



FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWSLETTER

MAY 2016

As the month of May has come to an end we enter the last month of the Dutch Presidency while we gear up for the Slovakian Presidency to take office until the end of 2016. All in all the month was full of events including the EU Aquaculture and its importance; the European Maritime Day, held in Turku, Finland; the Green Week, which brought the Webinar "Investing in our oceans"; and the resumed review conference on the UNFSA Agreement.

This month is also expected to be a busy, with the monthly Fisheries Committee, the 1st General Assembly of the newly formed Markets Advisory Council (MAC) taking place in Brussels on the 8th June; and 2 events organized by EBCD on the issues of Small Scale Fisheries and MPAs: I invite you to take a look to these and other events taking place in the coming weeks.

Despina Symons
Director, EBCD



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New briefings released

The European Fisheries Control Agency

Based in Vigo (Spain), the European Fisheries Control Agency was established in 2005 to support enforcement of the rules applicable under the EU Common Fisheries Policy. The Agency fosters cooperation between national authorities and coordinates the operational side of specific joint deployments of national inspections and controls of fishing and fishing-related activities, both at sea and on land. It also contributes to training, the provision of inspection handbooks and the promotion of best practice. It collaborates with other EU bodies and agencies in the field of maritime affairs, notably on the development of the EU's integrated maritime surveillance capacities. In the future, it may become part of a new European Border and Coast Guard capacity, an initiative recently proposed by the European Commission.

You can learn more about this plan [here](#).

EU-Mauritania fisheries agreement: New protocol

Of all the fisheries partnership agreements currently in force, the EU-Mauritania agreement is by far the most significant in economic terms. A new protocol, setting the details for implementation of the agreement over the coming four years, was signed and entered into provisional application in November 2015. Parliament's consent is now required for the conclusion of this protocol.

Read the briefing [here](#).

New fisheries agreement and protocol between the EU and Liberia

The first-ever EU fisheries agreement with Liberia and its associated implementation protocol were signed and entered into provisional application in December 2015. Their conclusion is now subject to approval by the European Parliament in a plenary vote.

Read the briefing [here](#).

The Discard Ban and its Impact on the MSY Objective on Fisheries

This is the reference document of the Workshop on "The discard ban and its impact on the Maximum Sustainable Yield objective on fisheries" of 16th June 2016, organised by the Committee on Fisheries (COMPECH) and the Policy Department B (PECH Research) of the European Parliament. It is structured in three parts: 1. The discard ban and its impact on the MSY objective-The North Sea. 2. The discard ban and its impact on the MSY objective-The Atlantic Ocean: The Bay of Biscay case. 3. The discard ban and its impact on the MSY objective-The Baltic Sea An Overarching report on the commonalities and differences of the three reports is attached.

Read the document [here](#).

Fisheries technical measures

The main strengths of the IA are its use of wide-ranging and apparently sound information from the external studies, meetings and consultations, as well as the cogent presentation of the stakeholder views and the results of the public consultation throughout the report. The IA appears to be well-illustrated by examples; however, they do not always facilitate a better understanding of the current issues due to their sometimes inconsistent and rather confusing presentation. The analysis of the various impacts on stakeholders and fishing regions is rather weak. In particular, the analysis of impacts on SMEs is brief, qualitative and very general, and might have merited a more in-depth approach. It is unclear why Options 1 and 2.1 were retained for further analysis since it is claimed that they would only have a limited contribution to solving the problems of enforcement of the technical measures. A more detailed analysis is provided for Option 2, which is the preferred option, in comparison to the other options, which might suggest that the apparent choice of options is not as broad as it may appear. Finally, the IA could have given greater insight into how the remaining technical measures regulations and the Commission acts would be affected in practice as a result of this proposal.

Read the document [here](#).

#FARMEDINTHEEU:

In a high-level joint event with the Dutch Presidency of the Council on 24 May 2016, Commissioner Karmenu Vella presented progress made and obstacles that need to be addressed in further developing a sustainable aquaculture sector in the EU.

