

RCG LDF Report 2020

Regional Co-ordination Group for Long Distance Fisheries

Online WebEx meeting
13-15 July 2020



Regional Coordination Group
Long Distance Fisheries

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1. Executive summary

Due to the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic and restrictions on the movement of persons imposed throughout Europe, the 2020 RCG LDF meeting was held from July 13 to 15 as a virtual online meeting on the Cisco WebEx communication tool, addressing its Terms of Reference set for the 2020 meeting and to provide a platform for an overview of the EU long distance fisheries over the previous year(s) in order to evaluate the scope for required regional coordination in area of data collection.

The group reviewed the progress in regional coordination since 2019, the outcomes of the 16th Liaison Meeting and feedback from the end-users. The group also reviewed the Long Distance Fisheries activity by MS in CECAF and SPRFMO areas with the use of updated 2019 data provided by MS through the Regional Database (RDB).

All EU non-landlocked countries were addressed through a data call. Data were uploaded by MS to the Regional Database hosted by ICES in support of RCG work. The main aim of using the RDB is to standardise data provisions for the MS as well as to address an interest and need stemming from the DG MARE International Directorate to support the development of a database holding the data for fisheries in non-EU waters. The response provided improved insight in the coverage of the data the RCG LDF is using, including preparation of standardised fisheries overviews in relation to the fishing areas under the competence of this RCG. Some tweaking of the overviews might be required to better address the RCG needs. The future structure of the overviews will be discussed intersessionally.

Units for effort data required in the 2020 data call were kWdays (not fishing days as used before). It appeared however, that some MS uploaded the effort data in kWdays, and others in days at sea. And some errors were also noticed in reporting days at sea. For these reasons, effort and landing data can only be regarded as a provisional data. This issue is to be clarified through contacts between the chair and contact all NCs concerned.

Based on an analysis of the updated fisheries overviews, the RCG LDF concluded that there is no need for amendments to the NPs for 2021 and beyond in respect of the long distance fisheries in the area of its competence.

The appropriateness of the RoPs established in 2018 was discussed with the conclusion that there is no need to amend these. As Portugal is a member of the group, the RoP shall be ratified by Portugal as well. Chair of the RCG LDF will submit an appropriate request to the Portuguese NC.

The current multi-lateral agreements for sampling small pelagics in SPRFMO and CECAF waters expire at the end of 2020. Poland offered to continue to coordinate the sampling in both regions.

The Group discussed the new SPRFMO document – „Observer Programme“ adopted in January 2019 with effective implementation from 2024 onwards. The perception of the RCG LDF is that specifications included in this OP are too complex and overly prescriptive, resulting in a very high administrative burden, huge paper load and unavoidable workload to justify that SPRFMO's Member provides sufficiently trained observer. It requires, *i.a.* going through an extensive and complex procedures for the accreditation of observers and observation programs. Currently, none of the MS involved will apply for this accreditation. An intersessional work during the year is planned to address this issue.

Overall the group made two recommendations:

- RCG LDF recommends MS to continue to update their historical data prior to the 2021 Data call. Addressed at all MS uploading data.
- RCG LDF recommends to set-up intersessional subgroup to prepare for data collection in the SPRFMO area beyond 2024. Addressed at chair of the RCG LDF and MS involved in the SPRFMO pelagic fisheries.

A dedicated online decision meeting of the NCs representing MS who are members of this RCG is planned in early September in order to make decisions on ratification of RoP by Portugal and on multilateral agreements related to joint sampling programmes in the CECAF and the SPRFMO areas.

The next RCG LDF meeting is planned for July 2021, and Portugal kindly offered to host this meeting in the Azores. The meeting will be chaired by Irek Wójcik (Poland).

2. Introduction

2.1 General

Due to the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19 pandemic) and restrictions on the movement of persons imposed throughout Europe, the 2020 RCG LDF meeting was held from July 13 to 15 as a virtual online meeting on the Cisco WebEx communication tool, addressing its Terms of Reference set for the 2020 meeting and to provide a platform for an overview of the EU long distance fisheries over the previous year(s) in order to evaluate the scope for required regional coordination in area of data collection.

The continued availability of a SharePoint hosted by ICES proved to be very efficient again in support of organising the work before, during and after the meeting. ICES Datacentre is thanked for all RDB work carried out in preparation of this meeting and to facilitate the upload of RCG LDF data for the second time.

During the meeting, participants exchanged their insights, experiences and comments about the pros and cons of virtual meetings, compared to face to face physical meetings. There was a common opinion that the quality of virtual meeting very strongly depends on technical aspects, like internet connection or software used. In meetings with a big group of people (30 and more), this can create technical problems. In virtual meetings, a considerable amount of time is invested in written communication, which would not be necessary in many cases when meeting physically. The positive aspect of online meetings is that new people can attend that would not be able to do this in physical meetings for various reasons, e.g. financial constraints, travel restrictions. However, many participants expressed the definitive preference for physical meetings and some have expressed the opinion that the combination of physical and virtual meetings brings new dynamics to the work of the group. In general, the RCG LDF 2020 online meeting was received very positively by all participants as facilitating effective and productive work of the group in a good atmosphere.

2.2 Legal requirements

2.2.1 Background of RCG LDF

The EU Data Collection Framework (DCF) establishes a framework for the collection of economic, biological and transversal data by Member States (MS). This programme provides the basic data needed to evaluate the state of fishery resources and the fisheries sector.

Prior to the current Regulation, the RCG LDF (at that time RCM) stemmed from the Data Collection Framework (EC Regulation no. 199/2008), establishing a community framework for the collection, management and use of data in fisheries sector for scientific advice regarding the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). According to this regulation and without prejudice to their current data collection obligations under Community law, Member States (MS) were obliged to collect primary biological, technical, environmental and socio-economic data within the framework of a multi-annual national programme drawn up in accordance with the Community programme.

According to EC Regulation 665/2008, laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) 199/2008, and its technical Decision 2010/93/EU specifying practical aspects for data collection, actions planned by MS in their national programme should be presented according to the predefined regions.

The coordination of the data collection was recommended at regional level and specific meetings were in charge of facilitating this and these meetings aimed to identify areas for standardisation, collaboration and task sharing between MS. RCMs were held annually with participants from each MS involved in fishing activity in the respective region. Being an end-user, RCM LDF might launch data calls to gather the information needed to complete its tasks.

From mid-2017 onwards, regulation 199/2008 was repealed and replaced by a new regulation. As a basic principle, the new Regulation (REGULATION (EU) 2017/1004) stipulates that “...*Member States shall coordinate their data collection activities with other Member States in the same marine region and shall make every effort to coordinate their actions with third countries having sovereignty or jurisdiction over waters in the same marine region.*” Apart from the requirement to establish Regional Coordination

Groups (see following section), the Regulation also foresees the participation and contribution by the relevant MS as well as their respective National Correspondents. The EU data collection requirements were further detailed in Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2016/1251 (EU-MAP).

In 2019, this Decision was administratively transformed into two different decisions without any modifications to the actual obligations: Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/909 establishing the list of mandatory research surveys and thresholds for the purposes of the multiannual Union programme for the collection and management of data in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors and Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2019/910 establishing the multiannual Union programme for the collection and management of biological, environmental, technical and socioeconomic data in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors

2.2.2 Establishment of RCG LDF

In 2017 the RCG LDF hold two meetings and during the 2nd meeting, the requirement for a formal establishment of the RCG was discussed and concluded upon by all parties present at the meeting. This conclusion led to the following statement regarding the establishment of RCG LDF:

Having regard Article 9.2 of REGULATION (EU) 2017/1004, stipulating that regional coordination groups shall be established by the relevant Member States for each marine region, and, having considered all regions outside EU waters as a marine region and in continuation of the previous definition of the RCM marine regions and having relevant Member States present at a meeting succeeding the RCM LDF 2016, the Regional Coordination Group for Long Distance Fisheries has been established upon opening of the 2nd RCG LDF meeting on November 22, 2017 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

2.3 Terms of Reference

The following terms of reference were set for RCG LDF 2020:

Terms of Reference – RCG LDF 2020

1. Review progress since 2019 following up the 16th Liaison Meeting or other expert groups report

2. Review feedback from end users

- Consider possible updates under the SPRFMO requirements EU observers (both observer requirements as well as data collection requirements)
- State of play of pelagic sampling in CECAF and SPRFMO area in 2019
- Discuss and conclude upon requirements/recommendations specified by Scientific Committees
- Other input received

3. Analyse data from 2020 RCG LDF data call

- Data compilation, providing overviews of fisheries
- Consider EU wide responses
- Consider future inclusion of emerging fisheries
- Identify sampling obligations facilitating future multi-annual work plan
- Comments on experience RDB upload

4. Regional data collection, analysis and storage

- Consider future mechanisms to continue strengthening regional cooperation, including end-user interaction (e.g. based on Workpackages as described in MARE 2016/22)
- Discuss data collection and dissemination in relation to scientific committees
- Overview on commercial sampling during coronavirus pandemic in 2020
- Revision of EU MAP and outstanding questions to LDF

5. Future data collection set up in CECAF/SPRFMO

- CECAF future data needs
- Future data collection set up in CECAF/SPRFMO

6. AOB

- Discuss relevant upcoming call for tenders, studies
- Review RoP and propose possible adaptations
- Place and date of the next RCG LDF

2.4 Structure of the report

ToR addressed by the 2020 RCG LDF meeting are referred to in the following sections of the report.

ToR 1 - in section 5

ToR 2 - in section 6

ToR 3 - in section 3

ToR 4 - in section 7

ToR 5 - in section 8

ToR 6 - in section 9

Recommendations stemming from this group are summarised in section 10

2.5 Participants and agenda

The following persons participated to the RCG LDF meeting in 2019.

Name	Email address	Organisation	Mandate
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* NA = not applicable

The agenda of the meeting is included in Annex 1.

RCG LDF builds upon long standing, and often specialist, experience of its participants. Given the pivotal role of the RCG in EU Data Collection outside European waters, continued contributions by its experts is crucial for a successful continuation of the RCG work. In line with article 7.2.c (EU Reg 2017/1004) National Correspondents are expected to coordinate the attendance of experts to relevant groups. Thus, it is expected that NCs pay attention to this issue, in particular for the participation to the RCG. Moreover, as the RCG set up evolved into an expert meeting followed by an NC decision making meeting, even more needs arises for the experts to attend.

3. 2020 RCG LDF data call (ToR 3)

3.1 Response to 2020 data call

As in previous years, prior to the 2020 annual RCG LDF meeting and in line with the continued 2015 recommendation to address future data calls to all non-landlocked MS, the 2020 data call was sent to all National Correspondents of these MS. From 2019 onwards, the data call requests to upload the data into the RCG Regional Database (RDB), hosted and maintained by ICES in Copenhagen.

The call was launched at May 29th while setting the deadline for submission at July 1st. A request for an active response indicating the absence of long distance fisheries was also included in the data call as well as a specific request to upload data when only a few vessels are active in the region.

The following list provides a general overview of the responses received by RCG LDF. The highlighted row is explained in the following paragraph. This overview doesn't discriminate between the various types of responses received. Uploading data to the RDB posed some challenges for MS not routinely uploading data to the RDB. As a result, some data had to be re-uploaded to the RDB during the meeting. This was not considered as a major issue as the work could be completed in time. Data can be updated throughout the year and MS are encouraged to do so where applicable. (see section 3.5).

Table 3-1 Overview of 2020 data call response

MS	Response (Y/N)	Activity (Y/N)	Data provided (Y/N)
Belgium	Y	N	N
Bulgaria	Y	N	N
Croatia	Y	N	N
Cyprus	N	N	N
Denmark	Y	N	N
Estonia	Y	N	N
Finland	Y	N	N
France	Y	N	N
Germany	Y	Y	Y
Greece	N	(historical)	N
Ireland	Y	(historical)	Y (updated)
Italy	Y	Y	Y
Latvia	Y	Y	Y
Lithuania	Y	Y	Y
Malta	Y	N	N
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y
Poland	Y	Y	Y
Portugal	Y	Y	Y
Romania	Y	N	N
Slovenia	Y	N	N
Spain	Y	Y	Y
Sweden	Y	N	N
United Kingdom	Y	(historical)	Y (updated)

Both Greece and Cyprus responded after the deadline, however as both confirmed that they were not involved in relevant fisheries, the response had no influence on the outcomes of the data analysis. In general, MS are encouraged to meet the deadline to avoid confusions during future meetings.

RCM LDF processed all data provided. The results are presented in chapter 4 and lead to a few suggestions.

3.2 Sampling obligations facilitating future multi-annual work plan, including emerging fisheries

Analysis of data uploaded to the RDB allows to detect if there are any substantial changes in fishing pattern or volume of landings for those stock which are not currently subject to data collection and cross checking this data with the DCF obligations enables to conclude if any emerging fisheries should be included in the future data collection programme (see also comments in section 3.3).

To date, the RCG LDF has not identified the need to extend the sampling program to new stocks.

3.3 Data compilation, providing overviews of fisheries

Based on the RDB data and based on the work done by intersessional RCG subgroup on fisheries and sampling overviews the RCG LDF explored the option to use standardized fisheries overviews to produce the yearly overview tables and to get more information out of the data available through maps and more detailed analysis. The very detailed overviews provide a lot of useful information, but some tweaking of the overviews might be required to address the RCG needs. The current overviews already provide good additional insights, but the amount of them might be overwhelming. Prior to the RCG LDF meeting in 2021, the future structure of the overviews will be discussed intersessionally.

The main point of focus are to get insight in trends over the last three years, splitting the overviews by designated regions and e.g. focus on some main species of direct relevance for DCF work, while grouping other species of lesser relevance. It is also planned, to include in the overviews, the report tables that are being produced on a yearly basis. Preparing these tables in advance of the meeting will lower the workload of the participants, allowing them to focus mainly on data analysis.

To make the overviews as useful as possible, it is extremely important that the countries upload their data to the Regional Database. All the countries should include the information on the Subpolygon in the data provided as this will allow to carry out more detailed spatial analysis.

The current RDB catch and effort overview for the RCG LDF can be found on the sharepoint site. It does not include data from Italy and Canaries, as these were not uploaded to the RDB.

