

Secretariat report

Council is invited to take note of the information in the Secretariat report, relating to:

- *visits to Member Countries, connected with voting on national contributions;*
- *recruitments, and re-appointments in Secretariat, for ACOM, and SCICOM chairs, as well as ICES Editor-in-Chief of the ICES Journal of Marine Science (IJMS)*
- *exploration of cooperation agreements within strategic areas*
- *procedural and administrative issues relating to how to carry out the organizations work*
- *progress on working tools for use by the community*
- *communication and outreach*
- *coordination of implementation through the coordination group.*

1 Visits to Member Countries

Contact and visits to Member Countries, took place from January to June, prior to the e-voting regarding 2017 national contributions. Although the e-voting resulted in a decision for stable contributions in 2017, the visits provided a good opportunity to discuss the scope of ICES activities, and listen to specific requests from Member Countries. Also with national authorities that are not normally directly involved in ICES work.

It was not possible to arrange for visits to all Member Countries prior to the voting, and some meetings are planned for 2017.

2 Reappointment of the current Editor-in-Chief of the IJMS

Bureau decided, based on a recommendation from a review panel, to re-appoint the current Editor-in-Chief, Howard I. Browman of the ICES Journal of Marine Science (IJMS) for another 5 years (2017–2021).

Bureau also requested the Secretariat, in cooperation with SCICOM, elaborate new Guidelines for appointment and re-appointment of the Editor-in-Chief of the IJMS, and the Series Editors of the ICES in-house publications (CRR, TIMES, and Disease Leaflets).

3 Recruitments – Secretariat

A number of recruitments have taken place during 2016:

- maternity term replacements;
- four positions in the Secretariat;

In addition, the Secretariat has extensively offered possibilities for internships, and taken advantage of opportunities to provide time-limited work for persons with wages subsidized by the municipality. This is a mutually-beneficial arrangement, with mostly positive outcomes for all.

As part of the re-organization of the Secretariat Science Department, following the Council decision on Strengthening of the SCICOM leadership, and based on requested background information submitted to Bureau on 25 April 2016, the General Secretary appointed Wojciech Wawrzynski as Head of Science Support, starting 1 October 2016.

4 Cooperation Agreements with Member Countries and Partners

Bureau has agreed that the Secretariat will explore a number of cooperation agreements, to make progress on areas of ICES Strategic Plan. This includes:

- 1) a potential Letter of Agreement with EEA, to ensure:
 - ICES work on integrated ecosystem assessments in regional seas, are used as scientific contributions to implementation of the ecosystem-based approach, including a temporal-spatial approach;
 - ICES strength as a scientific knowledge provider, data and information producer, and advice delivery are recognized, with its different nature and cost components;
 - ICES strength in the reach of its trans-Atlantic and global scientific network is recognized;
- 2) a potential cooperation agreement with the Arctic Council, to ensure
 - coordination of identification and acquisition of knowledge inputs.

Both agreements have been discussed with representatives of EEA, and the Arctic Council, respectively – through the Secretariats.

Cooperation with PICES on sub-Arctic issues will continue on specific thematic issues (i.e., the upcoming ESSAS Symposium on “Moving in, out and across the Subarctic and Arctic - shifting boundaries of water, ice, flora, fauna, people and institutions”, jointly with PICES, IMBER, NPRB, NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center, NSF, Research Council of Norway, Norwegian Fishing Companies, Japanese funding agencies, and others.)

- 3) An MoU between ICES and Norway on delivery of scientific advice, including costs for recurrent advice and costing components for special requests, including advice on aquaculture.

The MoU was elaborated with representatives from Norway, and entered into force on 1 July 2016.

5 How to conduct ICES work – procedural and administrative issues

1. Communication during meetings and ASC:

- to ensure a consistent approach to external communication (i.e. use of social media) during meetings, from both members and observers, Bureau agreed to the importance of the Chair bringing this issue up at the beginning of a meeting. The text below will be incorporated to the guidelines for Chairs.

At the beginning of each meeting, the Chairs should agree with meeting participants the expectations of what may or may not be communicated externally during the meeting (i.e. via email and/or social media). Any communication with the press should always be coordinated through the ICES Secretariat communications department (communications@ices.dk). ICES encourages openness and transparency in the scientific process, however, in some cases confidentiality must be respected and results protected until formally published on ICES website.

