MINUTES OF THE 42ND MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD
VIGO – 24 APRIL 2024
From 09h30 to 13h30

0. ATTENDANCE

The Chair, Mr Fabrizio Donatella, opened the 42nd AB meeting by welcoming the AB members, the Advisory Board member and all the participants. Then he thanked EFCA Head of Sector Facilities Maria Minadaki, responsible for the development of the ground floor, where the AB meeting was taking place. The ground floor has been added to the rental agreement between the Spanish Authorities and the owner of EFCA’s building since October 2022. Works started in December 2022 and the reconfiguration and redesign as part of the functional workspace were completed by the contractor end of 2023 on time.

He explained the involvement of the sustainable refurbishment of the entire ground floor of the EFCA headquarters and included the upgrade of the HVAC installations, the improvement of the quality of insulation of the building envelope as well as space allocation and management in compliance with safety and accessibility requirements. It contributes to the effort for the reduction of environmental impact by using sustainable materials such as carpet flooring (recycled sea waste) and fully recyclable plastic furniture; as well as the supply of 100% renewable energy that that powers the building.

The Chair reminded that only AB members have the right to vote.

The Chair stated that since the last AB meeting of EFCA there are a few new appointments of representatives or alternates:

Since the last Administrative Board meeting, EFCA has received the appointment of new representatives/alternates from:

- **Denmark**: Mr Kenneth Joensen (representative)
  Ms Emilie Bang Jacobsen (alternate)
- **Estonia**: Mr Allar Leppind (representative)
- **Spain**: Mr David Poderoso (alternate)
- **France**: Mr Mayeu de Drouâs (representative)
  Mr Olivier Didon (alternate)
- **European Commission**: Mr Jérôme Broche (Acting Head of Unit D4 “Fisheries Control and Inspection”)
  Mr Eckehard Reussner (Acting Head of Unit C4 "Data management")

The Chair informed about the observers who participate to the AB as experts without voting right:
- Observer representing the Advisory Board: Ms Daniela Costa (Outermost Regions Advisory Council);
- Observers from Commission: Ms Sarah Vitiello-Ferrara,
- Observers from the MS:
  - Denmark: Ms Emilie Banjac Jacobsen
  - Malta: Mr Marvin Seguna
  - The Netherlands: Mr Gerrit Albertus Lam
  - Romania: Ms Ancuta Kazimirovicz
  - Slovakia: Mr Dominik Skoda
  - Portugal: Carlos Ferreira

The Chair checked if there were additional proxies and the quorum (at least two thirds of all member of the Board with the right to vote (i.e. 22 votes); proxy holders are considered as members having the right to vote on behalf of the members they represent).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Proxies were given for all agenda items within the Commission delegation, from Ms Delilah Al Khudhairy to Mr Stylianos Mitolidis and from Ms Céline Idli to Mr Jérôme Broche</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quorum</td>
<td>The presence list is attached in Annex I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Chair concluded that the quorum was obtained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Chair asked if any of the participating Administrative Board members had any direct or indirect interests in relation to any matter on the agenda of the meeting. Members of the Administrative Board concerned were required to give an oral declaration of such interests.

The Chair reminded that the Board members would need to fill in the conflict of interest forms provided by EFCA, which shall be submitted annually. The Chair also reminded the Board members of their obligation to submit a résumé of their Curriculum Vitae [which are subject to publication on EFCA website and should be updated whenever necessary.]

Board members had to meet the obligation which was established in March 2016 (AB Decision No 16-I-10 amending AB Decision No 14-II-8(1) of 17 October 2014 adopting the policy on the prevention and management of conflicts of interest of the European Fisheries Control Agency). The European Parliament is closely monitoring the application of the EFCA conflict of interest policy as part of the discharge procedure.

Finally, Board members were reminded that the meeting would be recorded and that during the meeting some printshots may be taken for communication purposes. If anyone would prefer his/her image not to be published on the EFCA website and social media profiles, to inform EFCA and your choice would be respected.

The Chair informed about the gender balance among the Board representatives and alternates:
- AB representatives: men 72 %, women 28%.
- AB alternates: men 71 %, women 29%.

The Chair also explained that the Board documents were now numbered to facilitate the identification of the documents during the Board. Revised documents versions have been uploaded on FISHNET following the consultation process on Item 3, the Annual Report and Item 6, the new Administrative Board Rules of Procedures.
1. **AB42-01. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Chair asked the AB members if they had any comments on the agenda to be added under AOB. In the absence of comments, the agenda was adopted (Annex II).

2. **AB42-02. INFORMATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Susan Steele, EFCA’s Executive Director (ED), expressed her gratitude to the members of the Administrative Board for the participation in the workshop on EFCA’s current role and activities held the day before, during which very valuable input and feedback was provided.

The ED then informed about the Advisory Board meeting held the day before and thanked for the high attendance to that meeting of Administrative Board members. All Advisory Councils (AC) are now looking, more than before, into marine ecosystems, marine protected areas, renewable energy and environment related issues. Important topics highlighted by some of the AC are related with the energy transition, landing obligation, the revised control regulations, full traceability, forced labor, communication on China, protection of observers, deep sea mining, climate change, development of wind farms and fisheries restricted areas.

