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Minutes from the midterm meeting of the ICES Science Committee (SCICOM)

8–10 March 2016



ICES
CIEM

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea

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1 Opening

The SCICOM Chair welcomed participants, and asked for a tour de table to introduce attendees, which included guests and country alternates (see **Annex 1**).

Apologies for Sunday, 20 September, were received from Laura Uusitalo. (Finland).

A special welcome was extended to newcomers, Audrey Geffen (incoming PUBCOM Chair), Kevin Friedland (US SCICOM member), and Cornelius Hammer (ICES President).

2 Adoption of agenda and timetable

The agenda was accepted without comments and no new items were brought up for inclusion. Items 3 and 5 to be merged.

SCICOM is invited to an icebreaker and joint dinner on Wednesday evening and joint dinner at Restaurant Flammen on Wednesday evening.

3 Follow-up on decisions taken at the meetings of SCICOM (September 2015) and SCICOM Forum and ICES Resolutions Forum

All action items identified at the previous SCICOM meeting had been addressed.

With reference to item 7.2, Evaluation of multi-annual groups, the SCICOM requested to change the process to become a one one-stage process for review of the EG self-evaluation and review/approval of the new draft resolution.

With reference to item 10, SCICOM was informed that Council has requested a full evaluation of the ICES Science Fund to be prepared by SCICOM for the Council October meeting.

SCICOM Chair referred to Doc 5, listing all items brought up for approval, feedback or information via the SCICOM Forum and ICES Resolutions Forum.

4 Information on Council actions and recommendations for SCICOM

SCICOM Chair informed the meeting of Council decisions:

- Council establish a Council–SCICOM Working Group on ICES Science (CSWGIS) to review Science Leadership, ICES Science and Science funding. Chairs Pierre Petitgas and Tammo Bult. SCICOM members: Jörn Schmidt, Laura Uusitalo, Henn Ojaveer, SCICOM chair and HoS
- Coordination and support action (CSA) projects. Bureau has looked into more pro-active project participation. Bureau/SCICOM are to identify areas where research priorities need projects, and to identify EU funding that could help ICES develop projects for the common good.
- Science funding approved for 2016 (see overview).

Science Fund: maximum 500.000 DKK to be allocated as follows:

- Arctic: Development of demonstration advice in this priority action area. 100 000 DKK
- Socio-economic considerations: Development of demonstration advice in this priority action area. 100 000 DKK

- Aquaculture: to follow-up on priorities agreed under agenda item 7.1.2. following the ICES Aquaculture dialogue meeting 100 000 DKK
- Remaining 200 000 DKK for regular “Science Fund” or other activities
- Science Fund review. CSWGIS and Bureau have received a review of Science Funding 2009-2015 and a comprehensive overview of products from Science Fund projects in 2014 (2015 reports are pending)
- CSG MSFD will continue as a Council Strategic Initiative on the MSFD-Ecosystem Approach (CSIMSFD-EA).
- CWGMTC will become a Strategic Initiative at Council level (CSIMTC).
- Ecosystem Approach and progress on IEAs. The Coordination Group (CG) will elaborate a discussion paper on how the IEA groups could test their approaches by responding to a specific “pilot advisory request” (i.e. demonstration advice).
- Council encouraged SCICOM to continue their work on the mapping exercise in relation to implementation of the ISP.
- SCICOM to discuss with WGAQUA/WGSEDA expert group chairs how best to meet ICES requirements for future work on aquaculture
- In order to create a clear Conflict of Interest policy for ICES, a Bureau Sub Group (BSGCOI) consisting of the President, 1st Vice-President, General Secretary, ACOM Chair, SCICOM Chair, and Head of Data and Information will consider how to define and deal with conflict of interest in ICES.
- Council supported the continual review of the ASC to continue to improve and modernize this important ICES event. Bureau and SCICOM will consider the proposal to adopt a revolving list of ASC hosts. The Secretariat will develop a list of Member Countries indicating how many and when they have hosted the ASC.

Comments

Renaming of Council working groups to Strategic Initiatives might cause confusion. In response it was stated that the naming of groups is mostly for internal purposes. The background for the renaming of the Council Working Groups was clarified. Council had established a number of working groups, but it turned out that they were more efficient when working across the organisation, involving institute directors, external cooperation partners, SCICOM and ACOM.

In relation to the request for a full report on the Science Fund SCICOM Chair explained that so far SCICOM has set up a number of criteria and evaluated whether these have been fulfilled. Once the reports from the Science Fund 2015 have come in, SCICOM will try to identify the specific products that have come out of the Science Fund and identify the benefits to ICES. SCICOM will discuss the science priorities and criteria and update them if necessary.

With regard to the funding General Secretary explained that for the Science Fund the 500,000 DKK had been taken from the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). SIF is now exhausted and therefore funds need to be requested from Council from the equity.

5 ICES Resolution Approval Forum – feedback

SCICOM Chair asked SCICOM members for feedback on the new ICES Resolutions Forum.

ACOM Chair encouraged SCICOM members to also comment on ACOM resolutions on the ICES Resolutions Forum.

6 SCICOM Operational Groups

6.1 ICES Training Group (ITG)

Training course coordinator Anna Davies and Training Group Chair Daniel Duplisea presented an update from the Training Group.

The training course offerings for 2016 are shown in table below.

ICES training courses 2016

COURSE	INSTRUCTORS	DATES	LOCATION	Applications to date (16 Feb)
Training course in the R Environment	Bjarki Þór Elvarsson, Einar Hjörleifsson	29 February – 4 March	ICES Secretariat Copenhagen, Denmark	22
Social Science Methods for Natural Scientists	Marloes Kraan Maiken Bjirkan Marc Dubois	26 – 18 May	Brest, France	1
Data limited stock assessment	Jim Berkson, Anne Cooper, Jason Cope,	12 – 16 September	Reykjavik, Iceland	6
Design and analysis of statistically sound catch sampling programmes	Jon Helge Volstad Mary Christman	12 – 16 September	ICES Secretariat Copenhagen, Denmark	2
Management Strategy Evaluation: an introduction	Carryn de Moor, Jose De Oliveira	12 – 22 October	ICES Secretariat Copenhagen, Denmark	3
Stock assessment advanced	Jan Jaap Poos Arni Magnussen	24 – 28 October	ICES Secretariat Copenhagen, Denmark	3
Principles and methods of broadband/wideband technologies: application to fisheries acoustics	Dezhang Chu, Lars N. Andersen, Gavin J. Macaulay, Egil Ona, Rolf J. Korneliussen,	December	Bergen, Norway	15

The tools for promotion of these courses include social media, twitter account, e-mails directed at specific relevant target groups and news features in the ICES communications.

There was general consensus in SCICOM that some forms of training do need to go online, however there was not 100% clarity of how this should be carried out in practice. Investigations will continue into the production of video “shorts”, broadcasting of training courses and an online instruction package for new ICES working group chairs.

Funding. In 2015 it was decided that the training course programme should be supported with funds from the ICES equity fund. 300,000 DKK for 3 years. There was a reiteration of the aim for courses to be cost neutral, not a money making venture for ICES, but not a cost to ICES either. Funds are for use to compensate undersigned courses and to produce online training.

Utility review. At the September SCICOM meeting, a review of the utility of the training courses was requested with the aim of examining options for a review of the productivity of the training courses. Are the courses fulfilling their aims? As a first step, three courses from 2012 will receive a short survey. The secretariat is preparing the questionnaire.

ICES involvement in the Blue Bridge project. ICES has become involved in the Blue Bridge project which addresses Blue Growth societal challenge by developing and deploying service-driven digital research environments, services and tools. The ICES training courses will make use of the e-infrastructures, called Virtual Research Environments (VREs), which provide enhanced facilities for online document, software and dataset distribution and communication facilities.

SCICOM members were encouraged to advertise the training courses. We need your help to spread the word!

Daniel Duplisea presented the training group and some strategic considerations.

- There are two types of remote training: 1) recorded, always accessible: e.g. MOOC model, WMU model, or 2) live but remote, and there are funding implications for both.

Short video clip. As part of the training course requirements, instructors could be asked to provide a short video clip, which could be used to announce the course and also advertise new (follow-up) courses.

The aim of the Training Programme is to ensure we have the expertise needed for our expert groups and at the same time it is also an outreach to attract new experts into ICES. The funding to be used up till 2018 will allow ICES to run some courses for strategic reasons. In this connection it would be relevant for the Training Group to explore whether it would be relevant to join forces with other course suppliers, and are there courses that ICES can provide that no one else can give?

6.2 ICES Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM)

PUBCOM Chair, Audrey Geffen, reported from PUBCOM with reference to Doc 7, the midterm report to SCICOM.

Audrey Geffen was elected in January as PUBCOM Chair for a three-year term and PUBCOM member, Valerio Bartolino, resigned from PUBCOM in January 2016 due to time constraints in the near future.

One Category 1 resolution for CRR publication has been submitted for evaluation by PUBCOM for the SCICOM mid-term meeting: CRR – WGTC's Report on Target Classification, edited by Rolf J. Korneliussen.

PUBCOM presented a progress update on ICES publications:

- **CRR:** Two CRRs have been published since the 2015 ASC (No. 330, Effects of extraction of marine sediments on the marine environment 2005-2011; and No. 328, Best practices for the provision of prior information for Bayesian stock assessment). There are currently two CRRs that have been edited by the

series editor and are waiting for final processing and publication by the Secretariat.

- **TIMES:** There were no new resolutions requesting this publication outlet. Peer review has been completed on the COMET assay manuscript and the authors are working on addressing the comments.
- **SISP:** SISP 5 (version 11.0) and 6 (version 2.0) have been updated and are being processed by ICES. Publication is expected in March.
- **ICES Disease Leaflets Series:** Two leaflets have been updated (No. 24 and 42). Leaflet No. 24 has been published, while No. 42 is pending approval by the series editor. Leaflet No.65 has been formatted, but publication is pending due to some copyright issues.
- **Plankton ID Leaflets:** The WGZE meeting is scheduled for the 14 to 17 March; Antonina dos Santos is hoping to present plans for the leaflets there, receive their input, and then to present this to PUBCOM. The first leaflets will come out this year.
- **ICES Annual Report 2015.** The report is on track to be completed by the end of March 2016. The annual report has been restructured so that it provides a more thematic overview of the organization's key activities and achievements.

ICES Journal of Marine Science

After the surge in submissions in 2014 (from 495 the previous year to 643), things have stabilised somewhat with a total of 653 submissions in 2015. The Editor-in-Chief will be reducing the number of themed articles in 2016 to balance the page budget; as a result, a slight decline in submissions is predicted for 2016.

There has been a great reduction in the publication backlog that reached a peak of 13 months in 2014. When the second standard issue of 2016 (Issue 4) is published, the backlog is expected to have been reduced to about two months.

ICES and OUP have decided to remove the optional colour waiver from the IJMS, as it was not cost-effective. All colour figures can be accommodated in the online publication, while they will be greyscaled for the print version. The discretionary waiver has now been discontinued and the journal Instructions to Authors modified accordingly.

The Publisher contract is due for renewal at the end of 2016; OUP will draft a new contract for review.

Comments/questions:

Do we have an inter-annual vision for the coming requests of CRRs? The groups have three-year ToRs and in most of their outcomes there is the production of CRRs. This could be reflected. In response the HoS explained that we have an internal overview of what is in the pipeline.

6.2.1 Strengthening the profile of ICES CRRs

A SCICOM subgroup consisting of Jan Jaap Poos, Niall O'Maoileidigh and Dave Reid had drafted a strategy document for CRRs as requested by PUBCOM. The document was brought to SCICOM for approval via the SCICOM Forum.

Action: The PUBCOM Chair will now return the strategy document to PUBCOM for consideration for the future development of the CRRs. SCICOM is looking forward to receiving the feedback from PUBCOM on the strategy document.

Comments

There was a general acceptance that there is not anything that can replace them.

With limited amount of effort we can raise their profile, making them easier to search on google, they are open access and peer-reviewed.