The Commissioner launched "EU Aquaculture online", a one-stop-shop information source for businesses on EU rules and Member State's strategic priorities to encourage investment in the sector. Commissioner Vella commented on the event:

"While the EU only produces 2% of all fish farmed worldwide, when it comes to quality, it is a world leader: be it in product quality, in research, in environmental standards. Building on this quality, we need to continue our work to help the European aquaculture sector grow, including through improved business certainty and financial support. This will not only create sustainable jobs and growth in Europe, but will also contribute to improved food security for European citizens."

To check the presentations made at the meeting check [here](#).

Source: [European Commission](#)

A full report will be published in the coming days.

EUROPEAN MARITIME DAY

European Maritime Day is the annual meeting point for Europe's maritime community to network, discuss, and forge joint action.

EMD 2016 was organised in cooperation with the City of Turku and the Finnish government. It took place in an old locomotive hall called Logomo in Turku, Finland, on 18 and 19 May 2016.

Blue growth is here to stay, concluded the 1200 marine and maritime economy stakeholders who gathered in Turku, Finland, last week to celebrate the 9th edition of the European Maritime Days. "A sustainable marine economy is not a dream, it is a reality", said Commissioner Karmenu Vella in the Opening Session of the conference. "Across Europe – he went on - people are working hard on innovation and pushing boundaries". European Commission Vice-President Katainen listed a number of blue economy projects already selected for EFSI support, stressing the importance of new investments for all maritime innovations.

Since the launch of the Blue Growth Strategy by the European Commission in 2012, the maritime economy has been moving steadily forward, with various sectors striding decisively towards creating jobs and sustainable growth while safeguarding seas and oceans. The current 75,000 jobs in offshore wind energy are a case in point.

Investing in the Blue Economy was precisely the focus of the first 'Leadership Exchange' panel, and the best way to make investment happen is by working on the ground and mobilising bottom-up initiatives, who said that? . "Jobs – said Committee of the Regions president Markku Markkula - will come from local activities". The environmental dimension was central to many of the leaders' interventions: "*Healthy marine eco systems are the foundation of all we do*" stated Lasse Gustavson, Oceana's director for Europe. Moreover, being at the cutting edge of sustainability gives Europe the competitive edge for export. As Bernard Meyer, CEO of Meyer Shipyards, put it: "*The ocean is our market.*"

But there is a crucial prerequisite, and that is good ocean governance. Not just the Law of the Sea, which has been in place for 4 centuries, but something more: an interplay, in the words of Irish vice-admiral Mark Mellet, between governments, law, institutions, civil society and industry. EU policies and strategies contribute to streamlining that interplay: for example to MEP Gesine Meissner "*Maritime Spatial Planning is an important tool*".

"Now we need to move to the next level, and encourage blue growth more systematically", said Commissioner Vella.

Within the conference some twenty workshops and five thematic sessions discussed a wide range of topics: innovation, smart specialisation and sustainable solutions for blue growth, potential and challenges of sectors like cruise tourism and ocean energy, clean shipping and environmental technologies, the role of ocean governance, Maritime Spatial Planning and multiple uses of space, the importance of data and knowledge, marine litter, the importance of digitalization and connectivity, and the role of business actors including SMEs and clusters.

On the second day findings were discussed and reported back to a second 'Leadership Exchange' panel which comprised, besides the European Commission, representatives from Member States and regional governments, industry, civil society and the European Parliament.

The key messages emerging from the two intense days of debate include:

- Clusters are enablers that can connect good ideas – of SMEs and others – to industry partners and finance providers and help drive transitions to new blue growth activities
- Sectors such as ocean energy provide massive opportunities for growth, jobs and global environmental gains; we should not be discouraged by the challenges that are still outstanding, but should tackle them gradually and keep a long term focus.
- Ocean Energy also shows how important it is to prioritise strategic investments that provide returns not only in economic terms but also in terms of climate and environmental benefits.
- Access to finance continues to be a challenge. Policy makers have a huge responsibility to strengthen risk guarantees, cut red tape and ensure stable regulatory environments.
- Action at regional level has a huge role to play in boosting blue growth. The most advanced regions are systematically developing their transnational partnerships to maximise their potential and bundle strengths. This could be further facilitated through wider blue growth platforms that could turn the ambitions of these actors into concrete and joint investments.
- If we are to get a return from all the investments in innovation and infrastructure, developing skills is critical. It is hard to predict what future jobs will entail, so it is important to educate also for the 'unknown'.

