

WGBIFS – Baltic International Fish Survey Working Group

2014/MA2/SSGIEOM02

The **Baltic International Fish Survey Working Group** (WGBIFS), chaired by Włodzimierz Grygiel, Poland, will meet in Riga, Latvia, 27–31 March 2017, to work on ToRs and generate deliverables as listed in the Table below.

	Meeting dates	Venue	Reporting details	Comments (change in Chair, etc.)
Year 2015	23–27 March	Öregrund, Sweden	Interim report by 15 May 2015 to SSGIEOM, SCICOM and ACOM	
Year 2016	30 March–3 April	Rostock, Germany	Interim report by 16 May 2016 to SSGIEOM, SCICOM and ACOM	
Year 2017	27–31 March	Riga, Latvia	Final report by 15 May 2016 to SSGIEOM, SCICOM and ACOM	

ToR descriptors

TOR	Description	Background	Science plan topics addressed	duration	Expected deliverables
a	Combine and analyse the results of spring and autumn acoustic surveys and experiments	Acoustic surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks		Year 1, 2 and 3	Updated acoustic tuning index for WGBFAS
b	Update the BIAS and BASS hydroacoustic databases	The aim of BIAS and BASS databases is to store the aggregated data from acoustic surveys		Year 1, 2 and 3	Updated databases with aggregated acoustic data for WGBIFS
c	Plan and decide on acoustic surveys and experiments to be conducted	Acoustic surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks		Year 1, 2 and 3	Finalized planning for the surveys for WGBIFS
d	Discuss the results BITS surveys and evaluate the characteristics of TVL and TVS standard gears used in BITS	Demersal trawl surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic cod and flatfish stocks		Year 1, 2 and 3	Updated BITS data in DATRAS database for ICES Data Centre and WGBFAS
e	Plan and decide on demersal trawl surveys and experiments to be conducted, and update and correct the Tow Database	Demersal trawl surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic cod and flatfish stocks		Year 1, 2 and 3	Finalized planning for the surveys for WGBIFS
f	Review and update the Baltic International Trawl Survey (BITS) manual according to SISP standards	Demersal trawl surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic cod and flatfish stocks		Year 3	Updated BITS manual for WGBIFS

g	Review and update the International Baltic Acoustic Surveys (IBAS) manual according to SISP standards	Acoustic surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks	Year 3	Updated IBAS manual for WGBIFS
h	Analyses related to the improvement of quality of acoustic indices and estimation of the uncertainty	Acoustic surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks	Year 3	Improved quality of acoustic indices with estimates of the uncertainty for WGBFAS
i	Coordinate cod stomachs sampling programme in the Baltic International Trawl Survey (BITS)	Baltic cod stomachs collected during the demersal trawl surveys improve the basic knowledge concerning the species interactions in relation to the multispecies approach. Collected and registered information about the marine litter (mostly anthropogenic origin), occasionally appeared in the ground trawl fish control-catches, are additional source of data about present ecological status of marine seabed in investigated areas of the Baltic.	Year 1, 2 and 3	Coordinate cod stomachs and marine litter sampling programmes in the Baltic International Trawl Survey (BITS)
j	Discuss the possibilities to make further standardizations of IBAS. An attempt to standardize the pelagic fishing gear used in BIAS and BASS surveys.	Acoustic surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks	Year 3	Agreements for further standardizations of IBAS for WGBIFS and through the improved data quality for WGBFAS. The 1 st approach to designing the standard pelagic fishing gear used in BIAS and BASS surveys, including an update of the IBAS manual to ensure consistent use.
k	Review the progress of the ICES acoustic database		Year 1	ICES is developing an acoustic database and it is important that the plans are reviewed to ensure adoption of the system.

1	Define methods for the appropriate processing of the survey data and output products from the BITS survey to feed the Baltic LFI and MML indicators	The 2 nd holistic assessment of the Baltic Sea by HELCOM will draw on ICES competence to provide D3 indicators; through the BalticBoost project the ICES data centre is given resources to implement the indicators based on an appropriate methodology to be defined by WGBIFS as the survey experts.	Year 2	Processing method for BITS survey data including any caveats to its use and applicability to the indicators.
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Summary of the Work Plan

Year 1	Compilation the survey results from 2014 and first half of 2015 and reporting to WGBFAS. Coordination and planning the schedule for surveys in the second half of 2015 and the first half of 2016. Coordinate cod stomachs sampling programme in the Baltic International Trawl Survey. The 1 st approach to designing the standard pelagic fishing gear used in BIAS and BASS surveys.
Year 2	Compilation the survey results from 2015 and first half of 2016 and reporting to WGBFAS. Coordination and planning the schedule for surveys in second half of 2016 and first half of 2017. Coordinate cod stomachs and marine litter sampling programmes in the Baltic International Trawl Survey. An attempt to construct the standard pelagic fishing gear, which will be applied to BIAS and BASS surveys.
Year 3	Compilation the survey results from 2016 and first half of 2017 and reporting to WGBFAS. Coordination and planning the schedule for surveys in second half of 2017 and first half of 2018. Coordinate cod stomachs sampling programme in the Baltic International Trawl Survey. Reviewing and updating the common survey manuals according to SISP standards. Proposals for improvement of quality of acoustic indices and for further standardization of International Baltic Acoustic Surveys. The implementation of the standard pelagic fishing gear to control-catches in BIAS and BASS surveys and fishing gears intercalibration.

Supporting information

Priority	The scientific surveys coordinated by this Group provide major fishery-independent tuning information for the assessment of several fish stocks in the Baltic Sea. Consequently, these activities are considered to have a very high priority.
Resource requirements	The research programmes which provide the main input to this group are already underway, and resources are already committed. The additional resource required to undertake additional activities in the framework of this group is negligible.
Participants	The Group is normally attended by some 20-25 members and guests.
Secretariat facilities	None.
Financial	No financial implications.
Linkages to ACOM and groups under ACOM	The survey data are prime inputs to the assessments of Baltic herring, sprat, cod and flatfish stocks carried out by WGBFAS. Linked to ACOM through the quality of stock assessments and management advice.
Linkages to other committees or groups	There is a very close working relationship with WGBFAS. It is also relevant to the SSGESST and WGFASST.
Linkages to other organizations	No direct linkage to other organizations.