



WWF

REPORT

EU

2012

STOP BANKRUPTING OUR OCEANS

How to improve the way the EU fishes in the world



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65%

EU imports 65% of the fish products available in its internal market



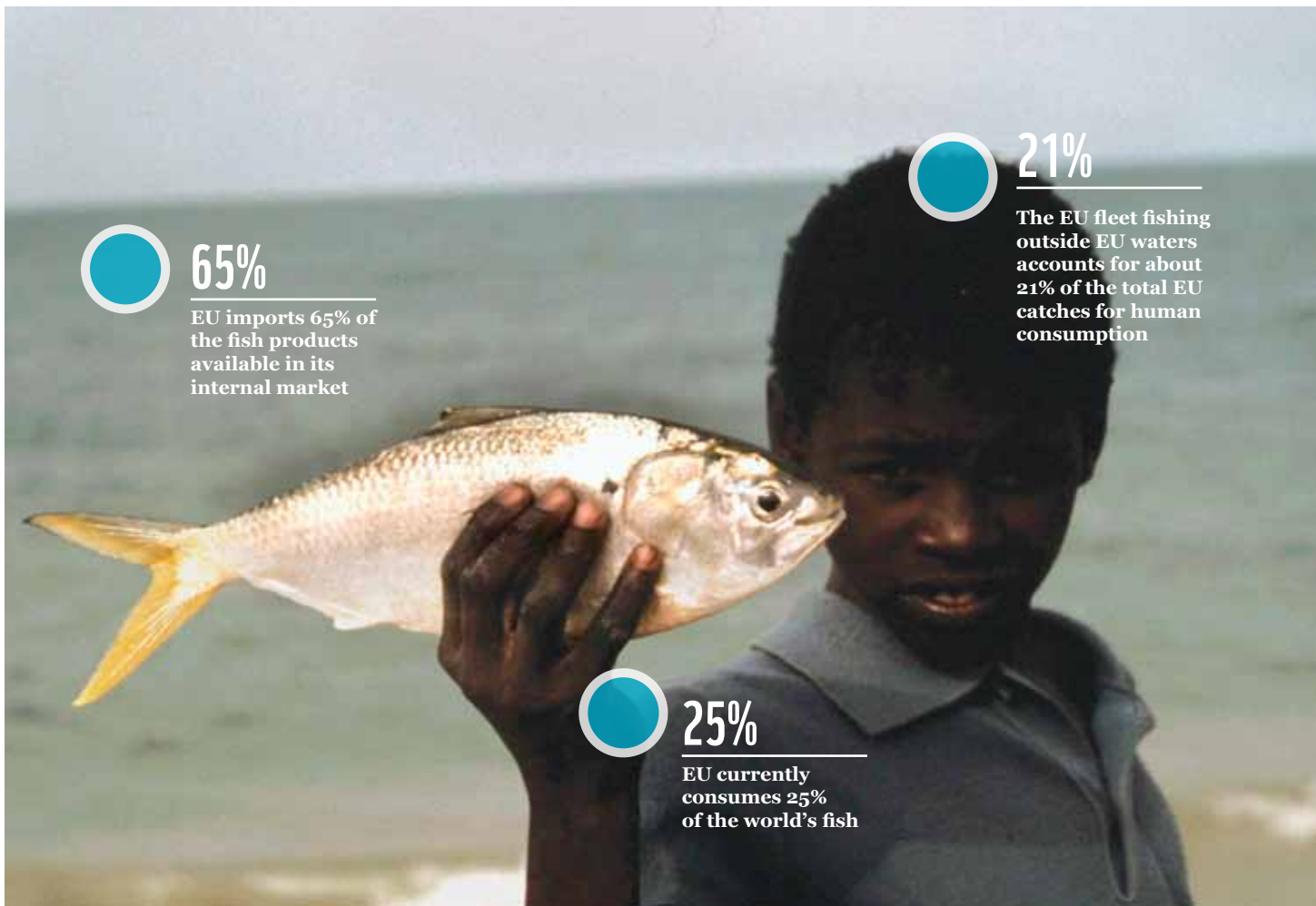
21%

The EU fleet fishing outside EU waters accounts for about 21% of the total EU catches for human consumption



