

ICES WGCHAIRS REPORT 2018

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Report from the Annual Meeting of Expert Group Chairs (WGCHAIRS)

23–25 January 2018

ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen, Denmark



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1 Opening and Welcome

Eskild Kirkegaard, ACOM Chair and Simon Jennings, SCICOM Chair, gave a warm welcome to all participants in the WGCHAIRS meeting. They were pleased to see the high number of participants from all parts of ICES. A warm welcome was also extended to Expert Group Chairs joining via WebEx.

In previous years WGCHAIRS was mainly a meeting point for Expert Group Chairs involved in the advisory work of ICES, but this year the meeting has been expanded to also include Chairs from Expert Groups less involved in ICES advisory work with a view to try to enhance the cooperation between science and advice. The meeting Chairs commented on the important role of Expert Group Chairs who (together with group members) should be seen as the engine of ICES.

The purposes of the WGCHAIRS meeting were to:

- get feedback on ongoing work and to understand how we can best support our Chairs;
- help us to provide effective guidance for Chairs and other contributors to the network;
- bring people from science and advice together to see how we can increase scope, scale and impact of our work;
- help us plan future science priorities and advisory products.

The Chairs also commented that an important aspect of this meeting was for the Expert Group Chairs to get to know each other, exchange experiences and develop a sense of community. To this end, the Chairs announced that ICES was hosting an icebreaker on the first evening and a standing buffet dinner on the second evening of the meeting.

The ICES President, Nils Hammer, welcomed the WGCHAIRS participants and was also very pleased to see the good attendance, setting a record for how many people the Atlantic Room can accommodate. The President, with reference to the ICES Vision “To be a world leading scientific organization concerning marine ecosystems and to provide the knowledge to secure the sustainable use of the seas” emphasized that ICES should strive to be the best.

A Tour de Table was conducted. The list of participants is available in Annex 1.

The agenda and structure of the meeting was introduced (see Annex 2).

2 Supporting Expert Group Chairs in ICES

The aim of Session 1 was to better understand the role of Chairs, how ICES can support Chairs and to make the role more rewarding. During Session 1 the meeting broke into subgroups which addressed four topics designed to support the chairs:

- Roles of Chairs and Co-Chairs
- Communication with Expert Groups
- Highlighting and disseminating Expert Group outputs
- Mentoring Chairs

The subgroups were asked to provide feedback, which could be used to guide the implementation of changes that would provide more effective support for Expert Group Chairs.

3 ICES Chairs Guidance

Simon Jennings, SCICOM Chair, informed the meeting that the existing guidelines for ICES Groups has been updated and broadened. The draft document made available to WGCHAIRS has taken on-board comments from ACOM Vice-Chairs and the Steering Group Chairs, and now Expert Group Chairs are asked to provide comments and feedback on how we can improve the guidance with a deadline of 26 January. The aim is to send out a first version of the new ICES Chairs' guidelines as soon as possible after 1 February, and a second version will be made available in the autumn.

He commented that the revised guidelines also give some insight into the work of SCICOM and ACOM Members, and the role of the Steering Groups and Operational Groups in ICES. He expressed the wish that the guidelines would be useful and put Expert Group work into an ICES-wide context.

The SCICOM Chair gave a general introduction on the contents of the updated guidelines. ICES is also producing a PowerPoint presentation which will be made available as an ICES introduction for new Chairs.

Chairs were requested to submit their feedback and comments to this consultation using the online questionnaire on the WGCHAIRS SharePoint site with a deadline of 26 January. All comments received would be reviewed alongside the outputs from Session 1 at this meeting, and a new version of the guidelines would be made available to Expert Group Chairs in early February 2018.

The SCICOM Chair commented that the section of the guidelines dealing with the Code of Conduct was under review by the Council Working Group known as CWG-CODE. For this reason there would be little value providing comments on this section until CWGCODE had completed its review and the Council had signed off any new Code of Conduct.

4 Developing ICES Viewpoints

The SCICOM Chair presented the criteria and process for selecting ICES Viewpoints. In areas where ICES is doing strong science, he remarked that we are seeking to show capability by developing advice on our own initiative rather than waiting for requests from clients. ICES Viewpoints are intended to facilitate the uptake of science into advice and to provide an opportunity for Expert Group Chairs to show that their science matters and has impact. The development of viewpoints is seen as a strategic investment by ICES.

A call for viewpoints was distributed last year to Expert Group Chairs via the ICES Steering Groups and Strategic Initiatives. Three topics were selected for coming year and ICES is currently working on:

- Future fish production in Arctic waters
- Management of biofouling as an invasion vector
- Consequences of large fish stocks

Viewpoints will be developed following the standard procedures for the development of advice and will be subject to the same quality control, but they will be dubbed 'ICES viewpoints' because they are not requested advice.

All Chairs were encouraged to submit further candidate topics for viewpoints to the ACOM and SCICOM Chairs for consideration with a deadline of 16 February.

Questions:

What is the process if/when a viewpoint becomes formal advice? Will there be adequate resources and sufficient geographical coverage to develop the viewpoint and will there be expectations for formal data calls?

- *The ACOM Chair illustrated his response with the example of the Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews which were not officially requested. It was ACOM (with support from SCICOM) that decided to issue the first ones. Now they have been requested officially and are seen as really important.*
- *There is support in ICES for the viewpoints, as they are seen as a strategic investment.*
- *Expectations on data calls. This would be discussed on a case-by-case basis and subject to review. The potential benefits to ICES should be considered.*

5 Science highlights

Simon Jennings, SCICOM Chair, explained that SCICOM has focused strongly on identifying science highlights with the support of the ICES communications team. He explained that science highlights are seen as very important to raise the profile of ICES science. As the primary generators of science in the ICES system, Expert Groups, through their Chairs, are requested to feed highlights into the system.

The SCICOM Chair explained in detail what science highlights are and the types of topics that can be developed. He noted that Annex 7 of the Guidelines for ICES Groups provided more information on science highlights.

