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REPORT

EFARO Seminar on the reformed CFP: An analysis of what went wrong, what went well and what should the next CFP look like

**Brussels, Belgium
Thursday 24th of May 2018**

1. Welcome

Jessica Demblon (EBCD) attended a seminar held by the European Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Organisations (EFARO) to discuss the reformed CFP: An analyses what went wrong what went well and how can we shape the next CFP.

Mr Bult, President of EFARO, opened the meeting introduced the theme. The CFP was first introduced in the 1970s and went through successive updates, the most recent reform took effect on 1 January 2014¹. A reform of the CFP requires an evaluation of the current CFP is needed.

The seminar covered some key topics introduced by a key note speaker. A summary of the topics is described below.

2. A scientific view on the present CFP: What went wrong and what went well and why?

Mr Degnbol (Adjunct Professor Aalborg University) expressed it is time to start thinking of the reform of the CFP and to start the process an analysis of the CFP must be done to know what could be done for the future.

The following points from the previous CFP's evaluation² where starting points for the reform of the current CFP:

- The sustainability of the fisheries (pressure on fish stocks had not decreased)
- Fleet overcapacity: the previous CFP had not delivered on the capacity of the fishing fleets versus availability of the resources

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/reform>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0163:FIN:EN:PDF>

- Imprecise policy objectives: resulting in insufficient guidance for decisions and implementation
- A decision-making system that encourages a short-term focus;
- A framework that does not give sufficient responsibility to the industry;
- A lack of political will to ensure compliance and poor compliance by the industry.

The CFP's reform was there to address those issues, and the current CFP saw changes such as the following:

- MSY introduction
- MAPs introduction
- CFP alignment to MSFD, although there are differences that are still not solved
- Knowledge through the industry: Some progress was made to try to move in the right direction but it is still a top-down macro management system
- Governance
- Regionalisation

Unfortunately, legally it was not possible to have regional bodies in the Treaty which would have any kind of competence. In addition, the CFP is still following a top-down approach.

He then presented the outcome of the reform of the CFP through the following graphs:

- State of the stocks in North East Atlantic and adjacent ([STECF 2016, p.25](#)), the Mediterranean Sea ([STECF 2016, p.29](#)), the Celtic Sea ([ICES 2016, p.4](#)), and the North Sea ([ICES 2017, p.5](#)).
- Evolution of the EU fishing fleet capacity between 1996 and 2015 ([EC 2016, p.14](#)).

He then highlighted some issues that need to be addressed in the following CFP:

- Landing obligation (LO) and discards: need to move away from the top-down approach.
- Governance: how can those processes be improved?
- Ecosystem-based approach: still need to work on it.
- MAPs: need to develop and adopt them.

3. A comparison of fisheries management in the EU and US/Canada

Mr Penas-Lado (Principal Adviser to the Director-General of DG MARE): gave a presentation comparing the EU and US fisheries management systems. The US system is a more flexible regime that contains a range of management options that take into account and allow for variation, while the EU system, for example in the case of the Baltic Sea MAP, requires amendments to biomass thresholds variation, adopted by co-decision by Council and EP.

The following table summarises the comparison made between both fisheries management:

	EU	US
Incorporating uncertainty in policy	Low	High
Scientific evaluation	2/3 (Atlantic/Baltic)	90% main stocks More money spent in marine research
F objective	F _{MSY} target or limit?	F _{MSY} limit (flexible)
B objective	Aspirational 'above B _{MSY} '	Above ½ B _{MSY}
Recreational fishing	Not included	Included
Overfishing reduction	Recent, partial	Longer, more complete; Distinction made between overfishing and overfished stock
TAC consumption	Relatively high but slight decrease over the past years	Low
Discard objective	Fixed across the board	Flexible
Discard reduction	?	Extremely variable
Impact of Advisory Councils	Low	High. They have the mandate to recommend on all topics.

Mr Penas-Lado then gave a personal view on “What is next for the CFP?”:

- Redefine the MSY objective? Food security dimension? A new time limit in the US?
- Moving to multispecies management? And to the ecosystem approach?
- Is the landing obligation working?
- Policy flexibility: more regionalisation? More guidelines, less regulations?
- A new role and structure for stakeholder consultations?
- Adaptation to climate change? The ICES’ ‘big movers’
- The Mediterranean problem
- Managing recreational fisheries?
- And finally: can the scientific community cope?

Mr Penas-Lado was asked why he did not mention the increased need for monitoring at sea, as in the US. Mr Penas-Lado pointed out there have been several attempts, but there is opposition from the MS. For example the exemptions to the LO, such as based on high survivability, are a political nightmare. Often there is still a lack of data to evaluate ‘high’ survivability. An engagement will be required to continue the data collection.

