



Council Strategic Initiative on Maritime Transatlantic Cooperation

Council is invited to take note of the activities of CSIMTC.

CSIMTC met in May in Halifax, Canada. The report is attached.

Highlights:

- *Transatlantic Cooperation through the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance (AORA) continues to develop. ICES and the Ocean Frontier Institute (OFI) are continuing to discuss ways to work together to promote transatlantic cooperation. The EU has also expanded its research and innovation cooperation in the South Atlantic through an agreement¹ with Brazil and South Africa. This provides an opportunity for ICES to contribute to the Coordination and Support Action for this new agreement.*
- *There is a potential opportunity for ICES (members) to contribute to the ocean mapping component of AORA (link to a webpage) and member states are encouraged to flag their interest.*
- *Further opportunities and strategies for facilitating Canadian and US engagement in EU projects continues to be explored, and are expected to improve in specific funding instruments in future, both in H2020 and in FP9.*

CSIMTC convened an open session at the Annual Science Conference in Fort Lauderdale, Florida: *Trans-Atlantic science to do ecosystem-based management*. The Report is attached.

Report of the
Council Strategic Initiative on Maritime Transatlantic Cooperation
(CSIMTC),
24-25 May 2017
Steele Ocean Sciences Building, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

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1 Introduction

The Co-Chairs of the ICES Council Strategic Initiative on Trans-Atlantic Cooperation ICES (CSIMTC), Fritz Köster and Alain Vezina, welcomed the participants and introduced the work of the ICES CSIMTC. It was explained that this meeting had a specific focus on

- *ToR 1: ... to ensure cooperation and complementarity to ongoing and planned activities of member countries and international organisations in the North Atlantic and relevant bordering sea areas, such as the Arctic,*
- *ToR 2: ... a continuous update and extension of mapping research, monitoring and advisory efforts in relation to the Galway Statement, the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance, and other relevant collaboration agreements, and*
- *ToR 5: Provide strategic guidance ... on research needs, programming to meet these needs and potential models for joint research and funding mechanisms in the North Atlantic.*

2 ICES North Atlantic Strategy and contribution to AORA (ToR 1)

The ICES President, Cornelius Hammer, gave a presentation on ICES North-Atlantic Strategy, focusing on the work in the eco-regions, including the Northwest Atlantic Regional Sea, and the Arctic Ocean.

The General Secretary, Anne Christine Brusendorff, summarized ICES contribution to the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance, focusing on ICES institutional set-up, and building on existing services and products delivered by ICES.

Wendy Watson welcomed these presentations and mentioned that at the AORA Steering Committee meeting held in Washington a potential for a year of the North Atlantic in 2019 (or 2020) was discussed, and OFI would be interested in working together with ICES on that. OFI has also committed to a biannual state of the Ocean /state of the Atlantic conference series and this could be a potential area for cooperation with ICES and AORA.

3 Ocean Frontier Institute (OFI) – cooperation with ICES and contribution to AORA

Wendy Watson-Wright introduced the strategy, structure and funding of the Ocean Frontier Institute.

The [Ocean Tracking Network](#) – a large global acoustics network to track species ranging from the Arctic to West Africa – was introduced by Blendal Townsend, Senior Project Manager, Dalhousie University, Canada.

The [Marine Environmental Observation Prediction and Response \(MEOPAR\)](#) network was introduced by Stefan Leslie, MEOPAR Executive Director. MEOPAR is now into its second five-year cycle. Core funding is provided in areas linked to marine risk, where there is already work going on.

Action:

Several areas of potential cooperation between OFI and ICES were identified, and it was decided to follow-up with a small working group to map those out, from single events (joint conferences/symposia) to more long-term cooperation (training/education, infrastructure, data handling/information products). This working group could also highlight scientific areas of common interest, with a potential to develop common strategic initiatives. The first step could be appointing focal points – persons per thematic areas of interest, responsible for developing cooperation and updating the other parties.

The remit of ICES, and its legal basis, makes it possible for Member Countries through their Council delegates and nationally appointed representatives in the Science and Advisory Committees to guide and direct the trans-Atlantic cooperation, relaying scientific priorities, and building on existing services and products.

