

ICES Council Minutes  
102nd Statutory Meeting  
22–23 October 2014

Chair: ICES President, Paul Connolly

## **1 Welcome and Agenda**

ICES President Paul Connolly opened the meeting and welcomed the new Delegates, Alain Vezina (CA), and Anders Hermansson (SE). The Portuguese delegation was unable to attend. A full list of participants is available in Annex 1.

The meeting reviewed and adopted the agenda. (CM\_2014\_Del-01.1).

### **1.1 Follow-up of 2013 Council meeting**

To ensure all the necessary actions have been taken, the meeting reviewed the follow-up actions decided at the 2013 Council meeting (CM\_2014\_Del-01.2).

## **2 ICES Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan**

The President updated Delegates on the launch of the ICES Strategic Plan in March 2013 at the Norwegian Mission in Brussels, and the launch of the ICES Implementation Plan at the ASC in September 2014. The implementation plan includes detailed working plans for the four pillars of ICES; Science, Advice, Data and Information, and Secretariat.

The President stressed the importance of monitoring performance in the implementation of the ISP. The ISP highlights the need for performance measures. These have been, or are in the process of, being developed. It is difficult to measure success after only one year of a five-year strategic plan; however, there is still a need to monitor the implementation progress as we complete year 1 of the ISP.

To assess implementation progress, a common “gut-feeling” approach was developed by Bureau for use by all four pillars in 2014 progress reporting (CM\_2014\_Del-02a).

The President highlighted that Bureau had delivered on its mandate from Council to complete the Strategic Plan and the Implementation Plan, while keeping Council fully informed on progress.

### **Advisory Leadership structures**

The advisory leadership is key to delivering the advisory elements of the ISP. The Council discussed the Bureau proposal to strengthen the Advisory Leadership (CM\_2014\_Del-02b).

The President gave a presentation on the Bureau proposal. He highlighted that much Bureau time had been invested on this important issue, and that two additional Bureau sub group meetings were held on this topic. Council gave their initial comments to the proposal.

ICES staff representative, Claus Hagebro, was unable to attend the first day of the Council meeting when the initial presentation and opening comments were given on this agenda point. On the second day of the meeting, he presented a document (CM 2014 Del-13) outlining some Secretariat advisory staff concerns with the proposal. The main advisory staff concern is that the Secretariat Advisory Unit will be weakened by removing resources from the Secretariat to ACOM. (It should be noted that the staff document presented to Council differed from the document presented to Bureau earlier in the week). Council listened to these concerns and supported staff participation on CAWGSAL (Council-ACOM Working Group on Strengthening the Advisory Leadership).

Council also noted that the ICES staff representative had a seat at Bureau meetings.

During the discussion of the Bureau proposal, the following points emerged:

- The Council/ACOM Working Group should also look at how the work will be financed.
- The structure of the ICES Advisory Leadership directly impacts the nature and quality of the advice. Full-time employees, capable of integrating advice, are required and there are costs associated with employing good people.
- A full-time ACOM Chair position may be a more attractive position that will create greater interest among potential candidates for the job.
- There is some doubt among ACOM members and staff about how the new arrangements will be implemented. It will be important to have these doubts addressed by the Council – ACOM Working Group.
- The proposed changes to the advisory leadership structures will not solve all the issues associated with ICES advice (i.e. the issues identified in the review of ICES advisory process). The strengthening of the advisory leadership represents a first-step in a process to deal with implementation of the ISP, and the reality of greater work demands with fewer resources.
- Council pointed out that the staff representative has a seat at the Bureau meetings and should use this important forum to feedback to staff. Furthermore, the contributions and feedback from staff will be important to the work of CAWGSAL.

The President conducted a tour de table and all delegations expressed their support for the Bureau proposal. The following points emerged during the discussion:

- The current system cannot continue with the current advisory leadership model. Bureau has spent a lot of time discussing this issue and CAWGSAL will work on the details. The Bureau proposal is a starting point for evolving the advisory leadership. The Bureau will continue to deal with the issues raised in the review of the advisory process and in implementation of the ISP.
- A greater demand for advice on diverse issues including environmental and integrated advice requires a flexible organization that can respond, evolve, and change as needed.
- The Council discussion would have been aided by an outline of cost implications.
- It is important to communicate details of changes as soon as possible, particularly concerning job descriptions, and to accommodate the staff's

desire for as much information as possible (it should be noted that an advisory programme staff member will be a member of CAWGSAL).

- Strong leadership is needed as integrated advice develops.
- More complicated advice will demand greater resources.
- The interim year (2015) will be a learn-by-doing process. The work of ICES is becoming increasingly complex, and adaptation and creative solutions are required.
- The ACOM Chair will remain independent and continue to report to Bureau and Council. Changes to the advisory leadership are an initial step in the change process. Analyses of any further changes that may be required in other parts of ICES will follow (e.g., SCICOM; Data and Information).
- The system is stretched and there are resource limitations in the Secretariat, as well as in Member Countries. The current proposal is a technical fix in a series of steps. As the proposal develops, engagement with all parts of the organization will be needed and welcomed.
- The composition of the CAWGSAL is important. The ACOM representatives will be essential to ensure ACOM contribution and buy-in to the proposal.
- ICES needs a strong advisory process.
- It is a challenge to find a balance between increasing workload and requirements with fewer resources. This should be included in the analysis of the problem.
- The workload problem cannot be solved by internal reorganization alone. New approaches to address the increasing number of requests will be required, and Member Countries must be involved in the process (e.g. the Resource Coordination Tool).