3.4 Comments on experience RDB upload

The majority of countries finally managed to upload their data to the RDB and the overall experience was rather positive. In some cases, internal adjustments on the national level were needed to be able to prepare the data in the required format. Where some bigger tweaks were necessary, it happened that only 2019 data were uploaded with the note that previous years will be delivered soon.

Catch unit

What caused some concerns among some data providers is inconsistency between the unit for Official Landing Catch Weight in the RDB and the datacall - the RDB exchange format expects kilograms, while in the datacall the tonnes were required. That should be fixed in the next datacall.

Metier assignment

Because of some problems with metier assignment, the data from the Canaries were not uploaded to the RDB, but delivered as an excel file. The main reason for this is the existence of highly polyvalent fleet where three metiers (small pelagics, demersal, tuna) can be used in the same trip. This cannot be easily uploaded to the RDB, because according to the RDB exchange format, only one of the metiers can be assigned by trip.

Species

Catches of three bycatch species: *Prionotus spp*, *Pseudopentaceros richardsoni* and *Sarda chiliensis* could not be uploaded because the species are not in the RDB species reference tables.

A total number of 85 bycatch species of the Spanish demersal fisheries was not uploaded with the species name, as they were not included in the RDB species reference tables. In these cases, they were uploaded with the name of the closest taxa (genus, family, order), when possible, or even in broader groups as "Piscis".

Deleting data issues

MS were requested to update their LDF data in the RDB to reflect the changes to the area/subpolygon codification. However, updating the data requires overwriting (and consequently deleting) previously uploaded data. The common workaround for this is to delete data of commercial landings, based on e.g. species or year. However, for species having an overlap with other regions, all data from a country for that species is being deleted. Thus requiring a full upload from the MS again. This is problematic as this requires a lot of work. It seems that the data can only be deleted manually, also involving a lot of work and potentially 'dangerous' for the existing datasets. ICES is aware of the problem and will be asked again to look into the issue during the year.

This issue might be quite relevant for some countries, as ES, for which some new data from the Canaries will be included next year and thus, new uploads will be needed for the period 2014-2019. It is also relevant for those MS that have not added the "polygon" field, as requested, and will need to do it for all the time series available in the future.

3.5 Preparation of 2021 data call

As in previous years, preparatory work was hampered by the late availability of the data. RCG LDF wishes to prepare the 2021 data at an earlier stage prior to the meeting, to facilitate both a timely upload as well as to conduct preparatory work before the meeting (e.g. producing complete fisheries overviews). The actual deadlines should be set in line with the dates of the RCG LDF in 2021 and the provisions in the current DCF (1 month response time).

Ideally, the deadline for data submission is 1 month before the meeting, as this will also allow ICES to contribute to the data extraction if needed while leaving sufficient time to prepare data and tables prior to the meeting.

The 2021 data call will request data from 2014 onwards (unless updates are provided earlier), but will invite MS to deliver/update older data to the RDB when possible. Also, the 2021 call shall stress that data stemming from private agreements under direct authorization should be included as well. Particular attention shall be paid to the upload of effort data to ensure streamlined use of the units, (kW/days at sea or fishing days).

Moreover, MS are continuously encouraged to upload data (and update when needed) prior to the RCG Data call. This will allow for a less stressful upload and once done, only last year's data needs to be uploaded, which should be a routine job by then.

Also, it is anticipated that ICES Data centre will have more time available for addressing issues in the second half of the year, compared to the first half due to all the working groups that take place. MS are invited to inform the chair on successful updates and to provide upload logs to the chair.

Recommendation 2020-1 : Updating national data to the RDB	
RCG LDF 2020 Recommendation	RCG LDF recommends that MS continue to update historical data as well as most recent data prior to the 2021 RCG LDF data call.
Follow-up actions needed	MS to update their data and promote set up of routine procedures to provide data to the RDB.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs of all RCG LDF MS.
Time frame (Deadline)	Prior to the RCG LDF 2021 data call.

Section 3.3 provides further details on future use of the RDB for this RCG.

Prior to the data call, a quick scan of the eurostat database will be done to explore potential new areas to be highlighted in the call. E.g. area 51, in case of other fisheries than large pelagics.

Also, clarification will be sought to see what the impact of the Regulation on Sustainable Management of external fishing fleets (SMEFF, regulation 2017/2403) is on data collection under de remit of the RCG. SMEFF is among the regulations to which DCF applies, but only for the rules on the use and transmission of the data, not data collection (art. 1.3 DCF reg. 2017/1004). Moreover data shall be collected under the DCF only if no obligation to collect them exist under other EU acts (art. 1.2). The potential impact is substantial as private arrangements fall under this regulation. RCG already asked for data from the fisheries under private arrangements to keep track of ongoing fisheries in specific regions. This request will be highlighted specifically in the 2021 call.

4. Review of EU Long Distance Fisheries activities

4.1 CECAF area

After the RCM-LDF 2015 decision of including "Canary" as a new fishing ground, the three fishing grounds considered for CECAF are:

FISHING GROUND	Area	FAO divisions
Madeira	EU waters	34.1.2
Canary Islands		
West Africa	Non EU waters	34.1.1; 34.1.3; 34.3.1, 34.3.3, 34.3.6, 47*

*Note that the fishing ground where the EU is operating in Angola (FAO 47 1.1, 47.1.2 and part of 47.1.3) is considered in CECAF area of competence, as *de facto* situation.

In Madeira and the Canaries, only Portuguese and Spanish vessels, respectively, operate and the fisheries/metiers are already included in respective National Work Plans and therefore, coordination between MS is not needed.

Fishery data are presented separately for the three Fishing grounds: "West Africa", "Madeira" and "Canary Islands".

FISHING GROUND "WEST AFRICA"

The information below describes the general types of fisheries in the relevant West African CECAF areas by MS (2019) as an overview of the CECAF fisheries carried out by EU-fleets. Some fisheries cover very large areas along the West African shelf. As non-EU countries also conduct fisheries in this area, the catches taken by vessels of EU MS constitute only a part of the total catches.

Demersal fisheries are mainly carried out by the Spanish fleet, with a limited activity of other countries as Italy, Portugal and Greece. The other EU MS (The Netherlands, Poland, Germany, Latvia and Lithuania) are operating pelagic trawlers in a small pelagic fishery, currently developed in waters off Morocco and Mauritania. In addition, there is a small fleet of Spanish purse seiners targeting small pelagics in North-Morocco. An overview of species fished by EU MS in the CECAF area in 2019 is presented in Annex 2.

In most cases the EU fishery has been carried out in this area under bilateral Sustainable Fishing Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) between the EU and the coastal states. However, there are other fisheries developed in the CECAF area, under direct authorizations, independent from these SFPAs. This is the case of the demersal fisheries carried out by Spanish vessels in Guinea, Congo, Angola, Sierra Leone and The Gambia¹, reported for the first time in RCG 2018. Likewise, the participation of Italy in the RCG LDF 2020 for the first time allowed to clarify that reported Italian demersal fisheries in CECAF waters during the period 2015-2019 were mostly carried out in Guinea and Sierra Leone, under direct authorization regime.

¹ Spanish vessels operated under direct authorisations regime until the signature of the new Agreement and the relevant Protocol between the EU and The Gambia in July 2019, within which a new fishing category for deep water trawlers targeting black hake is allowed.

Table 4.1 General types of fisheries in relevant CECAF areas by MS (2019 data)

FISHING GROUNDS	FISHERY	AREA	COUNTRIES
West Africa	Small pelagic	Morocco and/or Mauritania	Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Netherlands, Spain
	Small pelagic	Morocco	Spain
	Demersal fish		Spain
	Crustaceans	Mauritania	Spain
	Demersal fish		Spain
	Demersal fish	Senegal	Spain
	Demersal fish	The Gambia	Spain
	Crustaceans	Guinea*	Spain
	Crustaceans	Congo*	Spain
	Crustaceans	Angola*, **	Spain
	Demersal fishery	Guinea*	Italy
Demersal fishery	Sierra Leone*	Italy	
Madeira	Deep-water species	Madeira	Portugal
	Small pelagic		
	Demersal fish		
	Molluscs (cephalopods & limpets)		
Canary	Small pelagics	Canary Islands	Spain
	Demersal species		

*Fisheries developed with direct authorizations.

** Angola (FAO 47) is considered in CECAF area of competence, as *de facto* situation.

The responsibility for coordination of research activities in the area, stocks assessments and providing scientific advice for the stocks management lies with the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF). In addition, the Joint Scientific Committees (JSCs) of the SFPAs between the EU and the partner countries (Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau) play important role in setting an independent scientific cooperation framework between the EU and the coastal States. In the near future it is expected to set up a new JSCs in the framework of the SFPA EU-The Gambia.

The situation of the SFPAs, by country, is described in the following sections:

Morocco

The last FPA Morocco-UE expired in July 2018. A new SFPA was signed in March 2019, together with the relevant protocol for a duration of 4 years. Although the new protocol establishes the same fishing categories as the last one (Categories 1 to 6), catch limits for category 6 (pelagic trawlers fishing for small pelagic species) are established with monthly and annual ceilings.

Mauritania

The last protocol of the FPA between the EU and Mauritania was signed in December 2015, allowing some métiers included in the EU Data Collection Framework to be used again after one year of closure. The fishing possibilities for cephalopod freezer trawlers were excluded in this Protocol. Currently, a new SFPA is being negotiated by the parties. In the meantime, the current agreement has been extended until November 2021.

Senegal

Last Protocol in the framework of the relevant SFPA between the EU and Senegal was signed in November 2019 for a duration of 5 years, including fishing possibilities for trawlers targeting black hake.

The Gambia

A new SFPA between the EU and The Gambia was signed in July 2019 and the relevant Protocol will last for a period of 6 years. Fishing opportunities include black hake and tuna resources.

Guinea-Bissau

The previous protocol within the SFPA EU-Guinea-Bissau expired in November 2017 and no fisheries was conducted since then until the application of the new one in June 2019. The duration of the new Protocol is 5 years and, in addition to the previously existing categories (finfish/cephalopods, shrimps, tuna), includes a new category of vessels targeting small pelagics with pelagic trawls. The following tables, based on the data provided to the RCG LDF by MS, show the main fishing activities in relation to fishing effort (from 2017 to 2019) and total landings (from 2014 to 2019).

Note that data from Angola are included in Section 4.3 (Other areas), due to parctical reasons.

Table 4.2 Effort (days at sea, except* and **) by country and metiers from 2017 to 2019 (Fishing ground: "West Africa").

Metier (level 6)	Country	2017	2018	2019
LLS_DEF_0_0_0	ESP*	719	949	1428
Total		719	949	1428
LLS_DEF_6_0_0	ESP*	814	307	198
Total		814	307	198
MIS_DEF_0_0_0	ESP*	124	92	88
Total		124	92	88
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0	ESP*	5203	5513	4496
Total		5203	5513	4496
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0	ESP*	1579	2418	2071
	ITA	NA	NA	NA
Total		1579	2418	2071
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0	ESP*	2226		1268
Total		2226		1268
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	DEU	210	189	93
	ESP*		71	102
	LTU	607	548	980
	LVA	1115	896	541
	NLD	303	170	245
	POL**	2944752	1218080	2779200
Total		2235	1874	1961
PS_SPF_0_0_0	ESP	692	276	70
Total		692	276	70

Effort unit: *fishing days (ES) and **kw days (POL)

Table 4.3 Landings (tons) by country and metiers from 2014 to 2019 (Fishing ground: "West Africa").

MÉTIER 2014	DEU	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD	POL	TOTAL
LLS_DEF_0_0_0		2593						2593
LLS_DEF_6_0_0		317						317
MIS_DEF_0_0_0		48						48
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0		2571						2571
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0		5067						5067
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0		5650						5650
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	5837	6919		103084	57560	72819	19935	266154

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MÉTIER 2015	DEU	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD	POL	TOTAL
LLS_DEF_0_0_0		1306						1306
LLS_DEF_6_0_0		456						456
MIS_DEF_0_0_0		244						244
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0		2118						2118
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0		6730	569					7299
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0		15690						15690
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	17056			26292	14303	18373	4496	80521
OTM_SPF_32-69_0_0				16				16
PS_SPF_0_0_0		1395						1395

MÉTIER 2016	DEU	DNK	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD	POL	TOTAL
LLS_DEF_0_0_0			2798						2798
LLS_DEF_6_0_0			285						285
MIS_DEF_0_0_0			100						100
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0			2157						2157
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0			10395	371					10766
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0			20802						20802
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	20607	3164			71942	47742	39226	30464	213145
PS_SPF_0_0_0			692						692

MÉTIER 2017	DEU	DNK	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD	POL	TOTAL
LLS_DEF_0_0_0			2628						2628
LLS_DEF_6_0_0			196						196
MIS_DEF_0_0_0			89						89
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0			4127						4127
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0			12674	1362					14036
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0			17453						17453
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	21747				41119	48730	32997	12531	157124
PS_SPF_0_0_0			1674						1674

MÉTIER 2018	DEU	DNK	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD	POL	TOTAL
LLS_DEF_0_0_0			2130						2130
LLS_DEF_6_0_0			52						52
MIS_DEF_0_0_0			56						56
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0			3431						3431
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0			19320	1180					20500
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	23583		739		32107	62320	18562		137310
PS_SPF_0_0_0			728						728

MÉTIER 2019	DEU	DNK	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD	POL	TOTAL
LLS_DEF_0_0_0			3049						3049
LLS_DEF_6_0_0			26						26
MIS_DEF_0_0_0			56						56
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0			3566						3566
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0			15486						15486
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0			6615						6615
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	16360		782		71830	39514	17583		146069
PS_SPF_0_0_0			122						122

It is worth noting the increasing trend of landings from the métier OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0 since 2014, with a maximum volume of landings in 2018 (more than 20,000 t) following the inclusion of a new vessel category (2bis, targeting black hake) in the protocol EU-Mauritania as well as an increase in black hake catches in Senegalese waters. Landings for the shrimper trawlers (OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0) in 2018 and 2019 remain stable. Regarding cephalopod-finish trawlers, there were no landings in 2018 due to the end of the SFPAs with Guinea-Bissau in November 2017 while in 2019 landings were lower than usual given that the activity resumed only in mid-2019. Landings also decreased for artisanal purse seiners (PS_SPF_0_0_0) and longliners (LLS_DEF_6_0_0) due to the closure of the fisheries in Morocco, at the end of the SFPAs in July 2018. Landings from pelagic trawlers (métier OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0) remained at similar levels since 2017.

