

STECF EWG 25-16

Evaluation of work plans for data collection and data transmission issues

online meeting, 3-7 November 2025 (one subgroup in person)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Chair: Christoph Stransky

MARE focal: Monika Sterczewska

JRC focal: Zeynep Hekim

Background

The Commission requests the STECF to evaluate DCF work plans and their amendments, prior to their approval¹.

In January 2025, the Commission deployed a dedicated DCF IT platform for drafting, submitting and assessing the WPs and ARs. The IT platform will be used on a mandatory basis by Member States to submit their amended WP for evaluation by EWG 25-16.

EWG 25-16 will report the findings to the plenary meeting of the STECF, which will take place 10-14 November 2025. EWG 25-16 will evaluate:

- 1) amended WPs 2026-2027 submitted by at least five Member States plus 2026-2028 WP for Austria
- 2) the data transmission issues (DTi) uploaded on the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool (DTMT)

81 medium and low severity issues from 2024 data calls (Med&BS EWG 24-10 and EWG 24-12, FDI EWG 24-11, Aquaculture EWG 24-14, ICES, IOTC, ICCAT).

The number of submitted WPs will be confirmed on 16 October, as the submission deadline is 15 October 2025.

Request to EWG 25-16

¹ The legal base for the process is set in articles 6, 9 and 11 of Regulation (EU) No 2017/1004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 on the establishment of a Union framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the common fisheries policy and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008. ([consolidated version of 14.07.2021](#)).

EWG 25-16 is requested to:

ToR 1: Evaluate the amended WPs 2026-2027 (plus the WP 2026-2028 for Austria) and their link to RWPs

Experts are requested to evaluate the WPs submitted by Member States, in accordance with Article 10 of Regulation (EU) No 2017/1004, considering:

- the consistency of national WPs with regional WPs, as published on RCG/DCF websites (and uploaded in the IT platform)
- the conformity of the WPs with the contents of Articles 6 and 9 of the DCF Regulation, and with the EU MAP from 2022 onwards,
- the scientific relevance of the data covered by the WPs for the purposes laid down in Article 1(1) of the DCF Regulation, and the quality of the proposed methods and procedures,
- the conformity with the format and guidelines on the WP template (for the national WPs).

The experts should pay particular attention if the Member States considered the comments provided by STECF EWG 24-15 evaluating WP 2025-2027, the comments on AR evaluations (EWG 23-08, EWG 24-08, EWG 25-08), and the DTMT comments on gaps in data collection.

During the EWG 25-16, the experts may communicate to the Member States outstanding issues that require clarification and/or resubmission. The Member States will provide explanations and resubmit the WPs if necessary. The communication will be streamlined through the IT platform, with a backup in a dedicated feedback table, provided in Teams by the Commission.

The experts will use the evaluation grid (background document 2). They should use clear and neutral language in the evaluation for self-explanatory and fact-based comments. The comments must be aligned among sections and Member States, i.e. similar issues must be assessed and summarised in a similar way. More guidance is included in the stand-alone document of assessment criteria (background document 3), and in the guidelines on the WP/AR templates (background document 4).

The experts should pay particular attention that the submitted national WPs:

- address the issues raised in the assessment grids during past evaluations
- address the comments on data transmission issues concerning the data collection
- consider recommendations from end users, RCGs and STECF

ToR 2: Evaluate medium and low severity issues from 2024 data calls

Following EWG 25-08, the MS were requested to take actions on medium and low 2024 DT issues, and report on these actions in the DTMT.

As a result, EWG 25-16 is requested to evaluate the medium and low severity issues from 2024 data calls (Med&BS EWG 24-10 and EWG 24-12, FDI EWG 24-11, Aquaculture EWG 24-14, ICES, IOTC, ICCAT) where MS should have taken actions (81 issues reported).

The DTMT guidelines with a decision tree must be used for the evaluation; the experts may agree to further modify the guidance if necessary. All changes to guidance must be documented for future reference in a separate electronic annex. The DTMT table and guidance have been modified in 2025, to better capture the follow-up that Member States undertake to address the recorded issues.