Council unanimously **agreed** to the Bureau proposal:

1. *To set a clear direction regarding strengthening of the advisory leadership by extending the responsibilities and employment time of the ACOM Chair and, at the same time, ensuring an optimal mobilisation of the expertise and capacity within the Secretariat to support the work of ACOM;*
2. *On the need for a full time ACOM Chair and a Head of ACOM Support for 2015 et seq.;*
3. *To establish interim full time positions for the ACOM Chair and the Head of ACOM Support, and to increase the salaries for the ACOM Vice-Chairs until the full implementation of the proposal in 2016;*
4. *To establish a Council/ACOM Working Group that will engage during January to June 2015, with clearly defined Terms of Reference on how to take the process forward;*
5. *To mandate Bureau, informed by the recommendations of the Council/ACOM Working Group, to prepare a proposal for the October 2015 Council meeting;*
6. *To consider the Bureau proposal at the October 2015 Council meeting for implementation in 2016; and*
7. *To consider the cost implications from a full time ACOM Chair, in addition to increased salaries for the ACOM Vice-Chairs.*

The Council – ACOM Working Group on Strengthening the Advisory Leadership (CAWGSAL) will be chaired by First Vice-President Cornelius Hammer and will comprise two representatives from Council (Carl O'Brien, UK and Tore Nepstad, NO), two national ACOM members (to be decided at the December ACOM meeting), the ACOM Chair, the SCICOM Chair, the General Secretary, Head of

Science Programme, Head of Data and Information Services, and a Secretariat Advisory staff representative (to be decided by the end of 2014).

CAWGSAL will hold two, single-day meetings at ICES HQs, one in late winter 2015 and one in early spring 2015. Further details on the *modus operandi* of the Group will be outlined by the Chair during November 2015.

**Council agreed to the following CAWGSAL Terms of Reference:**

1. To develop a detailed job description for the full time ACOM Chair, particularly in relation to implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan and the advisory review, and making best possible use of Secretariat resources in accordance with ACOM needs;
2. To develop a detailed job description for a full time Head of ACOM Support in relation to ensuring optimal mobilization of the expertise and capacity within the Secretariat to support the work of ACOM;
3. To further elaborate the impact of resource limitations in relation to the support provided by the ACOM Vice-Chairs, and the need for integrated advice as part of the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan;
4. To examine the cost and resource implications for ICES in relation to the implementation of ToRs 1 and 2;
5. Examine the capacity within the ICES Secretariat to respond to requests for advice and ensure the science structures are capable of providing the necessary support.

**Action:** Council unanimously agreed to the seven (7) points of the Bureau proposal to strengthen the advisory leadership as outlined above. Council agreed to the establishment of a Council-ACOM Working Group on Strengthening the Advisory Leadership (CAWGSAL) to work on the detail of how to take the process forward. The TORs for the CAWGSAL were also agreed (as above). The CAWGSAL chair (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Cornelius Hammer) will further develop the *modus operandi* of the Group during November 2014.

### **3 Report from the Council Steering Group on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (CSG MSFD)**

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The Chair of CSG MSFD, Bill Turrell updated Council on the group's activities, (CM\_2014\_Del-03) highlighting work on developing cooperation with Regional Seas Commissions (RSC), specific MSFD work, and the 2014 CSG MSFD recommendations.

During the discussion the following points emerged:

- A strategy is needed to facilitate data sharing at the regional level to support MSFD. Guidance on how to develop a national strategy to move towards a regional approach is welcomed.
- A regional approach to monitoring is developing and ICES has begun to define how it can work best together with Regional Seas Commissions in future.
- Increasing amounts of science will be needed to support MSFD implementation.
- The advisory system needs a wider range of experts to support the MSFD system.
- The wording "client commission" does not accurately describe ICES relation to HELCOM, where cooperation is carried out through ICES contribution to projects.

- The key aspect of draft ToR 5 (see below) is communication and education to help partners realize the value of developing integrated advice.
- With the response to ToR 4 (see below), CSG MSFD should avoid duplicating initiatives developing in ACOM.
- The MSFD is ultimately about implementing the ecosystem approach. The techniques being developed will support the wider implementation of the ecosystem approach.

**Draft CSG MSFD ToRs (to be reviewed by the incoming Chair):**

1. To identify the principal elements of ICES work that are relevant to the implementation of the MSFD, and to consider how best to achieve the internal coordination of these elements.
2. Maintain strategic oversight of how current or new working arrangements with strategic cooperation partners, principally the European Commission, OSPAR, and HELCOM, may be best used to link the ICES Science and Advice structures to those of the Regional Seas Conventions so that ICES can provide appropriate input to the continuing MSFD process.
3. To consider how ICES can best contribute to the development of (a) integrated surveys and monitoring in support of the MSFD, (b) programmes of measures, (c) integration across indicators, and (d) cumulative effects.
4. Develop a strategy that encourages expert working groups under both the advisory and science committees to contribute to producing high-quality MSFD advice products.
5. To create the opportunity to co-convene an MSFD related symposium in 2014/2015 with recipients of ICES advice and interested collaborative partners.

