

Deep Sea Fisheries and Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems

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DSF and VMEs: FAO DSF Guidelines

An integrated ecosystem approach to spatially managing bottom fisheries in the high seas (bottom trawls, longlines, gillnets, pots, traps, etc)

VMEs

Criteria in the identification:

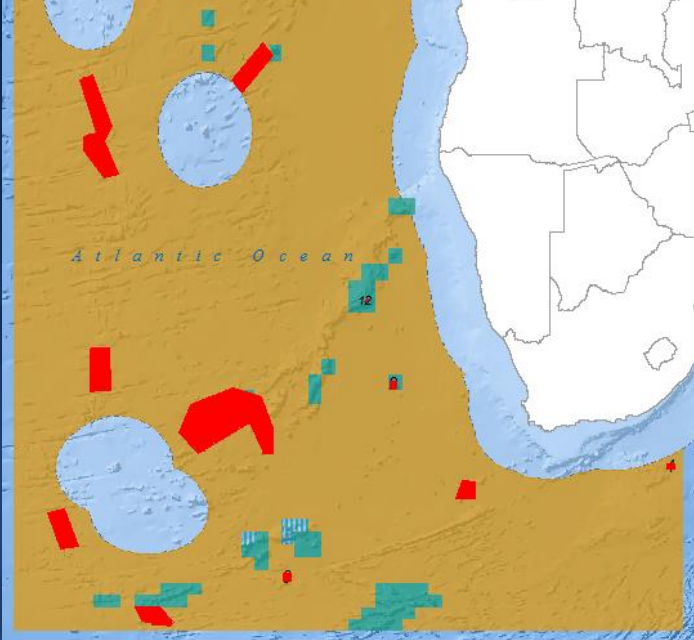
- Uniqueness or rarity
- Functional significance of the habitat
- Fragility
- Life-history traits make recovery difficult
- Structural complexity

Significant adverse impacts

Compromise ecosystem integrity :

- Impairs the ability of affected populations to replace themselves;
- Degrades the long-term natural productivity of habitats; or
- Causes, on more than a temporary basis, significant loss of species richness, habitat or community types.

RFMOs have

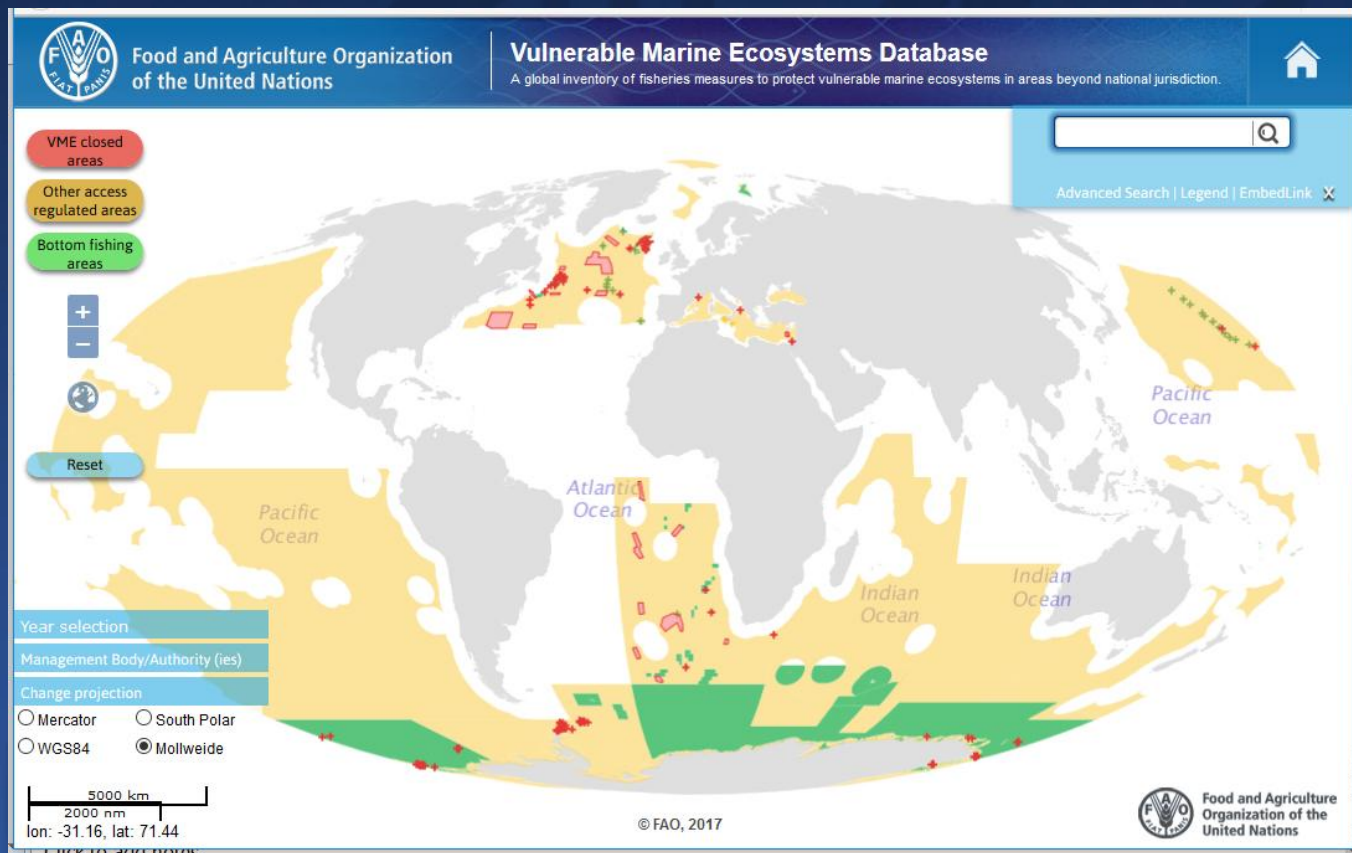
- Existing bottom fishing areas delineated
 - Exploratory fishing protocols (with impacts assessments) for new fisheries
 - VME encounter protocols (move-on and/or temporary closures) in all areas
 - VMEs, known or likely, closed to bottom fishing
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- The map shows the Southeast Atlantic Ocean (SEAFO) with various fishing areas and VMEs. Red shapes indicate VMEs, and green shapes indicate fishing areas. The text 'Atlantic Ocean' is visible on the map.
- Data collection and enforcement protocols improved (observers, satellite tracking (VMS), etc)
 - Institutional capacity for monitoring and protecting stocks and the environment strengthened (through States)