4 Regional Strategies

Alain Vezina, Canadian Council delegate, and Terry Schaefer, NOAA/AORA Implementation Team, presented the AORA and associated scientific activities, setting the stage for both expectations, e.g. in relation to infrastructure, and for progress in specific areas. Jason Link, NOAA, presented US trans-Atlantic science initiatives, *inter alia* focusing on management strategies under future climate change conditions.

Action:

ICES was asked to try to contribute to the ocean mapping in AORA, including covering the northern part of the North Atlantic (Denmark, Iceland, and Norway).

It was decided to as a start raise this issue at the Council meeting, including a more general session on Trans-Atlantic Maritime Cooperation. This could then be followed up by a more specific meeting with interested countries, including USA and Canada

The Project Manager, Margaret Rae gave an overview on the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Coordination and Support Action (AORA-CSA), Objectives and Status, covering also priority areas not led by ICES.

This was followed by Jason Link reporting on progress in WP4 Ecosystem Approach to Ocean Health and Stressors.

Wojciech Wawrzynski reported on WP7 Aquaculture with a brief analysis of thematic and action overlaps among the AORA aquaculture group, ICES aquaculture groups, and the OFI four thematic modules under the 'sustainable aquaculture' theme block.

WP 11 Knowledge Sharing Platform was presented by Anne Christine Brusendorff.

Action:

It was decided to use the European Catalogue under WP11 Knowledge Sharing Platform as the basis for a mapping of the landscape in relation to marine infrastructure coordination between US/CA/EU.

Based on the European Catalogue specific marine infrastructure initiatives should be identified with the potential to launch an initiative to the EU opening funding under the program Excellence Science, European Research Infrastructures, similar to other longer-term FP7, H2020 projects already running with involvement of Canada/USA.

This work could be carried out as part of WP11.

5 **Open Session at 2017 ASC: Trans-Atlantic Science to do Ecosystem-Based Management**

Jason Link, NOAA gave an outline of the concept and preparations for the Open Session at 2017 Annual Science Conference: Trans-Atlantic Science to do Ecosystem-Based Management.

Action:

It was suggested to include also a social scientist to the group of conveners.

6 **Horizon 2020, and how to involve US and Canada in the upcoming work programme 2018–2020**

Fritz Köster, ICES First-Vice President, gave an introduction to the current involvement of US and Canada in the Horizon 2020 programme, concluding that there is:

- a relatively high Canadian and US involvement under the Societal Challenges Component; Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry, Marine, Maritime and Inland Water Research; Bioeconomy; and Blue Growth, and through Blue Growth also in the Societal Challenges Pillar; Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials. However, direct funding from the EU is limited, as so far this required expertise is not available in Europe. This prerequisite may fall away in relation to the renewal of the EU/US Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation.
- a limited/no involvement of Canada and USA in other relevant components, such as European Research Infrastructures (cf. action above on mapping of research infrastructure involvement) and an apparent absence of cooperation under the Industrial Leadership Component; *Space*.

The coming Horizon 2020 work programme 2018–2020 has substantial funding under the calls dealing with Blue Growth (BG), with a substantial focus on the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance. Topics are in general broader, less prescriptive allowing funding of several projects.

There is a tendency to phase out relevant Sustainable Food Security (SFS) topics and include them under BG calls, to make BG topics less cross-sectorial and more focused on bioeconomy, and move Arctic topics from BG to the component dealing with Societal Challenges 5 to the call *Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials*. It was noted that topics on Climate actions address both terrestrial, marine, and atmospheric aspects.

Action:

It was decided to map existing Can/EU/US cooperation under the Industrial Leadership Component *Space*, specifically the Copernicus programme, for further discussion with Canada and the US. (Lead: AORAC WP11)

Canada and the US will look into the participation of scientists in the H2020 projects, and the possibility to obtain funding for their participation as direct beneficiary under the bilateral agreements between EU and Canada. It was noted that recent Implementing Arrangements amending the bilateral agreements between US and EU had made participation of US scientists, with own funding, possible in Horizon 2020 projects, without signing of legal partnership agreements. Similarly, the Implementing Arrangement between Canada and the EU has made participation of Canadian scientists in ERC grants easier.

