



FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE NEWSLETTER

November 2017

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European Union

Latest Official Journal Publications

Here are this month's Official Journal **publications** related to fisheries. Legal acts published in the Official Journal are **binding**.

Regulations

- [Commission Implementing Regulation](#) (EU) 2017/2178 of 22 November 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 468/2010 establishing the EU list of vessels engaged in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.
- [Commission Delegated Regulation](#) (EU) 2017/2167 of 5 July 2017 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/2374 establishing a discard plan for certain demersal fisheries in South-Western waters.
- [Commission Regulation](#) (EU) 2017/1973 of 30 October 2017 amending Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards official controls on fishery products caught by vessels flying the flag of a Member State and introduced into Union after being transferred in third countries and establishing a model health certificate for those products.
- [Regulation](#) (EU) 2017/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the common fisheries policy.

Position

- [Position](#) (EU) No 6/2017 of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets, and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1006/2008 Adopted by the Council on 17 October 2017.
- [Statement](#) of the Council's reasons: Position (EU) No 6/2017 of the Council at first reading with a view to the adoption of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets, and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1006/2008.

Information

- [European Fisheries Control Agency](#): Publication of the final accounts for the financial year 2016

Latest proposals, communications & other instruments

Here are this month's proposals, communication, staff working documents, decision and opinion from the European Commission, Council of the European Union and European Parliament:

Regulations

- [Commission Delegated Regulation](#) (EU) No .../.. of 21.11.2017 establishing a discard plan as regards **salmon** in the Baltic Sea
- [Commission Delegated Regulation](#) (EU) .../... of 21.11.2017 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1394/2014 establishing a discard plan for certain **pelagic** fisheries in **South-Western waters**
- [Commission Delegated Regulation](#) (EU) No .../.. amending Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1393/2014 establishing a discard plan for certain **pelagic** fisheries in **North-Western waters** (+[Annex](#))
- [Commission Delegated Regulation](#) (EU) No .../... amending Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1395/2014 establishing **a discard plan** for certain **small pelagic** fisheries and fisheries for **industrial** purposes in the **North Sea** (+[Annex](#))

Proposals

- [Proposal](#) for a Council Regulation fixing for **2018** the **fishing opportunities** for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, applicable in **Union waters** and, for Union fishing vessels, in **certain non Union waters** ([Annex1](#) and [Annexes 2-8](#))
- [Proposal](#) for a Council Regulation fixing for **2018** the **fishing opportunities** for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks in the **Black Sea** (+ [Annex](#))
- [Proposal](#) for a Council Decision on the **position** to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Ministerial Conference of the **World Trade Organization** as regards public stockholding for food security purposes, trade-distorting domestic support, including for cotton, export restrictions in agriculture, fisheries subsidies, domestic regulation in services, and SMEs/Transparency of Regulatory Measures for Trade in Goods

Decisions

- [Commission Implementing Decision](#) amending Implementing Decision C(2015) 5168 approving the operational programme for the implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in the **Republic of Slovenia** for the period 2014-2020 for support from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (**available upon request**)

- [Commission Implementing Decision](#) amending Implementing Decision C(2015) 1279 approving the operational programme Operationelles Programm Österreich - Europäischer Meeres- und Fischereifonds 2014-2020 for support from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in Austria (**available upon request**)
- [Commission Implementing Decision](#) amending Implementing Decision 2013/C 346/02 identifying the third countries that the Commission considers as non-cooperating third countries pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, regarding **Belize**.
- [Commission Implementing Decision](#) amending Implementing Decision 2013/C 346/02 identifying the third countries that the Commission considers as non-cooperating third countries pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, regarding **Guinea**.
- [Commission Decision](#) on the 2017 budget appropriations under budget line 11 03 01 ('Establishing a governance framework for fishing activities carried out by Union fishing vessels in third country waters') for the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Protocol thereto concluded between the EU and the **Republic of the Seychelles**.
- [Commission Decision](#) on the 2017 budget appropriations under budget line 11 03 01 ('Establishing a governance framework for fishing activities carried out by Union fishing vessels in third country waters') for the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Protocol thereto concluded between the EU and the Republic of **Kiribati** as well as for the implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and Protocol thereto to be concluded in the year 2017 with the **Republic of Mauritius (available upon request)**.
- [Commssion Decision](#) on the 2018 budget appropriations under budget line 11 03 01 ('Establishing a governance framework for fishing activities carried out by Union fishing vessels in third country waters') for the implementation of the Fisheries Protocols concluded between the EU and the Government of **Cook Islands**, the Government of **Greenland**, the Republic of **Liberia**, the Republic of **Madagascar**, the Islamic Republic of **Mauritania**, the Republic of **Senegal** and the Republic of **Seychelles**, respectively (**available upon request**).



