

MariFish Briefings

Working collaboratively on the influence of climate on small pelagic fish biology, distribution and population dynamics

January 2011

What are we working on?

Gaining knowledge of the effects of climate variability on small pelagic fish is a major challenge for fisheries managers across Europe. A substantial amount of research is being undertaken at national and international levels and MariFish partners agreed to join their research efforts to find possible solutions. **Under Work Package 7**, MariFish Partners identified common research themes or geographical areas of interest and selected five to be developed into collaborative research programmes. A thematic programme on the effects of climate on small pelagic fish was identified as one area that would particularly benefit from collaboration under the MariFish project. Through a united vision, a collaborative programme was developed: “of climate on small pelagic fish biology, distribution and population dynamics”.

What were our aims?

Six partners, Spain, UK, Greece, France, Portugal and Iceland signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work collaboratively on climate and small pelagic fish. The main goal was:

- To identify related existing initiatives as well as planned programmes among the national research institutes.
- To construct a common, comprehensive, multi-national programme in this discipline in order to increase cooperation and to fill evidence gaps, based on the priorities of participants and their available opportunities to collaborate.
- To define a plan of action to achieve the objectives of the common program.



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MariFish Kick-off meeting of the Management and Scientific CLIMAFISH Committee, Madrid November 2008.



MariFish

Strengthening the links between European marine fisheries science and fisheries management



What have we achieved?

MariFish brought together experts at three consecutive meetings, two held in Madrid and one in Coruña (Spain), to reach the following agreements:

1. Joint Programme of work

Partners defined a joint programme of work to cover the collaborative topic with general objectives, potential candidate research themes and candidate key species/areas of work.

2. Focusing the topic

Partners agreed that the use of integrated ecosystem models to incorporate climate effect on fisheries and other ecosystem elements was one of the most relevant tools to analyze the effect of climate on the ecosystem. Partners therefore decided to progress on their joint effort to improve the effectiveness of research through the organization of a workshop on the “Integration of spatial components, species interactions and environmental data for improving the understanding and management of small pelagics”.

3. REPROdUCE Project (see related MariFish summary)

Addressing the gaps identified, a consortium was formed to participate in the MariFish competitive joint call, presenting a project that will deal with the use of ecosystem integrated models to improve the understanding of the combined effects of climate and human in reproductive potential.

4. MariFish-ICES Joint Workshop on Integrated ecosystem modelling; building our capacity to understand and manage marine ecosystems in a changing world (Barcelona, Nov. 2010) (see related MariFish summary)

The workshop was conducted in coordination with the MariFish Mediterranean collaborative programme (see related MariFish briefing). The aim of the joint workshop was to discuss the state-of-the-art and the future of integrated ecosystem modelling as a tool to investigate marine ecosystems and to further improve coordination and dissemination of research results within related research groups and EU funded projects. The main outcomes of the joint workshop include:

- The preparation of a manuscript about the future of end-to-end models to be submitted to the ICES Journal of Marine Science.
- The official recommendation to ICES for the creation of a Working Group (WG) for the stimulation of the development of end-to-end models.

(Further information about the workshop can be found at <http://www.marifish.net/WP7/Workshops/default.htm>).

Plans for further collaboration

Taking into account that the MarFish project comes to an end in January 2011, the scientific group will continue to collaborate through the three year project REPROdUCE and will develop new initiatives as stated in the recommendations of the joint workshop.

