

STECF
EXPERT WORKING GROUP EWG 26-03
Methodologies for West Mediterranean stock assessments and EU
MAP advice and evaluations

4-8 May 2026, physical (JRC Ispra) with hybrid option

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TOR 1 – methodologies for stock assessment

1. (P1). Test alternative methods to compute Biomass Reference Points (BRPs) comparing to the one developed during STECF EWG 22-03. The methodology currently applied has shown to be sensitive to the S/R inflection point for stocks that are in a transition period. The group should identify specific case studies among the stocks assessments available from STECF EWG 25-09 to highlight the issues to be overcome.
2. (P1). Define a method to evaluate the status of the stocks that takes into account the effect of fishing in the most recent year of data.
3. (P1). For stocks that show dynamics which seem to be mainly driven by environmental factors, explore methodologies to provide information that allows the integration of these stocks in the effort advisory process.
4. (P1). Suggest a more streamlined structure for the stock assessment report.

If enough time and people are available, the following points should be discussed as well:

5. (P2). Define guidelines on how to proceed in model testing when a stock cannot be evaluated by age-based models in order to define which would be the most appropriate assessment model or evaluation procedure to give advice on these stocks as well.
6. (P3). Expand on the t_0 correction methodology building on the work done by STECF EWG 25-01 also focusing on its influence on the estimation of biological parameters.

TOR 2 – methodologies for evaluation and advice for West Mediterranean EU management plan

1. Explore a method for providing advice in terms of fishing days at MSY for the WestMed MAP implementation while making explicit assumptions on what happens in the intermediate year.
2. Consider alternatives on how to run the scenarios requested to evaluate the WestMed MAP when “most vulnerable stocks” are not evaluated at EMU level, but at single GSA level, or when analytical stock assessments are not available for all stocks within an EMU and cannot be taken into account in the evaluation process. Discuss how the delivery of advice should be redefined when such issues are encountered.
3. Discuss which evaluability scenarios can actually be delivered while considering measures implemented in the intermediate year including compensation mechanisms listed in Article 8 of EU Regulation 2026/266, depending on the data availability and the modeling frameworks assumptions.

4. Examine the repercussions of implementing Compensation Measures (CMs) in the intermediate year. To this end, it is suggested that the EWG could help by setting the stage for “envelope analysis/scenarios” within Management Strategy Evaluations (MSEs), incorporating different effort level assumptions to better capture uncertainties.
5. The group should redefine the presentation of results to improve readability and comparison of outputs from different modeling frameworks.

TOR 3 – coordination between the assessment and effort EWGs

1. Develop a protocol to clarify which outputs from the assessment EWG are needed by the effort EWG, including deliverables, timelines and roles.
2. Possibly explore ways to simplify the policy option table while clarifying expected deliverables, i.e. what the stock assessment EWG and effort Regime EWG should deliver to EC.

TOR 4 – future work framework

The group should compile a list of outstanding points to be discussed in future Methods EWGs that remain unresolved due to time constraints during the current STECF EWG that have emerged throughout the ongoing working group also referring to the points under TOR 1 with priority P.2 and P.3.