- The element to emphasise when attracting capable and motivated young people to maritime careers is not just the purely technical interest of the profession but also the role of 'steward of the oceans'.
- Blue Growth can only thrive within a strong and reliable international ocean governance system, for which intense cooperation and stricter implementation and enforcement globally are needed.

In a parallel action, the European Maritime Day this year has hosted the photo competition #MyPortofTurku, organised by DG MARE. The wide participation (almost 600 entries) and the exhibition of the 50 best photos generated a lot of interest for the participants and the stakeholders.

The Commission thanked participants for their insights and will follow up on these conclusions. The conference's *leitmotiv* was that economic growth and sustainability are not in opposition, but go hand in hand. The integration of the two, through innovation and good ocean governance, will be the key to achieving healthy and prosperous oceans.

[Read more](#)

[EMD site](#)

[Press release on EMD 2016](#)

[Opening speech of Commissioner Karmenu Vella in EMD 2016](#)

[Photo competition](#)

Source [European Commission](#)

BIRDS AND HABITATS DIRECTIVE

The maritime dimension of the Birds and Habitats Directive:

On the 1st June the European Parliament's Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas Intergroup organized a round table entitled "**The maritime dimension of the Birds**

and Habitats directives" hosted by MEPs Ricardo Serrão Santos and Gesine Meissner.

The areas covered by those two directives constitute the *Natura 2000 Network*. This Network introduced a series of key elements in nature conservation related to the marine environment. This meeting aimed to discuss the maritime dimension of the Birds and Habitats Directives by bringing together representatives of the European Institutions, the private sectors involved, the marine research community and NGOs. Both, opportunities and constraints were discussed with the view of finding new synergies and solutions. It was also an opportunity to discuss the fitness check of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

The round table design allowed an open discussion with the stakeholders.

Europêche presentation focused mainly on the incoherencies in the implementation at national level, lack of clear definitions in both Directives, lack of data, disproportionate measures for the conservation of those areas.

The main needs are:

- Revision of Directive in fitness check
- Merge Habitat & Bird Directive
- Clarify indefinite legal concepts and terms
- Create clear rules for fixing conservation status and impact assessments

MedPAN: The representative pointed out that the management of these areas, which seeks primarily to reach Aichi Target 11, is very poor. Sites that are well managed have an important economic impact in the society around but these areas are only a few. More than half of the identified areas do not have even a management plan.

Seas At Risk emphasized the need for strengthening the relationship between Birds and Habitats Directive and the need to establish it as soon as possible a net of areas since it is relevant to implement the Maritime Spatial Planning. She also mentioned the bottom trawling as an activity that endangers the environment.

Birdlife: Merging directives will not solve the problem because the problem is the poor management and enforcement of the directives. It is necessary to focus on data, dialogue, information, mitigation measures. The Directives, if and when properly implemented, prove to be effective.

Green Week

Webinar: Investing in our Oceans: how to make it happen

During the Green Week 2016, held every year and organised by the Commission, took place on the 2nd of June and DG MARE organised a Webinar: Investing in our Oceans, how to make it happen aimed at gathering experts and tackling the issue of investments for Oceans.

This webinar covered the major ways to fund projects in blue economy and showed how to combine different funding sources.

A representative from DG MARE introduced the discussion underlining that oceans have a huge potential while reminding also the challenges to face, and raised the importance to ensure their sustainable use. It was also stressed that blue economy brings lots of opportunities for growth, jobs and development.

Making the Investment Plan for Europe (aka “Juncker Investment Plan”) work for you and for the oceans: Iain Shepherd, also from DG-MARE, presented the “European Fund for Strategic Investments” (EFSI) and the possibilities it offers to help financing projects in the Blue Economy.

