AGENDA

EXPERT WORKING GROUP (EWG) 21-02
On Methods for supporting stock assessment in the Mediterranean
12-16 April Remote Meeting

Stock allocations and ToRs are given below. Times below are CET. To help plan the meeting plenary times will be fixed following the list below and a meeting link using MS Teams will be circulated at least the day before. If necessary extra sessions can be timetabled.

Timetable

Monday 12 April. 0900 log in and troubleshoot MS Teams.
Please do log in at 0900, don't wait for 0915

0915 Opening Meeting (hopefully)
Adoption of Agenda
STECF information
Terms of Reference (ToR1 and ToR 2)

Discussion of approaches by ToR
ToR 1

DTMT Record of issues in excel file (in FTP)
Additional issues from meeting (for end of meeting)

General points and available methods. (Ale Mannini)
Diagnostic routines for exploring data
Routines for reconstructing data
Routine to produce the stock object.

Overview of approaches discussion / agreement on reconstruction/use data (John)
Use of median / mean for parameters and LFDs
Choice of year ranges for fill-ins :- guidance (adjacent years/ series means)
(provide R code lines)
Sex separated evaluations (work on sex combined LFDs initially)

Process
Highlighting/correcting outliers in data sets.
Template for evaluation
R Code / output LFDs and archiving process

ToR 2

Overview of report George
Participation in subgroup to evaluate report

Tuesday 13 April 0900 Progress / Issues ToR 1
Subgroup ToR2

Wednesday 14 April 0900	Progress / Issues / Outcomes ToR 1
Thursday 15 April	Progress / Issues / Outcomes ToR 1
Friday 16 April 0900	Progress / Issues / Outcomes ToR 1 Finalise Tor 2
1700	End of meeting

Responsibilities

TOR 1 Catch

The following table provides a preliminary list of stock allocations for Catch analysis. It also note priorities 'priority 1' are the ones needed this year in the assessments, and should be done first, if time permits the other 'priority 2' stocks should be reviewed to evaluate where issues can be found. Generally GSAs should be kept separate, so that these can be treated separately in assessments if the needed. However if needed, LFDs can be 'borrowed' from other GSAs, for areas with insufficient sampling. Generally where areas have been combined in the past these have been allocated to one person.

ToR 1 Survey Checking (developing error trapping and value checks) Ale Mannini and Cecilia Pinto

ToR 2 Review of the technical report submitted by Greece, concerning the methodologies for estimation of fleet and stock related variables

Athanassios Tsikliras, Vjeko Ticina and John Simmonds

Preliminary stock/work allocation.

Area		Common name	Scientific name	NAME	Priority	Comments
West Mediterranean						
GSA	1-5-6-7	Hake	*Merluccius merluccius*	*BEA*	**1**	work up as a separate areas
GSA	1	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*	*FRANCESC*	**1**	
GSA	5	Striped red mullet	*Mullus surmuletus*	*BEA*	**1**	
GSA	6	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*	*FRANCESC*	**1**	
GSA	7	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*	*FRANCESC*	**1**	
GSA	1-5-6-7	Deep-water rose shrimp	*Parapenaeus longirostris*	*MARIO/FRANCESC*	**1**	work up as as separate areas
GSA	5	Norway lobster ##	*Nephrops norvegicus*	*ANTONELLO*	**2**	index based advice last year no further exploration
GSA	6	Norway lobster	*Nephrops norvegicus*	*VANJA*	**1**	
GSA	8-9-10-11	Hake	*Merluccius merluccius*	*CLAUDIA*	**1**	work up as separate areas
GSA	9	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*	*ISABELLA*	**1**	
GSA	10	Red mullet	*Mullusbarbatus*	*ISABELLA*	**1**	
GSA	9-10-11	Deep-water rose shrimp	*Parapenaeus longirostris*	*MARIO*	**1**	
GSA	9	Norway lobster	*Nephrops norvegicus*	*ANTONELLO*	**1**	
GSA	11	Norway lobster ##	*Nephrops norvegicus*	*ANTONELLO*	**2**	index based advice last year no further exploration
GSA	1	Blue and red shrimp	*Aristaeus antennatus*	*MATTEO*	**1**	
GSA	5	Blue and red shrimp ##	*Aristaeus antennatus*	*ANDREA*	**2**	index based advice last year no further exploration
GSA	6-7	Blue and red shrimp	*Aristaeus antennatus*	*ALE LIGAS*	**1**	
GSA	9-10-11	Blue and red shrimp	*Aristaeus antennatus*	*ALE LIGAS*	**1**	work up as separate areas
GSA	9-10-11	Giant red shrimp	*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*	*MATTEO*	**1**	work up as separate areas
Adriatic Sea						
GSA	17-18	Hake ##	*Merluccius merluccius*	*ALE MANNINI*	**2**	already under benchmark
GSA	17-18	Red mullet	*Mullus barbatus*	*IGOR*	**1**	work up as as separate areas
GSA	17-18	Norway lobster ##	*Nephrops norvegicus*	*ANDREA*	**2**	length not currently used
GSA	17-18-19	Deep-water rose shrimp	*Parapenaeus longirostris*	*MATTEO*	**1**	as combined area
GSA	17-18	Common Cuttlefish	*Sepia officinalis*	*IGOR*	**1**	work up as separate areas

