

MCAP-MIRAC REPORT 2007

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**MCAP CHAIR'S REPORT OF MCAP-MIRAC
MEETING 2007**

22–23 JANUARY

ICES HEADQUARTERS



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Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer

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1 Background

In February 2006 a first dialogue meeting between ICES and the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) was held. An ICES resolution to MCAP adopted at the ASC 2006 states:

2006/2/MCAP01 The Management Committee on the Advisory Process [MCAP] (Chair; Paul Connolly, Ireland) will meet:

A) Together with the Regional Advisory Councils (MIRACs) at ICES Headquarters from mid-afternoon on 22 January -23 January 2007 (to be confirmed) at Council expense (for MCAP members) to explore how cooperation between the RACs and ICES should further be developed. In particular, the meeting shall explore how the RACs could be involved with the ICES Advisory Process within the guidelines defined by the ICES Council, and in the light of the MoU between ICES and EC.

Based on this resolution MCAP took initiative to arrange the present meeting with the RACs.

2 Participants

A participant list is given in Annex 1.

The North Sea RAC, the Pelagic RAC, the North Western Waters RAC and the Baltic Sea RAC participated.

The Distant Waters RAC and the South Western Waters RAC were represented by Rocío Béjar, Spain, and Iria Soto Tejedor, Spain, and the Mediterranean Sea RAC were not represented.

The EC was represented by Poul Degnbol.

3 Agenda

The agenda is shown in Annex 2.

4 Minutes of the meeting

4.1 Opening and welcome

The Chair opened the meeting.

The ICES General Secretary welcomed the participants. He remarked that since last year's meeting between the RACs and ICES there has been great progress in the cooperation and the purpose of this meeting is to improve the relationship further.

There was a roundtable presentation of the participants.

The Chair clarified that the official name of the meeting is MCAP-MIRAC (Meeting of ICES and RACs).

The Chair stated that the main objectives of the meeting were to:

- 1) Continue the dialogue process started in 2006. "Get to know each other better"
- 2) What have we learned in the first year of working with each other?
- 3) How do we improve and develop the relationship in a practical way?

The Chair said that it was his attention that the final part of the meeting would be devoted to agreeing and putting in place an agreed set of actions for 2007. He would also review the meeting in terms of whether we have met our objectives.

The agenda of the meeting was adopted with the addition of 'ecosystem aspects of marine management' under agenda item 14.

4.2 Update on the Status of each RAC

There will be 7 RACs in total when all the planned RACs are finally established. At this meeting 6 RACs were represented. Each RAC presented its current status, modus operandi, and priorities for the coming year. The North Sea RAC, the Baltic RAC, the Pelagic RAC, and the Western Waters RAC each produced a summary of their current status (see Annex 4).

Mediterranean Sea RAC: This is still some way from being developed.

South Western Waters RAC: Close to being established.

Distant Water RAC: An Executive Committee will be finalised and the RAC should be up and running this year.

The Strategic plans and action plans for the North Sea, Baltic, North-Western Waters and Pelagic RACs are available on the RACs' web pages.

The EC Observer mentioned that in May 2007 there will be a review of the RACs conducted by the EC.

4.3 Progress on follow up action points from the previous RAC ICES meeting in February 2006

The meeting reviewed the Action Points from last year's report:

- 1) "ICES will participate as an observer at InterRAC meeting in Brussels, March 2006".
 - *Done – ICES participate at this meeting and 14 other RAC meetings in 2006*
- 2) "For the time being requests from the RACs to ICES will go via the EC, other management bodies which have an MOU with ICES or National member States of ICES".
 - *Some requests via EC dealt with by ICES in 2006 (agenda item)*
 - *Also direct contact with RACs on 'clarification' issues*
 - *Communication System and Process continues to evolve*
- 3) "RACs are invited by ICES and the EC to present their 'advisory and research' needs. Such needs will be considered in relation to the revision of the ICES-EC MOU in 2006."
 - *RACs had input into new MOU between ICES and EC.*
 - *Under the new MOU ICES will present and discuss the latest ICES advice with RACs*
 - *Under the new MOU, ICES and RACs to look at data issues*
 - *Research and advisory needs of RACs – All agreed that it may be too early in the RACs evolution to clarify their scientific needs!*
- 4) "This report should be presented and discussed at the EFARO meeting in May 2006".
 - *Need to follow this up again! The issue of Resource Allocation of the limited pool of fisheries scientists in National Labs between ICES, STECF and ICES is a major issue*

- 5) “The RACs are invited to participate in the ICES ASC in Maastricht in 2006”
 - *RACs attend ASC. Informal meeting held. Positive Feedback.*
- 6) “Explore the possibility of ICES acting as co-ordinator for a ‘pool of scientists’ “
 - *Major issue which involves ICES, STECF, National Laboratories, EC (at the heart of resource allocation issue)*
- 7) “Specifications of the financial implications of the ‘pool of scientists’ system for the EFARO meeting in May 2006”.
 - *As item 6*
- 8) “ICES and RACs continue their dialogue so we have a full understanding of each others ‘modus operandi’, our needs and how best to use the limited pool of scientific resources in an efficient and effective manner”.
 - *Working Hard on this.*
- 9) “Progressing the ICES – RAC relationship will be a high priority for MCAP in 2006.”
 - *Continues to be a high priority and action point on MCAP agenda*