**Action:** Council **supported** the appointment of the interim Chair of CSG MSFD Eugene Nixon (IE), and the draft ToRs were **accepted** as a basis to move forward. The interim Chair will review the ToRs, membership of the Group, and continue the work in 2015 to support ecosystem approach implementation. The interim Chair emphasized the importance of feedback from both Member Countries and marine directors, and also in actively engaging with DG MARE.

#### **4 Report from the Council Working Group on Maritime Trans-Atlantic Cooperation (CWGMTC)**

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The first Vice-President and Chair of CWGMTC, Cornelius Hammer, reported on: (a) the activities of the group; (b) the follow-up initiatives taken to define the role and contribution of ICES to the Transatlantic Ocean Research Alliance (CM\_2014\_Del-04); and (c) activities underway to support implementation of the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation. ICES working groups and non-EU members of ICES (RU, IS, NO) were encouraged to bring their interests and perspectives to CWGMTC as the ICES definition of transatlantic cooperation is broader than in the EU approach. For both the EU and ICES, the Arctic is considered as part of trans-Atlantic cooperation. While circumpolar Arctic cooperation is well organized through the Arctic Council, cooperation in the North Atlantic is facilitated and strengthened by ICES broad activities. The CWGMTC Chair outlined five themes in the Galway Statement where ICES could make substantial contributions. For example, the ICES Report on Ocean Climate was a very good example of on-going work that could strengthen cooperation with US and Canada, particularly relative to sharing or coupling of common databases. It

is clear that ICES provides a well-established and functioning platform for trans-Atlantic cooperation.

Feedback from Council:

- The Council decision in 2013 to establish the CWGMTC was a good and timely strategic decision and has positioned ICES well in the arena of transatlantic cooperation. ICES needs to define how it can further contribute and what its role will be in helping to deliver the themes of the Galway Statement and what its priorities will be.
- The outcome of the BG14 call will soon be public. If this project is funded, this could provide a basis to further develop and substantiate ICES activities in transatlantic cooperation.
- Ocean literacy is of major importance and is an area where ICES can certainly contribute.
- Other projects/calls should be identified and assessed to determine if they can be used to strengthen ICES contribution to transatlantic cooperation and to the implementation of the ISP.
- To ensure ICES is contributing in the most effective and efficient way, any gaps in ICES activities and duplication of effort should be identified.
- ICES needs to bring its priorities (based on the ISP) into transatlantic cooperation and to position itself accordingly. This process and the definition of ICES priorities should be linked with other initiatives and also with the ICES Business Model (See further discussion under 5.1). ICES priorities have not yet been set, and this should constitute a new ToR for CWGMTC.

#### **Council Working Group on Maritime Transatlantic Cooperation**

The CWGMTC will meet for one day in 2015. The following countries indicated their intention to participate in the CWGMTC: NL, IS, ES, US, IE, CA, DK, UK, FR, PT.

#### **Draft CWGMTC ToRs (to be revised by the Chair):**

1. To summarise (a) the main elements of the EU Maritime Strategy for the Atlantic Ocean Area and the subsequent Action Plan for the Maritime Strategy in the Atlantic Area; (b) transatlantic cooperation agreements and initiatives (an example of the latter; the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation); (c) bilateral cooperation agreements; and (d) any other relevant Atlantic research and cooperation agreements.
2. To summarise existing ICES work and other relevant work carried out by ICES Member Countries in the area of maritime transatlantic cooperation, by reference to the agreements and initiatives summarised under ToR 1.
3. To describe how the ICES cooperation structure could be used to facilitate and promote work under transatlantic cooperation agreements using the outputs from ToRs 1 and 2, including ICES position in relation to Horizon 2020 calls (e.g., BG-14-2014 "Supporting cooperation initiatives: Atlantic Ocean Cooperation Research Alliance").
4. To identify new opportunities for transatlantic marine science and research for ICES that would support the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan, and which could be advanced using the ICES network (expert groups, projects, databases, etc.), or through strategic partnerships.
5. Position ICES for future work that can be allied with the ISP.

<p><b>Action:</b> Cornelius Hammer was commended by Council for his efforts in highlighting the potential of ICES as a major player in the transatlantic cooperation arena. The Chair will revise the ToRs and continue the work of</p>
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CWGMTC into 2015. ToRs 1 and 2 should remain active, but the main focus will be on ToRs 3 and 4 to assess where ICES fits and can add value. This work should prepare ICES to position itself for future HORIZON 2020 projects, BG14, and other projects. Participation in such projects should help ICES realise the goals of the ISP. This latter point should constitute the basis for a new ToR 5. The President stressed the importance of this work, and the need for Member States who join the Group to be active participants. CWGMTC will also consider future Arctic work under a new ToR (see Section 11).

## 5 Finance

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### 5.1 Finance Committee Report

The Chair of Finance Committee, Konstantin Drevetnyak, presented the report of Finance Committee. The meeting **approved** the report from the Finance Committee (CM\_2014\_Del-05.1), including the final accounts 2013 and the Audit Book.

