
Council Steering Group on the MSFD

Report to Council 2013

This document sets out the comprehensive set of ICES MSFD related activities that have taken place since the 2012 Council meeting.

The Council is invited to specifically take note of the actions arising from the meeting of the CSGMSFD, and the status of follow-up of these; interlined to other activities of ICES, when discussing the two related papers on an ICES MSFD internal strategy (CM 2013 Del-03.1) and the proposed ICES input to the EU Common Implementation Strategy for the MSFD (CM 2013 Del-03.2), to presented at the EU Marine Directors meeting in December 2013.

Actions from the meeting of the CSG MSFD

Action #1 – European Data Management: A joint paper will be developed by ICES, EEA, HELCOM, and OSPAR outlining the shared vision for regional and European data management looking towards 2018 and the second round of MSFD reporting. Responsible: Secretariat.

Action #2 – MSFD Scientific Governance Landscape: A limited/simple mapping exercise of higher level groups will be provided to help decision-makers obtain an overview of the scientific governance landscape and possible options for organizing MSFD-related science. There will be an emphasis on identifying potential overlaps and duplications, as well as gaps and missing infrastructure. Responsible: Secretariat and CSG-MSFD, making use of input to be provided by DG ENV.

Action #3 – ICES/RSC Communication: Follow-up the current meeting by providing bilateral feedback to the Black Sea and Mediterranean RSCs, and learn more about their needs. Maintain dialogue with all RSCs. Encourage the ICES Secretariat to further develop and strengthen the operational and strategic partnerships with Regional Sea Conventions with regards to the MSFD, taking note of existing cooperation agreements. Responsible: Secretariat.

Action #4 - COMPLETED - Pre-Communication with Marine Directors – ICES Contribution to the CIS: *A letter for circulation at the meeting of Marine Directors, 30–31 May in Ireland, will be prepared signalling ICES intention to provide input to the draft EU Future Priorities document and the associated Common Implementation Strategy (CIS). Responsible: Eugene Nixon and Chair, Bill Turrell.*

Action #5 – ICES Contribution to the CIS: Given the Marine Director's support following Action 4, this should then be followed up with a paper outlining ICES contribution to the Common Implementation Strategy, within the ICES context of the renewal of the ICES Strategic Plan, and prior to the meeting of the Marine Directors, (jointly with Water and Nature Directors) on 3–6 December 2013; Responsible: CSG-MSFD, ACOM, SCICOM, Secretariat

Introduction

Many activities have taken place since the 2012 Council Meeting in relation to ICES and its input to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. This report summarises the principle activities and highlights further actions that are required. Annex 2 presents the year's achievements in a tabular form.

Presidential Meeting with DG-ENV – February 2013

This was a key activity this year in relation to the relationship between ICES and DG-ENV concerning the MSFD. Main points from the meeting were:

Main Messages from DG ENV

- 1) The MoU development, and inclusion of MSFD related issues in a fisheries context, is an important institutionalization of the cooperation between DGs ENV and MARE
- 2) The incorporation of MSFD related activities in the format of recurrent advice is to be seen from this strategic perspective and a future role for ICES in the MSFD is envisaged similar to ICES current role with the CFP.
- 3) It is not foreseen that specific work tasks within the recurrent part of the MoU will be undertaken during 2013, but special requests in 2013 will build the foundation for long-term work starting from 2014.
- 4) By the end of 2013 a list of future recurrent work for inclusion in the MoU for 2014 is envisaged.
- 5) A list of potential special requests have been elaborated, including:
 - further work on D1 (biodiversity) and D4 (foodweb)
 - follow-up on EC arranged Paris fisheries workshop building on the D3+ work, 2012
 - coordination of data collection and access
- 6) A budget of 100.000 euro has been identified, with an initial prioritization of the two latter issues.
- 7) Much of the future EC work is linked to the outcome of the Article 12 assessment, including identification of deficiencies and discussions with member states.
- 8) The precautionary principle continues to be important.
- 9) Indicator targets will be developed by the member states while the Commission will focus on defining GES.
- 10) ICES is recognized as a main scientific provider for the MSFD, and as part of the development coordinated by DG ENV of a strategy 2020 for the MSFD and related policy instruments, DG ENV will provide input to the ICES strategic Plan.

- 11) ICES support areas mentioned included harmonization of methods and standards for aggregation.
- 12) It is important that the development of the strategy is not a purely northern driven process.
- 13) EEA is preparing a 2012 baseline Pan-European assessment.

Action Points From the Meeting

1) ICES to contribute to the DG ENV arranged workshop in April 2013 on biodiversity related aspects of fisheries focusing on indicators 3.3.1, 3.3.2, and 3.3.4 and link also to the ICES coordinated Workshop on the Development of Quantitative Assessment Methodologies based on Life-history traits, exploitation characteristics, and other relevant parameters for data-limited stocks (WKLIFE III; 28 October–1 November).

The EU Biodiversity Strategy should be integrated into the process and there will be a biodiversity workshop in June, arranged by the DG ENV Biodiversity Team.

