

**REPORT OF THE  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON THE ADVISORY PROCESS**

**ICES Headquarters  
30 August–2 September 2001**

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



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page	i
1	OPENING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.....	1
2	ROLE OF MCAP VIS-À-VIS THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES, DELEGATES AND BUREAU.....	1
3	QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE ICES ADVICE AND REVIEW OF THE ICES ADVISORY PROCESS.....	1
4	DATA COLLECTION: REVIVAL OF AN ICES COORDINATION ROLE.....	2
5	INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL, OCEANOGRAPHIC AND FISHERIES DATA.....	2
6	OBSERVERS FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES.....	2
6.1	Observers from Commissions and Intergovernment Organisations.....	3
7	DEVELOPING THE PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH - TORS FOR SGPA.....	3
8	TERMINOLOGY USE OF “SAFE BIOLOGICAL LIMITS” IN ADVICE.....	4
9	RESPONSE TO CLIENTS.....	4
9.1	Report of the Joint ICES/Commissions Working Group on Cooperative Procedures.....	5
9.1.1	Advice on small cetaceans for the EC.....	5
9.1.2	Status of advice on sea bass and deep-water species.....	5
9.1.3	Quality control of anchovy and North Sea cod advice.....	5
9.2	Answer to DG Fish concerning Various outstanding issues.....	5
9.3	Answer to Joe Horwood in response to his letter of January 2001.....	5
10	TASKS FROM THE FOLLOW UP OF THE 11 <sup>TH</sup> DIALOGUE MEETING.....	5
10.1	General description of the fisheries.....	5
10.2	Ecosystem advice.....	5
10.3	Quality assurance (p.3) quality checking retrospective (p.4), improvement of documentation, transparency, software handbook.....	5
10.4	Review process within ACFM is not transparent.....	5
10.5	Feedback system on shortcomings of advice.....	6
10.6	Risk assessment.....	6
10.7	Timeliness.....	6
10.8	Presentation of advice to make it understandable to non-experts.....	6
10.9	Assure software quality - SGFADS.....	6
10.10	Expert pool for advisory committees.....	7
11	AD 5 TASKS FROM BUREAU MEETING JUNE 2001.....	7
11.1	Follow-up of the 12 <sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting.....	7
11.2	Training Course in Stock Assessment.....	7
11.3	Genetics to ACE or ACME.....	7
11.4	Review Arctic cod criticism and external peer review approach taken.....	7
11.5	48-hour embargo.....	8
12	TASKS FROM THE JUNE CONC MEETING.....	8
13	TASKS FROM MCAP 1 REPORT (JANUARY 2001).....	8
13.1	Review ACFM advice retrospectively.....	8
13.2	North Sea Cod status quo catch overestimates Cod assessment methodology.....	8
13.3	Structural problems of the advisory process.....	8
14	REVIEW HANDBOOK FOR WORKING GROUP CHAIRS.....	9
15	REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF ACE.....	9
16	TASKS FOR ACFM FOR 2002.....	10
17	ICES WORK FOR HELCOM AND OSPAR IN 2002.....	10
17.1	Concerning handling of nutrient data (Eutrophication OSPAR group).....	10
18	NOMINATION OF MCAP MEMBER TO PUBCOM.....	10
19	ISSUES FOR THE MCAP MEETING AT ASC (23 SEPTEMBER 2001, 14:00–18:00 IN OSLO).....	11
19.1	Draft agenda for MCAP 23 September 2001 14:00-18:00.....	11
19.2	Documentation for the September Meeting.....	11
19.3	Topics for January 2002.....	12
20	ANY OTHER BUSINESS.....	12

ANNEX I: PARTICIPANTS..... 13  
ANNEX II: AGENDA..... 14  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON THE ADVISORY PROCESS..... 14  
ANNEX III: LIST OF DOCUMENTS—MCAP 30 AUGUST–2 SEPTEMBER 2001 ..... 15  
ANNEX IV: ACTIONS DECIDED BY MCAP ..... 17

## **1 OPENING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The meeting was opened on Thursday 30 August 2pm by the chair Gerd Hubold. Participation is given Annex I. The draft agenda was extended with a new point "Nomination of a member of PUBCOM and then adopted. The agenda is given in Annex II. The chair drew the committee's attention to the documentation available for the meeting. The list of documents is given in Annex III.

Outside the agenda, MCAP discussed briefly the experiences with workload and economic consequences for the ICES budget of establishing MCAP and ACE. The decision of the Delegates was based on that the addition of MCAP and ACE should not add to the budget of ICES. MCAP considers that the Delegates undoubtedly will review this situation at the 2001 Statutory meeting.

## **2 ROLE OF MCAP VIS-À-VIS THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES, DELEGATES AND BUREAU**

The Fisheries Adviser said that he had experienced somewhat varying opinions on the role of MCAP in the committees and that he hoped that MCAP could briefly clarify its role.

The General Secretary reviewed the intentions in setting up MCAP and said that there were fundamentally two concerns: an internal ICES administration task to manage the advisory process among other things to allocate specific requests from clients to each advisory committee and avoiding work overlap and possible conflicting advice and as the second task to function as a focal point for discussions with client commissions and in particular to feed any criticism received from these clients into the ICES system and ensure that the ICES advisory system remains responsive. As part of this task he noted that MCAP on its agenda works on draft letters to some clients.

The ICES President put more emphasis on the internal management tasks of the committee but agreed with the General Secretary that MCAP had both internal and external functions.

There was also a brief discussion of the role of the advisory committees. The ACME chair emphasised that little of the tasks allocated to ACME, and this applied to some extent also to ACE, were directly related to requests for advice but was often of a more general nature to provide overviews of specific topics or of the status of a marine area. ACFM on the other hand was almost entirely guided by direct requests for management advice from client commissions. MCAP recognised this difference in working conditions. MCAP should pay close attention to ensuring detailed coordination among the advisory committees and also that the advisory committees maintain close contacts with the science committees. MCAP found that the work allocation between the advisory committees and the science committees should be considered at some later time.