The ICES Science Committee (SCICOM) and AORA-CSA should, once the H2020/2018-2020 programme has been finalized, map the topics of trans-Atlantic interest, with due regard to the North Atlantic-Arctic Coupled System Science Plan. Especially as regards the USA this is an important component for the National Science Foundation (NSF), in their project considerations. The list of specific topics could then serve as a motivation and guidance for the scientific community.

The short deadline for submission of project proposals in 2018 was noted; February 2018. More time would be available for submission of proposals in 2019, and 2020.

7 CSA and Era-Net Cofund

In addition to the participation in Horizon 2020 projects, the meeting discussed:

- The importance of direct participation, as opposed to mere involvement of US and Canada in Coordination and Support Action Projects (CSAs), to allow for more long-term, and strategic planning. The CSAs with the most developed and sufficient US and Canadian involvement are the AORA-CSA and the PolarNet, while in other relevant CSA's, e.g. supporting JPI Oceans, the involvement is more limited.
- The importance of direct participation of US and Canada in Era-Net CoFunds, where funding organizations/ministerial agencies define common calls, with a limited contribution of the EU (ca. 25–33%). This makes it possible to jointly program and fund coordinated research.

Mike St. John, Denmark, made a presentation of JPI Oceans, an example of funding agencies and ministries jointly programming, and funding coordinated research.

Action:

US and Canada to consider direct participation in CSAs, and Era-Net CoFunds.

Specifically for Era-Net CoFunds, reference was made to a topic on Blue Bioeconomy in the Work Programme 2018, initiated by JPI Oceans and two Era_Nets in the marine areas, and the opportunity for US/CA participation.

8 Art. 185 and other Cofunds

Fritz Köster, ICES First-Vice president and co-chair, presented BONUS; Art 185 an example of current EU instruments enabling long-term planning and integration of research efforts by defining and committing to a joint research programme, including integration of scientific, managerial, and financial aspects.

The meeting discussed instruments enabling long-term planning, such as European Joint Programme Cofunds (EJP Cofunds), and Article 185 (the latter presently being under evaluation by the EU). Compared to Art 185, the EJP Cofund is a new, more flexible, less heavy administratively instrument, which does not require commitment at the level of countries. EJP Cofunds still allow integration of research efforts through elaboration of a joint research programme, and joint funding. EJP Cofund partners are agencies with research funding and/or management responsibilities issuing calls over a 5–10 year periods, with up to 50% financing by the EU.

As an alternative, and potential bridge between Art. 185 and EJP Cofund, it was suggested to analyse the Mediterranean Programme Prima on food and water security, that includes major involvement of third countries and may thus be a template for an intensified North Atlantic cooperation.

Action:

The meeting concluded that the more long-term cooperation needs also longer planning. For EJP Cofunds or Art. 185 this will only be realistic for the upcoming FP9 programme, while new Era-Net Cofunds could possibly be launched within H2020, realistically for the year 2020. The latter needs to be done with AORAC as a development platform and in cooperation with JPI Oceans.

Fritz Köster will map the landscape and report back on the long-term EU funding mechanism for transatlantic research with EU, Canada and US as partners.

This should be presented at the next meeting of the CSIMTC (end of 2017 or early 2018) and should also be discussed within the trilateral AORA implementation committee.

ICES will arrange a thematic session during its Council meeting in October, focussing on trans-Atlantic Maritime Cooperation, with invited guests as appropriate.

9 Trans-Atlantic reviewers

Bill Karp, US and US ICES Council delegate suggested to draw up a list of trans-Atlantic reviewers, to be used as a trans-Atlantic service. The ICES Resource Coordination Tool could be helpful and used in this regard.

This issue was suggested in connection with an EFARO (the European Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Organisations) meeting discussing reviews of fish stock assessment and ecosystem monitoring surveys and how/to which extent data

collected are being used for assessment purposes. Bill Karp also explained how this could be beneficial in the annual reviews of the US science programme, including a panel of external reviewers.

