

## **Working Group 1: EU Production Minutes**

Monday, 31 May 2021

14:00 - 17:15 CET

Zoom online meeting

**Welcome from the Chair, Sean O'Donoghue**

**Adoption of draft agenda and minutes of last meeting (31.03.21): adopted**

Click [here](#) to access the Chair's presentation.

### **Action points of the last meeting**

- **State of play of the decisions made during the last meeting (28.01.21) – information**
- Covid-19 Pandemic:
  - Topic to be included on the draft agenda of the next meeting, in order to continue monitoring developments
  - Secretariat to arrange a bilateral meeting with MARE D3 on the requirements of the new EMFAF emergency mechanism
  - Secretariat to circulate EUMOFA monitoring report
    - Agenda item included
    - Request for bilateral meeting sent (9 April), but MARE D3 unavailable
    - EUMOFA monitoring report circulated (9 April)
- Marketing Standards
  - Topic to be included on the draft agenda of the next meeting with more allocated time
  - Secretariat to circulate the STECF report, once publicly available
    - Agenda item included (1 hour)
    - STECF report circulated (21 April)
    - Agenda item included
- Biodiversity Strategy:
  - Draft advice to be put forward to the Executive Committee for consideration at the 14 April 2021 meeting
    - Advice considered and adopted by the Executive Committee (14 April)
- Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet
  - Topic to be included on the draft agenda of the next meeting, in order to discuss specific data issues, such as Brexit and COVID-19 pandemic
    - Agenda item included



- Joint MAC/NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group on Brown Crab
  - o Continuous updates on the next meetings
    - Agenda item with an update scheduled

## Marketing Standards

- **Discussion on STECF report on incorporating sustainability aspects with Didier Gascuel, STECF EWG Chair**

The Chair emphasised that the sustainability aspect of the CFP should be the start of the discussion, recalling that, Article 2.1 of the CFP refers to environmental, social and economic sustainability. This concept is also part of the CMO Regulation. He highlighted that, in the preparation of the report, STECF received specific terms of reference from DG MARE. The remit was to cover environmental and social sustainability aspects, but not to cover economic sustainability. The Chair drew attention to the conclusions of the STECF report, including that, information on social aspects is limited.

The Chair asked members for their views on which sustainability aspects should be covered. It is quite likely that sustainability aspects will be part of the revised Marketing Standards Regulation, in line with the Farm to Fork Strategy. Therefore, the MAC should work to contribute to the development of a system that is workable and with added value.

Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) stressed that sustainability must cover the three pillars. Due to the terms of reference, the STECF report was not complete. The marketing standards are essential for economic communication between operators, particularly to ensure confidence between economic partners. Modifications to these rules should not be hastened, because it would have negative impacts on the market. The next steps should be to complete the indicators proposed by STECF, specifically economic and social criteria. Mr Robert suggested that the MAC should identify clear criteria under the economic and social pillars of sustainability. These should be based on data that is already periodically collected. In case the data is not available, then a revision of the Data Collection Framework should be considered. The Data Collection Framework and the Marketing Standards Regulation must be in tune.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) welcomed the development of sustainability criteria under the CMO Regulation. The Data Collection Framework might need to be reviewed to address these. Taking into account the relevance for aquaculture producers, Mr Guillaumie suggested the adoption of joint advice by the MAC and the AAC.

Javier Ojeda (FEAP) agreed with the suggestion of common MAC-AAC advice. Mr Ojeda recognised that the existing marketing standards are not contributing to the level-playing-field on environmental and social aspects, so he very much welcomed the STECF initiative to develop criteria. For several years, FEAP drew attention to the need of a level-playing-field with imported aquaculture products in



the EU market. This should cover environmental and social issue, but should also consider animal welfare and other food safety aspects of seafood production and processing. Nevertheless, Mr Ojeda argued that the report did not provide a sound basis for the development of policy options, especially for aquaculture products. Mr Ojeda expressed opposition to the development of a relative scoring system. Instead, there should be a general sustainability scoring for food directed at consumers. Currently, there is already significant confusion amongst consumers due to certification scheme labels, traffic light systems, among others. Consumers like to compare different food products, so a relative system only for aquaculture products would not provide valuable information for consumers.