The RACs were disappointed about the fact that EFARO had not as yet answered their letter from spring 2006. It was suggested that this should be put on the EFARO agenda and the letter sent again. While ICES is not a member of EFARO it could support the RACs letter and the opening of a debate on the important issue of resource allocation. ICES was struggling with this issue even before the RACs existed. The chair further suggested to the RACs to give EFARO concrete examples of how the RACs currently work with ICES and with national laboratories.

The meeting participants agreed that there had been a good follow-up to the 2006 action points except the important one about the interaction with the EFARO.

4.4 The RAC issues in the new EC and ICES MOU, including resources within RACs and within ICES (Hans Lassen Doc 6)

Hans Lassen, ICES, gave a presentation on the MoUs relevant to the RACs. The new MoU runs until 2009. The draft EC-ICES MoU has been sent out to the RACs for comments in 2006. The new MoU has still not been finally signed by the EC.

The question was put forward as to the appropriateness of an agreement which might be called a “Memorandum Of Recognition” between the RACs and ICES. This could be useful in defining more precisely the area and issues of cooperation and how they should be dealt with. However, for the time being where the cooperation is still very new and with some RACs still to be established, it was agreed that it might be more appropriate to let the ICES-RAC relationship develop on the present ad hoc basis.

4.5 The RACs experience in working with ICES during 2006

Each RAC presented its experience:

Baltic Sea RAC: They have received what they asked for from ICES and are generally satisfied.

Pelagic Sea RAC: They were pleased with the way their requests to ICES have been answered by ICES. However, they would like to be able approach ICES directly in addition to the present way of having to go through the EC with their request.

North Sea RAC: They were pleased with the assistance provided by ICES. It is some times found difficult though to distinguish between ICES and scientists under the ICES umbrella. The requests are mostly ad-hoc and they often deal with individual institutions rather than the ICES Secretariat. If a way could be found of formalizing the relationship this would be great.

North Western Waters RAC: They were happy with the interaction with ICES particularly in relation to the presentation of the advice. It was remarked that one issue missing from the agenda was the national laboratories experience in working with the RACs. Most laboratories do not regard their scientists as giving the ICES advice. This is a job for ICES. There has been some confusion about when a scientist was talking on behalf of ICES or on behalf of a national laboratory. National Laboratories have a role to play in discussing the data with RACs and the outcome of various reviewed Working Groups. The presentation of advice to the RACs is an ICES job, as indicated in the new ICES – EC MOU.

4.6 ICES' experience with participating in RAC meetings during 2006

Martin Pastoors made a presentation on ICES experiences with the RACs based on meetings with 4 RACs in 2006. The roles of ICES can be divided into: observer, advisor and scientist. ICES attended 17 RAC meetings in total, 4 times as an advisor, 8 times as an observer and the rest as a scientist. ICES could not participate at a number of RAC meetings due to resource issues. Invitations and annual planning issues still needs to be further developed between the RACs and ICES.

The Group discussed the critical areas of joint planning and resource allocation. It was noted that the whole idea of planning, the identification of gaps, and the avoidance of duplication in work were key areas that ICES and the RTCs needed to work on.

The ICES experiences with the RACs during 2006 seem to have been good overall.

4.7 Reform of the ICES advisory structure and new timing of advice

Hans Lassen gave an update on the reform process and timing of advice. The time schedule for developing the new advisory system is by September 2007 and then, if accepted by the ICES Council, it will be implemented in 2008. This is expected to be a gradual change over process during 2008 and 2009.

The reform process will focus on the structures and processes. The new reformed advisory services of ICES will be more efficient and effective at delivering the advice decision makers need. The focus on ecosystem issues has increased in recent years and has driven the reform agenda. Some requests no longer fit the ICES calendar year. ICES wishes for more flexible system and also wants the advice to take a longer-term view. ICES Council came up with a resolution asking MCAP and the Secretariat to develop an implementation plan for consideration at the next Bureau Meeting. Once agreed, ICES will commence an open consultation within the wider ICES community and with stakeholders.

The EC and ICES are having discussions to push ICES advice to an earlier date. This has not yet been concluded and ICES is awaiting a response from the EC. ICES is presently undertaking a pilot study in the North Sea on 'early June advice' to see find out what kind of problems would arise, if advice was produced in the middle of summer. Assessments are not likely to change but survey data for August/September will be excluded and assessments from April/May may require revision later in the year to include these survey data.

The RACs emphasised the need to know about ICES management meetings in order to keep abreast of changes. Hans Lassen replied it is too early to say anything about the advisory reforms until the implementation plan is finalised in February. The issue will be discussed and finalised during the ASC and perhaps the RACs could be updated then. ICES is entering into a

period of intense consultation on the advisory reforms and the RACs will be kept informed on developments.

