

SUMMARY REPORT

Annual Meeting between ICES, the Advisory Councils and Other Stakeholders (MIACO) – Copenhagen, 18-19 January 2018

Author: Alexandre Rodriguez, LDAC Executive Secretary



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DISCLAIMER NOTE: This is a personal summary of the meeting from the LDAC Executive Secretary highlighting only those topics which are deemed to be of particular relevance for the LDAC. It is not intended therefore to cover all topics that were dealt with at the agenda of MIACO as this will be duly covered by the ICES official report.

Overview

The Long Distance Advisory Council was invited, together with all the ACs, and other interested stakeholders to participate to the meeting organized annually by ICES on the second week of January, together with its coordination meeting with other clients and recipients of advice, including EC, and Member Countries (MIRIA).

The meeting was well attended by about 30 delegates from 7 Advisory Councils out of existing 10 (with the exception of Mediterranean, Aquaculture and Black Sea), as well as ICES scientists, organisations such as MSC and representatives from third non EU countries such as the Norwegian Fishermen's Association.



In terms of procedure, each AC was invited to nominate three representatives. According to the LDAC best practices for external meetings with limited participation, the Chair, a Vice Chair and the Secretary were designated to compose the LDAC delegation, including at least one industry and one NGO representatives.

Due to last minute justified absence of both the LDAC Chair of the ExCom and the WG2 Chair, the LDAC delegation was composed in this occasion by Bjorn Stockhausen, appointed on behalf of the NGO group, and Alexandre Rodriguez in his capacity as Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary was tasked with giving an update of the work held with ICES in 2017 as well as to identify the LDAC research and advisory needs for 2018.

The 2 days were structured in 2 meetings: one half-a-day meeting called “pre-MIACO” between ICES and the Advisory Councils; and two half-day meetings between ICES, the ACs and other stakeholders.

Pre-MIACO Meeting between ICES and the Advisory Councils Thursday 18 January, 9am-12am.

AC experiences regarding science-stakeholder collaboration on data, communication and quality control:

This was an item included in the agenda at request of the LDAC.

The ACs do have an increasing role in contributing, in close cooperation with scientists, to the collection, supply and analysis of data necessary for conservation measures, as laid out on article 44.c of CFP Basic EU Regulation 1380/2013.

The aim is to improve the knowledge basis for the sound conservation and adequate management of fishing resources in areas such as the drafting of multiannual management plans (MAMPs), implementation of Landing Obligation (LO) or establishment and review of effectiveness of closed areas (Natura 2000, MPAs), amongst other examples.

The main challenge faced by the ACs is how to ensure that data collected by the stakeholders has a quality assurance by the scientists. The only way for achieving this is improving communication to make sure that the data collected is done in a way that can be validated and translated into scientific assessment for the production of advice. This can only be achieved by enhancing collaborative work and fostering innovative research to tackle and minimize where possible those data gaps that undermine the quality of the assessments.



Industry representatives in particular could provide substantial fisheries dependent data (FDD) in a standardized manner and in dialogue with scientists from national institutes and ICES those required data sets.

This has been the case in recent years for the Pelagic AC, which has carried out work led by scientists working for POs helping to shape/providing the necessary scientific evidence for advice for the drafting and development of multiannual management plans (MAMPs) as well as discard plans for pelagic stocks such as mackerel, horse mackerel, blue whiting, amongst others.

After the meeting, a list of examples of successful fisheries-science initiatives involving the industry, NGOs, some ACs were identified:

- Three Data Deficiency Coordination Workshops (WKDDRAC), that were co-chaired by ICES and the (R)ACs in 2010, 2011 and 2013 to identify the main data issues and gaps of the northwest and southwest Atlantic stocks in EU waters and agree on remedial actions to improve data deficiencies as well as organise data preparation for ICES stock benchmark and data compilation meetings;
- ICES Working Group on Maritime Systems (MARS) as a “think tank” or platform for the ACs to redefine science and research needs including stakeholders’ input;
- DEEPFISHMAN2 Project with the use of fishermen’s log, cognitive maps and questionnaires for improving deep-water species assessments;
- Scientific surveys onboard commercial vessels (Marine Scotland-SWFPA, DFTPA, IEO...);
- Self-sampling programmes carried out by the industry and monitored by IFREMER used in stock assessments for Celtic Sea Cod or blue whiting in France;
- Industry funded surveys for Nephrops and Boarfish in Ireland;
- Fisheries Science Partnerships (FSP) programme in UK for roundfish surveys.
- Sentinel fisheries, reference fleets or fully documented fisheries to provide a better quantification and spatialization of fishing effort and catches;
- NFFO fishermen’s questionnaire in the North Sea;
- Co-management projects led by WWF with case studies such as red shrimp in Palamós or Scallops in the Channel through the GAP/GAP2 Project...;
- Spanish initiative to improve data from anglerfish and megrim in Subareas VII and Div. VIIIabd by means of industry knowledge incorporation in relation to tuning fleets to be used in the assessment.

