

MARE Policy Day

June 25, 2012

Giving Small-Scale Fisheries a Place: The Knowledge and Governance Challenges

A summary report¹

Introduction

Small-scale fisheries have a long and complex history in Europe. They make up a majority of the fleet in a number of countries, especially in southern Europe. About 80% of the commercial fishing fleet in Europe is considered small-scale. Similar to those in other parts of the world, small-scale fishers in Europe face many challenges, like market competition, urban development, and the expansion of coastal tourism. Despite their numbers, small-scale fisheries receive relatively little attention in fishery management debates. The European Union's (EU) new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), still under negotiation and expected to enter into force in 2014, is likely to introduce specific new measures for small-scale fisheries. One of the key aims of the 2013 MARE Policy Day was to look at how the reformed CFP will affect small-scale fisheries, negatively and/or positively, and to discuss arising challenges: is there appropriate knowledge on small-scale fisheries and what governance arrangements would best achieve the policy goals?

Building upon two ongoing research projects, this policy day focused on two issues: knowledge and governance. GAP2's (see www.gap2.eu) purpose is to demonstrate the role and value of stakeholder driven science within the context of fisheries governance. The Too Big to Ignore (TBTI – see toobigtoignore.net) project aims to promote and revitalize small-scale fishing communities around the world, including Europe. Both projects are concerned about the relative lack of information about small-scale fisheries and their communities, and strive to improve and better integrate our knowledge base into the policy process.

¹ Prepared by Easkey Britton, TBTI Post-Doctoral Fellow; Easkey.britton@gmail.com

The policy day centered on the following questions:

- What is the future of small-scale fisheries in Europe? And how is the new CFP going to affect this sector?
- What are the key governance challenges of small-scale fisheries in Europe today, and what action is required to enable this sector to play its role?
- How can better knowledge be developed with and about small-scale fisheries?

The event attracted over 140 participants with a diverse mix of stakeholders from academia, fisheries, civil society organisations, NGOs and policy, reflecting the growing recognition of the need to take small-scale fisheries issues seriously. A briefing paper about the CFP, describing its overall goal, process and key decisions was prepared and circulated to the participants (see Appendix 1).

Summary of the Presentations – Morning session

David Symes - keynote lecture: Governance needs for Europe's small-scale fisheries in Europe

Key points:

- Challenge of defining small-scale fisheries (SSF) – Defining SSF by their basic characteristics, for example, their distinctive modes of organisation as family based enterprises, economic behaviour and dependence on local ecosystems, rather than through arbitrary but quantifiable proxies such as vessel size is preferable but these essential attributes are often inadequate for purposes of regulation or qualification for specific forms of grant aid, and they vary greatly from one part of the world to the next.
- Evolving identity and resilience – SSF are a distinctive subset of a modernising fishing industry found throughout almost all coastal regions in Europe
- A social phenomenon - Throughout much of Europe, SSF are very largely the outcomes of choice rather than necessity – a preferred form of livelihood and way of life that imposes certain limitations on their fishing activity, especially in terms of their operational range.
- Informal versus formal organisation - The challenge with converting informal cooperation into more formal collective action.
- Priority issues for the governance of SSF – *organisation; knowledge base* on which policy decisions relating to the SSF are made; and the choice of *policy approach*, which was the core focus of the presentation.
- Policy needs of SSF - fair allocation of access to fishing opportunities; protecting the sector from the unintended consequences of conventional management measures targeted at the offshore sector; maintaining the flexibility of small-scale fishing

activities that facilitate the sector's adaptation to both short and long term change; and focusing on (re)building the sector's resilience. The aims, objectives and delivery systems implicit in Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund have direct relevance for the last two requirements.

David Symes concluded his keynote by emphasising that we already have sufficient knowledge and understanding to appreciate the importance of SSF and we are beginning to address the difficult challenges of ensuring their effective governance. However, he stated that, “*we still have some way to go to convince the scientific, managerial and political elites of the need for investment in alternative approaches to their management.*” As well as these ‘external’ factors there are several internal issues that the sector must resolve for itself, in particular, “*leadership at the local level, organisation and representation – and with these the ability to find a clear and coherent voice to express its own views on how to manage its future, and the will to act collectively in pursuit of its common goals. (...) There is (...) a need (for SSF) to reconnect with local society, to forge links with other sectors of the coastal economy and to build political alliances at the local level that will help to strengthen its resilience in the challenging years ahead.*” This final point, the connection with local society, was a recurring theme throughout the event.

Jaap Vegter: New approaches to small-scale fisheries in the Netherlands

A key issue for SSF highlighted in the opening keynote by David Symes and throughout the event by various speakers, is the difficulty of defining SSF. The question, ‘how can you manage that which you cannot measure?’ has been one that the CFP reform process has struggled to address and has so far failed to provide a meaningful definition. However it is defined, it is important that the purpose for that definition is made clear. Jaap Vegter opened his presentation by stating that he would not talk about SSF at all but rather, *local and integrated fisheries*. Vegter represents an integrated fisheries working group called, *Geïntegreerde Visserij*. He argued for the importance of defining fishers and their fishery as an integral part of the ecosystem, market and society across various scales. SSF are hard to define in isolation and should be thought of instead as local fisheries that encompass several interdependent and dynamic fishing categories including: sea fisheries, local fisheries, artisanal and recreational fisheries, all of which are linked to science, education, market, supplies, rural economy, knowledge production (e.g. stocks and trends), identity, skills and support.

