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Minutes from the Meeting of the ICES Science Committee (SCICOM)

20 and 26 September 2015



ICES
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International Council for
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1 Opening

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

Apologies for Sunday, 20 September, were received from Daniel Duplisea (Canada) and for Kevin Friedland (US), who were unable to attend the ASC. The US was represented by Tom Noji.

A special welcome was extended to Tom Therriault, PICES Science Board Chair, and Laura Richards, PICES Chairman.

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 (March 2015 and SCICOM Forum)

Most items identified at the previous meeting had been addressed.

- **Evaluation of EGs under multi-annual ToRs.** A new procedure was introduced as a follow up from the last SCICOM meeting. The self-evaluations from EGs were posted on the SCICOM Forum for review and comments prior to the ASC. The SCICOM Chair urged members to be more active when feedback is requested to these self-evaluations.
- **Training Group.** Training Group Chairmanship is up for renewal this year.
- **SICCME.** SICCMME Chairmanship is up for renewal this year.
- **SIBAS.** SIBAS was dissolved at the SCICOM midterm meeting and as a follow-up there was an action item for the Chairs of SSGEPD and SCICOM to continue working on finding a way forward for promoting biodiversity science in ICES.
- **Review of ASC business model and format.** SCICOM was referred to Doc 39 for the conclusions of SRGASC (so far).
- **SCICOM meeting format.** As a follow up to the discussion SCICOM had on streamlining the agenda to allow more time for discussion, this meeting has accommodated ample time for a strategic discussion on new science leadership.
- **Summary of decisions on the SCICOM Forum.** SCICOM Chair presented Doc 5 giving an overview of the items for decision, feedback, and information (**Annex 2**).

4 General arrangements for Annual Science Conference 2015

4.1 Preview of SCICOM Open Sessions at ASC 2015

4.1.1 Monday am

SCICOM Plenary

The SCICOM and ACOM Chairs will focus on future cooperation between science and advice. How is the science that feeds into advice developed, and how do we create the

science that is required for future advice? The Chairs will also give some highlights of recent science and advice.

Bridging the gap between data users and data providers (BSG/SSGIEOM)

The link between data users and data providers has been identified as a bottleneck in our integrated assessment processes. The objective of this joint session is to explore these connections and get feedback from the community with a view to improving the flow of information. The hope is to have some concrete steps in terms of recommendations for DIG, SSGIEOM and BSG after this meeting.

Strategic Initiative on Climate Change and Marine Ecosystems

At this SCICOM Open Session SICCME will present the main achievements of the past year, including summaries of the 3rd Symposium on Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans, SICCME related workshops and projects, and provide an opportunity for discussion of new networking activities.

Ecosystem processes and dynamics

The aim of this session is to discuss future directions for fundamental ecosystem science within ICES, its contribution to the ICES Science Plan, and its role in underpinning advice. There is no theme for the session beyond the updates from EGs.

Integrated Ecosystem Assessment

During WKRISCO the idea of including the human dimension in the IEAs was brought up and one session will focus on how to include the human dimension in IEA, including a presentation on the work being done by ICES Working Group on the Northwest Atlantic Regional Sea (WGNARS) on a conceptual model to combine ecosystem and human dimensions. Conveners of next year's ICES symposium on "Understanding marine socio-ecological systems: including the human dimension in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments", (June 2016, Brest, France) have been invited to present the details of the conference and where SSGIEA groups might fit in. This session will feed into the Wednesday session on Human Dimensions in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments

4.1.2 Wednesday pm

Human Dimensions in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments

This session will inform the community about the new strategic initiative and possible connections to projects and organisations outside ICES. The aim is also to get feedback from the community. There will be a lunchbreak meeting with SIHD members right before the meeting.

Marine ecosystem baselines as the basis for reference points

This joint SSGEPD/SSGEPI session is aiming to review the state-of-the-art in the availability of information on historical baselines and the methodological challenges associated with interpreting historical data, accounting for the different characteristics of different ecosystem components, and the effects of human activities.

What makes a good conference?

Conference participants are invited to attend a brainstorming session on how the ASC can become an even more inspiring and useful conference. The session will discuss features and formats for future ASCs.

4.2 ASC Award Selection Group Process (Best Paper, Poster, Early Career Scientist Awards) – Process

In April 2015 SCICOM appointed an Award Selection Group for the 2015 ASC:

Brian MacKenzie, (Chair), Dariusz Fey, Antanas Kontautas, Olafur Astthorsson, Antonina dos Santos, Tom Noji, Laura Uusitalo and Francisco Velasco (ACOM) were appointed for the 2015 ASC Award Selection Group.

The group is tasked to select the winners of the 2015 ASC Merit Awards (Best Presentation, Best Poster, and three Early Career Scientist Awards). The Secretariat has provided an online nomination tool for conveners to nominate their award candidates.

The Chair of last year's Award Selection Group advised the group member attending the session to approach the conveners before the session starts.

4.3 Chaperoning keynote speakers

SCICOM representatives were appointed as hosts and contact persons to liaise with the keynote speakers.

Begoña Santos and Graham Pierce were appointed as hosts for Ratana Chuenpagdee.

For Henrik Gislason and David Secor, who are already very familiar with ICES no hosts were appointed.

5 Preview of Theme Session proposals for ASC 2016 and suggestions for plenary speakers

In April 2015 SCICOM appointed a subgroup to propose the Theme Session Programme for ASC 2016 to be held in Riga, Latvia, based on the ratings provided by SCICOM members:

Georg Kornilovs (Chair), Jörn Schmidt, Antanas Kontautas, John Pinnegar, Nils Olav Handegard, and Graham Pierce.

21 proposals had been received by the 7 September deadline and new proposals emanating from ASC before Wednesday, 23 September noon would also be accepted and considered.

The Secretariat instructed the subgroup to rank all proposals "business as usual" pending a decision on a new format for future ASCs (which may or may not lead to a reduced number of theme sessions).

Nominations for plenary speakers for the ASC 2016 were invited via the SCICOM Forum with a deadline of 5 October. The final decision on plenary speakers will be made at the SCICOM Skype meeting scheduled for 12 October pm.

6 Presentation of candidates for SSGEPD Chair

The two candidates gave their presentations by Skype and video. The election is scheduled for the SSGEPD presentation on the Saturday agenda.

7 Science Implementation

7.1 Draft Resolutions and recommendations addressed to SCICOM

The Secretariat informed SSG Chairs and SCICOM members of the process and deadlines for finalisation of the draft resolutions.

The review of EG Recommendations addressed to SCICOM was postponed to the Skype meeting on 12 October.

7.2 Evaluation of multi-annual groups

The SCICOM Chair reminded SCICOM of the process as described on the SCICOM Forum:

- EG self-evaluations are performed by EG chairs and uploaded to the SCICOM Forum by secretariat for preview and comments by SCICOM members. The self-evaluation document links to the EG's community page on the ICES website and there the ToRs for the past three-year term are available for reference.
- SSG Chairs will post a recommendation/comment on continuation of the EG via the SCICOM Forum and all SCICOM members are invited to comment via the Forum.
- Formal feedback from SCICOM to the EG will be decided in plenary at the physical SCICOM meeting, and based on this the Secretariat will prepare letters to EG Chair(s) to be signed by the relevant SSG Chair and SCICOM Chair on behalf of SCICOM.
- The newly proposed ToRs (if any) will be dealt with as part of the resolutions package.

The following groups had completed their first three-year term and submitted a self-evaluation:

SSG	ACRONYM	NAME
SSGEPD	WGBIODIV	Working Group on Biodiversity Science
SSGEPD	WGPME	Working Group on Phytoplankton and Microbial Ecology
SSGEPD	WGSPEC	Working Group on Small Pelagic Fishes, their Ecosystems and Climate Impact
SSGEPD	WGCRAN	Working Group on Crangon fisheries and life history
SSGEPI	WGMRED	Working Group on Marine Benthic and Renewable Energy Developments
SSGEPI	WGPDMO	Working Group on Pathology and Diseases of Marine Organisms
SSGEPI	WGVHES	Working Group on the value of Coastal Habitats for Exploited Species
SSGEPI	WGSFD	Working Group on Spatial Fisheries Data
SSGEPI	WGBEC	Working Group on Biological Effect of Contaminants
SSGEPI	WGAQUA	Working Group on Aquaculture
SSGIEOM	IBTSWG	International Bottom Trawl Survey Working Group
SSGIEOM	WGEGBS2	Working Group 2 on North Sea Co and Plaice Egg Surveys in the North Sea
SSGIEA	WGIAB	ICES/HELCOM Working Group on Integrated Assessments of the Baltic Sea

The SSG Chairs presented their groups and all groups were approved by SCICOM for continuation.

Steering Group on Ecosystem Processes and Dynamics (SSGEPD)

The SSGEPD Chair recommended the four groups (WGBIODIV, WGPME, WGSPEC and WGCRAN) for continuation. Specific comments were made on the following group:

WGBIODIV. The attendance in WGBIODIV has not been good and the outgoing chair was not optimistic about the future of the group. SIBAS failed because it was too broad, and there are views that the WGBIODIV topic is too narrow – so there needs to be a compromise! The SSG Chair felt that the group should be given the mandate to continue.

Steering Group on Ecosystem Pressures and Impacts (SSGEPI)

The SSG EPI Chair recommended all six EG's (WGAQUA, WGMBRED, WGPDMO, WGSFD, WGHVES and WGBEC) for continuation based on their self-evaluations, but pointed to the following issues indicated in reports that might deserve attention:

WGAQUA: The expertise of the group does not cover all aquaculture topics that were identified by ICES prior to formation of the group. The report identifies several challenges related to the 3-year management cycle and mostly requires better planning of the work by chairs

WGSFD: There are several important problems listed in the report, all of which are related to data. These concern access, submission, quality and completeness of data.

WGBEC: The group has experienced that the format needed to submit data to the ICES Data Centre seems complicated and would like to have a simplified format or process. The SSG chair will initiate discussion between WGBEC chair and ICES Data Centre to find a solution.

WGVHES: The group published good papers, that have been very useful, some already used at universities.

Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Observation & Monitoring (SSGIEOM)

The SSG Chair recommended both groups in question (IBTSWG and WGEGBS2) for continuation.

IBTSWG. The group coordinates the IBTS survey, and although the self-evaluation is on the short side, this group should continue.

WGEGBS2. There had been some challenges in the workflow between the survey groups and WGEGBS2 that needs attention, but the group represents a nice example of how additional information can be collected on existing surveys. The ToRs need to be worked on, but continuation is recommended.

Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (SSGIEA)

The SSG Chair supported the continuation of WGIAB. This is a good functional group, which clearly needs a new 3 year period. The associated workshops need to materialise.

Citations in self-evaluations

SCICOM discussed what publication types should be listed in the self-evaluations. If a publication is listed it should be clear that it will be mentioned as an ICES-related product. Do we need more information and guidance on which publications to include in the self-evaluations? Some felt that this should be left to the groups, however SCICOM should bear in mind that sometimes even annual reports are quoted.

Action: SSG Chairs should inform EG chairs that the EG members may also list citations in annual reports if relevant to the group.

Evaluation of EG performance and approval of new ToRs – a one or two-stage process?

SCICOM discussed whether it would better to review the new multi-annual EG Draft Resolution in connection with the SCICOM evaluation of the EG performance, since the two are contingent on each other. Some felt that a two-stage process was twice the

work and would prefer to deal with the draft ToRs at the same time as looking at the EG's self-evaluation.

Action: The SCICOM Chair will consider changing the process to become a one one-stage process for review of the EG self-evaluation and review of new multi-annual ToRs.

SCICOM concluded that the process had gone well. The EG Chairs are given an opportunity to communicate good and bad, and this communication would never come through via a draft resolution. The self-evaluation is also an opportunity for the group to ask SCICOM for assistance if there are problems.

Action: The Secretariat will draft a letter for approval by SSG Chairs to be sent to the relevant EG Chairs.

The SCICOM Chair thanked the SSG Chairs for doing a good job.

8 Cooperation with other organisations

8.1 (P)ICES SGSP and initiation of process towards ECSC 2017

PICES is one of our closest and reliable cooperating partner to ICES. The two organisations are complimentary and the joint venture SICCME is doing excellent work.

There were staff changes in the PICES secretariat. In addition to the new Deputy Executive Secretary (Hal Batchelder), the position of the Executive Secretary was filled by Robin Brown.

PICES was represented at the ICES Annual Science Conference and meetings of the ICES Science Committee by Tom Therriault (Science Board Chair) and Laura Richards (PICES Chair).

The P/ICES Study Group on Strategic Planning: Developing a Framework for Scientific Cooperation in Northern Hemisphere Marine Science will meet during the ASC and identify its priorities for the coming years.

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 one workshop at PICES while PICES co-sponsors two sessions of our ASC.

PICES was invited to co-sponsor: 1) PLASTICS open session at 2016 ASC, and 2) Joint PICES/ICES Workshop on Ocean Acidification in 2016 (see Section 17.2).

CIESM

Following up to the joint CIESM/ICES workshop at the 2014 ASC, contacts have been made with the workshop organizers to continue the work. We may have an ICES/CIESM non-indigenous species session at the CIESM conference in Kiel 2016 and potentially tie it to ongoing BONUS activities.

JPI Oceans

HoS participated together with the SCICOM Chair in the kick-off meeting of the JPI, held in Brussels in May 2015.

Involvement of ICES and its mention in the introductory sessions was disappointing. JPI includes joint actions by member countries which are to a certain degree identical with the ICES members. Maybe ICES could be brought in via those joint actions where

a party sees added value via ICES participation. Beyond the JPI Healthy and Productive Oceans there are also JPI Water and the EU Lingua which could be interesting for collaboration.