Action:

The meeting agreed on the benefits of a list of trans-Atlantic reviewers. The ICES Resource Coordination Tool will be useful in this exercise.

It was suggested, that a side-effect of a review of European fish stock and ecosystem monitoring surveys using trans-Atlantic reviewers could be interoperability between some EU/CA/US surveys

10 Participants

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Open session

Trans-Atlantic science to do ecosystem-based management (EBM)

*Conveners: Jason Link (USA), Mark Dickey-Collas (ICES), Fritz Köster (Denmark)
Alain Vezina (Canada), Marloes Kraan (The Netherlands)*

There is an array of trans-Atlantic marine science throughout ICES. Several bilateral and multilateral agreements facilitate these trans-Atlantic exchanges, including the Galway Agreement and Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance.

The ICES network of scientists provides relevant and evidence-based information for sustainable management of the Atlantic Ocean area; providing a platform for knowledge exchange and best practice development on important marine science issues. In this context, many organizations are exploring strategic plans for the next decade of ocean science priorities. Science needs to be conducted to not only better understand marine ecosystems and to delineate good environmental status of marine ecosystems, but have relevance for the management of the ecosystem goods and services that marine ecosystems provide.

This session was an exploration of the science needs to implement EBM. It emphasized the needs, context and goals of EBM, the trans-Atlantic nature of this science, and the vision that the discipline needs to achieve these science goals in the coming decade. It followed on from the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance January 2017 report. The session centred on a Kahoot poll, which participants answered through their mobile phones and laptops. The session participants (30, mostly experienced natural scientists that had worked in the applied arena, paraphrased as ‘frontrunners’ of EBM rather than ‘backbenchers’) were polled on a variety of aspects related to the operationalisation of EBM and what that requires. The purpose of the Kahoot was mainly to spur discussion as well as to gather some instant insight on how the participants thought about the issues presented.

Following the responses to the Kahoot, the participants felt that the mandate for EBM was unclear, although EBM was currently being partially and incrementally executed in the North Atlantic. EBM was seen as a process towards better management with key impediments being institutional/governance issues and poor translation of knowledge to management. The participants had limited experience of working with trade-offs. There was agreement that trans-disciplinary approaches were required, and despite the expectation of the conveners, the participants felt that there were incentives for natural scientists to engage with stakeholders, outreach and scoping for objectives.

During the broader discussion, facilitating change to increase EBM was highlighted as a challenge. It could be difficult for a researcher to engage in trade-off exploration as they will mix their researcher role with that of being a citizen. We should accept that there may not always be win-win situations for trade-offs. Scale is an important issue (both spatial and temporal) when providing the evidence for trade-off explorations.



Figure 8.2.1.1. Example questions from the Kahoot poll (pink edging shows most popular answers).

The main impediments to EBM are

- the lack of flexibility in existing institutional structures,
- no location to resolve cross sector issues,
- scientists, business and managers in sector silos,
- scientists have as yet not found an approach to deliver evidence for EBM, and are being limited by their single sector approaches.

The summing up concluded that there was a large degree of consensus in the session. All agree that EBM is happening incrementally across the many jurisdictions in the North Atlantic. There was a positive attitude in the room. It could be that the people coming to this session were more of the 'frontrunners' of EBM (biased group), and perhaps also the question & answer sets of the kahoot were a bit leading (as they were meant to spur debate, being aimed also at the backbenchers). Through the poll, the participants had offered support to the AORA approach that the challenges to EBM were not only centred on improving the science and scientists need to be aware of the management arena to which they are contributing. The issues of complexity, dynamics, and impact of scales were not raised and the timing of change was not highlighted. There is a need for AORA as it is still unclear how to get to strategic alignment across the Atlantic.

The session was aimed at awareness raising about AORA, challenges for operational EBM and examining the ideas and concepts of providing the knowledge for EBM being developed by the AORA working group on ecosystem approach to ocean health and stressors. The answers given to the Kahoot and the discussion showed that the ideas the organisers had on what is needed to operationalise EBM were broadly supported. This suggests that the AORA working group and ICES community are aligned on the concepts of providing the knowledge base for EBM.