Pim Visser (VisNed) stressed that the marketing standards are clearly B2B. The STECF report demonstrates that the revision is aimed at consumer information. In relation to social sustainability, Mr Visser drew attention to the importance of the ILO Convention C188, which should be taken into account. In relation to environmental and social criteria, there should be a level-playing-field for EU capture fisheries and the imported fish. The same should be for EU aquaculture production. The high EU standards should be applicable to all imported seafood that enters the EU market.

Linnéa Engström (MSC) welcomed the STECF report. Ms Engström noted that, according to the report's conclusions, further detailing is needed and the proposed systems is expected to complete existing certification schemes and labels. It is rather difficult to foresee how an EU labelling system could be applied due to the complexity of marine systems. It is important to be aware of undue burdens on the supply chain, particularly those who already invested in credible third-party ecolabels. Nevertheless, there is definitely a role for the EU to set a baseline of minimum requirements for sustainability standards. It should not be possible to market unsustainable seafood as "sustainable" or "green". Minimum requirements should allow for complementarity with credible third-party certification, so that operators are incentivised to improve performance beyond baseline, including through participation in certification, if desired by the operators.

Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana) expressed support for further exploration of the topic in the MAC and for a careful analysis of the STECF report, particularly on how sustainability aspects can be incorporated in the marketing standards. The inception impact assessment clearly demonstrated that, currently, there is no system in place that meets the sustainability requirements under the CFP. It is important to move ahead under the ongoing revision of the Marketing Standards Regulation, instead of waiting for a revision of the CMO Regulation.

Frangiscos Nikolian (DG MARE) clarified that the CMO Regulation will not be revised. At the end of 2022, the Commission will produce a report to the Council and the European Parliament on the implementation and results of the CMO Regulation, as it is legally required. The same applies to the CFP Regulation.

Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) welcomed the initiative. The marketing standards, currently, do not sufficiently contribute to the level-playing-field on environmental and social aspects. Ms Absil



expressed her willingness to hear more about how this initiative would align with other consumer information initiatives on sustainability under the Farm to Fork Strategy. Ms Absil stated she would not oppose joint advice with the AAC, but highlighted that the regional fisheries ACs would likely also want to take part, so the MAC should focus on its strongest points. It is important to be certain about what will be included in the advice.

Didier Gascuel (STECF) highlighted that there will be a consultation phase with aquaculture and fisheries stakeholders and that there will be a testing phase. The system can be implemented relatively quickly, but would evolve and be adapted with time. In relation to the three pillars of sustainability, Mr Gascuel explained that the mandate of the STECF EWG was to work mostly on environmental criteria, but also on social criteria. Social and economic standards are not the same amongst EU countries and differ from the imported products. Developing countries are not able to meet EU standards. The criteria proposed by STECF do cover social criteria in line with the conventions of the ILO. It is also necessary to respect WTO rules.

It can be difficult to determine how to take into account socio-economic differences between EU countries as well as between production types, including differences between aquaculture and fisheries sizes. More exhaustive information on production and type and size of the undertakings would be needed. On the scoring per product, Mr Gascuel recognised that STECF reflected on criteria for aquaculture production and on criteria for wild caught fisheries production. The indicators would be different for aquaculture and for caught fisheries. There are questions about global comparisons with other food products, in order to inform consumers, but those are political questions.

Mr Gascuel explained that the scoring system would be at farmgate. In order to account for processing, it would require a lot more information on lifecycle and the footprint, which goes beyond aquatic food products. The proposed system would be quite complete for fresh and frozen products. The transport footprint would also be taken into account.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) expressed concern about the complexity of the proposed system. Mr Pastoor highlighted that there is general agreement with the development of environmental and socio-economic sustainability criteria, but that there are doubts about the correct instrument to implement these. From the beginning, the marketing standards were developed as a B2B tool, which facilitate sales in terms of size and quality. The discussions seem to focus on a consumer-facing labelling system, which does not connect to marketing standards. Marketing standards vary per product and per region. Mr Pastoor wondered if it was not more appropriate to consider alternatives, for example trade conditions and requirements, in similar manner to veterinary rules for imports. He expressed doubts that marketing standards would be the correct instrument.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) stated that it is important to bear in mind that, presently, there are no marketing standards in force for aquaculture products.



Annelie Rosell (Swedish Pelagic Federation PO) expressed agreement with Visfederatie.

