

# **Fisheries Data Collection 19th Liaison Meeting**

Meeting between the Chairs of RCGs, key end users, **European Commission DG Mare and JRC** 

# Report

25<sup>th</sup> November 2022









#### **EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES Fisheries Policy Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic and Outermost Regions Unit C.3 — Scientific Advice and Data Collection

#### **REGIONAL COORDINATION GROUPS** For Fisheries Data Collection

Edition support: RCGs' SECRETARIAT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXE	ECUTIVE SUMMARY				
1	INTRODUCTION			6	
	1.1	Backgro	und	6	
	1.2		n of the agenda		
	1.3	-	f Reference		
	1.4	Participa	nts (list in annex)	8	
2	DISC	JSSION V	VITH END-USERS (TOR 1A&1B)	9	
	2.1	Setting t	the scene (ToR 1A)	9	
	2.2	End-use	r needs and interactions (ToR 1B)	9	
		2.2.1	IOTC presentation	9	
		2.2.2	CECAF presentation	9	
		2.2.3	SPRFMO presentation	. 10	
		2.2.4	ICES presentation	. 11	
		2.2.5	GFCM presentation	. 13	
		2.2.6	STECF presentation	. 15	
		2.2.7	ICCAT presentation	. 17	
3	DATA	MANAGE	MENT (TOR 2A&2B)	. 18	
	3.1		ts in progress achieved in 2021 - 2022 in the Regional Databases for 2021 and problems identified (end users) RCG data calls (ToR 2A)		
	3.2		ts in actions related to the future developments for Regional Databases		
		-	airs and/ regional grants (ToR 2B)		
		3.2.1	RDBFIS grant		
4	RCG A	ACTIVITIE	ES (TOR 3)	. 21	
	4.1	Highligh	ts in RCG activities relevant to end users	. 21	
		4.1.1	RCG Long Distance fisheries	. 21	
		4.1.2	RCG Large pelagics	. 22	
		4.1.3	RCG NANSEA/BAL		
		4.1.4	RCG Med&BS		
		4.1.5	RCG ECON		
		4.1.6	ISSG Diadromous species		
	4.2	Meeting	22 RCGs - specific recommendations to be discussed at the Liaison and proposal for future intersessional work. Follow-up of Decision	۱	
		-	meeting and streamlining work between RCGs (ToR 3A)		
		4.2.1	RCG Large pelagics		
		4.2.2	RCG Long Distance fisheries		
		4.2.3	RCG Med&BS		
		4.2.4 4.2.5	RCG NANSEA/BAL		
	4.3		RCG ECONa calls – overview of how MS responded and discussion on future use		
	ч.5		her exploration by the RCGs (ToR 3B)		
		4.3.1	RCG Large pelagics	. 30	
		4.3.2	RCG Long Distance fisheries		
		4.3.3	RCG Med&BS		
		4.3.4	RCG NANSEA/BAL	. 32	
		4.3.5	RCG ECON		
	4.4		nship and venues (ToR 3C)		
		4.4.1	Overview of chairs, dates and venues for 2023		
		4.4.2	Finding chairs; issues and proposals for supportive measures		
	4.5		steps in RCG pan-regional and intersessional work (i.e. regional work exchange of ideas and discussion (ToR 3D)		

		4.5.1	Fishn 'Co grant: regional workplans	33		
		4.5.2	Streamline grant	34		
5	GOVERNANCE (TOR 4)			35		
	5.1	Follow-u	p on RCG Rules of Procedures developments in each of the RCGs (ToR			
				35		
		5.1.1	RCG Large pelagics	35		
		5.1.2	RCG Long Distance fisheries	35		
		5.1.3	RCG governance of NAFO area	35		
		5.1.4	RCG Med&BS	35		
		5.1.5	RCG NANSEA/BAL	35		
		5.1.6	RCG ECON	36		
	5.2		e of RCGs and cooperation. Lessons learned from combined 2021 RCGs. e changes in structure and in RCG number (ToR 4B)	36		
		5.2.1	SECWEB grant	36		
		5.2.2	Future position of the ISSG Diadromous species	39		
6	AOB .			40		
	6.1	RCG LDF	F ISSG on SPRFMO Observer Programme Accreditation	40		
7	ANNEXES					
ANN	ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS					
ANNEX 2: LIAISON MEETING 2022 AGENDA						
ANNEX 3 [TO BE DISCUSSED] OVERVIEW OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS						
RCG Long Distance Fisheries 2022 Recommendations						
	RCG Med&BS 2022 Recommendations 47					
	RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic 2022 Recommendations					
	RCG Economic Issues 2022 Recommendations 58					
ANN	ANNEX 4 FOLLOW UP ON FISHING ACTIVITY VARIABLES SUBMISSION					

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Description
AC	Advisory Council
AER	Annual Economic Report (for the European fishing fleet)
CECAF	Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic
CMMs	Conservation and Management Measures
	-
CPCs	Cooperating non-Contracting Parties
COVID-19	Pandemia caused by SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus
DCF	Data Collection Framework (follow up of DCR)
DCRF	Data Collection Reference Framework
DG MARE	Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
DTMT	Data Transmission Monitoring Tool
EC (or COM)	European Commission
EMU	Eel Management Unit
EU	European Union
EU-MAP	Multi Annual Programme for Data Collection
EWG	Expert Working Group
FDI	Fisheries-dependent information
GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
ISSG	Intersessional Subgroup
JRC	Joint Research Centre
LDF	Long Distance Fisheries
LM	Liaison Meeting
LP	Large Pelagics
Med & BS	Mediterranean & Black Sea (region)
MRF	Marine Recreational Fisheries
MS	Member State(s)
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization
NC	National Correspondent (DCF)
NEAFC	North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
NPFC	North Pacific Fisheries Commission
NQS	Non-Quota Stocks
PETS	Protected, Endangered and Threatened Species
PGECON	Planning Group on Economic Issues
PIM	Perpetual Inventory Method
RCG	Regional Coordination Group
RCM	Regional Coordination Meeting
RDB	Regional Data Base (of the RCM/RCG)
RDBES	Regional Data Base and Estimation System
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
RWP	Regional Work Plan
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries
SAF	Stock Assessment Form
SCICOM	Science Committee
SID	Stock Information Database
SPRMFO	South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization
SSC	Scientific Sub-Committee
SSF	Small Scale Fisheries
STECF	Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
WG	Working Group
	······································

Term	Description
WGRDBESGOV	Working Group on Regional Data Base and Estimation System
	Governance
WoRMS	World Register of Marine Species

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

19th Liaison Meeting (LM) between the Chairs of RCGs, STECF meetings on DCF, RDB steering groups, key end users (ICES, STECF, RFMOs), JRC and the Commission met on September 21 & 22, 2022 on a hybrid meeting. The meeting was opened by the chair introducing the ToRs. Following the ToRs, the meeting addressed common topics through interaction with end users of the first day as well as among the various RCGs on the second day. Due to the wide range of topics addressed during the meeting, some discussions and conclusions are only directly relevant to a specific group or end user. By discussing the topics in this forum, additional input and insights are gained as well as improved shared responsibility and commonalities.

On the end user interaction: the main end users acknowledged the good cooperation with relevant RCGs. In some cases, the interaction is formalised through dedicated meetings or even a dedicated RCG contact person. Other interactions are mainly built on the annual technical RCG meeting.

End user driven DCF data collection may not always suffice for end user needs. Improved interaction between data collectors and end users was discussed with some end users in order to better align needs and options to collect data. Some end users had planned workshops (GFCM) to improve the data collection and data quality as well as the interaction with data providers. Some planned updates on how to provide data call (SPRFMO), mapping tools for small scale fisheries (GFCM) and developments in various Regional databases (ICES, GFCM) and recommendation databases (ICES). STECF informed that in next year's data call the updated RCG metiers will be used in the FDI data call.

Regional data bases are acknowledged as the back bone for storing and dissemination of DCF data. Dedicated developments were discussed as well as the current status of the development of a Regional Database for Med&BS as currently under development through a MARE grant. There were further discussions on how to align the FDI data call with the Annual Economic Report (AER) on capacity, effort and landings as the same data is transmitted for both data calls which leads to duplication of work and an increased number of inconsistencies; this was also highlighted by the STECF. Presently there are some inconsistencies in how to handle definitions, clustering procedures and allocation vessel to the segment. It was agreed to draft ToRs for relevant groups (ISSGs/ FDI) to address this issue.

On the RoPs discussions were on how decisions can be taken if a given MS is not participating during the NC meetings and have not sent a suppliant. Presently this is not addressed in the RoPs.

The dedicated subgroup on diadromous species will continue under the current setup for at least another year and will participate again in the 2023 LM.

The LM has slightly changed over time, from being the fora where the recommendations and decisions should be taken to more discussions and exchange of ideas and feedback, including a dedicated day with end users. Further, the RCG Chairs are now invited to participate in a separate decision meeting together with the national correspondents (NC) that for several years has taken place before the LM, the decision meetings which is held in the same week, has both the NCs and the RCG chairs attending, while the RCG chairs are now also invited to the NC meeting. This creates repetitions of agenda points over four days. As a remedy, the LM decided to reshuffle the order of the meetings (NC, decision and liaison meetings) in 2023 and schedule the End-user interaction for the first day, followed by the RCG Chair liaison meeting and the decision meetings by one day and probably increase their effectiveness.

# **1** INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

According to Article 8 of the Regulation (EC) No 2017/1004 (Data Collection Framework, DCF), Member States shall cooperate and coordinate their actions to further improve the quality, timeliness and coverage of data enabling the reliability of data collection methods to be further improved, with a view to improving their data collection activities. Further, according to Article 9(1) of the same regulation, 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.

In order to facilitate regional coordination, Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs) shall be established by the relevant Member States for each marine region (Article 9(2) of the Regulation (EC) No 2017/1004). An RCG consists of experts appointed by Member States, including national correspondents, end users and the Commission and a meeting is held annually. Regional coordination has been conducted through various constellations since 2004. In 2017, the following five Regional Coordination Groups (RCG) were operating under the DCF:

- RCG Baltic (Baltic),
- RCG North Atlantic, North Sea & Eastern Arctic (NANSEA),
- RCG Mediterranean and Black Sea (Med&BS),
- RCG Long Distance Fisheries (LDF)
- RCG Large Pelagics (LP)

In 2020, an RCG ECON dealing with data collection of economic data issues was established, to continue the work of the Planning Group on economic issues (PGECON):

RCG	Chairs 2021/2022	email
NANSEA	Harriet van Overzee (outgoing)	harriet.vanoverzee@wur.nl
	Dália Reis	Dalia.CC.Reis@azores.gov.pt
	Josefine Egekvist	jsv@aqua.dtu.dk
Baltic	Sven Stötera (outgoing)	sven.stoetera@thuenen.de
	Maciej Adamowicz	madamowicz@mir.gdynia.pl
LP	Josip Males (outgoing)	josip-males@hotmail.com
LDF	Irek Wójcik	<u>iwojcik@mir.gdynia.pl</u>
ECON	Irina Davidjuka (outgoing)	Irina.Davidjuka@bior.lv
	Heidi Pokki	<u>heidi.pokki@luke.fi</u>
	Hans van Oostenbrugge	hans.vanoostenbrugge@wur.nl
Med&BS	Jurgen Mifsud (outgoing)	jurgen.a.mifsud@gov.mt
	Beatriz Guijarro	beatriz.guijarro@ieo.csic.es

• RCG Economic Issues (ECON)

The RCG Baltic and RCG NANSEA are holding their meeting together although they are still formally two separate groups. In addition to the regional RCGs, a pan-regional RCG deals with collection of economic data: The Regional Coordination Group on Economic Issues (RCG ECON). This RCG is the

successor of the previous group PGECON although the status of PGECON was slightly different as it a subgroup of the EU Expert<sup>1</sup> group on Fisheries Data collection.

Similarly, the Liaison Meeting is a subgroup the EU Expert<sup>2</sup> group on Fisheries Data collection, established to assist the Commission on data collection issues. As stipulated in Article 9(6) of the Regulation (EC) 2017/1004, RCGs "shall coordinate with each other and with the Commission, where issues affect several marine regions". In order to create a forum where issues that affect several marine regions can be assessed and discussed, a Liaison meeting is organised every year after the RCG meetings have taken place, with participation of the chairs (incoming and outgoing) of all RCGs, key end users, and the Commission.

The 19th Liaison Meeting (LM) was held as a hybrid meeting in DG MARE, Brussels on September 21 & 22, 2022.

#### **1.2** Adoption of the agenda

After opening of the meeting, the draft agenda was adopted by the participants. Under AOB "accreditation process in observer programs" was added. See Annex 2 for the agenda of the meeting.

#### **1.3 Terms of Reference**

#### TOR 1 Discussion with end users

- A. Setting the scene: End-user role and new NWPs (Liaison Meeting chair and COM)
- B. End-user needs and interaction: presentations from end users (ICES, STECF, JRC, RFMOs) on:
  - current interaction between the end user and RCGs/data collectors and proposals for improvement
  - data needs and data quality
  - ongoing developments
  - main changes in data calls anticipated next year

#### TOR 2 Data management

- A. Highlights in progress achieved in 2021-2022 in the Regional Databases for RCGs and problems identified (end users ICES, GFCM, ICCAT, IOTC)
- B. Highlights in actions related to the future developments for Regional Databases (RCG chairs, RDBFIS, RDBES)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup><u>https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2750</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expertgroups/consult?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2750

# TOR 3 RCG activities (follow-up) Discussion on possible follow-up to the main outputs/ recommendations

- A. Highlights in RCG activities
- B. The 2022 RCGs recommendations and proposals for future intersessional work (Liaison Meeting and RCG chairs)
- C. RCG data calls overview of how MS responded and discussion on future use (RCG chairs)
- D. Announcement of new chairs (where relevant), next meeting(s) and venues
- E. Future steps in RCG pan-regional and intersessional work (i.e. regional work plans, country profiles): exchange of ideas and discussion (COM, Liaison Meeting, RCG Chairs)
  - Fish'nCo (RCG chairs/project coordinators)
  - Streamline (RCG chairs/ project coordinators)

#### **TOR 4 Governance**

- A. Follow-up on RCG Rules of Procedures (RoP) developments in each of the RCGs (Liaison Meeting, RCG Chairs)
- B. Structure of RCGs and cooperation. Discuss needs for new pan-regional ISSGs (RCG chairs)
  - Secweb (current output available to RCGs)
  - Diadromous ISSG (position and future participation to LM)

#### TOR 5 AOB

#### **1.4 Participants (list in annex)**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Liaison Meeting was chaired by Marie Storr-Paulsen (Denmark) and the meeting was attended by the Commission, key end users of the data collection, RDB steering groups, the chairs of the RCGs and MARE/2020/08 grants coordinators. Annex 1 provides an overview of the participants to the meeting and their respective affiliation.

## 2 DISCUSSION WITH END-USERS (TOR 1A&1B)

#### 2.1 Setting the scene (ToR 1A)

The chair presented the terms of reference, outlined where to find the documents, set the timelines for the report writing and mentioned the legal reference to the Liaison meeting, its objectives and its evolution over time including the dedicated day for interaction with the end users.

Next Mrs Annette Hurrelmann, DG MARE Head of Unit C3, welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of the interaction and dialogue with the end-users but also the Liaison meeting (LM) as a forum for the RCGs to share the output of their work, raise issues and present recommendations and future work plans. She outlined how the regional grants as well as the regional data bases support the work of the RCGs and how their work will need to be incorporated into the core work at the end of this year when the projects complete their work.

## 2.2 End-user needs and interactions (ToR 1B)

#### 2.2.1 IOTC presentation

No written contribution has been sent

*Discussions and feed-back:* During the LM there were some discussions on the general data quality not only from EU members but from all data providers and the feedback was that the last two years the data problems had been for most countries and was probably due to Covid-19. It was discussed if the IOTC could use the data transmission tool to report on data failure.

### 2.2.2 CECAF presentation

CECAF was not represented at the meeting due to technical issues, but did send a written contribution.

The broad aim of the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF), is to promote the sustainable utilization of the living marine resources within its area of competence by the proper management and development of the fisheries and fishing operations. The CECAF Committee currently has an advisory role, operating under the framework of FAO that acts as the Secretariat of the Committee; it is not a Regional Fisheries Management Organization. CECAF currently has 34 Members including coastal and non-coastal countries, covering an area of competence that extends from Cape Spartel down to the Congo River. The Sessions of the CECAF Committee are held every two years. A Scientific Sub-Committee (SSC) was established in 1998 to provide scientific advice to the Committee on fisheries management decisions. It also meets every two years. The SSC has several intersessional working groups on pelagic, demersal, and artisanal fisheries. Key thematic areas of CECAF are stock assessment, fisheries management, coordination of fisheries related research, and collection of fisheries information and statistics. The main outputs produced by the Committee consist of stock and fisheries status reports, as well as thematic studies (e.g., on small scale fisheries, deep-sea fisheries, vulnerable marine ecosystems, and illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing). The Committee also provides fisheries management recommendations and indications on research priorities. Both artisanal and industrial, national, and foreign fleets exploit multiple species in the CECAF area using a wide variety of gears (e.g., CECAF provides advice for over ten pelagic species and nearly twenty demersal species in its Northern area). The CECAF working groups commonly use production models or Length based methods such as LCA, and yield per recruit Y/R depending on the available data. Analytical models (e.g., VPA) are used for few species only. The assessment is heavily reliant on expert and general knowledge on species distribution and life

cycle. All available data are tabulated and are regularly updated by the members of the stock assessment working groups. These data include information on catches, effort, and biological information. Countries have different statistical and sampling systems; therefore, data issues are contingent to local situations. Generally, catch data for the most recent years are commonly missing or cover only some fleets. Moreover, species identification is not always accurate, and species must be lumped together, especially demersal species. Regarding fishing effort, there is currently no compilation of data series for all fleets operating in the region. As far as biological data are concerned, even though surveys are carried out in 1 http://www.fao.org/cecaf/en/ the region, length and age data from the fisheries need to be improved; however, there are exceptions (e.g. sardine, mackerel regularly sampled by Morocco, Spain, and Russia). The scientists in the stock assessment working groups have issued a series of recommendations to be conveyed to the Member countries through the SSC and the Committee for a follow-up at national level to address these data issues. The recommendations relate mainly to the intensification of the biological sampling (including through on-board observer programmes), the improvement of species identification, enhancement of catch and effort data, as well as the production of appropriate age length keys. Specific studies were also recommended, as for example on improving quantification of discards in the shrimp fisheries at the national level. The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the execution of the work plan and the calendar of working groups sessions are continuously under discussion with member countries. The first faceto-face meetings since 2020 is taking place in 2022.