The representative of the **PELAC** highlighted the difference in structure of the ACs in US and EU and questioned whether having a policy maker in the EU ACs would increase the impact/policy acceptance of the ACs’ work. Mr Penas-Lado pointed out that the cooperation between the industry and environmental NGOs, as well as building bridges between stakeholders and MS has improved partly because of the ACs, but he did agree that the US ACs have a much wider scope.

4. The future CFP: Design, governance and implementation. What can we learn from the past for the future

MEP Linnéa Engström (Greens/EFA, SE) highlighted the importance of lessons learned. Where are we heading? What are the challenges to come? Climate change, a growing population and a decrease of resources are to be taken into account in future policies.

The scientific advice [Food from the Oceans \(2017\)](#) from the SAM expert group, which states that the short answer to the question “How can more food and biomass be obtained from the oceans in a way that does not deprive future generations of their benefits?” is “we need to harvest the oceans from a lower trophic level”. This means that we need to change our habits and eat: mariculture of filter feeders and algae; and improved management of fisheries, more selective fishing, and fish for food – not for feed.

The lessons learned from the current CFP are:

- The objective was MSY by 2020, but the EC shifted its position by adding MAPs for the Baltic Sea and North Sea which allow to fish above FMSY. This leads to less fish, less catches, and less profitable fisheries. Fishing below FMSY leads to much higher yield (cfr [SAPEA Report](#))
- There is an obligation to land but have not seen any improvements towards an increase of selectivity or fishing mortality.

Ideas from the Food from the Oceans for the future CFP are:

- Different ocean stressors could be included in determining fishing yield (MSY);
- Tailored taxation on fish catches;
- Food corporations should develop their public responsibilities for sustainable marine foods.

The representative of the LDAC agreed with the need for better control and transparency of the origin of fish products. The BSAC representative questioned what can be done to increase selectivity in the context of the LO. She also asked for an update on the progress made towards an agreement on the Technical Measures (TM) Regulation. Ms. Engström replied that only 1% of the funds allocated to the implementation of the LO had been used by MS, which shows a lack of political will at MS level. Regarding the TM Regulation, Mr Vella had promised that it will include common goals. If those were to be removed during trilogue, the EC would withdraw their proposal.

A reference was made to the lack of compliance with human rights in third countries in both aquaculture and fisheries sector. Although the IUU Regulation is a success story to control seafood coming in the EU, it does not target social rights.

5. How can innovation and advances in science & technology help in designing a better CFP

Mr Gerard van Balsfoort presented his work at the Pelagic Freezer-trawler Association and underlined the importance of building bridges between the industry and research, specifically, the need for research in the pelagic industry and on genetics.

Regarding the previous CFP reform, the introduction of the MSY approach had taken time to be accepted, but now is, although it is hard to apply it in certain cases e.g. mixed fisheries situations.

A total reform of the CFP is not needed, but he was in favour of a revision of the weak parts of the CFP e.g. Art.15 and mentioned the benefits of having cameras on board in the context of fisheries and by-catch control, and has been pushing for this within his organisation.

6. Towards new Governance: How can we achieve better coordination and integration across policies and sectors as basis for ecosystem-based management

Ms. Vera Coelho presented the work from PEW Charitable Trust. There has been slow progress towards meeting the objectives of the CFP; Ministers did not meet their obligations (e.g. sustainable fisheries by 2015 and by 2020 at the latest for certain difficult socio-economic cases, landing obligation, MAPs). There is also the issue of stocks for which we do not have MSY assessments. She deeply regretted the lack of transparency on many aspects of marine environment policies (e.g. setting of fishing opportunities and MAPs) and information in the public domain.

Questions were raised on how to increase stakeholder involvement at regional level, apart from increasing transparency. Ms Coelho expressed that ACs are very valuable and need to be maintained. However, they lack time and resource to further their research. The structure of the ACs (40%/60%) creates a division where one tried to impose his view on the other. She proposed to have more neutral AC Chairs.

In response to a question on how to go further into the delegation of power towards fishermen stakeholders and fishermen associations, Ms Coelho said that ideally clear objectives are set in a framework and then it should be up to the industry and experts to decide how to achieve those objectives.

7. Conclusion

An interactive board discussion took place around the question “The CFP will change: the most important topic we should discuss in our closing discussion session is ...” and participants were asked to rank the most/least important suggestions

- 1) Accountability
- 2) Ecosystem-based approach
- 3) Stakeholders involvement in decision making process. Links between the CFP and international commitments on fisheries management
- 4) Fully documented fisheries
- 5) Transparency
- 6) Alignment to sectoral policies (CFP, MSFD, MSP)

Mr Penas-Lado pointed out that all the top 6 suggestions made are supposed to be in place, except for fully documented fisheries. So either people are not aware of it, or we are not doing it properly.