Chairs were encouraged to send their highlights to Terhi Minkkinen in Communications (communications@ices.dk), and Communications will discuss plans for further development and dissemination. Ideally, Chairs will also copy their texts to the Steering Group Chairs, ACOM and SCICOM Chairs for information.

The SCICOM Chair informed the meeting about a new Operational Group, the Science Impact and Publication Group (SIPG). SCICOM is keen to track the impact of ICES activities and this will be one role of the SIPG. Information on impact is seen as increasingly important for our member countries. The ACOM Chair emphasised that also the work of the classic stock assessment Expert Groups would be relevant for the science highlights.

The SCICOM Chair reported that a database has been established in the ICES Publications Department. This is intended to list all outputs from Expert Groups (books, peer reviewed publications) and to track their impact (e.g. in terms of citations). Chairs are encouraged to inform Celine Byrne (Celine.Byrne@ices.dk) of any publications that are catalysed by Expert Groups that are not in the database and ideally to send her a pdf copy of the publication. Further, when publications are catalysed by Expert Groups, Chairs are also encouraged to acknowledge ICES in a formal sense. Proposed approaches for acknowledging ICES are described in the draft Guidelines for ICES Groups.

Questions:

Who are we trying to target with the science highlights?

From a strategic point of view the science highlights are for the benefit of the wider marine science community and potential clients, but also to be enjoyed as news and information-sharing in the ICES network.

6 Group activities: Session 1

In Session 1, four groups of 5–10 Expert Group Chairs were asked to address the four questions below. Each Breakout Group appointed a rapporteur to provide a short feedback to plenary and was invited to provide up to half a page of written comments on specific actions to be considered following WGCHAIRS.

Roles of Chairs and Co-Chairs

What are the roles of Expert Group Chairs and how can Chairs be effectively supported to fulfil these roles?

Communication with Expert Groups

How can Expert Groups communicate more effectively with other parts of the ICES network (with a focus on other Expert Groups), and how and when would Expert Group Chairs like to receive feedback from other parts of the ICES network and on which topics

Highlighting and disseminating Expert Group outputs

In which ways can Expert Groups better highlight and communicate their work and measure the impact it is having on science and advice?

Mentoring Chairs

What approaches for Expert Group participation and management will effectively support and mentor future Chairs?

7 Reporting back from session 1

Breakout group reports from session 1

A summary of feedback from breakout groups under Session 1 and during plenary discussions is provided in Annex 3.

8 Group activities: Session 2

In Session 2, Expert Group Chairs were invited to join a group addressing one of the topics listed below. Short introductory/background documents were provided beforehand.

Topic A. Next generation of Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews (lead Mette Skern-Mauritzen)

To identify science products that could contribute to future developments of the fisheries and ecosystem overviews, to define the work needed to progress these products and to propose actions for progressing the work.

Topic B. Science and advisory opportunities for ICES (lead Simon Jennings)

To identify emerging national and international drivers for science and advice and to identify and report on opportunities for ICES to address them, including through the development of viewpoints.

Topic C. Fisheries advice (lead Eskild Kirkegaard)

To discuss and report on implications of recent developments in requests for fisheries advice and developments in assessments methods (e.g. MSY advice for Category 3 and 4 stocks, mixed fisheries considerations, ranges advice, quality assurance, assessment models,) on ICES science and advice and operation of Expert Groups.

Topic D. Integrating ocean data (lead Sophie Pitois and Silvana Birchenough)

To identify and integrate available data sets (from oceanographic data sources) with support from relevant Expert Groups, to develop robust outputs that could support ICES science and advice.

Topic E. How can data collection keep up with developing data needs (lead Sven Kupschus)

An interactive session to identify where there are opportunities for improving communication (benchmarks, ecosystem advice, science highlights, SISPs etc.) that would lead to more coherent responses to current and future advisory requests. The session is targeted towards Chairs in the Ecosystem Observation Steering Group, but others are welcome.

Open Topics (session 2 only)

For Chairs preferring to undertake other discussions and planning (for example with Steering Group Chairs) not covered by the topics above. No reporting back to plenary was expected after these discussions, although participants were invited to report any actions for the network so that these could be included in the minutes.

After the Wednesday lunch break, one hour was set aside on the agenda to provide an opportunity for side-meetings. The following side meetings took place during the extended lunch break:

- Meeting of IEASG Expert Group Chairs (North Sea Room)
- Demonstration of the Transparent Assessment Framework (TAF). TAF is a system and workflow for handling all the stock assessments conducted by ICES. (Baltic Room)

9 Group activities: Session 3

In Session 3, Expert Group Chairs were invited to join a new group addressing one of the topics A-E listed under agenda item 8. Chair should join groups addressing different topics in Sessions 2 and 3.

10 Reporting back from Sessions 2 and 3, Topics A, B, C, D and E

A summary of feedback from breakout groups under Sessions 2 and 3 and plenary discussions are provided in Annex 4.

11 Discussion of outcomes

The ACOM Chair reconvened the meeting and introduced the last session of the WGCHAIRS meeting, which consisted of an evaluation of the meeting to guide the development of future WGCHAIRS meetings and sought to gather feedback from participants on the action items.

The SCICOM Chair presented a summary of commitments and actions that the SCICOM and ACOM Chairs, working in close cooperation with the Secretariat, intend to fulfil. These commitments and actions were responses to issues that had been raised by Expert Group Chairs in both the plenary and breakout Session 1.

Table. Summary of actions from WG Chairs Session 1.

ROLES OF CHAIRS AND CO-CHAIRS

Recruiting new members to groups: We will explore additional ways to flag new groups to ICES delegates and the ICES community

Member induction: We will prepare a presentation which can be used by Chairs to help induct new members

Inactive members: We will look at options to better track such people and to help Expert Groups manage them

COMMUNICATION WITH EXPERT GROUPS

Accessible information on all Expert Groups: We will prepare a pdf / excel file with links providing full names and contact details for all Expert Groups. We will investigate web options in longer-term and also invite WGMARS to conduct an analysis describing relationships between Expert Groups based on their Terms of Reference.

