



Regional Coordination Group
North Atlantic
North Sea & Eastern Arctic



Regional Coordination Group
Baltic

**Mandate and remits of the
Regional Coordination
Group North Atlantic,
North Sea & Eastern Arctic and
Regional Coordination Group Baltic
(RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic)**

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Mandate and remits of the RCG NA NS&EA and RCG Baltic

*The **objective** of this document is to summarize the mandate and remits of the RCG Baltic and RCG NANSEA) so that ICES Expert Groups may better target their recommendations to the RCGs.*

- **What is an RCG?**

The Regional Coordination Group is the main hub for regional coordination and cooperation within the different sea basins or specific type of fisheries contributing to the EU fisheries Data Collection Framework (DCF)¹. Each RCG consist of experts appointed by EU Member States (MS), MS national correspondents (NC) for data collection, and the Commission. End users of data, other stakeholders and relevant non-EU countries may participate in RCG meetings as observers, where necessary.

- **Which type of issues can RCG Baltic and RCG NANSEA deal with?**

RCGs are ultimately responsible to ensure coordination between MSs on national sampling programmes, and to design and implement regional sampling programmes. RCGs have the authority to engage MS through their NCs, and to recommend/agree changes in the sampling through the national and regional sampling programmes.

Therefore, RCGs are the appropriate fora to discuss and make decisions about the type of data to be collected, sampling effort, temporal and spatial resolution, data gaps, data quality and standardization of codes, with a regional approach. It is also the place to validate and implement new methodologies and best practices guidelines in the relevant national or regional sampling programmes.

RCGs can reach agreements about MS participation on surveys and other sampling programmes such as commercial and recreational fisheries sampling. End users should inform RCG about the need of major changes to data collection in terms of planning, effort and design than can have an impact on the DCF work plans, obligations and budgets of the MS involved

RCGs can also recommend and support the development of regional tools such as the RDBES or SmartDots, as well as other relevant projects related with regional coordination.

RCG can evaluate and implement procedures, methods, quality assurance and quality control for collecting and processing data, to enable further improvement of scientific advice reliability. For that,

¹ [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 (recast)





Mandate and remits of the RCG NA NS&EA and RCG Baltic

RCG liaise with the relevant end user, ICES. RCGs do not develop sampling methods, guidelines and tools. Specific recommendations and requests such as how to sample, how much to sample, how to make imputations and raising, how to estimate catch, calibration of biological variables, etc. should be addressed to relevant ICES EG, such as WGCATCH, WGBIOP, WKBIOPTIM, WGRDBESGOV, WGMRFSS, surveys EG, etc.

- **How do the RCG Baltic and RCG NANSEA work with recommendations?**

The RCG Baltic and RCG NANSEA work in thematic Intersessional Subgroups (ISSGs) throughout the year with assigned tasks. ICES recommendations are forwarded to the respective ISSGs depending on the topic, e.g., surveys, commercial sampling, PETSs sampling, stomach sampling, marine recreational fisheries, small scale fisheries, diadromous fishes, data quality, regional data bases, etc. ISSGs present their main results to be discussed in plenary at the RCG Baltic and NANSEA Technical Meeting.

- **General guidelines for the submission of recommendations to RCGs Baltic and NANSEA:**

1. **Define what and who.** The recommendation should be self-explanatory and very clear about:
 - a. What is the requested action?
 - b. What is the motivation for the requested action?
 - c. Who is responsible for the action? Normally there is only one group responsible for an action.
2. **Provide background information.** In order to understand the issue, it is important that the RCGs know the context and the rationale behind the recommendation. Be concise and clear. For further information, include a link to the relevant report.
3. **One recommendation, one action.** Do not merge different recommendations in one, because it makes it more difficult to manage them and provide an answer.

