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WORKSHOP REPORT

*Seminar Surveying the Sea
under CFP and MSFD*

EFARO has organised a one day seminar in Brussels on the 23rd of November 2016 to discuss how we can coordinate and cooperate in the monitoring of our seas, especially noting the two different EU policies guiding this monitoring (CFP and MSFD).

The CFP has been recently revised (2013) and has today a more regional focus than before; the MSFD has been introduced in 2005 and is currently in the process of being operationalised. Monitoring of the CFP has a longstanding tradition and is today executed under the DCF. In addition to the data collected under the DCF, the MSFD requires additional information on specific indicators related to Good Environmental Status (GES). In fact this set of indicators is yet under development.

Whereas the CFP operates at the European level, and data collection and assessments are well structured under the Data Collection Framework (DCF), operationalisation of the MSFD, including its data collection, is an issue of individual Member States. Whereas a logical crystallisation point for data collected under the CFP can be found in institutions such as ICES, GFCM and the ACs, the implementation of the MSFD centres around the Regional Sea Conventions such as OSPAR, HELCOM and the Barcelona and the Bucharest convention in a less institutionalised fashion.

While both CFP and MSFD intend to monitor developments at sea, responsibility over the two policies is split between DGMARE and DGENV and in most of the MS also over two ministries. Main challenge is, noting this structure and differing signature of the two policies, how can we coordinate and cooperate within MS and between MS the monitoring of our seas.

The seminar was attended by representatives of relevant services of the Commission (DGENV, DGMARE), EP, institutions such as ICES, GFCM, OSPAR, HELCOM, Barcelona convention, Bucharest convention, relevant officials of the MSs, Industry representatives from different sectors, NGOs, Science providers and EFARO members.

Mr Tammo Bult (EFARO president) opened the meeting and introduced the topic. The main questions we seek to answer are:

- how to collect and manage in the best possible way our marine data and information?
- How do we do this in an efficient, effective way noting the money available?
- How can we improve the current situation for example by way of improving cooperation, coordination and targeted rational decisions to deliver on information needs under the two policy frames: CFP, MSFD?

It would be nice if today's seminar would provide suggestions, ideas and actions on how to improve our current situation.

Mr. Matjaž Malgaj (DG ENV) elaborated that the status of the World's seas and oceans is currently not very good. Internationally the thread of ocean pollution is recognised. The main goal is to have healthy oceans to feed the population. To achieve this the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive was made. The challenge we face today is to come to a common implementation strategy. The approach is more risk based data

collection and to fulfil the increased demand on data from Brussel in such a way that we not duplicate the work. We need collaboration and innovation.

A panel discussion was held. The panel discussion moderated by Mr Maarten Mens was attended by Mr Bas Drukker (DG MARE), Mr David Connor (DG ENV), Mrs Anne Christine Brusendorff (ICES), Mr Philippe Moguedet (EFARO). The discussion highlighted six challenges that were felt needed attention. These were related to Policy (changes in demands of data), the Legal framework (CFP has very clear targets on data collection whilst MSFD has a broad frame work), Financing (the DCF only finances the collection of data that is needed for fisheries management), Clear objectives for the data collection, Methods to analyse the data and, finally, the actual data collection process (resources and knowledge needed). These topics were discussed in discussion groups. The results were presented and discussed in the plenary meeting. This resulted in the following action points being formulated:

1. Multiple step approach

EFARO/ICES go to the Regional Seas Convention groups and the Regional Coordination Groups under the DCF to define common objectives and work towards a plan to proceed.

2. Improve uptake of funding

Noting the relevant Articles for EMFF funding for data collection and funds that can be made available for monitoring programmes under the MSFD, apparently very little of allocated funding has been used, and mainly by three countries (Fi, FR, and PI). One reason could be that co-financing is requested/and a lack of contact between those responsible for EMFF and MSFD is hampering the use of these funds. Use these funding to perform together with EFARO a regional pilot desk study on how to improve efficiency and effectivity in data collection.

3. Devise plan for MSFD/CFP data collection at regional scale.

When looking into potential environmental monitoring parameters in specific ecoregions the revised Commission decision on GES could also serve as an input

4. Organise buy in from member states and DGs.

To develop an outline of the use of current DCF fisheries data, also for MSFD purposes, and to come up with a suggestion for potential environmental data for inclusion to the fisheries independent sampling programme

5. If we don't find common objectives between the organisations involved, data collection will be at the same point in 5 years' time. Do we know why there seems to be limited motivation to make progress on something that seems so beneficial? Are there other pathways to be identified? (Remembering that this has been an issue for consideration earlier, e.g. 2012 Council, as well as ICES earlier contact to the Marine Directors, and ICES participation in their meeting)

6. Find champions to make good regional examples. Sven Kupschus (UK CEFAS) and Dennis van Schaardenburg (NL Informatiehuis Marien) volunteered.

In the final discussion the following conclusions were drawn. While there was agreement as to the WHY to cooperate (resource efficiency, dwindling budgets), there was more discussion, and no agreement on WHAT this cooperation is about and HOW and WHO

are to define these COMMON PRINCIPLES for cooperation. There were also some formal discussions, to point out that that Member States have signed a legal environmental framework and need to find the needed resources for its implementation.

ICES has experience from the Celtic and the North Sea on testing integrated monitoring (WKMSFDemo, and WKPIMP). The Celtic pilot shows that it can be quite challenging to identify the common principles of data collection between the two frameworks, the North Sea pilot shows the challenges of bringing together a large group of ICES member countries involved in a survey. It is necessary to assure the support of the community behind these ideas, Member States, Regional Sea Conventions, Regional Coordination Groups, Science community. We can make better use in this of established (ICES) groups, such as the SCICOM Steering Group on Integrated Ecosystem Observation and Monitoring, the survey groups and the assessment groups.

There appeared to be a common understanding at the meeting, that the definition of the COMMON PRINCIPLES for cooperation will be a scientific exercise. While there definitely will be a need for scientific input, we should be aware, that this needs to take into account f.e. the revised Commission decision on GES, and will in the end be a political decision. Also to be successful such an exercise needs the blessing of all involved partners, and a possibility for these partners to designate their specific scientific experts.

Given that implementing the MSFD is a Member State responsibility it was stated that nor the Regional Seas Commissions (MSFD) nor the Regional Coordination Meetings (DCF) have the mandate to talk on behalf of the Member States. It is agreed that DG ENV and DG MARE (ambassadors are Kenneth Patterson and David Connor) will place the topic on the agenda of the Marine Directors Meeting of June 2017 to present the case for cooperation in monitoring of the sea under CFP and MSFD. And to invite EFARO/ICES, Regional seas convention and one or two 'champions' to define clear objectives for data collection.