RCGs Secretariat

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RCGs Secretariat support services and activities

Sep. 2025- Aug. 2026 Report

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1. Introduction

The RCGs Secretariat started its services in March 2023, building on the progress and the results of the SECWEB project "*Developing mechanisms to support the planning and execution of administrative tasks and the branding and online visibility of the Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs), with the aim to establish a long-term supportive structure*".

The Secretariat provides administrative support to the Regional Coordination Groups (RCGs), developing coordination, facilitation, and liaison roles among the whole network of RCGs, and, in particular, with RCGs chairs, National Correspondents (NCs) and the European Commission. In addition, the Secretariat is responsible for maintaining and further developing the RCGs communication strategy and communication activities.

Maintaining the Secretariat as a permanent support structure to the RCGs is essential to guarantee EMFAF funding efficiency, to reinforce experts' engagement and for strengthening the regional cooperation in the context of the Data Collection Framework (DCF).

Specific activities under the scope of the Secretariat:

1. A full-time dedicated Secretariat support service for the RCGs enabling a consistent approach to administering RCGs activities, facilitating communication, and enhances the intersessional work, supporting also the work of sub-groups.
2. A dynamic and permanently updated website is maintained available, and improvements have been incorporated thanks to the activity of CETMAR in the SecWeb2.0 project.
3. The Visual identity for the RCGs is permanently promoted under harmonised branding and normalised use. The visibility and understanding of the work by the RCGs has been enhanced for the relevant stakeholder groups and the dynamic RCGs community.
4. A regularly updated Stakeholders' database improves communication between the RCGs' experts and the stakeholders' community.
5. Internal communication protocols and helpdesk in place makes it easier for any new-comer to efficiently join, adopt responsibilities, and contribute to the RCGs' objectives and work commitments.
6. The public description of the secretariat functions, operational working protocols, and commitments are building trust and enhancing the transparency and accountability of the whole network.

The RCGs Secretariat is currently funded under bilateral agreements with Member States (MSs) on the basis of the decision between the NCs on funding of the RCGs Secretariat 2024-2025 taken at the RCGs Decision Meeting in September 2024 (details in Annex 1, 2024 RCGs Decision Meeting Report_RCGs).

From 2025-2026 the services provided by the RCGs Secretariat in support of the RCGs have been developed keeping the premise of maintaining service quality, providing an agile reaction and fostering continuous improvement. The Secretariat´s workload has increased over the last years as a consequence of an improved engagement with the RCGs network and a sound relationship; receiving more support requests, specially from RCGs and ISSG chairs, and queries from the RCGs network. The experience gained over the last four years as Secretariat service provider has allowed the Secretariat to establish priorities and achieve more efficient procedures.

During this reporting period, the Secretariat has delivered support services to all RCGs and in parallel and supplementarily, the implementation of SECWEB 2.0 project, which was launched in June 2024 and has been running for a total of 28 months.

SECWEB 2.0 aimed to evolve the on-line working environment, tools and services of the RCGs Secretariat for the RCGs community. To maintain these support structures and services beyond 2026, it will be essential to have a long-term funding plan for the Secretariat which is currently a subject under the remit of ISSG NCs.

This document reports on the activities undertaken by the RCGs Secretariat from September 2025 to the end of August 2026, and includes a synthesis of the main achievements and outputs from SECWEB 2.0 project. There is also a section dedicated to propose Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to be discussed with the RCGs Chairs, the NCs and DGMARE during the Decision Meeting 2026.

2. Services in 2025 -2026

2.1. Daily regular operations and processes

2.1.1. Manage daily communication, correspondence and ad hoc requests

The main communication channel used by RCGs Secretariat in managing daily communications and *ad hoc* requests continues to be the email, secretariat@fisheries-rcg.eu. Over the reporting period the volume of emails has increased with respect to previous years, in particular from ISSGs chairs. Incrementally, ISSGs chairs across all RCGs have made the RCGs Secretariat participant of their intersessional work and meetings.

As a consequence, the RCGs Secretariat participated in many "intersessional work meetings" with the different actors of the RCGs community (mainly, RCG chairs, ISSG chairs and experts). During these meetings the Secretariat is informed of the planned intersessional activities and in agreement with the Chairs, the Secretariat assumes the administrative tasks related to the intersessional work, such as sending the meeting invitations, taking notes during the meetings and support reporting and follow up reviews and the reports' final edition and publication on the RCGs website.

In addition, the communications associated with the RCGs annual technical meetings: the save-the-date, registration, agenda and additional information, timely reminders, SharePoint access, social dinner, follow up report contributions, distribution of draft report, and final report publication were managed by the RCGs Secretariat in a timely manner, following the indications and deadlines agreed with the RCGs chairs.

2.1.2. Maintain basic protocols and organisational procedures

There are several procedures and protocols which are accessible on the RCGs website and updated periodically by the RCGs Secretariat in collaboration with RCG chairs. These are:

- *Rules of procedure*
  RCG Med&BS_RoPs
  RCG NANSEA_RCG Baltic_RoPs
  RCG ECON_RoPs
  RCG LDF_RoPs
  RCG LP_RoPs

  RCG LP discussed during the 2026 annual meeting the need to update their RoPs, to update the list of participating MSs among other. The RCGs Secretariat will follow up the procedure with RCG LP chairs according to point *14. Amending rules of procedure*.

- *Mandate and remits of the RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic*

  Mandate and remits_RCG Baltic RCG NANSEA

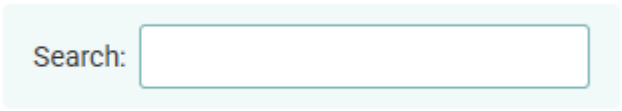
- *Terms of Reference*
  The ToRs are available under each RCG microsite; the Secretariat in collaboration with RCGs chairs periodically updates the RCGs ToRs on the website.

- *Guidance and technical documents*

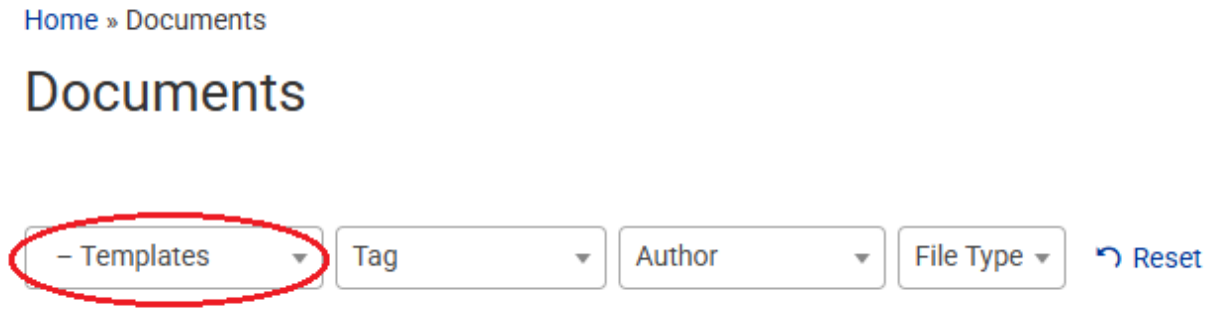
The growing number of reports and documents scattered on different sections of the RCGs website made evident the need for a structured organization of digital documents. Under the scope of SECWEB 2.0 project the RCGs Secretariat developed a section on the website to index relevant documents *https://fisheries-rcg.eu/documents/* and facilitate the search based on information such as keywords, tags, author and other relevant fields.

Guidance and technical documents have been indexed using the fields shown through the screenshots below:

Guidance documents can also be found using search box:



Discover Regional Coordination Groups for Fisheries Data Collection
RCGs Secretariat - Functions and working protocols
RCGs Virtual repositories and working spaces[1]
RCGs templates
Templates can be easily located by selecting – Templates; Category button



[1] This document will need to be updated to reflect on the changes made on the RCGs ICES SharePoint together with the new ISSG workspaces managed by the RCGs Secretariat.

Agreements; Manuals; Infographics; Regional Work Plans and Reports can also be found for filtering on the main categories implemented on the documents database.

The RCGs Secretariat is responsible for the management of the Documents database. Different RCG documents follow different processes; for example, with technical reports, the RCGs Secretariat is actively involved in final edition and report release so the indexing on the database is done automatically with the report release. Other documents, such as manuals or agreements, the document is sent by email by the relevant stakeholder and upon confirming the level of sensitivity and checking for RCGs visual identity the document is indexed and published. This process is normally accompanied by a short news publication bringing the attention to the RCGs community.

- *Supporting the development of Regional Work Plans*

During the reporting period, the Secretariat supported the chairs of ISSG RWP in several aspects, participating in periodical meetings with the chairs and contributing to report ISSG Regional Work Plan 2025 Overview. In addition, the Secretariat was actively involved in the organizational aspects of the ISSG workshop held in January 2026 in Ostend. Follow up of communications, taking notes and preparing, updating and presenting the interactive infographic "Levels of ambition".

