



Report of the STECF 55th  
Plenary summer meeting  
10-14 July 2017, Brussels

# INTRODUCTION

## Objective

Main observations, comments and outputs of the 55<sup>o</sup> Plenary meeting report concerning the Mediterranean Sea and of interest for the MEDAC's members

Additional information about the scientific methods and more details are available on the JRC website (Report PLEN-17-02)

*The scientific output expressed in the Plenary meeting Report does not imply a policy position of the European Commission*

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

*EWG 17-01 and EWG 17-06: Economic fleet data  
to support economic analysis in 2017 and draft  
AER national chapters and Annual Economic  
Report of the fleet (2017)*

The 2017 Annual Economic Report (AER) on the European Union (EU) fishing fleet provides the most comprehensive overview of the structure and economic performance of EU Member States' fishing fleets prepared up to date.

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

## STECF observations

Western Med	Adriatic Sea	Ionian Sea	Eastern Med
<p>The profitability of the EU fishing fleet again increased in 2015 compared to 2014 and is expected to have continued in 2016 and into 2017 mainly because of increased landings and low fuel prices</p>			
<p>Despite the decrease in landings, the overall performance improved in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, where 2015 was the most profitable year so far analysed</p>			
<p>The quality and coverage of data submitted by Member States has continued to improve</p>			
		<p>Only Greece was excluded from the EU overview due to incompleteness of data series</p>	

## STECF conclusions

- The AER represents a step forward and the report can provide useful information to managers, policy-makers, as well as other end-users;
- The methodology on data disaggregation by fishing regions using the days at sea should be further investigated;
- STECF notes the interest of DG MARE for analysis regarding the downstream services: a process would need to be initiated to identify the purpose of collecting the information.

**Tor 1** - Review of all relevant information of length based analyses used so far in STECF-EWG for Med stock assessment and consider both the influence on the results of stock assessment and also the influence on MSY reference points.

Hake (*Merluccius merluccius*),  
Red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*)  
Deepwater rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*)

## Conclusions

In the past: considerable variation in the parameter values used for length slicing and for natural mortality



The analyses performed by the EWG were strongly needed to improve the quality of stock assessment

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

**ToR 2** - To apply and compare potential data poor methods to provide MSY advice by taking into account timespan and types of data series available under the DCF

Western Med	Adriatic Sea
<p>Blue whiting in GSAs 6 and 9 hake in GSAs 6, 7 and 9. To apply the best available data poor method that resulted from the previous species to striped red mullet in GSA 11</p>	<p>To apply the best available data poor method that resulted from the previous species to blue whiting in GSAs 17</p>

## Conclusions

Individual indicators are often unbiased but can be noisy indicators of stock status



STECF supports the view for further development work on use of multiple indicators

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

	Western Med	Adriatic Sea	Ionian Sea
<b>ToR 3</b> - To carry out a critical review of the stock boundaries for the species and areas	Anchovy Sardine  GSAs 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11	Common pandora Norway lobster Common cuttlefish  GSAs 17 and 18	European hake Red mullet  GSAs 19 and 20

Pros and cons of the geographical scope of each possible MAP:

- The stocks configuration remains uncertain
- Hardly any new information on stock boundaries existing in addition to that collected during the STOCKMED project.
- Necessary to initiate new data collection (such as tagging, etc.) that can generate new information on stock identity and distribution.

Anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*), Sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*), Common Pandora (*Pagellus erythrinus*), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), Common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*), European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) and Red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*)

Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF



	Western Med	Adriatic Sea	Ionian Sea	Eastern Med
ToR 4 - To advise on the stocks that should be considered, either as driving the fisheries or as relevant by-catches, for possible multiannual plans (MAPs)	<p>Small pelagic fisheries</p> <p>GSA 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</p>	<p>Demersal fisheries</p> <p>GSA 17 and 18</p>	<p>Demersal fisheries</p> <p>GSA 19 and 20</p>	<p>Demersal fisheries</p> <p>GSA 22, 23 and 25</p>

STECF notes that the species have been proposed in the following possible MAPs based on the current catches and the EWG did not differentiate whether the plans should be implemented at national or multi-national level.

## **Possible MAPs for demersal fisheries in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas - GSAs 17, 18, 19 and 20**

Fishing gears:

Bottom trawl nets, longlines, bottom-set nets (including trammel nets and gillnets) and traps.

EWG and STECF conclusions:

Three additional fishing gears need to be considered: Beam trawl, hydraulic dredge, shore and boat seine

Target stocks defining the fishery:

Area	Species
GSA 17	Sole ( <i>Solea vulgaris</i> )
GSA 17-18	European hake ( <i>Merluccius merluccius</i> ), Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> ), Norway lobster ( <i>Nephrops norvegicus</i> ), Spot-tail mantis shrimp ( <i>Squilla mantis</i> )
GSA 19	European hake ( <i>Merluccius merluccius</i> ), Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> )
GSA 20	European hake ( <i>Merluccius merluccius</i> ), Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> )
GSA 17-18-19	Deep-water rose shrimp ( <i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i> )

Relevant by-catch species: Gilt-head sea bream (*Sparus aurata*), Sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), Common pandora (*Pagellus erythrinus*), Squids (*Loligo spp.*), Common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*)

STECF and EWG Conclusions:

- *striped venus* (vongole - clam) should be added to the MAP;
- *Eledone spp.* and *Octopus spp.* should be monitored

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

## Possible MAP for small pelagic fisheries in the western Mediterranean Sea GSAs 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11

Fishing gears:

Purse seiners and pelagic trawlers

Area	Species
GSA 5-6-7	European anchovy ( <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i> ), Sardine ( <i>Sardina pilchardus</i> )
GSA 8-9-10-11	

Relevant by-catch species: Atlantic mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*), Chub mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*), Atlantic horse mackerel (*Trachurus trachurus*), Mediterranean horse mackerel (*Trachurus mediterraneus*)

STECF and EWG Conclusions:

The plan is considered to cover all the relevant small pelagic species and fishing gears.

