

Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Working Group

Terms of Reference

(May 14, 2018)

1. Inventory and summarize all relevant peer-review information about stock structure of Atlantic cod in NAFO Divs. 5 and 6 and interactions with 4X. Evaluate the relative importance of the information with respect to developing a holistic understanding of Atlantic cod stock structure.
2. Identify and evaluate any new or existing data or information about the stock structure of Atlantic cod in NAFO Divs. 5 and 6 and interactions with 4X, and subject to a peer-review by the working group. Integrate any additional information into the inventory developed in TOR 1.
3. Using a holistic approach, synthesize all available information (TOR 1 and 2) and develop sets of possible biological stock structures and consider scientific support for each alternative. In developing alternative stock structures, consider the temporal stability of stock structure and how the available information can inform the knowledge of stock structure over time.
4. Evaluate the historical and contemporary fisheries-dependent and -independent data collection programs and evaluate current modeling techniques relative to the alternatives developed in ToR3. Summarize the practical limitations for each alternative.
5. Broadly consider potential management procedures to meet management objectives including but not limited to maintaining status quo, altering stock boundaries, spatial and temporal restrictions, and stock composition analyses
6. Identify any major information gaps in the existing research with respect to cod stock structure. Develop a prioritized list of research recommendations to address these gaps. Comment on the feasibility and time horizon (e.g., short-term, long-term) of the proposed research recommendations.
7. Identify any major data collection and modeling gaps that limit the use of stock structure alternatives.