The summary of landing statistics in the West African waters of the CECAF area, covering data from 2014 to 2019 is given in Table 4.4 below. After the important decrease observed in 2015, followed by an increase in 2016, a decreasing trend is observed from 2016 to 2018. These changes are mostly related to changes in the catches of small pelagics for some countries as well as the different situations related to the renewal of the SFPAs with Morocco and Guinea-Bissau which led to several months with no activity of EU vessels in these areas.

Table 4.4 Total EU landings (tons) in the West African waters of the CECAF area from 2014 to 2019. Data provided through the RDB.

Year	Total EU landings (t)
2014	282401
2015	109045
2016	250746
2017	197328
2018	164207
2019	174990

Tables 4.5 – 4.6 show the results of métier ranking for effort and landings criteria respectively for EU fishing activity in the CECAF area. Although under the new DCF effort is no longer a criterion for sampling obligations, effort distributions over the different métiers provide however insights in possible shifts in fishing activities.

Table 4.5 Percentage of average effort of different métiers operating in the CECAF area (West Africa) (period 2017-2019). Calculation based on days at sea or fishing days (ES). Métiers are comparable to previous reports. Métiers included in the 90% threshold are marked in bold.

Métier	% Effort
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0	41.67
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0	16.62
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	16.36
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0	9.57
LLS_DEF_0_0_0	8.48
LLS_DEF_6_0_0	3.61
PS_SPF_0_0_0	2.84
MIS_DEF_0_0_0	0.83

Table 4.6 Percentage of average landings (period 2017-2019) of different métiers operating in the CECAF area (West Africa). Métiers are comparable to previous reports. Métiers included in the 90% threshold are marked in bold.

Metier	% Landings
OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	81.88
OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0	9.44
OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0	4.54
OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0	2.1
LLS_DEF_0_0_0	1.47
PS_SPF_0_0_0	0.48
LLS_DEF_6_0_0	0.05
MIS_DEF_0_0_0	0.04

According to the métier ranking, some changes were observed for 2019 as compared to previous years within the same métiers (Tab. 4.5 & 4.6). With regard to métier ranking for landings (Tab. 4.6), the métier OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0, targeting small pelagics, has slightly decreased by 2%. The métier OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0, targeting demersal fish, decreased also by about 2%. Both métiers together constitute more than 90% threshold of métiers to be selected for sampling. In case of métier ranking for effort (Tab. 4.5), five métiers were selected for sampling, including four demersal métiers targeting crustaceans, cephalopods and demersal fish and one métiers targeting small pelagics. The order of the three most important métiers is the same over the last years. Only the percentage composition has changed slightly. Other métiers targeting both small pelagics and demersal species were also included in previous years due to their relevance in CECAF fisheries and their inclusion in respective SFPAs fishing opportunities. Therefore, no major changes occurred in the métiers sampled during the period analyzed.

In order to know the sampling obligation of demersal stocks by the different Member States (MS) according to their shared proportion in total EU catches, the last three years average landings of those stocks selected for sampling that are jointly fished by different countries were estimated and their proportions in the total EU landings calculated (Table 4.8). Following the 10% criteria (EU Impl. Dec. 2016/1251, Chapter V), Spain should continue sampling the three shared stocks considered (Southern rose shrimp *Penaeus notialis*, common octopus *Octopus vulgaris* and the cuttlefish *Sepia* spp (*Sepia officinalis* and/or *Sepia hierredda*). In addition, the proportion of *Penaeus* spp, *Sepia* spp and *O. vulgaris* fished by Italy in the last three years was higher than 10% and therefore to be considered for sampling by this MS if the fisheries were developed within SFPAs. However, as clarified by Italy, Italian demersal fisheries in the period 2017-2019 were based on direct authorizations provided by Guinea and Sierra Leone, and therefore, it is understood that this is out of the DCF sampling obligations.

Table 4.7- Average landings (tonnes) of main demersal species jointly exploited by EU demersal fleets in CEFAF-West African fishing grounds.

Main stocks commonly exploited by the countries	Average 2017-2019	
	ESP	ITA
<i>Penaeus spp</i>	233	73
<i>Sepia spp</i>	177	261
<i>Octopus vulgaris</i>	455	165

Table 4.8- Average landings (%) of main demersal species jointly exploited by EU demersal fleets in CEFAF-West African fishing grounds.

Main stocks commonly exploited by the countries	Share (%) 2017-2019	
	ESP	ITA
<i>Penaeus spp</i>	76.1	23.9
<i>Sepia spp</i>	40.4	59.6
<i>Octopus vulgaris</i>	73.4	26.6

FISHING GROUND "CANARY"

Effort and landings of the Canary Islands metiers are included in Tables 4.9 and 4.10, respectively. Data were not uploaded to the RDB. The reason was that the criteria of metier allocation in artisanal fishery still need to be revised and updated due to the high polyvalence of the fleet. The updating process has not finished yet and certain changes in landing and effort data by metier could be expected.

Table 4.9 Effort (fishing days) by metiers for the Canary Islands. 2014-2019.

Country	Métier (level 6)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ESP	PS_SPF_10_0_0	2716	3462	3403	4068	2693	2458
	MIS_DES_0_0_0	29206	28775	28833	29102	32328	29926

Table 4.10 Landings (tons) by metiers for the Canary Islands. 2014 to 2019.

Country	MÉTIER (level 6)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
ESP	PS_SPF_10_0_0	1965	2165	2406	2780	1897	1990
	MIS_DES_0_0_0	1079	1063	1030	1599	2380	1992

A decrease in effort and landings was observed for the metier of demersal artisanal fisheries MIS_DES_0_0_0 from 2018 to 2019. Effort values in 2019 were at the same levels than in the period 2014-2017.

FISHING GROUND "MADEIRA"

The bio-geographical conditions of the archipelago of Madeira, e.g. narrow insular shelf, oligotrophic waters and steep incline of the slope, have always imposed severe limitations on fishing, since the small biomass of the populations of the available fishing species, particularly in the neritic zone (to a depth of around 200m) forced the Madeira fishing fleet, operating inside the Madeira Economic Exclusive Zone (CECAF 34.1.2) to concentrate on exploiting deepwater species and/or migratory resources.

In 2019, concurrent sampling were developed according the Portuguese Work Plan for data collection for the fisheries. Monthly sampling were conducted for the métiers LLD_DWF_0_0_0 (benthopelagic species targeting *Aphanopus* spp.), LLS_FIF_0_0_0 (demersal fishes targeting Sparidae and Serranidae), PS_SPF_16_0_0 (small pelagic fish targeting *Trachurus picturatus* and *Scomber colias*) and MIS_MOL_0_0_0 (limpets *Patella aspera* and *Patella candei*) by the artisanal fleet in Madeira archipelago. Some of the most important target species were the black scabbard fish with 47% (*Aphanopus* spp.), and the small pelagic fish (*Trachurus picturatus* and *Scomber colias*) with 9%, apart from tuna that represented 40% of the total landings.

The demersal fish fishery (LLS_FIF_0_0_0, LHP_FIF_0_0_0 and MIS_FIF_0_0_0), despite showing only 2% of the total fishing in the region, assumes an important economic value in the local market.

Concerning the métier MIS_MOL_0_0_0 targeting limpets that represented 2% of the total catches, monthly sampling was only conducted from April to November in order to comply with the regional legislation in force (e.g. closed season from December to March).

Table 4.11 Effort (fishing days) by metiers for Madeira. 2014-2019.

Country	Métier	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
PT	LLD_DWF_0_0_0	3110	3074	2821	2991	2640	2899
	FPO_FIF_30_0_0	65	80	84	108	85	155
	LHP_FIF_0_0_0	302	439	567	545	563	725
	LLS_FIF_0_0_0	816	834	732	1229	1472	875
	MISC_FIF_0_0_0	16	5	7			
	LHP_MOL_0_0_0			6	36	23	12
	LLS_MOL_0_0_0			8	5		
	MISC_MOL_0_0_0	498	819	654	650	581	539
	LHP_SPF_0_0_0	15	17	40	4	21	
	LLS_SPF_0_0_0	18					
	MISC_SPF_0_0_0	29	57	96			
	PS_SPF_16_0_0	499	555	588	479	533	525
	FPO_CRU_30_0_0			2	9		

Table 4.12 Landings (tons) by metiers for Madeira. 2014-2019.

Country	Métier	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
PT	LLD_DWF_0_0_0	1983	1918	1965	2252	2232	2292
	FPO_FIF_30_0_0	1	2	2	3	1.74	3.53
	LHP_FIF_0_0_0	4	6	9	12	20	39
	LLS_FIF_0_0_0	28	31	24	47	76	53
	MISC_FIF_0_0_0	0.10	0.23	0.02	0	0	
	LHP_MOL_0_0_0	0	0	0.10	1.86	1.20	1.33
	LLS_MOL_0_0_0	0	0	0.32	0.16	0	
	MISC_MOL_0_0_0	73	150	119	108	79	74
	LHP_SPF_0_0_0	0.43	0.24	0.95	0.05	0.33	
	LLS_SPF_0_0_0	0.44	0	0	0	0	
	MISC_SPF_0_0_0	0.60	0.75	1.41	0	0	
	PS_SPF_16_0_0	516	772	953	473	432	452
	FPO_CRU_30_0_0	0	0	0	0.03	0	

There were no significant changes in the main metiers of local fisheries in the Madeira archipelago during recent years. However, there has been an increase in demersal catches (FIF) in the last two years, probably related to the high economic value that these species reach in the local market.

4.2 SPRFMO area

EU fleet activities in the SPRFMO area are reported since 2012. In 2013 only one vessel under the Lithuanian flag was active with a negligible landings volume. In 2014 only two EU vessels (one under DEU and one under NLD flag) were fishing in the SPRFMO area. In 2015, Dutch and Lithuanian fisheries were reported (and sampled under the sampling agreement between Poland, Lithuania, Germany and The Netherlands) in the SPRFMO area. Two fishing vessels were engaged in this area in 2016 (under DEU and POL flags) and in 2017 (under NLD and LTU flags). Only one fishing vessel was actively fishing in this area both in 2018 (LTU flag) and in 2019 (POL flag).

Until 2018 the effort (in fishing days) and landing data from the SPRFMO area were provided by MS to the RCG LDF in a form of Excell files. For 2019 RCG LDF meeting data were provided in a mixed form, some in Excel files and some were uploaded to the RDB. In reply to the 2020 data call regarding fishing activity up to 2019, data related to the fishery in the SPRFMO area were uploaded to the RDB.

Units for effort data required in the 2020 data call were kWdays (not fishing days as used before). Based on the data analysis it appears however, that some MS uploaded the effort data in kWdays, and others in days at sea. And some errors were also noticed in reporting days at sea – in some cases the sum of fishing days and sailing days (both sailing to the fishing ground and return trip) were uploaded, in other days at sea without the returning trip were uploaded to the RDB. For these reasons, effort and landing data (presented in Tables 4.13 and 4.14 below) can only be regarded as a provisional data and can not be directly compared with data reported to the RCG LDF in previous years.

In order to clarify the issue described above, it was agreed that the chair of this RCG would contact all NCs concerned with a request to check the data and confirm the units in which the effort data were reported. This issue also needs to be addressed in 2021 data call.

Table 4.13 SPRFMO small pelagic fishery effort (days at sea) by country from 2014 to 2019. Data marked with asterix (*) show KWdays (x 1000), what is consistent with the effort unit required in the 2020 data call.

COUNTRY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
NLD	65	136	33	125		
DEU	218		180			
LIT		193		271	177	
POL			428(*)			2779(*)

Table 4.14 SPRFMO small pelagic fishery total landings (tons) by country from 2014 to 2019.

COUNTRY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
NLD	49	124	???	80		
DEU	10669		9935			
LTU		13756		16020	10235	
POL			2751			12293

No fishing activity by the EU vessels is planned in 2020 as whole EU quota for *Trachurus murphyi* was transferred to Chile.

An overview of species fished by EU MS in the SPRFMO area in 2019 is presented in Annex 2.

4.3 Other areas

Based on the responses to 2019 RCG LDF data call, the following overview of fishing activities in other areas than CECAF or SPRFMO was made.

Table 4.15 Effort (days at sea) from other regions by country from 2014 to 2019. Data marked with asterix (*) show KWdays (x 1000), what is consistent with the effort unit required in the 2020 data call. Total amount of effort do not include numbers in grey. Data marked with (**) show Fishing days.

AREA	COUNTRY	Metier (level 6)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Area 41 (Atlantic, Southwest)	GBR	OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0	256	194	140	260	238	169
	LTU	OTM_SPF_32-69_0_0		8				
Total			256	202	140	260	238	169
Area 47 (Atlantic, Southeast)***	ESP	OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0	2879(**)	2820(**)	2918(**)	2873(**)	2524(**)	2718(**)
	IRL	OTM_SPF_32-69_0_0					28*	
	LTU	OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0		283	20			
	POL	OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	1358*	1848*	1165*	1838*	1218*	
Total			2879	3103	2938	2873	2524	2718

Table 4.16 Landings (tons) from other regions by country from 2014 to 2019.

AREA	COUNTRY	Metier (level 6)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Area 41 (Atlantic, Southwest)	GBR	OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0	3806	4282	2341	4466	4597	3258
	LTU	OTM_SPF_32-69_0_0		70				
Total			3806	4352	2341	4466	4597	3258
Area 47 (Atlantic, Southeast) ***	ESP	OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0	2011	1951	1604	1850	1533	1915
	IRL	OTM_SPF_32-69_0_0					746	
	LTU	OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0		21002	1140			
		OTM_SPF_32-69_0_0		6				
	POL	OTM_SPF_>=40_0_0	25324	41426	20429	37802	27072	
Total			27335	64384	23173	39652	29351	1915

*** Angola is included in the area 47, although it is considered in CECAF area of competence, as *de facto* situation.

Based on these overviews, RCG LDF concluded that there is no rationale for regional coordination in the above mentioned regions. However, this does obviously not void the responsibilities for MS to execute sampling programmes when and where required under the regulations applicable for the respective area.

An overview of species fished by EU MS in other areas in 2019 is presented in Annex 2.