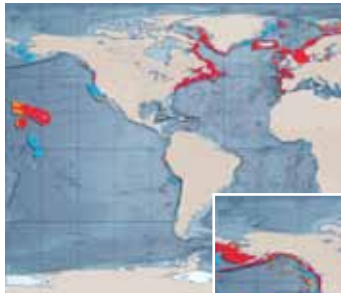
25%

EU currently consumes 25% of the world's fish



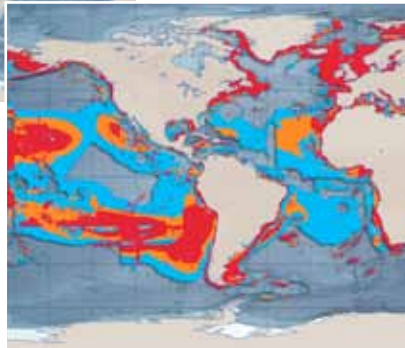
THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF THE EU'S FISHERIES POLICY

The EU is a global player when it comes to fisheries and seafood consumption. However, the EU is not yet a global leader in global fisheries governance, and its fishing activities can have serious impacts on the global state of fish stocks, local food security and development, as well as long-term EU food security.



1950

EU Fishing Around The World



2009

Areas impacted by global
fishing activity

The EU's fishing fleet is global. It fishes in other countries' waters through Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) with coastal states or in international waters under the management of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). Around 8% of EU catches (2004-06) are made under FPAs and the EU spends around € 160M a year to gain access to fishing rights under these fisheries agreements.

Another 20% of EU catches are taken on the high seas, mainly in regions under the care of RFMOs.



The EU policy for fishing outside EU waters, called the External Dimension, is driven by short-term interests of a relatively small commercial fishing sector. The risk that it could contribute to the collapse of fish stocks around the world is real. A recent study commissioned by WWF¹ shows a dramatic increase in the fishing activity by EU and non-EU fleets around the globe since 1950.

The impact of EU fishing

Europe's external fishing activities are not sustainable from an environmental, social nor economic point of view. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation, currently estimates 57.4% of global assessed fish stocks to be fully exploited, while 29.9% are overexploited. With its vast fleet, the EU has a responsibility in this matter. For example, European vessels operating under FPAs have been known to catch fish that is not *surplus to the host country's requirements*. Although this can be difficult to prove because of limited data and surveillance, most fish stocks in West Africa are being fished beyond their sustainable limits according to the Fishery Committee of the Eastern Central Atlantic.

According to the World Health Organisation², about one billion people worldwide rely on fish as their main source of animal proteins. Overfishing is not just an environmental disaster, it also robs people that are directly dependent on fishing from their income and food. The access fees paid under the FPAs are rarely used to support the development of coastal communities or to invest in sustainable fisheries benefiting local communities.

¹ Spatial expansion of EU and non-EU fishing fleets into the global ocean, 1950 to present. Sea Around Us project, University of British Columbia, 2011. Available at: http://www.wwf.eu/fisheries/cfp_reform/external_dimension/

² WHO website: http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/3_foodconsumption/en/index5.html

Time for a change

There is a growing consensus among scientists, the fishing industry, management and NGOs that we need to take bold steps to make fishing more sustainable if we want to secure global fish stocks in the long term. Clear rules and strong institutions to apply and enforce these rules are needed.

WWF believes that the EU should make global and regional fisheries governance the centrepiece of its External Dimension programme and of the ongoing reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). It should aim at rationalising and strengthening the rules and regulations for the EU's

external fleet. The reform of the CFP needs to reflect a long-term policy commitment to sustainable fishing worldwide, and provide greater depth and detail on how the EU is making sure that fish products that reach the EU market are caught fairly and sustainably.

The following case studies illustrate the situation on the ground, present some basic facts and issues related to the fisheries concerned whilst suggesting solutions for sustainable fishing.