This year is an important year for some of the Advisory Councils, as they are celebrating their 20th anniversary. The ED used the opportunity to remind that next year will be EFCA’s 20 year anniversary and EFCA will inform in due time about its celebrations plans.

Then, the Executive Director gave an update on the state of play of the JDP implementation in 2024:

- **North Sea**, with four specific actions implemented. There is a good level of implementation in terms of patrol days at sea and air surveillance. EFCA ED thanked the participation of inspectors on board EFCA OPVs and also at the EFCA Coordination Center.
- **Baltic Sea**, with three specific actions implemented, there is a good level of implementation in terms of patrol days at sea and air surveillance.
- **Western Waters**, with three specific actions implemented. The JDP foresees 25 patrols with overall 300 days and so there are 138 days reached.
- **Black Sea**, with one specific campaign covering the turbot season. In parallel, the upcoming Multipurpose Maritime Operation (MMO) in the Black Sea is under preparation.
- **Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic** with specific campaigns covering highly migratory species, fisheries restricted areas, and Western Mediterranean fisheries targeting pelagic and demersal stocks. The EFCA Integrated Maritime System (IMS) with Automatic Behaviour Monitoring (ABM) has been successfully used to control fisheries restricted areas. The EFCA OPV has been deployed for 5 patrols. A MMO in the Adriatic Sea is planned for 2024.
- **Indian Ocean** JDP is a new area of work, and there has been significant work done by France, Spain and Italy with the Agency in relation to the new JDP covering the fishing activities by purse seine vessels targeting tropical tuna in the Indian Ocean. The primary focus of the JDP is on landings in three countries.
- **NAFO and NEAFC Steering Group** meeting took place in January for the preparation of the sea campaigns, and training courses have been held. Several patrols are planned in summer 2024.

The ED also informed about the following operational activities:

- **Remote Electronic Monitoring Working Group**: EFCA continues to coordinate the working group to provide support and guidelines on how the REM systems should be set up in fishing vessels. Following a request from NAFO/NEAFC Steering Group, the Group focused in
developing guidelines and technical specification for implementation of REM in NAFO fisheries – delivered in January 2024. Pilot projects operational plans on the use of REM are being implemented in European waters of the North Sea, Baltic Sea and Northwestern Waters.

- In terms of interagency cooperation, the administrative arrangement with the EU SatCen is expected to be signed following their Board meeting. The MoU with the EU Space Agency was signed in January 2024 and EFCA is being consulted on research and development initiatives, which is expected to be of benefit to the fisheries control community. Under the cooperation with the European Coast Guard Functions Forum, a workshop was organized in January 2024 with the Portuguese Authorities. The workshop was very fruitful on the subject of Harnessing technologies and innovation for coast guard operations and fisheries control. Also, the revision of the SLA with Frontex is being prepared.

- Under the European Cooperation on Coast Guard Functions, EFCA is currently chairing the Tripartite Working Arrangement between EFCA, EMSA and Frontex, and the Annual Event is planned for the 25-27 June 2024 in Tenerife. In this context, of important value for the fisheries control community are the MMOs being implemented in different areas. The coastguard project financed by DG MARE is being implemented by EFCA, with the online portal (https://coastguard.europa.eu/) and the exchange programme with participation of fisheries control authorities.

- In terms of projects under the international dimension, the e-Fishmed project has the draft programme 2024 prepared and will come to an end at the beginning of next year. The project is developing modules for fisheries inspectors and Fisheries Monitoring Centre operators. The modules are published in English with the French version at the final stage. An exchange programme in Spain is planned along with a risk management for Tunisia. Regarding the Algeria project, a call for expression of interest is being launched for testing VMS devices in Algeria, which will be a significant step forward. EFCA is currently working in the preparation of two contribution agreements:
  - The West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme (WASOP) will be a follow up of the project PESCAO. EFCA will contribute to the project on operational coordination, capacity building and regional development of monitoring, control and surveillance.
  - the Sustainable Western Indian Ocean programme (SWIOP) is to look at the robust climate, resilience and governance for Western Indian oceans marine resources and the role of EFCA is to support third countries in the area on fisheries control.

- Regarding the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE), and like different MSs authorities, EFCA has CISE node instalad and updated. Since 2019 EFCA has taken an active role in the CISE transitional phase. As with all other activities, EFCA needs to take into account the budgetary constraints and the impact on Human Resource when following up with the CISE activities, especially during operational phase.

- In line with the EFCA Service Level Agreement with EMSA, a Specific Agreement including financial resources of EUR 300.000 per year to support the development of the IMS for EFCA between 2023 and 2026 was signed in 2022. EMSA has requested EFCA to amend the Specific Agreement for 2024 due to an increase in costs, in particular external cloud service costs. The financial implication is around EUR 145.000 in 2024. There is a need to amend the Specific Agreement for 2024 and onwards to anticipate covering the system's external cloud costs. EFCA is working with EMSA to look to the methods which will contribute to reduce the impact in the following years and the Board will be kept informed.