Spatial management in the high seas

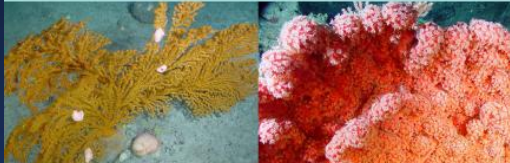
Existing bottom fishing areas

Exploratory protocols Encounter protocols

VMEs

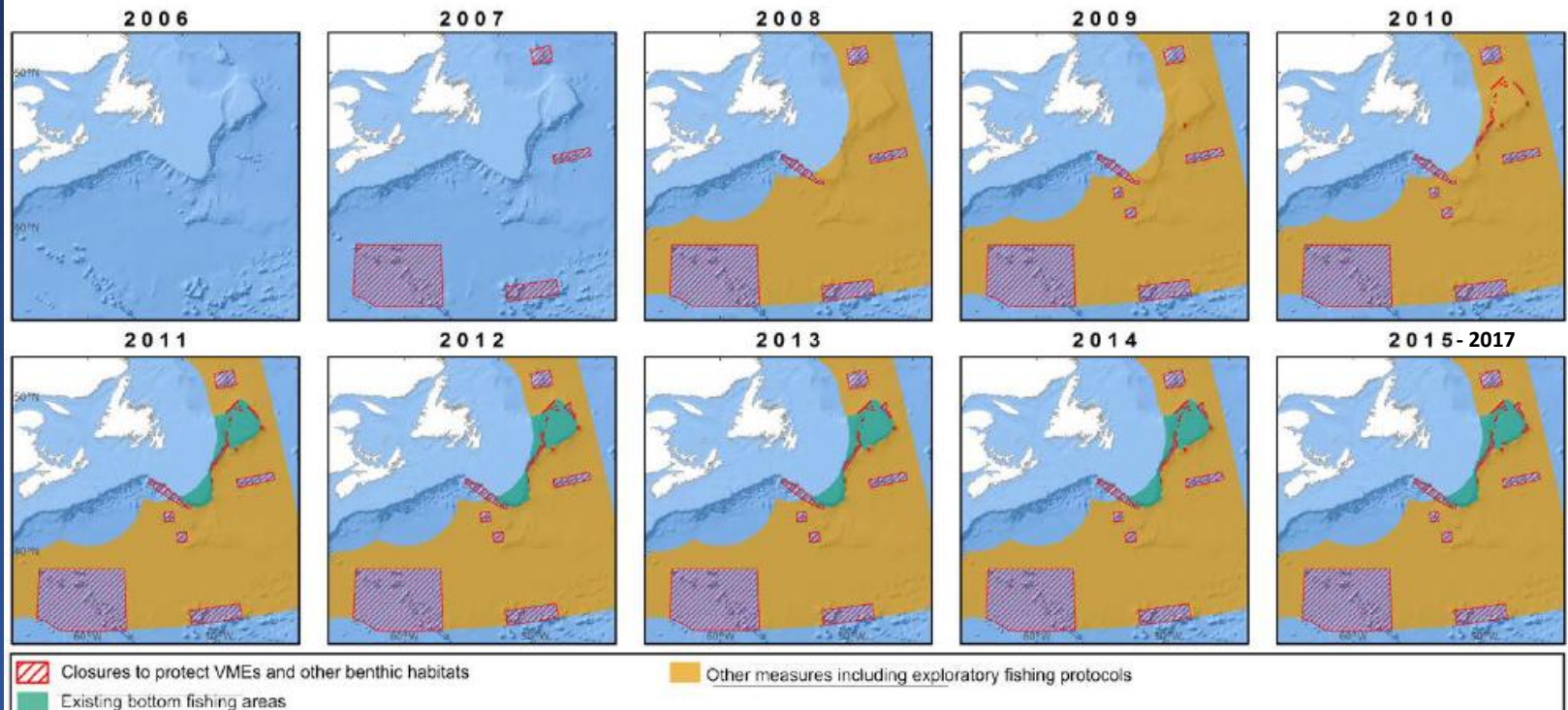


<http://www.fao.org/in-action/vulnerable-marine-ecosystems/vme-database/en/vme.html>



Integrated and adaptive measures to protect VMEs from bottom fishing

FIGURE 16
The evolution of spatial measures adopted by NAFO to protect VMEs and other benthic habitats. See Figure 15 for key



Deep sea fisheries in the high seas (ABNJ)

DSF are sustainably managed using an integrated spatial ecosystem-based approach.

VMEs are protected benthic habitats.

VME closures are only one part of the measures to protect VMEs.

The management of DSF contributes to
SDG and Aichi targets

Thank you