The EU's external fleet comprises 718 vessels, which represents 25% of the EU fleet in terms of gross tonnage. 59% of the EU's external fleet fly the Spanish flag, 14% the French flag, and 10% the Portuguese flag.³

³ EU Commission 2008: http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/documentation/studies/study_external_fleet/external_fleet_2008_en.pdf



FPA's & RFMO's at a glance

The EU has 13 currently active Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs). The EU pays a financial contribution, composed of access rights to the country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and of sectoral financial support. There are two types of agreements: tuna agreements which allow EU vessels to pursue migrating tuna stocks; and mixed agreements which provide access to a wide range of fish stocks in the partner country's EEZ. Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) are international organisations that either manage fish stocks found in a specific area, or focus on particular highly-migratory species, notably tuna, throughout vast geographical areas. The EU currently has an active role in 17 RFMOs of which six are tuna-RFMOs.

FISHERIES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (FPAs)





“The EU should support the governance of fisheries in West Africa and stop signing fisheries agreements when stocks are overexploited. Fish forms the basis of the food of poor people in West Africa.”

Dr Papa Samba Diouf,
Regional Coordinator at WWF's West Africa
Marine Ecoregion Office

MAURITANIA

Background

The FPA between the EU and Mauritania covers the period 2008 - 2012 with a financial contribution of €305M. This includes €65M earmarked for sectoral support to fisheries. Of this, €4M were allocated to the protection of the Banc d'Arguin ecosystem. The FPA allows EU vessels from 12 EU Member States to fish in Mauritanian waters and is the most important FPA for the EU, both in financial and economic terms. The Mauritanian FPA is due to be renewed in 2012.

Fishing is a major component of Mauritania's national economy - 50% of exports and 30% of budget revenue. However, development of local businesses for processing and enhancement of production could be expanded. For three decades, Mauritania's fish resources have supported intense fishing activity on different stocks, with a total volume of catches of around 600,000 tons per year.

Issues

- ▶ Current fishing capacity is characterised by the dominance of the FPA within the EU, in particular for the octopus fishery. However, the octopus fishery is now overexploited, with overfishing in excess of 30%.
- ▶ Mauritania's processing capacity is limited, thus preventing local communities benefiting from the added value. Over 90% of the catches from Mauritania's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is either landed abroad or trans-shipped in the Bay of Nouadhibou. Of all fish landed in Mauritania, 95% are exported and only 10% of these exported products are processed locally.
- ▶ Target species are shared between national and foreign fleets. The national fisheries are managed using technical measures such as mesh size, minimum size of species caught, rigging, zoning and no-take areas. But most foreign fishing effort is insufficiently regulated to establish a low risk of overfishing or ecosystem degradation. Although the situation is improving, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing is still frequent in Mauritania.



Recommendations

- ➔ Long Term Management Plans (LTMPs), inter alia for octopus and shrimp, must be established and implemented. These should include a fair ecosystem approach to management following principles of Rights Based Management.
- ➔ By investing in local processing facilities and other measures to increase the added value for Mauritania, local employment and local turnover would grow. This could directly contribute to poverty alleviation objectives in Mauritania.
- ➔ Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) should be intensified. Adverse impact of EU fishing fleets on the artisanal fisheries along the whole Mauritanian coastline should be minimised further.



“The landing of fish should take place locally to ensure seafood processing and food security.”

Mauree Daroomalingum
Director of Fisheries, Mauritius

CAPE VERDE

Background

The FPA between the EU and Cape Verde is a tuna agreement. The EU arranges licenses for the European tuna fleet with coastal states around the world, so that the fishing vessels can follow the migratory tuna both in international waters and in Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of coastal states.

Cape Verde lies in the rich West African upwelling. This FPA allows 28 purse seiners in the Cape Verde EEZ, 11 pole&line vessels and 35 surface longliners to fish here. Spanish vessels benefitted by as much as 90% from the previous agreement, but it is expected that French purse seiners will take a larger share in the coming years.

The EU contributes € 435,000/year for the 5-year period September 2011-2016. About 25% is support for the Cape Verde sectoral policy. The remaining € 325,000 is based on € 65/tonne for a reference tonnage catch of 5,000 tonnes per year. Vessel owners pay an additional € 35/tonne, pole&line pay € 25/tonne. In this agreement there are no catch limits, so if the European fleet catches more, they simply have to pay more money.