ToR 3: Finalise the STECF input to the guidelines and templates

During 2025, the Commission received several proposals to improve guidelines and templates used in WP/AR reporting cycle. EWG 25-16 experts are requested to revise these proposals and finalise to the extent possible the STECF input for further consideration by the Commission. The background documents are:

- EWG 25-08 input on the guidelines and templates (several documents);
- RCG NANSEA recommendation on WP Annex 1;
- EWG 25-10 FDI recommendation on AR template section 2.5
- Ad hoc contract reports for DTMT backlog issues (Med&BS, FDI and ECON).

ToR 4: Provide input on the DCF IT platform

In 2021, the Commission initiated an IT project to build a DCF IT platform for submitting and evaluating the WPs and the ARs. Throughout 2024, the IT platform was tested for AR and WP submission by a group of users from several Member States, and in January 2025, it was deployed in the production environment. The experts as platform users are requested to file their feedback on the encountered problems and on possible improvements.

EWG 25-16 report

The EWG should produce a Word document with general explanations and an Excel file with the assessment grid and comments of each WP. The Word document should include an overview of the assessment and overall evaluation of the Work Plans (horizontal issues, spanning many MS/ sea basins):

- 1) per Member State (National Work Plans):

- a) an evaluation of the WP amended content (compliance with DCF Regulation, EU MAP and end user needs); in particular, the follow-up on STECF and COM comments from previous evaluations,
 - b) conclusions from the consistency check with relevant regional work plans for the amendments,
 - c) conclusions from the format check (template guidelines) in general and per WP section;
- 2) per Member State (data transmission issues):
- a) an evaluation of Member State performance (main and recurring issues) by Member State, complimentary to and following EWG 25-08 findings,
 - b) an evaluation of Member States' responses via the DTMT online platform to issues raised by end users of scientific advice. EWG 25-16 is requested to evaluate DTi, and close issues which have been clarified and require no further action,
- 3) At EU level:
- a) EWG final proposal on guidelines and templates
 - b) a feedback on the DCF IT platform.

Background documents

For WP assessment ToR 1:

- 1) amended WP 2026-2027 submitted by the MS and RWPs 2025-2027 submitted by RCGs (folder 01)
- 2) WP evaluation grid (as used by EWG 24-15)
- 3) Stand-alone document for WP evaluation (approved by EWG 21-17: <https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/dcf/wp-assessment-instructions-for-evaluators>)
- 4) Guidance on WP/AR templates (COM Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/39, updated September 2024 online: https://dcf.ec.europa.eu/wps-and-ars/wpar-templates_en)

For DTi assessment ToR 2:

- 5) datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/dcf/dtmt-guidance-version_2025-03-24
- 6) DT issues recorded in the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool: https://dcf.ec.europa.eu/dtmt_en (Excel export file will be provided)
- 7) STECF EWG 24-03 and EWG 24-07 report (Annual Economic Report)

For guidelines and templates ToR 3:

- 8) EWG 25-08 proposals
- 9) RCG NANSEA/Bal recommendation
- 10) EWG 25-10 proposal
- 11) DTMT backlog ad hoc reports – sections on DTMT guidelines and cycle

For DCF platform ToR 4:

- 12) <https://work-plans-reports.dcf.ec.europa.eu/work-plans>

Additional background documents:

The experts should consider relevant assessment files from previous STECF EWGs, including EWG 23-08 (AR), EWG 24-15 (WP), EWG 24-08 (AR), EWG 25-08 (AR).

The experts may also consult previous WPs and ARs:

https://dcf.ec.europa.eu/wps-and-ars/work-plans_en

https://dcf.ec.europa.eu/wps-and-ars/annual-reports_en

and other relevant documents (e.g. ICES reports for meetings relating to the relevant data calls, Liaison Meeting and RCG recommendations etc.)