European Commission

Events organised by the EC

► **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Info Day: A wave of opportunities for blue growth**

Almost 200 participants took part in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Information Day held on 9 November in Brussels. **Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu Vella** announced a publication of the new [Sustainable Blue Economy](#) call with a total budget of €14.5 million. This new investment initiative is one of the commitments made by the EU at [Our Ocean 2017](#) to further promote sustainable blue growth across the EU.

The call comprises 4 strands to support innovation and bring research results closer to the market:

- **Demonstration projects for the blue economy**
- **Efficient strategies and technologies against marine litter**
- **Blue networks for the Mediterranean**
- **Joint actions for a sustainable Blue economy in the Mediterranean**

The other objective is to increase capacity building and networking for a sustainable use of our sea basins. The call will support sustainable job creation, innovation and entrepreneurship.

→ Read more [here](#).

► **Horizon 2020 Info week**

The Research Executive Agency, the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation and for Agriculture and Rural Development of the EC co-organised an **Info Week on Horizon 2020 [Societal Challenge 2](#) 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy'**, which took place in Brussels on 14-17 November 2017.

On its last day, an event on **Blue Growth and Research and Innovation** was held. Discussions revolved around the wide coverage of Blue Growth's cross-sectorial and interdisciplinary approach to marine, maritime and aquatic research and innovation and its relevance to EU policies and to the blue economy. It featured examples of impactful EU projects and their uptake by different stakeholders including policy makers, as well as synergies with other major programmes and initiatives that contribute to the blue economy in Europe and beyond.

The programme included an overview of EU programmes contributing to Blue Growth through research and innovation; a session showcasing project portfolios on sustainable marine bioresources; a second session on project portfolios with marine ecosystems and food security focus; a final session on project portfolios on marine data and digitisation technologies.

→ Read more [here](#).

► **Seminar on the EU Landing Obligation: Progress to date**

On the 15th November, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries held a seminar on the landing obligation (LO), which was divided into 4 working groups (WGs). Each working group (WG) discussed the key issues associated with each of the topic areas and were facilitated by a panel of experts representing different sectors:

- WG 1: Choke analysis tool – Results and Implications

This WG reviewed the results and discussed the implications of the analysis of choke species using the [Choke Mitigation Tool](#) (CMT) conducted by a number of Advisory Councils in collaboration with the regional groups of MS and the EC. Discussions focussed on the types of mitigation measures available, who has the responsibility in applying them and how far the measures are able to resolve potential choke issues.

- WG 2: Control and Catch Reporting Issues

Landings of fish below minimum conservation reference sizes and *de minimis* catches reported by MS are low across the different regions. The comparisons between estimates from the available observer data and the last-haul analysis cast doubt on whether they reflect the quantities actually caught. Continued underreporting of catches is of concern as this could potentially increase fishing mortality beyond the maximum rate of fishing mortality (F_{MSY}), which may negatively impact on future fishing opportunities. This should also be considered in light of the forthcoming revision to the EU control regulation.

This WG explored the extent and causes of differences in catch estimates and how reliable catch estimates can be ensured so that scientific advice is not compromised.

