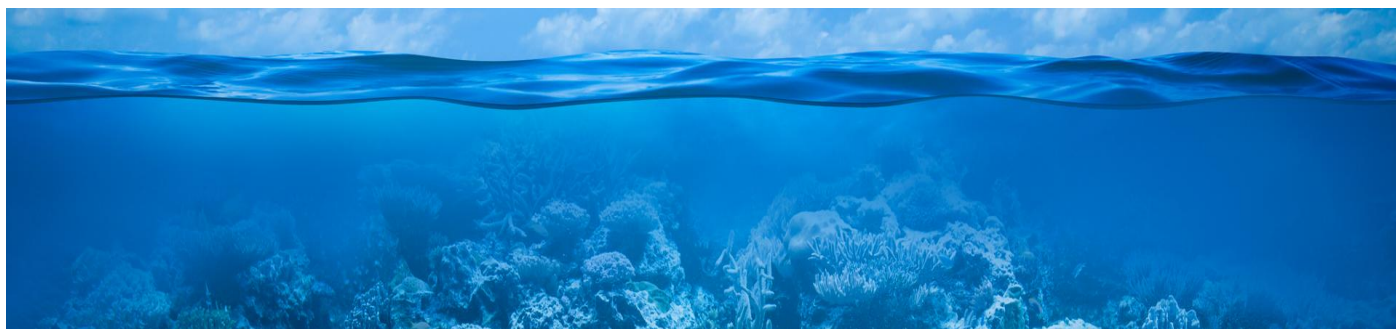


FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2015



European Parliament

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NGOs

Events

June is finished and with it comes the end of the Latvian Presidency and the start of the Luxembourgish one.

Quite a turn of events took place this month as the trilogues between the EU institutions (Parliament, Commission and Council) regarding the multi-annual management plans for the Baltic came at an impasse. On the other hand, the trilogues regarding the issue of trade in seal products ended in an agreement. Also, the EP has been active regarding Fisheries Partnership Agreements, since in the last Fisheries Committee it approved 3 FPAs and had an extensive discussion on a 4th, while preparing to discuss them in the upcoming plenary of July.

In an inter-Advisory Council meeting in mid-June, stakeholders had the chance to discuss issues like the fishing opportunities for 2016, the 2016 discard plans, the state of play with the technical measures frameworks and the evaluation of the control regulation.

On an international level, the Global Ocean Commission held its 5th meeting where the state of the oceans and the ways forward were high up on the agenda.

Additionally, the EP Intergroup on “Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development” organized a meeting on “Fisheries Governance and Biodiversity Conservation”, where presentations touched upon the issue of governance for fisheries management and biodiversity, followed by a lively discussion with the participations of the European Commission and representatives of the Fisheries Advisory Councils.

Lastly, this month we saw the publication of 2 reports raising issues on the seas and its habitats; the European Environmental Agency’s “State of the Seas” and the IUCN’s Red list of Marine Fishes. Also, we invite you to view a webinar organized by the Environmental Defense Fund on its recently published EU Discard Manual.

Enjoy the reading!

Despina Symons
Director, EBCD

European Parliament



Baltic trilogues halted

On the 25th a **press conference** was held in the European Parliament following the **suspensions of the discussions between the EP and the Council regarding the Baltic Sea multiannual management plan.**

[Find below the press release issued by the EP Press service.](#)

"No progress on Baltic Plan: "Council does not want to keep fish stocks at healthy levels", say MEPs

Following negotiations spread over several meetings between Parliament, Council and the Commission, no agreement could be reached on Wednesday on the draft multiannual plan for fisheries in the Baltic Sea to ensure the sustainable exploitation of fish stocks and offer fishermen increased predictability over the long run.

*"The refusal of the Council to honour the new Common Fisheries Policy, agreed in 2013, risks to block the negotiations between the European Parliament and the Council on the Multiannual Management Plan for the Baltic Sea", said rapporteur **Jarosław Wałęsa (EPP, PL)**. He added:*

"I am very disappointed with the attitude of the Council. They blatantly refuse to honour the Common Fisheries Reform. It seems like they insists on business as usual, keeping their right to over-exploit fish stocks."

