

STECF EWG 19- 19

EWG on Outermost Regions (OR)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Background

The PLEN 18-03 report indicated that a specific EWG on ORs should identify in 2019 the concrete issues and the necessary processes for addressing the four challenges already identified: data collection, stock assessment, ecosystem knowledge and social & economic impacts.

STECF concluded during the 19-02 plenary that the aim of the EWG should be to identify and prioritize the specific issues, and the necessary processes, for addressing the four challenges: data collection, stock assessment, ecosystem knowledge, and social & economic impacts in order to develop a roadmap that will form the basis for the permanent network of research institutes.

STECF concluded that the organizational details of an STECF EWG in 2019 should be examined and discussed in the remit of the STECF Bureau.

Request to EWG 19-20

EWG 19-20 is requested to:

1. Identify specific issues for each OR within the following four main challenges: data collection, stock assessment, ecosystem knowledge, and social & economic impacts.
2. Prioritize common issues within the four main challenges.
3. Identify the necessary processes for addressing the issues prioritized:
for example, through drafting specific ToRs on ORs data collection issues to be investigated in DCF EWGs and STECF EWG Social Data.
4. Develop a roadmap for the subsequent meetings that will form the basis for the permanent network of research institutes.

Participation for this first EWG on ORs should include:

- MS experts dealing with OR stock assessment
- MS experts dealing with OR data collection (including social and economic data)
- MS experts dealing with OR small-scale fisheries
- The chairs of the DCF Regional Coordination Groups (RCG) on Large Pelagics and the RCG on Long-Distance Fisheries
- Orfish and MRAG Europe consortium coordinators.

Background documentation

From [STECF PLEN 19-02](#), pp. 130-131:

7.3. Preparation of the EWG on Outermost Regions

Background provided by the Commission

The PLEN 18-03 report indicated that a specific EWG on ORs should identify in 2019 the concrete issues and the necessary processes for addressing the four challenges already identified: data collection, stock assessment, ecosystem knowledge and social & economic impacts. STECF concluded that the aim of the EWG on ORs should take the form of a scoping and prioritization exercise, to allow for the development of a roadmap for the subsequent meetings that will form the basis for the permanent network of research institutes.

Request to STECF

STECF is requested to further discuss and advise on the content and organisation of the EWG on ORs. The Plenary should propose draft ToRs and give indication of a date/place/composition of the EWG on ORs.

STECF observations

The STECF PLEN 18-03 noted that in response to a DG MARE call for proposals in 2015 (MARE/2015/06) the ORFISH project (<https://orfish.eu/>) has been established – Development of innovative, low-impact offshore fishing practices for small-scale vessels in outermost regions. STECF PLEN 18-03 noted that the project aims, amongst other objectives, to provide a platform for exchange of knowledge on low-impact offshore fishing techniques among fishers from the outermost regions.

STECF notes that in response to a DG MARE call for proposals in support of the CFP (EASME/EMFF/2018/011-Lot2 “Scientific advice in support of the CFP in the Atlantic EU western waters and the EU outermost regions”) a MRAG Europe lead consortium was recently established. The framework contract is expected to improved knowledge on fish stocks and ecosystems and fisheries management schemes in place in EU outermost regions.

The STECF PLEN 18-03 also noted that the ORs are part of the EU-MAP for data collection and are consequently included in the Work Programs and Annual Reports of France, Spain and Portugal. Thus, the sampling plans and achievements are also evaluated by the corresponding STECF Experts Working Groups. Issues linked to ORs data collection could thus be investigated in more details in these EWGs by adding a specific ToR to these groups in 2019.

STECF notes that the STECF Balance / Capacity EWGs have has been calculating balance indicators for OR based on EU-MAP data and publicly available stock assessment information since the implementation of the new Balance Guidelines in 2014 (COM(2014) 545); EWG 18-14 had a specific TOR focusing on the calculation of balance indicators for the OR of France, Portugal and Spain (TOR 5). Besides the balance indicators per se, experts were asked to indicate the fish stocks on which the assessed fleet segments rely, and the principal fishing areas. Experts were also asked to list the fleet segments for which the information available did not allow to calculate the balance indicators. STECF PLEN 18-03 observed that the balance indicators could be calculated fully for the Portuguese ORs, and partly for the Spanish ORs, but not for the French ORs due to the lack of available data.

STECF therefore proposes that the Terms of Reference for this first Expert Working Group on ORs are:

Identify specific issues within the following four main challenges: data collection, stock assessment, ecosystem knowledge, and social & economic impacts for each OR.

Prioritize common issues within the four main challenges.

Identify the necessary processes for addressing the issues prioritized:

for example, through drafting specific ToRs on ORs data collection issues to be investigated in DCF EWGs and STECF EWG Social Data.

Develop a roadmap for the subsequent meetings that will form the basis for the permanent network of research institutes.

STECF suggests that the participation for this first EWG on ORs should include:

MS experts dealing with OR stock assessment

MS experts dealing with OR data collection (including social and economic data)

MS experts dealing with OR small-scale fisheries

The chairs of the DCF Regional Coordination Groups (RCG) on Large Pelagics and the RCG on Long-Distance Fisheries

Orfish and MRAG Europe consortium coordinators.

STECF conclusions

STECF concludes that the aim of the EWG in 2019 should be to identify and prioritize the specific issues, and the necessary processes, for addressing the four challenges: data collection, stock assessment, ecosystem knowledge, and social & economic impacts in order to develop a roadmap that will form the basis for the permanent network of research institutes.

STECF concludes that the organizational details of an STECF EWG in 2019 should be examined and discussed in the remit of the STECF Bureau.