Pim Visser (VisNed) agreed with Visfederatie that the Marketing Standards Regulation is not the appropriate place for detailed and complex sustainability indicators.

Frangiscos Nikolian (DG MARE) recalled that the marketing standards were defined 25 years ago. The situation had completely changed, especially within the context of the European Green Deal, the F2F Strategy and the consumer expectations about the market. Under the impact assessment, the Commission services will assess all impacts of the initiative. DG MARE is confident that marketing standards are the right vehicle to communicate some aspects regarding sustainability performance, in line with the obligations of the CFP and the CMO Regulation. If the impact assessment demonstrates that it is not the correct instrument, DG MARE will consider all the other initiatives under the F2F Strategy. DG MARE is closely following all relevant labelling initiatives under the F2F Strategy for avoiding overlapping.

Didier Gascuel (STECF) emphasised that STECF was asked to develop sustainability criteria under the Marketing Standards Regulation. The proposal is quite simple in practice. For fisheries, System 1 is based on already available information. Additional information on the country and origin of the products would allow more social criteria, including the change to System 2. For aquaculture, the data is not available yet, but it is possible through data on the type of production. It would take time to implement and test the systems. These could be used for any fisheries and aquaculture products, including imported products.

Bruno Guillaume (EMPA) stated that there were two areas of focus for the MAC. First, complementing the criteria proposed by the STECF report. Second, the political discussion with DG MARE on the potential evolution of the CMO Regulation. It is important to focus on the criteria proposed by STECF and to provide advice on these.

Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) agreed that the MAC should look at the possibilities under the CMO Regulation with the required data. Irrespective of the system being consumer-facing, it is necessary to look at the data requirements. The STECF report clearly indicates that the existing data requirements are not sufficient. The MAC should look at where and how the industry is able and willing to provide data without increasing administrative burdens, in order to determine if the STECF's suggestions are doable.

- **Roadmap to producing recommendations for future advice**

The Chair stated that the working group should take into consideration the STECF report. The working group should look at the sustainability criteria and the data requirements, including gaps. The Chair recalled that, at a presentation about the Data Collection Framework at a previous meeting, there were mentions of pilot studies on social and economic factors. In the upcoming months, the working



group should look at the data that is needed for the setting of social and economic criteria. It is also necessary to consider potential cooperation with the AAC and other Advisory Councils. Eventually, the MAC would need to discuss whether the marketing standards are the appropriate instrument to communicate sustainability. The development of sustainability standards is inevitable, so the MAC must be proactive on the matter. The Chair expressed that a draft text could be considered at the next meeting, which would be focused on data and the socio-economic criteria. The Chair encouraged Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) and Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) to prepare work on the matter for the next meeting.

Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) agreed to reflect on the needs under the Data Collection Framework to develop social and economic sustainability criteria.

Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) agreed to also reflect on the data requirements. The require data is available for the EU industry, but it is unclear how the data requirements would be applied to imported products. It is important to reach a level-playing-field, but global data needs to be taken into account.

Nicolás Fernández Muñoz (OPP72) underscored the importance of considering imported products. The EU market will be more resilient if there are criteria for economic and social sustainability. The MAC must think about the criteria needed for a stronger market. The EU production is suffering due to a lack of action from the Commission in relation to imported products.

Gerd Heinen (DG MARE) clarified that reviews of the CMO Regulation or of the CFP are not foreseen. The marketing standards will be revised in the upcoming year and the ongoing evaluation will serve as a basis for this revision.

Guus Pastoor (Visfederatie) stated that information to consumer needs to have a system. As for imported products, the rules are the same as for EU products. EU products are not necessarily more sustainable than imported products. Additionally, there are extra-EU fisheries with available data.

Nicolás Fernández Muñoz (OPP72) emphasised that consumers need to access adequate information on whether a product is sustainable under the three pillars of sustainability. Imported products are not necessarily less sustainable than EU products. The focus is ensuring that imported products are subject to the same criteria that is applied to EU products, in order to ensure a level-playing-field.

- **Way forward**

The Chair suggested the development of a questionnaire by the Secretariat to the members ahead of the next meeting. Additionally, that Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) and Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) would work on the topic of data and socio-economic sustainability criteria.



## Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet

- **Exchange of views on data issues relating to nowcasting due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the EU-UK TCA with Raúl Pallezo, Principal Researcher, AZTI**
- **Attendance of 7-11 June 2021 STECF EWG meeting as observer**
- **Way forward**

The Chair recalled that, at the previous meeting, Mr Pallezo explained how STECF would take into account the COVID-19 pandemic and the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement under the AER. The Chair informed that the Secretary General and himself would be attending the STECF EWG on the Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet II meeting, taking place from 7 to 11 June, as active observers, on behalf of the MAC.

Raúl Pallezo (AZTI) explained that, under STECF, there are two groups dedicated to the AER. The first group, which met the previous month, works with the data submitted by the Member States and does quality checks and regional analysis. The group also discussed some issues with the terms of reference. The second group, which would meet the following week, would work on a more detailed economic analysis. The mandate from DG MARE is to provide an overview of 2019, a nowcast of 2020, and a forecast for 2020 and 2021. In relation to 2020 and 2021, there are some uncertainties due to COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit. The aim is to provide a better estimate of 2020. The group is trying to develop an approach to analyse the effect of Brexit, particularly the TACs changes. At that time, there were still no agreed TACs. The group will use preliminary data for 2020 and 2021, taking into account prices, fisheries biomass, and vessel registrations. Mr Pallezo expressed his willingness to hear from the MAC on expectation for the report.

The Chair expressed satisfaction that the nowcasting will include the EU-UK TCA and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair recognised the STECF's task would not be easy, due to the lack of agreement with the UK on the 2021 TACs.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) expressed disappointment that the Economic Report on the EU Aquaculture Sector is not produced annually like the AER on the EU Fishing Fleet. It is essential that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is taken into account under the Economic Report on the EU Aquaculture Sector. The MAC should remind STECF of the importance of the aquaculture report.

The Chair responded that previous MAC recommendations on data did cover the aquaculture sector, but committed to reminding STECF of the request for annual reports.

Raúl Pallezo (AZTI) informed that a draft agenda would be sent with the indication of the most relevant points for the MAC representatives to attend. Mr Pallezo expressed his willingness receive feedback from the MAC on what should be included in the STECF report.



## COVID-19 Pandemic

- **Update on market developments**

The Chair recalled that, on 21 May, under the European Maritime Day, there was an online EUMOFA Talk dedicated to “COVID-19 and seafood: impact and way forward”.

The Secretary General highlighted that, at the event, the speakers discussed the negative impacts of COVID-19, but also the market developments, such as market resilience, new segments, and the change to online sales. The presentations of the event would soon be available. A recording of the event might become available, if GDPR compliant.

The Chair requested for the Secretariat to circulate the presentations, once available.

- **Exchange of views**

The Chair recalled that, at the previous meeting, catching sector representatives drew attention to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on market prices and the potential need to trigger the EMFAF crisis management scheme.

Pim Visser (VisNed) explained that, since the previous meeting, the situation changed in Europe. The vaccination efforts had a positive effect and the HORECA sector is reopening. In the Netherlands, the price of fish sold to the HORECA channels is picking up. According to other EAPO colleagues, the situation has also improved in the remaining continental Europe. In Ireland, the situation remains difficult due to Brexit and the pandemic evolution.

The Chair expressed his conviction that, taking into account the recent positive market developments, it was no longer necessary to hold a meeting with MARE D3 to discuss the triggering of the EMFAF crisis management scheme.

Pim Visser (VisNed) stated that the situation remains serious. The prices have not fully recovered and fishers and other operators suffered a large hit. Nevertheless, the situation improved and is not dramatic as before.

Frangiscos Nikolian (DG MARE) informed that DG MARE was finalising a Eurobarometer survey on consumer consumption patterns in the context of COVID-19, which will be made publicly available. Mr Nikolian expressed willingness to present the results at the next working group meeting in September.





Nicolás Fernández Muñoz (OPP72) highlighted that seafood prices are improving as the vaccination rates increase and the HORECA sector reopens. Despite the EU being a common market, at the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Member States closed borders and imposed restrictions. There were several difficulties connected to commercialisation, storage, and aid. The EU was not prepared for a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is a sanitary crisis, but another crisis could take place. In the future, the MAC should think about the EU's preparation to face future crisis situations. Mr Fernández highlighted that the SWWAC established an ad hoc working group on COVID-19, which also took into account market issues, and adopted advice to strengthen the market. The MAC has significant responsibility to strengthen the market. There are still ongoing difficulties in the EU, because the vaccination process is still ongoing in Europe and in the world.