4.8 Various ICES Expert groups in 2007 of interest to RACs

Various ICES Expert groups will be of special interest to the RACs because they are dealing with important management issue and because some are specifically dealing with interaction and cooperation with stakeholder, for instance the SGMAS dealing with structures and processes for development of long term management plans and their evaluation.

ICES has decided to establish a 'pilot project' in 2007. This project will open up four expert groups to invited stakeholders in order to improve transparency and cooperation. The chair emphasised the need to distinguish between the 'stakeholder participants' in the expert groups and 'stakeholder observers' in the advisory groups. In the expert groups stakeholder 'participants' are requested to contribute in personal capacity and with their expertise to the work and not as representatives for any organisation. At the ICES advisory meetings stakeholders are 'observers'. It is up to the RACs to send the right people to expert groups and advisory groups (i.e. clearly distinguish between the observer and participator role)

MCAP-MIRAC Doc. 9 gives the terms of reference for all these expert groups as well as some back ground information.

A key issue brought up by the RACs was the late invitations received for SGMAS. These invitations were issued on 21st December, not a good time of the year to invite input for a January meeting. ICES agreed to learn from this and give more notice for future invitations.

4.8.1 ICES Study Group on Management Strategies (SGMAS) and Workshop on Limit and Target Reference Points (WKREF)

Hans Lassen presented SGMAS and WKREF. He stressed that the groups are working on further improving the long-term management plans.

ICES invited the RACs as well as the EC to participate in the long-term management plan. All ICES reports are publicly available from our web site.

The aim is to review the outcome and implement the accepted and revised findings in 2007, but it was also emphasised that the work is a part of an ongoing process improving the scientific basis for long term management (with short term implications).

4.8.2 Workshop on Using Fishers to Sample Catches [WKUFS]

Henrik Sparholt presented this item. The meeting will take place in June 2007 in Norway. The issue here is that the scientific sampling of data is very costly, but if integrated as part of the commercial fishing operation it may be done much cheaper. It is linked to EU Commission Data Collection Regulation. It would be useful for ICES to have fishermen representatives available at the meeting. The link to the previous ICES NSCFP Study Group on Fishers Information (SGFI) was mentioned and there are several points from this group which could be further explored at the WKUFS meeting.

The group also discussed whether sampling together with fishermen is best dealt with at the national level or at an international level.

The important and fundamental point was made that data sampled by fishers do not follow standard scientific sampling standards, like random sampling design. This might cast some doubt on the quality of the data and its usefulness in subsequent analysis. Sometimes the objectivity of the fishers when sampling is questioned (they are aiming at economical goals and not scientific ones) and this will also be an important issue to tackle. There has in the past

been some mistrust between fishers and science but this is less now and cooperation on sampling issues can contribute further to eliminating this mistrust.

A key point from the RACs point of view is that the aim of the workshops is to work together. Stakeholders need to see how scientists collect, compile and uses the information. Fishers have a huge and valuable knowledge base which scientists must tap into and use in their assessments. The great challenge is how to incorporate this knowledge into the ICES assessment process.

In discussions, it was stated that discard sampling is not only for the purpose of improving stock assessment, but also for mitigation measures, like protecting specific areas where there are high amounts of juvenile fish (discards). Better discard data will support a number of broad management measures.

The importance of access to sampling sites was also discussed. It is vital that scientists get full industry co-operation on the access to sampling sites (i.e. auction halls and vessels).

4.8.3 Workshop on the Integration of Environmental Information into Fisheries Management Strategies and Advice [WKEFA]

Martin Pastoors presented this item.

This workshop will try to build a bridge between environmental scientists and fisheries advice. There will be two meetings, a small scoping meeting with only a few key people in February and the main workshop in June. Both will be in Copenhagen. The idea behind it is to integrate environment info into fisheries advice. You will get aspects coupled into the advice, but not in species advice.

The Pelagic RAC would like this to be open to stakeholders.

4.9 ICES Annual Science Conference (ASC) 2007

Adi Kellerman spoke briefly about the ASC 2007, including theme sessions, plenary sessions and special theme sessions.

ASC is a very central event in ICES - especially for the planning of the science and advisory work programmes. Attendance in recent years has been rising (750 participants in 2006). In 2007 the ASC will take place in Helsinki, next year in Canada.

Several theme sessions were mentioned which are of potential interest of the RACs.

At the 2005 ASC there was a theme session on "An Interactive Forum with the Fishing Industry". Some RACs would like to have a follow up on this at the ASC 2007. It was mentioned that the programme for the ASC is still not completely finalised and closed, but decisions will have to be taken before May-June 2007.

It was suggested to invite young fishermen to the ASC as part of the ICES training and education programme. ICES could invite one from each RAC. The RACs enthusiastically supported this. The point was made that ICES only has money for young scientists, i.e. not for non-scientists, so this would need to be further considered by ICES. RACs and EC could also contribute.

