



LDAC SUMMARY REPORT ON ANNUAL COORDINATION MEETINGS BETWEEN ICES AND THE ADVISORY COUNCILS (MIRAC/MIACO)

Author: Alexandre Rodriguez (LDAC Executive Secretary)

Venue: ICES HQ Copenhagen – Dates: 17-18 January 2019

Background / General Overview

The meeting was well attended by around 50 participants including representatives from 6 ACs (Chairs and Secretariats), other stakeholders and international organisation both from NGOs (Pew, Seas at Risk) and fishing sector from UK (SFF, SWFPA) and third countries (Norwegian Fishermen's Association).

The LDAC was represented by the Chair of WG2 (North Atlantic Fisheries and its RFMOs), Jane Sandell, and the Executive Secretary, Alexandre Rodriguez. The LDAC NGO group was also invited to attend and fill the third seat but no answer was received within the given timeframe.

An overview of ICES Advisory Process was presented by Mark Dickey-Collas, the newly appointed ACOM Chair, as well as by Ghislain Chouinard and Colm Lordan, the two Vice Chairs, and by Lotte Clausen, Head of Advisory Department of ICES Secretariat. They explained a number of important topics related to the meetings calendar, the peer review system for adoption of advice on stock assessments and the differentiated but complementary overviews developed for presenting advice: ecosystem; mixed fisheries; and single species advice.

They also explained ICES iterative way of dealing with special requests in order to tackle and meet ICES clients' needs, including here the European Commission, NEAFC, OSPAR and/or Contracting Parties Countries. They explained that ICES Council was composed of national scientists employed by CPCs and provided as benefit in kind for their time. They had also started inviting scientists hired by external bodies (such as industry organisations) to explore ways of bringing commercial data that can help to improving stock assessments. However, this last strand of work needs to be carefully handled to manage expectations, as those data need to be robust, presented in a format who is able to be validated by the EWG and ADGs and submitted to their suitability for the models.

They finally explained the quality assurance process which strive for improvement. They highlighted that there was only a single correction of the advice sheets in 2018.



LDAC Input at MIRAC/Pre-MIACO (See Agenda under Annex I)

The LDAC presented 3 possible avenues for collaboration with ICES in 2019:

1. Developing collaboration with ICES WGDEEP and ADG to bring industry data to improve biology and knowledge on deep-water species in NEAFC, in particular by-catch and discards data. The LDAC has exchanged correspondence in 2017 and 2018 with DG MARE on this subject (appended to this report).
2. Following up the work of Joint ICES/NAFO *Pandalus* (Shrimp) Assessment Working Group, in particular stocks in NAFO RA such as Flemish Cap (3M) and the Grand Banks (3LNO). Ideally, it would be important to bring forward the advice from November to August/September to be available and ready prior to the NAFO Annual Meeting so CPCs can take a decision there. This might also be an important stock if jointly analysed with other stocks in the NAFO WG on Ecosystems on ecosystem productivity and predator-prey relations with other stocks such as cod or redfish.
3. Assisting ICES to enhance their role and increase their profile as marine scientific organisation in providing scientific and environmental advice and data products for the management of international fisheries. This is aligned with ICES newly published multiannual Strategic Plan, which positions the organisation in the context of international ocean governance, SDGs, and UNGA processes related to BBNJ. In this sense, it was recalled that ICES has acquired formal observer status in United Nations by motion of some of its Member Countries at last year's UNGA.

ICES ACOM replied to the proposals suggested by the LDAC as follows:

1. Work in deep-water species: the LDAC is welcome to become engaged and attend Advisory Drafting Group meetings in observer capacity and also bring data to benchmark workshops and/or prior to the work of the WGDEEP, as this is restricted to members for its participation.
2. They will pay more attention to the work with NAFO on this stocks taking into account as well the ecosystem approach. It was noted that there are currently 3 working groups within Joint ICES-NAFO on *Pandalus* (Northern Shrimp) Assessment Group (NIPAG): Skarregak; NAFO RA (3M and 3LNO); and North East Atlantic and Barents Sea. This year they on 17-23 October in Dartmouth and advice was only released on November. More info: <http://www.ices.dk/community/groups/Pages/NIPAG.aspx>
3. They thanked the LDAC for their support and welcomed this initiative to be more present in the future at UNGA, either as permanent observers or through their CPCs, for scientific evidence for management on international fisheries.



MIACO – Main topics of interest for the LDAC (See agenda under Annex II)

Mixed fisheries advice

These overviews have been produced for several years in the North Sea, and lately specific overviews have been developed for Celtic Seas and Iberian waters. Now there is an EC Request to extend the scope of analysis for Celtic Seas, and cover most of commercial species.

