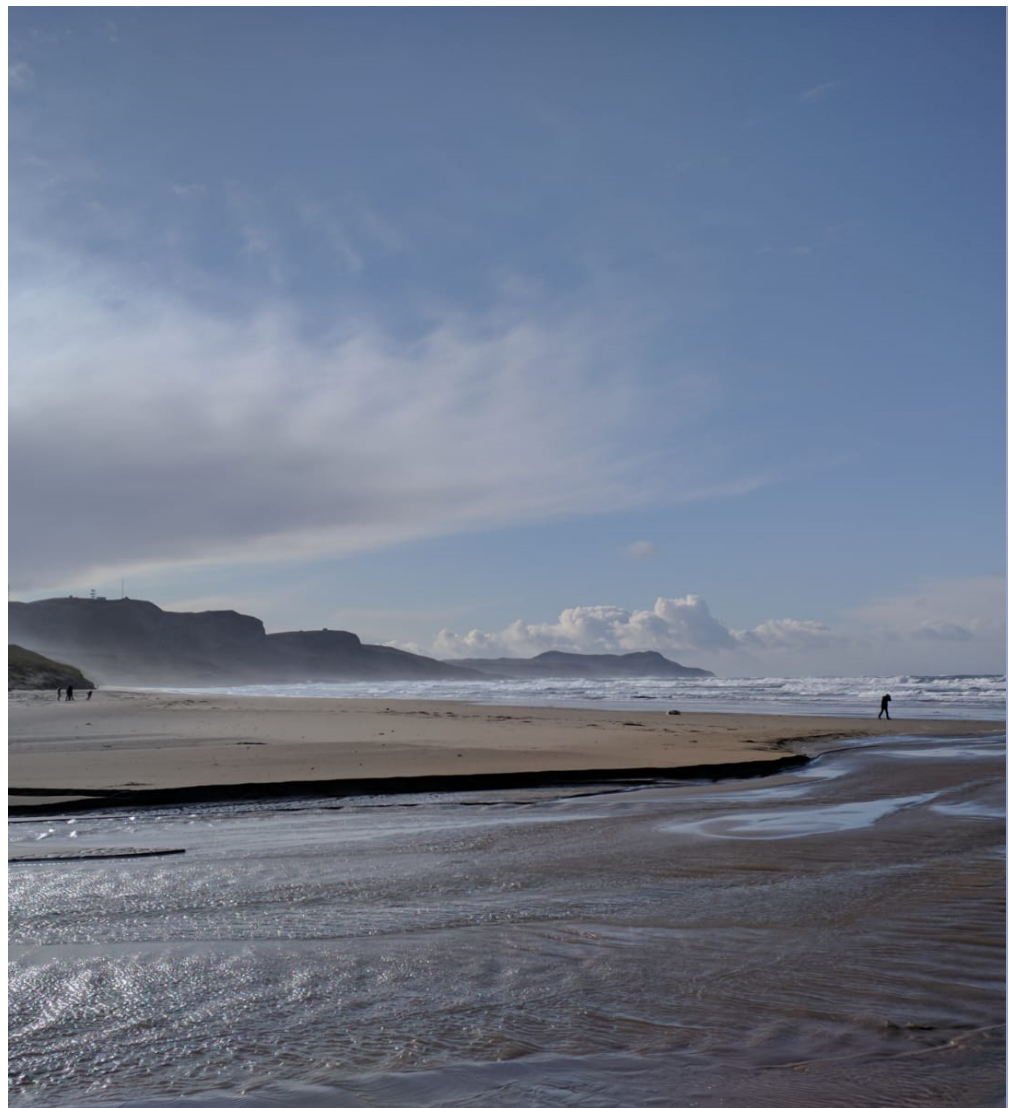


MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ACOM), SEPTEMBER 2022

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ICES BUSINESS REPORTS



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

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

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i Executive summary

The advisory committee of ICES met during the 2022 Annual science conference in Dublin. It was a hybrid meeting. It considered conservation status advice, new VME advice, reference points and rebuilding frameworks (in principle approving 3 further workshops) and next steps for alternative perceptions of advice from stakeholders (with approval to hold a workshop with a subgroup of MIACO on the issue). The work of the benchmark oversight group was discussed and there was a frank exploration of the decision process in ACOM and ramifications of ACOM members disagreeing in other parts of the process. In a joint session with SCICOM, the issues of integrated monitoring and gender awareness, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion were addressed. The impact of deviations from management plans in ICES were discussed (with approval to hold a workshop with a subgroup of MIRIA on the issue). The need for training and equitable representation was explored with no agreement by the committee and progress to mitigate the suspension of experts from the Russian Federation on advice was reviewed, given the ACOM leadership a further mandate to explore solutions. The committee remembered Dr Sarah Kraak, who passed away in 2022.

