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11–19 May 2011

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ICES

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Contents

Executive summary	1
1 General	3
1.1 Terms of reference	3
2 Data and methods.....	6
2.1 Data tables	6
2.1.1 Data section	6
2.1.2 Biological sampling	7
2.1.3 Survey information.....	8
2.1.4 Ecosystem information.....	9
2.1.5 Intercatch.....	10
2.1.6 Celtic Seas Stocks and Mixed Fisheries Forecasts	14
2.1.7 Summary of benchmark 2011.....	14
2.1.8 Proposal for benchmark 2012.....	15
2.2 Methodology and software; MSY estimation for <i>Nephrops</i> stocks	29
3.2 Cod in Subarea VIa.....	33
3.2.1 General	34
3.2.2 Data.....	35
3.2.3 Historical stock development.....	38
3.2.4 Short-term stock projections.....	39
3.2.5 MSY explorations.....	40
3.2.6 Management plans	40
3.2.7 Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	41
3.2.8 Recommendation for next benchmark.....	42
3.2.9 Management considerations	43
3.3 Haddock in Division VIa	95
3.3.1 General	96
3.3.2 Data.....	97
3.3.3 Historical stock development.....	99
3.3.4 Short-term projections.....	102
3.3.5 MSY evaluations	104
3.3.6 Management plans	104
3.3.7 Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	105
3.3.8 Recommendations for next benchmark	106
3.3.9 Management considerations	107
3.3.10 Other issues	148
3.3.11 References	149
3.4 Whiting in Subarea VIa.....	150
3.4.1 General	151
3.4.2 Data.....	152
3.4.3 Historical stock development.....	154
3.4.4 Short-term projections.....	156
3.4.5 Medium-term projections.....	157

3.4.6	MSY explorations.....	157
3.4.7	Biological reference points.....	157
3.4.8	Management plans	157
3.4.9	Uncertainties and bias in the assessment and forecast.....	157
3.4.10	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	158
3.4.11	Management considerations	158
3.4b	Whiting in Subarea VIb.....	158
3.5	North Minch, FU11.....	193
3.5.1	Ecosystem aspects.....	193
3.5.2	The fishery in 2010.....	193
3.5.3	ICES advice for 2010 and 2011	194
3.5.4	Management.....	194
3.5.5	Assessment	194
3.5.6	Historical stock trends.....	197
3.5.7	MSY considerations	198
3.5.8	Landings forecasts	198
3.5.9	Biological reference points.....	199
3.5.10	Quality of assessment and forecast	199
3.5.11	Status of the stock	200
3.5.12	Management considerations	200
3.6	South Minch, FU12	220
3.6.1	Ecosystem aspects.....	220
3.6.2	The fishery in 2010.....	220
3.6.3	ICES advice in 2010 and 2011	221
3.6.4	Management applicable in 2009 and 2010.....	221
3.6.5	Assessment	221
3.6.6	Historical stock trends.....	224
3.6.7	MSY considerations	224
3.6.8	Landings forecasts	225
3.6.9	Biological reference points.....	226
3.6.10	Quality of assessment and forecast	226
3.6.11	Status of the stock	227
3.6.12	Management considerations	227
3.7	Clyde, FU13.....	239
3.7.1	Ecosystem aspects.....	239
3.7.2	The fishery in 2010.....	239
3.7.3	ICES advice in 2010 and 2011	240
3.7.4	Management applicable to 2009 and 2010.....	240
3.7.5	Assessment	240
3.7.6	Historical stock trends.....	244
3.7.7	MSY considerations	245
3.7.8	Landings forecasts	246
3.7.9	Biological reference points.....	247
3.7.10	Quality of assessment and forecast	247
3.7.11	Status of the stock	248
3.7.12	Management considerations	248