Some theme sessions are only relevant for specific RACs and it would be useful, if ICES informs the relevant RACs about which.

4.10 RAC requests which via EC have been dealt with by ICES -North Sea herring forecasts and ICES Evaluation of Fishers Survey for the North Sea

Henrik Sparholt presented this issue.

There have been two requests from the RACs to ICES in 2006. One about herring in the North Sea and one about an evaluation of a survey among fishermen about the fish stocks size development in the North Sea, conducted by the fisher's organisations. The RACs involved were the Pelagic RAC and the North Sea RAC.

Both requests went through the EC commission and formally ICES got the requests from the EC.

The requests and reply about the herring stocks is given in Doc 5. There was a quite elaborate and comprehensive letter from the Pelagic RAC. It asked questions about Blim for the North herring stock, questions about 4 poor year classes in a row for the stocks and what might be the causes, and some very specific further calculations of the traditional outlook table. ICES was able to answer the last one quite quickly (by some calculations done by the ICES Secretariat) but the two first ones were referred to work of ICES expert groups to take place this winter.

The request about the evaluation of the fisher's survey was dealt with by ICES through the setting up a workshop with 3 selected scientists (one social scientist from outside the ICES system) and the person who had done the survey data analysis (Chevonne Laurenson) and there was one representative from the RACs who had been involved himself in the process. A report has been completed and was presented as Doc 12. This evaluation report generally says the survey can be improved a lot by some listed action points and that if this is accepted that a group of experts should find out how best to implement the action points. The group did not make firm conclusions on whether it is worthwhile to continue the survey or not but the flavour of the report is that it probably would be recommendable to continue but in some improved form.

At the present meeting it was regarded as most important to discuss the structure and process of the work and probably not talk so much the content of the scientific advice given by ICES. However, it might also be considered that there is no obvious structure available in the cooperation between the RACs and ICES where direct feedback on the ICES advice itself and the way ICES has treated the requests, can take place. This should be explored in the reform of the advisory structures and processes.

It was mentioned that a new set-up for the advisory timing issue is discussed in the report. Surveys have to be carried out in March in order for the ICES working groups to include the results in their analysis. ICES should consult with the fishermen to identify gaps in survey coverage and timing. It was discussed how and when to take this forward – the WKUFS was mentioned as a potential way. The idea behind the questionnaire is that the fishermen's knowledge is different from that of the scientists and should be brought into the process. Furthermore, it would help the fishermen to get more involved in this important aspect of the advisory process.

4.11 Presentation from RACs on their research and advisory needs, including issues on which the RACs might request ICES advice, via the EC or directly

Each RAC presented its research and advisory needs.

North Sea RAC: They will have at least 5 groups working on long-term management of various groups of stocks. Before 14 February the RACs will have put together a list of research needs.

The issue was raised whether the North Sea RAC long-term groups and the ICES SGMAS and other relevant ICES groups are sufficiently coordinated. The groups are, however, slightly different. SGMAS will specifically look at the future work plan for cooperation between ICES and RACs. Joe Horwood mentioned that CEFAS has a commitment to contribute, but there is a danger that the scientist expert group becomes too narrow. It might be useful to have a broad group of experts to draw upon by the RACs. Again this point touches on the issue of co-ordination, planning and use of the limited scientific resource pool.

Pelagic RAC: Generally they would need ICES input to long-term management issues. Also to the North Sea herring recruitment issue will need support as will presentation of the advice and the need for additional work to be done, e.g. horse mackerel and the necessary funding probably at least partly from the Commission.

Baltic RAC: According to draft work programme. Long-term management plan for cod and salmon will be important issues with advice to the Commission in April as will the control conference in the spring. The TAC advice will be worked on in June.

North Western Waters RAC: As with the North Sea RAC long-term working groups will be conducted. There will also be a cod symposium. Following this symposium, the North Sea RAC and Mid-Western Waters RAC will develop papers on cod recovery, and ICES scientist participation would be useful.

4.12 Future issues where the RACs and ICES should work together

Hans Lassen presented this issue.

Key issue: Presentation and discussion of advice. Development of management plans – we need to bring perspectives to these issues such as management tools. It is obvious too that we need to discuss what each RAC can bring to the table.

Data handling issues: There is a wish to involve stakeholders in evaluating the data.

Problem with access to sampling: We must join forces to ensure that data is brought to the relevant tables. Lots of meetings are dealing with presentation and discussion of advice, but also feed-back is very important and we should work on this in the future.

Review procedure: A model by which reviews can be set up would be desirable. Reviews are done on a personal basis; we do not use organisations which would be better.

We must organize info requests from the RACs with the EC as some questions are very broad and require major resources to answer.

An issue we had not yet touched upon are the marine protective areas and general ecosystem approach to fisheries management. ICES –RAC needs to look upon this as well.

4.13 Discussion of practical arrangements for cooperation between RACs and ICES, including procedures for delivering and discussion of the ICES advice on fisheries management

For 2007, the presentation of the advice would continue to the RACs after the May and October ACFM meetings. Advice without going through the EC is not possible until a discussion with EFARO has taken place.