MCAP concluded that it has both an internal function and an external function. Formulating advice is the task of the advisory committees and contact with clients concerning scientific topics should be directly between the advisory committee and the client. However, where proposed changes or criticism of the ICES structure were involved this would clearly be a task for MCAP.

It is a general ICES policy that there is an ICES advice and that clients should not be concerned with which committee that addresses the request.

## **3 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE ICES ADVICE AND REVIEW OF THE ICES ADVISORY PROCESS**

The Chair of ACME noted that he saw quality assurance as the key to ICES advisory role and that he therefore considered that MCAP should take a lead ensuring quality. MCAP agreed with several interventions that quality ensuring should be high on MCAP's agenda as often problems with advice to clients could be attributed to 1) lack of time allocated to deal with the issue, 2) the request for advice is imprecise and the answer therefore may be irrelevant and 3) the required information does simply not allow an answer to the question. Much of these problems might be eased through MCAP filtering requests and other tasks assigned to the Advisory Committees. In general MCAP should be more critical on accepting requests than hitherto has been the ICES policy. MCAP therefore needs to pay close attention to the formulation of the agendas for the advisory committees.

MCAP agreed that clear distinction must be made between the assessment and the advice. It was also felt that more quality control should be built into the assessments.

Clearly, at some time there should be a review of the structure of the ICES advisory process. This was one of the tasks explicitly assigned to MCAP when the committee was established. Such review should be focused on strategic issues and should only be conducted periodically. The review should be on issues specific to ICES the network, how we work

together to pool data, etc., given that most of the major institutes associated with ICES have been subject to reviews in the past few years. A review should be extended to cover the scientific aspects, the usefulness to the users, and the industry. This review could be conducted by MCAP or by the Advisory Committees themselves, but as persons who have created the system may not have the necessary objectivity, it will also be necessary to bring in a few persons from the outside to review the system. The active participation of MCAP and the advisory Committees will be required as it could be difficult for an external review team to identify the weaknesses in the system. There could be three reviewers to cover the science, the users, and the industry. The external review team could perhaps include a non-fisheries person who has relevant experience, such as a person might come from a medical profession, e.g., epidemiology.

The Secretariat was asked to draft a proposal for such an external review and after discussion and revision within MCAP such a proposal will be presented to the Bureau.

One aspect of quality control over which ICES has no influence is the resources made available to the Working Groups. This can have a clear impact on the quality of the work. The MCAP chair would take this issue up with the Bureau and with the Delegates when adopting the recommendations (and thereby defining the work schedule for 2002). He would point to the need to ensure allocation of resources in the national laboratories in response to the adoption of ICES recommendations.

#### **4 DATA COLLECTION: REVIVAL OF AN ICES COORDINATION ROLE**

In the discussion of MCAP's tasks the issue of data collection activities were raised. At present there are activities on standardising sampling programmes for commercial fisheries largely centred on the EC initiative to assure proper sampling of the commercial catches for biological characteristics. Some of this planning activity has taken place within ICES, e.g. ICES held a workshop on market sampling programmes in 2000. Formerly, ICES has been very active in setting up standards for such sampling programmes. In the light of the needs for assuring quality of the ICES fisheries advice, MCAP considered that ICES should be closely involved with defining standards that these sampling programmes shall meet for all stocks that ICES provides advice for. However, ICES take only a coordinating role as ICES has no influence on the plans adopted by each country.

MCAP will ask RMC to consider how best to take an initiative in this field, e.g. how review of the standards established by the EU in the fisheries data collection schemes. Such initiatives could include establishing a new group on fisheries data collection schemes to provide 1) guidelines for data collection schemes and 2) effects of the collection schemes on the quality of assessments.

It was recognised that ICES plays a significant role in quality assurance for oceanography and environmental data collection. However, the quality assurance problems are different between disciplines and a useful discussion must recognise these difference. At the very least the discussion should consider oceanography, environment and fisheries data separately.

#### **5 INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL, OCEANOGRAPHIC AND FISHERIES DATA**

Outside the agenda there was a discussion of the needs for data integration. This was seen in the light of developing an ecosystem approach to advice. CONC has asked ACE to develop TORs for such a group for considerations at the Statutory meeting. The Environmental Trend Monitoring WG was noted as an example of a group that has played a useful role. While focus at the moment is on the database issues it was recognised that data integration has a wider scope. Data integration would begin with the definition of research vessel surveys. The objectives for such multi-disciplinary surveys would be how best to survey the ecosystem and not just the fish stocks.

Data integration is discussed in many other forums, e.g. under GOOS. EuroGOOS collects meta information. ICES/IOC/EuroGOOS/OSPAR will in 2002 hold a workshop linked to the development of a GOOS component on ecosystem assessment.

MCAP asked the Secretariat to prepare a paper on its strategy concerning data integration.

#### **6 OBSERVERS FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

This topic was dealt with under various agenda items 4-7 and 10. The report of these discussions are summarised below.

There have been requests to ICES mainly verbally from stakeholders to become involved with the advisory process. The main focus is ACFM and examples are requests from the Baltic Fishermen Associations at IBSFC meetings and from EUROPECHE at the recent North Sea Commission meeting. The Chair of MCAP argued for opening the process to the fishing industry to having a qualified representative at certain meetings. He argued that this would meet the

criticism of the closed nature of the ICES advisory process. The Chair of ACFM found that having a dialogue with the fishing industry is necessary, but the best way for this dialogue is not completely clear. Fishermen often cannot, for example, provide quantitative information; making it difficult to incorporate their information into the assessment process. Also if ICES admits representatives from the fishing industry, then other stakeholders should get equal rights in the process. Furthermore, the credibility of ICES advice may be at stake if ICES is seen as being influenced by the industry. The present practice in many countries is that ICES Working Group assessments and advice are reviewed with national industry representatives usually after the advice is formulated. If ICES more formally releases Working Group results to, e.g. the North Sea Commission, then this can create various problems, e.g. impairing the review and quality assuring process. Opening up ACFM to NGO observers is likely cause a clear change in the working procedures of ACFM. One worry is that the meeting form will need to change, but more so the Committee may no longer be a group of individual scientists because there will be a more political component inserted and the members may no longer feel that they can speak freely. Thus, the independence of the Committee may no longer be assured. Furthermore, the confidentiality of the information can no longer be assured. This may have a bearing on the 48 hour embargo that is instituted within the ICES procedures