3.7.13	Other <i>Nephrops</i> populations within Division VIa.....	249
3.7.14	Stanton Bank.....	249
3.7.15	Shelf edge west of Scotland	249
3.7.16	References	250
4.2	Cod in Division VIb.....	264
4.3	Haddock in Division VIb (Rockall)	269
4.3.1	General	270
4.3.2	Data.....	272
4.3.3	Historical stock development.....	274
4.3.4	Short-term projections.....	277
4.3.5	Medium-term projection.....	278
4.3.6	Biological reference points.....	278
4.3.7	Management plans	278
4.3.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	280
4.3.9	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	281
4.3.10	Management considerations	281
4.3.11	References	282
5.1	Northern Shelf overview	336
5.2	Anglerfish (<i>Lophius piscatorius</i> and <i>L. budegassa</i>) in Division IIa, IIIa, Subarea IV and VI.....	336
5.2.1	Anglerfish in Division IIIa, Subarea IV and VI.....	336
5.2.2	Anglerfish in Division IIa	347
5.3	Megrim in IVa and VIa (Northern North Sea and West of Scotland) and Megrim in VIb (Rockall).....	378
5.3.1	Megrim in Divisions IVa and VIa (Northern North Sea and West of Scotland)	378
5.3.2	Megrim in VIb	385
6.1	Irish Sea overview	404
6.2	Cod in VIIa.....	404
6.2.1	General	404
6.2.2	Data.....	405
6.2.3	Historical stock development.....	408
6.2.4	Short-term predictions	410
6.2.5	Medium-term projections and MSY evaluation	410
6.2.6	Biological reference points.....	412
6.2.7	Management plans	412
6.2.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	412
6.2.9	Recommendations for next benchmark assessment	415
6.2.10	Management considerations	415
6.3	Haddock in Division VIIa.....	448
6.3.1	General	448
6.3.2	Data.....	449
6.3.3	Historical stock development.....	452
6.3.4	Short-term projections.....	453
6.3.5	MSY evaluations	454
6.3.6	Biological reference points.....	454

6.3.7	Management plans	455
6.3.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	455
6.3.9	Recommendations for next benchmark assessment	456
6.3.10	Management considerations	457
6.4	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIa (Irish Sea East, FU14)	481
6.4.1	General	481
6.4.2	Data available	482
6.4.3	Data analyses.....	484
6.4.4	Short-term projections.....	485
6.4.5	Medium-term projection.....	486
6.4.6	Biological reference points.....	486
6.4.7	Management plans	487
6.4.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	488
6.4.9	Quality of assessment.....	488
6.4.10	Management considerations	488
6.5	Irish Sea West, FU15.....	497
6.5.1	General	497
6.5.2	Data.....	500
6.5.3	Assessment	501
6.5.4	MSY explorations.....	502
6.5.5	Short-term projections.....	504
6.5.6	Biological reference points.....	504
6.5.7	Management plans	504
6.5.8	Uncertainties in the assessment and forecast.....	504
6.5.9	Management considerations	505
6.5.10	References	506
6.6	Whiting in VIIa.....	524
6.6.1	General	524
6.6.2	Data.....	526
6.6.3	Historical stock development.....	528
6.6.4	Short-term predictions	529
6.6.5	Medium-term projection.....	529
6.6.6	Maximum sustainable yield evaluation.....	530
6.6.7	Biological reference points.....	530
6.6.8	Management plans	530
6.6.9	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	530
6.6.10	Recommendations for next benchmark assessment	530
6.6.11	Management considerations	530
6.6.12	References	531
6.7	Plaice in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	555
6.7.1	General	555
6.7.2	Data.....	557
6.7.3	Historical stock development.....	559
6.7.4	Short-term projections.....	561
6.7.5	Medium-term projections	562
6.7.6	MSY explorations.....	562

