



# International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

**SEAS-ERA Atlantic Science Consultative  
Workshop, Ostend, Belgium, 28-29/02/2012**

**Comments by ICES**

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## *General comments on the science plan (1/2)*

The plan lacks a bottom up approach for the development of science priorities; It is based on national priorities set by funding agencies (top down)

The plan gives the impression of a “final”, polished document and does not reflect genuine interest to gather stakeholders’ views; moreover, it is not clear how this is to be accomplished

ICES view of the plan is critical albeit constructive. The envisaged “roadmap” is not transparent – will there be a series of workshops? This should have been accomplished during the drafting phase

Inconsistencies: mixture of political and scientific research needs, basic and applied research, themes vs. research objectives (e.g., p. 16, 17). For instance, why is the Deep Ocean more important than the shallow seas?



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### *General comments on the science plan (2/2)*

All-inclusive lists of topics which can accommodate a broad range of activities but lacks the specific research needs; limiting it to the priorities relevant to the SeasEra RFO's the plan will miss out the new and innovative goals and topics

Why is maritime/marine research not differentiated? Science agenda of these communities are inspired by different drivers and lumping them will lead to skewed research needs (which indeed may be the case in the plan)

Regrettably there is very limited mention of ICES's activities in general although its remits cover the entire North Atlantic bordering EU and non-EU member states, and has a science plan and implementation structure.

In particular, one of the envisaged actions (the climate change report card) duplicates a recurrent ICES product: The Annual Ocean Climate Report (IROC) which provides the whole picture for the North Atlantic Sea Basin



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### *Comments specific to Marine Bioresources and capture fisheries (1/2)*

Confusion of terms: primary productivity refers to phytoplankton, harvesting used synonymously with fishing, productivity as proxy for growth and recruitment?

“Major challenges” fail to identify emerging issues, instead the “usual suspects” are mentioned such as supply of raw material (for what?), overfishing (of stocks or regional? MSY vs. TAC’s?), impacts of climate change (on what?), food quality and security (what’s the challenge?)

There is no mention of linkages between capture fisheries and aquaculture, reducing fleet capacities, transfer of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management to other human activities, and integrated assessments

Regrettably again, there is no reference made to ICES being the prime science organization and source for providing non-political, science-based advice on fisheries and the environment in the North Atlantic Sea Basin



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### *Comments specific to Marine Bioresources and capture fisheries (2/2)*

Again, the research priorities listed on page 25, are one and all objectives of ICES Working Groups even though (or because?) reference is made to the CFP (e.g., WGECO, WGMHM, PGCCDBS, WGFTFB, WGMME, WGMARS), and this will thus lead to parallel working structures and duplication

Indicative Research issues for Sea (capture) Fisheries are unspecific and/or lack major topics (see above)

How do you envisage a plan of this nature, put together from the top down, to operate, when there are other strategic science plans developed with broader consultation and from the bottom up (e.g. ICES science Plan)?

How will this plan operate alongside other ERA-net plans (e.g. Marifish follow-up and extension), and alongside JPI?