



Report on the outputs of NC Consultation 2022 on preparing for RWP 2025-2027



Regional Coordination Group
North Atlantic
North Sea & Eastern Arctic



Regional Coordination Group
Baltic



Regional Coordination Group
Large Pelagics



Regional Coordination Group
on Economic Issues



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Section I – Introduction

Background

This consultation was meant to prepare the discussions in the RCG 2022 technical meetings regarding the development of Regional Work Plan (RWP), based on RCG/ISSGs regular work and Fishn’Co contribution to adapt all coordination initiatives in a RWP format. The aim of this consultation are to inform EU-MAP National Correspondents on the work progress of the project as well as asking for feedback on the overall setup of RWP and NWP and the suggested decision-making process for future RWP.

As a reminder, the “Fishn’Co” project (<https://www.fisheries-rcg.eu/fishnco/>) (DG MARE funded) is a project that brings together 13 institutes from 11 Member States and involves various experts, among whom several have chairing or leadership mandates in RCGs and Inter-Sessional Sub-Groups (ISSG) of RCGs. The project is addressing the needs to develop Regional Work Plans for RCG NANS&EA, RCG Baltic, RCG Large Pelagics and RCG on Economic issues. It is entirely devoted to providing added value to the RCG/ISSG and to complement their work, with the specific goal of initiating Regional Work Plans (RWP) for each of EU-MAP thematic areas.

The work in the project aims to be carried out in a transparent way, in consultation with data collection stakeholders such as National Correspondents, RFMOs, RCG, EU Commission in order to ease the process of adoption of Regional Work Plans for the considered RCGs.

A consultation on RWP already occurred during the project FishPi in 2016 (see deliverable 1.3 of the [fishPi report](#) p. 65-92) where there was a clear positiveness from MS to implement Regional Work Plans and especially regional sampling plans which is a part of the RWP and is reflected in the Figure I below.

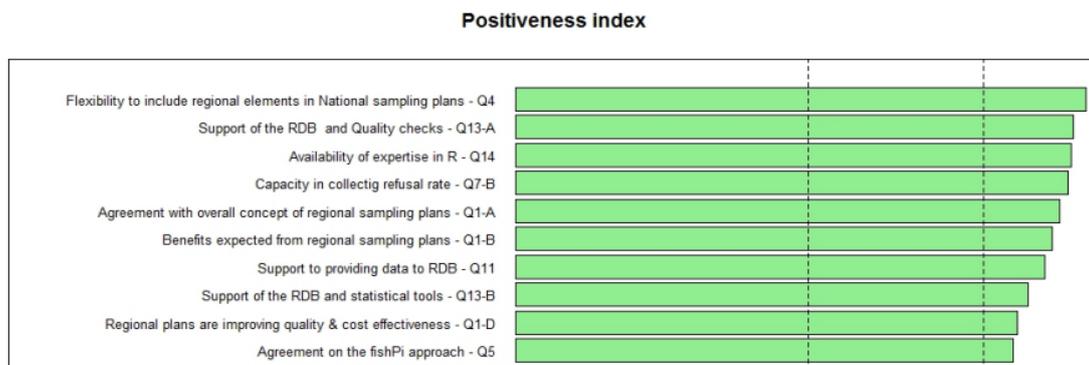


Figure I: outputs from the 2016 FishPi consultation process – bar plots of positive responses received to questions, ordered by decreasing order. X axes goes from 0 to 1 (maximum score) with vertical dashed lines indicating 0.5 and 0.8 marks.

The process of moving in this direction has then been worked upon in a dedicated RCG ISSG on RWP and now in Fishn’Co which resulted in the submission of the first two non-binding RWPs to the Commission by October 2020 and October 2021. These RWPs have been evaluated by the STECF in November 2020¹ and 2021². Based on the feedback from the STECF and further discussions the Fishn’Co project has proposed a

¹ Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) - Evaluation of DCF Work Plans 2021, WP/AR templates & guidance (STECF-20-16)

² Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) - Evaluation of work plans for data collection (STECF-21-17)

general setup of RWP (Annex 1) and a decision-making procedure for future RWP (Figure 3). The final and agreed decision-making process will as a result from this project be introduced in the revised Rules of Procedures (RoP).

Countries having responded to the consultation

The consultation was sent to 26 EU Member States on the 13th of April 2022 and was based on a dedicated consultation platform kindly provided by the EU commission. The deadline to respond was set on the 30th of April. Most of MS had responded by the deadline and another 15 days was given to gather all responses. By mid-May, 23 MS had responded and eventually a last contribution was received early June at the start of RCG NANS&EA and Baltic. The two non -respondents were a land-locked country who answered they were feeling the questions were not relevant to them and a Mediterranean country (Figure 2). Member State responses were attributed to each RCGs where they contribute as per Table I.

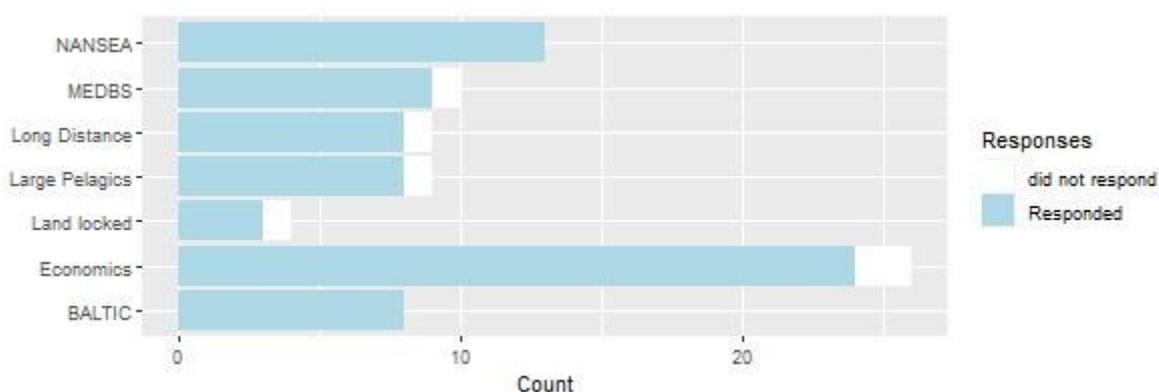


Figure 2: Number of Member States having responded to the fishn'Co consultation by RCG as specified

EU Member State	MS	Economics	NANS&EA	Baltic	MED&BS	Large Pelagics	Long Distance	Land locked
Austria	AUS	X						X
Belgium	BEL	X	X					
Bulgaria	BGR	X			X			
Croatia	HRV	X			X	X		
Cyprus	CYP	X			X	X		
Czech Republic	CZE	X						X
Denmark	DNK	X	X	X				
Estonia	EST	X	X	X			X	
Finland	FIN	X		X				
France	FRA	X	X		X	X		
Germany	DEU	X	X	X			X	
Greece	GRC	X			X	X		
Hungary	HUN	X						X
Ireland	IRE	X	X			X		
Italy	ITA	X			X	X	X	
Latvia	LVA	X	X	X			X	
Lithuania	LTU	X	X	X			X	
Malta	MLT	X			X	X		
Netherlands	NLD	X	X				X	
Poland	POL	X	X	X			X	
Portugal	PRT	X	X			X	X	
Roumania	ROU	X			X			
Slovenia	SLO	X			X			
Slovakia	SVK	X						X
Spain	ESP	X	X		X	X	X	
Sweden	SWE	X	X	X				
Total		26	13	8	10	9	9	4

Table I: Member States contribution to RCGs

Main figure description

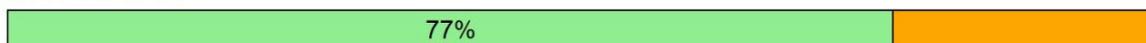
The figure below will be displayed for each of the questions. The first bar corresponds to the positiveness index as developed in the fishPi2 consultation. The estimator allocates 1 point for a 'YES', 0.5 point for a 'PARTLY' and 0 point for a 'NO' (example in Table 2). When the positive response is a 'NO' (e.g. do you foresee any issues with implementing the data collection), then the 1 point goes to the 'NO' and 0 point for the 'YES'. The total number of points over all Member States responses is divided by the number of MS having responded (max = all MS responded 'YES'). This gives a general picture of the agreement given by all MS to the question.

Response	Nb of responses	Points attributed	Positive index
YES	16	16	
PARTLY	5	2.5	
NO	3	0	
total	24	18.5	77%

Table2: Attribution of points for positive responses and positive index calculation (example taken from question Q2.a)

The second part is a set of pie plots providing the exact number of responses {'YES','PARTLY','NO'} by each MS in every RCG where the MS contributes. It is to be noted that the pie plot for RCG on Economic issues gather all MS and that Land locked countries are not a specific RCG but are displayed to give a better focus on their specific issues.

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Beneath the plot, a table provides ALL comments received in the consultation process. These comments are slightly redrafted and sometimes grouped with other similar comments for simplicity and readability.



Section 2 - General Principles for the development of RWP

Background and objectives

The concept of RWP was introduced in the EU Reg 2017/1004³ article 9 (points 8-11), then initiated in RCG NANS&EA and Baltic since 2019 and has evolved in different format and content as non-binding test runs for evaluation by STECF and feedback from RCGs and NCs. Since RWP is a new concept, its development requires consistency and a long-term approach, seeking for consensus all along the process. The Fishn'Co project is about to propose a new step, in line with STECF suggestions, for discussion in the RCG 2022 technical meetings and the consultation is part of the process of laying down solid foundations on general principles for future RWP.

Timeline

During the last NC meeting (March 2022), DG-MARE proposed three timeline options for the adoption of the first formal RWP which would cover the period 2025-2027. All options consider the proposal of the RWP 2025-27 in the second quarter of 2023 and differ on the further adoption or not by the Commission services. Two options are proposed in case of formal adoption, one which would require evaluation by STECF in June 2023 for an adoption in January 2024, the other would pass through STECF evaluation in November 2023 for an adoption in May 2024. The third option avoids the formal adoption by the Commission services, would go through STECF evaluation in November 2023 and would then be available to all MS by the end of 2023. Fishn'Co views on the timeline is that **the option without a formal adoption could be the logical follow-up of the recent non-binding RWPs, enabling RCGs to learn and consider the need for a formal adoption in subsequent time periods, if deemed necessary.** The proposed timeline associated to this option is given Figure 2.

Regional Work Plans no adoption timeline (3)

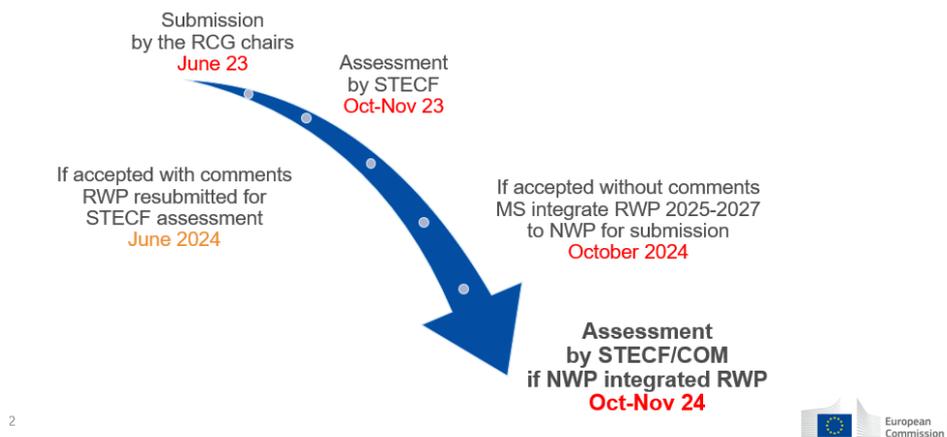


Figure 2: Timeline for RWP 2025-2027 without adoption by COM (slide from DG-MARE presentation to NC meeting)

Content

³ Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 on the establishment of a Union framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the common fisheries policy and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 (recast)



The prime concept and content of a RWP are the cooperation agreements that cover a large range of issues such as survey coordination and execution, but also regional sampling plans including data sharing mechanisms, data quality checks, sampling protocols, optimization of sampling designs, carrying out data sampling, etc... A RWP should consist of a number of different building blocks – and a number of (bi or multi-lateral) common approaches proposed by RCG and agreed at NC Decision Meeting. This would mean that **the RWP should only contain elements agreed at RCG and invariable during the time period of the RWP**. Ongoing development or work in progress, such as pilot studies or draft documents should not be part of RWP but left to the RCG technical meeting discussion.

Principles

Four basic principles on the linkage between NWP and RWP were proposed by RCG NANS&EA and Baltic chairs for STECF considerations in 2020. These are as follows, together with STECF (STECF 21-17) comments and illustrated in a diagram in Annex I.

Principle 1: MS full program is reflected in their NWP tables and information from these tables will not be duplicated in RWP tables. RWP might have tables, but MS should not have the obligation to report back on them in their (national) AR

STECF Comments on principle 1: Each MS is required to hold one set of tables and one text document for the NWP which contains information on both national and regional aspects. The regional aspects should match those of each RWP relevant to the MS. MS should copy all relevant information from RWP tables directly into the corresponding table in the NWP to ensure consistency between NWPs and RWPs, and when reporting in the AR.