6.7.7	Biological reference points.....	562
6.7.8	Management plans	562
6.7.9	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	562
6.7.10	Recommendations for next benchmark	562
6.7.11	Management considerations	563
6.8	Sole in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	599
6.8.1	General	600
6.8.2	Stock assessment.....	604
6.8.3	Short-term projections.....	606
6.8.4	MSY explorations.....	607
6.8.5	Biological reference points.....	607
6.8.6	Management plans	607
6.8.7	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	607
6.8.8	Recommendations for next benchmark	608
6.8.9	Management considerations	608
7.1	Celtic Sea overview	643
7.2	Cod in Division VIIe–k (Celtic Sea).....	643
7.2.1	General	644
7.2.2	Stock assessment.....	652
7.2.3	Short-term projections.....	654
7.2.4	Medium-term projection.....	654
7.2.5	Biological reference points.....	655
7.2.6	Management plans	655
7.2.7	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	655
7.2.8	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	655
7.2.9	Management considerations	656
7.2.10	References	657
7.3	Cod in Divisions VIIb, c.....	722
7.4	Haddock in Divisions VIIb–k.....	723
7.4.1	General	723
7.4.2	Data.....	724
7.4.3	Historical stock development.....	726
7.4.4	Short-term projections.....	728
7.4.5	MSY evaluation.....	728
7.4.6	Biological reference points.....	729
7.4.7	Management plans	729
7.4.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	729
7.4.9	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	730
7.4.10	Management considerations	731
7.4.11	References	731
7.5	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIb (Aran Grounds, FU17).....	768
7.5.1	General	768
7.5.2	Data.....	771
7.5.3	Assessment	773
7.5.4	Short-term projections.....	774
7.5.5	MSY explorations.....	775

7.5.6	Biological reference points.....	775
7.5.7	Management strategies.....	775
7.5.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	776
7.5.9	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	776
7.5.10	Management considerations.....	776
7.5.11	References.....	777
7.6	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIb,c,j,k (Porcupine Bank, FU16).....	790
7.6.1	General.....	790
7.6.2	Data.....	794
7.6.3	Stock assessment.....	798
7.6.4	Short-term projections.....	799
7.6.5	MSY explorations.....	799
7.6.6	Biological reference points.....	799
7.6.7	Management plans.....	799
7.6.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	799
7.6.9	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	799
7.6.10	Management considerations.....	800
7.6.11	References.....	800
7.7	<i>Nephrops</i> in the Celtic Sea (FU20–22).....	813
7.7.1	General.....	813
7.7.2	Data.....	816
7.7.3	Historical stock development.....	819
7.7.4	MSY explorations.....	820
7.7.5	Short-term projections.....	821
7.7.6	Biological reference points.....	822
7.7.7	Management plans.....	822
7.7.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	822
7.7.9	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	823
7.7.10	Management considerations.....	824
7.7.11	References.....	825
7.8	<i>Nephrops</i> in Divisions VIIjg (South and SW Ireland, FU19).....	872
7.8.1	General.....	872
7.8.2	Fishery description.....	873
7.8.3	Data.....	873
7.8.4	Commercial catches and discards.....	873
7.8.5	Biological sampling.....	874
7.8.6	Information from surveys.....	874
7.8.7	Assessment.....	874
7.8.8	Management considerations.....	875
7.8.9	References.....	875
7.9	Plaice in west of Ireland Division VII b, c.....	882
7.9.1	General.....	882
7.9.2	Data.....	882
7.10	Plaice in Divisions VIIIf,g (Celtic Sea).....	883
7.10.1	General.....	883
7.10.2	Data.....	884

