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Our Ref: C.24.b/HL/MB/MO

17 June 2009

Concerning request for a management strategy for Iceland cod and ICES evaluation

Dear Jon Bjarnason,

We thank you for your letter dated 22 May 2009 in which you ask ICES to evaluate the management plan for Icelandic cod which has been adopted for the next five fishing years starting by the 2009/2010 fishing season.

It has been discussed how this request can best be handled and at the earliest convenience. For ICES to provide an evaluation the first step is that the Icelandic scientists produce an extensive working document describing the management plan, presenting appropriate simulations and the software used. I have been informed that such a working document can at the earliest be presented by October. Thereafter, it is proposed in November to set up a meeting including some independent scientists to review the document and specify additional analyses as appropriate to be presented by the Icelandic scientists. When this technical background is completed, the next step is the usual ICES advisory process including adoption of the evaluation by the Advisory Committee. ICES should be able to answer Iceland in December 2009.

It is important for the process to have communication between the Icelandic scientists and the reviewers throughout the process in order to ensure that there is agreement on the analyses and simulations that are required from the beginning. This suggests that a shadow group should be established with some reviewers and some central placed Icelandic scientists to give input to the process. Through this process it is likely that additional analyses required after the November meeting will be limited.

With an evaluation meeting in November, the advice from ICES can be delivered in December.

I estimate that the costs involved in this process with a meeting of the shadow group in August/September and a meeting of the review group in November and including the marginal administrative costs for the Secretariat will amount to at most 15 000 Euro.

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I am looking forward to your comments on this proposed procedure. ICES will start the process as soon as we have your approval. If you agree to this procedure ICES will start to contact potential reviewers for the shadow group and start the dialogue with the Icelandic experts.

Many thanks in advance.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hans Lassen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hans Lassen
Head of Advisory Programme

Cc Mike Sissenwine, Carl O'Brien, Manuela Azevedo,
Chair NWWG (Gudmundur Thordarson), Einar Hjorleifsson
Gerd Hubold