The General Secretary briefly introduced an observer's report from the recent meeting (4<sup>th</sup>) of the North Sea Commission. The vice-chair of ACFM had attended this meeting and earlier meetings of this Commission and he found it quite interesting. There were very positive responses from the industry as reflected in various press articles on this meeting. However, the far-reaching expectations on the future contributions of fishermen to the advisory process as formulated in these articles will hardly be met in reality. One of the conclusions of this group is that the industry would like to review the advice before it is finally agreed, as is the case in Canada. MCAP is aware that this process is long and tedious before one achieves a well functioning system. Even when the industry does not come up with new data, they can be very useful in interpreting anomalies in the existing data as they have a different perspective on the data. The word "representative" should not be used as such observers are not intended to represent specific interests, but rather to provide knowledgeable assistance from the industry perspective.

ICES wants to be as transparent as possible while maintaining its scientific integrity. Meeting with the industry before the advice is formulated may be among the elements in achieving such improved transparency. In terms of evaluating the outcome, one aspect is whether some ACFM members come under pressure from the industry on the basis of this meeting. MCAP concluded that it could not at this point in time make a specific proposal, but also that it saw the topic as urgent and a proposal for opening the process would be required shortly. MCAP's members were asked to discuss this topic with their committees and be prepared for an in-depth discussion when MCAP meets in the beginning of 2002. MCAP realised that ACME and ACE only have the consultations in the margin of the ASC for discussion of this task but also considered that views could be exchanged using electronic media.

MCAP decided that it will develop a set of guidelines in relation to requests for observership on Advisory Committees. There should be a firm, unanimous policy covering all Advisory Committees, not just ACFM.

The Council has previously worked out a set of guidelines in relation to observers at the Statutory Meetings and these can be reviewed as a starting point for the discussion. MCAP will begin its considerations of this issue by reviewing the consequences of admitting observers, listing all the advantages and disadvantages. A broad outline of potential criteria for admitting observers could also be developed. MCAP decided to put this agenda item at its January 2002 MCAP meeting.

## **6.1 Observers from Commissions and Intergovernment Organisations**

The Chair of MCAP cited the recent request of the EC to have an Observer on ACE. He also noted that DG Fish for about 20 years have sent an observer to the ACFM meetings. The request for an observer to ACE was granted as the MoU with the EC permits observers for Advisory Committees dealing with fisheries issues, and ACE was handling a fisheries-related request from the EC. MCAP realised that such observers presented much less of a problem than could be created by stakeholder observers. MCAP realised that observers from other client commissions should be admitted if these organisations expressed a wish to have such observers.

## **7 DEVELOPING THE PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH - TORS FOR SGPA**

As part of the general discussion of MCAP's role the use of the Precautionary Approach was brought up. This discussion took place under various agenda items and is summarised below independent on under which agenda item the considerations were made. The Precautionary Approach is the foundation of the ICES advice - the yardstick on which to gauge the assessment of ecosystem, stocks and environment. Although this is largely a scientific issue (to be dealt with by the Advisory and Science Committees) it cuts across the Advisory committee boundaries and MCAP found that it is necessary that ICES establishes a consistent framework within which all three advisory committees can work. ACFM has the longer experience in applying the principle and much of the discussion centred on the use of the

PA made by ACFM and the work done in the Study Group on the Precautionary Approach (SGPA). SGPA has met in 1997, 1998 and again in 2001. The ACFM Chair found the recent meeting of SGPA useful, the group had identified a number of problems concerning a consistent application and definition of the PA reference points. ACFM had addressed some of the problems based on input from SGPA and looked forward to further input from this group. The specific proposal for TORs for the SGPA was commented upon and several proposals for revisions were made for ACFM's consideration.

The ACE Chair found that clarification of the underlying issues within the present concept of PA was needed and proposed how such work in achieving a better framework could be structured. He had prepared an overview for the ACE report and he found the existing text in the ACFM report (Form of ACFM advice) confusing. Furthermore, there is a terminology issue between OSPAR and ACFM/Fisheries Commissions. He expected that OSPAR will take an initiative to clarify the nomenclature. He hoped that there would be significant inputs in clarifying the issues from the environmental sector, e.g. from members of ACE. He proposed that relevant sections of the ACE August 2001 report should be issued as background documentation for SGPA (examples NS cod,  $F_{pa}$  used to define  $F_{lim}$ ).

In conclusion, MCAP considered that ICES should take an initiative to further develop the PA and broaden the concept outside the single species implementation so far put forward. There is a need to review the PA and do this in a wider context. Also in response to comments received from outside ICES, ICES needs to review how regime shifts in productivity of ecosystems should be included in PA reference points. MCAP concluded that the underlying issues of the PA concept should be clarified and looked to initiatives to be taken in the science committees on how to establish such work.

MCAP also concluded that SGPA should remain focused on the ACFM issues.

## **8 TERMINOLOGY USE OF "SAFE BIOLOGICAL LIMITS" IN ADVICE**

Another general discussion on the use of the phrase "safe biological limit" that relates to several agenda items is summarised below. The term "safe biological limits" has on some occasions been misunderstood and a stock that is "outside safe biological limits" has been understood as being threatened by extinction. In this context it is not understandable that a stock can be outside safe biological limits and at the same time ICES proposes a non-zero TAC. The term "safe biological limit" is used both by ICES and in the UN agreement on highly migratory and straddling stocks. The use of this term was discussed by ACFM in May 2001 and the chapter "Form of Advice" as been edited to clarify its use in the ACFM report. It was felt that this is not a scientific problem, but a political problem. There is a definition of this term under the UN agreement and therefore the use of the term cannot be changed. One solution could be that ICES drop the use of this term and develop new terms for use in fisheries advice. If such new terminology should be used next year, agreement should be reached before the Assessment Working Groups start to meet next March. Thus, the Delegates or the Bureau should take a decision as soon as possible.

