

Council Working Group on establishing an ICES Conflict of Interests Policy

Council is invited to discuss the need for a Council Working Group on establishing an ICES Conflict of Interests Policy.

A potential conflict of interest within the Publications and Communications group has highlighted the need for a more formal Conflict of Interest Policy, cf. the Bureau Statement distributed 16 September 2015 (Attachment 1).

Given that:

- ICES is a knowledge organization, and dependent on the expertise of its participants.
- ICES is dependent on the voluntary contributions of its experts.
- ICES advisory products are developed following an iterative process, ensuring an oversight of earlier processes, and thus impartiality and transparency through a clear audit trail to publicly show who was involved and how results were reached.
- ICES work is based on a principle of transparency, and best available information; *inter alia* supported by publishing (via the website) the names of experts participating in the scientific process, together with the scientific product.

And taking into account:

- the potential of COI to damage the integrity and reputation of ICES.
- that ICES reputation is built on ICES mission and core values that are the foundation of the ICES Strategic Plan.
- that ICES mission is to advance the scientific understanding of marine ecosystems, and provide information, knowledge, and advice on the sustainable management of human activities affecting, and affected by, marine ecosystems.
- that ICES work must be underpinned by its core values. ICES must be independent with its integrity and objectivity guiding the development of science and advice.
- that any perception that ICES is not observing these core values in its daily work, can have serious repercussions to its reputation, and must be dealt with immediately.

In order to create a clear Conflict of Interest policy for ICES it is proposed to create a Council Working Group on Conflict of Interest. CWGCOI will report their findings to the 2016 February Bureau meeting, and Bureau will elaborate and finalize the ICES COI Policy, for release second half of 2016. CWGOI will work by correspondence. CWGCOI will be tasked with the following Terms of Reference:

ToR 1: Compile examples of Conflict of Interest Policies of other international organizations, and if possible include concrete examples of conflicts of interest and how they have been handled.

ToR 2: Based on ToR 1, consider the possibility of drawing up an overall Conflict of Interest Policy for ICES, including different levels of COI, and more specifically a procedure to evaluate whether an interest constitutes a conflict, and the follow-up measures

ToR 3: Through the Chairs of the respective Committees/Group, seek input from the Science Committee, Advisory Committee, Data & Information Group, and Secretariat.

Re ToR 1:

European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), Rules of Procedure of the Administrative Board, including "[EMSA Administrative Board Conflict of Interest Policy](#)"

Summary of central points:

- interests declared in a transparent way are not per se considered to represent a conflict of interest
- aim of policy is to facilitate a transparent and consistent handling of situations where conflicts of interest may arise
- a conflict can create an appearance of impropriety that can undermine confidence in the person, profession, or the organisation
- a conflict of interest may exist even if no unethical or improper act results from it. On the other hand, the holding of interests does not automatically give rise to a conflict of interest, if the independence and objectivity of decisions are not at risk
- recognized that it is often difficult to objectively assess whether a conflict of interest situation exist
- primary responsibility for assessing whether an interest might impede independence or influence judgement and for declaring any possible conflict of interest is placed on the person concerned
- considered important to develop and sustain an open organizational culture where COI/measures dealing with COI can be freely raised and discussed

STECF, [Rules of Procedure](#)

- The extent of participation in the STECF work by members or external experts identified as having a conflict of interests on any items shall be decided by the Chair in consultation with the STECF membership. Any action shall be recorded. In cases where a conflict of interests exists, the members or external experts thus identified shall not be permitted to vote on the items concerned.

World Health Organization, GUIDELINES FOR DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (WHO EXPERTS), cf. attachment

- To be effective, the work of WHO and the contributions of its experts must be, and must be perceived to be, objective and independent. In this regard, to ensure the highest integrity and public confidence in its activities, WHO requires that experts serving in an advisory role disclose any circumstances that could give rise to a potential or reasonably perceived conflict of interest related to the subject of the activity in which they will be involved.

- In the context of these Guidelines, the term "conflict of interest" means any interest declared by an expert that may affect or reasonably perceived to affect the expert's objectivity and independence in providing advice to WHO.

- WHO's conflict of interest rules are designed to avoid **potentially** compromising situations that could undermine or otherwise affect the work of the expert, the committee or activity in which the expert is involved or WHO as a whole. Consequently, the **scope** of the inquiry is any interest that **could reasonably be perceived** to affect the functions that the expert is performing.

