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Midterm report of the ICES Science Committee (SCICOM)

8-10 April 2015

ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen



ICES

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea

CIEM

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International Council for the Exploration of the Sea Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer

H. C. Andersens Boulevard 44-46
DK-1553 Copenhagen V
Denmark
Telephone (+45) 33 38 67 00
Telefax (+45) 33 93 42 15
www.ices.dk
info@ices.dk

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1 Opening

The SCICOM Chair welcomed participants to the 2015 SCICOM Spring meeting in Copenhagen and conducted a tour de table to introduce all members. A special welcome was extended to the new SCICOM participants, Laura Uusitalo (Finland) and John Pinnegar (UK). Apologies received from Myron Peck, Dave Reid, Ingeborg de Boois and Dariusz Fey.

Myron Peck, and Dave Reid attended by WebEx for agenda items 6.1, 6.2 and 8, respectively.

2 Adoption of agenda and timetable

The agenda was accepted without comments and no new items were brought up for inclusion.

3 Follow up on decisions taken at the meetings of SCICOM (September 2014) and SCICOM Forum

All items identified as actions at the previous meeting of SCICOM (September 2014) had been followed up or would be dealt with under the SCICOM midterm meeting agenda.

- Performance measurements to be dealt with under Agenda Item 11.
- Cost of Science Programme is pending action this summer.
- Training questionnaire – update from ITG at this meeting.
- DIG had asked SCICOM endorsement of Joint Declaration of Data Citation Principles.
- Under “Need for further Strategic Initiatives” one proposal had been submitted.
- The ASC subgroup has met and will report to SCICOM midterm.
- Review of merit award process a subgroup consisting of previous chair of the Award Selection groups had outlined the process.

There were no comments to the action list.

The following resolutions had been approved via the SCICOM Forum since it was established in December: WGMSFDemo, WGCATCH, WKISCON2, WGEGBS2, WKICA, WKIELD, WGBIOP (new dates), PGDATA (new ToRs), WKARPV (new dates).

4 Information on Bureau actions and recommendations for SCICOM

The SCICOM Chair presented the Bureau update.

The following Bureau requests were addressed to SCICOM:

- SCICOM was asked to summarise the IEA progress and key elements.
- The Arctic is an ICES action area. A new workshop on IEA has been created and approved via the SCICOM forum.
- Performance measures. Bureau encourages SCICOM to continue work on Performance measures in relation to ISP.
- Science fund was approved for a second round by Council. SCICOM was requested to review the Science Fund 2014 projects and report back to Council.
- Bureau requested Chair of SRG-ASC (Pierre Petitgas) take feedback to SCICOM and continue discussion if there is a need for radical reform of ASC.

The General Secretary shared some additional information from Bureau and Council:

Council-ACOM Working Group on Strengthening the Advisory Leadership (CAWGSAL). This group was initiated to support the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan. SCICOM was informed that the ACOM Chair is now working on a full time based honorarium for ICES and the vacant position as head of ACOM Support was taken up by Cristina Morgado. CAWGSAL considered the job responsibilities, tasks, and resource implications of changes to the structure of the advisory leadership which was agreed by Council in 2014. CAWGSAL will submit a report to the June Bureau meeting and a further discussion will take place at Council in October.

A similar review will be initiated for SCICOM to see if there is a need for a strengthening of the Science leadership to meet the demands in the Strategic Plan. The work will be chaired by Tammo Bult from the Netherlands. A meeting is scheduled on 8 June, prior to Bureau meeting. SCICOM Chair and HoS will report back to SCICOM on the developments.

Council Working Group ICES Business Model (CWGIBM). An interim report had three objectives:

- To document the development and underlying decisions related to ICES current financial situation;
- to link the biggest risks to financial scenarios; and based on expected future scenarios, get an indication of strategic directions for the future;
- and the required investments to achieve these objectives.

A possible implication for ICES is lack of funding to provide financial contributions for additional co-sponsored symposia in 2016.

A revised document will be discussed at the June and September Bureau meetings, before being submitted for discussion at the Council meeting in October.

Council Working Group Maritime Transatlantic Cooperation (CWGMTC). There will be greater involvement of Council and Bureau in the priority areas of the ICES Strategic Plan, such as dialogue meeting on Aquaculture, the Arctic, integrated ecosystem assessments. Focus should be that we need to work across committees and how we can further the work together.

Council Steering Group Marine Strategy Framework Directive (CSG MSFD). This year ICES will arrange its meeting on MSFD with cooperation partners, on the 22 May in Brussels. The meeting will facilitate inter-regional dialogue on the science needs for MSFD. This year CSG MSFD will also discuss the development of benthic assessments as a specific theme.

Secretariat has provided an overview of ICES current activities with regards to benthic assessments which will be provided to cooperation partners in the CSG MSFD meeting. BEWG has cooperated closely on the issue and has looked into the ways and means how this can be of use for our cooperating partners.

Such a process needs to be communicated well with the Science Steering Groups. One of the goals must be to stimulate HELCOM and OSPAR and the Commission to communicate requests to ICES and to put the necessary resources into these areas. ICES should be used as the umbrella organization for coordinating and evaluating the process.

Annual Science Conference 2016. Warm thanks were extended by the General Secretary to the Latvian SCICOM member, Georgs Kornilovs, who has worked very hard to invite us to the ASC in Riga in Latvia.

5 SCICOM Forum – evaluation

Prior to the midterm meeting, SCICOM members were invited to provide their views on the structure and functionality of the SCICOM Forum.

Approval of resolutions

- The main purpose of the forum is to have a swift process for approval. The majority of SCICOM members felt that 14 days would be better, however the deadlines for joint resolutions need to be agreed with ACOM and therefore the deadline will be set to 7 days.
- SCICOM alternates should be informed to support the members approving resolutions in their absence.
- Tacit approval is the rule. Feedback from SCICOM members is encouraged, but not obligatory. An approve button would be helpful.

Categories

- SCICOM members felt that the current categories had fulfilled the needs so far.

Subfora

- Rather than creating subfora under the existing SCICOM Forum, it would be possible to establish similar (parallel) fora for Steering Groups, Strategic Initiatives, etc. via the support secretaries.

The following **shortcomings** were noted and the Secretariat will attempt to make improvements in cooperation with IT:

- It is not possible to see how many people viewed a post. This would be a useful feature to get a better idea how many members actually review the posts.
- There is no 'I approve' button.
- The alert for comments only links to the actual comment and not to the post.
- It is sometimes difficult to get an overview of the posts on the main page.

Action: SCICOM requested Secretariat/IT to look into the shortcomings identified.
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Overall, SCICOM members found the SCICOM Forum useful, and in some cases even easier to keep track of posts and comments on the Forum, compared with using emails.

Some felt that practice with the Forum was still new, so perhaps it would be valid to bring up these questions again in a year or so.

The ICES Communications department had suggested setting up a "SCICOM out and about" where SCICOM members can send a "postcard" from an event/conference/meeting. SCICOM did not support the proposal.

6 SCICOM Operational Groups

6.1 ICES Data and Information Management Group (DIG)

Neil Holdsworth gave an update from DIG on behalf of Ingeborg de Boois. DIG gave an update to SCICOM from their latest meeting in September 2014; their next meeting is scheduled for 18-20 May.

The actions from SCICOM to DIG had been addressed as follows:

Action: The ICES Data Centre will contact Aquanis/Sergej Olenin (Klaipeda University) and enquire about the possibility of setting up an online reporting tool of non-indigenous species in ICES Status of Aquanis.

Aquanis would like to have a backup of their system. ICES Data Centre will have to check if the resources are available. At the next meeting we will have a conclusion to this action.

Action: Update from SCICOM on the feasibility study on "Scientific data storage under the Data Collection Framework".

The final report from the study on Data Collection Framework data storage, transmission and dissemination under the project financed by DG-MARE was released in September 2014. National Correspondents, Regional Coordination Meeting (RCM) chairs, and end users i.e. ICES were requested in October to give feedback on the report findings according to a questionnaire type format provided by DG-MARE (attached). The ICES response was coordinated with the RCM chairs involved in the regional database (RDB), the RDB steering group chair and the ACOM chair.

ICES recommend Scenarios 2 (RDB) and 4 (Mixed) as the most viable options for data collection management on the European scale (see <http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/scientific-data-storage/>)

Action: The DIG Chair invited SCICOM to review the Joint Declaration of Data Citation and to endorse the 8 principles. SCICOM members were also invited to give feedback on how to achieve that credit is given to the originators for data (also) stored at ICES.

It was agreed to renew the action for SCICOM to review the Joint Declaration of Data Citation and to endorse the 8 principles. **Action:** Secretariat will seek endorsement from SCICOM via the SCICOM Forum.

Advice and data

Assessments will become more complicated in the future with integrated advice. The current working group process for stock assessment is not entirely transparent and not structured in a way to easily incorporate ecosystem advice. Work is ongoing to improve this situation through the implementation of the ICES Strategic plan. It is important to establish this in a systematic way, therefore Bureau has requested that the ACOM chair, together with the Head of Data and Information, clearly defines where and what the problems are with data in the advisory process (quality, timeliness) and the impacts on ICES working procedures and advice for further discussion at the June Bureau meeting. DIG will feed into this report where possible.

As part of this transparency of process, ICES now has the ability to publish the assessment data product, as a so called 'data output' publication type on the [ICES website](#). This links the scientific production (expert group report), to the Advice publication with the explicit result. These types of assessment results, or data products, are often embedded in Advice publications as pdf format and difficult to extract or use in another science or advice pro-

cess or publication. DIG would encourage a wider adoption of this approach to other assessment and science group data products, as it is relatively straightforward and does not require a large effort to create.

In terms of process, we need to be explicit about who is doing what, when they are doing it and to what methodologies, who delivers what, and how, and when. This needs to be adequately described and formalised. We need to know what is getting into the system, and by what route, and what happens when it gets past the advice process. For some OSPAR and HELCOM assessments we have these processes in place.

6.2 ICES Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM)

Myron Peck gave an update from PUBCOM via WebEx.

IJMS. Submissions reached a record high in 2014 and the overall acceptance rate in 2014 was 40.4%. The time required for review and post production are extremely competitive. SCICOM was reminded of the new approval process agreed on for the proceedings of symposia appearing in the Journal.

Otolith Symposium Issue. PUBCOM drafted a response letter to the conveners of the 2014 Otolith Symposium. The conveners were surprised by not being guest editors and by early rejections without reviews and an overall high rejection rate (8 out of 31 were accepted for publication), and they wrote a letter calling into question the review process. Due to the high rejection rate they found that the volume would not reflect the diversity of the symposium and asked if they could be relieved of the responsibility of publishing in the Journal. PUBCOM discussed the details and stated that the Journal clearly followed a well-publicized, consistent and unbiased procedure, and that PUBCOM does not question editorial decisions taken on manuscripts. PUBCOM felt this was a SCICOM issue. We have not lost the symposium, but there were very few submissions. Some papers will be published in the IJMS, while other have found a second journal for outlet of publications rejected by IJMS.

