



## ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

17 September 2014, Vigo

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Participants

**Advisory Board Representatives:** Mr Reine J. Johansson (BSAC), Mr José M. Beltrán (PELAGIC AC, SWWAC, NWWAC), Mr Antonio Cabral (LDAC), Ms Caroline Mangalo (MEDAC).

**EFCA:** Mr Pascal Savouret (ED), Mr Pedro Galache (HoU C), Ms Karin Hermansson (HoU B), Ms Clara E. Fernández (PO) and Ms María Coronado (Unit B, Executive Assistant).

#### **Approval of the Agenda:**

The ED welcomed the participants and explained the difficulties to fix the meeting day during a different period. The agenda was approved without any amendment.

#### **1. Introductory remarks:**

- ACs: state of play
- EFCA: latest developments

The ED gave the floor to the Advisory Board representatives.

The representative of the BSAC highlighted the lack of dialogue and pointed out that there are many uncertainties on the implementation of the new CFP Regulation, namely on the landing obligation (e.g. mesh size, landing ports, etc.). The BSAC representative mentioned that the authorities are waiting for instructions from Brussels on how to implement the landing obligation from 1 January 2015. He remarked that the date for the landing obligation is approaching and the sector has not been neither invited to discuss nor informed on how the new Regulation will be enforced and which steps to follow. The representative of the BSAC called for the need to lay down implementing rules for the landing obligation.

The lack of trustable statistics for assessment was pointed out. The BSAC representative commented that in the Baltic the data are mixed (East and West) and the catch composition has dramatically changed.

The representative of the BSAC asked EFCA to promote the dialogue among the concerned parties. He highlighted the need to discuss on control issues and stated that the enforcement of the control system of the landing obligation calls for a mechanism, but that mechanism is not yet built. He called for a trilogue between Member States, the Commission and the industry.

The representative of the BSAC wondered how fishermen could do to overcome the problem with the mesh size and remarked that the discard ban cannot be solved with Bacoma or T-90; therefore, fishermen need advice on how to avoid discard and assure their quota.

The ED mentioned that the Agency was opened to organise regional workshops/seminars with the Advisory Councils (ACs) and to hold a constructive dialogue in order to propose enforceable rules; however, he reminded that the Agency mandate is the one stated in its founding Regulation, thus to coordinate and assist MS. The ED mentioned that the next Administrative Board meeting will provide the opportunity to address the organisation of the regional workshops/seminars. The ED asked whether the industry in the Baltic would support a revision of the technical measures and what the most effective gear for the Baltic would be.

The representative of the BSAC thanked the ED for his proposal and reminded that there was not much time left. He mentioned the different mesh sizes used in the Baltic and the need to clearly clarify which ones would be suitable.

The LDAC representative mentioned Article 15 (2) of the CFP Regulation and drew the attention to the high competition among fleets in international/third countries waters. He raised some concerns regarding market, commercial and trade issues in third countries. He commented that NGO's are concerned about the implementation of the landing obligation vis-à-vis third countries, as it could place the international fleet under unfair competition conditions. The LDAC representative highlighted that the Regional Fisheries Management organisations (RFMOs) have their own rules and, according to Article 15 (2), these would prevail over EU rules. He commented that NAFO and NEAFC have very strict rules on catch composition, and called to consider the differences between different fisheries grounds and species.

The HoU C pointed that according to Article 15 (2) of the CFP the Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts, therefore to clarify to which species managed by the RFMOs the landing obligation will not be applied to.

The LDAC representative mentioned that the economic impact to be faced by the industry should be considered, especially the case of EU fleets competing in the international arena with fleets not following the same rules, and asked if compensating measures would be put in place.

The LDAC representative highlighted that building trust in the process is the way to avoid any gaps between the civil servants and the sector, thus to make the sector co-owners. He pointed out that there are technical issues affecting the implementation that are not laid down in the regulation and require to be addressed. The LDAC asked whether it would be possible to share with EFCA any doubts that may arise, this would improve the trust in the management bodies.

The PELAGIC AC, SWWAC and NWWAC representative took the floor and explained that they have had several meetings and fishermen are very worried, as the AC has no instructions on how to proceed from 2015 onwards. In the NWW and SWW they are starting to review and implement some programmes including the draft of a discard Atlas.

The ED pointed out the will of EFCA for a constructive dialogue with the Advisory Councils and highlighted that the Agency works within the framework of the Joint Deployment Plans, keeping the MS abreast.

The representative of the MEDAC mentioned that in the Mediterranean there were significant differences between the countries and areas. Therefore, fisheries organisation and NGOs have proposed some recommendations to MS, and the MEDAC members endorsed this idea. For the time being they are waiting for the discard plans (delegated act from the Commission). The MEDAC representative showed her concern about the risk of an increase of the black market for small fish. She drew the attention about the shared resources with third countries in the

Mediterranean Sea. In this respect the situation would be like in the LDAC, thus the different rules applied by different countries could negatively affect the resources and the fair competition. Last but not least, she pointed out the lack of information available to the fishermen.