*Discussions and feed-back:* CECAF has been invited to the RCG LDF meeting and did participate in 2021, but not in 2022. In the written contribution from CECAF it was stated that catch data from recent years were missing but it was not clear if this was also included for EU members or for the total catch. It would be beneficial in future feedback if CECAF could be specific on which data is missing, from which countries, which type data etc. It was raised if the DTMT could be used by the end-users to report data transmission issues of EU MS.

### 2.2.3 SPRFMO presentation

The South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) is responsible for the management of non-migratory fishery resources of the high seas of the South Pacific. Members and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CNCPs) participating in fisheries within the SPRFMO Convention Area are required to comply with a suite of Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) associated with fishing operations and data reporting. The European Union fleet is currently active in the jack mackerel fishery (CMM01) and an exploratory toothfish fishery (CMM14e). The primary data streams associated with these activities include: fishing activity (i.e., logbook), observer, annual catch and landings, transhipment notifications and declarations, vessel monitoring systems (VMS) data, and the record of vessels. In addition, there are additional reporting requirements associated with the toothfish fishery to include fish tagging and reporting on recaptures of tagged individuals.

Data collection and processing in SPRFMO is largely focused on Excel-based templates with data submitted via email or directly through a secure web platform. Guidance is provided on formatting and required data elements; however, the flexibility of the Excel templates (lack of formatting, range constraints, and data validation) often means that data submissions are error prone and require substantial and bespoke data processing scripts to reformat and verify the data. This is a time-consuming process for both the Secretariat and for members submitting the data. In addition, it takes away from time that could be dedicated to more value-added activities. Although SPRFMO does not have new data calls for the coming year, the organization is focused on improving the database structure as well as data ingestion and reporting procedures to ensure the data reported to the SPRFMO Secretariat are accurate, useable, and collected and processed in a more efficient manner. SPRFMO is keen to collaborate with other RFMOs and fishery agencies to share experiences and learn from the progress made elsewhere, as we embark on this initiative.

*Discussions and feed-back*: It was discussed how the EU member states data compared to the overall data for the region. Presently this was difficult to give *feedback* on from SPRFMO as the main task presently was to align data formats and the data quality had not yet been analysed. There were

however some issues with bycatch or non-target species reporting, especially within the jack mackerel fishery.

#### 2.2.4 ICES presentation

ICES gave an overview of communication means used for data needs and data transmissions, as well as general issues concerning data for advice. ICES presented data calls and data transmission developments in the Stock Information Database (SID), to streamline the processes, the developments in the BOG and recommendations flow between the ICES expert groups and the RCG. The presentation generated some discussions, summarised below.

#### Communication in general

ICES finds that there is a very good dialogue with RCGs Chairs, both formal and informal. ICES has now a dedicated Officer for the RCGs linked to the Benchmark Overview Group and data groups which should facilitate that the overall information flow is coherent across relevant groups in ICES, at least in the Secretariat. ICES Secretariat is following the development of the SecWeb project with great interest and see this as a potential good communication platform. ICES Secretariat and SecWeb met during spring 2022 to share experiences and future wishes and agreed on a continued work on improving visibility of RCGs (and RCG secretariat) through ICES community.

In terms of recommendations, a new process has been established by the RCG Chairs and the ICES Secretariat. A meeting with NANSEA/Baltic chairs and ICES Secretariat is scheduled for late summer/early autumn to coordinate after new list of RCG recommendations to ICES is published with the TM report.

#### Stock Information Database (SID)

Using SID as a repository for the data needs for each of the stocks has been implemented and it has facilitated more efficient and streamlined data calls. The ability for data providers to access and download upcoming data needs immediately after the working group termination is working well, though experts still need to be encouraged/helped to get this done. A more user-friendly access to up-to-date Issue Lists for all the stocks (SiD) is being implemented and the landing page for SID will be available soon with links and instructions for all modules making it easier to navigate and a user-handbook is being developed, including among other things R-scripts for easy extraction from SiD.

In terms of data transmission failures and their reporting, the data submitter feedback module has been implemented (<u>SiD datacall</u>). Access to this module is granted individually (77 data submitters already have access). This pre-screening by data providers has reduced the non-transmission failures.

#### Data calls

Having the expert groups as early as possible to draft the data call text was encouraged and the SiD module for data calls facilitate the 'pre-warning' of upcoming data calls. The 'big' data call is kept as stable as possible between years to facilitate an easy handling and as well some sort of predictability of data needs for the data submitters.

ICES will explore whether SiD could be useful for this in terms of getting a structured, condensed overview of the end-user needs on survey and catch data needs. ICES acknowledged that the timing of data calls is sensitive, it was encouraged that the experts in the relevant expert groups and the data providers within the institutes as well had a communication flow, enabling a wider communication of upcoming calls. ICES Secretariat has established a GitHub project board to help manage the data calls in order to have a better tracking of the process timeline and facilitate quality control check points.

So far data calls are being drafted for upcoming work and there are potential data calls for benchmarks still being drafted by experts and as well separate data calls for DLS as ACOM has decided to implement WKLIFE X Annex 3 rules during this and next year. See below table for current overview of data calls.

Description of data	Approximate issue date	Aim	Additional information
Data call on eel data	June/July 2022	In support of ICES advice on eel stock and factors affecting the stock	ele.2737.nea
Data call on WKBALTPEL benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	her.27.25-2932; her.27.28; spr.27.22-32
Data call on WKGREENCOD benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	cod.21.1; cod.21.1a-e; cod.2127.1f14
Data call on WKNORTH benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	ghl.27.1-2; ghl.27.561214; reg.27.561214; reb.27.5a14
Data call on WKSALMON benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	sal.nac.all; sal.neac.all; sal.wgc.all
Data call on WKSEABASS benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	bss.27.4bc7ad-h; bss.27.8ab
Data call on WKMSYSPiCT benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	pol.27.67; pol.27.89a; whg.27.89a and others
Data call on WKESLASMO benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support the benchmark	rjc.27.3a47d; rjh.27.4c7d; rjm.27.3a47d
Data call WKABM benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support of the benchmark	ane.27.8; boc.27.6-8; mur.27.3a47d
Data call on WKNSCOD benchmark	Q3 (tentative) 2022	Support of the benchmark	cod.27.47d20; cod.27.6a
Landings, discards, biological sample and effort data from 2022	January 2023	Support of ICES advice on fisheries opportunities	Deadlines for data submission for each WGs to be shared in December 2021.
Indicators of species distribution for advice on VME	February 2023	Provision of ICES management advice on VME's	Similar to previous years
VMS/Log book data for fishing activities in the Northeast Atlantic and Baltic Sea	February 2023	Provision of ICES management advice on spatial distribution and impact of fisheries	Similar to previous years
Annual observed bycatch, effort and estimates of bycatch rates for relevant species (marine mammals, seabirds, turtles and large elasmobranchs), associated to specific fishing gear types.	Q2 2023 (tentative)	Support of the ICES advice on bycatch of marine mammals, bird, turtles and large elasmobranchs	

#### Benchmarks

A list of planned benchmarks, associated issue lists and data calls are available on the SharePoint for benchmarks (accessible by RCG chairs). The Benchmark Oversight Group (the BOG) under ACOM evaluates the suggested benchmarks from the experts groups using an agreed prioritization process in order to recommend the list of benchmarks to be conducted in year+1 and year+2 to ACOM. The expert groups suggest the benchmarks using a prioritised Issue List overview and as well an outline of the feasibility of having all necessary data and documented science available for the scheduled benchmark. The BOG makes frequent updates with the selected benchmark processes in terms of status for Working Documents, etc., facilitating that all necessary material is ready at the time of the benchmark.

#### Recommendations

The current recommendation system includes RCGs, where ICES groups can put forward recommendations to RCGs and the RCGs can also put forward recommendations to the EG groups, ACOM, SCICOM and Secretariat through this system.

ICES has established a group of relevant steering group chairs and the SCICOM chair who will review and 'sense-check' the recommendations put forward to the RCGs prior to sending them on. The RCG Chairs have been participating in a couple of meetings with the new 'revision group' where the remits of the RCGs were clarified and a guidance as to what type of recommendations would be operational for the RCGs and what information is needed to support the recommendation was clarified. The review of recommendations will be done annually (or if needed, ad hoc) in the early spring to forward the recommendations to the RCGs in due time for the June meeting.

*Discussions and feed-back*: It was discussed if the GitHub ICES has implemented for the data calls could be expanded for more than internal ICES use and ICES promised to look into this issue. There were some discussions on how to optimise the use the RCG recommendations database and the ICES GitHub recommendation, but it was decided that presently both systems are used and that the ICES secretariat are subtracting the information from the database and are incorporation it in GitHub. There were also some discussions on how the new DCF NWP quality annexes are being used in ICES. Presently they are developed by sampling scheme and MS and not by stock, making it more difficult to use in ICES stock assessments. However, they have a value in MS being more aware on the quality of their own sampling scheme. ICES confirmed that socioeconomics is used by several WGs presently. Furthermore, ICES is also working with JRC on socioeconomics and is trying to figure out how to make better use of the socioeconomics data.

### 2.2.5 GFCM presentation

The GFCM Secretariat representative provided an overview of the functioning of the GFCM, the interaction between GFCM and RCG Med&BS, the GFCM fisheries data needs, the GFCM feedback on the received data (data quality), the ongoing GFCM development on regional databases, and finally reported information on GFCM key activities.

About the current GFCM working mechanism, the GFCM technical working groups compile and analyse evidence, the conclusions are then reviewed by GFCM technical committees that produce advice to support decision-making by the Commission. Member states (Contracting Parties) make proposals and the Commission adopts them either as binding recommendations or non-binding resolutions. The GFCM Compliance Committee assesses the compliance of both Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-contracting Parties of the GFCM with decisions taken by the Commission.

Taking into account the GFCM priorities in fisheries to make fisheries more productive and sustainable, to support livelihoods and food security, and to conserve the marine environment and

ecosystems, small-scale fisheries (SSF) continued being the crucial subsector of fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea region. SSF represents 83 percent of the fleet, 57 percent of employment onboard vessels, 29 percent of revenue and 15 percent of catch<sup>3</sup>.

Five virtual training courses on the identification and handling of vulnerable species (Marine mammals, Sea turtles, Sharks and rays, Seabirds, Corals and sponges) incidentally caught during fishing operations were co-organized in February 2022 by GFCM and RCG Med&BS. GFCM also continued participating to the RCG Med&BS annual meeting by providing information about GFCM data calls, data quality and relevant outcomes of the GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries (SAC).

From the communication of GFCM data needs point of view, GFCM has regularly informed its Contracting Parties and Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (CPCs) about GFCM data calls (90 in 2022) through both the online GFCM data submission calendar and the usual GFCM deadline reminders (emails in English and French) sent to national contacts when a deadline for data submission is approaching. In addition to the recurring ones, more data calls may be in place in 2023 on the basis of the data requirements emanating from the new GFCM recommendations that will be adopted at the 45th session of the Commission (November 2022). For stock assessment, GFCM has also started issuing data calls for data preparation meetings as well as to progressively request, when possible, more disaggregated data (e.g. TA/TB/TC files from MEDITS surveys) as deemed needed by experts.

About data quality towards the consolidation of the data use for scientific advice and compliance assessment of CPCs with existing GFCM recommendations, two different mechanisms are in place at the GFCM level according to the data. Information transmitted by both CPCs and national experts through the Stock Assessment Forms (SAFs) are regularly evaluated by existing GFCM stock assessment working groups held during the year in each GFCM subregion (Western, Central, Adriatic, Eastern, Black Sea) and, at least, for the species identified as priority by relevant GFCM subsidiary bodies. On the other hand, the quality of the fisheries data received through the Data Collection Reference Framework (DCRF) online platform from CPCs in reply to existing GFCM Recommendations is ensured thanks to the regular application of fisheries quality indicators [timeliness, completeness, conformity, stability and consistency] on the DCRF database. The role played by CPCs interacting with the GFCM Secretariat continued being of particular importance, with their feedback on data quality results be instrumental towards the consolidation of the GFCM databases thus contributing to the management objectives in the GFCM subregions.

In the field of regional databases, GFCM further worked on the release of new (e.g. Black Sea scientific DB, eel-related DB) and the update of existing (e.g. fleet register, authorized vessels, capture production, ports, Sensitive Benthic Habitats and Species, etc.) regional databases. Data dissemination was also streamlined on the GFCM website through interactive dashboards to consult those public data that are gathered in accordance with relevant GFCM recommendations.

Finally, the GFCM Secretariat representative informed about the GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the MedSea4Fish and BlackSea4Fish projects. The 10-year strategy offers a common vision and guiding principles to achieve sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the region, federating all efforts to deliver on national, regional and global commitments. MedSea4Fish (just started) and BlackSea4Fish (established in 2016) projects provide support for the implementation of Mediterranean and Black Sea priorities through tailor-made activities thus raising the capacity development within the GFCM to a new level.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> FAO. 2020. The State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries 2020. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. Rome. <u>https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb2429en</u>

*Discussions and feed-back*: A very large percentage of the fishery in the GFCM area is SSF (83% in vessel numbers and 15% in catch). The GFCM can inform the CPCs (cooperating non-contracting parties) through different means about the quality of the reporting and this will also be accessible for the EU. It is an on-line system to provide live assessment. It will be important to gather also live feedback.

#### 2.2.6 STECF presentation

Under the STECF umbrella, there are several Expert Working Groups (EWGs) using DCF data calls as main source for their work:

#### Fisheries-Dependent Information (FDI) (EWG 22-10, Sep 2022)

Data quality is improving annually with Member States (MS) gaining more experience in data submission and requirements. The huge amount of data (all species, all areas, all discards, etc.), however, leads to higher probability of errors in submissions by all MS. FDI biological data for the Med&BS region are not requested in the FDI data call, but the data from the Med&BS data call are used.

The EWG agreed on the approach to be used for the publication of biological data when landings weight and discards are marked confidential in the catches table.

This year, the EWG did not discuss COVID-19 consequences. In previous year's EWG, however, MS provided detailed information about the COVID-19 impact on their discard estimations.

In the next data call, new métier codes will be introduced. Data for the period 2013-2021 will be requested again to update métier codes and EEZ indicator codes (for the areas including the UK EEZ).

There is good interaction with the end-users, as data collectors are among the experts attending the EWG, including some National Correspondents. The continuation of the methodological meeting every two years will be beneficial for future development and coordination of the FDI submissions.

#### Mediterranean & Black Sea stock assessment (EWG 21-15, Oct 2021)

Most data issues involve individual errors with diverse data occurring right across data types (e.g. MEDITS, landings, etc.) and countries. A list of species-GSA combinations remain to be checked. MS should be encouraged to do the data checking before uploading, as routines are available but not always being used.

With regard to COVID consequences, in some areas, sampling of landings was poor, and in one case, the data could not be used to give length/age of landings for the year. All assessments were completed, but all were of a poorer quality.

MS have responded to data issues through the DTMT submitted last year, though in some cases, the revisions have been postponed to this year.

Data calls will be similar, except there is now a requirement to obtain recreational fisheries data for future analyses. So far, this has not yet been implemented; it seems likely this will take some time to be transmitted/collected.

The improved follow-up through the DTMT should help and is already helping. MS should be encouraged to routinely check data before uploading. It is likely that training will be required. Progress is being made to provide R scripts and web-based checking. These have been compared and are broadly compatible. MS should choose the method that suits them, but should take responsibility for this checking stage.

#### Fleet economics (AER) (EWGs 22-02/22-06, Apr/Jun 2022)

Regarding data needs, fully compatible landings and effort datasets between the Annual Economic Report (AER) and FDI data calls are essential. This would ensure the availability of data at lower aggregation levels (e.g. at ICES rectangle or c-square resolution). The final aim is to improve regional analyses and perform bioeconomic analyses.

Social variables are included in the 2022 AER data call. Data checks are performed during the AER II meeting. Quality and coverage checking procedures are commented in chapter 5 of the AER and data issues are included in the DTMT for the MS concerned.

The AER data call continues to request additional dimensions on gear and fisheries. The objective is to identify specific fisheries, in particular LDFs operating in RFMOs and Outermost Regions. Improvements were made in 2022 for some fisheries (ICCAT, IOTC, NAFO), although the data coverage/quality of other RFMOs (e.g. CECAF and NEAFC) and Outermost Regions is still limited.

Internally, JRC is modifying the interface for data checks. The lack of this interface has caused some problems with the data checks. It seems that by 2023, this will be solved. Additionally, JRC is looking into integrating the nowcasting and forecasting procedure for the North Atlantic into its DCF database that is currently doing this for the Med and Other Fishing Regions. This may help to provide preliminary results for the AER I group. Nowcast results feed into the national chapters, which are drafted during the AER I meeting. However, to be more robust, they can only be finalised during the AER II meeting, once we have more data on the evolution of prices in the current year.

In 2022, the COVID-19 effect will be embodied in the data. No further impacts are expected beyond the virtual mode of the meetings.

Currently, there is fluent interaction between RCG ECON and data collectors. Workshops and meetings are held on a regular basis and changes are implemented. There is also a fluent interaction between AER and the Advisory Councils (AC). The Long Distance AC and Market AC normally ask the EWG chairs to present the main outcomes of the AER. They also take part as observers of the AER II meeting.

#### Processing industry economics (EWG 21-14, Feb 2022)

Given that the EU-MAP does not provide a list of variables to be potentially collected, the data collection should follow the recommendations of the RCG ECON/PGECON (2020 Report) which are based on the COM Impl. Decision (EU) 2016/1251. In order to face the lack of some data (because of the optionality of the data collection), an estimation protocol has been developed in 2019 and further elaborated by EWG 21-14.

Data quality and coverage is improving with MS gaining more experience in data submission and requirements, although some discrepancies with RCG ECON recommendations still remain (e.g. social data, raw material data).

Re. raw material, a very low coverage was observed. However, in the light of the Farm-to-Fork Strategy and its recent deliverable "*EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices*", it is essential to identify the supply chain, as clearly as possible, from the fishing area (for fishery products) or farming plants (for aquaculture) to the market outlets. Furthermore, given that the purchase of fish and raw material is the dominant cost item for the sector, this information is also crucial for assessing the strengths and vulnerabilities of the sector. The collection of this data is, therefore, important and MS are encouraged to continue improving the data in accordance with the guidelines of the data call.