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

## Possible MAP for demersal fisheries in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea - GSAs 22, 23, 25

Fishing gears: Bottom trawl nets, longlines, bottom-set nets (including trammel nets and gillnets) and traps.

Area	Species
GSA 22	European hake ( <i>Merluccius merluccius</i> ), Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> ), Striped Red Mullet ( <i>Mullus surmuletus</i> ), Norway lobster ( <i>Nephrops norvegicus</i> ), Deep-water rose shrimp ( <i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i> )
GSA 23	Hake ( <i>Merluccius merluccius</i> ), Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> ), Deep-water rose shrimp ( <i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i> ), Striped Red Mullet ( <i>Mullus surmuletus</i> )
GSA 25	Striped Red Mullet ( <i>Mullus surmuletus</i> ), Red mullet ( <i>Mullus barbatus</i> ), Bogue ( <i>Boops boops</i> )

Relevant by-catch species: Gilt-head sea bream (*Sparus aurata*), Sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), Common pandora (*Pagellus erythrinus*), Squids (*Loligo spp.*), Common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*), Picarels (*Spicara spp.*)

STECF and EWG Conclusions: *Octopus spp.* should be monitored

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

## Evaluations and comments:

- The number of data transmission issues for the 2016 MED data call was very high (95).
  - Several “low severity”
  - the majority “satisfactory”.
- Necessary to improve the dialogue between MS and end users at regional level
- Establishment of an ad-hoc working group within the Mediterranean & BS RCG (as specified in article 9 of EU Reg. 1004/2017) to deal with data transmissions issues
- The group could assess the data failures identified by end users.

## **Effort regime for Mediterranean demersal fisheries**

DG MARE is considering improving the fishing effort regime so far implemented, only through the national management plans (Article 19, MEDREG), in Mediterranean demersal fisheries.

The new effort regime would possibly set fishing opportunities (in terms of input controls) in accordance with the scientific advice of the relevant fisheries/metiers.

## **Main STECF comments on effort management**

- Major difficulty: the poor monitoring and documentation of the actual effort levels of a large fraction of the fleet
- The definition of a sound effort management unit depends on a good definition of stock boundaries and good information on catch composition, which may be lacking
- Spatio-temporal measures aimed e.g. at the protection of juveniles or spawning aggregations may be useful but are not sufficient to reduce fishing mortality on adult populations.



## **Main STECF comments on effort management**

The feasibility of effort management in the Mediterranean is a complex issue that cannot be fully addressed within the frame of a STECF plenary.

STECF encourages further dialogue with stakeholders, regional states and scientists regarding the potential efficiency of a diversity of management measures.

## **Management Plan for small pelagics fishery using purse seine net "srdelara" (Republic of Croatia)**

Draft management plans previously submitted by Croatia to the European Commission (EC): April 2016, July 2016, October 2016 and March 2017

STECF is requested to review the scientific basis of the abovementioned revised Management Plan

## **Management Plan for small pelagics fishery using purse seine net "srdelara" (Republic of Croatia)**

Croatia has submitted various draft management plans to the European Commission (EC). The STECF has provided advice in four occasions (in April 2016, in July 2016, in October 2016 and in March 2017)

STECF is requested to review the scientific basis of the abovementioned revised Management Plan

## STECF Comments and Conclusions

- Sardine and anchovy stocks in the Adriatic are overexploited and have a high risk of collapse
- Management of the “srdelara” fishery should be part of a regional management plan for small pelagic fish in the Adriatic Sea
- No specific measures and harvest control rules to achieve the sustainable exploitation of sardine and anchovy in the Adriatic have been specified in the national plan for “srdelara”
- Many potential management measures are listed in the plan [...]they remain poorly specified
- STECF considers that these measures are likely insufficient to reduce fishing mortality to the levels specified in the objectives.

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

## Derogation for 'gangui' trawlers in certain territorial waters of France

STECF is requested to review:

- the implementation report of the 'gangui' fisheries supporting the request to renew the derogation
- the current Management Plan, to evaluate their findings and make appropriate comments with respect to conservation/management measures proposed therein

Conformity with the conservation and management requirements/objectives stipulated by the Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 ("MedReg") and by the Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*

## STECF Comments and Conclusions

- Not all the conditions which need to be fulfilled in order for a derogation to be granted were met in relation to *Posidonia oceanica*
- Detailed information on catch and impact on *Posidonia* beds is needed to cover separately the two types of ganguis, as STECF notes that the larger ganguis using otterboards are considered to have a stronger environmental impact than the smaller ganguis. Also, it is necessary to distinguish between activities inside and outside the derogated areas

## STECF Comments and Conclusions

- Detailed information on species composition and sizes of catches is unknown, and no information on discards is provided
- If the derogation is not granted, this would likely have a strong socio-economic impact on the small group of SSF: it remains unclear whether alternative fishing activities could be used
- No information has been provided to document that the current management plan would ensure a sustainable exploitation of the species targeted by gangui

*Report of the 55th Plenary meeting of STECF*



Thanks for your  
attention!

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