

## **Living Resources Committee (G)**

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Chair: Dave Reid (UK)

Rapporteur: Emma Hatfield (UK)

The Living Resources Committee met on Tuesday 21 September from 09:00 to 13:00.

### **Opening**

The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed the participants and it was agreed that Emma Hatfield (UK) would be Rapporteur. The agenda was presented and adopted. The Chair mentioned that in the afternoon of 21 September a joint meeting would be held, together with the Resource Management Committee, on surveys.

### **Reports of Working Groups**

#### **Study Group on the Biology and Life History of Crabs (SGCRAB)**

As there was no representative from this group, Doc G:13 was not discussed.

#### **Working Group on Cephalopod Fisheries and Life History (WGCEPH)**

Jean-Paul Robin (France), Chair of WGCEPH, presented Doc. G:02. WGCEPH planned to work by correspondence in 2004 and to produce their report through this means. The final report was not available at the time of the meeting, but the draft was presented. It was possible to address most of the ToRs. Recommendations for 2004 were mainly as in 2003, but included a request for funding for data collection to enable monthly assessment of the most important cephalopod stocks.

#### **Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF)**

Doc. G:11 was presented by the Chair, Maurice Clarke (Ireland). WGEF worked by correspondence in 2004. Landings data for most elasmobranchs continue to be unavailable on a species basis, but rather by category like "sharks" or "rays and skates". It is hoped that the new EU Data Regulations on sampling will reduce this problem. Deepwater sharks are now included in the remit of this Working Group. The German government asked the advice of the WG in commenting on the accuracy of a proposal to add two shark species to the CITES list Appendix II. It was discussed again whether this group should be under ACFM or LRC, but it was felt that the work of the group should focus both on assessments and on increasing knowledge of the biology of these species. Given their role as indicators of ecosystem quality it was felt that WGEF should remain under the auspices of the LRC. The group also attracts a wide participation including NGOs and other stakeholders. This should be encouraged, and will now be straightforward with the change of rules on participation in Science Committee Working Groups, provided WGEF stays under LRC parentage.

#### **Working Group on Fish Ecology (WGFE)**

Jim Ellis (UK), Chair of WGFE, presented Doc. G:09. This group had its second meeting in April 2004. Its remit was to decrease the workload of WGECO and specifically answer some of the requests from OSPAR and HELCOM. Subjects raised included new data from feeding studies on gadoids, indicating that the data currently used in MSVPA may no longer be valid. There was a worry that if the ToRs of the group were broadened further, this would result in too much work being spread too thinly across the Group's members, and would probably be counter-productive.

### **Stock Identification Methods Group (SIMWG)**

There was no representative from this group, so Doc G:12 was not discussed. However, the Group has prepared an extensive document for publication, presumably as a CRR. The work of the Group was also the subject of a large and well supported theme session within the 2004 ASC.

### **Study Group on the Regional Scale Ecology of Small Pelagics (SGRESP)**

The report G:06, of the first meeting of this group, was presented by the Chair, Pierre Petitgas (France). Stock ID cards were produced describing key life history parameters for each of the stocks discussed in the SG. These ranged from Biscay sardine and anchovy to NE Atlantic mackerel, Atlanto-Scandian herring, and blue whiting. Migratory behaviour of the various species was discussed and one of the conclusions drawn from discussions was that adults are thought to play a key role in all of the changes seen in the stocks' behaviour over time. The short- and medium-term products that could be delivered to assessment working groups were discussed, as was the close relationship developed already between SGRESP and WGMHSA. The Group is a collaborative venture with the GLOBEC SPACC and this allowed a much wider perspective to be taken, including for instance small pelagics in the Benguela and Humboldt Current systems.

### **Workshop on Mackerel and Horse Mackerel Egg Staging and Identification (WKMHMES)**

Mike Armstrong (UK) presented this report on behalf of Steve Milligan. The workshop entailed extensive trials of the performance of teams from all countries involved in the ICES Triennial Mackerel and Horse Mackerel Egg Surveys. The workshop addressed issues of sorting the mackerel and horse mackerel eggs from the plankton and from the egg sample, as well as stage identification. This followed a two-stage process of trials, followed by harmonization work, and then repeat trials. A new standard set of pictures and descriptions of species and egg stages was produced, and suggestions on analysis protocols and equipment. A sub group also looked at fecundity and atresia determination and standardised approaches to this. It was suggested by LRC that the workshop report should be expanded and published as a CRR on the ICES website to give it wide access.