Through the above referred examples, it was made clear at the meeting the need to validate and integrate a vast wealth of knowledge already existing from stakeholders (both industry and other groups of interest) into ICES advisory process in a structured manner to improve assessment and consequently management.



This contribution from stakeholders does not refer only to new data sets but also to historical data that might contribute as background information (e.g. on catchability, gear modifications, change of fishing patterns...) to improve the knowledge of the fishery.

Regarding LDAC initiatives, one of the first stocks to work with could be the deep-water stocks that are on the North East Atlantic under NEAFC RA adjacent to EU waters of West of Scotland (VIa) and Celtic Sea. The LDAC has already established contact and submitted a request for advice to ICES via the European Commission and is looking forward to provide input before the occurrence of the forthcoming ICES WGDEEP (April 2018), which will prepare the scientific advice that will underpin the recommendations for fishing opportunities for deep-water species subject to catch limits for the biannual period 2019-2020.

In reply to this appeal, the ICES ACOM Vice Chair, Dr Colm Lordan, recommended to look at a recent report commissioned by SEAFISH from UK titled ***Guidelines for Industry-Science Data Collection: Step-by-step guidance to gathering useful and useable scientific information***. This publication is led by Dr. Steven Mackinson et alii and can be downloaded here: http://www.fishingintothefuture.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/WP2-Data-Protocols-Guidance_FINAL-CLEAN.pdf

The LDAC also announced that they are partners to the H2020 Project FarFish, which aims to provide knowledge, tools and methods to support responsible, sustainable and profitable EU fisheries outside European waters, compatible with Maximum Sustainable Yield. The work will be done in collaboration of scientists, policy makers, resource users and other stakeholders aimed to improve fisheries management competences.

The LDAC is one of the main partners of WP1 (named Stakeholders' Interaction) and the 6 designed Case Studies: Morocco, Mauritania, Cabo Verde, Seychelles, South West (ASW FAO 41) and South East Atlantic. This work involves feedback and data for characterization of fisheries, as well as management proposals. ICES is also part of this project as member of the External Advisory Group.

Action: In view of the successful meeting and the need to discuss specific items on a separate meeting with ICES, it was agreed that the Chairs and Secretariats of the ACs will exchange views and discuss the possibility of putting together a written proposal to ICES to keep this meeting in future years separated with a clear procedure regarding a rotation system between ACs for preparing this meeting and co-Chairing it with ICES. The work of the Baltic Sea AC for this year's meeting was praised and the PELAC volunteered for organizing 2019's pre-MIACO.



Meeting between ICES, Advisory Council and Other Stakeholders (MIACO) – Thursday 18 January 13h to Friday 19 January 13h.

Terms of Reference (ToR) of the meeting:

ICES will invite the Advisory Councils (ACs) and other ICES observer organizations to meet with the ACOM leadership, chaired by ACOM Chair, Eskild Kirkegaard, at ICES Headquarters 18–19 January 2018 to:

- a) Invite ACs/observers to report on their experience of working with ICES during 2017 and to present their research and advisory needs, and discuss ICES' experience of participating in AC meetings in 2017;*
- b) Review progress on following up of action points from the 2017 MIACO meeting;*
- c) Discuss practical arrangements in 2018 for cooperation between ACs/observers and ICES, including procedures for delivering and discussion of the ICES advice;*
- d) Discuss ICES benchmark system and how stakeholder information can be brought into ICES advisory process;*
- e) Discuss the plan for further development of ICES advisory framework in relation to advice on fishing opportunities and ecosystem advice;*
- f) Discuss options for further development of the accessibility of ICES advice.*

MIACO will report 12 February 2018 for the attention of the Advisory Committee

TOPICS DISCUSSED WITH INPUT FROM LDAC

4. ICES Advisory Process and 5. ICES Advisory Frameworks

ICES ACOM suggested to deal with items 4.b, 4.c and 5.a were decide to be dealt with together in separate breakout sessions by fisheries areas or regions to facilitate focused debates and stimulate debates amongst all participants. All participants agreed to this proposal and the LDAC chose the Atlantic Ocean as the most suitable option.

