

**IBTSWG – International Bottom Trawl Survey Working Group**

**2018/MA2/EOSG03** The **International Bottom Trawl Survey Working Group (IBTSWG)**, co-chaired by Ralf van Hal, Netherlands, and Pascal Laffargue, France, will meet to work on ToRs and generate deliverables as listed in the Table below:

	MEETING DATES	VENUE	REPORTING DETAILS	COMMENTS (CHANGE IN CHAIR, ETC.)
Year 2019	1–5 April	Den Helder, NL	Interim report by 20 May 2019 to EOSG	
Year 2020	30 March – 2 April	By Correspondence/Online	Interim report by 30 April to EOSG	
Year 2021	12-16 April	Lysekil, Sweden	Final report by 14 May 2021 to EOSG	

**ToR descriptors**

ToR	Description	Background	<a href="#">Science plan codes</a>	Duration	Expected deliverables
<b>a</b>	Coordination and reporting of North Sea and Northeastern Atlantic surveys, including appropriate field sampling in accordance to the EU Data Collection Framework. Review IBTS SISP manuals in order to achieve additional updates and improvements in survey design and standardization. (ACOM)	Intersessional planning of Q1; Q3 and Q4 surveys; communication of coordinator with cruise leaders; combing the results of individual nations into an overall survey summary. Intersessional activity, ongoing in order to improve survey and manuals quality.	3.1, 3.2	Recurrent annual update	1) Survey summary including collected data and description of alterations to the plan, to relevant assessment WGs and other EGs (WGCSE, WGNSSK, HAWG, WGHMM, WGDEEP, WGWIDE, WGEEL, WGCEPH, WGML) and SCICOM.  2) Indices for the relevant species to assessment WGs (see above)  3) Planning of the upcoming surveys for the survey coordinators and cruise leaders  4) Updated version of survey manual, whenever substantial changes are made.
<b>b</b>	Address DATRAS-related topics in cooperation with DGG: data quality checks and the progress in re-uploading corrected datasets, quality checks of indices calculated, and prioritizing further developments in DATRAS. (ACOM)	Issues with data handling, data requests or challenges with re-uploading of historical or corrected data to DATRAS have been identified and solutions are being developed	2.1, 3.1	Multi-annual activity.	Prioritized list of issues and suggestion for solutions and for quality checking routines, as well as definition of possible new DATRAS products, submitted

to DATRAS group at ICES.  
Annual check of recent survey data.

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c	Develop a new survey trawl gear package to replace the existing standard survey trawl GOV. (SCICOM)	<p>The divergence in the GOV specification from the one given in the survey manual due to historical drift and technical creep has been acknowledged by the group (WGIBTS 2015). Furthermore, the deviation from the specification contained in the manual and between users has widened to the point where it will never be reversed. Therefore, the preferred option is to maintain the status quo of national GOV specifications and develop a new survey trawl package to replace the GOV.</p> <p>A number of IBTS members are due to replace vessels in the next few years and this provides an opportunity to review time-series and undertake inter-calibration trials between the GOV and a new trawl. A further driver for a new gear has been highlighted by the Celtic Sea area where the necessity to optimize sampling opportunities are not been provided by the GOV. In parallel with trawl development the process of replacing the GOV will need to be defined with reference to continuing the assessments and existing time-series.</p> <p>(For this ToR, the IBTS WG seeks support from gear technology experts and welcomes</p>	3.1, 3.2	2 years	Design specification (Working document) in 2020
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		their advice and input into the development of the new survey gear package)			
<b>d</b>	Evaluate the current survey design and explore modifications or alternative survey designs, identifying any potential benefits and drawbacks with respect to spatial distribution and frequency of sampling, survey effort in terms of number of otoliths by species and number of trawl hauls. (SCIOCM)	Specific issues to be addressed include: Stratification and optimal spatial distribution of effort.	3.2	1 - 3 years	CRR on effect of tow duration on catch rates and species richness by end of 2019 Paper on variance estimation of abundance indices in 2020 Paper on Stratification and distribution of survey effort in 2021.

### Summary of the Work plan

<b>Year 1</b>	Organise a workshop bringing together gear technologist and survey scientists to discuss gear options in relation to data needs and implementation issues
<b>Year 2</b>	Evaluate proposed gear options and their effect on timeseries
<b>Year 3.</b>	Carry out at sea trials and evaluate results
<b>Recurrent annual activity</b>	Updates for ToRs a, b, and c.

### Supporting information

<b>Priority</b>	Essential, The general need for monitoring fish abundance using surveys is evident in relation to fish stock assessments, and it has increasing importance in relation to MSFD GES descriptors biodiversity, foodwebs, and bottom integrity. Besides the relation of fish abundance with descriptor 3 Exploited stocks.
<b>Scientific justification</b>	<p><b>ToR a)</b> This is a core function of the IBTSWG, an important forum for coordination and evaluation of standardized bottom trawl surveys in the Eastern Atlantic Area, to ensure good survey coverage in relation to stocks and areas. inter-calibration work. and high quality of data. The group also provides a brief overview the result of the individual surveys undertaken during the previous year and in the first quarter of the ongoing year. IBTSWG will continue to review feedback and implement modifications, including coordination and implementing new requirements of the EU DCF. To ensure quality and traceability of sampling protocols, changes in the design and procedures used in the surveys coordinated by the IBTSWG have to be implemented and documented in detail in the IBTS manuals, which are available via the ICES webpage under Series of ICES Surveys Protocols.</p> <p><b>ToR b)</b> DATRAS has become the core database containing the data obtained in the national IBTSurveys, the The development of DATRAS needs to be evaluated annually, and the group is also one of the forum to discuss with ICES Data Centre and agree on the priority of desired further developments.</p> <p><b>ToR c)</b> A number of IBTS members is due to replace vessels in the next few years and this provides an opportunity to review time-series and undertake inter-calibration trials between the GOV and a new trawl.</p> <p><b>ToR d)</b> Efficiency and effectiveness are important drivers in the implementation of high cost surveys. Evaluations of different implementation options and their consequences need to be reviewed at regular intervals, particularly as changes to the gear are being discussed at</p>

	present.
<b>Resource requirements</b>	A 5-day IBTS meeting. Prepared documents from members following ToR Leaders identified above. 8-day Chair's time to edit. It is estimated that each ToR will require at least 8 hours of preparation.
<b>Participants</b>	The Group is normally attended by some 20–25 members and guests. All members will participate on the discussion of all ToRs, but ToRs leaders have been identified and appointed to intersessionally prepare the work and lead it in the meeting.
<b>Secretariat facilities</b>	SharePoint plus normal secretariat support.
<b>Financial</b>	No financial implications.
<b>Linkages to advisory committees</b>	ACOM. IBTS indices are used in the assessment of multiple stocks.
<b>Linkages to other committees or groups</b>	There are relations with other bottom-trawl surveys (WGBEAM, WGBIFS) that also use DATRAS as the international repository for its data (WGDIM, DGG). There are also linkages with Assessment WGs using IBTS indices. Also relevant to the Working Group on Ecosystem Effects of Fishing Activities (WGECO) , the Working Group on Improving use of Survey Data for Assessment and Advice (WGISDAA) and Working Group on Integrating Surveys for the Ecosystem Approach (WGISUR).
<b>Linkages to other organizations</b>	IOC, GOOS, OSPAR, Regional Coordination groups (DCF).