1 Welcome, reflections and introductions

ACOM was welcomed to the hybrid meeting and reminded that as hybrid, the ACOM meeting would have the ability to approve decisions. The meeting agenda had been adopted on the ACOM Forum prior to the meeting. The meeting was attended by 19 ACOM members/alternates, observers from Greenland and Faroese, ACOM Leadership, the incoming and outgoing FRSG Chairs and previous ACOM Vice-Chair Ghislain Chouinard, 19 people in person and 10 online (see Annex 1).

ACOM was informed and reflected on the [meeting etiquette](#) and [code of conduct](#) for ICES meetings.

In memoriam of Sarah Kraak, the major impact she had within the ICES network, her contributions to many ICES expert groups, and her scientific talent was stressed by the Chair who also touched on Sarah's personality that will be clearly missed.

Minutes and action points from the ACOM meeting in April 2022, as presented in Doc 01b, were reviewed and ACOM was asked to review and update the ACOM membership list (Doc 01c).

Action: 1. ACOM to review and update the ACOM membership list

2 Conservation status advice

Mindful of previous decisions, ACOM was asked to review the proposed guidelines for conservation status advice and agree the revised name of the 'ICES Advice on fishing opportunities, catch, and effort document' sheets.

The documents had been available on the ACOM forum with requests for comments by 14 September. The comments were synthesised and ACOM was invited to agree on actions and approve the guidelines.

The implementation process was discussed by ACOM; stepwise/stock-by-stock basis or overall for all stocks in one go, considering however the associated workload associated with this. It was decided to introduce the guidelines to all working groups but for a subset of stocks in each group; selection of these should be made in dialogue with the expert group chairs. Thus, a step-wise implementation but across all EGs, facilitating the community getting introduced to this change in one go and as well giving ACOM an option for a thorough discussion across stocks/regions.

The Fisheries Resources Steering Group (FRSG) Chair will discuss the approach on implementation with all WG chairs prior to WGCHAIRS. There will likely be around 20 stocks (max) in the first round of implementation. The selection of stocks will be made in collaboration with the FRSG Chair, ACOM Leadership (LS) and the EG Chair. Stocks with a biomass below Blim could be considered first/have increased focus; the consequences of climate change need also to be considered on a stock-by-stock basis. The implementation of the guidelines and the guidelines themselves will be agile and adaptable based on feedback from EGs, ACOM and as well the reception by the Advice Requesters.

A description of the minimum requirements for providing such a conservation advice should be included in the generic ToRs, asking the groups to provide such background documentation in their report. ACOM LS will put forward a suggestion for the nature of this documentation and where this should be provided in the report/advice.

International conservation measures will need to be considered here; these are being measured by different parameters which should be considered included in data calls. High priority/Internationally important management plans/conservation measures will be mentioned in the beginning of the guidelines to narrow down the scope of the advice to be provided. National management plans should be included to the extent possible and mentioned when appropriate.

2.1 VME occurrence and protection in relation to SAI (significant adverse effects)

In addition to the conservation advice, ACOM was provided with an update on the evolving advice on occurrence and protection of VMEs. A combination of different levels of fishing pressure and certainty of VME occurrence is used to communicate to managers options on establishing VME occurrence polygons that managers can use to suggest closures.

It was highlighted by the ADGME Chair that despite having made progress to better communicate the assessment procedure there are also a few as of yet unresolved challenges or implicit assumptions. For example, the assumption that recovery does not occur after stopping bottom trawl. Further work will also be required to validate a threshold of bottom fishing intensity for the North Atlantic. The ICES approach does not consider intensity of fishing with static bottom contacting gear. It will be important for ICES to effectively communicate such underlying assumptions.

The meeting was reminded of the recent application of the ICES approach to adopt closures, and that the EU decision to establish closures has also been taken to court and challenged. ICES has also received an advice request to establishing an assessment procedure for VMEs in the outer most regions of the EU.

The ICES work on VMEs was commended by ACOM, saying that better communication has helped. It was also emphasised that not only for areas 400–800 m, that VME protection will be extended to other areas for which the ICES approach will be useful.

3 Reference points and rebuilding framework

In light of Workshop on ICES reference points (WKREF1) and Workshop on guidelines for reference points (WKREF2), ACOM was consulted on next steps for the framework on reference points and the urgent need for a clear approach for rebuilding of stocks to sustainable biomass levels. ACOM was invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

The WKREF2 Chair presented the outcomes of WKREF 1 and 2 and discussions that had been held with the ACOM LS and FRSG Chair on plans for way forward.

Some key messages from WKREF1 was the desire to not disregard diverse expert knowledge for a generic one-size fits all approach to reference points, the need for a clear understanding across the ICES assessment community and the ability to easily explain the framework to recipients of advice, stakeholders and outside users. There were a number of recommendations put forward for WKREF2 for further consideration. WKREF2 provided possible reference point framework, not through consensus but rather put forward for consideration.

