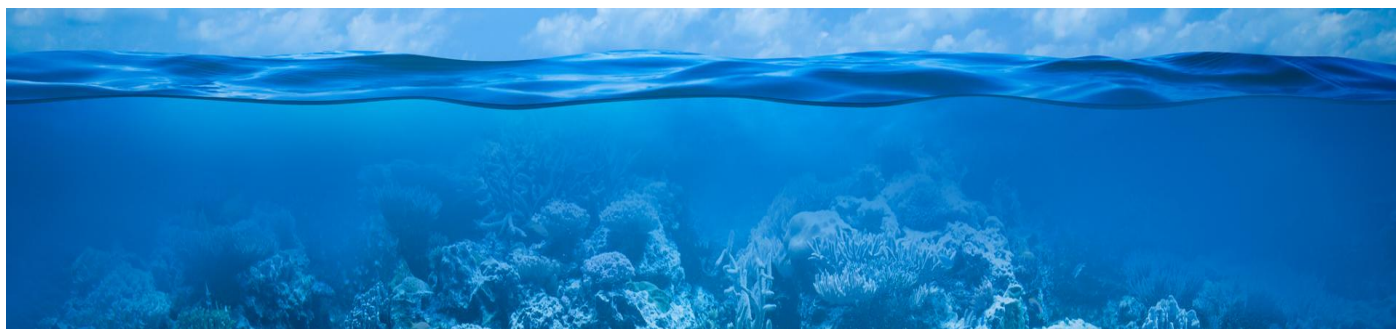


FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2015



The legislators

European Commission

Other Issues

Science

Events

Dear readers,

Much remains to be done before 2016 since with the New Year the landing obligation for demersal fisheries enters into force. The European Commission has, in the meantime, moved ahead with the adoption of 3 discard plans for the North Sea, the North Western and South Western Atlantic Sea. Additionally, the Council decided upon the TACs and quotas for the Baltic Sea.

The European Commission published a report on Marine Protected Areas under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) that will guide its policy for next year's review of the Directive. In addition, an interesting and controversial webinar took place this month on the issue of deep sea fishing in EU waters; a webinar hosting an NGO adamant on banning deep sea fishing, Bloom Association.

At international level, this month featured the 2nd annual "Our Oceans" conference in Chile where closure of fishing areas were presented and the EU made some long term commitments on sustainability. Also, twenty years after its birth, FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries shared a moment in the limelight with ministers, researchers and leaders in the fisheries industry at the first International Fisheries Stakeholders Forum that opened in Vigo, Spain.

The month of November is full with events, including the Annual meeting of ICCAT, a joint UNEP-European Commission workshop on Regional Ocean Governance, an EU workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals and how they can be implemented in Europe, the annual "Aquaculture in Motion", organized by FEAP and last but not least, the adoption of the Sustainable Fisheries Resolution by the United Nations General Assembly.

Enjoy the reading!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Despina Symons'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D'.

Despina Symons
Director, EBCD

The legislators (Council and EP)



Baltic Sea TACs for 2016 approved

At this month's Agriculture and Fisheries Ministers' Council meeting, the issues of the 2016 Baltic Sea Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and the EU/Norway consultations were discussed.

Regarding the TACs for 2016, Ministers adopted 20% reductions in catches. In addition, Member States agreed on several measures to protect the Western stock to accelerate its recovery, including a six-week fishing closure during the spawning period between mid-February and end-March 2016, which was criticized by the EU fishing industry ([press release here](#)). Additionally, as was the case for 2015, due to the Russian embargo, some fishing opportunities for certain stocks which have not been used in 2015 will be carried over to 2016.

Regarding the EU/Norway annual consultations, the first round of consultations was decided to take place from 16 to 20 November 2015 in Copenhagen (Denmark) and the second round from 30 November to 4 December 2015 in Bergen (Norway).