The infographic has been updated with the feedback received from several ISSGs, and it is available online https://fisheries-rcg.eu/levels-of-ambition/

- *Steering Committee for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional Database*

The Secretariat actively participated in the 2026 Steering Committee for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional Database meeting in April. The RCGs Secretariat assisted with communication exchanges for the organisation of the meeting, note taking, document version tracking and final editing. The final report is not public therefore is not publicly available on the RCGs website.

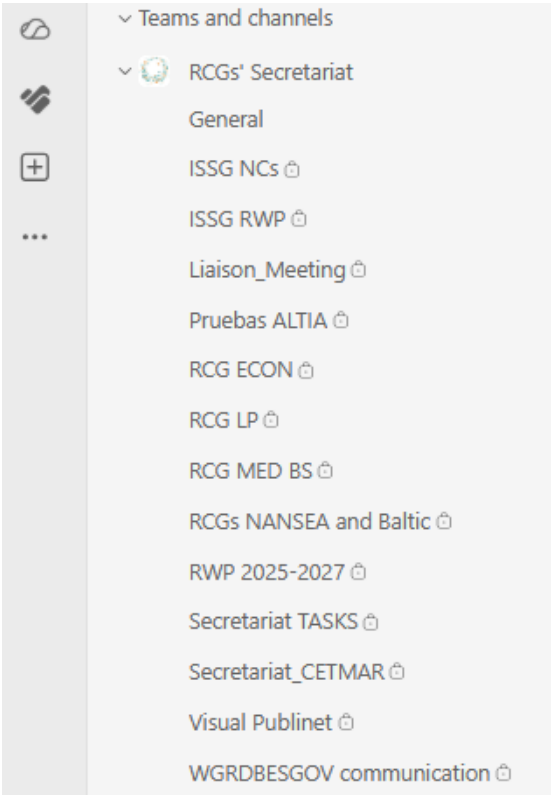
2.1.3. Maintain working tools and repositories

The maintenance of working tools and repositories involves a continuous communication flow with the RCGs network to guaranty the input and that the most updated information is always available and easy to access.

- *Virtual working spaces*

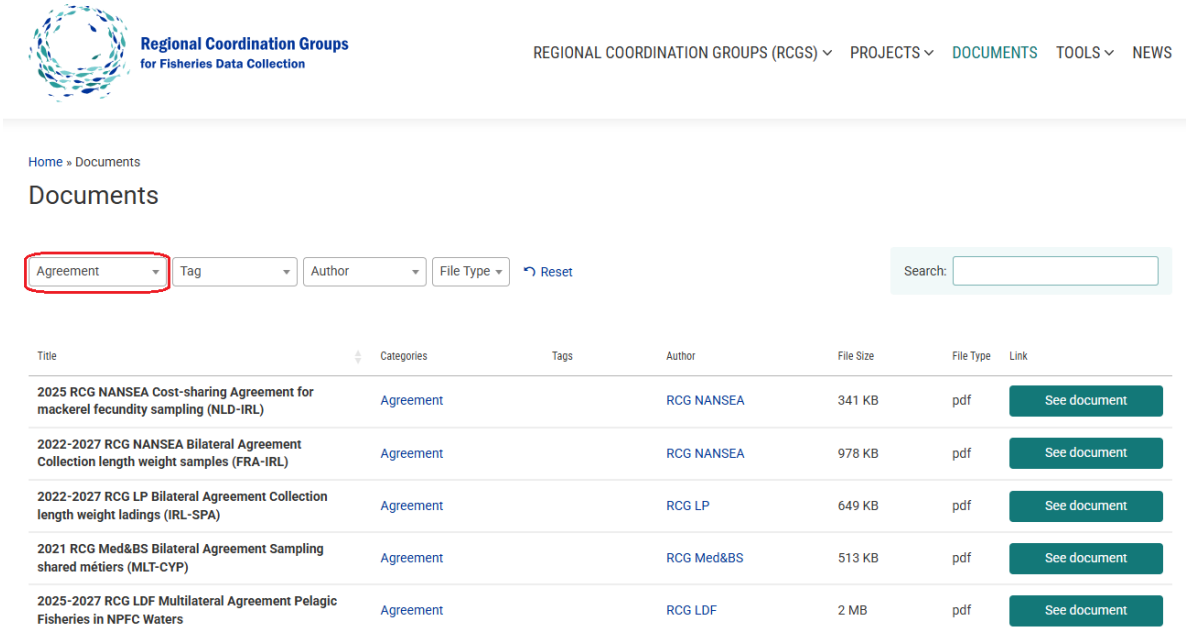
There is a growing number of ***virtual working spaces*** on Teams that the RCGs Secretariat has maintained and updated with relevant information. The Secretariat manages the access to these working spaces, which are mainly used by the RCG chairs and some sub-groups. These are often used in preparation for the respective RCG annual meetings, allowing RCG chairs to work collaboratively in the presentations as well as after the meeting, for the drafting of the RCG report. The use of these virtual working spaces differs across RCGs chairs, some of them have used it regularly for more than four years now as others hardly ever used it.

The Secretariat continues to advocate for their wider use among RCG chairs, as to guarantee a successful handover from one RCG chair to the next. Additionally, the experience tells us that it helps to reduce confusion with document versions when shared by email.



- *Multilateral and Bilateral Agreements Repository*

The RCGs Multilateral and Bilateral Agreements´ Repository as originally conceived has been replaced by the documents section on the website. Agreements are easily searchable and can be downloaded by selecting "Agreement" in the Category box (see the screenshot below).



- *Level of Ambitions interactive infographic*

  The Level of Ambition tool has been updated and uploaded with the latest information. This work has been done in coordination with the ISSG RWP and implied several meetings within 2025/2026. The tool is available at the RCG website (https://fisheries-rcg.eu/levels-of-ambition/).

- *Databases, logbooks and other records*

  The ISSGs participants databases for the season 2026 – 2027 is regularly updated by the RCGs Secretariat in close collaboration with NCs, RCGs chairs and ISSG chairs. The Secretariat is responsible for keeping the ISSG list updated to avoid outdated participants lists and inactive members and thus, ensure effective communications across the RCGs network.

  Following discussions during the 2025 pre-decision meeting, it was agreed that the Secretariat will check once a year with the NCs whether there have been any changes to the list of national experts appointed to the various ISSGs.

  This procedure is scheduled to be addressed since the end of September until the beginning of November, once the RCGs cycle has closed and in preparation for the new intersessional activity period. This procedure applies to the following RCGs: Baltic, LDF, LP, Med&BS and NANSEA. RCG ECON is currently addressing internal discussions to harmonise, when possible, their structure and procedures with the other RCGs.

  Up to 2026 RCG ECON has been following a slightly different approach, not keeping ISSGs participants lists but rather opening a registration system for each ISSG meeting, the Secretariat supported the meetings´ registration process.

  In addition to the annual update, NCs may inform the Secretariat throughout the year of any changes to their national teams. The Secretariat will then update the relevant information and communicate the changes to the respective ISSG Chairs.

2.1.4. Support to consultation processes

During the reporting period the Secretariat gave support to the following consultation processes:

- *ISSG NCs Consultation to the Member States about the Level of Sensitivity of fisheries data for a list of specific parameters*

In December 2025 the Secretariat supported the distribution and follow-up by ISSG NCs of the Consultation to the Member States about the Level of Sensitivity of data concerning a list of specific parameters to inform decisions on aggregation levels needed to allow for data dissemination.

- *Inventory on the use of traplines by UE Member States (ISSG Metier and transversal variables- RCG NANSEA&Baltic, in collaboration with RCG LP)*

In March 2026, the Secretariat distributed the questionnaire to relevant national correspondents and follow the feedback process. The questionnaire supported STECF information needs identified in STECF 25-01 section 6.9, contributing to the 2026 RCG ISSG inventory task and informing the development of métier coding approaches.

- *Questionnaire on AER 2026 data call - related to FDI effort homologation (RCG ECON)*

The Secretariat supported RCG ECON chairs collecting the feedback in preparation for NC meeting (March 2026), RCG ECON technical meeting and in preparation to feedback to STECF-AER.

- *2026 RCG LP | RDBES Case Study_MS Scope Mapping: Stock, Fishery, Gear, Metier, Progress*

In May 2026, in collaboration with the RCG LP chairs, the Secretariat developed an online questionnaire to support the implementation of the RDBES Case Study for Large Pelagics. Data from the Member States involved in the Case Study were collected in advance of the RCG LP annual meeting.

Moreover, the Secretariat produced a guidance document on how to launch a consultation with the idea that new chairs know exactly how to activate the procedure 2026 Consultation tool - User Guide - Regional Coordination Groups for Fisheries Data Collection.

