

Report from the Council Strategic Initiative on Maritime Trans-Atlantic Cooperation (CSIMTC)

Council is invited to take note of the information on Trans-Atlantic Cooperation, and discuss how this could be linked to various funding initiatives.

Europe and North-America have various funding mechanisms for supporting research and innovation, such as H2020, upcoming Horizon Europe, and the National Science Foundations.

ICES integrated role as science, data & information, as well as advice provider offers a good opportunity to make suggestions for:

- Programming themes, identified in our Strategic Plan, and thus reflecting needs of Member Countries and Clients as well as linked to international initiatives
- Specific calls of relevance for ICES and the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan

There are examples of macro-regional initiatives, including regional funding mechanisms, with participation, financial contribution and joint science calls covering all countries in a region (BONUS).

The Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation and Belém Statement on Atlantic Research and Innovation Cooperation could be a good starting point for establishing such macro-regional initiatives. Trilaterally developed vision documents and roadmaps, which identify research priorities have been or are in development by the various work packages – such as the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Coordination and Support Action project, where ICES is leading WP4 on Ecosystem Approach and Ocean Stressors, and WP7 on Aquaculture.

The Belém Statement further extends the geographic cooperation of the European Union in the Atlantic, building on the Galway Statement and referring to several of the science priorities included to the ICES Strategic Plan, such as food security (fisheries management, aquaculture and biodiversity), polar research, climate variability, and ocean technology.

ICES made contact with the consortium acting as the Coordinating and Support Action for the Belém Statement (H2020BG8- sub-topic A), to investigate the possibility of ICES taking part in the project in a manner similar to the Coordination and Support Action project for the Galway Statement. ICES was not included, and has instead been invited to take part in the Research and Innovation Action (RIA) project, BG8-B “Assessing the status of Atlantic marine ecosystems”. Beginning 2019 another large-scale RIA project on Aquaculture (BG8-C) will be of interest for ICES.

Involving ICES in the identification of programming themes and/or the specific calls of relevance, and its trans-Atlantic work would ensure:

- A linkage to policy implementation, current and future needs, thereby strengthening the link between science developments and the advisory process; as well as
- A linkage to the capacity and skills issues that must be solved for science to be ready to provide the science needed for policy implementation, and thus actively addressing this also in the programmes/projects.

In addition to these strategic activities, dialogue with the Ocean Frontier Institute (Canada) on future cooperation has continued and will be reported on during the Council meeting.