Steve Mackinson: New forms of knowledge for small-scale fisheries– some lessons from case studies around Europe

This presentation focused on the importance of science-fisheries partnerships, which are central to the GAP2 project. Mackinson emphasized the relevance of, ‘seeing is believing’ with examples of demonstration visits and activities between fishers from different fisheries and countries and the importance of new forms of knowledge through collaborative,

participatory management. He highlighted important areas for opportunity creation and possible solutions.

Opportunity creation:

- European Parliament's emphasis on preferential access, selective low-impact, local business and community in the CFP reform process.
- Demonstration activities highlight the value of knowledge and idea-sharing.

Solutions:

- Focus on participation and timely science 'fit-for-purpose'.
- Developing cost-effective approaches to capacity and mutual learning.
- Non-statutory, flexible, tailor-made approaches.
- Call for action – policy makers need to create space for these fisheries-science partnerships to flourish.

Ratana Chuenpagdee: The role of transdisciplinarity in small-scale fisheries research

Throughout the policy day the importance of collaborative, participatory approaches and co-production of knowledge in SSF was emphasized, in particular the role of transdisciplinary research. This holistic approach to address complex societal problems that crosses, integrates and transcends disciplines is at the core of the Too Big to Ignore project. It is a way of doing research that responds to the following issues:

- Some issues/problems are too complex to address from one dimension or a single perspective;
- Scientists may not have all the answers and may require inputs from 'lay' experts;
- Collaborative/participatory process may lead to better outcomes;
- New theory/methods/tools, or new disciplines, are necessary.

Transdisciplinarity in Too Big to Ignore is a bottom-up process of identifying and addressing problems with knowledge integration and mobilization strategies.

Round-table discussion – Afternoon session

The afternoon session explored the implications of the CFP reform for SSF with perspectives from the fisheries sector (Jerry Percy, NUTFA), the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (Brian O'Riordan, ICSF) and the European Commission (Miguel Pena-Castellot, DG MARE Economic Strategy Unit). The following is a summary of the key points made by the panel speakers in response to the question, "*What does the CFP really mean for the future of small-scale fisheries in Europe?*"

Some 'basic home truths' in relation to the CFP and SSF:

- The integration of SSF with wider EU strategies and policies (e.g. Marine Strategy

Framework Directive, Social Cohesion policy, European Regional Development Fund).

- SSF is mentioned in all CFP documents but does not include:
 - Fishing on foot/gathering by hand
 - Upstream and downstream activities
 - Role of women
- SSF are becoming increasingly ‘managed’ but it is still necessary to preserve the informal nature of the sector somehow in order to maintain the flexibility that is a key characteristic of the resilience and adaptability of the sector. Despite this, unless organized and recognized at national and EU level, prospects for SSF are limited.
- The CFP on its own is not enough - political will of the State is needed. However, several Member States have actively lobbied to remove SSF from the CFP, so prospects are mixed.
- The failure to participate in decision-making at EU level has a lot to do with access e.g. in producer organisations (POs) and Regional Advisory Councils (RACs). A RAC for SSF was proposed or at least a more devolved system within the RACs, which would reduce the ‘command-and-control’ structure.
- SSF communities and coastal communities are not the same thing, a point emphasized by DG Mare representative, Miguel Pena Costa. Globalization has hit even the most remote coastal areas and SSF are no longer ‘local’ in terms of markets and employment. Landings and first sale prices are more often concentrated in bigger markets. As fisheries as a source of income and employment decline, coastal communities are less and less dependent on SSF and it is rare to find SSF contributing more than 5% of the local value-added. However this only considers the *economic* contribution of SSF. Despite this, coastal communities are not dying but developing other activities (*pesca-tourism* was referred to as well as cases where call-centres are replacing fisheries in certain coastal communities, although social implications of this were not elaborated).

CFP outcomes as discussed by the panellists:

- A key outcome is that transferrable fishing concessions (TFCs) are not mandatory, although subsidies for effort reduction/vessels are back on the agenda in the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).
- Member States to apply transparent and objective criteria when allocating fishing opportunities, this criteria may include: Environmental impact, record of compliance, contribution to local economy and historical track record.
- Incentives for selective fishing.
- Maintenance of the 12nm zone and, where possible, preferential access to be given to SSF.
- Discards ban - at three pages long it is very complex and the ‘devil is in the detail’, with a risk of closing down fishing through *choke species*, especially those with low quota.
- Under the Common Market Organisation, POs are to be strengthened. Representation of SSF should be included in POs but often these are not an appropriate organisation for the way SSF operate. There is a possible opportunity to set up SSF POs.

- Additional voluntary information to be included on seafood labels.