Shepherd explained the 3 pillars of the JIP (Juncker Investment Plan), underlining the need to mobilize funds for investments.

- Pillar 1: To help large and small projects (especially for SMEs). EFSI is supposed to make an added value in topping-up projects which could not have other kind of investments, absorbing the possible financial risks. Energy (including wind farms) and transports (including ports) are the main supported sectors. All the projects are financed by the EIB group. He acknowledged that this fund is a good balance between energy, transport and ETS, while it can be used in addition to others EU funds.

Regarding this pillar, he suggested that the next steps will be collaboration with national banks, investments in aquaculture...

- Pillar 2: Making finance reach the real economy, creating a bridge between EU investments and the different projects through a project portal. He explained that European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH) is an initiative from the Commission and EIB which aims to strengthen Europe's investment and business environment..

- Pillar 3: Improved investments environment, helping the Member States to be more opened to investments and to have better and more predictable regulations at all levels.

Funding opportunities in coastal and maritime tourism: Dora Barreira Ramos from DG-MARE presented a new guide with examples of coastal and maritime projects that received support from different funding instruments managed by the EU. She started by stating that coastal and maritime tourism is the largest subsector of tourism and the largest sector of marine economy. This sector knows an increasing demand for recreational activities like sailing, diving or cruising. While being a resilient and very promising sector, several challenges such as gap in data and knowledge or increasing pressure on marine environment, were identified and have to be addressed. Taking all this into account, and the fact that the sector can be used for the promotion of blue growth in Europe, the Commission developed a communication plan to address challenges and propose a number of actions in order to give a new boost to the coastal and maritime tourism. The publication of a guide on funding opportunity for coastal and maritime tourism, using the synergies with DG GROW including some examples supported by EU funds, was announced. This guide can be found on DG MARE's webpage. Ramos added that coastal tourism activities can be promoted in lots of different ways combined with terrestrial projects. She concluded by reminding the audience that coastal proposals under the EMFF offer opportunities for stakeholders who want to promote blue growth in their regions.

Mobilising investment in the Atlantic region – the experience of the Atlantic support mechanism: Alex Chloros from the "Support Team for the Atlantic Action Plan", made a presentation on how the support team for the Atlantic Action Plan helps project promoters in developing their projects, get funding and finding partners through the stakeholder match-making database. He explained that the Atlantic Action Plan is used to mobilise funds in the Atlantic region and clarified how they make it happen:: outreaching an engagement of stakeholders, developing projects from a proactive approach, providing guidance to all relevant stakeholders wishing boost or develop their projects. Many stakeholders have registered in their database, including SMEs, high education organizations (universities), national and international authorities. The Support Team for the Atlantic Action Plan facilitates events, conferences, networking events and match-making at all the levels, but they also provide and disseminate information in funding opportunities for stakeholders.

Investing in Maritime Spatial Planning: Haitze Siemers, Head of Unit Maritime policy Baltic and North Sea in DG-MARE, presented the practical guidance on how to use maritime spatial planning to create offshore businesses. He broached the benefits of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) regarding the coherence in organization of maritime activities and named its 3 main objectives which are transparency, predictability and stability. He added that stakeholder involvement and ecosystem approach are important elements in implementing the MSP and stated that if well implemented, the MSP can facilitate investment and growth of

offshore maritime activities within acceptable parameters, including environmental objectives. He concluded explaining that maritime policy action is relevant on several fronts and records can be found on the DG-MARE website.

By **Léa Lebechnech**, EBCD trainee

UNITED NATIONS

Fish Stocks Review Conference

Last month in New York, the Resumed Review Conference on the Agreement for the implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNLCOS) 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UNFSA) held its meeting, where the key concept was to further strengthen the substance and methods of implementation of the provisions of the UNFSA agreement.