- WG 3: Technical solutions to reduce unwanted catches

One of the primary objectives of the LO is to promote the use of more selective fishing methods and practices. Over the past few years and decades, considerable research into mechanisms to enhance selectivity has been undertaken.

This WG explored recent research from projects such as [MINOUW](#) and [DiscardLess](#) with particular focus on the transition between development, demonstration and implementation of selective fishing techniques, to explore to what extent these have been used by the catching sector and how to promote growth in their use.



- WG 4: Marketing Issues – markets for undersized and underutilised fish; failure to implement the landing obligation - implications for market access?

The LO represents both challenges and advantages from a marketing perspective. On the one hand, the LO should result in making available catches of undersize fish that cannot be sold for human consumption and fish that are presently underutilised.

This WG explored the marketing opportunities for unwanted fish, including an assessment of the volumes available and the policy constraints surrounding the marketing of unwanted fish. It also explored the potential impact of under declaration of catches on seafood accreditation schemes.

► Workshop on the EU Fisheries Control System

On the 16th November, the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries held a workshop to present the possible ways forward proposed to tackle the shortcomings identified by the evaluation of the EU Fisheries Control System. The discussion mainly focussed on the policy options proposed in the [Inception Impact Assessment](#). The Advisory Councils, European Fisheries Organisations and Associations and environmental NGOs were invited.

Discussions evolved around the following topics: monitoring and reporting of vessels below 12m, recreational fisheries, weighing, transport and selling, traceability, control of fishing capacity, data management, enforcement, synergies with the environment, and EFCA Founding Regulation.

TACs and quotas for 2018

Ahead of the December Fisheries Council, where Member States will agree on next year's fishing quotas in the **Atlantic** and **North Sea**, the EC presented its proposal for sustainable fishing by the industry. It also presented its proposal on catch limits and quotas for the **Black Sea**, following adoption of the first-ever multiannual management plan for the region.

→ Read more [here](#) (Atlantic and North Sea) and [here](#) (Black Sea).

Blue Economy and Sustainable Blue Growth

► Promotion of Blue Economy in Western Mediterranean countries

The Ministers of Western Mediterranean countries gathered in Naples to endorse and launch the Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in their region, a goal-oriented series of joint actions to make the common sea space safer, cleaner and more productive.

→ Read more [here](#).

► Unveiling the potential of the Outermost Regions for sustainable Blue Growth

The report "*Realising the potential of the Outermost Regions (ORs) for sustainable blue growth*" published in September 2017 presents the results of a study prepared for the EC which aimed at contributing to the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy in the 9 ORs of the EU and their related sea basins.

→ Read more [here](#).

European Maritime Day 2018

Check out the indicative programme of EMD 2018 in Burgas (31 May & 1 June), submit your proposals for a stakeholder workshop (deadline 30 November 2017), pitch your impact-oriented activities, ideas and solutions at our pitch stage in the networking village or apply to participate in the "Blue Bubbles", a session dedicated to young ocean activists and leaders.

→ Read more [here](#).

New opinion on Food from the Oceans

The High Level Group of the EC's [Scientific Advice Mechanism](#) has published, to the request of the EC, a new scientific opinion on 'Food from the Oceans', which looks at how more food and biomass can be obtained from the oceans in a way that does not deprive future generations of their benefits.

→ Read more [here](#).



European Parliament

European Parliament's plenary session

► Protection of coastal marine habitats: the case of *Posidonia oceanica*

In October 2017, **MEP Alain Cadec**, on behalf of the Committee on Fisheries, and **MEP Adina-Iona Vălean**, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety tabled a [question for oral answer O-000076/2017](#) from the EC regarding "the protection of coastal marine habitats: the case of *Posidonia oceanica*". This question was [debated](#) between MEPs and the Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu Vella during the plenary session. The EC expressed that they attach a very high importance to the conservation of *Posidonia oceanica* meadows, and is concerned as much as the EP about the unfavourable status and deteriorating trends reported in some of these habitats. The EC acknowledge that MS' efforts, as well as research work during the last decades, to increase knowledge on the status of such coastal habitats.