Keyword search of resolutions: We will seek to implement as part of the planned development of the resolutions database

Recommendations: We will further review the current process, give better guidance and promote communication involving Expert Groups and Steering Group Chairs.

HIGHLIGHTING AND DISSEMINATING EXPERT GROUP OUTPUTS

Authorship of Expert Group reports: This will be raised at Bureau in mid-February 2018 for further consideration. We will convey the message from WGCHAIRS that authorship would increase incentives for Expert Group attendance and taking the role of Expert Group Chair and improve access to and promotion of reports within the scientific community.

Highlights from Expert Group reports: We will add guidance and help facilitate the development of highlights, but we also encourage Expert Groups to highlight their work directly with ICES Communications

MENTORING CHAIRS

Online introductory session for new Expert Group Chairs: We will set up an introductory sessions for new Expert Group Chairs, building on the presentation for Expert Group Chairs and revised “Guidelines”

Guidelines for ICES Groups: We will assimilate all feedback received and release revised Guidelines as soon as possible after 1 February 2018. The “Guidelines” will remain as a living document and another update is likely to be released in autumn 2018.

The ACOM Chair, in relation to the Guidelines for ICES Groups, mentioned that a Council group is working on an update of Section 3 on the Code of Conduct for ICES Groups, which will also be relevant for Expert Group Chairs.

SCICOM Chair thanked attendees for all the good input received in response to the draft document on Science Priorities, both via the online questionnaire and during Sessions 2 and 3 Topic B “Science and advisory opportunities for ICES.”

Table. Summary of actions from Sessions 2 and 3

Topic A” Next generation of Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews”
To establish an Expert Group (perhaps a workshop) on “presentation of overviews” tasked to look into the presentation of the next generation of ecosystem and fisheries overviews. This will be revisited by ACOM and SCICOM in consultation with the Secretariat.
Topic B on “Science and advisory opportunities for ICES”
SCICOM Chair will review all comments received on the draft Science Priorities and incorporate them to the extent possible in the February 2018 revision of the document for further review by SCICOM.
Topic E “How can data collection keep up with developing data needs”
A proposed action plan will be developed by the rapporteurs from session E (Leonie O’Dowd and Jens Rasmussen) and shared with the ICES secretariat.
Ask PGDATA if they are able to provide a contact person that can attend different assessment WGs to assess data quality

Additional actions and comments on proposed actions

Overview of Expert Groups easily accessible

In relation to the need to improve the way relationships between Expert Groups are displayed on the web and recognising the previous analysis of interconnectedness by WGMARS, it was proposed that it would be helpful to the ICES network to show similarities between topics covered by Expert Groups (synergies). Christine Rockmann, co-Chair of WGMARS, confirmed that she would take this proposal back to WGMARS. Although the latest analysis by WGMARS was based on participation, it could also be expanded to be based on keywords lined to the Terms of Reference. The ACOM Chair emphasised that a database solution would be preferable to spreadsheets, which would require frequent updating.

Early career scientists

On the topic of recruiting new members for ICES Expert Groups, Silvana Birchenough, EPDSG Chair, encouraged more strategic thinking on how to attract more early career scientists (ECS) to ICES groups.

The question of whether ICES has a chance to provide some grants for ECS to promote their participation was raised. The ICES President responded that Council and Bureau are very much aware that there is a need to attract more ECS and that this is at the top their priority list. ICES makes funds available for ECS to join the Annual Science Conference, and via the ICES Recognition Programme four ECS award winners are each year presented with a voucher to attend an ICES meeting (Expert Group meeting, Training Course or Symposia). In light of the current financial situation of ICES, it is unfortunately not possible to provide any additional funding for Expert Group participation.

Attracting scientists from academia

Participants commented that ICES does not have close links with academia, so one of the priorities when discussing strategic developments is how to widen the network to draw in scientists who are not currently involved in ICES. This should be high on the agenda for the next strategic plan and specific actions could be given to ICES member countries.

Evaluation of WGCHAIRS

The meeting Chairs invited the WGCHAIRS participants to provide feedback on the meeting and how they would like to see WGCHAIRS to develop in the future. The following comments were received:

- It was really valuable to be able to talk to a bunch of other chairs, it gave me a lot of guidance on how to sharpen the way we run our own group (Ryan B. Carnegie, WGPDMO Chair)
- It was a valuable step for the Chairs from the SCICOM and ACOM side to meet and gain a real insight into each other's work. A possible change in the format would be to have a fisheries group meeting on the first day and an overlap day in the middle, and then a SCICOM group day. (Colm Lordan, ACOM Vice-Chair)
- Attending WGCHAIRS is a good starting point for new chairs. Would it be an option not to restrict the number of participants? There is a limitation in terms of the meeting facilities.
- It would have been good to see a more active role for Steering Group Chairs and to have Steering Group meetings in connection with WGCHAIRS. A lot of Expert Group Chairs don't really know who the Steering Group Chairs are and what they do. (Alexander Kempf, WGSAM Chair)
- The Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Steering Group had met during the Wednesday lunchbreak and all participants found the meeting extremely valuable. Mette Skern-Mauritzen, IEASG Chair, agreed that it would be nice to set more time aside for Steering Group meetings back to back with WGCHAIRS.
- This meeting focused on broad topics, but we could think of more focussed topics, for example Expert Group chairs could work towards a work plan leading to a concrete product. (Alexander Kempf, WGSAM Chair)
- A speed-dating session between Expert Group Chairs as suggested to form potential links (Mark Payne, WGS2D Chair).
- It would be useful to use this meeting as a venue for giving ultra-short presentations of each Expert Group activity. Maybe this could be done by Steering Group.

- The ICES President complimented the Chairs and participants for a fruitful meeting and highlighted the following issues: 1) the role of oceanographers. He encouraged participants to think how to better involve oceanographers in future. 2) 'inactive participants'. He asked for better feedback to Delegates on these problems and in particular which groups are in need of additional membership.