- expectations around communication at the ASC must also be explicit (e.g. for tweets/pictures from presentations). For this reason the *Guidelines for ASC Conveners* will include recommendations stating that unless specifically stated otherwise by the presenter, a presentation will be considered public.

2. National nominations of industry observers

- Bureau discussed the current process for nominating industry experts. While industry scientists have so far been perceived as adding value, balance is needed, as to date there have been no scientists nominated from other sectors (e.g. NGOs). Nominating other scientists may help balance the perception. The implementation of the Code of Conduct and Conflict of interest policy should help to protect ICES reputation. At the same time there is an immediate need for awareness building amongst the Chairs.

3. Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct

- for the second time in two consecutive years a Conflict of Interest arose in the Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM), due to the chair becoming a Editor-in-Chief of a competing Journal.. The Chair resigned, members of PUBCOM, with E-i-C positions were asked to leave the meeting while IJMS issues were discussed. This prompted the need to review the PUBCOM ToR, with the aim to find a long-term solution.

6 Communications

Digital communications is the main focus for ICES communications activities: all news articles, press releases, event announcements, etc., are published on the ICES website and shared via social media. The website has a steady stream of users with 65% being returning and 35% new visitors. ICES is steadily gaining followers on all three social media channels with Twitter proving to be the fastest growing platform: as of September, ICES had over 6000 members in our LinkedIn group, over 4000 followers on Twitter, and over 3000 "likes" on Facebook.

Developing links with Communications departments in ICES member countries

The ICES Communications department is building links with science communicators in member countries. At the ASC this year a Marine Science Communicators Networking Meeting was organized. This platform provides an important link between the ICES Communications department and communicators in member institutes, facilitating communication about ICES work in Member Countries.

An Open Session on Science Communications also took place during this year's ASC.

Website development

The website has been updated to responsive design. This means that the website view adjusts automatically based on the device the user is using, be it PC, tablet, or a smartphone.

The "groups" section is also getting an update, so that information that is entered in the Resources Coordination Tool (RCT) will be automatically updated on the website.

ASC and Early Career Scientists

Several Early Career Scientist events took place during the ASC, including a mentor programme, a career chat, and a skills workshop.

Examples of communication and outreach products

The communications department is sharing information mainly via news articles focussing on ICES strategic areas, as well as reporting from ongoing and upcoming events and meetings. Both May symposia (zooplankton and MSEAS) were promoted by a series of articles posted throughout the week of the events.

The bi-monthly e-newsletter includes in-depth feature articles, written in co-operation with scientists in our network.

The 2015 Annual Report is available online: <http://ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/A-year-in-review-ICES-Annual-Report-2015.aspx>

By September, seven press releases had been sent out to the mailing list including press from different ICES member countries.

Seven Editor's Choice articles from ICES Journal of Marine Science have been profiled on the website so far this year.

Data decks, a series of cards describing ICES data portals, were published in the spring.

Development of a set of images which can be used in ICES communications, e.g. PP-presentations, outreach materials, infographics.

7 Resource Coordination Tool and Content Administration for Reports and Advice (CARA)

7.1 RCT

ToRs & Resolutions

A great deal of coordination and development progress has been made with regards to the inclusion of ToR and Resolution in the RCT system. Both Science and Advice have now agreed upon a useful format for the “front-end” reports of the ToR and Resolution information, so now only some final programming is required. The work is planned for completion by the end of 2016.

My Profile

The next major development planned for the RCT system is the inclusion of “My Profile” personal sites. This will allow individual ICES experts to contribute additional information about their personal skills and expertise to the ICES resources database, taking pressure for this information off of the national institutions. Work on the My Profile pages has begun, an initial testing phase is planned to take place before the end of 2016.

Delegate Nominations

The originally planned method of nomination for the RCT has proven to be too complicated for both the programming and user ends, so a new approach is being developed. This new approach will allow delegates access directly into the RCT which will also mean access to a variety of reports at any time. The focus will be to keep processes as simple as possible for ICES delegates. A pilot for this approach is in development.