The Chair of ACE suggested that ICES should consider conservation issues in its advice. ACE will develop proposals for establishing criteria for considering when a species is endangered. He found that ICES is far behind other international agencies in this consideration.

The Study Group on the Precautionary Approach will be requested to review the term "safe biological limits" and develop an explanation for it so that the public can understand its meaning. The difficulty as seen from the outside world is to deem stocks outside safe biological limits and at the same time propose a TAC for such stocks. ACFM should also discuss this issue and come up with clear proposals.

## **9 RESPONSE TO CLIENTS**

MCAP reviewed the annotated agenda and discussed each point. MCAP instructed the Fisheries Adviser to draft a letter in response to criticism received from EC, DG Fish and a second letter in response to the criticism received through Joe Horwood (CEFAS).

MCAP reviewed the OSPAR 2002 workplan under agenda point 11 and provided comments. The Environmental Adviser was asked to draft a letter in response to the workplan.

These letters should be considered at the next MCAP meeting 23 September in Oslo.



## **9.1 Report of the Joint ICES/Commissions Working Group on Cooperative Procedures**

MCAP reviewed the status of various non-recurrent requests and criticisms and user wishes that have been raised at various meetings. In particular the problem of admitting NGO observers to the advisory committee meetings was discussed based on expressed wishes from some users.

### **9.1.1 Advice on small cetaceans for the EC**

ACE has prepared advice on this topic on the basis of material from the Working Group on Marine Mammal Population Dynamics and Habitats as well as some other material. This advice will be sent to the EC before 20 September 2001. The request was in four parts and some advice was presented for all four parts, although the information basis was not adequate to provide a full response for all four bullet points. To provide a more complete response, either new data or new models would be required, in particular there is a lack of data on mortality rates that hinders the development of good populations estimates. It was agreed that no further action is required from MCAP on this topic.

The question was raised as to whether ICES can handle this type of request. In response, J. Rice stated that the ACE advice did not add much to what had been prepared by ASCOBANS, but it did provide a fisheries perspective and added a great deal of credibility to the advice, given that ASCOBANS is a more political organization.

### **9.1.2 Status of advice on sea bass and deep-water species**

ICES has provided preliminary answers to both questions. Further information on the status of sea bass in European waters is expected to be ready by the middle of 2002. Similarly, for deep-water species, the Working Group meets every second year and will undoubtedly have a number of requests for its meeting next year.

### **9.1.3 Quality control of anchovy and North Sea cod advice**

There will be a comment on this topic from the ACFM at its autumn meeting, so that a response can be provided back to the EC. The Mackerel Working Group will meet 4-13 September 2001 and consider an aspect of this issue. The Working Groups are aware of the criticism and are expected to respond to this in their reports.

## **9.2 Answer to DG Fish concerning Various outstanding issues**

MCAP review the list of topics and provided input to the Fisheries Adviser for him to draft a response to DG Fish. This draft would be considered by MCAP at its next meeting in September 2001.

## **9.3 Answer to Joe Horwood in response to his letter of January 2001**

MCAP review the list of topics and provided input to the Fisheries Adviser for him to draft a response to Joe Horwood. This draft would be considered by MCAP at its next meeting in September 2001.

## **10 TASKS FROM THE FOLLOW UP OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> DIALOGUE MEETING**

### **10.1 General description of the fisheries**

The ACFM report already contains an overview of fisheries for each stock.

ICES has agreed on an experimental basis agreed to link up with the FAO FIGIS project (FIRMS subproject). This project develops a website that provides a description of the stocks, their distribution, etc.

### **10.2 Ecosystem advice**

The Chair proposed that a brief statement be prepared for the clients describing how ACE is tackling this issue.

### **10.3 Quality assurance (p.3) quality checking retrospective (p.4), improvement of documentation, transparency, software handbook**

All Assessment Working Groups have been requested to contribute to the development of a quality handbook. The results from this will be considered next year.

### **10.4 Review process within ACFM is not transparent**

In ACFM, there are two types of minutes: "Technical Minutes" that contain comments on the Working Group report and ordinary "Minutes". The Technical Minutes will be linked to the Working Group report when this is published on

the CD-ROM of Documents. that will be issued by ICES so that there will be more transparency in how ACFM has handled each report.

#### **10.5 Feedback system on shortcomings of advice**

Such feed back from the clients are fed into the ICES system through irregularly held Dialogue meetings, the participation of the Secretariat at the meetings of the Fisheries Commissions and at various ad-hoc meetings between the Secretariat and the fisheries commissions. Most recently WGCOOP, that was originally set up to review the economic relationship of the clients with ICES, will now serve to provide feedback on other issues. It was noted as unfortunate that the environmental commissions do not participate in WGCOOP. MCAP did not see any need to change the structure but agreed that the Secretariat should attempt to have the Environment Commissions (HELCOM and OSPAR) represented at the coming WGCOOP meeting (probably to be held in the second half of April).

#### **10.6 Risk assessment**

From the fisheries standpoint, there is a need to develop appropriate tools for risk assessment. The Advisory Committees should be asked to consider this issue and whether there is a need for a common procedure for risk assessment. Such interest should be brought to the attention of the SCICOM, e.g. RMC and relevant committees be asked to develop the appropriate framework.

#### **10.7 Timeliness**

MCAP noted that ACFM has taken steps to provide the advice as early as possible and that it is difficult to do much more about this. MCAP agreed to review the issue again at a later meeting.

#### **10.8 Presentation of advice to make it understandable to non-experts**

MCAP recognises that this is a major task and that there would be several audiences and that the same presentation may not be appropriate for all these audiences, i.e. the non-experts must be defined in this context: Fishermen will need to have one type of presentation that should fairly specific, whereas the general public would want a more general presentation. There would also be the problem of language ICES provides its information in English while there are about 17 different languages in use in ICES member countries.

