (update current assessment)	Giant red shrimp	*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*
7	GSA 18-19-20 (update current assessment)	Blue and Red shrimp	*Aristeus antennatus*
8	GSA 19 **(update current assessment)	Hake	*Merluccius merluccius*
9	GSA 19 (update current assessment) **	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*
10	GSA 17-18 (develop age based stock assessment for GFCM benchmark)	Sardine	*Sardina pilchardus*
11	GSA 20/22 **	Hake	*Merluccius merluccius*
12	GSA 20/22 **	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*
13	GSA 15-16** (update EWG 22-16)	Norway lobster	*Nephrops norvegicus*
14	GSA 15-16** (update EWG 22-16)	Striped red mullet	*Mullus surmuletus*
15	GSA 24-27**	Giant Red Shrimp	*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*

^ key demersal stock in Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/5

* Stock with a GFCM benchmark

** Second priority

ANNEX II

GENERAL GUIDELINES: unless the data used and information provided comes from the official DCF data calls, the experts are requested to indicate the data source from where certain information has been taken (e.g. L-W relationships, prices) or if it is an experts' reasoned guess.

Data collected outside the DCF shall be used as well and merged with DCF data whenever necessary and following quality check. Due account shall also be given to data used and assessments carried out within projects co-funded by the European Commission and EU-Member States in particular when using data collected through the DCF/DCR and EU funded research projects, studies and other types of EU funding.

The raw data used to generate the input data, assessment scripts as well as input files should be made available to the JRC for reproducibility of the assessments and compilation of the STECF stock assessment database (https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dd/medbs/ram)

STECF 17-07[1] defined methodological guidelines to ensure standardized practices for the preparation of stock assessment input data. STECF 21-02 implemented data quality checks and cleaning to stabilize the time series. EWG 21-15 should adhere to these recommendations from STECF 17-07 and used data prepared in STECF 22-03, where possible.

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[1] https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/1691180/STECF+17-07+-+Methods+for+stock+assessments+in+MED_JRCxxx.pdf