

Report of the Mariculture Committee (MCC)

Chair: Ian Bricknell, UK

Rapporteur: D. Bengtson

Attendance

Committee members present: I. Bricknell (Chair, UK), T. Sephton, A. Mortensen, T. Matinan, T. Lang, D. Bengtson, and R. Hanel.

WG Chairs: P. Cranford and E. E. Nielsen

Observers: T. Barbar, J. Stevens, A. Griffis, G. Machand-Schiaffino, and B. Stockhemse.

Regrets: Sharon MacLean and Francis O'Beirn.

Opening and introduction

The meeting began at 08: 35 with attendees, committee members, and observers introducing themselves. The Chair presented a brief overview of the Mariculture Committee and its role, function, and structure within ICES for the benefit of those attending.

Adoption of agenda and timetable

The meeting timetable and agenda were circulated prior to the meeting, discussed briefly and adopted.

Appointment of Rapporteur

D. Bengtson was proposed as Rapporteur and accepted by the Committee.

Arrangements for MCC meeting, and 2007 ASC

The MCC meeting was partitioned over two working days:

Part I: Monday, 17 September 2007, 08: 30–12: 00 Selim Room, Scandic Grand Marina Hotel, Helsinki, Finland

Part II: Wednesday, 19 September 2007, 14: 00–18: 00 Selim Room, Scandic Grand Marina Hotel, Helsinki, Finland.

The MCC Report is due by COB Saturday, 22 September 2007.

Other information items concerning the ASC included:

Appointment of the MCC member of the awards committee;

Revised theme session for Halifax 2008 on Shellfish Carrying Capacity.

MCC Committee business

Matters arising from Consultative Committee and Advisory Committees

Science Strategy – where should MCC go?

T. Lang pointed out that the strategy for the MCC will depend on the restructuring of ICES science, but that we should identify ideas. T. Sephton remarked that we have well functioning working groups that report to MCC via WG Chairs. How the WGs are organized is independent of the advice that moves forward. ICES is called upon to provide synthesis and

advice, from WGs to Science Committees to Advisory Committees, and currently the Science Committees just serve as a filter. The WG advice should just go directly to the clients, but then the Science Committees no longer provide long-term strategy to the WGs. I. Bricknell agreed that the MCC role should change to become a gentle guide to the WGs (e.g. the recent identification of the Fish Welfare WG to replace the old WGMAFC, which had finished its work). R. Hanel noted that this means shifting emphasis to WGs, so that they are more driven by the WG Chairs. Consideration should be given to the fusion of the Science Committees into a framework that makes sense. I. Bricknell summarized that we felt the MCC should change by serving primarily to provide broad strategy and therefore having a lighter touch on the WG work. Of the current WGs in MCC, WGEIM, WGMASC, and WGPDMO are to varying degrees ecological in nature and could provide advice in a context beyond just mariculture. WGAGFM could provide advice anywhere. D. Bengtson noted that both fishery and aquaculture practices will have to become more ecologically oriented. P. Cranford pointed out that there may be lots of overlap with other WGs as we become more ecological, so that integration of our work with other WGs needs to be done. T. Sephton said that that was the role of the Consultative Committee – Science Committee Chairs should go back to WGs and tell them to pay attention to the work of other particular WGs. T. Lang said that we should make a strong point saying whether we need or don't need the MCC anymore, to be recorded in the minutes. E. Nielsen asked what the alternative would be if the MCC were disbanded. T. Sephton argued that MCC needs a Chair and some others to coordinate activity, especially the WG chairs should serve on the MCC. Two members opined that we need an MCC so that personal opinions of WG chairs don't completely drive the agenda. WG Chairs should identify new members for their WGs and for the MCC).

Finally, the MCC decided that a) MCC should continue to exist, b) the MCC structure should be revised to emphasize the role of WG chairs and any additional country representatives, and c) the role should be to provide long-term strategy for the WGs and to oversee the science needed, and also to integrate information with other ICES Committees. The WGs then continue to develop ToRs. T. Lang noted that the MCC (via the WGs) should come up with some kind of science product, publishing comprehensive reviews of mariculture science. If MCC, for example, published reports on best mariculture practices, T. Sephton wondered whether governments would use that or whether they would develop their own.