CRRs. Three Category 1 resolutions submitted (all CRRs) – PUBCOM recommends that all be published:

- Handbook on Geostatistics in R for fisheries and marine ecology
- The ICES Phytoplankton and Microbial Plankton Status Report 2011-2013
- Report on the Alien Species Alert: *Didemnum vexillum*.

TIMES. The number of manuscripts submitted has decreased, likely related to MSFD. When OSPAR and HELCOM were the primary regulators, ICES was their main source of advice and technical guidance. Four manuscripts are in progress, most stem from the Working Group on Biological Effects of Contaminants (WGBEC).

ICES Disease Leaflets Series. Secretariat has facilitated production of new/revised Disease Leaflets. WGPDMO will continue to propose titles of new leaflets and to suggest potential authors for these so that the series contains up to date information.

Plankton ID leaflets. PUBCOM strongly supports the update of these leaflets and looks forward to receiving additional information from the proposed co-editors.

Series of ICES Survey Protocols. PUBCOM noted the continued increase in publication of SISPs positively. It was recognized that the great number being produced is likely due to it being a relatively new publication series.

ICES Insight Magazine. The role that Insight plays in ICES publications was recently been reviewed. Insight was introduced nine years ago as an outlet for promoting ICES work to a broader (more general) audience. In recent years, the communications department has grown and greatly expanded their output using the new website and social media. The ICES community and other networks are now being reached on a daily and weekly basis, rather than the annual output of the Insight magazine. Last year, 1000 copies of ICES Insight were printed and distributed primarily at the ASC. Insight required a lot of activity by the secretariat directly prior to the ASC. During the summer, it was often a challenge for the secretariat to communicate with authors in order to maintain print deadlines. The average cost for design and print of the magazine was about 10% of the overall publications and communications budget. This budget has been and will likely continue to be reduced as ICES evaluates its current business model. A decision has been made to cancel ICES Insight magazine and build that content (longer, in-depth feature articles) into the online newsletter.

PUBCOM Membership. As part of the ongoing campaign to increase the number and breadth of expertise of PUBCOM membership, three new members are endorsed by the group: i) Dr. Antonina dos Santos (Portugal), ii) Dr. Valerio Bartolino (Sweden), and iii) Dr. David Secor (USA). Due to both personal and professional reasons, Floor Quirijns has stepped down from PUBCOM. PUBCOM warmly thanks Floor for her service to the group.

The plankton ID leaflets will be dealt with by Katie and Antonina offline. Steve Feist has also offered to share his experience on how those leaflets are dealt with.

6.3 ICES Training Group (ITG)

Olafur Astthorsson gave an update from ITG.

The whole programme has been very successful. Since 2009, over 30 courses have been offered on a range of topics. Six courses are planned for the coming year:

- Analysis and Visualization of VMS and EU Logbook Data Using the VMS Tools R Package
- Stock Assessment Introduction
- Fisheries Management to Meet Biodiversity Conservation Needs
- Opening the Box: Stock Assessment and Fisheries Advice for Stakeholders, NGOs and Policy Makers
- Social Science Methods for Natural Scientists
- Model Development in Fish Stock Assessment: ADMB, TMB, and SAM

SCICOM members were requested to bring the courses to the attention of colleagues!

The stock assessment course in June will offer a blended course (online/physical). The secretariat has looked into online training. In Sweden the World Maritime University makes use of online learning and have extensive online teaching facilities. The hope is to learn from their experience. The MARLISCO project runs e-learning courses which are free-of-charge and can be explored by the secretariat for its suitability.

Questionnaire. We want to know on a longer term, if the courses are fulfilling the aims of the participants. ITG is in the process of developing the questions for a questionnaire.

Finances. Training Programme ended with a surplus in 2014 and thus does not ask for subsidy.

Membership. Steve Cadrin will step down as chair, and thus ITG is discussing how to fulfil this post.

Action: ITG will recommend new chairmanship to SCICOM in September.

Thanks were extended to the group and the chair. We have increased the fee and still we have good attendance. The business model is working.

7 ICES Science Fund

For the 2015 call for proposals, SCICOM received a total of 21 proposals. The proposals were presented at the SCICOM SharePoint site and ranked by SCICOM using a ranking tool, grading the proposals from high (5) to low (1). A total of 15 rankings were received.

A subgroup consisting of Yvonne Walther, Begoña Santos, Jan Jaap Poos, Thomas Noji, and Wojciech Wawrzynski met via WebEx and evaluated the proposals taking into consideration the ranking made by SCICOM. The proposals were then divided into three categories: 1) Shortlist recommended for approval, 2) Proposals for discussion, and 3) Not recommended for funding/approval.

Those not recommended for funding were briefly presented and discussed. Concern was raised that the justifications for the rejections need to be elaborated when responding to the rejected proposers. HoS ensured that an appropriately detailed reason for rejection is always presented in a personal letter to the proposers.

Decision: SCICOM approved the shortlist recommended for approval with the addition of one proposal from Category 2, Proposals for discussion. A total of 7 proposals were approved. The Secretariat will inform the successful and unsuccessful proposals.

The function and eligibility of and for the Science Funds was briefly discussed. The character of seed money to basically kick-off research initiatives was emphasized for the Science Fund which rules out repeated funding given to the same set of scientists.

Review the Science Fund 2014 projects

Bureau has asked SCICOM to review the scope and aims of the Science Fund and evaluate if the money is well invested after the first year of the programme. SCICOM should also put focus on evaluating how the outputs from the projects 1) have been incorporated into ICES work, and 2) can be put into a strategic perspective for ICES. Opportunities for sponsorship may also be discussed.

A subgroup was established consisting of Mats Svensson, Jan Jaap Poos, John Pinnegar, Graham Pierce, and Wojciech Wawrzynski. The subgroup will review the 2014 Science Fund reports submitted to the secretariat, and based on their review SCICOM will report to Bureau in June.

SCICOM needs to have good and valuable arguments for continuing the Science Fund in the coming years especially along the strategic perspective.

8 Science Cooperation

HoS presented Doc 13 'Science Cooperation'.

PICES

PICES and ICES continue to co-sponsor joint science symposia and theme/topical sessions at each other's annual science conferences. In 2015, ICES co-sponsors two sessions and a workshop at PICES with the following scientists:

- Marie-Joëlle Rochet (France) as invited speaker for session S3 Change and sustainability of fisheries: Lessons from eastern-western cultures for global food security.
- Sebastian Villasante (Spain) will act as ICES convener to the S8 Marine ecosystem services and economics of marine living resources.
- Sakari Kuikka (Finland) as invited speaker for workshop W4 Marine Environment Emergencies: Detection, monitoring and response.

IOC

SICCME has proposed a session “Transformative pathways to sustain marine ecosystems and their services under climate change to be held at the COP meeting of the “Our common future under climate change” conference. It will be chaired by Manuel Barange.

JPI

HoS presented the JPI report on evaluation of IGO’s including ICES and other international bodies, done by JPI: www.vliz.be/imisdocs/publications/266491.pdf

LME-GEF

ICES is in contact with the consortium. The project (under a new name ‘LME-LEARN’) is still waiting for the final results of the proposal evaluation.

COFASP

The Deputy Head of Science Programme presented the progress within this project. ICES has been involved in two tasks supporting the new calls for proposals. COFASP case studies (for fisheries, aquaculture and seafood processing) have been mentioned as potential input to the work of ICES expert groups.

The list of approved projects in the pipeline was also presented. Five project applications with ICES participation have been submitted and have not yet been evaluated.

Arctic cooperation

There will be intensified cooperation with CAFF and AMAP on WKICA – all our main partners are co-sponsoring this workshop.

The third meeting of scientific experts on fish stocks in the central arctic ocean –it is by invitation of the US Government. The ICES advisory process will be presented to that group, with a view to one day provide advice on arctic fisheries.

Aquaculture

ICES is in the process of planning and inviting key persons to the dialogue meeting to be held 1–2 June 2015 in Bergen, Norway.

Discussion

The Baltic BONUS call out for ecosystem research was mentioned. Extension of the BONUS programme to the North Sea (OSPAR area) was also discussed – it will be called BONUS II. ICES can potentially get involved in this phase of the BONUS initiative.

9 ICES co-sponsored symposia

Two proposals for ICES co-sponsorship of symposia were brought to SCICOM requesting approval:

Symposium on the 9th International Conference on Marine Bioinvasions

SCICOM did not accept the resolution, chiefly because the list of SSC members did not indicate a wide geographical balance but was much North America biased. Further, the wording on the use of the IJMS as possible outlet of the symposium did not indicate a sound business model or plan for publication.

Decision: The draft resolution for cosponsorship was not supported by SCICOM.

WCRP CLIVAR (Climate and Ocean: Variability, Predictability and Change) Open Science Conference, September 2016

There was much appreciation for the scientific community of oceanographers to consider ICES as co-sponsor of CLIVAR. However, the resolution was not accepted by SCICOM, chiefly because the dates for the OS conference clash with the dates for the ICES Annual Science Conference (2016 in Riga, Latvia) to be held 19-23 September 2016.

Decision: The draft resolution for co-sponsorship was not supported by SCICOM.

The Secretariat and involved SCICOM members updated the Committee on the co-sponsored science symposia held since September 2014.

3rd International symposium on Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans, Santos, Brazil, March 23-27 2015.

John Pinnegar, incoming co-Chair of SICCME, gave a brief presentation of the major outcomes of the Santos Symposium. There were 287 participants from 38 countries. About 12 sessions, plus six workshops and the biggest was the one on ocean acidification. The symposium saw good participation from the South American research community and almost all Brazilian participants were engaged/involved with a paper or presentation.

The opening lecture was given by Chris Field (WG2 leader of AR5, IPCC). An interview is available on the ices website. <http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/Mapping-the-problem-space-and-the-opportunity-space.aspx>.

Three early career scientists, all from ICES member countries, received merit awards.

The venue for the next conference in 2019 will be in Australia, North America or Africa as suitable candidates to host the meeting.

SCICOM was informed that the ICES/PICES Symposium on Drivers of dynamics of small pelagic neritic fish resources has been moved from 2016 to 2017 and to a new venue. It will be held March 6–11 2017 at the PICES home in Victoria, BC, Canada.

10 Science Plan Implementation

10.1 Performance measures

The SCICOM Chair reminded SCICOM that last year a qualitative “gut feeling” approach to the performance indicators was used, rating the SSGs on a scale from 1 to 5. This approach was discussed with SSG Chairs in the autumn. The issue raised was that the evaluation made by SSG Chairs could be quite subjective.

10.1.1 Mapping of EGs in relation to Science Plan

For the internal evaluation and development of the science portfolio and to further implement the Science Plan a mapping exercise of EG work in relation to the Science Plan was

performed. The exercise was initiated in a Webex with the SSG chairs and performed during January-March 2015. The mapping exercise could be expanded to include Strategic Initiatives and ASC theme sessions.