Having a stand-alone document (NWP Tables and Text) is a legal and financial obligation for many MS. Information in NWP tables should be complete - however it is possible that NWP text may summarise RWP text and provide a link to the RWP for more details. When the evaluation of a MS NWP takes place, only the national parts need to be evaluated as the RWP part will have already been evaluated and accepted. (Scripts could be developed to check if the regional parts of the NWP are consistent with the relevant RWPs.)

Principle 2: Each row in the NWP table that is coordinated on regional level will have a reference to respective regional sampling/work plan explained in RWP text file.

STECF Comments on principle 2: NWP template should enable the identification of any type of MS involvement in the different RWPs; In all tables the “comments” field is available and this could be used by MS to indicate any involvement in a RWP if there is no field specifically identified to hold this information.

Principle 3: NWP texts contain only national information and references to the RWP text file. RWPs will contain all the agreed details, descriptions and context in its text file, so that MS can make a reference to them in their NWP.

STECF Comments on principle 3: NWP should contain both national information **and** the RWP information relevant to the MS (see comments on principle 1). This could be through a summary or references to each RWP text file for regions relevant to the MS.

Principle 4: RWP will contain information on a more general level so that there will not be a need to update it every year when some numbers in one MS NWP table will change. How to specifically fill in the NWP tables on regionally coordinated issues, can be prepared during (or before) each year RCG Technical meeting in order to have the consistency in filling the tables in by MSs.



STECF Comments on principle 4: None (full agreement)

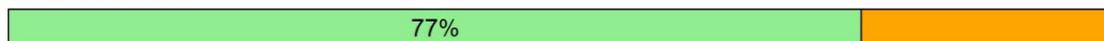
Additionally, and based on section 2.2, a fifth principle is proposed:

Principle 5: RWP should only contain elements agreed at RCGs and remain unchanged during the time period of the RWP.

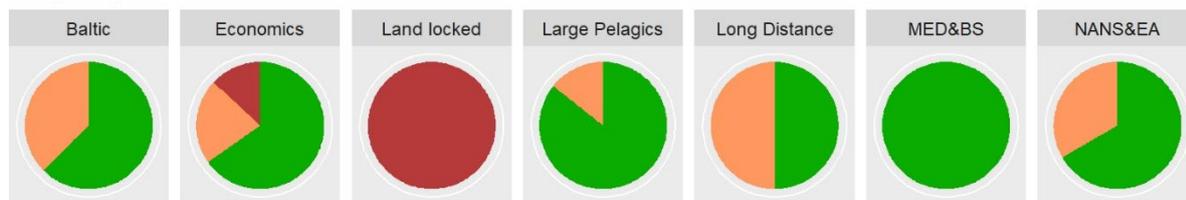
Responses on general principle

Q2.a Do you agree with the step-wise approach and the option of proceeding with a RWP 2025-2027 without formal adoption by the DG MARE services?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	16	<p>General agreement with the approach and the option of proceeding with a RWP 2025-2027 without formal adoption by the DG MARE services, with some additional information as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stepwise approach would also give flexibility to the MS involved and save time Any new initiatives would be fully funded Same option should be agreed for Med & BS RWP would be a plus only if the description of the cooperation activities is more detailed and if it allows to identify gaps in data collection and even bi or multi-lateral agreements would be part of a RWP. NWP should remain the only binding document
PARTLY	5	<p>The main reservation is about formal adoption of the RWP or lack of clarity in the proposal and suggest more discussions needs to happen on the adoption issue:</p>

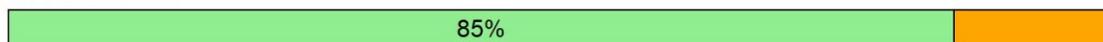


Resp	#	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RWP should be formally adopted by the Commission. If not, there is the risk of not having clear situation and obligations [Belgium in the YES response] and no legal status The text is about the timeline and principles is not very clear In accordance with the 'Recast', RWP is formally adopted to be part of the EU legislation. Stepwise approach is fine and if the question suggests that the RWP as agreed in the RCG and then transferred to the NWP before formally adopting a proposal from DG Mare, the reply is 'yes'.
NO	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The country supports formal adoption from DG MARE and two countries have answered no without comments.

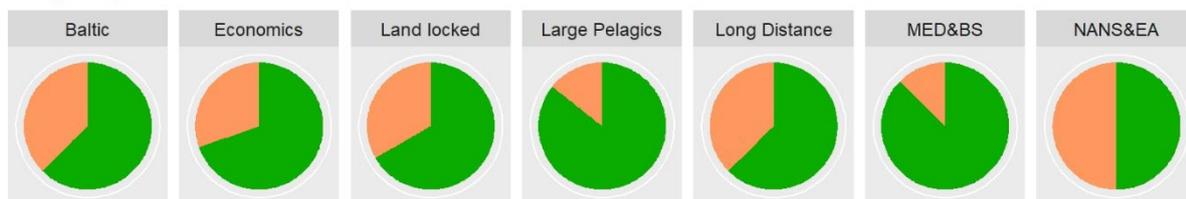
Q2.b

Do you agree that the RWP should only contain elements agreed at RCG and remaining unchanged during the time period of the RWP? This implies that all other elements under development which are not formally agreed should not be part of RWP.

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No comments
PARTLY	7	<p>On the contents of the RWP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be beneficial if the RWP would be limited to only the agreed elements, However, there should be flexibility for the MS to start already during the RWP to include new elements and not having to wait for the next RWP; RWP should contain only agreed elements, but unsure if it is good idea to have an option to include new elements only once after every 3 years (if all RWPs will be made for 3-year periods). If the RWP will not be formally adopted, then it is possible to make further addition to it, when new elements for RWP are ready;



- If non-binding, RWP would be helpful only if updated according to RCG decisions and following updates of NWP. The main goal is indeed to provide an overview of data collection between MS and identify gaps in order to agree on agreements to fill these gaps.

On the invariability of the RWP

- Not to have possibility to change or update RWP may cause some non-compliance or discrepancy. More discussion is needed. [Lithuania]. New insights and unforeseen circumstances may require adaptations to the plan. These should be possible to avoid a mismatch between plans and requirements. A short track to only adopt changes within the 2025-2027 time-frame should be possible;
- Agreement but with the option of yearly revision as with NWP;
- If we take to account, that only basic, general information is in RWP, maybe it is possible to remain RWG unchanged during the time period;
- It is not clear if all RWP will run for 3 years or 6 years?

NO 0

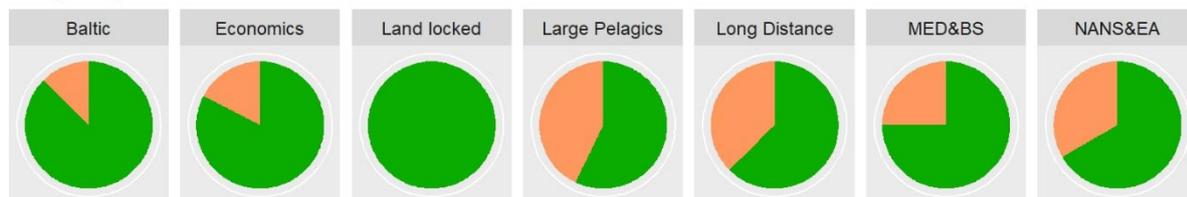
Q2.c

Do you agree with the general principles (#1-5) laid out by RCG NANS&EA and RCG Baltic chairs, STECF and Fishn'Co?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comments
PARTLY	5	<p>Contradictions regarding general principles are spotted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On principle 1: Copying all relevant information from RWP tables directly into the corresponding table in the NWP will result in a lot of information duplicated in the NWP and RWP and this is something that we want to avoid. What is meant by relevant information from the RWP to be copied in the NWP, is it considered part of the RWP? Or is it just the part of the NWP which is regionally coordinated (but not a RWP). This is relevant in terms of the decision-making process;



- In addition, RWP might have tables, but it is said that MS should not be obliged to report back on them in their (national) AR. If we do so, we may find problems to include in the RWP the table about multilateral agreements and the table about international coordination (meetings);
- On principle 3: NWP should contain both national information and the RWP information relevant to the MS (see comments on Principle 1). This will result in a lot of information duplicated in the NWP and RWP. And this is something that we want to avoid;
- Member State's feedback should be taken into account;
- Cannot reply. Text about the timeline and principles is not very clear;
- Yes, but also, some questions appear. If RWP contains information on a more general level and stays unchanged for many years, will it be relevant and useful for MS;
- "NWP texts contain only national information and references to the RWP text file": the timeline of elaboration of NWP and RWP will make difficult the exact coordination between RWP and NWP and direct link - though, reference could be lighter (reference to tables only for example);
- Approach should be made consistent between Med and NANSEA to avoid inconsistencies in reference to RWP in NWP for countries involved in different RCG.

NO 0

Summary on General principles

A general agreement was reached on the step-wise approach which will give flexibility to the MS involved and save time. It is also agreed that RWP would be a plus if the description of the cooperation activities is more detailed, even with bi or multi-lateral agreements, and if it allows to identify gaps in data collection.

Some reservations remain and suggest more discussions would be needed, especially regarding

1. the adoption or not by the EU Commission services; This point is to be contrasted with the contents of a RWP and if all binding agreements are reflected or not in each NWP (which are adopted by Commission services)
2. the impossibility to change anything within the time period of the RWP;
3. the clarification of the general principles

Score (positivity index) of Section 2

84%

Section 3 – RWP Decision making process

Background and objectives

Figure 3 below illustrates the general decision-making structures for developing RWP. All the steps are detailed further.

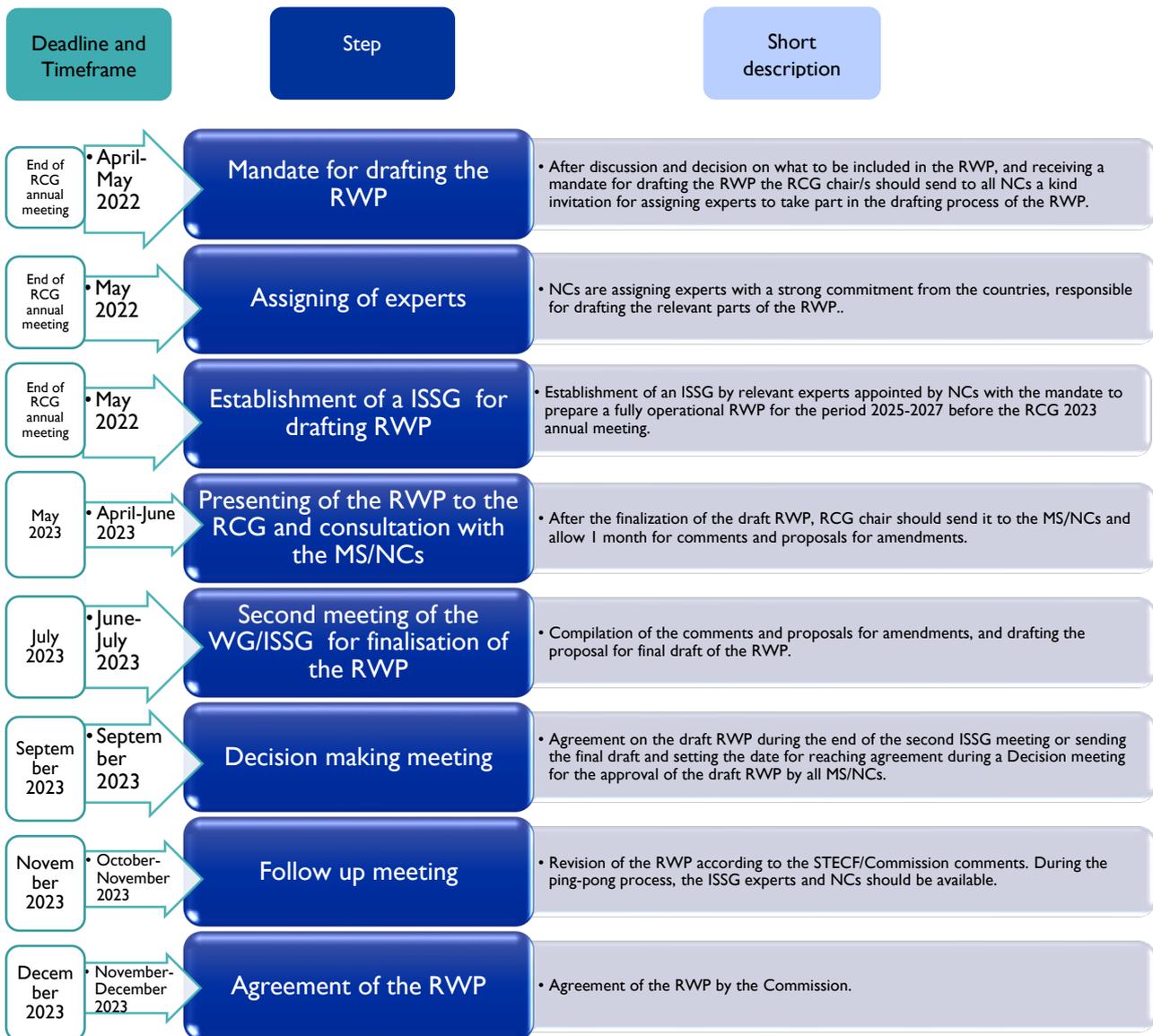


Figure 3. Draft general decision-making structures for developing the regional work plans

3.1 Mandate for drafting a RWP

During the RCG Technical Meetings 2022 and regarding the point in the agenda on developing the RWP and taking a decision on a draft regional work plan by consensus, the RCG could take a decision for the establishment of ISSG for drafting a RWP. This point should be based on a clear description of what exactly

will be included in the RWP and who will be responsible for the implementation of the activities. Furthermore, the preliminary discussion before the RCG annual meeting is strongly recommended, while such a discussion followed by a decision during the RCG meeting is needed. After receiving a mandate for drafting the RWP the NCs should assign experts to take part in the WG/ISSG and drafting process of the RWP or the RCG chair/s could send to all NCs a kind invitation for assigning experts.