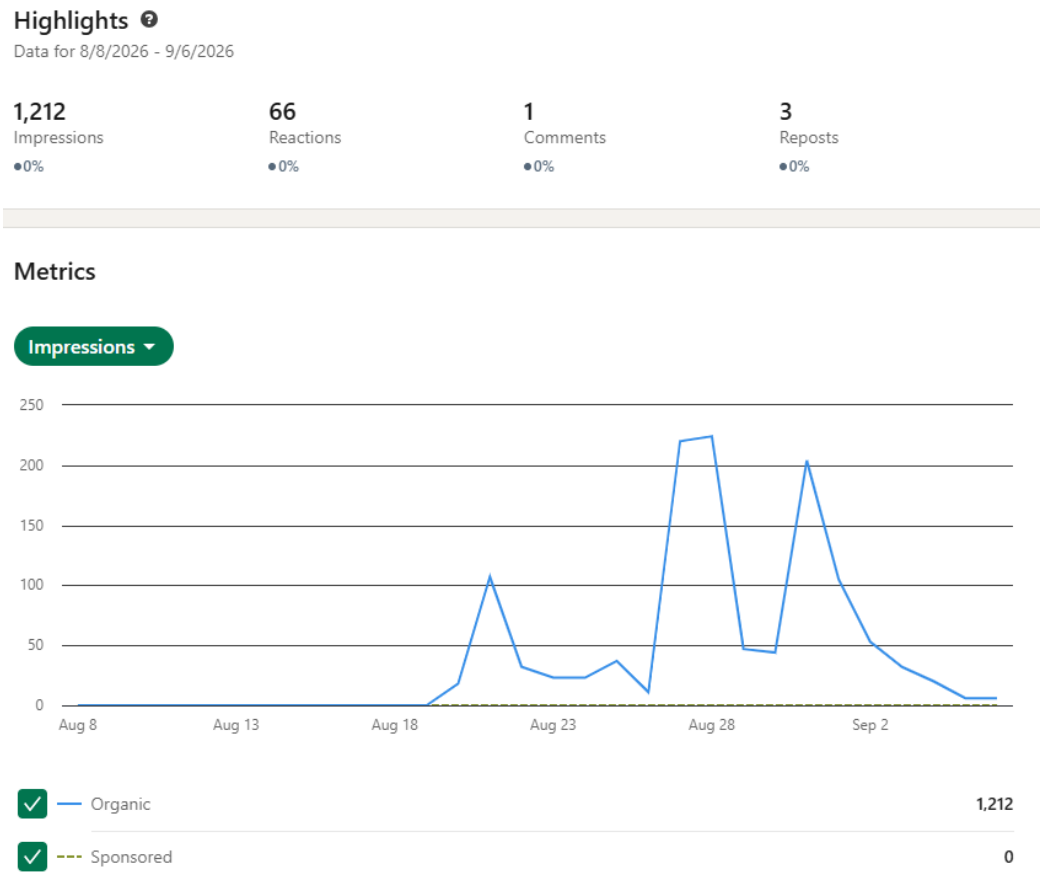
2.1.5. Communication and dissemination activities

The communication strategy is focused on promoting the visibility and engagement towards the RCGs and the Intersessional Groups.

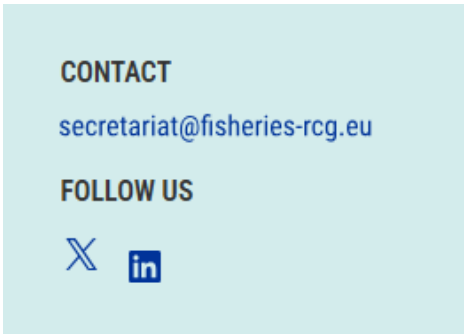
- *e-newsletter & Social network maintenance and promotion*
  The newsletter and social media have been maintained and fed periodically with the latest RCGs news and updates.

  News
  RCGs highlights have been published on the news section. The news and feeds to this section are published periodically and on demand.

  LinkedIn RCGs
  Following discussions in previous years on which social network would be most suitable for RCG activities, and driven by concerns over the proliferation of false information on X, we are refocusing the communications strategy for RCGs on social networks, exclusively on LinkedIn. Thus, the Secretariat created a dedicated RCGs page on LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/rcg-for-fisheries-data-collection.
  Activity on the LinkedIn page started in mid-August 2026. Since then, the Secretariat team has progressively dedicated time to increasing the number of followers and enhancing activity on the page, however, it is yet on an early stage

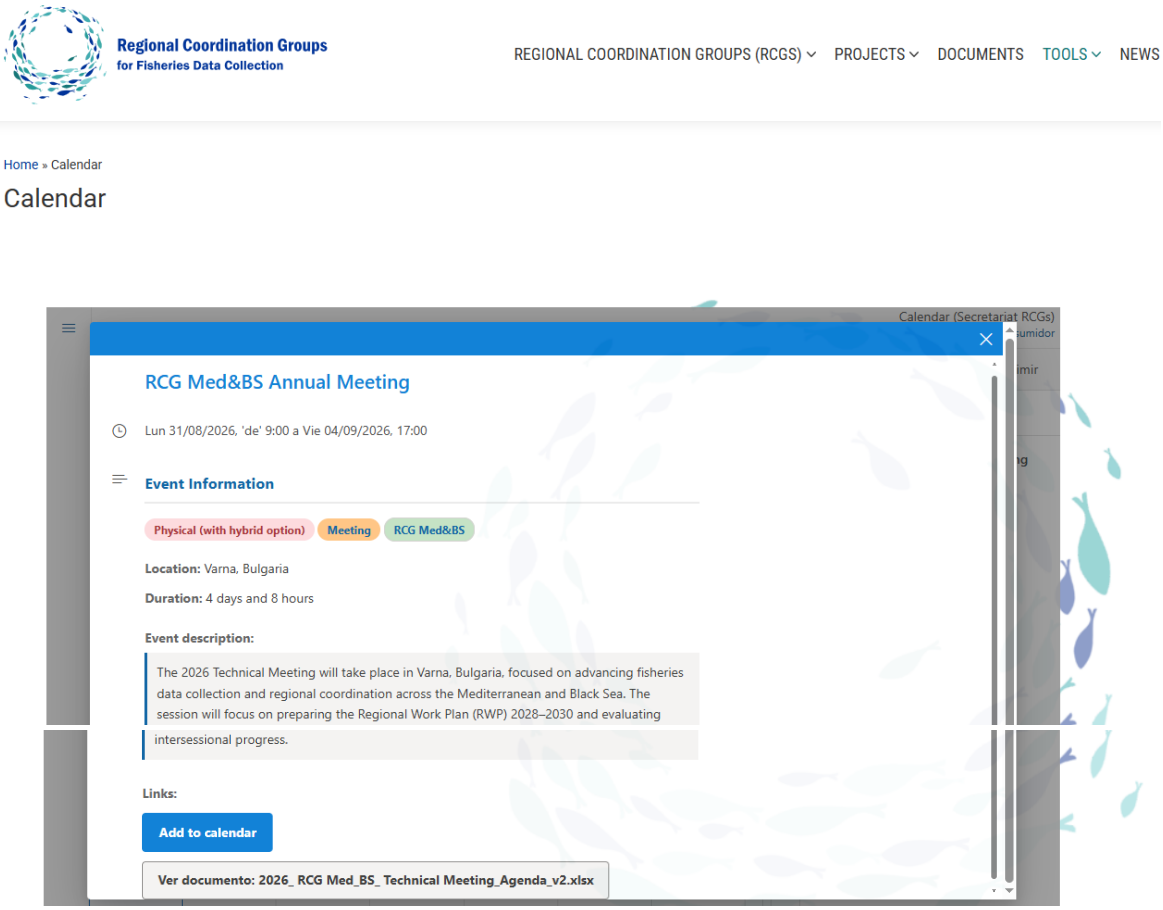


The LinkedIn page can easily be found through the RCGs website by clicking on the LinkedIn icon at the footer of the page.