- Generally speaking, a conflict of interest analysis must be performed whenever WHO relies on the independent advice of an expert in order to take a decision or to provide recommendations to Member States or other stakeholders. [...]As explained below, this situation typically arises where an expert is either: (1) providing advice **under contract or on a voluntary basis** or (2) participating in **scientific or technical advisory meetings**.

- Section IV HOW TO ANALYSE THE INFORMATION DISCLOSED? – with four steps to be taken on 1) Initial Review; 2) Assessment; 3) The Balancing Test, and 4) Possible Options

EEA Policy for the management and prevention of conflict of interest, cf attachment and

<http://glossary.eea.europa.eu//terminology/sitesearch?term=conflict+ofinterest>

- These (potential conflict of interest) situations shall be handled correctly and timely as they can negatively affect the decision-making process and lead to a loss of faith in the ability of the EU public bodies to operate impartially and in the interest of the EU citizens

- There is a conflict of interest where the impartiality and objectivity of a decision, opinion or recommendation for the EEA, including its bodies, is or might, in the public perception, be compromised by an interest held by, or entrusted to, an individual working for the Agency

- the best way to foster integrity and accountability is to ensure transparency in all instances, [...] avoiding a disproportionate administrative burden. To that end, the names of the main actors behind EEA's decision- and opinion-making are made available to the general public, together with a link to the organization they belong to...

- [...] effective application of the [conflict of interest] rules requires that the rules are clear, unambiguous and easily acceptable.

- . The first responsibility in preventing and managing any potential conflict of interest situation shall lie with the person concerned working for the EEA

UK CEFAS Conflict of Interest Guidance, attached

NOAA

[http://www.cio.noaa.gov/services_programs/NOAA PRB COI Policy 110606.html](http://www.cio.noaa.gov/services_programs/NOAA_PRB_COI_Policy_110606.html)

BUREAU STATEMENT

Conflict of Interest (COI) at ICES

BACKGROUND

Conflict of Interest (COI) has the potential to damage the integrity and reputation of ICES. The COI issue was discussed by Bureau in June 2015, following concerns about a potential COI after the PUBCOM Chair Myron Peck was appointed Associate Editor-in-Chief of Marine Ecology Progress Series and its sister journal (Aquatic Biology) at Inter-Research. Bureau tasked First Vice-president, Cornelius Hammer, and the SCICOM Chair, Yvonne Walther with developing a detailed and well researched report on the COI issue.

The report was completed in August 2015 and provided a synthesis of the views of SCICOM, PUBCOM, ACOM, previous and current PUBCOM chairs, previous and current Editor in Chiefs of IJMS, the Committee on Publication Ethics, and Oxford University Press relating to a potential "conflict of interest" (COI) that has arisen with the PUBCOM chair taking office with another journal. The document also addresses COI, with regard to ICES work, on a more general level. On 10th September 2015, Bureau arranged a special on-line meeting to discuss the issue of COI in PUBCOM.

Annex 1 contains an outline of the sequence of events related to the issue of COI in PUBCOM. Annex 2 presents a summary of the COI report considered by the special Bureau meeting.

SPECIAL BUREAU MEETING ON COI

The COI report made four recommendations for Bureau to consider.

- (1) accept the resignation of the current PUBCOM chair, Myron Peck;
- (2) develop and adopt a Policy document on COI including a clear process to be followed. Request the General Secretary to prepare a draft scoping document for the 23–24 September Bureau meeting.
- (3) request the Secretariat chair the PUBCOM meeting on 19th September 2015
- (4) decide on a process for recruitment of a new PUBCOM Chair in relation to the development of the Policy document on COI.

During the online discussions Bureau recognised the potential of COI to damage the integrity and reputation of ICES. This reputation is built on ICES mission and core values that are the foundation of the ICES Strategic Plan. Bureau highlighted that ICES mission is to advance the scientific understanding of marine ecosystems, and provide information, knowledge, and advice on the sustainable management of human activities affecting, and affected by, marine ecosystems. ICES work must be underpinned by its core values. ICES must be independent, with its integrity and objectivity guiding the development of science and advice. Any perception

that ICES is not observing these core values in its daily work, can have serious repercussions to its reputation, and must be dealt with immediately.