There are two basic scenarios to consider:

- Status quo scenario, where all fleets have the same level of effort between years. The outcome could be either overshooting or undershooting of some species such as whiting, haddock...
- Set catch limits based on most restrictive species: one example would be Celtic Sea cod where advice was zero catch, which means a closure of the fishery for haddock and whiting in that area.

ICES has started work on developing descriptions of mixed fisheries interactions and ecosystems, embracing a multidimensional challenge: Who, what, when, where, how? The Fcube has been chosen for forecasting consequences of different scenarios in the short term in a context of mixed fisheries.

Many ACs/industry participants praised this exercise but warned about it being implemented for management advice as this could alter equilibriums of relative stability and quota optimisation.

Fisheries and Ecosystems overviews

ICES explained the frameworks for ecosystem advice. Its aim is to provide advice on both the annual fishing opportunities (leading to fixation of TACs) and evaluation of Multiannual Management Plans (MAMPs) within EU waters, in compliance with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

ICES also provides scientific data and underpinning to the NEAFC impact assessment studies and designation of VMEs, which need of a regional implementation.

They also produce ecosystem overviews in waters outside the EU and national jurisdiction, such as the Barents Sea, the Arctic Ocean and the Norwegian Sea. Their aspiration is to extend to the Oceanic part of the North East Atlantic (NEA).

In terms of way forward, a dialogue meeting is planned for 2020 to explore and reevaluate the framework for which ICES gives mixed fisheries advice and environmental advice, in order to operationalize EBM advice to fisheries.



ICES MSY Approach for category 1 and 2 stocks below Blim

There was an interesting presentation and subsequent debate on how to deal with situations where individual stocks are below Blim. A consistent and objective method is needed. Everyone else in the world advises zero catch advice in the short term but this approach might not work in a context of mixed fisheries.

Concerns were shown by industry representatives in the setting of Blim values artificially high or without enough scientific evidence or a high degree of uncertainty. This could be counterproductive and have detrimental effects for socio-economic of fishing activities. They argued that it should be responsibility of the managers and not the scientists to decide on rules to apply in such circumstances on a case by case basis, e.g. regime shifts, review of targets and relations SSB-R in a context of climate change and affecting factors other than fishing mortality.

An specific example of failure was given in relation to the zero catch advice proposed for VIa Herring for a number of years, in view that ICES was unable to give advice based on the rebuilding plan adopted. It was concluded that changes on Blim values or reference point levels should be made only following a benchmark process and allow a transitional period to adjust.

The NGO group counter argued that it would be too risky for ICES to speculate on scenarios which are not precautionary, and simply provide the managers some flexibility in relation to transition periods for zero catch advice by giving them a range of F scenarios within safe biological limits to allow trade-offs.

ICES ACOM replied that all reference points stem from the Blim value. They use benchmark workshops to look at their robustness and test the elements of a MAMPs and/or MSE against different scenarios, while taking into account factors such as changes in productivity, but in the absence of a good scientific understanding they have to adopt a precautionary approach, being an illustrative example Western Baltic Herring, where there is a suggested regime shift but not documented or developed enough.

In terms of way forward, an ICES dedicated WGKMSE will take place in February and then the ACOM will decide in March how to take forward evaluations for rebuilding plan.



ICES Strategic and Science Plans

These documents are the result of a long period of brainstorming, identifying core values and ideas and it was open for consultation amongst stakeholders in order to achieve a direct correlation between the priority areas and the measures to achieve them, including Terms of Reference for work of the Scientific Groups.

The aspiration for ICES is to recruit top scientists to get the best possible advice, in a context of big competition between different scientific disciplines for attracting good scientists. They are also important as a route map to tackle societal needs and move from scientific discovery to understandable applied science. In terms of communication, it was highlighted that news on collapse of stocks 10 years ago had a major impact on the recruitment of young fisheries scientists and ICES was accordingly affected.

Link to ICES Strategic and Science Plans: <https://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/ICES-Science-Plan-questions-and-answers.aspx>

Comments can be sent to: science@ices.dk

Creation of an ICES Economics Expert Group

ICES made it clear that the aim of this group is not to deal with specific requests on economics but to broaden the scope and look at economic impact and social science issues related to the marine environment. The ToR for this group are quite broad and compatible in terms of work with existing work from other organisations.

Some participants wanted to know if some ICES CPCs do not want ICES to become involved in economics or social science and rather concentrate their efforts in providing biological and environmental advice. ICES replied that this was the case for some CPCs including Norway.