3.2. Assignment of experts to the ISSG on Drafting RWP

NCs are assigning experts from the countries, responsible for the relevant parts of the WP, e.g. the parts of the RWP can be structured in a table and each NC can include the name of the person from the country which will be in charge of filling it.

All the experts from this table will be ISSG responsible for the drafting of the RWP. After these lists of experts are ready, online or physical meeting can be organized, in which will be agreed the timetable for filling the RWP.

3.3. Establishment of an ISSG on drafting RWP

The ISSG on drafting RWP should be established with clear deadlines for drafting the draft RWP and presenting the draft to the RCG and NCs.

The ISSG on RWP should be tasked with preparing a fully operational RWP for the period 2025-2027 in order to be presented to RCG 2023 annual meeting. The ISSG should take into account Fishn'Co project outputs.

The easiest way to prepare the RWP could be if it is done in a collaborative document and if all the experts are able to work in the same time, without the need someone to combine it at the end.

The experts could also work on the practical part of the agreements between MS which will be needed.

3.4. Presentation of the RWP to the RCG and consultation with the NCs

It should be clear that the deadline for presenting the drafted RWP is May 2023 when the RCG annual meeting will be held. In addition, the draft RWP should be sent one month before the annual meeting in order to be reviewed by all experts and NCs.

During the 2023 RCG meetings, the RWP 2025-2027 should be finalised.

After the finalization of the RWP, RCG chair should send it to the NC and allow 1 month for comments and proposals for amendments (which in the ideal world should not happen since the RWP will be written from the experts in each MS).

3.5. Finalisation of the RWP

A second meeting of the ISSG/RWP should be anticipated for finalization of the RWP. The ISSG should compile the comments and proposals for amendments and prepare the proposal for the final draft of the RWP. The NCs could be invited at the end of the meeting where they will have to agree on the draft RWP, which the RCG chair will have to submit to the COM. It is to be noted that in this case, we do not need step 3.1.7. Final consultation with the NCs. If NCs are not present at the meeting the RWP should be sent to the NCs with an invitation to a decision meeting where the procedure for reaching an agreement on the approval of the draft RWP should be held.

3.6. Decision meeting

Agreement on the RWP by the NCs. In the event that step 3.1.5 sounds too ambitious the RCG chair should send the final draft and set the date (up to two weeks) for reaching an agreement on the approval of the draft

RWP by all NCs. When the final agreement by consensus is reached the RCG chair should send the final draft of the RWP 2025-2027 to the commission/STECF in a week (in September/October 2023) for evaluation and approval.

3.7. Follow up meeting.

Revision of the RWP according to the STECF/Commission comments. During the ping-pong process, the WG/ISSG experts and NCs should be available in order to revise the draft RWP in a timely manner.

3.8. Agreement of the RWP by the Commission.

When the final agreement on the RWP is provided by the Commission (which should be done by the end of 2023), the MSs will have time until October 2024 to implement the relevant parts from the RWP to their NWP.

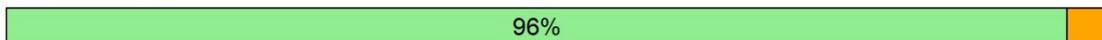
A communication channel between ISSG, RCGs, NCs and the COM could be established through a Q&A excel file for possible queries.



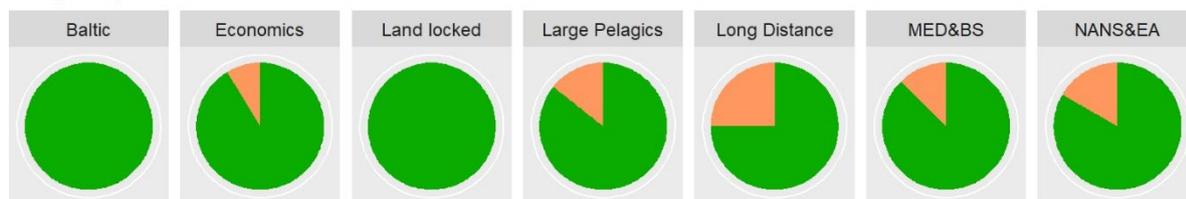
Responses on the RWP Decision making process

Q3.a Do you agree with the overall structure of the decision-making process?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement but formal adoption by the DG MARE is requested. No need to have consensus, two or more MS can agree to a RWP. In 3.6., the suggested period of 2 weeks is too short. It is likely that it is not enough to iron out nationally or between MSs the issues preventing the agreement. A month could be sufficient
PARTLY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will be quite difficult to achieve the RWP 2025-2027 to be completed by June 2023. Need to clarify. When we describe this process for the RWP (presentation, agreement, etc), are we referring to these lines in the NWP (ie sampling schemes) which are regionally coordinated, and that are flagged as such. Or only to the RWP, as a separate document Under 3.5, NCs have the option to amend the RWP at a very last stage. This should only be allowed for minor amendments as major amendments may require additional analysis, discussion and redrafting agreements while there is no time left to do so
NO		



Q3.b

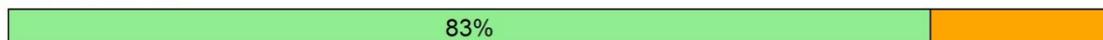
Do you have proposals how to ease or improve the structure? Please comment

- Ensure the inclusion of representatives from MS with sufficient mandate already earlier in the process.
- For additional clarity, it might be worth considering including an outline of what happens with the RWP in the Commission once RWP is delivered to the Commission (before formal adoption as part of the EU legislation)
- Adequate time for feedback from member states shall be taken into account.
- Concerning RCG LP, and specifically LLD Mediterranean fisheries, we consider very useful if there will be a joint ISSG for drafting RWP with the RCG Med&BS concerning Mediterranean fisheries.

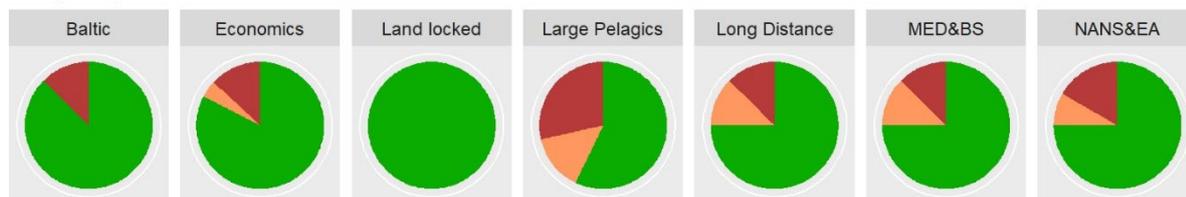
Q3.c

Do you agree with the suggested timeframe?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed timeframes as described in Figure 3 seems as being realistic and achievable • Some timeframes seem tight (e.g. two weeks for reaching an agreement on the approval of the draft RWP by all NCs) but possible.
PARTLY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We think it is quite difficult to achieve the RWP 2025-2027 to be completed by June 2023. • Adequate time for feedback from member states shall be taken into account.
NO	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not finding an Annex 2 (all NO's) • With regards to the timeframe in Figure 3, work/deadlines should not be planned for July/August since this includes the dominant holiday period in several MS.



Summary on Decision making process

There was a confusion in the text of the consultation with a reference to an Annex 2 instead of figure 3 (due to a previous version of the document). This prevented from having a better score, since the 3 NO's are all about not finding the Annex 2.

Eventually, there is a large agreement on the proposed Decision-Making process with a clear demand to allocate more time within the different stages for receiving feedbacks from MS and especially taking into consideration the difficulty for feedback during the summer period.

Score (positivity index) of Section 3



Section 4 – RWP contents

Background and objectives

In advance of the 2021 technical sessions of the RCG NANS&EA, Baltic, Large Pelagics and Economic Issues, Fishn’Co worked in close cooperation with RCG-ISSGs to map out their ambitions in terms of regional coordination and identify existing knowledge and gaps to inform Regional Work Plans (RWP). Given that Fishn’Co activities encompass the needs from four RCGs, all of the EU-MAP scope for data collection is addressed and thus all of the tables and textboxes of NWP. Following the step-wised approach detailed in Section 2 (and questions Q2.1-3), there would be no need to rush through a comprehensive RWP 2025-27 containing all elements in all tables and textboxes of the WP, but to build upon easily agreeable information prepared by RCG/ISSGs. The question is then opened on the scope and content of such a proposal for a RWP knowing that the very details on what will be proposed is not subject of this consultation.

From the RCG NANS&EA and Baltic technical reports 2021, almost all tables and textboxes are potentially candidate to receive regional coordinated activities in some form or another. In this section of the consultation, specific questions considered preliminary to start or continue further developments are proposed.

PETS, recreational and small scale fisheries

PETS, recreational and small-scale fisheries (SSF) are three areas of increasing interest as well as a continuously growing important part of the DCF. Even though there has been some progress in these areas over the last years, there are still some basic needs lacking to move forward in an efficient way, for example common database, understanding of how to design sampling programs etc. To further improve the collection of data in recreational fisheries, SSF, PETS we need to get an overview and understanding of where the limitations are and define obstacles, to be able to come up with a proper plan for each of the areas

Responses on PETS

Q4.1.a Do you identify any obstacles that would potentially hamper the collection of data on PETS?

Issue	Comments
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will be determined by the eventual extension or coverage/quality needs of the sampling programs and the need to increase SP or develop a separate one; Additional costs anticipated if needed specific technological means (CCTV) and additional staff or subcontracting observers to carry out work; In addition, one of the possible solutions for the observation of the artisanal fleet without habitability could be using on-board cameras (REM). The implementation of these improvements may need more funding from the CFP-DCF budget; Could be an issue, when the extent of the sampling programs gets big or unbalanced compared to the species abundance in MS; The use of the data collected should be clarified by end-users and in ISSG, in order to improve protocols and optimize.
Legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DATA PROTECTION REGULATION: The access to the data recorded under the Control Regulation and the GDPR General Data Protection Regulation (as the implementation of mandatory electronic monitoring, etc). Data confidentiality is a main issue to consider;



- **CONTRACT REGULATION:** according to some National legal framework, the sampling programmes are hired through call for tenders addressed to specialized companies for a number of years. During these years the sampling contracted can hardly be modified, so they cannot be quickly adapted to new sampling needs;
- Other acts require to collect data on bycatch, such as MSFD which requires a risk-analysis in MPA. Such data collection follows other protocols than observers at sea, and has a dedicated program. Articulation with DCF should be clarified;
- Effort data on passive gears (soaking time, net length, no of nets, no of hooks) not mandatory in the control regulation;
- If EU legislation is not comprehensive enough, additional national legislation is needed;
- In the case the catch of certain species is prohibited by legislation, it is expected that fishermen will be very reluctant to collaborate on the collection of bycatch data on these species.

Lack of expertise

- [Not an issue] This could be issue for rare or very less abundant species;
- [Not an issue] Training courses on the identification of different categories of PETS were recently organised under GFCM and RCG Med&BS;
- [Not an issue] Expert knowledge exists, and some MS are working on outreach activities with fishermen;
- [Not an issue] Need to be regionally coordinated (has started), e.g. Machine learning need to be coordinated.

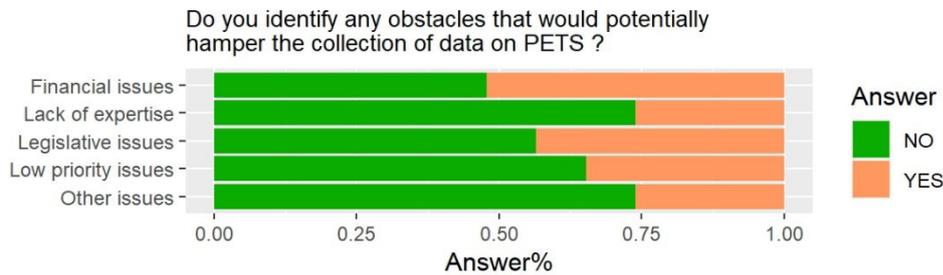
Low priority

- PETs monitoring until recently not the focus yet. Setting up a dedicated program will be a challenge, but with time it is possible;
- Priority should be given to relative high-risk fisheries;
- Lack of historic data as it only has given high priority in recent years;
- Low priority under the current DCF is a result of the DCF design focused on main fishery, not on high-risk small-scale fishery. PETS monitoring should be subject to dedicated programme;
- "New" things/obligations could be intimidating so there is a risk for lower prioritisation due to different reasons;
- [Not an issue] Under DCF, and especially during the preparation of 2022-2024 WP, it has become evident that data collection on PETS cannot be considered by the MSs as low priority.
- [Not an issue] Work on PETS is one of the priorities for the Spanish Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Other

- Difficulty to access to fishing vessels;
- Coverage on small vessels is difficult due to security issues. Mandatory reporting of bycatch can be implemented, but do not provide consistent data;
- Lack of cooperation with fishers on the use of CCTV and proper reporting in the logbooks. Bycatch is very clustered therefore it is difficult to upscale observer data.

