

## **RCG ECON Rules of Procedure**

### **1. Scope**

1.1 These Rules of Procedure are valid for the Regional Coordination Group for Economics Issues (RCG ECON) under Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a Union framework for the collection, management and use of data in fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the Common Fisheries Policy and repealing Council regulation (EC) No 199/2008 (recast). The RCG ECON aims at coordinating economic and social data activities of Member States (MS) in all regions referred to in Article 3 of the above-mentioned Regulation.

1.2 These Rules of Procedure are established based on the Article 9(5) of the above-mentioned Regulation.

1.3 The RCG ECON and these Rules of Procedure are established by the following EU Member States coordinating their economic and social data collection activities: Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Cyprus; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Malta; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; The Netherlands; Austria\*; Czech Republic\*; Hungary\* and Slovakia\*<sup>(1)</sup>. The landlocked countries may choose to participate in the RCG ECON work for issues relevant to their data collection activities.

### **2. Working language**

2.1 The working language of the RCG is English.

### **3. Role of the chairperson**

3.1 The governance of the RCG is the responsibility of a chairing team which may consist of one chairperson or two co-chairing persons, the venue organiser (when a meeting takes place outside of chairing persons MS), and the moderators selected by chairperson(s).

### **4. Election of the RCG chairperson(s)**

4.1 The chairperson(s) may be elected or agreed upon without a vote by the RCG. A national correspondent, an expert from a Member State or a representative from the European Commission may act as a chairperson of the RCG. Unless agreed without a vote by the RCG, the election of a nominated chairperson(s) shall take place by voting in a form suggested by the resigning chairperson after consulting the national correspondents and the European Commission present at the RCG meeting. The vote is decided by a simple majority of the present members.

---

<sup>1</sup> \* Landlocked countries (LLC).

4.2 One term for a chairperson covers the period of two years. A chairperson may serve two consecutive terms without limiting the total number of terms for the same person to act as a chairperson.

4.3 The RCG may decide to have co-chairperson(s). The same procedures and conditions as to the chairperson(s) elections apply.

## **5. The chairperson(s) responsibilities and agenda**

5.1 The chairperson(s), in cooperation with moderators, shall prepare Terms of Reference (ToR), agenda for the RCG annual meeting, and ToR and agenda for the workshop(s), in cooperation with their organisers.

5.2 The chairperson(s) convene the meeting, chair plenary sessions, coordinate drafting and preparing the RCG report and present the outcome at the Liaison Meeting.

5.3 To provide continuity of consultation and efficient decision-making between the annual meetings, the chairperson(s) may initiate a written procedure. A detailed mandate for the chairperson(s) to initiate a written procedure may be agreed and given by the RCG.

5.4 The chairperson(s) shall send documents with at least 15 calendar days deadline for delivering comments. The chairperson shall notify the results of the written procedure to the RCG within two weeks after the written procedure has ended.

## **6. RCG meetings**

6.1 To perform its duties, the RCG shall hold at least one annual meeting unless agreed otherwise by the RCG. An annual meeting shall consist of plenary sessions and may include work in subgroups or specific workshops that tackle issues raised at the annual meeting. Decisions may be taken in a dedicated (decision making) meeting referred to in point 11.4.

6.2 The chairing and organising team shall provide details of accommodation, travel and other relevant organisational information no later than one month before the meeting/workshop.

6.3 To carry out its duties, the RCG may agree to establish permanent or temporary subgroup(s). The RCG may provide terms of reference (ToR) for subgroups and appoint their moderator(s), rapporteur(s), or any other role(s) or working practices. If an RCG subgroup needs more extensive ToR for their tasks and need extra time to achieve results, workshop meetings may be planned.

6.4 Terms of reference (ToR) for workshops shall be agreed at the annual meeting or in a written procedure. The duration, form, the meeting venue, ToR and other relevant elements for workshops shall be established and organised by appointed workshop chairperson(s) with the assistance of RCG chairing team.

6.5 The chair(s) of a subgroup workshop are responsible for managing the workflow of the meeting, drafting and preparing the workshop report and presenting it to the RCG meeting. The workshop

report shall be prepared and sent to the RCG chairperson(s) and interested parties by the workshop chairperson no later than one month after the workshop meeting.

## **7. Agenda and submission of meeting documents**

7.1 The chairperson(s) shall prepare the agenda and the invitation to the annual meeting and send it to the interested parties at least one month before the meeting.