The ED noticed that the MEDAC documents reflected different positions depending on the areas. He explained that EFCA is involved in the Adriatic and the coordination is running smoothly. The ED asked the MEDAC representative if they had any comments on the Bluefin tuna campaign for 2014.

The MEDAC representative mentioned that additional information would be provided during the next MEDAC meeting.

The LDAC representative referred to Article 15 of the CFP Regulation and the lack of clarity on how fisheries are defined, and the need for a clear interpretation, thus to define the catch rate of the species in the catch composition to define a fishery.

The HoU C mentioned that this should be fixed by the discard plan.

The LDAC representative pointed out that the lack of clarity poses important questions e.g. regarding the bottom gear for the trawlers.

The HoU C took the floor to make a presentation on the landing obligation. He informed that EFCA is working on a landing obligation project to monitor compliance in the different EU regional areas, identify gaps in the information and provide the Fisheries Monitoring Centre, and if possible the inspectors, with a tool-box to identify where discards are expected in a determined fishery.

The HoU C pointed out the importance to raise awareness on the obligation to record discards and its importance on the implementation of the future obligation to land all catches. In this respect, the support of the Advisory Councils is crucial. EFCA has published a communication in its website; the communication has been translated in French, Italian and Spanish to be distributed to the Advisory Councils; a brochure for distribution among fishermen is being designed.

The ED pointed out that the main driver is the risk management strategy, bringing more and more intelligence to the matrix.

The representative of the BSAC mentioned that the actions presented by the EFCA were appreciated, however he pointed out that the main issue was the absence of a balanced quota for all fishermen, thus some Member States do not even have an ITQ system. He highlighted that it should be discussed country by country and fisheries by fisheries, e.g. in the North Sea there will be different rules, depending on the fisheries ground, EU or Norwegian; in this respect it should also be considered that Norway is fishing in EU waters.

The ED took note of the comments provided by the BSAC representative and mentioned that the topic would be brought up in the next meeting with the European Commission.

The representative of the BSAC pointed out the importance to set a common frame of rules for everybody and to reflect it in the bilateral agreement. He also highlighted that common stocks should have a specific working group.

## **2. Exchange of views: implementation of the EFCA Annual work programme 2014**

The ED and the Heads of Unit presented a PowerPoint on the implementation of the Annual work programme 2014.

The HoU B highlighted that the Core Curricula provides a common basis for level playing field enhancement, and reminded that the module on the Core Curricula at sea was available at OPOCE.

The representative of the BSAC asked for information about EFCA activities in Morocco.

The ED mentioned that the Agency had organised two workshops in the framework of the Mediterranean (ICCAT), one in 2012 and one in March 2014, where some third countries of the Mediterranean were invited. The ED pointed out that activities regarding cooperation with third countries are subject to Commission request.

### **3. Exchange of views: Provisional Multiannual work programme 2015-2019 & Annual work programme 2015**

The ED and the Heads of Unit presented a PowerPoint on the draft Multiannual work programme 2015-2019 & Annual work programme 2015.

It was explained that a seminar with Member States was organised by the Agency in June 2014 to discuss on new services to be provided by the Agency considering budgetary and human resources constraints. Thus, EFCA is facing new tasks assignment without extra resources. In this regard, a new strategy will be proposed during the next Administrative Board meeting.

The representative of the BSAC asked whether EFCA is officially invited to NEAFC.

The ED explained that the Agency attends NEAFC meetings on control. EFCA is part of the EU delegation providing support to the Commission.

The Head of Unit C pointed out that EFCA officials participate in NEAFC campaigns.

The LDAC representative asked to pass to the national administrations the message of being closer to fisheries communities, building trust is crucial to get people on board. He pointed out that EFCA training should get closer to the industry.

The BSAC representative supported what stated by the LDAC representative and underlined the urgent need to approach the fishermen so that they are informed and feel involved.

The ED pointed out that the dialogue should be through the Advisory Board and not through the individual associations. The ED mentioned that for the time being the Agency could not train the industry as it is not laid down in its founding regulation but that the Administrative Board might decide otherwise.

The Pelagic AC, SWWAC and NWWAC representative asked for clarification about the concept referred to the catch certificate.

The HoU B pointed out that the same catch certificate can be used to support the import of fisheries products in different Members States, as the total quantity in the catch certificate can be split in different imports, hence it is essential to track down how many times the certificate is used in the Member States and to cross check data.

### **4. Rotation of the Advisory Board representative in the EFCA Administrative Board**

The PO reminded that under the current rotation term the Advisory Board is represented in the Administrative Board by the LDAC. The next meeting of the Administrative Board will take place in Vigo, on 17 October 2014.

It was pointed out that the new Advisory Councils will be incorporated to the rotation of the Advisory Board representative once they are established.

**5. AOB**

Closure of the meeting at 13h55.