BUREAU DECISION

- (1) Bureau accepted the resignation of the PUBCOM Chair Myron Peck, and extends their thanks to him for his valuable contribution to ICES. Bureau finds it is important to stress that this decision is not based on a credibility issue. It is based on the advice from two external cooperation partners, Oxford University Press (OUP) and the Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE) that a COI exists.
- (2) In order to deal with future COI situations at ICES in the future, Bureau has decided to develop and adopt a policy document on COI, including a clear process to be followed when COI situations arise. An initial scoping document will be considered at the Bureau meeting during the Annual Science Conference, on 23–24 September. The scoping document will include examples of best practice in other international organizations and a draft Terms of Reference for a Council Working Group on COI (CWGCOI). The COI issue will be further discussed at the Council meeting in October 2015.
- (3) The PUBCOM meeting on 19 September 2015 will be chaired by the ICES Secretariat, and the process for the recruitment of a new PUBCOM Chair will be initiated in relation to the development of the Policy document on COI.

Annex 1 – Sequence of events leading to the Bureau online meeting on 10th September 2015 on Conflict of Interest

22 April 2015: Information on Myron's position as Associate Editor-in-Chief of Marine Ecology Progress Series (MEPS) and its sister journal, Aquatic Biology (AB) at Inter-Research released.

23 April 2015: Myron Peck informs PUBCOM that he has been appointed an Associate Editor-in-Chief of MEPS and AB.

23 April 2015; a member of PUBCOM strongly objects to Myron Peck both chairing the PUBCOM, and in this role overseeing the ICES Journal of Marine Science, at the same time as he takes on his new role as Associated Editor-in-Chief.

27 April 2015; the President, First Vice-president, and the General Secretary requests the SCICOM Chair, Yvonne Walther to solicit comments from SCICOM, and together with a specifically designated member of SCICOM, to finalize a guidance document, that will form the basis for resolving the current issue on the chairmanship in PUBCOM. The SCICOM Chair, Yvonne Walther is asked to report back to June Bureau, on how the issue has been resolved. PUBCOM is informed about the initiated procedure.

Bureau June 2015; new information is tabled, when the SCICOM Chair presents her COI report, and the SCICOM Chair is requested together with the First Vice-President, Cornelius Hammer to finalize the COI document. The importance of having all views in a consolidated document is stressed, and specifically the following information is requested to be included:

- SCICOM comments and edits to the document, a summary of PUBCOM involvement, views from the current (Myron Peck) and previous (Pierre Pepin) PUBCOM chair; views from the current (Howard Browman) and previous (Andy Payne) Editor in Chief of the IJMS; the view from the Committee on Publications Ethics, as well as the official view of Oxford University Press.

11 August 2015; the consolidated COI document by the SCICOM Chair and the First Vice-President is submitted to Bureau members.

24 August 2015; Myron Peck hands in his letter of resignation as PUBCOM Chair.

Special online Bureau meeting 10 September: Bureau agrees to issue a Bureau Statement, based on the recommendations in the well-researched and detailed COI document that has been prepared by the First Vice-President, Cornelius Hammer, and the SCICOM Chair, Yvonne Walther.

Annex 2 – A summary version of the COI report presented to the special Bureau meeting on 10th September

This document provides a synthesis of the views of SCICOM, PUBCOM, ACOM, Previous and current PUBCOM chairs, previous and current Editor in Chiefs of IJMS, the Committee on Publication Ethics, and Oxford University Press relating to a potential "conflict of interest" (COI) that has arisen with the PUBCOM chair taking office with another journal. The document also addresses COI, with regard to ICES work, on a more general level.

This COI issue has the potential to damage the integrity and reputation of ICES. The document will inform and help Bureau make a decision on the way forward at a special online meeting 2015.

2 INTRODUCTION

The discussion around this specific case has made it clear that COI needs to be addressed on a more general level to ensure a process for how to deal with potential cases in the future. The issue at stake is to identify if there is a conflict of interest when scientists engage in ICES activities, while also engaged in other institutes with similar interests, and provide solutions on how to deal with COI generally.

A conflict of interests (COI) contains a primary and secondary interest where the two parties have competing professional or personal interest. In the classic conflict-of-interest model, motivation is normally based on financial benefit and or other professional or personal rewards.