4.a. Involvement of stakeholders in the advisory process.

ICES advisory process involves five types of groups/meetings with different rules for stakeholder involvements:

- Working group meetings. Meetings are open to experts nominated by ICES Member Countries (Delegates). Representatives of ICES clients can attend as observers,*
- Workshops. Open meetings with no restrictions on who can participate,*



- *Review groups. Participation by invitation from ICES*
- *Advice drafting groups. Open to members nominated by ACOM members and experts invited by ICES. Stakeholders can attend as observers,*
- *ACOM approval web-conferences. Open to ACOM members or alternates and experts invited by ICES. Stakeholders can attend as observers.*

ICES Council has established a Working Group on ICES Code of Conduct to review and evaluate ICES procedures related to experts in the advisory process, code of conduct, and conflict of interest.

Observers are invited to express their views on stakeholders' involvement in ICES advisory process.

Some ACs felt that participation by Stakeholders in Benchmark Workshops could improve. It was also made it clear that the role and importance of stakeholders should be made more evident as they are full members of this meetings and not observers. There was a certain degree of frustration on the outcomes of some of these workshops in terms of use of assessment methodology resulting in severe changes on the perception of the stock having an effect on the TACs and creating instability for the affected industry with examples made on pelagic stocks (herring, mackerel, blue whiting).

Following these comments, ICES made available the following documents:

- **ICES Policy on Observer Status:**

http://www.ices.dk/community/Documents/Observers/CM_2013_Del-11%203_Observer_rules.pdf

- **Introduction to Benchmarks at ICES:**

<http://www.ices.dk/community/Documents/Advice/Introduction%20to%20Benchmarks%20at%20ICES.pdf>

It was generally acknowledged that all fishery related data are conveyed by scientists working in ICES community within their national institutes and/or laboratories. The latter are the recipients of any new sets of information coming from industry and stakeholders to be then transferred into ICES system, this is an iterative process that does not need to be waiting for a Benchmark Workshop to occur.

In order to allow a more effective feedback on data information input, the LDAC supported the idea raised by Martin Pastoors (Chief Scientist at Dutch Freezer Trawler Pelagic Association) on considering one additional layer of flexibility by giving more direct access to stakeholders to ICES by opening partially their Expert Groups for designated AC participants to provide data sets which might be valuable for stock assessment without having to wait in the process for calling for a new Benchmark Workshop.



In terms of participation of ICES at AC meetings, the LDAC also highlighted the smooth communication with ICES ACOM and Secretariat thorough the year and thanked in particular its participation at ICES WG2 held in April to provide an update on their work on the North East Atlantic and its collaboration with the Scientific Committee of NEAFC (PECMAS).

They congratulated ICES for the quality of their training courses on the basics of stock assessments for stakeholders that are open to AC members.

In relation to LO, the LDAC highlighted potential issues and problems that might arise related to straddling stocks spreading between EU waters and outside (e.g. haddock, sharks, deep waters), often with differing scientific and management units.

Regarding framework for setting fishing opportunities, the LDAC also noted issues regarding different approaches and methodologies for evaluating stocks inside and outside EU waters. ICES is the scientific body designated by the European Commission to provide scientific advice for stocks subject to TAC and quotas within EU waters but outside EU waters there are RFMOs which use as basis precautionary approach but not MSY approach, this is the case for example on MSE and HCR in NAFO. Increased communication and dialogue between ICES and RFMOs could be therefore explored as this was included in a recommendation of the last NAFO Annual Meeting on September 2017.

As concluding remarks, the ACOM Chair, Eskild Kierkegaard, stated the following:

- Data collection: Cooperation between stakeholders and scientists is an extremely important thing. It is crucial to acquire a common understanding on the use of data and the requirements needed in terms of quality assurance for ICES. There is room for building partnerships which help to manage expectations and optimise existing resources by improving coordination of ongoing industry initiatives that were commended.
- Discards and Landing Obligation: Need to ensure a better monitoring and compliance of discard ban rules to improve data collection and analysis at national level as Member States are responsible for that.
- Observer system in ICES: ICES and ACs will work together in improving communications on rules and clarify observers' role in ICES as it is not always evident or easy to understand duties and assignments to each of the constituent ICES advisory groups.
- Stock status and categorisation: There is a thinking going on between ICES and the EC on how to present the advice.



4.c. Potential role and contribution of stakeholders to collection, supply and analysis of scientific data to feed into the ICES Advisory Process

The LDAC requested an open discussion on the potential role of ACs in data collection and analysis. As background for the discussion the letter from the LDAC to the EC on a proposal for request to ICES on improving knowledge and (catch and discards) data of deep-water stocks in NEAFC RA and the European Commission's reply to it was made available on MIACO Sharepoint.