Michael Keatinge, Gerard van Balsfoort, Sean O'Donoghue, Alexandre Rodriguez and a Pew representative noted that there is already a good economic framework in place in the EU through the Data Collection Framework and the work of STECF. There should be therefore coordination to avoid contradictions or duplicities in work. ICES could focus on less tactical things and more strategic activities such as quantifying the economic value of some ecosystem services rather than dealing with economic performance of fishing fleets or aquaculture plants.

ICES replied that they agreed with the suggestions and noted that coordination was needed to avoid any potential conflicts of interests. They mentioned that the Chair of STECF AER (Hazel Curtis) is also chairing the ICES Economic WG.



There are also several scientists which are members involved with previous experience on the work of STECF EWGs. It was also stressed that introducing social science within ICES remit of work does not mean diminishing their commitment to natural science and this will be done over a transitional period over a 10-15 year period to ensure smooth integration of social and economic scientists into ICES work.

The LDAC representative, Alexandre Rodriguez, congratulated ICES for the quality of its Strategic and Science Plans and in particular for setting clear links to UN Sustainable Development Goals 2 (zero hunger), 13 (climate change) or 14 (life below water). He offered support and assistance from LDAC in working on international fisheries and encouraged work on improving knowledge on areas such as economic value for ecosystems services, or assessment and review of MPAs/VMEs.

The ACOM Chair explained that ICES was criticized in the past for not becoming more engaged in multidisciplinary approach including innovative methodologies and creation of decision support tools for managers. There are opportunities for doing that through H2020 Projects where not only the EU but also Norway and Iceland participate and get funding.

NB: The LDAC is involved in a H2020 EU Project called FarFish who looks for implementing EBA to fisheries management in 6 case studies outside EU waters. ICES is formal member of the External Advisory Group so they could have an input there as well.



LIST OF ACTIONS

LDAC-ICES Collaboration for 2019

- ***Deep-water species:*** The LDAC will be informed of the next date and content of the next ICES WGDEEP and any benchmark workshop that might be organized. The Secretary and the Chair will be invited via WebEx to participate on Day 1 of the meeting at a brainstorming session to see how LDAC members and concerned fishing industry could help and contribute to improve the knowledge on the deep-water commercial stocks in preparation for next assessment.
- ***ICES Work on RFMOs:*** The LDAC will continue engaging with ICES Secretary to be informed on work progress on joint NAFO/ICES WG on Pandalus Shrimp, of particular interest for the stocks in NAFO RA.
- ***ICES Strategic Plan:*** The LDAC will invite ICES ACOM for future WG2/WG5 meetings to discuss related issues on UN SDGs and how to improve scientific advice within international fisheries governance.

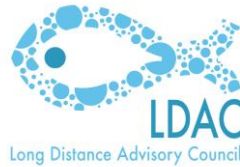
MIRAC

Following organisation by the Baltic Sea and the Pelagic AC, the LDAC Secretary was requested by ICES ACOM Chair to coordinate with the Chairs of the LDAC the organisation and coordination of agenda items for next annual preparatory meeting between ICES and the Advisory Councils (pre-MIACO, MIRAC) to be held before MIACO on January 2020. The participants and attendees supported this proposal.

MIACO

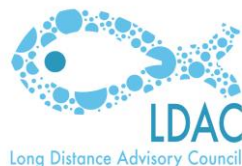
The report of MIACO was agreed by ICES to be submitted within a 4 week period after the end of this meeting, including a list of outstanding actions.

-END-



ANNEX I.
AGENDA FOR PRE-MIACO / MIRAC meeting
Thursday 17th January 2019
From 09.00 – 12.00 h ICES HQ

- 1. Opening: adoption of agenda and new name of ICES/ACs meeting**
- 2. Specific Issues**
 - a. NWWAC collaboration with ICES WG on Brown Crab **[NWWAC]**
 - b. LDAC collaboration with ICES WG on Deep-water species **[LDAC]**
 - c. Western Baltic herring: 0 TAC advice **[BSAC and PELAC]**
 - i. Transparency in decisions taken at WGs, ADGs and ACOM
 - ii. Decisions relating to timing of reference points
 - d. Benchmark processes (FG Cod 6a and 2019 benchmark) **[NWWAC]**
 - e. ICES guidelines for rebuilding plans **[PELAC]**
 - f. ICES work in RMFO's e.g. NAFO and NEAFC **[LDAC]**
 - g. EU request for ICES to provide advice on a revision of the contribution of TACs to fisheries management and stock conservation **[NSAC]**
 - h. Ecosystem overviews and ecosystem based management related work ICES **[BSAC]**
 - i. ICES support for genetic study on cod stock identification **[NWWAC]**
 - j. Integration of underwater noise effects in ICES assessments **[NWWAC and PELAC]**
- 3. Possible future ACs collaboration on data, communication and quality control with ICES**
 - a. ICES communication when re-opening advice **[BSAC]**
 - b. Follow-up on quality control process within ICES, especially in light of the NEA mackerel Western horse mackerel advice and Atlanto Scandia Herring. **[PELAC]**
- 4. ACs experience with the landing obligation, discards and interaction with ICES**
 - a. Integration of selectivity trials in stock assessments **[NWWAC]**
 - b. Improving science and discard data for deep-water stocks **[LDAC]**
- 5. Listing of action points (request for immediate circulation)**
- 6. AOB – Chairmanship for next meeting (January 2020)**



