

**STECF**  
**EXPERT WORKING GROUP EWG 24-12**

**concerning the fishing effort and catch regime  
for demersal fisheries in western Mediterranean Sea**

*30 – 4 October 2024, **online***

**Chairs:** Cecilia Pinto – Ralf Döring

**DG MARE focal points:** Anne-Cécile Dragon, Chato Osio; Giacomo Petrucco

**Background:**

This EWG builds on preliminary work conducted in EWG 24-01 and during discussions in STECF PLEN 24-01 and 24-02. The idea is to facilitate the reading and interpretation of the STECF EWG results, including the socio-economic outputs, as well as get closer to an ICES-like type of advice. Therefore, experts are invited to use the template tables provided in Annex below in order to standardize as well as facilitate the comparison and readability of the models outputs.

Considering that as of 1 January 2025, the transitional phase of the West Med EU MAP will end and the plan enters in its long-term implementation phase. As per Articles 21 of the MAP, Article 4 and Article 6(1) shall apply from 1 January 2025. Article 4 details how the FMSY ranges operate and the flexibilities given in the context of mixed-fisheries while accounting for the safeguards outlined in Article 6. On this basis STECF was requested to develop a methodology for computing Fmsy ranges for stocks with Fmsy or with Fmsy proxies in EWG 24-02. Such methodology has been evaluated by STECF PLEN 24-02.

To improve the estimates of the current fleet profitability, STECF requested the launch of three ad-hoc contracts on financial supporting measure stemming from EWG 24-01. Data and results from those should be accounted in the socio-economic analysis following comments from STECF PLEN 24-02. To be noted, like in 2023, the EWG report would be reviewed during the November STECF Plenary (PLEN 24-03).

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The objectives of the TORs are to build fishing effort scenarios, coupled with catch limits and other complementary measures, that will ensure achieving and maintaining MSY in 2025 and beyond for all Western Mediterranean demersal target stocks in the new context of using the Fmsy ranges developed by EWG 24-02. The EWG 24-12 is requested to:

**TOR 1.** Based on the work of the FDI EWG in September 2024, compile and provide complete sets of annual data on fishing effort for all demersal fishing gear from 2015 to 2023. This should

be described in terms of fishing days, days at sea, GT\*days, fishing hours and nominal effort by Member State, GSA, vessel lengths<sup>1</sup> (4 fleet segments: < 12m, 12m to 18m, 18m to 24m and > 24m) and, where possible, by fishing gear. .

- TOR 2.** a. Update the F-E analyses for Effort Management Units 1 and 2 with the most recent socio-economic and biological data and the most recent stock assessments' results.
- b. Given the fuel-related situation in 2022-2023 and measures to support the fleet, use the qualitative information collected under the STECF ad-hoc contracts (for France and Italy and if available Spain) to estimate, if possible, the consequences of fuel costs changes in 2022-2023, if possible for the different types of vessel sizes and fishing gear, with the most updated available data and expert knowledge.
- TOR 3.** a. Develop effort and catch management scenarios for all demersal fishing gear (e.g. bottom trawls, nets, longlines) in EMU1 and EMU2. Scenarios should account for the management measures adopted since 2020 in the context of the Western Mediterranean multiannual management plan. The scenarios aim at identifying and evaluating the best levels of effort/catch to ensure that the stocks concerned shall be within the Fmsy ranges (or F levels from EWG 24-02 or EWG 24-10) in 2025. Scenarios should follow the new legal provisions stemming from the West Med MAP, notably the use of Fmsy ranges (Art 4 and 6 of the MAP) following Table 1. Requested management scenarios, including the compensation mechanism implemented in 2022, 2023 and 2024, are provided in Table 2 in Annex as well as the references to the legal texts adopted for the implementation of EU-level and national management measures in place since 2020.
- b. For stocks below Bpa and Blim the EWG should test the effects, measured in terms of reduction in F and in catch, of the remedial measures for the stocks listed in Table 1 and identified in Table 2. Additionally, if time allows, the EWG could test as a remedial measure, (a) the effect of a spatial closure below 600m for blue and red shrimps in EMU 1 and (b) the implementation of a mesh size of 50mm SM for the deep water fishery targeting deep water shrimps.
- TOR 4.** a. On the basis of the simulated scenarios under TOR 3 a, b, STECF is requested to include a comprehensive analysis of the economic impacts of the proposed management scenarios, incorporating data resulting from the ad-hoc contracts stemming from TORs defined in EWG 24-01. The indicators should consider the potential effects on gross profit margins, or GVAs (TBC) and employment levels within the demersal fishing fleets, providing valuable insights for the overall socio-economic sustainability of the sector.
- b. Based on the advice structure developed in 2021 (EWG 21-13) and the template tables for outputs (Table 4.1-4.3), provide a synoptic overview of: (i) the source of data and methods, (ii) the management advice, (iii) the socio-economic indicators for the West Med MAP management scenarios developed under TOR 3. This overview should offer a clear and concise summary of the economic implications of the proposed management measures, aiding in the assessment of the potential socio-economic impacts of the scenarios in the context of achieving and maintaining MSY in 2025 and beyond for demersal target stocks in the western Mediterranean.