European Parliament's Committees

PECH Committee's meetings

During this month meetings, the PECH Committee voted on the following dossiers:

- Conservation of fishery resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures

→ The committee voted on the [tabled amendments](#) to the draft report.
→ The committee voted on the [amended draft report](#), and it was **adopted**.
→ The committee voted on the [mandate for negotiation](#) and it was **rejected**.

The EP's position builded on the EC's proposal which aims at **modernising the existing rules** on how, when and where fishermen may operate. The ultimate goal is to reduce catches of juveniles

of commercial and non-commercial species, to improve species selectivity, to avoid catches of protected species, to reduce discards and to minimize environmental impacts.

The EP has introduced '**performance indicators**', replacing the 'targets' proposed by the EC, to assess the effectiveness of the measures. In addition, the EC had proposed a 5% limit for catches under the minimum size as a target across all seas, but the EP has found a way to adapt the 5% threshold to all sea basins through regionalisation.

The innovative fishing gear, **electric pulse trawl**, would be permitted on a commercial scale without limitation on the number of permits provided that a positive scientific assessment is issued by the STECF after a 4-year trial period. This fishery would also be subject to certain technical conditions.

- **Sustainable management of external fishing fleets**

→ The committee voted on the [draft recommendation for 2nd reading](#), and it was **adopted**.

- **Management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention Area of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO)**

→ The committee voted on the [tabled amendments](#) to the draft report.

→ The committee voted on the [amended draft report](#), and it was **adopted** by a large majority.

- **Next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF): Preparing the EP's position on MFF post-2020**

→ The committee voted on the [tabled amendments](#) to the draft opinion.

→ The committee voted on the [amended draft opinion](#), and it was **adopted** by a broad majority.

PECH Committee's publications

- [Recommendation for second reading](#) on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets, and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1006/2008
- [Opinion](#) on the next MFF: preparing Parliament's position on the MFF post-2020.

Here are the latest fisheries-related briefings, studies and fact sheets:

► **At a Glance and Briefing on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing**

The IUU Regulation (1005/2008) is the core of EU's legal framework for action against global IUU fishing. Its primary objective is to prevent, deter and eliminate the trade of IUU-caught products into the EU. One of its key components is a multiple-step procedure for dealing with non-EU countries considered uncooperative in the fight against IUU fishing. The EC identifies non-EU countries that fail to discharge their duties under international law to take action against IUU fishing, and initiates dialogue with each of them. In most cases, the bilateral discussions result in the countries in question improving the governance of their fisheries.

→ Read it [here](#) (At a Glance) and [here](#) (Briefing).

► **Fisheries structural assistance**

Initially funded by the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG), the European fisheries policy was funded by the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) for 2007-2013, and is presently funded by the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), worth EUR 6.4 billion over 2014-2020. The EMFF supports fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing, supports coastal communities in diversifying their economies and finances projects to create new jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts.

→ Read it [here](#).

► **Copernicus – The EU's Earth observation and monitoring programme**

Copernicus is the European Union's Earth observation and monitoring programme. It has a space component and a ground-based component, and provides users with data services. It is a user-driven programme under civilian control, building on existing national and European capacities, and continuing the work of the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) programme. It is based on a partnership between the EU, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the EU Member States.

→ Read it [here](#).

► Pacific

The EU is the Pacific region's fourth trading partner, although the volume of trade is small in both absolute and relative terms. The EU is currently preparing to negotiate free trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand, which are important trading partners, and has a partnership with the 15 Pacific Independent Island Countries (PICTs), focused on development, fisheries and climate change, as well as partnerships with the four Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

→ Read it [here](#).

► Understanding Sustainable Development Goals

Two years ago, the international community embarked on an unprecedented common path mapped out in the comprehensive set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to which it had committed. Taking into account the high level of ambition of this new agenda, it was crucial to implement it as quickly and coherently as possible on all levels.

→ Read it [here](#).