The EMFF, currently being negotiated in the CFP reform process, has the potential to greatly influence outcomes for SSF and how they are able to obtain funding:

- A core debate is if SSF should receive subsidies for vessels.
- Currently Axis 4 accounts for 30% of the EMFF and is focused on coastal community development. The projects with the most success are those more related to fishing (e.g. adding value to local products) but remain very small in scale with limited job creation. However, alternatives are developing in small communities and can make a difference (with potential to link with other funds in the context of Integrated Coastal Development).
- EMFF is very delayed and the final trilogues will not conclude until the end of 2013.

Breakout sessions

Following the round-table panel discussion, participants broke up into five groups, each focusing on one of the following key issues for SSF:

- i. Small-scale fisheries in the new CFP
- ii. Knowledge and governance challenges of small-scale fisheries
- iii. Values, communities and cultures in European small-scale fisheries
- iv. Market opportunities for small-scale fisheries in Europe
- v. Future of small-scale fisheries in Europe: enabling and constraining factors

The aim of the small-group ‘breakout’ sessions was to address core issues at the heart of the wellbeing of small-scale fishing communities and the governance of SSF. Each group discussed the enabling and constraining factors, and explored possible solutions, which were then shared in a group feedback session at the end of the day.

Small-scale fisheries in the new CFP – Facilitators: Marloes Kraan and Martin Pastoors

At the core of the discussion in this session was the issue of representation and the challenges/opportunities affecting representation of SSF:

- Level and type of representation and organization is influenced by history and geography.
- The nature of fishing can influence willingness and ability of fishers to participate, i.e. ‘fishermen fish’, timing of meetings.
- SSF are individualistic but co-operative approaches exist or are developing e.g. SSF in POs, RACs, and the EU supported initiative, Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE).
- Need to understand the relevance and importance of these organisations – who do they represent and they do not work for all.
- Difficult to ‘delegate’ representation.
- Costs – proposals for SSF to realign with existing organisations but are the interests of SSF included? What about national differences?

- Funding available specifically for SSF in the proposed EMFF.
- Communication – a step-wise, structured approach needed; increasing relevance of social media.

The impact of fisheries regulations on SSF has been light so far but the stakes and relevance are rising. Possible major impacts on SSF were discussed in relation to regionalization, access and discards:

- For all species that are regulated through minimum landing size, discards will apply, including in the Mediterranean.
- Regionalization is not clearly explained causing confusion. Is it the member states or the regional fisheries councils who take charge? Will the decisions made regionally impact SSF?
- Recommendation for preferential access is in the preamble, but there are no regulations. Ambiguity exists - what would preferential access actually look like in a way that meets social, and environmental criteria? Does preferential access also take into account other management measures such as area-based management and not just quota-based fisheries? Would this lead to an increase in fishing intensity and effort or add more vessels in the inshore zone? Existing fishers are wary of the possibility.
- Are there objectives other than economic efficiency? Or is this the main objective of the CFP?
- Allocation of non-TAC species? One option is to not introduce new quotas. In the Mediterranean, spatial and temporal regulations exist and do not rely on quotas.

Knowledge and governance challenges of small-scale fisheries – Facilitator: Steve Mackinson

This group explored the following themes in relation to knowledge in SSF:

- Co-production of knowledge:
 - What does co-production of knowledge mean?
 - How does stakeholder engagement improve fisheries governance?
 - Increases legitimacy and compliance
 - Inclusion of different types of knowledge
 - Knowledge needs to be balanced
 - Social science knowledge is generally lacking
- Special approach to knowledge is needed for SSF:
 - Inclusion of community/regional context
 - More ecosystem-based knowledge especially in coastal fisheries
 - General lack of knowledge about SSF in EU
- What types of knowledge are required to facilitate good governance in fisheries:
 - Fish harvesters' knowledge
 - Academic (social and natural sciences)
 - Industry knowledge (processors/traders)

- What restricts the integration of knowledge:
 - Disciplinary silos (incompatible values and methodologies)
 - Lack of trust
 - Lack of transparency in how the knowledge will be used
- With regards to knowledge production it is important that we consider the following:
 - Transparency
 - Feedback loops
 - Bounded knowledge
- Important that knowledge be objective and relevant (i.e. what the science will be used for and why it is necessary be clearly stated)
 - Fish harvesters should have clear understanding how their knowledge will be used
 - Agencies can be data rich and still not be good governors
- Power and knowledge:
 - Who's included / who's not?
 - Who's knowledge counts and why?
 - Implication of leaving certain knowledge out
- Disconnect between science and policy:
 - Prevalent and not easy to overcome
 - Disciplines use knowledge in different ways and for different reasons
 - Policy uses scientific knowledge selectively to support policy decisions
- Do we need a set of principles to guide the acquisition of knowledge in fisheries and the interactions of the knowledge producers?
 - New Zealand example – rules of engagement

It was evident that there are a growing number of positive examples of fisheries-science partnerships but that the disconnect between the policy process with practical reality of data/knowledge and the people practicing it was highlighted as a key obstacle.