JPI and EU will do co-funding of projects. The fundamental problem between JPI and ICES is that JPI offers funds for cooperation between member countries on certain topics of common interest while initiating such projects in ICES requires resources without compensation except added values to national labs.

It was mentioned that **Bonus II** is on its way with funding of 200 Mio. Euro for 6 years. The Secretariat informed SCICOM that Bonus II had requested cooperation with ICES, and one first outcome is a joint theme session proposal between BONUS, ICES and HELCOM.

Euromarine

During the EUROMARINE General Assembly in February 2015 the HoS was in exchange with the Portuguese institute representation (based on earlier correspondence) about possible joint ventures with ICES. One of the topics was the use of acoustics for ecosystem research.

ICCAT

SCICOM noted that there have been recent activities on the advisory side to join forces with ICCAT. ICES has been invited to ICCAT meetings and vice versa. A joint Working Group on Methods is in preparation. There are several ICES expert groups with obvious links to ICCAT activities and where cooperation and expert participation between the two organizations would be beneficial:

WGEF - WKSHARK - benchmark process – WGMG

The joint ICES-ICCAT training programme on large pelagic stocks. EU has expressed a wish for ICES to organize a training programme on large pelagics in 2015. ICCAT was very interested and found that this would be an important course to improve the capacity at ICCAT assessment meetings.

Action: The ICES Training Group should investigate the possibility to carry out this course with the ICES Training Programme.

8.2 GEF/LME

The Working Group on Large Marine Ecosystem Programme Best Practices (WGLMEBP) will meet in Unesco HQ, Paris, as part of the 17th Annual LME and Coastal Partners Meeting and this meeting will be followed by the LME-LEARN project kick-off meeting. The meeting will be attended by HoS and ICES Project Coordinator who will chair the LME-Learn Moving forward: Focus on Capacity Development session.

COFASP

HoS explained that COFASP is an ERA-NET on fisheries, aquaculture and sea food processing which plans to have three calls until 2017. The first call was launched in February 2014, and included topics in all three sectors; the second call was launched in February 2015 and closed on 17 June 2015. The third call is planned for 2016.

Case study on regional differences in aquaculture: the COFASP work plan includes case studies as means to promote emergence of joint research programs in fisheries, aquaculture and seafood science; 2 workshops were held in 2015.

Workshop: Towards new solutions on mobility and learning tools for human capacity building on the fisheries, aquaculture and seafood processing chain is planned for October 2015.

8.3 Horizon 2020

The following H2020 projects with ICES participation as partner organization have kicked off in 2015:

- BG8-2014 Developing in-situ Atlantic Ocean Observations for a better management and sustainable exploitation of the maritime resources: ATLANTOS project;
- BG11-2014 Monitoring, dissemination and uptake of marine and maritime research: COLUMBUS project;
- BG14-2014 Supporting international cooperation initiatives: Atlantic Ocean Cooperation Research Alliance: AORAC project;
- H2020-EINFRA-2015-1 E-Infrastructures for virtual research environments: BlueBRIDGE project.

Projects under evaluation (H2020 2nd round, 2nd stage):

- BG1: Improving preservation and sustainable exploitation of Atlantic marine ecosystems (2 competitive proposals);
- BG2: Forecasting and anticipating effects of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture;
- SFS11b: Consolidating the environmental sustainability of European aquaculture.

9 ICES Action Areas

9.1 Arctic

Arctic science arena

Four important meetings were highlighted:

The Arctic Council has launched a new Arctic Marine Strategic Plan 2015-2025. ICES has been invited to the first meeting of the Arctic Council's Task Force on Arctic Marine Cooperation (TFAMC), 21-22 September, Oslo, Norway. ICES General Secretary and also for PICES Tom Therriault (PICES Science Board Chair) will attend.

The Arctic Council will consider the ICES 2014 application for having observer status at the next meeting of the Arctic Council in 2017.

March 14-16, Seattle, USA: 3rd Meeting of Scientific Experts on Fish Stocks in the Central Arctic Ocean. One of the recommendations that came out of this meeting was to develop monitoring programmes for the Arctic and ICES was seen as a long-standing advice-giving organization to be given a prominent role in this area.

Joint meeting of the AC Working Groups ACAP, AMAP, CAFF, PAME, Tromsø, Norway, 15-18 September 2015. This was the first time for the AC Working Groups in 20 years to have a joint meeting, and it was organised to encourage closer cooperation/integration between the groups.

A new joint working group will be established as a follow up of the joint ICES/AMAP/CAFF/PAME Workshop on Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) for the Arctic Ocean (WKICA), which met in Bergen in May 2015. This is a big milestone! The working group links to the Seattle workshop recommendation and there is a strong interest from the USA to make that link. Phil Mundy who chaired the Seattle workshop was also a co-Chair of WKICA.

The ICARP III conference and the (IASC) Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) took place in Toyama, Japan in April 2015. ICES cosponsored two theme sessions. One dealt with human dimensions, and the other was a merger of theme sessions on fishing, shipping and other activities.

Comments/discussion

Some of the Arctic Working Groups had reservations about the new WGICA to attempt a full integrated assessment during its term. They would rather prefer to see a first outline and draft of how an IEA could look like. Consequently, the WGICA ToRs focus on productivity of the Central Arctic Ocean (CAO) and its potential for fisheries, and on invasive species.

There are some overlaps between PAME CAFF and AMAP, but PAME is dealing with human activities. AMAP is the long-standing monitoring programme on contaminants and CAFF is the biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council. PAME and CAFF have clearly stated that cooperation with ICES is an open door for us to come in on several topics, for instance on invasive species.

ICES has a letter of agreement with IASC, but the cooperation has seen limited impetus so far.

9.2 Aquaculture

Aquaculture in COFASP

Case study on regional differences in aquaculture has been exploring the similarities and differences in research priorities between different regions of the areas covered by the COFASP partnership. Two workshops were carried out in 2015 within the aquaculture case study: the outcome of the first workshop was a list of prioritized challenges for both bass/bream and salmon producers within biological, technological and market/societal issues. In the second workshop each of the prioritized challenges were elaborated further in order to deliver detailed input for call descriptions which will serve as contribution to development of the COFASP third call.

Aquaculture in the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance: The AORAC Trilateral WG on aquaculture and ICES are organizing a workshop in Rotterdam in October. The meeting should facilitate consensus around the activities in order to implement well-developed topics (the plan is to close the discussion on priorities pre-defined in the AQ roadmap there and move on). Furthermore, discussions will tackle an inventory of ongoing cooperation initiatives (basing on overview documents like the one on collaborations from the CWGMTC and several COFASP ones) and the establishment and funding of a trilateral aquaculture exchange programme.

9.2.1 Aquaculture dialogue meeting

The ICES Project Coordinator presented Doc 20. Aquaculture is a strategic action area in ICES. To further define ICES focus in this strategic theme area, ICES held an Aquaculture Dialogue Meeting in June 2015 which concluded that ICES has a clear mandate

to provide advice broadly on the environmental impacts of aquaculture, and stakeholders and clients within the ICES area are looking to ICES to provide such advice. ICES role is both in support of sustainable aquaculture, which is dependent on the environment, and to provide scientific advice on potential environmental impacts of aquaculture activities.

The report also provides a table mapping recommendations from the Dialogue Meeting, corresponding ICES deliverables (both ongoing and proposed), and an implementation timeline. Most recommendations are addressed to WGAQUA, some to the AORAC project and four to ACOM.

10 ICES Science Fund

Eight Science Fund projects under the 2014 call had reported to SCICOM by 1 July, except for one report that was given an extended deadline and reported 1 August. SCICOM had established a process for evaluating the reports and a subgroup fulfilled the review process by August 2015. The review addressed the following items:

1. Did the project meet the objectives?
2. Did the methodology fit the objectives?
3. How well is the report presented?
4. How does the project contribute to the ICES Strategic Plan/Science Plan?
5. How can the results be used in the ICES community, create new initiatives?
6. How was the results disseminated to ICES and elsewhere?
7. Links between Governmental and Academic Institutes?

The recommendations of the subgroup were presented to SCICOM. SCICOM noted that it had been a very positive process. The funding was well spent and ICES was appropriately acknowledged in publications.

Decision/Action: SCICOM approved all Science Fund project reports. The Secretariat will convey the good news to all Science Fund coordinators, and the last 20% of the funds will be paid out.

In light of the review of the current business model, funding was only granted for the Science Fund for one year (2015). There was a strong consensus in SCICOM to recommend a continuation of the Science Fund to Council. The following comments were noted:

- For future Science Fund calls it was suggested to have more focused calls, limited to specific areas, addressing specific priorities/goals of the strategic plan, for instance IEA. We want to make the Strategic Plan connection even stronger than it is today.
- The Science Fund is a great opportunity for SCICOM to act as a science funding body and it is very good value for money.
- It was suggested to highlight the science coming out of the Science Fund projects at the ASC Monday plenary or via the ICES website sending a clear signal that these projects were able to demonstrate some interesting results and they were funded by the ICES Science Fund.
- One aim was to bring in the academic community. Has this aim been fulfilled?

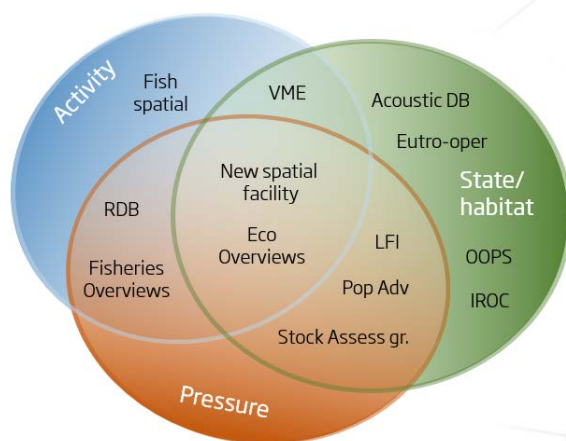
- A full evaluation of the Science Fund was still not possible and considered too early. Council had requested a review as prerequisite for further support. The reports had just come in, the spin-off and full impact of the individual projects are mostly still pending while the 2015 call projects are still carried out.

Action/Recommendation to Council

Action: Funding will be requested from Council for 2016 and a full evaluation will be prepared for the 2016 Council meeting.

11 Provision of automatic data products and services

The ICES Ecosystem Approach Coordinator, Mark Dickey-Collas, presented Doc 18 on Products for the Integrated Ecosystem Approach. The framework for the data products is the ecosystem overviews which are intended to be completed by the end of this year. The data products are automated online systems. For the ecosystem approach, the distinction between fisheries and environmental science is broken down to improve analysis between activity, pressure and state/habitat, all available through the ICES Data Centre: These are the products that are about to be launched, or already available.



The development of all of these products is an iterative process and requires continual dialogue between users and producers to ensure that the products are fit for purpose. The secretariat aims to remain responsive to scientists needs and to work with the community to address forthcoming challenges.

The SCICOM Chair thanked for the presentation and invited comments from SCICOM:

- An idea to connect other data sources to ICES Data Centre (via their APIs/interfaces) so that the user can download all relevant data from this one place. One example where this could be useful is the HELCOM pollution load compilation data in the Baltic.
- ICES is working in partnership with HELCOM OSPAR, EEA and NEAFC. The aim of the presentation is to show that data products are interchangeable but unfortunately not available through one platform.
- Would it be possible to make a map of the pipelines, i.e. methodologies used to produce different products? *Response:* The ICES data policy is to ensure that metadata is in a reasonable format.

- Could the Baltic be included in the VMS (Fisheries spatial data) product? In terms of VMS there will be an annual data call. *Response:* Some countries come back saying that they can't submit data for format reasons.
- Would the spatial facility also have a mapping facility? *Response:* there is already a spatial facility that can visualize things that are there. It has been there for some time.
- One framework taking all the data – activity pressure state – we are trying to fit everything into that format using the spatial facility.

SCICOM members were encouraged to approach the Secretariat for additional information and detail on specific products.

12 SCICOM Operational Groups

12.1 Updated rules for membership and chairmanship

The operational groups have different rules for membership and Chair terms which has led to confusion. The Secretariat had reviewed these rules with a view to providing a harmonized approach to all groups (EGs, OGs, and SIs) as far as possible. However, SCICOM was informed that the review of the rules would be postponed until the SCICOM midterm meeting pending outcome of the process to strengthen the Science Leadership.

12.2 ICES Training Group (ITG)

Steven Cadrin presented an update from the Training Group.

The 2015 ICES Training Programme has completed one training course and another five courses are planned for the autumn season, to take place at ICES Headquarters in Copenhagen:

- Stock Assessment Introduction, 15 – 19 June, ICES, Copenhagen, Denmark (22 participants)
- Opening the box: stock assessment and fisheries advice for stakeholders, NGOs and policy makers, 8-9 October, ICES, Copenhagen, Denmark (15 applicants to date)
- Social science methods for natural scientists, 13-16 October, ICES, Copenhagen, Denmark (11 applicants – tentatively postponed)
- Model development in fish stock assessment: ADMB, TMB, and SAM, 2-6 November, ICES, Copenhagen, Denmark (21 applicants to date)
- Analyzing and visualization of VMS and EU logbook data using the VMS tools R package 9-13 November, 2015, ICES Copenhagen, Denmark (15 applicants to date)
- Fisheries management to meet biodiversity conservation needs, 7-10 December 2015, ICES, Copenhagen, Denmark (9 applicants to date)

The Training Group met during the ASC decided that the following courses would be pursued, with the aim of offering them in 2016. This list is still tentative, pending the agreement and availability of instructors are course facilities:

- **Training Course in the R Environment** (contact Einar Hjørleifsson and Bjarki Þór Elvarsson) (to be reduced from the proposed seven days, to five days)

- **Training course on broadband/wideband acoustics** (contact Dezhang Chu and Verena Trenkel) (pending confirmation of number of participants, and potential additional costs of survey attendance)
- **Data-Limited Stock Assessment** (contact Anne Cooper and Jim Berkson)
- **Management Strategy Evaluation: an Introduction** (contact Carryn Lee Le more and Jose de Olivera)
- **Stock assessment advanced** (Jan Jaap Poos and second instructor TBC)
- **Social Science Methods for Natural Scientists** (Marloes Kraan *et al.*). Suggested to run this course in conjunction with the ICES symposia *Understanding marine socio-ecological systems: including the human dimensions in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments* in May, in France.