The Chair of ACE mentioned the report prepared by ICES for the Nordic Council of Ministers on the "Status of Fisheries and Related Environment of Northern Seas" as one example of a presentation of fisheries and environmental information in a more popular format. The North Sea portion of this report has been updated this year for the North Sea Secretariat.

#### **10.9 Assure software quality - SGFADS**

Implementation of methods once adopted by ACFM needs to be through a process that assures high quality (as far as possible error free software) and software that be run by WG members that only use this particular package once every year. Furthermore, the output from such software needs to be formatted so that it can be directly incorporated in the assessment reports.

Thus, standard software for use in fish stock assessment includes three main modules 1) a database to document the basis for the assessments, 2) an analytical package with a series of analytical tools and 3) a presentation package for producing graphs, tables, and reports not least the ACFM report. The now obsolete software IFAP did not distinguish these modules very clearly and as it developed over time elements were added often not very transparent. It became an "expert" system that could only run if constantly supervised by its originator. The Secretariat was instructed by ACFM to seek a replacement of this system. IFAP was therefore taken out of service after the 2000 round of assessments.

The Secretariat intends to build a database module to hold national fish stock assessment data (following a model developed under MHASWG and HAWG and further developed under the EC funded project EMAS that reports for the coming ASC).

ICES has always been based on fish stock assessment software developed by researchers in national fisheries laboratories. The IFAP system included a few routines that were written by the Secretariat (simple standard calculations and projections), but the major part of the analysis package was developed in Lowestoft and in Aberdeen. This is the preferred strategy as laid down by SGFADS and confirmed by ACFM.

The Secretariat has built a first part of the reporting module (standard graphs and summary table) and put a first version of this module into operation at the May 2001 ACFM meeting. This module has since then been revised and a new version will be used for the October ACFM meeting.

MCAP will review the progress in the development/acquisition of this software at its next main meeting.

#### **10.10 Expert pool for advisory committees**

Regarding ACE, nominations came in very late and there seemed to be uncertainty in the member countries regarding these nominations. The Chair of ACE had hoped that there would be a large overlap in membership between ACE and ACME/ACFM but as it turned out such an overlap was not established. There were quite a few persons who were new to ICES. The range of expertise of the group was sufficient. All member countries were represented and all *ex officio* members except one attended.

The Chair of ACME stated that two countries, the UK and France, were not represented at the June 2001 ACME meeting. There was also adequate expertise, even though the pool of experts system is no longer in use.

### **11 AD 5 TASKS FROM BUREAU MEETING JUNE 2001**

#### **11.1 Follow-up of the 12<sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting**

The chair of ACE reported that ACE had supported the idea of having a further dialogue meeting and had developed a first draft programme that focused on the ecosystem approach to management. However, ACE did not consider this proposal as finalised.

It was considered that the agenda on the 12<sup>th</sup> dialogue was too broad and that the next meeting should have a more focused agenda. Clients are OSPAR, HELCOM and many countries. There are many other interested organisations both NGOs and governments. The report of 12<sup>th</sup> Dialogue is rather unspecific on what follow-up would be required. The President reported that at the First Environmental Dialogue Meeting in Bonn in September 2000 did not have representation by the environmental Commissions' Secretariats and that this is considered to be very important in ensuring a dialogue between those organizations and ICES.

The proposal will be taken forward in a planning group that will develop the more precise agenda. It was proposed that the person responsible for the Planning Group should be the First Vice-President, Mike Sissenwine. This group would involve organisations outside ICES and ICES should not on its own develop the text further. Timing should be left for the planning group to consider, but it was considered that 2002 is too early in particularly with the view on the 5NSC in March and the ICES Centenary in the autumn so the Dialogue Meeting should take place some time in 2003.

The Consultative Committee will at the ASC consider the proposal made by ACE containing details of this Dialogue Meeting.

#### **11.2 Training Course in Stock Assessment**

MCAP was informed about the plans for this Training Course planned for 4-15 February 2002 at the ICES HQ. Three key persons have agreed to run this course.

#### **11.3 Genetics to ACE or ACME**

There are several items related to genetics, in addition to Genetically Modified Organisms, including the genetic effects of fisheries on fish stocks; and genetic effects on the ecosystem. Such requests should go to ACE. There may be other items, e.g. method development, that relate to ACME. There are also cases that relate to ACFM, such as stock unit identification, a method application.

Accordingly, MCAP agreed that the review Committee will depend on the specific request.

#### **11.4 Review Arctic cod criticism and external peer review approach taken**

The Norwegian-Russian Commission has requested this review and ICES accepted this task. The Fisheries Adviser tried to locate the appropriate experts to carry out this review. Unfortunately, most of the experts contacted were busy, but it appears that two experts have now been found to carry out this review in the next two months. Their report will be presented to the Norwegian-Russian Commission in the first instance. In parallel, ICES will receive this report but will have no possibility of censorship.

MCAP noted that ICES has agreed to this external review to show that ICES is open to transparency in, and review of, its work. Clear procedures need to be established for determining when such a review should be done. It was felt that such reviews should be done under the authority of MCAP, even though the persons arranging the review are doing this without necessarily communicating with all members of MCAP.

### 11.5 48-hour embargo

This request has been communicated to the Delegates for comment. Delegates were requested to comment whether they would like to keep the present embargo or whether they would support specific changes. This embargo is a serious problem for Iceland owing to speculation on the Icelandic stock market during the period of the embargo based on leaked information.

MCAP will remind the ACFM members that the information from the meeting is confidential and that they have a strict requirement not to provide information outside the meeting.