#### Proposed budget 2015

Council discussed the proposed budget for 2015. Prior to the vote, one country expressed the desire to increase the contributions for 2015. However, it was clarified that the decision (0% increase) in national contributions in 2015 had been taken at last year's Council meeting and hence was a fixed decision.

The 2015 budget was **approved** with more than the required 2/3 majority.

#### Forecast budget 2016

Council voted on the forecast budget for 2016, which called for a 2% increase in national contributions. The required approval of a 2/3 majority of the Contracting Parties was not achieved (12 yes votes).

Following this vote, it was noted there had now been no increase in national contributions for five years consecutive years (2012–2016), and also in 2010. During the Council discussion on how to proceed, the following issues emerged:

- Clarifications were requested on the accumulated income over expenditure (equity), and how spending priorities are decided.
- The forecast budget 2016 assumes the Annual Science Conference will be hosted by a Member Country.
- Member Countries need a well-presented business case to help increase national contributions, including a description of what ICES is doing to be more efficient.
- Some Delegations are not able to influence the decision to support the proposed increase.
- ICES needs to strategically review its business model and ensure it is operating on a sound basis. The business model should be developed and linked to the ISP. To get the organization on a sound economic basis, the review should consider funding costs, membership shares, and project funding.
- The lack of any annual increase in member contributions is an increasing burden on the organization. The problem is compounded as Member States who contribute significantly in terms of manpower are also experiencing resource difficulties.
- ICES is responding to more complex requests with diminished resources.
- The Science Fund may not be an efficient use of limited ICES resources.

- A prioritization strategy (decisions on what should be reduced or dropped) is urgently required.

**Action:** Council agreed to postpone the vote on a 0% increase in the 2016 budget. In the interim, the Secretariat will prepare a detailed case to Member Countries highlighting the urgent need for an increase in Member State contributions (at least to match inflation). The document will outline the cumulative impacts and consequences of 0% increase in budget over the recent 6 years (2010 and 2012–2016), and will be presented for discussion at the February 2015 Bureau meeting, after which it will be circulated to Member Countries. The Secretariat will be available to present the document to Member Countries that require clarifications before making their decisions on an increase in the 2016 forecast budget. The vote on the 2016 forecast budget will take place via e-voting procedure in April 2015 and will attempt to secure a 1.9% increase in national contributions. (It would not be appropriate for Council to “vote again” on a 2% increase in the 2016 forecast budget).

### **Council Working Group on ICES Business Model**

Council recognised the urgent need to review the long-term financial operations of ICES. The meeting agreed to establish a Council Working Group on the ICES Business Model (CWGIBM). As a starting point, the CWGIBM will examine the Business Model approved by Council in 2012, and the Secretariat will update the figures presented in the 2012 Business Model. The group will hold two single-day meetings in 2015 at ICES HQs, one at the end of January and the other in May. The second meeting will be arranged back-to-back with the meeting of the Finance Committee.

The Working Group will consist of eight delegates (from BE, CA, FI, FR, DE, NL, PL, and SE), chaired by the Danish representative in the Finance Committee (Fritz Köster). The Chair of the Finance Committee (Konstantin Drevetnyak) will participate as an *ex officio* member. The General Secretary will support the work of the Group and also participate in the meetings.

#### **Draft CWGIBM ToRs:**

1. The Group will review and make recommendations to revise the Business Model to be used by ICES to fund its future activities. The Group will examine the Business Model in relation to the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan, Member Countries’ contributions to ICES (money and resources), budget spending within ICES, the use of equity, income from external sources (MoUs, projects), as a basis for priority setting within the organization.
2. To test the business model against a series of plausible scenarios built around financial risk assessment.

The Working Group Chair will further refine the ToRs and develop the *modus operandi* for the Group during November.

The Group will present its recommendations at the June 2015 Bureau meeting. Bureau will then prepare a document for the 2015 Council meeting to serve as a basis for discussing the long-term financial operations of ICES.

**Actions:** Council recognised the urgent need to review the long-term financial operations of ICES. The meeting agreed to establish a Council Working Group on the ICES Business Model (CWGIBM). The CWGIBM will examine the Business Model in relation to the implementation of the ISP, Member Countries contributions, budget spending, use of equity, income from external sources, and



priority setting within the organization. CWGIBM will report to the June 2015 Bureau meeting. Bureau will then prepare a document for the 2015 Council meeting to serve as a basis for discussing the long-term financial operations of ICES.

#### 5.1.1 ICES Science Fund

The ICES Science Fund (CM\_2014\_Del-5.1.1) was provisionally supported in 2014, and is viewed by SCICOM as a success in terms of providing seed money to projects that complement the ICES Strategic Plan and bringing new scientists into the ICES system.

Based on the recommendation by SCICOM, Finance Committee, and Bureau, Council was requested to approve the use of a maximum of 500,000 DKK from the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) for the 2015 Science Fund.

**Action:** Council approved the use of a maximum of 500,000 DKK from the Strategic Investment Fund to support the Science Fund in 2015. Before considering the longer-term funding for the Science Fund, Council requested SCICOM to review the outputs from the 2014 and 2015 science funds. SCICOM should pay particular attention to how project results have been integrated into ICES work in relation to implementation of the ISP. The longer-term viability of the Science Fund will be discussed at the 2015 Council meeting and will be considered in the work of the CWGIBM (see 5.1 above).