Can CRRs be added to the big databases for publications? PUBCOM Chair responded that this is unfortunately not feasible. One of the biggest problems is that the CRRs are not cited very consistently, however you do find them because they are cited in other papers. To be in the impact factor database you have to fulfil two requirements, one is timeliness (follow schedule), and the second is you need to follow international standards for peer reviews.

To be included in the web search engine Google Scholar there is a requirement for a minimum amount of publications to be published. It is possible to make more of this option, by advertising it to the authors.

DOIs - people are not fully aware that they exist, but having a DOI does not make you eligible to be in the big databases.

Press release regarding special issue of IJMS

During the first week of March, ICES published a press release about a special issue of the JMS which was devoted to papers dealing with ocean acidification. In the press release, the E-i-C states that, "...the majority of the literature on ocean acidification report negative effects of CO₂ on organisms and conclude that ocean acidification will be detrimental to marine ecosystems. Studies that report no effect of ocean acidification are typically more difficult to publish". Therefore, studies reporting no effect ocean acidification were welcomed. This latter statement and an interview published in the press with the E-i-C led to misinterpretations of the E-i-C comments by the media as well as to negative secondary statements from a third party.

SCICOM had no prior information on the volume.

SCICOM has delegated much of its authority over the ICES JMS to the E-i-C at its ASC meeting in A Coruna 2013. The E-i-C has the freedom to assign supplement volumes of the journal to topics of his choice, as well as to decide which ICES co-sponsored symposia will be entitled to the JMS as outlet for their proceedings.

SCICOM discussed the issue and concluded that the statement inviting no-effect-studies was an unfortunate wording. The editorial policy of the ICES journal of marine science is independent of ICES. The E-i-C is encouraged to make this clear to any media and is expected to disassociate journal policy from ICES. SCICOM would have and will appreciate to be informed when a special issue with a topic of the E-i-C's choice is planned. It is important that information is shared as a workable principle.

A possible mechanism for information is via PUBCOM. In his report the E-i-C gives an overview of potential topics for special issues of the JMS of his choice. PUBCOM Chair in her report informs SCICOM. Of course the E-i-C is always welcome to approach SCICOM directly at its regular meetings.

6.3 ICES Data and Information Management Group (DIG)

DIG Chair, Ingeborg de Boois, presented the DIG report.

The state of the art of digital data citation. ICES signed a contract with DTU in October 2015 to mint DOIs, starting with a limited number of DOIs we are licenced to mint in the first year (1000). A web service and database has been set up at ICES to control the minting. Currently the publications library on the ICES website is undergoing a change to its template to hold the additional metadata, and also be able to view the metadata for any publication type which will be a major improvement. When the website is ready, the new process will be applied to some of the new publications. The first data products receiving a DOI will be publication type and the stock assessment graphs.

6.4 Review of membership rules

HoS presented Doc 9 on updated rules for membership and chairmanship of operational groups.

With the 2008 science reform, all committees were disbanded and so was the *Publications committee (PUBCOM)* which formerly reported to SCICOM. When PUBCOM was re-established as an operational group in 2009, the membership was changed from the formerly national representation to a SCICOM-appointed status with a review of membership every three years. The Chair is appointed by SCICOM for a three-year term with an option for a one-year extension. The group meets at the ASC with exchange by intersessional correspondence.

The membership and turnout has always been an issue, and there has been efforts to strengthen the membership, but no real improvement.

The Secretariat now suggests to change membership rules to encourage direct nominations via the member countries. Currently there is no clarity on who sits on PUBCOM and what their role is.

Proposals:

Adjust the options for Chairs in accordance with the existing rules for Expert Groups so that Chairs can be extended by another term for the ITG, DIG and for PUBCOM.

Decision: Not approved, SCICOM felt that it would be better to bring in new people at shorter intervals, and thus keep the '3 plus 1' term of office for chairs of operational groups.

Adjust the membership for DIG and PUBCOM so that national nomination of members will be possible for both groups; regular (3-year) reviews by SCICOM will ensure adequate expertise represented in the groups. DIG and PUBCOM will assist SCICOM in this exercise.

Decision: Approved. SCICOM noted that this is technically possible within the current system, but is only happening to a limited extent.

A new Operational Group is proposed to absorb the tasks of the SCICOM subgroup for the ASC award selection: the ASC Awards Selection Group (ASG). Members are appointed by SCICOM for a given year.

Decision: Approved.

7 SCICOM funding

7.1 Proposals for demonstration advice

The ACOM Chair gave a short introduction to the topic. Council agreed in 2015 to use money from equity to be allocated to the Science Fund. A certain amount of this was to be allocated to develop demonstration advice within strategic priority areas (aquaculture, Arctic and socio-economic). ICES secretariat and some delegates took initiative and contacted experts on the topics to submit proposals. After some initial evaluation there are four proposals for demonstration advice for SCICOM to consider:

- Arctic knowledge gathering.
- Arctic ballast water.
- Reconciling trade-offs; abrasion, space and catching fish
- Aquaculture food production.

Demonstration advice is defined as an area where there is a perceived need for management advice, where ICES has the science and competence to provide advice, and where there is a potential for a request but no actual request. Five criteria that have characterized demonstration advice so far (and should also be fulfilled in the future) were outlined:

- The proposal should have clear objectives and the advice product should be defined.
- The proposal should take into account management needs as determined through a dialogue with managers and stakeholders.
- The proposal should demonstrate buy-in from relevant institutes to commit the resources needed to support the proposed work.
- The relevant science and competence should be available within ICES.
- The nature and timing of project deliverables should be clearly defined.

SCICOM was invited to 1) decide on a process for evaluation of demonstration advice, 2) to evaluate the current proposals on the quality of the proposals and 3) decide on the further procedure.

Subgroup: Evaluation of demonstration advice

Action: A subgroup consisting of the five SSG Chairs (Dave Reid, Nils Olav Handegard, Jörn Schmidt, Graham Pierce, and Henn Ojaveer), Daniel Duplisea, Jan Jaap Poos, HoS, ACOM Chair, and SCICOM Chair was established and tasked to evaluate the four proposals for demonstration advice taking into consideration the five review criteria outlined by the ACOM Chair. Report deadline: 15 May 2016.

Comments:

The concept of demonstration advice was established a couple of years ago. SCICOM believes there is a lot of knowledge and advice that could be made available to managers. SCICOM is asked to evaluate the proposals in a constructive manner, adding value to the proposals. The idea was to use demonstration advice to reinforce and build up our Strategic Plan. At the end of the day it will matter that the advice is convincing and something that our clients may be willing to pay for.

It was noted that ACOM itself will not be involved in the review, and it will be hard for SCICOM to decide on whether we have the required expertise within ICES.

SCICOM criticized the lack of process. The call for proposals was made ad hoc by individual efforts external to SCICOM. SCICOM regards the current situation to be unfortunate.

WGBOSV and WGITMO had been tasked to look at the proposal on Arctic ballast water. It would be preferable to have feedback from the relevant working groups, before the evaluation in SCICOM. The same applies to WKICA for the Arctic topics to be consulted.

Evaluation of SCICOM funding impact and value added on ICES science

SCICOM Chair presented Doc 10e, a review document on the SIF funding of SCICOM activities 2010-15 and its impacts and urged SCICOM members to read the document before the Wednesday breakout groups. The document serves to inform the SCICOM discussion and recommendation on future financial support of SCICOM activities.

SCICOM has to decide on how to use the agreed funds for 2016 and SCICOM is invited to discuss a process how to evaluate the hitherto impact of science funding, with particular respect to the Science Fund 2014 and 2015.

This issue of SCICOM funding is continued in Section 11, Council SCICOM Working Group on ICES Science (CSWGIS).

8 Science cooperation

8.1 Aquaculture

ICES has received requests for advice from OSPAR in 2014 and from NASCO in 2015. WGAQUA contributed to the 2014 response to OSPAR but was unhappy with the advice drafting process. For the 2015 request there was a timing issue related to the meeting dates of WGAQUA being too close to the delivery date. Instead a special workshop WKCULEF was set up with participation from quite many experts under the WGAQUA umbrella.

ICES is otherwise involved through participation in H2020 projects like AORA-CSA, CLIMEFISH and the FP7 ERA-net COFASP. Some results were presented by the project coordinator such as the foresight analysis study and aquaculture case study carried out under COFASP, as well as the topics run under AORA-CSA.

8.2 Arctic

The working groups of the Arctic Council continue to be partners in the developing arena of ICES Arctic science activities. PAME co-sponsors the ICES/PAME WGICA with a view on providing a pan-Arctic platform/network for coordination and cooperation towards the Pacific. AMAP co-sponsors the strategic 2016 ASC session P: Arctic ecosystem services: challenges and opportunities (AMAP, EU-PolarNet, and ICES) with conveners Jeremy Mathis (USA) and Kriss Rokkan Iversen (Norway).

8.3 (P)ICES SGSP

HoS informed SCICOM that the cooperation has not been as smooth as it could be. ICES secretariat has not attended an annual PICES meeting since 2012, and PICES has been represented by PICES Chair and Science Board Chair (and not the Secretariat) at the ICES ASC. This year PICES is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

This year PICES cosponsors two ICES theme sessions in Riga. ICES regularly cosponsors some of theirs. So far there was only support for one session (P-16). PICES has

asked us about P-14 on ocean acidification. The decision on which sessions to co-sponsor will be made in the context of deciding on the future funding of SCICOM activities under the new leadership.

8.4 CIESM

ICES will be cosponsoring a theme session at the CIESM science congress (held every three years) in Kiel, Germany, September 2016. The Chair of SSGEPI will be co-convenor for ICES.

8.5 Projects

The Deputy Head of the ICES Science Programme presented an update of ICES project participation. The only project with ICES involvement from the H2020 call closed last year is the BG2 ClimeFish 'Co-creating a decision support framework to ensure sustainable fish production in Europe under climate change'. The next project to kick off is the GEF co-funded LME-LEARN project (kicking-off in March 2016), under which the ICES training program should receive a significant boost.

The Deputy Head of the ICES Science Programme also presented progress in the Aquaculture key action area: OSPAR / NASCO advise, ICES WGAQUA, ICES WGSEDA and the running projects: COFASP and AORA CSA. Participation in these projects provides opportunity to raising visibility of ICES as a key aquaculture research organization, especially in North America, as well as provides updated priority topics from various international stakeholder groups. Names of persons responsible in the EU, Canada and the USA, for management and support of the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance were provided. Future steps for the AORA CSA will be to consider how projects can be funded by multiple jurisdictions as for the time being no aquaculture-targeted mechanisms existing in Canada and the USA. Projects table, all apart from EMODnet will continue. There is one addition, with the last H2020 round ICES is involved in BlueGrowth 2 (to be added next time).

Proactive approach for project involvement

SCICOM advised that the secretariat reflects on processes of how to involve the expert groups in projects work. At the same time SCICOM should proactively identify calls and forming consortia and promote ICES role when its contribution is of added value and could be of benefit both for the consortium partners and for ICES. SCICOM pointed to the fact that production of Norwegian salmon is rapidly increasing and more research will be required, especially on feed, fish welfare and sector sustainability. This area, among others like the data collection framework, create new needs for dedicated projects and thus opportunities for ICES involvement. SCICOM should be responsive to such emerging needs and opportunities and strive to put ICES in the centre of attention, especially at the trans-Atlantic scale, and especially when a project call refers to mechanisms typically designed for international organizations and networks (e.g. coordination and support actions).

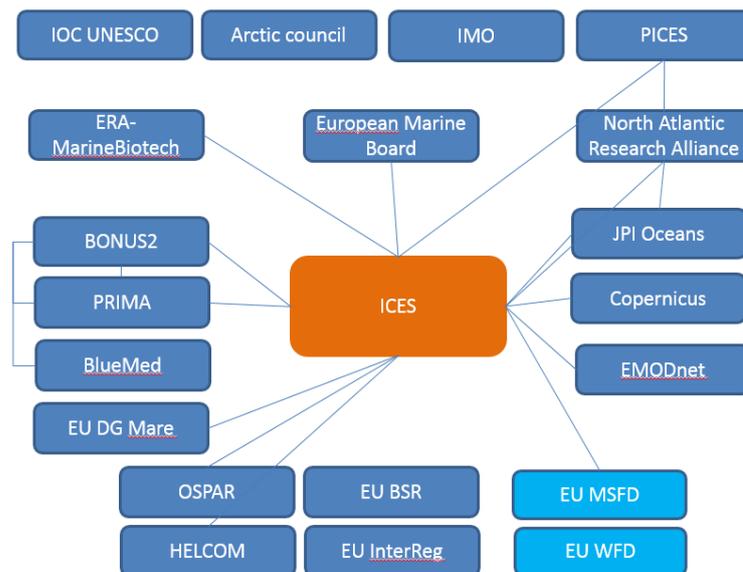
8.6 Mapping of science cooperation

Mats Svensson had been invited by SCICOM Chair to prepare a presentation on ICES in the context of the surrounding world with external partners.

