

WGFAST – Working Group on Fisheries Acoustics Science and Technology

2016/MA2/SSGIEOM02

The Working Group on Fisheries Acoustics Science and Technology (WGFAST), chaired by Richard O’Driscoll, New Zealand, will work on ToRs and generate deliverables as listed in the Table below.

	MEETING DATES	VENUE	REPORTING DETAILS	COMMENTS (CHANGE IN CHAIR, ETC.)
Year 2017	4-7 April	Nelson, New Zealand	Interim report by 30 June 2017 to ACOM-SCICOM	New chair from 2017
Year 2018	18-23 March	Seattle, USA	Interim report by 30 June 2018 to ACOM-SCICOM	
Year 2019	29 April - 2 May	Galway, Ireland	Final report by 30 June 2019 to ACOM-SCICOM	

ToR descriptor

ToR	Description	Background	Science plan codes	Duration	Expected Deliverables
a	Collate information on acoustic related research and surveys by Country represented in WGFAST.	a) Science Requirements b) Advisory Requirements	3.1, 4.1	3	Filled in template for WGFAST report
b	Present recent work within the topics “Applications of acoustic methods to characterize ecosystems”, “Acoustic properties of marine organisms”, “Behaviour”, and “Emerging technologies, methodologies, and protocols”.	Create a venue for informing the group members on recent activities and seeking input to further development. An overview of the different contributions will be presented in the annual report	3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3	1, 2, 3	Report
c	Organize training session on use of acoustics for biomass estimation	Introductory course on use of acoustic for abundance estimation, including survey design and data analysis	3.1, 3.6	1	ICES training course

d	Provide guidance for calibrating echosounders on fishing vessels (topic group)	Fishing vessels increasingly collect acoustic data. To allow quantitative use of these data, suitable calibration procedures for fishing conditions are needed.	3.6	1 or 2	Report
e	Organize joint sessions at ICES ASC		3.1, 4.2, 4.3	2 or 3	Topic session at ICES ASC
f	Define a commercial data format for omni fisheries sonars.	Increasingly use of omni fisheries sonars in research requires a data format defined by the scientific community. Format definition will involve also software producers and equipment manufacturers.	3.2, 3.3, 4.2	1, 2	ICES CRR
g	Work towards developing and recommending procedures for collecting and processing quality acoustic data in inclement weather.	Acoustic data are collected from a variety of vessels that respond to inclement weather in diverse ways. Procedures are needed to provide quality control for data collected in inclement weather to stock assessment.	3.2, 3.3	2, 3	Review paper(s) and/or CRR; updates of relevant SISP manuals (to be produced in the first year of the next WG cycle)

Summary of the Work Plan

Year 1	Produce the annual overview of recent developments within the field; organize training session on use of acoustics for biomass estimation; provide guidance for calibrating echosounders on fishing vessels; provide guidance for calibrating echosounders on fishing vessels; collate information on acoustic related research and surveys by country to which WGFASST contributes. Establish a Topic Group to define a data format for acoustic data from omni fisheries sonars.
Year 2	Produce the annual overview of recent developments within the field; provide guidance for calibrating echosounders on fishing vessels; collate information on acoustic related research and surveys by country to which WGFASST contributes. Produce an ICES CRR with the final description of the omnidirectional sonar data format. Establish a topic group to evaluate the impact of inclement weather on acoustic data quality.
Year 3	Produce the annual overview of recent developments within the field; collate information on acoustic related research and surveys; collate information on acoustic related research and surveys by country to which WGFASST contributes. Develop and test procedures and methods for identifying and selecting quality data for stock assessments.

Supporting information

Priority	Fisheries acoustics and complementary technologies provide the necessary tools and methods to implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries management within ICES and research into their application and further development is vital.
Resource requirements	No new resources will be required. Having overlaps with the other meetings of the Working, Planning, Study and Topic Groups increases efficiency and reduces travel costs.
Participants	The Group is normally attended by some 60-70 members and guests.
Secretariat facilities	None.
Financial	No financial implications.
Linkages to ACOM and groups under ACOM	Stock assessment groups using acoustic abundance indices.
Linkages to other committees or groups	The work in this group is closely aligned with complementary work in the FTFB Working Group. The work is of direct relevance to the survey planning groups within EOSG and WGISUR.
Linkages to other organizations	The work of this group is closely aligned with similar work in FAO, the Acoustical Society of America, the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization and the American Fisheries Society.
