

ICES ACOM REPORT 2011

ICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ICES CM 2011/ACOM:01b

Report of the Advisory Committee Meeting

15–18 November 2011

ICES Secretariat



ICES

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea

CIEM

Conseil International pour
l'Exploration de la Mer

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer

H. C. Andersens Boulevard 44–46
DK-1553 Copenhagen V
Denmark
Telephone (+45) 33 38 67 00
Telefax (+45) 33 93 42 15
www.ices.dk
info@ices.dk

Recommended format for purposes of citation:

ICES. 2011. Report of the Advisory Committee Meeting, 15-18 November 2011, ICES Secretariat, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2011/ACOM:01. 27 pp.

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<https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8313>

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Welcome

The Chair welcomed the meeting. This was followed by a round table where all participants introduced themselves.

1 Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted with an extra item concerning 'trophic levels' added under AOB. See 'Agenda' in Annex 1.

2 Review of membership

Didzis Ustups (Latvia) and Alberto Murta (Portugal) attended an ACOM meeting for the first time. This meeting would be last ACOM meeting for Fred Serchuk to attend as ACOM member and the last meeting for Manuela Azevedo to attend as ACOM Vice-Chair. See 'List of Participants' in Annex 2.

3 Minutes from September ACOM Consultations

The minutes from the September ACOM Consultations were approved.

4 Pending Advisory Services

Two advisory processes had been postponed in the autumn and were still pending; the advice concerned was advice for European eel and advice for OSPAR request on EcoQO seabird populations in region II.

The eel advice had been postponed because the Eel Review and Advice Drafting Group had not been able to come to an agreement on the advice and came up with two versions of the advice. After correspondence between ACOM Chair, RG/ADG Chair and Expert Group Chair agreement had been made on one version which will be dealt with in ACOM WebEx on 23 November.

The postponement of finalizing the advice for OSPAR was caused by material not being delivered by the Expert Group in charge, because the necessary data had not been available to the EG. It is expected that the EG will work on this by correspondence and deliver early January. This would make it possible to deliver advice in time for OSPAR BDC.

5 Review of work progress during 2011

5.1 Secretariat analysis

The agenda item was presented by Barbara Schoute and emphasis was put on inconsistencies in advice, workload, and participation in Advice Drafting Groups (ADGs) and ACOM WebEx meetings.

It was suggested that ACOM should try to correct inconsistencies, development is ongoing regarding the MSY framework and MSY reference points estimation.. Other issues like ecosystem approaches and biodiversity elements should also be considered. It was also mentioned that ACOM should be careful to distinguish between Fmsy and proxies for Fmsy. So far, the best at time was done and it is now time to bring more

consistency into the process. It was thought that Section 1.2 in ICES Advice needs more clarity on the MSY concept used by ICES.

The need for improving the consistencies when a stock is much depleted was raised. It was however also suggested that in these cases it might not be appropriate to try to specify the approach as the situations vary a lot between cases. The Secretariat will make a compilation of the cases from the past 2 years, and maybe suggest guidelines. An ACOM WebEx meeting about such a document will be conducted.

The Advice Drafting Group for the 'Reopening of advice' process had received no ACOM nominations because of work load issues. It was suggested that the ACOM leadership should at the MIRIA meeting take this up with the clients; a shift in prioritising the ICES Advisory Services seems to be needed. An ecosystem integrated advice will also create additional workload. It was suggested to do less frequent fish stock advice to reduce workload.

As mentioned, lack of ACOM participation in ADGs and ACOM WebEx meetings is an issue. WebEx participation statistics was presented. It was stated that this might be a larger problem than at first glance. This might compromise the whole ACOM system – the original idea was that the work force of all the ICES previous committees (ACFM, ACE, ACME) should be more effectively used by being more specific about topics, and not a substantial reduction in work force. The ACOM working procedure of working by consensus and the option of accepting an advice without participating was discussed. It was concluded that the ACOM should take a closer look on participation statistics and send targeted messages to council delegates.

5.2 Round table– Feedback from ACOM members

The issues brought up by ACOM members in the round table focused on the ACOM working procedures, participation in Review and Advice Drafting Group, workload, access to experts, and strategic considerations. It was mentioned that the external review of ICES Advisory Services will be available soon but at the same time agreed that ACOM should not wait for the review to make its own evaluation but of course listen to the points raised by the review.

Also problems related to individual pieces of advice were mentioned. All issues raised in the round table are dealt with elsewhere in the Minutes.

5.3 Discussion on ACOM Working Procedures

Document 5c.1 on ACOM working procedures was presented by Bill Turrell. Environmental experts within ACOM had found that ACOM agenda's reflect the old Advisory Committee on Fisheries Management (ACFM) on many points. ACOM meetings tend to be very technical, much more so than SCICOM. When comparing ACOM agendas so far it was found that:

- ACOM has many agenda items per meeting;
- Advice adopting during physical meetings: 18 in total, most of which are fisheries – and most ACOM members are fisheries experts;
- Agenda items do cover strategic and ecosystem issues as well as fisheries;
- More than half of the time is spent on overseeing current business, operational and technical, very little on strategic level. Procedures are not managed with a specific strategy in mind, many different processes started off (subgroups, strategic initiatives, etc.).

It was stated that this had worked in the start off of ACOM, but that it was now time to change focus and set up of the meetings to get more time for strategic discussions.

ACOM found that the ACOM leadership work needs to be evaluated as well, it had in the past been difficult to gather all members, to discuss cohesive processes, and very little time was therefore used for strategic discussions on the leadership level. It was mentioned that SCICOM Business Group has a different set up, which might be an example to look at.