7.2 CARA – Content Aministration for Reports and Advice

Progress is being made on the development of CARA, a virtual environment that threads the needle of integration across all pillars in the ICES Strategic Plan: Advice, Data, Science and the Secretariat. CARA facilitates interoperability, transparency, reproducibility, and data provenance.

Interoperability – CARA links to ICES and non-ICES databases, datasets, and sources to provide outputs in the form of products, services, and tools for the ICES community

Transparency – CARA unlocks data and information published by ICES from PDFs and into downloadable, searchable, and transferable products

Reproducibility – CARA facilitates ICES results to be published with data and software code so that others can verify the findings and build on them.

Data provenance – CARA documents data lineage and record of transformations from survey to assessment to advice

CARA is built using a modular approach to provide functional, value-added products for the ICES community on a rolling basis while improving integration and extensibility throughout the ICES system.

8 Coordination Group

Following the Council decisions on the strengthening of the ACOM and SCIOm leaderships, Bureau established a Coordination Group, consisting of the Chairs of ACOM, and SCICOM, the Heads of Science and Advisory Support, the Head of Data and Information, the General Secretary, the Ecosystem Coordinator, and the Coordinating Secretary.

The group has meet on a monthly/bi-monthly basis with the aim to ensure coordinated implementation of the strategic decisions taken by Bureau, ACOM, and SCICOM.

Among the issues discussed;

- handling of data in the current set-up; the link between survey and assessment groups, and the use of the Regional Database (RDB) in raising data used for assessments;
- work within strategic areas (integrated ecosystem understanding, aquaculture, arctic);
- requests for participation in projects;
- development of the code of conduct/CoI policy;
- midway review of the ICES Strategic Plan.

Annex: Additional information on CARA– Modules implemented 2016

Stock List Database and management interface

<http://sld.ices.dk/StockList.aspx>

Database of all active stocks by year, metadata and attributes used in the ICES catch advice and stock assessment expert groups. A web-based tool, the SLD facilitates central management of data using controlled vocabularies.

Products and services implemented

- Stocks by assessment year
- Validity of current advice
- Stocks by ICES areas and ecoregions
- Stocks by species
- Stocks by ICES data category
- Stocks by EG, ADG

Work in progress

- Surveys – coherent use of survey acronyms/labelling throughout ICES. Links ICES Science Expert Groups, SSG's, survey indices generated by DATRAS, and ICES catch advice.
- Stock annexes – increase accessibility
- Stock codes and names -- link historic stock codes and names for traceability between historic records among ICES databases (e.g. SLD, InterCatch, RECO, SAG, Publications Library)
- Dataset of catch advice type and value by year to provide “most recent advice” product for all ICES catch advice.

Stock Assessment Graphs Database <http://standardgraphs.ices.dk>

Database of fish stock assessment output that is used as the basis of ICES advice on an annual basis.

Products and services implemented

- Stock assessment outputs for category 1 - 6 stocks

Work in progress

- Reference Points by stock by year
- Stock status table

Fisheries Overviews

Synthesize stock assessment output, catch statistics, and effort data for each ICES ecoregion using a streamlined and repeatable product with proper data provenance.

Products and services implemented

- Web-services to link ICES databases with the Fisheries Overviews.
- Facility that hosts the R scripts, which take the data from these web-services, aggregate according to ecoregion, calculate indices, and plot the standard outputs for all ecoregions in a document that can then be developed into an ACOM-reviewed and agreed advisory publication.

Work in progress

- Centralize these operations and streamline the transfer of data from the databases into a final product that is reproducible for each ecoregion and advice publication.

Historic advice

Dataset of historical catch and landing statistics. This database was populated by extracting the data from historic advice tables from more than 260 pieces of published catch advice. Online tool will provide tabular output in various electronic formats.

Work in progress

- Standardize output format
- Extend the dataset, by including more stocks
- Online input
- Web based outputs services (by year, stock etc.) for software packages i.e. (R script)

Historic catch

Dataset of catch data (catch by year, area, country) provided in the ICES advice and reports. Online reporting tool providing tabular output in various electronic formats

Work in progress

- Standardize output format
- Import facility
- Table automation - synch with Rec-12 (Preliminary catch statistics) database

Web based services