The possibility to implement the nowcast was discussed but this should be further discussed in the future (before the next EWG) in order to evaluate the appropriate parameters to be used (e.g. volume and/or value of production, source Eurostat).

In 2023, the COVID-19 effect will be embodied in the 2020-2021 data (data call every 2 years). No further impacts are expected beyond the virtual mode of the meetings.

Currently, there is fluent interaction between RCG ECON and data collectors. Workshops and meetings are held on a regular basis and changes are implemented. Furthermore, the STECF report on the EU processing sector is highly welcomed by Market AC.

#### Non-quota stocks (NQS) (EWG 22-04, May 2022)

This data call and EWG was carried out in 2022 for the first time. The EWG required data of the NQS landings (weight and value) for the last 22 years by ICES rectangle. The purpose was to establish a database for species that are not managed by TACs agreed via the Council Reg. (EU) 2022/109. The data quality was in general good, albeit lacking from certain MS. One important issue encountered was the absence of a comprehensive TAC species list by region. This led to some MS throwing all the landings data at the EWG. Furthermore, the resolution by ICES statistical rectangle was deemed to be problematic when attributing EEZ provenance. Effort data for small vessels are an issue, as the calculations of days at sea differ between MS and the location of the effort being exerted depend on very impactful assumptions.

Other data calls, such as the FDI and the AER, were consulted but either were lacking the required spatial resolution (AER) or not all NQS were required to be reported. Negotiations with other data calls, however, are ongoing whether it would be possible to include the data required by follow-up EWGs to be included into them. This would avoid data providers from MS having to fulfil an extra data call. No data call is planned for 2023.

*Discussions and feed-back*: In the LM discussions, concerns were raised upon the huge effort for MS to collate the data for this call and the need for an additional EWG for quality checking was expressed or discussions with MS before launching a large data call, to avoid asking for data not being used.

#### 2.2.7 ICCAT presentation

ICCAT was not represented at the meeting.

## **3** DATA MANAGEMENT (TOR 2A&2B)

# 3.1 Highlights in progress achieved in 2021 - 2022 in the Regional Databases for RCGs in 2021 and problems identified (end users) RCG data calls (ToR 2A)

The RDBES is planned to replace both the existing ICES InterCatch and RDB database systems and has an important part to play in increasing transparency and improving the quality of stock assessment within ICES. In 2022, several WK have taken place to give countries support in the transition (WKINTRO, WKRAISE&TAF, WKTAF). Other WG such as WGCATCH and WGBYC are also working in coordination with RCGs to provide their input

The main milestones set up in the roadmap for the following years are shown in figure 3.1.

The RDBES Data Call in 2022 covers landings and effort data, and sampling data for length, biological variables and PETs. In addition, a test data call has been launched for marine recreational fisheries (MRF). WGEEL confirmed during the meeting that they will develop their own data base. The data call covers the RCGs NANSEA, Baltic and LD. RCG LP is discussing their participation in the RDBES.

The Core group and two subgroups of the WGRDBESGOV are working intersessionally in the alignment between the RDBES and FDI, and in solving the problems with confidentiality in RDBS data. As a result, several variables have been included in the CE table this year.

Recommendations have been made to RCGs to adapt the scripts and reports that currently use RDB data to the RDBES data format, and to provide feedback about how to ensure the availability of RDB data once the RDB is terminated (2024).

RDBData in & outTerminatedICData in & outData outData outRDBES - DataData in & outData in & outData in & outRDBES - EstimationSelected stocksSelected stocksAll stocks		2022	2023	2024	2025
RDBES - Data     Data in & out     Data in & out     Data in & out	RDB	Data in & out	Data out	Terminated	
	IC	Data in & out	Data in & out	Data out	Terminated
RDBES - Estimation         Selected stocks         Selected stocks         All stocks         All stocks	RDBES - Data	Data in & out	Data in & out	Data in & out	Data in & out
	<b>RDBES - Estimation</b>	Selected stocks	Selected stocks	All stocks	All stocks

Figure 3.1. Main milestones according with the current RDBES roadmap. Dates can change

*Discussion & feedback:* During the meeting some participants expressed their concern about the RDB data call being replaced by the RDBES data call in 2023, and the timing of it (which will overlap with the regular ICES data call).

Further, there were some discussions on how to improve the use of the RDBES by having the database to support more data calls (including the FDI data call). This will however, need some more work as the structure is not 100% similar between the RDBES and FDI. However, as this alignment eases the work load for the MS, it was agreed that this would be the goal. It was suggested the RCG ECON and ISSG metier chair should come up with a suggestion for a forward procedure (Annex 4).

It was further discussed how the time frame for the data call would be if the RDBES would take over from InterCatch and the feedback was that it would follow the regular ICES data call and be in the beginning of the year. Further, there were some discussions on the eel and salmon data and how it should be implemented in the RDBES as these data have different variables and structure compared to all other RDBES data sets. It was still not decided if the data would go into a separate database and if ICES would host the database.

# **3.2** Highlights in actions related to the future developments for Regional Databases (RCG chairs and/ regional grants (ToR 2B)

#### 3.2.1 RDBFIS grant

MARE/2020/08 - SI2.839444 "Development of the Regional Database for the Mediterranean & Black Seas (Med&BS RDBFIS)"

The grant started in January 2021 and will be completed on December 2022. Open source in information technologies were fully adopted (2020-2023 EC strategy) for the development of the RDBFIS. The consortium was focused on the cooperation and communication with EC, Med&BS RCG, Med&BS MSs, Med&BS RDB SC, ICES/RDBES, ICES/FishFrame RDB, LP, end users, other initiatives and the MARE 2020/08 grants STREAMLINE, FISHN'CO and SECWEB on the creation of RDBFIS. A considerable effort was exerted to finalize the dialogues with the Med&BS MSs in order to precisely collect the required information about the existing infrastructure used to support the DCF, the statistical system for the data analysis and the sampling scheme. Discussions related to the compatibility issues between RDBFIS & RDBES as well as the possibility to integrate part of the RDBES into RDBFIS took place with ICES experts, RCG, Med&BS MSs and Med&BS RDB SC. A communication and collaboration channel is open between RDBFIS and the Med&BS RDB SC discussing issues related to: governance, data policy, data access, RDBFIS hosting and maintenance, compatibility of RDBFIS & RDBES, type of data to be included in the RDB, data submission (primary and aggregated).

Three WPs have been completed: WP-1 (Deliverable 1.1) Investigate and mapping the current situation, WP-2 (Deliverable 2.1) Define the DB schema and set basic rules concerning governance and data policy, WP-3 (Deliverable 3.1) Specifications for the RDB and final requirements including a Minimum Viable Product. The data base structure has been completed; the tables were grouped as follows: RCG, Med&BS, FDI, GFCM/DCRF datacalls, Surveys (MEDITS, MEDIAS, SOLEMON, BlackSea, Eggs and Larvae), COST, RDBES hierarchies, PETS, Recreational fisheries, Stomach content, Alien species, Work Plan, EU Fleet Register & fishing ports, aggregated fishing effort data by spatial rectangle, WoRMS & IT IS species codification, coding system.

As far as Task 4.2 (Design and develop a graphical user interface (GUI), access and security subsystem), the Backend layers providing access to all the tables of the database and Data Validation/Processing layers have been implemented. Further, R scripts, implemented in Tasks 4.3 and 4.4, have been made accessible as services. The design of the security system of the RDBFIS has been completed.

As far as Task 4.3, RDBFIS takes advantage from existing quality check tools designed for the different types of data and data formats. The key outcome of Task 4.3 is an R package (RDBqc) including specific quality checks for all the relevant formats utilized for data exchanging in Mediterranean and Black Sea (detailed and aggregated). The R package has been integrated in the RDBFIS and also is available as a stand-alone tool. A new RoME version for RDBFIS is under development, expected to be completed on November 2022.

Task 4.4 RDBprocessing package is in development, including R functions, expected to be completed by the end of October. The statistical estimates in RDBprocessing are implemented through several options of the COST package that allow deriving raised LFDs of landings and discards and biological information (*e.g. sex ratio, maturity at age/length, ALK*).

Potentially, statistical estimates and algorithms from RDBES could be acquired by RDBFIS. A first version of the report file for the a priori QC on the RCG format and relative tutorial documentation has been drafted, including the functions implemented in the RDBqc package (Task 4.5). It is expected to be completed by November.

The phase "testing" (WP5) will bring together the Commission, data providers (Member States/RCG), RDBFIS developers and end users to check the data model and the feasibility of the outputs (test the functionality and performance of the RDBFIS with real data). Part of the testing will come from workshops to test and adjust, if needed, the different features of the RDBFIS test version. The implementation of this WP is expected to start at the end of September and be completed on 15/12/2022.The WP5 aims to and get feedback for potential improvements.

Possible links with the LP RDB was investigated during the RCG LP ISSG RDB development meeting. At the STECF EWG 22-03, the RDBFIS data quality checks R-package was presented, and interest was expressed in using RDBFIS in the next EWG on data quality checks. Two datacalls were launched requesting the data sets from (a) Med&BS and FDI datacalls and (b) Med&BS RCG datacall, aiming to test the functionality of the RDBFIS on the input, quality control and output processes and to support the WP5 (testing the RDBFIS).

FDI scripts on spatial data (effort & landings) could be integrated in RDBFIS (relevant technical discussions with the developers took place during the STECF EWG 22-10 (12-16/09/2022), contact with European Commission officials will be made in the near future). Communication and dialogues with MEDIAS are foreseen to be completed in the near future.

As far as milestones, the following were highlighted: to deliver a robust and fully functional RDB and application, to be adopted by the Med&BS MSs and continue to be "alive" after the end of 2022, to become a powerful tool for the RCG/MSs/STECF/GFCM/other end users, to incorporate additional quality checks routines, in the future to constitute for the Mediterranean an integrated fisheries information system including fisheries and environmental data and be able to combine several data sets for modelling and mapping purposes.

# 4 RCG ACTIVITIES (TOR 3)

#### 4.1 Highlights in RCG activities relevant to end users

#### 4.1.1 RCG Long Distance fisheries

Until 2022, the RCG LDF coordinated the collection of fisheries data from EU fisheries in areas under the management of two RFMOs - *Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic* (CECAF) and *South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation* (SPRFMO) – based on multilateral agreements between the MS concerned:

- Multi-lateral agreement between Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in CECAF waters (joint sampling programme in force since 2012, coordinated by the Netherlands until 2016 and by Poland since 2017);
- Multi-lateral agreement between Germany, Lithuania, The Netherlands and Poland for biological data collection of pelagic fisheries in SPRFMO waters (joint sampling programme in force since 2015, coordinated by the Netherlands until 2016 and by Poland since 2017).

In 2021 sampling activity was hampered due to various reasons: serious COVID-19 development in Poland in the first and third quarters, safety measures taken at the Institute employing observers, including ban on at sea sampling (lifted in May 2022) and ban on travelling abroad, problems with observers availability (COVID-19 infections, COVID related family issues, staff reduction).

In 2021 the EU fleet was active in <u>CECAF</u> area (Mauritanian and Moroccan waters) until July only. No sampling in CECAF was performed in 2021 due to reasons mentioned above and due to reluctance of vessels operators to take scientific observers on board vessels fishing in Moroccan and Mauritanian waters as an effect of the obligation of embarking a certain % of crew and observers from those countries.

Placing observers on board EU fishing vessels in the <u>SPRFMO</u> area in 2021 was a great logistical challenge due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on people's movement still in force, including *i.a.* obligation for observers to be in possession of a negative COVID PCR test prior to departure to South America and on arrival there, with 2-3 days of quarantine after arrival (and another PCR test on disembarkation prior to boarding the return flight). Despite those challenges, the SPRFMO requirement to have a minimum 10% observer coverage in terms of fishing trips was achieved and exceeded by having four fishing trips observed out of total of 10 fishing trips executed by EU vessels in 2021. In 2022 also four fishing trips were observed by scientific observers by mid-September.

In 2022 the EU became a contracting party to *North Pacific Fisheries Commission* (NPFC) being another new area under the competence of the RCG LDF. MS concerned (DEU, LTU, LVA, NLD, POL) are already members of the RCG LDF. Based on information received prior to and during the RCG LDF 2022 meeting, there will be no data collection needs for 2022 in NPFC, as the EU fleet is not authorised yet to undertake any fishing operation in the Convention area.

*Discussion & feedback:* There were during the LM some questions raised on the cooperation between end-users and the RCG. The reply was that SPRFMO has a clear and comprehensive information on their website on data needs. NAFO is however, a new area included for this RCG and they need to get more familiar with NAFO issues and needs. For NPFC there will be a need for coordination because some MS are planning to participate in the fishery but it depends on when they get the authorisations.

#### 4.1.2 RCG Large pelagics

The intersessional Subgroup for Tropical Tunas continued with their meetings after they had a hiatus caused by the Covid pandemic. The meeting was hybrid with 15 participants from which 6 were online - 6 from Spain, 7 from France and 2 from Seychelles and was held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2022. During the meeting the main subjects for the Sub-ISSG Tropical Tunas were the summary of reports and datasets, data collection of PS Tropical Tuna Fishery, RFMO needs (including the Fishn-co Project) and for the Sub-ISSG Observers topics were the update of observer programmes and perspectives, common methods and tools for data collection, ObServe database and associated tools, Electronic Monitoring and data analysis.

The annual meeting of the RCG was held in June with participation of representatives from EC, ICCAT and IOTC who gave feedback presentations on subjects related to the group. Additionally, Alessandro Ligas held a presentation on the outputs of the Streamline project and Pierluigi Carbonara presented outputs of the MED bycatch project.

In May 2022, a virtual meeting on ISSG Regional Database development was held with 7 out of the 9 European countries involved in the RCG LP. The group created 4 scenarios with different roles of the RDBES and RDBFIS that were later presented in the annual meeting of the LP group. However, there was no collective consensus on this topic and no recommendation or decision could be made.

There was a question raised both in the annual meeting and in the questionnaire sent to the MS regarding the work and activity or rather the lack of those in some RCG LP ISSGs. General thought in the annual meeting was that MED&BS Large Pelagic consists of special fisheries and should be followed by a single separate RCG and not joined with the RCG MED&BS but rather be in communication with it. Majority of the questionnaire participants expressed that they want to continue with the work of the RCG LP as it is and not be part of either the Long Distance or the Med&BS RCGs.

A matter of urgency was to nominate a future chair and a co-chair for the group. It was agreed that the NC's need to make this decision. Since the nomination did not occur up to the decision meeting with the NC's there was a proposition to run a script to randomly determine the future chairs and their rotation as a simple and transparent solution. Some rules were decided, mainly that for the first and upcoming year the chair is going to be elected for one year and that in the case of MS not being able to provide a chair they can find a replacement among other MS. This was accepted by the majority of MS present in the meeting. After the script was run, the NC of Ireland volunteered Ireland to provide the next chair instead of Italy which was first on the list. Accordingly, starting with the year 2023, the chair of RCG LP is from Ireland with a co-chair from Malta. Following in the succession from 2024 and onwards, to provide a co-chair (and then chair) are these countries: Portugal, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, France, Spain and Croatia. Of note is that this list of chairs selection is repeatable and should solve the issue of chairing.

*Discussion & feedback:* There were during the LM discussions if there are going to be enough human resources to have all ISSG active and running to which the current chair answered that this is to be seen since the first obstacle in the RCG work was to determine future chairs and now group can turn its attention to the ISSGs. Main problem being that a lot of experts that should be participating are taken by work in other projects or work in other RCGs like Med&BS which prevents them from proper participation. Possibly already in the next year it should be clear whether the ISSGs can establish their work procedures or if they will be seen as inactive and considered to be dismissed until it is called for to activate them again. It was also noted that the BFT fishing in EU is expanding namely with Denmark and within the Black Sea area and the question was raised if there should be a consideration to add more MS to the group to which chair answered that this is definitely a subject to be discussed for the next year and done in communication with ICCAT, hopefully in the upcoming

ICCAT workshop. The final remark was on the importance of establishment of communications with LDF and Med&BS RCGs regarding the common interests that all the groups share.

#### 4.1.3 RCG NANSEA/BAL

The RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic technical Meeting 2022 was held from 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> June in Oostende, Belgium in a hybrid format, allowing people to also participate online. An additional virtual one-day meeting was held on 25<sup>th</sup> of May. This meeting addressed ISSGs that wanted to give a work statusupdate, but did not have any recommendations or decisions to be discussed and agreed on during the TM. The virtual day also gave the possibility to address problems and issues that might have occurred during ISSG work and should be solved before the start of the TM.

The communication with end users is channelled in two ways. The Intersessional Subgroup "Enduser and RCG interaction" is in charge of keeping a close connection with end users, with a generic focus. During the period 2021-2022, two virtual meetings took place between the ISSG and the main end users (i.e. ICES and DG MARE). The main topics discussed were:

- Updating each other on the progress made with respective recommendations of 2021 (mostly ICES), keep track of ongoing recommendations and their status (e.g. if forwarded to relevant WG).
- Updating each other of progress made in regards to the pilot projects "SecWeb" and "Fishn'Co" (mostly DG MARE)
- 3. Reviewing and refining mechanism for streamlining recommendations: The RCG has been discussing with ICES secretariat and ICES SG & SCICOM chairs how to improve both the contents and the route of the recommendations. A mandate and remits document from the RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic, written by the respective chairs, was provided to ICES in 2021, so that recommendations from the Expert Groups can be aligned with what the RCGs can actually facilitate. Furthermore, the route of the recommendations was updated, adding some more flexibility in planning e.g. meetings.

In addition, the intersessional subgroups of RCG NANSEA and Baltic (surveys, recreational fisheries, stomach sampling, PETs, etc) usually interact directly with end users for specific technical issues. During the TM 2022, the RCG formulated one recommendation addressed to ICES and three recommendations which are relevant to end users. Eight decisions were formulated and forwarded to the decision meeting, of which 3 are relevant for end users.