The benchmark processes should be a good place to start off integration of ecosystem issues into the fisheries advice but this has not worked yet.

It was suggested to organise Subgroups to get strategic thinking moving, and get the organisation in place to come up with strategic work that ACOM can discuss.

A Subgroup to Revise the ACOM working procedures, chaired by Bill Turrell, was established to consider ToRs for SGWOPRO work programme. The Advisory plan needs to be revisited and it need to be clearer on the process to get strategic work going.

ACOM-SCICOM dialogue need also to improve and Inter-committee work should be set off (ACOM to define requirements, SCICOM to develop and present results for ACOM to work with).

ACOM should be pro-active towards questions to avoid only receiving fishy requests: offer to clients examples of what ICES could provide in terms of advice, so they can improve / extend their requests.

Document 5.c.2, from the Working Group on Maritime Systems (WGMARS), was presented by the head of advisory department, Poul Degnbol.

Analysis of the communication lines (memberships) between different ICES expert groups were presented in the document to indicate where exchanges can take place between groups. Substance overlap (in ToRs) should also be assessed but this is not done in WGMARS. The suggestion is to prepare a membership overlap evaluation for all meetings. This may be one way forward, but participation (on ICES meetings) alone (looking back) may not necessarily help to look forward, to improve planning more efficiently (enhancing working together, getting rid of overlap between meetings that are not aware of each other). This would not be the basis for fisheries strategy evaluation as the ToRs ask for, as far as ACOM can see from this report.

The scoping of synergy between ICES groups will be interesting. Especially the link on content, between ACOM and SCICOM groups, would be welcomed. ACOM would be happy with a pragmatic result, to be used as guidance on how to improve the current situation.

This also relates to development of integrated assessments within ICES. A systematic analysis of overlap is needed, this information needs to be made operational. Check SCICOM report: pg 13: Steering group on sustainable use of the Ecosystem. This group can be an important link for improved integration.

Action: ACOM to ask SCICOM to bring forward information that could be used for ACOM work.
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6 Evolution of Fisheries Advice in 2012

6.1 Mixed / multispecies issues

6.1.1 Mixed fisheries (North Sea)

The mixed fisheries process should be linked with STECF. The MIXFISH is ready to be included in the 2012 advice (it was already available this year in August). The scooping meeting will involve stakeholders to check if there is a need for extra scenarios beyond the ones that were already considered. Norwegian stakeholders will also be involved. ACOM members have some concerns about the providing single species advice that were not precautionary in a mix fisheries context.

ACOM needs to be prepared if managers request advice on specific mix-fishery options. A sub-group to discuss the ACOM position on this was created. The sub-group supports the suggestion to add the extra five option lines, even though the options might not be consistent with the ICES final advice for the individual stocks. ACOM should clearly state the assumptions behind the new 5 lines and clearly state that ICES cannot evaluate which option is the most realistic. ICES should be prepared to answer a lot of questions about the potential conflicts with the ICES final advice.

Reviewers for the mixed fisheries advice should have a broad country range. The method has been reviewed as a scientific paper but not exactly as implemented by ICES and normally ACOM has not blindly accepted peer reviewed papers in the past.

What should ICES do with the mixed fisheries advice results? Should they be considered as a basis for advice? The first year at least this would just be options inserted for consideration.

Action: reflection on this in the ADGNS would be useful, later in the year it should be discussed with clients (MIRAC, MIRIA).

6.1.2 Multispecies (Baltic) advice

ICES wishes to obtain new multispecies reference points from this initiative, to show that sprat stock will be pressed as cod is getting more abundant and this will be addressed, a way of including environmental factors.

It was agreed to keep this advice option separate from the single species advice and thus nothing including into the Outlook table.

It was asked what the precautionary approach in the multispecies advice will be. ACOM will need to consider this. It is not only biological consequences that matters, there are likely to be social-economic consequences as well.

Text drafting of advice could already be done now, and be finalised after the benchmark workshops in February–March, or maybe earlier.

Reviewers should represent a broad range of countries and views.

Action : Prepare a generic introduction explanation (also between Mixed and Multispecies advice)

The initiative of multispecies advice in the Baltic should be a continuous process and, not a shift from a single species to a multispecies. A solution could be having two different advices, one with a single species and a multispecies.

Action: Planning a ADG for the WKMULTBAL, depending on the outcomes of the benchmark (WKMULTBAL).

6.1.3 Multispecies /low trophic levels

This issue was presented by Reidar Toresen. The zooplankton status report from ICES has just come out and is going to be regularly updated. Generally support for the initiative. Maybe the ICES integrated assessment EGs should be given some of the ToRs to them.

It was suggested that it is a challenge to bring this forward comprehensively to the science part of ICES, SCICOM, and in quantitative ways and by testing hypothesis.

It was mentioned that zooplankton and especially euphausiids data are quite scarce.

It was also mentioned that recruitment science is in fact dealing with a lot of this and we should make sure to get the link clarified.

It might be a fruitful approach to not split this into subareas but look at the major drivers like climate in several areas simultaneously.

It is also an issue that for the lower tropic parts of the ecosystem a harvesting strategy of MSY might not be the most appropriate one.

It was decided to link this to the Agenda item 6aiv concerning plan and timeline for mixed/multispecies advice.

6.1.4 Developing a plan and timeline for mixed/multispecies advice

It was suggested that the multispecies working group should be asked to consider the multispecies data and models available by region, and that the WGMIXFISH should be asked to consider the same matter for mixed fisheries issues.

A subgroup of ACOM was set up with Maurice Clark as chair.

