

REPORT MIAC 2020

ICES HQ, Copenhagen – 16 January 10am-1pm

LIST OF AC MEMBERS AND ICES PARTICIPANTS

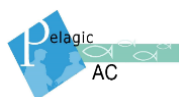
ADVISORY COUNCILS

Jane Sandell (JS)	Long Distance AC – Chair
Alexandre Rodriguez (AR)	Long Distance AC - Secretary
Guillaume Carruel (GC)	Pelagic AC - Secretary
Laurens van Balsfoort (LvB)	Pelagic AC
Gonçalo Carvalho (GC)	Pelagic AC
Esben Sverdrup-Jensen (ESJ)	Baltic Sea AC - Chair
Michael Andersen (MA)	Baltic Sea AC
Tamara Talevska (TT)	North Sea AC – Secretary
Mike Park (MP)	North Sea AC
Emiel Brouckaert (EB)	North Western Waters AC – Chair
Chloe Pocheau (CP)	South Western Waters AC - Secretary
Miren Garmendia (MG)	South Western Waters AC
Jorge Abrantes (JA)	South Western Waters AC
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council – Secretary

ICES

Mark Dickey-Collas	ICES ACOM Chair
Colm Lordan	ICES ACOM Vice-Chair
Eugene Nixon	ICES ACOM Vice-Chair
Ghislain Chouinard	ICES ACOM Vice-Chair
Helle Gjeding Jorgensen	ICES secretariat
Lotte Worsoe	ICES secretariat
Rui Catarino	ICES secretariat
David Miller	ICES secretariat

Apologies noted from Sean O’Donoghue (PELAC-MAC), Michael Keatinge (NWWAC Secretary) and Sally Clink (BSAC Secretary)



1. Opening remarks: adoption of agenda and list of actions completed from MIAC 2019

The chair, Ms Jane Sandell, opened the meeting by recalling the background for having it. The MIAC is a meeting between the Advisory Councils and ICES, and is separate from MIACO. Three years ago it was agreed to hold this meeting in conjunction with MIACO and that the AC's would take on the chairmanship through a rotation system. The Baltic AC organized the first meeting in 2018, then it was the turn of the Pelagic AC in 2019 and this year the LDAC has succeeded.

The chairperson (JS) explained the agenda was set up based on input received from each of the individual interested ACs and the LDAC Secretary has worked closely with ICES ACOM led by Mark Dickey-Collas to avoid duplication with MIACO. The chair asked if everybody was happy with the agenda and assured any missing items could be dealt with under any other business.

The agenda was adopted without any further comments. The list of actions from last year's MIAC meeting was checked and it was agreed to complete all those pending actions that are still relevant for this year's meeting.

2. Specific issues

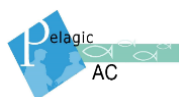
Item 2a. Data used for the advice on the Norway lobster VIIIc FU 25 and 31 [SWWAC]

The **SWWAC (CP)** made the following questions:

- a) Has ICES assessed the results of the IEO campaign of 2019?
- b) Has the impact of the recovery plan for southern hake and Norway lobster been evaluated in the evolution of the stock?
- c) Has the management change implemented by Spain on the quota of Norway lobster been assessed, as of 2012?
- d) Has ICES taken into account the data provided by the fisheries sector of the years 2015 and 2016, data confirmed in your CPUE average by the scientific campaigns of the years 2016-2019?

ICES ACOM responded that:

- a) Data from 2019 campaign have not been included in this year's assessment
- b) TAC zero was established in the last 3 years. The abundance indexes have decreased sharply. A Sentinel fishery is in operation since 2017, although data has not yet been incorporated in the assessment as it covers a small area and longer time series are needed (at least 3 years) until it is stabilized (e.g. similar case with mackerel).
- c) ICES has not been asked to make an evaluation impact of the recovery plan adopted in 2015.
- d) CPUEs from 2015-2016 are consistent with 2018-2019 and show a decreasing trend.