The Training Group is thankful to Bureau for granting the equity fund. The funds will help us to balance the budget and we can absorb some losses.

Online training

The Training Group recognizes that participation in courses has decreased, and online training could provide a cost-effective method for reaching a wider audience. The Secretariat staff have visited WMU in Malmo and reported to Training Group on their assessment for the capabilities for online training. The training group has proposed to use part of the income generated by the Training Programme as well as funding granted by the Bureau in June 2015 (100K out of the total of 300K) to develop the course "How to chair a successful technical meeting", run for the first time in 2012 into an online course. By doing so, ICES EG Chairs (current and incoming) may better be able to participate. "Externals" will have to pay a fee taking the course.

Training Group leadership

The Training Group recommended Daniel Duplisea as new Chair of Training Group.

Decision: Daniel Duplisea was approved as new Chair of ICES Training Group.
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Thanks were extended to the outgoing chair for his dedication and good work as Chair of Training Group from 2010 to 2015. Steve Cadrin confirmed that he would like to stay on the group as an active member.

12.3 ICES Data and Information Group (DIG)

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

The Data and Information Group (DIG) met in Copenhagen, 18-20 May 2015 with participation of 15 people representing 9 different countries. ICES Data Centre staff actively participate in DIG meetings.

Data availability in ICES groups

There is limited systematic understanding of what data sources are being used, by whom, quality of data, access to data, and where the gaps in provision of data and data products are. This undermines the advisory process and is likely a cause of inefficiencies and duplication of effort. For this reason DIG has selected 8 ICES Expert Groups which have been asked to fill in an online catalogue with metadata of the datasets/products they use and/or create and/or manage. The information and the process will be evaluated by DIG at their 2016 annual meeting, and subsequently other groups will be asked to add to the catalogue.

DATRAS automated resubmission

Resubmission of data is time-consuming, resulting in differences between the source database and the information in DATRAS. ICES Data Centre and IMARES work together on automated resubmission of data in DATRAS. The facility will be available for other institutes when it is operational. By automated resubmission DATRAS and the institute's database will be identical.

When you re-upload data do you have a unique identifier? Has this issue of version in handling of data sets been solved? Response: the Data Centre is working on it, not sure if it has been solved.

Digital data citation

Minting DOIs by ICES will be possible in due time. DIG and SSGIOEM will discuss how to implement this for survey data series.

Proposal for a training course

SCICOM was informed that DIG is working on the details for a proposal for an ICES training course on how to use specific databases.

12.4 ICES Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM)

The ASC PUBCOM meeting was chaired by Mark Dickey-Collas, ICES Secretariat, following the recent resignation of Myron Peck as Chair. SCICOM thanked Myron Peck for his efforts and leadership during the 2½ years of his tenure as Chair of PUBCOM. A call for nominations for a new PUBCOM Chair will soon be announced.

PUBCOM looked at the ICES Journal for Marine Science (IJMS) and Oxford University Press and found that IJMS is heading in the right direction. IJMS has increased its visibility, it remains competitive and submissions continue to increase (forecast 722 for 2015 v 445 in 2012). The citation impact factor has declined, but is still in the top 10 per cent. IJMS is the largest fisheries journal in terms of submissions.

Despite symposia attracting large numbers of participants (300+), some still result in very few submissions. Acceptance rates also vary greatly between symposia. There is a clear link between motivated conveners and resulting papers in symposia volume.

PUBCOM found that the new system for symposium proceedings is appropriate and *recommends that SCICOM agree with that.*

The OUP contract to publish the ICES Journal of Marine Science is up for renewal 31 December 2016 and a one-year's notice is required should ICES decide not to renew it. *PUBCOM recommended to continue with OUP as our publishing partner.*

Communications

The ICES Communications Officer, Terhi Minkkinen, gave an update from the Communications department. Digital communications play a big role. Social media offers a cheap way of rapidly expanding communications to a large network. ICES communication is focused on LinkedIn (discussions and professional notifications) which now has 5663 members, Facebook (daily activity) which has reached 2015 "likes", and Twitter (followers of ICES account more than doubled in a year, important channel) with 2379 followers. ICES is reaching out beyond the ICES community by using social media.

CRR, TIMES, disease leaflets, survey protocols

PUBCOM discussed the current role of CRRs. They are valuable and provide an outlet for a synthesis of the science, but concern was raised that the niche is narrowing, e.g. scientists are increasingly encouraged to publish in peer-review journals, and it is becoming difficult to secure submissions and finalizing reports with authors

Action: PUBCOM asked SCICOM to consider the rationale/role of the CRRs including a proposal for how to establish a process within SCICOM to identify expert group reports/symposia, etc., that contribute to the implementation of the ICES Strategic Plan, and how to proceed with the synthesis of this information. *SCICOM should consider the need for a strategic review of how to communicate and highlight ICES Expert Group work.*

SCICOM discussion on CRRs:

It would be interesting to measure how often CRRs are downloaded. Unfortunately, retrieving the number of views for CRRs from the website requires an expensive software. Whereas ICES has an amazing ability to appear high up on google searches, the CRR number don't appear in google searches and that's a real problem. Appearance in google searches would lead to a bigger audience.

The IROC, zooplankton status reports and other CRRs are no longer being printed, but they are available online and they are really valued products.

The problem with CRRs is that they look like grey literature; if it was made clear that they are actually reviewed, the perception of CRRs might change.

Action: SCICOM established a subgroup consisting of Jan Jaap Poos and Niall O'Maoileidigh to provide half page on the profile of CRRs for comments and approval by SCICOM.

SCICOM was informed that the TIMES series is being used extremely well, however some questions were raised with a view to improving TIMES. *PUBCOM recommended for TIMES that the series editor and secretariat address the use of TIMES with the expert groups and consider improving the TIMES relevance and delivery mechanisms.*

SCICOM noted that the disease leaflets and SISP are coming on well. PUBCOM thanked Assisting Secretary Claire Welling, who has been looking after both and will be leaving the Secretariat this year, for her excellent work.

DOI (Digital Object Identifiers)

SCICOM was updated about DOI numbers. A contract is being signed with DTU Library and the plan is for all publications from ICES (EG reports, and all former publications) to have DOIs. ICES Secretariat will report back to PUBCOM on the progress of the introduction.

ASC extended abstracts

Extended abstracts at ASC have caused confusion for many scientists submitting abstracts and has led to additional processing time required by ICES Secretariat staff. PUBCOM had drafted a recommendation to SCICOM to discontinue extended abstracts. See **Annex 3**.

PUBCOM requested SCICOM to consider the document.

PUBCOM membership rules

HoS reported that there are considerations to change the PUBCOM membership rules to encourage direct nominations via the member countries. The challenge is always getting enough members other than editors and other ex-officio members. PUBCOM will be included in the review of membership/chairmanship rules for SCICOM Operational Groups. Currently there is no clarity on who sits on PUBCOM and what their role is.

13 Presentation of future Science Leadership

The SCICOM Chair presented Doc 26, explaining that the process of Strengthening the Science Leadership in ICES was started by Bureau via the Bureau Subgroup on Strengthening the Science Leadership (BSGSSL) and subsequently the Bureau Sub Group on New Strategic Leadership (BSGNISL).

Bureau is now proposing that SCICOM, under the leadership of the SCICOM Chair, should develop a steering group structure that can involve Vice-Chairs paid part-time honorarium (one of which may be responsible for data). The strategic tasks of the current Head of Science shall be distributed between the SCICOM Chair and the appointed SCICOM Vice-Chairs and administrative tasks redistributed within the Secretariat, including a new position: Head of Science Support. The proposed structure was based on a setup similar to the advisory leadership. Furthermore, a Coordination Group has been established to ensure the coordination between the different organizational pillars, where the strategic and operational heads of the four pillars in the ICES Strategic Plan meet and coordinate their work.

13.1 Plenary discussion on Science Leadership (Sunday 20 September)

SCICOM discussed the initial Bureau proposal. Concern was raised that the background and need for a change in the science leadership was unclear and not consistent. SCICOM missed a process during which an analysis could have been made what needs to be fixed and where the current model wouldn't fulfil the requirements. While there was never a proper evaluation made of the previous changes on the advisory side, it would be open if it is at all applicable for the science side. Redistributing the tasks of the current leadership on several shoulders was not seen as a strengthening of the leadership. The main point for SCICOM's reservation was the way it is being pushed and the lack of a proper process.

The current participation and communication problems of EGs need to be taken into account if any change is made. It was not clear how introducing paid vice-Chairs could be a contribution towards an improvement. Another issue that was identified was the communication between SCICOM and its SSG's and EG members in ICES member countries. A new leadership and resulting structure would have to take that into account and it was hard to perceive how a changed leadership could accomplish that outside the secretariat. Hosting the data and information group under an SSG Chair was seen as rather detaching it from advice than leading to better integration which is claimed to be a motivation of the proposed changes. The central role of data would not be properly acknowledged.

Leadership needs definition in this context. SCICOM viewed it as being about people wanting to get something done and achieved.

13.2 Breakout groups and summing up in plenary

Three breakout groups were established and tasked to look at the following questions:

Group 1. A new leadership to promote cooperation

The proposed leadership change is to ensure better implementation of ICES Strategic Plan and Science Plan by an effective and efficient cooperation between Science, Advice, Data and Information. Discuss and present: - A schematic state of the cooperation today identifying strong and weak links within Science and between Science, Advice, Secretariat, Data and information pillars - The new leadership shall strengthen the cooperation. What shall the new leadership do differently? - Discuss other ideas to strengthen cooperation

Olafur (Chair), Antonina, Nils-Olav, Antanas, Jörn, Mats, Tom

Group 2: A new structure for Science Priorities and Expert Groups

The change in leadership will need a major reorganization of our Science Priorities.

Discuss and present: - A schematic suggestion how to divide the Science Priorities and Expert Groups under three Vice-Chairs. The proposal should incorporate the responsibilities of Data/DIG under one of the Vice-Chairs.

Niall O'Maoileidigh (Chair), Graham, Laura, Dariusz, Begoña, Ingeborg, Georgs, Pierre

Group 3: The new leadership – task distribution

The proposed change in leadership has the prerequisite to be cost neutral and strengthen the Science Leadership. Discuss and present: - A redistribution of HoS strategic and operational tasks (listed below) among SCICOM chair and Vice Chairs plus the secretariat.

Steven (Chair), Brian, Henn, Dave, Svetlana, Steve, John, Jan Jaap

The breakout groups gave a short summary of their conclusions. The breakout group reports are available in **Annex 4**.

13.3 Strengthening of Science Leadership

During the ASC, ACOM, SCICOM, and Council delegates were invited to attend an information meeting to present the new strategic leadership proposal and collecting feedback and input from the community to help create a more efficient structure.

Prior to this meeting Bureau put forward a draft statement 'Bureau Proposal to Council on Strengthening the Science Leadership', and SCICOM was invited to give written input to the document with a deadline of 6 October. SCICOM appreciated the possibility given to contribute to the process of strengthening its leadership. Since no final reply could be formulated at the SCICOM meeting, a subgroup (Jörn Schmidt, Henn Ojaveer, Begoña Santos, Pierre Petitgas, Mats Svensson, Niall Ó Maoiléidigh, and Graham Pierce) was tasked to draft a SCICOM statement. The statement (**Annex 5**) was submitted 6 October to Council via the Bureau.

14 Symposia 2015–2017

Symposium reports 2015

HoS presented the ICES cosponsored symposia held during 2015 with reference to Doc 28:

- EU FP 7 Project SOCIOEC Brussels, Belgium, 17-18 February 2015
- Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans Santos, Sao Paulo, Brazil, 23–27 March 2015. A report was given the SCICOM midterm meeting 2015.
- Oceans Past V Tallinn, Estonia, 18-20 May 2015

SCICOM was informed that a new research initiative was announced at the conference by Prof. Poul Holm. This initiative is a five-year project (Norfish; 2016–2020). The research aims to understand the restructuring of the North Atlantic fisheries, fish markets and fishery-dependent communities between AD 1400 and 1700. This can feed into WGHIST and there are already plans for a new Oceans Past conference to be held in Portugal in 2017. ICES funded eight early career scientists at this year's conference.

- Marine Ecosystem Acoustics Nantes, France, 24-28 May 2015

The Symposium was organized around three themes looking at modern technology: 1) Recent developments in acoustic sensor and platform technologies: 35 oral presentations, 2) Acoustic characterization of aquatic organisms, ecosystem structure, and ecosystem processes: 41 oral presentations, and 3) The contribution of acoustics to integrated ecosystem assessments and management: 15 oral presentations. The proceedings of the symposium will be published in the ICES Journal of Marine Science in 2016. This symposium is part of a series of symposia held by ICES and they are very successful.

Comment:

The role as convener is among others to encourage people to submit manuscripts for the journal. The acceptance rate under the old system was higher because the guest editor spent considerable time working on the papers to improve their quality. This new system is less work for the conveners, but the acceptance rate will be a lot lower because the in house editors treat the submissions as standard.

Draft Resolutions for Symposia

Theme session “How can natural science and social science research be integrated into science advice so that it is useful to policy makers and the broader society?”

