**Work plan WMR**

**North Sea herring benchmark**

**Tasks**

If my notes are correct there are 4 main tasks :

1. Assess the influence of updating the proportion of fishing mortality occurring before spawning.
2. Assess the influence of updating the natural mortality time series.
3. Assess the usefulness of using additional age-classes from the IBTS survey
   1. Updating to new series (only age 1 Q1)
   2. Updating to all ages (only Q1)
   3. Adding Q3
4. Test the new model configuration in which the proportion of each spawning component is explicitly modelled and the SSB index is expressed per component.

**Approaches**

The way I see it, tasks 1) and 2) are simple, these new data have to be used and we just need to assess which difference they make on the assessment. The work just consists in running the model with updated data and describing the changes in model parameters and estimated quantities (model from HAWG2017 used as the base case).

For task 3) we have to decide whether the additional age-classes can be used in the assessment. I propose that we do that in 2 steps :

1. first fit the model using the additional age-groups for the IBTS with the default model parameters configuration (and compare with HAWG2017),
2. see if the model can be improved by changing the configuration (grouping) on observation variances and catchability of this survey

step a) could be based on comparing parameter values too see if model improves, comparing model uncertainty, retrospective pattern, residuals pattern... . step b) could be based on statistical tests (since we would compare model based on the same data).

For task 4) we can maybe use the same diagnostics as for task3/step a, but interpretation may be more difficult as the model will be quite different, with the introduction of time varying proportions per component.