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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
AND THE COUNCIL (COM (2020) 28)

**TOWARDS MORE SUSTAINABLE
FISHING IN THE EU: STATE OF PLAY
AND ORIENTATIONS FOR 2021**



- Overview of the progress made in achieving sustainable fishing by EU fleets
 - Reviews the socio-economic performance of the EU fleet
 - Balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities,
 - **Implementation of the landing obligation.**
 - Main orientations for the Commission's proposals on fishing opportunities for 2021
- MS, ACs, stakeholders invited to reflect on this policy orientations
- Provide feedback to the Commission by 31 August 2020.

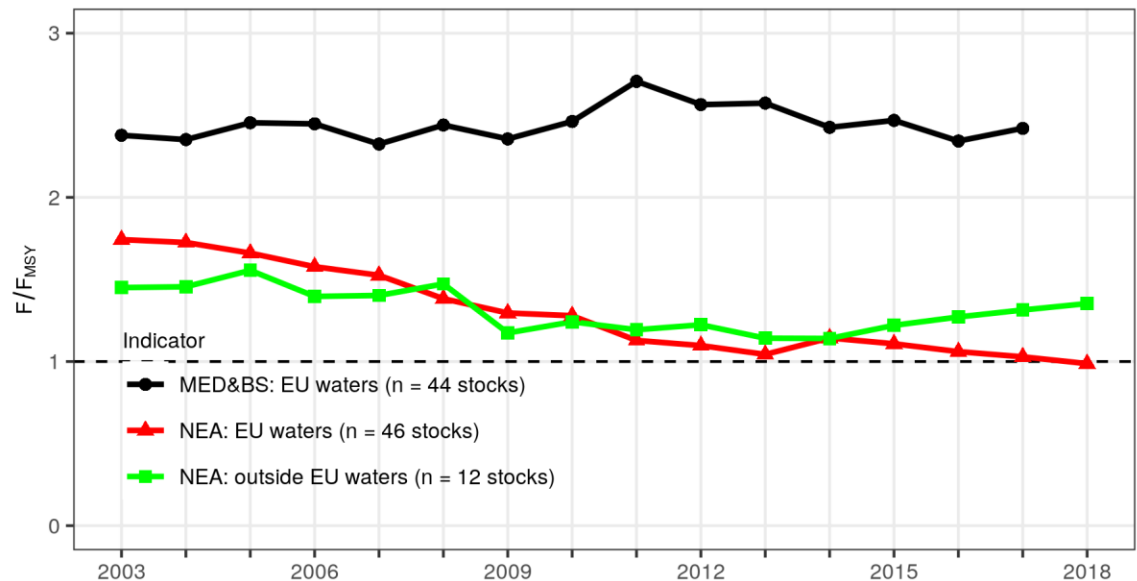
Progress in achieving Fmsy

- **Fishing mortality indicator (F/Fmsy) for the Mediterranean remained at a very high level for the entire 2003-2017 period. Since 2011 (highest historical level) the value of F/Fmsy has remained at around 2.4.**
- **This indicates that the stocks are being exploited on average at rates well above the sustainability objective of the common fisheries policy.**

47 stocks assessed in 2016; information only available for 21 stocks in 2018.