Summary on PETS



Financial issues are considered the main obstacle to increasing and/or setting new dedicated sampling programmes on PETS, due to the cost of specific equipment (CCTV) and additional staff or subcontracting with private companies. Legislative issues come second with data protection and contract regulation adding on the difficulties to implement such programmes. Sampling for PETS is a recent requirement and there is a need to discuss the priority given to it, in a balance with the other sampling programmes. The lack of expertise is not given to be so problematic and can be improved through capacity building and regional coordination. Lack of cooperation with fishers on the use of CCTV and proper reporting in the logbook is also an obstacle to the data collection on PETS.

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.1.a



Suggestions for ways forward on PETS

Below all responses made by MS in response of the question Q4.1.d on PETS data collection. The responses are sometimes grouped and/or rewritten for better understanding but no order of importance is given:

- Outreach and communication with the fishing sector is crucial to achieve good results;
- To establish a dedicated program, extra funds are needed. The implementation of new technological means will be required;
- For PETS, for instance, project cetambicion between France, Spain and Portugal is looking precisely into this for the Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast;
- Agreement at RCG on common database for PETS;
- Define priorities based on risk/impact assessments;
- Learning from each other, promote best practice;
- Clarification on data needed and protocol fitted to achieve the objectives (e.g. - cameras on-board of few voluntary vessels? random coverage by observers but with a low total coverage due to cost?);
- Mandatory use of CCTV;
- EU legislation, particular control legislation should be comprehensive enough. At the moment, it is not. The needs of the EU legislation should be taken into account.
- On-board observations should be rationalised both to make the best use of human and economic resources and not to interfere with the activity of the fleet. The cohesion of different observation programmes would allow for greater efficiency in the use of resources;
- Define what should be done in each region. What is the ideal sampling program etc.
- Streamlining of Data Collection methodology

Responses on Recreational Fisheries

Q4.1.b

Do you identify any obstacles that would potentially hamper the collection of data on Recreational fisheries?

Issue	Comments
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funds to improve the efficiency and sampling coverage of data collection on recreational fisheries would help. Part of improving the efficiency, and the quality of the data is the introduction of new technologies; • Angling effort estimation currently requires population surveys - significant expense. Nonbiased CPUE estimation currently requires probability-based sampling programmes. Staff requirement. Significant expense; • There is roughly 1,5 million recreational fishermen in Finland. The accuracy of data needed is relevant; • Depends what element of recreational fishermen should be targeted. If the targeted group is small, uses the resources in a very large area + during longer time period and on random patterns (fishing depends on weather) then it would be very expensive to cover the sector well; • [Not an issue] One MS 2022-2024 WFP includes the collection of recreational data using a logbook scheme through a mobile application; • Poll sampling is costly, and results are uncertain • Taking into account the following point regarding the distribution of competences in our country, one of the main difficulties will be the coordination and availability of funds and the work that this will entail.
Legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No register of (all) recreative fishermen in several countries, as no licence in place. This makes difficult to conduct surveys on catch by recreational fisheries. Licence for recreational fisheries is highly sensitive on a political level and will not be implemented in a near future. • Recreational Fisheries are not covered under the current Control Regulation, and that hampers the data collection for these fisheries. • [Not an issue] If substantiated by the Control Regulation • Perhaps the legislative restrictions/prohibitions on catches of large pelagic species will result in misreporting of recreational catches of large pelagic. • According to one MS legal framework, the jurisdiction on recreational activities corresponds to Autonomous Regions. Neither sampling activity nor programme implementation are harmonised. The Central administration carries out regulatory and coordination work in order to harmonise this activity, in particular data collection. There is still a lot of work to be done in this regard.
Lack of expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although expert knowledge exists, outreach to recreational fishermen is still needed and also a further development on data collection tools to allow improvement on the available data and data sharing between Autonomous Regions in order to define a reliable representation of the sector and its impact on commercial fishing and the biological condition of different stocks.
Low priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RF is seen as important, the different authorities in one MS do not take action and always look to one of the other authorities to take action (and to invest in it)



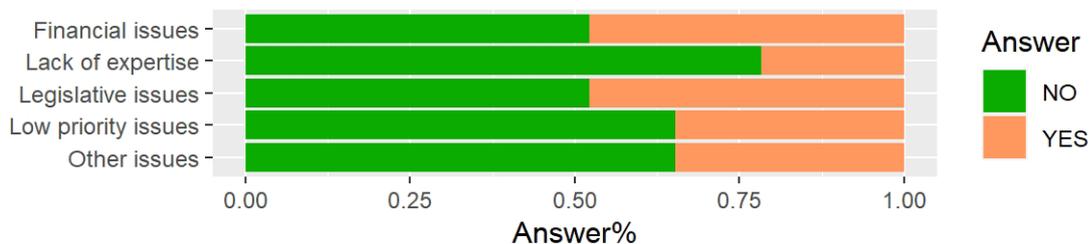
- Might be, depend on the species that are regionally important and how important are they for the MS.
- [Not an issue] Work on RF is becoming increasingly important and one of the priorities for the Spanish Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Other

- Lack of representation by angling sector in MS at management table;
- Angler/sectoral concerns about engaging with data collection process due to potential of subsequent introduction of controls for a relatively benign recreational fishery;
- Data on catch and effort is hard to collect based only on willingness.
- Access to license holder register;
- The purpose of collecting very detailed data from recreational fisheries needs to be identified;
- [Not an issue] In the Black Sea there are no attractive species that could be a subject to recreational fisheries;
- One MS specifies that Central administration has no direct competences on the activities performed at the coastline waters where Recreational fishing activity is carried out. Although we are actively working on a legislative revision in order to improve coordination and data collection through the Administration of the autonomous regions, there is still some work to do, and in any case, once the objective of coordinating and defining a harmonised sampling activity has been achieved, the work involved will be considerable.

Summary on Recreational Fisheries

Do you identify any obstacles that would potentially hamper the collection of data on Recreational fisheries ?



Like for PETS, financial and legislative are the most cited obstacles to data collection on Recreational Fisheries. Financial issues come with the difficulty to collect data of good quality using poll or field sampling added by the difficulty to estimate the whole population of recreational fishermen since there is no formal registration or mandatory declaration of catches in most of the countries and it is not covered under Control Regulation. There is no such lack of expertise, although outreach to recreational fishermen is still needed and also further development on data collection tools to allow improvement on the available data. Recreational Fisheries data collection has seen its priority increasing the in the recent years and the purpose of collecting very detailed data from recreational fisheries needs to be identified.

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.1.b

57%

Suggestions for ways forward on Recreational fisheries

Below all responses made by MS in response of the question Q4.1.d on Recreational fisheries data collection. The responses are sometimes grouped and/or rewritten for better understanding, but no order of importance is given:

- We have two considerations on this issue. On one hand, the creation of an ISSG Pan-regional group in order to avoid major differences between the methodologies and criteria for the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. On the other hand, GFCM considerations on RF should be taken into account for the Mediterranean MS and RCG members in order to avoid duplication of work. Also, according to the MS legal framework, the jurisdiction on recreational activities corresponds to the Autonomous Regions. Neither sampling activity nor programme implementation are harmonised. The Central administration carries out regulatory and coordination work in order to harmonise this activity, in particular data collection. There is still a lot of work to be done in this regard;
- Licenses are in place. New technologies needed to improve efficiency and the quality of the data;
- Sampling design should be built to use results for stock assessment, and as much as possible comparable between countries;
- For recreational fisheries, increase mandatory data reporting from recreational fishers. However, it's difficult to control the fisher's compliance... There would be a need to fully evaluate the way the implementation of such measure could be done;
- Medium term funding to promote retention of experienced staff. Where applicable, aim to standardise collection and analysis of recreational fisheries data across MSs. Workshops within the recreational fisheries ISSG could accommodate this. Funding for temporary staff for periodic extensive national surveys as required. Funding for applied studies (e.g. measuring catch and release survival, developing catch & release methods/equipment for charter sector etc);
- Mandatory licensing to have a register of recreational fishermen - though, any further obligation also needs to have more controllers;
- Mandatory to report catch and effort. Access to license holder register;
- Extra funds and staff required;
- Needs to further discussed, policy objective not entirely clear;
- Define the information is needed/still missing per region;
- Streamlining of Data Collection methodology



Responses on Small Scale Fisheries

Q4.1.c

Do you identify any obstacles that would potentially hamper the collection of data on Small scale fisheries?

Issue	Comments
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data on the SSF, the largest fishing segment in many countries, presents financial issues given the number of vessels. More investment is needed to increase the amount and quality data collected for biological and socio-economic variables. Need to improve coverage, which implies to increase the cost. Moreover, it is more difficult to contact small-scale fishermen (turn-over, activity during some period of the year, small ports difficult to access, difficulties to predict activity, direct sales to restaurant or consumers without sales in auctions...). The effort to embark on these vessels versus the number of samples taken is high. Extra funds, staff and technological means required. The improvement in on-board observation programs such as the possibility of using on-board cameras (REM), may need more funding from the CFP-DCF budget. It could be a challenge to cover well the wide randomly fishing group of fishermen that use very large territory for their activity. So, it boils down what kind of information is needed and how much data is nationally already collected and with what quality it has.
Legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DATA PROTECTION REGULATION: The access to the data recorded under the Control Regulation and the GDPR General Data Protection Regulation (as the implementation of mandatory electronic monitoring, etc). Data confidentiality is a main issue to consider. CONTROL REGULATION: The data collection included under the current Control Regulation does not fulfil the needs for scientific purposes (e.g.: lack of high-resolution geospatial data). Logbooks no mandatory for all vessel sizes. Lack of stock management for SSF. [Not an issue] Some MS have monthly journals for collecting data on SSF.
Lack of expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although efforts are made to characterise and follow up on small scale fisheries, this segment of the fishing fleet is complex, highly variable and under continuous change. This renders the very description of such fisheries a challenge. [Not an issue] The MS has good experience of collecting data.
Limited space onboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is an ongoing issue with SSF. Application of new technologies should be considered, accompanied by specific image analysis software can help alleviate this problem, although the inclusion of cameras or the installation of other data capturing equipment could compete with limited space and with safety concerns; Limited space onboard affects the collection of the data on small scale fisheries, especially the one referring to vessels under 6m; another MS specifies they are only sending observers on vessels larger than 9.5 m Activities such as on-board observer programmes are often impaired by crew size limits and security on board in this segment of the fishing fleet.



Low priority

- Relatively low priority under the current DCF is a result of the DCF design which is not focused on small scale fishery. SSF monitoring should be subject to dedicated programme;
- Given a high priority by the fishing sector and some MS. It is recognized by the SSF industry representatives that they need to have better data. However, there is difficulty in engaging the SSF at large to encourage them to provide data;
- [Not an issue] Work on SSF is becoming increasingly important and one of the priorities for the Spanish Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

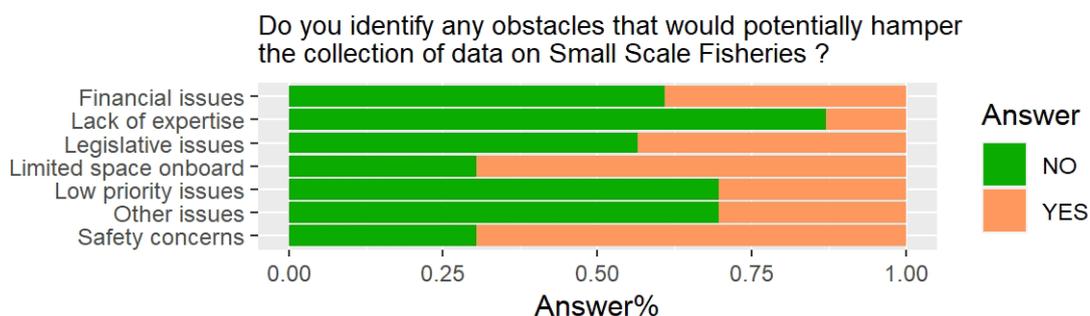
Safety concerns

- The inclusion of cameras or the installation of other data capturing equipment could compete with limited space and with safety concerns.
- Access/finding vessels problematic as the fishermen are not centrally managed/organised.
- No authorizations to embark observers due to safety norms. It is related to limited space on board and boats' Safety Certificate limiting the crew to 1 to 3 people (no extra safety equipment for observers)
- COVID prevention measures have also hampered compliance with the obligation to take observers on board this segment of the fishing fleet and security on board in accordance to the space limits.

Other

- There may be digital literacy issues if electronic data methods are being used.
- Need to improve the quality of data reported through control regulation by small-scale fisheries
- How big should the coverage be? Achieving this coverage could be problematic
- [Not an issue] One MS collects detailed transversal, economic and social data for the whole fleet (including SSF). If we misunderstood the question and it is regarding the collection of PETs data from the SSF, the fishermen are obliged to report the information in their landing declarations. The observers on board of vessels are covering VL0612 from the small-scale fleet.