► Implementation of the 7th Environment Action Programme - Mid-term review

The 7th Environment Action Programme (7th EAP) is the long term overarching strategy of the EU and its MS in the field of environment and climate change. It covers a seven-year time frame (between 2014 and 2020) and is the first to set a long-term vision for policy-making in the field, until 2050. This European Implementation Assessment found that while the EAP scope remains relevant to current needs and adds value to EU and national policy-making efforts, its objectives are unlikely to be fully met by 2020, despite sporadic progress in some areas. Another key finding in this document is that environmental and climate-related concerns are not sufficiently integrated into a number of EU policies. These findings were made on the basis of publicly available sources of information and views shared in the course of the targeted stakeholder consultation in support of this document.

→ Read it [here](#).

► Marine plastics pollution

On the 8th November, an conference entitled “**Marine Plastics Need European Action**” was organised by the EP Intergroup on “*Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Development*“, **EBCD as Secretariat**, together with International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (**IUCN**) European Regional Office. **MEP Serrão Santos**, Vice-Chair of the Intergroup, hosted the conference.

Plastic waste is increasingly impacting the marine environment and becoming one of the most challenging issues for global and European marine and coastal species and ecosystems. Growing scientific evidence and an increase in public awareness on the sources of plastic waste and their impacts on marine and coastal environments, demonstrate the need for more action at EU level. In December 2015, the EC adopted an EU Action Plan for Circular Economy. In an effort to tackle the issue of marine plastic litter, the EC has planned to launch its Strategy on Plastics by the end of this year.

The event aimed to support an ambitious European Strategy on Plastics that takes action to fulfill the objective of significantly reducing marine litter. An [IUCN report](#) on existing national and sub-national policies tackling this issue in EU MS, including recommendations in reducing marine litter in EU, was launched during the event.

Relevant decision makers and conservationists, including Commissioner Karmenu Vella and Pierre-Yves Cousteau, participated and contributed to the discussion.

→ Read more [here](#).

► Crime in the fisheries sector

On the 23rd of November, an event entitled “**Combating Transnational Organised Crime in the Fishing Industry: Global Challenges and International Cooperation**” was organised by the EP Intergroup on “*Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Development*“, **EBCD as Secretariat**. **MEP Ricardo Serrão Santos**, Chair of the “*Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services*” Working Group, and **MEP Alain Cadec**, Chair of the “*Fisheries, Aquaculture & Integrated Maritime Policy*” Working Group hosted the event.

While no international legal definition of Fisheries crime exists, such concept is used in this context to refer to a wide range of criminal offences (e.g. documentary fraud, tax evasion, money laundering, human trafficking, forced labour, organized criminality) along the fisheries value chain. Due to the transnational and organised nature of criminal offences informally called fisheries crimes, there is a need to combat them through close collaboration at the international level, which is also highlighted and supported by the EP 2011 Resolution on illegal fishing.

This conference gathered policy-makers and stakeholders with the aim to follow-up on ongoing and new international programmes to combat fisheries crime also highlighting results and lessons learned so far. Concrete fisheries crime cases will also be presented as well as the work of the EU in terms of fight against IUU fishing as well as the need to improve inter-agency and international cooperation for better enforcement against crimes linked to IUU fishing.

→ Read more [here](#).

► QR Code for Seal Products

On the 29th of November, an event on “**How can we support indigenous people’s sustainable hunt in the Arctic? The initiative of a QR Code for Seal Skin**” was organised by the EP Intergroup on “*Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Development*”, **EBCD as Secretariat. MEP Jørn Dohrmann**, in cooperation with the **Representation of Greenland to the EU**, hosted the event.

Two years ago, the EP debated the dossier on trade in seal products and the conditions for the placing on the market. As a result, a new QR-Code for seal products has been developed by stakeholders. The code will be able to effectively indicate that the seal product originates from Inuit hunting and complies with the conditions for the placing on the market in the EU.

This event was organised with the purpose of informing about this new QR Code initiative, while also ensuring dissemination of knowledge that it is legal (and sustainable) within the EU to sell/buy seal products within the boundaries of the Inuit-Exemption.

