

Dr. Mark Dickey-Collas

Chair of Advisory Committee
International Council Exploration of the Sea
H.C. Andersens Boulevard 44-46, DK 1553
Copenhagen V,
DENMARK

Cc to:

Charlina Vitcheva, Pascale Colson, MARE AC Team (DG MARE, European Commission)

Date: 25 October 2022

PelAC reference: 2223PAC12

Subject: Presentation ICES advice at Pelagic AC meetings

Dear Dr. Dickey-Collas,

For the first time since the coronavirus crisis, the Pelagic AC (PelAC) has organised in-person meetings in July and October of this year in the Netherlands. As an exception to the general policy, the PelAC has facilitated the possibility for remote participation by ICES to these meetings, to accommodate the travel policy that ICES has in place.

We regret to inform you that on both occasions, the experience with the remote connection of the ICES representative, delivering key input to our meeting agenda's, was highly unsatisfactory. At both meetings simultaneous translation was made impossible by the quality of the connection, thereby preventing members requiring interpretation from following the presentation. At the October meeting, the quality of the sound was so poor that the presentation was virtually inaudible to all members present in the meeting. As a result, the subsequent discussion on the advice content did not meet the level the PelAC is used to over the years of engaging with ICES at these occasions. Further, we wish to note that the hybrid facilities in place did not pose any such obstacles to other speakers contributing to the meetings remotely.

The PelAC would like to underline its appreciation for ICES's efforts throughout the years for delivering key presentations on the advice for the stocks under its remit, which forms an essential basis for the subsequent formulation of PelAC recommendations to the European Commission and Member States. However, based on these last two experiences the PelAC cannot over-emphasize its conviction that in-person participation to our meetings by ICES would strongly benefit the interaction between ICES and stakeholders, as well as the quality of the discussion.

Moving forward, the PelAC foresees two sets of in-person meetings each year (in July and October) to which ICES is invited to present relevant stock advice. In light of the above, the PelAC kindly reiterates its request to ICES to review its travel policy and enable the physical attendance of designated ICES representatives to both but **at least one** of these key meetings on an annual basis.

We thank you in advance for your kind consideration of our request, and we look forward to your response.

Kind regards,





Sean O'Donoghue

Sean O'Donoghue
Pelagic AC Chairman