Issues

- ▲ Cape Verde is a member of the Sub-regional Fisheries Commission (CSRP) that has repeatedly promised minimum regional conditions for fishing access. In addition, the CSRP developed a joint action plan for shark conservation with a

regional alliance of conservation NGOs. The European Commission negotiates bilateral FPAs in the CSRP-region. Catches in this FPA are not specified by species, nor are maximum catch limits set. The 5,000 tonne reference is purely determined as a base for payment.

- ▲ There is no obligation for trans-shipment in port. There have been no records of trans-shipment or landings by purse seiners in Cape Verde, but some surface longliners are reported to use the port of Mindelo for operations.
- ▲ There are no processing facilities in Cape Verde. No fishery products caught under the agreement have been landed in Cape Verde and the agreement has not contributed to supplies to this market. The value for the tuna catch of the European fleet was estimated by the ex-post evaluation for the Commission to be about > €1,600/tonne, a sharp contrast with the €100/tonne (6%) that Cape Verde is receiving in the FPA.
- ▲ Cape Verde has no dedicated monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) activities. While a corps of observers was trained, on-board observers have been virtually absent due to lack of funds. Cape Verde has insufficient MCS capacity, so is entirely dependent on an observer scheme.

Recommendations

- ➔ The European Commission should support the CSRP efforts for a regional approach and propose negotiations at a regional level instead of bilateral agreements. The Commission should also work with the CSRP to implement the joint shark action plan. The maximum allowable catch should be calculated in the context of the ICCAT⁴ scientific advice. This is yet another reason to seek a regional approach to fisheries access.
- ➔ Trans-shipment of purse seiners and longliners should take place in Cape Verde ports as a measure to reduce illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing. The EU could assist in establishing landing facilities.
- ➔ The EU should ensure that the owners of operating vessels (including parent companies) have not been convicted for IUU-practices anywhere in the world. Cape Verde should reserve the right to withdraw licenses to companies that have been charged with IUU practices, whether or not these have taken place in Cape Verde waters.
- ➔ An observer programme with 100% coverage should be agreed between the two signatories, instead of the current limited scheme through ICCAT.

⁴ ICCAT – International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna:
<http://www.iccat.int>

MADAGASCAR

Background

The Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Madagascar is a tuna agreement. The EU arranges licenses for the European tuna fleet with coastal states around the world, so that the fishing vessels can follow the tuna both in international waters and in EEZs. A new draft for 2013-2014 was agreed between the two parties in May 2012.



The Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Madagascar only delivers licences for tuna vessels

The EU currently contributes €1.2 million/year for six years, covering the period 2007-2012. This includes € 864,500/year for licenses to catch 13,300 tonnes of tuna, based on € 65/tonne. An additional € 332,500/year is used to support the Madagascar sectoral policy. Vessel owners need to pay an additional € 35/tonne. When more tuna are caught than was anticipated, the compensation is increased pro rata. There are no catch limits in this agreement.

The current FPA allows 43 freezer purse seiners, 48 surface longliners >100t and 26 surface longliners <100t to fish in Malagasy waters.

Recommendations

Issues

- ▶ The catches in the present draft agreement with Madagascar refers to the UN list of migratory species, instead of “tuna and tuna-like” species. The UN-list includes cetaceans and oceanic sharks, thus allowing bycatch of these species, some of which have protection status. Substantial bycatch of sharks by longliners have been reported.
- ▶ The presence of Spanish vessels is dominant in Madagascar. Even if private agreements between EU-flagged vessels and third countries are not allowed when an FPA is in force, Spanish purse seiners flying the Seychelles flag have concluded private agreements with Madagascar. The EU does not control that part of the Spanish purse seine fleet.
- ▶ Madagascar has a functioning capacity for monitoring, control and surveillance, but the current on-board observer scheme is far from complete. In recent years there were few observers, only covering a small part of the fleet. Signals that surplus catches (above the reference level) are not paid for are apparently disregarded by the European Commission. There is no fisheries management basis for the reference tonnage level, it is not a quota, but a base to determine the payments.