2) Coordinate and collaborate with DG ENV, Marine Team to identify a role for ICES in potentially upcoming work, such as:

- a) a revision of the 2010 Commission Decision
- b) the preparation of a planned conference in first quarter of 2014, potentially leading to a roadmap for the way forward for 2018–second MSFD implementation cycle;

3) Await specific request(s), from DG ENV through Gilles Doignon (DG MARE).

4) Make use of, *inter alia*, the Initial outline of ICES Work on MSFD indicators [this is the same outline, as was included to the document, which was used in April, for the CSG-MSFD meeting with external partners] within the CSG-MSFD to further develop the overall ICES MSFD work in order to maintain the strategic focus and be able to show ICES deliverables.

Annual Meeting of the CSG–MSFD – April 24

The CSG-MSFD met in Copenhagen on 24 April 2013. The principle outcomes were as follows:

The “Living” document

The document has not been updated and it was agreed to remove the status of “living” and consider the document a formalized working document for internal reference. The document was subsequently removed from the ICES website.

Exchange of MSFD relevant information between groups

The group discussed the need for a strategy/framework for addressing the MSFD, and ensure that the desired work is initiated and followed through. The following points came up during the course of the meeting:

- ICES MSFD work focus on products is strong; more general work must be strengthened.

- Various approaches for advancing the MSFD work were discussed:

1) Day-to-day work - Direct advice- special requests from, *e.g.*, Regional Seas Commissions (RSC) and DG ENV.

2) Strategic- Long-term development/dialogue on what RSC, DG ENV will need- this will include not only strategic science needs but also address the structural setting for how to deal with these, *e.g.*, joint groups - perhaps a workshop/conference.

3) Political context- Funding- DG ENV– DG MARE are currently discussing integrated maritime policy- ICES will provide technical input to revision of the DCF, and thus part of the political funding strategy that should be pursued to fund new initiatives, *f.i.*, through the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. ICES can highlight where potentials exist and where resources are required. This could also be done by showing what ICES could additionally do, in a cost-beneficial way.

4) Highlight in-house data facilities.

- Strategic thinking for ICES should include:

Cumulative effects

Risk assessment

Review of selected indicators.

- Distinction between ACOM/SCICOM groups is not helpful and the working structure should be refocused to support the development of MSFD. Need to establish work as a collaborative effort that is a process from science to advice- *i.e.* delivery of a product.

- Resources are decreasing; efficiencies need to be found such as avoiding duplication between expert groups in different organizations.

- Need to discuss the roles with partners; to be clear on who is doing what, what can we contribute. Create a joint vision for the roles.

CSG-MSFD Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference CSG-MSFD 2013 were reviewed:

1. To identify the principle elements of ICES work that are relevant to the implementation of the MSFD, and to consider how best the internal coordination of these elements can be achieved.

Completed. Internal Coordination to be linked through the strategic plan.

2. To consider how current or new working arrangements with Client Commissions, principally the European Commission, OSPAR, and HELCOM, may be best used to link the ICES Science and Advice structures to those of the Regional Seas Conventions so that ICES can provide appropriate input to the continuing MSFD process.

Was discussed at the meeting with partners 25 April.

3. To consider how best ICES can contribute to the development of integrated surveys and monitoring in support of the MSFD.

This ToR is being addressed through the 2012 Report, meeting at the ASC in Bergen, at the meeting with partners 25 April, and through ICES possible participation in the upcoming EU funded pilot projects.

4. To consider the potential role of ICES in developing advice concerning the outcomes of possible programmes of measures which will be needed to ensure GES is reached at the regional level.

Addressed by Poul Degnbol's presentation on scenarios of options at the April 25 Workshop. A reformulated ToR was proposed subsequently to the workshop:

Reformulation: To consider the potential role of ICES in developing advice concerning the scenarios of options for possible programmes of measures which will be needed to ensure GES is reached at the regional level

5. To create the opportunity to co-convene an MSFD related symposium in 2014 / 2015 with recipients of ICES advice.

Was addressed at the meeting with partners 25 April with emphasis on Co-convene.

6. To advise the Bureau working group on the ICES Strategic Plan (ISP) on MSFD activities that should be included in the 2014–2018 ICES Strategic Plan and associated Science, Advice, Data and Information Services, and Secretariat Plans.

Completed: Feedback from CSG MSFD to be included in the ICES Strategic Plan was developed and submitted to Paul Connolly prior to 6 June.

The Future of CSG MSFD

The meeting discussed the need to visualize the MSFD process and build a framework for MSFD related work and feed this in to the renewal of ICES strategic plan process. Need to describe a proposal for work distribution, governance structure, information flow, and what is needed in terms of manpower. This should be provided to Paul Connolly by 6 June.

Future work for CSG MSFD will need to be developed around what was agreed with partners at the workshop on 25 April.

Workshop with MSFD Partners – April 25

The ICES Council Steering Group on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (CSG-MSFD) hosted a one day workshop with MSFD partners to discuss how ICES work could support and contribute to the work of the Regional Seas Commissions in the Baltic Sea (HELCOM), the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR), the

Mediterranean (UNEP/MAP – MED POL) and the Black Sea (the Black Sea Commission) in relation to the implementation of the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities impacting on the marine environment, and where relevant the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Representatives from the European Commission DG Environment (DG ENV) and the European Environment Agency (EEA) were also present.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive defines specific roles and tasks for the EU, EEA, Regional Seas Commissions, and Member States. However, the meeting primarily focused on the science required to successfully implement the MSFD, and the potential scientific contributions from on-going and emerging ICES work.

Implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive

DG ENV briefed the meeting on current developments and processes related to the implementation of the MSFD, providing a good context and basis for the proceeding discussion on potential future work.

DG ENV is encouraging Member States to take a forward looking approach for the future implementation of the MSFD. Greater collaboration will be required to ensure efficiencies. DG ENV presented a draft document entitled: *MSFD Common Implementation Strategy –future priorities*.¹ The document identifies major priorities and activities, including suggestions for who should be responsible for each activity, to address the challenges posed by MSFD implementation.

During the discussion the following main issues/themes emerged:

1. The need to ensure that the different fora linked to the MSFD process, or potentially contributing to it, have clear roles and communicate well between themselves. To this end, a mapping exercise can be conducted at all levels, mapping the complex web of science governance, implementation and development, including related integrated marine ecosystem issues broader than MSFD science. The mapping should also include “piggy-backing” – i.e. matching other environmental and fishery policy-related obligations with the MSFD in order to make a coherent picture, avoid duplication and use scarce human scientific resources efficiently.
2. The importance of timelines. The need to ensure that all organizations are aware of the timescale of the MSFD implementation, and that products/outputs are delivered at the appropriate time.
3. The need to ensure efficient processes, emphasizing appropriate and thoughtful management of people/ expert resources.

Case-Studies- science areas

Short presentations were given on each of the case-studies outlined in a discussion document, followed by a short discussion on each topic.

¹ Accessible on CIRCABC (<https://circabc.europa.eu/>)

Integrated Ecosystem Assessments and Ecosystem Overviews

Five ICES Expert Groups are now working on Integrated Ecosystem Assessments: WGIAB, WGINOR, WGNARS, WGEAWESS, and WGINOSE. All are working towards a framework for ecosystem based management. This will support the further development of ecosystem overviews summarizing ecosystem state and pressures, which have been a part of ICES advice in the past. The purpose of the ICES ecosystem overviews is to help the expert groups who are preparing advice to put their analysis in an ecosystem context. The overviews also help the scientific network in identifying science and data gaps and support partners with an interest in marine ecosystems.

Descriptors, criteria, indicators, and targets

ICES role relates to a dynamic, process-based understanding across descriptors, concept development, standardization, practical implementation, and making the production of indicators operational.

OSPAR has submitted a request to ICES this year. ICG-COBAM is developing a suite of biodiversity indicators, that ICES will peer-review.

Integrated Monitoring

ICES acts as a regional coordinator of fisheries surveys, these surveys often collect additional data on issues such as ecosystem disturbances, effects of human activities, contaminants, seabirds and mammals. ICES can help to make things more cost-efficient by recommending appropriate ways of combining monitoring including the extension of existing surveys in an integrated context.

Access to Data and Information

ICES data services focus on regional partnerships, provides core data for regional assessments and integration along the data chain. The data services have an operational focus and the emphasis is on getting existing data to be used in enhanced ways (e.g. by expert groups, projects, and generally online). Annex 1 and Annex 2 in the meeting document described existing and developing datasets and their application to MSFD descriptors.

ICES is already providing support to the EEA and RSCs to organize data and information so that it is available and useful.

One of the key additional issues that will be prominent in the MSFD is the problem of resolution; environment and fisheries communities are not working to the same spatial units or scale. Data are collected and organised in different aggregations which will mean there will be a significant task ahead, providing consistent regional and European spatially resolved data and data products. New funding is required for this additional work.

Assessment Tools and Cumulative Effects

ICES can offer its experience from assessing fish stocks, which have been expanded to also cover ecosystem considerations, with tools (including models) to assess different components of the ecosystem. One area that is not well-developed is that of cumulative effects. There is a strong science base in ICES working to improve the tools for the future, including tools to assess if measures taken have been successful.

In a policy context modelling tools for impact assessment are important in three areas; 1) validation of Member States efforts (did they pick the most appropriate indicator/target; or potentially to validate/assess future self-reporting 2) Policy evaluation(were the goals achieved?) 3) Policy development.

The tools needed at the European level need to be applicable for all four regional seas.

Establishing Measures

The move from indicators and targets to measures raises three issues and science needs:

1. For most descriptors, measures will only work on a regional scale and there is, therefore, a need to have an ecoregion approach to programmes of measures.
2. The move from indicator targets to measures must be based on process understanding as the linkage of specific measures to targets must be based on some kind of cause-and-effect understanding.
3. Measures will have impacts across descriptors and measures must therefore be developed on basis of an understanding of accumulative effects of human intervention.

All these issues require appropriate science on an ecoregion scale to support decisions. This will have to be developed over time. Tools (incl. models) are important as platforms for exploring options.

Some Member States are already beginning to plan for the development of programmes of measures. A workshop is being organized in June by the Working Group on Economic and Social Assessments (ESA WG) in collaboration with the GES WG.