Summary on Small Scale fisheries



Like for PETS and Recreational Fisheries, financial and legislative issues are important issues hampering the data collection on Small Scale fisheries but not so much as the limited space onboard and safety concerns. The SSF is difficult to sample since it is a numerous, heterogeneous and scattered fleet segment to sample, that is why electronic tools would probably help, although it comes with a cost and extra difficulty vs larger vessel because of the limited room onboard and technical facilities. The data collection included under the current Control Regulation does not fulfil the needs for scientific purposes (e.g. lack of high-resolution geospatial data)

and logbooks are not mandatory for all vessel sizes, although it exists monthly forms in some MS for declaring catches for SSF. Another issue is also the lack of (international) management requirements for the targeted species which are often local

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.1.c



Suggestions for ways forward on Small Scale fisheries

Below all responses made by MS in response of the question Q4.1.d on Small Scale fisheries data collection. The responses are sometimes grouped and/or rewritten for better understanding, but no order of importance is given:

- Increase mandatory data reporting from SSF. The main source of data on landings and effort on fisheries (in general) originates from data reported by vessels, since this is mandatory under the control regulation. However, SSF are required to report much less information under this regulation. This is the main cause of insufficient data on SSF landings and effort. Improving data collection on SSF implies increasing the requirement of mandatory data reporting from SSF (even if with different means/format than for LSF). The main issue with SSF data in MS is related to fishing pattern information (métiers used, fishing effort and spatial information). Since it is already mandatory to SSF report on species landings (sales notes), it should also be set as mandatory detailed fishing information regarding each sale note (e.g. daily or monthly reports);
- Mandatory to use logbook on all vessels no matter size.
- EU legislation, particular control legislation should be comprehensive enough. At the moment, it is not. The needs of the EU legislation should be taken into account.
- There needs to be investment in this area to increase data collection for the SSF. The sector also needs to see the benefit of data collection and submission through increased management and funding;
- Define priorities based on risk/impact assessments;
- Learning from each other, promote best practice;
- Extra funds and technological means required. A dedicated programme should be designed;
- Define what information is needed per region;
- Streamlining of methodology and diluting some of the data collection requirements;
- Outreach and communication with the fishing sector is crucial to achieve good results;

Stomach sampling,

Background and objectives

Stomach sampling related costs consists of 6 aspects which can be considered for member states to decide to what level they may become involved:

- (1) dedicated/trained staff to dissect stomachs on-board during survey,
- (2) transportation of samples (if stomachs are processed in a centralised lab e.g. Stomach Analyses Centre),
- (3) sample storage costs,
- (4) stomach analysis costs (whether in national labs or in Stomach Analyses Centres)
- (5) data storage, processing and management and
- (6) miscellaneous expenses.

The RCG NANS&EA and Baltic 2021 agreed on a rolling scheme for sampling stomachs to be operated over the 2022-2027 period.

Responses on Stomach sampling

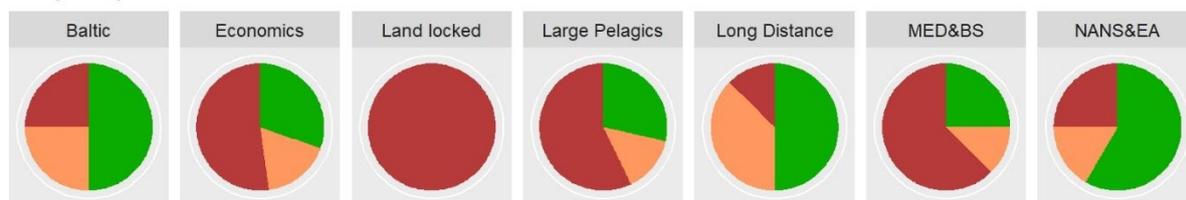
Q4.2.a

Have you started collecting stomach samples according to ISSG protocol? If yes, please comment on which surveys and in which region? If no, please comment on what is the plan i.e. when and how?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS has been performing stomach analyses onboard since 1992. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In ICES area. in the survey IBTS_Q4, area 27 8c, since 1992. The methodology used is based on a specific onboard sampling and analyses of the most commercial fish species. Using this methodology (volumetric method) there is no need to collect, transport and analyse the samples in the lab. All analyses are carried out onboard. ○ In NAFO area, in the Flemish Cap survey, area NAFO 3M, since 1993, in the Platuxa survey 1st part, area NAFO 3NO, since 2002-in the Platuxa survey 2nd part, area NAFO 3L, since 2003. The methodology used is



also based on a specific onboard sampling and analyses of the most commercial fish species. Volumetric method was used traditionally, but in the latest years the gravimetric method is starting to be used.

- For more information about plans for stomach sampling, see the Table 4.1 of the Spanish WP 2022-2027.
- AZTI does not collect stomach in the surveys. However, they do some work on stomach using genetics in a routine sampling.
- IBTS participation in stomach sampling
 - Q1 - 5 MS; Q3 - 4 MS; Q4 - 3 MS
- BITS participation in stomach sampling
 - Q1 – 3 MS; Q4 – 3 MS
- MEDITS participation in stomach sampling (1 MS)

PARTLY 4

- Stomachs for BITS surveys are collected
- Included stomach sampling in NWP 2022-2024, and sampling design (criteria for selection of species, sampling effort/intensity) was defined by discussion with MS of the region (France, Spain, Portugal; Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast). Sampling is planned for two research surveys at sea in ICES 9a: IBTSQ4 and SAHMAS
- Detailed information managed by Klaipeda University (here and after KU)
- Stomach data collection carried out according to the STREAM protocol

NO 13

- It has been agreed in the RCG MED&BS that stomach sampling will be collected only from the MEDITS Program and for HKE.
- Planned to start 2022-2023, methodology still being discussed.
- No stomach sampling yet, although interested; not involved in IBTS surveys, but has a BTS Q3, which could also be looked at to collect stomach samples.
- It is not cost effective
- No agreement under RCG LP on stomach sampling
- Low priority as a land locked country
- One MS has not included a stomach sampling programme in 2022 (ref NWP 2022-2024). To evaluate future needs for this data collection activity, MS is taking the following steps:
 - A concept study to evaluate the data requirements for predator prey interactions as inputs to a Celtic Seas multi-species VPA assessment.
 - Further development on indicators and data needs for MSFD descriptor 4 including the use of DCF survey data to support trophic guild assessments.
 - An increase in capacity in fisheries ecosystem modelling and advice from 2024 onwards once concept studies are concluded (new post).
 - Close monitoring of the North Sea regionally coordinated pilot study on IBTS stomach sampling and the interaction with and advisory outputs of WGSAM over the next two years.
 - A financial placeholder for future funding of stomach sampling in the DCF budget estimations under EMFA
- This program involved only IBTS survey in North Sea, where MS has no fishery.



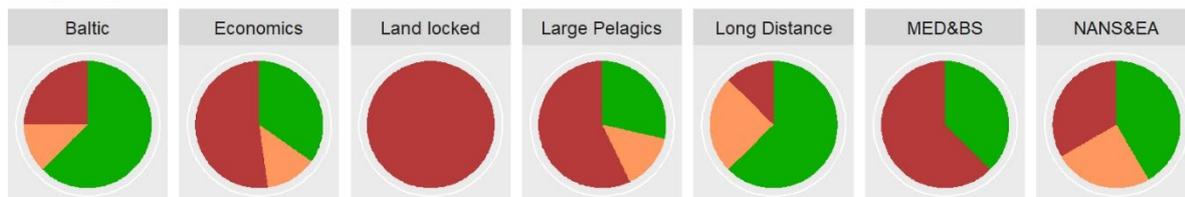
Q4.2.b

If stomach samples are being collected, is funding already in place for stomach sampling and analysis in your country?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The funding is included in the DCF. Since 2022-2024 NWP adoption, the stomach sampling costs are eligible.
PARTLY	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sampling only. Pending further decisions on the analysis, no funding in place yet.
NO	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resource implications of starting stomach content sampling on MS surveys are significant. Having a successful pilot study will enable strategic decisions to be made by management as to the rollout of any such sampling. This pilot work is best suited to EMFF-biodiversity type funding. Financial provisions should be made in either the DCF or the biodiversity funding to stomach sampling or genetic analysis. A financial placeholder for future funding of stomach sampling in the DCF budget estimations from 2023 onwards It is planned but not started yet; MS not involved yet in stomach sampling. Some funds available, rather for analysis than collection of samples; Data collection still to be decided; Low priority as a landlocked country; No stomach sampling is performed for Large Pelagic; MS is not involved in the sampling and fishing in North Sea. No human means to cover analysis without dedicated contracts. Review of means required ongoing, but recruitment and specialization of experts would need to have a 3-years view of the stomach sample to analyse.



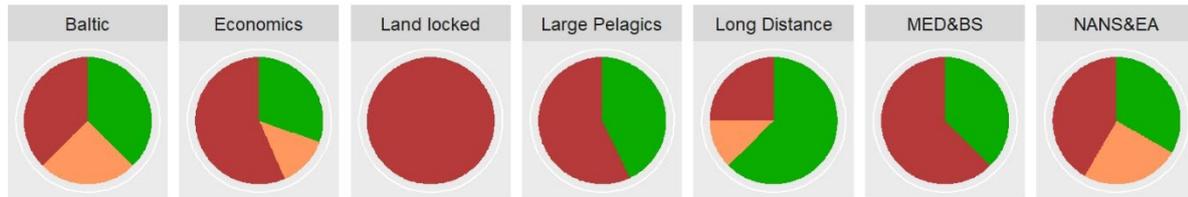
Q4.2.c

Are you analysing the stomach samples within your national lab?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stomach analysis is performed since 1960s in our institute The national institutes are responsible for the analysis. Each institute is performing the analysis in their own premises.
PARTLY	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS did analyse stomach samples in the past Stomach sample analysis still to be decided Detailed information managed by a University Presently only cod stomachs from BITS in the Baltic
NO	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The analysis takes place at the two Institutes responsible for the implementation of DCF [which thus should be a YES!] No expertise to carry out the analysis Issue of no concern for land locked countries MS not involved in the sampling and fishing in North Sea. Awaiting further decisions on what/where/when to analyse the samples Review of means required ongoing.



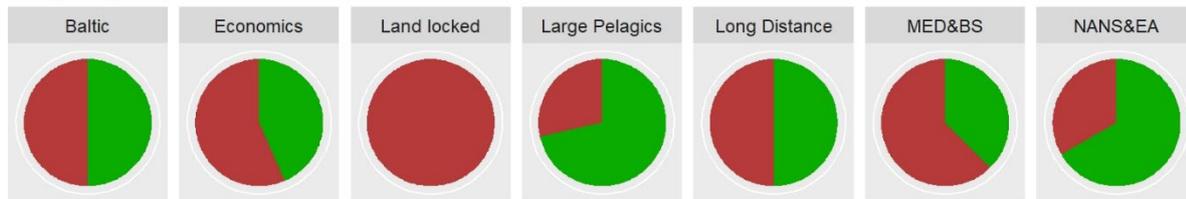
Q4.2.d

If no capacity, would you be willing to arrange the sending of samples to another country to be analysed by a centralised lab (Stomach Analyses Centre) in the form of a multilateral agreement?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still to be decided • Yes, but no funding for transport to be included in NWP 2022-2024. • Detailed information managed by University • Sweden is already sending stomach samples to Poland for analyses • Willingness to send samples to a centralised lab in the form of a multilateral agreement • Would probably give the best result and be the cheapest solution • Centralised lab would be a good option to optimize expert time and provide contracts to international centres, allowing for recruitments.
PARTLY	0	•
NO	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no such need • not relevant as collection of samples has not started yet for MS • MS has the capacity • No substantial increase in samples amount will be required. • MS is not involved in the sampling and fishing in North Sea



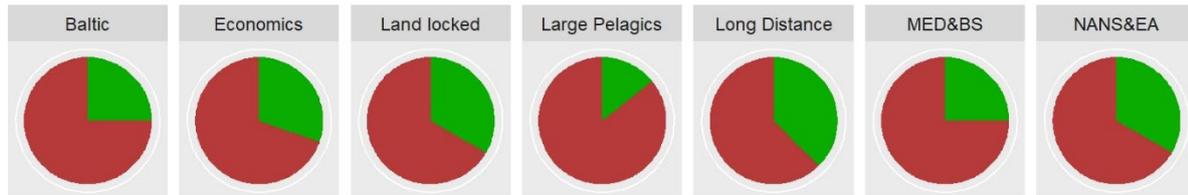
Q4.2.e

Do you have the capacity to analyse samples from other countries?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS did analyse stomach samples in the past MS already does it and currently using about 50% of its capacity MS answered yes, because there is no general problem to analyse the samples from other countries, but this question should be further investigated with the National institutes involved. Depending on number of samples, level of detail of the analysis and time-frame. National institute is willing to hire additional staff, provided medium to long term agreements can be reached with other parties. Review of means required ongoing - material platform available, but contracts need to be taken to allow recruitments of technicians and experts.
PARTLY	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
NO	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This depends on the species the sampling is referred to, as the analysis could be quite challenging for some benthic species. Not in the period 2022-2024. No trained staff at the moment Detailed information managed by University



Summary on stomach sampling

A general interpretation of the responses is not ideal, since commitment to start sampling and analysing the stomach samples was a concern only for MS involved in the North Sea. Some MS already carry out sampling analysing in other areas and others simply are not concerned at all. Eventually the responses received is a mixture of the different situations MS are at the moment. Focussing on the countries involved in the North Sea only show a general follow-up of the requirements for collecting the samples and some struggles to perform the tedious analyses. The willingness to send samples to other countries is there, provided some technical questions, mainly on the volumetry, protocol and transportation of samples from a country to another, in respect of national and European regulations. The willingness to analyse samples from other countries is also there, even though the number of MS expressing this willingness is weak, there is no need to have that many. Further discussion to happen in the ISSG on stomach sampling with more detailed considerations of this consultation.