- ➔ The FPA should refer to the 17 “tuna and tuna-like” species as specified by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) as target species, and the rest as bycatch species, instead of referring to total catch volumes only. All levels of non-target species should be limited. The FPA should include measures to reduce bycatch. Longliners should only apply circle hooks, and purse seiners should be discouraged to use Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)⁵ until their negative bycatch consequences have been adequately assessed.
- ➔ The reflagging of the Spanish fleet shows the urgent need for regional management. The EU should seek improved management of all its fleets. The maximum allowable catch should be calculated in the regional context and ensure that fishing levels do not exceed scientific advice.
- ➔ All trans-shipments of purse seiners and longliners should happen in Malagasy ports. Madagascar should install 100% observer coverage on purse seiners and longliners and 100% at landing sites for trans-shipments. Observer reports should be acted upon by the parties. The EU should ensure that vessel owners (including the parent companies) have not been convicted for illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) practises anywhere in the world. Such measures will help reduce IUU-fishing.

⁵ A fish aggregating (or aggregation) device (FAD) is a man-made object used to attract ocean going pelagic fish. Increasing FAD use has increased the productivity of the fishing fleet, but has significant side-effects. The average FAD-caught fish is smaller and comes with relatively large bycatch.



"I would like to see the EU give more support to coastal states for implementing Indian Ocean Tuna Commission resolutions with regard to the conservation and management of tuna resources. This is important for the benefit of the people and the communities in this part of the world."

Edward Kimakwa,
Fisheries Programme Officer for WWF's
Coastal East Africa Initiative

EAST AFRICA: KENYA, TANZANIA & MOZAMBIQUE

Background

Fisheries management arrangements in Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique for tuna have different histories. Kenya and Tanzania never concluded fisheries agreements with the EU but have issued private licenses, while Mozambique has had a long-standing relationship.

The only regional fisheries management organisation in the region is the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). The IOTC is responsible for 17 tuna and tuna-like species.

Issues

In late 2011, **Kenya** used a World Bank loan and grant package of US\$40 million to strengthen the environmentally sustainable management and development of the coastal and marine fishing industry. The primary concern for fisheries in the Western Indian Ocean consists of illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing in the waters of the failed state of Somalia and beyond. The fishing industry in the entire region also suffers from piracy.

Foreign registered vessels are fishing in the Kenya's EEZ. Their catch is unrecorded in Kenya's statistics, although tuna and some other species are landed in Mombasa for trans-shipment or for local processing. Around 30-40 purse seiners have been licensed in recent years. The Kenyan navy has undertaken occasional patrols to combat illegal fishing by a suspected sizeable number of unlicensed foreign vessels. The fleets dominating the fishery are from the EU, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. License fees have remained at US\$12,000 per vessel per year in some coastal states for several years, though in some countries like Tanzania it reached US\$35,000 per year.

Tanzania and the EU had planned to resume their fisheries relations by concluding a FPA but failed to agree in 2006. The draft text referred to 70 purse seiners and surface longliners allowed to catch 8,000 tonnes, indicating the fishing opportunities of the species in Tanzania waters. It is estimated that currently 70-100 licences may be issued each year. It is thought that approximately 40% of the vessels fishing for tuna in Tanzania's EEZ originate from the EU, but the EU has no influence at all. Fisheries are not managed centrally in Tanzania, and the mainland and Zanzibar continue to issue separate fishing licences for the same EEZ.

Mozambique has had fisheries agreements with the EU since 1988. After 2007, the EU fleet lost interest in deep-water shrimp and demersal species, which are no longer included in the FPA. The FPA with the EU was renewed in February 2012 for three years, allowing 75 EU vessels access to catch 8,000 tonnes per year. There is no credible basis for scientific advice, so catch levels appear entirely determined by the request of the EU fleet. The 2007-2011 agreement had a catch limit of 10,000 tonnes for 89 vessels, the 2003-2006 allowed 8,000 tonnes for 49 tuna vessels. Apart from the EU fleet, Mozambique issues private licenses to, among others, Japan and Taiwan, mainly for tuna long-line fishing.