ICES
CIEM

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea

Conseil International pour
l'Exploration de la Mer

MIACO

January 2018

Doc 2

8 January 2019

Annex II. Meeting between ICES, Advisory Councils and other Observers (MIACO)

17 January (1pm) –18 January (1 pm) 2019

Chair: Mark Dickey-Collas

AGENDA (annotated)

1) Welcome and opening of the meeting.

2) Adoption of agenda (Doc 02).

Suggested dates for MIACO 2020 – 16-17 January 2020.

3) Review

a) Review of ICES Advisory services in 2018 (Doc 03).

An overview of the advice process and the advice provided in 2018 is given in document 03.

MIACO is invited to review the advisory process in 2018 and to discuss via round table any issues and concerns arose since the 2018 MIACO meeting.

Also review progress on action points from MIACO 2018 (annex 1).

b) Skills shortages.

ICES has highlighted that the research and advice community lack expertise in some key areas, including mixed fisheries, management strategy evaluation, stakeholder engagement and combining qualitative and quantitative information. In addition, expertise is sometimes lacking to address certain special requests. ICES is exploring mechanisms to resolve these shortages.

MIACO will be invited to comment on this list and provide their experience of skills shortages as well as their views on the key areas where expertise will be required in the coming years.

4) Quality assurance and consistency.

a) Quality assurance (Doc 4a)

Errors in ICES advice were discussed at previous MIACO meeting. All Clients acknowledged that errors might appear but expect that they would be minimized.



Quality check of data was also discussed previously and Clients expressed willingness to cooperate with ICES to ensure that ICES has access to all relevant data.

ICES will present initiatives taken within ICES to quality assure ICES advisory products. MIACO is invited to comment on the initiatives taken by ICES and to discuss possible needs for further initiatives.

b) Greater consistency in outcome (Doc 4d)

ICES has developed a comprehensive framework for assessing the state of fish stocks and their exploitation and for providing advice on fishing opportunities, that conforms to international best practice (FAO guidelines).

The advantage of these frameworks is consistency in process maybe not consistency in outcome. This is particularly true in the case of large biases or uncertainties in the assessment. Stability in advice has been highlighted as a major concern by clients and stakeholders.

MIACO is invited to discuss future approaches to improving the stability in the advice.

c) ICES Code of Conduct (Doc 4c)

ICES Council approved a Code of Conduct for experts contributing to ICES science and advice to maintain scientific independence, integrity and impartiality. The ICES Code of Conduct provides guidance on identifying and handling actual, potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest and is presented for information.

The role of independent review of stock assessment methods and special requests will also be highlighted.

MIACO is invited to comment.

5) Layers of advice

As recently highlighted by Ernesto Penas-Lado, the complexity and layering of the evidence based required to inform fisheries and marine environmental management is continuing to increase. ICES needs to adapt to this layering and ensure that its advice is credible throughout the layers, is broad enough to remain relevant and legitimate across multiple management objectives.

There are a number of initiatives:

a) Mixed fisheries advice (Doc 5a)

As in other regions of the world, there are increasing requests for decision makers to compare the consequences of choices catches on one stock across other fish stocks and bycatch in mixed fisheries. ICES is incrementally developing tools and approaches to provide this information but perhaps not rapidly enough to consider the management challenges of spatial closures, temporal shifts and changes in selectivity.

The Celtic Seas Fisheries Overview is provided to show the current approach to mixed fisheries advice (see page 22).

Meeting participants will be asked to share with ICES any experiences or concerns with mixed fisheries advice.



b) Fisheries and Ecosystem Overviews (Doc 5b)

To encompass the need to layer ICES advice, fisheries and ecosystem overviews have been developed. This also always movement towards providing advice within the context of the ecosystem approach to be documented.

Fisheries overviews have been published for the Baltic Sea, Celtic Seas and the Greater North Sea ecoregions.