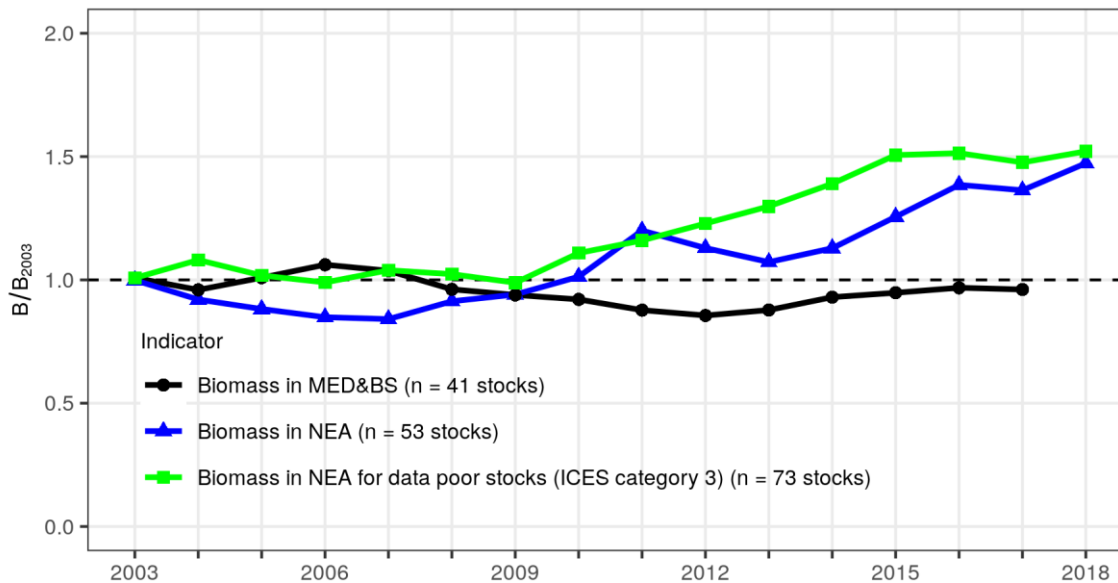
This reduced availability of data makes historical comparisons difficult

Figure 2. Trends in fishing pressure (northeast Atlantic area and Mediterranean and Black Seas), 2003 - 2018



- In the Mediterranean sea situation remained essentially unchanged since 2003, although since 2012 there may have been a slight increase in biomass. STECF notes, however, large uncertainty surrounding this indicator.

Figure 7. Trends in the indicators of stock biomass



For the Mediterranean sea, vigorous conservation efforts also clearly need to continue, notably with the implementation of the Western Mediterranean MAP and the many actions taken to deliver on the MedFish4Ever and Sofia Declarations, such as the GFCM Adriatic multiannual plan for demersal fisheries adopted in 2019.

- **Number of vessels, GT and KW in the EU fleet continue to decrease.**
- **Capacity of the EU fleet overall remains below the fishing capacity ceilings, but a significant number of fleet segments likely not to be in balance with the fishing opportunities available**
- **Economic performance of the EU fleet continued to be very good. Continued improvements in performance were mainly the result of some important stocks improving, average fish prices being high (more value for fewer fish landed) and fuel prices remaining low.**
- **Significant differences across the different EU fishing regions persist, being the Baltic, the Mediterranean and Black Sea those with lower profitability levels**
- **Total employment in the EU fleet in full time equivalents (FTE) has been decreasing on average by 1.2% per year since 2008, partly due to the decrease in the fleet's capacity.**
- **Average FTE wage (average annual FTE wage is EUR 25 000) has been increasing by 2.5% per year.**



Projections for the economic performance of the EU fleet in 2020 remain highly uncertain so far due to the combined effects of the decline in demand and the disruption of supply chains resulting from the COVID-19 health crisis.

- **Compliance in general still appears to be low**
- Overall it appears that LO continues to have a low impact on Member States and the fishing industry
- **Full implementation is still some way off from being achieved in all sea basins.**
- **Member States must put more focus on control and enforcement.**

Major concerns:

- Lack of accurate reporting by most countries of the amount of discarded fish under exemptions allowed
 - Very low volumes of fish below MCRS being landed
 - **Difficulties in monitoring such catches by MS**
- Control of the landing obligation remains a challenge
- Efforts needed to increase the selectivity in fishing gear and techniques.



EC will continue working with the co-legislators to reach an agreement on the revised fisheries control system

Objectives of the fishing opportunities proposals for 2021

While the poor status of some stocks is also the result of other anthropogenic factors (such as climate change and pollution), which have to be addressed, fishing pressure on such stocks still needs to be limited.

EC, together with scientists, is stepping up the work on fisheries ecosystems, with the aspiration of integrating those elements into fisheries management.

- **Implementation of the Western Mediterranean MAP in 2021: further efforts to achieve reductions in light of the MAP's objective of achieving Fmsy in the area by 2025 at the latest**
- **Implementation of GFCM measures already in force, including the ones adopted in 2019, such as the multiannual plan for demersal stocks in the Adriatic, as well as the Adriatic emergency measures for small pelagic species, measures for eels**

Stakeholders will also have the opportunity to make recommendations on fishing opportunities through their respective advisory councils and Member States.

