

Open session

Do you know more about marine climate change issues than the wider European public?

Conveners: John Pinnegar and Myron Peck

This highly interactive session aimed to establish whether ICES scientists were necessarily better informed, or more concerned about marine climate change issues in comparison with the wider European populace. In order to achieve this, the conveners made use of an innovative voting software called 'mentimeter', whereby participants voted in 'real-time' on their smartphones, tablets and laptop computers – and results were relayed immediately to the screen. Outputs were compared with results from a similar Europe-wide polling exercise of 10,000 citizens, carried out in 2011 (see <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fmars.2017.00206/full>), that included an identical set of questions. In this open session, the ICES/PICES Strategic Initiative on Climate Change Impacts on Marine Ecosystems (SICCME) attempted to assess levels of consensus, understanding and engagement with climate change issues among the ICES community, but also to seek opinions on what elements are most important to include in the forthcoming ICES Strategic Plan? What climate change research topics should be prioritized in future collaborative bids or ICES workshops? During this session SICCME reported back on insights from the Fourth International Symposium on the Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans (June 4-8 2018, Washington DC). The peak number of voters reached 50 on certain questions (out of 70+ participants in the room), and participants showed themselves to be relatively well informed (in test questions) about marine climate change issues. However ICES participants 'over-emphasised' the importance/urgency of certain issues, such as ocean acidification (see figure), in comparison with members of the public.

Which three things, if any, come to mind when you think about the impacts of climate change on the coastline or the sea?

Mentimeter



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Figure 1. 'Word cloud' generated in real-time, illustrating the main topics that participants in the 'open session' thought about, when considering climate change in the marine environment.