In conclusion, all priority areas are covered by the Science EGs. A positive side-effect from the exercise was that EG Chairs got a better understanding of our Science Plan priorities and now they have a better idea of how their EG relates to the exercise. The mapping exercise also showed where the EGs work across a larger array of Science Plan Priorities than assigned to the Steering Groups.

Based on the outcome the Science Steering Group chairs were asked to evaluate the outcome of the mapping exercise, for all EGs, towards their assigned Science Plan Priorities and give some initial proposals how to strengthen the area, i.e. if there is a need to refocus, or start new activities. This (ongoing) evaluation ensures that crosscutting benefits of implementation of Science Priority areas are addressed.

During a discussion the following comments and observations were made:

- The number of groups involved is not necessarily an indication that an area is well-covered. Concern was raised that the groups are evaluated, but not on the basis of the resolutions. Inclusion of ToRs would have to be done retrospectively.
- A lot of activities undertaken by EGs are related to data collection, analysis and review, but that does not imply they are not doing an important job.
- In the name of integration it was suggested to expand the mapping exercise to include relevant ACOM groups.
- When new ToRs come up we look at where they are in relation to the broader picture. It is the role of the Steering Group chairs to make this evaluation, however this needs to be developed in future. A qualitative evaluation made by the SSG chair should be made.
- SSG Chairs could have a role in steering this more. There is more in the data, than what is pulled out here.
- Good communication with EG Chairs is a challenge. The presence of secretariat staff and/or SSG Chair when EGs are developing their next 3-year terms would be really useful to help them shape it to be in line with the Science Plan. It would only have to be done every three years. We tend to try to solve structural problems with technical solutions. Real communication is what is needed. A possibility is to encourage the groups to choose the venue of the SSG Chair for the last year.
- Performance measures quantitatively tell us something important about our products, services and the processes that produce them.

The SCICOM Chair thanked for all the good input and comments.

10.2 Evaluation of EGs under multi-annual ToRs.

An overview of EGs completing their 3-year MA ToRs in 2015 was presented. At the end of their 3-year term the expert groups will complete a self-evaluation. It is then up to SCICOM to decide on continuation. The EG evaluation can be scheduled for the spring or September meetings of SCICOM and should be reviewed by the relevant SSG Chairs and all of SCICOM before the meeting.

SCICOM was invited to provide their view on the evaluation procedure of EGs under multi-annual ToRs.

Most groups want to continue, but equally some groups struggle with participation. Participation is an important part of the group's performance and should be viewed as an explicit part of the self-evaluation. Some Chairs are good at encouraging participation and some are not. This needs to be considered. In some cases ICES (through dialogue with the SSG Chair) might want to add a co-Chair to enhance the participation.

The SSG Chairs could do the first half of the work and only cases where there are problems or doubt, would need to involve SCICOM. However, it should not be forgotten that the self-evaluation, review and decision by SCICOM is an important process which has replaced the annual drafting and review of ToRs. This business needs to continue to be an important part of the committee's work.

Decision: For future evaluations, the EG self-evaluation should be posted on the Forum for digestion. SCICOM could use the same approach as for the science fund. Some groups will continue and may not need much discussion, while others will need more attention/discussion in SCICOM before approving continuation.

10.3 Rules for membership in joint ACOM/SCICOM groups

SCICOM was informed that Bureau in February had decided that the EG membership rules that apply for SCICOM should apply to all joint groups under A/SCICOM SSGs. SCICOM was informed that the Bureau agreed to this unanimously without discussion.

The question was raised about the implications for ACOM. Some ACOM groups are more restrictive in terms of observer participation, but there is not that much difference in participation. Some participants are employed by industry, but nominated by national delegates. The difference is becoming less marked.

11 SCICOM Steering Groups

11.1 SSGIEA

Involvement of Social and Economic dimension in SSGIEA

A mechanism is needed for including social and economic scientists in the IEA process in particular, and wider ICES work in general. The Workshop on Regional Seas Commissions and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Scoping (WKRISCO) met in November 2014 and one of the key issues that was raised and discussed was the inclusion of a social and economic dimensions in IEA. This could be an important task for the newly proposed Strategic initiative on the human dimension. As a first step an extension of the remit of WGIMM might be considered.

In ICES the infrastructure of EGs is built to support fish stocks and ecosystems. The social and economic sciences are an important element for setting the objectives in IEA. There is however no supporting framework for natural, social and economic sciences to work together in ICES.

Specific suggestions ("demonstrations") for ecosystem input in the context of management advice

ACOM has asked SSGIEA to provide suggestions for demonstration advice. WGIAB are proposing a specific daughter workshop to deal with advice. The idea of a separate workshop is to keep the WG focused on the science development. The workshop would connect to assessment and other relevant EG on the advice side, and rely on commitment from a subset of the full WGIAB membership. This links well with the outline described by HELCOM at WKRISCO. WGNARS have already established a similar framework. WGNARS

works in two sub-areas (one US, and one Canadian) and have thematic focus on fishing and the energy sector. WGEAWESS will attempt the same thing, where we will identify, by subregion, examples where the IEA work can provide a range of input information to advice coming ideally from modelling, empirical trends data, and from a wider multi-sectoral pressures assessment such as ODEMM or the approach used in DEVOTES. One key area for advice will be selected e.g. for Biscay for example, the sole stock in Div VIII, or also possibly zooplankton. In The Celtic Seas, it will be based on feedback from either/or both of the proposed Expert Groups WGMSFDemo (Celtic Seas) or WKIRISH for the Irish Sea. WGINOSE will be encouraged to apply the same strategy, and WGIBAR, WGINOR, and WGEKOMEDA will be asked if they would like to consider this in outline.

Discussion:

The science side needs to set up a process to ensure that science developments within the integrated ecosystem assessment groups can feed into the advisory process. This should be a joint process, run from both the science and the advisory processes. Demonstration cases are being developed but slowly. Lack of resources is a key reason for this, but also lack of a framework that facilitates cooperation. A recent example was the case with the Baltic cod assessment in 2014 and the following benchmarking in 2015. The issues were clear but there were no resources available to tackle them within WGIAB – this will hopefully be expedited by proposals for a dedicated workshop process linked to WGIAB in 2015. We need to move away from the idea that advice can only be quantitative, as when advising on e.g. single stocks. In the early stages of developing integrated advice will likely be qualitative and based on expert judgement. It is important to identify what knowledge is needed for the advisory process and then try and develop it. Taking an example for the issue of resources and workloads on the science side, WGITMO is still struggling to finalise an advisory request. How will groups divide up their time to do science and do advice? Many of the groups are still developing the science for IEAs.

A general comment from an academic point of view and an interdisciplinary group at the university, it takes a lot of goodwill and time, to actually come in from different disciplines and really understand and work with each other. ICES is at a good point with a lot of goodwill and people trying to develop methods, but we cannot rush it too much, this will only lead to frustration.

Specific proposal for discussion

The WKRISCO meeting was the first opportunity for IEA groups to share experiences and issues in a more extensive forum than is possible at ICES ASC. All IEA EG chairs who attended felt that this was a useful exercise and should be repeated. The aim would be to have presentations from each of the SSGIEA groups, on their progress, problems, ideas and innovations and to look at what each group could gain from the others. This could be held alongside (before or after) the ICES ASC, however, while this reduces the travel costs, it would make for a very long meeting for many of the participants. An alternative would be to set this up as a workshop at the ICES HQ or another suitable venue, but away from the ASC.

As well as a simple exchange of ideas, SSGIEA would aim for tangible products from such a meeting. Two possibilities were identified:

- Produce a manuscript on the issues surrounding IEA and the way forward – covering both ecosystem AND human wellbeing, possibly as a food-for-thought paper in ICES JMS.
- Develop a position paper on a possible future H2020 project call in the arena of IEAs. The EC is currently consulting with Member States on future calls and this would be an ideal time to make such an approach.

WGMARS has addressed a recommendation to SSGIEA. They are suggesting setting up “Stakeholder interactions case studies” as a way to involve the stakeholders. Case studies will be evaluated and analysed by measuring a “happiness index” representing the quality and utility of the interaction from both the stakeholder(s) and scientist(s; including ICES as an institution) perspectives. The outcomes of the analysis will be used as a basis for advising on specific progressive improvements that promote engagement where it is needed.

This might be a constructive way for the group to take their work forward and link to the social dimensions. Missing is ‘are they doing it in a way that the stakeholders like?’. Constructive way of taking their work forward and linking to the social dimensions.

11.1.1 Secretariat activities in relation to IEAs

Mark Dickey-Collas gave an update on recent activities of the ICES Secretariat on IEA/ecosystem approach. In autumn 2014 and spring 2015 the ICES Secretariat continued the development of products for the IEA. These were both developed in-house (DATRAS, LFI, standard graphs, ecosystem overviews) and using external projects and institutions (operational oceanographic products and services with MyOcean, Emodnet-biology/SAHFOS and IMR). It was emphasised that the ongoing activities in-house are all interlinked with the activities in SSGIEA. The list of activities was presented and included MSFD review of descriptors, EU MSFD cross cutting issues workshop and D3 workshop, data base and operationalising eutrophication (D5) indicators for HELCOM (EUTRO-OPER), ICES WGMPCZM, ETC contribution to EEA development of fisheries and society indicators, Benthic indicators for biodiversity, JMP & BALSAM, OSPAR request on how to handle large amount of observation data, OSPAR request on establishing an International Noise Register (MSFD D11), VMS data for with ICES working groups.

The reporting on the workshops on integration can be found in the reports of WGCHAIRS and HAWG. The ACOM chair emphasized that the fisheries work provides information into the ecosystem approach, and this was acknowledged by Mark Dickey-Collas. Jörn Schmidt commented that it was encouraging to see that there are a lot of different activities and the challenge will be to bring these together. Henn Ojaveer mentioned that the work on invasive species appeared absent from the list, including the Aquanis database, created by the ICES secretariat and updated by WGITMO.

11.1.2 Operational oceanographic Products and Services to ICES

Mark Dickey-Collas gave an update on Operational oceanographic Products and Services to ICES.

The eight submissions was evaluated in October by a panel of independent experts from Europe and North America (Pierre Pepin, Pierre Petitgas, Hjalte Parner, Jörn Schmidt and Paula Fratantoni).

The submitters were informed of the decision on 12 December 2014 and the three successful proposals were sent a follow up letter in January 2015. With the ICES secretariat, a team under the leadership of Neil Holdsworth has been set up (from both the science and data departments) to bring about the delivery of OOPS. Rather than formalising the SLA (service level agreement) from the outset, the successful proposals have been asked to start setting up a case example. This would enable us to see what challenges need to be overcome before we formalise the agreements. We think that this approach would enable us to develop a common language which would lead to a better and more robust SLA once we go fully operational. The initial case examples are:

- MyOcean – Greater North Sea temp & salinity
- EMODnet biology – Greater North Sea copepods
- IMR – Barents Sea temp & salinity

The Secretariat is now in the process of working with each of the organisations.

