

THE HAGUE INTERNATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE
EXPLORATION OF THE SEAS**



**THIMUN 2027
PARTICIPANT GUIDE**

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ICES Committee at a Glance

A specialised forum for marine science, international cooperation, and evidence-based policy recommendations.

ISSUE 1	ISSUE 2	ISSUE 3
Controlling Climate Change Impacts on Marine Ecosystems	Measures to Protect Submarine Cultural Artefacts	Measures to Protect Submarine Infrastructure

What ICES does

- Provides scientific knowledge and advice concerning the marine environment and the sustainable use of marine resources.
- Brings together scientific expertise and international cooperation to improve understanding of the oceans and support decision-making.

What ICES does not do

The committee does not function as an international legislature or court and cannot enforce laws, impose criminal penalties, or exercise powers belonging to national governments or other international bodies.

The guiding question

What advice could ICES provide to governments and relevant organisations to help address these challenges?

1. Introduction

The ICES committee at THIMUN examines three contemporary challenges affecting the marine environment:

The purpose of the committee is to enable delegates to investigate these issues, represent the interests and policies of their assigned delegation, and cooperate with other delegates to develop practical and scientifically informed policy recommendations, as a joint communiqué.

Delegates should approach the committee not simply as politicians, but as representatives participating in an international marine-scientific advisory process.

2. The Role of the Delegate

The delegate represents the position and interests of the assigned country. Delegates should remain consistent with the policies with their delegation's core interests while listening to others, responding to arguments, and finding consensus. A delegate should therefore be able to answer five key questions:

What is the position of my delegation?

What are its interests, concerns, and existing policies?

What does the scientific evidence show?

What are the relevant facts, risks, and uncertainties?

What solution does my delegation propose and what practical measures could address the problem?

3. Preparation for the Conference

Good preparation is essential to successful participation in the ICES committee.

Research should include:

The Delegation

- geographical location.
- marine ecosystems.
- fisheries and marine industries.
- underwater cultural heritage.
- submarine infrastructure.
- existing marine policies.
- climate-related concerns.
- relevant scientific institutions.

The Issues

Delegates should understand:

- the scientific background.
- the principal challenges.
- existing measures.
- relevant stakeholders.
- viable solutions.
- advantages and disadvantages of proposed policies.

4. Developing a Policy

Before the conference, delegates should develop a clear policy for each agenda item.

A useful policy should contain:

A. The Problem

What is the main issue facing the marine environment?

B. The Position

How does the delegation view the problem?

C. Existing Measures

What is already being done?

D. Proposed Solutions

What additional measures could be taken?

E. International Cooperation

What could other countries or organisations do together?

Delegates should prepare several viable solutions rather than relying on a single proposal. This will provide greater flexibility during lobbying and negotiation.

5. Opening Statements

Delegates may be given the opportunity to make an opening statement at the beginning of the committee.

The opening statement should introduce the delegation's general position and establish its priorities.

A strong opening statement should:

- Identify the main concern.
- Demonstrate understanding of the issue.
- Present one or two key priorities.

Delegates should avoid attempting to explain every detail of their policy in the opening statement.

The purpose of an opening statement is to establish a clear starting position for the debate.

6. Lobbying, Negotiation and Working with Other Delegations

Lobbying is an essential part of the THIMUN experience.

Delegates should use lobbying periods to discuss their ideas with other delegations and develop common proposals.

During lobbying, delegates should:

- Present their main ideas.
- Listen to the proposals of others.
- Identify areas of agreement.
- Combine similar ideas.
- Negotiate differences.
- Develop joint recommendations.

Delegates should seek broad support while remaining consistent with their delegation's essential interests.

Delegates should distinguish between:

Core Interests - Issues on which the delegation cannot easily compromise.

Negotiable Interests - Issues on which wording or implementation may be changed.

Common Interests - Issues on which several delegations can cooperate.

Identifying these distinctions before the conference will help delegates negotiate effectively.

7. Debate

During formal debate, delegates should present arguments clearly and concisely.

A good contribution should contain:

Position → Evidence → Explanation → Proposed Action

For example: A delegation may identify the increasing vulnerability of a marine ecosystem, refer to scientific evidence demonstrating the risk, explain why existing measures are insufficient, and propose a specific monitoring or management measure.

Delegates should respond to other speakers rather than simply repeat their own position. Disagreement should remain constructive and focused on the issue.

8. Drafting Policy Recommendations

The principal outcome of the ICES committee will be a Joint Communiqué.

Recommendations should be practical, and evidence based.

A recommendation should make clear:

- What should be done.
- Who should undertake the action.
- How it should be implemented.
- Why the measure is necessary.

For example:

Recommends that relevant maritime and scientific authorities establish coordinated monitoring programmes for vulnerable submarine infrastructure corridors, using seabed mapping and environmental data to identify potential risks and facilitate preventative action.

The recommendation is stronger because it identifies an action, the relevant actors, the method, and the purpose.

Delegates should avoid vague recommendations such as:

“Encourages countries to protect the oceans.”

Such statements do not provide sufficient guidance for implementation.

9. Amendments

During the drafting process, delegates may propose amendments to recommendations.

An amendment should improve the proposal by:

- Clarifying its meaning.
- Improving scientific accuracy.
- Making implementation more realistic.
- Addressing concerns raised by another delegation.
- Removing unnecessary provisions.
- Adding appropriate safeguards.

Delegates should consider amendments carefully and avoid rejecting proposals simply because they originated from another delegation.

10. Voting and Adoption

The committee should seek consensus wherever possible.

However, where consensus cannot be achieved, proposals may be put to a vote according to the applicable rules of procedure.

Delegates should vote according to the interests and policies of their assigned delegation while considering the scientific arguments presented during debate.

Delegates should consider whether recommendations are scientifically sound and achievable, not only whether they have political support.

11. Research and Sources

Delegates are expected to conduct independent research before the conference.

Priority should be given to reliable sources, including:

- ICES publications and scientific advice.

- universities and research institutions.
- national marine research agencies.
- international organisations.
- government publications.
- recognised scientific databases.

Delegates should verify statistics and other factual claims before using them in debate.

Scientific uncertainty should be acknowledged where appropriate. Delegates should never invent sources, statistics, or scientific findings.

12. Plagiarism and Originality

Delegates are expected to develop their own arguments and recommendations.

Ideas and information taken from external sources should be appropriately acknowledged.

Delegates should develop their own arguments and recommendations rather than copying existing resolutions, reports, or other delegates' work.

13. What Makes a Successful Delegate?

The most effective delegate is not necessarily the delegate who speaks the most. Effective delegates research thoroughly, argue clearly, negotiate constructively, and contribute meaningfully to the final recommendations.

14. Final Preparation Checklist

Before the conference, delegates should be able to answer the following:

My Delegation

- ☐ What are my delegation's main marine interests?
- ☐ What marine challenges does it face?
- ☐ What policies does it currently support?
- ☐ What are its priorities regarding each agenda item?

Committee Skills

- ☐ Can I explain my delegation's position clearly?
- ☐ Can I support my arguments with reliable evidence?
- ☐ Can I identify potential allies?
- ☐ Can I compromise without abandoning my core interests?
- ☐ Can I contribute a practical policy recommendation?

15. Conclusion

The ICES committee provides delegates with an opportunity to approach international marine challenges through scientific research, international cooperation, and policy development.

Delegates should remember that the purpose of the committee is not simply to identify problems but to develop credible solutions.

Final recommendations should reflect the committee's collective effort and demonstrate how marine science can contribute to addressing the three agenda issues.