Representatives from the EU Institutions, MS, Customs, Retail sector and Stakeholders including a high-level delegation from Greenland with the participation of the Minister for Fisheries and Hunting, gathered in the EP to discuss and exchanged views on the QR Code information initiative.

→ Read more [here](#).





Advisory Councils

Long Distance Advisory Council

The LDAC published the following document:

- [Recommendations](#) in relation to Atlantic Tuna and Tuna-Like Stocks ICCAT Annual Meeting – Marrakech, 14-21 November 2017

Market Advisory Council

The MAC published the following document:

- MAC [Letter](#) Mr Machado - Combined nomenclature

Mediterranean Advisory Council

The MEDAC published the following document:

- MEDAC [opinion](#) on the management of coastal stocks- Focus on the main endangered inshore species in the Mediterranean Sea
- MEDAC [opinion](#) for a Multiannual Plan (MAP) for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Western Mediterranean demersal stocks

North Western Waters Advisory Council

The NWWAC published the following documents:

- A [management strategy](#) for sole in the Eastern Channel (7.d)



International events

► COP 23 and the Oceans

Oceans were higher than ever on the agenda of this year's 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP23) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, that took place in Bonn, Germany from 6th to 17th November 2017. Two main events addresses this topic:

- **The Oceans Action Day (11/11/2017)**

The event was organised, among others, by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO); Global Ocean Forum; Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO; and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). High-level delegates addressed the Oceans Action Day, such as **Karmenu Vella**, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs, and Fisheries, and **Peter Thomson**, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean and President of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly.

The event highlighted progress on the most pressing topics in relation to oceans and climate change, and reflected on the diverse efforts of the ocean community to identify and implement swift solutions. Participants heard lessons learned, examples, and best practices for replicating and transferring successful experiences on a multitude of ocean-related topics including: ecosystem-based management; scientific research; fisheries and aquaculture; blue carbon; migration; risk management; and financial mechanisms. Representatives from the UK, Finland, Honduras and Romania also proceeded to sign the "[Because the Ocean" declaration](#): towards ocean-related NDCs, joining 28 other signatories supporting the inclusion Oceans in NDCs

→ Read more [here](#).

→ Listen to Karmenu Vella's speech [here](#).

- **The EU Oceans Day (10/11/2017)**

This session reflected on the European marine science scape in and for climate politics by bringing together science policy and donor representatives from the EU and selected MS, representatives from the marine science community, an international civil society organisation as well as the UN agency in charge of the recently released Global Ocean Science Report. Based on short high-level expert statements, the existing funding mechanisms, expected scientific output production and key structural challenges in the match of marine sciences for climate politics were discussed.

Sessions covered the topics of:

- Ocean governance and climate action – a perspective from the EU, by DG MARE, EC.
- Ocean, Climate and the role of science:
 - Marine observation, data and information systems
 - Science and science funding for understanding the ocean-climate nexus
 - From challenges to solutions

Based on these discussions, a Science Policy Brief was developed as a contribution to the further development of the European marine science scape for and in climate politics.

➔ Read more [here](#).

► **Annual meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna**

The 25th Regular Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) took place in Marrakech from 14 to 21 November 2017.

During 2017, 4 species were subject to a full scientific stock assessment: bluefin tuna; Atlantic swordfish; Atlantic shortfin mako shark; and Mediterranean albacore. Overall **9 new Recommendations** by ICCAT covering relevant issues related to species conservation and fisheries management were adopted:

- on prohibition on discards of tropical tunas caught by purse seiners
- amending the Recommendation for the conservation of North Atlantic swordfish, Rec. 16-03
- amending the Recommendation for the conservation of south Atlantic swordfish, Rec. 16-04
- on a harvest control rule for the North Atlantic albacore supplementing the multiannual conservation and management programme, Rec. 16-06
- establishing management measures for the stock of Mediterranean albacore
- for an interim conservation and management plan for western Atlantic bluefin tuna
- amending Recommendation 14-04 on bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean
- on the conservation of North Atlantic stock of shortfin mako caught in association with ICCAT fisheries
- amending Recommendation 15-10 on the application of the eBCD system

