



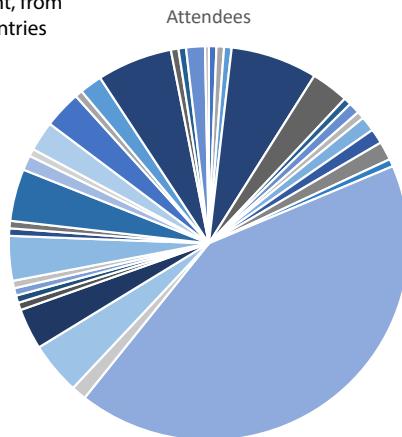
THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF THE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY. PRESENT CHALLENGES AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

1st -2nd June 2021



SUMMARY OF THE EVENT

A total of 169 people attended the event, from 35 different countries



Argentina	Australia	Bangladesh	Belgium	Brazil	Canada
Switzerland	China	Costa Rica	Cape Verde	Germany	Denmark
Spain	Faroe Islands	France	United Kingdom	Ghana	Guadeloupe
Indonesia	India	Iceland	Italy	Luxembourg	Morocco
Madagascar	Namibia	Netherlands	Norway	Philippines	Poland
Portugal	Seychelles	Sweden	Senegal	Taiwan	

Here we present a brief summary of the Conference. The conclusions and remarks from each panel will serve as a basis for a policy briefing on specific recommendations for improving the implementation of the External Dimension of the CFP in the next period (2023-2033).

BACKGROUND

The Conference was held within the framework of the FarFish H2020 project (H2020-727891), and was organised by the Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC) and CETMAR. This event was aimed at analysing the implementation of the External Dimension and the creation of recommendations ahead of the CFP report in 2022. To meet such goal, we invited high level experts and key stakeholders from the fishing, industry and NGO sectors, together with relevant policy makers, scientists and academics to discuss the importance, advantages and challenges of the EU role in international fisheries management and ocean governance.

[THE RECORDED SESSIONS ARE AVAILABLE HERE](#)

GOALS

- Discuss the achievements and shortcomings of the current external dimension of the CFP.
- Propose measures for enhancing Europe's role in the International Fisheries Governance (in line with the headline ambition of the European Green Deal).
- Discuss how to improve evaluations and transparency of SFPAs, to maximise fishing opportunities for operators and use of sectorial support by Coastal States.
- Recommend ways to strength EU input and influence in the RFMOs.
- Reflect on mechanisms to achieve sustainable management and conservation measures in the High Seas, through level playing field among all operators and better coordination and implementation of international legal instruments related to human activities and pressures in the seas.



Panel I: Perspectives on the CFP External Dimension.

The External Dimension is a positive driving force of the CFP to improve international ocean governance in accordance with EU standards. It helps the EU fleet to operate within a well-defined legal framework, with clear policy objectives. It has also contributed to improve transparency, fishing access, employment conditions and development of coastal communities.

The main challenges that the External Dimension has to overcome are: **A)** the lack of playing field between EU and non-EU fleets, **B)** lack of progress on the dialogue between the EU and third countries to safeguard the interests of local coastal communities, **C)** the environmental threats for the ocean (acidification, climate change,...). All the mentioned challenges might lead to a negative perception from third countries towards SFPAs, mainly created by the possible competition with local communities.

The way forward is to have zero tolerance with IUU fishing, and reinforce the dialogues with 3rd countries, not only to improve the image of the EU but also its contribution.

Panel II: The importance of EU participation in RFMOs.

RFMOs are generally performing well but could improve its functioning in a number of areas related to decision-making, adoption and implementation of conservation, management and control measures within their regulatory areas. The EU has had an important presence, visibility and role in the RFMOs in tabling proposals aimed to achieve the three pillars of sustainability: environmental, economic and social (including promotion of human and labour rights).

The main challenges are related to the implementation of recommendations drawn from the performance reviews, capacity building and governance gaps in international waters. Improved communication and cooperation would be desired in terms of cross-check of IUU vessels lists, regional monitoring, catch documentation and control schemes, etc.

The EU should actively promote and advocate for the creation of RFMOs could be created where they are not existing due to geopolitical or resources issues. RFMOs could act as "test laboratories" for regional governance and MCS.



DAY 2 - IMPROVING MANAGEMENT UNDER FISHERIES AGREEMENTS

GOALS

- Open a critical and accurate discussion about achievements and shortcomings of the External Dimension of the CFP, particularly at the SFPAs levels.
- Initiate a dialogue to identify the main findings, strengths and weakness of SFPAs, as international cooperation tools between the EU and third countries.
- Communicate advances, lessons learnt, challenges and needs on scientific cooperation between the EU and coastal countries with a SFPAs in place, from the FarFish project experience.



Panel I: The value of SFPAs as an instrument of cooperation with third countries

There is an optimistic balance on SFPAs as contributors to sustainable fisheries, as SFPAs management measures are based on the best scientific knowledge.

SFPAs are mechanisms to facilitate dialogue to improve fisheries policies, specifically to support scientific collaboration and to promote transparency. In addition SFPAs are contributing to fight against IUU, making this one of the pillars for fisheries sustainability. Control and surveillance have been strengthened from the agreements, through the use of technology and human capacity.

SFPAs are projected towards the generation of employment, the development of infrastructures to promote local fishing economies, entrepreneurship diversification and gender balance, which has a wide potential for development.

Nevertheless, there is room for improvement, particularly on capacity building what is reflected in a lack of real training programs for managers and technicians to support decision-making. Currently, capacity building is essential but with limited efficiency; it needs to be transformed into a cooperation tool for sectoral budgetary support.

Scientific cooperation between the EU and third countries need to be consolidated through the promotion of long-term scientific cooperation (particularly increasing the availability of socioeconomic data to create a better community-based risk assessment), strengthening coherence with efficient resources management, accompanied by a strategy for real impact in job creation, especially at a local level.

Dissemination and communication need to be strengthened through participative processes as currently it is noted a low participation rates of civil society in the negotiation process and implementation of the agreements.



Round table: FarFish Case Studies

It was presented the FarFish project as a valuable Hub to strengthen scientific cooperation at coastal country level within the framework of the SFPAs.

Particularly, it was addressed the importance of capacity building and training as one of the most relevant actions to improve professional skills, competences and knowledge transfer to a wide groups of stakeholders within the field of fisheries management.

There have been several initiatives for partnership between science and fishing industry, such as the implementation of a pilot program for self-sampling with the participation of industrial and artisanal fleet from Mauritania and Senegal.

Sectorial support management does appear as a relevant mechanism to promote cooperation, although it is essential to connect this funding set to real needs and interest to partner countries. There is also an urgent necessity to improve flexibility on sectoral support execution, strengthen transparency and local stakeholder engagement.

The inclusion of the regional approach in cooperation is essential; it needs to be approached from a broad perspective, since the physical countries barriers generate obstacles in scientific cooperation. It needs to increase the technical and human capacities to carry it out, since institutions from different coastal countries do not count on the same resources. It would support a better stock assessment, promoting transparency on scientific data.

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