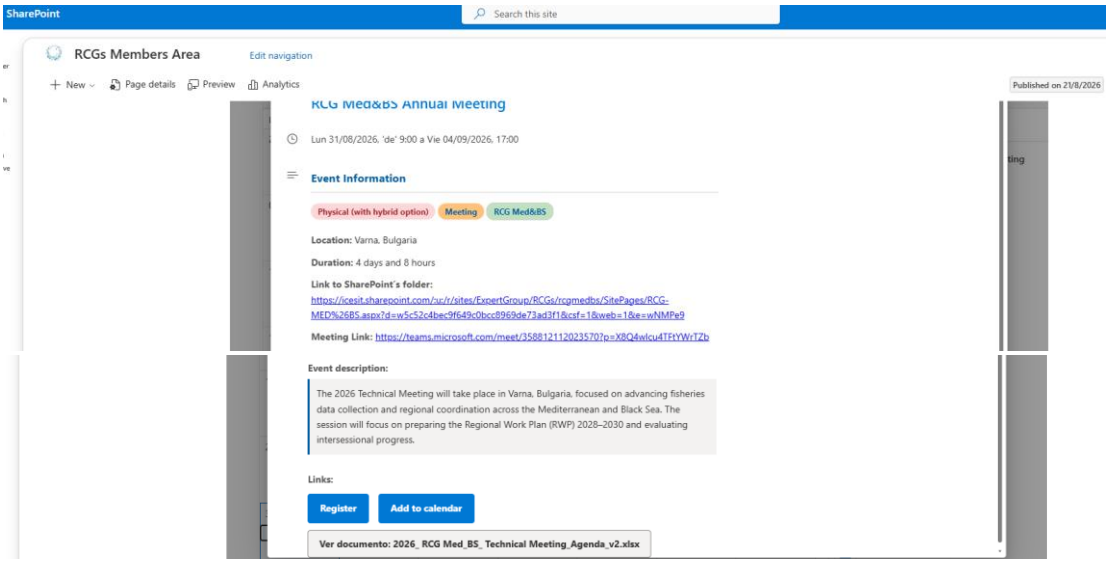


- Calendar

The dates of the RCGs' annual technical meetings and ISSG meetings are regularly updated and are available on the website. In addition, as part as SECWEB 2.0 project, some additional functionalities have been developed on the calendar accessible through the RCGs Member Area. The calendar on the website contains information that is publicly available, while the calendar on the Members Area has additional information such as the meeting link, link to SharePoint, etc. (see figures below).



Website – Calendar view



RCGs Members Area – Calendar view

It is important to reinforce the message that the timely flow of information from the RCG network to the Secretariat is crucial to keep the calendar fully up to date and ensuring that it is used to its full potential.

- *Branding strategy maintenance*
  The Secretariat has reinforced the use of the established RCGs visual identity using the corporative image in all communications and RCGs documents. In general terms, we can say that the RCGs visual identity has been consolidated in recent years, and all RCGs reports, presentations, or any other documents clearly show the branding of the RCGs. New or updated templates have been created whenever needed for RCGs purposes. The Secretariat also tailored templates on request for several ISSGs reports.

- *Stakeholders´ focal point and helpdesk for the RCGs network*
  Throughout the reporting period, the Secretariat continued to strengthen its relationships and working procedures not only with RCG chairs, but also with ISSG chairs, key end-users and RCG experts. The Secretariat has further strengthened its role within the RCG network, with working routines and information flows becoming increasingly well established and operating more naturally over time. The Secretariat has also been actively involved in more ISSG meetings.
  One of the key strengths of the regional coordination process is that the Secretariat brings together information from all RCGs across regions, serving as a valuable source of information to support effective coordination and managerial harmonisation.

2.1.6. Manage the Secretariat´s legal, finances and staff obligations

In 2025-2026, the funding scenario for the RCGs Secretariat services followed the scenario agreed on the 2025 RCGs Decision meeting. Namely, each MS contributes to the share of the service according to the amounts set in *Decision 02- Details on the decision between the National Correspondents on funding of the RCGs Secretariat 2026,* 2025 RCGs Decision Meeting Report (pages 46-48).

Based on the decision between the NCs referred above (2025 RCGs Decision Meeting Report, pages 46-48), Fundación CETMAR as the RCGs Secretariat service provider would invoice each MS. The invoicing of the 2026 Secretariat service has not been done yet. The plan is to start the invoicing process by the end of September 2026, when the 2025-2026 report has been presented to the Member States NCs and the other end-users of the RCGs Secretariat.

The Secretariat has been tackling significant staff shortages since January 2026. Through internal contingency decisions and the objective to minimize the impact of this situation for the network. CETMAR has resourced the service through capacity redistribution and recruitment to cover basic administrative support functions, internally. The internal service supervisor at CETMAR increased the allocation of time to reinforce the daily activity of the RCG Secretariat, especially during the preparation and accomplishment of the RCGs Annual Technical Meetings, and for the Liaison and Decision Meeting.

2.2. Communication support structure: RCGs website

The RCGs website is a key element of the communication strategy. The Secretariat is responsible for maintaining the website as well as updating and writing new content, creating new pages and functionalities and removing outdated content.

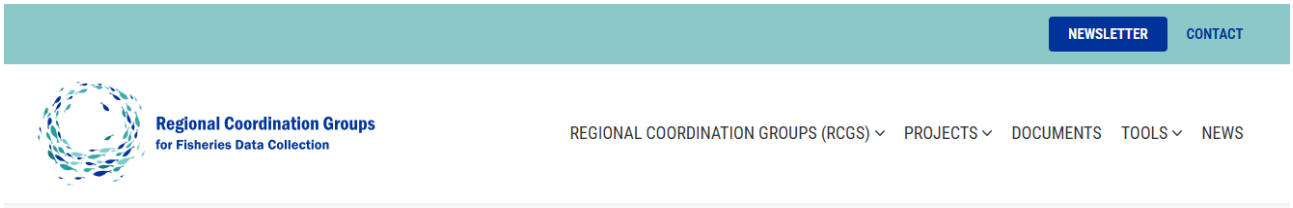
During 2025-2026, as part of the regular services, the Secretariat has accomplished a series of updates, such as:

- Contact information and Bios on the RCGs chairs section
- NCs contact information on each of the RCG scope maps
- ToRs and RoPs
- Calendar
- ISSGs
- News
- Documents upload: agreements, reports, guidance documents, manuals, etc.

Enhanced website's design and usability:

As part of the SECWEB 2.0 project, the RCG website has been redesigned while maintaining the RCG visual identity, with the aim of improving the website's structure, navigation and overall user experience.

There are two new elements worth highlighting: DOCUMENTS and TOOLS

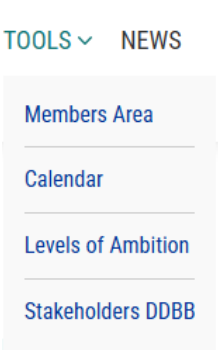


DOCUMENTS

On the former website, reports, rules of procedure and other RCG-related documents were available on the corresponding RCG page, making navigation increasingly difficult as the number of reports grew. Clearly, this arrangement was no longer fit for purpose, and it was therefore replaced by a dedicated document repository.

The DOCUMENTS section provides a centralised repository for RCG-related documents, allowing users to easily search, filter, access and download relevant information. Documents are organised according to predefined Categories, Tags, Author and File Type and can be regularly updated by the Secretariat.

TOOLS



There is a drop-down menu where former tools, such as the Calendar, Level of Ambition and Stakeholders DDBB, are available and easily accessible. This structure allows new tools to be added to the menu without compromising the overall navigation of the website.

In addition, access to the RCG Members Area, developed within the SECWEB 2.0 project, is also available through the TOOLS drop-down menu. The Members Area is a suite of tools developed within the Microsoft 365 environment and tailored to the needs of the RCGs.

2.3. Support to the RCGs Annual meetings and meetings´ reporting

Supporting the six RCGs in their Annual Technical Meetings was a priority for the RCGs Secretariat throughout 2026.

The Secretariat´s participation in the annual meetings is a valuable experience, both in terms of the support provided to the RCGs and for the first-hand information gathered when participating in the meetings. This allows the Secretariat to gain insight into the different dynamics of the RCGs. This information is crucial in shaping the Secretariat's support. RCGs benefit from the Secretariat´s role in the sense that the Secretariat gathers information to retain a high-level overview while feeds back information quickly and efficiently into RCGs activities, acting as a connecting point among RCGs, fostering synergies and the pan regional coordination in final instance.

In general terms, we present here the main support activities carried out.

2.3.1. RCG ECON - 2026 Technical Meeting, 12th to 14th May, Sofia, Bulgaria

One member of the Secretariat team attended the meeting physically.

The RCGs Secretariat provided continuous administrative and organizational support before, during, and after the meeting, while managing the participants review process and finalizing the report for its publication on the RCGs website.

The 2026 report was released on the 15th Sept:

https://fisheries-rcg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/2026_RCG-ECON_Annual-Meeting_Report.pdf

2.3.2. RCG NANSEA and Baltic - 2026 Technical Meeting, 9h to 10th June, Nantes, France

One member of the Secretariat team attended the meeting physically and another team member online.

The RCGs Secretariat provided administrative and organizational support prior, during and after the meeting. Participated actively in the preparation of the meeting by taking part in periodical meetings with RCG chairs.

The 2026 report was released and published on the RCGs website on the 27th Aug:

https://fisheries-rcg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/2026_RCG-NANSEA-RCG-Baltic-Annual-Meeting-Report_Part-I.pdf

https://fisheries-rcg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/2026_RCG-NANSEA-RCG-Baltic-Annual-Meeting-Report_Part-III.pdf

https://fisheries-rcg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/2026_RCG-NANSEA-RCG-Baltic-Annual-Meeting-Report_Part-III.pdf

2.3.3. RCG LP- 2026 Technical Meeting, 23rd to 25th June, Heraklion, Greece

One member of the Secretariat team attended the meeting physically. The RCGs Secretariat provided administrative and organizational support prior, during and after the meeting.