6.2 Incorporating environmental information (e.g., climate change, regime shifts) into fisheries advice

Document 6b was presented by the head of Advisory department, Poul Degnbol. The aim is to improve communication between SCICOM and ACOM groups. Benchmark workshops should be the forum for this. Better communication from the benchmark workshops to SCICOM is needed, and the other way round, to inform ACOM groups about SCICOM work.

Participation of environmental experts in benchmark workshops is useful particularly in situations where other surveys than fisheries surveys are available. ACOM agreed to continue along the lines as outlined in document 6b) i.e. try to involve the SCICOM community in the benchmark workshops.

6.2 Development of new Ecosystem Overviews

A short update (Document 6c) from the SSGRSP Chair was presented covering both the integrated assessment development and the ecosystem overviews and 'state of the seas' reporting. It was questioned why these overviews are being prepared for ICES Advice. The 2008 overviews were found to be far too long. The same issue was discussed at the SSGRSP meeting at the ASC without any answer. It was stated that the idea of the 2008 overviews was slightly different from what is needed today. The aim now is to provide the settings for the advice i.e. the context in which the advice should

be read. The overviews should indicate what has affected/ may affect the future advice. It was mentioned that we should be careful with the wording: Integrated assessment is different from integrated advice. The timetable for the SCICOM process is to make significant progress by the end of 2012 and finalise in 2013.

6.3 State of stock description, range around reference points

Einar Hjörleifson presented a preliminary document through skype.

Problem: readers of the advice have problems interpreting red crosses for the line describing the state of the stock in relation to management plan reference points: Even when a precautionary management plan has been followed for years, this sometimes does not deliver results (F for instance is red in the last 3 years).

Issue 1): people read the state of the stock table as an audit of management – we have advised one thing, managers are following it, and the result is not positive.

Issue 2): difference between PA and MSY approach what does red/green mean in relation to target and limit reference points.

Main issue to resolve on the short time is the use of red/green on the MSY approach, differentiating between limit reference points (that have a 'black/white' option of being above/below) or target/trigger points, for which a range around a reference point can be used. The state of the stock should not be read as an audit of the success of management. It should be kept in mind that some managers would not like a range, like DG ENV.

Action: Secretariat to make sure that in the textual description the use of limit or target is improved (i.e. update state of stock guidelines to get this right).

WKFRAME2 points on range around an MSY target, and how to determine the range should be taken up.

The issue with the ranges could be raised at the next MICC and MIRAC.

7 Development of the 2012 work plan

7.1 Activities following new initiatives

7.1.1 Mixed fisheries advice

See Section 6.1.1

7.1.2 Multispecies advice

See Section 6.1.2

7.1.3 Stocks w/o forecasts (ToRs for WKFRAME3 and WKLIFE)

ToRs for WKFRAME 3 and WKLIFE were agreed. Attention was drawn to the meeting of the Working Group on Improving use of Survey Data for Assessment and Advice that is meeting in ICES HQ at the same time as WKFRAME3 and some of whose ToRs overlap with those of WKFRAME3.

In relation to WKLIFE, there is large number of stocks with no forecast, and it will not be possible to cope with all the stocks at the meeting. The list of stocks available at the meeting needs some corrections, namely to remove the Southern horse mackerel (stock with forecast) and the deep water stocks should be specified. WKLIFE will only work with stocks with no forecast. Depending on the outcomes of WKFLABA, for the Baltic stocks there might be some changes and the list should be updated accordingly, if needed.

WKFRAME3 will work on the formulation of advice for stocks with no forecast (i.e. the table that is now available in the Introduction to ICES advice).

WKFRAME3 will take place first and the outcome of this workshop will be used in this year in the formulation of the advice for stocks with no forecast. The outcome of WKLIFE, could be used already this year, but this is dependent on the outcome of the workshop.

7.2 Expert group recommendations

It was suggested that these Recommendations from expert groups to ACOM and Delegates should be sorted according to themes. The Recommendations will be addressed at the WGCHAIRS meeting.

Most EG recommendations from this year have already been acted upon.

7.3 Benchmarks 2013

Document 7c was presented by the Secretariat. New models will be presented in WKFLABA 2012, there will be a need to benchmark WKFLABA results in 2013. For some stocks to be benchmarked in 2013, there are two options for workshops in document 7c. ACOM members are welcome to express their views about each of the options they are in favour of. The 2013 benchmark with the two Baltic cod should work on a single species basis.

In the list of 2013 benchmark there are no stocks that are aiming to move to ecosystem integration. Moving to ecosystem integration, would need to a different set up of benchmark not based on single species, but by ecoregion.

The UK Scottish member request to include whiting in Division VIa in the 2012 benchmark list, considering the recent work and progress made on this stock.

Action: ICES Secretariat to contact the Scottish experts and request the “issue list”, and also contact the ICES coordinator of WKROUND 2012 to check the possibility to include this stock.

A subgroup to prepare a final benchmark set up for 2013 was established and a final proposal was presented to ACOM and approved. The new document was made available on the SharePoint. It was requested if Baltic stocks (cod/sprat): could be considered in a more holistic approach including herring

Action: Secretariat to ask Baltic experts for possible holistic benchmarks in 2013

Action: For Benchmarks 2014 information EGs should be asked to consider multi species options

7.4 “New” stocks – outstanding issues from consultations

Document 7d was presented. For new stocks where there is a scope for improvement, WGNEW will work with those stocks; otherwise the stocks should be placed the ecoregion assessment working group.

For most of those cases, there problems with stock identity. WGNEW is the right forum to address stock identity. WGNEW is not an Ecoregion working group and does not have the Ecoregion information of the fishery.

