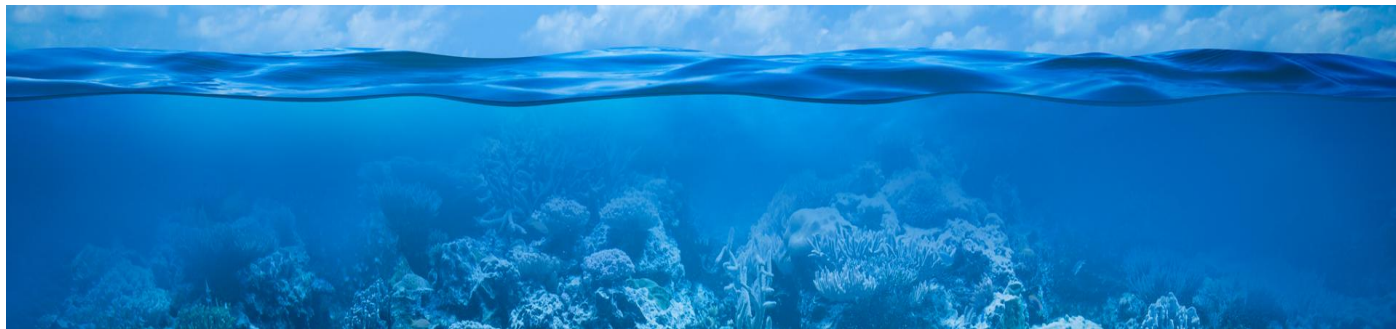


FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2015



European Parliament

European Commission

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Events

Dear readers,

Following the summer break the institutions started strong in their work, with the European Commission issuing 2 yellow cards to third countries and the European Parliament giving its consent on the renewal of 3 Fisheries Partnership Agreements. Also, the European Parliament held a hearing on Multispecies Fisheries Management whilst the European Commission held another on Blue Growth.

At international level, the North East Atlantic Organisation (NAFO) took several decisions, one of which was to enhance the protection of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs). At the same time, the Long Distance Advisory Council held a conference on the implementations of the CFP's External Dimension enhancing collaboration with the EU and Africa.

Lastly, the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted this month, including the Goal 14 on oceans and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) issued its advisory opinion on ocean governance issues and specifically countries – flags of convenience.

The month of October is packed with events, including an EP Intergroup event on "Marine Protected Areas", the "Aquaculture Europe", an event organized by the European Aquaculture society and a Workshop on IUU organized by the Conférence Ministérielle sur la Coopération Halieutique entre les Etats Africains Riverains de l'Océan Atlantique (COMHAFAT).

Enjoy the reading!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Despina Symons'.

Despina Symons
Director, EBCD

European Parliament



3 FPAs renewed

The September Plenary Session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg gave its consent to three Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) that have been renewed: Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar and Cape Verde.

Fishermen from France, Spain, Portugal and other countries can now continue to benefit from the deals which have already entered into provisional application less than a year ago. In adjoining resolutions, Parliament however expressed concerns, for example, with the performance of sectoral support, which is usually part of such agreements.

- Guinea-Bissau - Rapporteur: João Ferreira (GUE/NGL, PT)

Under the new three-year-deal, fishing vessels from France, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal are again allowed to fish in the waters of Guinea Bissau following a two-year interruption. An annual amount of €3 million is reserved for the development of the country's fisheries sector to strengthen its monitoring, control and surveillance capacity, encourage scientific cooperation, improve sanitary controls and offer support to artisanal fisheries.

In an adjoining resolution, MEPs however noted that the performance of sectoral cooperation "has not been globally satisfactory" and call on the Commission to take every step required "by installing mechanisms for increased transparency, accountability and participation of beneficiaries" to increase the take-up rate for sector support.

- Madagascar - Rapporteur: Ricardo Serrão Santos (S&D, PT)

Altogether 94 fishing vessels from Spain, France, Italy and Portugal targeting tuna and similar species are benefiting from the four-year-deal allowing them to fish in the waters of the Republic of Madagascar.

- Cape Verde - Rapporteur: Peter van Dalen (ECR, NL)

71 fishing vessels from Spain, France and Portugal targeting mainly tuna are allowed to fish in the waters of the Cape Verdean archipelago

The new protocol provides, inter alia, for a new mechanism to monitor catches of pelagic sharks. In an adjoining resolution, Parliament stresses its concern that "there was a significant increase in the catch of shark species during the final years of the previous Protocol". To make sure that this fishery is exploited "in a sustainable and responsible way", MEPs request that Parliament should be informed about the application of the monitoring mechanism and the data obtained as regards shark stocks.