Values, communities and cultures in European small-scale fisheries – Facilitator: Derek Johnson

This group discussed some key interventions to help understand the contribution of SSF to community wellbeing:

- Gender perspective - Need to ensure recognition for how SSF are gendered and the importance of gender relations (e.g. in the Netherlands there is a freshwater fishery where women are taking an increasing outreach role).
- Assurance of rights appropriate to SSF – community-based rights to fish and rights of access to SSF (especially in relation to tourism).

As well as key issues affecting the wellbeing of these communities:

- Intergenerational transfer of knowledge and the desire to continue to fish were identified as key issue for the social viability of SSF.
- Loss of youth in many fisheries to alternative pathways but also disconnect and sense of loss (of place and identity) that is not considered but can have significant consequences for the wellbeing of youth in fishing communities.
- Increasing importance of migrant fish workers can create social tension and may further the disconnect between local people and their fisheries.

Market opportunities for small-scale fisheries in Europe – Facilitator: Jaap Vegter

Key questions addressed in this session included:

- What is the niche for new products that might increase the value of SSF?
- What are the skills that SSF need to engage in those markets?
- What sort of guarantees and assurances can be given to consumers that they are engaging in a sustainable market?
- How to assure the quality of the products?

With these questions in mind various options were discussed:

With regards to the niches, there were various market options for the SSF. It was also emphasised that different markets served different purposes and that SSF have to also be able to imagine marketing options other than the one where they are tied to middlemen and traders. In this regard two types of markets in particular were discussed.

- 1) Community Supported Fisheries (CSF) - community directly involved in procuring fish from the fishermen, even to the extent of advancing money for future catches. This involved a lot of organising of the community in terms of building specific relations and trust.
- 2) Larger markets could also be explored by the SSF. Tools of labelling like MSC could be useful in exploring the larger markets, while it was recognised that getting an MSC certificate does not entail a guaranteed price or market.

With these two markets as the base niches other issues were discussed:

- Sustainability- CSF guaranteed sustainable practices, all fish were consumed locally and seasonal fish availability was made use to the maximum. In addition, it was also argued that certification could also help to harvest fish sustainably when catering to larger markets.
- Gains for community – CSF in general was gainful for the community as they were protected from larger economic forces. Also, fishers themselves could explore traditional contacts.

- Skills required - different sets of skills were required for CSF and for exploring larger markets and it was recognised that SSF did not have the required skills for larger markets.
- Traceability and labeling – With increasing consumer awareness, it was agreed that while traceability and labeling was desirable, the cost that came along with this was a detriment for SSF to adapt to these.
- Scale of marketing – local/in the village vs. nationwide strategy
- Legal issues - such as anti-trust laws, when SSF starts to fish in conjunction with a pre-determined market.

Throughout the discussion there was recognition of the fact that there was diversity both in SSF and in market options. Therefore, while one could emphasise generic advantages and disadvantages, market access and marketability was place/region specific. Opportunities to support fisher-led, grass-root/local certification schemes should be explored.

Future of small-scale fisheries in Europe: enabling and constraining factors – Facilitators:
Ratana Chuenpagdee and Easkey Britton

A key challenge for the future governance of SSF identified in this session was the recurring issue of representation - representation of SSF has to be meaningful with an active role in decision-making. Representation by other organisations (NGOs) does not necessarily represent the views of SSF. Closely linked to the issue of representation are the following challenges for SSF:

- Loss of voice and power, a common argument from SSF is that *'nobody listens, we're too small.'*
- Disparities between lifestyle at sea and need for political representation
- Lack of access, time and resources.
- SSF majority are individuals and do not engage in formal organizations
- In the past SFF didn't share the same problems as the LSF sector and are playing catch-up now.

Opportunities:

- Recognition (since 2009 Green Paper) of the need to act together and reconnect to wider society. There has also been an increase in the types of actor, which are dynamic and change over time.
- Collaboration is still limited to certain types of actor. Participants said it was time to think bigger and bolder about how to create a platform where more interests are met.
- Informal dimensions of social networks are considered an integral part of SSF and also need to be considered and supported in some way, alongside more formal approaches.
- In order to empower SSF it was suggested that it is important to 'tell your story' - what is the story of SSF, the importance of its existence? There is a need to communicate the power of that vision to create voice and visibility and lead to greater education and awareness (role of media).

Another important issue of the future of SSF is the role of women and youth:

- Women and youth were considered key ‘actors’ in SSF that have been neglected in research and policy. Women were considered likely leaders and often the first to voice concerns and represent the interests of their fishing community.
- Young people were considered key for the survival of SSF but challenged by high cost of access. The provision of licenses/training/certification not enough, need a diversity of skills and opportunities linked to fisheries, grounded in the community but also innovative.
- Potential for ‘mentoring’ or apprenticeship programs to encourage intergenerational transfer of knowledge.

Towards the end of the session the changing identity of those in SSF was emphasized (*‘Fishermen used to be heroes’*) and the question what do we want our fisheries/fishers to look like was raised (*‘local and young’*). In conclusion participants reiterated the need to link fishing to wider society and economy.

