

# ICES MIRAC REPORT 2010

ICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ICES CM 2010/ACOM:03

## Report of the Annual Meeting between ICES and the Regional Advisory Councils (MIRAC)

26–27 January 2010

Gdynia, Poland



**ICES**

International Council for  
the Exploration of the Sea

**CIEM**

Conseil International pour  
l'Exploration de la Mer

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

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

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## Executive Summary

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The fifth annual meeting between ICES and the European Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) was held at the Sea Fisheries Institute (MIR) in Gdynia, Poland, 26–27 January 2010. The objective of the meeting is to coordinate work between ICES and the RACs, and to provide a forum for the free and frank exchange of ideas concerning future collaborations.

The meeting was well attended by all the RACs of relevance to ICES (North Sea RAC, North Western Waters RAC, South Western Waters RAC, Pelagic RAC, Baltic Sea RAC and Long Distance RAC), by several members of the ICES Advisory Programme and the ACOM Chair (Mike Sissenwine). The meeting was initially chaired by Michael Andersen of the Danish Fishermen's Association and Tomas Linkowski of MIR who stepped in for Mike Sissenwine who was delayed but arrived by mid-afternoon of the 26 January.

In an open and frank way, the participants discussed issues of common interest to ICES and the RACs, like the collaboration on benchmark assessments including the need for fishers' involvement, the new format of ICES advice as well as the new form of the ICES fisheries advice (MSY).

The meeting was successful in aligning the work plans of ICES and the RACs, fine-tuning the cooperation, and it provided ample opportunities to explore future collaborations.

## 1 Terms of Reference

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2009/2/ACOM03 ICES will invite the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) and other stakeholders to meet with the ACOM leadership (Chaired by: Mike Sissenwine, USA) on 26–27 January 2010 in Gdynia, Poland to:

- Discuss practical arrangements in 2010 for cooperation between RACs and ICES, including procedures for delivering and discussion of the ICES advice and Young fishermen's participation in ICES ASC Berlin 2009;
- Review progress on following up of action points from the 2009 MIRAC meeting including a review of progress on development and evaluation of Management Plans and on RAC Focus groups on improving the data quality;
- Invite RACs to report on their experience of working with ICES during 2009 and to present their research and advisory needs, and discuss ICES' experience of participating in RAC meetings in 2009.

## **2 Participants and Agenda**

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The meeting had 28 participants. Both ICES and the RACs of relevance to ICES were well represented. Four observers from the EC were present.

A participants list can be found in Annex 1.

The Agenda is shown in Annex 2.

### **3 Minutes of the meeting**

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#### **3.1 Opening and welcome**

The meeting was opened by Michael Andersen (in place of Mike Sissenwine who was delayed) who thanked MIR and by Tomas Linkowski the host who welcomed the participants.

This was followed by a tour-de-table presentation of participants.

Philippe Moguedet asked for an item to be inserted on the Agenda to present the 7th Framework Programme for Fisheries Related Research. Benoît Guerin wanted a discussion on Fisheries management. The Agenda was adopted with these changes.

#### **3.2 ICES: Survey of ICES user satisfaction**

Hans Lassen presented an evaluation of the survey responses (Document 4). There followed a discussion on the form and value of the survey, to which Hans Lassen reiterated that ICES had consulted professionals on how to design the survey.

#### **3.3 ICES experience of participating in RAC meetings in 2009**

Hans Lassen presented the timetable of ICES participation in RAC meetings in 2009 (Document 5) and commented on cooperation between RACs and ICES. Hans Lassen stated that a lot of resources are put into presenting Advice to the RACs and there is a need to rationalise this effort, making a more efficient use of time by grouping meetings together around various topics.

#### **3.4 RACs Review of cooperation with ICES 2009**

The RACs feedback was positive. A discussion was initiated on the usefulness of the contact and of whether national or ICES scientists should attend the meetings. It was generally accepted that the two may overlap thus the division is acceptable.

The RACs expressed satisfaction “for the time being” with the current timing during the year of the ICES advice. One issue in this has been moving the ICES WGWIDE forward in time to June-July, but the move forward in time by one week in the early autumn from 2010 and onwards had solved most of the problem of getting enough time in the management system to negotiate the use of the advice in the management of the following year’s fishery.

