

Draft Terms of Reference for the SCSA Working Groups on Stock Assessment for demersal and for small pelagic species.

One of the objectives of SCSA, is to progress in the enhancement of joint practical stock assessment. “Joint” refers to the participation of scientists from different countries providing their data and sharing them with their colleagues, using a standard method and analyzing together the results and options for fisheries management.

The main objective of the annual meetings of the two Working Groups is to give advice on those stocks that are “well” assessed, well meaning agreed by the group on the type of data, on the parameters used and on the methodology applied. Specifically, the group will, on a stock by stock basis:

1. Analyse the data sets provided by the participants (Sampling frequency, time series, age structured, commercial vs surveys data, ...)
2. Check parameters used and methodology applied on the assessments already done “at home”.
3. Resume the performance of the methods through sensitivity tests and residuals analysis.
4. Run stock assessments on the cases not previously done with the data sets available and with the agreed methodology on a practical session.
5. Get the actual values of the biological reference points (BRP) and compare with those agreed at the 13th SAC meeting, namely FMSY or its proxy $F_{0.1}$ as the Target Reference Point and F_{max} as provisional Limit Reference Point.
6. In cases where BRP cannot be obtained use an empirical approach based on standing stock as stock status indicator, the harvest ratio (catch/biomass from survey) as fishing impact, and some indicators (SST, Chlorophyll, condition factor,...) of environmental stress.
7. Produce diagnoses on the status of the stocks.
8. Present and discuss assessment related works.
9. Complete the filling up of the SCSA stock assessment forms including, when available, those for direct methods.
10. Suggest management advice to the SAC considering different alternatives