---

<sup>1</sup> See ToR 6.5 in STECF PLEN 21-03 pages 120-121 and Annex pages 155-167.



## Annexes

### References to legal texts:

- Annex 1 of 2020<sup>2</sup>, Annex 3 of 2021<sup>3</sup>, Annex 3 of 2022<sup>4</sup> Fishing Opportunities<sup>5</sup>, Annex 3 of 2023 Fishing Opportunities<sup>6</sup> and Annex 3 of the 2024 Fishing Opportunities<sup>7</sup>.
- French Ministerial Decree for closures in adopted in 2020 (JORF 0299, text n°85);
- Spanish Ministerial Decree for closures in adopted in 2020 (ORDEN-APA-423-2020 and OM 1212-20), 2021 (ORDEN-APA-1341-21) and 2023 (ORDEN-APA-2023-2571);
- Italian Ministerial Decree for closures in adopted in 2020 (DECR.DIR.Zonechiusura\_prot\_9045689).

As well as GFCM recommendation on Gulf of Lion 44/2021/5

### **Management scenarios**

For each scenario, the models have to be run with the management measures adopted at EU and national level between 2020 and 2024, which from 2022 onwards include both effort and catch management measures.

Namely, for trawlers: 10% reduction of effort applied in 2020, 7,5% reduction of effort applied in Spain and France in 2021 (resp. 10% reduction in Italy in 2021), 6% reduction of effort applied in all 3 Member States in 2022, except for French and Spanish vessels active in GSA 7 in France where the reduction is of 4% from the compensation mechanism and, in 2023, 7% for Italy while 3,5% for 90% of the fleet from France and Spain from the compensation mechanism. Finally, for 2024, 9,5% effort reduction for trawlers and the compensation mechanism for the French and Spanish fleets (see Article 8 of the 2024 Fishing Opportunities Regulation).

As in previous EWGs, the percentages of reduction of trawlers effort given in the scenarios are calculated in reference to the baseline period 2015-2017.

Scenarios should be run till [2027] in order to estimate the short-term impact of the management measures from a stock as well as a socio-economic perspective. However, the interpretation of the model outputs should focus on achieving and maintaining MSY in 2025 and identifying the best combination of measures for this.

\* In all scenarios, to account for closure areas the catchability is adjusted to reflect the closure areas adopted in French, Italian and Spanish national legislations, see list above.

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CONSIL:ST\\_10485\\_2020\\_INIT&qid=1655826077148&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CONSIL:ST_10485_2020_INIT&qid=1655826077148&from=EN)  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020R1485&qid=1655826077148&from=EN>  
<sup>3</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0090&qid=1655826077148&from=EN>  
<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022R0110&qid=1655826077148&from=EN>

<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/AUTO/?uri=CELEX:32023R0195&qid=1688397098419&rid=1>

<sup>7</sup> COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2024/259 of 10 January 2024 fixing for 2024 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Mediterranean and Black Seas

\*\* All reductions are applied to the baseline (which corresponds to the average value of FDI fishing effort by fleet between 2015 and 2017).

**Table 1 Criteria for the identification of the most vulnerable stock and the use of Fmsy ranges level in line with Art 4 and 6 of the West Med MAP**

