

**WKMSHS2 – Workshop on Sexual Maturity Staging of Herring (*Clupea harengus*) and Sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*)**

2015/2/SSGIEOM18

A Workshop on Sexual Maturity Staging of Herring (*Clupea harengus*) and Sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) (WKMSHS2), chaired by Cindy van Damme\*, The Netherlands and Joanne Smith\*, United Kingdom, will be established and take place in Göteborg, Sweden, on 23–27 October 2017 to:

- a) has the goal of assessing the usefulness of the maturity scale agreed in 2011 and the conversion to and from other scales used in the different labs/institutes;
- b) to validate the criteria and descriptions to classify maturity stages of the 2011 scale which takes into account the difficulties and / or inconsistencies of the maturity scales in use in different labs;
- c) to calibrate staging of herring and sprat using fresh fish between the different laboratories;
- d) to calibrate staging of herring and sprat following the pattern of trial-discussion-retrial using photographs, following the pattern of trial-discussion-retrial;
- e) to validate with histological analysis the macroscopic maturity stage, mainly the resting stages that are incorrectly classified as immature.
- f) to address the generic ToRs adopted for maturity staging workshops (see 'WGBIOP Guidelines for Workshops on Maturity Staging').

WKMSHS2 will report by 15 December 2017 for the attention of ACOM, SCICOM and WGBIOP.

**Supporting Information**

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Priority:	The maturity stage is an important biological parameter to be used in the calculation of maturity ogives (and therefore of Spawning Stock Biomass), for the definition of the spawning season of a species and for the monitoring of long-term changes in the spawning cycle. Moreover these parameters are essential input data for the model of fish stocks-assessment usually used to establish a diagnosis on stock status.
Scientific justification and relation to action plan:	During the 2011 workshop a common maturity scale with the objective of defining common criteria was proposed for herring and sprat. Laboratories involved in the collection of maturity data agreed to use the common scale for reporting.
Resource requirements:	Before the Workshop the chairs will setup a sampling plan for collecting samples for to be used during workshop. The sampling will be carried out during 2016. For the two species, the sampling parameters are: total length; gonad visual inspection - maturity stage by the new common maturity scale; total weight; gonad weight; liver weight; gutted weight; gonad photo; age; histological maturity stage; microscopic preparation photo. This workshop will be based on the analysis of both digital photos of gonads and fresh gonads. Therefore facilities suitable to examine fresh biological material must be available during the workshop. It would be necessary to have a web server for storage and easy access to the photos collected by the participants before the workshop.
Participants:	In view of its relevance to the ICES data assurance, the Workshop is expected to attract interest from ICES Member Countries. The Workshop will include international experts on maturity staging.
Secretariat facilities:	None.
Financial:	None.

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Linkages to advisory committees:	ACOM
Linkages to other committees or groups:	WGBIOP, SCICOM, RCM, HAWG, WGIPS, IBTSWG
Linkages to other organisations:	None.

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