Discussion on the reform process

As we look forward, what themes should we emphasize? As carrying capacity is of interest T. Lang thought we might propose a study group with a 3-year lifetime. There was general speculation on the current status of the reform process. T. Lang noted that there are actually two reforms occurring. The Advisory structure will probably change so that WGs will be given more importance in generating advice. Review groups will review that advice and then pass it on for approval by the single Advisory Committee. I. Bricknell pointed out that this will put pressure on WGs to produce work in a more timely fashion. T. Sephton argued that individual countries would then have to provide their ICES scientists more time to do ICES work (i.e. ICES work would have to be given a higher priority). T. Lang responded that the workload should not increase; it should just be more focused. T. Sephton noted that someone from the WG needs to “accompany” the advice document as it moves forward. T. Lang replied that the new system would do this. The WG Chair will be a member of the review group. It is envisioned that the Advice Management Group would consist of 4 people: the WG Chair plus 3 senior managers and they will transmit the ICES advice to clients. I. Bricknell noted that it is likely that mariculture will not be well represented in that group outside the WG Chair. T. Lang pointed out that the Advisory Group will deal with requests coming from clients who pay for advice. E. Nielsen then noted that advice may be generated by WGs, but may not go anywhere. The question is, what happens to unrequested advice? I. Bricknell replied that unrequested advice is usually quite good and that members of the WGs are enthusiastic about

producing it; if the advice is not wanted, WG members may be less willing to participate in WGs. We should get information out via scientific publications. If we produced a review every 5 years, that would be quite valuable. It would be useful if we could produce a pamphlet for each ToR that would then go on the website, associated with the MCC. E. Nielsen pointed out that the ICES magazine is always looking for material, so we could also place information there. T. Lang said that the product should have more weight, i.e. some kind of report coming from the MCC. He then asked about the reform process for the structure of science within ICES. I. Bricknell replied that it is up for grabs and the process still has a long way to go. These are major topics at the ConC this weekend. T. Lang said that the major discussion will be on the ConC structure; there may be a second science committee meeting during the year, perhaps tied in with the spring ConC meeting. P. Cranford wondered about the review process (for advice, with the WG Chair as part of the Advisory Management Group) and how much extra work that would mean for WG Chairs. Given the workload, fewer people may volunteer to be WG chairs. I. Bricknell said he has been vocal about that at the ConC meetings. E. Nielsen offered the opinion that this would depend on whether the meetings were valuable or just endless talking. P. Cranford noted that WGs would have to integrate more with other WGs; perhaps a WG vice-chair could help to handle the various responsibilities.

Cooperation with World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

ICES has received a request for cooperation from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). A. Kellermann explained that ICES needs to develop alliances with partners and that OIE has a lot to offer ICES. They have offices in Paris and 5 regional offices, with 170 member nations. ICES and OIE will sign a letter of agreement to cooperate, pending the approval of each of the governing bodies. It is likely that WGPDMO, WGITMO, and WGMAFW will be involved. These WG Chairs are invited to participate in OIE meetings. T. Lang asked if any ICES funding was available to support this. A. Kellermann responded no, participation would be at national expense. T. Sephton wondered whether OIE as a management and regulatory organization would mesh well with ICES, which just provides advice. A. Kellermann responded that OIE is a standards organization and that the groups will mesh well. The MCC agreed to cooperate in this endeavour.

Cooperation with Marine Genomics

E. Nielsen and A. Kellermann explained that Marine Genomics is an EU-funded network of excellence in the 6 th Framework. A fish and shellfish node is looking at the interplay of the environment and the genome, moving genetics into the genomics area. Education and training is part of the project. In general, ICES wants to (1) strengthen the programmes we have by training young people, (2) have a post-doc exchange programme, and (3) increase access to the academic community. ICES has a strategic investment fund that might be used to co-fund the post-doc programme and the marine genomics area would be a great place to start. Given the 6 th framework basis for this D. Bengtson asked whether Canadian and US members might participate. I. Bricknell responded that Canadians could, but US could not, unless EU contracted them. The MCC agreed to be supportive of this cooperation effort.

Close of Session 1 at 10: 35 on 17 September.

R. Hanel was elected to serve on the Awards Selection Committee for 2007.

Session 2

Committee business–continued

Integrated ecosystem advice, continued request from Consultative Committee for new ToRs to promote integration of fishery and ecosystem advice

After discussion on which ToRs qualify as ecosystem advice, it was decided to include the following:

WGPDMO – ToRs b and d;

WGMASC – all ToRs;

WGEIM – ToRs a, c, and e. One further ToR might also apply, but it was so confusingly written that the MCC could not understand it;

WGAGFM – ToRs f, g, h, and j.