The RCG Secretariat provided the RCG chairs with a first draft of the report, including contributions from experts, draft recommendations and decisions, and annexes containing the list of participants and the detailed agenda. The 2026 RCG LP Annual Meeting report has yet to undergo review by the meeting participants.

The 2026 RCG LP Annual Meeting report will be published on the website once the review process has been completed.

2.3.4. RCG LDF- 2026 Technical Meeting, 7th to 10th July, Roma, Italy

RCGs Secretariat support was provided prior, during and after the meeting. One member of the Secretariat team attended the meeting physically.

After the meeting, the report was subject to the review process by the RCG LDF participants, and the final edition by the RCGs Secretariat concluded with the report publication on the RCGs website.

https://fisheries-rcg.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/2026_RCG-LDF_Annual-Meeting_Report.pdf

2.3.5. RCG Med&BS - 2026 Technical Meeting, 31st Aug to 3th Sep, Varna, Bulgaria

The RCGs Secretariat participated actively in the consolidation of the meeting agenda, contacting key speakers to confirm their participation and registration. One member of the Secretariat team attended the meeting physically.

The RCGs Secretariat in close collaboration with RCG chairs is supporting the reporting process, assisting with the compilation of report contributions and information flow.

The 2026 RCG Med&BS Annual Meeting report will be published on the website once the review process has been completed.

2.4. Other meetings

2.4.1. 2026 RCGs Pre-Decision Meeting, 14th September, online

The RCGs Secretariat, in coordination with the RCGs chairs (Baltic, NANSEA and Med&BS) and ISSG NC chairs, organised the 2026 pre-decision meeting. The RCG pre-decision meeting provides an opportunity to present the recommendations and decisions and to obtain further insights and clarifications. NCs, RCGs chairs, some ISSG Chairs and DG MARE were invited to participate in the meeting.

The 2026 RCG Decision Meeting dossier, together with other relevant background documents on *Publishing Aggregated Fisheries Landings and Effort Data from RCG NANSEA and Baltic Member States*, were circulated prior to the meeting.

The outcomes of the pre-decision meeting will be taken into account when updating the dossier prior to the RCG Decision Meeting.

2.4.2. 2026 Liaison Meeting, 22nd - 23th September, Brussels

In coordination with the LM Chair and the DG MARE team, the RCGs Secretariat supported the organisation of the meeting by participating in several preparatory meetings, setting up a registration system, and facilitating communication with RCG Chairs, Regional Database experts and end-users.

The Secretariat also modified the structure of the report template and the contributions template to facilitate and streamline the reporting process.

One member of the Secretariat team will attend the meeting in person in Brussels, while online support from other team members is also planned.

After the meeting, the Secretariat will actively support the reporting process by following up on report contributions and coordinating the review process prior to the release of the final report.

2.4.3. 2026 RCGs Decision Meeting, 23th September, Brussels

The Decision Meeting is organised following the Liaison Meeting and once the RCGs' Annual Technical Meetings have taken place. Its objective is to formally approve the decisions and recommendations formulated during the RCGs' Annual Technical Meetings by the relevant NCs. Decisions are taken by consensus among the NCs.

The Secretariat has liaised with the RCG Chairs regarding the organisation of the meeting and coordination of the agenda. The meeting is chaired by the RCG Secretariat, which is also responsible for the reporting.

2.5. Support intersessional activity

During 2025 and 2026, the Secretariat supported the work of several ISSGs and coordination activities within the RCGs, providing organisational, communication and follow-up support.

2.5.1. RCG ECON

- *ISSG Chairs Meeting*

The RCGs Secretariat supported the coordination of the ISSG Chairs, participating in the ISSG Chairs Meeting held on 10 April 2026 and assisting with the related preparation and follow-up activities.

- *ISSG Methodological Issues – Quality Annexes*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the intersessional work on the quality annexes, participating in the evaluation meeting held on 8 July 2026 and in the subsequent consultation meeting on Annex 1.2 held on 4 September 2026. The Secretariat supported the organisation and follow-up of these meetings and the related coordination with participants.

- *ISSG Energy and Raw Materials*

The RCGs Secretariat supported the intersessional coordination on energy and raw materials, participating in the meeting held on 11 September 2026 and contributing to the subsequent follow-up of the work.

- *RCG NANSEA & Baltic – Coordination Meetings*

The Secretariat facilitated several bilateral coordination meetings between the RCG ECON and RCG NANSEA & Baltic Chairs throughout the year, held on 20 May 2026. This meetings focused on coordination for the Technical Meeting and on addressing pending issues between the RCGs.

2.5.2. RCG NANSEA and Baltic

- *RCG chairs meetings throughout the year cycle*

The RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic despite having numerous ISSGs to handle and many experts in their network benefit from long-standing established procedures and logbooks. This makes it easier for chairs to keep track of all their duties and activities throughout the year. To ensure the continuity and smooth progress of the RCGs' work, the Chairs meet regularly, with a member of the RCGs Secretariat normally attending these meetings.

This approach facilitates the Secretariat's follow-up of issues arising within the RCGs and ISSGs and contributes to more efficient coordination and communication support.

- *ISSG End users*

The ISSG End Users, composed of the RCG Chairs, key end users, the ICES Secretariat and DG MARE, continued its work during 2026. The RCGs Secretariat took part in the End Users meeting held on 13 March 2026 and supported the subsequent coordination and follow-up activities.

The Secretariat provided organisational support throughout the process, including setting up Doodle polls, convening meetings and preparing minutes. It also contributed to selected technical discussions, particularly those concerning the streamlining of communication between RCGs and end users and the further development of the Recommendations and Decisions exchange platform.

- *ISSG Regional Work Plan*

The RCGs Secretariat has been closely involved in the intersessional work of the ISSG Regional Work Plan (RWP) within RCG NANSEA and RCG Baltic. This included participation in the preparatory meetings held on 18 February, 8 April, 28 April and 1 June 2026, as well as in the follow-up meetings held on 18 March, 13 April and 5 May 2026.

The Secretariat also contributed to the coordination meeting held on 21 April, involving the ISSG RWP, RCG Chairs, ISSG Recreational Fisheries and DG MARE, supporting the coordination and follow-up of the work towards the RWP 2028–2030. RCG NANSEA and Baltic RWP Workshop 2026

In addition, the Secretariat took part in several bilateral preparatory meetings with the ISSG RWP Chairs, as well as in the general ISSG meetings during 2025–2026. Support included the preparation of notes, communication with participants and the follow-up of agreed actions. The Secretariat also assisted the ISSG Chairs in updating outputs from the Fishn'Co project, including the Levels of Ambition tool.

The Secretariat's involvement in this pan-regional ISSG contributes to facilitating coordination across RCGs and between the different Regional Work Plans. In this context, the Secretariat prepared the text for Box 1.b – RCGs Secretariat for inclusion in the RWP 2028–2030 and circulated it to all RCG Chairs.

- *ISSG Surveys*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the intersessional work of the ISSG Surveys, attending the meeting held on 21 January 2026 and the follow-up meeting on 16 April 2026. The Secretariat assisted with the organisation of the meetings and the subsequent follow-up of the work carried out by the ISSG.

- *ISSG EMT*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the work of the ISSG EMT through participation in the meeting held on 26 February 2026 and the follow-up meeting on 23 April 2026. The Secretariat supported the organisation of the meetings and the coordination and follow-up of the intersessional work.

- *ISSG Diadromous*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the intersessional work of the ISSG Diadromous, participating in the annual meeting held on 4 March 2026. The Secretariat supported the preparation and circulation of the agenda, took notes during the meeting and subsequently updated the list of experts. Follow-up actions and related communications were also coordinated as required.

- *ISSG NCs*

During 2025–2026, the RCGs Secretariat worked with the ISSG NCs Chairs to gather and coordinate information supporting the development of a funding scenario for the RCGs Secretariat beyond the completion of SECWEB 2.0 in September 2026. This work was carried out between March and September 2026 and contributed to the assessment of potential options for the future resourcing of the Secretariat.

In parallel, progress was made towards streamlining procedures aimed at improving the governance of the RCGs Secretariat and clarifying the role and involvement of the NCs.

2.5.3. RCG LP

- *ISSG RWP*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the intersessional work of the ISSG RWP within RCG Large Pelagics, participating in the meeting held on 29 May 2026 and supporting the coordination and follow-up of activities related to the Regional Work Plan 2028–2030.