- 1. Recommendations (end user relevant highlighted in black):
  - R01: ICES give download rights of RDB/RDBES data to ISSG chairs for the ISSG [ICES]
  - R02: Each MS to assign at least one expert to participate in ISSG EMT and appoint an additional chair [NCs]
  - R03: Raise awareness among NCs and national institutes on the RDBES roadmap [NCs]
  - **R04:** implement the collection of additional variables needed for SSF effort estimates in the control regulation [DG MARE / MSs]
  - R05: implement the collection of additional variables needed for bycatch estimates in the control regulation [DG MARE / MSs]
  - **R06:** Provide prioritization of PETS species list [DG ENV]
  - **R07:** Participation in the regional stomach analysis program [NCs NANSEA]
  - **R08:** MS to evaluate options and capacities of national labs to become analysis hub for the collected IBTS case study stomachs [NCs]
  - **R09:** Naming of experts to ISSG RWP [NCs]
  - R10: NCs that have mandate to make decisions should be present at the DM 2022 [NCs & COM] (see section 5.2.1)

- 2. Decisions (relevant to end users highlighted in black):
  - **D01 part I:** ISSG starts to collaborate with benchmark groups and gather their feedback to create a "template for RDB data overviews in support of benchmark groups" [all NCs]
  - **D01 part 2:** *Provide the CBH benchmark group with a multi-annual RDB overview based on the WGBFAS document (as a case study)* [Baltic NCs]
  - **D02:** Renewal cost-sharing agreement for IBWSS Survey
  - D03: Renewal cost-sharing agreement for IESNS Survey
  - D04: Binding 2025-2027 RWP for NANSEA and Baltic region without formal adoption
  - **D05:** Continuation of RCG Secretariat after the SecWeb project ends (see section 5.2.1).
  - **D06:** ISSGs proposed to work during season 2022-2023
  - **D07:** Agree on proposed set-up and chairing for season 2022-2023

The RCG chairs also followed up on the "covid-19 questionnaire" of 2021 and adjusted it to be more generic, covering not only the pandemic, but also other disruptions in commercial sampling and surveys, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the respective stop to all cooperation with Russia (including data access and sampling). A draft of this new "commercial sampling and survey disruptions" questionnaire was evaluated during the TM. The RCG agreed to send out the questionnaire regularly and the feedback and suggested improvements will be incorporated in the next version.

Finally, the RCG chairs presented some highlights and end-user relevant outputs of several ISSG:

- The ISSG "RDB overviews" provided WGBFAS with RDB data products, which were used for stock evaluation and presented in their respective working group report.
- The ISSG "Métier and transversal variable issues" further improved the unified Métier list and more WGs and expert groups applied the list in their data calls in 2022. In 2023, the FDI data call will be included.
- The ISSG "RWP case study on SPF in the Baltic" progressed further in their work and is likely to be the first of the case studies to be adopted in a RWP in 2024.
- The ISSG "survey design" managed the adaption and change in survey timing of the North Sea mackerel egg Survey, making it more fitting to the changed migration of Mackerel.
- The ISSG "RWP case study on stomach sampling" successfully implemented the regional collection of stomachs on the IBTS and started the next step of the RWP, i.e. the planning on regional analysis of the stored samples.

*Discussion & feedback:* There were some discussions on the RDB data overviews and if they could be provided as standard plot at the benchmark or if they should be requested by end-users. Presently only one of the five stocks at the herring and sprat benchmark has requested plots in sampling levels. Further, as a directly feedback to recommendation 06 the commission invited DG Environment to participate in the meeting on the 2. Day.

### 4.1.4 RCG Med&BS

The RCG Med&BS 2022 Annual Meeting & Meeting with End-users of Scientific Data was held from the 6<sup>th</sup> till the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 in Larnaca, Cyprus in a hybrid format. A list of meetings and workshops which were organised by the RCG Med&BS along with STREAMLINE and the GFCM during 2022 were outlined. The chair of the RCG remarked the importance of the STREAMLINE meetings with regards to the regional work plans which are being drafted and shall be submitted to the Commission by the end of the year, for further details please see STREAMLINE section (4.5.2). The RCG chair also remarked that the workshops which have been organised with the GFCM attracted a

significant number of participants and that there are plans for the organisation of similar workshops for 2023.

The RCG chair then highlighted how the 2021 recommendations were addressed in 2022. Indeed, recommendations 1, 5, 9, 10, 11, and 12 were finalised, whereas recommendations 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 13 are going to be followed-up in 2023. All the eight RCG Med&BS 2022 recommendations which were put forward during the RCG Med&BS 2022 Annual Meeting by the member states was then presented by the RCG chair. The following recommendations were presented, STECF (EWG 22-18) agreed with these needs for further development of the RWP Med&BS:

- Updating of the list of regional métiers and collaboration with ISSG on Métier issues
- Drafting of the RWP on recreational fisheries to be submitted by September-October 2023 (implementation 2025-2027) and RCG Med&BS Workshop on recreational fisheries
- Drafting of the RWP on PETs bycatch monitoring to be submitted by September-October 2023 (implementation 2025-2027) and RCG Med&BS Workshop on PETs bycatch monitoring
- Establishment of a Technical group on the regional data base RDBFIS
- Drafting of the RWP on fish stomachs collection and analysis to be submitted by September-October 2023 (implementation 2025-2027) and RCG Med&BS Workshop on fish stomachs collection and analysis
- Inclusion of SECWEB's proposal text to be included in section 1: General Information; Text Box 1B: Other Data Collection Activities in the respective National Work Plans
- Recommendation on expansion of MEDIAS to GSA 15 on a voluntary basis
- RCG MED&BS 2022 proposed to establish an ISSG for sampling optimisation

Finally, the RCG chair pointed out the ongoing collaboration with RCG LP regarding the biological sampling of large pelagic species, and with the ISSG on Metier Issues regarding the RCG Med&BS metier list. A list of upcoming workshops which shall be taking place in 2023 regarding stomach sampling, recreational fisheries, and on the data collection related to the impact of fisheries on the marine ecosystem were also outlined. It was remarked that these workshops are still going to be supported by the coordinator of STREAMLINE, although STREAMLINE officially ends by the end of 2022.

*Discussion & feedback:* During the meeting there were some discussions on the new metier codes implemented. There were some issues with the new metier codes, the new metiers are not used yet for data submission in data calls by GFCM, but are presently only used for MARE calls.

## 4.1.5 RCG ECON

The main take-home message from RCG ECON 2022 is how to progress in the development of the regional work plan for the economic and social data collection. The draft regional work plan was presented by the Fishn'Co project to the technical meeting of RCG ECON 2022. The RWP for economic and social data collection does not include national work plan tables, but includes current guidelines, definitions, methodology and summary of the statistical Handbook guidelines for economic and social data collection. In June 2022, the chairs of RCG ECON have sent out draft guidelines to the national correspondents highlighting methodologies and definitions which need further discussion and collect comments from member states by the end of September 2022. The RCG ISSG on regional work plans will be organised in November 2022 to finalize the pan-regional work plan for economic and social data collection. In RCG ECON 2023 the final RWP for economic data collection will be approved by the NCs. Moreover, RCG ECON 2022 suggested 4 workshops for 2022-2023 including further work on 1) the alternative fleet segmentation, 2) finalizing the RWP for economic and social data collection, 3) issues related to fish processing and 4) inventory on issues related to PIM.

For reporting the fishing activity variables, RCG ECON recommended to reduce the workload and double reporting of fishing activity data in the future data calls (FDI/fleet data calls). Submission of the final annual Fishing Activity data (landing; effort) from EU MAP Table 6 should be implemented

in the frame of a Fishery Dependent Information (FDI) data call. The provisional Fishing Activity data can be submitted in the frame of the Fleet Economic Data Call.

#### 4.1.6 ISSG Diadromous species

The ISSG Diadromous Fishes held no full-scale annual meeting in 2022 due to the cancellation of relevant salmonid expert meetings resulting from the war in Ukraine. However, as a number of important reports arose from recently finished eel-associated workshops and projects, a short hybrid-meeting with focus on eel-affairs was held in-line with the 2022 annual WGEEL meeting in Toomebridge, Northern Ireland on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The group discussed several issues and topics associated with diadromous fish data collection that were raised by participating experts or that were derived from outcomes of RCG-related work and ICES EG workshops and meetings. Data in assessments and end-user needs were again a topic of high priority during the meeting. An update from the salmonid end-users WGNAS and WGBAST was presented and brief presentations were given and discussed on DCF-relevant outcomes and findings from WKEELDATA, WKEMP, WKFEA, the GFCM eel project and the SUDOANG project.

WGBAST, due to their cancelled meeting in 2022, reported no urgent updates or issues. WGNAS is currently preparing for a model-benchmark planned for 2023, in which the group's newly developed life cycle model is supposed to be tested. The new model was developed to process and analyse a much broader input range of data compared to before. With regards to eel, WKEELDATA4 formulated (for the first time) a data call for WGEEL to collect and assess yellow and silver eel grouped and individual biometric data. One particular commonality in the outcomes of the other above-mentioned workshops and projects was the identification of regional differences and difficulties in data availability, methodology and hence comparability, which impairs their use in stock assessment. Altogether, outcomes of these projects suggest the need to further develop an assessment model for the eel stock with additional input parameters to the currently used recruitment time-series. For this, outcomes from the Workshop of future eel advice (WKFEA) propose a shift to a spatial model (SUDOANG is a smaller scale working example) and thus more holistic stock assessment model for the European eel, which would be able to incorporate abundance and density data of also later continental life stages. This offers opportunities to cope with spatial differences in environmental factors, fishing regimes, productivity but also fish-guality data and is thus able to provide for estimates on the stock on both, Eel Management Units (EMU) (EU) and whole stock level (ICES). The group currently seeks for appropriate sources of funding for the necessary steps to continue the development of the model, assess data sources and initiate the respective infra structure.

As a resulting step from the progressing development of the stock assessment methodology for eels and salmonids, ISSG proposes a recast of the WKESDCF2012 workshop to include data needs for sea trout in Baltic and Atlantic-draining river systems and re-evaluate the needs for mandatory data collection as well as their data management and data processing for data calls of the respective expert working groups.

#### 4.2 The 2022 RCGs - specific recommendations to be discussed at the Liaison Meeting and proposal for future intersessional work. Follow-up of Decision Making meeting and streamlining work between RCGs (ToR 3A)

#### 4.2.1 RCG Large pelagics

There was no noticeable progress towards resolving the issues mentioned in the recommendations from 2021 and they are still active.

In ISSG Mediterranean Sea Large Pelagic Fisheries there are two recommendations to work on: large\_pelagic\_2021\_r04: Use the standard measure for swordfish amending current observer manuals, and large\_pelagic\_2021\_r03: Increase number of participants in RCG LP ISSGs. Regarding the first, there were two experts commissioned from ICCAT to coordinate research to find new conversion factors for the possible discrepancy. Additionally, there are several groups of observers taking both measures (curved and straight) to make this correlation and it is planned to have some results during the next ICCAT species group meeting. This is a clear focus for this ISSG to cooperate on with the ICCAT, however the issue remains on how to find human resources since ISSG BFT and ISSG LP Med&BS share majority of experts.

Furthermore, for ISSG BFT, it is important that RCG MED&BS accepted to follow the FAO methodology on scientific monitoring of bycatch in the Mediterranean and this decision does not exclude LP and the group needs to decide if it will follow this methodology. Any recommendations in RCG MED&BS regarding the large pelagic fisheries were left aside for RCG LP. Connected to this is the need to progress on work for a regional sampling plan for the large pelagic in MED&BS and it would be a good opportunity to organize a joint session with RCG MED&BS to further discuss this cooperation. During the annual meeting of LP, ICCAT noted that feedback for the end user should be listened when having this type of meetings and that SCRS or the ICCAT secretariat should be notified and invited if sampling plans for LP are to be discussed. It is important to mention that communication between the RCG and ICCAT should be established to determine the needs of ICCAT as an end user and what needs to be done from the part of the RCG LP as a representative of the MS collecting the data to fill existing data gaps. GBYP is considering promoting a specific data call in the future, but the first intention is to follow their workplan that has been delayed by the Covid pandemic and that is to organise a workshop for all countries with BFT fisheries to get a full overview to better assess the current situation and future data call. RCG LP is to participate and in the framework of the workshop the necessity of launching a specific data call on biological data on BFT could be discussed. Finally, on recommendation large\_pelagic\_2021\_rec06 on communication with ICCAT to specify required data for the recreational fisheries - there is no need for this recommendation as it is clear what data should be collected (Task 1 and Task 2). Nevertheless, there are doubts regarding biological data that is not yet compulsory. There is no clear sampling plan decided by SCRS and the workshop mentioned before could be a place to have agreement on this.

After the presentation it was confirmed that the communication between LP and ICCAT should increase to resolve active issues in biological data collection. New insights are expected from the workshop as it is the place to solve both issues regarding the biological sampling and the clarification on what biological data to collect for recreational fisheries especially since the new data call is expected from ICCAT on this and it will be based on findings from this workshop. There is an upcoming SCRS meeting and it is to be seen if there is going to be any news about workshop. Main concern to be aware of is to avoid duplications on biological sampling from ICCAT and MS.

It was added that Denmark started with recreational fishery on BFT and already got a specific biological data call from ICCAT and this should be taken into consideration regarding potential invitation of Denmark to the RCG LP.

#### 4.2.2 RCG Long Distance fisheries

RCG LDF 2022 proposed 2 recommendations to be put forward to the NCs

Recommendation 2022-1: Inclusion of new and updated reference codes in the RDB				
RCG LDF 2022 Recommendation	WGRDBESGOV to take the proposed new and updated reference codes as provided by RCG LDF 2022 into consideration and to include these references in the RDB codes lists.			
Follow-up actions needed	Contact WGRDBESGOV, ICES and put request on agenda for December meeting. Inclusion requested prior to the 2023 RCG LDF data call.			
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	Chair RCG LDF / Data manager RCG LDF			
Time frame (Deadline)	After LM 2022			

Recommendation 2022-2: Extension of the SPRFMO and CECAF Agreements into 2024				
RCG LDF 2022 Recommendation	Further extension of the agreement on joint sampling programme in the SPRFMO area into 2024 is required as this will be the last year under the current SPRFMO monitoring obligations. Further extension of the agreement on joint sampling programme in the CECAF area into 2024 is advisable to align it with an updated agreement for SPRFMO.			
Follow-up actions needed	Poland and The Netherlands to liaise and draft agreement			
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	Irek Wojcik (Poland) and Sieto Verver (The Netherlands)			
Time frame (Deadline)	At the RCG LDF 2023 meeting			

### 4.2.3 RCG Med&BS

The following recommendations were highlighted by the RCG chair:

Métier issues					
RCG Med&BS 2022 Recommendation 1	Updating of the list of regional métiers and collaboration with ISSG on Métier issues.				
Justification	Following LM 2020 recommendations and recommendation n. 2 of the RCG Med&BS 2021, RCG Med&BS agreed to continue with its collaboration with ISSG on Métier Issues to update the métier list for Med&BS to be used in DG MARE and RCG Med&BS data calls, and to harmonise codes, which will allow to avoid overlapping and to apply similar methods and criteria on assigning metiers for fishing activities by MS. Furthermore, procedures for the identification of métiers at MS level, particularly miscellaneous métiers, should be explored with the aim of harmonising the approach.				
Follow-up actions needed	<ul> <li>Analyse the results of RCG Med&amp;BS 2022 data call to check if the regional métier list needs to be updated.</li> <li>MS to provide detailed data on the landing, effort and landing value for miscellaneous métiers, if needed.</li> <li>RCG chairs to organise a meeting with ISSG on Métier Issues.</li> <li>MS should ensure participation of national experts in the meeting and collaborate with the ISSG on Métier Issues.</li> </ul>				

Responsible persons for follow-up actions	RCG Chairs, MS
Time frame (Deadline)	End of 2023

Establishment of a scientific network for sampling optimisation			
RCG MED & BS 2022 Recommendation 8	RCG MED&BS 2022 proposed to establish an ISSG for sampling optimisation.		
Justification	The 2018 RCG Med&BS agreed on the need to set up a network of experts to be trained and use the tool developed under STREAM and STREAMLINE projects on sampling stratification and optimisation of biological commercial data. It was further agreed that MS should nominate experts to be part of the network, as outlined in recommendation n. 10 of the RCG Med&BS 2021. A preliminary list of experts nominated by the MS exists and should be confirmed/updated. However, the scientific network for sampling optimisation has not been established so far.		
Follow-up actions needed	Med&BS NCs should update or complement the list of national experts for participating in the network on sampling optimisation; the nominations should be communicated to the nominated coordinator of the ISSG for sampling optimisation (Ms Isabella Bitetto) and RCG Med&BS chairs.		
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	RCG Med&BS NCs, RCG Med&BS chairs, moderators of the scientific network for sampling optimisation.		
Time frame (Deadline)	Confirmation of nominations by 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2022. Submission of a progress report by the RCG Med&BS 2023 Annual Meeting.		
Comments	This recommendation is recalled from 2019.		

### 4.2.4 RCG NANSEA/BAL

Since 2020, the recommendations that are formulated in the RCG Baltic and RCG NANSEA are stored in an excel database which enables the chairs to keep track of and ensure follow-up of all recommendations. During the LM the creation of a recommendation database including all RCGs was briefly discussed. An online meeting with all RCG chairs for a more in-depth discussion of such a database was agreed.

The recommendations on implementing the collection of additional variables needed in the control regulation for (i) bycatch estimates and (ii) SSF effort estimates were briefly discussed as they concern all RCGs. An update was provided during the NC meeting by the Commission on the current status of negotiations for the new control regulation. The Commission highlighted that MSs can feed into the process via the Council. Also, the recommendation directed to DG Environment (DG ENV) on providing a prioritization of species list for PETS sampling was discussed with the other RCG chairs and DG ENV. DG ENV indicated that the current advisory request in ICES and the completed risk assessments should further help with prioritization. They offered a bilateral meeting with the RCGs to further discuss this.

The full list of RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic ISSGs was presented at the LM. Some ISSGs are already pan-regional, having participants from more than one RCG, and some ISSGs are discussing issues that are common for many marine regions and therefore sharing experiences and knowledge can benefit all. During the LM it became clear that two ISSGs (i.e. stomach analyses and recreational fisheries) are doing similar work as what is done in the other RCGs. Therefore, in order to support

pan-regional contact, the RCG LP and Med&BS chairs have been put into contact with the relevant ISSG chairs.

Seven decisions were agreed by the relevant NCs for the RCG NANSEA and Baltic. During the LM it was discussed what to do when not all relevant NCs are present during the DM. It was concluded that in such case the particular NCs would be sent an email, in which all relevant decisions are communicated accompanied with a deadline for response, emphasizing that no response will be considered as agreement.

