

ICES MCAP Report 2007

ICES Management Committee on the Advisory Process

ICES CM 2007/MCAP:04

Report of the Management Committee on the Advisory Process

15 and 22 September 2007

Helsinki



ICES

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea

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Recommended format for purposes of citation:

ICES. 2007. Report of the Management Committee on the Advisory Process, 15 and 22 September 2007, Helsinki. ICES CM 2007/MCAP:04. 8 pp.

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1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed the participants, see Annex 1. He welcomed Doug Wilson, who was present to observe the discussion for the SAFMAMS project. Doug gave a short description of the SAFMAMS project and told the meeting that he intended to summarise the conclusions of SAFMAMS – finishing in 2007 - and its preceding project PKFM in a book. Doug had presented the findings of PKFM in 2006 to MCAP.

The meeting would focus on the reform proposal which has been widely distributed. The Council will consider the proposal in October.

2 Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted; see Annex 2. MCAP's contribution to the Outreach evening during the ASC 2007 would be discussed under AOB. The General Secretary distributed a letter from Boris Kotenev (Russia) on the planned arrangement for the WGNPBW and WGMHSA. This issue was passed on to ACFM for consideration in its planning for 2008.

3 Review of Action points from MCAP 2–3 August and 5 September 2007

Hans Lassen reviewed the action points from the MCAP 2–3 August meeting. All actions points have been followed up. The MCAP Chair and ICES General Secretary had discussed how the Advisory Management Group would be incorporated in the Secretariat. The conclusion is that the AMG and the chair of the ACOM will be Secretariat staff. It was noted that the ACOM Chair has reporting obligations to Bureau and Council and are appointed by the Council. The meeting on 5 September which was conducted through web conferencing reviewed progress status and developed the agenda for this meeting. Hans Lassen noted that the budget is not yet finalised as expected (deadline 1 October) as this requires that a number of issues such as the number of review groups etc be discussed. However, indications are that we are dealing with a plan that is cost neutral.

4 Time Table 2008: Change in timing of the fisheries advice and consequences

4.1 WGNSSK pilot project with a changed timing of the assessment

The pilot project that WGNSSK undertook with a changed timing of the assessment – was reported by Martin Pastoors. The project is not concluded, the update phase based on summer/autumn survey results would be done in the second half of September. Martin said that so far experience indicates that the change is feasible. However, the criteria for when ICES would update its advice shall be developed; ICES should draw up the rules and introduce its own discipline.

4.2 Time table for Assessments in 2008

There is a proposal for a Plan 2008 for discussion by ACE, ACFM and ACME. This proposal reflects 1) the EC/Norway wish for an early advice, 2) OSPAR's wish for advice delivery during 2008, 3) ACFM wish for rationalisation of the work, and 4) the reform proposal for a single advisory committee and a full range of review groups. A key feature is to introduce multiannual assessments for a range of stocks. Another feature is separate meetings to benchmark the assessment method. Experiences suggest that benchmarking as part of the assessment WG meeting is not working well.

The Chair noted that Frank Redant (Belgium) had sent a letter complaining about problems with concentrating the data compilation work in a very short time slot. Hans Lassen had responded to the letter explaining how the workload might be eased and the consultation process that had taken place. MCAP had no further comment.

MCAP did not review the ToR package for 2008 but noted that the system with parenting groups to specific committees in some cases seems rather artificial. The issue has been raised at earlier MCAP and ConC meetings and ConC has decided that it will not address the issue until the science structure has been decided upon. Even so, there are groups under the science programme who's ToRs are solely determined by advisory needs.

4.3 Video conferences

The proposal for a timetable includes a structure based on video conferences (Webex). Video conference needs a very specific agenda: for say 10 agenda items you would need 10 video conferences. The Chair can be anywhere, but only one person can run the meeting. It was also noted that the Secretariat is now using IP telephone (Skype) with success. It was recognised that using a web facility as the method for convening the ACOM requires that all member countries can use the facility. The Chair concluded that this looked as a useful tool, but also that the introduction of this tool would not be without problems; however, it is the way we have to go; we have to learn.

