

PROPOSAL FOR A SECOND ENVIRONMENTAL DIALOGUE MEETING

Action requested

Based on the proposal below, Delegates are invited to offer their views on the usefulness of holding the proposed Environmental Dialogue Meeting. If it is agreed that such a meeting should be held, expressions of interest in hosting it are welcomed. As indicated below, the proposed timing for the one and one-half day meeting would be towards the end of 2003 or the beginning of 2004 (November to February).

Introduction

Over the past two decades, ICES has sponsored a series of Dialogue Meetings to discuss issues relating to the advisory process with Partner Commissions and stakeholders. As a follow-up to the most recent Dialogue Meeting (in September 2000), the Consultative Committee requested ACE to prepare a proposal for a Dialogue Meeting that picked up on the theme of developing advice in relation to an ecosystem approach to management. ACE prepared such a proposal at its first meeting, in August 2001. This proposal was given some consideration during the Statutory Meeting in 2001, but no further action was taken at that time. Subsequently, several major activities have taken place that have given cause for some amendment to the original proposal. The proposal set out below considers issues and questions to be addressed at such a meeting and further planning beyond the meeting. Each ICES Member Country will be invited to send three participants; in addition, participation will be invited from environmental and fisheries Partner Commissions, as well as from other relevant organizations.

Background

The Twelfth Dialogue Meeting, held in Bonn in September 2000, was also the first Environmental Dialogue Meeting. The following comments (ICES Cooperative Research Report, No. 243) were made during the meeting:

“The biological couplings and the multiple human impacts in open marine ecosystems are the main reasons why we need a holistic and integrated approach to our studies and management of marine ecosystems. The integration involves two different aspects or levels. The first level is the ecosystem, where we need to take into full account the integrated nature of marine ecosystems with their biological couplings and climatic driving forces. The second level is the management system where there is need for integration through close cooperation between the various sectoral management branches. These two levels of integration are the main principles and pillars of an Ecosystem Approach....”

The Fifth International Conference on the Protection of the North Sea (Bergen, March 2002), in adopting the Bergen Declaration, gave further impetus to placing scientific research and advice, and management decision-making, into an ecosystem context. The Bergen Declaration explicitly states in Paragraph 2 that:

“The Ministers therefore **agree** to implement an ecosystem approach by identifying and taking action on influences which are critical to the health of the North Sea ecosystem. In particular, they **agree** that management will be guided by the conceptual framework set out in Annex 2, which includes:

- the development of general and operational environmental goals;
- best use of available scientific and technical knowledge about the structure and function of the ecosystem;
- best use of scientific advice;
- integrated expert assessment;
- coordinated and integrated monitoring;
- involvement of all stakeholders; and
- policy decisions and control and enforcement.”

The Bergen Declaration contains a number of specific references to the role of ICES in the provision of the necessary scientific support for implementation, including work with appropriate Ministries and OSPAR to:

“develop focused research and information gathering which address the driving forces of North Sea ecosystems variability, including climatic, biological and human factors” (3-i)

“share[d] integrated expert advice and assessments of the North Sea, including marine resources, environmental and socio-economic factors” (3-ii)

“develop operational ecological quality objectives” (4)

“establish a management regime for deep sea fisheries in the North East Atlantic and implement it on the basis of ICES advice” (15)

To fulfill this important scientific advisory role, ICES must continue to engage in frequent and constructive dialogue with appropriate officials in Ministries and management agencies.

The Bergen Declaration gives particular attention to taking a broader and more conservation-oriented approach to fisheries management.

Much has been written about the principles that should underlie an ecosystem approach to fisheries management. These principles apply also for the most part to the broader concept of providing advice on ocean management.

Sissenwine and Mace (2001) suggest that the key elements of the approach should include (amongst others) decision-making that is participatory and transparent, as well as management support including scientific information, enforcement, and performance evaluation. The authors suggest that (Fisheries) Ecosystem Plans are a useful vehicle for designing and implementing (fisheries) management systems. Such Plans should highlight a hierarchy of management entities from the ecosystem scale to the local scale of communities.

The ideas arising from the First Environmental Dialogue meeting and underlying the provisions of the Bergen Declaration form a sound and important basis for a Second Environmental Dialogue Meeting.

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR A DIALOGUE MEETING ON
THE ROLE OF ICES TO PROVIDE SCIENTIFIC ADVICE
ON AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO OCEAN MANAGEMENT

Steering Committee

Chair: Michael Sissenwine (First Vice-President)
Stig Carlberg (Chair of ACME)
Incoming Chair of ACFM
Hein Rune Skjoldal (Chair of ACE)
Gerd Hubold (Chair of MCAP)
Jake Rice (Chair of CONC)
Representative of EC DG FISH
Representative of EC DG Environment
Representative of OSPAR
Representative of IBSFC
Representative of HELCOM
ICES General Secretary
ICES Fisheries Adviser
ICES Environment Adviser

**PLENARY SESSION – THE EVOLUTION FROM SINGLE-ISSUE- TO ECOSYSTEM-
BASED MANAGEMENT**

Lecture topics may include:

A) Introductory lecture – The new Declarations – Reykjavik, Bergen, Johannesburg, Copenhagen, and what they mean for science and management of marine ecosystems

[Potential speaker: a person who is familiar with these declarations, who is aware of the obligations that these declarations put on the countries; possibly Fritz Holzwarth]

B) Governance for Responsible Management of Marine Resources: an Ecosystem Approach –

[Potential speaker from New Zealand or Australia, who can speak of the approaches that have been used in that region for some time.]