*The rapporteur for the new Common Fisheries Policy **Ulrike Rodust (S&D, DE)** said: "In the reform we agreed that multiannual plans were one of the main tools to implement it. As co-legislators we - Parliament and Council - should work ahead to put in place what we agreed so we can get our fish stocks back to healthy levels. Moreover, only on this condition fishermen will have long-term planning security."*

*A multiannual management plan is the instrument for managing the fish stocks in a certain area. The fishing mortality rates are an essential part of it. They provide a basis for the setting of the TACs and quotas. The norm set out in Article 2, paragraph 2 of the Basic Regulation for the Common Fisheries Policy is that the exploitation restores and maintains "harvested species above levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield". **The question posed by European Parliament was whether the Council accepts F-MSY (fishing mortality rate) as a target or a limit. This is fundamental to the difference of positions. According to Mr Wałęsa, in order to achieve the objective of the CFP - stocks above levels that can produce MSY - it must be a limit.***

"For us, there is no point to continue unless we know that we all try to stay within what we agreed in the Basic Regulation", Mr Wałęsa commented after the meeting.

Background

During the previous legislature (2009-2014), the Council blocked a number of Commission proposals on earlier management plans. The European Parliament duly adopted its position in

the first reading, but the Council did not do their part to solve the deadlock.

The Parliament adopted its position for negotiations with the Council on the multiannual plan for managing Baltic cod, sprat and herring stocks on 28 April. This is the first such plan under the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which took effect in 2014.

MEPs demand that the stocks must be restored and maintained "above" biomass levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), thus reflecting the language of the CFP regulation. MSY means catching no more than a given stock can reproduce in a given year, a key concept made mandatory by the reformed CFP."

Next steps

The negotiations will most likely pick up after the new Presidency (Luxembourg) takes office next month.

Watch the press conference via webstream:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/other-events/video?event=20150625-0915-SPECIAL>

Deal reached on Trade in seal products

The **trilogues between the Council, European Commission and European Parliament** on the dossier **"Trade in seal products"** came to an end with the closing of a deal.

Find below the [press release](#) from the [European Parliament Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection \(IMCO\)](#).

"Trading in seal products from hunts hitherto conducted to protect fishing stocks will be banned in the EU in future but the exemption

for the trade in products derived from seal hunts carried out by the Inuit community will remain, under the preliminary deal struck by internal market MEPs and the Latvian Presidency of the Council on Thursday.

"I am very pleased with the outcome of the negotiations today and I am very confident that we will hear good news from the Council after the Coreper meeting next week. The final text will encompass a new set of criteria under which seal products resulting from hunts conducted by Inuit and other indigenous communities could be placed on the market, a clear reference to the needs of such communities for food and income to support a sustainable livelihood".

"The new article which refers to the need to inform citizens properly that the seal products originating from Inuit and other indigenous communities' hunts are legal, was obtained by Parliament," said the rapporteur, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi (EPP, RO), after the agreement was reached.

The EU banned the trade in seal products in 2009 in response to animal welfare concerns. However, it allowed two exemptions, one for products derived from seals hunted by Inuit and other indigenous communities and the other for small-scale hunts to ensure the "sustainable management of marine resources" (the so-called MRM exception). Then in June 2014, a World Trade Organisation ruling challenged these exemptions on the grounds that they could have discriminatory effects, thus obliging the EU to update its rules on the trade in seal products.

Reinforcing Inuit exemption

MEPs backed a Commission proposal to align the EU rules with the WTO ruling by renouncing the

MRM¹ exception and keeping a reinforced Inuit exception, as seal hunting is an integral part of the Inuit community's culture and identity.

Inuits will be allowed to sell seal products in the EU only if their hunting methods have due regard to animal welfare, are a part of their tradition and contribute to its subsistence, the deal says. A body recognised by the Commission will issue a compliance document in this regard.

However, if the Commission uncovers evidence that Inuit hunts are conducted primarily for commercial purposes it may restrict or prohibit the placing on the market of seal products from these hunts.

Impact assessment and proper information

The Commission will have to report by the end of 2019 on the implementation of the new rules, paying particular attention to their impact on the Inuit community. Meanwhile, under the deal, at the insistence of MEPs, the Commission will be tasked to inform the public and customs officials about the new rules and the Inuit exception. Parliament's negotiators believe that this could help to counter the widespread negative portrayals and misunderstandings of seal hunts conducted by Inuits and other indigenous peoples.

Next steps

The provisionally agreed text still needs to be formally approved by the Council's Committee of Permanent Representatives and Parliament's Internal Market Committee."