5 Review of progress with the Advisory reform proposals

The Chair noted that the reform proposal had been available on the MCAP Sharepoint site since 23 August.

Hans Lassen presented a Powerpoint presentation as a proposal for how the reform should be presented to the ACOMs. This presentation was followed by a discussion which was concluded that the ACOM chairs and Hans Lassen should revise the presentation after the meeting.

The meeting identified some outstanding issues:

- 1) Motivation among the experts; this issue might be better addressed in the presentation and is under represented in the documents
- 2) Stakeholder observer at expert, review groups and ACOM. The point of debate is stakeholder observers at review groups; this is seen as a critical point. Some delegates and clients are not in favour of opening the review groups as illustrated by the message from Tore Nepstad (Norway) and NASCO. See also comments by NEAFC at the MCAP-MICC 2006 and 2007.
- 3) It is proposed to run a pilot in 2008 with observers in selected Review Groups;
- 4) Clearly identifying the tasks of the Council
- 5) Clarifying that Web and electronic communication are essential to this model.
- 6) More information to the Delegates is required as illustrated by Nils Hammers e-mail.
- 7) Risks. How to assure appropriate expertise in advisory Committee. The answer is that there is no assurance possible as the membership at the advisory committee is solely the responsibility of the individual member country.

6 Science Reform proposal

Harald Loeng informed the meeting that the discussion on the reform of the science programme continues but that there were no conclusions to report on at this stage beyond the paper that was presented at the 2–3 August meeting. He also noted that the requested paper on linkage between science and advice was prepared but of course as the science side is still

under discussion it is difficult to be specific beyond the role of ConC – ConC is laid down in the Convention.

He also noted that elements that have been mentioned in the ongoing discussions include *ex officio* membership of science chairs in review groups and ACOM.

7 Presentation of the Advisory Reform Proposal

MCAP agreed to develop a single framework presentation that each ACOM Chair would fill in with the relevant case study. It was also agreed that to the extent possible all MCAP members should be present at the presentations.

There should be presentations at the three ACOMs (Sunday), at Bureau and Council (Wednesday) and at the joint ACOMs meeting on Friday.

8 Update on the EFARO proposal for funding the fish stock assessments

The Chair reminded the meeting on the EFARO proposal for funding the fish stock assessments at national laboratories. There had been no development on this issue within EFARO since the 2–3 August meeting. MCAP found that this point should remain on the MCAP agenda for future meetings because of the potential impact this proposal might have on recruitment of expertise for the fish stock assessment groups.

9 Review of Symposia of interest to Advice

Adi Kellerman presented the content of the document. MCAP thanked for the information and noted that while this is ConC's remit there could well be an advisory input to which symposia that would be of particular interest. MCAP also noted that this was an area where ICES had a long tradition for linkages between Science and advice.

The agenda point spawned a discussion on how the value of such symposia could be measured in advisory terms. There is obviously a possibility for information transfer at such events plus the symposia in themselves bring together a lot of information while its use is rather invisible whether information is being used in the advisory process. It is claimed outside the advisory circles that much science that has been done, is not being used while the advisory side claimed that the information is used but just invisible. MCAP considered that this discussion could be usefully taken up at a time when there would be more time for in-depth discussions.

10 Developing advisory guidelines for ACOM meeting (establish process)

This point was to flag that AMG and the ACOM chair would need to develop draft guidelines for adoption by the ACOM in February. It was agreed that the three ACOM chairs would develop such a draft in November-December 2007 with a view to have these guidelines adopted by ACOM.

11 Considerations of a PLAN B

The meeting considered briefly the situation should the Council decide not to implement the reform proposal. It was quickly realized that this would require some major revisions to the Plan for 2008. Plan 2008 is an interwoven structure reflecting the EC/Norway time request, the ACFM and Clients wish for more long term considerations and the reform proposal. The plan also include expectations that AMG (or the ACOM chairs become financed by ICES) and that this is an important precondition for running the system in 2008. Realising that ICES is

under obligation to the clients timing changes have to remain a part of Plan 2008. MCAP concluded that it could not at this stage develop a Plan 2008 (B) but would require Council input on which elements Council are unhappy about and to hear Council steer on how such issues should be addressed. MCAP could meet and revise the plan for 2008 in early November if such a decision would be reached.