C) Governance for Protection of the Marine Environment from Anthropogenic Impacts (e.g., pollution, eutrophication, oil and gas exploitation)

[Potential speaker: Alan Simcock]

D) Scientific advice to support an ecosystem approach and Limits to Knowledge in an Ecosystem Approach

[Possibly a director (with a scientific background) from an environmental protection agency who receive advice based on science, who can see shortcomings, and who can indicate how the scientific advice should be modified to suit the requirements.]

SIMULTANEOUS WORKSHOPS in the afternoon

Each workshop to begin with two lectures followed by discussion.

Workshop 1: Precautionary Reference Points in an Integrated Ecosystem Management context

This would include both how the traditional reference points used in fisheries advice might change and what other types of reference points would likely be added. This should bring in the North Sea Conference outputs, with its commitment to advance work on EcoQs and EcoQOs, and should draw extensively from the text around the EcoQ/EcoQO test in the Bergen Declaration and its annexes. The ICES terminology on reference points and the developing terminology on EcoQOs should be reviewed with the aim of, by the end of the Meeting, having all of ICES and all the clients thinking the same way. It is unlikely that agreement could be reached on what numbers are right, but agreement on the concepts and how science interfaces directly with management in their selection would be a major step forward.

Workshop 2: Scientific advice in ecosystem management

There are two topics to be discussed: 1) what science is required, and 2) the organisation of the provision of advice. While development of the necessary science is a technical issue, the scientific topics to be dealt with have a larger remit, e.g., incorporating fisher's knowledge in the assessments. With an ecosystem approach, the advisory process must be expanded and it must be considered who will participate at which level. It will also cover the role of Partner Commissions, managers, the industry, and NGOs in this process. So far, ICES has been treating this to be decided from the top down, and perhaps the decision has to be at that level. However, the decision should be based on the best balance of costs and benefits of different degrees of openness. The workshop should identify what the costs and benefits really are, avoiding to the extent possible speculation, stereotyping, and fear mongering. This workshop could cover the following types of questions: What new types of science are required? What can ICES do to accommodate participation and transparency in its advisory processes? How can this be helpful in the interpretation of advice and implementation by management? How can this promote acceptance by stakeholders? What might be the impacts on the management decision-making that uses the scientific advice? What are particular issues of concern, for which this would apply?

Workshop 3: Ecosystem Management in the Coastal Zone

Every theme in the Bergen Declaration comes into play in the management of coastal zones. Coastal zone management presents the most complex problems, because the multiple uses for recreation, mariculture, fisheries, energy, shipping, aggregate extraction, etc., are most intensively compounded in the presence of histories of past pollution, nutrient enrichment, and other abuses. Scientific advice and management decisions receive the highest scrutiny as well, because so many industries and coastal residents are affected directly. The need for integrated ecosystem management is greatest in regard to coastal zones. However, requests for scientific advice in such contexts are infrequent, and the ICES handling of such requests tends to be *ad hoc* and opportunistic. This discrepancy between need and practice is a disservice to all parties: science advisors, coastal zone managers, and the public, as well as marine coastal ecosystems. Frequently, managers seem to have particular difficulties framing clear requests for advice. The root causes of the discrepancy need to be identified and addressed so that a way may be found for fruitful and effective scientific input to the integrated ecosystem management process in the coastal zone. All these issues need candid dialogue among ICES representatives, environmental managers, and key members of the public.

Proposed Timetable

Day 1

9.00	Opening of the meeting, Welcome
9.15	Plenary Session I
11.00	Break
11.30	Discussion
12.30	Lunch
14.00	Simultaneous Workshops
17.00	Close of business

Day 2

9.30	Presentation of results of Workshops
10.30	Discussion
11.00	Break
11.45	Development of overall conclusions and recommendations for future actions
12.15	Final remarks and closing of the Dialogue Meeting

Planning Schedule

October 2002	Decision by Council (including determining host and venue)
November 2002	First meeting of Steering Group (decision of final plan, proposals for speakers)
December 2002	Contacting speakers and finalizing roster of speakers
February 2003	Second meeting of Steering Group, including speakers; finalization of programme
March 2003	Distribution of invitations
January/February 2004	Dialogue Meeting

Relevant literature

- ICES. 2000. Report of the 12th ICES Dialogue Meeting (First Environmental Dialogue Meeting). ICES Cooperative Research Report, No. 243.
- NRC. 1997. Striking a balance: Improving stewardship of marine areas. National Academy Press, Washington, DC. 177pp.
- Sissenwine, M.P., and Mace, P M. 2001. Governance for responsible fisheries: an ecosystem approach. To be presented at FAO Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem, 1–4 October 2001, Reykjavik, Iceland.