The Secretariat had received a request for co-sponsorship of a theme session to be held during the World Fisheries Congress in Pusan Korea in May 2016. Funding is requested for one convener: Jörn Schmidt.

Decision/Action: The resolution was approved by SCICOM, including financial support for one convener (Jörn Schmidt, Germany) to attend conference. The secretariat will look into the funding.

Symposium on “A forward look at Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management in the Baltic Sea, real options”

SCICOM was informed that the symposium “A forward look at Ecosystem-based Fisheries management in the Baltic Sea, real options” to be held in June 2016, Stockholm, Sweden, has requested ICES support, but that there are no financial implications and no request for the IJMS.

Decision: The resolution – asking for the ICES rubberstamp – was supported by SCICOM

SCICOM noted that BONUS/INSPIRE is planning a related event in 2017 and that ICES could also be involved in this event.

Funding issue

The General Secretary informed SCICOM that there is no more funding available for symposia. We have funding available for one symposium in 2016 and 2017.

HoS informed SCICOM that funding has been secured for the next (third) joint ICES/PICES Early Career Science Conference; this was approved by Council last year. The conference will be held in May 2017 in Pusan, Korea. PICES and ICES will appoint a Scientific Steering Committee (three from each side), and it will be assisted by a local organising committee and the two secretariats. The ICES Secretariat will soon announce a call for nominations of early career scientists to serve on the Scientific Steering Committee with a deadline of 30 October.

15 ICES Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM)

Mark Dickey-Collas presented Doc 25.

CRRs

SCICOM had drafted a strategy document for CRRs as requested by PUBCOM. The document will be brought to SCICOM for approval via the SCICOM Forum, before it is returned to PUBCOM for consideration for the future development of the CRRs.

PUBCOM recommendation on extended abstracts

Extended abstracts at ASC and the resulting additional processing time required by ICES Secretariat staff was discussed. It is causing confusion for many presenters and as a consequence PUBCOM has drafted a recommendation to SCICOM to discontinue extended abstracts. PUBCOM concludes that there is no compelling reason for ICES to continue to support the submission of short manuscripts or extended abstracts and recommends that this request be discontinued with immediate effect. However, there are certain countries where the submission of a short manuscript or extended abstract may still be necessary to secure meeting attendance.

Action/Decision: SCICOM agreed to the PUBCOM recommendation that extended abstracts are no longer required, but allowed on presenter's initiative. Information should be passed to contributors that extended abstracts may reduce the possibility of publishing of the presented scientific work in the future. The Secretariat will announce this decision and inform PUBCOM.

15.1 Draft resolutions for publications

Category 1

PUBCOM recommended the following resolutions for SCICOM approval:

- TIMES:
The report on "**Methods for the Determination of Chlorophyll in Seawater**", prepared and edited by Pamela Walsham (UK) and other members of the MCWG, as reviewed and approved by the Chair of the SSGEPI, will be published in the ICES Techniques in Marine Environmental Sciences (TIMES) series.
- CRR

Incorporating culturally significant areas into Coastal and Maritime Spatial Planning: A handbook

- Reviving the ICES Identification leaflets for plankton (formerly Fiches d'Identification du Plancton) series.

Decision: SCICOM approved all three resolutions.

16 ASC Theme Sessions 2016 (final decisions)

Georgs Kornilovs, on behalf of the SCICOM ASC group, presented a proposal for the ASC 2016 theme session package. Basing their work on the votes and rankings provided by SCICOM members, the ASC group had condensed 22 theme session proposals (21 before ASC and 1 during ASC) into a package of 18 theme sessions.

One theme session merger was proposed by the ASC group, and conveners will be asked to merge their proposals.

Decision: The final list of Theme Sessions approved by SCICOM is given in **Annex 6**.

Decision: In terms of process it was agreed that SCICOM would maintain the 'old' 18 session format for the 2016 ASC. For 2017 ASC a four-day conference with fewer theme sessions should be the format.

In addition SCICOM had received two proposals for SCICOM Open Session:

- SCICOM Open Session: Delivering science for the management of the Baltic Sea. (with DGENV, DGR&I, HELCOM and BONUS)
- SCICOM OPEN Session: How to get your message through?

Decision: The two open sessions were approved by SCICOM. The full package of open sessions will be discussed and approved at the SCICOM midterm meeting.

When the ICES theme session package has been finalized with mergers, PICES will be asked for their selection for co-sponsorship and, if applicable, PICES conveners will be added to the relevant theme sessions.

16.1 ASC keynote speakers

Traditionally, one keynote speaker is invited from the host country, and SCICOM noted that our host for the ASC 2016 (Latvia) had nominated Fritz Köster, Denmark, to give the 2016 ASC open lecture. A call was opened for the two remaining slots, which were decided via a Skype meeting on 12 October 2015:

- Chad Hewitt, University of Waikato, New Zealand
- Éva Plagányi-Lloyd, CSIRO, Australia

17 Reporting of SCICOM/ACOM Steering Groups

The full reports from the SCICOM Steering Groups are available in the [SCICOM Progress Report 2015](#).

17.1 Steering Group on Ecosystem Processes and Dynamics (SSGEPD)

Graham Pierce, SSGEPD Chair, reported on the highlights from SSGEPD.

- An overview of the SSGEPD Expert Groups (17 WGs, 7 WKs) was presented:

Taxon or component-based

BEWG, WGCRA B, WGCRA N, WGCEPH, WGERAAS, WGHABD, WGOH, WGPME, WGRECORDS, WGSPEC, WGZE

Concept or process-based

WGBIODIV, WGEVO, WGRFE, WGRMES

Tool-based

WGIMT, WGOOFE

- The most recent Science Plan mapping exercise attracted responses from 12 groups associated with SSGEPD. The first nine topics of the Science Plan are closely related to ecosystem processes and dynamics, and all covered to some extent by SSGEPD EGs.
- For the groups that completed their three-year terms and self-evaluations deliverables and outcomes include:
 - WGBIODIV has carried out an extensive review of MSFD implementation, generating a 310 pp excellent report. There were concerns during the last two years over attendance and it is apparent that the report is mainly the work of a very small core group but the outgoing chair was optimistic about future prospects under the leadership of the proposed co-chairs.
 - WGCRA N has cited an output of 32 publications and reports from its work, however it is not clear how many of these publications would have been produced independently of WGCRA N. Still, an active and energetic group and one which also has an interest in contributing to the advisory process.
 - WGPME reported on completion of a review of methodology, assembly of an image collection and >80 time series and delivery of monitoring guidelines.
 - WGSPEC highlighted its work with PICES and GFCM and production of a journal special issue and various papers.
- The ASC Open Session on Ecosystem processes and dynamics talked about the issues faced by the groups:
 - Limited resources for EGs (manpower, time, money) *versus* increasing demands (Integrated Ecosystem Surveys, Assessment and Management, MSFD, revised CFP, etc.)
 - Balance between top-down (ICES needs) and bottom-up (member interests) processes
 - Need to address ICES Strategic Plan science priorities and advisory needs
 - Need to engage with the ICES community
 - Working Group Terms of Reference
 - Scope and (over-) ambition of ToRs
 - Extent to which ToRs correspond to day jobs
 - Performance measurement

- ICES looks for “measureable” outputs/deliverables
- Benefit to group members?
- Reaching end-users
 - Most EPD EGs contribute to several science areas and some contribute to advice, via one SSG
 - How can we improve coordination, communication, and use of EG outputs?

Comment:

WGCAN report. Attention was drawn to the surprisingly high F value estimated for Crangon in the North Sea which, if confirmed, would be a cause for concern.

17.1.1 Election of new SSGEPD Chair

SCICOM decided to postpone the election of a new SSGEPD Chair pending the outcome of the process to strengthen the science leadership. SCICOM found that it would not be beneficial to elect a person for only one year.

17.2 Steering Group on Ecosystem Pressures and Impacts (SSGEPI)

Henn Ojaveer, SSGEPI Chair, reported on the highlights and issues brought up by SSGEPI expert groups.

Several EG's reported on lessons-learned for better planning ToR's under multiannual management.

WGAQUA: Concerns raised by EG chairs on advisory process. Some key expertise still lacking, is proposing to establish a sub-group

Working Group on Spatial Fisheries Data: not all countries submitted VMS/Logbook data. The group reported on attendance problems.

Working Group on Methods of Fish Stock Assessments: there are ongoing discussions between ICCAT and ICES on establishing a joint group. The group did not have a physical meeting this year, but ICES ICCAT leadership met via WebEx.

Marine Chemistry Working Group: The ICES database possibly unable to receive all data collected. The group would like to be engaged in MSFD work

Working Group on the Effects of Extraction of Marine Sediments on the Marine Ecosystem: The group reported on attendance issue related to underrepresentation of some countries. They would like to be more involved in how MSFD-related work to be better used in ICES.

Working Group on Risks of Maritime Activities in the Baltic Sea. This is a new group and the membership is mostly from chair-country. EG and SSG chairs to work together to obtain additional nominations.

Working Group on History of Fish and Fisheries (WGHIST). The group had attendance problems in previous years, but due to back-to-back meetings with EU COST Action 'Oceans Past Platform' these difficulties are likely solved during 2015-2018. New chairs are very enthusiastic

Six EG's (WGMBRED, WGPDMO, WGAQUA, WGVHES, WGBEC and WGSFD) were positively evaluated and all EG's should be allowed continue.

In cooperation with PICES two proposals are under preparation:

- OCEAN ACIDIFICATION. ICES-PICES workshop in 2016 (the task now is to identify the co-chairs). The previous group was dealing with monitoring (joint OSPAR group), this new group is a science group.
- PLASTICS. ICES-PICES open session on plastics at ASC 2016 (proposed by SSGEPI for next year).

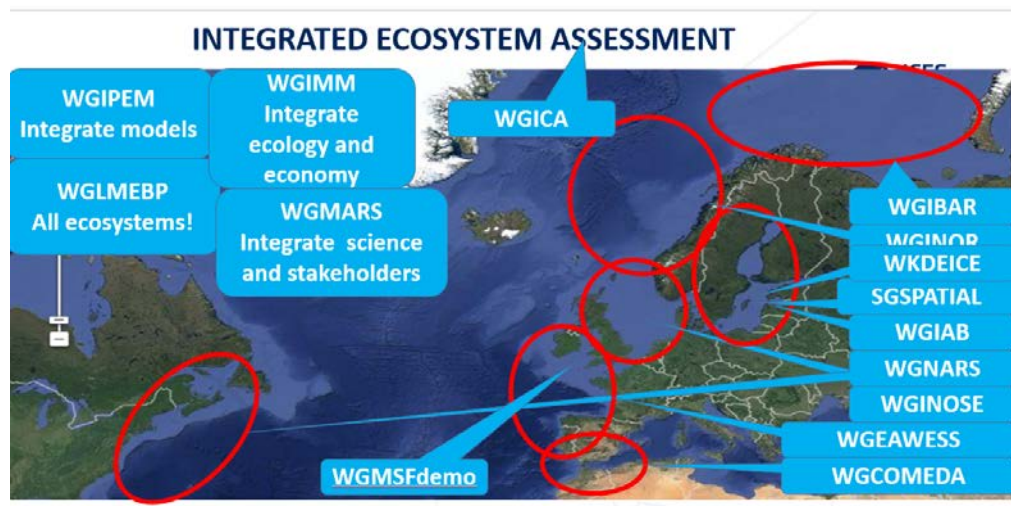
Data availability problem:

The ACOM Chair informed SCICOM that Bureau and Council have asked ACOM for a discussion paper on the data availability problem. ACOM is currently working with the ICES Data Centre on this. Guidelines are being developed specifying when a group can refuse to take data into account.

17.3 Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (SSGIEA)

Dave Reid, SSGIEA Chair, reported on the highlights from SSGIEA. Whereas last year had been characterised by a lot of 'storming' and requests that the groups felt they couldn't handle, this year can be defined as 'norming', towards delivering material into the advice process.

Overview of Integrated Assessment groups.



WCOMEDA – It needs to be clarified that the group is not specifically doing IEAs in the Mediterranean. They carry out analytical, comparative work between the Mediterranean and adjacent waters in the Atlantic. They are currently also extending the comparisons further afield including North America.

WGIAB – Have proposed WKDEICE aimed at providing input into the advice process. ACOM Chair commented that it is essential that WKDEICE maintains the dialogue with the Baltic Assessment community - WGBFAS.

WGIBAR – Is focusing on quantifying ecosystem and fish interactions. They are building up their understanding of these relationships.

WGINOR – The main finding was that BBN analyses need to be designed specifically to address a particular advice question rather than having a generic applicability.

WGNARS – Continue to focus on two particular sub regions which are characterised by pressure from fishing industry and from other sectors. Strong emphasis on the human dimension, and new chair nominee is an economist.

WGEAWESS – The ODEMM analysis remains the main core of the work, although this is not completely standardised between areas. Work continues on the compilation and analysis of ecosystem trends. Importantly, fishing pressure is declining in almost all areas, except for the Gulf of Cadiz.

WGIMM – Continued work on characterising coupled models, and paper presented at ASC on Evaluation of Integrated Ecological-Economic Models – Review and Challenges for Implementation. The group has some problems with attendance which might be eased via SIHD.

WGIPEM - Identified good examples of studies that included both models and observations to integrate knowledge on processes. But also noted that these are relatively rare. They identified a series on multi-disciplinary collaboration needs to take this work forward.

WGMARS - Looking at us looking at them! The group has completed analysis of ICES networks, and facilitated stakeholder engagement in herring spawning ground identification. They will be moving further into the human dimension over the next 3 years.

WGMSFDEMO – Useful meeting, looking at questions on how to optimize the surveys, and taking the DATRAS database into account. Hoping that through 2016 there may be a first Celtic Sea IEA.