7.10.3	Stock assessment	887
7.10.4	Short-term projections.....	889
7.10.5	Maximum sustainable yield evaluation.....	889
7.10.6	Precautionary approach reference points.....	890
7.10.7	Management plans	890
7.10.8	Uncertainties in assessment and forecast	890
7.10.9	Management considerations	890
7.11	Plaice in the Southwest of Ireland (ICES Divisions VIIIh–k)	927
7.11.1	General	927
7.11.2	Data.....	927
7.11.3	Historical stock development.....	927
7.11.4	References	928
7.12	Sole in West of Ireland Division VIIb, c.....	939
7.12.1	General	939
7.12.2	Data.....	939
7.13	Sole in Divisions VIIfg.....	940
7.13.1	General	941
7.13.2	Data.....	942
7.13.3	Stock assessment	944
7.13.4	Short-term projections.....	946
7.13.5	MSY explorations.....	946
7.13.6	Biological reference points.....	947
7.13.7	Management plans	947
7.13.8	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	947
7.13.9	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	948
7.13.10	Management considerations.....	948
7.14	Sole in the Southwest of Ireland (ICES Divisions VIIIh–k)	991
7.14.1	General	991
7.14.2	Data.....	991
7.14.3	Historical stock development.....	991
7.14.4	References	992
7.15	Whiting in Division VIIe–k.....	1003
7.15.1	General	1004
7.15.2	Data.....	1006
7.15.3	Historical stock development.....	1009
7.15.4	Short-term projections.....	1011
7.15.5	Biological reference points.....	1011
7.15.6	Management plans	1012
7.15.7	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	1012
7.15.8	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	1013
7.15.9	Management considerations	1014
7.16	Whiting in Divisions VIIb, c.....	1070
8.2	Plaice in the Western Channel (ICES Divisions VIIe).....	1072
8.2.1	General	1073
8.2.2	Stock assessment	1076

8.2.3	Short-term projections.....	1078
8.2.4	F _{MSY} evaluation.....	1079
8.2.5	Biological reference points.....	1080
8.2.6	Management plans.....	1080
8.2.7	Uncertainties and bias in assessment and forecast.....	1080
8.2.8	Recommendation for next benchmark.....	1081
8.2.9	Management considerations.....	1081
8.3	Sole in Division VIIe.....	1121
8.3.1	General.....	1123
8.3.2	Data.....	1124
8.3.3	Stock assessment.....	1127
8.3.4	Short-term projections.....	1130
8.3.5	Biological reference points.....	1130
8.3.6	MSY evaluation.....	1131
8.3.7	Management plan.....	1131
8.3.8	Uncertainties in assessment and forecast.....	1131
8.3.9	Recommendation for the next benchmark.....	1133
8.3.10	Management considerations.....	1133
8.3.11	Ecosystem considerations.....	1134
8.3.12	Regulations and their effects.....	1134
8.3.13	Changes in fishing technology and fishing patterns.....	1135
8.3.14	Changes in the environment.....	1135
9.2	Pollock in the Celtic Seas (ICES Subareas VI and VII).....	1194
9.2.1	General.....	1194
Annex 1:	Participants list.....	1199
Annex 2:	Stock Annexes.....	1203
Annex 3:	Summary of Working Documents presented to WGCSE	
2011	1507
Annex 4:	Technical Minutes.....	1512
	Celtic Sea Review Group 1 Report.....	1512
	Celtic Sea Review Group 2 Report.....	1526

Executive summary

ICES Working Group on the Assessment of Celtic Seas Ecoregions stocks (WGCSE) met at ICES headquarters in Copenhagen (Denmark) from 11 to 19 May 2011. 35 stocks distributed in ICES Subareas VI and VII (excluding VIIId), with anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius* and *L. budegassa*) extending its distribution to ICES Divisions IIa, IIIa and Subarea IV, and megrim (*Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis*) extending to ICES Division IVa, were assessed. In total, WGCSE assesses four stocks of cod (*Gadus morhua*), four stocks of haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*), one stock of anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius* and *L. budegassa*), two stocks of megrim (*Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis*), four stocks of whiting (*Merlangius merlangius*), five stocks of sole (*Solea solea*), five stocks of plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), and nine stocks of *Nephrops* (*Nephrops norvegicus*) distributed in eleven functional units (FU), upon which one stock was added this year, pollock (*Pollachius pollachius*) in Subareas VI and VII. There were 22 participants from six countries (Belgium, France, Ireland, Norway, Russia and UK), and some supportive help by correspondence in various institutes. The meeting was chaired by Pieter-Jan Schön (UK) and Joël Vigneau (France).