#### 5.1.2 Proposal for investment in SCICOM activities 2015–2018

The meeting considered a proposal for investment in SCICOM activities over the period 2015–2018 (CM\_2014\_Del-5.1.2). In light of the on-going discussions on spending priorities in ICES and the establishment of the CWGIBM, Council was reluctant to commit to funding all the activities over the entire period.

**Action:** Council approved the use of the necessary funds from equity for both activities in 2015, and for the joint ICES/PICES Early Career Scientist Conference in 2017. Other items in the proposal may be re-submitted for further consideration in 2015. The 2015 Council deliberations on the future financial footing of ICES will clearly influence future funding of ICES Science.

## 6 Elections and Appointments (CM\_2014\_Del-6)

### 6.1 Advisory Committee Vice-Chair

Based on the nomination by ACOM, the Council unanimously approved a one-year extension of ACOM Vice-Chair, Carmen Fernandez.

### 6.2 Vice-Presidents

Council elected four new Vice-Presidents: Jóhann Sigurjónsson (IS); Pierre Petitgas (FR), Tammo Bult (NL), and Kai Myrberg (FI).

The President welcomed the new member of Bureau and thanked outgoing members Fritz Köster (DK), Fred Serchuk (US), Tore Nepstad (NO), and Carmela Porteiro (ES) for their hard work over the past three years.

**Action:** Council requested Bureau to investigate a revision to the rules of procedure and develop a proposal to simplify the voting procedure. Based on the new proposal, the Secretariat is requested to refine the e-voting system to ensure

that voting remains a “secret ballot”. Council also asked Bureau to look into ways to preserve continuity on the Bureau and avoid having 4 members leave at the same time.

### 6.3 Council delegate member of the Award Committee

Council unanimously appointed Carl O’Brien (UK) to the Awards Committee.

## 7 ICES Science

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### 7.1 Report from the SCICOM Chair

#### 7.1.1 Annual Progress Report

The Chair of SCICOM, Yvonne Walther, provided a report on the activities of SCICOM, with a specific focus on activities carried out to further the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan (CM\_2014\_Del-7.1)

Progress on implementing the Science plan is evident through the well-established Steering Groups. Some Science Plan areas are already operational, and certain areas need special attention and activities. Overall, the delivery of science to advice is improving.

#### 7.1.2 Aquaculture

Head of Science Programme, Adi Kellermann, updated the Council on the development of the aquaculture document (CM 2014 Del-7.1.2.) A proposal to host an ICES dialogue meeting on aquaculture was also discussed:

- A dialogue meeting with stakeholders (e.g. industry, policy makers, scientists, research funders) should be a platform that highlights what ICES has to offer.
- It will be an important forum to identify aquaculture gap areas and help identify a niche where ICES can make a valuable contribution to sustainable aquaculture.
- It is important for ICES to build contacts with existing players and to be aware of on-going work, for instance in the Nordic Council of Ministers, and as part of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region.
- A dialogue meeting could be a catalyst for stimulating a focus in ICES. As ICES possesses the capacity to respond to requests, ACOM should highlight what kind of advice could be provided—or easily developed—as part of the dialogue meeting.
- The proposal for an ICES hosted dialogue meeting is timely. There has been a lot of new research and ICES would be seen as an “honest broker”.

**Action:** ACOM and SCICOM are requested to provide an updated programme for the dialogue meeting, for consideration at the February 2015 Bureau meeting.

#### 7.1.3 Arctic

See discussion under item 11.

### 7.2 2015 and forthcoming Annual Science Conferences

The meeting discussed the lack of forthcoming hosts for future ASCs, and how to make the ASC more attractive in future years. SCICOM has been tasked by Bureau to review the format of the ASC, including considerations of the need for a new

business model and if the ASC is fit for purpose. Potential changes to the format could include reducing frequency or length of the ASC. One delegation noted the moral obligation of countries to host the Annual Science Conference about once every 20 years (CM 2014 Del-7.2).

Although changes to the format are expected, some countries indicated that they would be willing to investigate the potential to host the ASC in the next 5-years. Although no commitments were made, Latvia (2016), United States (2017), Germany (2018), and Sweden (2019) indicated they would investigate and report back as soon as possible.

**Action:** SCICOM will conduct a review of the ASC format, and present a report at the June 2015 Bureau meeting.

### 7.3 Joint ACOM/SCICOM scientific strategic initiatives

The meeting was invited to consider information on activities and work conducted to further the joint ACOM–SCICOM scientific strategic initiatives.

#### **Strategic Initiative for Stock Assessment Methods, SISAM:**

- Special volume of the ICES Journal in 2015;
- Dissemination of scientific advancements from WCSAM;
- Planning for further simulation-testing of stock assessment methods;
- Global coordination of advancement in stock assessment methods; and
- Development of best practices guidance for stock assessment methods.