Suggestion to establish a WGCHAIRS Forum on SharePoint

Participants suggested establishing an Expert Group Chair's Forum **on SharePoint** for knowledge transfer and to keep the momentum developed at this meeting going throughout the year.

Decision/Action: The meeting agreed to set up a joint forum and to evaluate the usefulness at the next WGCHAIRS meeting and decide whether to continue or not.

Concluding remarks from the Chairs

ACOM Chair conveyed a message from the meetings held the previous week between ICES, ICES clients and observers. A review was made of the ICES advice in 2017, and ICES was strongly commended for the high quality and the science basis of the advice. The ACOM Chair wanted to convey this message back to the Expert Group Chairs and thanked the Expert Groups for their high quality of work and dedication. This shows that ICES advice is used, and that we are recognised as the advisory body on fisheries, and now also on environmental issue.

SCICOM Chair thanked the participants for a great meeting. This was his first year in the role as SCICOM Chair and it had been very valuable to meeting with between one third and one half of the Expert Group Chairs present. This is the first time the SCICOM Chair has been in a permanent role here in ICES and the fact that the ACOM and SCICOM Chairs are now in opposite offices across the hallway has been fantastic in building relationships between Science and Advice. SCICOM Chair expressed hope that in the coming years we can start to get more of the science products through into supporting the advice, either through the integrated ecosystem assessments or via the special requests for advice.

2018 Workshops

The meeting was informed about the Workshop on Science2Advice co-chaired by the SCICOM and ACOM Chairs to be held in April. This will be a specialised workshop and we are looking for participants coming with case-studies, to help us understand the most effective ways of translating science into advice.

Jens Rasmussen, DIG Chair, gave a short presentation on WKINVITED. This will be the first hackathon. You do not need to be a coder to attend the workshop; it is about data visualization! Would like to encourage you as chairs to raise awareness in your groups. The workshop will be co-chaired by David Currie and Sjur Ringheim. The meeting is closely linked to the work of the Data and Information Group (DIG).

A big thank you was extended to all Expert Group Chairs for their very important contributions!

Expert Group Chairs were encouraged to draw on their network, the Secretariat and the ACOM and SCICOM Chairs for assistance whenever needed.

12 Next meeting

It was agreed to schedule a WGCHAIRS session in connection with the Annual Science Conference to be held in Hamburg, Germany, on 26 September, most probably this would be a lunch session.

There was agreement that January is a good time for the three-day WGCHAIRS meeting to be held, and all Secretariat meeting rooms would be reserved during the week of 21–25 January (exact dates to be confirmed). All suggestions received at this meeting will be taken into account when planning the format and contents of the next WGCHAIRS meeting.

Close of meeting (13:00)

Annex 1: WGCHAIRS list of participants

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Annex 2: WGCHAIRS meeting agenda

Chairs: Eskild Kirkegaard and Simon Jennings

Tuesday 23 January 2018 14:00 – Thursday 25 January 2018 13:00

Tuesday 23 January

- 1) Opening and Welcome (14:00)
- 2) Supporting Expert Group Chairs in ICES (14.15)
- 3) ICES Chairs Guidance (Doc 04) (14.30)
- 4) *Proposal to review the Chairs Guidance and a call for feedback on how to meet the information needs of new and existing Chairs more effectively.*
- 5) From science and advice, and developing ICES Viewpoints (Doc 05) (15.00)
- 6) *Facilitating uptake of science into advice. What are the opportunities to highlight and use developing science? What are ICES viewpoints and which topics will be considered for future viewpoints?*
- 7) Science highlights (Doc 06) (15.15)
- 8) *Highlighting and communicating the work of Expert Groups, recording and measuring impact*

Break (15:30) (pre-registration for groups in Sessions 2 and 3)

Group activities: Session 1 (Doc 07) (16.00)

In Session 1, groups of 5-10 Expert Group Chairs will each address the following four questions: a short introductory/ background document will be provided.

Roles of Chairs and Co-Chairs

What are the roles of Expert Group Chairs and how can Chairs be effectively supported to fulfil these roles?

Communication with Expert Groups

How can Expert Groups communicate more effectively with other parts of the ICES network (with a focus on other Expert Groups), and how and when would Expert Group Chairs like to receive feedback from other parts of the ICES network and on which topics

Highlighting and disseminating Expert Group outputs

In which ways can Expert Groups better highlight and communicate their work and measure the impact it is having on science and advice?

Mentoring Chairs

What approaches for Expert Group participation and management will effectively support and mentor future Chairs?

Close for day (17:30)

Reception (18:00)

Wednesday 24 January

Reporting back from session 1 (09.00)

Reports from session 1, discussion and actions

Break (10:30)

Group activities: Session 2 (11:00)

In Session 2, Expert Group Chairs will be invited to join a group addressing one of the topics listed below. Short introductory/ background documents will be provided beforehand. In this session there will also be an opportunity for Expert Group Chairs to meet and discuss other topics which they regard as a priority.

Topic A. Next generation of Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews (Doc 08, lead Mette Skern-Mauritzen)

To identify science products that could contribute to future developments of the fisheries and ecosystem overviews, to define the work needed to progress these products and to propose actions for progressing the work.

Topic B. Science and advisory opportunities for ICES (Doc 09, lead Simon Jennings)

To identify emerging national and international drivers for science and advice and to identify and report on opportunities for ICES to address them, including through the development of viewpoints.

Topic C. Fisheries advice (Doc 10, lead Eskild Kirkegaard)

To discuss and report on implications of recent developments in requests for fisheries advice and developments in assessments methods (e.g. MSY advice for Category 3 and 4 stocks, mixed fisheries considerations, ranges advice, quality assurance, assessment models,) on ICES science and advice and operation of Expert Groups.

Topic D. Integrating ocean data (Doc 11, lead Sophie Pitois and Silvana Birchenough)

To identify and integrate available data sets (from oceanographic data sources) with support from relevant Expert Groups, to develop robust outputs that could support ICES science and advice.