4.4 Ranking of métier to find out whether any of the NPs need to be modified for 2021

In order to check whether or not the fisheries over the last three years have had similar pattern as in previous periods or whether there were significant changes to that pattern and to evaluate whether or not to amend future National Work Plans, the group performed the ranking of métiers using effort (days at sea or fishing days) and landings data for 2017-2019 for the CECAF area (see section 4.1 – “CECAF area” for details). Based on the above analysis of the most actual métier ranking at the regional level compared with the métiers selected for sampling in current work plans in respect of the fishing activity in the CECAF area, the RCG LDF concluded that there is no need for changes or amendments to the national WPs for 2021.

5. Review progress in regional co-ordination since the 2018 RCG (ToR 1)

5.1 Follow-up of the 16th Liaison Meeting

The RCG reviewed the report from the 16th Liaison Meeting. As described in the report, the role of the LM is to assist the Commission on data collection issues. This role is in line with EU Reg 2017/1004 Article 9 (6) "Regional coordination groups shall coordinate with each other and with the Commission, where issues affect several marine regions".

Previously, the LM had to endorse recommendations emerging from the RCGs (RCM at the time). In the new role, LM mainly streamlines the recommendations from the various RCGs and provides additional support where and when needed.

The 2019 RCG LDF yielded 4 recommendations that were presented at the LM. No specific comments were received from the LM.

- **Recommendation 2019-1 : Updating national data to the RDB**
 - *Through the 2020 data call, MS were requested to upload updated data from 2014 onwards. In some particular cases, MS couldn't update the older data, this will be looked at in the future.*
- **Recommendation 2019-2 : Funding of RDB work for RCG LDF**
 - *No direct follow-up. The discussion on funding RDB work for RCG purposes is ongoing through several fora.*
- **Recommendation 2019-3 : RCG LDF participation to intersessional RCG subgroup on fisheries and sampling overviews**
 - *Participation has been arranged for through the participation by Marta Suska (POL)*
- **Recommendation 2019-4 : Facilitate combined area upload.**
 - *Facilitating the combined area upload required changes to the current RDB structure. A make-shift solution has been created pending the move to RDBES. This renewed version of the RDB shall accommodate for this combined upload directly. The solution became available only shortly before the data call, thus not allowing MS to upload data prior to the call.*

5.1 Feedback SCRDB

The SCRDB met in Copenhagen in December 2019 and included participants from all RCGs as well as various ICES groups, ICES data centre, the Commission and Non-EU ICES Members. For the RCG LDF, the key points revolved around facilitating RCG LDF data uploads based on recommendation 2019-4. These points were all addressed and implemented at a later stage. No specific questions were raised by the SCRDB to the RCG LDF.

From 2021 onwards, the acronym for the SCRDB will change to WGRDBESGOV, to align the name with the ICES nomenclature.

6. Feedback from end users and 2019 state-of-play (ToR 2)

6.1 CECAF AND JSCs of SFPAs

CECAF

The CECAF scientific Subcommittee (SSC) met in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 23 - 26 October 2018. The recommendations of the last four assessments Working Groups (WGs) adopted by the SSC were presented in the RCG-LDF report of 2019. The stocks exploited by the EU are assessed in three CECAF WGs: Small Pelagics-North, Demersal Resources-North and Demersal resources-South. Two assessments Working Groups have taken place in 2019: Small Pelagics-North (July, 2019) and Demersal Resources-North (December, 2019). Only, a draft report of the first Working Group has been published (FAO, 2020)². Two Working Groups were expected to be held during the first semester of 2020 (Small Pelagics_North and Demersal resources-South) but were postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The EU MS that are CECAF member states and participate in these WGs (Spain for demersal and small pelagics and The Netherlands and more recently, the EU for small pelagics) should provide fishery and biological information from their fisheries in the areas. The data calls are directly sent by the WG chair persons to the participants. Spain provided fishery and biological information (length frequency distributions, maturity, length-weight relationship, sex-ratio, etc.) for most small pelagics and demersal stocks required. Due to the limited possibilities of having observers onboard EU pelagic trawlers in 2018 and 2019, only limited biological information on the stocks required was provided to the last small pelagics WGs.

Research recommendations from the last Small Pelagics WG potentially affecting fishing information and biological samplings from the EU fleets are summarized below.

FAO Working Group on the assessment of small pelagic fish off northwest Africa, 2019 (FAO, 2020)

Main recommendations affecting stocks exploited by the EU in Morocco (artisanal purse seiners and pelagic trawlers) and Mauritania (pelagic trawlers) were:

Sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*)

- Strengthen sardine sampling for year-round coverage in Area C, especially in Mauritania.
- Strengthen sardine age reading for different fisheries and resume otolith exchange between countries in the region in order to standardize methods of reading and validating age readings.

Sardinella (*Sardinella aurita* and *Sardinella maderensis*)

- Undertake at least one sampling per month and per landing site in the whole sub-region. The minimum sampling rate is one sample (minimum 100 individuals) per 1 000 tonnes of catches.
- Re-start studies on the growth and age reading of round sardinella.

Horse mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus* & *Trachurus trecae*)

- Continue analyses in 2019 to implement structural models and encourage biological studies to improve the biological parameters used as input into assessment models.
- Strengthen the revision of the identification of different species of horse mackerel to better separate these species in catches, including for the Canary Islands.
- Ensure boarding of observers on fishing vessels in the North West Africa area to ensure biological sampling of catches.
- Improve sampling on the fishing segments not covered so far.

² FAO. 2020. Report of the Working Group on the Assessment of Small Pelagic Fish of Northwest Africa Casablanca, Morocco, 8–13 July 2019. Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF). FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No. 1309/FAO. Rome. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca4121b/ca4121b.pdf>

Mackerel (*Scomber colias*)

- Strengthen and extend the biological sampling of mackerel in all operational fleets at the sub-regional level and during all seasons,
- Strengthen collection and reading of otoliths to determine size-age keys by fishery and / or area and promote exchanges between countries to improve age reading.

Anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*)

- Intensify sampling at the different segments of the anchovy fishery, particularly in Mauritania.
- Proceed and expand the age reading of anchovy by fishery in all areas.
- Construct a time series for length frequencies in Zone C (from 26°N to the southern limit of the species in the area, this is to the border Senegal-Guinea Bissau).

RCG response: main recommendations have been followed since the end of 2018, when the new program of observers onboard pelagic trawlers, coordinated by Poland, was implemented. Two fishing trips per quarter are planned to be sampled by observers. One fishing trip was covered in 2018 and two in the first quarter of 2019, all of them on Dutch vessels operating in Mauritania. At the beginning of 2020, attempts were made to deploy observers during the first quarter of the year. However, according to information received from vessels operators, there were no plans to start pelagic fishery in January and February. First information on the vessel moving to Moroccan grounds were received late March when the restriction on people's movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic were already in place in Poland, including border closure and closure of air traffic, making it impossible and undesirable for scientific observers to leave the country. At the time of the RCG LDF meeting no information was available on when it would be possible to deploy observers on board the vessels fishing in the CECAF area.

The RCG recommends that in the future an effort should be made to have sampling trips evenly distributed throughout the year. It is also expected that the CECAF general recommendation of "Intensifying biological samplings" will be specified in quantitative context.

In addition, Spain resumed the length and biological samplings of anchovy and sardine of the stock North-Morocco in July 2019, once the fishery was reopened after the signature of the new SFPA.

JSCs of SFPAs

In addition, the Joint Scientific Committees (JSCs) of mixed Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) between the EU and West African countries are very relevant end users of the information collected through the DCF on the EU fisheries developed in some CECAF countries (Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau). This information is generally provided to the JSCs through data calls launched by the EC (DG MARE) to the MS having any fishery activity in these West African countries. A data call was transmitted and properly responded by relevant MS in 2020, for the meeting of the JSCs of Morocco, held the week before this meeting. The information requested mainly concerns the fishery statistics, length frequency distributions and biological information of main exploited stocks.

Main sampling recommendations made by the JSCs of the EU and different countries with SFPAs were presented in the report of this RCG last year. Two meetings have been held since July 2019: the JSC EU-Mauritania (July, 2019) and JSC EU-Morocco. As the latter meeting took place the week before to this RCG meeting, the report is not available yet. Thus, only sampling recommendations established in last JSC with Mauritania are presented.

The following specific recommendations, by fishing category, potentially affecting in some degree the Data Collection from EU fleets, were made by the JSC EU-Mauritania in 2019 (Fernández-Peralta et al. 2019)³:

³ Fernandez Peralta L., Bouzouma M., Balguerías E., Braham, C., Brahim, K., Corten A., Dia, M., Garcia Isarch, E., Habib, B., Licandro, P., des Clers S. et Röckmann C. 2019. Rapport de la Réunion annuelle du Comité Scientifique Conjoint relatif à l'Accord de pêche signé entre la République islamique de Mauritanie et l'Union européenne. Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Espagne, 11 au 14 juin 2019. Rapports des

JSC EU-Mauritania**Fishing Category No. 1 - Vessels fishing for crustaceans other than spiny lobster and crab.**

The JSC recommended to follow the catch and effort evolution of *Aristeus varidens* over the next few years to conduct stock assessments of this stock in Mauritania.

RCG response: Spain had been monitoring the catch and effort statistics of this species for years, as it is a relevant by-catch species of this fishery. In addition, Spain added it for biological sampling in its annual Work Plan for 2020. However, no sampling could be performed in 2020, as planned, as no observations have been made due to several constraints (IEO budgetary and administrative issues and COVID-19 crisis).

Fishing Category No. 2 and 2 bis - Black hake (non-freezer) trawlers and bottom longliners (2) and freezer trawlers (2bis).

- The JSC noted differences between the IMROP, IEO and DG MARE landings data, which are linked to the use of different conversion factors for the estimation of tonnes in equivalent live weight. To establish harmonized conversion rates by type and by product category, the JSC recommended an analysis of existing work and further research on the subject through the embarking scientific observers and landing sampling.

RCG response: this recommendation is to be followed by Spain, which routinely performs sampling for conversion factors through scientific observers onboard the non-freezer and freezer black hake trawlers. No observations have been made since the second semester of 2019 due to above mentioned constraints.

- The JSC noted the significant quantities of black hake bycatch in landings from other fisheries, especially those of small pelagics. It recommended, among other measures, strengthen their monitoring, through observations at sea (as it is the case for the EU small pelagic fishery) and landings sampling, in order to better estimate their impact on the stocks of black hake.

RCG response: the recommendation have been followed since the end of 2018, when the new program of observers onboard pelagic trawlers, coordinated by Poland, was implemented. Two fishing trips per quarter are planned to be sampled by observers. This program includes the reporting of retained or discarded bycatch species, including black hakes. Two fishing trips were observed in 2019 and none in 2020, for the reasons explained before.

- The JSC recommended to establish a joint scientific observation program for monitoring the (EU and national) black hake fishery in Mauritanian waters, in order to: estimate black hake catches by species; evaluate the catches of cephalopods from the two fleets (cat. 2 and 2b); harmonize the sampling protocols of IMROP and the IEO in order to ensure compatibility of the data collected by the two institutions on the size structure, the biology of the species, bycatch and discards and obtain precise information on the efforts and yields of the fleets.

RCG response: During the *Workshop for standardization of observer methodologies*, held in January 2020 as part of the project Specific Contract No 12 within the Framework Contract EASME/EMFF/2016/008: "Study on improvement for the analysis and exploitation of observer reports in EU fisheries from NW African waters", a sampling protocol for scientific observers on board the fleets was proposed by IEO and agreed by other relevant parties (including IMROP) with the aim of using standardized methodologies by the two institutions in charge (IEO and IMROP). The sampling protocol was designed to give answer to these and other relevant issues. This can be considered as a first step for establishing a joint scientific observation program for monitoring the black hake fishery in Mauritania.

- The JSC recommended studying the possibility of separating the catches of the two black hake species by developing a harmonized sampling protocol for a separate assessment of these stocks.

RCG response: Spain routinely separates the two species of black hake in samplings performed within the DCF in landings and/or through observers on board black hake trawlers. No samplings at

sea have been made since the second semester of 2019 to date due to above mentioned constraints (IEO administrative issues and COVID-19). The observers sampling protocol for the black hake fishery agreed in the *Workshop for standardization of observer methodologies* includes the description of sampling procedures to separate the two species.

Fishing Category No. 3 - Vessels fishing for demersal species other than black hake with gear other than trawls. The JSC reiterated the need to collect data on Atlantic pomfret (*Brama brama*) in order to conduct stock assessments of this species.

RCG response: the IEO information and sampling network was proposed to be extended in 2020, to collect length information on *B. brama* fished in Mauritania and landed in the port of Vigo (Spain). In addition, this species was added as a stock to be sampled within the DCF in the Spanish annual Work Plan for 2020. However, no sampling of the species landings could be made in 2020 due to constraints mentioned already before.

Fishing Category No. 6 - Pelagic freezer trawlers.

- The JSC recommended the EU to take the necessary measures to force European ship owners to embark scientific observers on board pelagic trawlers in order to ensure the data collection concerning bycatch and discards of pelagic trawlers operating in Mauritania.

RCG response: MS are aware of the problem. However, this particular issue lies beyond the scope of the RCG competence.

- The JSC recommended that the data from the EU observer program implemented by the fishing countries and compiled by DG MARE as well as that from the IMROP observation program are made available to IMROP and to the JSC as soon as possible.

RCG response: The group do not see any problem with provision the data collected under the DCF to an end-user being e.g. DG MARE or JSC.

- The JSC recommended that scientists from all MS benefiting from the SFPA with Mauritania attend the CECAF assessment WGs.
- **RCG response:** The group is aware of the problem. However, this particular issue is the competence of MS.

6.2 SPRFMO

With regard to the SPRMFO, its website gives clear details on the data required and the format for data submission.

There were no changes in SPRMFO Data Standards adopted in May 2018 (CMM 02-20 Conservation and Management Measure on Standards for the Collection, Reporting, Verification and Exchange of Data), published on Organization's webpage⁴. Thus, from the perspective of EU fishing activity, the Data Standards provided for no changes to data requirements in 2019 sampling year .

