

Increasing energy costs – Another challenge for fishers and managers (M)

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Energy costs are one of the main drivers in fishing operation and global indications are that fuel prices will remain at inflated levels in the long term. This will have a major impact on the profitability of most fisheries. Without adjustments the financial viability of many fishing entities is questionable. The environmental impact from fisheries is in many aspects directly proportional to energy input. Development of energy-efficient fisheries is therefore not only an economic question but also has an environmental conservation issue.

This theme session has the objective to address technical, economic, and managerial aspects on how to counteract the difficulties arising from increasing energy costs, including improvements in fishing gear, changes in fishing operations, the use of alternative energy sources, and using alternative fishing methods. Further the session will address how fuel-related changes in fishing activity and fleet dynamics may impact on stock assessment and fisheries management.

Contributions are invited on:

- Development of energy-efficient fishing gears and the use of alternative fishing methods;
- Measures to save energy in fishing operations;
- Design concepts for low energy fishing vessels;
- Social and economic effects of increases in fuel costs;
- The potential for alternative energy sources, e.g. bio fuels and additives;
- Fuel-driven changes in fleet dynamics and their impact on fisheries management.

At the ICES ASC 2005 an Interactive Forum with the Fishing Industry seemed to attract huge interest with participation from both fishers and scientists. The present theme session has the potential to attract similar interest from all sectors of the industry, including fishers, gear manufacturers, marine engineers, and fuel providers, given rising fuel costs is one of the biggest obstacles to the continued viability of commercial fisheries.

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