#### **3.5 Benchmarking workshops past, present and future**

Hans Lassen presented a document outlining the Benchmarks Workshops that had taken place and what was planned for 2010 and the immediate future (Document 6). The RACs were encouraged to get involved as early as possible in the process, preferably a long time before the Workshops take place. It was suggested that a brainstorming meeting could be arranged well in advance of each benchmarking to let shareholders express their concerns and points of interests. It was left to the RACs to organise these Workshops.

Mike Sissenwine arrived at this stage and replaced Michael Andersen as Chair.

#### **3.6 Plan for ICES Advice 2010**

Hans Lassen presented and demonstrated the Advisory Workplan 2010 located on SharePoint at the Advice 2010 site (Document 7). All SharePoint users have access to this site. A discussion ensued with the EU observers supporting the RACs’ wish to

attend Working Groups, something that ICES feels may influence the impartiality of their Advice.

### **3.7 MSC labelling**

Alex Olsen from Espersens gave a presentation of the MSC labelling process: the background, the pre-assessment phase and the actual assessment, as well as the involvement of ICES in this. He explained that Germany, Sweden and Denmark were in the process of getting certification for their cod fisheries in the Baltic; a question was whether Poland would also apply. Document 9.

### **3.8 New form of the ICES fisheries advice-MSY-presentation and discussion**

Hans Lassen gave a detailed presentation of the new form of ICES Advice, which would be based on the MSY approach. Basically this will be based on fishing mortality and on how to predict the biomass. To move over to MSY will require a gradual transition from the current precautionary approach based advice. ICES will invite clients, governments and stakeholders to discuss this at a workshop planned for the end of March 2010. This point generated a lot of discussion and questions among the participants and all welcomed the opportunity to learn more about this at the Workshop. Document 8.

### **3.9 DG Research presentation of the 7th Framework Programme**

Philippe Mogueudet of DG Research gave a presentation of fisheries research under the Framework 7 programme for 2011. Three calls will be launched in this connection, covering the following topics:

- 1) Beyond MSY;
- 2) socio-economic effects of the CFP;
- 3) to strengthen the impact of agriculture, forestry fisheries and aquaculture research; use of the Mediterranean and Black Sea and off shore multi-use of wind farms.

There was some discussion of exactly how the RACs can take part in this process. Document 14.

### **3.10 New format of ICES fisheries Advice**

Hans Lassen presented the results of the WKFORM meeting which called for a more user-friendly format of the Advice. Document 10. There has been a discussion at ICES regarding how it is difficult to talk about the quality of the Advice, whereas one may talk about the quality of the input data. Thus ICES have been working on how to establish a traffic light system of estimates/assessments. The basic structure is still based on individual fish stocks. The traffic lights will probably not be in the final format, but various options have been explored in draft versions.

### **3.11 Expressing confidence or uncertainty**

Mike Sissenwine led a discussion on how to express confidence and uncertainty in fisheries Advice/scoring of information and how to reduce uncertainty (Document 11a). This was discussed at an ICES Workshop in Lisbon last year.

This presentation was well received and a question was put regarding the scope for regional initiatives where RACs, managers and ICES sit down together and work together to strengthen the links between data collection and the assessment groups in ICES?



### **3.12 Other issues**

Mike Sissenwine had produced a summary of the meeting; unfortunately we had run out of time to present it. Uploaded to the SharePoint site as Document 15 and included as Annex 4 in this Report.

#### **4 Concluding remarks**

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The Chair thanked MIR for hosting the meeting and the participants for turning up despite the snow, saying he looked forward to continuing cooperation. Mike thanked Sally Clink for coorganising the meeting, and Michael Andersen and Tomas Linkowski for standing in for him at the initial stages as co-chairs. He wished everyone safe travels home.