He had read the 2010 Report of the SCICOM Study Group on Science Cooperation (SSGSC) with keen interest, but missed the scope and analysis of the exercise, i.e. where would ICES like to go?

The following issues for discussion were brought up:

- Where is ICES heading, scientifically?
- How can we maintain and develop the ICES networks of researchers?
- How can ICES influence future research funding?
- What are the paths towards Ecosystem-based fishery management, and how to include environmental issues in the track?
- How to do good “business intelligence” over the ICES knowledge domain?



Business intelligence

The concept of business intelligence was brought up and whether SCICOM members thought it could be useful for ICES to have some kind of information management. Concern was raised that such systems potentially use a lot of resources and that it would be difficult for ICES to provide such services at a useful level.

The General Secretary stated that as a result of this mapping exercise we would like to get a pool of ‘research priorities’ and have an overview of the commonalities with ICES.

SCICOM Chair stated that clear actions, goals and science priorities should set the route for this work.

Mapping Subgroup

Action: A subgroup was established to continue the mapping of ICES in the context of the surrounding world with external partners and to report to the SCICOM September meeting. The group should identify entities that we are not cooperating with, and consider whether it would be relevant to engage in cooperation or not, and what level of cooperation would be relevant. The mapping exercise should result in a pool of ‘research priorities’ showing where there are commonalities with ICES. Some players may influence ICES and should be mapped in relation to ICES and whether there are opportunities for synergies, etc. The subgroup was asked to include the periodic table presented at the ASC 2013 in Reykjavik by Luis Valdes.

Membership: Mats Svensson and Pierre Petitgas (co-Chairs), Jörn Schmidt, John Pinnegar, Olafur Astthorsson, Antanas Kontautas, and Begoña Santos.

Based on the subgroup's report SCICOM will need to prioritise which organisation to cooperate with. This exercise fits well with the CSWGIS review of science leadership.

8.7 Other

Niall O'Maoileidigh presented the background for the International Year of the Salmon and explained that NPAFC is seeking to involve partners, including relevant regional organizations such as ICES and NASCO.

NPAFC considers the pace of research is too slow; an intensive burst is needed. The vision for the IYS is for a seven year programme (2017-2022) with an intensive burst of internationally coordinated scientific research in 2018 and 2019. It notes that the geophysical research community has demonstrated the benefits of having 'a year' as a call to action. The proposed timetable is as follows:

2015 - 16	Planning
2017	Start up
2018 - 2019	Intensive field study
2020 - 2022	Analyses, dénouement symposium and publication.

ICES is invited to attend the scoping meeting in Vancouver and to become an IYS partner. 20 members of NASCO have endorsed the project.

Action/decision: SCICOM supported the initiative and it was suggested that IYS could be an exploratory model/case study for similar initiatives. A short statement/response to NPAFC (three bullets) will be drafted by Niall Ó Maoiléidigh on behalf of SCICOM. It should be made clear how ICES can best provide input, we hope to be able to provide ICES expertise into the process.

Comments

- Suggestion was made to arrange a spinoff session to the theme session during ASC
- There is a lot of historical information on salmon, i.e. in WGHIST, which may be included.

9 ICES co-sponsored symposia

SCICOM was updated on the co-sponsored science symposia held since September 2015:

- MYFISH symposium: Targets and Limits for Long-term Fisheries Management, 27-30 October 2015, Athens, Greece

And the two forthcoming symposia:

- ICES/PICES 6th Zooplankton Production Symposium, 9-13 May 2016, Bergen, Norway
- Understanding marine socio-ecological systems: including the human dimensions in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments, 30 May –3 June 2016, Brest, France

Funding for symposia

SCICOM was informed that the decision made by the Council Working Group on ICES Business Model (CWGIBM) to abolish the support for symposia had been discussed at the recent Bureau meeting. The decision may well be revisited. This means that ICES may be able to provide funding for 2017 and support may be directed exclusively at early career scientists. Furthermore, the funding for the ESSAS symposium will be on the list for prioritisation for final decision by SCICOM.

Draft resolution for symposium co-sponsorship

ESSAS Symposium on “Moving in, out and across the Subarctic and Arctic - shifting boundaries of water, ice, flora, fauna, people and institutions” to be held during 12–16 June 2017 at Tromsø, Norway

SCICOM noted that the last ESSAS symposium held in 2011 was cosponsored by ICES and produced a nice volume in the IJMS. EiC has approved the symposium based on the turnout of the last ICES/ESSAS symposium.

Decision/Action: ESSAS Symposium. The draft resolution was approved by SCICOM, including financial support for early career scientists and IJMS. Olafur Astthorsson volunteered to be the ICES representative on the Scientific Steering Committee.

9.1 Early Career Scientist Conference 2017

HoS gave an update on the state-of-the-art of preparations for the Early Career Scientists Conference 2017. The Scientific Steering Committee is now in place with three early career scientists from PICES and three from ICES. Communication with the Korean hosts is ongoing. The registration, website, etc., will be dealt with by PICES.

10 Update from Council Working Groups

10.1 Council Strategic Initiative on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Ecosystem Approach (CSIMSFD-EA)

The work of CSIMSFD-EA is linked to the special requests from DG Environment on the MSFD. The Strategic Initiative is chaired by Eugene Nixon (Ireland) and the next meeting of the group will be held 1 April at ICES HQ, Copenhagen. SCICOM Chair will provide an update on the SCICOM forum after the meeting.

Thanks to the work carried out by this group ICES now has specific focus to look at benthic habitats, collating activities within science and advice. Looking to get further development and set new priorities.

Does that include the work done in WGIMP in integrated monitoring programmes? This work has been related to EFARO and will take on-board more data for the MSFD. Integrated surveys to make sure we are making the surveys more efficient and expanding to looking at other activities.

10.2 Council Strategic Initiative on Maritime Transatlantic Cooperation (CSIMTC)

SCICOM was informed that CSIMTC was reinvigorated during the Council October meeting and two new chairs (Fritz Köster, Denmark, and Alain Vezina, Canada) appointed. During the first meeting held in the beginning of January the CSIMTC ToRs were updated to include strategic guidance from ICES.

In the longer term it would be interesting to set up a programme like Bonus for the North Atlantic, where countries put money into a common pot, and this would require inter-state negotiation and contracts. In the short term cooperation on research programming is seen as an achievable aim, and this will be further refined. This was discussed at a meeting between ICES and the Canadians, a similar meeting will be held in September with participation from USA and Canada.

Action: For the ASC 2017 to be held in Florida SCICOM is requested to consider themes addressing the transatlantic cooperation.

11 Council SCICOM Working Group on ICES Science (CSWGIS)

SCICOM Chair gave an update from CSWGIS. The group was tasked to work on three inter-related components: Strengthening science leadership, Review of ICES Science, and Science Funding.

Review of ICES Science and survey on Science Programme

SCICOM discussed the process of the planned survey on Science Programme. The survey questions will be sent to SCICOM/SSG Chairs for review before the survey is launched. It should be a two-step approach, starting with a survey addressed to the ICES community and then a second survey addressed to external partners. The survey going to inner circle should not be the same as the one going to outer circle.

SCICOM members found that it would be important not only to address “what can I do for ICES?”, but also to receive feedback on how ICES influences them. Furthermore, it would be interesting to know through which domain survey participants know ICES?

It was suggested to bring in a consultant to help design the survey

Will there be an evaluation based on real figures? How can we do a hard-core review?

Two breakout groups chaired by Henn Ojaveer and Jörn Schmidt were asked to discuss the two topics, SCICOM leadership structure and SCICOM Funding priorities.

SCICOM leadership structure

Based on three different scenarios for a leadership structure the groups were asked to suggest their preferred structure and they were also asked to consider how to spend the money available in support of the SCICOM leadership structure.

There was overall agreement in the two breakout groups that the five SSG chairs should be kept. Otherwise the connection to the ICES strategic plan (ISP) and the science implementation plan (SIP) would be lost. Further the expert groups (EGs) would have to adapt to a new system again after just 2 years of operating under the current system. Continuity of the existing structure will signal stability. According to Group 2 addition of a data-related SSG should be considered. The data-related SSG could also be linked to SSGIEOM.

There was no clear conclusion or preference for allocating funds to cover operational costs of SSG chairs, essentially to attend meetings, or honorarium to be paid to SSG chairs. On the one hand an honorarium would match better with the ACOM system, on the other hand travel budget for the SSG chairs is as important or even more important.

Science Funding

The breakout groups were asked to consider and give input to the discussion on the continuation of Science funding beyond 2016. The investments are divided by SIF and ICES Core Budget.

The following comments were made by the subgroups:

- Strategic Initiatives (SI's) should be given priority and be allocated budget to carry on their work.
- Contacts with academia and universities are important for ICES. These should be further developed in future to involve a wide array of specialists to assist ICES to address priority areas (incl. socio-economy, aquaculture and Arctic).
- Scientific cooperation should be under SIF.
- ECS should be under the core budget.

It was noted that the set-up of the leadership is based on the assumption of continued level of support in the Science Programme in the Secretariat.

The question of how and where to host the data issues under SCICOM was discussed. Currently the DIG operational group is in charge but it was pointed out that data is linked to both SCICOM and ACOM, with strong secretariat support by the ICES Data Centre to all expert groups.

Data can be considered a flow of information from producers to national databases to end users involving databases within and outside ICES. Looking at it this way it becomes an overarching, cross-cutting task involving the competencies at different levels. Embedding such a task in one part of our structure only prevents an integrated process.

Question was raised why some of the costs should be financed only by SCICOM and not also by ACOM. ACOM should share the funding; this particularly because now 3/5 of the science fund budget will be spent on demonstration advice. ACOM Chair pointed out that there is a difference in the financing of SCICOM and ACOM. ACOM is cost neutral to ICES, all costs are paid under MoU. There is currently the cost of running it which is higher than the income, but in principle, all activities have to be funded under the MoUs. The burning issue is to set up a mechanism for feedback from an EG to the sources providing the data. Setting up a process and mechanism is a big task which if carried out under ACOM would need financing.

The proposal to provide an operational budget for SSG Chairs rather than inserting another personnel layer was discussed. Resources for travel and meeting support but some flexibility including options for an honorarium was preferred. It was discussed how such a budget should be handled either by paying it to the institutes or directly to SSG Chairs. Some may not be allowed to receive support from outside their institutional budgets. These limitations will have to be considered when the details are discussed.

The General Secretary stated that in total 19 Mio. DKK was provided by the Strategic Investment Fund for the period 2009–2015 of which the majority was used to boost SCICOM and its activities. The SIF is now exhausted and SCICOM will have to consider how the leadership structure is to be financed over the coming years. There will be 60% of a P5 position which is available and the secretariat will provide the precise figures in order to allow an informed discussion.

Science Fund

SCICOM has been asked to consider and give input to the discussion on the continuation of the Science Fund beyond 2016, as a follow up to the discussion in Council 2015. First of all two years are insufficient time to perform a full review of the efficiency of the Science fund and its contributions to the ISP. Reports are only available for the 2014 projects and the products and other spin-offs are only now becoming emergent. Publications, input to other projects and to the work of expert groups will have to be taken into account for a thorough review. Given the 2015 projects are still underway a conclusive assessment of the Science Fund projects cannot be expected realistically before 2017.