11.2 SSGEPD

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

The ongoing Science Plan mapping exercise has seen good participation from SSGEPD; 12 out of 21 groups have participated so far. The most popular (best covered) topics were 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 25, 27 and 31. We have to keep in mind that science groups are also contributing to data collection and some have an advisory role. It was also noted that SSGEPD groups worked on topics across the Science Plan, not only those topics (1-9) which most obviously relate to SSGEPD objectives – and indeed this broad range of activity is apparent in the work of EGs falling under other Steering Groups.

It was clear from the exercise that the groups are addressing some of the priority areas related to SSGEPD, but they are also cross-cutting. Clearly the Steering Groups can help EGs with drafting Terms of Reference to ensure that as far as practical, given other objectives and constraints, they address Science Plan priorities.

The evaluation of EGs was also discussed, drawing on the “gut feeling” exercise and an ongoing of EG work within SSGEPD by the core group, noting that ideally EGs need to be evaluated in relation to successful completion of their Terms of Reference and associated deliverables. Considering both the difficulties some groups have in attracting sufficient and suitable members, and the need to be able to evaluate EG work, generic suggestions included:

- More active steering in terms of coordination of activities, and refining of ToRs
- Encouragement of focused sub-group meetings, including virtual meetings, to address specific ToRs
- Focus of deliverables more on peer-reviewed publications
- Separation of advisory and science roles into different EGs.
- Find ways to ensure national financial support for attendance of all EG members

Short updates

WG HABD has been earlier given ICES endorsement for the Scientific Symposium on Harmful Algal Blooms and Climate Change

WK BECEEL had a setback in that both proposed chairs were unavailable

WG ZE has been planning the 6th Zooplankton Production Symposium

Relevant to WG CEPH but produced independently, CRR324 described cephalopod paralarvae in the Mediterranean. A 300+ page CRR from WG CEPH is in press.

Proposed closure of SIBAS and relation to future work of WG BIODIV

In relation to the proposed closure of SIBAS and a vision to transfer work to WG BIODIV, the outgoing Chair of WG BIODIV has expressed concern that “WG BIODIV would not be

able to take on the SIBAS work". However the incoming WGBIODIV Chairs had not commented on this yet.

During the discussion, a suggestion was made that WGBIODIV could be a super group pulling together the work done in other groups. WGBIODIV is an important group within SSGEPD and SSGEPD could become the new focal point for biodiversity in ICES.

The SIBAS scope was quite regional, but the OSPAR approach is not the only way. This needs to be addressed when reviewing the WGBIODIV Draft ToRs in September. SCICOM should also encourage a broader regional coverage in terms of membership. The regional focus so far has been the result of participation.

SSGEPD Leadership.

SCICOM was informed that Graham Pierce will complete his four-year term by the end of this year (2015). A call for nominations for a new SSGEPD Chair will be sent by the secretariat. SCICOM nominations for new chair are welcome.

Daniel Duplisea brought forward Ellen Kenchington from Canada as a potential candidate. SCICOM welcomed the nomination and asked Daniel to formalise a nomination for Ellen Kenchington.

11.3 SSGEPI

Henn Ojaveer reported from Steering Group on Ecosystem Pressures and Impacts (SSGEPI).

ICES-ICCAT cooperation

WGMG. SCICOM was informed that Arni Magnusson has agreed to act as interim chair of WGMG. There is a draft plan to establish a joint ICES/ICCAT methods working group. The new group will hopefully meet in 2016, WGMG will not meet this year as an ICES group.

The following comments were made:

- Formalities and procedures of establishing a joint group with ICCAT needs to be further specified.
- ICES needs should be further discussed, and it should be clarified how that is relevant to stock assessment activities in ICES. WGMG has been a home for the stock assessment methods scientists, but has not succeeded in getting sufficient attendance and therefore there are problems with science delivery.
- When planning the joint group, we should ensure not to have overlap with WKLIFE. When designing ICES strategy and starting suggesting ToR's, we should bear in mind that nowadays the stock assessment science advances very quickly. Therefore, flexibility in planning activities is very important.
- The SISAM suggestion was to form a Global Assessment Methods Working Group for Sustainable Fisheries (GAME).
- The focus of ICCAT - data-limited species – might be of specific interest for ICES to cooperate on.
- Hosting a workshop was recommended as a way forward. The workshop should discuss aims and strategies and suggest ToR's for the working group to be established.

- It was also suggested that further communication on this issue (incl. with ICCAT) should be continued on the secretariat level.

WGHIST. SSGEPI Chair explained that there seems to be a mismatch between SCICOM expectations and the WGHIST reality. There is a need to establish close cooperation between WGHIST and modelling/long-term time-series analysis EGs (including IEA EGs). SSGEPI recommends continuation of WGHIST.

The following comments were made:

- WGHIST is offering a great opportunity to bring in socio-economics.
- For ICES the ecosystem approach is key in the MSFD, and WGHIST clearly relates to this.
- Participation has been a problem. The group is hoping to solve the problem by organizing joint meetings with the EU COST “Ocean Past Platform” Action.
- The group has achieved a long list of publications, but these are not necessarily research outputs emerging from the group activities. It should be communicated to the EG that credit should be given to WGHIST in this work.
- Is the focus of this group too large? For this group working on time series and assessing reference points is probably a gap. Some interaction between WGHIST and Stock Assessment groups could be a good way forward to have a stock-assessment type approach. Expertise is needed to handle the existing long-term datasets.
- There used to be a statistical working group in ICES; perhaps there is a now need for this group to be re-established?
- It would also be beneficial to have more specialists with expertise in quantifying changes over time into WGHIST.

The SSGEPI Chair will communicate the comments from SCICOM to WGHIST.

WGBOSV and WGITMO. Last year two advisory groups changed home and are now allocated under SSGEPI: ICES/IOC/IMO Working Group on Ballast and Other Ship Vectors (WGBOSV) and Working Group on Introductions and Transfers of Marine Organisms (WGITMO). IOC and IMO involvement in WGBOSV should be clarified, including delivery of contributions to these organisations. It should be ensured that IOC/IMO will not interpret working communication and input from WGBOSV as official ICES advice.

Science Plan mapping exercise. For SSGEPI the feedback success from EGs has been > 50% with 13 EG responses so far. SSGEPI EG’s contribute to 4-19 Science Plan priority areas.

11.4 SSGIEOM

Nils Olav Handegard reported from the ACOM/SCICOM Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Observation and Monitoring (SSGIEOM). SCICOM was informed that the SSGIEOM ACOM co-Chair will retire, and that a replacement from ACOM side needs to be found.

Nils Olav Handegard presented an overview of SSGIEOM groups grouped by Workshops and supporting EGs, Survey planning and operations, Survey development and evaluation, and Survey methods and fishing technology. The subdivision is used in the communication to ensure that EGs are not flooded with information that is not relevant.

Science Plan mapping exercise. There are some activities done by survey and planning groups on the ICES priority areas 25–26, but surprisingly only two groups responded that they deliver to this priority area. There are activities from survey methods and fishing technology groups within priority areas 27–28. Within priority areas 30–31 there is activity by SSGIEOM survey and planning groups.

A task has been initiated to map the SSGIEOM EGs and their ToRs to the information and data they are delivering, and compare this list to that of the secretariat. Seven out of 11 survey groups have responded on this. However, there is a need to formalize this process, and there is a need to work together with, e.g., DIG to set up a framework for data products and needs. Discussion and a way forward should be decided upon by SCICOM. A joint session on this topic has been proposed for the 2015 ASC. PGDATA will also be an important group to address this, and they meet 30 June. The objective is to go through all the benchmark reports to see what data they have requested and used. Going through the list of data calls is a good idea. It might also be an idea to align the PGDATA activities with WGISDAA since they cover similar topics. The ACOM Chair raised the issue that for some groups (not all) late data delivery is a problem, as well as corrections of data late in the process. Streamlining this process is important, e.g. by moving to regional databases, is important.

WKSUREQ has taken up the discussion of how to implement new technology/methods/data collection and there is also a theme session proposal addressing the issue.

AtlantOS is a H2020 project that several of the EG within the SSG is involved with, and the objective is to develop data processing software for acoustic data and enable the ICES data centre to host data from acoustic surveys. Together with data centre and WGIPS the aim is to set up a structure to host data and processing software, and there is funding through the ICES budget to bring in other WGs responsible for acoustic surveys.

11.5 BSG

Jörn Schmidt reported from the ACOM/SCICOM Benchmark Steering Group (BSG). This Steering Group (SG) differs from other SGs in having no specific multiannual Expert Groups under its umbrella, but works through facilitating communication and targeted workshops. Membership has been hand-picked and currently encompasses 25 members.

The Benchmark Steering Group (BSG) has a vital function in ensuring the effective transfer and application of innovative and relevant science into sound, credible, and responsive advice.

The work has been organised in tasks, each with one member having the lead. BSG has looked at the existing benchmark process and in particular how to include mixed fisheries, multispecies and ecosystem considerations. The current tasks are:

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

Short report on progress on these tasks:

- 1) an extensive evaluation has been done by the subgroup and a flow diagram and guiding document has been prepared for the assessment groups. Key to success is preparation!
- 2) The first meeting of PGDATA will be early July. ToRs have been developed in tight communication with BSG.
- 3) WKRISCO has taken place in November 2014 and some preliminary conclusions are:
 - a. IEA groups are mainly in an exploratory phase of data collection and method testing
 - b. They are pure science groups and their priorities reflect this
 - c. There is still the need to clarify roles and expectations
 - d. IEA groups themselves proposed to have more joint workshops, e.g. focused on methodological exchange, data collection...
 - e. The scoping with HELCOM, OSPAR and EEA in WKRISCO was seen as very useful
- 4) The idea is to explore the possibilities for integration by sending experts from the bycatch group into the relevant assessment groups, aiming to prepare a demonstration advice to be presented to ACOM in December 2015.
- 5) First work steps have been undertaken and it will be further explored how to share work between WGSAM (multispecies models) and WGIPEM (ecosystem models).
- 6) The meeting of WGISDAA in 2015 suffered from low participation, but the chair is in personal contact with relevant expert groups.

Preparation is the key to success, when doing benchmarks. A good example is 'regional ecosystem benchmarks'. What do we understand by regional ecosystem benchmark? This could be a process aiming for better integration of *key* regional ecosystem factors (indicators) *relevant to fish stocks / fisheries assessment and advice*.

Regional ecosystem benchmarks could have 3 components:

- (1) Focused process to identify priority ecosystem indicators for assessment and advice for the stocks in the region (could be a workshop similar to WKSIBCA one)
- (2) Data Compilation Workshop for the region
- (3) Benchmark workshop focused on the stocks and fisheries of the region.

And the first example could be an Irish Sea benchmark.

Comments/questions:

SCICOM thanked Jörn Schmidt for a good overview of a complicated process. Is there a way of monitoring the progress of uptake of the science into advice? The current process has not been set up in that way. At the moment the focus is more on knowing that the ecosystem approach is being followed, than to monitor the science uptake.

ICES is relying on the benchmark process to be the way forward for science into advice, but the question of workload is jeopardizing the whole system. To a large extent the benchmark process is relying on intersessional work. There has been a lot of goodwill, but the follow-up has been too little. It is also a matter of prioritisation for the institutes. Instead of calling it a process, we should call it a benchmark project. There are three meetings and hopefully some intersessional work. Maybe we need to rethink how this is set up.