## 12 TASKS FROM THE JUNE CONC MEETING

The tasks given were dealt with elsewhere. The CONC list of actions of relevance to MCAP was:

No	Action	Responsibility	Deadline
14	Identify presenters for the 2002 plenary slots	Chair of FTC, MCAP, Secretariat	ASAP
15	Consider WGHARP parentage.	MCAP	Next meeting of MCAP
16	Consider development of ecosystem advice inventory	ACE	Next meeting of ACE
17	Publication issues on Committee agendas	All Chairs	Before next Committee meetings.
18	Make proposals for an “ecosystem” Dialogue meeting	MCAP	Next meeting of MCAP

## 13 TASKS FROM MCAP 1 REPORT (JANUARY 2001)

These tasks are dealt with elsewhere in this report. The list included

### 13.1 Review ACFM advice retrospectively.

There was insufficient time to do this in depth during the meeting. MCAP will keep this item on its list for coming meetings. MCAP will review ACFM/ACME/ACE advice only in those cases where specific criticism or requests from clients have been directed to ICES.

### 13.2 North Sea Cod status quo catch overestimates Cod assessment methodology

As an introduction to the discussion see Bureau Meeting 177/ Doc. 1243/ para. 13.8. These problems relate to the methodology in the assessments and are hence dealt with by the WGNSSK and by ACFM in its 2001 meeting. See also MCAP Doc. 19.

### 13.3 Structural problems of the advisory process

This is the main task for MCAP to trim the advisory structure whenever needed, The background documentation provided were MCAP Docs. 12, 17, and 18. The discussion was structured under two main headings

- *Data quality statements in ACFM report, quality ranking of advice.* ACFM is aware of the problem and is taking more time to develop precise indications of the quality of the assessment on which ACFM basis its advice..
- *Attendance at working groups.* The Secretariat was asked to update the table given in the report of the January 2001 MCAP meeting on membership by country and committee. The Secretariat was also asked to develop a similar table showing the actual attendance before the next MCAP meeting in January 2002.

#### **14 REVIEW HANDBOOK FOR WORKING GROUP CHAIRS**

This topic was moved to the next full MCAP meeting in 2002 as no work had been done.

#### **15 REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF ACE**

The Chair of ACE reported on the outcome of the first meeting of the new Advisory Committee on Ecosystems. He was pleased with the outcome of the meeting. There are two cultures that need to become used to each other and this will take some time.

ACE dealt with four requests: two from OSPAR on developing EcoQOs for marine mammals and seabirds, including the status of the populations of these species in the North Sea, a request for a review of a paper on the status of fisheries in the North Sea for the Secretariat for the 5<sup>th</sup> North Sea Conference, and an EU request concerning by-catches of small cetaceans in fisheries. ACE has dealt with these tasks and the answers will be out shortly.

In addition, ACE considered the development of a framework for ecosystem management and integrated assessment of fisheries and environment. The issue of terminology was considered carefully and definitions were proposed for a number of terms. This will need to be taken further to provide clear definitions that do not clash with definitions used in other contexts and organizations.

One proposal is to create Regional Assessment Groups to prepare integrated assessments on a regional basis. Consideration needs to be given to the types of data and data products that are needed to conduct these integrated assessments. There are a number of practical aspects to these proposals, such as the workload associated with this type of assessment. This consideration must also take account of the workload in other contexts, such as OSPAR, given the large overlap in the persons associated with the other organizations.

It was questioned whether there is a clear task definition between ACE and ACME and the President noted that there was still some confusion on the borderlines between ACE and ACME and ACFM. These borders must be defined by MCAP. The Chair of ACME stated that whatever structure we have, there will always be fuzzy borders in nature. He did not see a problem with the borders, as they seem to be clear and will undoubtedly become clearer in several years.

ACE seems to be more like ACME in also looking at the science side of the issues and MCAP found that ACE needs to consider means of cooperating with the Working Groups and Science Committees as the Delegates want Advisory Committees to conduct advisory work and the Science Committees to do science work. The Chair of ACE pointed out that advice could mean different things in different contexts including advice on monitoring methods and techniques, advice on the status of populations, and advice on management actions. In relation to the other Advisory Committees, ACE has a general term of reference to develop a framework for ecosystem advice. The EC Observer at ACE pointed out that the EC in general terms has requested the development of this broader approach.

The Chair of ACE pointed out that the remit of ACE (to provide information and advice on the status and outlook of marine ecosystems) is new to ICES and has not been done before, thus it will take some time to develop these issues. F. van Beek felt that advice on techniques should not be the major topic for advice while advice on the status of ecosystems is legitimate. ACE should provide advice on the objectives of management, both operational objectives and how to achieve these objectives.

The Chair suggested that MCAP take the task to develop the agendas for the new Committee and for ACME so that the tasks of these Committees are clear to the Delegates. This should give a greater credibility to the agendas of those committees. MCAP should review the requests to these Committees and review what could be cut out to decrease the time spent in these Committees and give it to the Science Committees. For this, all requests should be on the table so that they can be reviewed and assigned to the Advisory Committees.

At the January MCAP meeting, the package of requests can be reviewed and MCAP can get an overview of them and the distribution of items among the Advisory Committees.

The Chair of ACME pointed out that late requests cause a problem because they cannot be handled properly without first being handled by the relevant Working Group(s).

## **16 TASKS FOR ACFM FOR 2002**

The requests for advice have not yet been received except for that from NASCO. It is therefore premature to open this discussion that needs to be postponed until all requests are at hand in November, NEAFC will be the last to come in.

## **17 ICES WORK FOR HELCOM AND OSPAR IN 2002**

ICES has received the OSPAR request for work to be done in 2002 while the HELCOM request will not be forthcoming before early 2002. MCAP agreed that the HELCOM request be dealt with by in the appropriate recommendations explicitly stating, "Tasks to be decided when the HELCOM group has specified its requests". This is not expected to hamper planning and preparatory work much as there is quite some inside knowledge on what can be expected. MCAP will later consider the HELCOM request most likely through a mail procedure. The President has proposed that ICES prepares future periodic assessments for HELCOM, but this has not been accepted.

The rest of the discussion was on the OSPAR request. There are joint ICES/OSPAR Working Groups under ACME to deal with this work. Most members are from the OSPAR side. It was noted that the work among other topics includes quality assurance in support of the OSPAR monitoring programme.