A new group, WGICA, will start building to an IEA for the central Arctic Ocean with support from PAME and CAFF.

SSGIEA Leadership

SCICOM was informed that Dave Reid has served three years on IEA, and he has agreed to serve his fourth year.

Discussion on MSFD Integration

Are there ways to secure that the fundamental science needed for MSFD is accomplished?

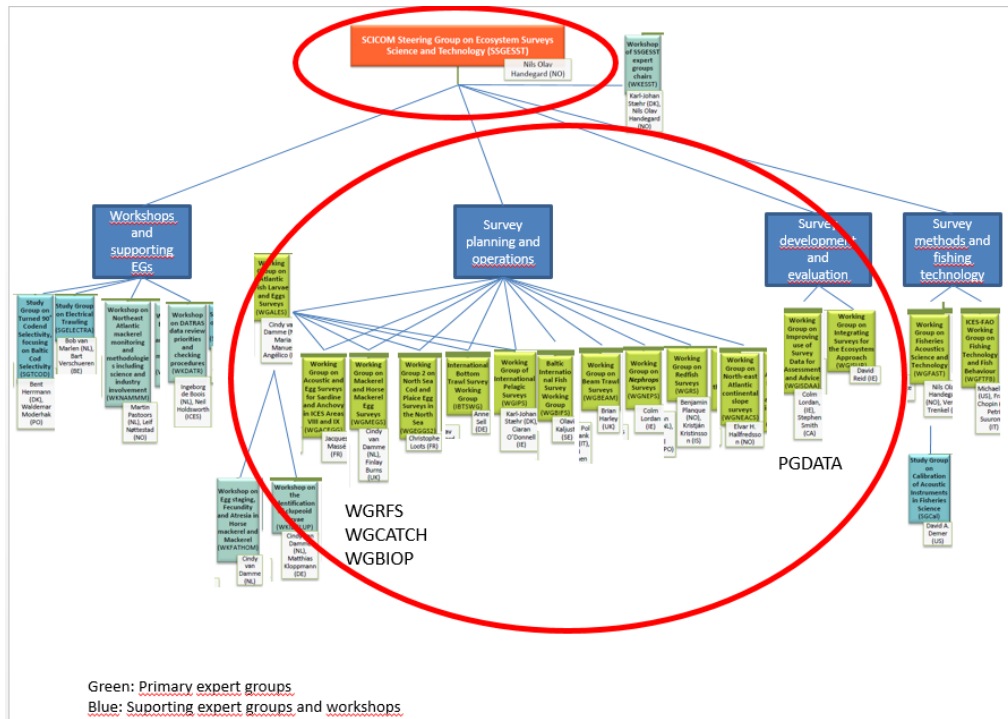
The Chair replied that IEA groups are not MSFD focused and that this is not the place to ensure that everything is linked to MSFD. It should be the responsibility of the CWGMSFD to pick it up – probably the responsibility of both the EGs and the MSFD CWG.

WKRISCO – finding one common methodology is impossible for all the different ecoregions where IEA groups carry out their work. WKDEICE will be building upon WGMSF Demo though.

A second round of what the workshop had accomplished could be useful and a good option. ACOM Chair commented that there is a lot of willingness and eagerness to solve the problems which have arisen in the Baltic and we should keep this momentum. Balance between top-down and bottom-up work and the complementarity of the different IEA approaches will have to be maintained to motivate the work of the groups and to address the critical problems. In relation to the Baltic it is difficult to get an overview of the groups and the various research projects. Should SCICOM/Science Programme have more influence on this? There are other activities in relation to science and this aspect is missing from the discussion. The Chair of SSGIEA and the Professional Officer at ICES will look at developing a new WKRISCO for 2016.

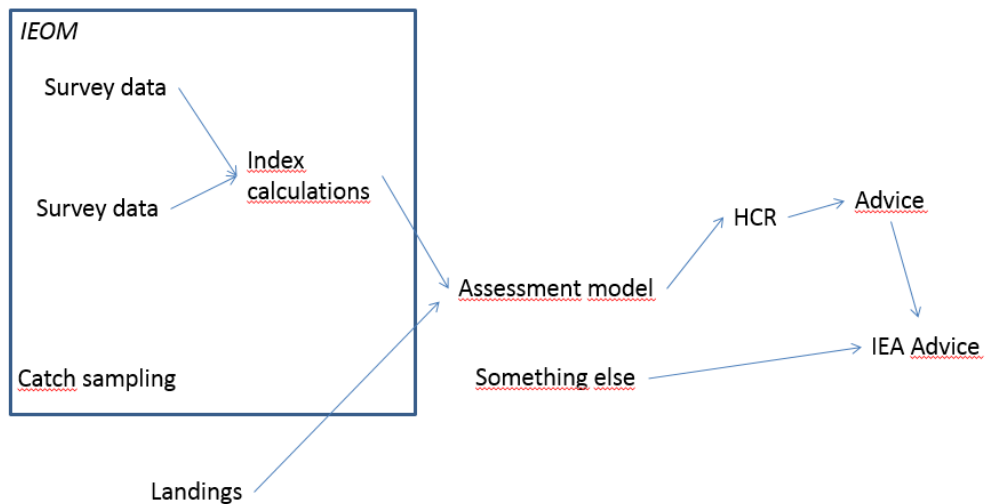
17.4 Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Monitoring and Observations (SSGIEOM)

Nils Olav Handegard, SSGIEOM Chair, reported from the Steering Group:



WGISUR has a good connection to the survey planning expert groups, but the relation to the IEA groups needs attention.

PGDATA and WGISDAA. WGISDAA works on specific issues raised by the survey groups, and this works well. The group needs input from survey groups as a foundation for increasing the survey quality, but are usually tasked with "fix this" recommendations. We will need to look into how we can raise this to more broadly cover the relation between the survey groups and the assessment groups, including the link to PGDAGA. PGDATA is more overarching and had their first meeting in the summer with good attendance.



One issue that was identified in the ASC open session “Bridging the gap between data users and data providers”, was the information flow from end-users to the survey groups and vice versa. To solve the latter and give better guidance on how to make information from the surveys easier available, a workshop, Workshop to establish reporting guidelines from survey groups (WKSUREP) was proposed.

ICES is partner in the ATLANTOS project and contributes with acoustic and zooplankton data and post processing software.

SCICOM was informed that Nils Olav had agreed to stay on for another year as Chair of SSGIEOM and until the end of his term the plan is to:

- Work further on the series of survey protocols (SISP)
- Work further on the acoustic database
- Develop guidelines for reporting from surveys
- Produce an overview of survey products (with the secreariat) & data paths (with BSG, ACOM and DATA)

Discussion

The question was raised if we need a benchmark for surveys (with BSG).

Can we do a more thorough benchmark of the surveys? Each survey is quite expensive and given the resources, we should review the surveys, to see if we are using best practises and document well. We also need a better overview of how the data underpinning ICES advice are collected, stored and used. This should be identifged as a part of the benchmark process. Furhtermore, bottlenecks in the data pipeline can be easier identified with this overview, and, , if an error is found in the data we have a framework to identify where the corrections should go. Currently this goes to the national institutes, which is not necessarily reported back to ICES. To achieve these goals, a better steering might be necessary.

WKSUREQ (Workshop on the review of the ecosystem survey requirements) was set up to look into data needs and flows in relation to ecosystem surveys. The outcome was that data users need to better identify what they need. All processes are set up for a purpose, but MSFD seems only to look into what we have, not what we could or should do.

ICES has been forced to give info on data needs on fisheries dependent sampling, we are issuing data calls, and this means we have formulated ‘what data do we need’. For fishery independent data there is no similar process and for this reason we have set up the EFARO/ICES initiative trying to go in that direction. Making the monitoring more efficient, defining what data we need and then discuss how to get this data. This will feed into WGMSFDemo.

In summary, a process to formalise the data needs, e.g. via data calls, and map this to the data collection is needed. There might be a good opportunity to use the SCICOM leadership restructuring process to ensure its implementation.

Action item: CSWGIS should adress this topic.

17.5 Benchmark Steering Group (BSG)

Jörn Schmidt, BSG Co-Chair gave an update from the Benchmark Steering Group

The work of the Steering Group is divided into six tasks.

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

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

Task 3: Integrated assessments and benchmarks; here WKIrish1 – the next process involves five meetings:

- WKIrish 1- Scoping with stakeholders (September 2015)
- WKIrish 2- Data Evaluation meeting (November 2015)
- WKIrish 3- Stock Assessment meeting, to be renamed... (March 2016)
- WKIrish 4- Ecosystem Description and Model tuning (Spring 2016; in conjunction with WGEAWESS meeting)
- WKIrish 5- Full integration of final meeting. Autumn 2016

Integration of bycatch into the WKIRISH process was a useful and challenging process that can be helpful for the advancement of integrated benchmarks, assessment and advice. BSG will continue to follow and support this process. The funding needed to develop part of this work is a concern, given that there is no guaranteed source of funding at the moment.

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

The Benchmark process is an interactive process and not just a couple of workshops; it involves a lot of intersessional work and active communication is needed between groups and people.

18 Council Steering Group on MSFD – information

Pierre Petitgas gave a short update from Council Steering Group on MSFD with reference to SCICOM Doc 34a and 34b.

The annual Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) meeting with external partners was held at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Science (BNIS) in Brussels. There are many actors and players in this area and the Council Steering Group on MSFD is aiming to position ICES at a high level, for ICES to be recognized as an MSFD partner by the EU and the Regional Sea Conventions.

- The Council Steering group held a short business meeting during ASC.
- The Working Group to Demonstrate a Celtic Seas wide approach to the application of fisheries related science to the implementation of the MSFD (WGMSFDemo) co-chaired by Jean-Paul Lecomte (France), Eugene Nixon (Ireland) and Carl O'Brien (UK) met for its second meeting on 28–30 April 2015 in Dublin, Ireland, to develop and initiate a 3-year work programme.
- There is an EFARO-ICES initiative on DCF surveys to organize the surveys differently, starting from scratch and CSGMSFD has provided tables on data collection for MSFD indicators that fisheries surveys could provide.

ICES activities in 2015 can be grouped under three main foci:

- Integrated monitoring beyond fisheries
- Impacts on benthic habitats, from anthropogenic activities such as fisheries or eutrophication
- Request from OSPAR on biodiversity indicators for benthic habitats

Pierre Petitgas referred SCICOM to the list of special requests from DGENV to ICES. The document showcases the capacity of ICES, showing the different groups contributing to indicators and collecting the information.

19 Strategic Initiatives

19.1 SCICOM Strategic Initiative on Climate Change (SICCME; Pinnegar, MacKenzie)

Outgoing SICCME Co-Chair, Brian MacKenzie, gave an update from SICCME and thanked the Secretariat for their support throughout the years.

Brian MacKenzie highlighted the main events held so far in 2015:

- The 3rd International Symposium on the Effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans, was held 23-27 March 2015, Santos in Santos, Brazil. SICCME co-chairs and members were involved with the overall organisation and planning of the symposium, as well as its execution as chairs of several sessions. A summary of this event was in given at the midterm meeting of SCICOM.
- **World Oceans Day 2015 Celebration, 8 June 2015, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France.** SICCME was represented by Manuel Barange, who reported on the 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).
- A four-day conference, **Our common future under climate change**, was held 7-10 July 2015 at UNESCO headquarters, Paris France ahead of the COP21 of the UNFCCC. SICCME ex-Chair Manuel Barange and current co-Chair Shin-Ichi Ito addressed 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.
- A well-attended **ICES/PICES Workshop on Modelling Effects of Climate Change on Fish and Fisheries** (WKSICCME_Project) was held in Seattle, USA, 10–12 August. The workshop was organized primarily by NOAA and IMR.
- ICES ASC 2015 theme session G: Managing marine ecosystem services in a changing climate (Co-sponsored by PICES).

Future activities

SICCME has proposed two resolutions for 2015:

- The ICES/PICES Workshop on Economic Modelling of the Effects of Climate Change on Fish and Fisheries (WKSICCME_Econ), Brest, France, in connection with the 'Understanding marine socio-ecological systems' symposium, in June 2016.

- A one-day ICES/PICES workshop on Phase 1: Modelling Effects of Climate Change on Fish and Fisheries (WKSICCME-I) will be held in September 2016 in Riga, Latvia.

PICES and ICES are also planning to jointly organize two theme sessions, pending approval by Science Committee/Board, at their 2016 Annual Science Conferences. These will be on topics related to adaptability of marine biota to climate change impacts and predictability of climate impacts on marine ecosystems and biota at seasonal to decadal time scales.

SICCME Leadership

The terms of the two ICES appointed co-chairs are scheduled to end at end of 2015 and their replacement was staggered to maintain continuity. M. Barange rotated off after the Brazil symposium and has been succeeded by John Pinnegar, CEFAS, UK as of 1 April 2015. B. MacKenzie will stay on until end of 2015.

Decision: SCICOM noted the willingness of Myron Peck, University of Hamburg, Germany, to serve as SICCME co-chair and he was appointed as new Co-Chair of SICCME as from 1 January 2016.

SCICOM noted that the PICES co-Chair, Suam. Kim, completed his term at end of 2014, and had been succeeded by Shin-ichi Ito (Japan).

19.2 SCICOM/ACOM Strategic Initiative on Stock Assessment Methods (SISAM; Cadrin)

Mark Dickey-Collas gave an update from SISAM.

The second stage of SISAM involves continued coordination with Regional Fishery Management Organizations and national agencies, the development of “good practice” guidelines, and further evaluation of model performance. In the second phase of SISAM, progress was made in global coordination of advancement in stock assessment methods, and development of best practices guidance for stock assessment methods.