**THE INDIAN OCEAN TUNA COMMISSION (IOTC)
IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MANAGEMENT
OF 17 TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES**



Recommendations

- Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique should take a joint, stepwise approach in negotiating access by EU vessels. Tanzania should resolve its internal obstacles with Zanzibar and ensure that there is a joint system to issue fishing licenses. All access should be under a regional FPA and private agreements should not be allowed.
- All states in the region have different numbers of licenses. The FPAs with Madagascar, Mauritius and Comores allow 117, 86 and 70 licenses respectively. There should be consistency between the different countries about the number of licenses and the total catch volume, based on IOTC scientific advice.
- The EU and coastal states should seek to develop minimum regional terms and conditions for their next round of negotiations. Conditions should include ecology and socio-economic aspects. The EU should encourage the East African coastal states to also collaborate with the Seychelles, Madagascar, Comores and Mauritius.
- Trans-shipment at sea should be outlawed in the Western Indian Ocean for all licenses, whether under FPAs or private agreements. The EU should prohibit all EU-flagged vessels to trans-ship at sea. All licenses should be restricted to species that fall under the responsibility of the IOTC, which defines 17 tuna and tuna-like species. For all other species the licenses should specify conditions for bycatch and discards.

REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS (RFMOs)



INDIAN OCEAN (IO)

Background

The Indian Ocean (IO) is an area of great interest to the EU fishing industry. The primary targets are tuna stocks, but high value species like lobster and shrimp are also fished in several countries.

The active RFMO in the region is the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). It is responsible for 17 tuna and tuna-like species.



PIRATE ATTACKS WENT UP
BY 11% IN 2011

Issues

Most industrial tuna fishing in the Indian Ocean takes place between 10°N and 30° S. The primary concern for fisheries in the Indian Ocean consists of unregulated fishing in Somalia waters and in international waters. The fishing industry in these waters also suffers from lack of effective management of stocks and piracy. Pirate attacks on all vessels, not only fishing, went up by 11% in 2011. The tuna catch in the region reduced substantially and shifted further southwest. At the same time, ports in Kenya, Tanzania and Seychelles have noticed reduced port calls, although recent reports indicate signs of recovery. It has been estimated that the Seychelles economy, which is for 40% dependent on fisheries earnings, suffered a 4% of GDP loss due to piracy.

Recommendations

- ▶ The EU fleet is large and very active in the region, either under FPAs, joint ventures or via private agreements. A large part of the Seychelles purse seine fleet is owned by Spanish companies. French vessels can operate from Réunion. Fishing has shifted to the high seas more to the east, with an increased use of Fish Aggregating Devices⁶ by purse seiners. Longliners have moved to safer seas in eastern and southern waters. Japanese vessels no longer have licenses in Tanzania and Seychelles.
- ▶ The IOTC is performing poorly, producing few resolutions on management advice and with little to no compliance. This, plus the fact that coastal states have hardly any surveillance capacity, leaves the door wide open for IUU practices. In 2012, the IOTC began the first steps towards precautionary management. Now all members must work to implement effective harvest control rules and strategies. There are very few data on sharks and their catch levels.

⁶ A fish aggregating (or aggregation) device (FAD) is a man-made object used to attract ocean going pelagic fish. Increasing FAD use has increased the productivity of the fishing fleet, but has significant side-effects. The average FAD-caught fish is smaller and comes with relatively large bycatch.

- ➔ The effect of the area shifts of tuna fleets should be monitored at a regional level in the Indian Ocean. Both coastal states and fishing nations need to invest in the capacity and efficacy of the IOTC. The EU should take initiatives to introduce conditions for fishing practices, both at the regional level and for its own fleet. This must include minimum conditions for data collection and analysis, and for observers on-board. WWF continues to demand a regional management shift for fishing practices, from opportunistic to one based on scientific advice that will maximise the benefits to all participants in the long term, as well as adequate harvest control rules and strategies.
- ➔ The EU is an active fishing party in the WIO and should press IOTC to adopt management practices that include sustainable harvest control rules and associated quota systems for all species at a regional level. The emphasis should be on adopting quota systems for the tuna and tuna-like species. IOTC's scientific advice for catch levels of bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack should be consistently applied. The EU and the coastal and island states in the WIO should establish improved reporting and conservation measures to reduce the effects of fisheries on sharks.
- ➔ The EU should assist WIO coastal and island states in developing their enforcement capacity for tuna and tuna-like fisheries in the region. WWF wants to see trans-shipment at sea prohibited, also in FPAs. The EU could contribute to this process by prohibiting trans-shipment at sea for all EU-flagged vessels.



