

Roadmap for the Scientific Committee

Article 10 of the SPRFMO Convention establishes the Scientific Committee (SC) whose functions are, in summary, to:

- (a) plan, conduct and review scientific assessments of the status of fishery resources;
- (b) provide advice and recommendations to the Commission and its subsidiary bodies based on such assessments;
- (c) provide advice and recommendations to the Commission and its subsidiary bodies on the impact of fishing on the marine ecosystems in the Convention Area;
- (d) encourage and promote cooperation in scientific research; and
- (e) provide such other scientific advice to the Commission and its subsidiary bodies as it considers appropriate.

Regarding the scientific advice for 2015 on Jack Mackerel stock status, the Commission endorses the short term priorities as defined in the report of the 11th SWG Meeting. In addition to these priorities, the Commission requests the Scientific Committee to:

- a) Update and further develop the stock assessment of Jack Mackerel based on the agreed methods;
- b) Continue the work on evaluating alternative hypotheses on Jack Mackerel stock population structure and consequences of alternative management approaches. In this context, and pending more conclusive findings on the stock population structure of Jack Mackerel, continue and expand the stock assessment work under both the stock hypotheses considered in the 1st Meeting of the SC;
- c) To review and evaluate the Rebuilding Plan adopted by the 2nd Meeting of the Commission;

Consider a range of exploitation levels and present the probabilities that the spawning stock biomass will reach target and limit reference points (or their proxies) in 2016, and also 10 and 20 years into the future. Regarding the impact of fisheries on the marine ecosystem and the Ecosystem Approach to fisheries management, the Commission requests the SC:

- d) To evaluate the impact of fishing activities on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) described in the Convention area and on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) identified by the Scientific Committee within the Area of the Convention.
- e) To review international best practices in bycatch, incidental catches (seabirds, marine mammals and reptiles) and mitigation options in pelagic and bottom fisheries, and make the appropriate recommendations.
- f) To review the standards for data collection and reporting, and for observer coverage to ensure a full understanding of the nature and extent of bycatch interactions across all fisheries. In particular, to revise the section on observer data in the Conservation and Management Measure on Standards for the Collection, Reporting, Verification and Exchange of Data (CMM 2.02) in order to cover the collection of data on incidental catches of oceanic sharks included in Annex I of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

- g) To consider the level of risk to seabird species in the Convention Area for each of the following methods, and explore mitigation measures that would minimise impacts on seabirds:
 - a. Bottom trawling – with discarding of biological material
 - b. Bottom trawling – with no discarding of biological material
 - c. Pelagic trawling – with discarding of biological material
 - d. Pelagic trawling – with no discarding of biological material.
- h) Evaluate the level and type of observer coverage that is recommended for demersal longline and trawl fisheries to provide a statistically reliable estimate of seabird mortality associated with that fishery.
- i) To advise on a sampling scheme design for offloading fish in ports.
- j) Undertake the work described in Paragraph 5 of CMM 2.03 for the Management of Bottom Fishing.
- k) The Commission requests the Members and Non Members to provide the necessary experts to the SC to address this roadmap and its specific requests.