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International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer

Workshop to develop guidelines for addressing catch forecasts from biased Assessments (WKFORBIAS) in Woods Hole MA (USA)

Dear Colleagues

We invite you to participate in a workshop to develop guidelines for addressing ***Catch forecasts from biased assessments*** (WKFORBIAS), to be held at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, MA, USA, **11 November – 15 November 2019**. The workshop will be chaired by Larry Alade (USA) and Chris Legault (USA), and the Terms of Reference can be found below. We would appreciate if you could circulate this note to extend the invitation to members of your network.

The goal of the workshop is to bring together researchers and stock assessment experts to discuss and present a framework for addressing retrospective bias in ICES stock assessments.   A central task of the workshop will be to document the extent of the retrospective bias in category 1 and 2 assessments based on data produced by assessment working groups during 2019. Additional objectives are to identify and compile possible causes for retrospective bias and to develop approaches for retrospective bias correction and guidelines for acceptability of a stock assessment with retrospective bias. The outcome of the workshop is expected to be delivered to ACOM and considered for implementation in 2020.

Please let us know if you plan to attend the workshop and can present/propose candidate products for the workshop. As such please send your expression of interest to Colin Millar (colin.millar@ices.dk) stating the following:
   a. Name
   b. Affiliation
   c. Your role as an interested party to the workshop
   d. Title of a contributing Working paper addressing any number of the TOR's below (if applicable)

We wish to accommodate as many participants as possible so if you are interested please send your expression of interest **by 15 April 2019**. A selection of the participants may be required to ensure that all of the TOR's are addressed. ICES will consider the list of potential participants and inform selected participants by **30 April 2019**.

Feel free to circulate this announcement to your networks. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Co-Chairs (Larry Alade: larry.alade@noaa.gov or Chris Legault: Chris.legault@noaa.gov)

WKFORBIAS Terms of Reference

1. Document the extent and magnitude of bias as identified in ICES category 1 and 2 stock assessments through the retrospective analysis performed by the ICES expert groups in 2018

2. Categorize the potential causes for bias as identified in ICES stock assessments with respect to factors like stock longevity, quality of input data (catch and survey), model assumptions and environmental changes

3. Develop criteria for characterizing a major or minor bias through retrospective analysis as it pertains to:
   i. Acceptability of an assessment,
   ii. Consideration for correction (using the results of the retrospective analysis) for stock status determination and catch forecast, while taking into consideration other model diagnostics from the assessments.

4. Investigate through simulations the performance of using Mohn's rho to correct biased assessments for the purpose of making catch projections or, alternatively, to directly correct catch forecasts, particularly as it relates to the short and long-term tradeoffs in achieving MSY targets.

5. In cases where Mohn's rho can be used, develop criteria for its use including a description of the methodology for correcting population metrics (for example, indicate whether the correction should be applied to spawning stock biomass or numbers at age) or the catch forecasts
   i. Develop standard methods for the presentation of bias corrected values in advice sheets.
   ii. In cases where Mohn's rho should not be used, recommend other approaches.