The meeting saw an increase in the TAC for eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean **bluefin tuna**, following the advice of the scientific committee. The new approved **TAC for 2018** is of **28,200 t**. While a larger pie to share should have led to greater possibilities of consensus, the demands by those who already had a quota for a larger slice made negotiations tougher than ever, but in the end tentative agreement was reached on the quota share for 2018, pending further negotiations in March 2018 for the share out in future years. While 28,200-32,240-36,000 t are the TACs for the



period 2018-2020 for this emblematic species, the details of the new management plan could not be agreed, so most of the current provisions were left in place for a further year.

NGO criticised ICCAT for neglecting tropical tuna while the industry believes that the EU has not been able to strike a balanced agreement since, besides not having achieved the desired TAC increase, ICCAT did modify the quota allocation scheme among the contracting parties to the detriment of EU operators.

→ Read more from ICCAT's press release [here](#).

► Annual meeting of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

The 36th Annual Meeting of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) was held in London from 13 to 17 November 2017. NEAFC is the intergovernmental organisation responsible for fisheries management in international waters in the North-East Atlantic. Its Contracting Parties are Denmark, the EU, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation.

Here are the main outcomes of the Annual Meeting:

- **Conservation and management measures** for the year **2018** were adopted for a number of fish stocks (e.g. blue whiting, herring, mackerel, redfish and Rockall haddock).
- NEAFC renewed its Recommendation on deep-sea fisheries, but in addition agreed a Recommendation to ensure **fisheries for deep-sea stocks** not subject to other conservation and management measures only to expand gradually to allow for information to develop to assess sustainability.
- NEAFC received the latest scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) regarding the occurrence of VMEs in the Regulatory Area. In response to the advice, NEAFC has not only **extended the current vulnerable marine ecosystems VMEs** closures from the end of 2017 to the end of 2022, but also **expanded the coverage** of its areas closed to fishing in the Rockall-Hatton Bank. Furthermore it **extended the period** of the closed areas from the end of 2017 to the end of 2022.
- NEAFC continued to place great emphasis on action against **IUU fisheries** by adopting the UN's international standard for exchange of fisheries information.
- WGs related to the Allocation Criteria and the Framework for Coastal State Negotiations were established.
- NEAFC adopted **Guidelines** for **Coastal States Negotiations** in the North East Atlantic and a Model Framework Arrangement.
- The cooperating non-Contracting Party status of the Bahamas, Canada, Liberia, New Zealand and St Kitts and Nevis was renewed for the year 2018.

→ Read more from NEAFC's press release [here](#).

► Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The 69th meeting of the Standing Committee of the CITES (CITES SC69) met in Geneva, Switzerland from 27 November-1 December 2017.

During the meeting, the SC considered administrative, financial and compliance issues, including on introduction from the sea of specimens from the North Pacific population of the sei whale, and participants worked in plenary to tackle outstanding agenda items, including the cooperation under the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), with special reference to the scientific and technical evaluation of listing proposals for commercially exploited aquatic species, such as eels, sharks and rays.

→ Read more [here](#).

► UN Working Group reports progress on Second World Ocean Assessment

The Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole has transmitted a report to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) as part of its agenda item on 'Oceans and the law of the sea.'

The report titled, '**Report of the Ad Hoc WG of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects**' presents the group's work during its 9th meeting, which convened from 6-8 September 2017. The report highlights progress towards a second 'United Nations World Ocean Assessment' and outlines recommendations to the UNGA, such as to reiterate the need to strengthen scientific information on the marine environment to enhance the basis for policymaking and reaffirm the importance of the first World Ocean Assessment.

→ Read the meeting's report [here](#).

► World Ocean Council's Sustainable Ocean Summit 2017 – Shaping the future of ocean industry leadership

The World Ocean Council kicked off its 5th Sustainable Ocean Summit (SOS) - the unique global ocean business community gathering - in Halifax, Canada, on 29 November.