The Chair recalled that the MAC was quite proactive in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and adopted advice with 20 different recommendations. The Commission has also been quite proactive and took up most of the recommendations.

The Secretary General highlighted that the Commission is developing a Contingency Plan for Ensuring Food Supply and Food Security and is holding meeting of experts and stakeholders on the matter. The MAC adopted advice on the development of the plan, which included an offer to participate in the forum. The MAC was not invited to participate in these meetings, but several EU-level MAC members have, such as EAPO, Europêche, AIPCE, FEAP and EMPA. Several food stakeholders are participating and the aim is to ensure food security in time of crisis.

Frangiscos Nikolian (DG MARE) expressed full agreement that the EU needs to look forward and determine how to cope with future emergency situations. Under the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission established a working group on the Food Supply Contingency Plan. The sector was invited to participate. The work should be finalised in the upcoming months. The contingency plan will cover all food products.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA) stated that it could be relevant for the MAC to establish its own emergency COVID-19 group. The transmission of information across between producers as well as with other actors of the supply chain is very important. The working group established by the Commission includes a very large number of stakeholders, so it is quite difficult to contribute. There should be a system for the exchange of information and holding of meetings in case of emergency.

The Chair responded that it was important to keep in mind that a working group had already been established by the Commission, which should be starting point.

## EMFAF

- **Presentation of 2019 EMFF implementation report by Commission representative**



Click [here](#) to access the presentation.

Angelos Sanopoulos (FAME) explained that the EMFF is implemented through shared management with 27 national programmes. Each year, the Member States submit a detailed report of the projects undertaken, which is compiled by the Commission into the EMFF implementation report. According to submitted data for 2020, the total number of operations reached 68000. The commitments reached 4.03 billion euros or 70.9% of total allocation. As for expenditure, 2.37 billion euros or 41.7% of total allocation were spent. The 2019 implementation report highlights the most importance achievements of the EMFF implementation and demonstrates its impact on related policy objectives and specific topics.

Mr Sanopoulos provided an overview of the expenditure planned, committed and spent in 2019 under the different priorities. In terms of financial implementation, the first peak was infrastructure projects, such as ports and landing sites, productive investments in aquaculture, community development, processing, control and enforcement, and data collection. About half of the operations were completed by 2019. The representative also provided an overview of implementation of specific topics, namely support to fishing fleet, small-scale fishing fleets, landing obligation, innovation, Natura 2000, biodiversity, climate change, and outermost regions.

In 2020, there was, for the first time, the possibility to earmark expenditure to face the COVID-19 pandemic. According to preliminary information, Member States committed around 100 million euros on pandemic-related measures. The expenditure is likely around 70 million euros. The majority was related to temporary cessations and public health measures.

Yannis Pelekanakis (FEAP) wanted to know if a breakdown of operations under Article 66 on the implementation of the Production and Marketing Plans was available. It would be useful to know the percentage of plans carried out by fisheries POs and by aquaculture POs. This information would help determine the pick up by the aquaculture industry, particularly how effective it was for aquaculture producers to establish POs and develop plans.

Angelos Sanopoulos (FAME) responded that the system does not allow the identification of the sector, even though it is possible to infer based on the name of the beneficiary. For the future EMFAF period, the system will be updated to allow the identification of the sector.

- **Update on 2021-2027 EMFAF legislative developments**

Click [here](#) to access the presentation.

Vincent Guerre (DG MARE) provided a state-of-play of the 2021-2027 EMFAF legislative developments. On 4 December 2020, political agreement between the Council and the Parliament was reached. In the first semester of 2021, a legal revision took place. In mid-July, it is expected to



entry into force. In 2021 and 2022, there would be a preparation and approval of the national programmes. The scope of the EMFAF includes achieving the objectives of the CFP, contributing to the EU maritime policy, contributing to the Biodiversity Strategy, and contributing to EU climate and environmental objectives, as a key contributor to the European Green Deal.

