



ICES

International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea

CIEM

Conseil International pour
l'Exploration de la Mer

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

ICES charts the course towards integrated understanding of marine ecosystems

The **International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)** will be taking a lead role in advancing the integrated scientific understanding of marine ecosystems and in providing advice on the sustainable use and protection of these ecosystems. These commitments are documented in the new Strategic Plan, charting the course for ICES for the next five years 2014–2018.

“ICES is well known for providing evidence-based advice on fishery management. However, there is a need for science and advice to go beyond traditional assessments of the status of fish stocks. The new ICES Strategic Plan commits to building a foundation of science that depends on improving our understanding of marine ecosystems, and producing integrated advice needed by decision-makers that is based on timely and accurate data and information,” said Paul Connolly, the ICES President.

The Strategic Plan was endorsed at the annual ICES Council meeting held in Copenhagen this week. The plan will be implemented through four coordinated action plans related to Science, Advice, Data and Information, and the ICES Secretariat, all of which will be finalized in February 2014.

The ICES Council of Delegates, representing the organization’s 20 member countries, decided to further support the transition towards integrated ecosystem understanding by establishing a special Science Fund. A request for research proposals to be supported by this fund will be announced next month, and further information will soon be made available on the ICES website.

The delegates also agreed to forward a letter to the European Marine Directors outlining how ICES can contribute to the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (EU MSFD). ICES offers an efficient and responsive intergovernmental process that can generate routine science-based environmental advice essential for the successful implementation of the EU MSFD.

The EU MSFD, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB), and the World Summit on Sustainable Development are interrelated legal frameworks that require an integrated understanding of marine ecosystems to support an ecosystem-based approach to ocean management.

The Council has also elected three new committee Chairs for a 3-year term starting on 1 January 2014: Yvonne Walther (Sweden) for the ICES Science Committee (SCICOM), Eskild Kirkegaard (Denmark) the ICES Advisory Committee (ACOM), and, as of 1 November, Pierre Petitgas (France) the ICES Awards Committee.

The Council is the principal decision and policy-making body of ICES, and is led by the President, Dr. Paul Connolly. For more information, visit the [ICES website](#).

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Note to editors

The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) coordinates and promotes marine research in the North Atlantic Ocean, the North Sea, and the Baltic Sea. ICES advises competent authorities (international commissions and governments) on marine policy and management issues related to the impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems and the management of the exploitation of living marine resources. ICES is working towards integrated ecosystem assessments and integrated advice, delivered at the regional seas level. For more information, visit www.ices.dk.

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