<i>West MED MAP Fmsy ranges provisions</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<i>EMU or Effort group code in EMU 1?</i>	
<i>Which is the most vulnerable stock?</i>	
<p><i>Effort may be set above the Fmsy range if all concerned stocks are above Bpa (Art 4(5))?</i></p> <p><i>-If NO Fupper cannot be used</i></p> <p><i>-If YES, conditions a,b,c could apply in particular c (“in order to limit variations in maximum allowable fishing effort between consecutive years to not more than 20%. ”)</i></p>	<p><i>EMU 1 HKE and EMU 2 HKE are the most depleted being both below Blim so Fmsy ranges to be taken with these stocks as reference</i></p>
<p><i>Is the most vulnerable stock below Bpa (Art 6(1))?</i></p> <p><i>-If YES only reduced Flow – Fmsy can be used</i></p> <p><i>Is the most vulnerable stocks below Blim (Art 6(2))?</i></p> <p><i>-If YES only reduced Flow – Fmsy can be used + remedial measures</i></p>	<p><i>MUT and NEP in GSA 6, ARA in GSA 5 and 6-7 are below Bpa</i></p> <p><i>EMU 1 HKE and EMU 2 HKE are below Blim</i></p>

**Table 2 Management Scenarios for 2025**

Scenario	Trawler effort levels in 2025 and beyond	Set nets (GNS&GTR) Catch Limit for HKE levels 2025 and beyond	Effort level (fishing days) LLS in 2025 and beyond	Catch Limit level for ARS and ARA in 2025 and beyond	Remedial Measures (Spatial)	Remedial Measures (Mesh Size)
<b>SQ</b>	roll over effort in 2024	NO	roll over effort in 2024	level of 2024	keep current closure areas	No remedial measure

<b>SQ remedial_SP</b>	roll over effort in 2024	NO	roll over effort in 2024	level of captures of 2024	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	
<b>SQ remedial_M esh</b>	roll over effort in 2024	NO	roll over effort in 2024	level of captures of 2024	No remedial measure	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 50mm in codend for all trawlers
<b>SQ remedial_SP &amp;MESH</b>	roll over effort in 2024	NO	roll over effort in 2024	level of captures of 2024	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers
<b>A</b>	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	NO	keep 2024 level	2025: level of reduction (use F level as target not a value of catch) that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers
<b>B</b>	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	50% reduction from 2023 level (starting from 2025)	keep 2024 level	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers

<b>C</b>	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	50% reduction from 2023 level (starting from 2025)	50% reduction from 2023 level (starting in 2025)	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers
<b>D</b>	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	NO	25% reduction from 2023 level (starting in 2025)	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers
<b>E</b>	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	25% reduction from 2023 level (starting from 2025)	keep 2024 level	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers
<b>F</b>	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	25% reduction from 2023 level (starting from 2025)	25% reduction from 2023 level (starting in 2025)	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers



G	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks (after accounting for reduction due to MCLs on deeps, effort LLs, catch GNS+GTR and remedial measures)	2025: level that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks, in particular hake	2025: level that secures Fmsy in 2025 for all stocks in particular hake	2025: level of reduction that secures Fmsy in 2025 for ARA and ARS	increase of closure areas for trawlers to all waters below 200m from May to September to protect age 0 and 1 hake	increase in selectivity with mandatory square mesh size of 45mm in codend for all trawlers
---	--	--	---	--	---	--

*Please note that for each scenario the closure areas adopted in 2020-2021-2022- 2023 and 2024 should be taken into account.*

*In addition, for each scenario, the number of trawling vessels should be, as per the latest estimations, 656 for Italian trawlers, 47 for French trawlers and 588 for Spanish trawlers. For longliners, the number of vessels are: 921 for France, 4051 for Italy and 1431 for Spain. Simulations including number of vessels for Italy in 2025 should account for the foreseen level of Permanent Cessation planned for 2025 as in the Directorial Decree n. 319453 of 17 July 2024<sup>8</sup>*

1) Biological outputs for all West Med stocks

**Table 4.1: Total catches by management scenarios for 2025 for single-stock advice (based on STECF 24-10 outputs) and scenarios:**

Stock	Single-stock catch advice for 2025	Catches per scenario 2025 (in tons)					
		a	b	c	d	e	f
<i>One line per stock</i>							

**Table 4.2: Fishing Mortality (F) by management scenarios for 2025 for single-stock advice (based on STECF 24-10 outputs) and scenarios:**

Stock	Single-stock advice F for 2025	F(2025) resulting from scenario					
		a	b	c	d	e	f
<i>One line per stock</i>							

Legend:

	$F_{2025} < F_{msy}$
	$F_{msy} < F_{2025} < F_{pa}$
	$F_{pa} < F_{2025} < F_{lim}$
	$F_{2025} > F_{lim}$

**Table 4.3: Spawning stock biomass (SSB) by management scenarios for 2025 for single-stock advice (based on STECF 24-10 outputs) and scenarios:**



