

Annex

ICES request form

Request from	NEAFC
Committee making the request	
Contact within organisation	
Content contact person	
Request announced	January 2024
Request received	January 2024
Outcome of request required by client	
Request code (client)	
Request code (ICES)	[completed by ICES]
Details of request	Request from NEAFC concerning Advice on vulnerable marine ecosystems in the NEAFC Regulatory Area
	<p>The objective of the NEAFC Recommendation 19:2014 (as amended) on the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in the NEAFC Regulatory Area is to ensure the implementation by NEAFC of effective measures to prevent significant adverse impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems known to occur or likely to occur in the NEAFC Regulatory Area based on the best available scientific information provided or endorsed by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES).</p> <p>According to Article 10, first paragraph, of the Rec 19:2014 the Commission shall every five years from the date of the Recommendation's entering into force examine the effectiveness of the Recommendation in protecting VMEs from significant adverse impacts. In addition, this review process shall be supplemented by modifications required as a result of new scientific advice.</p> <p>ICES is requested to contribute with scientific information regarding the effectiveness of the Recommendation in protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems in the NEAFC Regulatory Area from significant adverse impacts.</p> <p>The ToRs are outlined below this table.</p>
Intended use of the request output	The Terms of Reference specify much of this, but put in informal language, NEAFC needs to know if its measures do in fact deliver protection to VME from significant adverse impact of (bottom) fishing. ICES scientific advice can further this understanding. Should the recommendation be found not to be reaching its aims, direction on what further needs to be done can be part of the scientific advice.

Planning ICES	
ICES contact person	
WG(s) involved	preparation by a select core group of expert, and a targeted ICES workshop (12-16 August 2024, tbc) to review/compiling evidence base required to evaluate the effectiveness of NEAFC Recommendation 19:2014 in protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems in the NEAFC Regulatory Area from significant adverse impacts, as set out in the NEAFC request
Preparation timing	
Review group	26-30 September, ICES Working Group on Deep-water Ecology (WGDEC)
Advice drafting group	3-6 September 2024, ADGVMEREV
ACOM Web-conference	23 September 2024, WCVMEREV
Release date	30 September 2024

Terms of Reference for ICES advice to support the 5 yearly Review of Recommendation 19:2014 on the protection of VME.

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Recommendation 19:2014 includes a provision in Article 10.1 for a general review every 5 years, which would be due in Autumn 2024:

“The Commission shall every 5 years from the date of this Recommendation entering into force examine the effectiveness of this Recommendation in protecting VMEs from significant adverse impacts. In addition, this review process shall be supplemented by modifications required as a result of new scientific advice.”

AM 2023 agreed that the request for ICES to contribute with scientific information regarding the effectiveness of the Recommendation in protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems in the NEAFC Regulatory Area from significant adverse impacts. And that the Terms of Reference for this request would be agreed by correspondence between NEAFC and ICES during 2023.

Accordingly, in addition to its regular advice on VME, ICES is requested for the period 2019 onwards:

1. Review and summarise ICES scientific advice to NEAFC on VME.
2. Review and advise on any changes to scientific understanding on evidence for VME from relevant UNGA resolutions/FAO and other intergovernmental guidance.

3. Review and advise on any changes to evidence for Significant Adverse Impacts (SAI) of bottom fishing from relevant UNGA resolutions/FAO and other intergovernmental guidance. This can include any advice on science related to threshold levels under article 9 of the Recommendation.
4. Provide any insights from recent relevant scientific developments, including in other regions around the globe.
5. Conclude if the science supports that Recommendation 19:2014 has been effective in protection of VMEs in the NEAFC Regulatory Area.
6. Review the list of “VME indicators” in Annex 5 to the Recommendation and suggest additions if relevant.