In addition MEPs observe that the implementation of sectoral support, earmarked to promote the sustainable management of fisheries in Cape Verde, including reinforcement of control and surveillance capacities, and to support the local fishing communities, faces delays, and that it is difficult to determine its impact.



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Financial contribution

In comparison, the most important of the agreements is the one with Guinea-Bissau, as it is one of the EU's few fisheries agreements allowing access to mixed fisheries. The EU contributes €9.2 million annually for three years. The other two FPAs are mainly tuna agreements. For Madagascar the yearly contribution is roughly €1.5 million (for four years) and for Cape Verde €550,000 in the first two and 500,000 in the last two years of application of the Protocol. Important parts of these contributions are reserved for supporting the respective country's fishing sector.

- You can find more information [here](#).

Hearing on Multispecies Management Plans

MEP Wałęsa (PL, EPP) opened the hearing by stating the importance of the multispecies management plans for fisheries and by giving a brief state of play of the negotiations in trilogues, which broke down last summer and will restart next week.

The hearing was split into 2 panels:

- **PANEL I**

Multispecies Management Plans for Fisheries, the second step: putting in place the landing obligation and technical measures through delegated acts in the Baltic Sea and in other waters, where Mr Ireneusz Wojcik, National Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Poland and Mr Olivier Leprêtre, President of the regional fisheries committee of Boulogne-sur-Mer, France, focused their presentations on the landing obligation.

Amongst the MEPs who took the floor were **MEP Gróbarczyk (PL, ECR)**, **MEP Rodust (DE, S&D)**, **MEP Finch (GB/EFDD)** and **MEP Van Dalen (NL/ECR)**. In their observations, they noted the contradictions the landing obligation is bringing and wondered whether the investments fishermen had to do through years to adapt to successive legislations are profitable now.

- **PANEL II**

Multispecies Management Plans for Fisheries, the next step: Lessons learned for the development of the Multispecies Management Plans for the North Sea and other waters, where

Mr Simon Collins, Head of Shetland Fisherman's Association, Scotland, UK opened the floor. Another speaker, Mr Raul Prellezo, Principal Researcher, AZTI, Basque Country, Spain praised the importance of gathering data to understand the behaviour of the fleets and stated that several aspects affect multiannual plans

Mr. Andrew Clayton, Project Director, The Pew Charitable Trusts, UK in his presentation took a look back on the CFP and lessons from its reform and from the Baltic Multiannual plan process. According to him, overfishing continues, the limits that have been set are still too high even though the fishing mortality has been reduced. European Parliament attention to these files is crucial. The majority (54%) of the 2015 TACs agreed in December 2014 were above the scientific advice.

Mr. Pim Visser, Chief Executive of VisNed, the Netherlands stated that the spawning stock of the certain species give a positive outcome, way above the MSY limits. He underlined the problem of the choke species. Quota management are always linked to the mix of species under same net. Landing obligation should be implemented to be acceptable, workable and enforceable.



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Concluding the hearing, European Commission welcomed the enriching exchange.

You can find the presentations from all the speakers [here](#) and the video recording of the hearing [here](#).

European Commission

European Commission takes action on IUU fishing

The month of October started strong as the European Commission **lifted the yellow cards imposed on Ghana and Papua New Guinea** for “significantly reforming their fisheries governance system”. Additionally, the European Commission also **issued yellow cards to 2 countries**:

- **Taiwan**

Serious shortcomings in its fisheries legal framework,

A system of sanctions that does not deter IUU fishing,

Lack of effective monitoring, control and surveillance of the long-distance fleet

Does not systematically comply with Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO) obligations

- **Comoros**

Has partly delegated the management of their fleet register to a private company located offshore

The private company’s fishing fleet operates in breach of Comorian law and is not monitored by the Comorian authorities

Shortcomings exist in legal framework, its system of sanctions, the management of fisheries

resources, and in monitoring, controlling and surveillance

The European Commission has given these countries a 6 month grace period to resolve the identified issues. If they fail to do so, the EU could consider trade sanctions on fisheries imports (red card – as is the case for Sri Lanka, Guinea, Cambodia).

Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries noted that *“Today's decisions demonstrate the determination of the European Union to bring important players on board in the fight against IUU fishing. Both Ghana and Papua New Guinea have taken ownership of their fisheries reforms and now have robust legal and policy frameworks in place to fight IUU fishing activities. I am calling on the authorities of the Comoros and Taiwan to follow their example and join the European Union in promoting legal and sustainable fisheries worldwide.”*

Also, **worth mentioning on the issue of IUU is the Communication on the key achievements of the IUU Regulation in the first five years of its enforcement (see it online [HERE](#))**. On this website you can find:

- General Information such as handbooks, information/technical/cooperation notes
- Notifications such as lists of 3rd countries/flag state notifications/designated ports/MS competent authorities (port + implementation of IUU)
- Legislation (Council and Commission decisions, amendments, press releases, implementing decisions etc)
- An IUU vessel list
- Administrative arrangements with third countries

- Exempted products

Seminar on “BLUE.INVEST – EU SUPPORT TO MARITIME REGIONS”

The conference on BLUE.INVEST – EU SUPPORT TO MARITIME REGIONS organised by EU DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions (CPMR) looked at 3 thematic:

1. MARITIME INVESTMENTS AND SKILLS AS A CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITY

2. TAPPING INTO BLUE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES: MARINE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MARITIME INDUSTRIES

3. BOOSTING BLUE GROWTH: MARINE LIVING RESOURCES

The sectors which were discussed were the Blue Growth sectors mostly, such as aquaculture, coastal tourism, marine biotechnology and resources, ocean energy and seabed mining. Present at the conference were representatives from various areas of the EU (Italy, Greece, Spain, UK, Scotland, Finland, France etc).

Amongst the speakers were EU Commissioner for Environment and Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, K. Vella, MEP Gesine MEISSNER (DE, ALDE), speakers from regional bodies, national administrations and other sectors.

The key issues discussed and raised at this high level conference were:

- The need to create “blue jobs”; to do that there is strong need for coordination of research, innovation and skills. The seas and its sectors, unlike land based approaches, need a cross cutting approach.
- The EU has a clear strategy to develop the Blue Economy and wants to fund

investment projects in this field with a goal to boost the blue economy (which will in turn create jobs and growth) but to do that there is need for investment, therefore it is important to convince and reassure the private and public operators to bet on the blue growth economy and invest in it

- The need for a better coordination between the existing funds (H2020, Strategic Investment Fund, European Maritime Fisheries Fund EMFF).
- The solutions to deliver blue growth come from continuous dialogue between regions, EU & stakeholders as well as a more regional involvement in blue growth
- The need for EU plans for development of Blue Economy not to follow a “top down” strategy but reflect the real needs of maritime regions (aka smart specialisation)
- The need to create more synergies and local clusters that will provide solutions and plans for blue growth investment
- Integrated Maritime Policy must include 5 goals; preserve ecosystems, diversified and sustainable maritime economy, attractive and recognized maritime activities, ambitious maritime territories, structured sea and coastline governance. These goals will have to be implemented at 7 innovation areas (e.g. sustainable food chain for a quality food, maritime activities for the blue growth) to ensure that blue growth is innovative and environmentally compatible

The 3rd session was more aquaculture/fisheries resource oriented. Apart from all the issues and points raised above it also examined how the

reformed CFP has led to new opportunities to add value to seafood products. It focused on regional strategies and initiatives supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and other European Structural and Investment Funds to generate growth and jobs in aquaculture and biotechnology.

A DG Mare presentation informed that 65% of EU requirements is imported whilst in EU 10% of seafood comes from aquaculture. He noted that the European Commission is following a “soft/holistic approach”; coordination of national efforts, reduction of administrative burdens, facilitating access to water and space (MSP will be a tool for this), improving competitiveness and promoting a level playing field. This can be achieved via Member States’ strategic plans based on strategic guidelines defining Member states objective and themes include streamlining administrative procedures, reduction of costs and building a product niche. This roadmap will need financial incentives (EMFF, H2020, etc).

EU is assisting via the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive, coordination workshop for national administrations, consumer information awareness rising and RTD via H2020. Regarding the latter, the EU strategy and goal is to demonstrate the innovation potential of seas and oceans, to seize the opportunities of integrated sea basin strategies whilst simultaneously engaging with citizens and society.

The conference ended with an intervention from the new Director General of the DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Mr João AGUIAR MACHADO, who congratulated the diverse presentations whilst applauding the innovation of the EU maritime sector and its willingness to evolve even more. He raised 3 key issues for the future; the national management plans, a very encouraging step from Member States; the

coordinated approach of projects from all interested stakeholders; synergies will be essential in promoting blue growth.