ACOM concluded:

- WGNEW should be asked to provide their best estimate for stock ID for a specific list of species that we provide. If the knowledge is really insufficient WGNEW should indicate the time (and resources) needed to provide stock ID.
- If WGNEW provide new knowledge on stock id, such that the new stocks fit naturally into an eco-region, the relevant Expert group should make the assessment. If that is not the case, the WGNEW should provide the assessment and draft advice for the stock. It is not an option to put these (apparently) widely distributed stocks into the WGWIDE group.
- ACOM need to be pragmatic with respect to stock id, and probably combine small components (e.g. having 13 stocks of flounder in the Baltic is not feasible).
- Boarfish and blue jack mackerel: WGNEW should be asked for new information on stock identity. Boarfish should stay within the WGWIDE, as it is pelagic fishery in line with the other species presently handled. In addition, WGWIDE has done a good job with respect to boarfish.
- For bycatch species in the North Sea: Even though many species are taken as bycatch, such that any TAC change will not really influence the catch, ICES needs to provide information on stock status. ICES should ask the WGMIXFISH to include the new specie as additional species in the Fcube analysis (e.g. use a simple extrapolation to predict catch given the TAC for the main species, assuming a linear relation between catch and effort for the new species). If a quantitative approach is not feasible, the WGMIXFISH should be asked to provide their qualitative evaluation of the effect on exploitation rate of changes in the TAC for the new species. In case of missing quantitative analysis the mixed group should list the data needed and a time frame and method to obtain these.
- The addition of the new species to the Fcube approach should be included in the review as an additional request.

7.5 Protocol for reopening advice

The protocol of the reopening of the advice needs to be revised. AGREFA 2008 had not included *Nephrops* and the use of RCT3 and a second meeting was therefore scheduled for 2012. Mike Sissenwine will chair the meeting which will take place in May/June.

7.6 Meetings with the recipients of advice, the Regional Advisory Councils, and the Expert Group Chairs

The draft ToRs for the meeting between ICES and Recipients of Advice (MIRIA), the meeting between ICES and the Regional Advisory Councils (MIRAC), and the meeting between ACOM Leadership and Expert Group Chairs (WGCHAIRS) were made available for ACOM on SharePoint. ACOM members were requested to check the respective documents and to comment on these if necessary. No remarks were made during the meeting, except the comments that were already mentioned, such as an agenda item

on the frequency of the advice/assessment should be added to the ToRs for the MIRIA meeting.

ACOM was invited to provide input to ToRs for MIRIA, MIRAC, and WGCHAIRS meetings.

7.7 Mixed fisheries and multispecies fisheries in the Celtic Sea and west of Scotland ecoregion

The Celtic Sea is a very complex ecosystem compared to the Baltic and Norwegian Sea.

It is complex ecosystem with lack of data. There is a need for a rationalization of the work and human resources. The frequency of the advice could be a way forward, to remediate the lack of human resources and to reduce the workload.

Example of mackerel where we are giving annual advice based on triennial eggs survey. The frequency of the advice could be a solution to reduce the workload. For data poor stocks the incoming EG on use of survey data for assessment and advice should be useful to take into account on advice formulation.

There is a need to move to multispecies and species interaction in the Celtic Sea. Stomach data is not available in the Celtic Sea. There is no intention to collect this data, but to use other available indicators.

Other fisheries organizations are performing the assessment with a biennial basis. There is a need to monitoring the indicators (e.g. survey results) to see if there is a need to revisit the assessment and advice. The frequency of the advice should not be a statistical exercise, but should also take into account the human resources.

A subgroup chaired by Maurice Clarke, will propose a list of species of candidates stocks for non-annual assessment.

Action: MIRAC and MIRIA should be informed about the Celtic Sea initiative.

7.8 Initiative regarding Atlanto-scandian herring stock dynamics?

A Norwegian scientist had presented some information on Atlanto-Scandian herring at WGWIDE but this was reflected in the 2011 advice. ACOM suggested that a written peer reviewed should be presented. If this will result in new information that is relevant for ICES, then a symposium / conference meeting with experts from in and outside ICES with oceanographers, zooplankton specialists etc. could be set up. Norway will inform ICES if such a process is relevant, after which ACOM and SCICOM can decide on how to proceed.

7.9 FIMPAS/Dogger Bank process

Eugene Nixon presented the State of the FIMPAS. The work on Cleaver Bank has been done, work on the Frisian Front is ongoing and the Dogger Bank has been split out as an international activity (UK, NL, DE). There has been some delay of the process, and the timetable with the different remaining steps was presented. Possibly, with the new timetable ACOM will not be involved before end of May. Since May is very busy it was recommended to involve ACOM before or after May.

7.10 Adoption of the Workplan and resolutions

The workplan was approved by ACOM. Some ACOM members would like to have the workplan made available in the ICES website.

The NEAFC requests for 2012 had just been received and two requests were highlighted as being extensive.

Action: The new “sheet” with the overview of all the advisory groups will be available.

Action: An ADG to agree on the generic introduction must take place before the beginning of March (before the HAWG).

8 Data issues

8.1 Report on data bases (Intercatch, Fishframe, regional bases, data calls)

Doc 8a on InterCatch (IC) used in 2011 was presented by Henrik Kjems Nielsen (Secretariat, Data Centre). The tool is only being used to document the data used in the assessment for a few stocks.

ACOM had no comments to the Regional databases. It was clarified that data uploaded to FishFrame could be moved to IC, but not the other way around, since FishFrame includes disaggregated data and InterCatch, aggregated data to a stock level.

8.2 Reporting DCF performance

8.2.1 To Commission

Cristina Morgado (Secretariat, Advisory Department) presented the format of the feedback from ICES to the EC on data transmission (former report to SGRN). The Commission uses this information to verify if Member States are providing all the data that is needed, which initially had caused some hesitance in EGs to fill in these tables.