Science Fund gave good publicity and outreach for ICES towards the academia, even if the funding was low. In addition, the Science fund has opened new research fields for ICES and has widened our science portfolio. Given there are now only 200K DKK available for 2016, setting up a call for this amount may make it even harder to demonstrate the added value for ICES during evaluations, however. SCICOM concluded that the funds identified by Council in support of the Science Fund was better and more efficiently used in support of other SCICOM activities. It was pointed out that efforts should be made to enhance resources on the current focus rather than exploring new fields and engaging in new activities. We should also bear in mind that SCICOM by setting the leadership and the funding right is preparing the ground for the review of the science programme in the near future (see CSWGIS section).

Action: Evaluation process for science activities. A subgroup consisting of Steven Degraer, Audrey Geffen, Begoña Santos, Graham Pierce, Jan Jaap Poos, HoS and Brian MacKenzie, was established and tasked to:

- set up an evaluation process for the 2009–2015 science funding, including Science Fund and other SCICOM activities,
- propose sources, objectives and process for funding future SCICOM activities in support of the SCICOM leadership,
- and decide on the use of the available funds granted by Council for 2016

Deadline: 15 April 2016

Decision/Action: SCICOM agreed to keep the current SSG structure and consequently agreed to announce the vacancies/open the calls for new SSG Chairs for SSGEPD, SSGIEA, and SSGIEOM, as the current chairs have completed their terms (3 + 1) and will be rotating by the end of 2016. The elections will be scheduled for the SCICOM September meeting.

Action: It was agreed to revisit the role and tasks of the SSG Chairs at the SCICOM September meeting.

Action: SCICOM Chair asked SSG Chairs to consider strategies for the future for the five steering groups. It is timely to consider the legacy and what we would like to bring forward to the successors.

Action: SCICOM was asked to consider simplifying the abbreviation for SSGIEOM.

12 Science Plan Implementation

12.1 Mapping of EGs in relation to Science Plan

SCICOM Chair informed SCICOM that SSG Chairs are working on updated mapping exercises of EGs in relation to Science Plan with deadline in May. The aim of the mapping exercise is to identify strengths and gaps, and it also gives us a possibility to develop new ToRs and initiatives.

The last mapping was made against the 31 science priorities and it showed that all science priorities were covered and that the SSGs are working over the full range of science priorities, and not only the allotted priorities.

12.2 Evaluation of MA EGs and approval of draft resolutions

SCICOM Chair presented the revolving list of multi-annual EGs, and SCICOM was informed that self-evaluations would be dealt with under Agenda Item 15, Draft resolutions and EG Recommendations addressed to SCICOM (as a one-step process looking at the self-evaluation forms and the resolution for these groups at the same time).

SSGEPD	2013	Spring 2016	WGEVO	
SSGEPD	2013	Spring or September 2016	WGERAAS	No request for extension.
SSGEPI	2013	Spring 2016	WGSAM	
SSGIEA	2013	Spring 2016	WGINOR	
SSGIEA	2013	Spring 2016	WGMARS	
SSGIEOM	2013	Spring 2016	WGNEPS	

13 SCICOM Steering Groups

13.1 SSGEPD

Graham Pierce reported from Steering Group on Ecosystem Processes and Dynamics (SSGEPD).

The incoming chair of WGHABD had reported that the group had spent some time over the last years reviewing the relationship between HABs and eutrophication but that documents produced by OSPAR over the last year have not taken on board the group's work.

This incident led to a suggestion that science group reports could include a specific section highlighting potential advisory use of the work they are doing. The ACOM Chair encouraged EG Chairs to communicate directly to ACOM. For joint expert groups, the product is also owned by the client commission, they can use the product directly without any peer review, consistent with the agreement we have on shared groups.

WGEVO has proposed new ToRs and wishes to continue with the same chairs (thus extending beyond the usual limit for individual chairs). Concern was raised in SCICOM that there has been a stagnation in the participation of this group and it was not succeeding in bringing in new members from the community (and in particular new chairs).

<p>Action: SSGEPD Chair will get back WGEVO and ask the two old Chairs to resign and the new Chair to take the lead of the group.</p>
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SCICOM noted that WGCEPH have been debating whether to issue another data call this year. France does not supply data and its survey and fishery data on cephalopods would be very useful. A second issue raised by WGCEPH was reproduction of material from the WGCEPH report on the SEAFISH website (apparently they did not ask permission). The issue is not misuse of the material, simply whether the instruction which appears on WG reports (i.e. “For permission to reproduce material from this publication, please apply to the General Secretary”) is being taken seriously. The Secretariat suggested to approach the authors and in case this would not help, a complaint should be made at a higher level.

A tentative proposal has been received for a new group (see below for details): Working Group on Seasonal-to-Decadal Prediction of Marine Ecosystems (WGS2D)

WGERAAS is terminating this year. Its final report and self-evaluation will be ready in April.

13.2 SSGEPI

Henn Ojaveer reported from Steering Group on Ecosystem Pressures and Impacts (SSGEPI). SCICOM was informed that:

- Six expert groups (WGAQUA, WGBEC, WGMBRED, WGPDMO, WGSFD and WGVHES) were extended for the next three-year term.
- WGSAM submitted the self-evaluation report. The suggestion is to positively evaluate WGSAM report and proceed with SCICOM approval procedure of their new ToR's for 2016–2018.
- A formal request letter was sent to ICES national delegates by the General Secretary, and additional efforts by the SSGEPI chair, to solicit nominations for WGMABS to be able to carry out their ToR's,

ICES ICCAT joint methods WG

The resolution for the ICES-ICCAT joint WG is being finalised. The draft document is now with ICCAT for final comments/edits (incl. suggesting for ICCAT-nominated co-chair and expert group name). Laurie Kell is the contact person. Experts are eagerly waiting for the first meeting, however they need some advance notice to secure travel funding. SCICOM noted that there is a lot of goodwill behind the ICES-ICCAT joint WG and good momentum.

ASC 2016 Open Session on Plastics

The ICES-PICES open session on plastics was discussed and agreed at SCICOM 2015 meeting. Thomas Maes (UK) has kindly agreed to take a lead in this process although he is not able to attend the ASC.

SCICOM discussed whether the marine litter aspect has a home in ICES? Finding a niche for ICES would be important and it might be relevant to set up a study group on marine litter and acidification. There may also be interest from the PICES side. An idea for an ICES WG was outlined a couple of years ago, and this could be the starting process for a new group.

It was suggested to involve JPI Oceans in relation to micro-plastics; they could be invited to ASC.

Action: SSGEPI Chair will raise this question with Thomas Maes.
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Workshop on Ocean acidification

SCICOM was informed that ToRs are being drafted for a workshop on ocean acidification. The draft resolution will be submitted to SCICOM for commenting/approval via the ICES Resolutions Forum. There has been communication with PICES on this initiative.

MCWG Data Issue

SCICOM was informed that the Marine Chemistry Working Group (MCWG) has a lot of valuable data that cannot be uploaded to the ICES Data Centre.

- continuous data from sensors or online autonomous systems
- data on microplastics are not appearing in a standard format
- data from Passive Sampler monitoring

MCWG recommends that ICES considers either setting up a format for hosting these datasets, or establish strong linkages to other databases.

Renewal of ToR's for WGAQUA

SCICOM approved WGAQUA ToR's for 2016-2018 last year. However, a process was initiated to renew these ToR's with SSGEPI chair involvement at the very last stages of the process. The continued work of WGAQUA will be closely monitored by Henn.

Potential topic for open session at ASC 2016 under EPI

SSGEPI Chair is considering establishing an open session for ASC 2016 on Impacts of interacting drivers and arranging a workshop to summarise the state-of-the-art in the knowledge of the impacts of interactions (cumulative/synergistic/additive/multiplicative effects etc.) of different drivers (at least the most important ones) on marine ecosystems is currently at the idea-phase.

Action: SCICOM members were invited to suggest conveners for the open sessions to SSGEPI Chair.

13.3 SSGIEA

Dave Reid reported from Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (SSGIEA).

The SSG is planning to have a joint meeting of the IEA groups (chairs and interested members) towards the end of the year for 3 days, probably at ICES Headquarters. The ACOM/SCICOM Workshop on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Methods (WKIDEA) will be a follow up on the success of WKRISCO. The meeting will identify common problems and solutions, exchange ideas, methodologies and analytical approaches, and compare these. It also includes ideas on harmonisation and the human dimension.

IEA will convene a Theme Session ASC 2016: "Integrated Ecosystems Assessment and Decision Support to advance Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management" with John Pope, Lena Bergström, and Melania Borit as conveners. There are three main

- ecosystem interaction with fish stocks
- ecological, economic and social trade-offs
- How the fishing industry can help the ecosystem.

Working Group on the Northwest Atlantic Regional Sea (WGNARS) are up for renewal of their MA ToRs, and SSGIEA is suggesting to join forces with NAFO WGESA to work on synergies and extend the coverage on e.g. benthic systems.

Decision: SCICOM agreed to go ahead with a joint NAFO/ICES group.

13.3.1 Ecosystem Overviews

ICES Ecosystem Approach Coordinator, Mark Dickey-Collas briefed SCICOM on the ecosystem overviews. Four ecosystem overviews have just been published by ICES:

- Barents Sea Ecoregion - Ecosystem overview
- Bay of Biscay and the Iberian Coast Ecoregion – Ecosystem overview
- Celtic Seas Ecoregion – Ecosystem overview
- Greater North Sea Ecoregion – Ecosystem overview

It has been a 3½ year process to create them in a slightly different ways and there has been close cooperation with ODEMM, OSPAR and ICES integrated ecosystem assessment groups. Thanks were extended to Simon Jennings (Cefas), Dariusz Campbell (OSPAR), and Inigo Martinez (ICES Advisory Programme Professional Officer).

Processes have begun to develop ecosystem overviews for Baltic Sea, Norwegian Sea and Iceland Sea.

The issue of the regional impact of climate change was raised by Denmark and it was hoped that this can be included in the next round of production of the overviews

The overviews are structured around four key elements: Ecoregion description, Key signals within the environment and ecosystem, Activity and pressure, and State.

The purpose of the ecosystem overviews in the ICES advice is to:

- Describe the location, scale, management, and assessment boundaries of the ecoregion
- Alert expert groups to situations within the environment and ecosystems that are expected to significantly influence their advice
- Describe the distribution of human activities and resultant pressure (in space and time) on the environment and ecosystem
- Describe the state of the ecosystem (in space and time) and to comment on pressures accounting for changes in state.

The overviews are expected to materially influence the advice.

- SCICOM members congratulated Mark Dickey-Collas on the overviews and made the following comments:
- It was suggested to establish an overview for the Atlantic Ocean.
- For how long will these overviews be valid and what is the scale and process for updating them? The idea is for the overviews to be web-based and automatically updated, but the text and the key trends would of course need to be kept up to date. Whenever there is new data, they should be updated. The worst case scenario is a document that is out of date.
- It was suggested to lift out oceanographic conditions from WGOH. Mark Dickey-Collas agreed that there might be a place for hydrography and oceanography and would consider how to bring this in.

- We have to be careful about the top pressures. The recovery time from pressures, recovery time from wind farms, oil spills, etc. is not fast. There is that danger of over simplistic interpretation.

13.3.2 Progress on OOPS

ICES Ecosystem Approach Coordinator, Mark Dickey-Collas updated SCICOM on progress on ICES operational oceanographic products and services.

Progress has been made in the last 6 months with Copernicus and EMODnet-biology.

Copernicus (<http://www.copernicus.eu/>) are preparing web services for ICES for oceanographic data. Initial problems with very slow speed of connections and services are being improved. The main challenge at the moment is creating a service that covers all of the ICES area with integrated oceanographic products.

EMODnet Biology (<http://www.emodnet-biology.eu/>) are preparing web services for ICES for zooplankton data from the Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science (<http://www.sahfos.ac.uk/>). Initial products offered by EMODnet aggregated at too low a temporal resolution. EMODnet is now developing ICES specific products which will provide the requested aggregation and temporal resolution.

In both case web map services are being developed. These will be made available to the ICES community through the ICES spatial facility: <http://gis.ices.dk/devoops/> - press widgets and then OOPS products.