7.2 On the first day of the RCG meeting, a draft agenda shall be presented to the group for adoption. The draft agenda shall indicate points where decisions are to be made.

7.3 Other documents and tasks may be requested to be prepared for the meeting and shall be sent at any time depending on the task, but no later than two weeks before the meeting.

7.4 For the annual meeting and workshops, a document repository should be opened no later than two weeks before the meeting.

## **8. The annual meeting attendance**

8.1 The national correspondents and the European Commission shall nominate their participants to the annual meeting and may choose the number of their participants with due regard of the items on the agenda at the relevant meeting. The names of participants shall be communicated to the chairperson(s).

8.2 The landlocked countries may participate at any RCG meeting they see appropriate.

8.3 Observers<sup>2</sup> referred to in Article 9(7) of Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 may be invited to attend the RCG meetings where necessary.

## **9. RCG recommendations**

9.1 One of the aims of the annual meeting is to provide recommendations for further work to be carried out by the Member States or other parties on all relevant issues related to the scope of Regulation 2017/1004. The recommendations should provide, but are not limited to, clear and understandable stand-alone guidance on the recommended work to be carried out, its justification and methodological aspects. The recommendations are addressed to the person(s) or institution(s) responsible for the planning and implementing of data collection activities. The follow-up of recommendations may be reviewed in the annual meeting for recommendations of the previous year.

9.2 Landlocked countries shall participate in the decision making only if a recommendation is relevant for their data collection activities.

---

<sup>2</sup> Representatives of relevant end-users of scientific data, including the appropriate scientific bodies as referred to in Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, regional fisheries management organisations, Advisory Councils and third countries.

## **10. Preparation and endorsement of a draft regional work**

10.1 The RCG may draft a regional work plan in the sense of Article 9 of Regulation 2017/1004, relating to social and economic data collection, subject to a decision by the relevant Member States. The RCG may also decide together with the relevant RCG to draft relevant parts of another RCG regional work plan, and such work shall be carried out in close collaboration with that relevant RCG.

10.2 When the RCG has been mandated to prepare a draft regional work plan, the chairperson of that group or a person mandated by that group shall keep the RCG, and may keep scientific institutions referred to Article 26 in Regulation 1380/2013, informed of the progress of such work at intervals agreed by the RCG. Such procedures may include e.g. requests or any other type of action, including timeframes for such action, to the national correspondents and/or scientific institutions referred above, relevant to the drafting of the draft work plan.

10.3 When the RCG has made a decision to prepare a draft regional work plan, relevant Member States shall send expert(s) with the necessary expertise related to that draft regional work plan to participate in the group's work. National correspondents and the European Commission may participate in the group's work at all stages.

10.4 The time for drafting and approving of the draft regional work plan shall be agreed at the RCG annual meeting or through a written procedure in a timely manner.

10.5 The RCG may mandate the preparation of the draft regional work plan to the relevant subgroup with the above-mentioned responsibilities.

10.6 The RCG or the subgroup shall make every effort to reach consensus on a draft regional work plan in close collaboration with relevant MS.

10.7 Relevant Member States included in the draft regional work plan may take into account in their national work plans the content of the approved draft regional work plan.

10.8 The draft regional work plan shall be approved by consensus by the RCG. If consensus is not reached, additional effort should be made in order to achieve a draft regional work plan that satisfies all MS.

10.9 A decision for approval of the draft regional work plan, before its submission, may be taken by a written procedure, if appropriate. The chairperson(s) of the RCG may initiate such a written procedure.

10.10 The chairperson(s) of the RCG may request, if necessary, observers at the annual meeting to be absent during the discussion intimately linked to the decision on a draft regional work plan.

## **11. Decision-making**

11.1 The RCG may take any decisions within its competence provided by the relevant legislation. Decisions shall be taken by consensus.

11.2 Any decision to be taken concerning all MS participating in the RCG shall be voted by all national correspondents or their representatives. If consensus is not reached, additional effort should be spent by the group in order to achieve consensus.

11.3 A decision concerning part of the MS shall be taken by consensus by the national correspondents or their representative of the relevant MSs. If consensus is not reached, additional effort should be spent by the group in order to achieve consensus.

11.4 Decisions may be taken during the annual meeting or a dedicated decision meeting with due regard to the decision content.

11.5 A national correspondent may mandate another national correspondent or a national expert present at the meeting where the decision is to be taken, to vote on his/her behalf on a decision regarding a draft regional work plan, or another decision. The detailed mandate shall be given by the national correspondent in written and communicated to the chairperson(s) no later than one day before the voting.