Conclusion

Priority issues and opportunities for SSF in Europe

There were a diversity of complex and wide-ranging issues and opportunities identified and discussed throughout the policy day. The following are a brief summary of some of the key recurring themes:

- Challenge of defining SSF and the need to make the purpose of any definition clear.
- Importance for SSF to (re)connect with local and wider society for integrated solutions.
- Need to support both formal and informal networks and collaborative partnerships within SSF and between SSF and other actors, in particular to better link science and fisheries partnerships with policy. Alternative structures and institutions in support of ‘low-impact’ fisheries from local to regional to national levels are developing but how to build and support non-formal organizations also needs consideration.
- Widen the skills base, recognizing that a diversity of skills are needed to overcome new challenges (e.g. marketing, political engagement, nature conservation, media, technology and innovation). Especially important is support for skills development and training for women and youth.
- Importance of understanding the value chain in SSF and assessing the development of new market niches (e.g. systematic comparison of cases and their success such as the Axis 4 EMFF supported Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) initiatives).

Acknowledgments

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Appendices

Appendix I – CFP briefing paper

The new CFP – ‘once in a decade’ opportunity (or threat?) for sustainable small-scale fisheries

Established in 1983 by the 10 nations of the European Community, thirty years on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) of the 27 nation European Union (EU) is nearing the end of its third decadal review and reform process. In its April 2009 Green Paper on the reform of the CFP, designed to open up a public consultation, the European Commission floated the idea of establishing “differentiated management regimes: one for large-scale fleets, where capacity adjustment and economic efficiency are at the core, and another for small-scale fleets in coastal communities with a focus on social objectives.” Although this idea has not been taken up, the social, economic and environmental importance of small scale fisheries has received much attention in the reform process. The aim of the 2013 MARE Policy Day was to look at how the reformed CFP will affect small scale fisheries, negatively and/ or positively, and to discuss what the future may hold for this important fisheries sector. The following provides a very brief, general overview of some of the key aspects of small-scale fisheries (SSF) and the CFP reform process.

What small-scale fisheries looks like in Europe today

Over 80% of the EU fleet (approx. 85,000 vessels) are small-scale (defined as vessels 12m or less, no trawling) with higher levels of employment than the industrial sector but accounts for only 10% of the gross tonnage and 35% of the aggregate engine power (MacFadyen et al., 2011). A key aspect affecting the management of SSF is the high level of heterogeneity within the sector and the very different characteristics of small-scale coastal fishing and artisanal fishing from country to country and coast to coast. SSF also have insufficient and unequal representation, however, this appears to be changing with an increasing number of SSF groups seeking to collaborate and more recently plans by small-scale fishermen to establish a pan-European organisation (Fish Secretariat, 2013).

Perhaps at the core of the governance challenges facing SSF lies the definition of ‘small-scale fishing’ which to date has been reductionist and largely limited to vessel length. In a report to the European Parliament, SSF rapporteur Jose Ferreira (2012) highlighted the issue and stated that a definition of SSF needs to take into account a range of criteria, in addition to a strict boat-size criterion such as the impact of the fleet and of fishing techniques on the marine ecosystem, time spent at sea and characteristics of the economic unit exploiting the resources. In February 2010 the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Green Paper. A key element of the resolution was the distinction made between small-scale and large-scale or industrial fishing outlining the benefit of ‘small’ and the need to recognise their social, environmental and economic

contribution with access no longer based solely on criterion of historical catches but rather based on social and environmental criteria. Those who fish in a socially and environmental sustainable way should be rewarded and given priority access. A number of SSF organisations and networks have highlighted the important ecological, economic, social and cultural contribution and value of sustainable (i.e. low-impact) small scale fisheries (see: www.medartnet.org).

The small-scale sector has been the most adversely affected by declining access to resources and fishing areas with the majority of the 30% job losses in European fisheries in the last decade from the small-scale sector (Greenpeace Spain, 2013). With a high level of dependence on fishing, declining catches and access to resources are resulting in declining income for a sector that lacks occupational mobility, impacting the wellbeing and eroding the resilience of small-scale fishing households and communities.

In Spain, for example, 99.5% of small-scale fishers’ sole or primary source of income was from fishing (Greenpeace Spain, 2013). Although youth and women are often the hardest hit by fisheries decline and lack of employment prospects, the important role of women has only recently been afforded any attention, and women are still not properly included in the statistics of the sector (Frangoudes, 2011). Research has recently highlighted the importance of SSF for the welfare of coastal communities in Europe, acting as a buffer against unemployment during economic recession but also the vulnerability and increasing pressures SSF face as a result of reduced access to resources (Britton and Coulthard, 2013; Greenpeace Spain, 2013).

What is the CFP?

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is the main instrument the European Union uses to manage EU fishing activities and to conserve fish stocks; to regulate who can fish what, where, when, how and how much. The CFP was formally established in 1983, with subsequent reforms in 1992 and 2002. The CFP includes various dimensions including conservation and management, trade and markets and an external dimension. There is also a financial instrument to support implementation of the “basic regulation” and to guide the CFP towards achieving its objectives (see Box 1). The third reform of the CFP is currently being finalised and the new policy is planned to enter into force in January 2014 (see Figure 1).

