

**2013/MA2/SSGESST06**      **The Working Group on North-east Atlantic continental slope surveys (WGNEACS)**, chaired by Rasmus Hedeholm, Greenland, will work by correspondence/intersessionally in 2015, to work on ToRs and generate deliverables as listed in the Table below.

	MEETING DATES	VENUE	REPORTING DETAILS	COMMENTS (CHANGE IN CHAIR, ETC.)
Year 2014	By Correspondence		Interim report by 15 December 2014 to SSGIEOM, SCICOM & ACOM	Group worked intersessionally in 2014
Year 2015	By correspondence		Interim report by 15 December 2015 to SSGIEOM, SCICOM & ACOM	Group to work intersessionally in 2015.
Year 2016			Final report by XXX 2016 to SSGIEOM, SCICOM & ACOM	

### ToR descriptors

ToR	DESCRIPTION	BACKGROUND	SCIENCE PLAN TOPICS ADDRESSED	DURATION	EXPECTED DELIVERABLES
a	Coordinate and evaluate new survey initiatives.	There is an unsurveyed commercial fishing area targeting Greenland halibut northwest of Iceland. Areas in Faroese waters and surrounding waters that are not well covered.		1	Advice on better Survey coverage of deep-sea resources.
b	Evaluate current surveys in relation to ecosystem monitoring.	Include "ecosystem survey components" in existing surveys.		3	Contribute to advice on deep-sea ecoregion.  Report to WGDEC, NWWG
c	Compare and possibly implement joint indices on deepwater species.	Such work has been initiated on Greenland halibut data from the Icelandic and Greenlandic survey. However, the approach would possibly be applicable to other species.		2	Combined indices of stock trends  Report to WGDEEP, NWWG, AFWG.

d	Evaluate if survey data allows for detection of migrations. Also if they can reveal shift in distribution of key species.	Stock structure of Greenland halibut and redfish and survey results suggest migration between EEZ's. Using length and area specific data some patterns may emerge.	3	Better definition of stock structure.  Joint publications (if data allow for that)
e	Continue work on sampling protocols for surveys by Faroe, Greenland, Iceland and Norway, and attempt to standardize the protocols as much as possible. Special attention should be given to species identification, especially regarding non-target species.  The protocol will be published as a SISP.	Facilitate use of data across national surveys. Joint publications (in case of interesting findings)	3	Standardized measurement methods.
f	Planing of deepsea surveys in the central and southern areas as defined in earlier WGNEACS reports (Approximatly the slope from Scotland to Portugal, and the Asoras).	Coordinated deep-sea surveys are currently being applied for in EU waters that have been a central subject for WGNEACS in the past. WGNEACS will again be the correct body for further planning of these surveys when they are at the stage of being realized.	3	Deep-sea surveys in central and southern WGNEACS areas

### Summary of the Work Plan

The task is to coordinate as much as practically possible about surveys on deep-sea recourses in the NE Atlantic. The main focus the coming 3 years is on surveys in the Nordic area (Greenland, Iceland, The Faroese and Norway). Work is planned regarding un-surveyed areas, ecosystem monitoring, joint indices on deepwater species, detection of migrations, and standardization of measuring methods between countries.

Additionally coordinated deep-sea surveys are currently being applied for in EU waters that have been a central subject for WGNEACS in the past. WGNEACS will again be the correct body for further planning of these surveys when they are at the stage of being realized.

YEAR	COMMENT
Year 1	Tentative plan for new surveys in ToR a. Start evaluation of current surveys regarding ecosystem monitoring and suggest for improvements ToR b. Start evaluation of current surveys regarding migrations ToR c. Continue analysis for ToR c and e. React to eventual needs of central and/or southern surveys in ToR f.
Year 2	Complete work on combined indices ToR c. Continue analysis for ToR b, d and e. React to eventual needs of central and/or southern surveys in ToR f.

Year 3	Sum up ToR b, d and e. React to eventual needs of central and/or southern surveys in ToR f.
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## Supporting information

Priority	High. The work of the Group is essential if ICES is to collate even the most basic data and to progress the application of assessment techniques.
Resource requirements	None specific, beyond the need for members to prepare for and participate in the meeting. Some of the international deep-water surveys are subject to funding
Participants	The Group is normally attended by some 5–10 members and guests.
Secretariat facilities	None.
Financial	No financial implications.
Linkages to ACOM and groups under ACOM	<p>This working group would fulfil the need of internationally coordinating the existing dedicated deep-water surveys that are currently being carried out along the European continental shelf and Nordic seas. These internationally coordinated deep-water surveys would be a potential source of abundance indices for roundnose grenadier, black scabbardfish, deep-water sharks, Greenland halibut, bluemouth redfish, greater silver smelt and greater forkbeard and also be a platform for carrying out studies of seamounts identified by WGDEC and any related studies of the efficacy of closed areas.</p> <p>Close links with WGDEEP and WGEF and also for the Nordic deep-water surveys NWWG and AFWG to provide abundance indices on deep-water species including deep-water sharks; links with WGDEC for the collection and analysis of environmental data and deep-water habitat characterization.</p>
Linkages to other committees or groups	Links with IBTS in order to benefit from expertise in the international coordination of trawl surveys.
Linkages to other organizations	NEAFC