- *ISSG Tropical Tunas*

The RCGs Secretariat provided organisational and coordination support for the ISSG Tropical Tunas Coordination Meeting held from 15 to 18 June 2026. Preparatory work was carried out during March and April and included the circulation of the agenda and practical information, preparation of logistics and registration documents, and the creation of the registration form and a dedicated OneDrive space for the meeting, which was shared with the ISSG Chairs.

The Secretariat also followed up on registrations and attendance, including the confirmation of the final mailing list and communication with participants regarding their participation in person. A dedicated

collaborative workspace was established for the meeting to facilitate the exchange and joint preparation of documents by participants.

During the meeting, the Secretariat took notes, supported the preparation of the meeting report and assisted with communication and practical arrangements. Follow-up support was provided after the meeting as required.

- *ISSG Regional Database Case Study*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the work of the ISSG Regional Database Case Study, participating in the meeting held on 17 April 2026. The Secretariat supported the organisation of the meeting and the subsequent coordination and follow-up of the work undertaken within the RCG Large Pelagics framework.

- *ISSG Métier and Transversal Variables*

The RCGs Secretariat supported the intersessional work on métier and transversal variables within RCG Large Pelagics. This included participation in the ad-hoc meeting on traplines held on 30 October 2025, which addressed the proposed métier and gear codes and the related follow-up with STECF and ICCAT.

2.5.4. RCG Med&BS

- *Steering Committee for the Med&BS Regional Database*

The RCGs Secretariat provided organisational and coordination support to the Steering Committee (SC) for the Med&BS Regional Database throughout the reporting period. This included participation in preparatory coordination meetings held on 27 March 2026 with the Commission and the previous Chair, as well as coordination with the different actors involved in the process.

For the SC meeting held on 16 April 2026, the Secretariat supported the organisation of the meeting by setting up the Doodle poll and meeting platform, circulating communications and preparing the report template. During the meeting, the Secretariat provided notes and a transcript and supported the documentation of the discussions.

Following the meeting, the Secretariat worked in coordination with the SC Chair and members on the revision, formatting and finalisation of the meeting report. The report was completed and circulated in July 2026 to the relevant National Correspondents, SC members and DG MARE. The final report is a confidential document and is not publicly available.

- *ISSG End Users*

The RCGs Secretariat supported the coordination between RCG Med&BS and end users of scientific data, participating in the coordination meeting held on 21 April 2026 and providing organisational and follow-up support.

As part of this work, the Secretariat prepared the meeting report template and supported the subsequent review process. The report was reviewed and finalised in July 2026 and is available on the RCGs website: ISSG End Users – RCG Med&BS meeting report (April 2026)

- *ISSG RWP*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the intersessional work of the ISSG RWP within RCG Med&BS, participating in the meeting held on 16 June 2026 and supporting the coordination and follow-up of activities related to the Regional Work Plan 2028–2030.

- *ISSG Recreational Fisheries*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the work of the ISSG Recreational Fisheries by participating in the meeting held on 17 November 2025, which focused on the analysis of the questionnaire on marine recreational fisheries data collection. The Secretariat also followed the subsequent intersessional coordination activities during 2026.

- *ISSG PETs*

The RCGs Secretariat contributed to the intersessional work of the ISSG PETs, participating in the meeting held on 21 May 2026 and supporting the preparation and follow-up of the meeting documentation.

Following the meeting, the Secretariat prepared and circulated the minutes for review in August 2026, coordinated the collection of comments from participants and supported the subsequent formatting and finalisation of the document.

2.5.1. Relevant to all RCGs

The RCGs Secretariat supported cross-RCG coordination through meetings involving RCG Chairs during the 2025–2026 period, facilitating the exchange of information and coordination on issues of common interest across the RCGs.

The Secretariat also supported the organisation and follow-up of the RCGs pre-decision meeting held on 14 September 2026.

3. Terms of reference proposed for the RCGs Secretariat work in 2026-2027

By the time of preparation of this report, the activity of the RCGs Secretariat under the remit of CETMAR is granted until the 31st. Dec. 2026. Assuming that there will be a mechanism to grant the resources for the service continuation, the work under this next period should guarantee the following:

- Continuation of the basic support for the whole period as described in Decision 02 of ISSG NCs in 2025.
- Capitalise on the SecWeb 2.0 outputs maximising the use of the project outputs across the RCGs network, and guaranteeing the maintenance of the enhanced online environment.
- Increased efficiency and harmonization of some basic procedures among RCGs and the Secretariat itself thanks to the full operationalization of the SecWeb2.0 outputs.

4. Key Performance Indicators

It is the aim of the RCGs Secretariat to deliver due diligence of the service provision. This KPI proposal aims to establish clear, quantifiable metrics to evaluate the true impact of the service. Its implementation will allow the RCG Secretariat end-users to monitor performance, guarantee adherence to agreed quality standards, and base continuous improvement initiatives on objective evidence.

We propose a list of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) according to major groups of tasks. This list is proposed at the LM-DM 2026 in order to announce a process to agree on the most suitable:

1. Daily regular operations and processes	
KPI	**Suggested measurement**
1.1. Documents processed	Number of new or updated documents reviewed, formatted, circulated, archived or uploaded on the RCGs website
1.2. Database updates	Number of updates to RCG-related , lists, contacts, calendars, etc.
1.3. Stakeholder consultations	Number of consultations distributed to RCG network
1.4. On-line coordination/preparation meetings	Number of online meetings involving RCG Chairs, ISSG Chairs, NCs and/or DG MARE

2. Communication support structure: RCGs website and online environment	
KPI	**Suggested measurement**
2.1. Website updates	Number of website updates/new items published
2.3. Website traffic	Number of users/visits/page views
2.4. Document repository usage	Number of downloads/searches or other available usage statistics
2.5. Website/online working environment improvements	Number of new/enhanced functionalities/tools incorporated
2.6. Social media activity	Number of LinkedIn posts, followers and engagement, where relevant
2.7. Use of the Intersessional WorkSpace	Number of ISSGs using the Intersessional WorkSpace
2.8. Use of the Rec&Dec Platform	Number of RCGs using the Rec&Dec Platform
2.9. Number of experts supported	No. of registered experts and related statistics (by country, by RCG, by ISSG…)
2.10. IT support required	Number of requests/incidences handled with the support of the IT staff at CETMAR

3. Support to meetings and meetings' reporting	
KPI	**Suggested measurement**
3.1. Online Meetings supported	Number of meetings supported by the Secretariat
3.2. Meetings with in person Secretariat participation	Number of meetings attended and supported by the RCGs Secretariat Team
3.3. Registration management	Number of participants/registrations processed

4. Support intersessional activity	
KPI	**Suggested measurement**
4.1. ISSGs supported	Number of ISSGs receiving Secretariat support
4.2. ISSG meetings supported	Number of intersessional meetings supported
4.3. ISSG reporting	Number of ISSG reports edited

5. SECWEB 2.0 project

The main objective of the SECWEB 2.0 project was to evolve the online working environment, tools and services provided by the RCG Secretariat to the RCG community. The project started in June 2024 with an initial duration of 24 months and was subsequently extended to 28 months, ending in September 2026.

SECWEB 2.0 built on the previous work of the RCG Secretariat to identify and understand the evolving needs of the RCG community. The project adopted a highly interactive co-design approach, involving users throughout the development process to ensure that the new and improved tools and services were relevant, user-oriented and fit for purpose.

The project was structured into five work packages:

- WP1 – Project management and coordination
- WP2 – Co-design and fine-tuning of functional specifications
- WP3 – Prototyping and validation
- WP4 – Programming, integration and content development
- WP5 – Communication and promotion of new and improved functionalities and services

5.1. Development process

The development process followed a user-centred approach. Updated information on users' needs and expectations was first gathered and used to define the functional specifications. These specifications were then translated into prototypes, which were tested and validated with users before being developed into full-scale solutions. The prioritisation of developments was also guided by users' preferences and feedback.

Validation and testing were carried out at both prototype and full-development stages, ensuring that the solutions were progressively refined before implementation. The new functionalities and tools were presented across the RCG network, including through demonstrations during RCGs Annual Technical Meetings, complemented by tutorials and visual guidance materials that are available on the RCGs website. This approach supported user engagement and facilitated the uptake and effective use of the new developments.

5.2. Communication and dissemination

Communication and dissemination activities were an integral part of SECWEB 2.0. They focused on increasing the visibility, accessibility and usefulness of the RCG Secretariat's services and included:

- **Evolution of the RCG website:** The www.fisheries-rcg.eu website was redesigned and enriched with new content and sections, providing a more structured, accessible and user-friendly online environment.
- **Stakeholders database:** The stakeholders database was improved and further developed to facilitate communication and interaction across the RCG network.