11.6 The chairperson(s) or a person indicated by the chairperson(s) shall be responsible for the availability of the documents and information for the decision-making to all relevant national correspondents one month before the meeting.

11.7 A decision may be taken through a written procedure, initiated by the chairperson(s).

11.8 The chairperson(s) of the RCG may request, if necessary, observers at the annual meeting to be absent during the decision making procedure.

## **12. Cooperation with other RCGs, the European Commission and other relevant bodies**

12.1 The chairperson(s) and/or other person(s) mandated by the RCG may participate and represent the RCG in the coordination among other RCGs and the European Commission under Article 9(6) of Regulation 2017/1004.

12.2 Reports, recommendations and other RCG outcomes shall be presented in the annual Liaison Meeting to other RCG chairs and European Commission representatives.

12.3 The chairperson(s) and/or other person(s) mandated by the annual meeting may participate and represent the RCG in other RCG or other relevant meetings related to data collection, use and management of economic and social data of fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing.

12.4 If the terms of reference of the RCG are relevant to other RCGs, invitations may be extended to other RCG chairperson(s) to participate in the annual meeting.

12.5 The European Commission shall ensure attendance of at least one representative at the RCG meetings or if relevant, to workshop meetings.

## **13. Observer participation to the RCG meetings**

13.1 In accordance with the Article 9(7) of the Regulation 2017/1004, the RCG may invite as observers relevant end users of scientific data, including appropriate scientific bodies as referred to in Article 26 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, regional fisheries management organizations, Advisory Councils and third countries, when necessary.

13.2 Observers referred to in article 9 of the Regulation 2017/1004 shall indicate interest to participate in the RCG by sending the following information to the chairperson(s) of the RCG at least one month in advance of the RCG meeting:

- The relevance of their participation from the Common Fisheries Policy and/or fisheries management point of view and;
- Their data interest as accurately as possible relevant to that RCG and;
- The scientific bodies/groups in their relevant institution or country conducting the scientific analyses based on the relevant data and;
- The management body with a legal mandate for fisheries management within the CFP for which the scientific analysis based on the RCG data is conducted for and;
- How, to whom and where the results of the scientific analysis referred above are intended to be made available and;
- Organizational details and details of the representative to be nominated to participate and
- Commitment to comply with the rules and conditions set by the RCG and any other information considered relevant by the potential observer.

13.3 Bodies referred above intending to attend a RCG meeting as an observer, shall make a formal request to the RCG chairperson(s) two months in advance of the meeting with justification. The RCG chairperson(s) will consult members for a final decision.

13.4 The RCG shall decide by consensus and no later than four weeks prior to the annual meeting which observers shall be invited to attend RCG and subgroup meetings.

13.5 The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has a standing invitation to participate in relevant RCG meetings and in RCG subgroup work.

13.6 After a written confirmation from the RCG chairperson(s), observers may attend the meeting. The attendance may be subject to conditions, for example – exclusion from particular discussions and presentations.

13.7 Observers are bound by the conditions set by the RCG. If one or more of these conditions are violated repeatedly or seriously by the observer, their continued attendance may be re-evaluated. The observer/organisation shall be informed of this, including the results of the re-evaluation, by a letter from the RCG chairperson(s) after consulting and with the consent of the national correspondents of the Member States of the RCG.

13.8 Observers may be invited to provide written contributions or presentations.

#### **14. Reporting from RCG meeting**

14.1 The chairperson(s) of the RCG shall be responsible for drawing up a report and meeting minutes. The report may contain, but is not limited to, recommendations, a summary of the RCG intersessional progress and of the RCG discussions, future work directions, and the intended work to be carried out before the next meeting, the list of foreseeable RCG meetings and list of participants, their contact information, role and institution.

14.2 The minutes and report shall be made available to the participants of the meeting and publicly, as appropriate, within two months after the RCG annual meeting has ended.

### **15. Amending rules of procedure**

15.1 These Rules of Procedure may be reviewed and amended at the RCG annual or additional meeting by consensus of all national correspondents or in a written procedure by all national correspondents replying within a set time limit of at least 1 month.

15.2 Any Member State of the RCG can request to put the review and amendment of the Rules of Procedure on the agenda of the RCG meeting.

15.3 A Member State wishing to become a member of the RCG may submit a written request to the RCG chairperson(s). The list of Member States in point 1.3 may be then amended in accordance with point 15.1 above.