A theme session on “Advancement of Stock Assessment Methods for Sustainable Fisheries” was convened by SISAM leadership at the 2015. The theme session was attended by Sidney Holt and was very well attended. The theme session promoted 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. An open session is proposed by SISAM for the next ASC in 2016, which will come from the World Fisheries Conference in Korea in 2016 May. The GAME working group will be discussed further at the 7th World Fisheries Conference.

SISAM is involved in dialogue between ICCAT and ICES on a joint expert group on stock assessment methods. ICCAT and ICES have many of the same member countries and many of the same stock assessment scientists are contributing to science and advice for both organizations.

19.3 SCICOM/ACOM Strategic Initiative on Human Dimension (SIHD)

SIHD held its kick-off meeting at the ASC in Copenhagen with 18 participants. The meeting discussed possible ways forward, but did not reach a conclusion. The actions and the work plan of the Strategic Initiative will be decided at a two-day workshop, which will likely take place early 2016 in IJmuiden in the Netherlands.

SIHD hosted an Open Session during this year's ASC and has proposed a new Open Session "Integrating humanities and social sciences into Integrated Ecosystem Assessments - first steps" for next year's ASC. Furthermore the Strategic Initiative has suggested one of the plenary speakers, Dr Éva Plagányi.

SIHD is also contributing to the World Fisheries Conference and the Brest symposium with theme sessions.

20 ASC 2016 and 2017

20.1 New format for the ASC and new formats for ASC theme sessions

Pierre Petitgas reported from SRGASC. The Subgroup had worked via Skype meetings and had presented a preliminary proposal to Bureau in June. The following changes have been approved by SCICOM and Bureau:

- Increased registration fee (now 195 euros)
- Limited duration of sessions (1.5 day max)

And at the 2015 ASC, the following changes were made:

- Modified and shorter opening and closing sessions
- Long lunch breaks to increase interaction and implementing particular sessions
- Run a new session format with the Project Market Place
- Run a kahoot open session to get feedback from participants on new ways of running the ASC
- Used a dart game (poster) for participants to aim at the ASC they wish.

The proposition from SRGASC is to:

- Reduce the ASC by one day, starting the conference on Monday and ending on a Thursday.
- Schedule the opening ceremony on Monday morning.
- Renaming and re-programming the SCICOM Open Sessions as other sessions in the program
- Have a programme structure with 4 parallel sessions.
- Keep the long lunch breaks

SCICOM noted that it would not be possible to shorten next year's conference. For the 2016 ASC in Riga, Latvia, the contract for the conference centre has been signed. We will try to move towards a new format with a mix of open sessions and theme sessions, and in 2017 the new format with 12 parallel theme sessions can be launched.

Bureau and Council will be asked to give their views on a possible revision of the cost split key, to alleviate expenses by the host country.

It is suggested that SRGASC continues until full changes have been implemented and a new ASC is in place.

SCICOM was asked for feedback on the following items:

- The number of sessions proposed bottom up vs. the number SCICOM sessions

- Whether to program SCICOM sessions as other sessions but with non-traditional format
- How to improve the poster session

A suggestion was made to have the conference dinner on the last day of the conference and to present the merit awards during dinner to give the awards much better visibility and acknowledgement. The downside would be the risk of not having the full conference turnout at the dinner. It was suggested that the dinner ticket could be included in the conference fee, however it would be a challenge for the organizers to accommodate all participants at the conference dinner.

There are ways to improve sessions by making more room for discussion. A suggestion was made to develop a *pecha cucha* setup where all presenters produce posters.

Conveners should be strongly (and once again) encouraged to read the guidelines for conveners more carefully.

21 Summary of ASC 2015

22 Conference coordinator evaluation and recommendations for future ASCs (Davies)

The Conference Coordinator, Anna Davies, updated SCICOM on the ASC statistics:

By 4 September, 620 participants had registered for the 2015 ASC. (510 at the same date in 2014). The early registration fee closed on 1 August to encourage participants to register early. At a final count on Friday 25 September, 734 people had registered in total, with participants from 37 countries.

ASC Survey

All ASC participants will be asked for feedback about the conference, and in particular about the project market place and social events. The questionnaire has received 72 feedbacks within the first ten days.

Conference programme and handbook

This year the handbook was available as i-paper format, available via the ICES ASC website, and the printed tri-folder programme was provided in the conference bags. The Secretariat had feedback from participants who found it difficult to get an overview of theme sessions. Some missed the Groupio app that was provided last year. The Secretariat provided paper copies on ad hoc basis.

For future years it was suggested to provide a poster overview at a central place near the main reception and to have A4 fliers available for participants to pick up.

22.1 Input from ACOM/SCICOM meetings

SCICOM and ACOM Chairs gave a brief update on the main items discussed and agreed at the joint ACOM/SCICOM meeting:

- **Joint EFARO/ICES initiative.** At the 2015 General Assembly of EFARO in Bergen in June 2015 it was suggested that ICES and EFARO should cooperate to streamline surveys and data collection and it was agreed to recommend the setup of a joint EFARO – ICES meeting to be held in January 2016 at ICES Headquarters to develop two regional pilot studies for developing joint data collection plans using vessel surveys. Currently data collections

account for 90% of the total costs associated with advice. This is a touchy area – some institutes are interested in keeping the current surveys, and some are interested in cost-saving measures.

- **Discard survival.** Two years ago ICES, DGMARE and STECF agreed to develop guidelines on methods for estimating discard survival. ICES WKMEDS has produced a draft report. Parallel to this WG on recreational fisheries catch survey (WGRFS) has developed study proposal on mortality of discards in hook and line fisheries. The joint meeting agreed that a formal peer-reviewed process would be needed and the aim would be to have the study published by the end of the year. The Secretariat was tasked to carry out the peer review. The reports should go to ACOM and SCICOM.
- **Joint A/SCICOM Forum for approval of joint resolutions.** A joint Share-Point site will be established for approval of resolutions. All resolutions should be dealt with here to avoid confusion where to go and to ensure transparency. However, SCICOM will not be asked for input to ACOM groups (and vice versa).

22.2 Feedback from SCICOM Open Sessions

Overall there was positive feedback from the SCICOM Open Sessions; all were well attended and they are a good way for interacting with the ASC participants. The full reports from the SCICOM Open Sessions are available in the [SCICOM Progress Report 2015](#).

Project marketplace

A new event was introduced at this year's ASC, the Project Marketplace was held on Wednesday afternoon, providing a forum for the ICES community to interact with members of key marine projects and initiatives. The European Commission's Head of Marine Resources Unit, DG R&I, presented current and future opportunities for marine science within the Horizon 2020 and an invited panel discussed opportunities for project cooperation and the application of outcomes.

22.3 Feedback from Awards Committee

The ASC Award Selection Group reported on their observations and suggestions for future work:

- A nomination was submitted right after the last session, and it had not been possible for the group get together to consider the nomination in time for the Awards Ceremony. The group proposed that presenters could be asked to submit all presentations for Thursday and Friday by Wednesday 5 pm latest (including those to be presented on Friday), or for all presentations to be submitted before ASC. Nils Olav Handegard, who had chaired the last Award Selection group, agreed that the last day of the ASC is a challenge and that it is very important to have good contact with the conveners and to ensure that the last sessions have participation from the Award Selection Group.
- Update the Guidelines for the Merit Award Selection process to state that invited and keynote speakers are not eligible for awards; only contributed presentations.
- The Secretariat was asked to send an email message to presenters indicating they have been selected as honourable mentions and offering congratulations.

23 SCICOM Annual Report to Council

The SCICOM Chair outlined the structure of the document and reminded the contributors of the deadline. It was noted that a new item had been added to the SSG Section of the report: "Examples of EG activities that fulfil the ICES Strategy and Science Plan".

24 Any other business

SCICOM spring dates.

Action: The next midterm meeting will be held in Copenhagen from Tuesday, 8 March 2016 (starting at 13:00) till Thursday, 10 March 2016 (ending at 13:00). The Joint ACOM leadership/SCICOM business group will meet on Thursday, 10 March from 14:00 till 17:00.

Mapping of ICES cooperating partners

Action: SCICOM agreed to schedule a mapping exercise, looking into cooperating partners based on the ICES Strategic Plan.

Training group

The HoS had been asked by Steve Cadrin to update SCICOM on two items related to the Training Group report:

During the ASC week the Training Group report had been amended. Two important items were brought to SCICOM's attention:

- 1) As noted by SCICOM members in the discussion of the Training Programme, there was an error in the budget (Table 1). The Chair mistakenly interpreted negative values in the budget spreadsheet as costs and positive values as revenue, but the opposite was the correct interpretation. So, the Training Programme operating budget actually had a positive balance from last year.
- 2) An additional paragraph was added to the section on online training (page 3): "The Training Group appreciates the 100,000 DKK (14,000 EUR) approved by Council from equity for use for further development of the training course programme for 2015-2017. These funds will primarily be used to offset losses in courses with insufficient participation, thereby decreasing the number of cancelled courses. As a second priority, the Training Group requests SCICOM support for investing the unplanned earnings from 2014 courses (66,000 DKK, 9,200 EUR, Table 1) and a portion of the equity funds to contract WMU to develop a platform for online courses (approximately 7,000 EUR) and a recording of an online version of the "How to Lead an Effective Technical Meeting" course (approximately 5,000 EUR). This topic has been recognized as a priority for ICES science and advice, and is expected to be best suited for the advantages of online training. The course can be offered to all ICES Expert Group Chair for no fee, and participants can complete the course at their own pace and whenever they have time available. The Training Group will offer the online course as a test, with the intent of offering more online courses based on the performance and feedback from the test offering."

The General Secretary explained that ICES is aiming for the training courses to be cost-neutral, however, it was recognised by Bureau and Council that some new courses would benefit from support in the start phase.

The General Secretary was pleased that the Training Programme operating budget had a positive balance in 2014, but it should also be noted that there is a cost in the Secretariat that needs to be taken into account.

Strengthening Science Leadership and new SSGEPD Chair

The election of a new SSGEPD Chair had been postponed pending the outcome of the process to strengthen the science leadership. SCICOM found that it would not be beneficial to elect a person for only one year.

Action: The SCICOM Chair was asked to outline the process and timelines for the process of strengthening the Science Leadership. SCICOM would need to allocate time for discussion on the future structure for the Science Programme.

Decision: Pending a decision the future structure and a new call for SSGEPD Chair, Graham Pierce agreed to oversee the groups during the interim period.

25 Closure

The SCICOM Chair thanked the outgoing SCICOM members (SSGEPD Chair, Graham Pierce, Training Group Chair, Steve Cadrin, and US SCICOM member, Thomas Noji) for their important contributions to SCICOM. Thanks were also extended to the guest from PICES, the General Secretary, and ACOM Chair for participating in the SCICOM meeting.

The PICES Chair, Laura Richards, and Chair of PICES Science Board, Tom Therriault, thanked SCICOM and the Secretariat for the opportunity to participate in the SCICOM meetings and for a good meeting of the PICES/ICES Strategic Group.

Annex 1: List of participants

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Annex 2: Summary of items for decision, feedback, and information on SCICOM Forum

The following items (for decision, feedback and information) were brought up via the SCICOM Forum since the SCICOM mid-term meeting:

DATE	DECISION
22 April	WKARDAB2 - new meeting dates
7 May	WKARDL - new chair
7 May	WKARDL - new chair
28 May	Updated Working Group on Spatial Fisheries Data WGSFD ToRs
5 June	WKBECEEL - new chairs
5 June	Working Group on the History of Fish and Fisheries (WGHIST) ToRs
19 June	SIHD - Strategic Initiative on the Human Dimension in Integrated Ecosystem Assessments
23 June	Updated PGDATA ToRs
21 August	WKIrish1 – Workshop on the impact of ecosystem and environmental drivers on Irish Sea fisheries management
8 September	EG self-evaluations posted on SCICOM Forum

DATE	FEEDBACK REQUESTED	OUTCOME
29 May	Conflict of interest in ICES (COI)	Feedback from SCICOM presented to Bureau June.
30 May	ASC session (new) formats	Based on SCICOM Feedback the following guideline was made available via the call for ASC 2016 theme session proposals: http://ices.dk/news-and-events/asc/ASC2015/Documents/ASC%202016%20session%20types.pdf
4 June	Draft version of the ASC timetable	
13 August	Feedback needed- Important information on Bureau process to Strengthen Science Leadership	
8 September	EG self-evaluations	

DATE	INFORMATION ITEMS	OUTCOME
2 July	Feedback from Bureau meeting June 9-10	
20 July	Science communicators' networking event at the ASC 2015	

Annex 3: PUBCOM recommendation on extended abstracts for the ICES ASC presentations

Recommendation to Discontinue Extended Abstracts to the ICES' Annual Science Conference

As a result of several years of discussion by PUBCOM and SCICOM, ICES no longer requires that contributors submit short manuscripts ("CM" documents) or extended abstracts in support of their presentations. Rather, submission of short manuscripts is still permitted should it be the preference of the contributor and extended abstracts are requested by ICES. This latter practice has caused some confusion among contributors to the ASC - some are uncertain about whether extended abstracts are a requirement for their participation. Herein, and for the reasons that follow, PUB-COM recommends that the request for extended abstracts be discontinued.

Submissions of short manuscripts or extended abstracts may limit future opportunities to publish material presented at the ASC. Digital conference materials are discoverable by search engines, including those used by publishers to detect plagiarism and the repurposing/republishing of material. In some cases, this can result in a journal declining to consider a manuscript for publication. ICES contributors are justifiably concerned about this.

Supporting the submission of short manuscripts and extended abstracts requires significant effort from the Secretariat - in terms of soliciting them, collating them, formatting them, and fielding questions and concerns from contributors.

