

Users of the data should note the following caveats:

- The methods for identifying fishing activity from the VMS data varied between countries; therefore there may be some country-specific biases. Additionally, activities other than active towing of gear may have been incorrectly identified as fishing activity. This would have the effect of overestimating the apparent fishing intensity in ports and in areas used for passage.
- The data for 2012 and 2013 is not directly comparable to the data of previous years in the data call (2009–2011) due to the gradual increase in VMS-enabled vessels in the 12m-15m range. This is likely to be most relevant when examining trends in effort for inshore areas.
- Many countries have substantial fleets of smaller vessels that are not equipped with VMS (< 15 m prior to 2012, < 12 m thereafter); logbook data is at the spatial resolution of ICES rectangles, but where possible, they have been overlaid with the VMS data for the purpose of analysis.
- The fishing abrasion pressure methodology is based on very broad assumptions in terms of the area affected by abrasion. A single speed and gear width was applied across each gear category in most cases, which can lead to both underestimates and overestimates in actual surface and subsurface abrasion.