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.2





Large pelagics

Background and objectives

On Large Pelagics, the construction of the RWP focuses on the Purse Seiner tropical tuna fishery. Two items are planned to be provided:

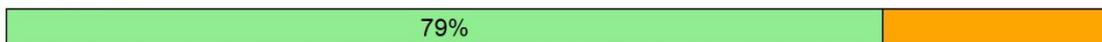
- A regional sampling plan regarding onshore and offshore samples
- Coordination around the Tropical Tunas Treatment and bycatch processes

It is important to note that a collaboration is under construction between the RCG Large Pelagics and the RCG Med&Black sea (through association under the umbrella of the [STREAMLINE](#) project) regarding the monitoring of the incidental bycatch of vulnerable/PET. Even if an LP case study focuses on that subject is not planned to be integrated now in the RWP draft, this could open possibilities in the future.

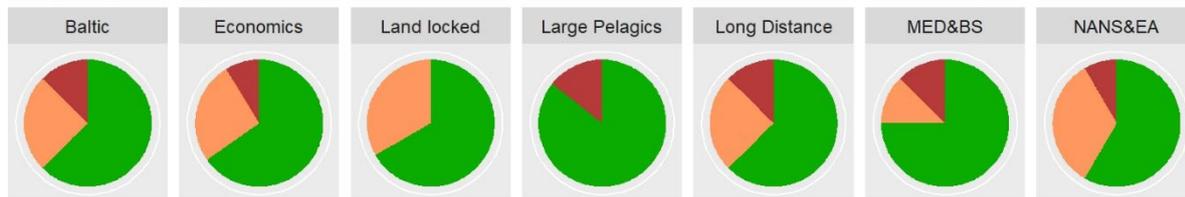
Responses on Large Pelagics

Q4.3.a Do you agree with the approach above 4.3 Large Pelagics?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

For this question, only those MS involved in the RCG Large Pelagics (as per Table 1) are given. All other MS having expressed they are not concerned with the question.

Resp	#	Comments from MS involved in RCG Large Pelagics
YES	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been extensive collaboration between EU scientists around onshore and offshore sampling, as well as on the processes to correct catch and bycatch estimates, in the latest decades. The redesign of the sampling plan and the tropical tuna treatment process could result in a significant development in the estimation of purse seine catch species and size composition. The specific monitoring of vulnerable/PET species within the RWP is also considered an interesting possibility. The only inconvenience that is assumed would be economic and administrative issues. There must be a prior high level of coordination between the member states.

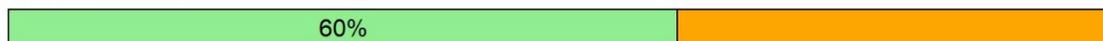


Resp	#	Comments from MS involved in RCG Large Pelagics
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint RWP is essential 3 MS express that currently they are not involved on the Purse Seiner tropical tuna fishery. Among these three, one adds that the approach is sound and makes sense going forward in the RWP.
PARTLY	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
NO	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS does not have tropical tuna fishery

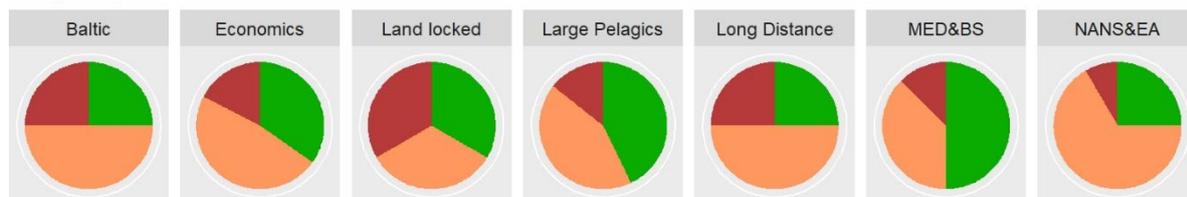
Q4.3.b

If your country is also involved in other fisheries on large pelagics would you agree with further enlargement of the coordination?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments from MS involved in RCG Large Pelagics
YES	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should facilitate the process; MS scientists are also involved in RCG-LP and in the development of further coordination for other large pelagics fisheries; MS is involved in LLD Mediterranean fisheries. As mentioned before, we consider very useful if there will be a joint ISSG for drafting RWP with the RCG Med&BS concerning Mediterranean fisheries. The plus of RWP is to provide recommendation on which fleet are not covered by any country. Thus, RWP should focus on this aspect of fleet coverage and also experience and protocol sharing btw countries.
PARTLY	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This possibly needs a case-by-case consideration, to assess whether regional coordination can optimize the resources or simply complicate different processes. Coordination between member states with the same fishery is always useful, necessary and beneficial for all parties. The details and the extent of the enlargement of the cooperation should be discussed on a regional level within the EU Member States



- Dependent on pre-agreed MoU or bilateral agreements to engage in large pelagics sampling.

NO

I

- Our position is that the Med LP should be coordinated between the RCG LP and RCG Med&BS

Summary on Large Pelagics

The long matured Regional Sampling Plan on Purse Seiner tropical tuna fishery gathers all positive responses on the first question, except four MS expressing they are not part of any tropical tuna fishery with three of them approving the plan and another one disapproving it or responding NO simply because they are not part of it. The second question on further enlargement of the coordination receives mixed responses but essentially positive (YES and PARTLY). One MS summarises the general mood by expressing that the details and the extent of the enlargement of the cooperation should be discussed on a regional level within the EU Member States. One MS is expressing a NO with a statement on their position that the Med LP should be coordinated between the RCG LP and RCG Med&BS.

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.3



RWP tables (Low hanging fruits)

As for the tables already proposed in the test run RWP NANS&EA and Baltic 2021 (surveys) and 2022 (agreed meetings, landings, TAC and EU shares per species), there will be discussions in RCG 2022 on improved versions of RWP tables. These tables were always considered as low hanging fruits for the development of RWP (ref. project fishPi²), meaning they were the easiest to agree upon and start the discussions on RWP. These tables are:

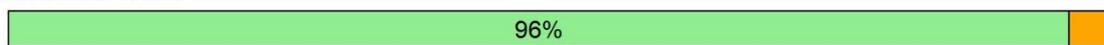
- Table 1.2. International coordination
- Table 1.3. Bi and multilateral agreements
- Table 2.1. Stocks
- Table 2.6. Surveys at sea

Responses on RWP tables

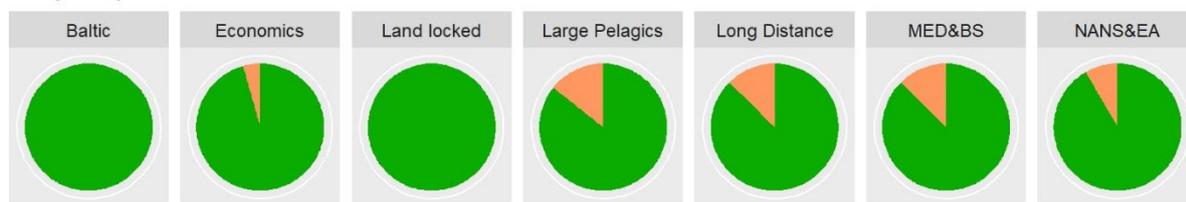
Q4.4.a

Do you agree with including in future RWP the Table 1.2. International coordination as proposed in the test run RWP 2022?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses  PARTLY  YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

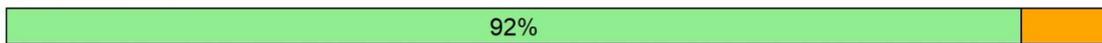
Resp	#	Comments
YES	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, it should be coordinated, especially due to the fact that only very limited number of meetings are fit for this table (RCG, LM and NC meetings) • We would like to support this activity oriented for fishing as a landlocked country. • Yes but this Mediterranean MS is not aware on the format of relevant table as proposed in the test run RWP 2022. • provided that mid-term updates are allowed
PARTLY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to be very careful not to duplicate information. And again, if we include them, how will we do the follow up?
NO	0	



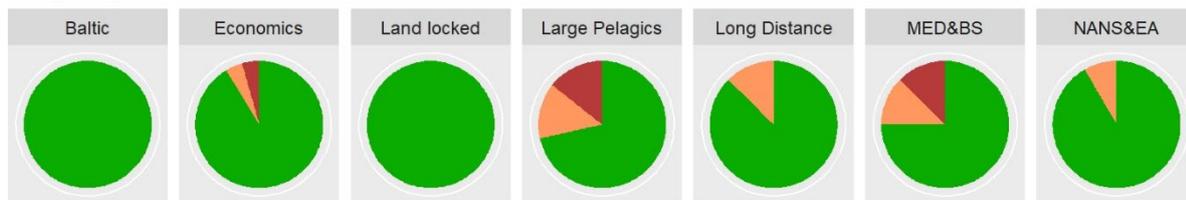
Q4.4.b

Do you agree with including in future RWP the Table I.3 Bi-Multilaterals as proposed in the test run RWP 2021 but with a renewed format as in the test run 2022?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It will simplify establishing the NWP and the update of the agreements. it is part of regional coordination. Only issue may arise when the agreements are valid for lesser period then the RWP is valid. Or the valid periods do not overlap entirely; provided that mid-term updates are allowed; We would like to support this activity oriented for fishing as a landlocked country;
PARTLY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to be very careful not to duplicate information. And again, if we include them, how will we do the follow up?
NO	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS expresses a no and commenting that this is not applicable to the Mediterranean



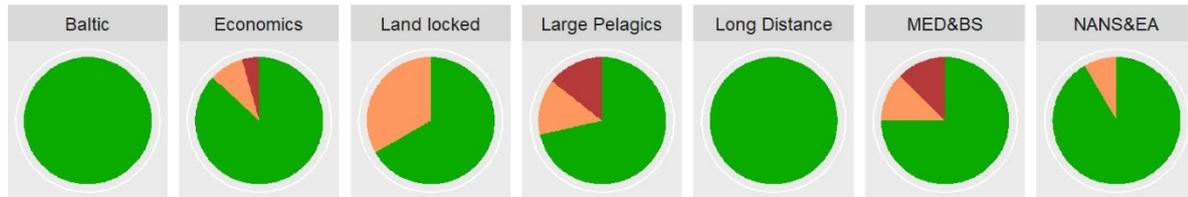
Q4.4.c

Do you agree with including in future RWP the Table 2.1. Stocks as proposed in test run RWP 2021 and 2022?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

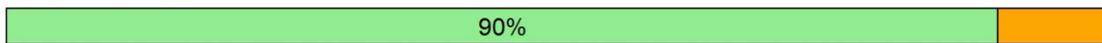
Resp	#	Comments
YES	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is necessary to know the official landings of the reference period used to establish the % (share), especially for spp. without TAC (spp. with TAC come from FIDES). Also problematic for spp. with joint TACs. This will improve the overview of MS fishing; provided that mid-term updates are allowed; We would like to support this activity oriented for fishing as a landlocked country.
PARTLY	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue given to be of no concern for one land locked country; It would have been useful to resend the test run RWP.
NO	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS expresses a no and commenting that this is not applicable to the Mediterranean



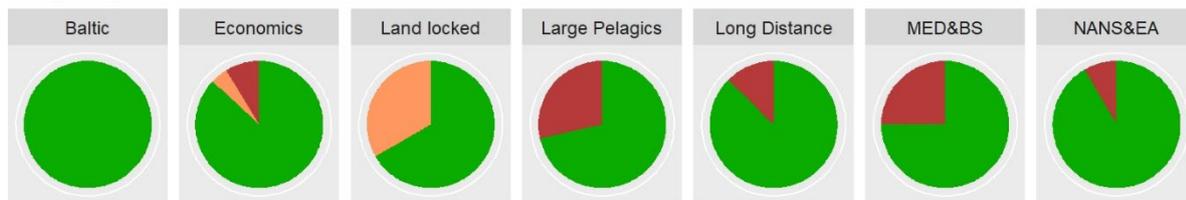
Q4.4.d

Do you agree with including in future RWP the Table 2.6 Surveys-at-sea as proposed in the test run RWP 2021 but with a renewed format as in the test run 2022?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agreements on cost sharing will then be an integrated part of the RWP; the common protocol is used, so the RWP is best place for it; provided that mid-term updates are allowed.
PARTLY	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not an issue for land locked country
NO	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We understood that the table will go into the NWP. And that in the RWP we will only have the description of the survey... MS expresses a no and commenting that this is not applicable to the Mediterranean



Summary on RWP tables

The inclusion of the four tables in a future RWP receives an overwhelming agreement, very close to a consensus if responses and/or some clarifications are brought to expressed concerns. Among these concerns are (i) the importance of avoiding duplication of information between NWP and RWP leading to an agreement of how to split the information between NWP and RWP, (ii) the possibility to provide mid-term updates and (iii) the clarification of reference to the period of a coordinated action vs the period of a RWP.