Topic E. How can data collection keep up with developing data needs (Doc 12, lead Sven Kupschus)

An interactive session to identify where there are opportunities for improving communication (benchmarks, ecosystem advice, science highlights, SISPs etc.) that would lead to more coherent responses to current and future advisory requests. The session is targeted towards Chairs in the Ecosystem Observation Steering Group, but others are welcome.

Open Topics (session 2 only)

For Chairs preferring to undertake other discussions and planning (for example with Steering Group Chairs) not covered by the topics above. No reporting back to plenary is expected after these discussions, although any actions for the network should be summarised and forwarded to ICES for inclusion in the minutes.

Lunch (13:00)**Including opportunity for side-meetings (14:00-15:00)**

Group activities: Session 3 (15:00)

In Session 3, groups of Expert Group Chairs will be invited to join a group addressing one of the topics A-E listed under agenda item 8. Please join groups addressing different topics in Sessions 2 and 3.

Break (16:30)

Reporting back from sessions 2 and 3, Topics A and B (17.00)

Reporting back from groups in sessions 2 and 3 which focused on Topic A "Next generation of Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews" and Topic B "Science and advisory opportunities for ICES": conclusions and actions.

Close for day (18:30)**Social event (19:00)****Thursday 25 January**

Reporting back from sessions 2 and 3, Topics C, D and E (09.00)

Reporting back from groups in sessions 2 and 3 which focused on Topic C "Fisheries advice", Topic D "Integrating ocean data" and Topic E "How can data collection keep up with developing data needs": conclusions and actions.

Break (10:30)

Discussion of outcomes (11:00)

Next meeting (12:45)

Close of meeting (13:00)

Annex 3: Breakout group reports from session 1

Roles of Chairs and Co-Chairs

What are the roles of Expert Group Chairs and how can Chairs be effectively supported to fulfil these roles?

Group A: The Chair has varied roles: facilitator at the meeting, contact with outside (throughout the year), but also to lead and provide direction. The Chair needs to encourage and include all participants, be careful about different languages. Make sure report is delivered, and quality assured.

The Guidelines for Chairs needs some 'don't' examples of good practice, make people feel responsible. Be careful of unrealistic expectations, prioritize. Explain stock coordinator and stock-assessor roles.

Group B: (lot of overlap with A). Communication is a central role of the Chair: within Expert Group, with the Secretariat and with other Expert Groups/SGs etc. Issues include (1) More pressure for delivery of products on ACOM chairs than SCICOM chairs, (2) How to get rid of unwanted group members? (3) Funding an issue for getting participants, (4) Report template should be more flexible as it does not always fit the Expert Groups work.

Group C: Clear differences in practice between groups, from facilitator to top-down approach. Large part of the role is 'chasing' experts to get work done. Many chairs weren't aware of the guidelines. A schematic would be useful for those from the outside to show how decisions are made. Could a Skype between the chair and point of contact at the Secretariat be encouraged when a new Chair is appointed? Some Expert Groups have the problem of an extensive member list but not many meeting attendees.

Group D: (Most things mentioned already). Communication with ADG/ACOM important, both ways. Should highlight in the guidelines that ToRs may change, there is some flexibility with them.

Summary of discussion

- Inactive members, and how to react to them. This is more of an issue for SCICOM than ACOM, because active ACOM participation is often a high national priority. A certain amount can be done through the Delegates and national processes about inactive members. For SCICOM, a lot depends on benefits participants get from being in the groups, since participation is often on the basis of 'good will'. Strong drive for members to be active when there is communication/publication.
- Recruiting members to groups. More a SCICOM issue, with less national support. Dissemination of information about new groups among the community may not be working so well. Need to encourage spreading the word. (through a show of hands, very few Expert Group chairs had heard of the 3 new groups formed this year).
- Integrating members is as important as recruiting. New people may have limited ICES knowledge. Ensuring that everybody has the knowledge about how the processes work is important for the chair. The SCICOM chair noted that the Secretariat could produce a presentation for new Expert Group members about their role and contribution to the ICES system (in addition to the one for new Expert Group chairs). It was also suggested to set up regularly event for chairs at the ASC.

- **Co-Chairing.** Co-chairing could mean losing control of who is doing what – important to clearly share the responsibility and let the Steering Group chair know. Potential problems with co-chairs not replying to email because each co-chair thought the other co-chair was responsible. Being a co-chair can help assure the participation at the meeting – more likely to be supported financially than being just a member.

Communication with Expert Groups

How can Expert Groups communicate more effectively with other parts of the ICES network (with a focus on other Expert Groups), and how and when would Expert Group Chairs like to receive feedback from other parts of the ICES network and on which topics

Group A: Recognize the need for inter-Expert Group work. Allow Experts to attend other Expert Groups, and speed talks at WGCHAIRS. Suggest some ways to increase awareness e.g. Information pack about Expert Groups available? Table of parent groups etc.

Group B: Linking SCICOM to ACOM groups important. Back-to-back meetings? Identify any differences between SCICOM and ACOM procedures that are causing issues? Social media can be a useful communication tool, even within Expert Groups.

Group C: Difficult to search Expert Groups via ICES Website without some prior knowledge of them (why is it not feasible to use keywords etc.?). Relational and schematic maps of linkages between groups (e.g. based on keywords) would be informative. What can the Secretariat do about participants not doing their work? Difficult for new groups to get members. How recruit/publicize more? Should the Secretariat facilitate more communication between groups giving recommendations and groups receiving them? Recommendations are not always clear, and sometimes are out of context.

Group D: Organise mini-symposia (e.g. day before Expert Group). Membership lists should be checked by Delegates annually. Searchable ACOM/SCICOM resolutions and topic, region (e.g. keywords).