#### **Strategic Initiative on Biodiversity Science and Advice, SIBAS**

- World Conference on Marine Biodiversity (Qingdao, China, 12-16 October 2014. The first ICES Vice-President will represent ICES on the scientific advisory board of the World Conference on Biodiversity to be held in Montréal in May 2018.
- Cooperation with IPBS and CBD is slowly progressing

#### **ICES/PICES Strategic Initiative on Climate Change effects on Marine Ecosystems, SICME**

- Release of the climate impacts report by the IPCC;
- 3rd Symposium on Climate Change on the World's Oceans symposium, Brazil, 2015;
- Rotation of chairs by end of 2015.

##### **7.3.1 Integrated Ecosystem Observation and Monitoring**

At the request of Bureau, ACOM and SCICOM are collaborating in developing a position paper that reviews existing surveys, and how ecosystem data can be included in future surveys. The review will take account of the current policy context including the new EU Common Fisheries Policy, EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and the ecosystem approach.

##### **7.3.2 Integrated Ecosystem Assessments**

The work of Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (IEA) is concentrated in Regional Seas Expert Groups: the Baltic Sea (WGIAB), the North Sea (WGINOSE), the North Atlantic Regional Sea (WGNARS), the Western European Shelf Seas (WGEAWESS), the Norwegian Sea (WGINOR), and the Barents Sea (WGIBAR).

Priorities for assessments, ecosystem descriptions and delivery of trend information to the Advisory process have been established, and regional ecosystem overviews prepared. A workshop in November 2014 (Workshop on Regional Seas Commissions and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Scoping (WKRISCO)) will synthesise the work of the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) groups, and focus on a scoping exercise between ICES and the regional seas commissions (OSPAR and HELCOM). This will help in preparing potential ICES input for the next OSPAR Quality Status Report of the North East Atlantic and for the HELCOM Initial Holistic Assessment of the Ecosystem Health of the Baltic Sea.

### 7.3.3 Benchmarks

The Benchmark Steering Group (BSG) coordinates the transfer of science into assessment and advice through increased communication and targeted workshops. The Workshop on Scoping for Integrated Baltic Cod Assessment (WKSIBCA) took place 1–3 October 2014 in Gdynia, Poland. The main outcomes of the workshop were (a) a road map for the work to be accomplished before the March 2015 Baltic cod stock assessment benchmark workshop, and (b) a demonstration of how environmental and ecological factors can be considered and integrated in a single species stock assessment. The workshop will serve as a guiding example for future integrated assessments.

## 8 ICES Advisory Services

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### 8.1 Report from the ACOM Chair

#### 8.1.1 Annual Progress Report

The Chair of ACOM, Eskild Kirkegaard, reported on the activities of ACOM, with a specific focus on activities carried out to further the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan (ISP) (CM\_2014\_Del-8.1).

The report reviewed (a) progress on addressing ways to streamline and ease the heavy workload on the system; (b) ways to deal with late data submissions; (c) the role of data calls in improving overall data quality; (d) changes to the advice format; and (e) use of secretariat support.

There has been very low participation from ACOM members in the Advice Drafting Groups. These Groups are an integral part of the advisory process and some changes are clearly needed. The role of ACOM will be re-examined at the ACOM meeting in December to assess if the Committee sees its main responsibility as developing advice, or overseeing the advisory process. ACOM still needs better representation on the environmental side. Few ACOM members have this expertise (although many alternate ACOM alternate do).

The “gut-feeling” approach was used to gauge progress on how ACOM was doing on ISP implementation. Low scores were reflected in some of the new advisory areas. The decision to strengthen the advisory leadership will help move some of these “low scores” into “higher scores” in the coming years.

#### Feedback from Council:

- Regarding the proposal to ease the workload by changing the frequency of assessments, an alternate option – in cases where the level of new information is not sufficient or prudent to conduct an annual assessment - is to provide multi-year advice.

- An alternate approach to ensuring ACOM member participation in advice drafting groups is to change the structure of Advice Drafting Groups to consist of a Chair, a relevant EG member, and an ACOM member. Alternatively, ADGs could draw on participants from the ICES network.
- The Council believed the risk-based approach to by-catch species was worth pursuing but will be challenging.
- Addressing workload issues is important as is the development of ecosystem advice and progress. The Council commended ACOM for its initial efforts in addressing these two issues.
- The format of science advice that comes at stock level, fishery level, and environmental level is difficult to standardize due to regional differences. A template is not yet ready, but work is underway to simplify the format of the advice.

#### 8.1.2 Resolutions/ToRs

ACOM has adopted a two-step process for planning the annual advisory work with (1) most of the recurrent expert groups and ToRs developed during the ASC, and submitted to Council in October; and (2) any additional ToRs set following the December ACOM meeting.

The most current versions of the Work Plans and ToRs for both SCICOM and ACOM are available on the ICES SharePoint site:

[https://community.ices.dk/admin/Workplan/\\_layouts/15/start.aspx#/default.aspx](https://community.ices.dk/admin/Workplan/_layouts/15/start.aspx#/default.aspx)

#### 8.1.3 Status of ICES-EU MoU renewal

The MoU with the EU Commission is renewed annually and is normally signed in January. The MoU is currently financed under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Due to the delayed adoption of the EMFF, the EU Commission did not sign the 2014 MoU until late August. This has created problems in relation to addressing special requests from the EU Commission. A major revision to the text of the MoU is planned for the 2016 MoU.