EC aims to adopt proposals for Mediterranean and Black Seas in September, to be discussed in November Council

In 2019, the 10 advisory councils submitted 72 recommendations to the Commission, versus 73 in 2018.

Figure 2. Recommendations received from each advisory council

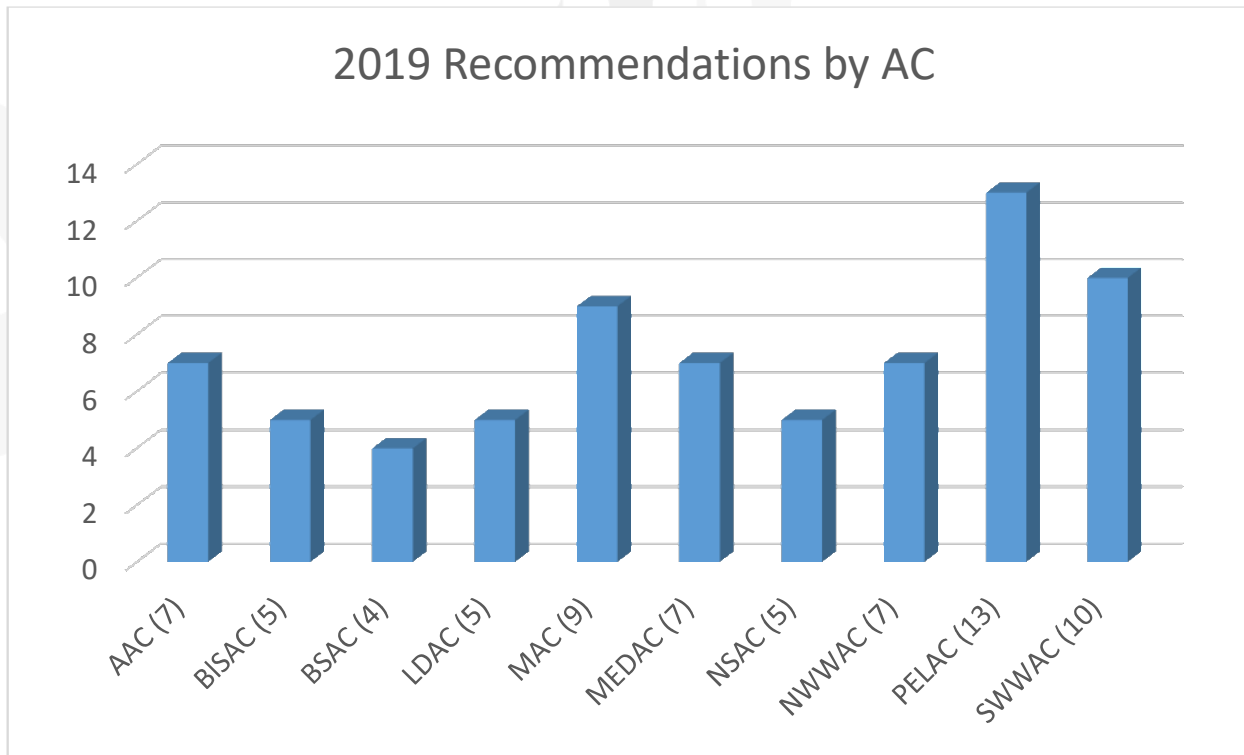
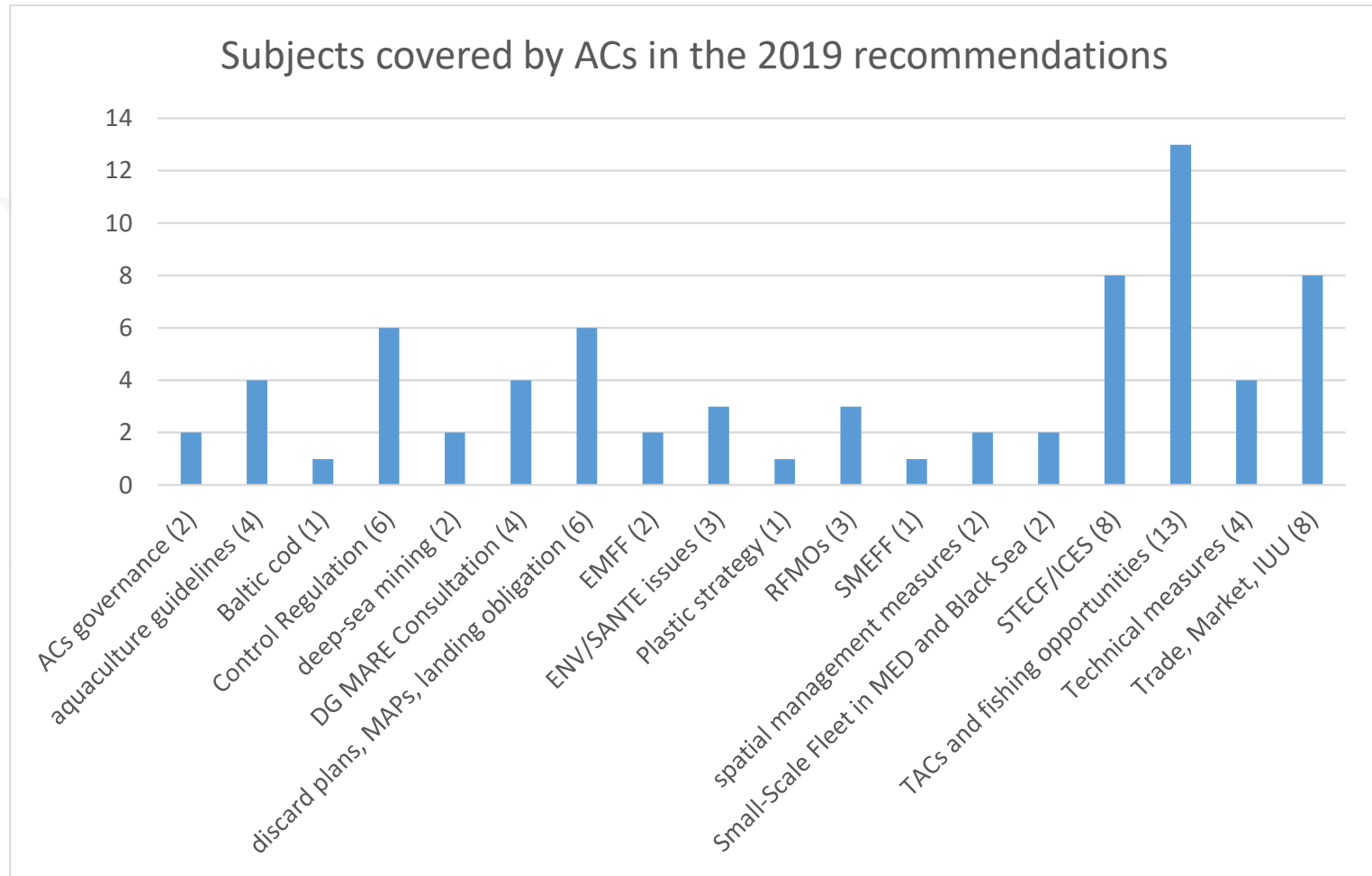


Figure 1. Number of recommendations received from advisory councils



Healthy fish stocks continue to help boost the economic performance of the EU fleet, although the economic performance of the EU fleet in 2020 remains uncertain due to the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis.

Bringing stocks to sustainable levels, by managing them at maximum sustainable yield by 2020 and beyond and eliminating discards, is the primary objective of the common fisheries policy and remains a priority.

The situation in the Mediterranean and Black Seas remains a cause for concern, and further concerted efforts are required.

The Commission will work closely with all stakeholders to implement the Western Mediterranean MAP.

The Commission's biodiversity strategy and farm-to-fork strategy highlight the need for sustainable fisheries and lists concrete actions to be taken by the Commission to ensure that negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem are minimised.

Member States, advisory councils, stakeholders and the public are invited to consider the policy orientations set out in this Communication and to provide feedback to the Commission by 31 August 2020.



Thanks for your
attention!