Box 1. The CFP Reform package - 3 legislative files:

Basic Regulation – the main file in the fisheries reform, it establishes the framework for fisheries management in the EU. Agreement reached May 30th.

Core debates:

Overfishing, quotas – maximum sustainable yield (MSY), multiannual plans and stock assessments.

Discards – effort reduction, ‘equity versus efficiency’ debate, who will receive the benefits of a ‘sustainable’ use of resources?

Regionalisation – at what scale and whose voice counts?

Rewarding sustainable practices/punishing unsustainable practices.]

Common Market Organisation (CMO) regulations - key issues include labelling of fish and aquaculture products, storage aid and the framework for Producer Organisations.

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) - the regulation that governs how public money is used within EU fisheries management. The EU made a commitment to end capacity-building subsidies or subsidies contributing to overcapacity or overfishing at Rio+20 Summit in 2012 and the Commission states that subsidies linked to production must end with increased subsidies for sustainable development of coastal communities instead. There are a number of provisions for SSF proposed in the EMFF. A vote at the Fisheries Committee is scheduled for July 10th.

Why change?

Despite its longevity, the CFP has been widely criticised as a dysfunctional management tool, failing to achieve:

- An end to overfishing and declining stocks – An estimated 47% of EU fish stocks and almost 90% of Mediterranean fish stocks are overexploited, with 25% of total catch in the EU discarded (thrown away). This figure is as high as 45% in the North Sea.
- An end to fleet overcapacity and overcapitalisation – structural change seriously undermined the fishing sector with fishing effort 2 to 3 times greater than what EU waters can support leading to an imbalance between available resources and fishing capacity. An EU Court of Auditors report (2011) found ‘overcapacity’ to be the main reason for failure of the CFP with a massive misuse of EU fisheries funds.

Other pressures for CFP reform:

- Failure to reconcile contradicting EU policies such as the need to reduce fishing effort but maintain livelihoods in coastal areas, alongside the increasing standard of living requiring fishers to maintain or increase their fishing effort (Coelho et al., 2011).
- EU enlargement and lack of political will to implement policy and manage fisheries (Symes, 2012).
- Complex decision-making affecting regionalisation.
- Globalisation (e.g. markets, labour, climate change, policy commitments, information).
- New players in world fisheries (e.g. aquaculture and developing or emerging countries).
- Environmental agenda and emergence of new EU maritime policies (e.g. Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Natura 2000).
- Crisis in the Euro zone/ economic recession and decline of coastal regions.

Why is this one different?

The Lisbon Treaty (2009) is viewed as the ‘game changer’ in the CFP Reform process, effectively reshaping fisheries institutions and the governance system. As a result, a key difference of this reform process is the new co-decision power - the European Parliament (EP) now has an equal say, with the exception of quota allocation, with the Council in policy decision-making processes (see Box 2).

Box 2. Three ‘co-legislators’:

- i. Commission - prepares the legislative text
- ii. Parliament - adopts a position on the text
- iii. Council - decides on whether the text should be adopted and if amendments are needed.

This forms the basis for negotiation between Council and Parliament. These negotiations between the Council and the Parliament to reach a common position are known as ‘tripartite dialogue’ or ‘trilogues’, the Commission is also present. These debates ended with an agreement on the Basic Regulation on May 30th. Debate on the EMFF is currently underway.

Time-line of CFP Reform – key ‘milestones’