ICES Relation to the Regional Seas Conventions

Background

There is a general tendency to establish more and more parallel expert groups. This is increasingly putting pressure on the finite resource of national experts. The workshop went onto discuss this and related issues.

OSPAR

It was considered how OSPAR made the decision to direct scientific requests to ICES. A problem exists as the current work cycle/timing of OSPAR requests to ICES are not always well-matched to the ICES planning cycle. The Secretariats have started to look at how ICES and OSPAR work together and explore new ways of working, aiming to identify areas for collaboration, taking advantage of respective strengths. Some OSPAR work fits well into the ICES annual cycle, other work, especially related to the future/longer-term development for MSFD does not currently fit so well and new working procedures are required in order to ensure the most efficient use of experts and resources.

In addition, there is a need to have a dialogue to ensure that the correct questions are being asked and that suitable answers can be provided, ensuring that outputs from ICES can be delivered the appropriate place in the OSPAR/MSFD structure, and at the appropriate time. The current focus is on areas that need development in terms of longer-term strategy: e.g. 1) Biodiversity, foodwebs, seabed integrity descriptors (D1, D4, D6); 2) Cumulative effects, and integrated ecosystem assessments.

In summary, the OSPAR and ICES Secretariats are working together to suggest improvements to the working systems. The ideas developed will need to be submitted to contracting parties for their input and approval.

RSCs in General

When ICES and the RSCs are tackling MSFD related issues, the overall aim should not be to create more working groups, but rather fewer but with improved focus. There is a need to frame/structure/map MSFD related work so that duplications and gaps can be identified, and then cross-organisational discussions take place on how best to organize work. Collaborative working groups would allow better comparison of methods, standards, etc. ensuring coherence between RSCs and ICES. The RSCs in general, and specifically those with overlapping Member States, could benefit from increased cooperation as they have common core issues which could be jointly managed. ICES could assist with these core issues to see where resources can be saved. This approach would require approval from contracting parties. Cooperation will ensure inter-regional comparability and allow for specific RSCs concerns to be addressed as well.

Actions Arising from the Meeting

Action #1 – European Data Management: A joint paper will be developed by ICES, EEA, HELCOM, and OSPAR outlining the shared vision for regional and European data management looking towards 2018 and the second round of MSFD reporting.. Responsible: Secretariat.

Action #2 – MSFD Scientific Governance Landscape: A limited/simple mapping exercise of higher level groups will be provided to help decision-makers obtain an overview of the scientific governance landscape and possible options for organizing MSFD-related science. There will be an emphasis on identifying potential overlaps and duplications, as well as gaps and missing infrastructure. Responsible: Secretariat and CSG-MSFD, making use of input to be provided by DG ENV.

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Action #4 - COMPLETED - Pre-Communication with Marine Directors – ICES Contribution to the CIS: A letter for circulation at the meeting of Marine Directors, 30–31 May in Ireland, will be prepared signalling ICES intention to provide input to the

draft EU Future Priorities document and the associated Common Implementation Strategy (CIS). Responsible: Eugene Nixon and Chair, Bill Turrell.²

Action #5 – ICES Contribution to the CIS: Given the Marine Director's support following Action 43, this should then be followed up with a paper outlining ICES contribution to the Common Implementation Strategy, within the ICES context of the renewal of the ICES Strategic Plan, and prior to the meeting of the Marine Directors, (jointly with Water and Nature Directors) on 3–6 December 2013; Responsible: CSG-MSFD, ACOM, SCICOM, Secretariat

Input to Meeting of EU Environmental Ministers – 18 June 2013

ICES received an orientation paper, prepared by the IE EU Presidency, which included some questions for discussion during a Ministerial lunch in the Environmental Council, Luxemburg 18 June 2013.

At the end of the paper, there were three questions, reading as follows:

1. The 'Blue Growth' agenda has drawn attention to the economic potential of our oceans. What can Environment Ministers do to ensure the sustainable development of our marine waters? How can synergies with Our Green Growth policy be achieved?
2. With work under the MSFD moving towards agreeing on concrete measures to attain or maintain GES by 2020, how can we ensure that objectives in other relevant policy areas such as fisheries, energy or transport, contribute to this goal?
3. Because of the transboundary nature of the marine environment, cooperation between Member States, including outside the EU, is of central importance to the MSFD. How can we make best possible use of the important role of bodies such as the Regional Seas Conventions and ICES in this context?

In response, the Secretariat prepared a package of material to explain further the role of ICES. The package consisted of:

- ICES and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive – Providing the science needed for implementation (colour A4 fold-out)
- Secretariat paper - ICES scientific and advisory services of relevance to the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- One page summary of ICES

²The letter was sent on 13 May 2013. Full text given in Annex 1 of this report.

³ Reply received from Marine Directors accepting ICES offer of input to next meeting in Lithuania

JRC Guidance Document on MSFD Monitoring

DG ENV has asked the JRC to prepare a Guidance Document on MSFD Monitoring. Preparing this, the JRC invited ICES to contribute by drafting a chapter 5 on the Descriptor 3 (Commercially exploited fish and shellfish populations). Involving four experts from UK, Germany, and Italy the ICES Secretariat delivered the requested chapter in September. The draft Guidance document will be presented at the WG GES meeting in October 2013.

