

Report by Convener of Working Group 'A' on Zooplankton Research Methods

by

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At the Zooplankton Symposium held in Copenhagen in 1961 a sub-committee was set up to consider the possibilities of advising on the standardisation of zooplankton methods. This sub-committee presented its interim report to the Plankton Committee in Copenhagen last year. Following the discussion on this, a recommendation was made to set up four working groups to advise on various plankton methods, and in my absence I was asked to convene the group on zooplankton research methods.

At the 2nd session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, (UNESCO) held just prior to last year's meeting of ICES, a resolution (no.19) was adopted on standardisation and intercalibration of oceanographic techniques and methods, and subsequently a SCOR working group was established to consider this problem. Obviously overlap and possible confusion should be avoided, and Dr. Wooster of UNESCO suggested that the ICES zooplankton working party should increase its scope and membership so as to have a world-wide representation in this particular subject. I am sure the Plankton Committee will agree that it would not be sensible to have two working groups with such similar terms of reference, and also that this problem would be all the better for being discussed on a world-wide basis.

However, it seemed to me that UNESCO is better equipped administratively to appoint and finance a world-wide committee and I therefore suggested that it would be better for a joint zooplankton working group to be convened by SCOR with ICES representation. As several of the proposed members of the working group would be those already suggested for the ICES group this would present no problem.

After some discussion by correspondence, and a personal meeting with Mr. Currie, it was agreed between us that Mr. Currie, a member of SCOR and one of our ICES working group members, should be Convener. The terms of reference as envisaged by SCOR are wider than those of ICES, in scope as well as geographically, but include them. Although to me they seem rather ambitious they can be tackled and developed stage by stage, and include our points in the earlier stages. I wrote to Dr. Humphrey, Chairman of SCOR to this effect on 5th February 1963 expressing my own agreement, at the same time sending copies to our own Chairman, Professor Krey, and to ICES, both to keep them informed and to give them the opportunity to express any disagreement or make any additional comment or suggestions.

The suggested members of the joint working group are Currie (Convener); Vagn Kr. Hansen, Nikolaev and myself for ICES, and McGowan and Prasad for SCOR with one other, probably chosen from the southern hemisphere.

All these arrangements have, of course, been discussed on my delegated authority as Convener of the ICES Zooplankton Working Group. They cannot proceed further without the approval of the Consultative Committee, and their reactions will be largely dependent on the report of this Committee. The wording of the recommendation to be sent from this Committee to the Bureau will of course depend on the reports of the three other working groups set up last year, but I suggest that our recommendation should include a paragraph to this effect:-

- a) That the Plankton Committee notes that two working groups have been set up to deal with essentially similar problems on the standardisation of zooplankton methods, one by ICES and one by SCOR, and that we endorse the proposal that these two be amalgamated into one joint working group.
- b) Considering the world-wide aspects of the SCOR terms of reference the Plankton Committee recommends that this joint working group should be convened under the auspices of SCOR with adequate ICES representation, and supports the suggestion that this should include Fraser, Vagn Hansen and Nikolaev.
- c) In making these proposals this Committee is also aware of the increased value of the world-wide coverage offered by a joint working group, the advantages of the enhanced liaison between ICES and UNESCO, and that the costs to ICES are likely to be reduced rather than increased.