Many contributors feel burdened in producing extended abstracts. The requirement is unusual for new ASC attendees and young scientists - they are viewed by some as an anachronism that is increasingly difficult to justify owing to the limitations of the extended abstract format.

Today, participants at conferences use social media to share information about presentations and posters, as they are presented. In the near future, all conferences will live-stream and record presentations and they will be archived and available online. Further, if anyone comes across an ICES ASC abstract that they find of interest, they can contact the researchers to obtain details and ask questions.

In this context, PUBCOM concluded that there is no compelling reason for ICES to continue to support the submission of short manuscripts or extended abstracts and recommends that this request be discontinued with immediate effect. However, there are certain countries (e.g. Russia) where the submission of a short manuscript or extended abstract may still be necessary to secure meeting attendance, so PUB-COM's recommendation may require discussion with Council Delegates.

Annex 4: Science Leadership Breakout group reports

Breakout group 1: A new leadership to promote cooperation

The proposed leadership change is to ensure better implementation of ICES Strategic Plan and Science Plan by an effective and efficient cooperation between Science, Advice, Data and Information.

Discuss and present:

- A schematic state of the cooperation today identifying strong and weak links within Science and between Science, Advice, Secretariat, Data and information pillars
- The new leadership shall strengthen the cooperation. What shall the new leadership do differently?
- Discuss other ideas to strengthen cooperation

First of all are we only discussing internal cooperation or also external cooperation? Are we clear about the responsibilities of the different structures?

When moving from the single stock advice into IEAs and ecosystem advice, we do need to reach out of the organisation to fulfil these tasks. We need to maintain the capacity to access and process multiple sources of information and data.

The extension towards ecosystem assessments does raise the issue of funding streams that are currently not existing like in the stock assessment world (DCF), (not talking about communication issue within the EU Commission and the member countries).

We need not only to maintain, but to increase a strong science community, which can provide the science to respond to client requests but also proactively identify, evaluate and report on issues of relevance to the ICES leadership, ACOM and community.

Better connection between groups ('just throwing recommendations' to groups does not work). The aim should be to better educate our scientists at all levels, to understand how their services lead to higher-level ICES products and support the ICES Science and Strategic Plans. Reducing the number of people in the leadership also reduces the science network they are connected to.

So find the funding for 5 SSG chairs!

1) The proposal for strengthening the science leadership starts by stating that there is the need for more cooperation and integration. It is not fully understood by the subgroup what the issues are and we try to analyse what issues in relation to cooperation we *might* have. To our opinion weak links exist on different levels in the organisation and also in how we reach out of the organisation and in structures outside ICES, which are relevant for ICES in doing its work (also in terms of funding).

Weak links might exist between:

- ICES and the EU Commission DGs (and other international regulatory and funding agencies) dealing with fisheries issues and environment.
- ICES and the agencies and ministries dealing with fisheries and environmental issues,
- ACOM, SCICOM and Council representatives of a member country (variable between countries of course),
- ACOM, SCICOM and Council members and the science community within the countries (variable between countries of course),

- ICES scientists working in fish stock assessment and advice and scientists working on other science topics with the countries (expert group level)

The structure within ICES is very much formalised due to the need to be transparent in providing advice based on best available science, but that seems to prevent sometimes direct communication between people and could make it difficult to actually include the best available science into the advice.

The crucial connection is communication channels, which need secretariat support more than changes in strategic leadership. Important are feedback mechanisms that ensure that groups providing products get feedback if these products are used, if not why and what probably needs to be changed.

2) To strengthen cooperation between the pillars within ICES, the leadership needs to promote and facilitate communication between ACOM, SCICOM and Council members. The Science leadership needs to reach out more to external organizations to inform them of the ICES science foci and growing environmental concerns, which in turn may generate funding to support the work. 'The leadership needs to be more present in Brussels.'

3) Be more active in communicating science needs towards the science funders.

What is the future relationship between courses, science and advice in the future? What kind of leadership is needed for this? Partnering up with several universities? Diversify training towards including more topics within ICES (methods training, ecosystem approach etc.).

Have more combined workshops and more joint reports and more peer-reviewed paper coming out of these joint activities.

Have more joint theme sessions.

Breakout Group 2. A new structure for Science Priorities and Expert Groups

The change in leadership will need a major reorganization of our Science Priorities.

Discuss and present:

- A schematic suggestion how to divide the Science Priorities and Expert Groups under three Vice-Chairs. The proposal should incorporate the responsibilities of Data/DIG under one of the Vice-Chairs.

Background

Since the dissolution of the old Consultative Committee in 2008, and the creation of the new SCICOM, ICES have undergone two major revisions of the structure of the new SCICOM to provide scientific leadership and coordination for the work of the Science Expert Groups (EGs of which there are approximately 100) and the ICES Strategic Plan 2014.

The first of these was presented in 2009 (ICES. 2009. Report of the SCICOM Working Group on Science Leadership (SWGSL) and established that this leadership would be provided by members of SCICOM and that the role and responsibilities of specific steering groups would be based on the existing high priority research thematic areas identified in the newly adopted Science Plan. The essential elements of the structure were to provide leadership to the many Expert Groups and to better integrate the science being produced with the newly

Science Plan. The need to support ongoing “core” functions such as Publications, Training, Data, the ICES Recognition Programme and the planning of the Annual Science Conference was also highlighted. The proposed strategy allowed therefore for a direct link between the Expert Groups and the Science Plan. The guiding principles were considered to be:

- The system proposed should not be overly bureaucratic
- Approximately 5–6 steering committees to enable a manageable system.
- Full participation by all expert group chairs in steering committees is desirable but not mandatory
- SCICOM needs a structure which facilitates governance of the Science Plan and at the same time expert groups should feel they are part of the process.

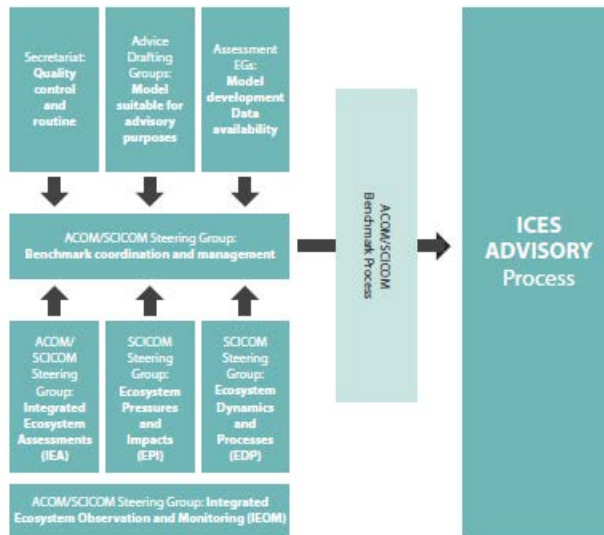
The outcome of the restructuring was the creation of 5 Steering Groups:

5 Science Steering Committees	4 additional Support Groups
Ecosystems Function SC (Science Plan Thematic Area 1)	Training
Human interactions on Ecosystems SC (Science Plan Thematic Area 2)	Publication
Sustainable use of Ecosystems SC (Science Plan Thematic Area 3)	Data
Regional Sea Programmes SC	ICES ASC
Ecosystems Surveys Science and Technology SC	

After the initial formulation of this structure several Strategic Initiatives were also created to deal with specific strategic issues i.e.

- SICCME – Strategic Initiative on Climate Change
- SIBAS- Strategic Initiative on Biodiversity
- SISAM – Strategic Initiative on Stock Assessment Methods

In 2014 the ICES Strategy (2014–2018) was published and within this a new Science Plan was also adopted. The SCICOM structure was modified to allow for more integration with ACOM and to operate in a more cohesive way to deliver on the Science strategy. While 5 Steering Groups were retained, some of these were combined and a number of new and jointly (SCICOM/ACOM) Steering Groups were established.



Revised SCICOM structure and relationship with the Strategic Plan (Implementing the ICES Strategic Plan 2014–2018)

Group 2 Discussion was based on the Bureau proposal as follows:

- the SCICOM-Chair position be changed to a full-time P5-position, located in Copenhagen at the ICES Secretariat (similar to the recent changes to the ACOM-Chair-position);
- the SCICOM Chair continues to report to Bureau and Council, and is responsible to SCICOM (equal to the ACOM chair)
- the SCICOM SSG chairs should be formalised as Vice-Chair positions and compensated for a certain percentage of their time,.
- to dissolve the Head of Science Programme position, and reallocate the tasks between the SCICOM Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Head of Science Support.

The Group 2 discussion centred on how this would affect science priorities and how the current Expert Groups are structured and managed and how to incorporate the responsibilities of Data/DIG under one of the Vice-Chairs.

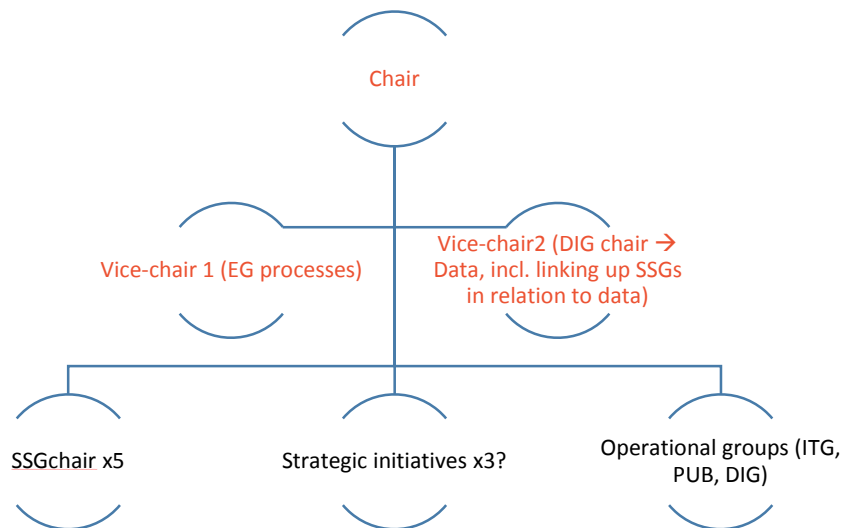
The main issues raised were:

- Is it possible to split up a vice-chair into 5 SSG chairs? This was felt to be a difficulty with the proposal as in previous examinations of the SCICOM structure a minimum of 5 thematically structured steering groups had been identified.
- There must be a connection between functional work and content so that “generic” Vice Chairs would find it difficult to co-ordinate the 100 highly diverse expert groups for effective delivery of the Strategic and Science plans.
- The expert groups have already had two significant changes in their reporting and links with the science plan. They now recognise their main steering

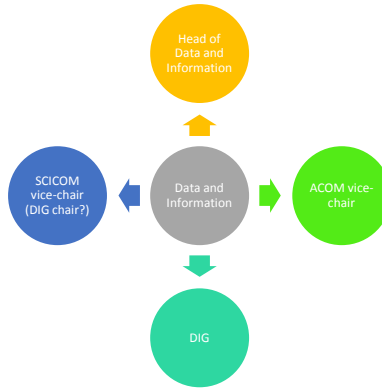
group and their links and obligations to the ICES Strategy and Science Plans (and associated steering groups as clearly overlap occurs). This has taken some time to be established and should be maintained.

- The process of revolving SSG chairs every 3 (possibly 4) years meant that there was a frequent renewal of people and this was felt to be a positive process in maintain momentum within the SGs.
- The current SG chairs do not receive an honorarium so there is not specific cost associated with this. However, if possible a review of the amount of time spent by current SSGchairs would probably indicate that they contribute quite a lot of time and a small honorarium could be considered.
- Retaining the SG structure but bringing in Vice-Chair (or chairs) who are paid an honorarium was seen as a way to boost the overall co-ordination and management of the existing science structure.
- SCICOM performs a very different function to ACOM so having exactly the same structure is not necessarily an improvement. However if a similar structure is created it but retaining the steering group structure this would possibly allow:
 - Streamlining of communications
 - Offer some compatibility with ACOM
 - Provide a stronger linking between data providers and data users
 - Would release the SSG chairs to allow them to interact more with the EGs and co-ordinate output more efficiently.

A proposed structure was provided based on retaining the current 5 Steering Groups



In relation to DIG, as the positioning of Data in relation to the proposal was not clearly worked out in the SCICOM meeting, a subgroup (Cornelius Hammer, Tammo Bult, Pierre Petitgas, Neil Holdsworth, Ingeborg de Boois) further discussed this in the ICES structure on Monday 21 September. The outcomes of this group should be considered as a later version of the SCICOM proposal (only refers to data) which is shown below. This shows that significant data and information input is required from the data and Information services at several levels and it was felt that this aspect of the Bureau proposal required further discussion.



Subgroup 3 Group 3: The new leadership – task distribution

SCICOM acknowledges that the proposed structure: (1) suggesting to replace the SSG chairs by the SCICOM vice-chairs, may not sufficiently provide for a strengthened bottom-up process and communication, indispensable to create a sense of ownership within EGs within the ICES science pillar, (2) seems not to generate more time to streamline the SCICOM work, in contrary.

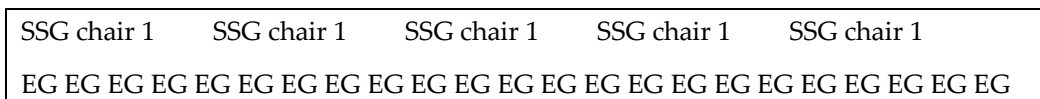
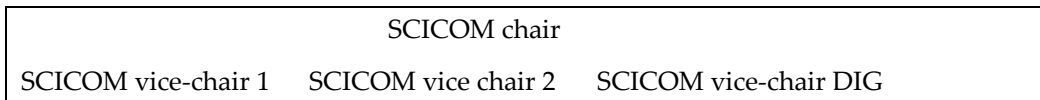
The current tasks of HoS can be allocated to three themes (Annex 1):

- 1) Science outreach, e.g. link to external organisations (~ 20% FTE)
- 2) Science operation, e.g. work done in relation to ASC, PUBCOM, (~ 50% FTE)
- 3) Science strategy, e.g. link to EGs and SSGs (~30% FTE)

The task “Management of 10 staff in the Science Programme” was not allocated to a task theme. This task may be covered by the Secretariat.