MSFD and the ICES Strategic Plan – June 2013

The CSG-MSFD carried out two actions in the first half of 2013 in relation to the inclusion of the MSFD in the new ICES Strategic Plan. These were:

Secretariat Paper to Bureau Working Group on ICES Strategic Plan (BWGRISP)

A paper was presented to the BWGRISP outlining the science activities related to the MSFD for consideration in drawing up the new ICES Strategic Plan.

Delegates Paper to Bureau Working Group on ICES Strategic Plan (BWGISP)

This paper lay out some “food for thought” for the WGISP. Principle points made were as follows:

1. Mechanisms to be considered to enhance MSFD actions within ICES:
 - Joint JRC / STECF / SG-MSFD / RSC / ICES Resource planning and timetabling of work
 - Joint JRC / STECF / SG-MSFD / RSC / ICES Expert Groups / Workshops
 - Joint JRC / STECF / SG-MSFD / RSC / ICES Conferences / Symposia
2. ICES strategy for MFSD needs to be clarified and “lines to take” need to be clearly defined.
3. ICES needs to implement an operational steering structure on MSFD to organize internally and coherently the flux of information across EGs and the Data Centre for achieving at regional scale: coordinated monitoring, delivery of products, assessments and evaluation of measures. This could be provided by a continuation of the CSG-MSFD in some form.
4. It is essential that the ICES Strategic Plan 2014–2018, and the four sub-plans (Science, Advice, Data and Secretariat) all have “hooks” upon which to hang MSFD-related science and advice development. These should be:
 - clear and transparent to readers of each Plan
 - coordinated between plans

- as specific as possible, with a small number of high level, real targets and deliverables (an example of one such specific high level ICES deliverable is given below)
- to the extent possible be relevant to non-EU ICES Member States
- clearly define the MSFD policy referred to in sections 1 and 2 above.

5. A showcase study should be considered to start the process of coordinated and integrated GES monitoring. At present monitoring at regional seas level lacks overall integration and coordination. Noting that current projects / initiatives are all aimed at developing the theoretical implementation of an integrated survey rather than an actual one, it is therefore suggested that consideration in the Science Plan should be given to set up an ICES coordinated integrated MSFD pilot survey at a regional seas level, possibly the North Sea. This could build on a past history of ICES-coordinated joint surveys (e.g. the JONSIS surveys of the 1970s)

6. The specific high level MSFD targets and deliverables that should be placed into the ICES Strategic Plan, and its associated Science, Advice, Data, and Secretariat plans will form the work plan that the ICES President has committed to providing the European Marine Directors by their meeting of 13 December 2013.

7. As a final suggestion, the CSG-MSFD suggested that Bureau might like to consider how the new ICES planning cycle aligns with the implementation timetable of the MSFD.

ICES Input to EC Meeting on Black Sea – June 2013

On 21 June 2013 a meeting took place between EC/DG ENV (including representatives from EEA, JRC, and ICES – the General Secretary) and representatives from the Romanian and Bulgarian ministries of environment and water management, as well as their associated agencies.

The meeting was a follow-up to the meeting of Marine Directors in Dublin, Ireland on 30–31 May, recommending that the MSFD Common Implementation Strategy (MSFD CIS) could contain specific components for each of the four European Marine Regions. One of the potential outcomes of this process could be a revision of the Commission Decision of 1 September 2010 on criteria and methodological standards on good environmental status of marine waters, through establishment of regional sets of criteria while at the same time ensuring a certain level of inter-regional comparability.

The plan for the development of the MSFD CIS, to which ICES will also give its input following considerations by the October Council meeting, is as follows:

- Marine Strategy Coordination Group (MSCG) meeting on 6–7 November, to consider and agree on a number of issues in the MSFD CIS;
- Marine Directors meeting, on 4–5 December to agree on MSFD CIS, detailing arrangements between Member States and to outline and

propose arrangements for consideration by the Regional Seas Commissions;

- The MSFD CIS will contain the overall structure, and the annexes will detail the work to be carried out in the four European Seas.

The meeting was meant as a start of the preparations for the Black Sea annex to the MSFD CIS. Though it was important to define the Black Sea activities in the Annex, it was of similar importance to define the mechanisms, and processes, as well as the responsible partners, who would contribute to the implementation of the activities.

With the upcoming deadline; July 2014, for monitoring programmes, EC specifically stated their possibility to financially support activities to this end. EC stressed, that while monitoring programmes should be in place by the deadline, it was also acceptable and expected to outline short and long-term strategies for further development of these programmes.

In preparing the monitoring programmes, it was considered important to;

- ensure documentation, through a (simple) joint information system, which could be used both for internal (coordination between Bulgarian and Rumanian authorities) and external (public consultation) purposes (EEA suggested making use of the EIONET and the National Responsible Contacts (NRCs));
- ensure that this documentation (f.i., in the form of fact sheets) could be used for reporting purposes;
- ensure a multifaceted process, touching on a range of issues, while at the same time delivering specific products (workshops and training programmes; capacity building and concrete deliverables).

