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Report of the Baltic Fisheries Assessment Working Group (WGBFAS)

12–19 April 2016

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Executive Summary

The ICES Baltic Fisheries Assessment Working Group (WGBFAS) met 12–19 April 2016 (Chair: Tomas Gröhsler, Germany and Co-chair: Michele Casini, Sweden), with 39 participants and 8 countries represented. The objective of WGBFAS was to assess the status of the following stocks:

- Sole in Division 3.a, SDs 20–24
- Cod in Kattegat, Cod in SDs 22–24, Cod in SDs 25–32
- Herring in SDs 25–27, 28.2, 29 and 32, Herring in SD 28.1 (Gulf of Riga), Herring in SD 30, Herring SD 31
- Sprat in SDs 22–32
- Plaice in SDs 21–23, Plaice in SDs 24–25
- Flounder in SDs 22–23; in SDs 24–25; in SDs 26+28 and SDs 27+29–32, Brill in SDs 22–32, Dab in SDs 22–32 and Turbot in SDs 22–32

WGBFAS also identified the data needed for next year's data call with some suggestions for improvements in the data call.

The report contains an introduction with the summary of other WGs relevant for the WGBFAS, country specific fishery description, the methods used, and ecosystem considerations. The results of the analytical stock assessment or survey trends for the species listed above are then presented with all the stocks with the same species in the same sections. The report ends with references, list of Working Documents, recommendations and links to Stock Annexes.

The principle analytical models used for the stock assessments were XSA and SAM. For most flatfishes, CPUE trends from bottom trawl surveys were presented (except plaice in SDs 24–25 and herring in SD 31 using relative SSB from SAM and XSA, respectively).

For cod in SDs 25–32, the results of the current projects focusing on the understanding of basic biological and ecological processes were presented and summarised. This work will hopefully allow returning to an analytical stock assessment in the near future.

Ecosystem changes have been analytically considered in the following stock assessments: Herring in SD 25–27, 28.2, 29 and 32, and Sprat in SD 22–32, in form of cod predation mortality.