Moreover, expression of land locked and Mediterranean & Black Sea countries are worth a specific consideration. These countries were confused to receive this wealth of questions, with several of no concerns to them (e.g. surveys at sea for land locked countries, stocks sharing in the Mediterranean and Black Sea). For Mediterranean & Black Sea countries, the full consultation has been passed to the Streamline project for preparing further discussion during the RCG 2022. One land locked country expressed their support for the RWP concept and suggests a discussion on what would a land locked country RWP would look like. This is an interesting idea worth a discussion at forthcoming NC meetings.

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.4





Section 5 - Questions on monitoring the work progress towards RWPs

Background and objectives

The consultation was also an opportunity to display an output of Fishn'Co project, which is an interactive infographic representing Levels of ambition towards Regional Work Plans in 10 Thematic Focus Areas (TFA), namely:

1. Commercial fisheries
 - a. Small pelagics
 - b. Iberian trawlers
 - c. Freezer trawlers
 - d. Large pelagics
2. Marine recreational fisheries
3. Diadromous species
 - a. Salmon in the Baltic
 - b. sea trout in the Baltic
 - c. Salmon in the NANS&EA
 - d. Sea trout in the NANS&EA
 - e. Eel in the Baltic and NANS&EA
4. Small-Scale Fisheries
5. Incidental catches of PETs
6. Stomach sampling
7. Social data on fisheries and aquaculture
8. Economic data on fisheries and aquaculture
9. Research surveys at sea
10. Biological data quality

The outputs of the infographics are available through the following link:

The graphics show the actual level of coordination and the target (or desired) level of coordination for each area and for a series of topics (sampling protocols, regional database, harmonization of data collection, etc.). Additionally, the infographic provides information on progress versus goal. And specific comments are displayed in pop-ups (put your pointer on the bars, for this).

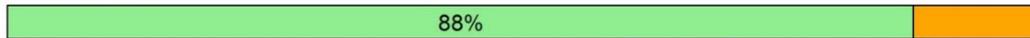


Responses on monitoring of work progress

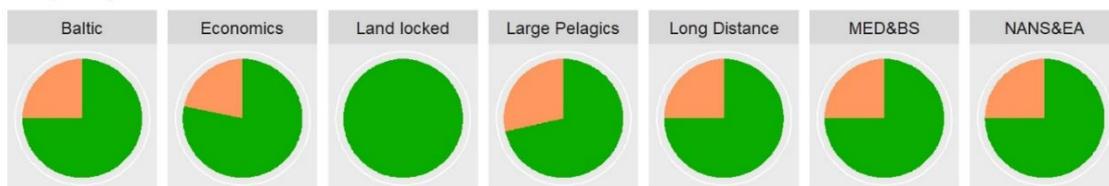
Q5.a

Do you consider the level of ambition, as detailed in Infographic, achievable? If not, for with Thematic Focus Area (TFA) do you foresee difficulties? Please explain in comments

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

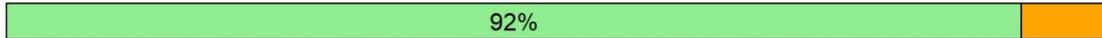
Resp	#	Comments
YES	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TFA 2 Recreational fisheries. Agree that Socioeconomic data collection is important. However, successful collation and analysis of these data will require more resources and expertise. Ambition levels for surveys are missing When do we decide of a regional sampling if not all MS agree to participate. Do we choose the highest or lowest denominator on ambition level. RWP must bring value added. RCG can agree easily in all TFA issues needed to be agreed. We should not rush into several RWP without first reflecting that why there has to be a RWP and why other ways of agreeing is not enough in terms of results. Interesting information especially thematic focus areas 7. Social data on fisheries and aquaculture and 8. Economic data on fisheries and aquaculture Only TAFs 7 and 8 (social and economic parts) are applicable, and only in case it is agreed at the level of RCG ECON) We choose yes for TFAs 2,4,5,7,8,9 and 10 because we must continue to strive to improve the quality and coverage of the data collection and the proposed target levels are achievable. The Infographic does not include information for the RCG Med&BS, which is of interest for Med&BS countries. It will be interesting to see the actual level for TFAs 6. Stomach content.
PARTLY	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general it is informative. However, it is hard to pin-point if the level of ambition is achievable in TFAs like Surveys, Recreational fisheries, SSF, since they contain for example many surveys, several species. This question is easier to give feedback on after the Technical Meeting where the different TFAs will be presented and discussed in detail. no scale on graphs Depending on the human resources and on local engagement with fishers
NO	0	



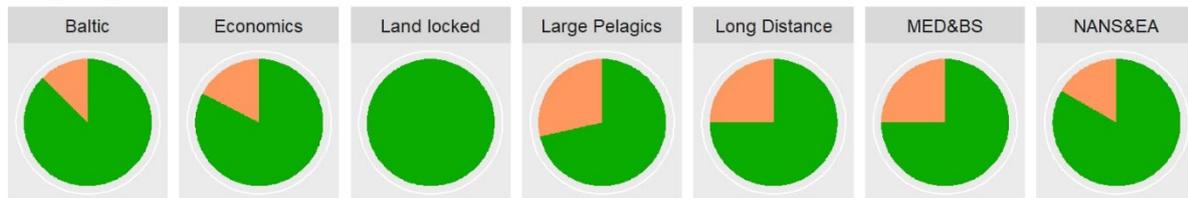
Q5.b

Can the level of ambition be agreed at RCG level. If not, for which Thematic Focus Area (TFA) have you identified barriers? Please explain in comments

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of ambition can be agreed at RCG level with input from the relevant ISSG It is crucial that MS are harmonizing the interpretation of the demands stated in EU-MAP, as well as harmonizing the level of ambition, and the RCG are the proper fora for these kinds of agreements. What does it mean to agree on level of ambition. Agreeing should be different thing than identifying potential areas of TFA which is fine.
PARTLY	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No comments
NO	0	



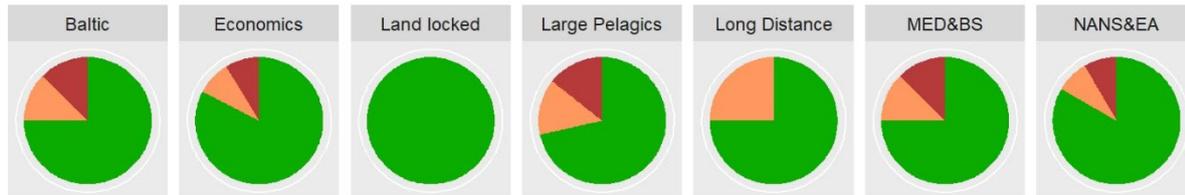
Q5.c

Do you find the information available on the infographic useful and clear? Please explain in comments.

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses NO PARTLY YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes in general. But as for format, not all the text is readable. • It is very useful to see it all in one place on one page rather than scrolling through pages of tables
PARTLY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The infographic is very nice, but we think that there is too many information in the same graph. In addition, we have some comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some of the topics seems to be repeated (data collection..., improving knowledge) ○ There is one definition for the Levels (0-4), but we think that this definition is not very clear for some of the topics. We may need a different definition of the scale depending on the topic. Otherwise, it is quite subjective.
NO	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infographic is very limited in information. Different themes are not entirely comparable and clearly some of themes can be identified as more urgent than others. Urgency should be policy driven which is not entirely clear. • no scale on graphs



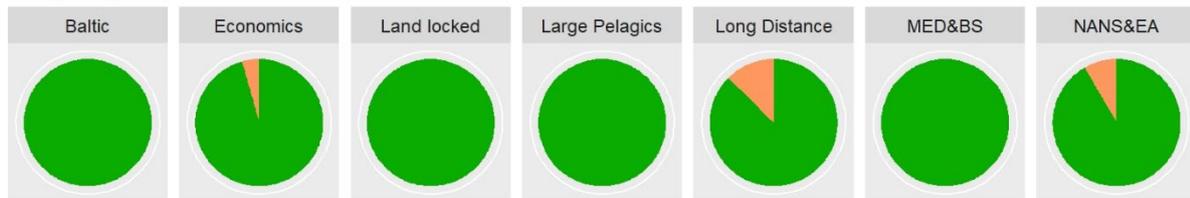
Q5.d

Do you agree to display the interactive infographic of Levels of ambition developed within Fishn'Co on the RCG's website?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

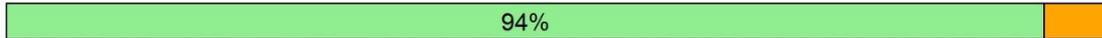
Resp	#	Comments
YES	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We consider useful to display it in the RCG's website; Yes, but not as an agreement that these themes have been agreed to be advanced as RWP at any cost and without making priorities; Just wondering if somebody not familiar with this topic will fully understand/follow? We agree even though it does not apply to us (Med&BS MS); Involved MS should be indicated by each TAF.
PARTLY	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too detailed for the wider public. Maybe highlights are useful to demonstrate progress
NO	0	



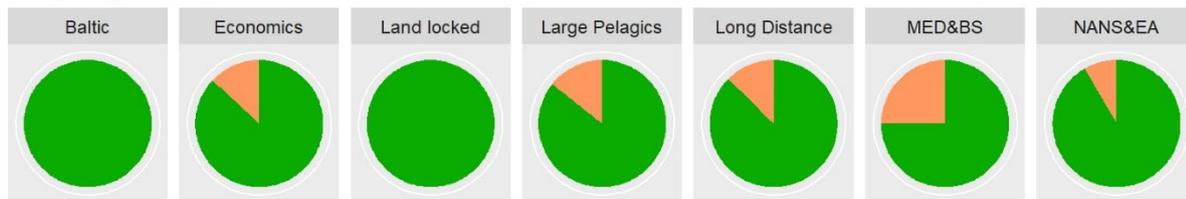
Q5.e

In your opinion, will it be useful to keep the infographic updated beyond Fishn'Co (finishing in Dec. 2022)?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

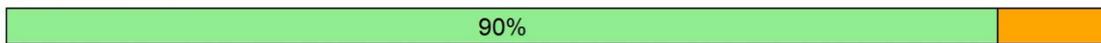
Resp	#	Comments
YES	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would definitely help to stay up to date of how the levels of ambition are evolving. It would be useful to keep up to date in order to monitor progress Worth trying the usefulness over longer period, but after discussions they may be refined and/or adjusted according to needs. It could be task for ISSG RWP to update the content; We agree even though it does not apply to us (Med&BS MS);
PARTLY	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes if there is an added benefit; near real time updates almost impossible, e.g. once every three years (or based on mid-term major achievements) may be sufficient.
NO	0	



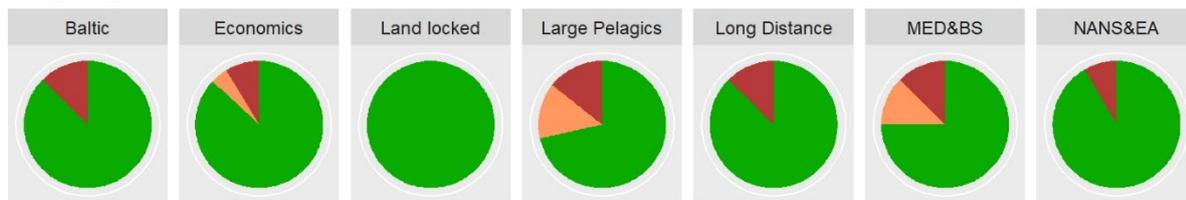
Q5.f

Would you agree that the maintenance of this infographic beyond Fishn'co project makes part of the RCG's Secretariat tasks in collaboration with the relevant RCGs and ISSGs?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would definitively help to stay up to date of how the levels of ambition are evolving. • The infographic is great, but it will be part of the Secretariat tasks, it should include all RCGs. • We agree even though it does not apply to us (Med&BS MS);
PARTLY	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes if there is an added benefit.
NO	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need of specific expertise to analyse NWP and RWP - STECF instead?



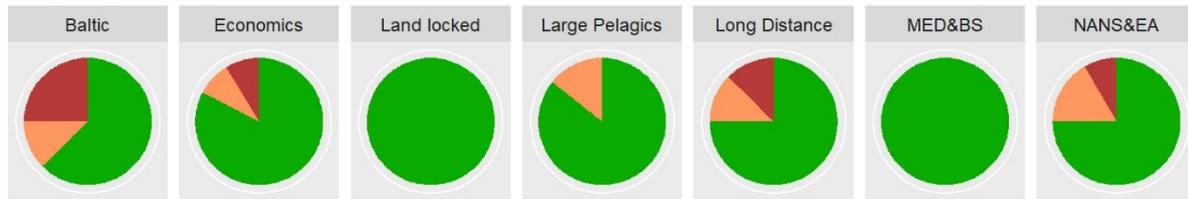
Q5.g

Providing that your answer to questions Q5.e and Q5.f is YES. Do you agree that efforts should also be directed to incorporate the RCG Med & BS into the infographic?