SCICOM and SCICOM Chair praised Mark Dickey-Collas for the good work and the nice outcome. The following comments were made:

- A related product was developed for the US, which is dealing with the data directly, rather than being dependant on a third party. Most of the data summaries are not overwhelming to work with. It is the updating, storing, etc., that is a challenge.
- UK SCICOM member mentioned a portal for climate change projections, and promised to send the link to Mark.

13.4 SSGIEOM

Nils Olav Handegard reported from the ACOM/SCICOM Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Observation and Monitoring (SSGIEOM).

Three EGs have renewed their ToR for a new term (IBTS, EGGS2 and WGIPS), and six EGs are coming to the end of their multi annual cycle later this year.

Increasing attention has been devoted to the exchange between survey groups and the assessment groups. Two expert groups are working along these lines (WGISDAA and PGDATA), and the SSG chair have discussed with both groups how to improve these links. WKSUREP has been established with the goal of formulating what information needs to be documented from the survey to the assessment groups. Guidelines for the SISF protocols will be updated to include guidance on the reporting format from the surveys, and to ensure that this complies with the needs from the assessment groups.

The effort in developing the series ICES survey protocols (SISF) are progressing steadily. Updates have been published for several protocols. They state what the survey groups are supposed to do and also serve as an instrument to update protocols to be aligned with best practices.

AtlantOS. ICES is contributing acoustic data to AtlantOS, a project which will see existing Atlantic Ocean observation efforts pulled together into a single cohesive system. The database is specified, implementation is starting.

Survey overviews. The survey overviews are not progressing. The objective of this was to get an overview of the survey and data products from the surveys and where that information goes into the assessment groups. This is important for getting the overview of the data and information flow and how this information is used in the (both integrated and conventional) assessments. This needs to be coordinated on a higher level than the survey groups in collaboration with DIG, the Data Centre and the ACOM chairs.

The ACOM Chair has requested a feedback process for the data providers. It should be possible to trace where the information behind our advice comes from. Also, a lot of survey data has scarcely been used, and we don't know why. A framework needs to be established to look into this.

Action: The issue of survey overviews should be further discussed and moved forward in the SCICOM/ACOM leadership group with a view to establishing an interim group to look into survey overviews.

SSGIEOM Expert Group Chairs need to physically meet, perhaps back to back with the WG Chairs meeting with attendance from ACOM.

One ACOM Vice-Chair needs to be "appointed" to IEOM and IEA.

13.5 BSG

Jörn Schmidt reported from the ACOM/SCICOM Benchmark Steering Group (BSG).

BSG is currently working on the following tasks:

Task 1: Identifying gaps and incremental improvements in the current benchmark processes

Task 2: Integration with the data quality assurance groups (PGDATA)

Task 3: Integrated assessments and benchmarks;

Task 4: Integrating by-catch (marine mammals) advice with fish stocks advice

Task 5: Role of WGSAM and reviewing of multispecies/ecosystem models for use in benchmarks

Task 6: Improve integration of WGISDAA (Improving the use of survey data for assessment and advice) in benchmark process

Task 7: set up evaluation criteria for the uptake of science into assessment and advice

BSG is aiming to set up a process that can help deliver the required results, but has no power to ensure experts will be available to engage in the process and do the required work. Benchmarking is a process, and it involves a lot of intersessional work. Active communication is needed between groups and people

A joint BSG-ACOM ad-hoc subgroup has been established to improve links between Expert Groups and benchmark work and increase efficiency of resource utilization. It will be chaired by the BSG Chairs (Carmen Fernandez and Jörn Schmidt). The subgroup will prepare a proposal for discussion during the ACOM consultations in September 2016 and is also planning a special session for the ASC 2016 in Riga to allow feedback from a wider audience on the proposed changes.

14 Draft resolutions and EG Recommendations addressed to SCICOM

Category 1: Draft resolutions for publications

The SCICOM Chair presented the Category 1 draft resolutions. The draft resolution was recommended by PUBCOM for SCICOM approval:

The Report on the Target Classification, edited by Rolf J Korneliussen (Norway), as reviewed and approved by the Chair of the ACOM/SCICOM SSGIEOM Steering Group, will be published in the ICES Cooperative Research Report series.

Decision: SCICOM formally approved the Category 1 resolution.

Category 2: Draft resolutions for Expert Group meetings

The SCICOM Chair presented the Category 2 draft resolutions:

SSG on Ecosystem Pressures and Impacts (SSGEPI)

- Working Group on Multispecies Assessment Methods (WGSAM). This group is doing an excellent job; the chairs are very responsive, providing good input.

SSG on Ecosystem Processes and Dynamics (SSGEPD)

- Working Group on Fisheries-Induced Evolution (WGEVO). The self-evaluation is in line with expectations. SCICOM noted that the list of Science Plan topics and theme sessions looked good. (Chair question to be resolved).
- Working Group on Resilience and marine ecosystem services (WGRMES)

SSG on Integrated Ecosystem Observation and Monitoring (SSGIEOM)

- Working Group on Nephrops Surveys (WGNEPS)

SSG on Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (SSGIEA)

- Working Group on the Integrated Assessments of the Norwegian Sea (WGINOR). **Decision/Action:** SCICOM recommended continuation, but postponed approval pending meeting dates, deliverables and timeframe for their work.
- Working Group on Maritime Systems (WGMARS). SCICOM recommended continuation, keep up good work and focus on the understanding of implementation of IEAs.
- Workshop on IEA in the Northwest Atlantic (WKIEANWA). This is a workshop under WGNARS and WGMARS. Will meet back to back with MARS. (Better acronym needed).

Workshop on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Methods (WKIDEA). SCICOM noted that this is a follow on from WKRISCO, this time without clients.

Operational Groups

- BSG Updated ToR. Approved.

Action: It was suggested to update the template for EG Self-Evaluations to include a section for one or two highlights of their results. The secretariat can then collect the highlights and this will also help the Communications team. **Action:** The Secretariat will update the template for self-evaluation accordingly, and inform groups of the change.

Decision: All draft resolutions (except for WGINOR, postponed for SCICOM Forum) were approved by SCICOM.

Action: The Secretariat and SSG Chairs will inform the EG Chairs of WGEVO, WGSAM, WGINOR, WGMARS, and WGNEPS that their self-evaluations were well received by SCICOM and continuation of their groups approved.

Category 3

Action: ICES approved co-sponsorship of the ESSAS Symposium. Olafur Astthorsson volunteered to be the ICES representative on the Scientific Steering Committee.

WGEEL Recommendations

The Secretariat presented a list of recommendations addressed to SCICOM from WGEEL (see **Annex 3**). SCICOM was requested to take note or appropriate action/decision.

SCICOM noted that the proposed groups (WKEARS, WKOCRE, WKSTOCKEEL and WGESR) will become part of the WGRECORDS family under SSGEPD.

Action: Niall O' Maoiléidigh will get back to WGEEL and ask for draft resolutions for the proposed working groups/workshops and additional information on what is expected from ICES in relation to the recommendations on international research programmes and eel recruitment time-series.

Comments

- Why set up an international programme to study eel? This could be brought into a bigger, more interesting programme. Response: A lot of this is relevant to EU requirements, and thus this information is needed to develop brand-new programmes. The question is – how can ICES contribute?
- We could call for an international year of the eel.
- There is the option of transatlantic cooperation.

15 Strategic Initiatives

15.1 Strategic Initiative on the Human Dimension (SIHD)

Jörn Schmidt gave an update from SIHD.

The Workshop on Activity Planning of SIHD (WKAPSIHD) was held in Ijmuiden, Netherlands, 12–13 January 2016 to further elaborate the tasks for SIHD.

The workshop focused on four questions:

- Which participatory processes are available or need to be established to engage across disciplines and involve the wider civil society?
- What could an integrated, interdisciplinary discourse in support of an effective communication between human, social and natural science look like? (language barriers)
- What are key components of IEAs and how can the IEA work benefit from the involvement of the humanities and social sciences?
- Which social, cultural and economic indicators and models are available or need to be developed and how could the use of empirical quantitative and

qualitative methods to characterize the state of and changes in the human dimension of ecosystem-based management be extended?

WKAPSIHD actions:

- Systematically contact all ICES EGs (chairs) to explore where there is already context for SIHD.
 - Current needs and demand of 'human' disciplines
 - Understand how the integration of social scientists work in the existing group and how to extend this
 - How could we better link those social scientists, who already are engaged within ICES
- Explore further opportunities for funding, e.g. COST actions (but core-funding would still be needed SIHD to secure travel funding).
- Demonstrate to SCICOM/ACOM/Council/us the development of an IEA using WGNARS as a case study; use graphics, simple language to communicate efficiently with the target groups → WGMARS!
- Outreach to other organisations/venues/conferences

Very good links have been established to the work that is being done in NOAA.

- Produce outreach material, poster, leaflet, T-Shirts
- Interact with groups like STECF to understand what the issues in integrating the Human Dimension are
- How could advice on Human Dimension issues (or within the ecosystem approach) could look like (e.g. produce demonstration advice)

For discussion:

- It needs to be recognized that social sciences and humanities are as broad in their disciplines as natural sciences. Thus it is important to identify which expertise is necessary for a given research question.
- Interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary research is complex and time demanding. Communication between scientists and between scientists and non-scientists is key.

Comments

- It was suggested that SIHD should look at the ecosystem services and to make a short consequence analysis to identify where the conflicts are and where there are synergies.
- The problem lies in the structure of ICES itself. In the IEA domain we draw on the outputs of many ICES groups to start building ecosystem descriptions and analysis and we are inviting in social scientists at the high-level integration phase, but we don't have a place where they discuss their work; they are brought in as invited experts. ICES needs a Steering Group (SSG) on Social Sciences.
- The WG membership comes from Government fisheries laboratories, but it is difficult to attract attendance in areas that are not supported by those laboratories. ICES is continuously struggling to involve the academia in ICES working groups. ICES has good linkages to the EU Framework Programme

and Horizon 2020, and could invite social scientists from relevant work packages to engage in ICES work. Some felt that this is already happening

- SIHD is aware that it has been a cultural challenge to get the existing people in ICES to accept the new disciplines coming in, so there is also a need to engage with the people inside ICES to promote better integration. There seems to be a barrier between social scientists and the other scientists. It is important to have moderators who understand both worlds.

Jörn Schmidt invited SCICOM members to visit the [MSEAS conference website](#) and also the [SIHD page](#) on the ICES website.

15.2 SCICOM Strategic Initiative on Climate Change (SICCME)

John Pinnegar gave a brief update on SICCME activities since the ASC:

- 1) October 2015: Convened a one day SICCME meeting in Qingdao, China (see Appendix 1).
- 2) October 2015: PICES Topic Session S3: Eastern-western approaches to fisheries: resource utilization and ecosystem impacts. (Jacquelynn King co-chair)
- 3) October 2015: Past, present, and future climate in the North Pacific Ocean: Updates of our understanding since IPCC AR5. (Anne Hollowed, Shin-ichi Ito and Sukgeun Jung co-chairs among other).

Future activities include:

- 1) June 2016: ICES/PICES intersessional workshop on “Economic Modelling of the Effects of Climate Change on Fish and Fisheries” (WKSICCME_Econ), to be held in Brest, France (See Appendix 2) – there may be ICES support for this, PICES is supporting to members to attend the meeting.
- 2) ICES/PICES Workshop on Phase 1: Modelling Effects of Climate Change on Fish and Fisheries (WKSICCME1) A full-day open workshop to be held in conjunction with the ICES ASC in Riga, Latvia, September 2016 (Appendix 3).
- 3) ICES-PICES sponsored Theme Session “I” at ICES ASC (Riga, Latvia, September 2016) (See Appendix 5). Seasonal to decadal prediction of marine systems: opportunities, approaches and applications.
- 4) Fall 2016 PICES workshop on SICCME modelling updates (Appendix 4). A full-day open workshop to review regional models and preliminary results on the PICES side.