SCICOM proposes to allocate the science outreach tasks to the SCICOM chair, as the ultimate ICES ambassador for science. Science operation tasks can be covered by one vice-chair (50% FTE), while science strategy tasks can be covered by the second vice-chair (50% FTE). The latter tasks cover only about 30% FTE leaving time to the second vice-chair for a strengthened interaction with EGs and SSGs. The third SCICOM vice-chair takes responsibility of the data and information needs within SCICOM and is possibly shared with ACOM. In this model, the SSG chairs are maintained as the facilitators of the bottom-up communication with the EGs.

Schematic presentation of the suggested structure:



Annex 1: Allocation of the current HoS tasks to three task themes

Science strategy tasks

- Support for the Expert Groups under the Science Programme (review reports, coordinate recommendations, review and give input to all important decisions,...)
- Support for SCICOM and its Steering Groups Support for Strategic Initiatives (funding, organizational, liaising with other IGOs on strategic issues,...)
- Oversee support for research projects and other research coordination efforts, participate in decision-making meetings re. projects
- Oversee the cross-cutting activities in support of IEAs in the secretariat (review reports, coordinate recommendations, review and give input to all important decisions,...)

Science operation theme

- Support for science symposia in cooperation with other organizations (advise conveners with funding, organizational decisions, staffing/speakers, coordination, venue, participate if desirable in the conference,...)
- Organization of the Annual Science Conference (review and give input on all important decisions, answer general questions on procedures and protocol related to scientific conferences, create the ASC scientific programme, act as point-of-contact for all questions on scientific content, select Early Career Scientists,...)
- Oversee in-house publications, the library and part of communications (advise on status and handling of category 1 resolutions, review and give input on all important decisions)
- Oversee coordinating and administration of the ICES Training Programme (review and give input on all important decisions, recommend potential course instructors from professional network, advise on matters of scientific content)

Science outreach tasks

- Oversee and proactively initiate scientific cooperation with other organizations (participate in each other's main meetings, identify in consultation with SCICOM science priorities for joint activities, implement existing MoUs, ...)
- Specifically with PICES organize the Early Career Scientists Conference every five years

Annex 5: SCICOM response on the Bureau Proposal to Council on Strengthening the Science Leadership

SCICOM response to Bureau on

“Bureau Proposal to Council on Strengthening the Science Leadership”

SCICOM welcomes the opportunity presented by Bureau to strengthen the Science leadership across the four ICES pillars.

SCICOM invites Bureau to clarify the framework and procedure within which SCICOM will contribute. In particular, clarification is sought on whether a full-time chair position and a head of support in the secretariat has already been decided by Bureau as this will clearly influence how SCICOM can develop operational structures.

SCICOM also welcomes the opportunity to engage with Council in a Council-SCICOM group to:

- consider the overall leadership structure across ICES pillars as suggested by Bureau to evaluate and propose alternative scenarios for the Science leadership,
- design and propose a leadership structure for SCICOM that is adapted to SCICOM internal and external procedures as well as fulfilling the needs identified by Bureau for leadership across ICES pillars which will also be viewed favourably by ICES members and clients,
- develop the strategic and operational tasks of the SCICOM leadership and develop corresponding job descriptions,
- recommend a recruitment process with its timeline.

SCICOM is pleased to contribute to a constructive dialogue with Bureau, and SCICOM is available to Bureau to finalise the Bureau proposal to Council. SCICOM would appreciate if its views could appear in the Bureau proposal to Council.

Annex 6: Theme Sessions approved by SCICOM for ASC 2016

ID	Title	Conveners
1	Fisher Collected Aquatic Data (FCAD)	Steve Barbeaux (steve.barbeaux@noaa.gov) Martin Pastoors (mpastoors@pelagicfish.eu) Sascha Fässler (sascha.fassler@wur.nl)
2	Predictably Irrational – a new scientific research field for the science underpinning marine-resource management	Sarah B. M. Kraak (sarah.kraak@ti.bund.de) Dorothy J. Dankel (dorothy.dankel@svt.uib.no)
3	From individuals to ecosystems: their ecology and evolution	Anne Maria Eikeset (a.m.eikeset@ibv.uio.no) Silva Uusi-Heikkilä (silva.uusi-heikkila@utu.fi)
5	Ecosystem changes and impacts on diadromous and marine species productivity	Katherine Mills (kmills@gmri.org) Timothy Sheehan (tim.sheehan@noaa.gov)
6	The emerging science of ecological multi-model inference for informing fisheries management	Phillip Levin (phil.levin@noaa.gov) Stefan Neuenfeldt (stn@aqua.dtu.dk) Tessa Francis (tessa@uw.edu)
7	Integrated Ecosystem Assessment, how does it work, what is it good for, who is it for, and where is it going?	David Reid (david.reid@marine.ie) Lena Bergström, (lena.bergstrom@slu.se) M. Robin Anderson, (m.robin.anderson@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)
8	The inshore challenge – management of recreational and commercial fisheries accounting for social benefits, economic value, and biological sustainability	Harry Strehlow, (harry.strehlow@ti.bund.de) Estanis Mugerza, (emugerza@azti.es) Maria Teresa Spedicato, (spedicato@coispa.it)
9	Looking backwards to move ahead – how the wider application of new technologies to interpret scale, otolith, statolith and other biomineralised age-registering structures could improve management of natural resources.	Ewan Hunter (ewan.hunter@cefas.co.uk) Vladimir Laptikhovskiy (vladimir.laptikhovskiy@cefas.co.uk) Philip Hollyman (p_hollyman@hotmail.co.uk)
10	Seasonal-to-Decadal Prediction of Marine Systems: Opportunities, Approaches and Applications	Mark R Payne (Proposed ICES co-convenor) (mpay@aqua.dtu.dk) Desiree Tommasi (Proposed PISCES co-convenor) (desiree.tommasi@noaa.gov) Alistair Hobday, (Alistair.Hobday@csiro.au)
11	What is a good pelagic habitat?	Mark Dickey-Collas (Mark.dickey-collas@ices.dk) Abigail McQuatters-Gollop (abigail.mcquatters-gollop@plymouth.ac.uk) Verena Trenkel (verena.trenkel@ifremer.fr)
12	Marine sediment extraction as a sustainable use of the sea	Ad Stolk (ad.stolk@rws.nl)
15	Integration challenges in maritime spatial planning – approaches, science gaps and communication demands	Andreas Kannen (Andreas.Kannen@hzg.de) Matt Gubbins (matthew.gubbins@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) Michael Gilek, Michael.gilek@sh.de
17	The role of zooplankton in exploited ecosystems: top-down and bottom-up stresses on pelagic food webs	Angus Atkinson (aat@pml.ac.uk) Webjoern Melle (melle@imr.no)
18	Long-term phytoplankton trends in the ICES area: regional distribution, bloom dynamics and response to environmental drivers	Alexandra Kraberg (Alexandra.Kraberg@awi.de) Eileen Bresnan (Eileen.Bresnan@gov.scot) Marie Johansen (marie.johansen@smhi.se)

19	“When is enough – enough” Methods for optimising, evaluating and prioritising of marine data collection	J.H. Vølstad, (jonhelge@imr.no) Mike Armstrong, (mike.armstrong@cefas.co.uk) Marie Storr-Paulsen, (msp@aqua.dtu.dk)
21	State of the Arctic Marine Biodiversity Report	Marianne Olsen (marianne.olsen@miljodir.no) Tom Christensen (toch@bios.au.dk)
22	Harvest control rules: beyond FMSY for an ecosystem approach to European fisheries?	Didier Gascuel (didier.gascuel@agrocampus-ouest.fr) Lisa Borges (lisa.borges@sapo.pt) Dave Reid (Dave.Reid@Marine.ie)
23	Integrating humanities and social sciences into integrated ecosystem assessments – first steps	Jorn Schmidt (jschmidt@economics.uni-keil.de) David Goldsborough (david.goldsborough@wur.nl) Eva Lotta Sundblad (eva- lotta.sundblad@havsmiljoinstitutet.se)

Annex 7: SCICOM September 2015 – Actions and Decisions

ITEM NO.	AGENDA ITEM	ACTIONS AND DECISIONS	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
7.2	Evaluation of multi-annual groups	Citations in self-evaluations. SSG Chairs should inform EG chairs that the EG members may list citations in annual reports if relevant to the group.	SSG Chairs, SCICOM Chair	SCICOM March 2016
7.2	Evaluation of multi-annual groups	The SCICOM Chair will consider changing the process to become a one one-stage process for review of the EG self-evaluation and review of new multi-annual ToRs.	SCICOM Chair	SCICOM March 2016
7.2	Evaluation of multi-annual groups	The Secretariat will draft a letter for approval by SSG Chairs to be sent to the relevant EG Chairs.	Secretariat	Done
10	ICES Science Fund	SCICOM approved all Science Fund project reports. The Secretariat will convey the good news to all Science Fund coordinators, and the last 20% of the funds will be paid out.	Secretariat	Done
10	ICES Science Fund	Funding will be requested from Council for 2016 and a full evaluation will be prepared for the 2016 Council meeting.	SCICOM Chair	Council 2016
12.2	ICES Training Group (ITG)	Daniel Duplisea was approved as new Chair of ICES Training Group	–	January 2016
12.4 and 15	ICES Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM)	<p>SCICOM established a subgroup consisting of Jan Jaap Poos and Niall O'Maoileidigh to provide half page on the profile of CRRs for comments and approval by SCICOM.</p> <p>SCICOM had drafted a strategy document for CRRs as requested by PUBCOM. The document will be brought to SCICOM for approval via the SCICOM Forum, before it is returned to PUBCOM for consideration for the future development of the CRRs.</p>	Secretariat	2015
14	Symposia	<p>Theme session at World Fisheries Congress in Pusan Korea in May 2016</p> <p>'How can natural science and social science research be integrated into science advice so that it is useful to policy makers and the broader society?'</p> <p>The resolution was approved by SCICOM, including financial support for one convener (Jörn Schmidt, Germany) to attend conference. The secretariat will look into the funding.</p>	Secretariat	2015
14	Symposia	<p>Symposium on "A forward look at Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management in the Baltic Sea, real options" to be held in June 2016, Stockholm, Sweden.</p> <p>The resolution – asking for the ICES</p>	Secretariat	-

		rubberstamp – was supported by SCICOM		
15	ICES Publications and Communications Group (PUBCOM)	SCICOM agreed to the PUBCOM recommendation that extended abstracts are no longer required, but allowed on presenter's initiative. Information should be passed to contributors that extended abstracts may reduce the possibility of publishing of the presented scientific work in the future. The Secretariat will announce this decision and inform PUBCOM.	Secretariat	-
15.1	Draft resolutions for publications	SCICOM approved all three resolutions: TIMES: The report on "Methods for the Determination of Chlorophyll in Seawater", prepared and edited by Pamela Walsham (UK) and other members of the MCWG, as reviewed and approved by the Chair of the SSGEPI, will be published in the ICES Techniques in Marine Environmental Sciences (TIMES) series. CRR: Incorporating culturally significant areas into Coastal and Maritime Spatial Planning: A handbook CRR: Reviving the ICES Identification leaflets for plankton (formerly Fiches d'Identification du Plancton) series.		-
16	ASC Theme Sessions 2016 (final decisions)	The final list of Theme Sessions approved by SCICOM is given in Annex 6. In terms of process it was agreed that SCICOM would maintain the 'old' 18 session format for the 2016 ASC. For 2017 ASC a four-day conference with fewer theme sessions should be the format.		-
16	ASC Theme Sessions 2016 (final decisions)	Two open sessions were approved by SCICOM: Delivering science for the management of the Baltic Sea. (with DGENV, DGR&I, HELCOM and BONUS) How to get your message through?		-
16.1	ASC keynote speakers	SCICOM noted that our host for the ASC 2016 (Latvia) had nominated Fritz Köster, Denmark, to give the 2016 ASC open lecture. A call was opened for the two remaining slots, which were decided via a Skype meeting on 12 October 2015: • Chad Hewitt, University of Waikato, New Zealand • Éva Plagányi-Lloyd, CSIRO, Australia		-
17.4	SSGIEOM	A process to formalise the data needs, e.g. via data calls, and map this to the data collection is needed. There might be a good opportunity to use the SCICOM leadership restructuring process to ensure its implementation. CSWGIS should address this topic.	SCICOM Chair, CSWGIS	

19.1	SICCME	SCICOM noted the willingness of Myron Peck, University of Hamburg, Germany, to serve as SICCME co-chair and he was appointed as new Co-Chair of SICCME as from 1 January 2016.	-	-
24	AOB	<p>Action: The next midterm meeting will be held in Copenhagen from Tuesday, 8 March 2016 (starting at 13:00) till Thursday, 10 March 2016 (ending at 13:00). The Joint ACOM leadership/SCICOM business group will meet on Thursday, 10 March from 14:00 till 17:00.</p> <p>Action: The SCICOM Chair was asked to outline the process and timelines for the process of strengthening the Science Leadership. SCICOM would need to allocate time for discussion on the future structure for the Science Programme.</p> <p>Decision: Pending a decision the future structure and a new call for SSGEPD Chair, Graham Pierce agreed to oversee the groups during the interim period.</p>	-	-