OSPAR: contributes to the ICES budget for meeting the OSPAR request and most of the money has been spent on data handling. OSPAR would like to re-allocate more to scientific work in the future.

Some of the tasks on the OSPAR list in not sufficiently well defined to allow detailed planning within ICES to meet the request. An example is development of the Assessment Tools for Joint assessment. ICES has asked OSPAR what they want ICES to contribute, e.g. development of temporal trend models.

The work load on national scientists contributing to the work of ICES, OSPAR and HELCOM has been discussed with the Chairman of HELCOM. It appears that cooperative schemes are needed so that the workload is not increased on national scientists.

### **17.1 Concerning handling of nutrient data (Eutrophication OSPAR group).**

ACME provides information to OSPAR (and HELCOM) based on the ICES Oceanographer's work. To assure quality, ACME has appointed a small group of four to follow the work and thus enable ACME to review the information provided to OSPAR. However, the ICES Oceanographer has not received any new data and thus ICES may not for 2002 be able to provide the requested information. MCAP asked the Oceanographer for a clear statement on this issue (submission rate and time schedule) for the ASC based on which MCAP will prepare an answer to OSPAR. The Oceanographer's review should be made country by country. This note should also include a discussion if there is a need for strengthening this side of the data submission programmes

There were a number of technical issues that the Environmental Adviser was asked to cover in the letter to OSPAR.

## **18 NOMINATION OF MCAP MEMBER TO PUBCOM**

MCAP nominated Stig Carlberg.

The Chair of ACME asked about when his nomination as the MCAP representative on the Publications Committee would be effective, as requested by the Consultative Committee. The President stated that only the Delegates can change the membership of the Publications Committee, so this appointment would be effective on 1 January 2002.

## 19 ISSUES FOR THE MCAP MEETING AT ASC (23 SEPTEMBER 2001, 14:00–18:00 IN OSLO)

### 19.1 Draft agenda for MCAP 23 September 2001 14:00-18:00

- 1) Adoption of Agenda
- 2) Report from August 2001
- 3) Approve letters to
  - a. EC
  - b. Joe Horwood
  - c. OSPAR
- 4) Policy on admitting observers to advisory committee meetings
- 5) Using the phrase "Safe Biological Limits" in the fisheries advice.
  - a. What are the issues and what are the MCAP position
  - b. TORs for a WG to consider the issue
  - c. Statement for the Council
- 6) Review of TORs for the Advisory Committees (neither of the committees will have commented on these drafts at this point in time)
  - a. ACFM
  - b. ACME
  - c. ACE
- 7) Any Other Business
  - a. Statement to ICES from the Latvian Fishermen

### 19.2 Documentation for the September Meeting

Doc no	Document	Agenda points
1	Draft Agenda	
2	Draft letter to EC DG Fish	3
3	Draft letter to Joe Horwood	3
4	Draft letter to OSPAR	3
5	ICES Policy on admission of observers	4
6a	TORs for an ad-hoc Group on the use of the phrase "Safe Biological Limits"	5
6b	Draft statement for Council on the use of "Safe Biological Limits"	5
7	TORs for ACFM and its Working Groups 2002	6
8	TORs for ACME and its Working Groups 2002	6
9	TORs for ACE and its Working Groups 2002	6
10	Observer's report from IBSFC 3-7 September 2001	AOB
11	Statement from Latvian Fishermen	AOB

### **19.3 Topics for January 2002**

- Review handbook for Working Group Chairs
- Review the package of requests so that MCAP can get an overview of them and the distribution of items among the Advisory Committees.
- Timeliness of the Fisheries advice
- Review the progress in the development/acquisition of fish stock assessment software
- Review ACFM advice retrospectively

### **20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Document 15: proposal for an ad Hoc Group on ACFM Working Procedures was noted; this is internal ACFM business.

Document 21: report of the meeting of the IBSFC sub-group. The Fisheries Adviser reported that the main topic of this meeting was changed without notice, which created some difficulties. The question was raised as to whether IBSFC is satisfied with ICES advice. The Fisheries Adviser thinks that the advice is considered clear, and this is satisfactory. The content of the advice pleases some countries and not others, which is to be expected.

Document 22: report of an IBSFC meeting of scientific experts for the development of a cod recovery plan. This meeting was called to review the impact of the change in technical measures on stock development agreed by IBSFC in March. The Group came up with a different set of results to those that were used as basis for an agreement made earlier in the year and this demonstrated that there is a problem of consistency and a problem with who is advising at different stages of the management decision process. MCAP can only ensure that ICES remain consistent but has not control over whether other and external experts are used in the process.

The General Secretary summarized the outcome of the Wilton Park Conference on the Common Fisheries Policy after 2002, which was organized by the British government. There was good participation by the EC, government representatives, academics, and the fishing industry. There was an exchange of positions through oral presentations and written papers.

As there was no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 12.15 hrs.



## ANNEX I: PARTICIPANTS

### **Members:**

Gerd Hubold (Chair)

Jake Rice (Incoming chair CONC, only Thursday afternoon)

Hein Rune Skjoldal (ACE)

Stig Carlberg (ACME)

Tore Jakobsen (ACFM)

Frans van Beek (vice chair ACFM)

### **Observer:**

Pentti Malkki (President)

### **ICES Secretariat**

Janet Pawlak

David Griffith

Hans Lassen

Alain Maucorps (Interim chair CONC) sent his greetings regretting that he was unable to attend the meeting