6.3 SPRFMO observer requirements

Over the last years RCG LDF addressed various versions of the upcoming RFMO "Observer Programme", coming into force as of 2024. RCG LDF as well as individual MS raised various serious concerns regarding the impact of this regulation on the EU observer programme in the region.

The perception of the RCG LDF still is that specifications included in this OP are too complex and overly prescriptive, resulting in a very high administrative burden, huge paper load and unavoidable workload to justify that SPRFMO's Member provides sufficiently trained observer, particularly in the light of the fact that share of EU catch of a key species (Chilean jack mackerel) in total catch for that stock is insignificant (<4% in 2016, <6% in 2017). Share of the EU in the total TAC in 2018 and 2019 equals to 6,1% only.

⁴ <https://www.sprfmo.int/assets/Fisheries/Conservation-and-Management-Measures/2018-CMMs/CMM-02-2018-Data-Standards-8March2018.pdf>

The final version of the “Conservation and Management Measure Establishing the SPRFMO Observer Programme” (CMM 16-2019) was already adopted at the 7th SPRFMO Commission Annual Meeting in January 2019 and it entered into force 27 May 2019 with effective implementation from 2024 onwards.

RCG LDF discussed the options to apply for accreditation, but given the aforementioned concerns, none of the MS currently involved will apply for this accreditation, despite the offer for financial support. However, not having accredited procedures might jeopardize data collection on board trawlers in the area from 2024 onwards. This issue needs to be addressed in the upcoming years to prepare the ground for a solid solution once the OP commences. RCG LDF will initiate intersessional work to progress on this during the year.

Recommendation 2020-2 : Data collection in SPRFMO region beyond 2024	
RCG-LDF 2019 Recommendation	RCG LDF to set-up intersessional subgroup to prepare for data collection in the SPRFMO area beyond 2024. This subgroup shall work on a solid solution to cater for data collection under the given SPRFMO observer requirements as well as taking DCF requirements into account. The subgroup shall explore different scenarios such as accreditation for EU observers, self-sampling, remote monitoring etc. First results to be presented at the 2021 RCG LDF.
Follow-up actions needed	Setup of the subgroup, organize (virtual) meeting.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	Chair of RCG LDF and MS involved in the SPRFMO pelagic fisheries.
Time frame (Deadline)	Prior to the RCG LDF 2021 meeting.

6.4 State-of-play 2019 data collection

6.4.1 SPRFMO

Following the RCM LDF 2016 recommendation, a “Multi-lateral agreement for 2017 and 2018 between Germany, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in SPRFMO waters” was agreed and signed, with Poland taking over the role of coordination of the sampling program from The Netherlands. This agreement was amended in 2018 with its extension for 2019-2020.

In 2017, two EU fishing vessels engaged in the Chilean jack mackerel (*Trachurus murphyi*) fishery in the SPRFMO area. In total, ten fishing trips were performed by these two vessels in 2017. To sample this fishery, according to the multilateral agreement, Poland placed one observer on board the EU vessel for a fishing trip in March, two observers for a fishing trip from a second week of April till mid-May and one observer for the fishing trip conducted in August-September. Placing observers on board fishing vessel for three fishing trips out of total ten trips (30% coverage) allowed to meet the SPRFMO requirements of ensuring a minimum of 10% scientific observer coverage of trips for EU vessels participating in the *Trachurus murphyi* fishery (as set in the SPRFMO Conservation and Management Measure for *Trachurus murphyi*).

In 2018 only one EU vessel was engaged in the Chilean jack mackerel fishery in the SPRFMO area. Polish observers collected data during two fishing trips in 2018 (out of total of 6 fishing trips, which resulted in 33% observer coverage), with one observer placed on board the vessel from mid-March till end of April and two observers from beginning of May till mid-June.

Also in 2019 only one EU vessel was engaged in the Chilean jack mackerel fishery in the SPRFMO area. Data were collected during two fishing trips in 2019 (out of total of 3 fishing trips, resulting in 66% observer coverage), with observers placed on board from end of March till mid-May and from mid-May till end of June.

The contacts and exchange of information with vessels’ operators so far as well as information received from the observers during briefings confirm very good cooperation with both vessels’ operators and the crew in execution of the sampling programme.

In 2020, despite the lack of possibility of placing observers onboard fishing vessels due to the restrictions imposed worldwide in relation to COVID-19 pandemia, no biological sampling could be performed due to the fact, that the whole EU fishing quota for Chilean jack mackerel (*Trachurus murphyi*) in this year was transferred to Chile.

6.4.2 CECAF

Madeira

Under the 2019 Portuguese Data Collection Plan, monthly concurrent samplings on shore were performed for the main métiers operated by the local fleet in Madeira waters. Stock specific landing sampling for deep water species, mainly targeting *Aphanopus* spp. (LLD_DWF_0_0_0) covered 50 trips and 6189 individuals. In the metier PS_SPF_16_0_0 (small pelagic fish, directed to *Scomber colias* and *Trachurus picturatus*) 12 trips were sampled and 2365 specimens were measured. Concerning the demersal fish targeting mainly Serranidae and Sparidae (LLS_FIF_0_0_0 and LHP_FIF_0_0_0) sampling were performed on 2 trips and 215 specimens were measured. Regarding the limpets harvesting (MIS_MOL_0_0_0) 647 individuals were sampled from 5 trips.

Canary Islands

For the metier PS_SPF_10_0_0 (artisanal fleet targeting small pelagics in Canary Islands) one fishing trip per month is planned to be sampled at sea in Tenerife Island (concurrent length sampling) together with stock-specific samplings at the main landing places carried out by the IEO sampling network for the target species (*Scomber colias*, *Trachurus* spp., *Sardinella aurita* and *Sardina pilchardus*). In addition, monthly biological sampling of the main target species is carried out in the laboratory. For the metier MIS_DES_0_0_0 (artisanal fleet targeting demersal species in Canary Islands), at least two fishing trips per month are planned to be sampled at sea in Tenerife Islands (concurrent length samplings). Moreover, monthly length samplings of main landed species are also planned to be carried out by the IEO information and sampling network. In 2019, the national onboard observer program had to be cut due to budgetary and administrative problems and this affected the trips planned to be sampled during the last quarter of the year for the two Canarian metiers.

West Africa

Until the end of 2017, data collection of small pelagics in CECAF waters was arranged for through a multi-lateral agreement between Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, The Netherlands and Poland. For this agreement NLD operated as the coordinator for the programme. The actual work was subcontracted to a dedicated partner having a vast experience in the region.

Following the conclusions from the second meeting of the RCG LDF in 2017 (Copenhagen, November 2017), the new multilateral agreement was concluded upon shortly after the meeting for period 2018-2020 with Poland coordinating the data collection in the CECAF waters. In February 2018 a meeting was held in the Hague, the Netherlands, between the representatives of the Polish National Marine Fisheries Research Institute (NMFRI - coordinator of the joint sampling programme), the Dutch Wageningen Marine Research and the Dutch fishing companies engaged in the fishery for small pelagics in the CECAF area. The purpose of this meeting was to set up the rules of cooperation between the NMFRI and the Dutch vessels' operators in executing the joint sampling programme and in placing Polish observers on board the fishing vessel operating in the CECAF area. Contacts have also been established with operator of the Polish vessels active in the CECAF area.

In March 2018, in cooperation between Institutes from Germany, the Netherlands and Poland, a new "Manual for scientific observers on board EU pelagic trawlers in CECAF area" was set⁵.

Despite the efforts made, placement of observers on board the EU vessels operating in the CECAF area was possible only in December 2018, mainly due to lack of space on board the vessels.

In 2019 biological data were collected by Polish observers during two fishing trips in Mauritanian waters in the first quarter on board the Dutch vessel. Despite attempts made, placement of observers on board the EU vessels operating in the CECAF during remaining period of 2019 was not possible due to lack of space on board the vessels.

⁵ <http://dcf.mir.gdynia.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Manual-for-scientific-observers-on-EU-pelagic-trawlers-in-CECAF.pdf>

At the beginning of 2020, attempts were made to deploy observers during the first quarter of the year. However, first information on the vessel moving to Moroccan grounds were received late March, when the restrictions on people's movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic were already in place in Poland, including border closure and closure of air traffic, making it impossible for scientific observers to leave the country. At the time of the RCG LDF meeting no information was available on when it would be possible to deploy observers on board the vessels fishing in the CECAF area.

Spanish small pelagic purse seiners operating in Morocco were sampled by the IEO information and sampling network, at landings in the Spanish port of Barbate (Cádiz, SW Spain), since the fishing activity was resumed in this fishing ground in 2020, this meaning four months of activity in this year since August 2019. Monthly length samplings (both concurrent and anchovy-stock specific samplings) were carried out. Landing samples for biological sampling of anchovy *Engraulis encrasicolus* and for sardine *Sardina pilchardus* were obtained only for one of these four months of activity.

In relation to demersal fisheries, the Spanish demersal métiers operating in West Africa are sampled by the IEO programs of observations onboard. In 2019, the national onboard observer program had to be cut due to budgetary and administrative problems and this affected the majority of the trips planned for the 3rd and 4th quarter of the year and resulted in not achieving of all the planned observer trips.

The observer program on board the métier OTB_CRU_>=40_0_0 (shrimper trawlers) is organized in a way that observations are annually alternated between the two fishing grounds where the fishery is developed (one year in Mauritania, one year in Guinea-Bissau). Planned observations in 2019 were in Mauritania. However, only one fishing trip could be sampled, covering only the first quarter and 3 months from January to March, during a total of 54 fishing days. This represented 4% coverage of the total effort and 3% of the fishing trips carried out by this fleet in 2019. Due to logistic reasons, there were not observations on board shrimper trawlers during the 2nd quarter. After, the observer program was cut due to the administrative reasons explained above, this affecting the sampling of the 3rd quarter. No fishery was developed in Mauritania during the 4th quarter.

The Spanish métier OTB_MCF_>=70_0_0 (cephalopod-finish trawlers) operates only in Guinea-Bissau. Last protocol between EU and this coastal State became effective by July 2019. One fishing trip was sampled in the 4th quarter of the year, covering November and December during a total of 26 fishing days. This represented 2% coverage of the total effort and 2% of the fishing trips carried out by this fleet this year.

For the métier OTB_DEF_>=70_0_0 (black hake trawlers), 8 fishing trips, carried out in 51 fishing days, were sampled in 2019, 6 conducted in Mauritania and 2 in Morocco. This represents a sampling coverage of around 4% of the 2286 fishing trips carried out by this fleet in the West African fishing ground (this including Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia). Length samplings of black hake landings from this métier in Spanish ports were also conducted on a monthly basis by the IEO information and sampling network during the first semester. All samplings had to be cut during the second semester due to the administrative issues explained before.

7. Regional data collection and the EU MAP revision (ToR 4)

7.1 Response to consultation document on EU MAP revision

Since 2020, the Union Multi-annual Programme for Data Collection (EU-MAP) is divided into two legal acts, due to the provisions of the DCF Regulation 2017/1004:

- COM Delegated Decision 2019/910 on biological, environmental and socio-economic data requirements (EP and Council scrutiny 2 months after adoption)
- COM Implementing Decision 2019/909 on thresholds for data collection and the list of surveys-at-sea (no scrutiny by EP and Council; comitology vote)

These two legal acts are valid for 2020-2021, while the revision of the EU-MAP for 2022 and beyond is currently underway: In 2018, there was a first brainstorming on the EU-MAP revision in the STECF EWG 18-18. In 2019, there were several consultations with end-users, RCGs, PGECON, the Liaison Meeting and the meeting of National Correspondents (NC). There was a dedicated EU-MAP revision meeting of the RCGs in May 2019, an STECF EWG (19-05) on the review of surveys-at-sea and the EWG 19-12 on the revision of the EU-MAP and Work Plan templates.

At the NC meeting (Expert Group of Fisheries Data Collection) on 1 July 2020, a draft of the Implementing Act was discussed and a wide consensus was reached. A postal voting on this act by the Committee of Fisheries and Aquaculture is planned for September 2020. Thereafter, the adoption and publication in the Official Journal will follow.

Regarding the Delegated Act, a first discussion of a COM draft took place at the same meeting on 1 July and will be continued in the Expert Group of Fisheries Data Collection in September 2020. Thereafter, the draft will be subject to COM inter-services consultation, public consultation, adoption, EP and Council scrutiny and publication in the Official Journal.

The STECF EWG 20-18 (early 2021) will then work on the templates and guidance for Work Plans and Annual Reports for 2022 and beyond.

7.2 Consider future mechanisms to continue strengthening regional cooperation including funding

The RCG LDF has been conducting successful regional coordination and cooperation since several years and was in fact the first RCG establishing multilateral agreements (see section 8), containing regional sampling plans and thus already providing working examples for important elements of Regional Work Plans.

Regarding further strengthening of regional cooperation, the RCG LDF was made aware that there is currently an effort by the RCGs (sub-groups on Regional Work Plans) to apply for a grant under the Call for Proposals MARE/2020/08 "*Strengthening regional cooperation in the area of fisheries data collection*". The RCG LDF, however, does not consider it appropriate or relevant to use this grant for strengthening regional cooperation, as the RCG LDF is already sufficiently prepared for the inclusion of the relevant regional elements into Regional Work Plans. Through the involvement of the RCG LDF chair and other members of the group during the project application and implementation, the consideration of these elements within the possible MARE project will be ensured.

7.3 Time frame for RCG LDF actions

Based on the Rules of Procedures currently relevant for the RCG LDF, the following general mile stones are considered current for organizing the RCG work, including the data call and organisational aspects. In practice, due to day-to-day issues and practicalities, not all deadlines can be met. However, given the nature of the work, participants (heavily) being involved in other groups, shifting time-lines due to external factors, some flexibility is required to be able to organize this meeting.