¹ **MRM exception:** products derived from hunts conducted for the sole purpose of the sustainable management of marine resources on a small scale and non-profit basis; specifically, seal products that result from by-products of hunting that is regulated by national law or Import of seal products where they are of an occasional nature and consist exclusively of good for the personal use of travellers or their families (article 3.2 a and b).

You can find the portal of the dossier here:
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2015/0028>
(COD)

European Commission

Europe's seas: productive, but not healthy or clean

The European Union's Blue Growth agenda aims to harness further the potential of Europe's oceans, seas and coasts for jobs, economic value and sustainability. A new report published today by the European Environment Agency (EEA) shows that, despite some improvements, the way we use our seas remains unsustainable and threatens not only the productivity of our seas, but also our wellbeing. Human activities and climate change are increasingly putting a number of pressures on Europe's seas, the cumulative effects of which threaten the functioning and resilience of marine ecosystems.

[...]Selection of facts from the report

- For species and habitats assessed from 2007 to 2012 under the EU's Habitats Directive, 9% of marine habitats and 7% of marine species assessments were in 'favourable conservation status', while 66% of habitat and 27% of species assessments were 'unfavourable'.
- Over 650 marine fish species, over 180 marine bird species, five species of sea turtles and almost 40% of the world's known marine mammals are found in Europe's seas.

- Around 320 new non-indigenous species have been observed in Europe's seas since 2000.
- The knowledge base on marine biodiversity remains very limited, calling for greater cooperation among EU countries and with other countries bordering the regional seas of Europe.
- Climate change is already affecting Europe's marine ecosystems.
- Hazardous substances are widespread in the marine environment. They can accumulate through the marine food chain and pose health risks to humans.
- Marine litter, mainly in the form of plastic, is also accumulating in Europe's seas. Most of the litter comes from land-based activities. Micro-plastics can enter the food web.
- Underwater noise from human activities (shipping, renewable energy, oil and gas extraction, etc.) is increasing and can have a wide range of impacts on marine life.
- Signs of improvement are observed in certain pressures, such as fishing and nutrient loading.
- More than half of the commercial fish stocks assessed are not in good environmental status.
- Total catches in all fishing regions have been declining in the past ten years. The EU is increasingly dependent on imports of its most widely consumed species: tuna, cod and salmon.
- The maritime sector is estimated to provide 6.1 million jobs and to generate an economic value of approximately EUR 467 billion. [...]

Source: European Environment Agency

Inter-ACs June Meeting

On the 23rd of June, an **Inter-ACs meeting** took place in Brussels where Advisory Council representatives gathered to be briefed by the Commission on several issues of their interest. EBCD was invited as an observer.

Find an unofficial report below on these issues:

COM communication on fishing opportunities for 2016.

Regarding the status of the stocks on Baltic Sea, the Commission stated that there is a positive trend but on the Mediterranean the picture is not clear yet.

On the delivery of the MSY, Commission clarified that the idea is to reach MSY and if it is not possible, reasons should be duly sent to Commission. MSY is a leading parameter, BMSY is an aspiration, not an operational parameter.

Any possible top-up on quotas should be proportional to well demonstrated discard levels and any argument in favour of topping up quotas should be presented to the Commission on time.

In this regard, attendees stated that the quota uplift is not a political reward but a necessary measure to avoid the problem of choke species. On the Mediterranean, a better management of fishing effort and limits are needed. Overcapacity needs to be dealt with and the resources for scrapping under the EMFF are not sufficient. Commission stated that funds are enough: Member States are not declaring overcapacity.

State of play of discard plans for 2016.

Commission welcomed the level of engagement of the ACs, which is a proof of a good implementation of the principle of regionalisation, and confirmed its commitment in trying to engage RFMOs and other bodies to adopt a discard ban. This promotion has been done, according to Commission, among others through the Public Consultation on International Ocean Governance.

Some concerns were raised on the fact that Discard plans seem to be mainly consisted of exceptions and decreases of minimum sizes.

State of play of technical measures framework.

Commission is carrying out an impact assessment. The proposal, that will come out before 2016, aims to simplify rules and open the door to rules specific for each region.

Evaluation of the Control Regulation.