There seems to be a lack of clarity on what is needed by ICES, so that EU member states can deliver the requested data. It had caused confusion between data submitters and EGs. This should not mean that Member States are penalised. The data needs should be clear to submitters in advance. If data are not specifically asked for, then this should not be marked as ‘not available, but needed’, but as ‘not available, not needed’.

ACOM agreed that ICES should not be ‘policing’ for the data collection. The DCF has an option to check which data are available per country. The background for this specific report is that the end users actually have the data available and use them for the advice.

The role of this list is checking availability of data, not ‘if the MS has used DCF money to collect data or not’.

Action: Secretariat to check if ICES could negotiate this out of the MoU

Action: Secretariat to inform the European Commission about specific problems on data transmission, but there is no need to do provide this information for all stocks.

8.2.2 As part of advisory report

Considering that comments from EC on data reporting in the advisory report were related to a need for a better description on data quality and the reason for not forecasting the stock when data is being collected, it is recommended that, in 2012, the report on data quality in the current advice format is prepared in a more consistent manner. Annex I is a compilation of the report on data quality in this year's advice. It is clear that often there is not enough information about issues with data and recommendation on future improvements. Annex II is the template of WKACCU scorecard on commercial data quality. This year the benchmark WKs were asked to fill the scorecard.

ACOM agreed that the feedback on data quality should be available under the current advice format, and should be presented in a more consistent manner. The ICES secretariat has an important role to ensure this consistency.

8.3 ICES input to DCF revision

In 2014 a new data collection regulation (DCF) will be in place. The EC wants to involve the end-users in the preparation process. EC has already started the process and ICES (as well as other end-users) will be invited to give feedback in April 2012. A specific ToR for this has been added to the generic ToRs for assessment working groups: Propose specific actions to be taken to improve the quality of the data (including improvements in data collection). There is a proposal for a workshop on data collection for eel and salmon (WKESDCF) to deal with this issue.

It was highlighted that the D3+ project, amongst others, should be taken into account and used that background in informing for the feedback.

9 Planning with EC and STECF on use of experts. EFARO process

Document 9, prepared by EFARO, was presented by the Head of the Advisory department, Poul Degnbol.

The problem seems to get worse rather than improving. Three recent examples where STECF has been competing for the same experts – cod management plan evaluation, mixed fisheries and multispecies assessments in the Baltic. ACOM suggested that it would be useful to evaluate if the workload is equitably shared between countries.

10 Marine Strategy Framework Directive developments

10.1 D3+ outcomes

Eugene Nixon, ACOM Vice-Chair, gave an update of the activities as regards the D3+ activity. The outcome of the D3+ action will be technical/scientific support to the Member States, the EC, and the RSCs prepared by the Core group supported by the two workshops. It will not be ICES advice.

10.2 New initiatives

Eugene Nixon, ACOM Vice-Chair, presented the MSFD Overview Report which inform on all MSFD relevant activities in ICES EGs. Examples of useful results were presented. It is a living document as more responses from EGs may still be added. The document will be uploaded to ICES Homepage so the latest version is always available. The report should be presented to the WGCHAIRS.

10.3 Baltic commitment

Document 10c was presented. This Update document will be uploaded to the Commitments website. It was asked if ICES would review the HELCOM CORESET results as several CPs found it not complete or did not agree. The CORESET work should be complete before that option could be considered. The Chair invited Delegates from the Baltic Sea to forward possible comments/ questions directly to Claus Hagebro, Advisory Department at the ICES Secretariat.

11 Review of the Council Meeting

11.1 Draft report of the Council Meeting if available

The ACOM Chair had informed the Council about the ACOM wish for a more modern production system for the ICES Advice. The Council had expressed support for obtaining new information technology and it will be supported financially by the Bureau. It was highlighted that this was not a way to move workload from the Secretariat to Expert Group, but that it would be a direct link from EG reports to the ICES Advice. The technology must be in place for the 2013 advice.

ACOM decided that the Chair in the future should involve ACOM when writing the status report for Council and that it should be added as agenda item for the ACOM Consultations in September. Reports from subgroups such as update of the advisory plan could be inputs to this report

11.2 External Review of Advisory Services in 2011–2012

Only a draft report was available at the meeting and it was not discussed.

11.3 Outcome of MSFD discussions

Eugene Nixon, ACOM vice-chair, gave a brief update of the half day MSFD discussions in the Council: HELCOM and EU were present and OSPAR had provided written input. It was noted that only about 1/3 of the Delegates are involved in implementing the MSFD. There was a general support in Council to the D3+ activity as the Regional scale activity on D3 is weak. Future focus should be on improving science for the next assessment cycle e.g. data gaps. It was expressed that MS are learning by doing in this first cycle of implementation. Regarding the role of ICES it was considered that ICES need a request to have a mandate to go on. There may be a role for ICES helping the Commission with a peer review of MS assessments (Art 12). Finally the Council agreed to take a more active role and ToR for a Council Working/Sub Group will be developed.

ACOM took note of the presentation and the question was raised why the EU member states are not asking ICES for help. Possibly member states are too busy to decide what to ask. In principle the ICES Council is the most relevant “client”.

11.4 Observer document

The issue of having observers in expert groups was raised by MIRAC and in Council. The Chair referred to experiences from US and Canada where the depth of review is less because some observers do not have the technical background. Therefore stakeholders should participate as experts and they should send experts.

After having discussed the matter **ACOM concluded** that the current policy where observers cannot attend expert group meetings should continue.

