

2025 September Intersessional Governing Council Meeting Report and Decisions

Governing Council (hereafter GC or Council) met online from 16:00-17:30 on September 17, 2025 (PDT) under the Chairmanship of Tetsuo Fujii.

No Decisions were taken by Council at this meeting. This report summarizes discussion and follow-up Actions needed (highlighted below).

All member countries were represented at the meeting (IGC Endnote 1).

The agenda was adopted (IGC Endnote 2).

IGC Agenda Item 3. Report from SG-ERRR

The Chair of the Study Group on the External Review Report Recommendations, Andrew Thomson, presented the results of the SG's meeting on August 27 regarding the four items below.

- a) Revised Mission Statement. The current draft was discussed:

PICES conducts and coordinates marine research and the exchange of knowledge across the North Pacific Ocean to provide member states with information on the current and future conditions of the ocean environment, including the interactions between atmospheric and oceanic processes, marine ecosystems, and human dimensions. PICES brings together academic and government researchers, and organizations responsible for the protection and sustainability of the North Pacific Ocean, to inform management decisions and actions.

Most discussion centred around the final sentence. It was felt there was a need to be broader than “management decisions and actions” but the term “stakeholder” is also not the best substitute, it has different meanings in member countries. Additionally, PICES brings together more than just government researchers so a broader description needs to be found for that part of the sentence. The Executive Secretary (ES) agreed to provide an updated statement considering these points for members to review. The goal is to present the draft at the PICES-2025 Town Hall. Council will be open to feedback there, in that if a participant has strong feelings, they can share them with their GC member to bring to Council and Council intends to adopt the finalized Mission Statement at PICES-2025.

Action

A revised Mission Statement is below, taking into account discussion (altered text is in red). GC members to review and provide comments by email to the ES.

*PICES conducts and coordinates marine research and the exchange of knowledge across the North Pacific Ocean to provide member states with information on the current and future conditions of the ocean environment, including the interactions between atmospheric and oceanic processes, marine ecosystems, and human dimensions. PICES brings together **academic researchers, government scientists and managers**, and organizations responsible for the protection and sustainability of the North Pacific Ocean, to inform ~~management~~ decisions and actions.*

- b) The Roadmap was reviewed and discussed. The ES clarified that there is a deliberate gap between the ending of the current ISP (FUTURE) and the start of the next one to allow for the necessary review and planning (likely to be done by a Study Group, once FUTURE has ended). The Roadmap will also be updated as proposed actions become confirmed (for now, the WG on revising the Strategic Plan is proposed but not endorsed, for example).
- c) The proposal template for a WG to revise the Strategic Plan (and associated activities) was reviewed. The WG proposal will go to Science Board for their review at PICES-2025, and it will come to GC again then, with their recommendations.

Action

GC members to provide any recommended WG members to the ES who will forward the proposal to SB. (Members can also be added following the WGs establishment.)

- d) The PICES-2025 plenary Townhall plans were reviewed. The SB Chair, Sukyung Kang, had confirmed her willingness to be a Panel member since the briefing book went out.

Action

The ES will email the Panellists and provide materials and offer Secretariat support as needed.

IGC Agenda Item 4. Update on Plans for PICES-2025

- a) The ES gave an update on the current number of registrants and outlined the plan for the GC meeting. There is flexibility on the timing of GC's start time on Day 2, depending on the time zone of any remote GC members. The ES encouraged members to send in delegation information as soon as possible to assist with logistics.
- b) The ES shared a draft "Annual Meeting Briefing Note" prepared by the Communications Officer. The draft is based on activities at last year's meeting, just as an idea of what the content could be, but the first such Briefing Note to be released would be about PICES-2025. The Secretariat plans to prepare this Briefing Note during the week of PICES-2025 and to have a draft available for GC to review at its meeting. After any required revision, the Briefing Note could then be circulated very shortly after the conclusion of PICES-2025. Discussion was positive about this idea, and there was a request that the draft be shared for review. The ES asked that any thoughts on what the highlights could focus on for the upcoming meeting would be appreciated, to help with preparation (examples might be the Townhall, a specific workshop/session related to the meeting theme, observer participation etc).

Action

The Executive Secretary to email the draft to Council (it is included in the email with this draft report). Please provide any feedback regarding layout, potential content, or participants to interview, to the ES as soon as possible.

IGC Agenda Item 5. Draft letter for GC to share with governments

Council discussed the draft letter provided. Points raised were that it would be useful to include the Mission Statement (once finalized) to provide more information on the Organization's purpose and to point to where products or an overview can be found (such as a link to the website). A sentence should be added inviting the addition of the country's own priorities if not in the examples provided, and to include the ISP. Members should feel free to edit the list of framing topics, removing any that are not needed or re-ordering them.

The timeline was also discussed. Responses to the letter will be essential information for the WG on the Strategic Plan revision, which we expect to confirm at PICES-2025 but which will take some additional time to set-up with members. Given the need to include the new Mission statement when adopted, then this letter could also be finalized at PICES-2025 with the goal of sending it out in time to receive responses in early spring.

As a post-meeting note, the ES would like to emphasise that this letter can be sent by GC delegates to their own national government departments or by the ES/PICES Chair on behalf of any delegation (provided a list of names and contact information to send it to is provided). The goal is to acquire the information on what PICES can do to help each country, and we can be flexible in the mechanism to achieve that, depending on each delegation's preference.

Action

The ES will revise the draft based on the discussions and circulate (it is included in the email with this draft report). Please send any further comments/edits to the ES, or bring them to PICES-2025 when this item will be re-visited.

IGC Agenda Item 6. Any Other Business

Japan looked forwards to welcoming everyone in Yokohama for PICES-2025 in November.

GC Endnote 1**Delegation list of participants for the September 2025 Intersessional Governing Council meeting**

<u>Canada</u> Andrew Thomson (PICES Vice-Chair) Bernard Vigneault	<u>Russian Federation</u> Vladimir Radchenko (Alternate)
<u>Japan</u> Takashi Kamaishi Fumie Maruyama Yutaka Hiroe (Advisor, F&A member) Sayaka Minamikawa (Advisor)	<u>USA</u> Jack Barth Evan Howell Hannah Lachance (Advisor)
<u>People's Republic of China</u> Fangli Qiao Zheng Rui (Alternate)	<u>Other</u> Tetsuo Fujii (PICES Chair) Enrique Curchitser (PICES Past-Chair) Sonia Batten (Executive Secretary)
<u>Republic of Korea</u> Se-Jong Ju Joongho Moon (Advisor) Minkyong Kim (Advisor)	

GC Endnote 2**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Adoption of agenda and meeting procedures
3. Report from SG-ERRR
 - a. Revised Mission Statement
 - b. Revised Roadmap
 - c. Revised WG proposal
 - d. Townhall at PICES-2025
4. Update on plans for PICES-2025
 - a. Overview of meeting structure and attendees
 - b. Discussion and feedback on a draft PICES-2025 briefing note
5. Draft letter for GC to share with governments according to GC Decision 2024/A/10/iii
6. Any Other Business