When	What (incl. reference to RoP Article)	Who
t – 2 months (at the latest)	Formal request if an independent organisation or individual seeks to attend an RCG meeting as an observer (11.2). Note that SPRFMO and CECAF have a standing invitation to the RCG LDF (11.7)	Any organisation or individual
t – 2 months (at the latest)	Launch data call to all non-land-locked MS.	Chair (or delegated data coordinator)
t - 2 months	Provide details of accommodation, travel and other organizational information relevant for the meeting. (4.4)	Host Member State
t – 6 weeks	Consult members regarding observers (11.2)	Chair
t - 1 month	Provide details on participants to the chair	NC's of participating MS
t - 1 month	Provide draft agenda to participants	Chair
t – 4 weeks	Inform observers whether or not invited	Chair
t	Annual technical meeting (4.1)	All participants
t + 2 weeks (at the latest 2 months before the decision meeting)	Circulate proposed decisions to the relevant MS for consideration prior to the decision meeting (if any). Circulate draft regional workplan (if any) for decision to NCs (8.6)	Chair
t + 2 months (at the latest)	Circulate draft report to participants	Chair
t + ?	Decision Meeting of relevant NC's	Chair
t + ?	Represent RCG LDF at Liaison Meeting (10.3)	Chair (when applicable outgoing and incoming chair)

7.4 RCG LDF decision meeting

During the meeting, the organization of the NCs meeting representing MS who are members of this RCG was initially considered in order to make decisions arising from the course of the meeting, *i.e.* on ratification of RoP by Portugal (section 9.1) and on multilateral agreements related to joint sampling programmes in the CECAF and the SPRFMO areas (chapter 8). Two possible options were discussed - make decisions at the NC decision meeting organized in September for RCGs from northern Europe (RCGs Baltic and NANSEA) or arrange a separate meeting with only NC relevant to RCG LDF. Although no final arrangements have been made in this matter, given the limited, though very specific decisions that need to be taken, preference was expressed to have a separate, dedicated RCG LDF decision meeting online to finalize the required decisions. This issue will be agreed with the relevant NC on the initiative of the RCG LDF chair.

8. Future data collection set up in CECAF/SPRFMO (ToR 5)

8.1 Data collection of small pelagics in SPRFMO area from 2021 onwards

At the 2018 RCG LDF, the, at that time, standing multi-lateral agreement for sampling small pelagics in SPRFMO waters covering for 2017-2018 was extended to 2020. The RCG discussed the future follow-up of this agreement and concluded that the current arrangements were satisfactorily fulfilled. Poland offered to continue to coordinate the sampling in the region. The MS involved appreciated the offer and expressed their wish to amend the agreement for a second time to extend the end-date beyond 2020.

The amendment includes an update to the legal basis and, pending the start of the new Fisheries Fund and subsequently the so far unknown budgets for the MS, a clause to review the agreement should substantial changes to the financial situation occur. The amendment can be found in Annex 3 and will be concluded upon at the decision meeting in September.

8.2 Data collection of small pelagics in CECAF area

At the 2017 RCG, a renewed agreement was reached for sampling small pelagics in CECAF waters. This agreement covered the period 2018-2020. Similar to the SPRFMO agreement, the RCG discussed the future follow-up and concluded that the current arrangements were satisfactorily fulfilled.

Poland also offered to continue to coordinate the sampling in the CECAF region and in line with the SPRFMO agreement, the MS involved appreciated the offer and wished to amend the agreement to extend the end-date beyond 2020.

The amendment includes an update to the legal basis and, pending the start of the new Fisheries Fund and subsequently the so far unknown budgets for the MS, a clause to review the agreement should substantial changes to the financial situation occur. The amendment can be found in Annex 4 and will be concluded upon at the decision meeting in September.

The group addressed the issue of data availability from observers in pelagic trawlers in CECAF area for the use of JSCs and, in particular, the information on the lowering in abundance indices from surveys at sea recently reported by Morocco, which could potentially result in restrictive measures for Category 6 in the framework of this SFPA.

Changes in the observer's schemes and reluctance of ship-owners, to embark EU observers in the last years have resulted in incomplete sampling coverage. This, together with the exceptional circumstances of COVID-19 in 2020, make very difficult to the group to proceed with reliable analysis of the EU data which could confirm or counteract the conclusions from the Moroccan observations.

Notwithstanding this, it has to be noted that the results of the 2019 CECAF assessment WG for small pelagics did not present worrying situations for most stocks (mackerel, horse mackerel and anchovy fully exploited; sardine not fully exploited) with the exception of sardinella stocks which appear to be in a poor state for several years. In addition it has to be understood that the Moroccan survey covers only a limited part of the distribution area of small pelagic stocks in CECAF region and therefore, cannot be considered as a providing sufficient information on a definite status of these stocks.

9. Any other business (ToR 6)

9.1 Rules of procedures for future RCG work

Article 9.5. of EU Regulation 2017/1004 stipulates that RCGs shall draw up and agree on rules of procedures for their activities. Based on this article, the Rules of Procedure for the RCG LDF were established on 9th of July 2018 by the following MS coordinating their data collection activities for Long Distance Fisheries in 2018: Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Spain and Poland. For the full RoP text, see Annex 5 of the 2018 RCG LDF report.

RCG LDF discussed the appropriateness of the current RoP and concluded that there is no need to amend these.

As Portugal is a member of the group, the RoP shall be ratified by Portugal as well. In order to arrange the ratification of RoP by Portugal, the group decided that shortly after the meeting, the chair of the RCG LDF would submit an appropriate request to the Portuguese NC. Acceptance of submitted RoPs and Portugal's decision to ratify them is expected at the September NCs decision meeting.

9.2 Surveys, studies and pilot projects

RCG LDF did not propose new surveys, nor studies or pilot projects in 2019.

A "Study on improvement for the analysis and exploitation of observers' reports in EU fisheries from NW African waters" was developed by a Consortium of European Institutions (IEO, MRAG, WMR and CEFAS), as the Specific Contract No 12 of the Framework Contract EASME/EMFF/2016/008 for the "Provision of scientific advice for fisheries beyond EU waters", from February 2019 to March 2020 (García-Isarch et al., 2019⁶). Its main objectives were: i) to scrutinise and analyse the available information from observers onboard EU fleets operating in NW Africa in order to maximise the use of this information and ii) to analyse the information available to identify strengths and weaknesses in data coverage, with a view to establishing standardised observer manuals.

One of the tasks of this project was to organize a "*Workshop for standardisation of observer methodologies*".

The main goal of the Workshop was to discuss, standardize and implement the guidelines from the draft manuals produced under other task of the project, to be used by observers on board EU demersal and pelagic trawlers operating in West African coastal States (CS) within SFPAs. It took place from 28 to 31 January 2020, in the premises of the IEO in Tenerife and was attended by 26 participants from Morocco (2), Mauritania (4), Senegal (2), The Gambia (1), Guinea-Bissau (2), EU (14 from Spain, The Netherlands, Poland, DG MARE and EASME and FAO-CECAF (1). The participation of NMFRI-Poland, as the coordinating institution of the Multilateral Agreement on joint programme for biological data collection from the EU pelagic trawlers in the CEEAF waters, and the new chair of the RCG-LDF was considered as a key issue for the Workshop success. In addition, in the context of the work coordinated by the RCG-LDF and to avoid any overlapping, WMR and the current chair of this RCG closely followed the development of the manual for pelagic trawlers, in order to ensure consistency with the work to be performed by NMFRI observers.

Some conclusions from the project that might be relevant for this RCG were:

- There are obligations to develop programs of scientific observers onboard EU demersal and pelagic fleets operating in West African fishing grounds through mixed SFPAs, established in the DCF and SFPA Protocols for the EU and CS, respectively. While the sampling requirements for the EU observers are specified in the DCF, there are no clear specifications on the biological information required in the SFPA Protocols.

⁶ García-Isarch E., Clark J.M., Fernández-Peralta L., González-Lorenzo J.G., Duque-Nogal V., Corten A., Rey J., Young S., Perales-Raya C., Cervantes A., Verver, S. 2020. Study on improvement for the analysis and exploitation of observers' reports in EU fisheries from NW African waters. Specific Contract No 12 of the Framework Contract EASME/EMFF/2016/008. Final Report. 109 pp + Annexes.

- Not all the CS have implemented programmes of scientific observation on board yet, others have recently resumed them, and for others, the collection of scientific information is partial or occasional.
- The information from SFPA observers provided to the SFPA-JSCs and CECAF is very limited and therefore, these end users make recurrent recommendations on the implementation of observers' programmes and on the use of standardized methodologies between CS and the EU.
- In general, information from EU observers can be considered sufficient to meet the DCF requirements. However, some shortcomings have been identified in terms of coverage, also noticed in SFPA observers' programmes. In spite of existing legal obligations for EU vessels to take scientific observers, the reluctance of some ship owners to host observers on board their vessels is one of the most significant issues to solve to improve coverage and effectiveness of the observer programmes on board EU vessels in West Africa.
- Observer manuals for the four fleets with EU (DCF) observers' programmes (shrimper, black hake, cephalopod-finfish and pelagic trawlers) were produced to provide clear sampling protocols harmonized between the EU and CS for each fishery. This will enable the collection of comparable data to contribute effectively to the improvement of stock assessments in CECAF and therefore to obtain the best scientific advice from relevant end-users (JSCs and CECAF).
- The Workshop for standardization of observer's methodologies involved most of the concerned stakeholders, to produce the final versions of the manuals, to ensure that main sampling principles are followed and so lead to improved data collection. Manuals can be considered as reference documents and can be implemented, where needed, with a certain degree of flexibility.

Some recommendations, also relevant for the RCG-LDF were:

- The recurrent recommendation from the JSCs addressed to the SFPA Joint Committee (JC), to take the measures needed to impose the requirement that EU vessel owners must allow the embarkment of observers needs to be followed-up by the relevant parties.
- Coordination between the EU and CS to develop DCF and SFPA observer programmes, respectively, is essential to avoid temporal and spatial duplication of effort. Ideally this coordination should also include the use of same methodologies for data collection, through the tools provided during the Observer Workshop, and with follow up by the SFPA JSCs.
- Further steps for coordination among the DCF and SFPA observer programmes were identified during the Workshop. In the short term, mutual exchange of information between EU and CS focal points on deployment of observers (i.e. dates and vessels). In the medium term, possibility to alternate observer deployments between the two programmes may be considered. The possibility of developing annual Workshops should also be contemplated.
- As recommended by RCG-LDF (2018), the contribution of demersal fisheries in the area from MS other than Spain should be closely followed to determine if other MS fleets should be sampled within the DCF. If so, coordinated observers' programmes similar to the one established for small pelagic fisheries, are recommended.

9.3 Call for tenders for studies in support of the CFP

No specific call for tender was addressed during the RCG (see section 7.2).

9.4 Timing and venue of the RCG LDF meeting in 2021

It is anticipated that, in order to ease the coordination workload prior to setting the new multi-annual work plans and revision of the EU-MAP, all RCGs meetings will take place in June/early July.

The 2021 RCG LDF is expected to be held in June/July as well. Most likely, the dates will be **5th -7th of July**. The meeting will be chaired by Irek Wójcik (Poland).

Regarding the venue of the next RCG LDF meeting, Portugal invites the group to visit Funchal in the Madeira for its next meeting, subject to formal confirmation. As a back-up options Poland and Lithuania flagged the offer to host the RCG LDF meeting in 2021.

The following table provides an overview of the venues and chairmanship of this RCG.

Year	Venue	Chair
2020	Online WebEx meeting	Irek Wójcik (Poland)
2019	Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain	Sieto Verver (The Netherlands)
2018	Riga, Latvia	Sieto Verver (The Netherlands)
2017	Copenhagen, Denmark Hamburg, Germany	Sieto Verver (The Netherlands)
2016	Vilnius, Lithuania	Sieto Verver (The Netherlands)
2015	Hamburg, Germany Cádiz, Spain	Irek Wójcik (Poland)
2014	IJmuiden, The Netherlands	Irek Wójcik (Poland)
2013	Constanza, Romania	Irek Wójcik (Poland)
2012	Madrid, Spain	Irek Wójcik (Poland)
2011	Ljubljana, Slovenia	Maria Teresa Garcia (Spain) and Dirk-Jan van der Stelt (The Netherlands)
2010	Madrid, Spain	Maria Teresa Garcia (Spain) and Jaime Mejuto (Spain)

9.5 Draft ToR 2021

Pending future developments and decisions within the DCF realm and pending the outcomes of LM 2020, the following ToRs are proposed for RCG LDF 2021.

Draft Terms of Reference – RCG LDF 2020

1. Review progress since 2020 following up the 17th Liaison Meeting or other expert groups report

2. Review feedback from end users

- Consider possible updates under the SPRFMO requirements EU observers (both observer requirements as well as data collection requirements)
- Discuss and conclude upon requirements/recommendations from the CECAF assessment WGs and/or JSC of the SFPA
- Other input received

3. Analyse data from 2020 RCG LDF data call

- Data compilation, providing overviews of fisheries
- Identify sampling obligations facilitating future multi-annual work plan, including emerging fisheries

4. Regional data collection

- State of play pelagic sampling in CECAF and SPRFMO area
- Discuss data collection and dissemination in relation to SPRFMO and to the CECAF assessment WGs and/or JSC of the SFPA

5. AOB

- Discuss relevant upcoming call for tenders, studies
- Review RoP and propose possible adaptations
- Place and date of the next RCG LDF
- Preparation for the NC s decision meeting

10. Recommendations

RCG LDF 2020 proposed 2 recommendations to be put forward to the NC decision making meeting in September 2020.

From section 3.5:

Recommendation 2020-1 : Updating national data to the RDB	
RCG-LDF 2020 Recommendation	RCG LDF recommends that MS continue to update historical data as well as most recent data prior to the 2021 RCG LDF data call.
Follow-up actions needed	MS to update their data and promote set up of routine procedures to provide data to the RDB.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs of all RCG LDF MS.
Time frame (Deadline)	Prior to the RCG LDF 2021 data call.

From section 6.3:

Recommendation 2020-2 : Data collection in SPRFMO region beyond 2024	
RCG-LDF 2020 Recommendation	RCG LDF to set-up intersessional subgroup to prepare for data collection in the SPRFMO area beyond 2024. This subgroup shall work on a solid solution to cater for data collection under the given SPRFMO observer requirements as well as taking DCF requirements into account. The subgroup shall explore different scenarios such as accreditation for EU observers, self-sampling, remote monitoring etc. First results are presented at the 2021 RCG LDF.
Follow-up actions needed	Setup of the subgroup, organize (virtual) meeting.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	Chair of RCG LDF and MS involved in the SPRFMO pelagic fisheries.
Time frame (Deadline)	Prior to the RCG LDF 2021 meeting.

