

ICES Benchmark planning

This document contains the stock lists for Benchmarks that are decided on for 2010 and 2011 plus a list for future benchmarks.

Introduction

In a benchmark meeting, ICES scientists in cooperation with external experts and stakeholders, review the current assessment method and try to develop improved assessment and forecast facilities. This can involve improvement of data, assessment models and forecasts. The benchmark results in a 'stock annex' that describes the methodology (and its conditions) for the 'update' stock assessment in the coming 3–5 years. An assessment methodology can describe the analytical procedure, resulting in point estimates of stock size and catch options, but also the non-analytical trends based analyses.

In 2008, ICES decided to design specific meetings, splitting the annual update assessments (that feed into the advice) from the development and improvement of stock assessment methods. This allows time ensure quality assurance of both the annual assessment and the intrinsic quality of the assessment methodology. This process has been applied for the first round in 2009 with satisfactory results and comments on improvements. One adaptation to the original framework is that an intermediate year protocol was developed to facilitate adapting the current assessment method in between benchmarks.

On the topic of stakeholder involvement the evaluation remarked:

“ Fisheries industry representatives (varying from 1–5 per day) were happy to be involved and their input was useful for scientists even where it provided no immediate input to the stock annex. New data collection by the industry is under development in partnership with science. Continued interest depends on the results of the benchmark and requires feedback from science on how new data are received/used. External experts proposed involving stakeholders in the planning process as they have positive experience with that elsewhere.”

Acting on the last point, stakeholders (from the side of fisheries and green organisations) were again invited via the RACs in a letter in November 2009. For the Roundfish benchmark, participants are available and have also been able to put forward data. ICES regrets that so far, only one stakeholder has applied for the WKFLAT meeting and that for both WKFLAT and WKDEEP, no data have come forth from stakeholders.

2010 Benchmarks

2010 Roundfish (9–16 February 2010)

Stocks to be benchmarked
Faroe saithe (Division Vb)
Icelandic saithe (Division Va)
Northeast Arctic saithe (Subareas I and II)
Northern stock of hake (Division IIIa, Subareas IV, VI and VII, and Divisions VIIIabd)
Southern stock of hake (Divisions VIIc and IXa)

2010 Deep-sea stocks (17–24 February 2010)

Stocks to be benchmarked
Roundnose grenadier in Division Vb and Sub-areas VI and VII
Greater Silver smelt in all areas
Tusk in Division Va
Red (blackspot) seabream in Sub-area X
Deep-water squaliform sharks in all areas
Greater forkbeard

2010 Flatfish (25 February–4 March 2010)

Stocks to be benchmarked
Sole in Division IIIa (Skagerrak and Kattegat)
Sole in Subarea IV
Plaice in VIId
Plaice in VIIe

2010 Protocol project

SHORTLIVED SPECIES (proposed 6–10 September 2010)

Stocks to be benchmarked
Sandeel North Sea
Sandeel IIIa

2011 Benchmarks

2011 PELAGIC

Stocks to be benchmarked
Icelandic summer-spawning herring (Division Va)
Horse mackerel (<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>) in Division IXa (Southern stock)

2011 DEEP SEA

REGIONAL APPROACH
Ecoregion approach to assessment in deep-water components of Celtic Seas (Sub-areas VI and VII) and Oceanic Northeast Atlantic eco-regions

2011 FLATFISH

Stocks to be benchmarked
Sole in Divisions VIIIabd (Bay of Biscay)
Megrim (Divisions VIIb-k and VIIIabd)
Megrim in Subarea IV and VI
Sole VIIa
Possibly also Plaice in VIIa and VIIf,g

2011 Roundfish

Stocks to be benchmarked
North Sea saithe
North Sea haddock
Northeast Arctic haddock (Subareas I and II)
Possibly also Cod Subdivision Vb (Faroe bank)

2012 Proposal

FLATFISH

Candidate stocks
Anglerfish (Divisions VIIb-k and VIIIabd)
Anglerfish (Divisions IIa and IIIa, Subarea IV and Subarea VI)
Anglerfish (Divisions VIIIc + IXa)
VIIIf,g sole
VIIe Sole

DEEP SEA

Candidate stocks
Stocks not considered at the 2010 benchmark meeting

Other

Candidate stocks
All Western waters cod stocks (Area VI and VII excl. VIId).
Cod Via
Cod VIIa
Cod VIIe–k
SGHERWAY results
Sardine (VIIIc-IXa)