WKAREA3 – Third Workshop on Age Reading of European and American Eel

2018/2/EOSG14 The **Third Workshop on Age Reading of European and American Eel (**WKAREA3), to be chaired by Françoise Daverat, France, Isabel Domingos ,Portugal, and Kélig Mahé, France, will meet in Bordeaux, France, 17-18 June 2019 to:

a) Exchange a collection of European eel otolith pictures, including known age eels, with samples prepared using different protocols and representing all the eel sub-populations and their respective environmental types from Portugal, Spain and France (Science Plan codes: 3.3, 4.1, 4.4)

b) Conduct an age intercalibration process with institutions throughout Europe, applying the ageing criteria defined during the Workshop on Age Reading of European and American Eel (WKAREA) to the otolith image library compiled by the workshop.; (Science Plan codes: 3.3, 4.1, 4.4)

c) Develop recommendations on any aspects of the age estimation criteria that could be refined to increase the standardization, precision and accuracy of eel age estimation. (Science Plan codes: 3.3, 4.1, 4.4)

WKAREA3 will report by October 1st 2019 for the attention of WGBIOP and EOSG.

Supporting information

Priority	The EU has requested annually recurring scientific advice on the Europear eel from ICES. The advice is sought in support of the Eel Regulation (EC 1100/2007), fisheries controls and other legislative frameworks such as CITES. The EU also has requested period advice from ICES on the post-evaluation of national eel management plans. Eel ageing by otolith reading is a pillar of data collection and analysis for national eel assessments, and i is vital that eel ageing is standardized between countries. Thus, the work c WKAREA3 is essential if ICES is to be appropriately placed to advise on th development of recovery plans for eels.
Scientific justification	European and American eel stocks are currently in a severely depleted state. The EU Regulation for the Recovery of the Eel Stock requires biomas estimates of current silver eel escapement. The reporting requirements of the EU Eel Regulation specifies biomass reference points and these plus mortality rates need to be summed over the age groups in the stock. For this approach to provide meaningful results at the local and stock (species) scale, biologists need to estimate eel age with precision. The previous meeting established age estimation criteria for European and American eel A very small scale age intercalibration was conducted during the meeting based on known age eel samples. This exercise pointed out the need for a larger scale age intercalibration reading in order to apply the newly established age estimation criteria, and to measure the accuracy and precision of readers.
Resource requirements	Access to a dedicated area in the ICES SharePoint is requested for file sharing and storage.
Participants	Members of SUDOANG project, members of WGEEL and other ICES groups.
Secretariat facilities	Support to organize the logistics of the meeting including a SharePoint site and publishing the report.
Financial	None specific.
Linkages to advisory committees	The proposal originates from SUDOANG and WGEEL but is of direct relevance to ACOM and review group activities in relation to the development of appropriate assessment methods for eel (e.g. WKEELDATA; WGBIOP).

Linkages to other committees or groups	WGEEL, WGBIOP and other Working Groups on inshore fisheries; and to Regional Coordination Groups and other interested parties involved in the EU's Data Collection Framework.
Linkages to other organizations	INTERREG SUDOANG project, European Union Recovery Plans.