However when involved in a non-profit situation the benefit of COI becomes more subtle, multi -dimensional and hard to define. In the case of engaging a scientist for a role in ICES we cannot differentiate the scientists level of interest in ICES, be it in an institute, university or journal which are all primary and respectable commitments.

In a conflict of interest between equally respectable commitments the perceived acts that are undue are a matter of judgment and depends on the context. As of now, no clearly specified situations where the PUBCOM chair would be under undue influence by another journal have been specified. The current situation is based on a general perception that COI could hypothetically become a problem. As such a perceived risk of COI should not be ignored and the standards ICES uses for evaluating this should be transparent and clearly specified.

While the issue of COI risk in other Groups, e.g. Operational Groups is noted, this document primarily addresses the role of the PUBCOM Chair and PUBCOM members' duties, including a review of precedents with regards to COI, based on the tenures of former PUBCOM Chairs or members. The conclusion of this review is followed by suggestions for an ICES policy for situations of COI.

3 THE ISSUE – POTENTIAL COI at PUBCOM

Following the announcement from PUBCOM Chair that he had been assigned as associated editor-in-chief of MEPS and Aquatic Biology, one of the PUBCOM

members strongly objected on the grounds of a potential COI, and requested the PUBCOM Chair to step down immediately.

The issue of COI must be addressed in light of any potential damage disadvantage the situation may cause for the integrity and reputation of ICES.

Based on PUBCOM ToRs we have tried to foresee situations that would be affected by COI and the risk at stake for ICES in the given situation.

4 THE ROLE OF PUBCOM

a) Provide advice and oversight on all ICES publications and communications activities dealing with public outreach.

PUBCOM Chair or members have access to all resolutions regarding publications being submitted to ICES, and therefore have considerable insight into new and innovative research topics. There is however no information or access to specific articles submitted to the ICES Journal for peer review. The potential for COI is therefore limited.

PUBCOM Chair or members get information about the number of articles rejected by country by the ICES Journal, but no information is provided about the rejection of specific papers. The potential for COI is therefore limited.

Editorial and or commercially sensitive information is available to PUBCOM Chair and members relating to OUP which is a commercial entity. This is the concern of OUP presently, cf. Section 11.2. Given that it is a concern for the publisher of ICES Journal it should not be ignored.

b) Work closely with the ICES Secretariat to ensure that the ICES website is developed in order to better serve ICES and the broader marine science community;

ICES website is a window on ICES activities and relies somewhat on being able to encourage views with information which is very new (e.g. advice) or topical (e.g. ICES influence on policy or initiatives regarding science and innovation). This information would also be of interest to competing entities including competing journals. PUBCOM chair and members could give information to commercial entities on new developments relating to science and science advice or development of the ICES website before these became live on the web. While possible COI exists, it is not clear how this would manifest and how it would cause a distinct disadvantage to ICES.

c) Review and give recommendations on requests for Symposium Volumes of the IJMS, CRRs and TIMES prior to the ASC and the SCICOM spring meeting;

As with scientific papers there is a possible COI with other competing journals if ICES symposia or special volumes were of particular significance or value. However, there is nothing currently stopping other journals from independently approaching convenors of theme sessions or symposia to get them to publish theme session, symposia special volumes with them and not ICES. And it does regularly happen.

d) Further develop plans for the implementation of the public outreach component of the Communication Strategy;

No obvious potential for COI.

e) Further develop those ICES publications media that serve the aims of the ICES Science Plan including how best to promote online media and phase out hard copy printing of some publications (CRRs and TIMES).

No obvious potential for COI.

5 PUBCOM AND IJMS

The PUBCOM Chair does not influence the contents of IJMS without the consent of the EiC. The EiC has editorial independence of the IJMS but reports to PUBCOM and SCICOM. The last issue of editorial independence was settled between EiC, PUBCOM and SCICOM in September 2014 (ICES CM 2014/SCICOM:03). The agreement was that editorial independence of the journal should include the EiC overview of symposia volumes. Therefore, it seems unlikely that a COI would arise where PUBCOM Chair could independently assert a major control over the publication process.

