

BCC Resolutions 2007

2007/2/BCC01 The **Study Group on Baltic Ecosystem Health Issues [SGEH]** (Chair: E. Andruliewicz, Poland) will meet in Helsinki, Finland, in 6–9 November 2007 to:

- a) report on new developments regarding ecosystem-based approaches to management of the marine environment with particular reference to progress in ICES, HELCOM, EU and US EPA;
- b) continue to develop the Baltic ecosystem health concept in relation to biological effects of hazardous substances and loss of biodiversity;
- c) evaluate the progress made regarding the planning of Sea-going Demonstration Project on the Ecosystem Health of the Gulf of Finland;
- d) contribute to the implementation of the HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) in relation to sustaining Baltic Sea ecosystem health, in particular regarding preserving its biodiversity, and preventing effects of hazardous substances;
- e) discuss and review project proposals for BONUS ERA-NET + on biological effects of contaminants and biodiversity.

SGEH will report by 1 February 2008 for the attention of the Baltic Committee and ACOM.

Supporting Information

PRIORITY:	The activities of SGEH will lead ICES to progress related to the ecosystem affects of fisheries, especially with regard to the application of the Precautionary Approach. Consequently these activities are considered to have a very high priority.
SCIENTIFIC JUSTIFICATION AND RELATION TO ACTION PLAN:	Action Plan Nos: 1.2, 2.3, 2.6 Several countries are conducting or have recently completed significant studies in aspects being potentially of relevance for the integrated assessment. The integrated assessment of WGIAB would benefit from a review of progress and an evaluation of the results obtained. This shall be done to support WGIAB with all available information in a structured manner and to help WGIAB in selecting appropriate areas for the integrated assessment. All fishing activities have influences that extend beyond removing target species. The approach recommended by FAO is that responsible fisheries technology should achieve management objectives with the minimum side effects and that they should be subject to ongoing review. SGEH is going to support this by defining ecosystem health indicators and by defining the respective reference levels for these indicators.
RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:	The research programmes which provide the main input to this group are underway and resources already committed. The additional resources required to undertake additional activities in the framework of this group are negligible.
PARTICIPANTS:	The Group is normally attended by some 20–25 members and guests. The membership is expected to decrease due to phasing out of the BSRP-project and decline of travel funding for the Baltic states.
SECRETARIAT FACILITIES:	None.
FINANCIAL:	No financial implications.
LINKAGES TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES:	There are no obvious direct linkages with the advisory committees.
LINKAGES TO OTHER COMMITTEES OR GROUPS:	There is a very close working relationship with all the groups of the Fisheries Technology Committee. Its most relevant linkage to other groups is however the Working Group on Integrated Assessment in the Baltic (WGIAB)
LINKAGES TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:	The work of this group is closely aligned with similar work in FAO.

2007/2/BCC02 **The Study Group on Baltic Sea Productivity [SGPROD]** (Chairs: B. Müller-Karulis, Latvia, and M. Olesen*, Denmark) will meet in Jūrmala, Latvia, from 22–25 January 2008 to:

- a) update lower trophic level (hydrography, nutrient, phyto- and zooplankton) indicator time-series for the use of WGIAB and fisheries assessment groups;
- b) summarize and report on the zooplankton indicators developed during the Baltic Sea Regional Project;
- c) present preliminary results from Baltic zooplankton data collected by CPR in comparison to WP-2 nets;
- d) initiate a case study to test approaches to assess Baltic marine primary productivity.

SGPROD will report by 1 March 2008 for the attention of the Baltic Committee.