## Annex 1 Participants list

PARTICIPANTS AT THE ICES-RACs MEETING 26–27.01.2010			
No.	Name of Participant	Organisation	Email
	Carlos Aldereguia	LD RAC	<a href="mailto:carlos.aldereguia@ldrac.eu">carlos.aldereguia@ldrac.eu</a>
	Michael Andersen	BS RAC	<a href="mailto:ma@dkfisk.dk">ma@dkfisk.dk</a>
	Hugo Andersson	NS RAC	<a href="mailto:hugo.andersson@lio.se">hugo.andersson@lio.se</a>
	Gerard van Balsfoort	PEL RAC	<a href="mailto:gbalsfoort@pelagicfish.eu">gbalsfoort@pelagicfish.eu</a>
	Fuensanta Candela Castillo	DG Mare	<a href="mailto:maria.candela-castillo@ec.europa.eu">maria.candela-castillo@ec.europa.eu</a>
	Sally Clink	BS RAC	<a href="mailto:sc@bsrac.org">sc@bsrac.org</a>
	Aukje Coers	PEL RAC	<a href="mailto:a.coers@pelagic-rac.org">a.coers@pelagic-rac.org</a>
	Barrie Deas	NS RAC	<a href="mailto:bdeas@nffo.org.uk">bdeas@nffo.org.uk</a>
	Didier Fourgon	PEL RAC	<a href="mailto:Dfourgon@wwfepo.org">Dfourgon@wwfepo.org</a>
	Caroline Gamblin	NWW RAC	<a href="mailto:cgamblin@comite-peches.fr">cgamblin@comite-peches.fr</a>
	Helle Gjeding Jørgensen	ICES	<a href="mailto:hgj@ices.dk">hgj@ices.dk</a>
	Benoît Guerin	SWW RAC	<a href="mailto:bguerin@ccr-s.eu">bguerin@ccr-s.eu</a>
	Marta Kaniewska-Królak	Government Poland	<a href="mailto:Marta.Kaniewska@minrol.gov.pl">Marta.Kaniewska@minrol.gov.pl</a>
	Hans Lassen	ICES	<a href="mailto:hans@ices.dk">hans@ices.dk</a>
	Thomas Linkowski	MIR	<a href="mailto:linkowski@mir.gdynia.pl">linkowski@mir.gdynia.pl</a>
	Ryszard Malik	BS RAC	<a href="mailto:malik@seatrade.pl/info@seatrade.pl">malik@seatrade.pl/info@seatrade.pl</a>
	Philippe Mogueudet	DG Research	<a href="mailto:Philippe.Mogueudet@ec.europa.eu">Philippe.Mogueudet@ec.europa.eu</a>
	Conor Nolan	NWW RAC	<a href="mailto:cnolan@bim.ie">cnolan@bim.ie</a>
	Alex Olsen	BS RAC	<a href="mailto:alex.olsen@espersen.dk">alex.olsen@espersen.dk</a>
	Christian Olesen	PEL RAC	<a href="mailto:po@pelagisk.dk">po@pelagisk.dk</a>
	Kenneth Patterson	DG Mare	<a href="mailto:Kenneth.PATTERSON@ec.europa.eu">Kenneth.PATTERSON@ec.europa.eu</a>
	Alexandre Rodriguez	NWW RAC	<a href="mailto:rodriguez@bim.ie">rodriguez@bim.ie</a>
	Mike Sissenwine	ICES	<a href="mailto:msissenwine@ices.dk">msissenwine@ices.dk</a>
	Henrik Sparholt	ICES	<a href="mailto:henriks@ices.dk">henriks@ices.dk</a>
	Krzysztof Stanuch	BS RAC	<a href="mailto:baltic@balticnet.pl">baltic@balticnet.pl</a>
	Isabelle Viallon	DG Mare	<a href="mailto:Isabelle.VIALLON@ec.europa.eu">Isabelle.VIALLON@ec.europa.eu</a>
	Steve Kamicki	MIR	<a href="mailto:zkamicki@mir.gdynia.pl">zkamicki@mir.gdynia.pl</a>
	Jarek Zielinski	LD RAC	<a href="mailto:jarek@paop.org.p">jarek@paop.org.p</a>

## **Annex 2    Agenda**

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### **MIRAC (Meeting between ICES and the RACs)**

**26 January, starts 14:00–27 January, ends 13:00 2010**

Sea Fisheries Institute MIR, Gdynia

Chair: Mike Sissenwine

#### **Tuesday afternoon**

##### **14:00–14:45**

- 1) Opening and welcome
- 2) Tour-de-table of participants
- 3) Adoption of agenda
- 4) ICES: Survey of ICES user satisfaction: report from ICES on the responses received