Among the issues brought forward by Bulgaria and Romania, and the EC, the following were of specific interest for ICES/touching on ICES core competences:

- Aquaculture (note; with the announcement in April 2013 of the European Commission Strategic Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture

(http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/aquaculture/official_documents/com_2013_229_en.pdf), DG ENV and

DG MARE is now preparing workshops in the four marine regions, starting September this year. The workshops will focus on competitiveness and environmental impacts, and the relation to both the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the MSFD);

- Infrastructure needs for carrying out monitoring programmes (no. of monitoring stations, other means than ship time, international coordination of RV surveys, QA, etc.) (note; this will serve as the technical basis for Bulgaria and Rumania when establishing their financial needs, and inserting to their national EU financial support programmes /operational programmes);

- Components of an integrated ecosystem based monitoring system / fisheries RV surveys and how to extend and include also additional environmental parameters, cf. CFP/DCF/DC-MAP and EMFF;
- Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and fisheries.

The suggested processes to deal with the above issues were;

- through workshops and/or
- training programmes.

ICES and the MSFD Common Implementation Strategy

Following the meeting between CSG-MSFD / OSPAR / HELCOM / DG-ENV /EEA and on the recommendation of the CSG-MSFD a letter was sent from the President to the EU Marine Directors (MDs), responsible for the implementation of the MSFD in their respective Member States This letter requested the MDs to accept a more detailed contribution from ICES on how ICES could input to the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) work programme which will be discussed at their December meeting. This was very well received by the MDs as is recorded in the report of their meeting. The proposed ICES input to the CIS MSFD work programme is contained in a separate document (cf. CM 2013 Del-03.2).

Annex 1 – Text of Letter from ICES President to Marine Directors

Subject: ICES and the MSFD

To Marine Directors,

The focus of this communication is first to provide the Marine Directors with a brief background of how current ICES activities could contribute, in an efficient, cost effective, and coordinated manner to the efforts of Member States (MS), Regional Seas Commissions (RSC), and the European Commission (EC) in implementing the MSFD. The communication then proposes that ICES, consulting with the RSCs, will prepare a more detailed work plan describing the contributions ICES can make to the Common Implementation Strategy work programme.

ICES would be grateful if the Marine Directors would take note of this communication and agree to accept a further more detailed contribution from ICES to the Common Implementation Strategy Work programme at their December meeting.

Background

ICES is an intergovernmental scientific organisation providing data and information services, science, and advice to its Member States and to the Regional Seas Commissions, the Regional Fisheries Commissions, and the European Union on a wide range of marine issues. These include how human activities affect marine ecosystems, how ecosystems affect human activities, options for management measures, as well as integrated monitoring and integrated ecosystem assessments of the North East Atlantic, the North Sea, the Bay of Biscay, and the Baltic Sea.

The majority of ICES Member States are EU countries and much of the scientific work needed to deliver the requirements of the MSFD is carried out by scientists involved in the ICES network.

ICES is in the process of regionalising its advice and building the scientific foundation for regional ecosystem advice and would, therefore, like to offer its services as a contribution to the implementation of the MSFD.

ICES is a key forum for scientific exchange and coordination regarding marine ecosystems and the marine environment and serves, in this context, an important role as coordinator of international data collection and facilitator of access to marine data. An example of this is that ICES every year coordinates and receives data from over 1200 ship days at sea, from 109 surveys, with

extensive dataset collections accessible via online web portals which can be displayed both thematically and geographically.

The recent European Commission Workshop on Descriptor 3+ recommended that the Commission consider inviting ICES to inter alia prepare “a detailed contribution to the future Common Implementation Strategy work programme as regards activities and deliverables that ICES would be able to prepare”.

ICES and the Common Implementation Strategy

On 25 April 2013, ICES met with the EC/DG ENV, European Environment Agency, HELCOM, and OSPAR (apologies were received from the Black Sea and Barcelona Commissions who supported the meeting but could not attend due to

a schedule conflict) to explore further how the data and information, scientific, and advisory work of ICES could better support the European Commission, Member States, and RSCs in their implementation of the MSFD. There is a clear understanding within ICES that Member States have limited scientific, vessel, and financial resources and that efficiencies must be identified and acted upon to meet the increasing demands on these limited resources.

During the discussions DG ENV tabled the Draft MSFD Common Implementation Strategy – future priorities (MSCG/10/2013/4) and invited ICES to consider submitting a contribution to the Common Implementation Strategy.

Proposal – Contribution to December 2013 Marine Directors Meeting

Building on the success of a number of recent requests for advice and initiatives such as the D3+ Process, ICES welcomes this invitation and will, in consultation with the four RSCs, make such a submission to the Marine Directors' December 2013 meeting.

Sincerely,

Paul Connolly

ICES President

cc. OSPAR Secretariat

HELCOM Secretariat

UNEP Coordinating Unit for MAP

Black Sea Commission Secretariat

Annex 2 – ICES activities through 2012/2013 in relation to the work of the CSG–MSFD

Summary of 2012/2013 MSFD-related ICES Activities

Documents referred to in the table below can be found on the CSG MSFD SharePoint site (<https://groupnet.ices.dk/csgmsfd/default.aspx>).

