

Title: Governmental quality and risk management (O)

Conveners: Tammo Bult (The Netherlands), Laurence Kell (UK), Sakari Kuikka (Finland), and Bonnie McCay (US)

Fisheries research aims towards a better understanding of fish resources and ecosystems to improve risk management. Management uses this information for management decisions and discussions on the sustainability of resources and the viability of their exploitation. The quality of the fisheries management, however, depends as much on the extent to which principles of good governance are addressed (transparency, accountability, effectiveness, coherence, participation). This holds especially for the way in which risks are assessed, communicated and handled in a transparent and understandable way with stakeholder involvement.

ICES fisheries advice has traditionally focused on single harmful event, like impaired recruitment. However, there is a need to move towards ecosystem approaches and interdisciplinary risk assessment, which would increase the likelihood of using risk related information in communicating with stakeholders. In a risk assessment context the scope of events is broadened and given weight not only related to the probability or likelihood of a biological event, but also from the social and economic magnitude of the consequence. Measures of consequence can range from fairly simple ones as loss of yield (in tonnes) to socio-economic consequences like lost jobs and community decline.

In this theme session we welcome contributions that:

- Elaborate on the principles for good governance to come up with testable criteria for governmental quality in fisheries management situations, going from problem identification via information handling, including risks to tackle, to evaluation;
- Explore the extent to which governmental quality is to be guaranteed in progressive, science-based and more evaluative, adaptive management strategies, addressing inevitable risks involved;
- Give guidance to attempts to improve the transparency of the management process and to enlarge the legitimacy of the decisions taken;
- Specify how risk assessment enables the production of useful management advice in a situation with large uncertainties, thereby guaranteeing governmental quality as well;
- Report on interdisciplinary analysis of fisheries systems, including analysis of the understandability of risk related information
- Determine whether risk assessment and management is properly and effectively applied in the precautionary approach of ICES and how this can be improved on
- Sketch possible practices in risk identification and risk communication as participatory processes, addressing stakeholder participation and commitment to use scientific information as a governmental quality.

It is expected that responses to a call for contributions will reflect the wide interest and active research current in this subject area.

Tammo Bult, IMARES, Wageningen UR, the Netherlands, e-mail t.bult@rivo.wag-ur.nl

Laurence Kell, Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science Lowestoft Laboratory, UK, e-mail: l.t.kell@cefas.co.uk

Sakari Kuikka, Helsinki University, Finland, e-mail: sakari.kuikka@helsinki.fi

Bonnie McCay, Rutgers University Human Ecol-Scoc Sciences, USA, e-mail mccay@aesop.rutgers.edu