Mr Guerre explained that the general framework is based on shared management, meaning that national programmes are prepared by Member States and approved by the Commission, and direct management, meaning work programmes prepared by the Commission and approved by the EMFAF Committee. In terms of financial framework, the overall budget is of 6.108 billion euros. The budgetary resources for shared management represent 87%. The national allocations were established on the basis of the 2014-2020 distribution key. In relation to the intensity of public aid, the standard maximum rate under shared management is 50%, but there are derogations based on the added value of the operations.

Mr Guerre emphasised that the conditions of support are focused on the ends (objectives) rather than means (eligibility rules). There is flexibility for Member States to define eligibility rules (subject to conditions for certain investments in the fishing fleet to avoid “harmful subsidies”). There is a discontinuation of the pre-defined measures of the 2014-2020 framework. The general principles in the Common Provisions Regulation is that the eligibility of expenditure is determined on the basis of national rules, except where specific rules are laid down in the EU legal framework. The general principles for shared management are that Member States may select operations which fall under the scope of the Priorities and Specific Objectives, are not explicitly ineligible, and are in accordance with applicable EU law.

In relation to Specific Objectives on markets, the legal basis is in Article 26 for shared management and Article 50 for direct management. Examples of eligible actions include the creation of producer organisations, implementation of production and marketing plans, development of new market outlets, promotion of traceability and consumer information, valorisation of products (e.g., through labelling on quality, sustainability or geographical origin), dissemination of market intelligence throughout the supply chain, modernisation of auction halls. The operations can be implemented by collective or individual beneficiaries. The main elements of national programmes are: a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) to identify the needs, a description of the types of actions envisaged for each Specific Objective to address the needs, a performance framework along output and result indicators, and a financing plan showing the distribution of financial resources across the Specific Objectives.

The Chair commented that the change to non-obligatory Marketing and Production Plans under the new EMFAF might cause problems in some Member States. The Chair wanted to know whether the national programmes would be in place on 1 January 2022.



Vincent Guerre (DG MARE) responded that it would vary on the Member State. Most draft programmes will be submitted in the second semester of 2021, but it was not possible to provide a precise date for their approval.

Bruno Guillaumie (EMPA), in relation to Member States that will use Production and Marketing Plans, wanted to know whether these plans would be aligned, particularly if the Commission would insist in consistency amongst these in objectives and indicators.

Vincent Guerre (DG MARE) responded that the logic of the indicators was the same as in the previous programme. The indicators serve to monitor the implementation of the programme. The Regulation aims for consistency between the plans and the EMFAF support.

### **Joint MAC/NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group on Brown Crab**

- **Update on last meeting (19.03.2021) by Norah Parke, Focus Group Chair**

Norah Parke (KFO) informed that the Focus Group was unable to hold its fourth meeting, scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> May, due to technical difficulties, but expressed hope that it would be rescheduled for the near future. Sarah Horsfall (EMPA) will not longer be a member of the Focus Group, which represents a setback, since she was spearheading the discussions on animal welfare. Nevertheless, the Focus Group will continue to discuss animal welfare matters. Ms Horsfall's departure is also a loss of insight into the management of brown crab in the UK, which represents a substantial part of the industry.

Ms Parke explained that, when the Focus Group started working, stock sustainability was not considered a major issue, since landings seemed fairly consistent across the years. However, recent scientific assessments show that, despite consistent landings, the fishing effort increased substantially. There are doubts regarding recruitment, which is very concerning, especially if it refers to different populations in different geographical areas. The Focus Group's draft recommendations will need to cover this matter.

In relation to animal welfare, Ms Parke explained that the UK is undertaking two in-depth examinations on crustacean welfare, following active campaigning by an NGO. These two reports have not been published yet, but these are expected to relate to vertebrates. No consequences are expected for crustaceans in the short-term. Nevertheless, the industry should follow the topic closely.

In relation to data, Ms Parke highlighted that there is significant data available in relation to UK, Ireland and France. There is insufficient data in the North Sea, which is the area with more rapid growth. FG members were encouraged contact their respective national authorities to gather as much data as possible on brown crab.



The Chair wanted to know if the issue of testing for cadmium in exports to the People's Republic of China was being addressed by the Focus Group.

Norah Parke (KFO) explained that a public consultation took place in China, which proposed to raise the acceptable minimum level of cadmium in imported brown crab. The consultation closed at the end of October 2020, but no new developments were known. Ms Parke highlighted that it was currently the time of year with lowest demand in China. It should become an urgent matter in September again.