##### **14:45–15:30**

- 5) ICES Advisory Services 2009: Cooperation with RACs, ICES: Participation at RAC meetings during 2009
- 6) RAC: Review of Cooperation with ICES 2009. RAC: feedback from the RACs and suggestions for change/improvement
- 7) ICES: Benchmarking workshops: feedback from the workshops in 2009 and information on the planned workshops for 2010 and 2011. Involvement of fishers' data/knowledge as input to advice: discussion and proposals on way forward: any progress in organising a RAC initiated workshop with the industry to clarify expectations on research? (*see point 3.2 from 2009 report*)

##### **15:30–16:00 Coffee**

##### **16:00–17:30**

- 8) Plan for advice 2010
  - a) ICES: Advisory Plan 2009 -2011 incl. timing of the advice: any update/change of requests? (*See 3.7 from 2009 report and discussion on shifting pelagic advice*)
  - b) RAC: Timing and future needs for expert advice
  - c) RACs and ICES cooperation to address data and science needs in preparation for 2010 advice on deep-sea fisheries

##### **17:30–18:00**

- 9) New form of the ICES fisheries advice – MSY– Presentation and discussion

#### **Drinks**

#### **Wednesday Morning**

##### **9:00-10:00**

- 10) MSC labelling - Presentation by invited representative from industry

Industry perspective on responsible fisheries management through labelling schemes: MSC labelling of cod fishery in the Baltic: progress made and its implications for rebuilding the burden of proof (here for example Klaus Nielsen/Alex Olsen of Espersen could give a presentation. This was an item on the programme of the conference organised by the BSRAC in Stockholm, October 2009)

**10:00–11:00**

11 ) Future needs for advice:

- ICES: a more efficient approach to presenting the fisheries advice
- ICES: user-friendly format of the advice.
- Quality of assessments and advice. Urgency of advice. The traffic light approach for the quality of assessments.
- How to involve stakeholders to a greater extent in the process

**11:00–11:30 Coffee****11:30–12:30**

12 ) Long-term management plans

- RAC(10 min): Development of management plans
- ICES (10 min): Principles for the evaluation of management plans in accordance with the Precautionary Approach

13 ) Access for RACs to ICES dynamic meeting schedule

**12:30–12:45**

14 ) Other issues

**12:45–13:00: Chair's summary and Closure**

The Agenda was modified according to new items for discussion and lack of time, see Section 3.

### Annex 3 List of documents or presentations

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NO.	TITLE	AGENDA PT.	RESPONSIBLE
1	Document list		HGJ
2	Draft Agenda	3	HS/SC/HGJ
3	Participant list	2	SC/HGJ
4	ICES User satisfaction survey	4	MS/HS
5	ICES participation in RAC meetings in 2009	5	MS/hgj
6	Benchmark Workshops 2009, 2010 and 2011	7	MS/hgj
7	Plan for Advice 2010	8	MS/hgj
8	New form of ICES Advice	9	MS/HS
9	MSC labelling	10	Alex Olsen
10	Draft new format of ICES fisheries advice	11	HS
11	MIRAC Report 2009		HGJ
11a	Expressing confidence or uncertainty		
12	Benchmark Evaluation 2009	7	MS/hgj
13	NWWRAC Report Work Progress Priorities		Alexandre Rodriguez
14	P7 Research on fisheries		Philippe Moguedet
15	Chair's summary		MS

All documents and presentations are available on the MIRAC 2010 SharePoint site <http://groupnet.ices.dk/mirac2010/default.aspx> to which all participants have access.

**Annex 4**    **Chair's summary**

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**MIRAC 2010  
26-27 January  
Gdynia, Poland****Chair's Summary****Tour-de-table**

- **Generally positive sense about cooperation between ICES and RACs**
- **RACs depend on both ICES and scientists from National labs for information. They recognize the difference.**
- **Some RACs expressed interest in “minority views.” Chair's note- minority views are reflected in WG reports, but advice is more useful if unambiguous.**

## Tour-de-table

- **Some RACs see a need for more:**
  - involvement of social scientists
  - permanent involvement of scientists (e.g., members of RAC or ex-officio members, Staff)
  - more priority for data poor stocks and stocks with no or limited assessments
  - effort coordinating calendars (noted conflict with timing of WKFORM and WKFAR in Lisbon Dec 2009).