- Item 2b. Zero TAC advice: example of Western Baltic herring [BSAC]**
- i. Transparency in decisions taken at WGs, ADGs and ACOM**
 - ii. Decisions relating to timing of reference points**

The **BSAC** has raised this point in relation to Western Baltic spring spawning herring. However, the point relating to a discussion on the zero TACs is a general one, and the BSAC would like to know how, or if, ICES is working with this issue. A zero catch advice, as explained below, is of no practical use and is rarely followed and simply adds to the conflict between stakeholders (e-NGOs and fishermen) and managers. We invite ICES to comment on this and come with suggestions as to how this can be improved and move away from this strategy to allow a certain level of (by) catches.

Sub-point i: Transparency in decisions taken at WGs, ADGs and ACOM

This is believed to be related to what happened in ICES when it was decided to interpret the rules in the ICES Advice basis, version 13th July 2018:

- “If the F following from applying rule 2 is insufficient to bring the stock above Blim in the short-term ICES advice will be based on bringing the stock above Blim in the short term. This may result in advice of zero catch.”

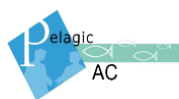
This rule was interpreted as:

- “If the F following from applying rule 2 is insufficient to bring the stock above Blim within one year, ICES advice will be a zero-catch advice”

The BSAC wants to know if there is an analysis which underpins the statement that “one year” is the correct interpretation. Why not 2 years? Or 3 years? Or one generation? Or half a generation?

Such an approach leads to a binary advice, switching between a quota and no-quota. This needs to be changed as it is dysfunctional, is of no practical use and has no beneficial impact on the stocks. Moreover, it is rarely followed, and adds to the conflict between e-NGOs, managers and fishermen. The difficulty is knowing how to change the approach to the advice, without knowing why it was implemented in the first place.

ICES ACOM replied that the zero TAC advice approach applies to stocks which are below Blim and there is strong evidence of impaired recruitment with risk to low productivity and potential to harvest the stock. ICES held WKMSE2 last year and highlighted the need to organize a dedicated Working Group on setting up guidelines for rebuilding these stocks.



Sub-point ii: Decisions relating to timing of reference points

This relates to the need for more clear guidance and information on which time period the reference points should be based upon. For Western Baltic spring spawning herring, it is obvious that there is not a continuum in the SSB/R relationship. There are two separate periods: one with high productivity back in time and one with lower productivity. The question is: how to decide between using the entire period and using the present period? Moreover, we would welcome some information on what ICES does to secure some consistency in the periods used when estimating reference points, both between stocks and within a stock.

ICES ACOM replied that the benchmarking framework is the best instrument here for process understanding and improving data availability and knowledge using best available science. It also permits to have quality assurance for sudden changes on the perception of stocks such as this.

Item 2.c. Update on ICES guidelines for rebuilding plans workshop [PELAC] [BSAC]

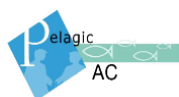
A workshop on ICES guidelines for rebuilding plans is scheduled on the 24-28 February 2020. More information will follow via email and on the ICES SharePoint Site.

Item 2d. ICES work in RFMOs: NAFO (3M Shrimp) and NEAFC (EAFM/VMEs) [LDAC]

The LDAC requested an update on how ICES interacts with NAFO and NEAFC Scientific bodies and Working Groups on Ecosystems and its action plan for 2020 in relation to the following topics:

- **3M Shrimp:** The LDAC was pleased to see that this year the timing of the stock assessment (to consider EU annual surveys) was streamlined and frontloaded from November to early September. This allowed to be included in the scientific report made available just in time to take an informed decision at the NAFO Annual Meeting held in the end of September. This brought positive implications with a direct impact into management, as the shrimp fishery was reopened following a 9 years moratorium (since 2011) to allow an effort allocation scheme with a limited number of 2 640 vessels and 10 555 fishing days at sea in 2020.

However, the Joint ICES/NAFO *Pandalus* Working Group (including other shrimp stocks in areas such as the Barents Sea) still took place in October. The LDAC would like to know if that was a one-off interim solution by request of NAFO or it is an intended course of action that ICES would like to continue in the future.



ICES ACOM confirmed that the joint ICES/NAFO Pandalus WG will continue to frontload its advice on 3M Shrimp on September in 2020 but will meet in plenary in October-November as in previous year to release the advice comprising the three stocks analysed, namely Norwegian and Barents Sea, NAFO 3M and other Stocks.