12 Draft resolutions for EG and SSGs and EG Recommendations addressed to SCICOM

12.1 Recommendations addressed to SCICOM

Many Expert Groups include SCICOM into their list of recipients of recommendations. While some of these may be dealt with by the SSGs, others should indeed be brought to the attention of the committee.

The Secretariat presented a list of recommendations addressed to SCICOM (see Annex 3), including suggested actions. SCICOM was requested to take note or appropriate action/decision.

12.2 Draft Resolutions

Category 1: Draft resolutions for publications

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

Alien Species Alert: *Didemnum vexillum*

ICES Phytoplankton and Microbial Plankton Status Report 2011-2013

Handbook of geostatistics in R for fisheries and marine ecology SCICOM approved the three draft resolutions

Decision: SCICOM formally approved the Category 1 resolutions.

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 Methods of Fish Stock Assessment (WGMG)
A workshop has been recommended for approval via the SCICOM Forum.

SSG on Ecosystem Processes and Dynamics (SSGEPD)

- Workshop on Growth-increment Chronologies in Marine Fish: climate-ecosystem interactions in the North Atlantic 2 (WKGIC2)
- Working Group on Resilience and Marine Ecosystem Services (WGRS)
- Working Group on Data Poor Diadromous Fish (WGDAM). New Co-Chair (Lari Veneranta, Finland) approved
- Working Group on Resilience and Marine Ecosystem Services (WGRMES). New Co-Chair (Gonzalo Macho Rivero, Spain) approved.

SSG on Integrated Ecosystem Observation and Monitoring (SSGIEOM)

- Workshop to Plan and Integrate Monitoring Program in the North Sea in the 3rd quarter (WKPIMP)
- Workshop on the review of the ICES acoustic-trawl survey database design (WKIACDDB)
- Working Group of International Pelagic Surveys (WGIPS)
- Working Group on Improving use of Survey Data for Assessment and Advice (WGISDAA). Update of ToRs approved. Please consider good participation for this group. Linkage to PGDATA to be added.

- Working Group on International Deep Pelagic Ecosystem Surveys (WGIDEEPS). New Co-Chair (Benjamin Planque, France) approved.
- Working Group on Atlantic Fish Larvae and Eggs Surveys (WGALES). New Co-Chair (Richard D. M. Nash, Norway) approved.
- Working Group on Nephrops Surveys (WGNEPS). New Chair (Ana Leocárdio, UK) approved.

SSG on Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (SSGIEA)

- Workshop on Spatial Analyses for the Baltic Sea (WKSPATIAL)
- Working Group on Marine Systems (WGMARS)

Decision: All draft resolutions, updates and incoming Chairs were approved by SCICOM.

Approval of two groups based on multi-annual self-evaluation

Working Group on the History of Fish and Fisheries (WGHIST)

The attendance has been low and therefore the activity has not been very high. SSGEPI Chair recommended the continuation of the group.

ToR a has to be stronger – it says tangible benefits, but they only offer two publications. The output and science delivery is a concern. They need to be more proactive and focus those discussions.

Action: Both co-chairs will attend the oceans past conference and they will be approached by SSGEPI Chair there. A new draft resolution should be submitted for approval via the SCICOM Forum.

Working Group on Operational Oceanographic Products for Fisheries and Environment (WGOOFE)

Concern was raised about attendance and the deliveries need to worked on.

SSGEPD Chair will facilitate communication between WGOH and WGOOFE and request that they update their website.

Action/Decision: SCICOM approved continuation of the group, pending updates on deliverables. SCICOM will be informed via the SCICOM Forum.

Draft resolutions for Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiative on the Human Dimension in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (SIHD)

Pending approval. See Section 17.4.

Strategic Initiative on Climate Change Impacts on Marine Ecosystems (SICCME)

The draft resolution reflecting the new leadership (incoming Chair: John Pinnegar, UK) was approved.

Strategic Initiative for Stock Assessment Methods (SISAM)

The draft resolution was approved.

SCICOM Buffet and Bowling at DGI Byen

SCICOM was invited to a foraging trip to the DGI Byen restaurant and subsequent physical exercises which were successfully done.

13 Strategic Initiatives

13.1 SIBAS

SCICOM agreed to formally dissolved SIBAS. SCICOM will look for other outlets for biodiversity issues. Two options have been discussed by SCICOM, i.e. to allocate the SIBAS ToRs to WGBIODIV or to establish a supergroup like WGAQUA.

Action: The Chairs of SSGEPD and SCICOM will continue working on finding a way forward for biodiversity in ICES.

13.2 SICCME

Brian MacKenzie gave a brief update on SICCME activities since the ASC.

The largest event with which SICCME was involved since the 2014 ASC was the organisation and execution of the **3rd International Symposium on the Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans**, March 23-27, 2015, Santos, Brazil. SICCME co-chairs and members were involved with the overall organisation and planning of the symposium (e. g. convenors or members of steering committee), as well as its execution as chairs of several sessions.

The conference was very successful and productive .

Future activities include:

- **World Oceans Day 2015 Celebration**, 8 June 2015, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France. In honour of the United Nations World Oceans Day, celebrated each year on 8 June, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) will organize a full day dedicated to the ocean and its link to the climate system. This event will lead up to the 2015 Paris Climate Conference (COP21). Manuel Barange, representing SICCME, will report on scientific outcomes of the Brazil 2015 conference at a special event for politicians and policy makers (including the French minister of the environment and Prince Albert of Monaco).
- **Our common future under climate change**, 7–10 July 2015, UNESCO headquarters, Paris France. This four-day Conference is the largest forum for the scientific community to come together ahead of the COP21 of the UNFCCC in 2015 . SICCME ex-Chair Manuel Barange and current co-Chair Shin-Ichi Ito will address delegates at a parallel session entitled "Transformative pathways to sustain marine ecosystems and their services under climate change", chaired by Manuel Barange and Luis Valdes.
- **ICES/PICES Workshop on Modelling Effects of Climate Change on Fish and Fisheries (WKSICCME_Project)**, chaired by Francisco Werner (USA), Kirstin Holsman (USA), Michio Kawamiya (JPN), Trond Kristiansen (NO), Myron Peck (DE), and Anne Hollowed (USA), will be held in Seattle, USA, 10–12 August 2015.

SICCME Leadership:

The two ICES co-chairs are scheduled to end their terms during 2015. Manuel Barange will rotate off after the Brazil symposium, and B. MacKenzie will stay on until end of 2015.

Two very qualified candidates, one is John Pinnegar to replace Manuel Barange. SCICOM noted that Myron Peck had showed interest to replace Brian MacKenzie.

Decision: John Pinnegar was appointed as new Co-Chair of SICCME with immediate effect.

13.3 SISAM

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

The first stage of ICES Strategic Initiative for Stock Assessment Methods (SISAM) culminated in a simulation-based workshop to evaluate performance of stock assessment methods and the World Conference on Stock Assessment Methods (WCSAM, 17-19 July 2013, Boston USA) two ICES technical reports and a special volume of the ICES Journal. The second stage of SISAM involves continued coordination with Regional Fishery Management Organizations and national agencies, on the development of “good practice” guidelines. Strategic funding has been secured for SISAM for 2015.

Members of the steering committee formed for the first phase of SISAM and WCSAM (representing many ICES member countries and Regional Fishery Management Organizations) have confirmed their interest in maintaining their leadership roles in the next stage of SISAM.

ICES and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) are developing a partnership for a joint expert group on stock assessment methods. Plans for such a partnership were presented to the ICCAT Methods Working Group (Miami USA, 16-20 February 2015). SISAM will coordinate the development of the plan for implementation in the next year.

Best Practices Guidance

SISAM is convening Theme Session A at the 2015 ASC on “Advancement of stock assessment methods for sustainable fisheries”. The theme session intends to promote the exchange of developments and identification of best practices from ICES assessment groups as well as from regional fishery management organizations, national fisheries agencies, and academic research.

SISAM leadership is involved in several activities developing guidance on best practices for stock assessment methods. For example, the Center for the Advancement of Population Assessment Methodology (CAPAM) will host a technical workshop on “data conflict and weighting, likelihood functions, and process error” (La Jolla USA, 19-23 October 19-23) and there is a proposal for the 2016 World Fisheries Congress.

13.4 SIHD

Jörn Schmidt presented the proposal for a new ICES Strategic Initiative on the Human Dimensions in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (SIHD) outlining the ToRs:

- a) Foster international collaboration with relevant organisations to enhance the capacity within ICES to address the Human Dimension in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments by complementing expertise in natural sciences with humanities and social sciences;
- b) Define and foster research activities on concrete issues to further develop this capacity
- c) Facilitate this research by organizing theme sessions, workshops and conferences over the next 3 years
- d) Synthesize knowledge achieved through experts groups, workshops and symposia in reports, publications and other high level communications.

and overarching goal for the Strategic Initiative:

To explicitly address the Human Dimension in Ecosystem Based Management, not only considering the pressures of human activities on the ecosystem but to take into account social, cultural, economic and governance conditions when assessing the marine system and giving advice on sustainable use.

Inside ICES the Strategic Initiative is linked to WGMARS, WGIMM, WGSEDA, WGRMES, WGMPCZM, WGHIST, WKRISCO and outside ICES we have PICES; EC, EEA, the Regional Seas Conventions, FAO, World Bank, large marine science programs (e.g. IMBER, Too Big To Ignore), International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFET), EAFE, IPBES, where these considerations are taken into account and expertise can be linked to.

SCICOM was informed that at least one year of funding has been secured for SIs. This foresees funding for SIHD, SISAM and SICCME – 45.000 DKK each available to run workshops, etc.

SCICOM noted that a good core group had been established and that it had been very active in the preparations and was very interested in remaining involved. The US offered to add additional membership to the core group.

SCICOM welcomed the initiative to foster human dimensions in ICES, and SCICOM approved the Strategic Initiative in principle, but asked for the following considerations and revisions to be made:

- Have you considered a two-step approach, starting with a scoping workshop and based on that develop the strategic initiative?
- What do you mean by facilitate research in ToR c)? It was clarified that this means “to find ways to bring forward the research”. It was suggested to expand to say “facilitate and disseminate”.
- For SISAM the key to success was that it has been extremely well-defined. It was felt that for SIHD the outcome was not as tangible and therefore more difficult to understand and thus scoping would be good before establishing the actual SI.
- More strategy needed in the ToRs and it was therefore recommended to move up some of the text from the Supporting Information.
- For SISAM the key to success was that it has been extremely well-defined. It was felt that for SIHD the outcome was not as tangible and therefore more difficult to understand and thus scoping would be good before establishing the actual SI. SCICOM recommended a clear focus for SIHD.

Decision/Action: SIHD was asked put forward a revised draft resolution based on the comments and suggestions made by SCICOM and in particular to provide a clearer strategy and focus. The SCICOM and ACOM Chairs should be consulted via WebEx and subsequently the new version of the draft resolution, including proposals for SIHD Chairs, should be posted on the SCICOM and ACOM fora before the end of May.