Planning and synchronising the ICES and RAC work is an important task in order to avoid duplication of work and to identify gaps. It is clear that in 2007 ICES and the RACs have a definite series of meetings that ICES and RACs are committed to. It was agreed to draw up a planning schedules (Table 1).

It was also agreed that the RACs and ICES secretariat should meet to draw up a list of other potential meetings that could involve ICES-RAC co-operation. However, the resource issues for this second table have not been agreed upon. For 2007, ICES agreed to contact individuals in various countries (e.g. ICES delegates) in order to draw up a list of 'potential scientific participants' at these RAC meetings (i.e. a first attempt at ICES-RAC resource mapping). This will be a tedious, but very important task. One of ICES key jobs is to co-ordinate.

The group also agreed that the schedules of ICES and the RACs should be available for future MCAP-MIRAC meetings to assist in planning and co-operation. However, the resource allocation issue remains a key issue to be resolved.

It was also suggested that ICES should participate in the RAC EC coordination meeting. STECF needs should probably also be taken into account. It is considered a significant logistical challenge, to coordinate their meetings so that ICES is able to come and present the advice for each RAC, when all 6 RACs are up and running. Management of the scientific resources is more needed now than ever.

The co-ordination of the limited pool of scientific resources between ICES, STECF and the RACs is a major debate that should take place as it is central to the many issues concerning work overload, duplication and poor co-operation.

**Table 3 A PROPOSED TIMETABLE TO SECURE SCIENCE SUPPORT FOR RACS
(Move to Table 2)**

Phase 1 – Setting Joint Priorities

July	Commission RAC Co-ordination meeting New presidency sets out work programme
September	Pelagic RAC and NWWRAC General Assemblies RACs set out strategic work plan
October	North Sea General Assembly RAC sets out strategic work plan Main framework for ICES meetings set out
November	Priority setting meeting 1 Agreement of joint priorities Identify gaps in support

STATEMENT OF UNDEDRTAKINGS TO SUPPORT PRIORITIES BY ICES AND EC
STATEMENT FROM RACS ON ADDITIONAL SCIENCE NEEDS

December **National Fisheries Administrations set funding priorities**

STATEMENT OF UNDERTAKING FROM FISHERIES ADMINISTRATIONS TO
SUPPORT ADDITIONAL SCIENCE NEEDS

Phase 2 - Finalise Practical Arrangements

January	MCAP-MIRAC dialogue meeting Commission RAC co-ordination meeting Agree details of work programme and timetable
February	ICES WORK PROGRAMME FINALISED STECF WORK PROGRAMME FINALISED RAC WORK PROGRAMME FINALISED

PUBLISH PLAN OF JOINT WORKING

It was agreed that ICES and the RACs should start the planning process. A simple scheme is presented in Table 3. A simple calendar with known meetings of critical mutual interests should be compiled (Table 1). We should avoid including second order priorities to avoid swamping the calendar. Alternatively, the entire list from the RACs could be compiled only including RAC priorities. A traffic light system could be envisaged to show clear priority meetings (Table 2).

InterRAC together with the ICES Secretary will produce the list of priority meetings (Table 2). It was agreed that a meeting is needed in mid-February. The RACs need some preparation for this, which they will do in early February. The list could also include research needs from the RACs to ICES. Then ICES would look at the list and point out the ones it can service. For 2007, ICES also agreed to contact individuals in various countries (e.g. ICES delegates) in order to draw up a list of 'potential scientific participants' at these RAC meetings (i.e. a first attempt at ICES-RAC resource mapping). This will be a tedious, but very important task. One of ICES key jobs is to co-ordinate.

4.14 Conclusion and action points

The draft report of this meeting will be distributed for comment to all participants as soon as possible. We will await comments from two RACs. In mid-February when the calendar developed by ICES and InterRAC is ready this calendar will be appended to the present report (Table 2). The Chair will draft Table 1.

Summary of key areas discussed during the meeting:

- 1) An update was given on the current status of each of the 7 RACs. They are all at different development stages and they all have different issues and priorities to deal with. The Pelagic, North Western Waters, North Sea and Baltic RACs are well established.
- 2) The South Western Waters RAC will be established later this year. The Distant Water RAC is expected to be established in March or April 2007 whereas the formation of the Mediterranean RAC is some time off.
- 3) Each RAC has a strategic plan/action plan in place. They are available on the web and can help ICES – RAC planning.
- 4) The EFARO letter, which deals with the issue of the limited pool of scientists ('resource allocation'), must be followed up. This should be put on the agenda of EFARO in 2007. RACs should write again to EFARO. This meeting will support a discussion on 'resource allocation' a very important issue at the heart of many problems. There is a need for ICES-RAC planning, gap analysis, resource allocation, defining clear roles and responsibilities as well as avoiding duplication.
- 5) RAC and new ICES-EC Memorandum of Understanding. The present annual advice is to be discussed with the RACs. We need to explore how we deal with the Data Issue. The RACs are not experts at analysis of data quality.
- 6) The RACs expressed their positive experiences with ICES in 2006, particularly on the advice side although there are still problems with providing scientists for the RAC working groups. They gave some positive examples of scientists input. Also, the Cod Symposium was viewed as a good initiative by the RACs as was the input received from ICES. It might be a suggestion for the RACs to deal with one key issue like this every year.
- 7) ICES' experience in dealing with the RACs in 2006 was good. There is great demand for participation at meetings, but it will not be possible for ICES to participate at all meetings. At present, the RACs' planning is done 'ad hoc' and the need to synchronise the ICES and RAC annual planning processes.
- 8) An update of the reform of ICES Strategy, Advice and Science in 2007 was given, including the likely implications of the new timing of advice (cf. ICES