Efforts are being made on improving framework since the actual regulation does not adapt to technological changes. It is important to develop a culture of compliance. A Public Consultation will be launched between 2015-2016 and the final evaluation will be presented in 2016. The Control Regulation will have as objectives the development of a culture of compliance, of a level playing field, of a new data exchange, of new traceability and simplification of the framework by repealing several regulations.

Other issues

5th Meeting of the Global Ocean Commission



On Sunday, 17 May, José María Figueres (Costa Rica), Global Ocean Commission (GOC) Co-Chair, opened the Fifth Meeting of the Global Ocean Commission (GOC 5).

GOC Executive Secretary Simon Reddy presented on progress made since the June 2014 launch of the report 'From Decline to Recovery: A Rescue Package for the Global Ocean.' He highlighted significant support received, including, media coverage consisting of, inter alia, over 30 million social media impressions, as well as the delivery of a global petition containing over 288,000 signatures to the UN, calling for a new international agreement to protect the high seas. He invited Commissioners to provide input and support in order to continue the momentum through the next seven months of the GOC mandate. In ensuing discussions, one Commissioner lauded the value of focusing on a small number of priorities and the "remarkable commitment" of the Secretariat, noting that positive progress has been made by the GOC in multilateral systems. The Commissioner raised the challenge of mobilizing people globally and expressed concern over the lack of significant traction in emerging economies, noting the need for political champions. Another Commissioner asked how the GOC can actively engage the UN system and the private sector to further mobilize action to fulfil the GOC mandate. One Commissioner underscored the value of a coordinating mechanism within the UN system to integrate the efforts and progress made in

various institutions. A Commissioner suggested coordination with the chemicals processes, specifically in the priority area of plastics, to help gain momentum. Commissioners strategized on opportunities presented by upcoming forums to generate high-level engagement, specifically by developing countries, and to strengthen political leadership. Opportunities to engage the African Union and further engage coastal countries in Africa were discussed. Focusing on the second “Our Oceans Conference” taking place in Chile in October 2015, one Commissioner underscored that the agenda needs to incorporate the voice of developing nations. A participant shared efforts to address the connection between oceans and climate change, indicating that these special issues will attract the interest of developing countries. One Commissioner noted that the task of moving from process to outcomes and engaging champions to raise the profile of oceans issues on the international agenda is a longterm journey.

Source: Global Ocean Commission Bulletin is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) , publishers of the Earth Negotiations Bulletin @

This report from the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) in collaboration with the Global Ocean Commission summarizes the presentations and discussions during the meeting. GOC 5 was held under the Chatham House Rule and this report therefore does not identify the speakers during the discussion sessions.

[You can read the report here.](#)

Fisheries Governance & Biodiversity Conservation



IUCN’s fisheries expert called the European Parliament and European Commission to give more attention to the need for joint governance of fisheries and biodiversity conservation and to reinforce support to the social aspects of fisheries as the sector has now to face strong pressure groups with different interests. Serge Garcia, Chair of the IUCN-CEM-FEG (Fisheries Expert Group of the Commission on Ecosystem Management of IUCN) was invited to the European Parliament to present a recently published 500-page book co-written by close to 60 experts of the biodiversity conservation and fisheries management worlds: “Governance of Marine Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation: Interaction and Co-evolution.” (Wiley-Blackwell publishers, 2014) The book analyses the two streams of governance respectively responsible for marine fisheries and biodiversity conservation. The two streams have diverged from the mid- 19th century to WWII under the impact of massive industrial development on the environment. Since then, the two streams have become progressively closer despite conflicts, showing convergence -when similar changes have occurred in independent response to external forces on both streams- and co-evolution -when similar changes emerged from inter-dependent responses of the two streams to their respective actions. At the present stage, many important conflicts have been resolved, although core

differences remain between long-term goals as well as risk perception and allocation. In the future the relation between the two streams can be further improved with the help of “good governance”, as well as market incentives, but these will not be sufficient unless broader social goals such as poverty alleviation, food security and equity are explicitly added to the “sustainability” equation. In closing, the presentation also addressed briefly the governance of environmental NGOs and their interaction with fisheries and the growing competition from rapidly developing economic sectors to be faced by fisheries in the next two decades.

