

Terms of Reference

EWG 24-16 Implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation 21 October - 25 October 2024

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Background provided by the COM

The current configuration of the technical measures expert group was set after the adoption of Regulation 2019/1241 in August 2019. The objective of this Regulation is to contribute to objectives of the common fisheries policy (CFP) as defined in Regulation 1380/2013⁴ ('the CFP Regulation') and more concretely, as set in Article 3, to optimise exploitation patterns and contribute to achieve good environmental status as set out in the environmental legislation, while finding the right balance among the economic, social and environmental objectives under the CFP. The use of more selective and sustainable fishing practices helps to increase yield from targeted fish stocks, while reducing unwanted (by-)catches and the impact on sensitive habitats.

Using regionalization, all interested stakeholders can participate on any modification or amendment deemed necessary to improve how the fishing activity is performed in all EU waters. In order to be fully informed on the scientific and technical basis for this improvement, in 2021, STECF (EWG 21-07) assessed the population selectivity-at-age of relevant species and compared it to the optimal one (i.e., the one producing the highest long-term yields). In 2022, STECF (EWG 22-19) focused on the evaluation of the population selectivity-at-length of those species, to be able to link it with actual size-based fishing gear selectivity and offer optimisation solutions.

EWG 23-15 building on the previous, outlined the pathways and tools required to develop a modelling framework to assess the biological and economic impact of technical measures. .

EWG 23-15 counted with the participation of relevant ACs and other observers. Their involvement and participation is essential to progress and offer a usable tool. Their participation should be granted for EWG 24-16.

The group should apply the proposed framework to two case studies, discuss the findings, and identify additional requirements to operationalise this framework. The two examples used are hake stocks (Atlantic and Mediterranean).

EWG 24-16 should be divided into three sections: tool preparation (data and code); framework application (two case studies); and framework development to identify additional aspects required to fully operationalise the bio-economic and social assessment of the impact of technical measures.

To help in the preparations of the tools required by the ToRS (see below, ToR 1), the attached ad-hoc contract was commissioned.

Similarly to the previous EWG, multidisciplinary expertise is required in economics, mixed fisheries modelling, gear technologists and social scientists.

It is planned to hold EWG 24-16 on a hybrid format, virtual and physical in Ispra at the JRC facilities to ensure active engagement and collaboration among the very diverse skill set of experts who will attend.

Proposed Terms of Reference EWG 24-16

ToR 1 – Review the outputs of ad hoc contract to determine suitability of data and code for use by the EWG.

ToR 2 – Apply the framework identified in EWG 23-15 to two case studies: hake in Bay of Biscay mixed fisheries and hake in the Western Mediterranean mixed fisheries. Each case study will where possible assess in the short term:

- a. the impacts of increasing the size-selectivity of gears on the species caught in mixed fisheries in terms of catch, effort, fishing mortality and recruitment.
- b. the likely costs and potential benefits associated with gear changes for fleets on the short-term (1 year forecast).

ToR 3 – Identify meaningful management scenarios that could be produced with these models, and the additional information/data/models that would be required to produce additional scenarios.

ToR 4 - Discuss direction of future work, additional needs, stakeholder engagement, and advice needs. These discussions will include the development of longer-term forecasts; assessments on the impacts of spatial and temporal closures, and inclusion of social data.