Amongst the key issues addressed were:

- **Conservation and management of fish stocks (including the application of precautionary approach to new and exploratory fisheries)**
- **Marine protected areas and reserves**
- **Data collection and information sharing**
- **Sharks**
- **By catch management and discards**
- **Development of best practice guidelines for conducting performance reviews**
- **Enhancement of participation of developing states in RFMOs as well as promotion of wider participation in the UNFSA agreement, including non-parties.**

Following lengthy discussions and interventions, an outcome document was discussed and adopted where most of the above were tackled and, inter alia, agreed.

The outcome document recommends further actions in a number of areas. One key use addressed was the conservation and management of fish stock, (with participants sharing a range of views including on the application of the precautionary approach to new and exploratory fisheries); marine protected areas and reserves, data collection and information sharing, sharks, by-catch management and discards.

The Conference also agreed to, inter alia, undertake regular performance reviews of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and develop best practice guidelines for conducting performance reviews and implementing their results, enhance the participation of developing states in RFMOs or Arrangements and promote wider participation in the Agreement, including among non-parties.

[Read the conclusions here.](#)

For a detailed outcome of the meeting as well as a brief analysis of it, we invite you to read the summary report of the meeting prepared by the IISD Reporting Services here:

You can find relevant documents to the meeting here:

http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/review_conf_fish_stocks.htm

EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE

MPAs: between the MSFD and the CFP – How to strike the right balance?



The EP Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development organises on the 23 of June from 09:00 - 11:00 an event on Marine Protected areas and their relation to the CFP.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

European marine areas and coastal zones require good governance to balance environmental protection with social and economic needs. Among the tools, policies and instruments the EU and its Member States can use to protect marine waters (e.g. Marine Protected Areas – MPAs) are two closely interlinked directives; On the one hand, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), which aims at protecting more effectively the marine environment while simultaneously allowing for a sustainable exploitation of its resources via an ecosystem based approach.

On the other hand the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSP) which ensures that human activities take place at sea are as efficient and sustainable as possible. To make it even more complex, the implementation of Natura 2000 at Sea is also part of this complex process.

In the case of MSFD, its approach cannot be implemented through one sector policy, it is important to ensure contribution from all sectors, since there is an imbalance both on the relevance between the inputs of scientists and stakeholders as well as between the various sectors covered by this Directive.

Fisheries, one of the most affected sectors by both the MSFD and MSP, and its policy (CFP) need to play an active role in an ecosystem-based marine management approach that will address a 2-way interaction; impact of fisheries on the marine ecosystems and impact on fisheries from other sectors (tourism, shipping, pollution, offshore energy, etc). It is hence important to provide cross-sector integration, as well as inside-sector contributions with all relevant stakeholders and actors.

The aim of this meeting is to further enhance the cooperation between Commission (DG Envi, DG Mare and other relevant DGs), MEPs and stakeholders in order to explore concrete and mutual ways forward.

[Link to event page](#)

Small Scale Fisheries in European Coastal Communities and Regions

An event on "Small Scale Fisheries in European Coastal Communities and Regions" is organised by the European Committee of the Regions' Commission for Natural Resources (NAT) in cooperation with the European Bureau for conservation and development (**EBCD**).

The purpose of this debate is to identify the actions that might be undertaken in order to assist small scale fisheries and small fishing communities in their transition to the future.

The policy debate will take place at the premises of the European Committee of the Regions during the afternoon session of the NAT commission meeting from 14.30-16.30, on the 27th of June, room JDE 52.

In order to participate, you need to register here: **SmallScaleFisheries27June2016**.

Registration closes on Friday, 24th June, 13.00, and on the spot registration will not be possible.

For more information, please contact nat@cor.europa.eu

Other Events

1. Seas in Motion - Activating the Atlantic Action Plan, 14 June, Brussels, Belgium

More information [here](#).

2. World Oceans Day 2016, 8 June, Paris, France

More information [here](#).

3. OCEANEXT Conference, 9-10 June, Nantes, France

More information [here](#).

4. 6th conference in Maritime Spatial Planning Worldwide (MSP), 23-24 June, Azores, Portugal

More information [here](#).



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