Supporting Information

PRIORITY:	SGPROD was founded as Study Group on Baltic Sea Productivity Issues in Support of the BSRP. Within the new Baltic related study and working group structure proposed by WKIAB it should continue its work, strengthening productivity indicator development and supplying lower trophic level information for both fishery management and integrated assessment purposes. Work of the group should therefore be given high priority.
SCIENTIFIC JUSTIFICATION AND RELATION TO ACTION PLAN:	<p>a) The integrated assessments for the Central Baltic and Gulf of Riga at WKIAB of the previous year showed that raw data time-series could be integrated into basin and process specific indicators by scientific experts. SGPROD will continue to describe the hydrographic, nutrient, phytoplankton and zooplankton indicator time-series required by the Baltic integrated assessment processes and make the relevant indicator time-series available to fisheries related groups, as an important step to organize the information flow for Baltic Sea integrated assessments.</p> <p>b) Discussions at the 2006 SGPROD meeting showed a very active group of experts involved in zooplankton indicator testing within the BSRP. Indicator testing results are expected to be finalized in summer 2007 with the closure of phase I of the BSRP. SGPROD will take the opportunity to discuss and review the results.</p> <p>c) Continuous plankton recorders (CPR) have been successfully and cost-efficiently applied in assessing zooplankton in the world oceans. In the Baltic Sea the applicability of CPR has been questioned because of the small zooplankton in relation to the standard CPR mesh-size. SGPROD will discuss the results of intercomparisons of modified CPRs with WP-2 nets and the potential for their application in the Baltic Sea, based on recent CPR trials in the Baltic Sea.</p> <p>d) SGPROD has also previously pointed out that in order to assess Baltic primary productivity, not only improved coverage of primary productivity data is needed, but that also that the applicability and ecological significance of different primary productivity indicators (e.g. total, new and regenerated production) should be reviewed. In order to refine Baltic primary productivity indicators, SGPROD will initiate a case study based on published literature and conceptual modeling in several Baltic sub-basins to a) investigate the role of new/tergenerated production for the ecological transfer efficiency to higher trophic levels, b) test the sensitivity of productivity indicators proposed earlier, c) propose measurement methods for new and regenerated production in the Baltic.</p>
RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:	None
PARTICIPANTS:	The group was attended by 22 participants from seven countries in 2007.
SECRETARIAT FACILITIES:	None
FINANCIAL:	
LINKAGES TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES:	ACOM. In the consideration of indicator issues, the Group will closely follow the guidelines prepared by ACOM.
LINKAGES TO OTHER COMMITTEES OR GROUPS:	There are close working relationships to SGEH, to Baltic Integrated Assessment activities (WGIAB), to the HELCOM/ICES zooplankton expert network as well as to ongoing HELCOM assessment activities (HELCOM EUTRO-PRO). Contacts are also established to the HELCOM phytoplankton expert network.
LINKAGES TO OTHER:	HELCOM

ORGANIZATIONS:	
----------------	--

2007/2/BCC03 The ICES-IOC Working Group on GEOHAB Implementation in the Baltic [WGGIB] (Chair: M. Viitasalo, Finland) will meet in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 27–29 February 2008 to:

- a) review progress in implementation of the GEOHAB-BALTIC cooperative research plan, with:
 - i) reports from the projects in progress;
 - ii) reports from projects at planning stage;
- b) define processes and plan experiments that are needed for better parameterisation of dynamical HAB models;
- c) review the progress of incorporating the Baltic HAB list into the *IOC Taxonomic Reference List of Toxic Plankton Algae*;
- d) discuss and report on the need of a Baltic HAB researcher network, in the light of the WGHABD comments on WGGIB performance.

WGGIB will report by 30 April 2008 for the attention of the Baltic Committee.

Supporting Information

PRIORITY:	The current activities of this Group will lead ICES into issues related to the effects of HABs on Baltic Ecosystem, as well as fisheries. Consequently these activities are considered to have a high priority.
SCIENTIFIC JUSTIFICATION AND RELATION TO ACTION PLAN:	<p>Action Plan No: 1.</p> <p>Term of Reference a) There is currently an intense research activity on HABs in the Baltic. It is in the interest of ICES, IOC and GEOHAB to foster international cooperative HAB research in the Baltic Sea. In 2007, the BALTIC GEOHAB – Cooperative Research Plan was prepared. This Cooperative Plan was intended to serve as a platform for more specific research projects to which funding will be applied during 2007 and 2008. For the implementation of the Cooperative Plan it is necessary to review the progress of the newly formed projects.</p> <p>Term of Reference b) The ultimate goal of the BALTIC GEOHAB is to develop means for better observation and prediction of HAB blooms in the Baltic Sea. To achieve this, ecosystem models are a primary tool. However, there are still gaps in knowledge in key parameters necessary for reliable modelling of HABs. These processes need to be identified and explicit experiments need to be designed to fulfil the existing gaps and to parametrise the models.</p> <p>Term of Reference c) A list of potentially toxic and bloom forming species has been prepared during the former SGGIB and WGGIB meetings. In 2007 it was decided that this information should be incorporated into the <i>IOC Taxonomic Reference List of Toxic Plankton Algae</i> .. Until this is completed the Baltic list will be updated if necessary.</p> <p>Term of Reference d) One of the GEOHAB objectives is to promote the cooperation and networking of HAB scientists. This Term of Reference intends to investigate if there is a need for a formal organisation of Baltic HAB scientists.</p>
RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:	Part of the research that provides input to this group are already underway in the participating countries, and resources are already committed. Additional resources will be sought for from various sources to build up research projects to implement different subtasks of the Cooperative Plan.
PARTICIPANTS:	In 2007 the Group was attended by 19 participants
SECRETARIAT FACILITIES:	None.
FINANCIAL:	No financial implications.
LINKAGES TO	There are no obvious direct linkages with ACOM.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES:	
LINKAGES TO OTHER COMMITTEES OR GROUPS:	There is a close working relationship with several working groups in the Oceanography Committee (Harmful Algae Bloom dynamics, Working Group on Modelling of Physical/Biological Interactions). The scientific content of the planned projects will be reported through WGHABD.
LINKAGES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS:	The Group is fulfilling the requirements of IOC and GEOHAB to foster international cooperative HAB research in the Baltic Sea.