11. Glossary

CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic
COVID-19	Pandemia caused by SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus
CFP	Common Fishery Policy (EU)
CS	Coastal States (of the SFPA)
DCF	Data Collection Framework (follow up of DCR)
DG MARE	Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
EC (or COM)	European Commission
EU	European Union
EU-MAP	Multi Annual Programme for Data Collection
EWG	STECF Expert Working Group
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPA	Fisheries Partnership Agreement
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IEO	Instituto Español de Oceanografía
IMROP	Mauritanian Institute for of Oceanographic Research and Fisheries
JSC	Joint Scientific Committees (of the SFPA)
LDF	Long Distance Fishery
LM	Liaison Meeting
MS	Member State(s) (of the EU)
NANSEA	North Atlantic, North Sea and Eastern Arctic (RCG)
NC	National Correspondent (DCF)
NMFRI	National Marine Fisheries Research Institute (Poland)
OP	"Conservation and Management Measure for the SPRFMO Observer Programme"
RCG	Regional Coordination Group
RCM	Regional Coordination Meeting
RDB	Regional Data Base (of the RCM)
RDBES	Regional Data Base Estimation
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
SCRDB	Steering Committee for the Regional Data Base
SFPA	Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement
SSC	CECAF Scientific Subcommittee
SPRMFO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization
STECF	Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries
WG	Working Group
WGRDBESGOV	Working Group on Regional Data Base Estimation Governance

12. Annexes

12.1 Annex 1 – Agenda

Regional Co-ordination Group for the Long Distance Fisheries (RCG LDF 2020)

Online meeting on the Cisco WebEx communication platform
13-15 July 2020

Agenda

Monday:

9:40 seat-in, connect and set up
10:00 - 17:00 meeting time

Tuesday

9:00 - 17:00 meeting time

Wednesday

9:00 - 13:00 - meeting time
(end time pending the progress made)

General

Coffee-break 10:30 & 15:30
Lunch 13:00 – 14:00

Work Plan

Monday, 13th July 2020

9:40 – 10:00 : Seat-in, set up connections etc.

10:00 – 17:00 : Plenary session

- Welcome, introduction, organization (task sharing) & “house” rules
- Discuss ToRs, adopt agenda, appoint rapporteurs

- **ToR 1 Review progress since 2019 following up the 16th Liaison Meeting report**
 - *Follow-up of recommendations / output RCM LDF 2019*
 - *Review of the outputs of the 16th Liaison Meeting*
 - *Participation to the SCRDB (update)*

- ➔ **ToR 2: Review feedback and recommendations from data end users**
 - *Discuss feedback CECAF groups*
 - *Discuss feedback SPRFMO*
 - *State of play of pelagic sampling in CECAF and SPRFMO area in 2019*

- ➔ **ToR 5 Current and future data collection set up in CECAF/SPFRMO**
 - *CECAF future data needs*
 - *Future data collection set up in CECAF/SPFRMO*

→ ToR 4: Regional data collection, analysis and storage

- *Consider future mechanisms to continue strengthening regional cooperation, including end-user interaction (e.g. based on Workpackages as described in MARE 2016/22)*
- *Discuss data collection and dissemination in relation to scientific committees*
- *overview on commercial sampling during coronavirus pandemic in 2020*
- *Revision of EU MAP and outstanding questions to LDF*

14:30 – 17:00 : “subgroup” session

Tuesday, 14th July 2020

9.00 – 17.00 : “subgroup” session

→ ToR 3 Analyse data from 2020 RCG LDF data call

- Data compilation
- providing overviews of fisheries
- Consider EU wide responses
- Consider future inclusion of emerging fisheries
- Identify sampling obligations facilitating future multi-annual work plan
- Share and comment on experience RDB upload

→ ToR 6 AOB

- Review RoP and propose possible adaptations

Wednesday, 15th July 2020

9:00 – 13:00 : Plenary session

→ Discuss outcomes and conclusions ToR 3,4,5,6

→ Report assemblage and reading

→ ToR 6 AOB:

- Discuss relevant upcoming call for tenders, studies
- place and date of the next RCG LDF

→ Adoption of the draft report

Closure of the meeting

12.2 Annex 2 – Landings by species by area reported by MS

Landings by species (tons) in West Africa (CECAF area). Data from 2019.

Species	DEU	ESP	ITA	LTU	LVA	NLD
Actinopterygii					3932	
Alectis alexandrina		16				
Allothunnus fallai (SLT)		<1				
Argyrosomus regius (MGR)		14				
Ariidae (CAX)		3				
Aristaeomorpha foliacea (ARS)		<1	25			
Aristeus (AXR)		2				
Aristeus antennatus (ARA)		<1	<1			
Aristeus varidens (ARV)		471				
Arnoglossus (RGX)		512				
Arnoglossus laterna (MSF)			80			
Auxis		<1				
Auxis rochei (BLT)				76		
Auxis thazard (FRI)						13
Balistes capriscus		10				
Balistidae (TRI)		28				
Beryx (ALF)				52		
Beryx decadactylus (BXD)		25				
Beryx splendens (BYS)		57				
Bothidae (LEF)		19				
Bothus podas (OUB)		<1				
Brachydeuterus auritus (GRB)		8				
Brama brama (POA)		2937		2344	2	12
Brotula barbata (BRD)		198	<1			
Callinectes sapidus (CRB)		<1				
Campogramma glaycos (VAD)				13		
Caranx crysos (RUB)		<1				
Caranx hippos (CVJ)		1				
Carlarius heudelotii		35				
Centrolophidae (CEN)		37				
Chaceon maritae (CGE)		76				
Chelidonichthys lucerna (GUU)		<1				
Citharus linguatula (CIL)			<1			
Clupeidae (CLP)		8				
Conger conger (COE)		8				
Crustacea (CRU)		<1				
Cynoglossus (YOX)		39				
Cynoglossus senegalensis (YOE)		125				
Deania profundorum (SDU)		47				
Decapodiformes		1				
Dentex (DEX)		206				8

Dentex angolensis (DEA)		12				
Dentex canariensis (DEN)		<1				
Dentex dentex (DEC)		<1	<1	485		
Dentex gibbosus (DEP)		6				
Dentex macrophthalmus (DEL)		117			6	
Dentex maroccanus (DEM)		12				
Dicologlossa cuneata (CET)		4	15			
Dicologlossa hexophthalma (DHZ)		19				
Diplodus (SRG)	33	10				
Diplodus sargus (SWA)		<1		1		33
Diplodus vulgaris (CTB)		<1				
Drepane africana (SIC)		4				
Elasmobranchii (DWS)		<1				
Eledone (OCM)		127				
Eledone moschata (EDT)		1				
Engraulis encrasicolus (ANE)		16				
Epinephelus (GPX)		<1				
Epinephelus aeneus (GPW)		8	30			
Epinephelus marginatus (GPD)		1	4			
Erythrocles monodi (EYO)		25				
Ethmalosa fimbriata (BOA)		<1				
Eucinostomus melanopterus (MFF)		67				
Gadiformes (GAD)		<1				
Galeoides decadactylus (GAL)		262				
Galeorhinus galeus (GAG)		43				
Galeus melastomus (SHO)		<1				
Gastropoda (GAS)		1				
Gephyroberyx darwinii (GXW)		15				
Haemulidae (GRX)		<1				
Helicolenus dactylopterus (BRF)		49				
Hippoglossus hippoglossus (HAL)			<1			
Homarus gammarus (LBE)		<1				
Hoplostethus atlanticus (ORY)		26				
Ilisha africana (ILI)		31				
Illex (ILL)		<1				
Katsuwonus pelamis (SKJ)		<1				
Labridae (WRA)		<1				
Lepidopus caudatus (SFS)		<1				
Lepidorhombus spp. (LEZ)		<1				
Lichia amia (LEE)		55		28		3
Liza aurata (MGA)		6				
Loligo vulgaris (SQR)		22				
Lophiidae (ANF)		631				
Lophius budegassa (ANK)		1				
Lophius spp (MNZ)		235				
Lophius vaillanti (MVA)		119				

Lophius piscatorius (MON)		91		
Lutjanus (SNA)	<1			
Merluccius (HKX)	6232			
Merluccius merluccius (HKE)	<1	388		
Merluccius polli (HKB)	5174			
Merluccius senegalensis (HKM)	2706			
Mollusca (MOL)	<1			
Mugil cephalus (MUF)	15	24		19
Mugilidae (MUL)		24		
Mullus (MUX)	7	253		
Mullus barbatus (MUT)	395			
Mullus surmuletus (MUR)	51	4		
Muraena helena (MMH)	1			
Muraenidae (MUI)	<1			
Mustelus (SDV)	6			
Mustelus mustelus (SMD)	<1			
Mytilidae (MSX)	<1			
Oblada melanura (SBS)	<1			
Octopus vulgaris (OCC)	627	201		
Ommastrephidae (OMZ)	2			
Pagellus (PAX)	76			
Pagellus acarne (SBA)	10	7		2
Pagellus bellottii (PAR)	563			
Pagellus bogaraveo (SBR)	3			
Pagellus erythrinus (PAC)	73	42		
Pagrus auriga (REA)	<1			
Pagrus pagrus (RPG)	98			
Palinurus elephas (SLO)	<1			
Pandalidae (PDZ)	98			
Panulirus regius (LOY)	<1			
Parapenaeus longirostris (DPS)	2031			
Pasiphaeidae	<1			
Pegusa lascaris	3			
Penaeidae (PEZ)	<1			
Penaeus (PEN)	78			
Penaeus kerathurus (TGS)	2	56		
Penaeus notialis (SOP)	<1			
Perciformes (PPX)	7			
Phycis (FOX)	3			
Phycis blennoides (GFB)		149		
Phycis phycis (FOR)	218			
Pisces	443			
Plectorhynchus mediterraneus (GBR)	26	<1		6
Plesionika edwardsii (LKW)		8		
Plesiopenaeus edwardsianus (SSH)	104			
Pleuronectiformes (FLX)	<1			

Polyprion americanus (WRF)		3			
Pomadasys incisus (BGR)		13		2	5
Pomadasys jubelini (BUR)		20			
Pomadasys perotaei (PKE)		<1			
Pomatomus saltatrix (BLU)		<1		1	
Pontinus kuhlii (POI)		15	<1		
Psettodes bennettii (PSB)		11			
Pseudotolithus senegalensis (PSS)		<1			
Pseudupeneus prayensis (GOA)		9			
Rachycentron canadum (CBA)		<1			
Raja miraletus (JAI)		65			
Rajidae (RAJ)		73			
Sarda sarda (BON)	2	<1		385	44
Sardina pilchardus (PIL)	12537	92		12168	3255
Sardinella (SIX)					686
Sardinella aurita (SAA)	25	1		407	18
Sardinella maderensis (SAE)				82	430
Schedophilus ovalis (HDV)		28			
Scomber (MAZ)		29			
Scomber colias (VMA)	3705			30562	
Scomber japonicus (MAS)				30562	1888
Scomber scombrus (MAC)					15142
Scomberomorus tritor (MAW)		<1			
Scombrinae Rafinesque		<1		351	
Scorpaena (SCS)		70			
Scorpaena porcus (BBS)		<1			
Scorpaena scrofa (RSE)		<1			
Scorpaenidae (SCO)		<1			
Scorpaeniformes		8			
Scyliorhinus canicula (SYC)		<1			
Selar crumenophthalmus (BIS)		3			
Selene dorsalis (LUK)		2			
Sepia officinalis (CTC)		343	201		
Sepia orbignyana (IAR)		6			
Sepiidae (CTL)		9			
Sepiola rondeleti (CTR)			17		
Sepiola rondeletii		46			
Solea (SOO)		<1			
Solea lascaris (SOS)			10		
Solea senegalensis (OAL)		<1			
Solea solea (SOL)		<1	2		
Soleidae (SOX)		<1			
Solenocera membranacea (SKM)			<1		
Sparidae (SBX)		2			
Sparus aurata (SBG)		<1			
Sphyraena (BAR)		<1			

Sphyraena sphyraena (YRS)		5				
Sphyraenidae (BAZ)		<1				
Spicara (PIC)		<1				
Spicara alta (QZU)		2				
Spondyliosoma cantharus (BRB)	14	6				10
Squaliformes (SHX)		63				
Squalus acanthias (DGS)		<1				
Stromateus fiatola (BLB)		<1		8		
Symphurus ligulatus (YFU)			4			
Synaptura cadenati (YNY)		<1				
Thunnus thynnus (BFT)		<1				
Todarodes sagittatus (SQE)		258	2			
Trachinotus (POX)		<1				
Trachinotus ovatus (POP)		<1		1		
Trachurus spp. (CJM)						498
Trachurus spp. (HOM)	44	1791		24231	16000	
Trachurus spp. (JAX)		420				
Trachyscorpia cristulata (TJX)		48				
Trachyscorpia cristulata echinata		<1				
Trichiuridae (CUT)				126		
Trichiurus lepturus (LHT)		59		2	<1	<1
Triglidae (GUX)		<1				
Umbrina canariensis (UCA)		9				
Xyrichtys novacula (XYN)			3			
Zenopsis conchifer (JOS)		185				
Zeus faber (JOD)		135	<1	17		

Landings by species (tons) in Canary Islands (CECAF area). Data from 2019.