## BENCHMARKS

- Need to engage stakeholders and RACs early and give them guidance on participation. Should schedule preparatory meetings with relevant RACs.
- If RACs cannot attend entire Benchmark, the first few days are most important.
- RACs were informed that there is an “inter-Benchmark process to add flexibility.
- Benchmarks during WG meetings (e.g., most recently for herring) occurred during a transition. They should not occur in the future. This should give RACs better access.
- Concern was expressed about not having a benchmark for blue whiting. ICES explained it was a data problem (specifically on stock id). If data becomes available, the inter-benchmark process could be used.



## **Work Plan**

- **RACs have access to all the details on the ICES Sharepoint site. Contact Secretariat if you need help.**
- **RACs interested in influence the formation of expert groups (i.e., WG) to address their priority needs. This requires a long time horizon. Could discuss in future MIRACs with a view to influencing the annual meeting (in autumn) between ICES and DG Mare to plan the following year's work plan.**

## **ECO-LABELING**

- **Governments and industry need to be part of the solution to problems of overfishing AND the damaged image of fishing and seafood.**
- **Some components of the industry seeking certification (e.g., MSC).**
- **This is a private sector activity. ICES will remain neutral. It will provide info, but it is not bound by “conditions” of certification between industry and certification bodies.**

## EC Research (FW 7)

- A presentation of current and future projects was welcomed by the MIRAC
- It was noted that future projects will require funding for stakeholder participation.
- Need intellectual involvement of stakeholders and end users (e.g., ICES) from initiation to completion of projects to achieve full potential.
- Should consider an intermediate design stage that is open to all ideas, prior to competition for funds. ICES might host such a process for a program expected in 2012 on “beyond MSY.”

## MSY Approach

- ICES is beginning transition of advice from PA framework to MSY framework.
- Expects the transition to be complete by 2015, but this needs to be worked out with managers.
- Approach is F based, Bmsy is notional, not predicted. MSY Btrigger based on experience fishing at Fmsy. For now, use Bpa.
- Many scientific challenges, but not inherently different from PA framework.
- MSY framework more precautionary on average than PA framework over most of the range of B.
- Annual catch on average higher and more stable for MSY framework than PA framework.
- Application to short lived species or data poor species, work in progress (future workshop being planned).
- Some RACs would like to see a range estimates of Fmsy, Catch at Fmsy.
- RACs generally supportive of stepwise/transition approach.
- Concern about “data poor stocks.” Do we need special effort?

## MSY Approach

- **Need to make sure that we do not through the “baby out with the bathwater” in terms of existing management plans.**
- **Management plans will be subject to routine review, and next generation of plans will be Fmsy based.**

## Format of Advice

- **There will be a new format that should be more user friendly while still meeting requirements of managers.**
- **For 2010, advice doc. will re-arrange current info.- short summary up front, followed by background docs.**
- **Color coding will probably be dropped for 2010. Some expression of uncertainty in doc. is useful, even if it is verbal.**

## Expressing Uncertainty

- **Uncertainty in what- data, assessment, advice? Or is the issue Urgency?**
- **In some cases, there is a formal statistical basis for expressing uncertainty.**
- **ICES is discussing a framework for expressing uncertainty when a formal statistical basis is lacking. Realistically, this will not happen this year.**
- **Need to link expressions of uncertainty to set priorities to reduce uncertainty.**
- **Need to give more emphasis in confidence of advice, which is different from quality of assessment.**

## EC expectations for next MoU

- **Request for area/fisheries based advice**
- **Want advice on MSY**
- **Want open/transparent process**
- **Want reports in multiple languages**

**These are all matters to be negotiated in next MoU.**

## Meeting Adjournment

- **The chair's summary was not presented at the end of the meeting because taxi's were waiting!. It was posted on sharepoints and comments welcome. However, it is the chairs summary, not an agreed meeting report.**
- **The chair thanked the organizers of the MIRAC and wished participants a safe trip home.**