Summary of discussion

- **Recommendations.** Frustration with recommendations process was clear. Recommendations are currently screened by the secretariat, but still some issues have occurred when Expert Groups are not expecting recommendations. In addition to the formal process we should encourage discussion between chairs to develop ToR before they are put into the recommendations process.
- **Searching for Expert Groups.** Several respondents mentioned that searching for Expert Groups is difficult, especially if you do not know what Expert Groups exist, or what to look for an Expert Group based on topics of work or ToR. A directory of the groups (that is easily accessible and searchable, ideally by topic and ToR) should be considered to address the Expert Group chairs concerns.
- **Links between Expert Groups.** It was clear that it would be helpful to be able to identify links between groups, beyond steering group relationships. Certain disciplines may have potential for greater interaction between groups. Tendency to create new groups without disbanding old groups - work being done by groups needs to evolve. Merging groups is a good option. The SCICOM chair noted that a self-evaluation process exists, but the rationale to

dissolve groups may not be clear. Generally, we would want to encourage participation so will welcome new groups and only dissolve when necessary. We should welcome all groups that are willing to work on a topic that feeds into the ICES strategic plan.

Highlighting and disseminating Expert Group outputs

In which ways can Expert Groups better highlight and communicate their work and measure the impact it is having on science and advice?

Group A: Usual outreach should continue. Could material be in multiple languages? Consider social media but a risk with language differences. Problem with data ownership issues.

Group B: Dissemination is the key - how get products to relevant groups. More peer-reviewed outputs. Dedicate some time at the groups to think about dissemination

Group C: Use keywords. Some way of mapping progress to ToRs (e.g. graphically). Feedback on recommendations important. Communication department could highlight an Expert Group in each newsletter (especially new groups).

Group D: Work with the Communication department on highlights – e.g. videos for events. Should communicate existing social media guidelines (2.6.2 in guidelines).

Summary of discussion

- Search tools and access to information. Expert Groups should come forward with material and highlights they have to the Communication Department, it can't all be top down.
- Authorship of Expert Group reports. People spend a lot of time writing reports with no authorship credit (only participation), this has a limited impact on their CV. CRR reports, for example, have an editor and section credits. The ICES president noted the authorship can help attract people from outside to the network too. STECF have giving authorship credits too. The ICES president indicated that the topic will be brought to Bureau for discussion this year.

Mentoring Chairs

What approaches for Expert Group participation and management will effectively support and mentor future Chairs?

Group A: Training for chairs? Expectations should be clear. Chairs should note how much time they spend on their role. Staggered appointments of co-chairs good for mentoring.

Group B: Out-going chair important role to play. Involve new chairs in advice process before they start. What about SGs/WKs?

Group C: Staggering co-chairs can make it harder to make significant changes when needed though.

Group D: Training course (interactive webinar). Nominate chairs 1.5 years in advance (if no co-chair overlap).

Summary of discussion

- Staggering chair roles. Staggering of roles has pros and cons - e.g. potentially perpetuating cycles in groups where a change is needed. But past chairs can

maintain a useful mentoring role. Developing new chairs. There is a potential role for steering group chair oversight of .

- Co-chairing. Co-chairing provides good opportunities to learn. However, responsibility can get diluted and it does double the requirement for chairs (and there are a lot of Expert Groups). Co-chairs need to clearly define their responsibilities to the group (and all responsibilities should be covered). The SCICOM chair indicated that ICES could add a comment on the importance of clear sharing of responsibility to the guidelines.
- Training chairs. A practical suggestion was made for an annual online interactive session (Webex) for new chairs and current chairs (e.g. like the Inter-catch Webex).

Annex 4: Breakout group reports from sessions 2 and 3

Topic A “Next generation of Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews”

IEASG Chair, Mette Skern-Mauritzen, gave a brief summary on Topic A “Next generation of Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews”.

During this session the status of the Fisheries and Ecosystem overviews was discussed and ideas were brought forward on how to develop them in future. The main questions related to the likely users of the overviews and the questions which the overviews are intended to address.

For the ecosystem overviews the group discussed the scales used to determine the thickness of lines that represent the connections between the pressures and ecosystem state. Another discussion addressed whether these links needed to be quantified, or whether it was ok to have a qualitative model. Some of these issues could be solved when we move into our interactive, web-based versions of the overviews.

WGMARS would like to explore ways to include management objectives in these diagrams. It was suggested that the diagrams can be linked to ecosystem services and also to UN sustainability goals, as there is much focus on that. Climate change scenarios will be included in the EO to be published this year, and to the updates of the old ones.

It will be necessary to bring in expertise from outside IEA groups to further develop the ecosystem overviews. The required work needs to be incorporated in Expert Group ToRs to allow for Chairs to do the planning. Authorship could be a motivator / incentive to get people involved.

ACOM Chair emphasised the importance of addressing the next generation of overviews and how they should be presented; otherwise, this will become a limiting factor. He suggested establishing an Expert Group (perhaps a workshop) on “presentation of overviews”.

IEASG Chair supported the proposal to establish a new group tasked to look into the presentation of the next generation of ecosystem and fisheries overviews. This will be revisited by ACOM and SCICOM, in consultation with the Secretariat.

It is important to flag to all contributors to the overviews that they have been a huge success, loved by the clients! ICES has not received any negative feedback in relation to the overviews.

Topic B “Science and advisory opportunities for ICES”

Ruth Thurstan, Chair of WGHIST, gave a brief summary of Topic B (Session 2). The group was asked “Are there areas of science that ICES should develop in the next 2–5 years that are not covered in the Science Priorities document?” The group found that the seven broad themes worked well and are thorough in terms of the science/perspectives that they cover. A few areas were noted where particular terminology was missing. Climate change is included, but it should be more upfront and explicit within the themes. It was suggested that it could be included as a flagship activity.

The following keywords/phrases that don’t appear in the themes (and should):

- Classical taxonomy often overlooked, but remains integral to understanding biodiversity trends.

