

benthic mortality which is combined with community recovery potential (based on longevity or population dynamics). The resulting benthic impact is characterised by a change in the relative benthic state. The assessment framework is developed for four generic gear groups, including beam trawls.

The quantitative framework of the FBIT tool is developed from a biological perspective. The trade-off between the protection of benthic communities with fisheries, however, necessitates the effect of these management measures on the fisheries itself. The trade-off is currently based on the assumption that most fishing effort is located in the most profitable areas. The 'value of an area to fisheries' is therefore based on swept area ratio as a approximate indicator. The ICES workshop WKTRADE2 has suggested a series of social and particular economic factors to improve this estimate, as well as a series of predictive (bio-economic) modelling approaches (dynamic or static) that take the displacement of fishing activities into account following fishing measures and how these may affect both benthic communities as well as the fisheries itself through feedback loops in the long term. These scientific approaches may be complemented with stakeholder engagement processes. The assessment of the socio-economic value of areas to fisheries is currently developing.

Work related to ICES via **WGFBIT**, co-chaired by **Gert Van Hoey** (ILVO, B), **Tobias Van Kooten** (WMR, NL) and **Ole Eigaard** (DTU, DK) **WKTRADE2**, co-chaired by **Jochen Depestele** (ILVO, B) and **François Bastardie** (DTU, DK)

(6) Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE): Drafting advice for 40 demersal stocks across the Celtic Seas Ecoregion.

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The submitted abstract is related to the ICES Working Group for the Celtic Seas Ecoregion (WGCSE). Belgian fisheries data are submitted by ILVO to the WGCSE and other assessment working groups (WGNSSK, WGBIE, HAWG, WGEF). The WGCSE is yearly attended by ILVO where we conduct the assessment of 2 sole stocks. Moreover, for the period 2019-2021, **Sofie Nimmegeers** (ILVO) is co-chair for WGCSE. In this abstract, the advice drafting process is clarified.

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is the EU policy for managing EU fishing fleets and for conserving fish stocks. This management relies on data collected and supplied by EU countries under the Data Collection Framework (DCF). For Belgium, the ILVO Fisheries Biology unit is responsible for collecting these data, which include age and length composition of the catch sampled by observers at sea onboard commercial vessels, data on fish landings and fishing effort, etc.

ILVO provides the Belgian data to several ICES expert groups (i.a. WGCSE) where they are used in stock assessments. Besides experts from Belgium, also France, Ireland, the Russian Federation and the UK have scientific representatives in the WGCSE. These ICES scientists compile the national data to investigate the size and condition of the fish stocks and their exploitation patterns. This allows them to forecast catches and evaluate the stock status against reference points to formulate advice following the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) principle. For stocks with a limited amount of data, precautionary advice on future fishing opportunities is provided.

The WGCSE is tasked to update fisheries data and assessments, and to draft advice for 40 demersal stocks across ICES subareas 6 and 7. Among these stocks there are gadoid species (cod, haddock, whiting, saithe and pollack), flatfish (sole, plaice and megrim), Norway lobster, sea bass and anglerfish.

Of the 40 stocks assessed, 13 had an unknown status and approximately 60% met the MSY targets (fishing mortality and spawning stock biomass) in 2019.

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