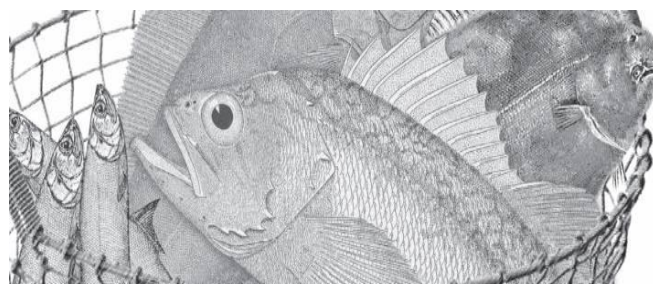
The panel discussion dwelled on the relevance of the global conclusions of the book in the European context, where the Common Fisheries Policy deals with fisheries governance, while conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity is regulated by other environmental institutions. The panellists representing DG MARE, the European Parliament and two Fisheries Advisory Councils (NWWAC and LDAC) touched upon the problem of implementation of existing regulation at Member State level; the need to directly involve fishermen in the negotiations; the need to have complete and reliable data before taking decisions; the necessity of setting clear objectives and achieving them; the concerns deriving from conflicting existing European policies in different domains (environmental vs. development); and the need to take measures that are proportionate to the problem. The event took place on 23 June 2015 at the initiative of Alain Cadec MEP, Chair of the “Fisheries, Aquaculture and Integrated Maritime Policy” working group of the Intergroup, and was chaired by Werner Kuhn MEP.

[Follow this link](#) in order to access the webpage of the event, where you will find **speaker’**

presentations, the list of participants, and other related document.

Reports

EU Discard Manual: The Webinar



The European Union has recently introduced a new set of laws under its reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) that ban the discarding of unwanted and unmarketable fish and require that all catch be landed. CFP legislation also requires that all overfishing be ended by 2015 for the majority of fish stocks and by 2020 for overfishing to end completely.

In March, Environmental Defense Fund released the first ever user-friendly guide to help EU fishermen, fishery managers and Member State regulators find ways to successfully implement the landing obligation. In this Webinar, two of the Discard Reduction Manual’s key developers will discuss the management tools presented in the document and how they can best be practically applied on the water, drawing on success stories such as the UK North Sea and English Channel Discard Pilot Projects, which across the fleets reduced discarding to a rate of 0-6%.

This webinar was presented by Karly McIlwain, Engagement Manager; and Erik Lindebo PhD,

Senior Consultant for Environmental Defense
Fund EU Ocean Program.

Click here to download a copy of this webinar
from their Vimeo page

assessment-of-european-marine-fishes-
highlights-major-threat-from-overfishing

You can view it **online** here:
[https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files
/documents/RL-4-017.pdf](https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/RL-4-017.pdf)



Red list of Marine Fishes

The IUCN published early this month the **IUCN European Red List of Marine Fishes**, “a review of the conservation status of European species according to IUCN regional Red Listing guidelines. It identifies those species that are threatened with extinction at the regional level, so that appropriate conservation action can be taken to improve their status. This Red List publication summarises results for all described native European marine fishes.”

“The report shows that existing marine management measures have been successful for certain species, such as the Atlantic Cod or Atlantic Bluefin Tuna, whose stocks have improved. However, for some other species, such as the Atlantic Halibut, Atlantic Salmon and Turbot, management has been less effective.”

You can read IUCN’s **press release** here:
<http://www.iucnredlist.org/news/first-complete->



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Upcoming EVENTS

July 2015

06-09	EP	Plenary	Strasbourg, France
09 July	PELAC	Executive Committee Meeting	Netherlands

August 2015

23-26 Aug	Elsevier	Aquaculture 2015- Cutting edge science in aquaculture	Le Corum, Montpellier, France
05-13 Aug	WCPFC	11th Scientific Committee	Pohnpei, Micronesia, Federated States Of
31 Aug	EP	Pech Committee	Brussels Belgium

September 2015

16 Sept	NWWAC	General Assembly	Edinburgh, United Kingdom
6-7 Sept	Anfaco	VII Worldwide Tuna Conference "Vigo 2015"	Vigo, Spain
16-17 September	LDAC	CFP: The External Dimension as a Driver for Change	Las Palmas, Spain
21-25 Sept	NAFO	Annual Meeting	Canada
22-23 Sept	NSAC	Executive Committee Meeting & General Assembly	
22-23 Sept	EP	Pech Committee	Brussels Belgium
25-27 Sept	UN	United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda	New York, USA
28-30 Sept	UN	Oceans and Law of the Sea Resolution	New York, USA

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