

Arctic – involvement of new Contracting Parties to the ICES Convention /scientist from these countries

The ICES Strategic Plan 2014-2018 identifies the Arctic as a key strategic priority area. Given that the Arctic is of interest to circumpolar nations (and others) beyond the traditional ICES member countries, it has become relevant to consider how to improve collaboration with these governments in order to ensure ICES competence is made use of in the Arctic. For all countries it would be beneficial to be able to prioritise and coordinate scientific work in the Arctic, making best use of limited resources.

Council is invited to:

- *review the existing options for including/collaborating with distant water states on ICES work in the Arctic;*
- *give the General Secretary a mandate to contact relevant countries to determine if and how they would see the potential for closer collaboration on arctic issues.*

Overview of expert participation in ICES work

Scientific work

Currently the ICES scientific work is open to nationally nominated experts, with a possibility for the chair of the expert group to nominate experts from outside the ICES area or from international organizations. Governmental organizations, intergovernmental organization, non-governmental organizations, and individuals who have been granted observer status may attend meetings of SCICOM and SCICOM Expert Groups. According to the ICES policy, observer status can be granted in case of support for the ICES general objectives and competence in the ICES areas of work. The ICES policy specifically determines the right and obligation of the observers.

Advisory work

Observers are allowed to participate in the advisory process, except for the advisory Expert Groups.

A specific observer status has been granted to Greenland and the Faroe Islands, by MoU of 1998 between ICES and the Danish Government/Greenland/Faroe Islands, allowing a joint nomination of one scientist and one alternate, one of whom can participate, but not vote in the meetings of ACOM.

Expanding collaboration

There are currently three existing options for increasing cooperation with member countries or scientists from member countries, beyond the ICES member countries;

1. In 2010, affiliate policy was updated and **affiliate institute** status was created, reflecting changes in the organization and improvements in transparency;
2. Article 16 (4) of the ICES Convention describes the process by which new members may **accede to the Convention**. The last country to accede to the Convention was Lithuania in 2006;
3. Cooperation with other **international organizations**, to widen the geographical and membership scope.

Affiliate Institutes

The ICES [Affiliate policy](#) states:

In order to meet the requirements of research institutions of countries outside the current geographical scope of ICES the Council may grant these institutions affiliate status in ICES.

1.2 The granting of affiliate status for a research organisation/institution shall be considered in the light of Article I (a) of the ICES Convention which indicates that the Council has the duty "to promote and encourage research and investigations for the study of the sea, particularly related to the living resources thereof." The organisations/institutions considered are national or international scientific institutes, funding agencies, ministries, etc. engaged in research activities which fall within the range of the ICES convention. These basic criteria shall be essential prerequisites for the status of affiliate status, they do not convey however, any right to claim that status.

Potential for New Members

Article 16 (4) of the [ICES Convention](#) states:

After the entry into force of this Convention in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Article, the Government of any State may apply to accede to this Convention by addressing a written application to the Government of Denmark. It shall be permitted to deposit an instrument of accession with the Government after the approval of the Governments of three quarters of the states which have already deposited their instruments of ratification, approval or accession, has been notified to the Government of Denmark. For any acceding Government this Convention shall enter into force on the date of deposit of its instrument of accession.

Opportunities and Challenges of accepting new members to ICES Convention

Opportunities	Challenges
Possibility to use ICES competence in geographical areas, where a broader group of countries is involved.	Ensuring ICES services remain relevant/possible in the context of increased membership – possibly a need to look into the delineation of advisory services in geographical areas, and to look into the participation of scientific experts in the various geographical areas.

Potential for new/additional experts participating in the ICES network.	Adapting to different working styles.
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Cooperation with other international organizations

ICES has developed cooperation agreements with a variety of international organizations¹. These agreements and existing cooperation will be reviewed to consider where cooperation could be further developed to include Arctic aspects.

Justification

Governments and the regulatory commissions that they have established need an objective scientific foundation for international cooperative decision making. In order to achieve consensus at the international level, it is necessary that scientific cooperation occurs between nations, that the results of such collaboration is focused on key questions or issues of mutual relevance, and that the results of such co-operation are of practical use for management purposes. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) is the main intergovernmental forum for linking science and management in the North Atlantic and its adjacent seas.

Ocean management issues, based on the need to harmonise protection or conservation of the marine environment and its living resources with a legitimate desire to rationally harvest such resources (e.g. through fisheries or mariculture) and pursue other uses of the sea (e.g., shipping), are very complex. Bases for rational management schemes are dependent in part on (a) the development of understanding of the basic scientific issues from an interdisciplinary perspective, and (b) the attainment of consensus on the scientific facts or state of knowledge presented in an objective manner, which is in turn dependent on high quality quantitative data. Objective, high quality, and politically neutral science should serve as a key element of successful management and regulatory decisions. The ICES organisational model decoupling science from management and politics is an important ingredient for international consensus.

¹ <http://ices.dk/explore-us/how-we-work/Pages/Scientific-cooperation.aspx>