- ICES overview on EAFM/VMEs: ICES was invited to present at LDAC WG2 held on 11 November 2019 the recent COMPLETE WITH TITLE AND CONTENT OF MARK'S PRESENTATION

An update on this work is expected as well as future actions derived from it.

ICES ACOM confirmed that the outcomes of the assessment was a high degree of compliance of fishing vessels and low rate of infringements by countries. ICES will continue its work with DG MARE in developing a fisheries footprint mapping and asks for the collaboration of concerned fleets/stakeholders.

Furthermore, it was stressed the relevance of this process aims to improve scientific knowledge of VMEs in NEA in light of the UN ongoing process on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Waters (BBNJ).

Item 2e. Iberian sardine stock (divisions XIIIc and IXa) [SWWAC]

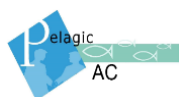
The advice summary of ICES, published 29 May 2019, answered to a request from Portugal and Spain to evaluate a management and recovery plan for the Iberian sardine stock (divisions 8.c and 9.a), and says that ICES considered that the Iberian sardine stock has been in a state of low productivity since 2006 and ICES has therefore recalculated the values of Blim to 196 300 tones and FMSY to 0.032.

Conclusions of the Working Group:

The current and future state of nature of sardine productivity is unknown, and the four scenarios outlined above (Medium, Low, Low–medium and Mix) should be considered as likely states of productivity for the sardine stock

The **SWWAC** (JA) posed two questions regarding productivity scenarios:

1. Why ACOM did not respect the conclusions of the Working Group and presented a conclusion that is in complete contradiction with the Working Group's assessment of the productivity scenarios?
2. What are the reasons that led to the adoption of a low productivity regime for sardine? Why is the low productivity scenario for 2020 and 2021 maintained, when the scientific bodies from Portugal and Spain came in to report that 2019 is one of the best years of recruitment in the last 30 years?



ICES ACOM commented that the WKSARMP held in 2019 examined several productivity scenarios. The current ICES report presents both low and medium productivity and indicates that the evidence points to low productivity in the most recent period. ICES ADG concluded that the advice should be based on the low productivity scenario as there was no evidence to suggest that productivity would change from that observed since 2006.

3. Possible future ACs-ICES collaboration on data provision, reporting and quality control.

Item 3a. Follow-up on quality control process within ICES, especially in light of WKRRMAC progress [PELAC]

The main discussion for this point will take place during the MIACO meeting. However, the PELAC stakeholders made a statement on the specific case of the research roadmap for mackerel workshop.

Item 3b. Improving science and discard data for deep-water stocks: exploring avenues for collaboration with ices WGDEEP [LDAC]

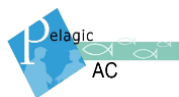
This is an ongoing action from last year's agenda about how the LDAC could collaborate with ICES in order to improve the knowledge base for discard data for deep-sea fisheries in NEAFC regulatory area and collaborate more closely with the ICES Deep Sea Working Group (WGDEEP).

The LDAC recalled last year that, under the control regulation fishermen are obligated to report discards so we need to think how the concerned fishing industry could contribute to improve the quality of fisheries dependent (catch and discards) data and make it available to scientists. Some examples of useful data could also refer to changes in fishing patterns due to migration of stocks caused by climate change, and catchability.

The LDAC took note of the point made by ICES ACOM Chair about safeguarding the quality of the data and data collection methods.

It was suggested as possible options for cooperation that the LDAC Secretary might inform ICES Secretariat/WGDEEP Chair or Vice Chair on commercial datasets available via informal IT preparatory meetings 4-8 weeks before the next WGDEEP. A LDAC representative could also participate as observer in the ADG.

However, there has been little progress in 2019 so the question from the **LDAC** is: Would ICES still consider this action useful for 2020 and onwards?



ICES ACOM replied that LDAC representatives are invited to provide feedback to WGDEEP beforehand and through ICES Data Compilation Workshop at least one month before its occurrence. They can also register as observers at ADG to follow closely the development of the advisory process.