“The EU should consider sourcing seafood from small-scale, lesser known yet healthy fisheries that promote best practices.”

Benjamin Tabios,
Director at the Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic
Resources, Philippines

WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION (WCPFC)

Background

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention and its governing body the Commission (WCPFC) form a RFMO that is responsible for fisheries management in 20% of the world's surface, including the largest tuna fisheries. It came into force in June 2004. The objective of the WCPFC is to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use, in particular for human food consumption, of highly migratory fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean for present and future generations.

The EU became a member of the WCPFC in early 2005 and, being a strong economic entity, has the ability to influence decisions. EU fleets operate in the WCPFC area and the EU is one of the major markets for tuna products.

Recommendations

Issues

- While the WCPFC includes default reference points, eight years after its inception there are still no explicit harvest control rules in the WCPFC. The current rudimentary harvest strategy does not contain any harvest control rules. The WCPFC has not adopted formal reference points for any of the tuna or tuna-like species. This implies that the Convention's own fundamental conditions have still not become effective.
- There are increasing concerns about the growing capacity and effort of longline fleets catching albacore. These are Chinese Taipei fleets or are reflagged to flags of regional islands states.
- WWF has serious concerns about bycatch levels in the WCPFC area, be they of sharks, seabirds, turtles or marine mammals. The failure by the WCPFC to adopt and apply a Catch Documentation Scheme is a serious flaw in the region's fisheries regulation.

- The WCPFC should adopt well-defined and predefined harvest control rules including mandatory and timely management action in response to changes in the status of stocks. Furthermore, conservation management measures should follow the advice provided by the Scientific Committee. This was again not achieved in March 2012. The EU should steer the WCPFC to formally adopt target and limit reference points for at least albacore, bigeye, skipjack and yellowfin tuna. The EU should report all its catches when harvested, transshipped, landed, traded domestically, exported, processed, imported and re-exported using electronic documentation.
- The EU should set the example to WCPFC member states by enforcing a functioning 100% observers scheme on all EU fishing vessels in the Convention area. The EU should cooperate with the Parties to the Nauru Agreement and other parties in the region to strengthen the management strategy for the albacore longline fishery, to address the related species interaction issues and to introduce measures aimed at introducing effective capacity limits and effort management.
- The WCPFC should take immediate management action to avoid bycatch interactions and to mitigate their impact. The EU should support the relevant scientific/ecosystem body to improve bycatch related information and strengthen the long-term management concerning bycatch levels and mitigation options. Management actions on bycatch should be reviewed as information improves, so that appropriate management action can be taken.

NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES ORGANISATION (NAFO)



Grand Banks cod is recovering
but still at only 21% of
sustainable level

Background

The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) is responsible for international regulation of most fishery resources of the Northwest Atlantic Ocean except salmon, tunas, merlins, whales, and sedentary species. Decisions by NAFO affect the health of important ocean ecosystems such as the Grand Banks by setting total allowable catches of commercial species and by managing impacts of fishing gear.

NAFO has 12 Members from North America, Europe, Asia and the Caribbean. During its 33 years of existence, NAFO has presided over the collapse of over half the stocks under its management and has only recently considered the importance of habitats and ecosystem functions. WWF has been involved in NAFO since 2005 with the goal of recovering the Grand Banks ecosystem. During this period NAFO has broadened its mandate under a new convention (not yet ratified by all contracting parties) in ways that allow for a greater focus on conservation, ecosystem science and rebuilding of collapsed fisheries. Each year WWF undertakes scientific, policy and management analyses and consults broadly with experts and with contracting parties to NAFO.

Issues

Cod: After 18 years of fishing moratorium there has been significant growth of the cod population on the southern Grand Banks (division 3NO). This iconic species is currently still at only 21% of sustainable levels on the Grand Banks, but in 2011 NAFO developed a strong rebuilding plan that will allow for continued growth, including harvest control rules, timelines and biologically meaningful targets for recovery.

