



**RACs
Stakeholders
Observers
and other interested parties.**

Our Ref: C.24.g/HL/hgj

14 April 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

Allow me to remind you about the upcoming Benchmark Workshop on Short-lived Species (WKSHORT). The Workshop will take place in Bergen, Norway from 31 August to 4 September. The following stocks will be considered:

- Capelin in the Iceland-East Greenland-Jan Mayen area (Sub-areas V and XIV and Division IIa west of 5°W)
- Barents Sea capelin (Sub-areas I and II, excluding Division IIa west of 5°W)
- Bay of Biscay Anchovy (Sub-area VIII)
- North Sea sprat (Sub-area IV)

North Sea sprat was included in WKSHORT only in December 2008, and therefore is not included in our letter about Benchmark information sent on 30th October 2008.

Benchmarking is a technical review of the assessments to assure that these are based on all relevant data and that the underlying population model and estimation procedure reflects best science. ICES benchmarking is a science process that aims for consensus among the scientists on how best to assess a specific fish stock taking into account the level of knowledge on the population dynamics, available data and estimation procedure.

Since no assessment can be better than the available data ICES welcomes additional input from stakeholders, so we can assure that all relevant data are considered and reviewed. You are invited to contribute new data sets, including data from non-traditional sources. New, relevant time series of data can improve the perception of fish stocks. You are welcome to contact the ICES Secretariat (cristina@ices.dk or hgj@ices.dk) if you have new data-series that you think are relevant.

At a benchmark meeting proposals for modifications of the assessment procedure shall be presented. To allow proper review of the data and, if appropriate, modification of the assessment procedure, it is important that the scientists can perform the analysis and model modification well in advance of the benchmark meeting. You are therefore asked to present proposals to the relevant Coordinator well in advance of the meeting.

The meeting will be chaired by an expert with relevant expertise. This expert is recruited from outside ICES circles. The Workshop members will be experts from and outside the ICES community. ICES invites you to participate in this Workshop to contribute to data preparation and evaluation of data quality.

If you would like to participate or have practical questions please direct such queries to Helle Gjeding Jørgensen (hgj@ices.dk).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hans Lassen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Hans Lassen
Head of Advisory Programme