However, building understanding and consensus within the workshops around simplified and harmonized guidelines has yet to be achieved. This was in part due to difficulties operating

remotely, highlighting the need for a physical meeting for follow-up workshops. Further work also needs to be done on the simulation framework. A useful product of WKREF is a quality checked database of FLR objects for Category 1 assessments. This provides a valuable resource to explore options, but needs to be properly conditioned for each stock. In future work stock experts can use the tool and check their own stocks.

The Feco approach was supported and needs to be included in the guidelines. The need to validate the prediction skill of stock assessment models was highlighted, since if models fail in this regard then any reference points derived from them may not be appropriate. A new tool is available to explore evidence for Allee effects, and these could be explored using the FLR stock database produced by WKREF1.

The discussion after the presentation tried to not go into details at a technical level, but rather discussed high level issues. Changing the reference point framework was seen as potentially contentious. There will be big changes and the ICES network, stakeholders and requesters will all need to be well informed. Treating Fmsy as a upper limit and what to advise when stocks are below Blim are likely to be difficult discussions. It was recommended to conduct further work on the simulation framework.

The proposed follow-up to WKREF1-2 was for three new workshops. Separating framework discussions (high level) from practical stock-based explorations:

1. Fishing opportunities advice framework - WGREFFRAME
2. Workshop on estimation of reference points WKNEWREF
3. Second Workshop on guidelines and methods for the evaluation of rebuilding plans (WKREBUILD2)

Some TORs were proposed in Document 3. ACOM felt that a lot of the concepts are complex, and it was a good way forward to separate out the complexity of the estimation and simulation from the higher level discussion points.

ACOM was accepted the proposed WGREFFRAME TORs and felt there is a strong need for this though leading it will be very challenging.

For WKNEWREF stock experts would work through the proposals in practice to identify any issues or misunderstandings. Active stock assessors would be invited to participate. ACOM noted that ICES has some escapement stocks, and we need to include these in the TORs for these workshops. The current framework builds up from Blim, which can be problematic if Blim is not well defined. If Blim can't be well defined, then it could be better if the framework was anchored on Fmsy, considering variability and risk to Bloss (e.g. Blim defined looking at distribution of Bmsy). i.e. getting Fmsy right in the first place was considered important. In general ACOM was supportive of this WK.

WKREBUILD produced some rough guidelines, but no concrete proposals. During the last advice and assessment season there was a clear need for some robust guidance for stocks below Blim. The current '50% probability of getting above Blim' rule was not perceived to be working well (keeps stocks low). Further work on rebuilding plan guidance could be done concurrently to other work on the reference point framework. In practice there is often a short time to put a plan in place once a stock drops below Blim, so there needs to be an easily accessible tool for experts to be able to apply to a wide range of stocks (should be a similar tool to what we use for ref points generally). There was a desire to avoid WKREBUILD3 - i.e. the TORs need to push things forward to a practical level for application. ACOM was generally supportive of this workshop. ACOM asked about data limited stocks (DLS), where we have examples where some are in poor condition, but we continue giving DLS advice and a number of ADGs have also discussed how we get out of zero advice for such stocks given the current DLS rules.

It was noted that in addition to this extra work required on the reference point framework there is also currently the Regional Database & Estimation System (RDBES) roadmap (to take over from intercatch by 2024) and a lot of pressure on stock assessors to implement TAF. So there is concern that there will be a lot of work for 2023 and it was suggested that the timelines of some of the processes could be spread out longer.

In terms of the process for the three workshops, the timing and order was discussed. Implementation should be at the same time for the REBUILD and NEWREF workshops. The WK involving experts should be before framework meeting. There was a preference for a changed framework in time for the 2023 advice season, but six months to get there could be very tight. It is fairly urgent to have an agreed approach for stocks below Blim i.e. REBUILD is most urgent. Resources to develop the simulation tool could take longer and it was proposed that the EU CIENA funding could be sought or simulations. Explorations here will feed into decision points for framework meeting. But this group would need direction on what the framework will look like (the working assumption is that the framework proposed by WKREF2 will be the one to guide explorations - if faults are found there can be changes proposed).

In summary, ACOM thanked WKREF1 and 2 for their work and agreed that the main recommendations from WKREF2 are accepted. They will be adapted to a three-workshop process to be discussed on the forum.

Decision 3.1- Recommendations from WKREF2 are accepted. They will be adapted to a three-workshop process

4 Next steps – alternative perceptions

MIACO in June, stressed the need to make progress on ICES advice to acknowledge and account for alternative perceptions of stock dynamics. This was further emphasised as a result of the removal of “information from stakeholders” from the advice sheets.