12 AOB

Outreach evening: The meeting suggested to the General Secretary that he might consider inviting HELCOM HOD – that is meeting in the same building – to the Outreach evening as a gesture to maintain good relationship with HELCOM. The General Secretary briefly reviewed the programme for the evening and the contributions to be made by Mark Tasker and Martin Pastoors.

Paul Keizer would attend the Publications Committee (Monday).to discuss the quality control of advisory publications.

13 Closing

MCAP found that a short Meeting on Saturday 22 September. The Secretariat will announce this meeting through the meeting folders.

The Chair thanked the participants and said that he foresaw a lot of discussions in the coming days and hope to keep everybody informed on the progress with the reform discussions.

22 September 2007

14 Opening

The Chair, Paul Connolly, welcomed participants and noted that this might be the last MCAP meeting as the reform proposal transfers MCAP tasks and responsibilities to other groups.

15 Brief reports from meetings with Bureau members and Delegates

The Chair reported from three meetings: 1) Bureau members present at the ASC on 19 September, 2) Delegates present at the ASC on 19 September and 3) Delegates present at the ASC on 20 September. He found that there is support for the reform proposal provided a number of concerns were addressed to the satisfaction of the Council. The issues can be grouped under the following main topics: 1) resources required to make the proposed system operational (in the national labs, in the secretariat), 2) governance of the Advisory management group – appointment and reference for the members of AMG (ACOM chair and senior advisers), 3) transparency for stakeholders, 4) Linkage with the science side of ICES, 5) function of the review groups and 6) on the development of integrated advice. He reported that there will be further discussions in a group led by Tore Nepstad (Norwegian Delegate) and involving several Delegates.

16 Reports from ACOM Chairs

Annex 2 is a set of bullet points that have been raised in the meetings of the three advisory Committees.

Paul Keizer and Mark Tasker reported that most members of ACE and ACME felt that the reform proposal would be a significant improvement in consistency and quality of the advice

Martin Pastoors reported that the discussions in ACFM had been difficult; the discussion had mixed timing changes driven by the Commission wish for an early advice and the reform proposal. The main worries are concerning 1) timing, 2) role of review groups, 3) separation between a science review and drafting advice, 4) loosing consistency and how this can be avoided through interaction between regional review groups. However, the discussions ended on a positive note there is support for the changes.

The concern about the disciplinary balance in the ACOM is still there but this can only be solved at Council level. Paul Keizer thought that this will mainly be a problem in the picture that ICES presents to the outer world.

17 Accountability of the Chair and AMG

MCAP was informed that there had been particular focus on the governance of the AMG and MCAP discussed this issue with a view to provide input to the Delegates subgroup mentioned above. MCAP noted that the Chair of the Advisory Committee is the face of ICES and that the incumbent must be independent of national interests as far as possible. The post must be based in secretariat which is the Council's administrative body. The Council should appoint the AMG as is the case for all higher ranking professionals in the Secretariat.

MCAP agreed that the analysis on the tasks around the Advisory Committee should include five posts: the Chair, the three Senior Advisers and the Head of the Advisory Programme.

MCAP instructed:

1. Paul Keizer to develop a paragraph for inclusion in the Implementation Plan on the need for independence of AMG
2. Hans Lassen to develop job descriptions for discussion in MCAP

These documents should feed into the discussion in the Delegates subgroup

Furthermore, MCAP asked Paul Keizer to update the Implementation Plan taking the comments raised at this meeting into account.