Funding: for modelling

- **Climate change and European aquatic RESources (CERES):** addresses topic H2020-BG-2015-2 (BG-02-2015, part of EU the Call on ‘Blue Growth’. The ‘kick off’ meeting will be held 6-8th April 2016, Catalonia Majórica Hotel, Palma, Majorca. It is a 4 year project (2016-2019), starting in March 2016 and involving scientists and industry partners from 14 countries. led by Myron Peck, will start with kick-off meeting in Mallorca
- NOAA has funded a new comprehensive Bering Sea climate change project: the **Alaska CLimate Integrated Modelling, ACLIM**. This 3 year project (2015-2017) will utilize a multi-model climate projection framework that will allow scientists to the implications of different sources of uncertainty

15.3 SCICOM/ACOM Strategic Initiative on Stock Assessment Methods (SISAM)

Mark Dickey-Collas reported on behalf of the SISAM Co-Chairs.

SISAM is cosponsoring two sessions at the World Fisheries Congress in Busan Korea in May 2016; one on “Where are we now” and one on “What do we need for the future?” SISAM funding is being used to support travel for session organizers.

SISAM will continue with discussions on GAME; the first GAME meeting will take place in the side-lines of the WFC. In a parallel effort, ICES has also made progress in coordinating joint assessments and methods developments with ICCAT. ICCAT will attend WFC and will be involved in the first GAME meeting later in 2016.

2016 will see the end of the SISAM initiative and for the remainder of the year it is hoped to create a legacy of a viable GAME forum. The modalities of how this global forum can operate can be worked out at the WFC in Korea.

SISAM leadership

SCICOM was informed that Ciaran Kelly will be stepping down, and a replacement will be needed

Action: SCICOM members were requested to nominate candidates for a new SISAM Co-Chair.

15.4 Strategic discussion on future initiatives

A suggestion was made to establish a strategic initiative for Data. The scope of a potential SI would need to be drafted and take onboard input from SCICOM. The bread and butter work related to data handling is well taken care of by ICES Data Centre, but it might be worth while looking into the other side.

There was no clear conclusion if such an initiative should be labelled a strategic initiative. The issue would be tabled and developed further in the joint ACOM Leadership/SCICOM business group.

Landing obligations

SCICOM discussed the landing obligations. The ACOM Chair informed SCICOM that ACOM held its annual meeting with 33 observers to the advisory process (MIACO) in January 2016. The meeting expressed a strong wish to have a forum to discuss practical issues linked to limitations of landing obligations and there was a pressure on ICES to take this up. This will be difficult for ICES under the ICES EU MoU, but we have a good link to stakeholders which can be used as platform to explore what will be needed to meet the new obligations.

There was overall agreement in SCICOM that the timing is not appropriate for action on ICES’ side. There are many assumptions, but nobody knows what will actually happen.

16 Update from SRGASC

HoS gave a summary of the ASC survey results. The main conclusions were:

- **Background of survey respondents.** 23% of the respondents indicated that they were from national laboratories and 49% from academia. The majority of survey results were submitted by ASC newcomers.

- **ICES committee work/business meetings.** The majority of the survey participants responded that they did not serve on a committee/business meeting (89%).
- The majority of the responses were satisfied with the duration of the ASC (73%), whereas only 20% indicated that it was too long.
- A majority of responses indicated that the main purpose of attending ASC was to attend particular theme sessions, to do networking, and to get an overall update on mainstream and innovative science.
- How effective and engaging was the poster session? There was no clear conclusion on the feedback on poster sessions although there seems to be satisfaction with the format.
- Survey participants felt that the opening session was an appropriate kick-off of the ASC and they were happy with the duration.
- One lesson learned is that Wednesday afternoon meetings could be announced better.
- Early career scientist events. Most agreed that the early career scientist programme was informative and helpful or had no opinion. It was noted that future surveys are directed to early career scientists only.
- Conference game did not attract a lot of participation, but those who participated liked it.
- Almost all survey participants would participate in ASC again!

Decision: There was agreement in SCICOM that annual user surveys would be valuable, in particular to track the opinions on a new format of the ASC. Since the survey on the review of ICES science also relates to ASC, it was suggested to merge the two surveys.

Pierre Petitgas gave an update from SRGASC. The objectives of the subgroup were to increase the attractiveness and efficiency of the ASC and to ensure comprehensiveness of topics, promote innovation, facilitate networking and incorporate young scientists.

In October 2015 Council took note of the new format for ASC:

- The conference lasts four full days, from Monday to Thursday.
- The Opening ceremony is the first event on the Monday morning and the format is short and snappy.
- The Closing ceremony is converted into a closing reception on Thursday night. It includes the hand-over of awards and conference highlights. The conference dinner will be organized to take place after the ceremony.
- SCICOM Open Sessions are science sessions run and announced as any other sessions. SCICOM defines the topics, formats and convenors for these sessions and reserves slots in the programme for them.
- There will be three theme session formats: theme session, panel discussion, presentation of innovation. A maximum duration for a theme session is 1.5 day, and 1.5h for the other types of sessions. **Session formats are advertised in the call for proposals.**
- Long lunch breaks (2h) are programmed to accommodate meetings that are not science sessions (discussion, workshop, project presentation, business). Lunch break meetings will be part of the ASC programme. **A procedure is needed to call for and select lunch break meetings.**

- The Early Career Scientists (ECS) programme is visible in the conference programme and includes: Lunch break meetings to introduce EGs/ICES work; an “EG” marketplace; Mentoring; Bus stop.
- Poster session. Posters are presented in the sessions as short oral communications. Convenors will be invited to reserve time for a guided tour of their session posters. **This needs to be included in the guide lines for convenors as well as in the guide lines for presenters.**
- The (standard) registration fee is increased to 190 Euros. The ASC income is split 50/50 between Secretariat and host country.

SCICOM was invited to discuss how to best implement the new format, which will be launched for the Annual Science Conference 2017 to be held in Fort Lauderdale, USA.

Action: The following items were highlighted by SRGASC Chair, which would need to be revisited by SCICOM:

Guidelines for convenors (call for theme session proposals and running the sessions)

Early career scientist programme

Establish decision process science sessions defined strategically by SCICOM

Establish decision process for lunch break meetings for inclusion on the programme.

Establish decision process science sessions defined strategically by SCICOM

SCICOM Chair emphasised that there is a process for deciding open sessions.

Going to the USA for the ASC in 2017, SCICOM needs to decide on relevant strategic topics (transatlantic cooperation and Galway Statement). SCICOM may want to have receive feedback from our strategic cooperation partners to know what they would find interesting. How will SCICOM include strategic input from cooperating partners?

ASC poster session

SCICOM was invited to discuss how to improve the poster session and whether there would be interest in introducing a webtool/app (tinder) to increase contact between authors and other participants.

- Poster presenters could be requested to submit a short video clip together with the abstract to give the poster more exposure.
- Twitter is also an outreach tool and really effective, it can be set up as a game. The tool should be decided by the aim. If for instance we wish to encourage match-making, this should decide which tool to utilise.

Labelling ASC related meetings

Lunchbreak meetings. How do we define lunchbreak meetings? The lunch breaks are perfect for business-related meetings, such as WGCHAIRS or steering group or strategic initiative meetings, but they should not be labelled as business meetings. Some meetings could be advertised as part of the ASC programme, and some could be internal meetings.

Open sessions. SCICOM discussed if changing the name of “SCICOM open sessions” would make them more appealing and inviting. There may be no need to label the different sessions.

Changing the ASC format is good, but SCICOM should be careful not to isolate the business side of ICES from the ASC participants. ICES business can be served in an attractive format. The next generation of SSG chairs will be found via the business meetings. They could be labelled “have your say” meetings and advertised as an opportunity to engage more in ICES?

There has been a tendency of labelling meeting types according to our own internal structure, which does not necessarily make sense to newcomers.

Number of theme sessions under the new ASC format

Under the new format the intention is to reduce the number of theme sessions from 18 to 12 to adjust to the new four-day format. Concern/alarm was raised by the US SCICOM member that this new format would potentially lead to a decline in participation. SCICOM should be careful to introduce a radical change (from 18 to 12 theme sessions); a gradual change would be better. SCICOM might want to consider having 5 or 6 parallel sessions in 2017. HoS agreed that the more sessions, the more participants, while a higher number of parallel sessions may lead to more complaints. The US SCICOM member is chair of the theme session selection group and will have the opportunity to engage in shaping the programme.

Action: SCICOM will revisit the number of theme session at the SCICOM September meeting, including duration of theme sessions.

ICES website applicable for phones

ICES has made a DKK 300,000 investment to make the ICES website applicable for smartphones. It should be easier to see the programme on our phones and issues regarding the downloading will also be addressed. Furthermore the trifold will be expanded slightly to include more information.

Conference dinner

A suggestion was made to include the conference dinner in the registration fee. HoS commented that ASC is attractive to young scientists because of the low registration fee. The proposed solution is to have a reception for all ASC participants, which will include an awards ceremony, and this reception will be followed by a conference dinner for those who have bought a ticket.

17 ASC 2016 – Conference programme

17.1 Update from Conference Coordinator

The Conference Coordinator, Anna Davies, updated SCICOM on the preparations for the ASC 2016 to be held at Radisson Blue in the city centre of Riga, Latvia. The venue is spacious and offers a good framework for ASC! There is one long space for poster session, and a massive big hall for the opening session and various desks.

Registration fees

SCICOM was informed that the students’ fee will remain the same, but all other fees have been increased as shown in the table below. SCICOM members were reminded to register for the early bird fee by 1 August.

Conference item	Fee (in €)	Previous fee (in €)

Ordinary fee for the five days of the conference	190	140
Reduced fee for Members and alternates of the Science Committee (SCICOM) and the Advisory Committee (ACOM), Expert Group Chairs under SCICOM and ACOM, and nationally appointed Member Country Delegates to ICES	95	70
Free registration for 2016 ASC Theme Session Conveners and Plenary speakers, Outgoing Committee chairs from 2015, Outstanding Achievement Award winners, and 2015 Merit Award winners	0	0
Full-time graduate students	70	70
One day fee	85	65
Accompanying persons fee	45	35
Late fee after 1 August for everybody	250	190

Abstracts

This year we will not be requiring the submission of extended abstracts. Authors can, if required by their institute, submit an extended abstract or full paper.

The abstracts will be used for the online abstract collection (on SharePoint), which will be available to all registered participants during the conference, and will go public immediately after the conference. Poster authors will be asked to submit their posters electronically in August, for inclusion in the abstract collection and later CM document collection.

Keynote speakers' abstracts are available on the ICES ASC website.

Conference events

The welcome reception will be held on Monday 19 September, at the conference venue.

The Poster Session will be held on Tuesday evening, at the conference venue.

The Conference Dinner will be held on Thursday 22 September, venue, style and cost is still to be confirmed.

Additional events still TBC:

Projects marketplace: An event similar to 2015. A chance for the projects that ICES is involved in to showcase their work, and demonstrate ICES involvement. Projects to participate by invitation only. The tentative theme is Baltic research, especially in relation to ICES priority action areas like ecosystem functioning, goods and services or aquaculture.

Networking meeting for communications professionals: Following the successful meeting at last year's ASC, the communications department will organize another networking meeting in Riga for communications professionals from ICES member institutes. The exact agenda and format are still in the development, but the focus will be brainstorming on how to find ways to cooperate and share ICES related news with member institutes – and vice versa.

ECS events: We want to make sure that all ECS know about this programme. The following events will be planned: bus stop, skills workshop, career advice sessions (which has been a big success in the past), a mentor programme.

Lunches are not included in the registration fee, but there are lots of places nearby.

The ASC 2017 will be held in Fort Lauderdale, USA. The ICES secretariat will work together with Kevin Friedland towards a successful conference in September 2017.

17.2 Appointment of ASC 2016 Award Selection Group

The ASC Award Selection Group is responsible for identifying in consultation with the theme session conveners the best poster and best oral presentations and the early career scientist awards.

There will be four parallel sessions, and ideally there should be two people in each session.

Action: Dariusz Fey (Chair), Antonina dos Santos, John Pinnegar, Antanas Kontautas, Begoña Santos, Brian MacKenzie, and (ACOM member to be announced), were appointed for the 2016 ASC Award Selection Group.

Action: SCICOM members are requested to contact their SCICOM alternates and encourage them to volunteer for ASC Award Selection group.