The main issues for the consultations this year are: detailed management arrangements for the seven jointly managed fish stocks in the North Sea (cod, haddock, plaice, whiting, herring, mackerel and saithe) and Skagerrak (cod, haddock, whiting, plaice,

shrimp, herring and sprat) involving notably the establishment of the TACs and quotas for the respective Parties, in accordance with the long-term management plans and agreed sharing arrangements; possible adjustments to the long-term management plans for North Sea stocks of haddock and herring in the light of new ICES advice;

the exchange of reciprocal fishing possibilities in order, among other things, to enable the continuation of a number of fishing operations which are important for the fishermen of both parties, including fishing opportunities for Arcto-Norwegian cod in Norwegian waters, as well as other measures in fisheries of mutual interest.

On another note, the decision for the European Commission to enter into negotiations for the renewal of a Fisheries Partnership Agreement with Gabon was endorsed by Council.

Workshop in PECH

This month at the European Parliament Fisheries Committee, and among other issues, a workshop was held regarding '**A new technical measures framework for the new CFP**':

Three presentations were made as part of the workshop:

1. Lessons from the past for the future of technical measures

Mr Stuart Reeves from CEFAS gave an overview of what technical measures are used for, including improving gear selectivity, reducing discards, protecting marine habitats and ecosystems and eventually, implementing the MSY approach. There are several types of technical measures: catch composition, gear handling and use, gear construction, area closures... Regionalisation, results-based approaches or flexibility are principles implemented that show some improvement but there is still work to be done.

2. Technical measures in the Baltic Sea: an alternative to over-regulation and the brace-and-belt approach

Mr Daniel Stepputtis from Thunen Institute of Baltic Sea Fisheries in Rostock, Germany, gave a briefing on the technical measures in place for the Baltic Sea which should be fully implemented by 2019, and he divided them in four categories: measures to be maintained, to be removed, to be altered and others still to be developed. As recommendations, Mr Stepputis stated the importance of a result-based management where deregulation and the creation of high incentives play an important role as well as a full documentation system for monitoring, control and enforcement.

3. Technical measures in the Atlantic and North Sea (working with stakeholders towards a meaningful revision)

Ms Nathalie Steins from the IMARES Wageningen Ur outlined in her presentation several case studies and examples regarding the approaches taken in the Atlantic and North Sea areas. Those case studies show several deficiencies in the technical measures in place, such as the need to change wording to adapt to the landing obligation. There should be a joint assessment of rules, a general consensus between fishermen and policy-makers on rules that should be revised or removed. An overall change in European fisheries governance is, in her opinion, needed.

4. Fishing management based on technical measures: the need of a new framework for the Mediterranean Sea

Mr Bellido, from the Instituto Espanol de Oceanografia de la ciudad de Alicante, in Spain gave an in-depth analysis on a new technical measures framework for the new CFP regarding the Mediterranean Sea. The technical measures in place are too complex, heterogeneous, disorganized and not linked to reality of the fishing operations. Updating those technical measures is especially important in the Mediterranean since its

management system leans mainly on technical regulations.

A lively debate took place regarding marine protected areas and its role as a technical measures: it was questioned whether they are a political measure or a conservative measure lies behind.

European Commission

European Commission adopts discard plans for the Atlantic and the North Sea

The European Commission, over the course of October, adopted 3 discard plans for demersal fisheries:

- North-Western waters discard plan (and its Annex)
- South-Western waters discard plan (and its Annex)
- North Sea (and its Annex)

These discard plans concern demersal fisheries, i.e. fish that feed on or near the sea bottom, and are a temporary measure to phase out discarding and gradually put in place the landing obligation, a key component of the EU's reformed Common Fisheries Policy. The plans will apply from 1 January 2016 for a maximum period of three years (except for the last one which will apply for one year), once final adoption takes place. Other discard plans will have to be adopted for 2017 to bring additional fisheries under the landing obligation.

Regarding these plans, the European Commission, K.Vella said: *"These plans are a major step forward as the fisheries concerned are very significant. Landing what is caught is a start – but more importantly perhaps these plans should lead to more selective*

fishing, which will help stocks recover and ensure a stable income for our fishermen."