pilot project in the North Sea 2007). Stakeholder consultations. ICES working with the Commission. The planning of the new ICES advisory structure will not impact on 2007.

- 9) ICES Annual Science Conference in 2007 will take place in Helsinki, Finland. There are several theme sessions of interest to the RACs. It might be an idea for ICES and the RACs to sponsor young fishers to participate in the Conference. An informal meeting at the Annual Science Conference with Science Committee Chairs might also be an idea. This would be an important forum to continue the 'science' dialogue.
- 10) Resource Allocation is at the heart of a number of key issues for ICES and the RACs. There is a limited pool of scientists from which we all draw on. For 2007, it was agreed to draw up a list of potential interaction meetings between ICES and RACs. ICES would then contact individuals (e.g. ICES delegates) from various countries in order to draw up a list of 'potential scientific participants' at the 2007 RAC meetings (i.e. a first attempt at ICES-RAC resource mapping). This will be a tedious, but very important task. One of ICES key jobs is to co-ordinate.

4.15 Timing and Venue for Next Meeting

There was general agreement that this is a useful forum for ICES and the RACs and that the meetings should continue to be held early in the year (January).

The Spanish Delegate offered to host next years MCAP- MICC meeting in Vigo Spain. An invitation would be issued shortly to ICES and the request would be considered by the General Secretary and the February Bureau meeting.

4.16 Closure

The chair reviewed the objectives of the meeting. He concluded that "we had continued our dialogue in a constructive way and are working on the lessons learned from 2006. We have clearly identified a number of practical ways to develop and evolve the relationship in 2007 ". He closed the meeting at 13:15, Tuesday 23 January 2007.

5 Action Points

- ICES will fund a young fisher from each RAC to go to the 2007 ASC.
- RACs are invited to come to the ASC for an informal meeting with ICES on current issues in marine science and to attend relevant theme sessions.
- ICES and RAC should map out agreed co-operative meetings for 2007 (Table 1).
- ICES will participate at Inter-RAC meeting in London in February 2007 to develop common calendar for the meetings of common relevance in 2007 (Table 1).
- For 2007, it was agreed to draw up a list of potential interaction meetings between ICES and RACs. ICES would then contact individuals (e.g. ICES delegates) from various countries in order to draw up a list of 'potential scientific participants' at the 2007 RAC meetings (i.e. a first attempt at ICES-RAC resource mapping). This will be a tedious, but very important task. One of ICES key jobs is to co-ordinate.
- ICES and RAC to look at ways of working together on: Long-term planning issues, feed-back on advice and incorporation of environmental issues into advice. This should be explored in the reform of the ICES advisory structures and processes.
- Presentation of advice by ICES to RACs will continue.
- ICES will actively participate at RAC cod meeting in March.
- ICES Pilot Project in 2007 - Further opening up ICES expert groups for RACs participation.

- Requests via the Commission will continue in 2007 as a possible path for RACs requests to ICES.
- ICES can respond to 'clarifications requests' from the RACs.
- Resource allocation is a key issue for ICES and the RACs. RACs will send a letter to EFARO to start discussions among national lab directors on the resource allocation.
- ICES will consider the invitation from Spain to host next years meeting in Vigo, Spain.

Annex 1: Participants for the RAC Dialogue Meeting 22-23 January 2007

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Annex 2: Agenda

RAC Dialogue Meeting

22 January, 14:30 - 23 January, 13:00 2007

Chair: Paul Connolly

Agenda

22 January, 14.30

- 1) Opening and welcome (Gerd Hubold).
- 2) Update on the Status of each RAC (Tour de table status, Doc 3).
- 3) Progress on follow up action points from the previous RAC ICES meeting in February 2006, including the outcome of the EFARO meeting May 2006. (Paul Connolly, Doc 4). The RACs made a letter to EFARO in spring 2006, but they have not got any reply yet.