At MIACO, the ACOM leadership committed ICES to hold further discussions with stakeholders on the next steps, building on the session during ACOM December 2021 (Agenda item 9). These discussions will report back to MIACO in January 2023.

ACOM was invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

A number of suggested priorities to initiate the discussion with MIACO were presented. Inclusion of data from the industry (series of Wks on this) will increase the credibility of the advice, visibly including the information from fishers, however, there is still a perceived need for a qualitative input from the stakeholders. For any quantitative assessment the data is the foundation, this is a well-known fact in the communities, however, the inclusion of these may not end up with assessment results which agree with the perception of the stocks in the stakeholder community. ACOM chose to go forward with quality and credibility. The importance of this opening should not be cancelled out by an option of ‘alternative facts’; ACOM should consider framing this as an opening for all, including Science as well.

Risk-based tools could be used (scoring approaches of fishers’ perception of stock size, spatial distribution, etc.) to map such perceptions (i.e. a different way to re-introduce the independent fisheries survey done in the North Sea). The application of these tools will have to be quite case-specific and be evaluated in terms of added value/information.

Socio-economics are currently not included at all, could as well make a difference as the ICES advice does impact the economy of the stakeholders.

ACOM suggested a workshop (2-hour meeting) with parts of MIACO (the ACs (and others)) on cases/lived experiences, where industry inclusion in the discussion of the advice process/assessment process/resulting advice have been successful or the contrary. Inputs from both MIACO and ACOM on cases should be invited.

Action 4.1 Holding a MIACO workshop to present and discuss examples of where perceptions of advice has been discussed and the process has been operational/not-operational. Meeting to be held prior to MIACO 2023. 2-hour workshop on alternative perceptions with ACs, asking for case-studies to be brought to the meeting.

5 Benchmarks and IBPs

There is a need to further address the flexibility of the benchmark system, and the criteria for IBPs. A proposal for further structuring of IBPs was made.

ACOM was invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

The definitions of IBP, benchmark and a review was presented (Document 5) . The different types of processes (review, IBP and benchmark) are in reality a continuum.

The ACOM Chair commented that the initial document to BOG included a consideration on the potential impact of advice as part of the decision process; how big an impact in the advice makes the change in assessment.

It was explained that BOG felt that the quality of the assessment is the main aspect to be considered and the assignation to a specific process should be solely determined by the amount of changes in the method.

It was noted that IBPs are typically triggered by retroactive biases and if this happen in the season there may not be enough time to move to a full benchmark but also that it may not need a full benchmark as IBPs can fix retro biases in short term and have a full benchmark latter. In any case, a better mechanism is needed to prevent the escalating number of IBPs.

It was also noted that the recent VME benchmark could score into an IBP and the need to find an implementation period for review without the need to go to an IBP. So, avoid immediate IBP for environmental benchmarks. To this it was responded that the guidelines being drafted at the moment are as generic as possible even though most of the experience is with fishing benchmarks.

There was support from ACOM to try to minimize the number of IBPs but it was at the same time underlined that the system should not be too strict as IBPs typically come during the assessment period and this flow should be maintained. The ACOM Leadership appreciated the serious situation and need for a better structure.

With regards to categorizing levels the ability of expert groups to incorporate methods and perform assessment was missed, the expert groups are the QA on its own and they can decide to deviate from annexes if they consider it appropriate.

It was requested whether there's a goal in mind in terms of number of IBPs and full benchmarks per year and what the ideal in terms of efficiency would be. The ACOM Vice-Chair responded that while there's not a fixed number it depends on the requirements and resources available. An IBP is as much work as a full benchmark for the ICES Secretariat.

It was also suggested that ICES could look at the individual expert group to see how much could be handled internally. ACOM was encouraged by Head of the Advice Department to spread the word to the community that it's ok to diverge from stock annexes as long as those changes are documented. The forthcoming guidelines will address this issue. The ACOM Leadership will work to better describe how much divergence can be accepted and how expert groups should proceed in case of divergence from stock annexes.

The document 5 triggered a good discussion but further work is needed as there are different views about empowering the expert groups.

Decision 5.1. BOG should deliver a new version of the benchmark guidelines.

6 Decision process in ACOM and ramifications

In recent years, the decisions of ACOM and the consensus agreed approaches and framework for the provision of advice have been challenged in advice drafting groups (ADGs). This is a sign of a strong, thoughtful and dynamic system. However, some of the challenges have been critical and originating from members of ACOM. This undermines the system and weakens the consensus decision making of the committee. Members of ACOM are part of the consensus of decision making and as such expected to support the decisions of ACOM.