Commission publishes report on MPAs under the MSFD



This report ([find it here](#)) shows significant progress in establishing protected areas in Europe's seas, with benefits for the economy and the environment. Under the [UN Convention on Biological Diversity](#), the EU has committed to ensure the conservation of 10% of its coastal and marine areas by 2020. In 2012, 5.9 % of Europe's seas had already been designated as marine protected areas, and work is continuing with a view to achieve 10 % coverage by 2020. This objective is also reflected in [Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Many marine species across Europe's seas are experiencing a decrease in population size and loss of habitat. Protected areas seek to reverse this trend by safeguarding ecosystems and species and rebuilding fish stocks, as well as ensuring the delivery of important ecosystem services such as coastal protection, flood management and tourism. The Commission will continue supporting Member States to designate, manage and control marine protected areas through financing mechanisms such as the LIFE Programme and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, while promoting inclusive governance structures for and research on marine protected areas.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive reporting

The Marine Directive aims to achieve Good Environmental Status of the EU's marine waters by 2020 and to protect the resource base upon which

marine-related economic and social activities depend. The Directive enshrines in a legislative framework the ecosystem approach to the management of human activities having an impact on the marine environment, integrating the concepts of environmental protection and sustainable use. In order to achieve GES by 2020, each Member State is required to develop a strategy for its marine waters (or Marine Strategy). Because the Directive follows an adaptive management approach, the Marine Strategies must be kept up-to-date and reviewed every 6 years.

For the first time, Member States have now reported under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive on the state of the environment in their marine waters, on what they consider as being a "good environmental status" and on the objectives and targets they have set themselves to reach it by 2020 (articles 8, 9 and 10 of the MSFD). The result shows that more efforts are urgently needed if the EU is to reach its goal.

The findings of the report, and the way forward, were discussed in Brussels on March 3-4 at the HOPE ("Healthy Oceans- Productive Ecosystems") conference. It gathered governments, NGOs, academia and other stakeholders working with or in relation to the European marine environment.

Other issues

2nd "OurOceans" Conference takes place in Chile



On the 5 and 6 of October, the Second Our Ocean Conference took place in Chile.

The conference is a follow-up to the first Our Ocean Conference, led by US Secretary of State John Kerry and held in Washington DC in June 2014, to highlight actions needed on oceans, especially regarding sustainable fishing, marine pollution, ocean acidification, and marine protected areas.

"There is literally too much money chasing too few fish," John Kerry

The 2014 conference resulted in commitments from government and private sources valued at more than \$800 million as well as commitments for the protection of more than three million square kilometres of the ocean.

Closure of fishing areas

During this year's conference, Chile announced the closure of more than 200,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean near the Easter Island from commercial fishing and oil and gas exploration. Combined with the Nazca-Desaventuradas Marine Park, Chile's two areas would protect more than 350,000 square miles. The exception would be subsistence fishing practices by Rapa Nui within an area extending 50 nautical miles from the shoreline.

European Commitments

Commissioner Vella announced at the Conference a set of actions that will include a major political initiative on international ocean governance next year. He stressed the commitment the European Commission has to better international ocean governance and his willingness to host the Our Ocean conference in 2017 in Europe.

These actions mentioned are:

Ten percent of all EU marine waters will be covered by marine protected areas by 2020. To achieve this, the EU's Member States will designate significant additional marine protected areas, as well as promote their effective management through necessary

fisheries measures. Moreover, Member States will adopt innovative maritime spatial plans for all EU marine waters by 2021 to ensure their conservation and sustainable use of EU marine waters.

The EU will adopt a major quantitative reduction headline target for marine litter, and will cut by one half the numbers of single-use plastic bags in the EU by 2019, helping to address the large accumulation of plastic bag litter in the ocean.

The EU will until 2020 dedicate EUR 100 million a year for marine research, including in renewable energy, transport, maritime security, climate change, environment, fisheries, and aquaculture. Work is also underway to create an unprecedented multi-resolution map of the European seabed by 2020.

The EU is ready to commit EUR 675 million covering the period 2016-2020 to enter into Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements that will assist non-EU countries in developing sustainable fisheries. It will, by the end of 2015, release a proposal to better and more sustainably manage the EU's external fishing fleet.

The conference also targeted marine pollution resulting from discarded plastics and increasing levels of ocean acidification, which damages coral reefs and shellfish populations

More information:

[Click here to access the official website](#)

[Click here to access the publication Environmental Outreach for Marine Protection and Conservation](#)

[Click here to access Commitments made in 2014](#)

Science

Deep Sea webinar

European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD)

10 Rue de la Science, 1000, Brussels, Belgium - T +32 (0)2 230 30 70



A [Webinar](#) took place this week, organised by the [Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative](#) under the 2015 Deep-Sea Webinar Series.