Major changes to the budget should not be expected, as within the EMFF there is a fixed budget for science advice (including STECF). Hence, any changes (e.g., possible increases for ICES) will come at the expense of others.

#### 8.1.4 Resource Coordination Tool

The Resource Coordination Tool (RCT; **CM 2014 Del-8.1.4**) has been developed and refined within in the Secretariat over the past year to facilitate work planning and to ensure that available resources are being used efficiently. The RCT should be fully operational in January 2015. A live demonstration of the RCT was presented to the Council. The future utility of the tool is dependent on people using and engaging with the tool.

Comments and feedback included:

- There was acknowledgement that great progress had been made in developing the RCT. When operational, the RCT will help to quantify the resources available for the advisory workload and help address the issue of dealing with more requests with diminishing resources (e.g. show clients the basis for saying “no” or “not now” to requests).
- Within the RCT, an additional category is needed to deal with the affiliation of experts from international organizations. Experts affiliated with the European Commission should not be affiliated with Belgium.

- To simplify the process of checking institute addresses, it was recommended to use an existing catalogue of addresses.
- The implementation of the RCT should help to clean-up the lists of participants, but this will only happen if feedback is received. The tool will make the available resources more transparent.
- All nomination procedures will be amalgamated in the RCT.
- Eventually, when licensing issues are worked out, the system will be accessible to everyone in the ICES network.
- Data protection was considered as part of the development of the address database (and is a key foundation of the new tool), but may need some revision.
- When the tool goes online in January, experts will be able to update their own skills. To ensure skills are regularly updated, a process is needed whereby experts are encouraged to update their skills in a timely fashion.

**Action:** Council commended progress on the development of the RCT, and supported further development and implementation. The onus is now on Delegates and resource managers to interact with and use the tool. This will require a commitment from Delegates and resource managers if the RCT is to be a success. The expected benefits of implementation of the RCT address one of the main goals of the ICES Strategic Plan, i.e., to ensure an efficient and effective organization.

## 9 Data and Information Services

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The Head of Data and Information, Neil Holdsworth, provided a status report on the activities of (and deliverables by) the Data and Information Group and the Data and Information Centre related to implementation of the ISP (**CM\_2014\_Del-09**). The gut feeling approach was used to gauge progress in relation to the ISP. Overall “good progress” has been made where there is engagement through projects/expert groups. “Some progress” is being made in processes where more input is needed from expert groups or Committees.

Council expressed support for the on-going work and praised efforts to make data accessible to the public.

For VMS data, one Member Country noted the desire for a policy that would extend outside the EU Data Collection Framework.

**Action:** The Head of Data and Information will provide additional clarification around the protocols and rules on use of VMS data, making use of existing ICES documentation.

## 10 Secretariat

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The General Secretary, Anne Christine Brusendorff, provided a status report on the Secretariat’s 2014 activities and deliverables (**CM\_2013\_Del-10**) related to implementation of the ISP.

Overall good progress is being made, with a need for further work on the following:

- Support from Member Countries would be helpful in facilitating contacts with national representatives who participate in other marine organizations/initiatives. This would also enhance the possible representation of ICES in other fora. The Secretariat would be happy to assist with any necessary advance preparations.

- Ensuring a more strategic and proactive approach for ICES participation in projects, and incorporating project outcomes in future ICES work. It is important to “fill holes” within ICES work and arrange for partnerships (e.g., academia) outside of the normal ICES community.
- Continue with specific Secretariat plans to support development of the Training Programme, especially regarding online accessibility and improving outreach and engagement with academia.
- Take better note of the status of the 2014 and 2015 accounts, in light of the budgetary uncertainties and organizational risks.
- Closely monitor the 2015 spending from the start of the budget year, and ensure that ICES core competencies and activities are considered when approached by external project participants (in accord with the ICES Project Policy).
- Produce a cumulative impacts document for Council delegates (based on the 0% increase in Member Country contributions in 2010 and during 2012-2015) for use in electronic voting in April 2015 on a 1.9% increase in national contributions for the 2016 forecast budget.

**Action:**

Closely monitor the 2015 spending from the start of the budget year, and ensure that ICES core competencies and activities are considered when approached by external project participants (in accord with the ICES Project Policy).

Produce a cumulative impacts document for Council delegates (based on the 0% increase in Member Country contributions in 2010 and during 2012-2015), for use in electronic voting in April 2015 on a 1.9% increase in the national contributions for the 2016 forecast budget (see 5.1 above).

## 11 The Arctic

The ICES Strategic Plan 2014–2018 identifies the Arctic as an area for strategic development. An outline of ICES Arctic work was submitted for comments and for identification of possible areas of joint cooperation to the Arctic Council Secretariat (**CM 2014 Del-7.1.4**, response in **CM 2014 Del-11**). ICES also submitted an application for observer status with the Arctic Council (to be considered at the 2015 Ministerial meeting).