Under the theme, "The Ocean Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 14): Business Leadership and Business Opportunities," the summit focussed on ocean business community leadership in achieving SDG 14, and business growth and investment opportunities of ocean sustainable development. SOS 2017 also aimed to advance the development of SDG targets and indicators being developed with and for the Ocean Business.

→ Read more [here](#).



Others

► UN Launches SDG 14 Communities of Action

To follow-up on outcomes from its World Ocean Conference, held in June 2017, the UN has launched **9 thematic multi-stakeholder “Communities of Ocean Action”** from 27-30 November, through a series of webinars. The communities are meant to generate new voluntary commitments and support collaboration across the many stakeholders implementing the Sustainable Development Goal on the ocean (SDG 14 on life below water). The seminars address: mangroves; coral reefs; marine and coastal ecosystems management; sustainable fisheries; marine pollution; sustainable blue economy; scientific knowledge, research capacity and transfer of marine technology; and implementation of international law as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

→ Read more [here](#).

► FAO Yearbook of Fishery and Aquaculture Statistics

The [FAO Yearbook of fisheries and aquaculture statistics](#) is a compilation of statistical data on capture fisheries and aquaculture production, employment, commodities production and trade, apparent fish consumption and fishing fleets. It is structured into a booklet (containing summary tables, notes on major trends, concepts, classifications and a pull-out map of FAO major fishing areas) and a [CD-ROM](#) presenting the full yearbook package with all the key information and the complete set of statistical tables.

→ A list of all Yearbook issues is available [here](#).

► Ocean-monitoring sensor system makes waves

An EU-funded project, **SENSEOCLEAN**, has developed and deployed cost-effective **marine sensors** to monitor and provide a more **complete picture of the health of our planet's oceans**. Some of the sensors are already on the market and patents are pending.

→ Read more [here](#).

► Eurostat monitoring report - How has the EU progressed towards the Sustainable Development Goals?

In this context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the UN in September 2015, Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, issues the publication '[Sustainable development in the European Union – 2017 monitoring report of the progress towards the SDGs in an EU context](#)'. It provides a first statistical overview of trends relating to the SDGs in the EU. The report states that overall the EU made progress towards the 17 SDGs over the past five years but progress for some goals has been faster than for others. In the case of 4 goals – **SDG 6** 'Clean water and sanitation', **SDG 13** 'Climate action', **SDG 14** 'Life below water' and **SDG 16** 'Peace, justice and strong institutions' – trends cannot be calculated due to insufficient data over the past five years.

→ Read it [here](#).



Upcoming events

EU Institutions meetings

5 December: Council Working Party on Internal and External Fisheries Policy (Brussels, BE)

7 December: EP ENVI Committee meeting (Brussels, BE)

7-8 December: EU-Faroe Islands Consultation on Fisheries Arrangement for 2018 (Faroe Islands)

11-12 December: Agriculture and Fisheries Council (Brussels, BE)

11-14 December: EP Plenary session (Strasbourg, FR)

Events and meetings in Belgium

6 December: 6th Forum of the **European Marine Board**: Implementing the UN 2030 Agenda

13-14 December: **MareFrame** Co-Creating Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Solutions: Policy Day & Conference

International events and meetings

3-8 December: Session of the **Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission** (Philippines)

4-5 December: **International Conference on Ocean Literacy** by UNESCO (Venice, IT)

4-6 December: UN Environment Assembly (**UNEA3**): Towards a Pollution Free Planet (Kenya)

4-9 December: **Subregional Group on Stock Assessment in the Black Sea** by GFCM (Batumi, GE)

5-7 December: **AlgaEurope 2017** by EABA, the EC, and DLG BENELUX (Berlin, DE)

10-13 December: **WTO** - 11th Ministerial Conference (Argentina)

11-14 December: 21st Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**) (Canada)

13-15 December: **European Coral Reef Symposium** by the International Society for Reef Studies and the Zoological Society of London (Oxford, UK)