He reminded that inclusion of new data from the industry or scientific institutes requires a benchmark workshop; and that it merits reflection to set up a mechanism for categories 4-5-6 stocks (i.e. data poor/limited stocks).

4. How ACs can better engage in ICES advisory process?

Item 4.a Climate change: how is ICES planning to deal with / include ecosystem considerations into the stock assessment? Is there any role of the ACs? [NWWAC]

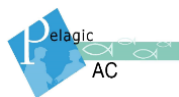
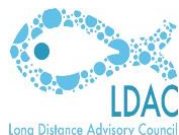
Climate change has an impact on fish stocks, especially on their recruitment and spatial distribution. While ICES stocks assessments take into account landings, discards and predation, how is ICES planning to consider the effects of climate change, such as increase in water temperature and decrease of dissolved oxygen levels, on the spawning biomass? The NWWAC has decided, as stated in its work programme for 2019-2020, to expand its work and focus also on climate change issues. Thus, it would be useful to know what level of contribution might be expected from the ACs to support ICES on this.

ICES ACOM replied that there are two ongoing EU funded big projects on climate change and fisheries: CERES and CLIMEFISH (linked to FAO Symposium), which they are waiting for the final result. One of the key elements of these projects are the impact of climate change in the productivity of the ecosystems and the distribution of the species. There will be an ICES workshop organised tasked with developing a proposal for reference points in changing environments.

In addition, other project such as SNAP and Fish Dish report were mentioned.

In summary, there are two key challenges for ICES:

1. Changes provoked by climate change in distribution and zonal attachment of species; and
2. Changes in productivity (within ICES remit) and distribution (duty of ICES to monitor and report but NOT to set management objectives or solutions, as this is responsibility of MS).



Item 4.b. ICES Working Group on Economics: update on the objectives / ToR, interaction with STECF and role of stakeholders (ACs). [NWWAC/LDAC]

According to the ICES website, “*WGECON addresses the need to bring fisheries economics into ICES science and advice*”. The defined tasks for WGECON are to map current work and identify future needs, look at links with international organizations, report on information needed for trade-off analysis of fishing impacts and ecosystem services, and assessing the economic significance of fishing. However, it is not clear how this differs from the role of the Commission’s Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) that seem to have a similar role and look at similar issues. In this context, the NWWAC would like to understand how WGECON and STECF interact, the linkages and differences as well as the role of the industry in WGECON given one of the tasks is looking at the economic significance of fishing.

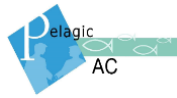
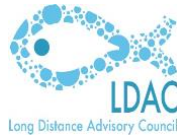
ICES replied that this is the fourth year this group has been operating informally in parallel with the EWG. The Economic Working Group seems to be working well while the Social WG (composed by social scientists, sociologists and anthropologists) is running a bit slower. This group comprises a big group of experts beyond of Member States and Contracting Parties beyond the EU (such as the US or Canada) and look at a broad range of issues related to areas such as impacts of other marine activities such as aquaculture and shipping and vulnerability assessments for coastal communities facing climate change and community-based responses. In this sense, a socio-economic database has begun to develop.

Item 4.c. Stakeholders’ engagement in ICES Advisory Processes: development of an engagement strategy? [NSAC]

Some months ago, an article on stakeholders’ engagement in ICES advisory process was published in the ICES Journal of Science. The complete article can be found here:

[http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/Documents/News%20articles/2019%2009%20Opinion piece Fishing industry as authors of ICES expert groups.pdf](http://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/Documents/News%20articles/2019%2009%20Opinion%20piece%20Fishing%20industry%20as%20authors%20of%20ICES%20expert%20groups.pdf)

There is a proposal for development of engagement strategy that would include objectives for engagement, mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, and how to address shortcomings in training mentioned.



Some possible questions to address:

- i. Has such strategy been developed?
- ii. What are the eligibility criteria for stakeholders' engagement?

iii. Under stakeholders only the industry is mentioned in the article, but no any environmental or cooperation for development NGOs – Is there any substantiated reason for this?

iv. *“Greater engagement can be seen to compromise scientific integrity”* – to what extent this perception currently underlies the ICES advice and what measures are taken to increase perceived rigor of scientific outputs?