6 PUBCOM CHAIR AND MEMBERS

The main responsibility of a PUBCOM Chair is to ensure that the specific tasks assigned to the group in the relevant PUBCOM resolution and its ToRs are carried out. This involves making plans for the specified meeting(s) of the group, including the preparation of an agenda and work schedule in consultation with the other members, chairing the meetings, overseeing the preparation of the group's report and preparing draft resolutions in cooperation with the Secretariat.

ICES has no classified material and the Chair does not have access to material that a member cannot access. Furthermore, SCICOM is overseeing PUBCOM activities, and hence SCICOM members and alternates have access to the same information.

PUBCOM also has editors of CRR, TIMES and ID leaflets where we can find similar cases of potential COI based on affiliation with other journals and also financial interest in private companies.

7 OTHER OPERATIONAL GROUPS

Data and Information Group (DIG) act as a coordinating body between the ICES Data Centre and ACOM/SCICOM on important issues relating to the national data centres and data policies, data handling and storage, metadata and the use of IT in the ICES Data Centre. Membership is based on representation by the national data centres and a good coverage of disciplines to reflect expertise on the respective data handled by ICES.

COI could possibly occur if institutes have different views on data management and if DGI chair or members are part in projects with a distinct data management

curriculum, such as EMODNET. To date no such COI has been reported to have resulted in a major disadvantage to ICES.

ICES Training group ITG oversees the curriculum of the courses in the Training Programme. It is quite common that Chair and members oversee national training programmes also and in fact this is a distinct advantage. A member of the training group recently announced a shift of jobs to industry, however SCICOM was in unanimous agreement that was no problem in continuing their role as member of the Training Group, as well as instructor of the course on Communicating Science and Advice (ICES CM 2014/SCICOM:01).

8 EXAMPLES OF COI IN SCICOM, AND HOW IT WAS HANDLED

Historically there have been cases of COI in SCICOM and they have effectively been dealt with by the principle of disclosure and exclusion. The disclosure is handled via the person under COI making an announcement to SCICOM and due exclusion from discussion and possibly abstaining from voting.

A recent example was in connection with selecting the winning proposals of Science Fund where a SCICOM member was co-applicant. The member identified a COI directly and asked to be excluded from the discussion and abstain from any promotion of the proposal. This worked in full satisfaction and SCICOM could take a decision based on good judgement.

9 EXAMPLES OF COI IN ACOM, AND HOW IT WAS HANDLED

The COI issue arose during discussions at Council on the appointment of the ACOM chair in 2010. Some Delegates suggested a stricter approach to the selection and appointment of the ACOM chair, stating that it is not possible for the ACOM chair to have consultancy for fishing industries in areas where ICES gives advice. There should be a mechanism for the Bureau and Secretariat to look at the consultancy work one by one and to decide whether there is a conflict of interest that could be compromising the integrity of ICES. The appointment was made under the condition that the ACOM Chair should not have consultancy with stakeholders and governments who are influenced by advice of ICES. For all other consultancy a transparent process will be established with the Secretariat on a case-by-case basis.

10 THE VIEWS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PUBCOM CHAIRS

The views of previous and current PUBCOM chairs provided reflections on the conflict of interest issue. Views were divergent demonstrating the complexity of the issue. Some of the arguments presented included:

- There is precedent for the chair and members of PUBCOM to be affiliated with other journals.
- The Chair acts as impartial facilitator and it would be difficult to impart this influence to any advantage given the committee format of PUBCOM.

- There are different levels of COI, and, therefore, it is difficult in the absence of appropriate guidance to assess what is an acceptable level and what is not.
- ICES must endeavour to avoid COIs as well as the perception of COIs and issues surrounding COI need to be carefully handled.
- ICES has and should continue to rely on the integrity and good judgement of its members and leaders.
- Disagreement and debate are normal and professional societies and organizations are best served by adopting policies which foster openness, collegiality/respect, honesty and trust among their members.
- Despite PUBCOM members potentially disagreeing on specific issues, consensus views were reached. The group has provided unbiased advice to SCICOM and the general secretary.
- ICES has been given the opportunity to revisit and strengthen statements regarding professional ethics and the code of conduct of its members, employees and contracted parties.
- One cannot serve two masters fairly, and the current apparent situation places ICES present E-i-C, and also the Publisher, in an untenable situation.
- Reputations are easily lost, but take a long time to (re)build.
- The Chair of PUBCOM is responsible for guiding the committee's oversight of everything that the EiC of the ICES JMS does, as well as for all other ICES publications. In this role, the Chair has access to documents, and is involved in off-the-record discussions, about plans and strategies for our journal and all ICES publications, production matters, the economics and the promotion plans of the Publisher, etc. Much of this information is sensitive and confidential.
- The ability of people who are in conflicting roles to handle them professionally is irrelevant and does not obviate the conflict. Holding such conflicting roles does a disservice to all parties.