Coffee break

- 4) The RAC issues in the new EC and ICES MOU, including resources within RACs and within ICES (Hans Lassen Doc 6).
- 5) The RACs experience in working with ICES during 2006 (round the table).
- 6) ICES' experience with participating in RAC meetings during 2006 (Martin Pastoors Doc 7), e.g. who are the most appropriate contact points between the RACs and ICES?
- 7) Reform of the ICES advisory structure and new timing of advice (Hans Lassen, Doc 8).
- 8) **ICES Study Group on Management Strategies (SGMAS) and Workshop on Limit and Target Reference Points (WKREF)** (Paul Connolly, Doc 9)
- 9) **Workshop on Using Fishers to Sample Catches [WKUFS]** Co-chairs: Kjell Nedreaas, Norway and Michael Pennington, UK) will be established and will take place in Bergen, Norway, during 5–6 June 2007 (Paul Connolly, Doc 9). A reference to the old SGFI initiative might be relevant here. Furthermore, also to be discussed could be the issue of whether this sampling together with fishermen is best dealt with at the national level or at an international level. And finally, the very important issue - can sampling by fishers really be trusted in science or will it always have a kind of dubious flavour around it?
- 10) **Workshop on the Integration of Environmental Information into Fisheries Management Strategies and Advice [WKEFA]** (Co-chairs: Manuel Barange, UK, and John Simmonds, UK), co-sponsored by ICES, EUR-OCEANS, and GLOBEC, will be established and will meet at ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen, Denmark, from 21–22 February 2007 (scoping meeting during WGRED and AMAWGC) and 18–22 June 2007. (Martin Pastoors, Doc 9)
- 11) **ICES Annual Science Conference (ASC) 2007**. What will be of special interest for the RACs (Adi Kellerman). E.g. at the 2005 ASC there was a theme session on "**An Interactive Forum with the Fishing Industry**". The InterRAC would like to have a follow up on this at the ASC 2007.

Close of first day (18:00).

Social event.

23 January, 09.00

- 12) RAC requests which via EC have been dealt with by ICES -North Sea herring forecasts and ICES Evaluation of Fishers Survey for the North Sea (Henrik Sparholt, Doc 5 and Doc 12).
- 13) Presentation from RACs on their research and advisory needs, including issues on which the RACs might request ICES advice on, via the EC or directly (Tour de table input by each RAC).
- 14) Future issues where the RACs and ICES should work together, e.g. development of management plans, data collection, and technical measures (Doc. 11 Hans Lassen).
- 15) Discussion of practical arrangements for cooperation between RACs and ICES, including procedures for delivering and discussion of the ICES advice on fisheries management.

Coffee break.

1. Conclusion and action points.

Closure (13.00).

Annex 3: The Present Status of Each RAC

Baltic Sea RAC

The Baltic Sea RAC has existed for almost a year. The 2nd General Assembly will be held on 28 February in Stockholm. The main outcome of the first year is a recommendation on the long term fisheries for cod stocks and the initiation of work towards a recommendation on the management of Baltic Salmon. The Baltic Sea RAC has also made recommendations on 2007 TACs for pelagic species. In 2007, the Baltic Sea RAC will further develop existing work that has been done during the first year and initiate new work as appropriate. According to the draft work programme for 2007 particular attention will be paid to long-term management of Baltic fish stocks and initiatives to reduce the illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. The Baltic Sea RAC will hold a conference on control and compliance from 28 to 29 March in Copenhagen. ICES will be invited to make a presentation at the conference.

Pelagic RAC

The Pelagic RAC was formally constituted in September of 2005 and has now been operational for 15 months. The Secretariat of the RAC is based in the Netherlands.

The Pelagic RAC grew out of the Northern Pelagic Working Group which had regular communication with the EU Commission. Since the formation of the RAC there has been an active involvement from the NGOs.

The Pelagic RAC differs from the other RACs in that it is species based as opposed to the geographical basis that applies to the other RACs. This reflects the migratory nature of the major pelagic species. As most of the major pelagic species are in a relatively good state the main emphasis of the work of the Pelagic RACs is in relation to long term management plans. The internal work of the RAC is divided between two working groups one of which deals with herring and mackerel whilst the other deals with blue whiting, horse mackerel and sprats.

Last year, the Pelagic RAC agreed with most of the scientific advice issued by ICES and although the situation in relation to North Sea herring gives some cause for concern it is believed that the root of the problem is not over fishing. Basically the long term objective of the Pelagic RAC is the maintenance of healthy pelagic stocks in the long term which the RAC believes can be best assured by the implementation of long term management plans. To that end the Pelagic RAC has been an active participant in the Study Group on Management Strategies.

North Sea RAC

The North Sea RAC is now into its third year of operation. We have, we believe achieved a great deal in our short existence. However we are like all new organisations still evolving.

This year we have changed the structure of our work plan. We now have only two Executive meetings per year, one in the middle of the year and one in conjunction with our General Assembly.

We have:

- 2 Working Groups – Demersal and Skagerak/Kattegat
- species Development Groups- looking at long term management plans for, (Saithe), (Cod, Haddock & Whiting), (Flat Fish), (Monkfish) and (Nephrops)
- 2 Development Groups looking at (Spatial Planning) & (Socio Economics)

We believed that this new structure would give best the value for our budget.