Positiveness index



Outputs per RCG



Responses ■ NO ■ PARTLY ■ YES

Data source : 2022 Fishn'Co consultation

Resp	#	Comments
YES	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would definitively help to stay up to date of how the levels of ambition are evolving, of all regions. • If RCG Med & BS takes it on board - the idea is good. • We believe that all RCG's should be in line • Yes in case the idea is to inform on all RWP's • Should streamline and facilitate coordination • RCG Med&BS should be also included in the infographic
PARTLY	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It needs more information, I am not against, but it is unclear for me. • At this stage it may become too large to be of use and require a large amount of effort in updating etc...
NO	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No comments



Summary on Monitoring of work progress

After the inclusion of key tables into a RWP, the infographics for monitoring the work progress is the second section of the consultation receiving overwhelming agreements. The availability of these infographics on a web site is a consensus provided that contents are reviewed to be understandable by a wider public. Will it be useful to keep the infographic updated beyond Fishn'Co (finishing in Dec. 2022) receives a large positive view with a point of vigilance on the timing for updating the information and the maintenance should be given by the RCG's Secretariat. The inclusion of initiatives by RCG Med&BS in the infographics is another consensus by the Mediterranean and Black Sea countries, although some reservations were made by other countries on the workload and the extra effort for updating the underlying information. For all remaining questions, comments by MS on achievability and agreements on levels of ambitions should be further considered by WPI and 4 of Fishn'Co.

Score (positivity index) of Section 4.4





Section 6 - General comments on the setting of RWP

If any point of interest for you has not been addressed in this consultation, feel free to comment on general issues or specific points, positive and/or negative on the RWP approach proposed. The comments received are as follows:

- We believe that once the first drafts of the RWP have been defined for the RCGs involved in this project, progress should be made in the search for consensus and cohesion among the different RCGs, regardless of their participation or not in Fishn'co. So that the Regionalization project advances in a harmonized way in the different waters and thus avoid different work methodologies in the collection and evaluation of data. Therefore, it seems logical that in the future the work of building the RWPs should also be addressed through a pan-regional group, as has been discussed for other areas such as Recreational Fishing.
- Please note that MS participating in the STREAMLINE project can be involved in the RWP for sections on social and economic data collection developed under the FISHN'CO only in case it is agreed at the level of the RCG ECON.
- For the land locked countries, it could be interesting to deal with focus areas 7. Social data on fisheries and aquaculture and 8. Economic data on fisheries and aquaculture.
- There is a need for general discussion on RWPs, the present flexibilities provided in the Recast for RCGs to adjust data collection and policy needs which can be further divided into immediate needs and in the longer term. This includes the needs from the EU environmental legislation (MSFD etc.) and the biodiversity strategy aspects. The discussions alone on RWPs and agreeing on RWPs can potentially take a lot of resources and energy.

Section 7 - Conclusions and main points from the consultation

The main outputs of the consultation have been presented to the RCG NANS&EA, Baltic and Large Pelagics 2022 Technical meetings. Responses for the Mediterranean & Black Sea countries have not been displayed during these presentations but forwarded to Streamline project for a dedicated consideration and presentation to RCG Med&BS Technical Meeting.

All sections of this document end with a summary giving the main message. Here below (Figure 4) is a synthesis of the positiveness indexes showing the differences in readiness to go further. A first set of elements capturing more than 90% approval are (i) the general tables of the Work Plans templates (i.e. Table 1.2 on International coordination, Table 1.3 on Bi and multilateral agreements, Table 2.1 on Stocks and Table 2.6 on Surveys at sea), (ii) the monitoring of work progress with the infographics developed by the Fishn’Co project and (iii) the decision-making process for developing a RWP Rules of Procedures. Some refinements on the proposals will need to be taken into consideration but it may be considered that the elements presented in these sections are solid bases for the future.

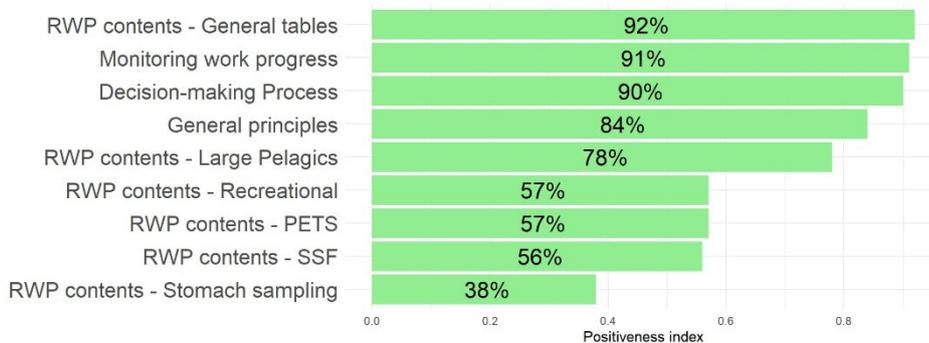


Figure 4: Positiveness index per section of the report. Sections are reordered by decreasing order of their index.

The second set between 70 and 90% approval comprises the general principles for developing a RWP and elements for the Large Pelagics RWP. A third set is composed of the three elements of sub-section 4 on PETS, recreational and Small-Scale fisheries, which included the greatest number of specific questions. The responses of the consultation will have to be looked at very closely in each relevant RCG/ISSG before any proposal of Regional Coordination can be proposed. Lastly, there is the stomach sampling with the lowest approval rate, but this low rating may also be explained by the fact that only one coordinated action is ongoing in the North-Sea and a few scattered initiatives elsewhere and some questions never meant to gather 100% of positive answers (e.g. are you willing to analyse stomach sampling from other countries, ...). Indeed, like in all other sections, thorough evaluation of MS responses in the relevant RCG/ISSG will have to be carried out.

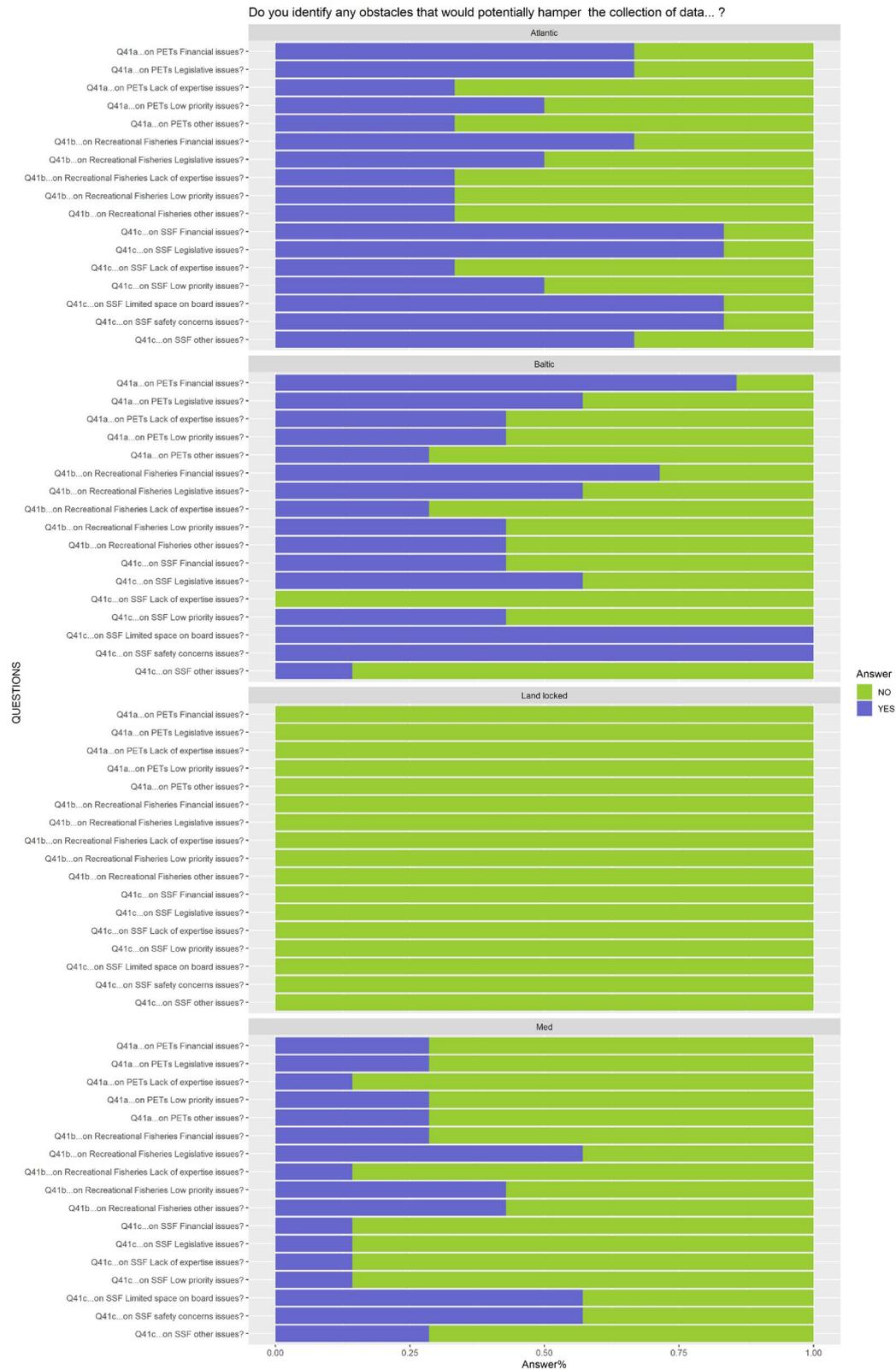
One information from this consultation is worth giving more consideration. It is one land-locked country (3 out of 4 of land-locked countries answered the questionnaire) which expressed an interest in a regional coordination approach (and maybe further a RWP) specific to the issues they are facing. This is food for thoughts for the 2022 NC Decision meeting.

Fishn’Co leaders and participants wished to express their acknowledgements to all respondents of the consultation. The receipt of 24 out of 26 EU Member States responses provided an exceptional material to analyse and the objective is clearly to use this wealth of information to build the foundations for future RWPs. This document is thus a contribution with the aim of highlighting the main messages given by EU NCs and also display, for a wider audience, all comments in a confidential manner, so that RCG ISSG experts can read all comments regarding their thematic areas when developing elements of RWPs for the period 2025-27 and/or beyond.



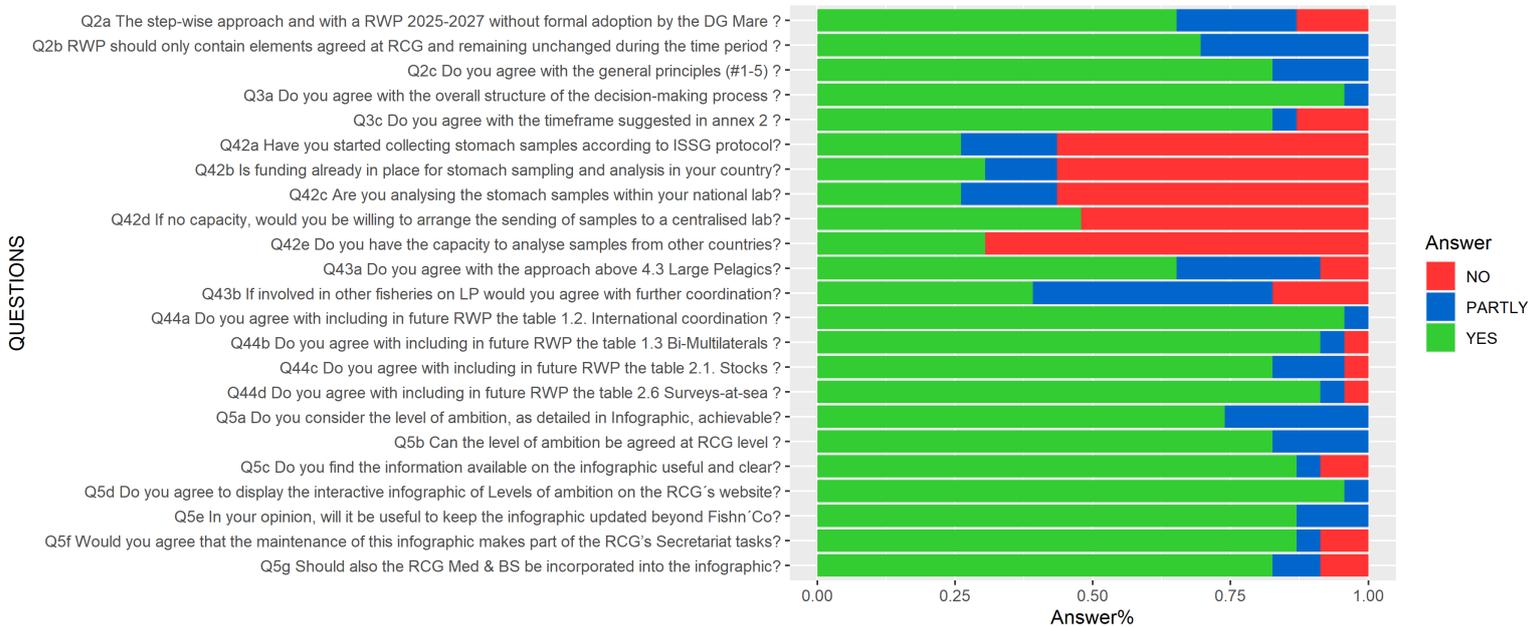
Supplementary information

Overview of question 4.I (by region)





Overview of responses to the questionnaire except question 4.1 (all the answers)





Overview of responses to the questionnaire except question 4.1 (by region)