#### 4.2.5 RCG ECON

As a follow up on fishing activity variables submission for AER and FDI data calls, a suggestion on the following recommendation was highlighted by the RCG chair:

Fishing activity data submission				
Recommendation 7	Submission of the final annual Fishing Activity data (landing; effort) from EUMAP Table 6 should be implemented in the frame of a Fishery Dependent Information (FDI) data call. The provisional Fishing Activity data can be submitted in the frame of the Fleet Economic Data Call.			
TOR 4	Issues related to WP implementation and data transmission			
Justification	The landings and effort data from the EUMAP table 6 are requested annually twice a year in the frame of Fleet Economic data call and FDI data call. In order to improve the MS performance and minimise the discrepancies for the submitted data and decrease the number of the DT issues, the possibility of combining these two calls should be considered.			
Follow-up actions needed	The discussion between economists and biologists should be organised in the frame of RCGs ISSG. The comparison of landing and effort data from both data calls should be done. The definitions, clustering procedures and allocation vessel to the segment should be checked between the data calls.			
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	JRC, MS, RCGs chairs			
Time frame (Deadline)	2022-2023			

As a follow up on fishing activity variables submission for AER and FDI data calls, a suggestion on how to proceed was drafted by the chair of the ISSG metier and the chairs of RCG ECON (Annex 4).

# 4.3 RCG data calls – overview of how MS responded and discussion on future use and further exploration by the RCGs (ToR 3B)

#### 4.3.1 RCG Large pelagics

So far, the RCG LP is not involved in any RCG data calls.

#### 4.3.2 RCG Long Distance fisheries

Prior to the 2022 annual RCG LDF meeting and in line with the continued 2015 recommendation to address future data calls to all non-landlocked MS, the 2022 data call was sent to all National

Correspondents of these MS. The data call requests to upload the data into the RCG Regional Database (RDB), hosted and maintained by ICES in Copenhagen. As in previous years, 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 also 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. This overview doesn't discriminate between the various types of responses received. Some contributions were completed beyond the deadline for various reasons; however, this was not considered a major issue as the work could be completed in time. MS are reminded that data can be updated throughout the year and MS are encouraged to do so where applicable. In particular, some MS still may update historic data.

EU Member State	Response (Y/N)	Activity last year (Y/N)	Data provide (Y/N/NA)
Belgium	Y	Ν	NA
Bulgaria	Y	Ν	NA
Croatia	Y	Ν	NA
Cyprus	Ν		
Denmark	Y	Ν	NA
Estonia	Y	Y	Y
Finland	Ν		NA
France	Y	N	NA
Germany	Y	Y	Y
Greece	Y	N	NA
Ireland	Y	Ν	NA
Italy	Y	Y	Y
Latvia	Y	Y	Y
Lithuania	Y	Y	Y
Malta	Y	Ν	NA
Netherlands	Y	Y	Y
Poland	Y	Y	Y
Portugal	Y	Y	Y
Romania	Ν		NA
Slovenia	Y	N	NA
Spain	Y	Y	Y
Sweden	Y	NA	NA

Cyprus, Finland and Romania didn't respond to the data call issued by RCG LDF. RCG LDF noted the non-response while realizing these MS have never had long-distance fisheries of relevance for this group.

## 4.3.3 RCG Med&BS

All member states have submitted their data call to the RCG Med&BS on time, and there was no missing information in the provided data sets. Moreover, no major issues were encountered during the process of data quality assurance. Two timeframes, 2018-2020 and 2019-2021, were requested from each member state in order to make a comparison between the two timeframes. As expected, some changes in the reported landings data for a number of species were reported for each member state.

As in previous years, the ranking system was applied in line with the old DCF decision 2010/93/EU, according to which ranking of the metiers is performed three times; firstly, on the share in the total landings, secondly on the share in the total value of the commercial landings, and thirdly on the share in the total effort. The ranking system was applied to the average data on landings, value and effort pertaining to the 2018-2020 and 2019-2021 timeframes. From the comparative analysis of the selected metiers, no changes between the two timeframes were reported for the Black Sea, whereas for the Mediterranean the same metiers were selected apart from OTH. Consequently, it was suggested that in the upcoming RCG Med&BS data calls, only one period of data shall be requested

from the member states since there is an insignificant effect on the outcomes from the ranking system.

#### 4.3.4 RCG NANSEA/BAL

All countries responded to RCG NANSEA and Baltic data call before the deadline. No major data submission issues were reported. The general impression is that the data submission process has improved over the years. There is a strong need from the RCGs to have access to submitted data immediately after the data call deadline. It is motivated by the necessity to prepare the results of data analysis carried out by RCG ISSGs, to be ready before the Technical Meeting. Hence, RCG NANSEA and Baltic made a recommendation addressed to ICES, to grant RCG ISSG's chairs the privileges to download data from RDB/RDBES. The recommendation has been registered by ICES.

#### 4.3.5 RCG ECON

RCG ECON do not organise data calls.

### 4.4 Chairmanship and venues (ToR 3C)

#### 4.4.1 Overview of chairs, dates and venues for 2023

- RCG Baltic (Chair: Maciej Adamowicz) same dates and venue as RCG NANSEA:
  - 1-2 days of virtual meeting mid-May 2023
  - 6-9 June 2023, Gdansk (Poland) or Vigo (Spain)
- RCG NANSEA (Chairs: Dália Reis and Josefine Egekvist) same dates and venue as RCG Baltic:
  - 1-2 days of virtual meeting mid-May 2023
  - 6-9 June 2023, Gdansk (Poland) or Vigo (Spain)
- The 2023 RCG LDF meeting is expected to be held in early July. Most likely, the dates will fall during:
  - the week 3rd-7th of July. The meeting will be chaired by Irek Wójcik, whose second term of the chairmanship ends in 2023. At the RCG LDF annual Technical meeting in 2023 a new chair will be elected.
  - Regarding the venue, Lithuania invites the group to visit Klaipeda or Vilnius (t.b.c.) for its next RCG LDF meeting. As back-up options, Spain, Poland and The Netherlands also flagged the offer to host next RCG LDF meeting
- The RCG Med&BS will be chaired by Beatriz Guijarro (Spain) and shall be co-chaired by France who will be nominating their co-chair by the end of November 2022. The RCG Med&BS 2023 Annual Meeting & Meeting with End-users of Scientific Data will be taking place from.
  - $\circ$   $\ \ \,$  the 29<sup>th</sup> of August till the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2023.
  - The venue still needs to be determined.
- RCG ECON (Chairs: Heidi Pokki and Hans van Oostenbrugge)
  - Preliminary dates 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> of June
  - Venue: TBD, Brussels?

#### 4.4.2 Finding chairs; issues and proposals for supportive measures

For the RCG Large pelagics it has not been possible to find a new chair and it was agreed that the NC's need to make this decision. Since the nomination did not occur up to the decision meeting with the NC's there was a proposition to run a script to randomly determine the future chairs and their rotation as a simple and transparent solution. Some rules were decided, mainly that for the first and upcoming year the chair is going to be elected for one year and that in the case of MS not being able to provide a chair they can find a replacement among other MS. This was accepted by the majority of MS present in the meeting. After the script was run, the NC of Ireland volunteered Ireland to provide the next chair instead of Italy which was first on the list. Accordingly, starting with the year 2023, the chair of RCG LP is from Ireland with a co-chair from Malta. Following in the succession from 2024 and onwards, to provide a co-chair (and then chair) are these countries: Portugal, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, France, Spain and Croatia. Of note is that this list of chairs selection is repeatable and should solve the issue of chairing.

# 4.5 Future steps in RCG pan-regional and intersessional work (i.e. regional work plans): exchange of ideas and discussion (ToR 3D)

#### *4.5.1 Fishn Co grant: regional workplans*

The Fishn'Co project funded under the EU Call for Proposals MARE/2020/08 (Strengthening regional cooperation in the field of data collection) has a main objective of strengthening EU-MAP data collection by developing Regional Work Plans (RWP) for RCG NANS&EA, Baltic, Large Pelagics and Economic issues. An overview of the project and work plan structure can be found on the <u>RCG website<sup>4</sup></u> where a summary brochure in the form of <u>leaflet<sup>5</sup></u> is also available.

After the agreement in 2021 to set up a non-binding RWP test 2022 for both RCG NANS&EA and Baltic, the intersession was devoted to continuing the development of collaboration and common agreements in all project thematic focus areas. In parallel, Fishn'Co worked on establishing decision making structures and processes for Regional Work Plan and developed a communication and dissemination strategy.

One of the main achievements in 2022 in preparation of the RCG Technical Meetings was the development and analysis of a large consultation of the DC-MAP National correspondents (NCs). This consultation was deemed necessary to prepare the ground for the setup of the first official RWP 2025-2027 to be finalised by mid-2023. The consultation proved successful with most of the NCs having responded (24 out of 26) and 100% in both the NANSEA and the Baltic regions. A report on the full analysis of responses was provided to all NC in advance of their September 2022 Decision Meeting and Liaison Meeting. In a nutshell, the outputs of the consultation (figure 4.5.1.1) confirm the general agreement on developing an RWP 2025-27 by mid-2023 with, at least, the general tables already present in the test run 2022 and confirm the need to use the Fishn'Co infographics for monitoring progress in coordinating regional activities. Some thematic focus areas (Recreational fisheries, PETS sampling, Small-scale fisheries and stomach sampling) were the object of several questions and received large number of comments which will need to be taken into account in the final stage of the Fishn'Co project.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> <u>https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/fishnco/</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> <u>https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/fishn-co\_Briefing\_final.pdf</u>

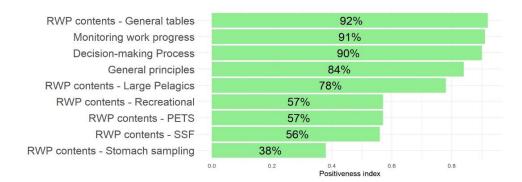


Figure 4.5.1.1 – Positiveness index of responses per sections of the consultation

In conclusion, the agreement was reached during the 2022 NC Decision meeting to develop the RWP for the period 2025-27 by mid-2023 with no adoption by the EU Commission services and mandate was given to RCG/ISSG on Regional Work Plan to take over the Fishn'Co project to follow-up on the RWP development in 2023 onward. The implications for the Fishn'Co project being to prepare as much as possible the finalisation of the RWP and organise a smooth transition to the ISSG/RWP.

### 4.5.2 Streamline grant

Alessandro Ligas, STREAMLINE coordinator, and Antonio Cervantes, STREAMLINE WP1 leader, presented an overview of the results achieved so far during the implementation of the grant, with particular focus on the draft proposal for non-binding Regional Work Plans (RWPs), and how the grant contributed in filling in the information gaps and overcoming the barriers preventing the development of regional work plans in the Mediterranean and Black Sea so far.

Taking advantage of these findings and a proactive cooperation between the STREAMLINE grant and the RCG Med&BS (including the organization of two Joint Workshops on recreational fisheries in the Med&BS and on data needed to assess the impact of fisheries on the marine ecosystem, which met online on the 27th and 28th April 2022), a draft proposal for a non-binding RWP was prepared by the STREAMLINE grant and the RCG Med&BS. This non-binding RWP will be submitted by October 2022 (for possible implementation in 2023), and includes the following points:

- 1. Regional coordination for sampling marine recreational fisheries (textbox 2.4);
- 2. Regional coordination for incidental catches of sensitive species (textbox 4.2);
- 3. Regional coordination for Research surveys at sea (including demersal fish stomach contents collection and analysis) (textbox 2.6);
- 4. Regional coordination for sampling plan for biological data (Sampling design optimization on 4 case studies) (textbox 2.5).

A timeline towards the submission of the non-binding RWP to the STECF EWG 22-18 has been agreed, including bilateral meetings between the STREAMLINE consortium and each MS. The final version of the non-binding RWP will be issued by the first week of October to be submitted to COM and STECF.

Under STREAMLINE WP3, a proposal for a general approach to decision-making structure and process for developing RWPs under the umbrella of the RCG Med&BS was drafted, and reported in Deliverable D3.1 "Definition of the decision-making structure".

This scheme is in line with the timeline proposed by the RCGs NANSEA and Baltic for the step-wise approach and the option of proceeding with a RWP 2025-2027 without formal adoption by COM, and will support the RCG Med&BS is drafting and submitting RWPs by middle 2023.

## **5** GOVERNANCE (TOR 4)

# 5.1 Follow-up on RCG Rules of Procedures developments in each of the RCGs (ToR 4A)

#### 5.1.1 RCG Large pelagics

No changes were made in 2021/2022.

#### 5.1.2 RCG Long Distance fisheries

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. Since Portugal has also become a member of RCG LDF, the RoP were also adopted by Portugal in September 2020.

Following the decision in 2021 of adopting common RoP for RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic, the 2022 RCG LDF reviewed the option to align its RoP with the common RoP to avoid the situation where one MS as a member of two or more RCGs would need to adhere to a different set of rules. The 2022 RCG LDF concluded that the current situation is not causing any conflicts for the MS, though an indepth analysis would be appropriate to ensure that the different RoP are not in conflict by design. This analysis will be done intersessionally prior to the 2023 meeting under the responsibility of the RCG LDF chair.

From 2022 onwards, the governance of data collection in the NAFO area falls under the remit of RCG LDF. Resulting of this move, Estonia became a new member of RCG LDF. Therefore, pending the revision of the current RoP and with the approval of Estonia, RCG LDF considers Estonia to be a full member of the group as if Estonia was included in the current RoP.

#### 5.1.3 RCG governance of NAFO area

Following a recommendation from the RCG NANSEA a decision was taken in 2021 to move <u>NAFO</u> area under the realm of the RCG LDF and NAFO issues were for the first time addressed in the RCG LDF 2022 meeting, focusing on becoming familiar with NAFO procedures and MS activity in NAFO area. A NAFO subgroup was created that started by characterizing the EU fleet/fisheries in NAFO, identifying, the MS involved, métiers, species, catch and sampling levels.

#### 5.1.4 RCG Med&BS

No changes were made in 2021/2022.

#### 5.1.5 RCG NANSEA/BAL

No changes were made in 2021/2022.

## 5.1.6 RCG ECON

No changes were made in 2021/2022.

#### 5.2 Structure of RCGs and cooperation. Lessons learned from combined 2021 RCGs. Tentative changes in structure and in RCG number (ToR 4B)

### 5.2.1 SECWEB grant

From January – September 2022: different consultations with the MS took place and gave insight in the diversity of the MS administrations and the individual approaches needed to achieve a long-term funding scenario for the implementation of the secretariat and the website.

- $\rightarrow$  Multi-lateral agreement in theory best option
  - Based on experience of the past (cfr survey) & feedback from different MS not the optimal long term scenario
  - Need to buy time
- $\rightarrow$  A step wise approach need to buy time to guarantee continuity from 1st January 2023
  - Intermediate solution for 2023 => engagement per MS agreement per MS invoice per MS: all-in line with the administrative regulations of the individual MS and covering the amount per year foreseen in the financial scenario proposed
  - Stable structure => an 'AC similar' setup more complex but the optimal solution
  - Possible impact on availability of services

The scheme below (Figure 5.2.1) reflects the stepwise approach of as well the transition period, as the flow to achieve the long-term scenario for all MS.

#### The budget needed for the implementation:

- $\rightarrow$  150 000 euros: the preliminary annual budget,
- $\rightarrow$  Amount has been calculated based on
  - Estimations done with the experience gained running the project for the last 18 months. The total amount estimated is expected to cover the RCG Secretariat Activities for all the RCGs for one year, and it does not include VAT.
  - The proposed budgets are relevant for the period 2023-2025 and is in alignment with the decision period of the COM. Per three year, an update of the calculations will be done, in order to have increase in costs taken into account.

In the proposed scenario, the annual budget is divided in **three components**:

- $\rightarrow$  First component: Direct contribution from the European Commission.
- → The second component is based on the distribution of the GLOBAL RESOURCES FROM THE EMFAF PER MEMBER STATE FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1 JANUARY 2021 TO 31 DECEMBER 2027 from ANNEX V of Regulation (EU) 2021/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/1004. The proposed amount of 52 500 euro is distributed according to the % of the EMFAF budget of each MS.
- → The third (and most complex component) is related to the complexity of the administrative support of each regional working group and the participation of each country in different RCGs. Based on the experience gained throughout the project. The weight of each RCG was estimated as:
  - 30% for the RCG MED&BS,

- 20% for RCG ECON,
- 20% for RCG NANSEA,
- 10% for RCG LP,
- 10% for RCG LDF and
- 10% for RCG Baltic.

Additionally, the participation of each MS in different RCGs is also considered; 4 landlocked countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia) are members only of RCG ECON. The number for participating MS in the RCG varied between 8 MS in RCG Baltic and 26 MS in RCG ECON. The total parts (74) consist of 8 MS participating in RCG Baltic, 10 MS in RCG Med&BS, 13 MS in RCG NANSEA, 8 MS in RCG LDF, 9 MS in RCG LP and 26 in RCG ECON. The proposed amount of 52 500 euro for this component is equal to the distribution of the EMFAF budget.

Do not forget: Visit <a href="https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/">https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/</a>

## Fisheries Data Collection – 19th Liaison Meeting - Report

	When	Intermediate approach	Long term scenario
	20 September NC meeting	Presentation of final approach	Presentation of final approach
Roadmap to implement a long term scenario for	>15 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	<ol> <li>Create a legal reference for the national administration: MS who do not have a text box under section Text box 1b of the WP 20222- 2024/2027 =&gt; insert text communicated dd. 08/09/2022 and resubmit WP</li> <li>The setup of a contractualisation calendar adapted to the requirements of the MS to make clear for all which countries can formalise the process in Nov-Dec</li> </ol>	Exploring the 'Council' structure
funding secretariat, website and divers tools	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2022	First set of MS engagement (payment not requested yet) Continuation of point 2 above Application extension 2 months	Exploring the 'Council' structure
	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2022	Second set of MS engagement (payment not requested yet)	Exploring the 'Council' structure
	1st January 20233 Mid January 2023	Third set of MS engagement (payment not requested yet)	Information & communication to MS of the structure NC meeting: feedback from MS Follow up of the process
	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2023 Mid February 2023	Final set of MS engagement ((payment not requested yet)	Final version of new Structure
	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2023 & following months	All MS engagement is with service provider. MS contacted for agreements – based on administrative needs of the individual MS	Administrative process to approve the structure
	From 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2023	Official confirmation financial contribution EC to expect (either 45K€ per year or 140K for three year)	Continuation of the administrative process
	1 <sup>st</sup> July – 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023	Invoicing to MS – based on the preferences & regulations of the individual MS administration	Continuation of the administrative process
	15 December 2023		Process finalised
	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2024	No individual agreements anymore	AC like structure implemented and up&going

Figure 5.2.1. Roadmap to implement a long-term scenario for funding the RCG's Secretariat, website and diverse tools.

