



**REPORT OF THE
STUDY GROUP ON THE BIOLOGY AND LIFE HISTORY
OF CRABS**

September 1997

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PROGRESS REPORT

At the 1996 Annual Science Conference in Reykjavik, Iceland, the ICES Council agreed that the remit of the Study Group on the Biology and Life History of *Majid* Crabs should be enlarged to include other commercially important crab families (such as Cancridae, Portunidae, etc.). Consequently, the Study Group on the Biology and Life History of *Majid* Crabs has been renamed the Study Group on the Biology and Life History of Crabs (SGCRAB). SGCRAB did not meet or produce a report in 1997. The present Study Group chairman, D. Latrouite (France), wishes to relinquish the chairmanship, which he has held since 1993. Rejean Dufour (DFO, Quebec, Canada) has been proposed to serve as the next chairman and has agreed to accept the chairmanship if it is offered to him.

The Study Group proposes to hold a four-day meeting in Brest, France from 4–7 May 1998 with the following terms of reference:

- a) review the commercially important crab species under ICES' mandate;
- b) assess the present knowledge on the biology, life history, and fisheries of these species;
- c) review the assessment methods (direct and indirect) in use for crabs;
- d) elaborate and update biological reference points on crab harvesting strategies and protection of the stock reproductive potential under the present exploitation regimes specific to each species;
- e) assess the potential 'no harvest' marine protected areas might have both in conserving crab population reproductive potential and in protecting important habitat used by crabs in their life cycles;
- f) assess the future production potential of crabs in Europe, taking into account the factors affecting quality;
- g) assess the impacts crabs, and particularly introduced crab species, have on nearshore community dynamics and bivalve mariculture.