Jan René Larsen, Deputy Executive Secretary from the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP), gave a presentation to the Council on the work of the Arctic Council, noting on-going collaborative work with ICES and identifying potential areas for future collaboration:

- It was requested that ICES Delegates nominate experts to the following processes:
  - Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACA)
  - Update of ‘Snow, Water, Ice and Permafrost in the Arctic’ (SWIPA)
  - Arctic Ocean Acidification (AOA). Expert meeting in Ottawa 8-12 December (SGOA)
- A model for joint assessment work in the Arctic (e.g., “Fisheries as a driver of change in the Arctic”).
- A joint ICES/AMAP workshop on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (2015)
- Regular (annual?) meetings between the ICES and Arctic Council working group secretariats (e.g. AMAP)
- The Arctic Council has two Expert Groups: ‘Ecosystem Based Management’ (EBM) and ‘Ecosystem Approach to assessment’ (EA)

- Arctic Marine Strategic Plan

Past cooperation has been based on using each organization's products. Future collaboration should aim for real joint initiatives.

Council support was reiterated for the ICES application for observer status in the Arctic Council. It was noted that a joint application with PICES may be beneficial. Although the ICES application has already been submitted, the Secretariat will informally discuss the idea with the PICES Secretariat. Member Countries with dual membership in ICES and PICES were also encouraged to raise this issue.

It was further noted that ICES should ensure that it is represented at the 3rd Meeting of Scientific Experts on Fish Stocks in the Arctic Ocean to be held in Seattle, 13–15 April 2015.

A reference was made to the CWGMTC, and that the Arctic is considered a component of transatlantic cooperation. This raised a possibility of joint ICES-Arctic Council proposals for obtaining EU funding under Horizon 2020. AMAP has had a long history of successfully using EU funding mechanisms. The CWGMTC will specifically include joint Arctic work in its ToRs.

The ICES President thanked SCICOM and Jan Rene Larsen for their work in highlighting ongoing cooperation and in informing the Council as to how ICES work has been used by the Arctic Council. Developing ICES activities in the Arctic is an important element of bringing the ISP forward. ICES will follow up on the suggestions made in the discussions.

**Action:** ICES should ensure that it is represented at the 3rd Meeting of Scientific Experts on Fish Stocks in the Arctic Ocean to be held in Seattle, 13–15 April 2015.

CWGMTC will specifically include joint Arctic work in its ToRs.

## 12 Any other Business

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### 12.1 UN Observer Status

At the June Bureau meeting, it was recommended that the Secretariat pursue observer status for ICES at the United Nations. To apply for UN observer status, a Member State or group of Member States needs to request that an appropriate agenda item be added to a meeting of the UN General Assembly.

Council expressed their support for the proposal and many Member Country delegations (Belgium, Estonia, France, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Poland, UK, and USA) expressed willingness to support a coalition to bring the process forward, following consultation with the appropriate agency in their home country.

**Action:** The Secretariat will draft a letter for use by Member Countries to contact the appropriate agency in their home country, to assist in requesting that an item related to ICES observer status with the UN be added to the agenda of the UN General Assembly. The ICES application (draft in **CM\_2014\_Del-12.1**) should be developed to better articulate the mutual benefits of ICES observer status with the UN, as well as to outline any cost and/or commitment implications for ICES. The General Secretary will coordinate feedback and facilitate communication as the process develops, and Delegates will be kept fully informed.



## 12.2 Proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure

The meeting approved the proposed change to the Rules of Procedure as outlined (CM\_2014\_Del-12.2), and in accordance with Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure. One country commented that it would preferable to use “modern language” for future updates to the Rules of Procedure.

Section/Rule	Approved text
Section 10/new Rule 30 vii)	For nominations and appointments the procedures in Rule 5 shall apply <i>mutatis mutandis</i> .

## 12.3 Date of the next meeting

The next statutory meeting will take place 21–22 October 2015.

## 12.4 Close of the meeting

The President thanked outgoing Council Delegates Eero Aro (FI), Carmela Porteiro (ES), Maurice Heral (FR), and Fredric Serchuk (US) for their long and dedicated service to the organization.

## Annex 1 List of Participants

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Adi Kellermann	ICES Secretariat
Alain Vezina	Canada
Anders Alm	Sweden
Anne Christine Brusendorff	ICES Secretariat
Bill Turrell	United Kingdom
Carl O'Brien	United Kingdom
Carmela Porteiro	Spain
Claus Hagebro	ICES Secretariat
Cornelius Hammer	Germany
Eduardo Balguerias	Spain
Eero Aro	Finland
Ellen Johannesen	ICES Secretariat
Eskild Kirkegaard	ACOM Chair
Eugene Nixon	Ireland
Fredric Serchuk	United States
Fritz W. Köster	Denmark
Georgs Kornilovs	Latvia
Gerd Kraus	Germany
Jakob Munkhøj Nielsen	Denmark
Johann Sigurjónsson	Iceland
Joost Backx	Netherlands
Kai Myrberg	Finland
Konstantin Drevetnyak	Russian Federation
Kris Cooreman	Belgium
Mark Dickey-Collas	ICES Secretariat
Maurice Héral	France
Neil Holdsworth	ICES Secretariat
Niall Ó Maoiléidigh	Ireland
Paul Connolly	ICES President
Pierre Petitgas	France
Piotr Margonski	Poland
Poul Degnbol	ICES Secretariat
Robert Aps	Estonia
Serge Scory	Belgium
Steve Murawski	United States
Tammo Bult	Netherlands
Tomas Zolubas	Lithuania
Tore Nepstad	Norway
Yvonne Walther	SCICOM Chair