GSA	17	Sole ##	*Solea vulgaris*	*ANDREA*	**2**	New benchmark in this month
GSA	17-18	Caramote Prawn	*Penaeus kerathurus*	*VANJA*	**1**	work up as separate areas
GSA	17-18	Spottail mantis shrimp	*Squilla mantis*	*DANAI*	**1**	work up as separate areas
Ionian/Aegean Sea						
GSA	19	Hake	*Merluccius merluccius*	*ISABELLA*	**1**	Cross check N and Wt. with benchmark/EWG
GSA	20/22	Hake	*Merluccius merluccius*	*KONSTANTINOS*	**1**	taking account of progress on Greek data
GSA	22	Red Mullet	*Mullus barbatus*	*GEORGE*	**1**	taking account of progress on Greek data
GSA	22	Deep-water rose shrimp	*Parapenaeus longirostris*	*DIMITRIOS*	**1**	taking account of progress on Greek data

Terms of Reference

STECF
EXPERT WORKING GROUP (EWG) 21-02
On Methods for supporting stock assessment in the Mediterranean
Date: 12 April – 16 April 2021
Venue: online

Chair: John Simmonds
DG MARE focal persons: Venetia Kostopoulou (MARE C3), Chato Osio (MARE D1).

Background TOR 1
A considerable amount of time is still taken up in the Expert Working Groups (EWGs) on stock assessment in the preparation of the data. This results in a number of issues:

· Data corrections are hard to pass smoothly from year to year;

· There is potential for data errors going undetected or being found only late in the meeting;

· New data extractions take a long time to process as errors are corrected by hand, leading to slow and error prone processing;

· Less effort and time can be devoted to modelling issues.

The EWG 19-16, in its Report, identified that the improvements needed, could be facilitated by some additional planning and by an additional data preparation workshop. If this was done, three things would be possible:

· JRC could run standard scripts on all the relevant data sets for the identified stocks on the preliminary lists and identify errors. Member States (MSs) could then be asked specifically to correct these errors with data resubmission. Alternatively or in addition, MSs could use the standard scripts to check the data before submission to a data call.

· A data preparation meeting could be held well in advance of the assessment EWGs to evaluate data issues. Once the first data preparatory meeting takes place, a new meeting would only be needed in the case that different data is requested (i.e. other stocks) and/or there is a need to re-upload historic data series.

· Standard routines could be developed to deal with missing data and data errors, thus it would no longer be necessary to check historic data in EWGs. Data could be corrected for known past issues automatically and the EWG on stock assessment would only look
at the latest data set.

In the EWG 19-16 Report, the following actions were proposed: (1) agree on the stock list by STECF Spring plenary, (2) hold a historic data evaluation meeting in spring to identify issues, correct these and ask MSs for revised data sets, where necessary, (3) develop correction procedures that can be run automatically so that data can be extracted and corrected as long as the errors remain uncorrected by MSs.

The Regional Coordination Group (RCG) Med & Black Sea Subgroup on 'Meeting with Endusers of Scientific Data' (12-14 March 2019, Rome) also discussed several possible ways to improve data quality, before the operational deadline of the Mediterranean data call[1].

TOR 1
The EWG is required to check and assemble Length Frequency Distribution (LFD) data for the stocks in the Annex I, which are identified as target for assessment activities in 2021. The EWG will:

1. Define the correct procedures to deal with: missing data, raising procedures (with particular reference to survey data), wrong length measurements, and to propose standardized procedures to be followed by participating experts. The EWG is required to compile an R code to generate such standardized procedures. The corrected and verified Length Frequency Distributions (LFD) will be archived in the shared cloud

folder of the coming Stock Assessment EWGs.
2. Examine assessment input for any outliers and signs of data issues, and check underlying data sets;