Bycatch has been one of the main reasons why it has taken so long for cod to recover. Some bycatch is unavoidable, but excessive levels are unlikely to be accidental and until compliance and enforcement steps up cod recovery will continue to be compromised. NAFO has made great strides towards improved management decisions in their commitment to follow scientific advice. But some of NAFO's compromises are unacceptable and more progress can still be made. Failure to sufficiently reduce cod bycatch, and the targeted overfishing on vulnerable species such as thorny skates and Greenland halibut (turbot) are notable transgressions.

Habitats: NAFO has closed 12 coral and sponge areas to fisheries and reduced the allowable amount of corals and sponges taken in bottom fisheries outside these areas. This

is called the encounter threshold and is intended to trigger a "move out of the area" rule when too much coral or sponge comes up in the nets. It's an important step although there is much work still to do. NAFO has also closed five seamount areas and the Orphan knoll. These and other types of habitats are called "Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems" under a United Nations General Assembly resolution. Last year, NAFO agreed to assess bottom fishing impacts on these areas by 2016.

NAFO Performance Review: The solutions that WWF advocates, and our efforts at NAFO meetings, are compromised by the decision-making process which often takes place in in-camera meetings. WWF has been pushing for increased transparency and accountability in NAFO decision-making and is pleased with the increased openness that resulted largely due to an independent performance review of NAFO in 2011. WWF strongly endorses the implementation of an Action Plan addressing the 129 recommendations.

Recommendations

- The EU should support the development of rebuilding plans for all depleted stocks in the NAFO Regulatory Area and support best available practices for bycatch minimization.
- The EU should also align with other NAFO member states and WWF on strengthening the conservation efforts on vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and ecologically and biologically significant areas (EBSAs). This involves protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in accordance to scientific advice; cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat to describe areas that meet the CBD criteria for ecologically or biologically significant areas; and adoption of strict deadlines for the implementation of the performance review recommendations.



KEY ASKS

To secure the future of global fish stocks and people dependent on them for their livelihood, there is a dire need for improving the governance and management of EU's external fishing fleet. The EU must become a leader in sustainable fisheries management worldwide, and should make global and regional fisheries governance the centrepiece of its External Fisheries policy and the ongoing reform of the Common Fisheries Policy.

WWF is specifically advocating that the EU's External Fisheries Policy:

- is consistent with WWF's call for **Multiannual Plans** (MAPs) for every commercial fishery in the EU by 2015; similar or equivalent plans should be proposed and encouraged in all future Fisheries Agreements and RFMOs;
- applies the EU's **regional approach** to fisheries management and co-management objectives to Fisheries agreements and RFMOs where possible;
- gives the European Commission (under the mandate of the European Council) an unequivocal **negotiating mandate** for all RFMOs;
- maintains the **EU as sole authority to negotiate fisheries management terms and conditions**; the EU should take responsibility for its fleets and discourage
 - by incentives as well as sanctions - the practice of reflagging (the practice when vessels change their flag to escape controls);
 - all terms and conditions of Fisheries Agreements must be **transparent and accessible** to the public and all interested parties;
 - the EU should ensure that the allowable catches taken by its external fleet are conditional on, and never exceed, the predetermined possible **catch surplus**;
- improves fisheries and aquaculture **governance** in third countries through targeted funding and policy reform;
- ensures **policy coherence for development** as a legal requirement and policy objective.



GLOSSARY

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy Reform
CSRP	Commission Sous-Régionale des Pêches (Sub-regional Fisheries Commission)
EBSA	Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FAD	Fish Aggregating Device
FPA	Fisheries Partnership Agreement
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated
LTMP	Long Term Management Plans
MAP	Multi-annual Plan
MCS	Monitoring, Controlling, Surveillance
NAFO	Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organisation
VME	Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention
WIO	Western Indian Ocean

For WWF's position on the external dimension of the CFP Reform proposal see:
http://www.wwf.eu/cfp_external_dimension

**STOP BANKRUPTING
OUR OCEANS** 



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

www.wwf.eu

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