18 Open Action points that shall be inherited by the new structure

The Chair reviewed the actions points that are open at this point in time. He stressed that the proposal is a reform not a revolution and there should be a smooth transition from MCAP to the new structure – mainly AMG as far as MCAP is concerned

The list includes

1. Update the Implementation plan for the Advisory Reform Proposal
2. Develop Job descriptions for the five key jobs around the ACOM
3. Develop a Budget for the advisory support group of the Secretariat under the advisory reform
4. Paper with NEAFC on lessons learned from the introduction of PA (for MICC 2008)
5. Report on Pilot Scheme on stakeholder participants at Expert groups for Council 2007
6. Access to VMS data (continued)
7. Evaluation of the results of the NGSSK pilot experiment with changed timing in 2007
8. Develop an "Advisory Strategy" in line with BWUPDATE proposal

9. MICC (April-May 2008): a) expand participation (DG Env, DG Res, HELCOM) b) 2008 meeting (General Business 1st day, Integrated advice 2nd day)
10. MIRAC 1-2 days January 2008
11. ICES needs better to sell itself
12. Develop Electronic Communication Policy
13. Resource allocation to advisory WGs – Establish a planning process with national laboratories
14. Keeping the advisory quality project under constant surveillance

19 Closing the meeting

The members thanked Paul Connolly for four very productive years under leadership. Paul Connolly thanked for the support he had received during his tenure.

Annex 1: Participants

	Participant	15 September	22 September
Members	Paul Connolly (Chair)	X	X
	Paul Keizer	X	X
	Harald Loeng	X	X
	Martin Pastoors	X	X
ICES President	Joe Horwood	X	N/P
Invited Observer	Doug Wilson	X	X
ICES Secretariat	Gerd Hubold (Gen. Sec)	X	X
	Adi Kelleman	X	X
	Hans Lassen (rapporteur)	X	X
	Michala Ovens	X	N/P
	Vivian Piiil	X	N/P

Annex 2: Bullet points from discussion of the Reform Proposal in the Advisory Committees:

ACE 15 September 2007 14–16

- 1) There will be some beginner problems,
- 2) We have to think in a cost neutral way. Everything has costs. More groups more costs. This means that if we add a task we also need to close a task.
- 3) Motivation: We need to get the experts into the EG and RG. You have to encourage, you can't just order them in and expect full commitment.
- 4) The role of national laboratories: fear of increased workload. In the new system liaison with national lab is needed for planning
- 5) Review groups: Since RG are getting paid, perhaps participants would postpone the work until they get to the meeting. Very little time for advice to get back to RG if necessary. Science committees should contribute to the RG's.

ACME 15 September 2007

- 1) Advantages are clear. Case study is in theory perfect, but in practise there will be difficulties

- 2) Limited pool of expertise Can we recruit a sufficient number of independent reviewers?
- 3) Fear of increased workload on the experts (expert group, review, advisory group). Increased demands on a limited pool of experts.
- 4) AMG as key group: concerned if you don't have the right person, it is a strong position. Concern that the disciplinary balance is maintained to cover the current range of ICES remits.
- 5) Maintaining the "*pro bono publico*" advice. Concern how this fits into the structure.
- 6) Anticipate extra workload for clients from working closer on an annual schedule and interpretation of the requests
- 7) The role of the science committees should be strengthened.

ACFM 15 September 2007 9-13

- 1) 2008 and perhaps 2009 transitions period. Some EG are more ready for the changes than others. The ToRs should be developed with that in mind.
- 2) Workload A lot of points can not be dealt with at the EG meetings. ICES must be careful not to overload the experts.
- 3) Concerns whether the Video conference will work.
- 4) Worried about timing of the WG plan
- 5) Proposal felt still open, still not concluded. Regional ACFM, but flexible system needed.
- 6) Benchmarks assessment groups are not in place. Update assessment is often more complicated than just an update as such an assessment is described.
- 7) Observer participation at Review group. For the moment not, but introduce a pilot program with review afterwards. Industry can take part in the review, but not in drafting advice.

Annex 3: MCAP Members 2001-2007

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Chair	Gerd Hubold			Paul Connolly			
ConC	Alain Maucorps	Jake Rice		Harald Loeng			
ACE	Hein Rune Skjoldal			Simon Jennings		Mark Tasker	
ACFM	Tore Jakobsen		Poul Degnbol		Martin Pastoors		
ACME	Stig Carlberg				Paul Keizer		