ACOM was asked to address this phenomenon, and was encouraged to comment on why the consensus decision making, and joint ownership of decisions, is not operating well. ACOM was invited to agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

ACOM had difficulties in recognising this overall phenomenon, looking for concrete examples and names. The representation part of being an ACOM member should be part of the participation in any ICES process; disagreements with the consensus-decided approaches are fine and the communication of these should be done acknowledging that ACOM did decide this. If there are disagreements, these should be brought back to ACOM for discussion. The communication from ACOM to the EG Chair to the expert group of decisions need to be closer/more inclusive and have the ambassadorship underpinning the communication of any changes impacting the work of the EG experts.

The consensus principle where disagreement can be apparent but the majority want to go ahead with a decision and the 'no' agrees to move on despite disagreeing (for the principle, greater good) – and the difference from unanimity was underlined.

Decision 6.1 - ACOM LS should intervene in cases where ACOM members challenge ACOM decisions, based on facts, directly with the individuals in case.

7 Joint ACOM/ SCICOM session

7.1 Integrated monitoring

The two committees joined for a session on next steps for integrated monitoring of the marine ecosystem. This was in light of discussions in OSPAR that may soon lead to a special request to

ICES on optimising monitoring, and building a system that is fit for upcoming fisheries and environmental assessment and advice.

ACOM and SCICOM were given a short introduction of an advice request from OSPAR on integrated monitoring that is being iteratively developed with the Netherlands together with a general recognition of a need for integrated monitoring among the ICES network. ACOM and SCICOM were asked about what the level of ambition should be for the planned work, what has been done already and whether the focus should be on OSPAR request or broader.

The challenge for OSPAR has been to better collaborate amongst countries in data collection and monitoring, not only to study biodiversity using fisheries monitoring data. It was felt that ICES could help encourage the required collaboration. ACOM and SCICOM were asked to comment.

The Chair of the Ecosystem Observations Steering Group (EOSG) informed the meeting that their mandate is exactly this, and that there may be a need to restructure ICES work. There is also a workshop planned for November to pilot for the North Sea data collection and integrated monitoring.

The Working Group on Integrating Surveys for the Ecosystem Approach (WKISUR) and Workshop to Plan and Integrate Monitoring Program in the North Sea in the 3rd quarter (WKPIMP) had been looking at the monitoring design of existing fisheries surveys and what can be pragmatically 'reused'.

New technology and resolution coverage were brought up as important in designing joint monitoring programmes given that the plans span over several years. This includes eDNA opportunities, and automated surveys, etc. tier type of approach could be applied. The technological means of data collection in the future will be a theme session in the ASC 2023.

The funding entity was also listed as a main aspect to get clarity on. A clear candidate would be the Data Collection Framework (DCF). A need to operationalise how to implement a sampling framework (new or reusing existing structures) was noted.

It was stressed that any joint monitoring should consider sampling design, and that for example fisheries surveys may not be statistically the best for other components of the ecosystem

Importantly it was stressed that any monitoring programme design/re-design should start by defining the end products that the data/information is needed for. Should ICES monitoring be designed around OSPAR QSR products (and not HELCOM). Furthermore, is the planned restructuring of the monitoring in line with the data needs that serve to operationalize ICES assessment products.

7.2 Gender awareness, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in ICES

The ICES Secretariat presented the work ICES is undertaking on creating a more diverse, equitable, representative, and inclusive community, and the committees provided feedback on the Gender Equality Plan, these initiatives, and ideas for future work.

Diversity is a fact. Inclusion is an act. Support was expressed for increased actions to make ICES more inclusive. It was shared that ICES Publications prompts authors to consider diversity when making nominations and it has made a difference. The Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) has also made a lot of progress due to deliberate actions taken by leadership. The ICES community has asked for training for experts and chairs, a prompt when making nominations to the committees or quotas for leadership committees, and more.

The ICES Gender Equity Plan (GEP), a requirement for Horizon Europe recipients is in the consultation process with final approval expected by Council in October. The GEP is not static and is expected to be updated annually. The GEP is one piece of the puzzle of ICES work towards creating an inclusive culture, that is family friendly with professionalized gender equality work. ICES is also developing a code of ethics (our baseline on how to treat each other), training for staff on these issues, reviewing ICES policies, and more. The WGCHAIRS DEI sub-group has worked over the last year to identify actions for ICES to take on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the expert groups. The Strategic Initiative on Integration of Early Career Scientists (SIECS) is very active in this area and the Secretariat will have a DEI group, further training, work on its values.

The Gender Equity Plan is about gender, but ICES work in this area is so much more. We are encouraging greater diversity we need to actively create a culture of inclusion. We need more training in unconscious bias. We should consider revising the nomination process as it is an entrance barrier to the ICES community. Tokenism is an issue. How do we get to equality in roles, not just numbers? The action can't be put only on women to fix the problem. Everyone should take it upon themselves to be allies.

