

## THE COPENHAGEN DECLARATION ON FUTURE ICES STRATEGY

The Contracting Parties of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), meeting on the occasion of the ICES centenary in Copenhagen, 4 October 2002,

**Recalling** that the ICES Convention of 1964 states that it shall be the duty of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

- a) to promote and encourage research and investigations for the study of the sea particularly those related to the living resources thereof;
- b) to draw up programmes required for this purpose and to organise, in agreement with the Contracting Parties, such research and investigations as may appear necessary;
- c) to publish or otherwise disseminate the results of research and investigations carried out under its auspices or to encourage the publication thereof;

and that the Council shall be concerned with the Atlantic Ocean and its adjacent seas and primarily concerned with the North Atlantic,

**Mindful** of the need for a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect, and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystems as agreed in the Rio Declaration of 1992,

**Concerned** about the increasing pressures on marine ecosystems worldwide, and in particular the increasingly precarious state of many living marine resources in the area covered by ICES,

**Recognising** that the need for scientific advice to manage living marine resources in an ecosystem context has never been greater, as is reflected inter alia in the UN Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and in other international instruments,

**Recognising** that a scientific understanding of the physical, chemical, and biological functioning of marine ecosystems is fundamental to interpreting and advising on human impact and dependence on them,

**Recognising** that understanding the effects of human activities on marine ecosystems is essential in order for scientists to provide advice that can improve societal decisions relative to living marine resources and marine ecosystems,

**Committed** to a strengthened role for scientific research on marine ecosystems as a basis for advice that is unbiased, sound, reliable, and credible, to the benefit of management and conservation of marine ecosystems and living marine resources,

### HAVING AGREED:

**to reaffirm** their commitment to maintain ICES as a strong and independent scientific organisation in order to improve its capacity to give unbiased, sound, reliable, and credible scientific advice on human activities affecting, and affected by, marine ecosystems;

**to endorse** the ICES Strategic Plan as a basis for future ICES scientific and advisory work;

**to stress** the need for ICES to develop and promote science-based knowledge of living marine resources and marine ecosystems;

**to stress** the need for ICES to strengthen working relationships with users of scientific information on living marine resources and marine ecosystems, including fishery management organisations and environmental commissions, and with stakeholders that are affected by, or have an interest in, ICES work, thus requiring that ICES:

apply a quality assurance scheme for its advisory function;

adopt procedures to ensure the full consideration of data from a wide range of stakeholders;

be flexible and timely in providing scientific advice to meet the needs of decision-makers responsible for the stewardship of living marine resources and marine ecosystems without compromising the quality or reliability of the advice;

ensure that ecosystem considerations, including the effects of human activities and climatic and oceanographic conditions, are taken into account;

frame advice in relation to fisheries management, giving full consideration to the ecosystem context;

**Commit** themselves to the implementation of this declaration through ICES and through the marine science institutes and universities of member countries that contribute to the work of ICES on marine science and advice.

SIGNED IN COPENHAGEN, 4 OCTOBER 2002, BY THE CONTRACTING PARTIES OF ICES