14 Update on ICES communications products

ICES Communications Officer, Terhi Minkkinen gave an update to SCICOM on ICES communications products. SCICOM was encouraged to use and share ICES brochures which are available and easily accessible online.

Scientific work, reports and news in general are shared via Expert Group pages on the ICES website (www.ices.dk/groups), the news page and the e-newsletter (www.ices.dk/news).

The newsletter is published six times a year, featuring a “guest” article in each issue. ICES has also introduced a blog “In other words” (<http://ices.dk/news-and-events/Blogs/In-otherwords/default.aspx>) where scientific jargon is explained by our experts.

All news items, as well as event, training course, etc announcements are shared via social media (Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter). All SCICOM members were encouraged to sign up to follow ICES on social media – and to share ideas with the ICES Communications team.

A suggestion was made to make a user survey of the “new” ICES website. Terhi Minkkinen welcomed the idea which would be added to the communications workplan, possibly for next year. When the website was launched, the communications department received a lot of feedback and questions, but this has slowed down significantly from the beginning.

A suggestion was made to display the Twitter feed on the website front page – this way you always have something new on the main webpage, and it gives a sense of activity.

15 Review of ASC business model and format

A subgroup consisting of Pierre Petitgas (Chair), Jan Jaap Poos, Antonina dos Santos, Myron Peck, Eskild Kirkegaard, Jörn Schmidt and Dave Reid was established by SCICOM in September 2014 and has worked by correspondence to review the ASC business model and format.

The starting point to establish the group was 1) concern that hosting the ASC has become a financial burden for an ICES member country, and 2) the schedule of the ASC has developed into many conflicting business meetings and science sessions. The Chair of the SRGASC presented the results of the group and the discussion during the Bureau meeting in February. SCICOM members were invited to provide their views on the future format of the ASC based on the work of SRGASC and Bureau recommendations. He presented a table based on the documents used by SRGASC which summarized the proposals for a future format of the ASC:

Purpose	Event	Proposed Change
Increase networking	Long lunch breaks	
Separate Business from Science	Lunch meetings	Scicom/Acom to take action
Engage science community	Theme sessions. Convenors may use: keynotes, talks, short talks, posters, discussion, panels, ...	Duration: 2 days max Oral presentation of posters; Session discussion
	Publication in IJMS	Scicom to secure a mechanism
	Plenary keynotes	On last day also
	Project presentations (EU, ICES Fund, ...)	Can be implemented during lunch meetings
		Games?
Engage students	ECS mentoring	Publication in IJMS of special features
Engage managers, stakeholders	Panel discussions Lunch meetings	Scicom/Acom to choose hot topics
Increase impact	Co-sponsored sessions with stakeholders/society	Scicom/Acom to choose hot topics
	Press	Topical press conferences

Purpose	Event	Proposed Change
Business model	Increase fee	Increase fee to 195 EUR Change cost split-key (Council to agree)
Understand behaviour of participants		Questionnaire (Annex 5) Count participants in sessions
Use of ASC after it has ended	ASC highlights at the closing	Make sure convenors provide highlights
Shorter/snappier opening and closing		Opening shortened and starting on monday-am All awardees on stage together at closing
Monday morning		Scicom monday-am sessions moved to another slot

There were views in favour of the traditional way of running a theme session but SCICOM also welcomed future alternative and innovative proposals. Convenors will be explicitly encouraged to seek alternatives in the guidelines but also in the standard letter. Currently

they have the option to choose their way of running a session and they are not encouraged to a specific traditional model.

Publication of papers in the IJMS was discussed. Until some years ago Elsevier had made provision for a suite of papers to be published, but there was never a sufficient number of papers qualified for this. In addition, there may be conflicts with other journals and results were published previously or are in press elsewhere. Some conveners organize special issues of journals including the IJMS.

The General Secretary thanked the group for its comprehensive work. She suggested to work the main suggestions into different scenarios. One could include increasing the registration fee, while another scenario is to shorten the meeting overall. In general she suggested get greater engagement of projects.

The idea of re-swapping the Monday arrangements and do the opening in the morning with subsequent sessions and SCICOM open sessions into the afternoon was welcomed. This sequence provides better opportunities for announcing the SCICOM open sessions and is also likely to generate more attendance to those.

Electronic posters were discussed as an alternative to the conventional poster boards. However there was recent experience from the WFC and electronic posters did not work well. There was limited space, and there were large video screens, but browsing the posters was not easy.

The idea of making more use of panel discussions to deal with topics was debated. In a large audience it needs a skilled moderator to have a successful panel discussion. SCICOM and SRGASC should invest thinking into increased active involvement of participants.

The draft questionnaire (by Myron Peck) is available and will be sent to 2014 participants and, based on the feedback, perhaps modified and handed out to 2015 participants.

The increase of the registration fee was discussed and SCICOM felt that a careful balance needs to be struck between generating the increase in income for the host country and not preventing early career scientists and students from participating.

Next Steps

- SRGASC to examine what changes can be implemented in 2015 already;
- SRGASC to develop a plan of action;
- Provide feed-back to the June Bureau on options for new formats
- SCICOM in September to agree on a new format

Decisions:

- For future years the opening ceremony should be held in the morning of the first day with theme sessions following the opening ceremony, and SCICOM open session on the afternoon.
- SCICOM decided for a one-third increase to 195 Euro regular (early bird) fee and recommended to Bureau to consider a change in the cost-split key towards assigning a 50 percent share to the host country.
- Give more flexibility to conveners
- Clear information to conveners about theme session format, i.e. allowing a panel discussion as part of the theme sessions, topical speakers and other, innovative ways
- Limit the duration of sessions to two days

16 ASC 2015 – Conference programme

16.1 Update from Conference Coordinator

The Head of Science Programme, Adi Kellermann, presented Doc 30, and gave an outline of the programme and the logistics for the 2015 Annual Science Conference to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from Monday 21 September to Friday 25 September. The venue will be the DGI Byen, located in the city centre.

This year the ASC is hosted by the Secretariat which means we are dependant on external funding. Carlsberg has signalled that they are willing to fund the ASC and the City of Copenhagen has offered to sponsor the conference Opening Reception, including refreshment and the famous “city hall pancakes”. Applications for funds are pending, with the AP Moeller Maersk foundation, the Vestas foundation, the Torm foundation the COOP fund and the Danish Ship owners Association.

Action: Good ideas for funding (and not necessarily stemming from Denmark) are welcome and can be sent to anna.davies@ices.dk.

This year the opening ceremony will be shorter than in previous years with approx. duration of one hour. For part of the week five theme sessions will run in parallel. The welcome reception will be held on the Tuesday, and therefore the Poster Session will be held on the Wednesday.

A project market place will be introduced with events starting on Monday and culminate on Wednesday night right after the poster session. There will be a panel discussion with high-level participation from the commission. One topic will be ICES participation in projects. The following projects were suggested as candidates for the project market place:

- Sea Change
- DISCARDERS Oceans Past platform.
- COPERNIKUS Programme (new satellites to be launched this year (remote sensing))

Another new event is a networking meeting for communications officers from our member institutes.

Lunches are not included in the conference fee. However there will be long lunch breaks planned, so that refreshment can be purchased outside the conference venue and also DGI Byen’s catering department will set up a pre-order system, online and with a booth onsite, to order a packed lunch. Last year in Spain, the two hours lunch-break turned out to be good for spontaneous meetings.

The 2015 ASC website opened in December 2014. The Call for Papers is available online in i-paper format. The deadline for submission of abstracts will be Thursday 30 April. With the aim of reduce the number of no-shows in the programme, presenters will be asked to register for the ASC before 1 July 2015. ICES will be flexible with refunds for those who registered before 1 July but later on were not granted travel funds from their institute.

ICES will not print the big handbook; the conference handbook will be available online as i-paper. ICES will also discontinue handing out the abstracts on USB which instead will be available online. There will be a hard version of the conference programme as a small tri-folder. The Secretariat will produce a mobile-friendly version of the ASC website, instead of a mobile app.

In 2014, ICES piloted a number of Early career scientists events at the ASC. The aim was to give newcomers and early career scientists a more inclusive ASC experience.

- **Early Career Scientists bus stop** – SCICOM and ACOM members are asked to set aside some of their time at the Welcome Reception to talk to ECS and explain a little about how both committees and ICES as an organization works.
- **Early Career Scientists career chat** – An informal lunchtime session where an invited number of senior scientists speak briefly about their career paths, and then have one-to-one or small group discussions on various careers.
- **Early career mentoring programme** – All ECS travel fund recipients will be invited to take part in a mentoring programme. Participants will be assigned to a group that have similar research interests and the chosen mentors will act as their group's guide to ICES and the ASC.
- **Local student event** – An additional event in 2015 will be a half-day programme for local students. The aim is to introduce ICES to a new audience.

On 17 February, ICES received a formal invitation to hold the ASC 2016 in Riga, Latvia. The ICES secretariat will work together with Georgs Korņilovs, Latvian delegate, towards a successful conference in September 2016.

16.2 Review of Merit Award Selection process

A subgroup consisting of the previous chairs of the Award Selection Group (Olafur S. Astthorsson, Jörn Schmidt, Myron Peck, Nils Olav Handegard) had met by correspondence to describe the working procedures of the ICES Award Selection Group (ASG). Olafur Astthorsson presented Doc 31, Award Selection Process for ASC Merit Awards.

Decision: SCICOM welcomed and adopted the document outlining the Award Selection Process for ASC Merit Awards.

16.3 Appointment of ASC 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 are five parallel sessions, and ideally there should be two people in each session.

Action: Brian MacKenzie, (Chair), Daniel Duplisea, Olafur Astthorsson, Antonina dos Santos, Tom Noji, Laura Uusitalo and (ACOM member to be announced), were appointed for the 2015 ASC Award Selection Group.

16.4 ASC 2016 Theme Session Group

The call for Theme Session proposals for the ASC 2016 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.

Call for ASC theme session proposals to ICES strategic partners

The call for theme sessions proposals is sent to the ICES community, but wouldn't it also be good to send it to our strategic partners? This would be a good way to advertise the ASC and gather this group and attract broader participation at the ASC. There be traditional theme sessions, but we can also arrange panel discussions with clients or strategic cooperation partners. We would need to take this into account when phrasing the call for theme session proposals.

The strategic plan should remain the decisive factor when deciding on the final package of theme sessions. The outreach should not be interpreted as an invitation; all proposals will be evaluated by SCICOM.

HoS suggested that SCICOM could go a step further and make a proactive decision on which strategic theme session proposals to encourage. This could be based on our deficits and what would we like to cover in terms of the Science Plan. This could be linked to the mapping exercise.

Can we set up a process on the forum, looking into specific areas, where to send out a note? In the name of integration, we should also invite ACOM to contribute.

Action: Georg Kornilovs (Chair), Jörn Schmidt, Antanas Kontautas, John Pinnegar, Nils Olav Handegard, and Graham Pierce were appointed for the pre-selection group for the 2016 theme sessions at the ASC 2015 for final decision by SCICOM.