Governance (ToR 4)

## 5.2.2 Future position of the ISSG Diadromous species

Diadromous species in EU data collection (Eel, Salmon, Sea trout) are distributed pan-regionally and across different RCGs, underlining the need for pan-regional assessment and management. Due to ongoing work regarding data needs and model development in respective ICES diadromous expert groups, as well as due to the poor stock statuses of salmon and eel, LM has decided to extend current ISSG status, in terms of representation at the LM, for another year. ISSG Diadromous will report again at LM 2023 and its status will then be re-assessed.

AOB

## 6 AOB

## 6.1 RCG LDF ISSG on SPRFMO Observer Programme Accreditation

A fundamental change in the future organization and implementation of the South Pacific fisheries data collection is the result of the adoption by the SPRFMO of the "*Conservation and Management Measure Establishing the SPRFMO Observer Programme*" (CMM 16-2022)<sup>6</sup> containing the requirement for observer programmes to undergo the SPRFMO accreditation procedure. Therefore, as of 01/01/2025, fisheries data from EU vessels fishing in this area can only be collected by observers accredited in accordance with SPRFMO requirements.

To meet the above obligation the RCG LDF established the Intersessional Sub-Group on SPRFMO Observer Programme (ISSG SPRFMO-OP) with a kick-off meeting in May 2021. After a series of meetings, including two technical meetings with the participation of COM, industry, Institutes implementing DCF, SPRFMO and the Accreditation Evaluator (MRAG) appointed by SPRMFO, an Action Plan was agreed in December 2021, which was approved by COM and MS fisheries administrations.

The agreed plan of action for the OP accreditation process implementation provides for:

- COM, Germany, Lithuania, Poland and the Netherlands appointed a national focal point for the accreditation process respectively Benoît Marcoux (COM, B2), Christoph Stransky (DEU), Vilda Griuniene (LTU), Irek Wojcik (POL) and Sieto Verver (NLD).
- The Netherlands will act as project leader for the process. Scientist Tom Bangma (Wageningen Marine Research) coordinates the project and will be the focal point in communication with MRAG (MRAG Ltd is an independent fisheries and aquatic resource consulting firm and has been selected to evaluate SPRFMO Member States' observer programs against the requirements set out in CMM 16-2022).
- Initiate the accreditation process by announcing the planned accreditation at the 10th annual SPFRMO meeting (24-28 January).
- Germany, Lithuania, Poland and the Netherlands to identify candidate observers to establish a
  pool of observers to undergo the accreditation process. Preliminary, 4 candidates from Poland,
  1-2 candidates from Germany, 1-2 candidates from The Netherlands and 1 candidate from
  Lithuania.
- This observer pool will form the basic team of EU observers that will undertake the observer trips from 2025 onwards.
- Consultation with MRAG to outline the accreditation process.
- Addressing administrative requirements and documentation according to SPRFMO CMM 16-2022 (Q4 2022 – Q1 2023).
- Evaluation by MRAG (Q1-Q4 2023).
- Finalization of accreditation (Q4 2023 or Q1 2024 at the latest).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> <u>https://www.sprfmo.int/assets/Fisheries/Conservation-and-Management-Measures/2022-CMMs/CMM-16-2022-Observer-Programme-7Mar22.pdf</u>

AOB

• Setup multilateral agreement between Germany, Lithuania, Poland and the Netherlands to set up and arrange practical implementation of the observer programme (it depends on the progress of all OP steps but preliminary in 2023 or 2024 on RCG LDF annual technical meeting).

Official announcement on the intention to start the accreditation process was made by EU delegation in January 2022 at the SPRFMO 10th annual session.

The main assumption of the proposed solution is that instead of individual MSs programmes, the EU Observer Program will be subject to accreditation (saving costs and increasing flexibility) and that accreditation will be based on a model of service provider - with the NLD acting as the service provider, sourcing and deploying scientific observers from an international pool of accredited observers.

## 7 ANNEXES

## **ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

The 19<sup>th</sup> Liaison Meeting was chaired by Marie Storr-Paulsen (Denmark) and the group met with the following participants:

Name	Countr	Role / Affiliation	Email
Marie Storr-Paulsen	y DK	Chair	msp@aqua.dtu.dk
Federico De Rossi		End user - GFCM	federico.derossi@fao.org
Lotte Worsøe Clausen		End user – ICES	lotte.worsoe.clausen@ices.dk
Jan De Haes		End user – ICES	jan.dehaes@ices.dk
Cynthia Fernandez- Diaz		End user - IOTC	IOTC-Secretariat@fao.org
Tiffany Vidal		End user - SPRFMO	tvidal@sprfmo.int
Christoph Stransky	DE	End user - STECF	christoph.stransky@thuenen.de
Sven Stöetera	DE	RCG BAL co-chair	sven.stoetera@thuenen.de
Maciej Adamowicz	PL	RCG BAL co-chair	madamowicz@mir.gdynia.pl
Heiddi Pokki	FI	RCG ECON co-chair	Heidi.Pokki@luke.fi
Irina Davidjuka	LV	RCG ECON co-chair	irina.davidjuka@bior.lv
Hans van	NL	RCG ECON co-chair	hans.vanoostenbrugge@wur.nl
Oostenbrugge			55 -
Irek Wójcik	PL	RCG LDF chair	iwojcik@mir.gdynia.pl
Josip Males	HR	RCG LP chair	males@izor.hr
Jurgen A. Mifsud	MT	RCG MED&BS co-chair	jurgen.a.mifsud@gov.mt
Beatriz Guijarro	ES	RCG MED&BS co-chair	beatriz.guijarro@ieo.csic.es
Kelly Camilleri	MT	RCG MED&BS assistant	kelly.camilleri.1@gov.mt
Harriet van Overzee	NL	RCG NANSEA co-chair	harriet.vanoverzee@wur.nl
Dália Reis	PT	RCG NANSEA co-chair	dalia.cc.reis@azores.gov.pt
Josefine Egekvist	DK	RCG NANSEA co-chair	jsv@aqua.dtu.dk
Lucia Zarauz	ES	WGRDBESGOV chair	lzarauz@azti.es
Annette Hurrelmann	EU	DG MARE, Head of Unit C3	annette.hurrelmann@ec.europa .eu
Monika Sterczewska	EU	DG MARE, Unit C3	monika.sterczewska@ec.europa .eu
Leonie O'Dowd	EU	DG MARE, Unit C3	Leonie.O'DOWD@ec.europa.eu
Jaana Mettala	EU	DG MARE, Unit C3	Jaana.Mettala@ec.europa.eu
Francoise Verheyen	EU	DG MARE, Unit C3	francoise.verheyen@ec.europa. eu
Zeynep Hekim	EU	JRC	hekim.zeynep@ec.europa.eu
Venetia Kostopoulou (2nd day pm)	EU	DG MARE, Unit C3	
Vedran Nikolic (2nd day pm)	EU	DG ENV	vedran.nikolic@ec.europa.eu
Joël Vigneau	FR	FISHN 'CO grant leader	joel.vigneau@ifremer.fr
Stefanos Kavadas	GR	RDB FIS grant leader	stefanos@hcmr.gr
Els Torreele	BE	SECWEB grant leader	els.torreele@ilvo.vlaanderen.be
Rosa Maria Fernandez	ES	SECWEB grant	rfernandez@cetmar.org
Susana Rivero	ES	SECWEB grant/RCG's Secretariat	secretariat@fisheries-rcg.eu
Alessandro Ligas	IT	STREAMLINE grant leader	ligas@cibm.it
Antonio Cervantes	ES	STREAMLINE grant	antonio.cervantes@ieo.csic.es
		12	

Name	Countr y	Role / Affiliation	Email
Marko Freese	DE	ISSG Diadromous	marko.freese@thuenen.de
Tapani Pakarinen	FI	ISSG Diadromous	Tapani.Pakarinen@luke.fi

## ANNEX 2: LIAISON MEETING 2022 AGENDA

### **19TH LIAISON MEETING**

#### Timetable:

21 SEPTEMBER 2022, 9:30-18:00

22 SEPTEMBER 2022, 9:00-16:00

#### Venue:

Borschette Conference Centre, Rue Froissart, 36, 1040 Brussels

#### Day 1 (21 September)

Liaison Meeting – interaction with end user (end users, RCG chairs, COM)

- 09:00 Meeting room open
- 09:30 Welcome by the Commission
- 10:00 12:30 morning session

#### TOR 1 Discussion with end users

- A. End-user role and new NWPs (Liaison Meeting chair and COM)
- B. End-user needs and interaction: presentations from end users (ICES, STECF, JRC, RFMOs) on:
  - current **interaction** between the end user and RCGs/data collectors and proposals for improvement
  - data needs and data quality
  - o ongoing developments
  - $\circ$   $\,$  main changes in data calls anticipated next year  $\,$

#### 12:30 - 14:00 lunch break

14:00 - 18:00 afternoon session

#### TOR 1 continued (if necessary)

#### TOR 2 Data management

- A. Highlights in progress achieved in 2021-2022 in the Regional Databases for RCGs and problems identified (end users ICES, GFCM, ICCAT, IOTC) share the data policy in background
- B. Highlights in actions related to the future developments for Regional Databases (RCG chairs, RDBFIS, RDBES)

15:30-16:00 break

#### TOR 3 RCG activities

Highlights in RCG activities (show-case important achievements relevant to end users and other RCGs)

#### Day 2 (22 September)

#### Liaison meeting (RCG chairs, COM)

9:00-12:30 morning session

Introduction from the Chair

#### TOR 3 RCG activities (follow-up) Discussion on possible follow-up to the main outputs/ recommendations

- A. The 2022 RCGs recommendations and proposals for future intersessional work (Liaison Meeting and RCG chairs)
- B. RCG data calls overview of how MS responded and discussion on future use (RCG chairs)
- C. Announcement of new chairs (where relevant), next meeting(s) and venues
- D. Future steps in RCG pan-regional and intersessional work (i.e. regional work plans, country profiles): exchange of ideas and discussion (COM, Liaison Meeting, RCG Chairs)
  - Fish'nCo (RCG chairs/project coordinators)
  - Streamline (RCG chairs/ project coordinators)

#### TOR 4 Governance

- A. Follow-up on RCG Rules of Procedures (RoP) developments in each of the RCGs (Liaison Meeting, RCG Chairs)
- B. Structure of RCGs and cooperation. Discuss needs for new pan-regional ISSGs (RCG chairs)
  - Secweb (current output available to RCGs)
  - Diadromous ISSG (position and future participation to LM)

#### 12:30 - 14:00 LUNCH

#### TOR 5 AOB

16:00 Closing of the meeting by the COM

# ANNEX 3 [TO BE DISCUSSED] OVERVIEW OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

## **RCG Long Distance Fisheries 2022 Recommendations**

Recommendation 2022-1:	Inclusion of new and updated reference codes in the RDB
Justification	WGRDBESGOV to take the proposed new and updated reference codes as provided by RCG LDF 2022 into consideration and to include these references in the RDB codes lists.
Follow-up actions needed	Contact WGRDBESGOV, ICES and put request on agenda for December meeting. Inclusion requested prior to the 2023 RCG LDF data call.
Responsible persons for follow- up actions	Chair RCG LDF / Data manager RCG LDF
Time frame (Deadline)	After LM 2022
Comments	

Recommendation 2022-2:	Extension of the SPRFMO and CECAF Agreements into 2024
Justification	Further extension of the agreement on joint sampling programme in the SPRFMO area into 2024 is required as this will be the last year under the current SPRFMO monitoring obligations.
	Further extension of the agreement on joint sampling programme in the CECAF area into 2024 is advisable to align it with an updated agreement for SPRFMO.
Follow-up actions needed	Poland and The Netherlands to liaise and draft agreement
Responsible persons for follow- up actions	Irek Wojcik (Poland) and Sieto Verver (The Netherlands)
Time frame (Deadline)	At the RCG LDF 2023 meeting
Comments	

#### RCG Med&BS 2022 Recommendations

RCG Med&BS 2022 Recommendation 1	Updating of the list of regional métiers and collaboration with ISSG on Métier issues.
Justification	Following LM 2020 recommendations and recommendation n. 2 of the RCG Med&BS 2021, RCG Med&BS agreed to continue with its collaboration with ISSG on Métier Issues to update the métier list for Med&BS to be used in DG MARE and RCG Med&BS data calls, and to harmonise codes, which will allow to avoid overlapping and to apply similar methods and criteria on assigning metiers for fishing activities by MS.

Follow-up actions	<ul> <li>Furthermore, procedures for the identification of métiers at MS level, particularly miscellaneous métiers, should be explored with the aim of harmonising the approach.</li> <li>Analyse the results of RCG Med&amp;BS 2022 data call to check if the</li> </ul>
needed	<ul> <li>regional métier list needs to be updated.</li> <li>MS to provide detailed data on the landing, effort and landing value for miscellaneous métiers, if needed.</li> <li>RCG chairs to organise a meeting with ISSG on Métier Issues.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>MS should ensure participation of national experts in the meeting and collaborate with the ISSG on Métier Issues.</li> </ul>
Responsible persons for follow- up actions	RCG Chairs, MS
Time frame (Deadline)	End of 2023
Comments	

RCG MED & BS 2022	Drafting of the RWP on recreational fisheries to be submitted by
Recommendation 2	September-October 2023 (implementation 2025-2027) and RCG Med&BS
	Workshop on recreational fisheries
Justification	Taking into consideration Recommendations n. 3 and n. 7 of RCG Med&BS
	2021, and the timeframe for the submission of RWPs (without adoption
	by COM), RCG Med&BS 2022 recommends organizing a workshop on
	recreational fisheries to discuss methodologies and review the list of
	priority species for biological data collection on a regional level.
	In line with Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2021/1167 MS should
	carry out statistically robust multispecies sampling schemes, allowing for
	catch quantities estimation for stocks in recreational fisheries, as a
	minimum for species listed in Table 4 of the Annex to the Commission
	Delegated Decision (EU) 2021/1167, i.e. eel (including in fresh water),
	elasmobranchs and highly migratory ICCAT species.
	During the Workshops on recreational fisheries in 2021 and 2022 (Joint
	Workshop), MS presented results of pilot studies and updated on the
	implementation of recreational fisheries monitoring under their current
	Work Plans. Based on contributions from all MS, a list of priority species
	was identified at marine region level for which biological sampling is
	needed as recreational catches affect the development of fish stocks.
	With the aim to create a common list of species agreed at regional (or
	sub-regional) level, MS were asked to further work on a list of priority
	species for data collection according to results of pilot studies, expert
	knowledge, current WPs, GFCM support, STECF EWG 22-18 comments,
	preliminary results of the implementation of the non-binding RWP drafted
	with the support of the STREAMLINE grant.
	In addition, methodological approach should be consistent for all MS,
	independently of the waters in which the fishing activity takes place in
	order to avoid discrepancies between MS (establish minimum
	requirements), in line with the GFCM "Handbook for data collection on
	recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea"
	(http://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/series/technical-

<ul> <li>Update</li> <li>Discussion in recr</li> <li>Proposidata c</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>caughi</li> <li>Coordi</li> <li>Draft I</li> <li>2023.</li> <li>Collabis specie</li> <li>Includ</li> </ul>	23 ToRs: e the list of priority species by sub-region. e on the results of the estimation of fisher's populations. so on the harmonization of methodologies for data collection reational fisheries. Se list of species, methodology and variables for biological ollection. on data collection for vulnerable species incidentally t in recreational fisheries. inate with RDBFIS on the uploading and storing of RFs data. RWP on recreational fisheries to be submitted by Sept-Oct orate with RCG LP on sampling plan for large pelagic s. e all relevant stakeholders (DG MARE, DG ENV, STECF, GFCM, RCG LP, ICES and RDBFIS). airs, WS chairs, ISSG RWPs, STREAMLINE and RDBFIS
Responsible persons for follow- up actionsMSs, RCG Ch coordinators, I WS chairs: Participant Participant	raskevi (Voula) Karachle, Manos Koutrakis, Fabio Grati
Responsible persons for follow- up actionsMSs, RCG Ch coordinators, I WS chairs: PaTimeframeWS Dates: Jur	raskevi (Voula) Karachle, Manos Koutrakis, Fabio Grati ne-July 2023, one-day meeting (virtual or hybrid)
Responsible persons for follow- up actionsMSs, RCG Ch coordinators, I WS chairs: PaTimeframeWS Dates: Jur	raskevi (Voula) Karachle, Manos Koutrakis, Fabio Grati
Responsible persons for follow- up actionsMSs, RCG Ch coordinators, I WS chairs: PaTimeframeWS Dates: Jur	raskevi (Voula) Karachle, Manos Koutrakis, Fabio Grati ne-July 2023, one-day meeting (virtual or hybrid)
Responsible persons for follow- up actionsMSs, RCG Ch coordinators, I 	raskevi (Voula) Karachle, Manos Koutrakis, Fabio Grati
ResponsibleMSs, RCG Chpersons for follow-coordinators, Iup actionsI	
	FCM, RCG LP, ICES and RDBFIS). airs, WS chairs, ISSG RWPs, STREAMLINE and RDBFIS

RCG MED & BS 2022	Drafting of the RWP on PETs bycatch monitoring to be submitted by
<b>Recommendation 3</b>	September-October 2023 (implementation 2025-2027) and RCG Med&BS
	Workshop on PETs bycatch monitoring