- **Visual identity:** The visual identity of the RCG network and the Secretariat was consolidated, strengthening recognition of the RCGs and contributing to a more coherent presentation of the project's outputs and services.
- **Communication products:** New communication products were developed to increase the visibility of the RCGs' work and outputs within the context of the DCF and among interested stakeholders.
- **Engagement with the RCG network:** The Secretariat participated in relevant meetings and workshops, using these opportunities to present SECWEB 2.0 developments, gather feedback and promote user engagement in the co-design process.

5.3. Main developments

One of the main outcomes of SECWEB 2.0 was the restructuring and enhancement of the RCG website. The redesigned website provides a more intuitive structure and improved navigation while maintaining the established RCG visual identity.

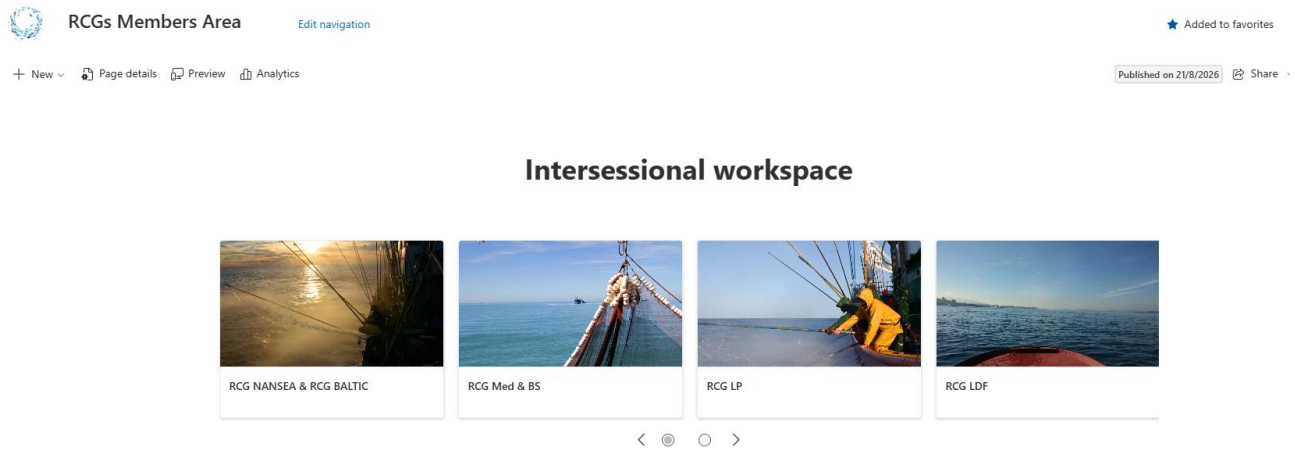
Among the new developments:

- The **Documents** section provides a centralised repository for RCG-related documents. It improves access to information by allowing documents to be organised, searched, filtered and accessed through a dedicated structure, addressing the limitations of the previous arrangement in which reports and other documents were stored within individual RCG pages.
- The **Tools** section provides a dedicated space for existing and new tools, including the Calendar, Level of Ambition and Stakeholders Database. This structure allows additional tools to be incorporated without compromising the overall navigation of the website.
- The **Members' Area** is a dedicated Microsoft 365 environment developed to meet the RCGs community needs. Access to the RCG Members Area is available through the drop-down menu 'Tools' on the website.

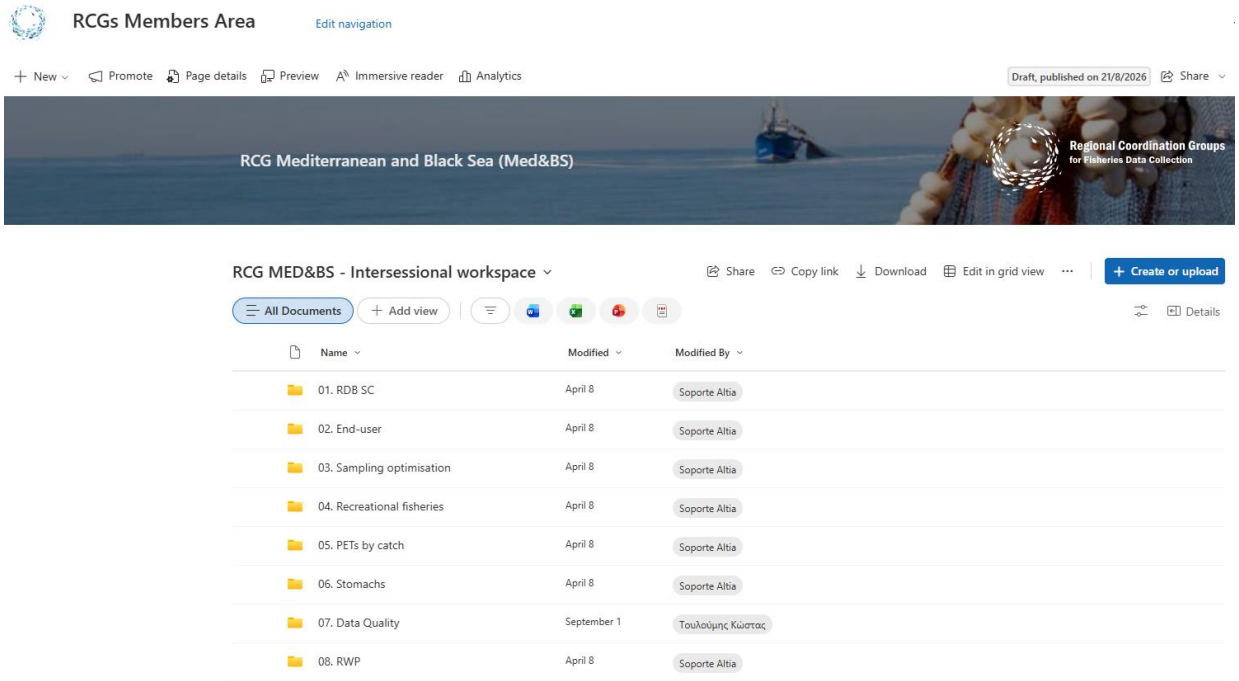
  The Members Area provides access to a set of tools, namely:
  - → Intersessional Workspace
  - → Recommendations & Decisions
  - → Calendar

Intersessional Workspace

Each RCG has its own Intersessional Workspace. When logged into the Members Area, RCG members can see and access the Workspaces corresponding to the RCGs in which they participate.

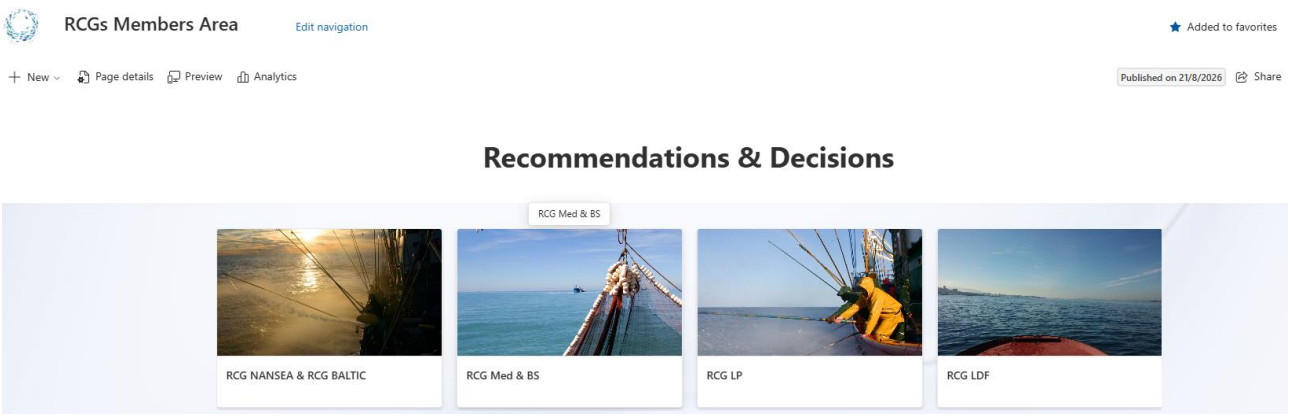


Once in a particular Intersessional workspace, users can access dedicated folders for the respective ISSGs, where ISSG participants can work collaboratively.