8 Next steps – precaution in management plans

MIRIA in June, had a discussion on the nature of precaution in fisheries advice and how short-term fishing opportunities advice incorporates precaution in comparison to evaluation of long-term management plans (MPs). At MIRIA, the ACOM leadership committed ICES to hold further discussions with requesters of advice to explore and explain the nature of precaution in ICES advice. These discussions will report back to MIRIA in January 2023. ACOM was invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

This issue was raised to inform ACOM about ongoing discussions with requesters (some of whom feel ICES may be stepping out of its role by effectively passing judgement on management by dropping agreed MPs as the basis for advice). MPs are negotiated between parties and because of effort negotiating these, managers want to keep them in place. ACOM noted that the issue of MPs not being followed will never go away completely, and perhaps there is a need for more flexibility in MPs to consider variations in implementation error. However, at the most recent mackerel MSE, the WK (not through the Secretariat or ACOM) wrote to industry about possibly examining implementation error, but managers did not want to see such analyses.

ACOM was informed that an invite to the meeting with managers to discuss this in advance of MIRIA 2023 would be circulated.

Action 8.1 Holding a MIRIA workshop on deviations from management plans. Meeting to be held prior to MIRIA 2023.
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9 Impact on quality of Russian Federation suspension

The Council decision in March 2022 to temporarily suspend experts and committee members from the Russian Federation has impacted the working groups and advice of ICES. The presentation summarised the impact, ongoing initiatives and challenges. ACOM was invited to comment, agree on actions.

The document 09 discussed should not be seen as a request to Council to revert the decision taken in April, but an information of the state of play and consequences of the decision. Discussion between various actors are ongoing (ICES, Norway, EU, UK).

In terms of delivering the Barents Sea advice in 2023 for 2024, ICES Bureau interpret the MoUs/GAs as ICES has to deliver this advice and there are initiatives to locate scientists to perform the stock assessments necessary. The data exist up until 2021. IMR, Norway has made the 'advice sheets' and the underlying report available on their website, including the data tables. Cod and haddock are done in StockAssessment.org and thus available there. If the data are not available for assessments next year, DLS methods or alternative projections can be applied, following the approach taken during the COVID-19 pandemic where data were missing as well. If new methods are to be applied, these need to be reviewed.

With the current fuel prices, the stability of catches and survey catches will certainly be impacted.

Note added Jan 2023: discussions around this issue are still ongoing and the situation keeps changing.

10 Membership of ACOM

ACOM is one of remaining bodies in ICES that does not encourage training and career development. ACOM also does not reflect the diversity of the network. Are there ways in which ACOM can cultivate and embed new talent in the provision of advice and also ensure equity and inclusion within the committee? ACOM was invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

The ACOM Chair asked ACOM members to think of ways that the next generation of ACOM could get the training they need. For example, it was suggested a limit on term length (2-3 years then to go to an alternate and back again). The Chair stated he had been trying to think of ways to use the alternates more.

An ACOM member felt that term limits would mean that smaller institutes would struggle to find enough experienced people to fill the role. Other ACOM members were not keen on the short-terms because of the loss of institutional memory. It was agreed that this should be passed on between members as long as there was sufficient overlap, and that ICES should document everything in order to deal with this issue.

A current mechanism that was felt by ACOM to be working well was the expert group chairs attending ADGs, which gave them a chance to see further along the ICES process. It was thought to be very useful for EG members to see what happens at an ADG, but important that different people attend the WG and ADG.

Another suggestion by ACOM was making a special session at the ASC or other big meetings to integrate new people. Could provide a mock-up of an ADG at the ASC with rotating ACOM members, to bring in new people.

Many institutes (e.g. IPMA0 are already trying to share the ADG attendance between new people. For a long time only one person has attended and there was no opportunity to share the knowledge.

It was agreed that succession planning is a national institute issue and needed to be kept there, and that the role of ACOM was to focus on the things that cannot be done nationally.

Actions were needed to make diversity happen and this was in the power of ACOM to change the current rules. If a change is to be made in the current setup, ACOM would do it and inform council; but that there should first be agreement between ACOM and SCICOM. Some ACOM members disagreed that they needed to do the same as SCICOM, as there was more need in ACOM for institutional memory than in SCICOM.

11 AOB

The issue of some workshops being announced too late for some countries to be able to attend was raised. It was explained that late announcement is a result of special conditions and that the Secretariat and ACOM Leadership are aware that meetings should be announced in time for member countries to be able to include in workplan.

It was highlighted that with Jonathan White becoming FRSG Chair BOG is short of one person. ACOM was encouraged to step forward. It was suggested that a fisheries person would be welcome. ACOM Vice-Chair will post information about BOG and the workload on the Forum.

