

WKARMAC2 – Workshop on Age estimation of Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*)

2015/2/SSGIEOM17

A Workshop on Age Estimation of Atlantic Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) (WKARMAC2), chaired by Mark Etherton*, UK, will be established and take place on 6–10 November 2017 in San Sebastian, Spain to:

- a) Review information and results on age estimations and recent otolith exchanges, follow up on the previous workshop in 2010 (WKARMAC) and validate the work done so far.
- b) Summarize the ageing protocols currently in use and improve them where possible.
- c) Address the low agreement between age readers of this species, particularly in fish over the age of 6 years, with group exercises and reading sample sets.
- d) Create a reference collection of agreed age otoliths.
- e) Address the generic ToRs adopted for workshops on age calibration (see ['WGBIOP Guidelines for Workshops on Age Calibration'](#))

WKARMAC2 will report by 8 December 2017 for attention to ACOM, SCICOM and WGBIOP.

Supporting information:

Priority:	Essential. Age determination is an essential feature in fish stock assessment to estimate the rates of mortality and growth. In order to arrive at appropriate management advice ageing procedures must be reliable. Otolith processing methods and age reading methods might differ considerably between countries and laboratories. Therefore, otolith exchanges should be carried out on a regular basis, and if serious problems exist age reading workshops should be organised to solve these problems.
Scientific justification:	To identify the present problems in age determination for this species (i.e. low agreement between age readers particularly for fish over the age of 6 years), to improve the accuracy and precision of age determinations and to share information of the methods and procedures used between different ageing laboratories.
Resource requirements:	Institutes to supply otolith samples for potential inclusion in a reference set.
Participants::	The Workshop will include international experts on growth and age estimation. In view of its relevance to the ICES quality assurance, the Workshop is expected to attract interest from ICES Member Countries.
Secretariat facilities:	None
Financial:	None
Linkages to advisory committee:	ACOM
Linkages to other committees or groups:	WGBIOP, SCICOM, RCM