Justification	Taking into consideration Recommendations n. 4 and n. 8 of RCG Med&BS 2021, and the timeframe for the submission of RWPs (without adoption by COM), RCG Med&BS 2022 recommends organizing a workshop on PETs bycatch monitoring to discuss methodologies and review the list of PET species on a regional level.
	Regional project STREAM (MARE/2016/22) proposed to the RCG Med&BS to address the regional needs for the collection of stomach contents, benthos and marine litter; identification of data needs; share knowledge and experience in the data collection. RCG Med&BS organized in 2021 the <i>Meeting on data needed to assess the impact of fisheries on the marine ecosystem</i> involving relevant end-users (DG MARE, DG ENV, and GFCM), JRC, national experts as well as regional projects STREAMLINE and RDBFIS. In addition, a STREAMLINE – RCG Med&BS Joint Workshop, in collaboration with the GFCM, took place in April 2022. It was concluded that further effort is needed to establish robust data collection for data needed to assess the impact of fisheries on the marine ecosystem, including data on:
	<ul> <li>By-catch of non-target species including PET species,</li> <li>Impacts of fisheries on marine habitats including vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).</li> </ul>
	The activities shall be performed in cooperation with the ISSG on RWPs which will be in charge of the decision-making process for developing RWPs, as described in STREAMLINE WP3 Deliverable D3.1 "Definition of the decision making structure". A timeline for the establishing of the ISSG RWPs and its future activities is described in D3.1, and reported in the RCG Med&BS 2022 Report.
Follow-up actions needed	<ul> <li>MSs to provide responses and propose correction actions in response to the comments of STECF EWG 22-18 on the non-binding RWPs;</li> <li>MSs to provide updated information to the WS chairs on the implementation of PETs bycatch monitoring under their WPs;</li> <li>MSs to nominate experts to participate in the ISSG RWPs;</li> <li>MSs to agree on the chairing of the ISSG RWPs;</li> <li>MSs and RCG to agree on a timeline for meetings and activities of the ISSG RWP.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>WS 2023 ToR:         <ul> <li>Further work on the identification of high-risk metiers by group of species for by-catch monitoring, taking into account the results of pilot studies, current implementation and STREAMLINE review (Task 2.2).</li> <li>Further work on the list of PET species according to regulations specified in Table 2 of the Annex to the Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2021/1167, taking into account the GFCM DCRF list (the JRCs MSFD list will possibly be considered, if and when finalised).</li> <li>Application of FAO estimation of by-catch rates and number of individuals incidentally caught implemented by MS (presentation of results for 2022 referent year).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>RDBFIS database structure on ecosystem data including bycatch of PET species, and estimation procedures according to FAO methodology.</li> <li>Discuss on the data and methods needed for the assessment of impact on seabed habitats, considering data sources from VMS, MEDITS and commercial fisheries.</li> <li>Include all relevant stakeholders (DG MARE, DG ENV, STECF, JRC, GFCM, RCG LP, ICES, STREAMLINE and RDBFIS).</li> </ul>	
Responsible	MSs, RCG Chairs, WS chairs, ISSG RWPs, STREAMLINE and RDBFIS	
persons for follow-	coordinators, RDB SC	
up actions		
	WS chairs: TBD	
Time frame	WS Dates: April-May 2023, one/two-day meeting (virtual or hybrid)	
(Deadline)	Submission of draft RWP on PETs bycatch monitoring by Sept-Oct 2023	
	(for implementation in the period 2025-2027)	
Comments		

RCG Med&BS 2022	Establishment of Technical group on the regional database RDBFIS.
Recommendation 4	
Justification	Steering committee for the regional database during its 4 <sup>th</sup> meeting in
	July 2021 agreed to establish a technical group to communicate with the
	regional project Med&BS RDBFIS (MARE/2020/08) regarding technical
	aspects of RDB development and to further support development of the
	regional database.
Follow-up actions	<ul> <li>Involvement of national experts in testing of RDBFIS.</li> </ul>
needed	Completing the revision of the respective data policy and SC
	guidelines documents for RDBFIS
Responsible	MS to nominate experts on a voluntary basis.
persons for follow-	
up actions	
Time frame	Revision of the two RDBFIS documents by the end of November 2022 (by
(Deadline)	NCs); approval of the revised documents (by RCG before the end of
	Med&BS RDB Grant, i.e. Dec 2022).
	Testing of RDBFIS by the RCG Med&BS Annual Meeting 2023.
Comments	This recommendation is partially recalled from previous RCG
	recommendations.

RCG MED & BS 2022 Recommendation 5	Drafting of the RWP on fish stomachs collection and analysis to be submitted by September-October 2023 (implementation 2025-2027) and RCG Med&BS Workshop on fish stomachs collection and analysis.
Justification	In line with Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2021/1167, MS should carry out data collection on the impact of fishing activities on food webs, including stomach sampling and analysis. RCG Med&BS recommended (recommendation n. 13 of the RCG Med&BS 2021) to introduce stomach sampling for the main stock identified by

	<ul> <li>regional project MARE/2014/19 Med&amp;BS D3.3, e.g. European hake in Mediterranean GSAs and turbot in the Black Sea.</li> <li>MS aligned the sampling methodology according to MARE/2016/22 STREAM D4.1 (Updated protocols and guidelines for collection, processing and analysis of stomach contents) and implement stomach sampling for identified species during bottom trawl surveys (MEDITS and Black Sea demersal surveys).</li> <li>Minimum sample size for European hake in the Med (STREAM D4.1. Table 3.4.1.): <ul> <li>Bottom trawl surveys: 20 full stomachs by per size class/life stage should be analysed by GSA if applicable.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Minimum sample size for Turbot in the Black Sea: <ul> <li>Bottom trawl surveys: A total of 30 individuals per year should be analysed (15 from the spring survey and 15 from the autumn survey).</li> </ul> </li> <li>Consultations were carried out with MS for the identification of species for stomach sampling. STREAM designed a sampling program for the</li> </ul>
	collection of data on stomach content of fish. Considering results of regional projects MARE/2014/19 and MARE/2016/22 STREAM D4.1., MS agreed in 2021 to carry out stomach sampling for the main species identified, starting from 2022. STREAMLINE further refined the protocols prepared by STREAM, and the STREAMLINE – RCG Med&BS Joint Workshop in 2022 proposed a non-binding RWP on fish stomachs sampling in cooperation with the RCG Med&BS.
	Sampling plan has to be revised according to the results of the analysis of the stomachs content under current implementation. Therefore, the sampling strategy and the sampling effort could be refined in order to minimize the variability of the estimates of the food spectra and to properly consider all the factors influencing the variations in diet composition.
	The activities shall be performed in cooperation with the ISSG on RWPs which will be in charge of the decision-making process for developing RWPs, as described in STREAMLINE WP3 Deliverable D3.1 "Definition of the decision making structure". A timeline for the establishing of the ISSG RWPs and its future activities is described in D3.1, and reported in the RCG Med&BS 2022 Report.
Follow-up actions needed	<ul> <li>MSs to provide responses and propose correction actions in response to the comments of STECF EWG 22-18 on the non-binding RWPs;</li> <li>MSs to provide updated information to the WS chairs on the results of the implementation of fish stomachs sampling under the current WPs;</li> <li>MSs to nominate experts to participate in the ISSG RWPs;</li> <li>MSs to agree on the chairing of the ISSG RWPs;</li> <li>MSs and RCG to agree on a timeline for meetings and activities of the ISSG RWP.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>WS 2023 ToRs:</li> <li>Update the list of target species for stomach sampling by sub-region.</li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>Discuss on the harmonization of methodologies for data collection and processing.</li> <li>Coordinate with RDBFIS on the uploading and storing of stomach data.</li> <li>Draft RWP on fish stomachs sampling to be submitted by Sept-Oct 2023.</li> <li>Include all relevant stakeholders (DG MARE, DG ENV, STECF, JRC, GFCM, RCG LP, ICES, RDBFIS).</li> </ul>
Responsible persons for follow-	MSs, RCG Chairs, WS chairs, ISSG RWPs, STREAMLINE and RDBFIS coordinators, RDB SC
up actions	
·	WS chairs: TBD
Time frame	WS Dates: April-May 2023, one-day meeting (virtual or hybrid)
(Deadline)	Submission of draft RWP on stomach sampling by Sept-Oct 2023 (for
	implementation in the period 2025-2027)
Comments	

RCG Med&BS 2022	Inclusion of SECWEB's proposal text to be included in section 1: General
Recommendation 6	Information; Text Box 1B: Other Data Collection Activities in the
	respective National Work Plans
Justification	RCG chairs and the RCG's network in general have acknowledged the
	added value of having an RCG's Secretariat to the overall aim to support
	the planning and execution of administrative tasks and the branding and
	online visibility of the RCG. Based on SecWeb project outputs, the
	proposed data collection activities will connect the whole RCG network
	and stakeholders to work together on common goals. The Secretariat
	provides fluent administrative and coordination support for more efficient
	regional coordination liberating national experts involved in data
	collection activities from heavy burden administrative tasks.
Follow-up actions	MS should ensure that SECWEB's proposal text is included in their
needed	National Work Plans.
Responsible	MS
persons for follow-	
up actions	
Time frame	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
(Deadline)	
Comments	

RCG Med&BS 2022 Recommendation 7	Recommendation on expansion of MEDIAS to GSA 15 on a voluntary basis.
Justification	According to the conclusions of MEDIAS steering committee in 2022 (Report of 15th meeting for MEDiterranean International Acoustic Surveys), MS shall clarify future involvement in MEDIAS activities in GSA 15. MS is encouraged to conduct MEDIAS within GSA 15 on a non-mandatory basis, given that the MS could make use of the cost-sharing agreement with another MS which carries out MEDIAS, since the MS does not have access to such a research vessel.
Follow-up actions needed	If possible, MS to include changes when compiling the WP.

Responsible persons for follow- up actions	MS (Malta)
Time frame (Deadline)	15 <sup>th</sup> of October 2022
Comments	

RCG MED & BS 2022	RCG MED&BS 2022 proposed to establish an ISSG for sampling
Recommendation 8	optimisation.
Justification	The 2018 RCG Med&BS agreed on the need to set up a network of experts to be trained and use the tool developed under STREAM and STREAMLINE projects on sampling stratification and optimisation of biological commercial data. It was further agreed that MS should nominate experts to be part of the network, as outlined in recommendation n. 10 of the RCG Med&BS 2021. A preliminary list of experts nominated by the MS exists and should be confirmed/updated. However, the scientific network for sampling optimisation has not been established so far.
Follow-up actions needed	Med&BS NCs should update or complement the list of national experts for participating in the network on sampling optimisation; the nominations should be communicated to the nominated coordinator of the ISSG for sampling optimisation (Ms Isabella Bitetto) and RCG Med&BS chairs.
Responsible persons for follow- up actions	RCG Med&BS NCs, RCG Med&BS chairs, moderators of the scientific network for sampling optimisation.
Time frame	Confirmation of nominations by 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2022.
(Deadline)	Submission of a progress report by the RCG Med&BS 2023 Annual
	Meeting.
Comments	This recommendation is recalled from 2019.

#### **RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic 2022 Recommendations**

ISSG Catch, effort and sampling overviews	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R01:	ICES give download rights of RDB/RDBES data to ISSG chairs for the ISSG work
Justification	At the moment RCG has not download rights and ISSG chairs have to do a request to ICES everytime they need the data. Direct access will increase the efficiency of ISSG work, which is especially relevant given the short deadlines ISSG has to prepare the overviews.
Follow-up actions needed	ICES give download rights of RDB/RDBES data to ISSG chairs for the ISSG work
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	ICES
Time frame (Deadline)	DM 2022
Comments	

ISSG EMT	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R02:	Each MS to assign at least one expert to participate in ISSG EMT and appoint an additional chair
Justification	Initiatives on developing and using new electronic monitoring technologies, machine-learning software and other technologies are going on in several MS. In order to ensure that information on the initiatives disseminated and made available for the DCF community the ISSG for EMT recommend that all MS within the remit of the RCG Baltic and NANSEA are ensuring their representation in the ISSG of an expert working with new electronic monitoring technologies. In order to make the work of the ISSG EMT most efficient two chairs to the lead of the ISSG are needed. At present Gildas Glemarec, DTU Aqua, Denmark has been elected as chair. The ISSG recommend an additional chair is found as soon as possible.
Follow-up actions needed	Each MS to assign at least one expert to participate in ISSG EMT
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs
Time frame (Deadline)	By the end of September 2022
Comments	

RDBESGOV	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R03:	Raise awareness among NCs and national institutes on the RDBES roadmap
Justification	The RDBES is planned to replace both the existing ICES InterCatch and RDB database systems and has an important part to play in increasing transparency and improving the quality of stock assessment within ICES.
	The RDBES roadmap is designed by the WGRDBESGOV and defines the steps needed to accomplish the transition. Time runs fast, and the plan is to make all the estimation needed to prepare the data for stock assessment in TAF, for all stocks, by 2024. In order to provide support for this change, a number of groups have been set up (WKRDBES-INTRO, WK-RASIE&TAF, WKTAF)
	NCs and national institutes need to know this roadmap and the implications for them. They need to know that they should start the transition.
Follow-up actions needed	Take advantage of the DM (and pre-meeting) to raise awareness about the RDBES roadmap and its implications for NCs and national institutes. Explain the need to start the transition and offer the support available (WK)
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs
Time frame (Deadline)	DM 2022
Comments	

ISSG SSF	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R04:	Implement the collection of additional variables needed for SSF effort estimates in the control regulation
Justification	Information collected from the control regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No. 1224/2009) named as transversal data (logbooks, sales notes, Vessel Monitoring System etc.) is one of the main source of information used also for sicentific purposes. However, in the case of the SSF, due to the exeptions that these fleet have in the current regulation, there are shortcomings that make it difficult to have a good understanding of the activity of this fleet. This is particularly the case for the vessels below 10m LOA, where filling logbooks is not mandatory etc. Some minimum information should be considered as mandatory considering management needs for scientist.
Follow-up actions needed	COM to contact Control Regulation colleagues
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	COM (DG MARE) and MS
Time frame (Deadline)	asap
Comments	

ISSG Bycatch	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R05:	Implement the collection of additional variables needed for bycatch estimates in the control regulation
Justification	Information collected from the control regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No. 1224/2009) named as transversal data (logbooks, sales notes, Vessel Monitoring System etc.) is one of the main source of information used also for sicentific purposes. However, in the case of the data needed for PETS bycatch-related advice, the information collected is not sufficient. Some needed fields are not mandaotry to be provided in logbooks etc. For passive gears, soak time, number of nets, hooks, traps is an essential information to provide sound PETS bycatch rates. It is necesary to make these fields mandatory in the logbooks for all fleet segments.
Follow-up actions needed	COM to contact with Control Regulation colleagues
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	COM (DG MARE) and MS
Time frame (Deadline)	asap
Comments	

ISSG Bycatch	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R06:	Provide prioritorization of species list
Justification	It is essential that there is prioritisation when sampling PETS for each of the regions. The PETS ISSG is working on possible coordinated sampling programmes at the regional level to start developing a specific plan to present to each of the MS. The priority should be decided by the COM to respond to the needs they have.
Follow-up actions needed	DGENV to prioritize PETS to be sampled by region

Responsible persons for follow-up actions	COM (DG ENV)
Time frame (Deadline)	By the end of September 2022
Comments	

ISSG Stomachs	ISSG Stomachs	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R07:	Participation in the regional stomach analysis program	
Justification	The regionally coordinated stomach sampling case study in the North Sea has started in the first quarter 2022. Approximately 2 000 Stomach samples have been collected and a similar amount of samples will be sampled during the third quarter IBTS 2022. All samples are stored in the freezers of the IBTS participating countries. In order to establish this as a coordinated stomach sampling programm, the stomachs have to be analysed and made available to the relevant ICES working groups (e.g. WGSAM, WGNSSK).	
Follow-up actions needed	MS should map the laboratory capacity and staffing situation in their own country and come to a decision on whether they can or want to process the samples in their own country, or whether they want to send them out.	
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs	
Time frame (Deadline)	DM 2022	
Comments		

ISSG Stomachs	ISSG Stomachs	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R08:	MS to evaluate options and capacities of national labs to become analysis hub for the collected IBTS case study stomachs	
Justification	The regionally coordinated stomach sampling case study in the North Sea has started in the first quarter 2022. Approximately 2 000 Stomach samples have been collected and a similar amount of samples will be sampled during the third quarter IBTS 2022. All samples are stored in the freezers of the IBTS participating countries. In order to establish this as a coordinated stomach sampling programm, the stomachs have to be analysed and made available to the relevant ICES working groups (e.g. WGSAM, WGNSSK).	
Follow-up actions needed	MS to indicate if national lab can serve as stomach analysis hub for the collected IBTS stomachs. If so, MS to indicate the "exact" capacities and corresponding costs of stomachs to be analysed annually	
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs	
Time frame (Deadline)	asap	
Comments		

ISSG Fishn 'Co	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R09:	Naming of experts to ISSG RWP
Justification	The project Fishn'Co ends at the end of 2022 and needs to pass over all findings to ISSG/RWP
Follow-up actions needed	Each MS to provide a name at the DM of at least one expert to participate in ISSG RWP
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs
Time frame (Deadline)	DM 2022
Comments	

ISSG Secweb	
Recommendation NANSEA BALTIC_2022_R010:	NCs of all MSs that have mandate to make decisions should be present at the Decision Meeting 2022
Justification	In order to respect the deadline of the project Secweb (31/12/2022) and in order to be able to inform all NCs on an level playing field, it is recommended to have the effective NCs present during the NC meetings where the scenario's for the long term support are presented. If not, it could take too much extra time to inform the effective NC, questions raised after the meetings, will be replied with delay and the whole process for establishing an (accepted by all MS) long term scenario could be hampered.
Follow-up actions needed	NCs that have mandate to make decisions should be present at the DM 2022
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	NCs & COM
Time frame (Deadline)	confirmation by the MS prior to 19th September (i.e. date of DM2022)
Comments	

## **RCG Economic Issues 2022 Recommendations**

Recommendation 1	International cooperation in Economic Data Collection
Justification	For some specific fleet segments and types of information such as social data, valuation of vessel capacity and fishing rights, international cooperation might enhance the possibilities for data collection and the quality of data.
Follow-up actions needed	<ul> <li>In order to investigate the possibilities for international cooperation the following follow-up actions are suggested:         <ul> <li>Small segments: a short study on technical possibilities and legal options with people from JRC would be needed.</li> <li>Foreign Labour: a workshop with MS representatives could discuss the scale of the issue and ways forward.</li> <li>Combination of data for small segments - discussed in a small group of experts in the frame of FishNCo project.</li> <li>Estimation of employment data for foreign crew - all experts discuss in the frame of RCG ECON ISSG (Regional Work Plan).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Responsible persons for follow- up actions	
Time frame (Deadline)	2022
Comments	

Recommendation 2	Alternative Segmentation annlication
Recommendation 2	Alternative Segmentation application
	The alternative approach should be further developed to achieve a consistent and comprehensive procedure which can be tested against the existing procedure with respect to specific criteria, in particular the link to stocks and the homogeneity in cost structure.
Justification	The current segmentation has some drawbacks with respect to the link to fisheries. An alternative approach to overcome some of these issues has been under development. This work in progress has been regarded as promising and WS participants suggested measures for further improvement.
Follow-up actions	
needed	<ul> <li>Develop pre-segmentation protocols:</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>introducing vessel characteristics indicator (e.g. size, power,</li> </ul>
	equipment) – grouping gears (regionally) to replace "main gear" as currently
	used
	<ul> <li>introducing reasonable target assemblages or métier groups by</li> </ul>
	region
	Continue describing regional, consistent fisheries
	Check effects on cost structure
	Draft set of rules
	Cooperation with RCG NANSEA
	Virtual ISSG meeting
Responsible	RCGs, MS, RCG Chairs
persons for follow-	
up actions	
Time frame	September 2022 RCGs ISSG meeting
(Deadline)	
Comments	Not applicable