I. Bricknell summarized by saying that the MCC has lots of ToRs relating to ecosystem advice and it will be his job to highlight them this weekend at ConC.

Proposals for symposia and theme session topics for 2008 and 2009

For 2008, MCC is proposing two theme sessions. The first is “New trends in diseases of marine organisms: causes and effects”. It will cover diseases as environmental indicators as well as aquaculture, and will include fish, shellfish, and even marine mammals. Sharon MacLean, Sharon McGladdery, and Thomas Lang are the organizers and will announce and advertise it widely. The second is “Ecosystem carrying capacity of shellfish culture”, which started as a topic at WGEIM with WGMASC being invited to co-organize. There is a question as to whether finfish aquaculture carrying capacity can also be added, and that may be a possibility. There is currently nothing proposed for 2009 in Berlin. D. Bengtson noted that since WGPDMO, WGEIM, and WGMASC are organizing sessions for 2008, WGAGFM and WGMAFW should be encouraged to organize something for 2009. I. Bricknell said he would put pressure on those chairs to do something.

Expert group reports

WG Chairs were requested to prepare short presentations (15 minutes presentation and 5 minutes of questions) summarizing the highlights, significant results, and bringing forward outstanding issues for discussion. For example, progress being made in relation to achieving the ICES action plan or ToRs being suggested for other expert groups to consider.

MCC:01 Working Group on Marine Shellfish Culture [WGMASC]

P. Cranford reported for the group. They now have 20 members. From last year’s work, ToR (a) is completed but needs review and publication, ToR (b) is ongoing, ToR (c) is completed, and ToR (d) is ongoing. In considering ToR (d) the WG wants to pursue 1) the significance of intentional transfers and 2) the effects of climate change on shellfish culture. P. Cranford mentioned that this would lead to overlap with work of WGEIM and WGITMO. T. Sephton noted that the intentional transfer material revolves around the ICES Code of Practice for transfers and that what the WG is proposing to work on is basically what a proponent of a transfer has to do now. How will this add new information? T. Lang said that WGPDMO is already looking at the disease issues involved, so WGMASC would not have to do that.

WGMASC would like to meet with WGEIM, but WGEIM is meeting next with PICES in British Columbia. The WGEIM is proposing a new ToR to look at climate change effects on mariculture. The MCC decided that WGMASC should keep their new ToR to examine climate

change impacts on shellfish culture and that WGEIM's new ToR on climate change should be restricted to finfish culture.

Regarding the idea expressed on Monday that a new study group be formed to look at carrying capacity, T. Sephton suggested that the study group could be initially formed to oversee publication of material coming out of the carrying capacity theme session in 2008 and then proceed from there.

MCC:02 Working Group on Environmental Interactions of Mariculture [WGEIM]

No one was available to present the report. The MCC requested that Francis O'Beirn, the WG chair, reconsider ToRs d and f, and following inter-sessional discussions with the chair the proposed ToRs d and f would be reconsidered next year.

MCC:03 Working Group on Application of Genetics in Fisheries and Mariculture [WGAGFM]

E. Nielsen reported for the group. The only comment was that R. Hanel noted that the EU is recommending no transfer of eel populations for restocking purposes and that disagrees with the recommendation of the WGAGFM. The WGAGFM should coordinate with the ICES WG on eels and should also connect to the Fish Welfare group in this regard.

MCC:04 Working Group on Pathology and Diseases of Marine Organisms [WGPDMO]

T. Lang reported for the group. This WG is now over 30 years old and has well established members who work well together. This year they covered new disease trends, specific diseases/pathologies (especially hyperpigmentation of dab, interactions of wild and farmed organisms, development of molecular techniques for diagnosis of bivalve pathogens, and environmental aspects (especially development of a Fish Disease Index), as well as new publications. T. Lang provided further information on the hyperpigmentation work and the Fish Disease Index, which the MCC found very interesting.

MCC:05 Working Group on Marine Fish Welfare [WGMAFW]

This group will meet for the first time this November in Copenhagen and so had nothing to report.

There is no report from WGMAFW which is due to meet later this year in Copenhagen.

AOB

I. Bricknell announced that the ICES Awards Committee has two new awards, an Outstanding Achievement Award and a Prix d'Écellence. Nominations were requested.

The meeting closed at 17: 30.