ICES ACOM replied that ICES is working with people with experience on this field and are aiming to develop a strategy and it will be discussed at the forthcoming ACOM that will meet in March 2020. There seems to be an uncertainty between the status of observer and stakeholder as such in this process. We will need facilitators and social scientists to help us with this.

5. Listing of Action Points Agreed

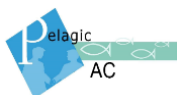
Item 1. Remarks related to information on changes and update of scientific advice

- ACs Secretaries and members to contact with ICES Secretariat to register in the ICES Observer Forum:
<http://www.ices.dk/community/get-involved/Pages/Observers.aspx>

Item 2. Use of scientific survey data into scientific assessments (related to 2a, b and e)

NOTE: This topic was referred to at the discussions on different stocks such as NEA Mackerel, Nephrops VIIIc and Iberian Sardine VIII & IXa.

- ICES ACOM/Secretariat to provide a summary paragraph on issue of requirements for independent scientific survey data to be included into stock assessment and advice; Reminder on need to strike a balance between new data and reliability, consistency and stability of the advice.



Sub-items 2.b (zero TAC advice methodology) and 2.c. (Update on ICES guidelines for rebuilding plans workshop)

- ACs to ensure active participation in special workshops WKREBUILD and WKREM in February and April 2020, with the aim to contribute actively to help develop a science-policy interface to find an agreed with managers and stakeholders to develop a MAMP...

Sub-item 2.d ICES Work in RFMOs: NAFO RA Subdiv. 3M Shrimp and VMEs in NEAFC RA

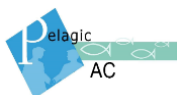
- NAFO: LDAC asked ICES to run again the assessment of the 3M Shrimp in late August/early September so advice can be frontloaded and arrive in time to inform the NAFO CPCs for the annual meeting (3rd week of September), without pre-empting the final meeting of the Joint NAFO/ICES Pandalus WG composed of three subgroups in late October/early November.
- NEAFC: LDAC to invite ICES to its next Working Group 2 (North Atlantic fisheries and its RFMOs) to follow up work in developing scientific advice on review of effectiveness and impacts of fishing activities in VMEs to provide management options linked to the EU deep sea access regime regulation (e.g. improving knowledge of fishing intensity/footprint while allowing stakeholder engagement in the process).

Sub-item 3.a Improving science and discard data for deep-water stocks: collaborative work of ACs with WGDEEP

- LDAC, NWWAC, NSAC (and SWWAC?) Secretaries to liaise and organise a small Task Force composed of relevant industry and OIG representatives to look together into needs and gaps in terms of commercial data on (by) catch and discards.
- Explore avenues of collaboration with ICES/WGDEEP to try to integrate commercial data into the advisory process in time for next biannual advice on fishing opportunities for 2021/2022.

Sub-item 4.a. Working with commercially collected data and stakeholder information

- ACs to read outputs of ICES WKSCINDI report and identify areas for collaboration.
- LDAC to upload reports of joint ICES-ACs meetings on data deficiencies for stocks; and make a review/update exercise jointly with ICES on data needs relying on industry, MS and scientists for commercially relevant stocks.



Sub-item 4.b ICES Working Group on Economics

- ACs to be regularly informed and to liaise with Simon Jennings and ICES ACOM to provide advice on the ToR and work contents from this WG in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of tasks with other organisations dealing with social and economic data of the fleets such as STECF.

Sub-item 4.c. Stakeholders' engagement in ICES Advisory Processes

- ACs to follow up outcomes and decisions of ACOM to be held in March 2020 in order to develop an engagement strategy and identify the resources.

Item 6. Organization and Chairperson for MIAC 2021

- Following the work of the BSAC, PELAC and LDAC in previous years, it is up for the NSAC, NWWAC, and SWWAC to discuss between themselves and decide who will take over the coordination work for organising next year's MIAC meeting. The decision will be reported to ICES Secretariat and the other ACs.

NOTE EX POST: The NSAC Chair and Secretary accepted to organize MIAC meeting for 2021.

-END-