



Ms. Charlina Vitcheva
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Date : 04 May 2021
Our reference : 2021PAC54
Subject : Request to ICES to peer review EASME genetics sampling report

Dear Ms. Charlina Vitcheva,

In our letter dated February 15th 2021, the Pelagic Advisory Council (PelAC) requested that the final project report for the EASME-funded project '*Herring in Divisions 6.a, 7.b and 7.c: Scientific Assessment of the Identity of the Southern and Northern Stocks through Genetic and Morphometric Analysis*', which concluded in December 2020, undergo a peer review by a relevant ICES expert group, such as the ICES Stock Identification Methods Working Group (SIMWG). It is imperative that this review is conducted as soon as possible so that the results of the project can be incorporated into the forthcoming benchmark meetings.

Whilst the data from the project will ultimately be published in peer reviewed scientific journals, this will take some time and will also be in an abbreviated form. The PelAC believes the report should be reviewed in its entirety as there are many aspects to the work that are relevant to the stock assessment process.

We kindly ask the Commission to advise if this formal review has been requested from ICES. If it has not, then the Pelagic AC reiterates its request that this recommendation be expedited as a matter of urgency, to enable timely completion before the first benchmark meeting of 6a, 7bc herring expected in November 2021.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat.

Thanking you in advance for your kind cooperation,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jesper Raakjaer', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Jesper Raakjaer
Chairman, Pelagic AC