## ANNEX II: AGENDA

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON THE ADVISORY PROCESS

Second Meeting, ICES Headquarters, 30 August–1 September

1. Opening and welcome
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Role of MCAP vis-à-vis the Advisory Committees, Delegates and Bureau
4. Response to Clients (review criticism since 1999 Nantes Dialogue Meeting (Bureau Doc. 1243)
  - 4.1. Report of the Joint ICES/Commissions Working Group on Cooperative Procedures, 5–6 February 2001: WGCOOP Report, Bureau Doc. 1247
  - 4.2. Tasks from the follow up of the 11<sup>th</sup> Dialog Meeting (CM 2000/Del:20)
  - 4.3. Letters and comments from DG Fish, EC letter of 25.09 2000
  - 4.4. Letter from J. Horwood
5. Tasks from Bureau Meeting June 2001
6. Tasks from Bureau Doc. 1251 (Report of the June 2001 CONC meeting)
7. Tasks from MCAP 1 report
  - 7.1. Review ACFM advice retrospectively
  - 7.2. North Sea Cod status quo catch overestimates
  - 7.3. Cod assessment methodology (Bureau Meeting 177/ Doc. 1243/ para. 13.8)
  - 7.4. Structural problems of the advisory process
8. Review handbook for Working Group Chairs.
9. First meeting of ACE.
10. Tasks for ACFM for 2002
11. Advisory tasks for OSPAR for 2002
12. Nomination of a member of PUBCOM
13. Issues for the MCAP meeting at ASC (23 September 2001, 14:00–18:00 in Oslo)
14. Any other business

**ANNEX III: LIST OF DOCUMENTS—MCAP 30 AUGUST–2 SEPTEMBER 2001**

<b>Document Number</b>	<b>Document Name</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>
1	Draft Agenda	2
2	Annotation for the Agenda	All points
3	Guidance to formulating advice	Response to Clients (Consistency) (4)
4	Formulation of Advice. From ACFM Minutes May 2001	Response to Clients (Consistency) (4)
5	Incorporate Technical Minutes in the AWG report. Note for information by the Secretariat	AOB (13)
6	Minutes of ACME meeting June 2001	Attendance in WG meetings (7)
7	Working paper for ACFM on Multiannual advice	(4) and (7.4)
8	Extract of ACE report	Integrated Approach (4.2), Ecosystem Advice (4.2), First Meeting of ACE (9)
9	New Dialogue meeting. Extract of ACE report August 2001	Bureau Meeting June 2001
10	Extract from ACE report. Developing EQOs	First Meeting of ACE(9)
11	Draft letter for DG Fish on processing of the small cetacean advice	Response to clients (4.3)
12.	Proposed TORs for SGPA	Response to Clients (4.1) and Tasks from MCAP 1 report (7.4)
13	Recommendation: Proposed Workshop on Fish Stock Assessment	ACFM 2002 (10)
14	Review of projects around data collection schemes etc.	AOB (13)
15	Proposal for ad-hoc group on ACFM working Procedures	AOB (13)
16	Extract from the CWP-19 report: Status of FIGIS/FIRMS. Note for discussion by the Secretariat	Response to Clients (4.2)
17	External review of the Barents Sea (NEA) Cod. Note from the Secretariat	Structural Problems (7.4)
18	Observer's report from the North Sea Commission meeting 15-16 August 2001	Structural problems (7.4)

	meeting 15-16 August 2001	
19	Summary of comments on development of quality handbook for assessments. By Secretariat	(4) and (7)
20	Report of meeting between Secretariat and DG Fish and DG Env officials 17 May 2001	11 <sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting (4.2) and Task from the Bureau meeting June 2001 (5)
21	Observer's report of IBSFC working group on herring long term management 18-19 June 2001	AOB (13)
22	Observer's report on IBSFC working group on eastern Baltic cod recovery plan 20-24 Aug. 2001	AOB (13)
23	Observer's report of Wilson Park (UK) meeting 23-25 July 2001	AOB (13)
24	OSPAR work programme for ICES for 2002	OSPAR 2002 (11)

**ANNEX IV: ACTIONS DECIDED BY MCAP**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>To be dealt with by</b>
Answer to DG Fish on various issues raised	Draft letter	Fisheries Adviser
Answer to Joe Horwood on various issues raised	Draft letter	Fisheries Adviser
Answer to OSPAR on the OSPAR/ICES workplan 2002	Draft letter	Environmental Adviser
Review of the ICES Advisory structure	Draft a proposal for a review including external reviewers	The Secretariat  Draft to be discussed and revised by MCAP  Revised draft proposal to be presented to the Bureau for implementation.
Observers at advisory committee meetings	MCAP shall be prepared for an in-depth discussion when MCAP meets in the beginning of 2002	MCAPs members
Incorporate information on the national sampling programmes of the commercial fisheries in the ICES quality assurance programme	RMC to consider how best to take an initiative in on the fisheries data collection schemes, e.g. review the standards established by the EU	RMC
Inform the Delegates on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consequences of inconsistencies in sampling and age reading for assessment of fish stocks</li> <li>• use of surveys in assessments and importance of surveys in assessment</li> </ul>	Present a paper based on the annexes in WGBFAS 2001 on influence of age reading uncertainties on the quality of fish stock assessments  Include general consideration on survey use in the above mentioned paper	Fisheries Adviser
Discuss data integration strategy in Bureau and among Delegates	Prepare a paper on its strategy concerning data integration	Secretariat
Handling of nutrient data (Eutrophication OSPAR group)	Prepare a clear statement on the ability to meet the OSPAR request taking into account the data submission. The review	ICES Oceanographer

	<p>should be made country by country.</p> <p>MCAP will based on this statement will prepare an answer to OSPAR.</p>	
Follow-up of the 12 <sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting	<p>Establish a planning group that will develop the more precise agenda.</p> <p>This planning group would involve organisations outside ICES</p> <p>The Dialogue Meeting should take place some time in 2003.</p>	First Vice-President, Mike Sissenwine
48 hours embargo on release of advice	MCAP will remind the ACFM members that the information from the meeting is confidential and that they have a strict requirement not to provide information outside the meeting	MCAP chair
Genetic effects	The review Committee will depend on the specific request.	
Follow-up of 12 <sup>th</sup> Dialogue Meeting	Consider the proposal made by ACE containing details of this Dialogue Meeting and communicate its comments to Mike Sissenwine as chair of the planning group.	CONC
Attendance at working groups..	<p>update the table given in the report of the January 2001 MCAP meeting on Groun and Committee membership by country and committee.</p> <p>develop as similar table showing the actual attendance at meetings</p>	Secretariat