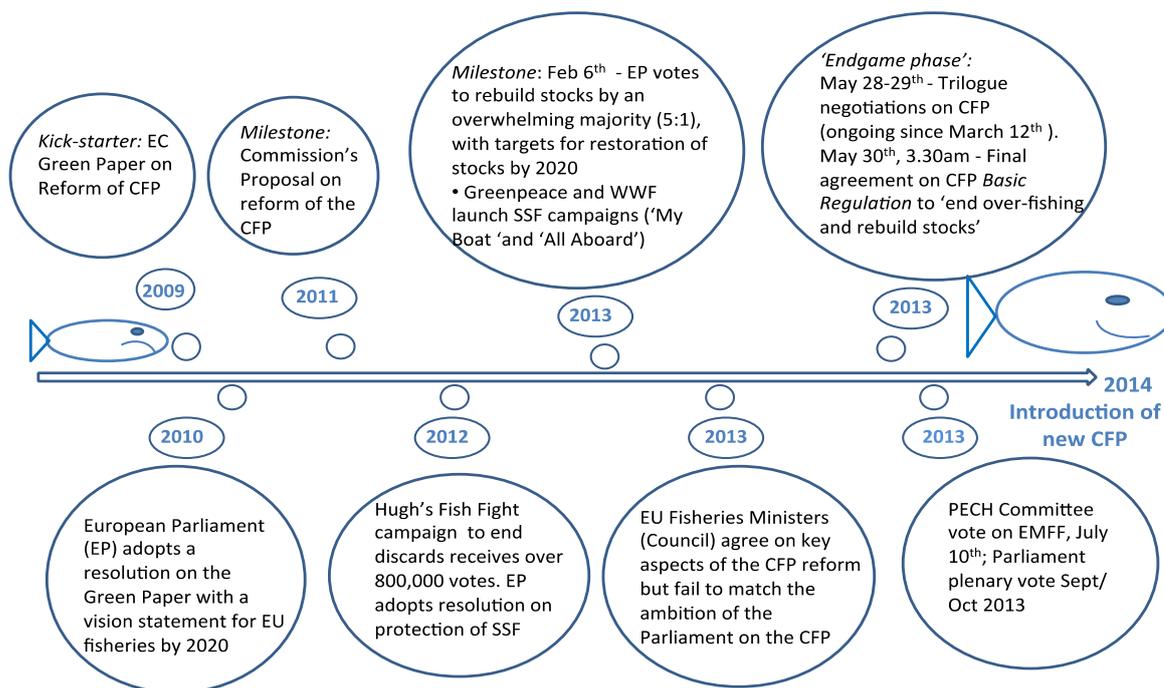


Figure. 1 Time-line of key events in reform of CFP

In parallel to this process there has been greater participation of civil society with the mobilisation of civil society organisations (CSOs) to influence the co-decision process, especially through the EP. Various environmental NGOs, foundations and campaign groups have been quick to take advantage of this new co-decision arrangement. With the resources available to them these organisations and groups are able to leverage wide-spread public support through membership networks, coalitions and strong social media following (see Box 3). SSF are generally very individualistic and do not belong to formal organisations, however, there are recent developments of alternative structures and institutions in SSF, in particular the alliance between some SSF organizations and ENGOs like Greenpeace and WWF.

Box 3. Leveraging ‘people power’

- Over 860,000 online votes to end discards on Hugh's Fish Fight campaign.
- WWF petition signed by over 150,000 European citizens demanding better fishing laws, May 2013.
- Over 100,000 paper boats signed by people (public, fishermen, politicians) from around Europe in support of low-impact fishing and a fundamental reform of fisheries policy as part of the Greenpeace campaign, 'Support Sustainable Fishermen.'
- The organisation 'Black Fish' have created a feature animation titled, 'Losing Nemo' currently touring Europe to highlight the impacts of overfishing and ocean awareness.

What is the process?

The process was kicked off in April 2009 with the European Commission's Green Paper on the Reform of the CFP. The original goal was to have the new CFP in place by January 2013 but negotiations on the legislation are continuing well into 2013 with the new CFP not due to come into force until January 2014. Despite shared principles, the Commission, Council and Parliament are driven by different values and interests and hold somewhat differing 'visions' for what sustainable fisheries should look like and how to achieve that. In February 2013, the European Parliament adopted, by an overwhelming majority of 75%, what was viewed by many as a much more ambitious reform of the CFP than proposed by the Council (see Figure 1).

What are some of the key changes in the reform of the CFP?

- Introduction of a limit to discards and new landing obligation (*de minimis* figure of up to 5% discards of TACs).
- Fishing quotas set on basis of scientific advice, i.e. the revival of Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY)
- End-of-year quota haggling replaced with multiannual plans.
- Rejection of mandatory introduction of transferrable fishing concessions (TFCs) by both Council and Parliament.

- Parliament secured agreement on allocation of quota based on transparent and objective environmental and social criteria.
- Fishing capacity – removal of EMFF financial assistance if member states fail to comply.
- Parliament secured agreement for establishing compliance committee.
- Regionalised decision-making (details of how this is to be achieved not yet known).
- Advisory Councils - New market advisory council. Representation of fishing sector on RACs slightly reduced to 60% highlighting the importance of the non-fishing sector in sustainable fisheries management.
- Protected areas – develop and strengthen biologically sensitive areas.
- Re-introduction of subsidies for vessel construction and engine replacement, including small-scale, was approved by the Fisheries Commission by a slim majority vote on the EMFF, July 10th - a decision that was widely condemned by MEPs and NGOs. The final outcome remains to be seen with the Parliament plenary vote scheduled for October before negotiations with the Council.

The implications for SSF

How far will these solutions to managing EU fisheries go to addressing the complex issues of SSF?

- A shift away from an entirely conventional, productivist view of management, rejecting the compulsory introduction of TFCs, however, TFCs/ITQs can still be taken up at Member State (MS) level.
- Distribution of quota based on ‘environmental and social criteria’ – At present wording is weak on the use of criteria, which is to be defined at MS level.
- Fishing quotas based on ‘best scientific advice’ – reliance and emphasis on ‘expert knowledge’ lacking integration of local ecological knowledge. or shared experiences and understanding of fish stock behaviour in local ecosystems
- The problem with MSY? Centralised decision-making and the failure of a reductionist, ‘simple’, instrumental approach led by ‘expert-knowledge’ and delivered in the form of technical fixes in a top-down command and control system of decision making (Symes, 2012).
- Concern that the ‘discards ban’ could have an overall depressing effect on market prices for fish by flooding the market with low cost, low quality fish. Also potentially could provide a low cost feed source for aquaculture, making industrial aquaculture more feasible, with a depressing effect on market prices and competing for space with SSF.
- Regionalised decision-making, greater involvement of fishermen and other stakeholders – who and how? At what scale? Typically, SSF are not well represented on RACs partly due to lack of resources or time to engage in RACs and also most SSF are non-aligned.