The LDAC Secretary summarized the content of the LDAC request and the EC Reply. He mentioned this was a pending action from previous MIACO meeting although the philosophy and aspiration of this request had evolved over time, as the initial intent was to improve catch and discard data of deep-water stocks linked to the effects of a future implementation of the LO in NEAFC RA. However, given the absence of scientific data and scientific advice for most of these stocks on the basis of article 15(5)(c) of the CFP Basic Regulation, there was no action taken by the Commission. Therefore, it is worthy of merit now to look at analyzing where data deficiencies lie and how the LDAC could provide useful data and input to scientists of WGDEEP for feeding their stock assessments.

Action: A proposal was made by the LDAC that some informal meeting or workshop might be organized between relevant LDAC representatives and ICES prior to the next WGDEEP meeting in April 2018 with the aim to increase the data background for assessing deep-water stocks and informing the advice that will be published in June 2018.

6. Advisory Deliverables

b) ICES Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews

Fisheries overviews have been published for the Baltic Sea and the Greater North Sea ecoregions. ACOM agreed in November 2016 to aim at releasing four overviews and is aiming to complete Celtic Seas, Icelandic waters and Norwegian Sea.

ICES has until September 2017 published six ecosystem overviews (Barents Sea, Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast, Celtic Seas, Greater North Sea, Icelandic waters, Norwegian Sea).

The resources allocated to the overviews by ICES Member Countries have, with a few exceptions, been relatively limited and the production of the overviews has taken substantially longer time than anticipated. ICES is now aiming at publishing in 2018 fisheries overviews for the Norwegian and Barents Seas and the Celtic Seas and ecosystem overviews for the Baltic Sea and the Azores.



ICES is interested in feedback on the overviews and MIACO is invited to review the overviews and comment on possible improvements.

The LDAC provided feedback to these points asking to include the impact of all human activities (and not only fishing) to the ecosystem, not only but considering the impact on the seabed, putting as an example the start of work at the NAFO Ecosystem WG on a protocol for exchange of information between Canadian relevant authorities and ministerial departments on impact of different maritime uses (oil and gas prospection, fishing...) both within the EEZ and outside. The LDAC reminded that in certain cases such as VMEs in international waters these are only respected by the EU fishing fleet.

ICES confirmed its interest in completing a fisheries overview for the Norwegian and Barents Seas and invited the LDAC to participate in the scoping process. They mentioned that there was work in progress to set up ECOFRAME, which is the ICES framework for the development of a common set of high level objectives, MSFD criteria and targets to implement an ecosystem advice. A workshop called WKECOFRAME took place in 2017 and another one is scheduled for 2018. The ACs will be timely informed on this.

The LDAC also invited to reflection to ICES about their present and future role in the context of providing scientific evidence to management of international fisheries while meeting international commitments on biodiversity at the high seas. It was highlighted that, in the context of international ocean governance, there is not any competent international scientific body designated to deal with advice related to fisheries management to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (at least 10% of MPAs by 2020) and the UN process leading to a Treaty on Biodiversity Beyond Waters of National Jurisdiction (also known as BBNJ).

This is perceived by the LDAC to be one of the biggest governance gaps and ICES was encouraged to contribute to the dialogue and discussions on this subject matter.

ICES General Secretary, Ms. Anne Christine Brusendorff, replied that ICES has formally requested observer status before the UN and that it follows closely the recent developments of management of fisheries and other marine activities in the high seas. If requested by clients or Member Countries, ICES might develop some specific work on areas of conservation of marine living resources and fisheries.

The ICES lead coordinator for Ecosystem Services, Mr. Dickey-Collas, mention ICES continuous collaboration in this field with other institutions such as PISCES or OSPAR (doing peer review work of its protected areas). ICES is developing research work in the Western Atlantic has also observer status in the Arctic Council and is leading on the Project Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Coordination and Support Action (AORA-CSA): <http://www.ices.dk/explore-us/projects/Pages/AORA-CSA.aspx>



Post meeting: It must be noted that ICES advice on management of the exploitation of living marine resources is based on policy principles and set by several international agreements, including UNCLOS, UNFSA, FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries or the Convention of Biological Diversity, amongst others. This is reflected in the document titled “**Context of ICES advice**”, which serves as an introduction of the annual ICES Advice. The last document, published in February 2016, can be found here:

https://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2016/2016/Introduction_to_advice_2016.pdf

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