Who?	When?	What?	Outcome
2012			
ICES Secretariat	Nov 7-8	JRC Workshop on Biodiversity	Claus and Han gave presentations
ICES Member Institutes	Dec	EU MSFD Integrated Survey call	1) Baltic and North Sea/Celtic Sea consortia put in bids. ICES tried to be involved.
2013			
ICES (Data and Information Centre) EEA	2013-2018	Topic Centre of the Inland, Coastal and Marine waters (ETC-ICM)	ICES is a partner in the Europe Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine Waters – for the component dealing with the Water Information System for Europe (WISE)-Marine for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
CSG-MSFD (Chair)	Jan 15-16	MIRIA Meeting	1) Presentation – Doc 01 2) Presentation from DG-ENV [Doc 02]
CSG-MSFD	Jan	WGCHAIRS	1) Presentation [Doc 03]
ICES President ICES Secretariat	Feb 6	Meeting with DG-ENV	1) Initiated contacts 2) Learnt of DG-ENV MSFD Conference 2014/2015

			<p>3) ICES Presented various issues related to our MSFD work, including information on the Integrated Ecosystem Assessments, the ecosystem overviews, and Initial outline of ICES MSFD indicator work, cf point 2 in document 6</p> <p>4) Outcomes summarised in Doc 04</p>
ICES Secretariat	March	Project Coordination Group (PCG)	Claus invited to give presentation on Marine Litter
ICES Secretariat	Apr	EC Workshop D3+	ICES was requested to arrange the WK and provide speakers.
CSG-MSFD (Part) OSPAR (Science Agenda Task Group)	Apr	Science Agenda for MSFD	1) Document submitted to OSPAR CoG [Doc 05]
CSG-MSFD (part)	Mar 12	CSG-MSFD meeting with ICES President	<p>1) Finalised CSG-MSFD membership (Annex 1)</p> <p>2) Finalised CSG-MSFD ToRs (Annex 2)</p> <p>3) Provisional agendas for April 24/25 meetings</p>
CSG-MSFD	Apr 24	Meeting of CSG-MSFD	1) Minutes [Doc 07]
CSG-MSFD OSPAR HELCOM	Apr 25	Workshop with partners CSG-MSFD / OSPAR / HELCOM / DG-ENV	<p>1) ICES Paper presented [Doc 06] - organised around 6 themes:</p> <p>1 - Ecosystem overviews [YVONNE AND MARK D-C]</p> <p>2 - Indicators/Criteria [MARK D-C]</p>

EU Commission			<p>3 – ICES Coordinated Surveys [DAVE REID / NILS OLAV]</p> <p>4 - ICES Data Services [NEIL HOLDSWORTH]</p> <p>5 - Assessment tools and cumulative effects [CLAUS]</p> <p>6 - Programmes of measures [POUL DEGNBOL]</p> <p>2) Report [Doc 08]</p>
ICES President CSG-MSFD		Letter to Marine Directors	<p>1) A principal action from the 25 April partner's workshop was the requirement for ICES to send input to the forthcoming meeting of the Marine Directors under the Irish Presidency.</p> <p>2) This was completed. The letter offered further input to the December meeting of the Marine Directors [Doc 09]</p> <p>3) Marine Directors replied in June accepting ICES offer [Doc 11]</p>
ICES Member Institutes	May	EU MSFD Integrated Survey call	<p>1) Successful bids announced (1. Baltic/BALSAM project (ICES has been contracted to a specific task under the WP 2 "Promoting resource-efficiency in national monitoring strategies"); 2. North Sea Celtic Sea; 3. IRIS SEB (Medsea/BS)</p> <p>2) Budgets reduced to 71% of that requested</p> <p>3) Consortia reorganise to account for cuts</p>
ICES Advice	June 6	First part of response to European Commission on DC-MAP, and the integration of information needs for CFP and MSFD.	See EU request - Scientific advice on data collection issues
CSG-MSFD	Jun	Paper to Bureau Sub-Group on ICES Strategic Plan	<p>1) Prepared by Secretariat</p> <p>2) Submitted to Bureau sub-group Doc 10</p>

CSG-MSFD Secretariat	Jun	Submission to EU Meeting of Environmental Ministers (lunch discussions) – not activated	<p>1) orientation paper received from IE presidency with 3 questions relating to the future orientation of the MSFD</p> <p>2) ICES responds by sending in package of summary information on ICES MSFD activities [Doc 12A, B, C]</p>
ICES General Secretary	Jun 21	Meeting between EC / Romania / Bulgaria on the Black Sea	<p>1) ICES joined EC delegation</p> <p>2) Gen Sec reported back to Council [Doc 13]</p> <p>One outcome was a request for training, a workshop on how to deal with CIS one in Bulgaria and one in Romania. ICES will organize this in 2014.</p>
ICES Secretariat	Jun	EC Workshop – MSFD Measures	<p>1) Organised by Working Group on Economic and Social Assessments (ESA WG) in collaboration with the GES WG</p> <p>No ICES participation or input</p>
CSG-MSFD Delegates	Jul	Paper to Bureau Sub-Group on ICES Strategic Plan	<p>1) From the Delegates sitting on CSG-MSFD</p> <p>2) A food-for-thought paper</p> <p>3) Principle points summarised in report text.</p>
ICES Secretariat	Jul	JRC Guidance on Monitoring	<p>1) Secretariat organized ICES input to the manual.</p> <p>2) Draft provided 15 June on D3. Revised draft early September. Will be discussed at the WG GES.</p>