The Secretary General highlighted that the draft recommendations prepared by the Focus Group were expected to include a recommendation requesting the Commission to look into this matter.

The Chair expressed willingness to follow-up on previous correspondence sent to DG MARE on the matter of testing for cadmium in brown crab exported to the People's Republic of China. The Chair wanted to know whether the Focus Group's draft recommendations would be ready for consideration in September.

Norah Parke (KFO) expressed confidence that draft recommendations would be ready in September.

The Secretary General highlighted that three meetings took place and several issues were discussed in depth. A first proposal of draft recommendations was prepared by the FG Chair and the Secretariat for discussion at the fourth meeting. Therefore, some agreed text is expected already at the fourth meeting. The deadline of September would be achievable.

#### **AOB**

None.



## Summary of action points

- Marketing Standards:
  - Secretariat, in coordination with the Chair, to prepare a questionnaire to the members on sustainability criteria and data requirements
  - Jean-Marie Robert (Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne) and Christine Absil (Good Fish Foundation) to make a presentation at the next meeting on sustainability criteria and data requirements
- Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet:
  - Chair and Secretary General to attend, as observers, the STECF AER II meeting, which will take place on 7-11 June 2021
  - At the meeting, Chair and Secretary General to highlight the recommendations previously approved by the MAC on data collection by STECF
- COVID-19 Pandemic:
  - Secretariat to circulate the presentations of the EUMOFA Talk on COVID-19, once these are publicly available
  - Presentation on the upcoming Eurobarometer report by DG MARE representatives to be scheduled under the next meeting's draft agenda
- Joint MAC/NWWAC/NSAC Focus Group on Brown Crab:
  - Continuous updates on the next meetings
  - If agreed by the Focus Group, draft advice to be considered at the next meeting



## List of attendees

Representative	Organisation
Aitana López (observer)	Spain
Angelos Sanopoulos	European Commission
Anna Boulova	FRUCOM
Annelie Rosell	Swedish Pelagic Federation PO
Aurora Carbonero de Blas (observer)	Spain
Bruno Guillaumie	EMPA
Carla Valeiras Álvarez	EuroCommerce
Christine Absil	Good Fish Foundation
Christophe Vande Weyer	European Commission
Daniel Weber	European Fishmeal
Didier Gascuel	STECF
Emiel Brouckaert	EAP0
Erin Priddle	MSC
Frangiscos Nikolian	European Commission
Garazi Rodríguez	APROMAR
Georg Werner	Environmental Justice Foundation
Gerd Heinen	European Commission
Guus Pastoor	Visfederatie
Imke Hinrichsen	Germany
Javier Ojeda	FEAP
Jean-Marie Robert	Les Pêcheurs de Bretagne
Jens Mathiesen	Danish Seafood Association
Jérémie Souben	FEDOPA
José Basilio Otero Rodríguez	FNCP
José Carlos Escalera	Federación de Cofradías de Pescadores de Cádiz (FECOPESCA)



Representative	Organisation
Josip Furčić (observer)	Croatia
Juan Manuel Trujillo	ETF
Laura Rull (observer)	Spain
Laurène Jolly	European Commission
Malgorzata Kieliszewska (observer)	Poland
Maria Luisa Álvarez Blanco	FEDEPESCA
Massimo Bellavista	COPA COGECA
Matthias Keller	Bundesverband der deutschen Fischindustrie und des Fischgroßhandels e.V.
Mike Turenhout	Visfederatie
Mirta Novak (observer)	Croatia
Nicolás Fernández Muñoz	OPP72
Norah Parke	KFO
Pedro Luis Casado López	OPP80 Punta del Moral
Pierre Commère	ADEPALE
Pedro Reis Santos	Market Advisory Council
Pim Visser	VisNed
Purificación Fernández	OPPC-3
Raúl Prellezo	AZTI
Rebeca Díez Barca	CONXEMAR
Roberto Carlos Alonso	ANFACO-CECOPECA
Rosalie Tukker	Europêche
Sean O'Donoghue (Chair)	Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation Ltd
Sergio López García	OPP Lugo
Stavroula Kremmydiotou	Market Advisory Council
Vanya Vulperhorst	Oceana
Vincent Guerre	European Commission





Representative	Organisation
Yannis Pelekanakis	FEAP

