Working Group on Ecosystem Assessment of Western European Shelf Seas (WGEAWESS)

2016/MA2/SSGIEA01 The **Working Group on Ecosystem Assessment of Western European Shelf Seas** (WGEAWESS) chaired by Marcos Llope*, Spain and Debbi Pedreschi*, Ireland and Eider Andonegi, Spain, 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	20-24 March	Lisbon, Portugal	Interim report by 30 April to SSGIEA	
Year 2018	5–9 March	Nantes, France	Interim report by 30 April to IEASG	
Year 2019	8–12 April, 2019	Cadiz, Spain	Interim report by 29 May to IEASG	Change in Chairs for third meeting

ToR descriptors

ToR	Description	Background	Science Plan codes	Duration	Expected Deliverables
a	Continue metadata compilation for all ecosystem components available for IEA development	Process initiated and completed for specific subregions in previous ToR. Other subregions in draft.	1.9, 6.1, 6.6	3 years, progress updated annually	**Database linked to ICES for Regional Sea Programmes**
b	Continue evaluation of data and trends for a regional Integrated Ecosystem Assessment. Identify ecosystem trends relevant to stock assessment and management	Linked to WKECOVER, WKRISCO, WKDECOVER, and the commitment to provide advice in the context of EBAFM	1.9, 2.1, 6.1	3 years	**Report IEAs and provide advice to fisheries groups as appropriate**
c	Review and update the regional Ecosystem overviews	Linked to ACOM-SCICOM advice	6.5, 6.6, 2.1	3 years	**Ecosystem overviews**
d	Develop and apply ecosystem models to fill identified gaps in empirical data for use in IEAs	This would be linked to activities conducted under previous ToRs	2.2, 5.2, 6.1 or 6.6	3 years	**Regional modelling prodcuts**
e	**Development of Interreg Atlantic Area proposal**	**Funding is being sought to increase the resources and participation of the group**	**1.9, 6.1, 2.1**	**1 year**	**Successful fund capture**

Summary of the Work Plan

Year 1	**The main task will be the development of a proposal for Interreg funding. the group will also be involved with providing advice to WKIrish. We will continue to identify and catalogue datasets available that would be potentially valuable in an IEA and EBAFM. Ongoing analysis of important trends in ecosystem indicators. Improve communication with relevant advice groups (fisheries stock assessment).**
Year 2	Continue with Year 1 activities while liaising with relevant ICES WG membership. Development of ecosystem models to fill identified gaps in empirical data for use in IEAs. Scope of IEA and model development will be dependent on successful Interreg funding.
Year 3	Continue with Year 2 activities while liaising with relevant ICES WG membership. Development of ecosystem models to fill identified gaps in empirical data for use in IEAs. Scope of IEA and model development will be dependent on successful Interreg funding.

Supporting information

Priority	Heavy pressure on shelf seas (biodiversity loss, climate changes, fisheries), lack in understanding of large marine ecosystem functioning and the context of ecosystem health indicators development for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive require to address those research topics at the relevant scale i.e. the regional approach. The EAWESS working group will focus on North Atlantic European continental shelf. Regional area of interest includes the Celtic Seas (Celtic Sea, Irish Sea, West of Scotland, Western English Channel), Bay of Biscay (French continental shelf, Cantabrian Sea) and Western Iberia (Iberian Upwelling, Gulf of Cadiz), involving five countries (Ireland, UK, France, Spain and Portugal). The choose of such limits is justified by : bio-geographical (transitional region between subtropical and Subarctic gyres) chemo-physical continuum: large opened and connected areas dominated by soft bottom, closely linked by regional ocean circulation process, offering 'coast-shelf-slope' and latitudinal environmental gradient management unit (ICES, OSPAR) already existing scientific networks (e.g. IBI-ROOS)
Resource requirements	There is no resource implication for ICES. Working group program is based on synthesis of data and results from existing scientific program, and coordination of surveys and observations networks. However, involvement of ICES Data Centre would useful to help with sharing and harmonizing data.
Participants	The Group is normally attended by some 8 members plus guests.
Secretariat facilities	None.
Financial	No financial implications.
Linkages to ACOM and groups under ACOM	Direct link to IEA, ACOM-SCICOM advice.
Linkages to other committees or groups	There is a very close working relationship with all the groups of IEASG. It is also very relevant to the Working Group on WGECO ,WGSAM, WKIrish, WGRMES and WGMSFDemo
Linkages to other organizations	DC- MAP- DG MARE, MSFD DG ENV, OSPAR, WWF