17.3 Appointment of ASC 2017 Theme Session Group

The call for Theme Session proposals for the ASC 2017 will open in late April and proposals will be accepted until 1 September. In line with previous years an online rating tool will be set up to assist SCICOM in preselecting their favourite theme sessions. Based on the ranking of theme sessions, the subgroup will make a pre-selection.

Action: Kevin Friedland (Chair), Henn Ojaveer, Daniel Duplisea, Jörn Schmidt, Mark Dickey-Collas, Olafur Astthorsson, Pierre Petitgas (and a representative from ACOM TBC) were appointed for the pre-selection group for the 2017 theme sessions at the ASC 2016 for final decision by SCICOM.

Strategic theme sessions

SCICOM discussed “strategic theme sessions” and how to ensure that some of the theme sessions will cover key issues as laid out in ISP. SCICOM could be more proactive looking at whether the theme sessions touch on ICES strategic issues. The strategic arctic theme session planned for this year’s ASC was highlighted as a nice example of good cooperation with strategic cooperating partners. It would be good to decide on some overall topics that we would like to allocate room for in 2017.

Call for sessions

Action: In addition to the call for theme session proposals sent to the ICES community, the Secretariat will send an internal call for open sessions to SCICOM, ACOM and Council. This will provide an earlier preview of next year’s programme. The internal call for sessions should include an option for strategic sessions. The pre-selection of the ASC programme will be carried out by the ASC Theme Session Group for final approval by SCICOM in line with previous years.

17.4 SCICOM and PUBCOM meetings

SCICOM agreed to the usual meeting schedule for SCICOM and PUBCOM meetings.

Saturday 17 September	09:00–18:00	Publication/Communications Group
Sunday 18 September	09:00–18:00	Science Committee (SCICOM)
Saturday 24 September	09:00–18:00	Science Committee (SCICOM)

SCICOM members were asked to make travel arrangements accordingly.

17.5 SCICOM Plenary Session

There was no decision on the theme of the SCICOM Plenary session.

17.6 SCICOM Open Sessions

SCICOM received two firm proposals for open sessions:

- How to get your message through? (from ICES Communications)
- Delivering science for the management of the Baltic Sea (Open forum with DGENV, DGR&I, HELCOM and BONUS)

The following proposals were suggested intersessionally, but firm proposals/short descriptions still pending for the Monday morning/Wednesday afternoon timeslots:

- Plastics (Henn Ojaver)
- EPI on drivers and interactions (Henn Ojaveer)
- Survey overviews (Nils Olav Handegard)
- The transfer of science into advice – linked to benchmark process. How to make the best use of our experts. (Jörn Schmidt/Eskild)
- SSGEPD (tentative)

Lunchbreak meetings

- SICCME has planned a spin-off workshop in connection with ASC; and therefore did not see a need for an open session for SICCME; a lunchtime meeting will be planned instead.
- SIHD will host a theme session at the ASC and thus will plan for a lunchtime session instead of an open session.
- ASC feedback on questionnaire session

17.7 SCICOM/ACOM business meetings

Rescheduling the joint ACOM Leadership/SCICOM Business group from Saturday 17 September (PM) for later in the week might enable savings on the travel budget. The decision of changing the timing was postponed for decision by the joint ACOM Leadership/SCICOM Business group.

18 Awards Committee

Pierre Petitgas, Chair of the ICES Awards Committee gave a brief update, explaining that the description of the Outstanding Achievement Award has been revisited to put more focus on science achievements. Nominations for both awards (Outstanding Achievement 2016 and Prix d'Excellence 2017) are open. Nominations can be submitted online. The deadline for nominations is 1 May 2016.

The Outstanding Achievement Award will be presented at the Annual Science Conference (ASC) in Riga, Latvia in September.

Action: SCICOM members are encouraged to solicit nominations for the Outstanding Achievement Award.

19 Any other business

ICES Meetings 2015 – preliminary statistics

ICES General Secretary presented some preliminary statistics of ICES Meetings 2015. The main aim of these statistics is to show the ICES member countries how they are providing resources.

We have experts participating from 54 countries and 568 institutes, 28000 days of work executed by > 2500 experts. The number of experts are displayed per country.

The Expert Days per country divided by ACOM and SCICOM gives an indication that some countries are putting less effort into the science activities, as compared to advisory activities.

SCICOM members welcomed the statistics, which send a strong signal that a relatively small amount of people are contributing to a lot of good science. SCICOM also noted that the science and advice sides are quite well balanced.

Evaluation criteria for the uptake of science in assessment and advice

Brian MacKenzie gave a presentation to SCICOM Evaluation criteria for the uptake of science in assessment and advice. Brian MacKenzie and Pierre Petitgas had worked since the last SCICOM meeting on one of the BSG ToRs and asked for feedback from SCICOM and BSG before ASC 2016:

ToR g.2) Develop evaluation criteria for the uptake of science in assessment and advice (ToR a.3)

Three candidates for uptake of science in assessment and advice were presented: 1) knowledge about the biological process; 2) ongoing data collection/data stream to support inclusion of the response in future assessments or forecasts; and 3) evidence that the forcing and response makes an impact on the advice.

There could be more criteria. The next step will be to start a consultation process leading up to a decision and criteria to be endorsed at ASC 2016.

Action: SCICOM members were encouraged to send their feedback to Brian MacKenzie via email.

SCICOM members welcomed the good initiative and gave some preliminary comments:

- You are explaining some of the variants, but at the same time adding new ones. An overall reduction in variants might be desirable. (Reid)
- I would also like to see the opposite: What is the fisheries effects on the ecosystems? For instance, what is the contribution of the fisheries on over-fertilisation? If going for an ecosystem approach, it should be in both directions. It would be useful to establish a relationship with the Working Group on Ecosystem Effects of Fishing Activities (WGECO) in this regard. (Svensson)

Concerned with this approach is that it is not including environment for environment's sake. You should bring in an MSC (Management Strategy Evaluation) approach. Improved management, stock assessment and advice should be the goal. (Dickey-Collas)

A lot of these studies ignore that in the ICES context we already have variable growth and maturity in our stock assessments that account for ecosystem variability and productivity changes. That should be built in. (Dickey-Collas)

SCICOM Chair thanked Brian MacKenzie for the presentation.

World Fisheries Conference

Jörn Smith raised the question of whether SCICOM should be more strategic in pushing theme sessions and the visibility of ICES for this conference. The next WFC will be held in 2019 in Australia.

Action: SCICOM will revisit this question at the SCICOM September meeting.

20 Closure

SCICOM Chair thanked for good support from the secretariat and for good discussions from SCICOM.

Annex 1: List of participants

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Annex 2: Breakout groups on Science leadership and science funding

Subgroup 1 on Science leadership and science funding

A) Science Leadership

Basis for discussion was the handout distributed by the SCICOM chair on Tuesday, 08.03.2016.

There was general agreement in the group that the 5 SSG chairs should be kept. Otherwise the connection to the ICES strategic plan (ISP) and the science implementation plan (SIP) would be lost. Further the expert groups (EGs) would have to adapt to a new system again after just 2 years of operating under the current system.

The budget was not fully discussed, as the numbers are still unclear. On the one hand an honorarium would match better with the ACOM system, on the other hand travel budget for the SSG chairs is as important or even more important. It was shortly discussed, if the name should change from SSG chairs to vice-chairs to better match the ACOM side and also to 'lift' the standing of SSG chairs. However, as it does not match the current ISP and SIP, it was felt to be potentially detrimental for communication with EGs.

B) Science Funding

- All listed Science activities were considered necessary. Only the science fund was discussed based on the special request to do so.
- Most activities are, however, ICES activities and it is not clear why they are attributed to and should be financed only by SCICOM and not also by ACOM. ACOM should share the funding; this particularly because now 3/5 of the science fund budget will be spent on demonstration advice.
- Science fund: It was explained that the 2016 call will have a budget of 200000 DKK (down from the 500000 originally available for the 2014 and 2015 calls).
- It is not possible and highly unfair to judge the success of a programme such as this one after only 2 calls with reports only available for the projects funded in the first call.
- An evaluation should be done to learn lessons and do better for the next call as to maximally match the science fund objectives.
- It is important to include the view of externals: how is the Science Fund perceived from the outside world? E.g. was it perceived to be funding for ICES scientists?
- The group had the feeling that the outcome was quite good in terms of increasing the visibility (ICES is acknowledged in papers, Early Career Scientists mention that they got funding from ICES also in their Peer Group)
- Expectations seem not be the same between Council and SCICOM and maybe too high?
- Pre-empting a failure and thus cutting of the fund before SCICOM had time for an evaluation seems counter-productive and can clearly become a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- If you have a Science Committee to deal with Science issues, then let it deal with them.

Subgroup 1 on Science leadership and science funding

A) Science Leadership

- SCICOM structure and funding: although not absolutely unanimously, the group 2 favours not to add additional vice-chair(s) layer, but rather keep the currently existing five SSG's. Adding the data-related SSG should be considered. The data-related SSG can be also potentially linked to SSGIEOM. The group suggested prioritizing to allocate funds to cover operational costs of SSG chairs, essentially to attend meetings. However, in case needed, honorarium can be paid to SSG chairs.
- Justification on the suggestion above: SCICOM functions efficiently and its structure matches to that of the Science Plan. Also, continuity of the existing structure will signal stability, which was considered very positive.
- Secretariat support: the suggestion on SCICOM structure and funding above is based on the assumption that the secretariat support will be retained at the current level.

B) Science Funding

The following thoughts were offered:

- SF has been operated very openly and functions as a good outreach activity for ICES.
- The effect of little money has been relatively good, incl. Involving academia and universities.
- Because of the low overall budget, the SF projects money is limited. Therefore, the system might not be sustainable in the current form, and changing the current system might be beneficial
- Before implementing any changes, it might be wise to keep SF in the same format for a few additional years.
- Strategic Initiatives (SI's) should be given priority and be allocated budget to carry on their work.
- Contacts with academia and universities are important for ICES. These should be further developed in future to involve a wide array of specialists to assist ICES to address priority areas (incl. socio-economy, aquaculture and Arctic).

Technical comments:

- Scientific cooperation should be under SIF.
- ECS should be under the core budget.

Annex 3: EG Recommendations addressed to SCICOM

ID	Year	EG	Recommendation	Recipient	Recommendation category
279	2015	WGEEL	In 2016, a workshop (workshop on eel assessment rationalisation and standardisation, WKEARS) is convened to review the substock-scale stock assessment approaches to identify where aspects could be merged, combined, or redundancies reduced in order to simplify the assessment approach across the distribution of the eel, to facilitate both inter-calibration and summing of sub-scale stock indicators to a robust whole-stock assessment.	ACOM;#14;#SCICOM;#143	new EG1
280	2015	WGEEL	In 2016, a workshop is convened on ocean climate processes relevant to eel (WKOCRE). This workshop, in cooperation with the Working Group on Ocean Hydrography (WGOH) would compile time-series of indices that might relate to the migratory success of spawners and larvae in the ocean, and report on any significant explanatory relationships that could be used to reconstruct recruitment or spawning stock time-series.	SCICOM;#143;#WGOH;#62	new EG1
281	2015	WGEEL	In 2017, a new working group (WGESR) is established to analyse the stock–recruitment relation for the European eel, taking into account the potential effects of spawner quality and ocean climate indices, and to define reference points. A new WG is proposed because this will be a multiyear program.	ACOM;#14;#SCICOM;#143	new EG1
284	2015	WGEEL	A workshop is convened to update knowledge of the net benefit of stocking to the recovery of the eel stock, and to make proposals for research to fill any crucial knowledge gaps that prevent a definitive advice on stocking as a stock conservation measure (WKSTOCKEEL). The priority is Low because at this time it is not clear what new evidence is available to progress this topic. Should new information arise, priority will increase.	SCICOM;#143	new EG1

287	2015	WGEEL	An international program of research be commenced to standardize and cross calibrate the assessment methods used to estimate silver eel escapement throughout the distribution of the European eel.	SCICOM;#143	Other
288	2015	WGEEL	An international program of research be commenced to address assessment of eel production from open waters throughout the distribution, including testing common methods and cross-calibrating different methods.	SCICOM;#143	Other
289	2015	WGEEL	Eel recruitment time-series identified by ICES as contributing to the annual international stock assessment process are secured and time-series for eel recruitment in non-EU countries (e.g. Norway, Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco) are established as a matter of urgency.	ACOM;#14;#SCICOM;#143;#GFCM;#226	New or extended survey