- New market advisory council – need to consider market opportunities for small-scale fisheries and how to develop a specific market niche, for example - improve certification schemes for SSF; promotion of differentiated marketing of artisanal fishing i.e. “geographic indicator” labels.
- Subsidies aimed at new boats for SSF are controversial, with widespread evidence that capacity-enhancing subsidies do no good in the medium/long term leading to overfishing (Sumaila, 2011). Subsidies supporting bottom-up sustainable growth are instead advocated (see: <http://www.greens-efa.eu/fisheries-reform-9523.html>)

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Appendix II: Delegates' Feedback on MARE Policy Day 2013

Alan Steer, UK Crab Fishermen, involved in GAP2:

“The biggest thing I’ve taken away from this is that the scientists and the fishermen are actually working really well together and the information is being transferred that far. The biggest issue we’ve come across now is that the scientists can’t actually promote this information to the policy makers.”

Emma Pearson, UK fisheries scientist, involved in GAP2:

“There was a lot of discussion about the problems that small-scale fisheries face in the future, but not many solutions brought to the table. I think that the involvement of policy makers in the day might have brought a few more solutions to bridging the gap between policy makers, and the gap that’s been closed between researchers and fishers.... It’s the missing link.”

Rosa Chapela:

“The event is a great opportunity for networking with people from throughout Europe and beyond. But we need to get the discussion to move forward and to be less ambitious. We do not need to solve the world’s problems; a small step would be enough.”

Marta Ballesteros

“The event brings together different knowledge from different sectors. I deal with EU projects and its important to know about different European aspects of fisheries management. A negative – the lack of policy makers, both on the floor and within the audience.”

Charlene Jouanneau (Research assistant)

“Really interesting, I learned a lot about small-scale fisheries.”

Maria Hadjimichael (Post Doc)

“It was great that there were researchers, policy makers and small-scale fisheries’ representatives especially (as opposed to large scale industrial fishers).”

Nadia Papadopoulou

“Very positive, very interesting, I learned some things too. The event tackled very varied aspects of the issues involved. The only criticism is that it was rather North European focus, but some very good examples”.

Brian O Riordan (ICSF)

“For me, this was my first MARE event. But also, I’ve been involved with the review and reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. There’s nothing really new that’s come out of it, but it’s been a very interesting, worthwhile discussion. Excellent presentations and discussion.”

Kai Watjen, scientist involved in GAP2 Germany case study:

“Very interesting, very fruitful, especially the small workshop on marketing.”

Audrey Van Mastrigt, researcher involved in Swedish GAP2 case study:

“Very interesting, I learned a lot, especially during the morning’s more in-depth session with the three different speakers.”

Appendix III: Policy day speaker bios

Key-note address:

Prof. David Symes, Reader Emeritus at the University of Hull, has published extensively in the field of European fisheries management and policy over the last 20 years. He has acted as adviser on fisheries management to statutory conservation agencies in the UK and to the European Commission and was one of the first to suggest regionalisation might be a tool for better fisheries management in Europe. David gave a keynote lecture on small-scale fisheries knowledge and governance challenges in Europe.

Presentations:

Dr. Steve Mackinson, coordinator of GAP1 and GAP2 and member of CEFAS (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, UK). Steve works with stakeholders to develop long-term fisheries management plans based on an ecosystem approach. Steve presented an overview of a GAP2 case study on the role of multiple stakeholders in research and governance on fisheries and the marine environment.

Dr. Ratana Chuenpagdee is the project director for Too Big to Ignore: Global Partnerships for Small-Scale Fisheries Research and the Canada Research Chair in Natural Resource Sustainability and Community Development. Ratana has an extensive international research background in fisheries governance and inter- and transdisciplinary research. Ratana discussed transdisciplinarity in small-scale fisheries research.

Mr. Jaap Vegter is coordinator of Stichting Geïntegreerde Visserij and a fisherman from the Wadden Sea who still works with the same conviction he had in the early years: It is possible to harvest in harmony with nature and fishermen themselves have an interest in doing that. Jaap gave a presentation on the practices of small-scale fishing in the Netherlands and on the connection between small-scale fishing, sustainability and local economy.

Round-table discussion:

Brian O'Riordan has worked in fisheries for over 35 years, specializing in small-scale fisheries and North-South issues. Since 2000 Brian has been employed by the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) as Secretary of its Belgium Office.

Mr. Jeremy Percy, has fished vessels from 5 to 26 metres around much of the UK over many years. He has also been a fisheries manager, regulator, managed the first real time electronic auction in England and Wales, skipper of a fisheries protection vessel and is currently Chief Executive to the New Under Ten Fishermen's Association (NUTFA).

Mr. Miguel Peña Castellot, Economist with a master in fisheries economics and European Commission Official since 1990. Miguel has worked at the Economic Analysis and Structural Policy Unit of DG MARE since 2006.