

**ECOREGION**      **Barents Sea – Norwegian Sea**  
**SUBJECT**        **Monitoring of Arctic Ocean fish stocks**

#### Advice summary

ICES advises that it is possible to monitor the geographic distribution of these stocks in the ice-free parts of the Arctic Ocean once a year, using existing survey methodology. This could be coordinated by existing ICES expert groups.

#### Request

ICES has received the following request from the Joint Russian–Norwegian Fisheries Commission (JRNFC) (ToR c):

*According to paragraph 14.1 of the protocol of the 38<sup>th</sup> session of JRNFC, the parties agreed to “make a request to ICES on continuous monitoring of the extensiveness in the Arctic Ocean of fish stocks managed by the Commission”. The joint management of fish stocks under the JRNFC encompasses the species of Northeast Arctic cod, Northeast Arctic haddock, Barents Sea capelin and Northeast Arctic halibut.*

*In view of the above described agreement in the protocol of the 38-th session of the JRNFC, the chairmen would hereby request ICES to:*

- a) Report on the possibility of conducting continuous monitoring of the migratory pattern in the Arctic Ocean of fish stocks (referred to above) managed by the JRNFC.*
- b) Facilitate future monitoring and research of fish stocks in the Arctic Ocean by anchoring the matter in the mandate of an existing ICES Working Group or in the establishment of a new Working Group.*

#### Elaboration on advice

It is assumed that “Northeast Arctic halibut” should be “Northeast Arctic Greenland halibut”.

Concerning a), it is possible to monitor the geographic distribution of these stocks in the ice-free parts of the Arctic Ocean once a year, using existing survey methodology. The Joint Ecosystem Survey in August/September (Anon., 2010) already covers the Barents Sea north to 80-81°N, and there is also additional Russian coverage of the Greenland halibut distribution in the Northeastern Kara Sea. These surveys could be extended into the Arctic Ocean if possible (depending on ice conditions) and if additional funding is provided.

Concerning b), future requests to ICES concerning monitoring and research of fish stocks in the Arctic Ocean could be handled by the Working Group on Northeastern Atlantic Continental Slope Surveys (WGNEACS). For stocks in waters adjacent to the Barents Sea this could be done in cooperation with the Arctic Fisheries Working Group. For other areas, other existing ICES working groups could be involved.

#### Sources

- Anon. 2010. Survey report from the Joint Norwegian/Russian ecosystem survey in the Barents Sea, August–September 2010. Joint IMR/PINRO report series, 2010-4. ISSN 1502-8828. 108 pp.  
 ICES. 2011. Report of the Arctic Fisheries Working Group, 28 April–4 May 2011. ICES CM 2011/ACOM:05.