<http://www.ices.dk/community/advisory-process/Pages/fisheries-overviews.aspx>

Ecosystem overviews have been published for Barents Sea, Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast, Celtic Seas, Greater North Sea, Baltic Sea, Icelandic waters, Norwegian Sea.

<http://www.ices.dk/community/advisory-process/Pages/Ecosystem-overviews.aspx>

ICES is now aiming at publishing in 2019 fisheries overviews for the Norwegian & Barents Seas and the Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters and ecosystem overviews for the Oceanic northeast Atlantic and the Azores ecoregions.

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

c) Frameworks for ecosystem advice (Doc 5c)

ICES has developed a comprehensive framework for assessing the state of fish but does not have a similar framework for providing ecosystem advice.

To ensure that ICES ecosystem advice is consistent with international agreed objectives and developed in a transparent process ICES is currently developing a set of frameworks for ecosystem advice. As part of this work ICES is planning a dialogue meeting for late 2020.

ICES will give a short presentation of the work to develop the frameworks.

d) Multidisciplinary nature of special requests

Many of the special requests answered in recent years have required an increased diversity of expertise; e.g. ecology, valuation, spatial mapping, stakeholder facilitation. Examples of this type of advice will be presented to MIACO.

6) Operational advice

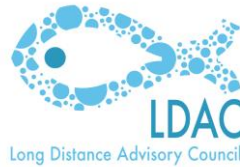
a) ICES MSY approach for category 1 and 2 stocks below Blim. (Doc 6a)

In 2018, ICES advised zero catch for a number of stocks that were estimated to be below Blim. ICES has considered this issue further in line with international practice and is updating its approach to provide catch advice for these stocks.

ICES will give a short presentation of the approach and invite MIACO to discuss the approach applied by ICES.

b) Special workshops in 2019. (Doc 6d)

There have been challenges with the provision of fishing opportunities advice for mackerel in the Atlantic and for mixed fisheries advice in the Baltic Sea. ICES has agreed to hold two scoping workshops on the science and advice needs for these two issues in 2019.



- *Workshop on the Ecosystem Based Management of the Baltic Sea (WKBALTIC), location and date to be determined*
- *Workshop on a Research Roadmap for Mackerel (WKRRMAC), Bremerhaven, 7-9 May 2019*

MIACO is invited to review and comment on the workshops. MIACO is also asked to publicise and send representatives to the workshops.

7) Looking to the future

To remain fit for purpose, the advice and evidence for decision making from ICES needs to adapt to the changing needs of managers and policy developers across its client governments and commissions. ICES has released the new strategic plan, which incorporates a new science plan. These will be described to MIACO.

In 2019, ICES will also develop a new advice plan, which will be in line with the two other plans.

a) ICES strategic plan

The strategic plan will be presented to MIACO during the evening reception. It will be circulated at the reception.

MIACO will be asked for informal comment during the evening.

b) ICES science plan

The science plan will be presented by the Chair of SCICOM and circulated during MIACO.

MIACO will be asked for comment.

c) Single stock advice

The current format of the single stock advice sheets was introduced in 2015. ICES has initiated a work to create an interactive web-based platform for presenting advice.

https://ices-tools-dev.github.io/VISA_tool/hke.27.3a46-8abd.html

https://ices-tools-dev.github.io/VISA_tool/bli.27.5b67.html

https://ices-tools-dev.github.io/VISA_tool/her.27.25-2932.html

https://ices-tools-dev.github.io/VISA_tool/nep.fu.11.html

MIACO is invited to review the initial web pages and comment.

8) ICES Advisory Work-plan 2019.

The meeting will be updated with information on the Work-plan for ICES advice and relevant science initiatives in 2019. Clients are invited to comment on the plan including the timing for release of recurrent advice.

9) Any other business- pre notification required

The Fisheries Secretariat (FishSec)

Is any discussion on a "traffic-light" indicator for population and age structure as related to the Marine Strategy Framework directive, or for Recruitment. Or any other way of making this information more available to managers and stakeholders?



The LDAC asked *What is the state of play and the hope for the ICES working group on economics (WGECON <http://www.ices.dk/community/groups/Pages/WGECON.aspx>)?*

ICES was not notified of any other issues.

Suggested timetable

17 January

- 13:00 Welcome, agenda, review (1-3)
- 14:30 Quality Assurance (4)
- 15:30 Coffee
- 16:00 Layers of advice (5)
- 18:00 Reception with presentation of ICES strategic plan (7)

18 January

- 09:30 Operational advice (6)
- 10:45 Coffee
- 11:15 Looking into the future (7)
- 12:15 Advisory work plan (8)
- 12:40 AOB
- 13:00 Close