Executive summary

The Working Group of International Pelagic Surveys (WGIPS) met at ICES Headquar-
ters, Copenhagen, Denmark from 19–23 January 2015 under the chairmanship of Karl-
Johan Stæhr, Denmark and Ciaran O’Donnell, Ireland: to report on herring larvae sur-
veys in 2014 and to coordinate herring larvae survey activities for 2014 in the North
Sea, Irish Sea and Western Baltic; to report on acoustic surveys in 2014 and to coor-
dinate acoustic survey activities for 2015 on herring, blue whiting, sprat, mackerel and
boarfish in the Northeast Atlantic, North Sea and Western Baltic.

Review of larvae surveys in 2014 and coordination of larvae survey in 2015. The her-
ring larvae sampling was still in progress at the time of the WGIPS meeting, thus sam-
ple examination and larvae measurements had not yet been completed. The
information necessary for the larvae abundance index calculation will be ready for, and
presented at the Herring Assessment Working Group (HAWG) meeting in March 2015.

Reporting on survey results from 2014 and coordination of surveys in 2015 for herring
larvae in North Sea, Irish Sea and Western Baltic are given in Section 3 of this report.

During the meeting, four internationally coordinated acoustic surveys and five indi-
vidual acoustic surveys carried out in 2014 were reported on for use by the relevant
assessment groups. Furthermore, planning for 2015 surveys was carried out.

North Sea, West of Scotland and Malin Shelf summer acoustic survey (HERAS). For
this survey, herring and sprat abundances for the North Sea, West of Scotland, Malin
Shelf and ICES Subdivision IIIa in June-July 2014 were reported. Data on herring di-
vided into North Sea autumn spawners and Western Baltic spring spawners as well as
sprat can be found in Section 4.1.1 in the report and for more detail in the post -cruise
report, Annex 5c.

International blue whiting spawning stock survey (IBWSS). Blue whiting abundances
for Porcupine Bank, Hebrides, Faroese/Shetland and Rockall in March-April 2014 were
reported. Data on blue whiting abundance, biomass, mean weight and mean length is
found in Section 4.1.2 in the report and for more detail in the post-cruise report, Annex
5a.

International Ecosystem survey in Nordic Sea (IESNS). For this survey herring and
blue whiting abundances in the Nordic Sea and Barents Sea in May 2014 were reported.
Data on Norwegian spring-spawning herring and blue whiting abundance, biomass,
mean weight and mean length can be found in Section 4.1.3 in the report and for more
detail in the post-cruise report, Annex 5b. Furthermore, information on hydrography,
zooplankton and marine mammals collected during the survey have been reported.

Coordinated Nordic Seas ecosystem survey (IESSNS). For this survey mackerel, her-
ring, blue whiting and lumpfish abundances in the Nordic Seas in July 2014 were re-
ported. Data on mackerel Norwegian spring-spawning herring and blue whiting abund ance,
biomass, mean weight and mean length can be found in Section 4.1.4 in the report and for more
detail in the post-cruise report, Annex 5b. Furthermore, information on hydrography,
zooplankton and marine mammals collected during the survey was reported.

Western Baltic Acoustic Survey This is a survey conducted by Germany in October
2014 in the Western Baltic (ICES Subdivisions 21–24). The survey is coordinated within
the framework of Baltic International Acoustic Survey (BIAS). The survey provides
HAWG with abundance data on Western Baltic spring-spawning herring and sprat. The survey has been reported in Section 4.3.1 of this report and in Annex 6a.

**Irish Sea Survey.** For this survey herring, abundance for the Irish Sea and North Channel in August 2013 has been reported by Northern Ireland, UK. Data on herring abundance, biomass, mean weight and mean length can be found in Section 4.3.2 in the report and for more detail in the survey report, Annex 6b.

**Celtic Sea herring acoustic survey (CHAS).** For this survey herring and sprat, abundance for the Celtic Sea in October 2014 was reported by Ireland. Data on herring and sprat abundance, biomass, mean weight and mean length can be found in Section 4.3.3 in the report and for more detail in the survey report, Annex 6c.

**Boarfish acoustic survey (BFAS).** For this survey boarfish, abundance in July 2014 was reported by Ireland. Data on boarfish abundance, biomass, mean weight and mean length is found in Section 4.3.4 in the report and for more detail in the survey report, Annex 6d.

**Pelagic ecosystem survey in Western Channel and eastern Celtic Sea (PELTIC).** This is a new survey conducted by Cefas, UK, in the Western Channel and eastern Celtic Sea in October-November 2014. The survey provides abundance data on pelagic species in the area such as herring, sardine, anchovy, mackerel and boarfish. The survey has been reported in Section 4.3.5 of this report and for more detail in the survey report, Annex 6e.

**Coordination of acoustic surveys in 2015.** Coordination of the four internationally coordinated acoustic surveys and five individual acoustic surveys are given in Section 4.2 and Section 4.3 of this report.