Our Strategic Plan and Work Plan were approved by the General and our now available on our web site.

We have been very fortunate in having funding from DEFRA for three of our working groups projects: Spatial planning, socio economic and long-term management.

The reports of the first phases of the projects are available on web site. We are now looking at alternative funding to continue the work.

North Western Waters RAC

The RAC is now into its second year. It covers a large and very complex area, and it has been necessary to form geographical working groups (West of Scotland, Celtic Sea, Irish Sea and Channel) which sometimes have different priorities. Issues dealt with reflect the areas covered to a significant degree. Advice has been produced on the following: Simplification of the CFP; gear marking; acoustic pingers; deepwater gillnets; Irish Sea enhanced data provision; western channel sole management plan; and the Trevoise closure. Additionally, detailed comments on the Commission TACs and quotas proposals for 2006 and 2007 have been prepared and submitted.

Work continues jointly with the NSRAC on long-term fisheries objectives and MSY. In 2007, a major part of the RACs work will be devoted to developing positions on MSY. There is a general wish across all working groups to improve the quality of stock assessments, however, it is expected that crab effort management and scallop conservation and TCMs will also form part of the future workload. Furthermore, together with NSRAC, the NWWRAC is organising cod recovery symposium in March 2007 in preparation for developing advice as part of the review of the cod recovery plan.

Annex 5: Table 2**Timetable for RAC meetings in 2007 where ICES input is wanted**

Date	Meeting	Venue	Additional comments
23 January	BS RAC Demersal WG	Warsaw	
24 January	Baltic ExCom	Warsaw	
25-26 January	NWW RAC WGs 1, 2, 3, 4	Bilbao	
5 February	NSRAC Working Group on Demersal Stocks & Focus Group on Spatial Planning	London	
5 February	Focus Group on TCM and effort in Cod Fisheries	London	
6 February	Pelagic Workshop on horse mackerel management	Edinburgh	
7 February	Pelagic WG meetings	Edinburgh	
21 February	Pelagic ExCom	Amsterdam	
27 February	BRAC Working Group on Salmon and Sea Trout	Stockholm	
28 February	BRAC General Assembly	Stockholm	
1 March	BRAC Executive Committee	Stockholm	
9-10 March	NSRAC and NWWRAC Cod Recovery Symposium	Scotland	
12 March	MRAC Preparatory Meeting	Italy	
14-15 March	BRAC Demersal Working Group meeting	Copenhagen (ICES)	Scientific input required
28-29 March	Conference on Control and Compliance	Copenhagen	
End March/early April	NWWRAC Executive Committee	France	
April	BRAC Demersal Working Group Control and Compliance- Date not decided		Scientific input required
April	NSRAC Executive Committee - Date not available	Austria	
April	SWWRAC General Assembly – Date not decided	France	
10 April	NSRAC/NWWRAC meeting on LTM –Saithe	Copenhagen	Scientific input required
11 April	NSRAC Demersal Working Group	Copenhagen	Scientific input required for cod, haddock and whiting (CEFAS/ICES)
17 April	NWWRAC Executive Committee	France	
May/June	BRAC Joint Demersal, Pelagic and Salmon/Sea trout Working Group meeting (Management of Fisheries) -Date not decided		Scientific input required
May/June	BRAC Executive Committee Meeting -Date not decided		
14 May	PRAC Working Groups I and II	Amsterdam	Scientific input required for herring, mackerel, blue whiting, horse mackerel
8 June	NSRAC/NWWRAC meeting on LTM - Monkfish	Paris	Scientific input required
11 June	Inter-RAC round table on Control	Vienna	

Date	Meeting	Venue	Additional comments
12-13 June	NWWRAC Working Groups	Northern Ireland	Scientific input requested. Stock advice- Chairs of Working Groups on Northern And southern Shelf Demersal Stocks- Hake, Meg and Monkfish
14-15 June	NSRAC Executive Committee	Vienna	Scientific input required
18 June	PRAC Working Groups I and II	Amsterdam	Scientific input required: ACFM person + herring, mackerel, blue whiting, horse mackerel
August/September	BRAC Salmon Sea Trout Working Group Long-Term Management- Date not decided		Scientific input probably required
August/September	BRAC Demersal Working Group- Date not decided		Scientific input probably required
August/September	BRAC Pelagic Working Group - Date not decided		Scientific input probably required
August/September	BRAC Executive Committee- Date not decided		
27-28 September	NWWRAC General Assembly and Executive Committee 27th and 28th	Ireland	
15 October	NSRAC General Assembly	Denmark	ICES input requested
16 October	NSRAC Executive Committee	Denmark	ICES input requested
17-18 October	NWWRAC Working Groups	Netherlands	Scientific input requested - Stock Advice - Chair of ACFM and Working Group on Southern Shelf Demersal Stocks
5 November	PRAC Working Groups I and II	Amsterdam	Scientific input required: ACFM person + herring, mackerel, blue whiting, horse mackerel
12 November	NWWRAC Executive Committee	Brussels	