All presentations and video recording can be found [here](#).

You can find the presentations and a video recording of the meeting online [here](#).

Commission proposes Baltic Sea TACs and quotas for 2016



The Commission proposed this month the Baltic Sea fishing opportunities for 2016.

Find the full article [here](#).

The Council, during its Ministers meeting at the Fisheries Council in Luxembourg on 22-23 October, will discuss the Commission's proposals with a view to its adoption. If adopted, the proposals will apply from 1 January 2016.

Among others, you can find information on:

Herring:

Western and Central- Increased by 12% to 24 797 tonnes, 9% to 177 505 tonnes, respectively

Bothnian Sea- Decreased by –35%, to 103 254 tonnes

Riga- Decreased by –21%, to 30 623 tonnes

Cod:

Eastern Baltic- Decreased by 20%, to 41 143 tonnes

Western- As the Commission is still awaiting additional data from ICES, it has not yet proposed a quota for this stock

Salmon:

Baltic Main Basin- Increased by 10%, to a total catch of 105 850

Gulf of Finland- Decreased by -24% to 10 024 tonnes

Sprat:

Decreased by 14%, to 184 336 tonnes

Plaice:

Baltic- Increase: +18%.

Other issues

Conference on the Implementation of the CFP External Dimension Enhancing Collaboration between EU and Africa



In Las Palmas, Gran Canarias, on the 16-17th September, an international conference was organised by the Long Distance Advisory Council on the “Implementation of the CFP External Dimension Enhancing Collaboration between EU and Africa”. In that conference the following recommendations were jointly adopted by the EU and African representations:

1. We recognise the progress made with the latest reforms to the exterior dimension of

the European Union Common Fisheries Policy aimed at changing the emphasis from access agreements, inconsistent with the Development Co-operation Policy, to a partnership-based regulation that is more focused on the Policy Coherence for Development (PCD). Going forward, agreements must conclude in the mutual interest of the Union and the third countries involved.

2. We recognise the importance of fishing, especially artisanal fishing, for African countries given the important contribution it makes to providing jobs, food security and to the economy of the African continent.
3. We must remember that the essence of the partnership between African countries and the European Union should be the joint promotion of sustainable environmental, social and economic development based on transparency and the participation of non-governmental stakeholders, especially the professionals who depend on fishing for their livelihood. The conservation of resources and the protection of the marine environment are essential in order to guarantee sustainable fishing for future generations.
4. We must remember that the EU and its African partners have a raft of instruments for attaining this goal: Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements, the presence of the EU and of the African countries in the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and other pertinent international bodies, a strict and non-discriminatory application of national and European legislative measures (such as the regulation for fighting IUU fishing), EU-ACP trade agreements, development aid and investments. Recommendations of the LDAC



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The coherence of these policies for the sustainable development of fisheries in third countries constitutes an important European Union commitment. The trade agreements signed with third countries in particular should promote fair and sustainable social and environmental production conditions that are in line with international regulations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

1. Harmonisation of the conditions of access for foreign fleets to African waters to fish tuna, small pelagic and demersal species, with a view to establishing favourable conditions for fishermen operating sustainably and responsibly.

2. Improve scientific knowledge and the international governance of fisheries.”

You can find the full list of recommendations [here](#).

NAFO enhances the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs)



Overview The North East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) held its 37th annual meeting this year at Halifax, Canada. At this meeting, the 12 contracting parties (from North America,

Europe, Asia and the Caribbean, including the EU, France (with respect to St. Pierre et Miquelon), Denmark (with respect to the Faroe Islands and Greenland), the USA, and Canada):

- Expressed their commitment to protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems by banning all bottom fishing on seamounts in the NAFO Regulatory Area (NRA)
- Maintained its moratorium for catches of coldwater shrimp (*P. borealis*), also known as northern shrimp, in the Grand Banks
- Committed to developing and reviewing risk based management strategies, as well as the implementation of an ecosystem approach to fisheries management
- On control and compliance, it adopted measures based on EU proposals that will favour transparency in fishing activities
- Adopted Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for a number of stocks taking due account of scientific advice; e.g. for cod, redfish and witch flounder (grey sole) the TAC was increased (you can see the quota tables [here](#) or attached to this email).