CSG-MSFD	Sep	MSFD Common Implementation Strategy	<p>1) Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Common Implementation Strategy Consultation Document following Marine Directors of 30 May 2013 [Doc 14A]</p> <p>2) ICES Secretariat added comments [Doc 14B] in prep</p>
CSG-MSFD	Sep 23	ICES ASC Meeting of CSG-MSFD	Preparation of the report by the CSG to the Council as well as discussion on the input by ICES to the CIS MSFD document, for the Marine Directors.
ICES Member Institutes	Oct	EU MSFD Integrated Survey call	1) Official kick-off meetings and contracts signed, see above.

Summary of Future MSFD-related ICES Activities / Incomplete Actions

Who?	When?	What?	What is needed now?
ICES Advice	October 2013	Second part of response to European Commission on DC-MAP, and the integration of information needs for CFP and MSFD.	WKDCF-NF t 8-10 October followed by Advisory process with advice release date 8 November.
DG-ENV	2014/2015	Conference on MSFD - roadmap for the way forward for 2018–second MSFD implementation cycle	1) Discussed at Feb 2013 meeting between President and DG-ENV. 2) Discuss again at next meeting (conference or Theme session at ASC 2014?)
Secretariat		Action #1 – April 25 Partners Workshop	European Data Management: A joint paper will be developed by ICES, EEA, HELCOM, and OSPAR outlining the shared vision for regional and European data management looking towards 2018 and the second round of MSFD reporting.
Secretariat CSG-MSFD DG ENV		Action #2	MSFD Scientific Governance Landscape: A limited/simple mapping exercise of higher level groups will be provided to help decision-makers obtain an overview of the scientific governance landscape and possible options for organizing MSFD-related science. There will be an emphasis on identifying potential overlaps and duplications, as well as gaps and missing infrastructure.
Secretariat	Ongoing	Action #3 –April 25 Partners Workshop	ICES/RSC Communication: Follow-up the current meeting by providing bilateral feedback to the Black Sea and Mediterranean RSCs, and learn more about

			their needs. Maintain dialogue with all RSCs. Encourage the ICES Secretariat to further develop and strengthen the operational and strategic partnerships with Regional Sea Conventions with regards to the MSFD, taking note of existing cooperation agreements.
CSG-MSFD, ACOM, SCICOM, Secretariat	Dec 2013	Action #5 – April 25 Partners Workshop	ICES Contribution to the CIS: a paper outlining ICES contribution to the Common Implementation Strategy, within the ICES context of the renewal of the ICES Strategic Plan, and prior to the meeting of the Marine Directors, (jointly with Water and Nature Directors) on 3–6 December 2013

Annex 3 - Council Steering Group on the MSFD 2013 Membership

Bill Turrell	ICES Delegate (Chair)	UK
Gerd Kraus	ICES Delegate	Germany
Eugene Nixon	ICES Delegate	Ireland
Pierre Petitgas	ICES Delegate	France
Dave Reid	Chair Regional Seas Steering Committee / Chair WGECCO	Ireland
Nils Olav Handegard	Chair Ecosystem Surveys Science and Technology (SSGESST)	Norway
Yvonne Walther	ICES National Expert	Sweden
Carlos Vale	ICES National Expert	Portugal
Mark Tasker	ACOM Vice-Chair	UK

External Participants

Heike Imhoff	Chair of HELCOM Group for the Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach	HELCOM
Wera Leujak	Scientist. (HELCOM/OSPAR German representative)	HELCOM OSPAR
David Connor	DG-ENV	DG-ENV
Emily Corcoran	OSPAR	OSPAR
Maria Laamanen	HELCOM	HELCOM

ICES Secretariat

Anne Christine Brusendorff	ICES General Secretary
Claus Hagebro	ICES Environmental Advisor

Mark Dickey-Collas	ICES Ecosystems Advisor
Ellen Johannesen	ICES Secretariat
Neil Holdsworth	ICES Head of Data
Poul Degnbol	ICES Head of Advice

Annex 4 – Terms of Reference CSG–MSFD 2013

1. To identify the principle elements of ICES work that are relevant to the implementation of the MSFD, and to consider how best the internal coordination of these elements can be achieved.
2. To consider how current or new working arrangements with Client Commissions, principally the European Commission, OSPAR, and HELCOM, may be best used to link the ICES Science and Advice structures to those of the Regional Seas Conventions so that ICES can provide appropriate input to the continuing MSFD process.
3. To consider how best ICES can contribute to the development of integrated surveys and monitoring in support of the MSFD.
4. To consider the potential role of ICES in developing advice concerning the outcomes of possible programmes of measures which will be needed to ensure GES is reached at the regional level.
5. To create the opportunity to co-convene an MSFD related symposium in 2014 / 2015 with recipients of ICES advice.
6. To advise the Bureau working group on the ICES Strategic Plan (ISP) on MSFD activities that should be included in the 2013-2018 ISP and associated Science, Advice, Secretariat and Data Plans.