### **ConC and LRC business**

- LRC was informed of the decision to allow Science Committee Chairs to authorise memberships as well as the Delegates; this was approved.
- In this context, the transfer of ACFM groups to LRC was discussed, but no conclusions were reached, apart from the suggestion that WGEF remain in LRC.
- The issue of integrated advice (reference letter by ConC Chair) was discussed. The LRC Chair encouraged a response by all Expert Group Chairs to the Chair of ConC, as soon as possible.
- LRC was notified of the existence of the section in the ACE report on how ecological and environmental information can be integrated with fishery and stock information. LRC considered that SGRESP should be considered as a model for an integrated advice WG, and that such integration should occur outside assessment working groups.

### **Theme sessions 2005**

In earlier theme session outlines for 2005 there were two proposals for theme sessions including marine mammals. Tore Haug (Norway) proposed a single unified theme session in 2005 incorporating these, it would have a similar framework to the title already agreed in principle by ConC: *“Marine mammals: Monitoring techniques, abundance estimation, and*

*interactions with fisheries*". This has been agreed by all parties involved. The timing of the session in 2005 is important for participation of the extensive sea mammal research community in Scotland.

Emma Hatfield (UK) presented a slight modification to a theme session proposed by LRC in 2003. This would be for 2005 and would be entitled "*Multidisciplinary approaches to the identification of stock structure of small pelagics: implications for assessment and sustainable management*". A theme session in 2005 would be very timely due to some EU-funded research projects that will finish in 2005.

Maurice Clarke proposed a session entitled "*Elasmobranch Fisheries Science*". There has been no theme session on this or any related matter for some years. Recently considerable progress has been made concerning the assessment of elasmobranchs, and they are specifically mentioned in the new MOU between EC and ICES, making this appropriate for an early theme session in 2005.

Olav Kjesbu (Norway) proposed a theme session entitled "*Advances in Reproductive Biology: methodology and applications for fisheries science*". This session would address the need for an understanding of egg production in modifying the stock-recruit relationship, underpinning much management advice. The timing in 2005 would allow the session to take advantage of several EU and other projects reaching their conclusions.

## **Theme sessions 2006**

A theme session entitled "Large scale changes in the migration of small pelagic fish and the factors modulating such changes" was proposed by Jürgen Alheit (Germany) and Dave Reid (UK). The session would target migrations which have changed dramatically over recent years and would, where possible, detail explanatory factors, e.g. environment/climate change, population effects, or anthropogenic impacts.

A theme session entitled "Genetic effects of exploitation on marine resources" by Mikko Heino (Norway). This session is based on the potential impact of the often massive selection pressures that fish stocks are exposed to as a result of fishing, and whether these only alter the demographics and life history strategies of the fish, or whether there are also changes in the genetic make up of the stocks.

## **Proposals for symposia**

LRC did not have a proposal for an ICES symposium in 2006 or 2007.

## **Action Plan progress**

The Action Plan Audit was discussed and the spreadsheet was forwarded to Expert Group Chairs. A full reply by September 25th will not be possible due to the late arrival of documentation to the LRC Chair.

## **Draft Resolutions**

Draft resolutions were adopted for all Working/Study and Planning Groups residing under the Living Resources Committee.

## **Any other business**

### **Proposals for new groups**

A proposal was made for a new working group entitled "The Working Group on Acoustic and Egg Surveys for Sardine and Anchovy in ICES Areas VIII and IV [WGACEGG]". The group

is proposed to integrate all the surveys carried out in this area into a common framework. It will aim to standardise designs and methodology for both acoustic and DEPM egg surveys, as well as coordinate and plan the surveys for the following year. The group will continue and expand the important analysis methodology development work in DEPM from SGSBSA. It will also build on the development of standardisation for acoustic surveys started by the PELLASES EU project. Stock estimates for these species are provided via both metiers, and an important aspect of their work will be to seek ways of integrating such advice into a single package for the use of WGMHSA. Finally, the group will look at the potential for including other indicators in the advice such as oceanographic features, e.g. upwelling and stratification.

## **Closure**

The Chair thanked the Rapporteur for her help with the report of the LRC session and thanked all members for their participation in the discussions.