However, there was no progress in the attempt to align NAFO port inspection rules with the FAO Port State Measures Agreement or in adopting a fins-naturally-attached proposal, a proposal presented by the EU to update the existing shark management rules in line with the EU ban on shark finning (supported by a majority of parties including the US).

Advisory Opinion of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) has published its Advisory Opinion (find it [here](#)) following a request from Sub Regional

Fisheries Committee (SRFC) (see the request [here](#)).

I invite you as well to read an article from the American Society of International Law providing an extensive analysis of the Opinion, its background, as well as the jurisdiction and substantive issues (see the article [here](#)).

The article, amongst others, states that the request involves the backdrop of the serious problem of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of SRFC members. Specifically, with most fisheries in the region fully exploited or over-exploited, IUU fishing is undermining the capacity of SRFC members to maintain their fishing industries and provide fish protein for their populations. The SRFC has expressed frustration over a series of violations of fisheries laws in the SRFC area, including the use of bunkering vessels to support IUU fishing.

In the request four questions are addressed:

- What are the obligations of the flag State in cases where illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities are conducted within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of third party States?
- To what extent shall the flag State be held liable for IUU fishing activities conducted by vessels sailing under its flag?
- Where a fishing licence is issued to a vessel within the framework of an international agreement with the flag State or with an international agency, shall the State or international agency be held liable for the violation of the fisheries legislation of the coastal State by the vessel in question?

- What are the rights and obligations of the coastal State in ensuring the sustainable management of shared stocks and stocks of common interest, especially the small pelagic species and tuna?

This Advisory Opinion from the ITLOS is of importance as it will be referred to in one of the paragraphs (PP25 of the draft resolution – New PP has been proposed to reflect issuance of the opinion) of the 2015 UNGA Resolution on Sustainable fisheries (negotiations expected to take place from 10-17 November 2015 in New York).

Sustainable Development Goals adopted

The **United Nations Sustainable Development Summit** in New York adopted the **post-2015 development agenda**, along with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (you can see all 17 goals [here](#)), and most importantly, for marine related issues, **SDG 14: Conserve and sustainability use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**.

Science

Deep Sea paper by European Marine Board



The **European Marine Board** published a position paper on **Critical challenges for 21st century deep-sea research**, *a pan-European platform for its member organizations to develop common priorities, to advance marine research, and to bridge the gap between science and policy in order to meet future marine science challenges and opportunities.*

The paper presents the findings of a European Marine Board working group that was convened to make recommendations on future deep-sea research priorities, taking account of the European economic and policy context. A key recommendation of the paper is that there are serious deficiencies in basic knowledge which can hinder sustainable ocean development and ecosystem-based management of the deep sea. In particular, a lack of understanding of the complex deep-ocean system including its biodiversity and its spatial and temporal variation, ecology, biology, physics and chemistry were all recognized as problematic. Major progress is also required in mapping the deep seabed, deep-sea observing, and understanding human impacts on deep-sea ecosystems. Barriers and enablers to meeting these scientific challenges in terms of funding, infrastructure and human capacities are also examined.

The recommendations are presented as eight high-level goals and associated action areas for deep-sea research.

You can download the position paper [here](#).

Upcoming EVENTS

| October 2015 | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 05-06 October | | 2 nd "OurOceans" conference | Chile |
| 06 October | | Understanding the EU's carding process to end illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing | Brussels, Belgium |
| 08 October | PELAC | General Assembly + Executive Committee | Edinburgh, UK |
| 08-09 October | FAO | Anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries | Vigo, Spain |
| 13 October | EP | Fisheries Committee | Brussels, Belgium |
| 13 October | EP Intergroup CCBSD | Marine Protected Areas and Fisheries Management | Brussels Belgium |
| 14-15 October | | EU and Law of the Sea Conference | Seville, Spain |
| 14 October | Waste Free Oceans | Guardians of the Sea | Brussels, Belgium |
| 20-23 October | European Aquaculture Society | Aquaculture Europe | Rotterdam, The Netherlands |
| 20 October | Institute of Marine Research | New frontiers for Blue Growth | Brussels, Belgium |
| 26-29 October | EP | Plenary Session | Strasbourg, France |
| 27-30 October | ICES | Targets and limits for long term fisheries management | Athens, Greece |
| 27-28 October | ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT | Workshop on "Monitoring, Control and Surveillance in African coastal states: an effective tool for fighting IUU fishing" | Morocco |
| 29 October | EC | Atlantic Stakeholder Platform conference | Brest, France |

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