

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 2017 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 (BASS, BIAS) provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks and are additional source of information about cod distribution in the pelagic waters zone of the Baltic. Moreover, a.m. surveys are a good source for collecting and developing the knowledge about acoustic parameters and the ichthyofauna biodiversity in midwaters of the Baltic.		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. The newly implemented acoustic-trawl database, developed under AtlantOS project can be a source of a modern, international base of the primary/raw data from acoustic surveys.		Year 1, 2 and 3	Updated databases with both disaggregated and aggregated acoustic data for WGBIFS

TOR	Description	Background	Science plan topics addressed	duration	Expected deliverables
c	Plan and decide on acoustic surveys and experiments to be conducted	Acoustic surveys (BIAS, BASS) provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks and are additional source of information about cod distribution in the pelagic waters zone of the Baltic. Moreover, a.m. surveys are a good source for collecting and developing the knowledge about acoustic parameters and the ichthyofauna biodiversity in the Baltic pelagic waters zone.		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 research surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic cod and flatfish stocks. Moreover, a.m. surveys are a good source for collecting data concerns the ichthyofauna biodiversity in the Baltic bottom waters zone.		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 research 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 research surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic cod and flatfish stocks, and should be organized and accomplished based on the common agreed standards.		Year 3	Final updated BITS manual for WGBIFS
g	Review and update the International Baltic Acoustic Surveys (IBAS) manual according to SISP standards	Acoustic research surveys provide important fishery-independent stock estimates for Baltic herring and sprat stocks and are additional source of information about cod distribution in the pelagic waters zone of the Baltic. The BIAS and BASS surveys should be organized and accomplished based on the common agreed standards.		Year 3	Final updated IBAS manual for WGBIFS

TOR	Description	Background	Science plan topics addressed	duration	Expected deliverables
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 the marine litter sampling programme in the Baltic International Trawl Survey (BITS) and registering the data in the ICES database. The status of Baltic cod stomachs sampling in BITS surveys.	Collected and registered information about the marine litter (mostly anthropogenic origin), occasionally appeared in the ground trawl fish catches, are additional source of data on present ecological status of marine seabed in investigated areas of the Baltic. Baltic cod stomachs collected during the demersal trawl surveys improve the basic knowledge concerning the species interactions in relation to the multispecies approach.		Year 1, 2 and 3	Coordinated the marine litter sampling programme in the Baltic International Trawl Survey (BITS). The status of Baltic cod stomachs sampling.
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 and are additional source of information about cod distribution in the pelagic waters zone of the Baltic.		Year 3	Agreements for further standardizations of IBAS for WGBIFS and through the improved data quality for WGBFAS. The 2 nd 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.

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 the marine litter sampling programme in the Baltic International Trawl Survey. Final reviewing and updating the common surveys manuals (IBAS, BITS) according to SISP standards. Proposals for improvement of quality of acoustic indices and for further standardization of Baltic International Acoustic Surveys. An attempt to implement the standard pelagic fishing gear to control-catches in BIAS and BASS surveys.
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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 SSGIEOM and WGFAS.
Linkages to other organizations	No direct linkage to other organizations.