Recommendation 3	Improvement the data collection reporting and correction of data
	JRC should contact experts before the EWG and collaborate to improve the quality of the Annual Economic Report for Aquaculture.
Justification	To improve the reporting at the aquaculture EWG, the finalised data should be readily available at the JRC database earlier than what has been the case in the previous meetings. Data issues/errors are first discovered when the experts start working with the data at the meeting. This means that the first part of the meeting or more have been used to correct and re-upload data for the report. The data from each MS feed into the EU overview and species chapters, which cannot be made before all data corrections have taken place. Thus, it is very important that most of these issues are solved before the meeting, allowing experts to

	analyze data at the FU and energies level and marking wave for damage
	analyze data at the EU and species level and making room for deeper
	economic analysis of the data submitted.
Follow-up actions needed	JRC provides an example of data templates filled in. JRC will prepare an Excel file for each MS with report tables and pointing out potential data issues. JRC offers help for MS that have more reporting issues regarding the EU economic report. Data will be made available on ftp for experts to check data prior to the meeting.
Responsible	JRC
persons for follow-	
up actions	
Time frame	Before EWG 22-17 (October 2022)
(Deadline)	
Comments	Annex III: Minutes Aquaculture Workshop

Recommendation 4	Guidelines for the aquaculture
	The additional meeting time in Agenda for EWG 22-17 should be planned for sub-group discussion concerning the aquaculture segmentation and definitions.
Justification	The problem encountered when reporting under the EU-MAP has been that the segmentation between the old and the new regulation has not been aligned and that MSs have been changing the segments to be presented in the national chapter. Also, there are no guidelines for clustering small segments with others, which creates discrepancies between MS reporting. The document 'EUMAP_guidance_AQUACULTURE' should be checked and finalised.
Follow-up actions needed	In the next EWG the group should draft guidelines for clustering on species and technique and updating definitions for variables in aquaculture data collection.
Responsible persons for follow- up actions	DG MARE; EWG 22-17
Time frame (Deadline)	Before EWG 22-17 (October 2022)
Comments	Annex III: Minutes Aquaculture Workshop

Recommendation 5:	Nowcast model for aquaculture AER
	The same Nowcast model should be applied for aquaculture EWG 22-17 report than in the previous year.
Justification	There is a need for reporting more up to date economic data in the aquaculture EWG report than what is currently provided under the aquaculture economic data call. For this reason, a nowcast model was created last year. This model requires additional data from the experts for 2021 and 2022 in the EWG 22-17.
Follow-up action needed	Need for ad hoc contract again for one expert preparing the nowcast model. After the meeting, asking for a contract for developing the model further or organising a forecast workshop under the RCG ECON. This workshop could cover other sectors as well.

Responsible person for follow-up actions	DG MARE
Time frame (deadline)	Before EWG 22-17 (October 2022)
Comments	Annex III: Minutes Aquaculture Workshop

Recommendation 6:	Environment and animal welfare data
	If the environmental data will be requested by the DG MARE in 2024 and onwards, it should be clarified which variables to be collected.
Justification	In the new EU-MAP, there is no table for environmental variables to be collected. If environmental data will be requested in future data calls, more guidance is needed for MS on how to report the data. Currently, the legislation obligates to collect national totals for environmental variables. For the aquaculture report national total is not at sufficient precision level for a proper analysis. Also, there are no consistent units used in the reporting. It has been questioned if the environmental data collected was structured in such a way that it made comparison between MS possible or if this data collection provided valuable knowledge to the report.
Follow-up actions needed	DG MARE could inform RCG ECON if they plan to request environmental data in the future. If environmental data will be requested, RCG ECON recommends a case study on a group of countries regarding the possibility of collecting new environmental and climate indicators in the future (nitrogen, phosphorus, organic matter, CO2 emissions).
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	DG MARE
Time frame (Deadline)	2022-2027
Comments	Annex III: Minutes Aquaculture Workshop

Recommendation 7:	Fishing activity data submission
	Submission of the final annual Fishing Activity data (landing; effort) from EUMAP Table 6 should be implemented in the frame of a Fishery Dependent Information (FDI) data call. The provisional Fishing Activity data can be submitted in the frame of the Fleet Economic Data Call.
Justification	The landings and effort data from the EUMAP table 6 are requested annually twice a year in the frame of Fleet Economic data call and FDI data call. In order to improve the MS performance and minimise the discrepancies for the submitted data and decrease the number of the DT issues, the possibility of combining these two calls should be considered.
Follow-up actions needed	The discussion between economists and biologists should be organised in the frame of RCGs ISSG. The comparison of landing and effort data from both data calls should be done. The definitions, clustering procedures and allocation vessel to the segment should be checked between the data calls.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	
Time frame (Deadline)	2022-2023
Comments	

Recommendation 8:	Fish processing data collection and submission
	The fish processing data collection, definitions and methodology should be discussed by MS. The Raw materials data collection should be consistent between MS.
Justification	<ul> <li>Fish processing is not mandatory in the new EUMAP however, it was planned for annual data collection in 16 MS National Work Plans. The MS uses a different type of aggregation to report the Raw materials data by species. The Raw materials data are incomparable between MS and cannot be used for the analysis. In order to improve the homogeneous approach to fish processing data collection the following recommendations should be taken into account: <ul> <li>MS should follow the fish processing data collection format provided in table 11 PGECON report 2020.</li> <li>definitions in the file 'EUMAP_guidance_PROCESSING' should be checked and revised, if necessary.</li> <li>the identification for the frame population for main and non-main activities should be improved.</li> <li>MS should follow the Raw materials categories recommended by PGECON 2020 and use the FAO codes for species uploading the data to JRC. The JRC data call templates should include all the categories suggested by PGECON 2020.</li> <li>MS should follow age categories for social data proposed by PGECON 2019.</li> <li>the variables (table 11) should be collected and transmitted separately and not be combined.</li> <li>turnover for main and non-main activity should be transmitted separately.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Follow-up actions needed	The Workshop for Fish Processing data collection should be organised to discuss specific issues, nowcast, identify frame population and raw materials data. WS should provide proposal for the EUMAP guidelines (definitions).
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	MS; RCG ECON chairs (WS); WS chair; JRC (to update the templates for raw material).
Time frame (Deadline)	Fish Processing WS - November 2022 before RWP WS 2023.
Comments	

Recommendation 9:	<b>COVID payments</b> COVID payments should be provided under the variable 'Operating subsidies' and not be combined with 'Other income'.	
Justification	The current definition for the Operating subsidies does not cover the COVID payments which were provided in 2020 and 2021 to fishing enterprises in MS.	
Follow-up actions needed	The current definition should not be revised, however for the fleet economic data submission in 2022-2023 the COVID payments should be attributed to the variable 'Operating subsidies'. The clarification about COVID subsidies data submission should be published on Datacollection web.	
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	MS	
Time frame (Deadline)	2022	
Comments	Not applicable	

Recommendation 10:	Clustering
	MS should follow a consistent approach for clustering of fleet segments.
Justification	Additional variables Geographical indicator and Gear code are used to distinguish specific fisheries from the basic segmentation. In cases when these additional variables are used, these should be applied consistently over and over time in order to provide the consistent time series.
Follow-up actions needed	MS should follow the rules of clustering. The clustered fleet segments should be consistent in time series. The guidelines for clustering should be clarified.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	MS, RCG ECON ISSG: RWP
Time frame (Deadline)	RCG ECON ISSG: RWP -November 2022 MS - annual (data submission)
Comments	Clustering rules WP text boxes template page 11: https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/guidelines/wp-text- boxes-template

Recommendation 11:	NWP ANNEX 1.2 - Quality report for socioeconomic data sampling scheme The expert evaluation of the content of NWPs Quality Reports (QR)
Justification	During the EWG Work Plan evaluation meetings the comparability and compliance of Annex 1.2 was evaluated. However, the quality of methodology for the data collection also should be evaluated. The best practice about how to fill in the NWP 1.2 QR should be shared between social and economic experts. The possible evaluation criteria for WP 1.2 QR should be discussed.
Follow-up actions needed	The short-term ad-hoc contacts should be set up to compare the QRs and summarise how MS organises the data collection process. The Quality Assessment System should be developed. The appropriate indicators should be selected for the Assessment System. EWG should be organised for the evaluation of NWP 1.2 QR.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	DG MARE
Time frame (Deadline)	2023
Comments	EUROSTAT Guidelines for the Implementation of the ESS Quality and Performance Indicators: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/64157/4373903/02- ESS-Quality-and-performance-Indicators-2014.pdf/5c996003- b770-4a7c-9c2f-bf733e6b1f31

Recommendation 12:	FishNCo (MARE/2020/08) Regional WP draft	project:	Presentation	of
	RCG ECON mandates a group of correspondents to prepare the dr project facilitates the work of this	aft regiona		

Justification	In the rules of procedures of RCG ECON it is stated that RCG ECON can mandate a group of experts appointed by national correspondents to draft the regional work plan. Already last year, RCG ECON mandated Fishn'Co project to start preparing the regional work plan. The current status of the regional work plan was presented by Fishn'Co project in 2022 RCG ECON. The draft Regional Work Plan includes current pan regional methodological guidelines, definitions, statistical Handbook and should include
	also other guidelines (e.g. clustering). The other National Work Plan tables and text boxes are not included in the RWP.
Follow-up actions needed	The regional work plan needs to be developed further with the help of experts from all MS. The chair of RCG sends out draft guidelines to the national correspondents highlighting methodologies and definitions which need further investigation for homogenous approach and informs NCs about RCG ISSG: RWP. National correspondents should nominate national experts to participate in ISSG drafting the regional work plan and provide the comments on the highlighted definitions. The meeting will take place online in November 2022 and will be chaired by experts from Fishn'Co project. All MS can appoint their representatives (for fleet, aquaculture and fish processing) to discuss and draft further the content of the regional work plan.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	RCG ECON chairs, Fishn'Co project organises the meeting in November 2022 and appoints the chairs for the meeting. NCs appoints national experts for ISSG to draft regional work plan.
Time frame (Deadline)	November 2022
Comments	

Recommendation 13:	FishNCo (MARE/2020/08) project: Comparative analysis on capital value and capital cost estimation. Inventory of issues with PIM
	More information on methods used for estimating capital value and details on the assumptions should be included in the work plans in Annex 1.2. Online workshop on a regional comparative analysis of methodologies and results.
Justification	Information used on the assumptions used to estimate the value of the physical capital on the basis of the PIM is crucial to evaluate if the derived estimates reflect the depreciated replacement value of the fleet and are consistent with the economic analysis of the fleet. Likewise, alternative methods have to be comprehensively described. The comparative analysis based on data collected from the AER and the survey carried by FISHN'CO and the RCG confirmed the importance of assuring homogeneity in the approaches used and in the results of the estimates.
Follow-up actions needed	The annex 1.2 of NWPs have to include a comprehensive description of methods (PIM or alternative approaches) and assumptions used to estimate the value of physical capital. MSs share their approaches and knowhow reached so far in order to ensure homogeneity in the estimation among similar regional fleet segments. The fishing rights should be discussed.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	
Time frame (Deadline)	2023 - WS PIM

	2022-2027 - NWP Annex 1.2
Comments	Not applicable

Recommendation 14:	Social data: National profiles
	Improvement of coordination and communication between different working groups in the field of social data collection. Identification of the data gaps. Community profiles development.
Justification	Several working groups collect and analyse various types of social information (RCG ECON in the frame of EUMAP, ICES, STECF etc.). The overview for these groups' responsibilities needs to be clarified.
Follow-up actions needed	In the frame of the FishNCo project, to organise a Pilot study and continue development of National and Community Profiles. Determine what information could be collected from other sources such as EUROSTAT or ICES data calls and what would be difficult to obtain. Additional communication between groups the ICES WGECON and WGSOCIAL and STECF.
Responsible persons for follow-up actions	FishNCo, RCG ECON Chairs, ICES, STECF
Time frame (Deadline)	National Profiles discussion 2022-2023 Cooperation between working groups 2022-2027
Comments	Not applicable

## ANNEX 4 FOLLOW UP ON FISHING ACTIVITY VARIABLES SUBMISSION FOR AER AND FDI DATA CALLS

#### Follow up on fishing activity variables submission for AER and FDI data calls

From RCG Econ 2022, there is a Recommendation (7) that the "Submission of the final annual Fishing Activity data (landing; effort) from EUMAP Table 6 should be implemented in the frame of a Fishery Dependent Information (FDI) data call. The provisional Fishing Activity data can be submitted in the frame of the Fleet Economic Data Call". The follow up actions proposed from the RCG Econ recommendation is that "The discussion between economists and biologists should be organised in the frame of RCGs ISSG. The comparison of landing and effort data from both data calls should be done. The definitions, clustering procedures and allocation vessel to the segment should be checked between the data calls". This was raised during the Liaison meeting, and it was agreed to draft ToRs for relevant groups to address this issue. The RCG ISSG on Metier and transversal variable issues will discuss definitions and methods, and the STECF EWG-FDI should make the analysis on combining AER and FDI data.

#### **Background information**

Submission of the final annual Fishing Activity variables (namely datasets for capacity, effort and landings from EUMAP Table 6<sup>7</sup>) is implemented annually in the frame of a Fishery Dependent Information (FDI) data call in July. The same data is requested for the Fleet Economic data call annually in February. Thus, the data is transmitted repeatedly which leads to duplication of work and an increased number of inconsistencies. In order to improve the MS performance, minimise the discrepancies in the reported data and reduce of the number of the DT issues, the possibility of combining these two calls should be considered and discussed. The final data could be submitted only for FDI and the provisional for the Fleet Economic data call. Interaction and cooperation between biologists and economists are essential to accomplish the task.

The following comment was made by STECF on PLEN 22-02<sup>8</sup>: "STECF points out the importance of coordination at Member State and EU level. STECF suggests for the RCGs, in coordination with JRC, to consider the organisation of a workshop to explore the allocation of vessels to fleet segments and landing and effort to metiers by Member States for both FDI and AER data calls. STECF concludes it would be beneficial to both groups to harmonise different approaches in accordance with DCF definitions, variables and data call specifications."

## The RCG ISSG on Metier and transversal variable issues in collaboration with JRC and RCG Econ participants is requested to:

1. Follow up on issues raised in STECF EWG-21-12 regarding the inconsistencies between AER and FDI data.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> <u>https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec\_del/2021/1167/oj</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/plenary/-

<sup>/</sup>asset\_publisher/oS6k/document/id/34818511?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fstecf.jrc. ec.europa.eu%2Freports%2Fplenary%3Fp\_p\_id%3D101\_INSTANCE\_oS6k%26p\_p\_lifecycle%3D0%26p\_p\_ state%3Dnormal%26p\_p\_mode%3Dview%26p\_p\_col\_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p\_p\_col\_pos%3D1%26p\_p\_col\_count%3D2

- 2. Discuss methodologies and make an inventory of methods used by MS to define the common variables used in the AER and FDI data calls.
- 3. Discuss the definitions, clustering procedures and allocation of vessels to the fleet segment for FDI and Economic data calls.
- Check and compare the codes and content in the data call templates for both data calls, in case of deviations make a suggestion for changes and unification in data calls structure. Any suggestions for changes to data calls should be communicated to JRC and STECF EWG-FDI.

#### The STECF EWG FDI is requested to:

- 1. Test that the coding of fleet segments is consistent on national levels between AER and FDI data submissions.
- 2. Compare the Capacity, Landings and Effort data sets between AER and FDI data calls.
- 3. Evaluate any suggestions for changes in data calls provided by the RCG ISSG.
- 4. Follow up on DTMT issues reported in STECF EWG-21-12 report in relation to AER and FDI comparison.

#### Previous historical reports and STECF comments should be taken into accounts:

- RCG ECON 20229
- STECF 21-12 FISHERIES DEPENDENT INFORMATION<sup>10</sup>
- Workshops on transversal variables Zagreb, 2015<sup>11</sup>
- Workshops on transversal variables Nicosia, 2016<sup>12</sup>

12

2%2526p p col count%253D1& 110 INSTANCE YIINT1qXsG0u fileEntryId=1242789

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> <u>https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/rcg-econ/</u> 10

https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/fdi/-/asset\_publisher/5ZaD/document/id/17822251?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fstecf.jrc .ec.europa.eu%2Freports%2Ffdi%3Fp\_p\_id%3D101\_INSTANCE\_5ZaD%26p\_p\_lifecycle%3D0%26p\_p\_sta te%3Dnormal%26p\_p\_mode%3Dview%26p\_p\_col\_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p\_p\_col\_pos%3D1%26p\_p\_col\_count%3D2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> <u>https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/docs/other-</u> <u>meetings?p p id=110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0u&p p lifecycle=0&p p state=normal&p p mode=view&p <u>p col id=column-</u></u>

<sup>2&</sup>amp;p p col count=1& 110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0u struts action=%2Fdocument library display%2Fvie w file entry& 110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0u redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fdatacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu %2Fdocs%2Fother-meetings%2F-

<sup>%2</sup>Fdocument library display%2FYIiNT1qXsG0u%2Fview%2F1407628%3F 110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0 u redirect%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fdatacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu%252Fdocs%252Fother-

meetings%253Fp p id%253D110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0u%2526p p lifecycle%253D0%2526p p state %253Dnormal%2526p p mode%253Dview%2526p p col id%253Dcolumn-

<sup>&</sup>lt;u>https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/docs/other-</u> <u>meetings?p p id=110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0u&p p lifecycle=0&p p state=normal&p p mode=view&p</u> <u>p col id=column-</u>

<sup>2&</sup>amp;p p col count=1& 110 INSTANCE YIINT1qXsG0u struts action=%2Fdocument library display%2Fvie w file entry& 110 INSTANCE YIINT1qXsG0u redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fdatacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu %2Fdocs%2Fother-meetings%2F-

<sup>%2</sup>Fdocument library display%2FYIiNT1qXsG0u%2Fview%2F1407628%3F 110 INSTANCE YIiNT1qXsG0 u redirect%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fdatacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu%252Fdocs%252Fothermeetings%253Fp p id%253D110 INSTANCE YIINT1qXsG0u%2526p p lifecycle%253D0%2526p p state %253Dnormal%2526p p mode%253Dview%2526p p coli id%253Dcolumn-

Fisheries Data Collection 19<sup>th</sup> Liaison Meeting

Meeting between the Chairs of RCGs, key end users, European Commission DG Mare and JRC