It will also be posted on the ACOM Forum that new ecoregions as ecosystem overview candidates are wanted and ACOM will be asked to suggest these.

12 Wrap up

The Chair summarised the meeting discussions and reminded ACOM about the scheduled online resolution meeting on 9 November 2022 and the online Workplan meeting on 7 December 2022. Before closing a specific thank you was passed on to previous ACOM Vice-Chair Ghislain Chouinard for his dedicated work to ACOM and for having attended this ACOM meeting.

List of actions and decisions

Actions

Action 1.1 - ACOM to review and update the ACOM membership list

Action 4.1 - Holding a MIACO workshop to present and discuss examples of where perceptions of advice has been discussed and the process has been operational/not-operational. Meeting to be held prior to MIACO 2023. 2-hour workshop on alternative perceptions with ACs, asking for case-studies to be brought to the meeting.

Action 8.1 - Holding a MIRIA workshop on deviations from management plans. Meeting to be held prior to MIRIA 2023.

Decisions

Decision 3.1- Recommendations from WKREF2 are accepted. They will be adapted to a three-workshop process

Decision 5.1 - BOG should deliver a new version of the benchmark guidelines.

Decision 6.1 - ACOM LS should intervene in cases where ACOM members challenge ACOM decisions, based on facts, directly with the individuals in case.

Annex 1: List of participants

Member	Institute	Email	Country	Function	participation
Alain Biseau	IFREMER Lorient Station	abiseau@ifremer.fr	France	Member	In person
AnnDorte Burmeister	Greenland Institute of Natural Resources	anndorte@natur.gl	Greenland	Observer	Online
Anne Cooper	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	anne.cooper@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Atso Romakaniemi	Natural Resources Institute Finland - Oulu	atso.romakaniemi@luke.fi	Finland	Alternate	Online
Bjarki Elvarsson	Marine and Freshwater Research Institute	bjarki.elvarsson@hafogvatn.is	Iceland	Member	In person
Bjarte Bogstad	Institute of Marine Research	bjarte.bogstad@hi.no	Norway	Member	In person
Christopher Zimmermann	Thünen-Institute of Baltic Sea Fisheries	christopher.zimmermann@thuenen.de	Germany	Member	Online
Colm Lordan	Marine Institute	colm.lordan@marine.ie	Ireland	Member	In person
Didzis Ustups	Institute of Food Safety Animal Health and Environment Fish Resources Research Department	didzis.ustups@bior.lv	Latvia	Member	In person
David Miller	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	david.miller@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Dorleta Garcia	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	dorleta.garcia@ices.dk		Vice-Chair	In person
Eirini Glyki	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	eirni@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Eugene Nixon	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	eugene.nixon@ices.dk		Vice-Chair	In person
Els Torrelee	ILVO Marien	els.torrelee@ilvo.vlaanderen.be	Belgium	Member	In person

Ewen Bell	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science Cefas Lowestoft Laboratory	ewen.bell@cefas.gov.uk	United Kingdom	Member	In person
Francisco Velasco Guevara	The Spanish Institute of Oceanography Centro Oceanográfico de Santander	francisco.velasco@ieo.es	Spain	Member	In person
Ghislain Chouinard		chouinard.ga@gmail.com		Previous Vice-Chair	In person
Henn Ojaveer	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	henn.ojaveer@ices.dk		Vice-Chair	In person
Inigo Martinez	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	inigo@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Ivone Figueiredo	Portuguese Institute for the Sea and the Atmosphere	ifigueiredo@ipma.pt	Portugal	Member	Online
Jan Horbowy	National Marine Fisheries Research Institute	horbowy@mir.gdynia.pl	Poland	Member	Online
Joanne Morgan	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	joanne.morgan@ices.dk		Vice-Chair	In person
Jonathan White	Marine Institute	jonathan.white@marine.ie	Ireland	Incoming FRSG Chair	In person
Jurgen Batsleer	Wageningen University & Research	Jurgen.Batsleer@wur.nl	Netherlands	Alternate	Online
Lara Salvany	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	lara.salvany@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Lisette Enserink	Rijkswaterstaat	lisette.enserink@rws.nl	Netherlands	Alternate	In person
Lotte Worsøe Clausen	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	lotte.worsoe.clausen@ices.dk		Head of Advice Department	In person
Marie-Julie Roux	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Marie-Julie.Roux@dfompo.gc.ca	Canada	Member	In person
Mark Dickey-Collas	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	mark.dickey-collas@ices.dk		Chair	In person
Michala Ovens	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	michala@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person