Species	ESP
Abudefduf luridus (AUU)	< 1
Acanthocybium solandri (WAH)	49
Acantholabrus palloni (AKL)	< 1
Aluterus scriptus (ALN)	< 1
Anthias anthias (AHN)	< 1
Argyrosomus regius (MGR)	< 1
Aristaeomorpha foliacea (ARS)	< 1
Atherina boyeri (ATB)	< 1
Auxis thazard, A. rochei (FRZ)	5
Balistes carolinensis (TRG)	36
Belone belone (GAR)	< 1
Beryx decadactylus (BXD)	7
Beryx splendens (BYS)	72
Bodianus scrofa (IVD)	8
Boops boops (BOG)	3
Brama brama (POA)	< 1
Campogramma glaycos (VAD)	< 1
Cancer bellianus (KCB)	1

Cancer pagurus (CRE)	< 1
Canthidermis sufflamen (CZT)	< 1
Carcharias taurus (CCT)	< 1
Centrolabrus trutta (JCN)	< 1
Centroscyllum spp (YCX)	< 1
Chaceon affinis (KEF)	< 1
Chelidonichthys lastoviza (CTZ)	< 1
Chelidonichthys lucerna (GUU)	< 1
Chelon labrosus (MLR)	1
Chromis limbata (HZL)	2
Conger conger (COE)	44
Coryphaena equiselis (CFW)	1
Coryphaena hippurus (DOL)	1
Dalatias licha (SCK)	< 1
Deania hystricosa (SDH)	< 1
Decapterus macarellus (MSD)	< 1
Dentex canariensis (DEN)	< 1
Dentex dentex (DEC)	1
Dentex gibbosus (DEP)	110
Dentex macrophthalmus (DEL)	16
Dentex maroccanus (DEM)	< 1
Dentex spp. (DEX)	< 1
Dicentrarchus labrax (BSS)	1
Dicentrarchus punctatus (SPU)	< 1
Diplodus annularis (ANN)	< 1
Diplodus cervinus (SBZ)	7
Diplodus puntazzo (SHR)	4
Diplodus sargus (SWA)	21
Diplodus spp. (SRG)	< 1
Diplodus vulgaris (CTB)	13
Enchelycore anatina (AWM)	5
Engraulis encrasicolus (ANE)	13
Epigonus telescopus (EPI)	2
Epinephelus aeneus (GPW)	< 1
Epinephelus caninus (EFJ)	< 1
Epinephelus marginatus (GPD)	27
Epinephelus spp. (GPX)	< 1
Galeorhinus galeus (GAG)	1
Gymnothorax maderensis (AGD)	2
Gymnothorax polygonius (AGI)	12
Gymnothorax unicolor (AGK)	7
Helicolenus dactylopterus (BRF)	20
Heterocarpus ensifer (HKF)	< 1
Heterocarpus grimaldii (HVQ)	< 1
Heteropriacanthus cruentatus (HTU)	3
Illex coindetii (SQM)	< 1

Illex illecebrosus (SQI)	< 1
Katsuwonus pelamis (SKJ)	428
Kyphosus sectatrix (KYS)	1
Lepidocybium flavobrunneum (LEC)	1
Lepidopus caudatus (SFS)	1
Lithognathus mormyrus (SSB)	6
Liza aurata (MGA)	< 1
Loligo forbesi (SQF)	< 1
Loligo vulgaris (SQR)	2
Lophius piscatorius (MON)	< 1
Maja spp (JCX)	< 1
Maja squinado (SCR)	< 1
Merluccius merluccius (HKE)	54
Merluccius spp (HKX)	< 1
Microchirus azevia (MIA)	< 1
Mora moro (RIB)	1
Mugil cephalus (MUF)	< 1
Mullus barbatus (MUT)	< 1
Mullus spp. (MUX)	< 1
Mullus surmuletus (MUR)	21
Muraena augusti (MWK)	19
Muraena helena (MMH)	22
Muraenidae (MUI)	< 1
Mustelus mustelus (SMD)	1
Mustelus spp. (SDV)	< 1
Mycteroperca fusca (MKF)	12
Oblada melanura (SBS)	6
Octopus vulgaris (OCC)	< 1
Octopus vulgaris (OCC)	21
Ommastrephes spp (OMM)	< 1
Ommastrephidae (OMZ)	< 1
Pagellus acarne (SBA)	9
Pagellus bellottii (PAR)	< 1
Pagellus bogaraveo (SBR)	1
Pagellus erythrinus (PAC)	29
Pagellus spp. (PAX)	1
Pagrus auriga (REA)	20
Pagrus pagrus (RPG)	90
Pagrus spp. (SBP)	< 1
Paracentrotus lividus (URM)	< 1
Parapandalus narval (PVJ)	23
Parapristipoma octolineatum (GRA)	12
Paromola cuvieri (OLV)	< 1
Patella tenuis (WPT)	< 1
Patella ulyssiponensis (LQY)	1
Phycis phycis (FOR)	19

Plagusia depressa (UIS)	< 1
Plectorhinchus mediterraneus (GBR)	< 1
Plesionika edwardsii (LKW)	18
Plesiopenaeus edwardsianus (SSH)	2
Polymixia nobilis (PXV)	3
Polyprion americanus (WRF)	1
Pomadasys incisus (BGR)	2
Pomatomus saltatrix (BLU)	3
Pontinus kuhlii (POI)	2
Promethichthys prometheus (PRP)	1
Pseudocaranx dentex (TRZ)	59
Ruvettus pretiosus (OIL)	5
Sarda sarda (BON)	22
Sardina pilchardus (PIL)	87
Sardinella aurita (SAA)	85
Sardinella maderensis (SAE)	28
Sarpa salpa (SLM)	28
Schedophilus ovalis (HDV)	1
Scomber colias (VMA)	1151
Scorpaena notata (SNQ)	< 1
Scorpaena porcus (BBS)	1
Scorpaena scrofa (RSE)	4
Scorpaena spp. (SCS)	< 1
Sepia bertheloti (EJB)	< 1
Sepia officinalis (CTC)	1
Sepia spp. (IAX)	< 1
Seriola carpenteri (RLR)	3
Seriola dumerili (AMB)	13
Seriola fasciata (RLF)	3
Seriola rivoliana (YTL)	7
Seriola spp. (AMX)	< 1
Serranus atricauda (WSA)	12
Serranus cabrilla (CBR)	21
Serranus scriba (SRK)	2
Serranus spp. (BAS)	< 1
Solea lascaris (SOS)	< 1
Solea solea (SOL)	< 1
Sparisoma cretense (PRR)	242
Sparus aurata (SBG)	< 1
Sphyaena viridensis (BVV)	22
Spondyliosoma cantharus (BRB)	28
Stephanolepis hispidus (FIK)	20
Sthenoteuthis pteropus (OFE)	< 1
Stromateus fiatola (BLB)	1
Synaphobranchus kaupii (SSK)	< 1
Synodus synodus (DYZ)	< 1

Taractichthys longipinnis (TAL)	< 1
Thunnus alalunga (ALB)	48
Thunnus albacares (YFT)	13
Thunnus obesus (BET)	67
Thunnus thynnus (BFT)	73
Trachinotus ovatus (POP)	7
Trachinus draco (WEG)	< 1
Trachinus radiatus (TZR)	< 1
Trachurus picturatus (JAA)	491
Trachurus trachurus (HOM)	8
Umbrina canariensis (UCA)	3
Umbrina ronchus (UMO)	1
Zenopsis conchifer (JOS)	1
Zeus faber (JOD)	1

Landings by species (tons) in Madeira (CECAF area). Data from 2019.

Species	PRT
Abudefduf luridus (AUU)	<1
Acanthocybium solandri (WAG)	<1
Acantholabrus palloni (AKL)	<1
Aphanopus spp (BOX)	2263
Apogon imberbis (OGT)	<1
Auxis thazard (FRI)	3
Balistes carolinensis (TRG)	2
Beryx decadactylus (BXD)	<1
Beryx splendens (BYS)	<1
Bodianus spp (BDY)	<1
Boops boops (BOG)	1
Brama brama (POA)	1
Capros aper (BOC)	<1
Centrophorus granulatus (GUP)	<1
Centrophorus squamosus (GUQ)	11
Centroscymnus spp (CZI)	<1
Chromis limbata (HZL)	2
Conger conger (COE)	2
Coryphaena hippurus (DOL)	1
Deania spp (DNA)	<1
Dentex gibbosus (DEP)	45
Diplodus cervinus (SBZ)	<1
Diplodus sargus (SWA)	<1
Diplodus vulgaris (CTB)	<1
Epigonus telescopus (EPI)	<1
Epinephelus marginatus (GPD)	<1

Galeorhinus galeus (GAG)	3
Gymnothorax spp (AXZ)	<1
Gymnothorax unicolor (AGK)	<1
Helicolenus dactylopterus (BRF)	<1
Isurus oxyrinchus (SMA)	<1
Katsuwonus pelamis (SKJ)	6
Kyphosus sectatrix (KYS)	<1
Lepidocybium flavobrunneum (LEC)	5
Loligo vulgaris (SQR)	1
Merluccius merluccius (HKE)	<1
Mora moro (RIB)	<1
Mugil cephalus (MUF)	<1
Mullus surmuletus (MUR)	<1
Muraena helena (MMH)	1
Muraena spp (MDZ)	<1
Mustelus mustelus (SMD)	<1
Mycteroperca fusca (MKF)	<1
Nesiarchus nasutus (NEN)	4
Oblada melanura (SBS)	<1
Octopus vulgaris (OCC)	<1
Ommastrephidae (OMZ)	1
Pagellus acarne (SBA)	<1
Pagellus bogaraveo (SBR)	1
Pagellus erythrinus (PAC)	<1
Pagrus pagrus (RPG)	11
Palinurus elefans (SLO)	<1
Patella spp (LPZ)	74
Phorcus atratus (OAW)	<1
Phycis phycis (FOR)	7
Polymixia nobilis (PXV)	<1
Polyprion americanus (WRF)	1
Pomadasys incisus (BGR)	<1
Pomatomus saltatrix (BLU)	<1
Pontinus kuhlii (POI)	2
Promethichthys prometheus (PRP)	1
Pseudocaranx dentex (TRZ)	<1
Raja spp (SKA)	<1
Ruvettus pretiosus (OIL)	1
Sarda sarda (BON)	<1
Sardina pilchardus (PIL)	1
Sardinella maderensis (SAE)	<1

Sarpa salpa (SLM)	<1
Schedophilus ovalis (HDV)	<1
Scomber japonicus (MAS)	221
Scorpaena scrofa (RSE)	1
Scyllarides latus (YLL)	<1
Seriola spp (AMX)	4
Serranus atricauda (WSA)	5
Sparisoma cretense (PRR)	1
Sphyræna viridensis (BVV)	1
Spondyliosoma cantharus (BRB)	<1
Synodus saurus (SDR)	<1
Synodus synodus (DYZ)	<1
Taractichthys longipinnis (TAL)	1
Thunnus albacares (YFT)	<1
Thunnus obesus (BET)	2
Todarodes sagittatus (SQE)	1
Trachinotus ovatus (POP)	1
Trachurus picturatus (JAA)	219
Trigla spp (GUY)	<1
Xiphias gladius (SWO)	4
Zeus faber (JOD)	<1

Landings by species (tons) in SPRFMO area. Data from 2019.

Species	POL
Brama japonica (BPQ)	146
Cubiceps caeruleus (UBA)	47
Katsuwonus pelamis (SKJ)	6
Scomber japonicus (MAS)	131
Trachurus spp. (CJM)	11963

Landings by species (tons) in 41 (Atlantic, Southwest) area. Data from 2019.

Species	GBR
Genypterus blacodes (CUS)	2
Illex argentinus (SQA)	2
Loligo (SQC)	2952
Macruronus magellanicus (GRM)	<1
Merluccius hubbsi (HKP)	290
Patagonotothen brevicauda (NOT)	<1
Raja montagui (RJM)	<1
Salilota australis (SAO)	10

Landings by species (tons) in 47 (Atlantic, Southeast) area. Data from 2019.

Species	ESP
Plesiopenaeus edwardsianus (SSH)	42
Aristeus varidens (ARV)	1366

Chaceon maritae (CGE)	471
Parapenaeus longirostris (DPS)	36

12.3 Annex 3 - Data collection of small pelagics in SPRFMO area from 2021 onwards

2nd AMENDMENT TO: Multi-lateral agreement for 2017 and 2018 between Germany, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in SPRFMO waters (extension 2021-2023)

The Multi-lateral agreement between Germany, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in SPRFMO waters, as signed by all countries named in December 2016 and March 2017, amended in 2018, is further amended as follows from 1st January 2021 onwards: This agreement is in accordance with EC COMMISSION DELEGATED DECISION (EU) 2019/910 of 13 March 2019 *establishing the multiannual Union programme for the collection and management of biological, environmental, technical and socioeconomic data in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors* and Regulation (EU) 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*.

Term:

The amended multi-lateral agreement is extended beyond its end date of 31 December 2020. The new end-date is 31 December 2023.

Costs:

The cost share of the total costs and maximum costs remain unchanged.

Governance:

This agreement is covered under the remit of the RCG LDF. Substantial changes to requirements, staff costs and/or substantial legal and/or financial amendments automatically lead to a review of this agreement.

Signatures

Member State	Name	Function	Signature
Germany	Christoph Stransky	National Correspondent	Date: _____
Lithuania	Vilda Griūnienė	Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania Fisheries unit Chief specialist	Date: _____
The Netherlands	Sieto Verver	Head Centre for Fisheries Research	Date: _____
Poland	Ireneusz Wójcik	Head of Department (NMFRI), DCF Coordinator	Date: _____

12.4 Annex 4 - Data collection of small pelagics in CECAF area from 2021 onwards

AMENDMENT TO: Multi-lateral agreement between Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in CECAF waters 2018-2020 (extension 2021-2023)

September 2020

This Amendment replaces the original end-date of the multi-lateral agreement and extends the time-frame for this multi-lateral agreement. The extension of the time-frame commences 1st of January 2021.

The Multi-lateral agreement between Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in CECAF waters, as signed by all countries named in 2017 for 2018-2020 is amended as follows from 1st January 2021 onwards:

Basis:

The basis for the agreement is updated to the latest regulations. Following EU regulation 1004/2017 and EU Delegated Decision 2019/910: Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland hold the obligation to collect representative biological data from the fisheries for small pelagics by freezer trawlers in the CECAF area.

Term:

The multi-lateral agreement is extended beyond its initial end date of 31 December 2020. The new end date is 31 December 2023.

Costs:

The cost share of the total costs and maximum costs remain unchanged.

Governance:

This agreement is covered under the remit of the RCG LDF. Substantial changes to requirements, staff costs and/or substantial legal and/or financial amendments automatically lead to a review of this agreement.

Signatures for agreement

Member State	Name	Function	Date and signature
Germany	Christoph Stransky	National Correspondent	Date: _____
Latvia	Aivars Bērziņš	Director, Institute of Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment BIOR	Date: _____
Lithuania	Vilda Griūnienė	Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania Fisheries unit Chief specialist	Date: _____
Poland	Ireneusz Wójcik	Head of Department (NMFRI), DCF Coordinator	Date: _____
The Netherlands	Sieto Verver	Head Centre for Fisheries Research	Date: _____