

# PICES Press



Newsletter of the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (Published semi-annually)



## Taking stock and looking to the future – note from former PICES Chairman

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This short note gives me an opportunity to express my personal perspective on PICES, its evolution and suggested future directions. The views expressed are entirely my own. They are offered as suggestions for the PICES community.

### *The Early Years, 1992-96*

PICES was established in 1992 as an intergovernmental organization with three main purposes:

- To promote and coordinate marine science in the northern North Pacific and adjacent seas, particularly north of 30 degrees north;
- To advance scientific knowledge about the ocean environment, global weather and climate change, living resources and their ecosystems, and the impacts of human activities on them;
- To promote the collection and rapid exchange of scientific information on these issues.

These purposes have been furthered by Scientific Committees, Annual Meetings, workshops, and activities of the Secretariat.

PICES has established a series of Working Groups of finite duration to advance knowledge and understanding of major issues. We have also convened workshops and symposia on topics of interest.

PICES established an interdisciplinary program, the PICES-GLOBEC International Program on Climate Change and Carrying Capacity (CCCC), which focuses on the effects of climate variation on marine ecosystems. As national GLOBEC programs move from planning to field work, PICES CCCC has moved from planning to implementation.

Annual Meetings have played a key role in promoting marine science and bringing together marine scientists from member countries. Participation in Annual Meetings has increased steadily as PICES has become better known in the scientific community.

The Technical Committee on Data Exchange (TCODE) has provided an inventory of data series relevant to PICES work.

The Secretariat has set up and maintained a web page, which promotes PICES and provides various information relevant to PICES.

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## *The past two years*

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The past two years have seen continued growth of PICES, both in terms of numbers of participating scientists and broadening of subject areas. The number of participants has risen more than 20% since PICES V. In 1998, PICES has hosted meetings of the North Pacific Task Team of JGOFS (The Joint Global Ocean Flux Study) and CREAMS II, (an oceanography program in East Asian marginal seas) in conjunction with the Annual Meeting. These specialized meetings have brought new scientists into the PICES community and are helping to involve PICES in broader studies of the ocean in the world climate system.

The content of the PICES web page has grown dramatically over the past two years. Our web site is an excellent source of news on upcoming scientific meetings, thanks to the work of Dr. Alexander Bychkov. Mr. Robin Brown also deserves thanks for incorporating TCODE's long-term data series inventory into the web page.

The 1997-98 El Niño gave PICES scientists an opportunity to study the effects of an extreme climate anomaly on the North Pacific ecosystem. The 1998 Science Board Symposium showed many dramatic observations and has raised interest in a more comprehensive symposium to be held in the year 2000, with co-sponsorship by other interested organizations.

PICES extended its cooperative links with other organizations in 1998. MOUs were signed with ICES, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, and NPAFC, the North Pacific Anadromous Fisheries Commission.

## *Next Steps*

PICES has led the way in revealing the linkages between North Pacific climate variations and changing productivity and composition of fish communities. Further progress requires better understanding and prediction of the climate system. The climate of the North Pacific is part of the world climate system. Two international climate science programs are particularly relevant to PICES. CLIVAR (Climate Variability and Predictability Program) aims to advance knowledge and predictability of this system and GCOS, the Global Climate Observing System aims to observe ocean and terrestrial climate.

Within GCOS is found GOOS, the Global Ocean Observing System. GOOS has some regional programs now, especially NEAR GOOS and EUROGOOS, and more will likely follow. PICES can, and should, play an active role in developing and coordinating a North Pacific GOOS.

CLIVAR has major ocean components. The process studies are focussed mainly on the tropical oceans and teleconnections from them. CLIVAR modeling, however, aims at better understanding and predictability globally. PICES could provide a forum at Annual Meetings to present results of CLIVAR studies and coordinate CLIVAR research programs in the North Pacific.

PICES needs to give more emphasis to communicating its research. Most of the papers presented at Annual Meetings have very limited outside circulation. The new Publications Committee will address this issue. One attractive possibility would be to publish an electronic journal through the PICES web page.

PICES is improving its connections with other international organizations. The co-sponsorship of the major symposium on interdecadal climate variability planned for the year 2000 is a milestone. If possible, scheduling PICES and NPAFC meetings to permit more scientists to attend both would benefit both organizations.

## *Criteria for continued success*

- A forum is a place to gather and debate. PICES should be the major forum for marine science in the North Pacific. If PICES continues to choose cutting edge topics for annual meetings, these meetings will interest many scientists and ensure that large numbers of scientists attend.
- Work on important issues will be supported financially. PICES should be sensitive to the needs and priorities of its member governments.
- Science needs constant renewal to remain vigorous. PICES should continue to encourage the participation of young scientists in its meetings and committee work.
- Communicate! The work of PICES is exciting and interesting. PICES should systematically promote its work and marine science in general to government policy makers and the broader scientific community.

In closing, I wish to thank all those who worked to further PICES over the past two years. Special thanks to Dr. Doug McKone and the PICES Secretariat, Dr. Makoto Kashiwai and other scientific Chairmen, and national delegates who have supported me.