16.5 Business meetings and open sessions

SCICOM discussed the format and schedule of SCICOM Steering Group meetings, the SCICOM Plenary Session, SCICOM Open Sessions and SCICOM/ACOM business meetings during the ASC 2015.

SCICOM and PUBCOM

No changes or requests for different timing was brought up.

Saturday 19 September	09:00–18:00	Publication/Communications Group
Sunday 20 September	09:00–18:00	Science Committee (SCICOM)
Saturday 26 September	09:00–18:00	

SCICOM Open Plenary

This year the SCICOM Open Plenary session on Monday morning (9:00–10:00) will identify important ecosystem science work done within ICES by region and there will be examples of how ICES adds value to this work.

SCICOM Steering Group meetings

SCICOM was informed that timeslots are available on Monday morning: 10:30–12:00 and on Wednesday afternoon the programme allows for four Open Sessions with two parallel sessions before the coffee break (15:30–16:30) and two sessions after the coffee break and (17:00–19:00).

SSGEPI proposes a session on “Marine ecosystem baselines to be used as the basis for reference points” to be held on Wednesday afternoon for 1½-2 hours.

Marine ecosystem baselines to be used as the basis for reference points

Review the state-of-the-art in the availability of historical baselines and discuss related methodological challenges by major human activities/sectors. Identify major research gaps, both in terms of data needs and methodologies. Discuss research needs in the management context. The following human pressures should be considered: Fisheries, Eutrophication and pollution, Aquaculture, Renewable energy, Sediment extractions, Shipping, and Species invasions. This is a strategic priority area under SSGEPI, and it would be important to

link with the EGs, so they feel engaged. It would also be important to ensure that fisheries-related issues will not dominate the session.

SSGEDP is planning to have a SSGEPD session, dealing with EPD ToRs. The baseline session would be interesting for EPD, and thus it would be important to avoid overlap of these two sessions.

SSGIEOM and BSG are planning to have a joint session on PGDATA and survey groups on Monday morning.

SICCME would like a timeslot on Monday morning, from 10:30–12:00 to give a talk about the Brazil symposium.

Different options for joint sessions across SSGs were brought up, i.e. a joint SSGEPI/SSGIEA or a joint SSGEPI/SSGIEOM session.

Action: SSG and SI Chairs were asked to communicate the titles and preferred timeslots for their open sessions to the Secretariat by 1 May and the final proposals (including agendas) by 15 May.

16.6 Criteria for keynotes

SCICOM members were encouraged to make suggestions for keynote speakers for the ASC 2016. The call for proposals will be officially opened via the SCICOM Forum.

Brian MacKenzie had drafted a set of criteria for selecting ICES keynote and plenary speakers and SCICOM members were encouraged to consider the suggested criteria.

17 Awards Committee

The Chair of the ICES Awards Committee, Pierre Petitgas, informed SCICOM that the Outstanding Achievement Award will be conferred at this year's Annual Science Conference.

SCICOM was encouraged to participate actively in soliciting candidates for these two prestigious awards.

18 Any other business

Some felt that the midterm meeting is too short and does not leave enough time for discussions. The SCICOM Chair brought up the question of the SCICOM meeting format and the possibility of extending the midterm meeting by half a day.

The Secretariat informed the meeting that there is no budget for extending the meeting format and thus the alternative would be to streamline the agenda to move some activities to the forum and to establish more subgroups to engage all members in specific issues.

Action: The SCICOM Chair will bring forward a proposal for a streamlined agenda allowing additional time for strategic discussions.

In comparison ACOM has 2½ days plus 30 webexes.

19 Closure

The SCICOM Chair thanked SCICOM members for their fruitful constructive discussions.

Annex 1: List of participants

List of participants SCICOM 8 – 10 April 2015 Copenhagen, Denmark

(blue = confirmed participants)

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE/FAX/EMAIL
Chair:		
Yvonne Walther	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences Institute of Marine Research Utövägen 5 37137 Karlskrona Sweden	Phone +46 10 478 40 50 Fax Cell: + 46 709 35 92 82/+46 76 126 80 41 Email yvonne.walther@ices.dk
SCICOM Steering Group Chairs :		
Henn Ojaveer (Estonia) SSGEPI Chair and national member, Estonia	Estonian Marine Institute University of Tartu 2a Lootsi EE-80012 Parnu Estonia	Phone +372 443 4456 mobile: +372 5158328 Fax +372 6718 900 Email henn.ojaveer@ut.ee
Nils Olav Handegard, SSGIEOM Chair (and national member, Norway)	Institute of Marine Research P.O. Box 1870 Nordnes 5817 Bergen Norway	Phone +47 55238500 Email nils.olav.handegard@imr.no
Graham Pierce, SSGEPD Chair	University of Aberdeen Oceanlab Main Street AB41 6FL Newburgh, Ellon, Aberdeenshire Scotland United Kingdom	Phone +44 1224 272459 Email g.j.pierce@abdn.ac.uk
Dave Reid, SSGIEA Chair (apologies received, will attend via WebEx on 8 April)	Marine Institute Rinville Oranmore Co. Galway Ireland	Phone +353 91 387431 Fax +353 91 387201 Email david.reid@marine.ie
Jörn Schmidt (Germany), BSG Chair	Christian-Albrechts- University of Kiel Department of Economics Wilhelm-Seelig-Platz 1 24118 Kiel Germany	Email jschmidt@economics.uni- kiel.de
PUBCOM:		
Myron Peck, PUBCOM Chair (Apologies received, will attend via WebEx)	University of Hamburg Institute of Hydrobiology and Fishery Science Olbersweg 24 D-22767 Hamburg Germany	Phone +49(0)40 - 4 28 38 6602 Fax +49(0)40 - 4 28 38 6618 Email myron.peck@uni- hamburg.de
DIG:		
Ingeborg de Boois, DIG Chair	Wageningen IMARES	Email ingeborg.deboois@wur.nl

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE/FAX/EMAIL
(Apologies received, may attend via WebEx)	P.O. Box 68 1970 AB IJmuiden Netherlands	

SISAM and Training

Steve Cadrin (Chair Training Group) (Apologies received, may attend via WebEx)	Steven Cadrin University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Department of Fisheries Oceanography 200 Mill Road, Suite 325 Fairhaven MA 02719 United States	Phone +1 508 9106358 Fax +1 508 9106396 Email scadrin@umassd.edu
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Ex officio:

Anne Christine Brusendorff, ICES General Secretary	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea H. C. Andersens Boulevard 44-46 1553 Copenhagen V Denmark	Phone 33386701 Email anne.christine@ices.dk
Eskild Kirkegaard, ACOM Chair	Eskild Kirkegaard DTU Aqua - National Institute of Aquatic Resources Jægersborg Allé 1 2920 Charlottenlund Denmark	Phone +45 35 88 30 10 Fax +45 Email eskild.kirkegaard@ices.dk

National members and alternates:

Steven Degraer (Belgium) will attend on 8 April only.	Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (MUMM) Gulledelle 100 B-1200 Brussels Belgium	Phone +32 27732103 Email S.Degraer@mumm.ac.be
Daniel Duplisea (Canada)	Fisheries and Oceans Canada Institut Maurice-Lamontagne, Mont-Joli, QC, Canada G5H 3Z4	Phone: (418) 775 0881 daniel.duplisea@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Brian R. MacKenzie (Denmark) (SICCME Chair)	Brian R. MacKenzie DTU Aqua - National Institute of Aquatic Resources Section for Ocean Ecology and Climate Charlottenlund Slot Jægersborg Alle 1 DK-2920 Charlottenlund Denmark	Phone +45 35883445 Fax +45 3588-3333 brm@aqua.dtu.dk

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE/FAX/EMAIL
Henn Ojaveer (Estonia and SSG Chair)	Estonian Marine Institute University of Tartu 2a Lootsi EE-80012 Parnu Estonia	Phone +372 443 4456 mobile: +372 5158328 Fax +372 6718 900 Email henn.ojaveer@ut.ee
Laura Uusitalo (Finland)	Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) Mechelininkatu 34a 00251 Helsinki Finland	Phone + Mobile + Fax + Email: laura.uusitalo@ymparisto.fi
Pierre Petitgas (France and Chair of Awards Committee)	IFREMER Nantes Centre P.O. Box 21105 44311 Nantes Cédex 03 France	Phone +33 240 37 40 00 Fax +33 240 37 40 75 Email pierre.petitgas@ifremer.fr
Jörn Schmidt (Germany and SSG Chair)	Christian-Albrechts- University of Kiel Department of Economics Wilhelm-Seelig-Platz 1 24118 Kiel Germany	Email jschmidt@economics.uni-kiel.de
Ólafur S. Astthórsson (Iceland)	Marine Research Institute Skúlagata 4 IS-121 Reykjavík Iceland	Phone +354 5520240 Fax 3545623790 osa@hafro.is
Niall Ó Maoiléidigh (Ireland) (may have to leave Thursday evening)	Marine Institute Fisheries Ecosystem Advisory Services Farran Laboratory Furnace Newport Co. Mayo Ireland	Phone +353 9842300 Fax +353 9842340 Email niall.omaileidigh@marine.ie
Georgs Kornilovs (Latvia)	Institute for Food Safety, Animal Health and Environment (BIOR) 8 Daugavgrivas Str. Fish Resources Research Department 1048 Riga Latvia	Phone +371 76 76 027 Fax +371 762 6946 Email georgs.kornilovs@bior.gov.lv
Antanas Kontautas (Lithuania)	Klaipeda University Coastal Research and Planning Institute Herkaus Manto str. 84 92294 Klaipeda Lithuania	Email antanas.kontautas@ku.lt
Jan Jaap Poos (the Netherlands)	Wageningen IMARES P.O. Box 68 1970 AB IJmuiden Netherlands	Phone +31 317 487 189 Fax +31 317 480 900 Email Janjaap.Poos@wur.nl
Nils Olav Handegard	Institute of Marine Research	Phone +47 55238500 Email

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE/FAX/EMAIL
(Norway and SSGIEOM Chair)	P.O. Box 1870 Nordnes 5817 Bergen Norway	nils.olav.handegard@imr.no
Dariusz Fey (Poland) Apologies received.	National Marine Fisheries Research Institute ul. Kollataja 1 81-332 Gdynia Poland	Phone +48 58 735 61 30 Email dfey@mir.gdynia.pl
Antonina Santos (Portugal, member)	Portuguese Institute for the Sea and the Atmosphere (IPMA) Avenida de Brasilia 1449-006 Lisbon Portugal	Phone +351 21302 7000 Email antonina@ipma.pt
Oleg Lapshin (Russian Federation)		
Maria Begoña Santos (Spain, Member)	Instituto Español de Oceanografía Centro Oceanográfico de Vigo P.O. Box 1552 36200 Vigo (Pontevedra) Spain	Phone +34 986492111 Email m.b.santos@vi.ieo.es
Mats Svensson (Sweden)	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management PO Box 11930 40439 Göteborg Sweden	Email mats.svensson@havochvatten.se
John K. Pinnegar (UK)	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) Lowestoft Laboratory Pakefield Road NR33 0HT Lowestoft Suffolk United Kingdom	Phone + 44 1 502 524 229 Email john.pinnegar@cefas.co.uk
Thomas Noji (USA)	NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fisheries Science Center 74 Magruder Road Sandy Hook NJ 07732 United States	Phone 1 732 872 3025 / 24 Fax 1 732 872 3068 Email thomas.noji@noaa.gov