12 Status report on SCICOM–ACOM Strategic Initiatives

12.1 Marine Spatial Planning

The development of the 3-year MSP initiative development was presented. Two WK have been arranged and a theme session at the ASC 2012 proposed and other planned activities have also been implemented. ToRs had been sent to EGs regarding relevant work in the groups. This has resulted in an Overview report (Doc 12a). Several groups have provided useful information and are planning further activities related to MSP. Both this living document (Doc 12a) and that on the MSFD (Doc 10) will be uploaded to the ICES homepage.

More details were given on the recent joint HELCOM/VASAB, OSPAR and ICES Workshop in Lisbon. It was successful with 80 participants. One day was spent playing a newly developed simulation game which provided good training of the participants. The game may also be used at future ICES training courses. There was a strong support for continued cooperation between the organisations. One conclusion was that we need maps of goods and services as well as vulnerability and cumulative impact spatial maps.

The Initiative has provided some overall results: A network has been established and ICES has been positioned as a player in MSP. The ICES Spatial Facility provides a good opportunity for ICES on the data side. The WG for Marine Planning and Coastal Zone (WGMPCSM) has been invited to continue the initiative and the Steering Group will stop its work by delivering a final report.

ICES future role was discussed as a data collector/provider and the possibility to support CPs with activities on MSP. ICES capacity should be advertised but the situation is similar to ICES role on the MSFD (MSP is a country responsibility). MSP is also relevant to future integrated advice activities. The initiative has only been running since 2010 which is rather short for a strategic issue but it has led to a more permanent EG to continue the work.

12.2 Biodiversity

A Steering group will be established including the 4 previous leading actors but also new (outside ICES) people will be invited and an activity planning document will be prepared soon. Information will be collected from relevant Science groups. Questions were raised such as: should stakeholders be invited? Who is ICES future clients? An example from the offshore activities (decommissioning) as a possible client were mentioned. The group will follow up on the recommendations from the previous Biodiversity WK.

CBD, OSPAR/HELCOM and the MSFD implementation will be future clients. In relation to the Ecosystem overview ICES may provide some useful products on biodiversity.

12.3 Global Stock Assessment Review (SISAM)

Funds for developing simulated data. There are simulated data sets in existence already. SISAM decided not to recommend funding this in large scale. The Council support the initiative and have set funds aside for SISAM in general and for SISAM to decide precisely how to best spend them.

It was mentioned that some of the new methods likely to come out of this initiative are better uncertainties but ACOM needs to consider how to use these uncertainties in the advice. It was suggested that in some of the few cases where it is used at the moment is sub optimal. It is also relevant in relation to the “range” issue (see agenda point 6d) in the state of the stock table. Also individual uncertainties around limit points and definition of Bpa and Fpa or other safe ways to stay clear of the limits points.

UN has an initiative on assessment of assessments, and UN member countries will do this. ACOM or ICES needs to follow this somehow. It is based on people still thinking that the stocks will be gone by 2042.

13 Conclusion regarding advisory products [report back from ACOM members on whether they need prints etc as they were asked at consultations]

The feedback from ACOM showed that the Printed version of advice, *The ICES Advice*, was used by libraries, that the CD is rarely used, and that there was no demand for the paper versions of advice distributed during the year.

ACOM agreed that the production of the CD and the distribution of advice on paper during the year are no longer needed.

14 Decisions on topics not yet decided

All decisions made in the meeting are reported in other sections of this report.

15 Approval of Expert Group Chairs

ACOM approved the nominated Chairs for WGBYC and WGCSE, new Chairs for NWWG, PGCCDBS, PGRFS, WGHARP, and WGMME had been approved by ACOM in September at the ACOM consultations meeting.

At the time of the meeting no nominations for WGHMM and NIPAG Chairs had been made, approval of Chairs for these two groups will have to be made by correspondence later in the year/early next year. It was mentioned that Norway might come up with a candidate Chair for NIPAG. The current Chair of WGHMM reported that absolutely no-one in WGHMM wanted to Chair the group; people see no benefit in chairing expert groups. It was the feeling that France was in turn to Chair the group. At the meeting it was mentioned that UK might be able to provide a Chair for WGHMM.

It was discussed what to do if no chairs were found and suggestions were made to either not let the group meet or let the Secretariat Chair the meeting.

It was highlighted that also WKREDOCE, is without a Chair (the Chair had stepped down owing to health issues) and will meet next year.

WGEEL will need a new chair next year, when Russell Poole is ending his term after 6 years. The current co-chair does not wish to take over and no other name was put forward by WGEEL. ACOM was asked to advise delegates to discuss this issue.

16 Choice of open lecturers for the ASC 2013

This item was put on the agenda because the lecture suggested by ACOM for the 2012 ASC had not been supported by SCICOM. The Chair informed that ASC is largely the responsibility of SCICOM but that any ACOM member can come up with suggestions, it does not have to go through ACOM.

17 Any other business (AOB)

17.1 Scheduling 2012 ACOM Consultations at ASC and ACOM meeting

It was decided that in connection with the 2012 ASC in Bergen ACOM will meet for a full day meeting on Sunday 16 September and for a full or half day meeting on Friday 21 September or Saturday 22 September. The 2012 ACOM meeting will be scheduled for 4-7 December in the ICES HQ, Copenhagen.

17.2 Observer access to the ACOM Forum site

Stakeholders have been included in earlier pre-WebEx discussions when these were by email.

ACOM agreed to grant access to the ACOM forum for stakeholders.

17.3 Trophic levels

A presentation on 'Key LTL study and implications' was made by Christopher Zimmermann.

Action: The multispecies WG should have a look to the available work and comment on it

17.4 New post in the ICES Secretariat

The description of a new post in the Secretariat had been circulated and had been misinterpreted by people in the network. Poul Degnbol presented the initial Bureau document. The intention is that this post will support the expert groups and the Regional Seas Programme. ACOM members were encouraged to approach relevant experts.

