

1 June 2021, 9:00-13:00CET

SUMMARY



Here we present the conclusions of both panels from the first day of the Conference. These conclusions and remarks 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).

[You can revisit the panels here](#)

Panel I: Perspectives on the CFP External Dimension

Author: Daniel Voces

ADVANTAGES

- Positive driving force to improve ocean governance embedded in EU standards. EU fleets operate within a well-defined framework and objectives
- Important contribution to food security, culture and wealth
- EU dedicated fisheries policy that improved transparency, access condition, employment & looks after coastal communities
- Provides specific tools to promote EU sustainable policies that integrates management and environmental protection
- Milestone towards relationship with 3rd countries
- CFP proven effective and adaptive policy

CHALLENGES

- Need to apply precautionary approach to new blue economy actors
- Post-covid19 crisis and need to build resilience
- Negative perception from African countries towards EU SFPAs mainly created by possible competition with local communities
- Lack of level playing field in terms of fleet and product standards
- Economic sustainability 'de-prioritized' in some SFPAs (e.g. underutilization of fish resources)

WAY FORWARD

- Right balance between the 3 pillars of sustainability
- EU needs to be more assertive and use market force to ensure viability of its external fleet
- Reinforce dialogue and common objectives with 3rd countries
- Focus on implementation, compliance and enforcement
- Work to improve image and contribution of the EU
- Level playing field for all fleets operating in the same area or under a SFPA
- Approve tools to make sure beneficial owners are responsible for IUU infringements
- Ensure that seafood imports comply with similar EU standards
- Zero tolerance against IUU
- Need to work on a multilateral level, create regional synergies and better collaborate under RFMO settings
- Increase support on research, training and social stability in coastal communities (SFPAs must be a driver for development but cannot work alone)

Panel II: The importance of EU participation in RFMOs.

Author: Alexandre Rodríguez

ADVANTAGES

- The EU, represented by the European Commission through a mandate adopted by the Council, plays an active role in 5 tuna-RFMOs and 11 non-tuna RFMOs. This makes the EU one of the most prominent actors in RFMOs worldwide.
- Most RFMOs have their own Scientific Councils or Committees coordinating or undertaking stock assessments for key commercial species and providing recurrent advice.

CHALLENGES

- Emphasis should be put on implementation of recommendations drawn from the performance reviews.
- The EU should make full use of available policy instruments and strategies embedded in the external dimension of the CFP (i.e. SFPAs, SMEFF, fight against IUU, etc.) to promote sustainable exploitation of fishing resources in RFMOs.
- There are still governance gaps in international waters.
- Capacity building and resources can be strengthened due to increasing workload.
- Improved communication and cooperation would be desired in terms of cross-check of IUU vessels lists, regional monitoring, catch documentation and control schemes, etc.

WAY FORWARD

- The EU might increase their efforts and dedicate more resources to work with other member states and contracting parties to not be "isolated" adopting a more coherent approach between its external policies.
- RFMO remit of work should align with international commitments on climate change, biodiversity strategies, BBNJ, CBD, links with trade (CITES), etc.
- The EU should actively promote and advocate for the creation of RFMOs where there are not existing.
- The idea of a "super e-logbook" might be explored where data on catch, bycatch and discard can be reported.
- RFMOs could act as "test laboratories" for regional governance and MCS (e.g. observer programmes at sea, EMS/VMS...)
- Institutionalise this cooperation through either informal (ad hoc arrangements) or formal (permanent secretariat) structures.

