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International Council for the
Exploration of the Sea

C.M.1980/A:3*
Consultative Committee

Evaluation of the work of the Consultative Committee (C.C.) 1978-80

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Terms of Reference of C.C.: (Rule 25, Rules of Procedure)

- a. Guide all Standing Committees, except Finance Committee and Publications Committee, as to the performance of their functions. (25 II c)
- b. Inform the Council of activities and plans of Committees, and of the expenditure involved (25 II d).
- c. Advise the Council, and the Bureau (25 II a,b) on its Science policy, Research programme, Arrangements for the scientific work, and for meetings.

1.) Guidance for Committees

The C.C. rendered guidance to Committees when required. It did, however, not draw up general lines of advice. F.i., newly elected chairmen were not sufficiently assisted, in particular not in drafting reports and recommendations. They were also not made aware that they, as members of C.C., are expected to contribute to the work of C.C., so that the above Terms of Reference can be accomplished.

It is recommended that attention of newly elected chairmen who are ex officio members of the C.C., is drawn to rule 25 and that guidelines on how to write reports and recommendations are handed to them.

2.) Committee reports

Committee reports and recommendations together with the comments of C.C. were presented to the Council for acceptance. This term did not appear to create problems other than those mentioned under 1) and 5). Except for tagging experiments the C.C. had nothing to report on expenditure.

3.) Science policy

Particular lines of research simply appear because of the obvious need. They are also important tools for the present well being and for the development. Wherever the need for a new research area can be foreseen, this should be implemented. Several years ago the Council established the Fisheries Improvement Committee as a new body. Meanwhile two large Committees have evolved from this, the Marine Environmental Quality, and the Mariculture Committee. Quite obviously, the Council followed a wise policy. It acted timely, and by this it very likely produced additional scientific effort that otherwise might not have developed.

At any rate, even a review on present Science Policy is of interest to science administrators, hence the Council. I think, therefore, C.C. should regularly deal with this item. To this end it might invite a relevant report each year as a basis for discussion. Subject to further information our present expertise indicates the following main lines of future research,

Climate as related to ocean circulation,
Functioning of ecosystems, in particular, larval
fish ecology, and species interaction,
Pollution and diseases of fish and mammals.

It is recommended that the Council is regular^{ly} informed of the main lines of the likely future research.

4.) Research Programmes

The Council largely followed our advice as to programmes of research. However, C.C. did not nearly identify itself with these tasks. It merely transmitted proposals from Committees and Working Groups to the Council instead of regarding them as their own concern. Chairmen were reminded each year to monitor the effects of resolutions. But this was scarcely reflected in reports. It is, however, of greatest importance for the success of the Council's scientific work that the repercussions of resolutions are continuously controlled.

A relevant item on the Agenda of C.C. is perhaps the best way to pursue this.

Resolutions passed 1976 through 1979 suggest that requests for fisheries statistics have been least successful. The worst response resulted from resolutions on discards, STATLANT-information, and length and age composition data. Recommendations on discards and survival have been repeated six times in turns (1974-1979). Standing resolutions on pollution matters, on the other hand, seem to have been powerful. As regards the discard problem, it is obvious that the present procedure does not essentially improve the picture. If there is to be any success, this will be achieved firstly by deliberations among the delegates in order to establish the reason for the failure to report on discards. Further steps can be determined thereafter.

It is recommended that resolutions are followed up each year and that those not operating be implemented by better methods.

5.) Arrangements for the scientific work, and for meetings

Several new arrangements, mainly proposed by the Bureau Working Group, were implemented 3 years ago. This design was generally successful. It enabled to make better use of the time available at Statutory Meetings.

Joint Sessions very likely had the greatest effect. Most of the Reference Papers, and several other documents as well as special themes have been discussed here. These are border-areas of science that are covered by more than one committee. However, there are still complaints, in that a number of important papers are not given sufficient attention. This would be possible at additional Joint Sessions.

It is recommended to hold more Joint Sessions rather than to allot additional sessions to Committees.

So far we have completely failed with Poster representation. In spite of the obvious advantage of posters over ordinary papers we were not able to convince our colleagues. The information letter first circulated this year will hopefully have a

greater effect in the future. In addition, however, posters should be advertised during ordinary sessions of Committees.

The present Structure of the Council is also part of the new organization. In 1978, virtually 6 new Committees came into being, and the Working Groups are no longer formally attached to Committees since. A positive effect of the latter change does not bear out from the recent work.

The following Table gives an impression of the present size of Committees in terms of average number of papers coded.

Number of papers coded, average 1976-80

<u>STAT</u>	<u>MAM</u>	<u>BALT</u>	<u>SHEL</u>	<u>MARI</u>	<u>ANAC</u>	<u>CAPT</u>	<u>HYDR</u>	<u>MEQ</u>	<u>BOC</u>	<u>DEM</u>	<u>PEL</u>
12.2	16.0	24.6	32.0	34.4	34.6	35.0	51.8	52.4	52.8	57.6	63.2

The Pelagic Fish Committee has 5 times the size of the Statistics Committee. However, some inconvenience may only arise when the number of papers is extremely low. Statistics Committee had 5 papers last year, Mammals Committee has 7 papers this year. They have to be allotted at least 1 session during which the other Committees would have to deal with some 15 papers. It is from this reason that C.C. might want to discuss the problem some day in order to reduce the size difference between Committees.

The avoidance of Working Group sessions during the Statutory Meeting and the earlier deadline for paper distribution have clearly had a positive effect on recent Committee Meetings. Minisymposia were welcomed like other joint sessions. The specification of topics was neither reported to have been favourable, nor adverse. It has been necessary in some instances to have papers grouped and each group reported in one summery (panel system). This was not fully appreciated. Authors claimed to have come all the way to the meeting without a possibility to submit their own paper. I think this is an important argument, the more so since the Council has some years ago passed a resolution asking member countries to send authors to the meetings to present their own papers. In addition it is not fair for some Committees with limited time to apply the panel system whereas others can use individual reporting. The panel system should therefore no longer be considered as being recommended by the Council. Each Committee is free to apply it, though.

6.) Organisation of the C.C's own work

Much of the Committee's meeting time is needed to discuss reports and recommendations of the Standing Committees. This part of the work can be made more effectful only to the extent that reports and recommendations need additions and editorial work. The better our timely guidance to Committee chairmen is, in particular new chairmen, the more time can be saved subsequently (see chapter 2). There are a number of other items on the agenda each year which need background information before the problem can be discussed, and settled. This instruction has so far been given verbally at the session. It could instead be distributed in a circular before the meeting. This would save time. In addition members would have the opportunity to reflect upon the problem, and they would be ready for suggestions at the meeting.

If the C.C. does not interfere it is, of course, also in the hands of its chairman to make a long story short.

It is recommended that all available background information for items of the agenda of the C.C. be precirculated in advance of the Statutory Meeting.