2007/2/BCC04 **The Working Group on Integrated Assessments of the Baltic Sea [WGIAB]**
(Co-Chairs: C. Möllmann, Germany, B. Müller-Karulis, Latvia; Juha Flinkman, Finland) will meet in Öregrund, Sweden from 25–29 March 2008 to:

- a) update the Integrated Assessments (IA) for the Central Baltic Sea, the Gulf of Riga, the Gulf of Finland and Bothnian Sea, and starting IAs for other subsystems of the Baltic Sea, e.g. the Western Baltic, as well as coastal-open sea comparisons;
- b) prepare ecosystem overview and assessment documents as the basis for ecosystem-based management, coordinating the work with HELCOM MONAS and HELCOM Projects (e.g. BIO and EUTRO-PRO) and ICES (e.g. WGBFAS, WGRED) activities;
- c) respond to the request of WGBFAS for information on environmental processes affecting fish stocks;
- d) outline the use of ecosystem modelling approaches available for the area, and outline a strategy of their use within the future Integrated Assessment framework;
- e) continue to develop an adaptive management framework in cooperation with HELCOM BIO and related ICES-groups;
- f) in consultations with WGDIM and the ICES Data Centre propose a data management strategy between ICES and HELCOM;
- g) produce detailed descriptions of the data-series produced as background for use by other groups and scientists;

WGIAB will report by 15 April 2008 for the attention of the Baltic Committee.

Supporting Information

PRIORITY:	This Working Group aims to conduct and further develop Integrated Assessments for the different subsystems of the Baltic, as a step towards implementing the ecosystem approach in the Baltic
SCIENTIFIC JUSTIFICATION AND RELATION TO ACTION PLAN:	<p>The Working Group contributes to Actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.11, 1.12, 2.1, 2.2, 2.8, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 3.12, 3.15, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.11, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.9, 5.17, 7.3, 8.1, 8.4 of the ICES Action Plan.</p> <p>Key to the implementation of an ecosystem approach to the management of marine resources and environmental quality is the development of an Integrated Assessment (IA) of the ecosystem. An IA considers the physical, chemical and biological environment – including all trophic levels and biological diversity - as well as socio-economic factors and treats fish and fisheries as an integral part of the environment.</p> <p>The work of the group base includes (i) a further development of overview assessments, and assessments for the different subsystems of the Baltic, (ii) contributions to the HELCOM assessment system, (iii) developing of new monitoring strategies, and (iv) considering the use of ecosystem modelling in the assessment framework. The working group serves as a counterpart to the fish stock assessment working groups and provides these with information on the biotic and abiotic compartments of the ecosystems. A key task of the working group is to serve as a communication and organisation platform between the different science organisations/groups involved in the area. Primarily this applies to the cooperation between ICES and HELCOM, but will also include cooperation with BALTEX, as well as EU-projects and networks of excellence such as EUR-OCEANS. The working group is thus key to implementing the ecosystem approach to the Baltic Sea. Further a close cooperation with IA activities in other areas is envisaged to coordinate the ICES IA activities.</p>