- BUT, national capacity may be limited – could ICES taps into national museums to harness expertise?. Taxonomy could be mentioned alongside novel molecular approaches in discovery/categorisation of biodiversity (traits is also an increasingly used word and should be included).
- ‘Cumulative impacts’, ‘restoration and recovery’ (conservation theme): both high interest and well developed in terrestrial realms, but not in marine although some major projects are underway (H2020).
- Emerging biotechnologies/bioprospecting in the deep sea should be added into the Observation and Exploration theme text.
- Rather than using ‘genetic methods’, state ‘molecular methods (genetics and genomics)’ as this is a more accurate terminology.
- ‘Bycatch mitigation’, ‘discarding’ should be included into the theme text of Food from the Sea/ Human activities. Also ‘fishing technologies’, ‘gear selectivity’ under Emerging Techniques and Technologies.
- Citizen science techniques are well established in some disciplines e.g., marine mammal/bird/coral reef surveys have been relying upon citizen science for the past 15-20 years or more (and testing its validity), so perhaps it should sit within Observation and Exploration theme rather than in Emerging Techniques and Technologies.
- Fisheries science partnerships should also be included within Observation and Exploration e.g., fishermen collecting data versus scientists collecting data – how do we get fishermen to collect data, how do we validate it?
- Remote sensing should be included?
- Phenology should be included in Understanding Ecosystems theme
- Vulnerable marine habitats/ecosystems, could be included as there is currently a lot of emphasis on mapping these systems

Proposals for flagship activities.

Topics should cut across themes and disciplines (social/ecological/political):

- Understanding the impacts of climate change on the structure and functioning of ecosystems
- Diadromous fish and human impacts (direct and indirect) on different life stages, and variation across different regions
- Release of new tools/models or novel (sampling) technologies
- Renewable energies and infrastructure (conflict, multiple uses)
- Understanding adaptation and response of organisms/ecosystems to change (disease, resistance, evolution) and how to harness this information to inform management.

Questions:

In relation to taxonomy, did you consider working with other organisations, in particular World Register of Marine Species (Worms)? That didn't come up, but the group spoke about harnessing expertise from the museums, i.e. the Natural History Museum in London was mentioned and individual institutions as well. It makes a lot of sense not to duplicate and there cooperation is already occurring in many areas.

This is an interesting idea. How would we make ICES attractive to them, what would we give back if we tried to attract them here?

They have been working on incorporating traits into EU organisms, so that's one thing to give back. Traits are useful in relation to ecosystem services. Maybe they don't even have to come here. Not sure where they have gaps to be filled...

Naiara Rodriguez-Ezpeleta, WGIMT Co-Chair, gave a brief summary of Topic B (Session 3).

The group felt that the themes were a bit imbalanced, some cover a broad topic, some deal with technologies, but this is justified, as these are the areas ICES wants to focus on. Two themes were not covered in the seven themes: one was economy and the other oceanographic prediction.

Economy is covered by some ICES groups already (WGIMM and WGSEDA), but it was concluded that this is not seen as a priority since ICES is not requested to provide economic advice and would not like to overlap with STEFCFs work. ACOM Chair commented that managers are asking for economic aspects to be included in ICES Advice and members' countries are not in agreement on how to proceed.

Oceanographic prediction is required to produce information on physical changes that affect distribution of species and forecast recruitment, to inform ecological models, etc. Concern was raised that it is difficult to get oceanographers involved in ICES working group and a solution to the problem is not clear.

The SCICOM Chair commented that he would be very interested to hear from a wider group about oceanography in ICES. Surprisingly prioritisation of this topic does not come across from the member countries. As it stands we feel there is little point flagging oceanography as a priority if the member countries don't agree. Mark Payne, WGS2D Chair, commented that oceanography and marine ecology/fisheries science has gone in different directions and have difficulty talking to each other. The solution is to have a translator in the middle (from data providers to the end users). ICES is the natural place to bring end users to the oceanographers, but you need to have that bridge in the middle. You need people who speak both languages. Sven Kupschus, EOSG Chair, commented that it would be worthwhile to develop such a bridge.

Topic C "Fisheries advice"

ACOM Vice-Chairs, Ghislain Guinard and Colm Lordon reported from Sessions 2 and 3.

In 2017, ICES provided advice for 194 stocks, and answered 26 special requests. The feedback from clients and stakeholders (MIRIA/MIACO) was generally positive; they appreciate the ICES frameworks and that these are followed, and the peer review is valued.

The format of the upcoming advice was presented, and changes in format as well as procedures were highlighted:

- Advice needs for 2018 have been finalized with NASCO, NEAFC and Norway.
- 24 special requests have already been received.
- Discussions with the EU are still ongoing.
- Multi Annual Plans (MAPs) are under development: The Baltic MAP is in place, the MAP for the North Sea and Western Waters is in draft.
- A change in procedure for 2018 will be that non-target stocks with a TAC, where previously advice was based on the MSY principle, will be given Precautionary Approach advice in 2018. This is not that many stocks, though.

- The development of proxy reference points will continue, though slightly changed.
- For stocks without a TAC, only the stock status will be provided in the advice.

Expert Group Chairs of assessment groups were asked to go through the list of stocks from the draft-AA with EU and provide feedback to the Secretariat if anything seemed incorrect.

Ghislain pointed out where to find the already available guidelines concerning drafting the advice. A document “Guidance for drafting the single-stock advice” is in the making. This will contain all necessary information in one place. Other Guidelines will be finalized this year as well.

Overall, the changes in the format of the advice are minimal:

- An extra column will be added to the Catch scenarios (previously known as the Catch options) table: % change in advice. Clients are requesting this column as well as a paragraph explaining the reason for a change in advice (change in perception of stock, low recruitment coming in, shift from MSY to PA, etc.)
- The change from ‘options’ to ‘scenarios’ are due to (some) managers interpreting the ‘Other options’ in the table as options all recommended by ICES. This is not the case, and distinguishing between these other options and the option which ICES recommends, is important.
- *Nephrops* advice: From 2018, the forecast will be a projection on most recent observed discard rates.
- Landing obligation: It is important for the catches to be attributed correctly.

