

EWG 19-08: Evaluation of Landing Obligation joint recommendations

17 June 2019 --- 21 June 2019 Dublin

- ✓ Main contents explained by DG MARE representatives during the videoconference at the beginning of the EWG: ToRs and a **pragmatic approach** has been recommended in evaluating JRs and scientific studies. The greatest difficulties related to the LO implementation in the Mediterranean have been highlighted and an effort toward the understanding of **reasonable requests** has been required when no full scientific evidence is provided. DG MARE representatives clearly asked to the EWG the scientific evaluation of **feasibility of selectivity improvement**. The first answer of the EWG experts refers to the difficulties to demonstrate the selectivity improvement. The DG MARE representant suggested the evaluation of DISCARDLESS and MINOW results.
- ✓ DG MARE representative emphasized the great scientific study supporting the **venus clam request of derogation** carried out by the Italian administration. Nevertheless, venus clam JR is related to the bottom dredge's management plan, that will be evaluated during the plenary at the beginning of July. However, two studies have been reported in the ADRIATICA shared folder concerning the growth performance and reproduction of venus clam in the Gulf of Cadiz. No more documentation than these two studies have been provided to the scientific experts;
- ✓ Exemptions and scientific studies underpinning requests have been increased: it has **not been possible the complete analysis of all the mentioned scientific reports** when the trials, results and data have not explicitly reported in the text (in some cases only the link to the full report of the project has been provided).
- ✓ The EWG experts have been divided in two different groups: high survivability and de minimis exemptions, not considering their geographical area;
- ✓ PESCAMED, ADRIATICA and SUDESTMED JRs are analogous between each other, nevertheless scientific studies and underpinning information are divided into national level. **Lot of data, but not provided following a standardized methodology;**

Summary of required exemptions in the Mediterranean

High Survivability (until 31 December 2021)

Species	Gears	Sub-Regional group
Common Sole	TBB	Adriatica
Norway lobster	FPO, FIX	Adriatica, Pescamed
Red sea bream	LHP, LHM, LLS, LLD, LL, LTL, LX	Adriatica, Pescamed, SudestMed
Lobster	GNS, GN, GND, GNC, GTN, GTR, GEN	Adriatica, Pescamed, SudestMed
Lobster	FPO, FIX	Adriatica, Pescamed, SudestMed
Crawfish	GNS, GN, GND, GNC, GTN, GTR, GEN	Adriatica, Pescamed, SudestMed
Crawfish	FPO, FIX	Adriatica, Pescamed, SudestMed

Notes:

- ✓ Concerning high **survivability of species sold alive**, in the debate of scientific experts the following considerations raised:
 - it is different to look alive to the market from being alive in the environment;
 - lobster is still discarded in all the other EU waters assuming that it can survive
 - moreover, it would be a waste the obligation to land an undersized lobster to collect it as a refusal;
- ✓ In the Mediterranean the **most difficulty is related to the high survivability exemptions**;
- ✓ High survivability evaluation is based on ICES table: Exemption status; Survival evidence; Fishery context; Survival and fishery compatibility; Additional evidence.
- ✓ In the SUDESTMED JR is reported: *'SUDESTMED recommend that fishing practices already aiming to sell alive shellfishes and crustaceans, may be exempted from the landing obligation based on scientific evidence of high survival associated with release good practices as described for example in MINOUW project.'* There is no reference to which species or fisheries this relates to, and no fishery information is supplied (vessels numbers by country, landings, discards, discard rate), and no high survival evidence, or information on good handling practices included in the JR.

De minimis - Disproportionate costs

Species	Gears	Sub-Regional group	De minimis
Demersal finfish[1] under the Landing Obligation excluding hake, mullets and pelagic species	Bottom trawls	Adriatica, Pescamed (and GSAs 7&8), SudestMed	5%
	Gillnets and trammel nets	Adriatica, Pescamed (and GSAs 7&8), SudestMed	3%
	Hooks and lines	Adriatica, Pescamed (and GSAs 7&8), SudestMed	1%
Anchovy, sardine, mackerel & horse mackerel	Bottom trawls	Adriatica, Pescamed (and GSAs 7&8), SudestMed	5%

- ✓ Required de minimis percentages are lower than those requested last year. Some of the EWG experts (not from the Mediterranean) expressed their **disapproval for the combined de minimis** mainly due to the difficulties to quantify the percentages of each species to the overall discard;
- ✓ However, **spatio-temporal closures** are considered effective in reducing undersized catches;
- ✓ Lot of information and data on disproportionate costs have been provided, but **not following STECF tables or a standardized methodology: not enough time for the evaluation of all the information by the experts**;
- ✓ The tables sent by DG MARE to member states last April mainly referred to additional costs on board, have not been included in the folders provided to the EWG experts.
- ✓ De minimis - The **additional biological information required by the Commission delegated act (EU) 2018/2036 of 18 October 2018** have not been provided, most probably due to the short time available between October and June.