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:	Assistance of the Secretariat in maintaining and exchanging information and data to potential participants. Assistance of especially the ICES DATA CENTER to collect and store relevant data series.
PARTICIPANTS:	The Group is normally attended by some 15–20 members and guests.
SECRETARIAT FACILITIES:	None.
FINANCIAL:	None.
LINKAGES TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES:	Relevant to the work of ACOM.
LINKAGES TO OTHER COMMITTEES OR GROUPS:	BCC, all SG/WGs related to Baltic Sea issues
LINKAGES TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:	HELCOM, BALTEX

2007/2/BCC05 An **ICES/BSRP Workshop on Developing and Testing Environmentally-Sensitive Stock-recruitment Relationships of Baltic Herring and Sprat stocks [WKSSRB]** (Chair: M. Cardinale, Sweden and Piotr Margonski, Poland) will meet in Ponza, Italy from 2–5 April 2008 to:

- a) review the work on environment-recruitment relationships for Baltic herring and sprat stocks, especially by WKHRPB;
- b) construct stock-recruitment relationships including environmental variables;
- c) evaluate the performance of environmentally-sensitive stock-recruitment relationships in stock projections.

WKSSRB will report by 30 April 2008 to the attention of the Baltic Committee.

Supporting Information

PRIORITY:	This Workshop aims at incorporating environmental information into stock-recruitment relationships (SRRs) of Baltic herring and sprat stocks. It further will test the ability of environmentally-sensitive SRRs to improve stock projections in the assessment process.
JUSTIFICATION FOR VENUE	Italy has previously participated with expertise at several ICES meetings and planning groups together with ICES members. The meeting will be kindly organized in conjunction with the Department of Human and Animal biology, University of Rome (reference person, Dr. Francesco Colloca; francesco.colloca@uniroma1.it and Prof. G.D. Ardizzone). The Department of Human and Animal biology, University of Rome has participated to several EU projects together with ICES members, for instance the BECAUSE and INDECO projects. Also, they have hosted a BECAUSE meeting in 2007. The Department of Human and Animal biology, University of Rome will also provide facilities for the meeting. Some of the invited scientists (PhD student, Valerio Bartolino, Department of Human and Animal biology, University of Rome) have already participated to the previous meeting in Hamburg in 2007 and thus are members of the EG. A scientist (Dr. Francesco Colloca) from Rome University will participate as expert in recruitment process. They have good expertise in R and recruitment of fish in general that will largely enhance the possibility to fulfil the TORs of the EG. There will not be any large additional cost to the ICES participants; on the contrary, accommodation and facilities will be in general cheaper than in Copenhagen.
SCIENTIFIC JUSTIFICATION AND RELATION TO ACTION PLAN:	The Workshop contributes to Actions 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 1.12, 3.2, 3.5, 3.15, 4.11, 4.15, 5.3, 5.6. of the ICES Action Plan. Herring is an essential component of the Baltic ecosystem, being a food item for cod and exerting predation pressure on zooplankton populations. The different populations are of considerable commercial value for the countries bordering the Baltic. While growth of herring has been intensively studied, studies on recruitment processes of Baltic fish stocks have in recent decades been exclusively directed to cod and sprat. However, recruitment trends drive a large proportion of the dynamics of the different stocks, which are partly of opposite direction. The work of WKHRPB has shown that these trends in recruitment are due to direct (e.g. temperature) and indirect effects (e.g. food availability) of climate. Reliably predicting recruitment is essential for proper stock management and environmentally-sensitive stock recruitment relationships are essential for implementing precautionary and ecosystem approaches. The workshop will thus built on the result of WKHRPB and model environmentally sensitive stock-recruitment relationships, evaluate their performance in stock projections, and suggest stock-specific strategies for including environmental information into the work of WGBFAS.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:	Assistance of the secretariat in maintaining and exchanging information and data to potential participants.
PARTICIPANTS:	This Workshop is expected to attract 10-15 participants working on Baltic herring and sprat stocks, contributing data and expertise. Further, experts from other areas should be encouraged to participate.
SECRETARIAT FACILITIES:	None.
FINANCIAL:	No financial implications.
LINKAGES TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES:	ACOM
LINKAGES TO OTHER COMMITTEES OR GROUPS:	BCC, LRC, SG/WGs related to Baltic Sea issues, HAWG, WGIAB, WGLESB
LINKAGES TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:	Baltic Sea Regional Project (BSRP), HELCOM