This year, there will be a new ToR for the assessment groups: “For the purpose of conducting further analyses relative to the issue of catch forecasts from biased assessment for category 1 and 2 age-structured assessment, report the mean Mohn’s rho (assessment retrospective analysis) values for R, SSB and F. The WG report should include a plot of this retrospective analysis.”

Audit system: A few years ago, we switched to the benchmark system where every 2-3 years a very detailed review was done of the model, the data, the assessment etc. There is a need for an audit procedure going on in the Expert Groups each year. This is an important step in the quality assurance of the production of the advice. At the moment, the audits done in the Expert Groups are of a very variable quality. Some are very good and thorough, while other times stocks reach the ADG without having been audited at all.

- Improved audit guidelines are needed, that go through each step of the audit. Start in the advice sheet and work your way back through the report.
- Critical things to check, for instance, are table 2 and 3 in the advice. Too often there are discrepancies between the landings data in the advice and the Expert Group report.

Other important things for the Expert Groups to be better at:

- Allocate the work within the Expert Group. Spread the workload evenly.
- Planning! So that there is time for the audits to be done. Keep tight deadlines for when the report and the audits need to be done. And stick to these.
- Include table in the Expert Group report with a checklist of stocks that have been audited.

The benchmark process:

There are some extremely successful benchmarks, but also some terribly unsuccessful ones. It is clear that the process is not fully functioning. Some of the issues can be, that a benchmark gets too model focused, the underlying data is not investigated properly.

The timing and scope: It is ICES who decides when to have a benchmark, and not the clients and stakeholders. In these situations, it is important to push back.

It is important to understand that the benchmark is a process. Maybe now the right time has come to implement some of the ideas that were put forward at the ASC in Riga in 2016. To have a transparent and open scoping process to begin with, before the benchmark is properly kicked off. WKIRISH and the benchmarking of the Baltic cod stocks are good examples of this. When sufficient progress has been made, the planning of the actual benchmark can start.

Final comment from the ACOM Chair: As there are not that many Expert Group Chairs of assessment groups present at this meeting, we will set up a web conference for all advisory Expert Group Chairs to follow up on the issues discussed in Session 2-3, topic C.

Action: set up a web conference for all advisory Expert Group Chairs to follow up on the issues discussed in Session 2-3, topic C.

Topic D “Integrating ocean data”

Silvana Birchenough present the conclusions from the subgroup discussing session D on 25th January.

This subgroup was a good exercise to find what people know about the oceanographic data and ICES dedicated working groups.

One of the conclusions was that very few experts know that these groups or data are available and promoting these groups and data should be a priority. To maximize the use of this data, data portals need to be more accessible and easier to find.

It was suggested that this data could and should be used in the next generation of fisheries overviews where we could use environmental variables to try to understand fisheries problems

Plenary discussion:

A comment was made that one of the most difficult aspects is to create a demand for oceanographic products. In order to develop new models and products the working groups need to asked questions. However, a suggestion was made that the oceanographic working groups could take the initiative and should start to develop products from their own initiative that can show what can be done. By making available new products oceanographic data will be more visible and help end users to see what is available and what can be achieve with this type of data.

Conclusions:

- Communication between Assessment WGs and Data (e.g. surveys): WGs are sometimes more depending on particular persons than on formal structures.
- ICES is asked to communicate data needs but there is no process in ICES at the moment that deals with data collection prioritization. The mandate to collect data is for member countries.

- Decisions to be made regarding the new variables/time series of variables to be collected (some of these in relation to MSFD) and stored at ICES.
- ICES should aim at having experts with knowledge on emerging technologies and new data collection methods.

Topic E “How can data collection keep up with developing data needs”

Leonie O’Dowd reported from Topic E (morning session) and Jens Rasmussen from the afternoon session.

There are still communication problems between assessment WGs and data WGs (e.g. Survey WGs). Usually Assessment WGs do not get back to data WGs with feedback. The link between WGs has been made in some occasions by particular individuals that are members of both data and assessment WGs but a more formal way to provide feedback and facilitate communication is needed. An example of the communication problem was outlined by the Chair of PGDATA. This WG developed tools with the aim of helping Assessment WGs. PGDATA has also looked at the data call and proposed suggestions to it. But feedback from Assessment WGs is needed (and was not provided). PGDATA would need feedback about the tools that are useful/needed.

Questions:

Proposal from PGDATA chair: Will it be a good idea to have a contact person from PGDATA that can attend different assessment WGs (first 2 days or so) to assess data quality? LWC reply: It will be especially helpful in those WGs where several benchmarks have been planned. We aim at having a living document of issue lists for benchmarks.

HAWG Chair: How strong is the interaction between PGDATA and TAF? Answer PGDATA Chair: so far this link is not established yet. EOSG Chair: PGDATA does not evaluate quality but provides methods to explore data quality.

ACOM Chair: ICES is asked to communicate data needs but the mandate to collect data is for member countries, not for ICES. There is no process in ICES at the moment that deals with prioritization; member countries should specify what data are needed and what are not.

BEWG Chair. Input from the Secretariat Data Centre is needed on what data is worth recording. For example if there is a good/long enough time series of a particular variable. New time series will be also generated because of MSFD.

SCICOM Chair: Alternative ways of data collection are being developed (emerging technologies). This is important in terms of science priorities. ICES should aim at having experts with knowledge on those areas.

Conclusions

- Communication between Assessment WGs and Data (e.g. surveys) WGs are sometimes more depending on particular persons than on formal structures.
- ICES is asked to communicate data needs but there is no process in ICES at the moment that deals with data collection prioritization. The mandate to collect data is for member countries.
- Decisions to be made regarding the new variables/time series of variables to be collected (some of these in relation to MSFD) and stored at ICES.
- ICES should aim at having experts with knowledge on emerging technologies and new data collection methods.

Action points:

- A proposed action plan will be developed by the rapporteurs from session E (Leonie O'Dowd and Jens Rasmussen) and shared with the ICES Secretariat.
- Ask PGDATA if they are able to provide a contact person that can attend different assessment WGs to assess data quality