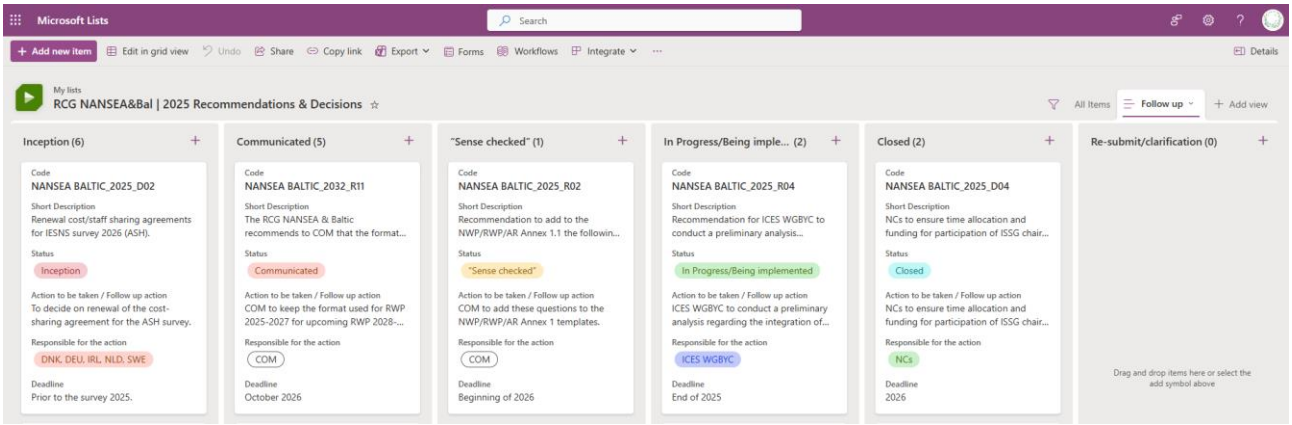
Recommendations & Decisions

Similarly to the Intersessional workspace, each RCGs has its own Recommendations & Decision platform. The platform is built on the Microsoft Lists application.



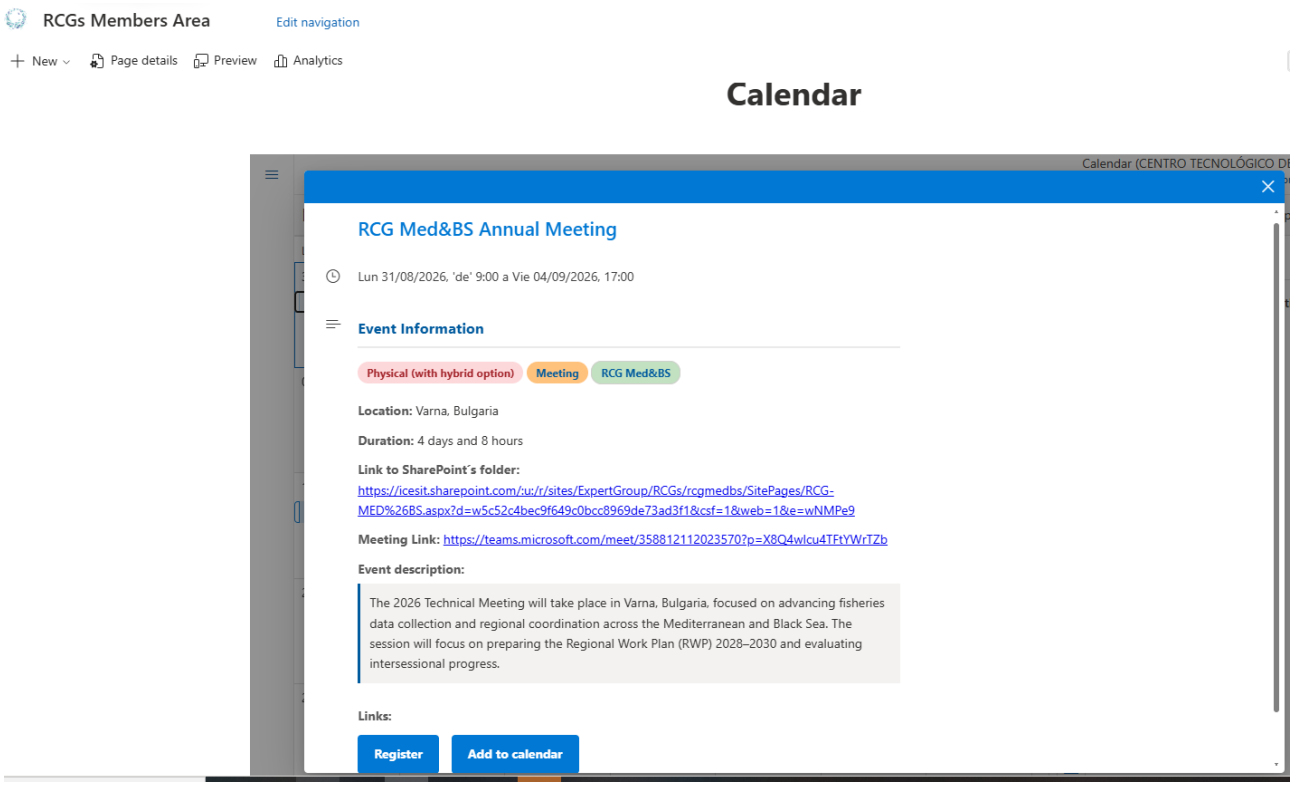
The Recommendations & Decisions platform is a system designed to facilitate the interactive follow-up of RCG recommendations and decisions. The permissions and functionalities available to each expert depend on their role within the respective RCG. For example, RCG Chairs have editing rights and can modify the status of recommendations and decisions, while RCG experts can view the recommendations and decisions but cannot modify them.

This tool provides a transparent overview of the follow-up and progress of recommendations and decisions across the entire RCG network.



Calendar

The Calendar allows RCG users to access all the information related to a meeting or event in one place, including the meeting link, the link to the SharePoint site, registration details, and any other relevant information, such as the event description.


RCGs Members Area
Edit navigation
New
Page details
Preview
Analytics
Calendar
Calendar (CENTRO TECNOLÓGICO D
RCG Med&BS Annual Meeting
Lun 31/08/2026, 'de' 9:00 a Vie 04/09/2026, 17:00
Event Information
Physical (with hybrid option)
Meeting
RCG Med&BS
Location: Varna, Bulgaria
Duration: 4 days and 8 hours
Link to SharePoint´s folder:
https://icesit.sharepoint.com/:u:/r/sites/ExpertGroup/RCGs/rcgmedbs/SitePages/RCG-MED%26BS.aspx?d=w5c52c4bec9f649c0bcc8969de73ad3f1&csf=1&web=1&e=wNMPe9
Meeting Link: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/358812112023570?p=X8Q4wlcu4TFtYWrTZb
Event description:
The 2026 Technical Meeting will take place in Varna, Bulgaria, focused on advancing fisheries data collection and regional coordination across the Mediterranean and Black Sea. The session will focus on preparing the Regional Work Plan (RWP) 2028–2030 and evaluating intersessional progress.
Links:
Register
Add to calendar

6. Conclusion

During the 2025-2026 reporting period, the RCGs Secretariat has continued to strengthen and develop the services provided in support of the RCG network, with a continued focus on maintaining service quality, improving efficiency and responding to the evolving needs of the RCGs. The level of interaction with the RCG network has remained high, with the Secretariat providing support to RCG Chairs, ISSG Chairs and experts across a wide range of activities, including the organisation and reporting of meetings, coordination of intersessional activities, follow-up of recommendations and decisions, and day-to-day requests and queries.

The experience gained over recent years has allowed the RCGs Secretariat to further consolidate its working procedures and identify areas where processes can be streamlined. Particular attention has been given to improving the flow of information within the RCG network and strengthening coordination with RCG Chairs and experts. At the same time, the Secretariat recognises that the RCGs have different structures, working practices and levels of engagement, reflecting the specific characteristics of the fisheries and the nature of the fisheries data covered by each group. The Secretariat therefore continues to seek common solutions and tools while maintaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate the specific needs of each RCG.

A major development during the reporting period has been the implementation of SECWEB 2.0, which has significantly enhanced the online working environment and support structures available to the RCG network. The redesigned website, new document repository and Members Area, together with tools such as the Intersessional Workspace and the Recommendations & Decisions platform, provide a more structured and collaborative environment for accessing information, supporting intersessional work and following up recommendations and decisions. These developments represent an important step towards improving transparency, accessibility and efficiency across the RCG network.

The Secretariat has also continued to support the RCGs throughout their annual cycle, including the Annual Technical Meetings, the Liaison Meeting, the pre-decision and Decision Meetings, and the preparation and publication of meeting reports. The increasing use of common templates, centralised information and digital tools is contributing to a more consistent and efficient approach to these activities. At the same time, maintaining the quality and timeliness of reporting remains an important area of attention and requires continued cooperation from RCG chairs, experts and NCs.

Looking ahead, the Secretariat will continue to focus on consolidating the tools and procedures developed during the reporting period, strengthening communication and coordination across the RCG network, and monitoring its performance through the most suitable ones among the proposed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Ensuring that information is provided to the Secretariat in a timely manner, particularly in relation to meetings, reports, experts and intersessional activities, will remain essential to maintaining an up-to-date and effective support structure.

Finally, the continued operation and further development of these services will require a stable and sustainable framework for the RCGs Secretariat. Securing long-term support and funding will be essential to maintaining the services and tools developed in recent years and to ensuring that the Secretariat can continue to provide effective, responsive and fit-for-purpose support to the RCG network.