Morten Vinther	DTU Aqua, National Institute of Aquatic Resources	mv@aqua.dtu.dk	Denmark	Member	Online
Patrick Lynch	United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA Fisheries	patrick.lynych@noaa.gov	United States	FRSG Chair	In person (part-time)
Petur Steingrund	Faroe Marine Research Institute	peturs@hav.fo	Faroe Islands	Observer	Online
Robert Aps	University of Tartu Estonian Marine Institute	robert.aps@ut.ee	Estonia	Member	Online
Sarah Millar	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	sarah-louise.millar@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Scott Large	United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA Fisheries	scott.large@noaa.gov	United States	Alternate	In person
Sebastian Valanko	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea	sebastian.valanko@ices.dk		ICES Secretariat	In person
Valerio Bartolino	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences SLU Department of Aquatic Resources- SLU Aqua	valerio.bartolino@slu.se	Sweden	Alternate	Online

Annex 2: Draft agenda

1 Welcome, reflections and introductions (Docs 01a, 01b, 01c)

The agenda will be adopted via the ACOM forum beforehand (Doc 01a).

Round table of introductions.

[Meeting etiquette](#) and [Code of conduct](#),

Review of minutes and action points from April 2022 (Doc 01b)

Review of membership (Doc 01c)

As hybrid, this is an ACOM meeting with the ability to approve decisions.

2 Conservation status advice (Presentation & Doc 02)

Mindful of previous decisions, ACOM will be asked to review the proposed guidelines for conservation status advice and agree the revised name of the 'ICES Advice on fishing opportunities, catch, and effort document' sheets.

The documents is available on the ACOM forum with requests for comment by 14 September. These comments will be synthesised.

ACOM will be invited to agree on actions, and take approve the guidelines.

3 Reference points & rebuilding framework (Presentation & Doc 03)

In light of WKREF1 and WKREF2, ACOM will be consulted on next steps for the framework on reference points and the urgent need for a clear approach for rebuilding of stocks to sustainable biomass levels.

ACOM will be invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

4 Next steps – alternative perceptions (Presentation & Doc 04)

MIACO in June, stressed the need to make progress on ICES advice to acknowledge and account for alternative perceptions of stock dynamics. This was further emphasised as a result of the removal of "information from stakeholders" from the advice sheets.

At MIACO, the ACOM leadership committed ICES to hold further discussions with stakeholders on the next steps, building on the session during ACOM December 2021 ([Agenda item 9](#)). These discussions will report back to MIACO in January 2023.

ACOM will be invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

5 Benchmarks & IBPs (Presentation & Doc 05)

There is a need to further address the flexibility of the benchmark system, and the criteria for IBPs. A proposal for further structuring of IBPs will be made.

ACOM will be invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

6 Decision process in ACOM & ramifications (Presentation)

In recent years, the decisions of ACOM and the consensus agreed approaches and framework for the provision of advice have been challenged in ADGs. This is a sign of a strong,

thoughtful and dynamic system. However, some of the challenges have been critical and originating from members of ACOM. This undermines the system and weakens the consensus decision making of the committee.

Members of ACOM are part of the consensus of decision making and as such expected to support the decisions of ACOM.

ACOM will be asked to address this phenomenon, and is encouraged to comment on why the consensus decision making, and joint ownership of decisions, is not operating well.

ACOM will be invited to agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

7 Joint ACOM/ SCICOM session

7a Integrated monitoring (Presentation & Doc 07a)

The two committees will join for a session on next steps for integrated monitoring of the marine ecosystem. This is in light of discussions in OSPAR that may soon lead to a special request to ICES on optimising monitoring, and building a system that is fit for upcoming fisheries and environmental assessment and advice.

7b Gender awareness, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in ICES

Gender balance in the Committee, alternates and succession planning. This will be further discussed by ACOM during agenda item 11.

8 Next steps – precaution in management plans (Presentation & Doc 08)

MIRIA in June, had a discussion on the nature of precaution in fisheries advice and how short-term fishing opportunities advice incorporates precaution in comparison to evaluation of long term management plans.

At MIRIA, the ACOM leadership committed ICES to hold further discussions with requesters of advice to explore and explain the nature of precaution in ICES advice. These discussions will report back to MIRIA in January 2023.

ACOM will be invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

9 Impact on quality of Russian Federation suspension (Presentation)

The Council decision in March 2022 to temporarily suspend experts and committee members from the Russian Federation has impacted the working groups and advice of ICES. The presentation will summarise the impact, ongoing initiatives and challenges.

ACOM will be invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

10 Membership of ACOM (Presentation)

ACOM is one of remaining bodies in ICES that does not encourage training and career development of the network. ACOM also does not reflect the diversity of the network.

Are there ways in which ACOM can cultivate and embed new talent in the provision of advice and also ensure equity and inclusion within the committee?

ACOM will be invited to comment, agree on actions, and take decisions as appropriate.

11 Wrap up (followed by close 18:00)

ACOM will be asked for additional comment, and the Chair will summarise discussions.