17.5 Request from WGDIM

ACOM had been asked, by WGDIM, to consider the various uses and products of VMS data. ACOM agreed that the feedback on this issue will be through the ACOM Forum.

Closing of the meeting

When closing down the meeting the Chair thanked Manuela Azevedo, as outgoing Vice-Chair, for the work she had done during her term as Vice-Chair, the way she had handled difficult issues in Advice Drafting Groups and ACOM WebEx meetings was very much appreciated.

The ACOM members were thanked for a good and fruitful meeting.

Annex 1 Meeting Agenda

Advisory Committee Meeting

Chair: Jean-Jacques Maguire

15–18 November 2011

Draft Agenda

Welcome

- 1) Adoption of agenda (Doc 1)
- 2) Review of membership (Doc 2) (for information)
- 3) Minutes from September ACOM Consultations (Doc 3) (for approval)
- 4) Pending Advisory Services (Doc 4) (for information)
- 5) Review of work progress during 2011 (for discussion)
 - a. Secretariat analysis (Doc 5)
 - b. Round table- Feedback from ACOM members
 - c. Discussion on ACOM Working Procedures (Doc 5c.1, Doc 5c.2)
 - d. Other issues
- 6) Evolution of Fisheries Advice in 2012
 - a. Mixed /multispecies issues (note also Doc 7i.i)
 - i. Mixed fisheries (North Sea) (Doc 6ai)
 - ii. Multispecies (Baltic) advice (Doc 6aii)
 - iii. Multispecies /low trophic levels (Doc 6aiii)
 - iv. Developing a plan and timeline for mixed/multispecies advice (Doc 6aiv)
 - b. Incorporating environmental information (e.g., climate change, regime shifts) into fisheries advice
 - c. Development of new Ecosystem Overviews (Doc 6c)
 - i. Integrated assessment development
 - ii. Ecosystem overviews and 'state of the seas' reporting
 - d. State of stock description, range around reference points
- 7) Development of the 2012 work plan (Doc 7.1, Doc 7.2, Doc 7.3)
 - a. Activities following new initiatives
 - i. Mixed fisheries advice

- ii. Multispecies advice
 - iii. Stocks w/o forecasts (ToRs for WKFRAME3 and WKLIFE)
 - iv. Ecosystem overviews
 - b. Expert group recommendations (Doc 7b)
 - c. Benchmarks 2013 (Doc 7c)
 - d. “New” stocks – outstanding issues from consultations (Doc 7d)
 - e. Protocol for reopening advice (Doc 7e)
 - f. Meetings with Clients, ToR and agenda for MICC (Doc 7f)
 - g. ToRs and agenda for MIRAC (Doc 7g)
 - h. ToRs and agenda for WGChairs (Doc 7h)
 - i. Other issues
 - i. mixed fisheries and multispecies fisheries in the western area (Doc 7i.i)
 - ii. Initiative regarding Atlanto-scandian herring stock dynamics?
 - iii. FIMPAS/Dogger Bank process
 - j. Adoption of the Workplan and resolutions
- 8) Data issues
- a. Report on data bases (Intercatch, Fishframe, regional bases, data calls) (Doc 8a.1, Doc 8a.2)
 - b. Reporting DCF performance
 - i. To Commission(Doc 8bi)
 - ii. As part of advisory report (Doc 8bii)
 - c. ICES input to DCF revision
- 9) Planning with EC and STECF on use of experts. EFARO process (Doc 9)
- 10) Marine Strategy Framework Directive developments
- a. D3+ outcomes
 - b. New initiatives? (Doc 10b)
 - c. Baltic committment
- 11) Review of the Council Meeting
- a. Draft report of the Council Meeting if available
 - b. External Review of Advisory Services in 2011-2012 (Doc 11b) (Doc 11b)
 - c. Status of MoUs (Doc 11c)

- d. Outcome of MSFD discussions
 - e. Observer document (Doc 11e)
 - f. Other issues
- 12) Status report on SCICOM-ACOM Strategic Initiatives
- a. Marine Spatial Planning (Doc 12a)
 - b. Biodiversity
 - c. Global Stock Assessment Review
- 13) Conclusion regarding advisory products [report back from ACOM members on whether they need prints etc as they were asked at consultations]
- 14) Decisions on topics not yet decided
- 15) Nomination and elections (Doc 15)
- a. Approval of Expert Group Chairs
- 16) Choice of open lecturers for the ASC 2013
- 17) Any other business (AOB)
- a. Scheduling ACOM meeting at ASC
 - b. Scheduling Annual ACOM meeting
 - c. Observer access to the ACOM Forum site
 - d. Trophic levels
- Closing of the meeting

Annex 2 List of participants

NAME		ADDRESS	EMAIL
Jean-Jacques Maguire	ACOM Chair	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea 1450 Godefroy Sillery Quebec G1T 2E4 Canada Phone +1 418 688 5501 Fax +1 418 688 7924	J.Maguire@ices.dk
Manuela Azevedo	ACOM Vice-Chair	INRB - IPIMAR Avenida de Brasilia PT-1449-006 Lisbon Portugal Phone +351 213 02 7148 Fax +351 213 025948	manuela@ices.dk
Han Lindeboom	ACOM Vice-Chair	Wageningen IMARES Alterra Postbus 167 NL-1790 AD Den Burg Netherlands Phone +31 317 487099	han.lindeboom@ices.dk
Eugene Nixon	ACOM Vice-Chair	Marine Institute Rinville Oranmore Co. Galway Ireland Phone +353 14766523	eugene.nixon@marine.ie