The Webinar **focused on the challenges regarding regulation of deep-sea fisheries:**

Glen Wright, a Research Fellow in International Marine Policy at the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) in Paris, stated that fishing is a significant threat to marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). Bottom fishing in particular can impact deep-sea ecosystems, and the UN General Assembly has called on regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) to take action to regulate bottom fisheries, including closing areas to bottom fishing activities where there is likely to be significant adverse impacts to vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs). This presentation provides an overview of deep-sea ecosystems and fisheries in ABNJ, and reviews the closures implemented by RFMOs. It concludes that biodiversity conservation efforts within RFMOs continue to advance slowly, with RFMOs often failing to act in a precautionary manner based on the available scientific evidence.

Claire Nouvian, Director & Founder of BLOOM Association in her presentation stated that deep-sea fishing has taken place in the European and North Atlantic deep-seas for over four decades, but the first attempt to regulate these highly destructive fisheries was not until 2003. The 2003 legislation serves as the current legal framework which has been unable to prevent ongoing damage to vulnerable deepwater fish stocks, species and habitats. In July 2012, under

former EU Fisheries Commissioner Maria Damanaki, the European Commission proposed an ambitious overhaul of the deep-sea fisheries legislation. The Commission sought to align EU law with the long negotiated UN resolutions that the UN General Assembly adopted from 2004 to 2011. Under extreme pressure from European industrial fishing lobbies and thanks to the will of the current Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the EU, legislation reform is finally progressing after over three years of delay in Council and a harsh debate at the European Parliament. Unfortunately, certain member states, especially France, strongly oppose the phase-out of deep-sea bottom trawling as proposed by the European Commission, and this has delayed and jeopardized the legislative process.

You can find the recording of the webinar [here](#).

EP Intergroup event: Marine Protected Areas and Fisheries Management

The European Parliament Intergroup on "Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development" brought together Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and important experts like Serge Garcia (FEG), Ernesto Penas Lado (COM) and Bertie Armstrong (Scottish Fishermen's Federation) among others, to discuss on the importance of the marine protected areas (MPAs).

The function of MPAs is usually to protect biodiversity by preventing or limiting human activities in controlled areas and their surroundings. Therefore they have positive and negative impacts on economic activities, which may be direct or indirect, that have not been entirely assessed yet. They can a priori be included in the set of tools used to manage fisheries, in synergy with more conventional solutions, under conditions to be determined case-by-case.

This event hinged on the presentation of a world-wide report on the biological, socio-economic and governance-related impacts of MPAs on fisheries by the Chair of the IUCN Fisheries Expert Group. This

presentation was followed by a description by the French MPAs Agency and the European Commission of the goals, approaches and results of their action, and by a contribution of fisheries professionals. The event provided the opportunity for a specific discussion on the utility but also the limits of MPAs for fisheries management, chaired by MEP Isabelle Thomas, Co-Chair of the Fisheries, Aquaculture & Integrated Maritime Policy working group of the EP

Intergroup “Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development”.

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

You can find the presentations on the event’s [page here](#).

Upcoming EVENTS

November 2015			
09-16 November	ICCAT	Annual Meeting	Malta
09-10 November	EP	Fisheries (PECH) Committee	Brussels, Belgium
09-10 November		The UNEP- European Commission Workshop on Regional Ocean Governance	Brussels, Belgium
11 November		Third Conference: The Ocean of Tomorrow projects	Brussels, Belgium
12-13 November	EESC	Sustainable Development Goals: Implementation in Europe	Brussels Belgium
10-16 November	UNGA	United Nations General Assembly: Sustainable Fisheries Resolution	New York, USA
16 November	CoR	Aquaculture in Motion (FEAP)	Brussels, Belgium
18 November	CCBSD	Sea for Society	Brussels, Belgium
19 November	WWF Poland	Fisheries and the protection of biodiversity.	Gdynia, Poland
23-26 November	EP	Plenary Session	Strasbourg, France

European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD)

10 Rue de la Science, 1000, Brussels, Belgium - T +32 (0)2 230 30 70