The aim will be to agree on and use data quality checks to resolve all issues and to stabilise and freeze time series in view of the stock assessments to be carried out in the following (2021) EWGs. Relevant information already available in the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool (DTMT) is considered particularly relevant for this EWG. For that reason, DG MARE will ask MSs to check beforehand the DTMT issues from 2020 Stock Assessments EWGs and reply to them. If needed, MSs will be allowed to re-submit corrected historic data before this EWG. This could also be the case if MSs substantiate that historic data revision is necessary, even in the absence of an identified DTMT issue. The provided information will allow for a better understanding of data issues that have been already encountered. It will be used by the EWG, to check whether MSs have corrected the reported issues. If the error(s) still persist(s) and/or amendments are still needed, the EWG will contact the National Correspondents of Member States to re-submit corrected data. This will be done either, in real time during the EWG or, for substantial amendments, during the official data call.

Depending on the outcomes of this EWG, and in order to prepare for the assessment activities in 2021, the MSs may be requested to re-upload the corrected historic data sets during the official data call.

The EWG is also requested, in its discussions, to take into account the recent disruption of DCF activities due to Covid-19 in 2020. This disruption will most probably lead to a number of gaps and delays in the data collection activities of MSs. The outcomes of the covid-19 questionnaires circulated by COM to Med & BS MSs will be made available to the EWG.

***Background* TOR 2**
In the beginning on 2020, DG MARE together with the Greek authorities agreed on a plan of priority list of actions on data collection under the DCF. This plan has an annual duration, with checkpoints in 2021 and 2022, due to the nature of DCF reporting by Member States. As part of this plan of actions, the Greek authorities have been tasked to work on data quality. To this end, a new working group on quality assurance has been set up at national level. It is composed of experts from the scientific institutes dealing with biological data collection in Greece. This working group will set a work plan for compiling a detailed description of methodologies and approaches in the form of a technical report.

TOR 2
The EWG is requested to review the technical report submitted by Greece, concerning the methodologies for estimation of fleet and stock related variables, evaluate the adequacy of the approaches and make any appropriate comments or recommendations, if needed.

[1] The 2019 Report is available on the DCF website (https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/docs/rcg).

ANNEX I
List of suggested stocks for EWG 21-02

Area		Common name	Scientific name
West Mediterranean			
GSA	**1-5-6-7**	**Hake***	***Merluccius merluccius***
GSA	**1**	**Red mullet***	***Mullus barbatus***
GSA	**5**	**Striped red mullet***	***Mullus surmuletus***
GSA	**6**	**Red mullet***	***Mullus barbatus***
GSA	**7**	**Red mullet***	***Mullus barbatus***
GSA	**1-5-6-7**	**Deep-water rose shrimp***	***Parapenaeus longirostris***
GSA	**5**	**Norway lobster***	***Nephrops norvegicus***
GSA	**6**	**Norway lobster***	***Nephrops norvegicus***

GSA	**8-9-10-11**	**Hake***	***Merluccius merluccius***
GSA	**9**	**Red mullet***	***Mullus barbatus***
GSA	**10**	**Red mullet***	***Mullusbarbatus***
GSA	**9-10-11**	**Deep-water rose shrimp***	***Parapenaeus longirostris***
GSA	**9**	**Norway lobster***	***Nephrops norvegicus***
GSA	**11**	**Norway lobster***	***Nephrops norvegicus***
GSA	**1**	**Blue and red shrimp***	***Aristaeus antennatus***
GSA	**5**	**Blue and red shrimp***	***Aristaeus antennatus***
GSA	**6-7**	**Blue and red shrimp***	***Aristaeus antennatus***
GSA	**9-10-11**	**Blue and red shrimp***	***Aristaeus antennatus***
GSA	**9-10-11**	**Giant red shrimp***	***Aristaeomorpha foliacea***
Adriatic Sea			
GSA	**17-18**	**Hake***	***Merluccius merluccius***
GSA	**17-18**	**Red mullet***	***Mullus barbatus***
GSA	**17-18**	**Norway lobster***	***Nephrops norvegicus***
GSA	**17-18-19**	**Deep-water rose shrimp***	***Parapenaeus longirostris***
GSA	**17-18**	**Common Cuttlefish**	***Sepia officinalis***
GSA	**17**	**Sole***	***Solea vulgaris***
GSA	**17-18**	**Caramote Prawn**	***Penaeus kerathurus***
GSA	**17-18**	**Spottail mantis shrimp**	***Squilla mantis***
Ionian/Aegean Sea			
GSA	**19/20/22**	**Hake**	***Merluccius merluccius***
GSA	**22**	**Red Mullet**	***Mullus barbatus***
GSA	**22**	**Deep-water rose shrimp**	***Parapenaeus longirostris***