Alain Biseau	ACOM member	IFREMER Lorient Station 8, rue François Toullec 56100 Lorient France Phone +33 297 87 38 20 / +33 6 77 02 722 7 Fax +33 297 87 38 01	abiseau@ifremer.fr
Jesper Boje	Greenland observer	DTU Aqua - National Institute of Aquatic Resources Section for Fisheries Advice Charlottenlund Slot Jægersborg Alle 1 2920 Charlottenlund Denmark Phone +45 339 634 64 Fax +45 339 63333	jbo@aqua.dtu.dk
Tammo Bult	ACOM member	Wageningen IMARES P.O. Box 68 1970 AB IJmuiden Netherlands Phone ++31 (0) 317 - 487 162	tammo.bult@wur.nl

Ghislain Chouinard	ACOM member	Fisheries and Oceans Canada DFO Moncton PO Box 5030 Moncton NB E1C 9B6 Canada	Ghislain.Chouinard@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Maurice Clarke	ACOM member	Marine Institute Rinville Oranmore Co. Galway Ireland Phone +353 91387200 Fax +353 91387201	maurice.clarke@marine.ie
Steven Degraer	ACOM member	Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences Gulledelle 100 B-1200 Brussels Belgium	S.Degraer@mumm.ac.be
Yuri Efimov	ACOM member	Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries & Oceanography (VNIRO) 17 Verkhne Krasnoselskaya 107140 Moscow Russian Federation Phone +7 499 264 9129 Fax +7 499 264 9129	efimov@vniro.ru
Carmen Fernandez	Incoming ACOM Vice-chair	Instituto Español de Oceanografía Centro Oceanográfico de Vigo P.O. Box 1552 E-36200 Vigo (Pontevedra) Spain Phone +34 986 492111 Fax +34 986 498626	carmen.fernandez@vi.ieo.es
Jan Horbowy	ACOM member	National Marine Fisheries Research Institute ul. Kollataja 1 81-332 Gdynia Poland Phone +48 58 735 6267 Fax +48 58 7356 110	horbowy@mir.gdynia.pl
Erkki Ikonen	ACOM member	Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute P.O.Box 2 00791 Helsinki Finland Phone +358 205 751 348 Fax +358 205 751 201	erkki.ikonen@rktl.fi
Alberto Murta	ACOM alternate	INRB - IPIMAR Avenida de Brasilia 1449-006 Lisbon Portugal Phone +351 21 302 7000 Fax +351 21 301 5948	amurta@ipimar.pt

Henn Ojaveer	ACOM member	Estonian Marine Institute University of Tartu 2a Lootsi EE-80012 Parnu Estonia Phone +372 443 4456 mobile: +372 5158328 Fax +372 6718 900	henn.ojaveer@ut.ee
Javier Pereiro	ACOM member	Instituto Español de Oceanografía Centro Oceanográfico de Vigo P.O. Box 1552 36200 Vigo (Pontevedra) Spain Phone +34 986492111	javier.pereiro@vi.ieo.es
Jakúp Reinert	Faroe Islands observer	Faroe Marine Research Institute P.O. Box 3051 FO-110 Tórshavn Faroe Islands Phone +298 35 3900 Fax +298 353901	jakupr@hav.fo
Fredric Serchuk	ACOM member	National Marine Fisheries Services Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Woods Hole Laboratory 166 Water Street Woods Hole MA 02543-1026 United States Phone +1 508-495-2245	Fred.Serchuk@noaa.gov
Björn Steinarsson	ACOM member	Marine Research Institute PO Box 1390 121 Reykjavík Iceland Phone +354 575 2000 Fax +354 575 2001	bjorn@hafro.is
Sarunas Toliulis	ACOM member	Lithuanian State Pisciculture and Fisheries Research Centre Fisheries Research Laboratory PO Box 108 91001 Klaipeda Lithuania Phone +370 46 391122 Fax +370 46 391104	sarunast@gmail.com
Reidar Toresen	ACOM member	Institute of Marine Research P.O. Box 1870 Nordnes 5817 Bergen Norway Phone +47-55 23 84 20 Fax +47 55 238531	reidar@imr.no

Bill Turrell	ACOM member	Marine Scotland Science Marine Laboratory P.O. Box 101 AB11 9DB Aberdeen, United Kingdom Phone +44 1224 876544 Fax +44 1224 295511	bill.turrell@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
Didzis Ustups	ACOM alternate	Institute for Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment (BIOR) 8 Daugavgrivas Str. Fish Resources Research Department 1048 Riga Latvia	didzis.ustups@slu.se
Morten Vinther	ACOM member	DTU Aqua - National Institute of Aquatic Resources Section for Fisheries Advice Charlottenlund Slot Jægersborg Alle 1 2920 Charlottenlund Denmark Phone +45 3588 33 50 Fax +45 3588 33 33	mv@aqua.dtu.dk
Christopher Zimmerman	ACOM member	Johann Heinrich von Thünen-Institute, Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries Institute for Baltic Sea Fisheries Alter Hafen Süd 2 18069 Rostock Germany Phone (0) 381 8116-115 Fax (0) 381 8116-199	christopher.zimmermann@vti.bund.de

Poul Degnbol	ICES Secretariat	Poul.degnbol@ices.dk
Claus Hagebro	ICES Secretariat	claus.hagebro@ices.dk
Cristina Morgado	ICES Secretariat	cristina.morgado@ices.dk
Michala Ovens	ICES Secretariat	michala.ovens@ices.dk
Barbara Schoute	ICES Secretariat	Barbara.schoute@ices.dk
Henrik Sparholt	ICES Secretariat	henrik.sparholt@ices.dk