The meeting was tasked with carrying out stock assessments and providing catch forecasts and a first draft of ICES Advice for 2012 for all stocks in its remit. Particular attention was given this year to provide an advice for all the stocks where this was possible, following ICES guidelines. In accordance with the advisory framework, all assessments conducted by WGCSE in 2011 were update analyses, and were conducted on the basis of the stock annex, for those stocks having an agreed assessment method. In 2011, four stocks in the remit of WGCSE were subject to benchmark analysis, and only sole in VIIa received an agreed assessment. Plaice in VIIa and plaice in VIIfg were recommended to use trends only assessment for the provision of management advice but could not be used as a basis for predicting future catch options, and the benchmark was inconclusive for megrim IV, VI. During the meeting:

- eight stocks were assessed with an age-based model: haddock in VIIb, plaice in VIIe, sole in VIIe, in VIIfg and in VIIa, (XSA), cod and haddock in VIa (TSA) and cod in VIIa (B-ADAPT);
- five stocks were assessed with an age-based assessment considered for trends only: haddock in VIIb-k, cod in VIIe-k, plaice in VIIfg and in VIIa and whiting in VIIe-k;
- seven *Nephrops* stocks were assessed with information from underwater TV surveys : FU11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 and the FU22 part of the FU20-22 stock;
- nine stocks were assessed for trends only: anglerfish in IV and VI, haddock in VIIa, megrim in IVa and VIa and megrim in VIIb, *Nephrops* FU16, plaice in VIIh-k, sole VIIh-k, Whiting VIIa and whiting VIa. *Nephrops* FU20-21 part of the FU20-22 stock can also be added to this list.
- six stocks could not be assessed: cod and whiting in Vb, sole and plaice in VIIbc, pollock in Celtic Seas and *Nephrops* FU19.

Some difficulties were encountered preventing from applying strictly an update assessment, and solutions had to be accommodated during the WG. The major difficulties were the absence of one survey in 2010 for technical reasons, and the modification of one survey design. No special data deficiencies were reported this year, although all data poor stocks remained in the same situation.

The WG discussed the preparatory work for the benchmarks in 2012, and proposed seven stocks to be reviewed next year. These are cod in Division VIa, in Division VIIa and in Divisions VIIe–k, Haddock in Division VIa, Whiting in Division VIa, Anglerfish in Division IIa, IIIa, Subarea IV and VI and Sole in Division VIIe. In the longer run, plaice in Division VIIa, haddock in Divisions VIIb–k and in Division VIIa were put on the list to be subject to a benchmark in 2013 and sole in Divisions VIIfg in 2014. Another set of six stocks were said to be prone to benchmark without a proposed date.

1 General

1.1 Terms of reference

2010/2/ACOM12 The Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE), chaired by Pieter-Jan Schon (UK) and Joel Vigneau (France) will meet at ICES Headquarters, 11–19 May 2011 to:

- Address generic ToRs for Fish Stock Assessment Working Groups (see table below);
- Assess the progress on the benchmark preparation of Anglerfish (*Lophius budegassa* and *L. piscatorius*) in Divisions IIa, IIIa, Subarea IV, VI, VIIb–k and VIIIa,b, Cod in Division VIa, VIIa, VIIe–k; Sole in Divisions VIIf,g, and Sole in Division VIIe.

The assessments will be carried out on the basis of the stock annex in National Laboratories, prior to the meeting. This will be coordinated as indicated in the table below.

Material and data relevant to the meeting must be available to the group no later than 14 days prior to the starting date.

WGCSE will report by 23 May 2011 for the attention of ACOM.