Annex 4: Actions and decisions

ITEM NO.	ACTIONS AND DECISIONS	RESPONSIBLE
6.2.1	<p><i>Review of membership rules (Operational Groups)</i></p> <p>Adjust the membership for DIG and PUBCOM so that national nomination of members will be possible for both groups; regular (3-year) reviews by SCICOM will ensure adequate expertise represented in the groups. DIG and PUBCOM will assist SCICOM in this exercise.</p> <p>Decision: Approved. SCICOM noted that this is technically possible within the current system, but is only happening to a limited extent.</p>	Secretariat/DIG/PUBCOM Chair
6.2.1	<p><i>Review of membership rules (Operational Groups)</i></p> <p>A new Operational Group is proposed to absorb the tasks of the SCICOM subgroup for the ASC award selection: the ASC Awards Selection Group (ASG). Members are appointed by SCICOM for a given year.</p> <p>Decision: Approved.</p>	Secretariat
6.2.2	<p><i>Strengthening the profile of ICES CRRs</i></p> <p>A SCICOM subgroup consisting of Jan Jaap Poos, Niall O'Maoileidigh and Dave Reid had drafted a strategy document for CRRs as requested by PUBCOM. The document was brought to SCICOM for approval via the SCICOM Forum.</p> <p>Action: The PUBCOM Chair will now return the strategy document to PUBCOM for consideration for the future development of the CRRs. SCICOM is looking forward to receiving the feedback from PUBCOM on the strategy document.</p>	PUBCOM Chair
7.1	<p><i>Proposals for demonstration advice</i></p> <p>Subgroup: Evaluation of demonstration advice</p> <p>Action: A subgroup consisting of the five SSG Chairs (Dave Reid, Nils Olav Handegard, Jörn Schmidt, Graham Pierce, and Henn Ojaveer), Daniel Duplisea, Jan Jaap Poos, HoS, ACOM Chair, and SCICOM Chair was established and tasked to evaluate the four proposals for demonstration advice taking into consideration the five review criteria outlined by the ACOM Chair. Report deadline: 15 May 2016.</p>	
8.6	<p><i>Mapping of science cooperation</i></p> <p>Mapping Subgroup</p> <p>Action: A subgroup was established to continue the mapping of ICES in the context of the surrounding world with external partners and to report to the SCICOM September meeting. The group should identify entities that we are not cooperating with, and consider whether it would be relevant to engage in cooperation or not, and what level of cooperation would be relevant. The mapping exercise should result in a pool of 're-search priorities' showing where there are commonalities with ICES. Some players may influence ICES and should be mapped in relation to ICES and whether there are opportunities for synergies, etc. The subgroup was asked to include the periodic table presented at the ASC 2013 in Reykjavik by Luis Valdes.</p> <p>Membership: Mats Svensson and Pierre Petitgas (co-Chairs), Jörn Schmidt, John Pin-negar, Olafur, Antanas Kontautas, and Begoña Santos.</p>	

8.7	<i>Other (science cooperation)</i> International Year of the Salmon Action/decision: SCICOM supported the initiative and it was suggested that IYS could be an exploratory model/case study for similar initiatives. A short statement/response to NPAFC (three bullets) will be drafted by Niall Ó Maoiléidigh on behalf of SCICOM. It should be made clear how ICES can best provide input, we hope to be able to provide ICES expertise into the process.	
9	<i>Draft resolution for symposium co-sponsorship</i> ESSAS Symposium on “Moving in, out and across the Subarctic and Arctic - shifting boundaries of water, ice, flora, fauna, people and institutions” to be held during 12–16 June 2017 at Tromsø, Norway Decision/Action: ESSAS Symposium. The draft resolution was approved by SCICOM, including financial support for early career scientists and IJMS. Olafur Astthorsson volunteered to be the ICES representative on the Scientific Steering Committee. onsored symposia	
10.2	<i>Council Strategic Initiative on Maritime Transatlantic Cooperation (CSIMTC)</i> Action: For the ASC 2017 to be held in Florida SCICOM is requested to consider themes addressing the transatlantic cooperation.	
11	<i>Council SCICOM Working Group on ICES Science (CSWGIS)</i> Action: Evaluation process for science activities. A subgroup consisting of Steven Degraer, Audrey Geffen, Begoña Santos, Graham Pierce, Jan Jaap Poos, HoS and Brian MacKenzie, was established and tasked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up an evaluation process for the 2009–2015 science funding, including Science Fund and other SCICOM activities, • propose sources, objectives and process for funding future SCICOM activities in support of the SCICOM leadership, • and decide on the use of the available funds granted by Council for 2016 Deadline: 15 April 2016	
11	Decision/Action: SCICOM agreed to keep the current SSG structure and consequently agreed to announce the vacancies/open the calls for new SSG Chairs for SSGEPD, SSGIEA, and SSGIEOM, as the current chairs have completed their terms (3 + 1) and will be rotating by the end of 2016. The elections will be scheduled for the SCICOM September meeting.	Secretariat
11	Action: It was agreed to revisit the role and tasks of the SSG Chairs at the SCICOM September meeting. Action: SCICOM Chair asked SSG Chairs to consider strategies for the future for the five steering groups. It is timely to consider the legacy and what we would like to bring forward to the successors.	SCICOM Chair/SSG Chairs
11	Action: SCICOM was asked to consider simplifying the abbreviation for SSGIEOM.	SCICOM Chair/SSG Chairs
13.1	<i>SSGEPD</i> Action: SSGEPD Chair will get back WGEVO and ask the two old Chairs to resign and the new Chair to take the lead of the group.	SSGEPD Chair
13.2	<i>SSGEPI</i> ASC 2016 Open Session on Plastics SCICOM discussed whether the marine litter aspect has a home	SSGEPI Chair

	<p>in ICES? Finding a niche for ICES would be important and it might be relevant to set up a study group on marine litter and acidification. There may also be interest from the PICES side. An idea for an ICES WG was outlined a couple of years ago, and this could be the starting process for a new group.</p> <p>It was suggested to involve JPI Oceans in relation to micro-plastics; they could be invited to ASC.</p> <p>Action: SSGEPI Chair will raise this question with Thomas Maes.</p>	
13.2	<p><i>SSGEPI</i></p> <p>Potential topic for open session at ASC 2016 under EPI</p> <p>SSGEPI Chair is considering establishing an open session for ASC 2016 on Impacts of interacting drivers and arranging a workshop to summarise the state-of-the-art in the knowledge of the impacts of interactions (cumulative/synergistic/additive/multiplicative effects etc.) of different drivers (at least the most important ones) on marine ecosystems is currently at the idea-phase.</p> <p>Action: SCICOM members were invited to suggest conveners for the open sessions to SSGEPI Chair.</p>	
13.3	<p><i>SSGIEA</i></p> <p>Working Group on the Northwest Atlantic Regional Sea (WGNARS) are up for renewal of their MA ToRs, and SSGIEA is suggesting to join forces with NAFO WGESA to work on synergies and extend the coverage on e.g. benthic systems.</p> <p>Decision: SCICOM agreed to go ahead with a joint NAFO/ICES group.</p>	SSGIEA Chair
13.4	<p><i>SSGIEOM</i></p> <p>Action: The issue of survey overviews should be further discussed and moved forward in the SCICOM/ACOM leadership group with a view to establishing an interim group to look into survey overviews.</p>	SSGIEOM Chair/SCICOM Chair
15	<p><i>Draft resolutions and EG Recommendations addressed to SCICOM</i></p> <p>Decision: SCICOM formally approved the Category 1 resolution.</p>	Secretariat to follow up
15	<p>Action: It was suggested to update the template for EG Self-Evaluations to include a section for one or two highlights of their results. The secretariat can then collect the highlights and this will also help the Communications team. Action: The Secretariat will update the template for self-evaluation accordingly, and inform groups of the change.</p> <p>SCICOM.</p>	Secretariat to follow up
15	<p>Decision: All draft resolutions (except for WGINOR, postponed for SCICOM Forum) were approved by</p>	Secretariat and SSG Chairs to follow up
15	<p>Action: The Secretariat and SSG Chairs will inform the EG Chairs of WGEVO, WGSAM, WGINOR, WGMARS, and WGNEPS that their self-evaluations were well received by SCICOM and continuation of their groups approved.</p> <p>Category 3</p>	Secretariat and SSG Chairs to follow up
15	<p>Action: ICES approved co-sponsorship of the ESSAS Symposium. Olafur Astthorsson volunteered to be the ICES representative on the Scientific Steering Committee.</p>	Secretariat to follow up
15	<p>Action: Niall O' Maoléidigh will get back to WGEEL and ask for draft resolutions for the proposed working groups/workshops and additional information on what is expected from ICES in relation to the recommendations on international research programmes and eel recruitment time-series.</p>	Niall O' Maoléidigh
16.3	<p><i>SISAM</i></p> <p>Action: SCICOM members were requested to nominate</p>	SCICOM members

	candidates for a new SISAM Co-Chair.	
17	<p><i>Update from SRGASC</i></p> <p>Decision: There was agreement in SCICOM that annual user surveys would be valuable, in particular to track the opinions on a new format of the ASC. Since the survey on the review of ICES science also relates to ASC, it was suggested to merge the two surveys.</p> <p>Action: The following items were highlighted by SRGASC Chair, which would need to be revisited by SCICOM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for conveners (call for theme session proposals and running the sessions) • Early career scientist programme • Establish decision process science sessions defined strategically by SCICOM • Establish decision process for lunch break meetings for inclusion on the programme. <p>Action: SCICOM will revisit the number of theme session at the SCICOM September meeting, including duration of theme sessions.</p>	Pierre Petitgas, Secretariat, SCICOM Chair
18.2	<p>Appointment of ASC 2016 Award Selection Group</p> <p>Action: Dariusz Fey (Chair), Antonina dos Santos, John Pinnegar, Antanas Kontautas, Begoña Santos, Brian MacKenzie, and (ACOM member to be announced), were appointed for the 2016 ASC Award Selection Group.</p> <p>Action: SCICOM members are requested to contact their SCICOM alternates and en-courage them to volunteer for ASC Award Selection group.</p>	Dariusz Fey SCICOM Members
18.3	<p>Appointment of ASC 2017 Theme Session Group</p> <p>The call for Theme Session proposals for the ASC 2017 will open in late April and proposals will be accepted until 1 September. In line with previous years an online rating tool will be set up to assist SCICOM in preselecting their favourite theme sessions. Based on the ranking of theme sessions, the subgroup will make a pre-selection.</p> <p>Action: Kevin Friedland (Chair), Henn Ojaveer, Daniel Duplisea, Jörn Schmidt, Mark Dickey-Collas, Olafur Astthorsson , Pierre Petitgas (and a representative from ACOM TBC) were appointed for the pre-selection group for the 2017 theme sessions at the ASC 2016 for final decision by SCICOM.</p>	Kevin Friedland
18.3	<p>Call for sessions</p> <p>Action: In addition to the call for theme session proposals sent to the ICES community, the Secretariat will send an internal call for open sessions to SCICOM, ACOM and Council. This will provide an earlier preview of next year's programme. The internal call for sessions should include an option for strategic sessions. The pre-selection of the ASC programme will be carried out by the ASC Theme Session Group for final approval by SCICOM in line with previous years.</p>	Secretariat, SCICOM Chair
19	<p>Action: SCICOM members are encouraged to solicit nominations for the Outstanding Achievement Award.</p>	SCICOM members
20	<p><i>AOB</i></p> <p>Evaluation criteria for the uptake of science in assessment and advice</p> <p>Brian MacKenzie gave a presentation to SCICOM Evaluation criteria for the uptake of science in assessment and advice. Brian MacKenzie and Pierre Petitgas had worked since the last SCICOM meeting on one of the BSG ToRs and asked for feedback</p>	SCICOM Members/Brian MacKenzie/Pierre Petitgas

from SCICOM and BSG before ASC 2016:

Action: SCICOM members were encouraged to send their feedback to Brian MacKenzie via email.