Annex 2: Actions and decisions

ITEM NO.	ACTIONS AND DECISIONS	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
5	<p>SCICOM Forum Evaluation. Action: SCICOM requested Secretariat/IT to look into shortcomings identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not possible to see how many people viewed a post. This would be a useful feature to get a better idea how many members actually review the posts. • There is no 'I approve' button. • The alert for comments only links to the actual comment and not to the post. • It is sometimes difficult to get an overview of the posts on the main page. 	Secretariat/IT	September 2015
6.1	<p>Data and Information Group (DIG) It was agreed to renew the Action: The DIG Chair invited SCICOM to review the Joint Declaration of Data Citation and to endorse the 8 principles. SCICOM members were also invited to give feedback on how to achieve that credit is given to the originators for data (also) stored at ICES. Secretariat will seek endorsement from SCICOM via the SCICOM Forum.</p>	SCICOM members	Completed.
6.3	<p>ICES Training Group Action: ITG will recommend new chairmanship to SCICOM in September.</p>	ITG	September 2015
7	<p>ICES Science Fund Decision: SCICOM approved the shortlist recommended for approval with the addition of one proposal from Category 2, Proposals for discussion. A total of 7 proposals were approved. The Secretariat will inform the successful and unsuccessful proposals.</p>	Secretariat	Completed.
9	<p>ICES cosponsored symposia. Symposium on the 9th International Conference on Marine Bioinvasions. Decision: The draft resolution for cosponsorship was not supported by SCICOM. WCRP CLIVAR (Climate and Ocean: Variability, Predictability and Change) Open Science Conference, September 2016. Decision: The draft resolution for cosponsorship was not supported by SCICOM.</p>	–	–
10.2	<p>Evaluation of EGs under mult-annual ToRs. Decision: For future evaluations, the EG self-evaluation should be posted on the Forum for digestion. SCICOM could use the same approach as for the Science Fund. Some groups will continue and may not need much discussion, while others will need more attention/discussion in SCICOM before approving continuation.</p>	Secretariat	New procedure to be noted.

12.2	<p>Draft Resolutions</p> <p>Decision: SCICOM formally approved the Category 1 resolutions</p> <p>Decision: All proposed draft resolutions, updates and incoming Chairs were approved by SCICOM.</p> <p>Working Group on the History of Fish and Fisheries (WGHIST)</p> <p>Action: Both co-chairs will attend the Oceans Past conference and they will be approached by SSGEPI Chair there. A new draft resolution should be submitted for approval via the SCICOM Forum.</p> <p>Working Group on Operational Oceanographic Products for Fisheries and Environment (WGOOFE)</p> <p>Action/Decision: SCICOM approved continuation of the group, pending updates on deliverables. SCICOM will be informed via the SCICOM Forum.</p>	Secretariat/SCICOM	Intersessional approval via SCICOM Forum (WGOOFE and WGHIST)
13.1	<p>SIBAS</p> <p>Action: The Chairs of SSGEPD and SCICOM will continue working on finding a way forward for biodiversity in ICES.</p>	SCICOM Chair, SSGEPD Chair	Intersessionally.
13.2	<p>SICCME</p> <p>Decision: John Pinnegar was appointed as new Co-Chair of SICCME with immediate effect.</p>		
13.4	<p>SIHD</p> <p>Decision/Action: SIHD was asked put forward a revised draft resolution based on the comments and suggestions made by SCICOM and in particular to provide a clearer strategy and focus. The SCICOM and ACOM Chairs should be consulted via WebEx and subsequently the new version of the draft resolution, including proposals for SIHD Chairs, should be posted on the SCICOM and ACOM fora before the end of May.</p>	Jörn Schmidt/Secretariat	Intersessional approval via SCICOM Forum
15	<p>Review of ASC business model and format</p> <p>Decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For future years the opening ceremony should be held in the morning of the first day with theme sessions following the opening ceremony, and SCICOM open session on the afternoon. • SCICOM decided for a one-third increase to 195 Euro regular (early bird) fee and recommended to Bureau to consider a change in the cost-split key towards assigning a 50 percent share to the host country. • Give more flexibility to conveners • Clear information to conveners about theme session format, i.e. allowing a panel discussion as part of the theme sessions, topical speakers and other, innovative ways • Limit the duration of sessions to two days 		
16	<p>ASC 2015 – Conference programme</p> <p>Action: Good ideas for funding (and not necessarily stemming from Denmark) are welcome and can be sent to anna.davies@ices.dk.</p>	SCICOM	asap

16.2	Review of Merit Award Selection process Decision: SCICOM welcomed and adopted the document outlining the Award Selection Process for ASC Merit Awards.	–	–
16.3	Appointment of ASC Award Selection Group Decision: Brian MacKenzie, (Chair), Daniel Duplisea, Olafur Astthorsson, Antonina dos Santos, Tom Noji, Laura Uusitalo and (ACOM member to be announced), were appointed for the 2015 ASC Award Selection Group.	–	–
16.4	ASC 2016 Theme Session Group Decision: Georg Kornilovs (Chair), Jörn Schmidt, Antanas Kontautas, John Pinnegar, Nils Olav Handegard, and Graham Pierce were appointed for the pre-selection group for the 2016 theme sessions at the ASC 2015 for final decision by SCICOM.		
16.5	Business meetings and open sessions Action: SSG and SI Chairs were asked to communicate the titles and preferred timeslots for their open sessions to the Secretariat by 1 May and the final proposals (including agendas) by 15 May.	SSG and SI Chairs	
17	AOB. SCICOM Meeting Format. Action: The SCICOM Chair will bring forward a proposal for a streamlined agenda allow-ing additional time for strategic discussions.	SCICOM Chair	September 2015

Annex 3: Recommendations addressed to SCICOM

Group	Recommendation	Action/decision
WGISUR	1. It is recommended that SCICOM investigates the need for Ecosystem survey expert groups (maybe by Ecoregion).	Action: Rather than creating a new layer, establishing an ecosystem survey expert group may be the way forward. Action: SSGIEOM and SCICOM Chair will look into the setup of the current EGs and get back to WGISUR.
WGIPS	14. It is recommended that the Northern Ireland egg and larval time-series be submitted for inclusion into the ICES egg and larval database	Action: ICES Data Centre is ready for the take-up. It is for the UK to deliver the data. Action: Secretariat to get back to WGIPS and UK delegates.
WGNAS	<p>The Working Group recommends the following actions to improve our understanding of salmon bycatch:</p> <p>1.1) Collate all available information on post-smolt and salmon marine distribution, particularly from the SALSEA Merge project.</p> <p>1.2) Collate information of possible interceptive pelagic fisheries operating in the identified migration routes and feeding areas of Atlantic salmon. This would require close cooperation with scientists working on pelagic fish assessments in the relevant areas and provision of disaggregated catch data in time and space which overlap areas known to have high densities of post- smolts or adults.</p> <p>1.3) Review pelagic fisheries identifying important factors such as gear type and deployment, effort and time of fishing in relation to known distribution of post-smolt and salmon in space and time and investigate ways to intercalibrate survey trawls with commercial trawls.</p> <p>1.4) Carry out comprehensive catch screening on commercial vessels fishing in areas with known high densities of salmon post-smolts or adults. This would require significant resources and would need to be a well-coordinated and well-funded programme.</p> <p>1.5) Integrate information and model consequences for productivity for salmon from different regions of Europe and America.</p> <p>The Working Group recommends that the first elements of such a programme could be carried out by a combined Salmon/Pelagic species Working Group. The major element (catch screening) would require some preparation and agreement between NASCO parties and could be conducted as a joint collaborative exercise with cooperation from the pelagic fishing industry.</p>	Action: The suggestion is to put this recommendation on hold pending more specific details from NASCO.

WGPDMO	<p>The WGPDMO noted with concern that some ICES member countries have not provided sufficient resources to support wild fish monitoring programmes, resulting in an insufficient spatial and temporal coverage of fish populations. It was emphasised that this lack of data will affect marine ecosystem health assessments in national and international programmes (e.g. under the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, OSPAR Coordinated Environmental Monitoring Programme (CEMP), and revised HELCOM monitoring programme). Additionally, there is a risk that emerging disease conditions affecting marine fish will not be detected. <i>[Clarification from the Chair: The background to this, is that previously a number of countries e.g. England & Wales, Scotland, Netherlands, Germany and Poland performed monitoring programmes in the North Sea and Baltic Sea. Over the last few years, only Germany and Poland still perform a limited number of cruises monitoring the fish health status. In particular, Scotland and the Netherlands have ceased any monitoring, while England & Wales only perform limited and targeted programmes. All other countries have never performed any monitoring in relation to fish health. The WGPDMO wanted to highlight this, particularly in relation to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive where it now appears that all countries will only perform chemistry based monitoring, with no fish health monitoring programmes. So in effect this recommendation should be brought to the attention of all ICES countries involved in the MSFD.]</i></p>	<p>Ecosystem health indices (MSFD related as well) with no fish disease inclusion Action: SCICOM national delegates to take note and revisit the national monitoring programmes.</p>
WGAQUA	<p>WGAQUA recommends that ICES contact delegates to seek additional representation on WGAQUA for experts on macroalgae aquaculture as well as to seek members from ICES states that are currently not represented in the group.</p>	<p>Action: SCICOM delegates to inquire about/identify national experts on macroalgae aquaculture who can be nominated.</p>
DIG	<p>Clearly communicate to all their expert and working groups that new data (storage) facilities or products the request form as available via http://ices.dk/marine-data/guidelines-and-policy/Pages/Requesting-data-from-ICES.aspx is used. Only in this way can it be assured that requests for new data storage or data products end up in the ICES Data Centre request overview.</p>	<p>Action: SCICOM to take note and SSG Chairs to monitor EGs.</p>
DIG	<p>DIG recommends that PUBCOM, SCICOM and ACOM read the document that lists the principles and after careful thought recommend that ICES endorse these principles (organisational endorsement). (see section 5.2 of DIG 2014 report)</p>	<p>No action. Done.</p>
WKIDCLUP	<p>1. Based on the low agreements during the workshop, it is clear that the identification of clupeoid larvae is difficult and identification should be improved. WKIDCLUP therefore recommends that workshops on fish larvae identification are held regularly (every 5 years) to exchange knowledge and to increase agreement on sample processing and identification of fish larvae. Especially when conducting ecosystem wide surveys it is important to standardize methods and larvae identification.</p>	<p>For SCICOM to note that the clupeoid larvae identification workshop should happen every five years.</p>