Fish Stock	Stock Name	Stock Coord.	Assessment Coord. 1	Assessment Coord. 2	Perform assessment	Advice
ang-ivvi	Anglerfish (<i>Lophius piscatorius</i> and <i>L. budegassa</i>) in Division IIa, IIIa, Subarea IV and VI	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)	Denmark, Norway	Y	Update
cod-iris	Cod in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	UK (England)	UK (England)		Y	Update
cod-rock	Cod in Division VIb (Rockall)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		N	Catch statistics only
cod-scow	Cod in Division VIa (West of Scotland)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update
cod-VIIe–k	Cod in Division VIIe–k (Celtic Sea)	France	France	Ireland	Y	Update
had-7b–k	Haddock in Divisions VIIb–k	Ireland	Ireland	France	Y	Update
had-iris	Haddock in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update
had-rock	Haddock in Division VIb (Rockall)	Russia	Russia	UK (Scotland)	Y	Update
had-scow	Haddock in Division VIa (West of Scotland)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update

Fish Stock	Stock Name	Stock Coord.	Assessment Coord. 1	Assessment Coord. 2	Perform assessment	Advice
meg-scrk	Megrim (<i>Lepidorhombus</i> spp) in Subarea VI (West of Scotland and Rockall) and Subarea IV (North Sea)	Ireland	Ireland	UK (Scotland)	Y	Update
nep-11	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIa (North Minch)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update
nep-12	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIa (South Minch)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update
nep-13	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIa (Firth of Clyde)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update
nep-14	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIa (Irish Sea East)	UK (England)			Y	Update
nep-15	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIa (Irish Sea West)	UK (Northern Ireland)	UK (Northern Ireland)	Ireland	Y	Update
nep-7bcj	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIb,c,j,k (Porcupine Bank)	Ireland	Ireland		Y	Update
nep-17	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIb (Aran Grounds, FU17)	Ireland	Ireland		Y	Update
nep-19	<i>Nephrops</i> in Division VIIa,g,j (Southeast and West of IRL, FU19)	Ireland	Ireland		Y	Update
nep-20-22	<i>Nephrops</i> in Divisions VIIf,gh (Celtic Sea, FU20-22)	France	France	Ireland	Y	Update
ple-7b-c	Plaice in Division VIIb,c (West of Ireland)	Ireland			Y	Update
ple-7h-k	Plaice in Divisions VIIh,k (Southwest of Ireland)	Ireland	Ireland	Belgium	Y	Same advice as last year
ple-celt	Plaice in Divisions VIIf,g (Celtic Sea)	UK (England)	UK (England)	Belgium	Y	Update

Fish Stock	Stock Name	Stock Coord.	Assessment Coord. 1	Assessment Coord. 2	Perform assessment	Advice
ple-echw	Plaice in Division VIIe (Western Channel)	UK (England)	UK (England)	France	Y	Update
ple-iris	Plaice in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	UK (England)	UK (England)		Y	Update
sol-7b-c	Sole in Division VIIb, c (West of Ireland)	Ireland			N	Catch statistics only
sol-7h-k	Sole in Divisions VIIh-k (Southwest of Ireland)	Ireland			Y	Same advice as last year
sol-celt	Sole in Divisions VIIf,g (Celtic Sea)	Belgium	Belgium	UK (England)	Y	Update
sol-echw	Sole in Division VIIe (Western Channel)	UK (England)	UK (England)	France	Y	Update
sol-iris	Sole in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	Belgium	Belgium		Y	Update
whg-7e-k	Whiting in Divisions VIIe-k	Ireland	Ireland	France	Y	Update
whg-iris	Whiting in Division VIIa (Irish Sea)	Ireland	Ireland	UK (Northern Ireland)	Y	Update
whg-rock	Whiting in Division VIb (Rockall)	Ireland			N	Catch statistics only
whg-scow	Whiting in Division VIa (West of Scotland)	UK (Scotland)	UK (Scotland)		Y	Update
Pol-celt	Pollock in the Celtic Seas					Collate data