11 EXTERNAL STATEMENTS

11.1 THE VIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS ETHICS

To clarify the situation, and upon recommendation by the publisher Oxford University Press (OUP) to seek independent and objective advice, the Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE), was asked to evaluate the situation.

Based on the description of the situation provided, COPE perceived a COI.

11.2 THE VIEWS OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

The publisher of the ICES JMS, Oxford University Press also perceived a COI.

12 SYNTHESIS OF SCICOM VIEWS

SCICOM welcomes the overview and clarification on COI within ICES. On a generic level, an alleged conflict of interest is going to be reoccurring. If ICES decided not to use the services of people who are doing related jobs outside ICES there will not be much of the ICES community left. We have reason to trust peoples own judgement and their professional conduct until clearly proven otherwise. SCICOM particularly want to stress the importance to openly communicate about and deal with potential occurrence of COI.

In the specific case of PUBCOM chair it is important to maintain the independency of the IJMS. EiC having total editorial control is important and the independence was secured via a process completed in 2014.

The perception of COI is as important as actual COI, and this must be accounted for. While the current situation may be perceived doable from an internal (i.e. SCICOM) and pragmatic perspective, it may not be perceived as such externally. Regarding PUBCOM and the particular case at hand the conclusion that the potential extension of the PUBCOM chair should be agreed upon with OUP. However ICES / SCICOM should provide input, as the body likely to have the better understanding of the perception of conflicts of interest. We should consider when real and perceived conflicts of interest tarnish the image that the scientific community has of ICES.

13 ICES POLICY ON COI

Arising from the discussions and observations above it is clear that ICES needs to adopt a clear policy for dealing generally with COI issues in relation to selecting chairs and members of operational groups or for incumbent chairs or members of operational groups:

The current unofficial ICES policy on COI is based on the practice of disclosure and exclusion.

Any future policy may wish to include the following elements:

A prospective or incumbent Chair must declare any possible COI to ICES General Secretary.

ICES should evaluate the possibility of COI and any possible disadvantages to ICES or which “could compromise the integrity and reputation of ICES”.

Where this evaluation indicates little risk of COI then the prospective Chair should be accepted, or the existing Chair can continue.

Where this evaluation indicates COI may occur, in one or a number of instances, the Chair should:

- be requested to refrain from carrying out those functions

or

- absent themselves from any sensitive discussions and provide commitment not to disclose material which might be considered as commercially

sensitive by ICES, their contractors, partners or affiliates to be made sensitive material for all chairs and members.

Where the review indicates a major or several COIs then the prospective Chair should be rejected or the existing Chair should be asked to step down.

A clear process to follow should be defined in the COI policy document.

14 RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUREAU

In the specific PUBCOM situation, SCICOM is in general expressing support for the PUBCOM chair knowing that similar situations has been successfully handled in the past. However, the two external partners; the publisher Oxford University Press and the Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE) both find that there is a Conflict of Interest.

Bureau is recommended to develop and adopt a policy on COI based on the description above. It is important that a policy document is followed by a process to adopt when COI may arise.

The process described in a policy document should be clear both on how to act when raising concern for COI and how to subsequently deal with the situation

COPE furthermore states that a clear Conflict of Interest policy is needed in order to deal with similar situations now, and in the future, for when an association with a competing journal is workable. The Policy document on COI should apply to both the chair and members of PUBCOM.

Recommended actions for Bureau:

Based on the comments by the two external partners, Oxford University Press (OUP) and the Committee on Publications Ethics (COPE);

- accept the resignation of the current PUBCOM chair, Myron Peck;
- develop and adopt a Policy document on COI including a clear process to be followed. Request the General Secretary to prepare a draft scoping document for the 23–24 September Bureau meeting.
- Request the Secretariat chair the PUBCOM meeting on 19 September 2015
- decide on a process for recruitment of a new PUBCOM Chair in relation to the development of the Policy document on COI.