- Regarding the weighing project, it is a key project for fisheries control. The project is progressing well and was extended to October 2024. The project objectives are to provide an overview of weighing measures and procedures in Member States, to look into existing methods and procedures for weighing and to produce a set of recommendations and best practices on methodologies and procedures. The project has been fully implemented hand
in hand with MS through the organization of workshops and visits to some Member States. There are specific areas of focus that are challenging such as pelagic fisheries, unsorted landings of small pelagic species and for many areas of demersal fisheries. Soon, there will be another workshop organised on highly migratory species. The closing meeting of the project is foreseen for October where the recommendations will be presented.

In relation to communication, the ED underlined the importance of communicating about the work EFCA is doing and thanked the Advisory Councils for the compliments received. The ED informed about:

- the communication activities undertaken and planned, such as the communication strategy for 2024 presented in Annex 2 of the document,
- visits to the EFCA OPV for the general public and dedicated visits to the EFCA headquarters and to the OPVs during port calls,
- visits of the EFCA ED to different Member States authorities,
- involvement of EFCA in the 20 years anniversary of the NWWAC and PELAC,
- social media was kept up to date and eight real time closures were published.

In terms of financial management, provisional accounts and procurement, the EFCA Executive Director informed that:

- budget implementation in 2023 was 99.94%,
- focus is currently on revision of budget programming for 2024,
- provisional forecast shows implementation of 95%,
- necessary routine expenditure contracts and budgetary commitments are put in place,

In relation to Human Resources, the EFCA Executive Director highlighted the following:

- The Executive Director’s KPIs for Human Resources and Annual Report were all met in 2023.
- Regarding geographical and gender balance of the Agency’s staff, there is staff from 19 Member States working at the Agency and there are 54% of female staff. Female staff at AD8 and higher is 38%, but it is expected that this figure will increase with reclassification.
- Staff engagement survey was launched in mid-March with overall replies of 81%. The report is expected by May and results will be analysed and an action plan will be prepared.

In relation to audits, the following was mentioned by the EFCA Executive Director:

- The European Court of Auditors did desk reviews with a final report expected later in 2024.
- The internal audit service did an audit on Human Resources Management and Ethics at EFCA and eleven recommendations were issued.
- The European Parliament decision on discharge in respect of the EFCA budget for 2022 should soon be adopted in Plenary.
- The Internal Control Coordinator gave a positive statement on the internal control system in place and the sharing of the risk assessment.

The Chair thanked the ED for the very comprehensive and informative presentation.

The European Commission (EC) representative thanked the ED for the presentation and briefly
made the following comments:

- Congratulated EFCA for the operational activities and the work done under the JDPs, underlining that this is real core business work of EFCA and really important for all MSs. Also asked MSs to make available and support EFCA in this domain.

- Regarding the REM Working Group, the EC remains fully supportive of the work done and encouraged MSs to be fully active. The EC also highlighted that WG will have an important role in the implementation of the revised fisheries control regulation.

- Regarding the EMSA Integrated Maritime Service, the EC takes note of the information provided and that EFCA is working to reduce the financial impact related to the service in the following years. The EC considers that there is a great importance of assuring business continuity. On the other hand, the EC considers that it would be important to keep the current contractual relation and to try to avoid changes related to costs. This is of course also related to the current situation in terms of financial resources and the EC considers that they are on the same page and is available to follow up this subject with the EC services and the Agency.

- On the weighing project, the EC thanked for the work done and underlined the importance that MSs continue collaborating with the Agency. Also, the outcome will fit into the implementing acts related to the implementation of the amended control regulation.

- On audits, the EC takes note of the information provided and really welcome the work of EFCA.

- In terms of EFCA’s participation to international meetings, the EC considers that it is important that EFCA is present. On the other hand it is important that we ensure the added value of the attendance and optimising resource allocation.

The following comments were expressed by different MS and the EC:

- The Denmark representative also expressed appreciation of the work of EFCA and echoed the EC in terms of the importance of the weighing project and that it was really essential to have a level playing field. For this reason, Denmark considered unfortunate that the project could not have been completed before the implementing act of the amended control regulation and questioned if there would be a way to use the finding of the best practice with regards to the preparation of the implementing acts.

- The Germany representative highly appreciated the operational work done by EFCA and questioned about the REM working group, if the group would continue to exist and if it would be involved in determining the risk of the implementing act for REM.

- The EC representative clarified that there were several implementing acts with regards to the amended control regulation and the weighing project will be key for some implementing acts planned to be addressed after the end of the project. In reply to the question from Denmark, EC clarified that the implementing act related to the derogation of the margin of tolerance, which the EC was working in full speed for the adoption in July 2024, as required by the amended control regulation, are outside the scope of the weighing project. The results of the study will contribute to other implementing acts which would be rolled out in a different time scale and will enter into force in 3-4 years. The EC is discussing with the Agency on how to start the work on the definition of the fleet segments for the high-risk vessels.

- Ireland thanked the EC for all the work on the margin of tolerance.

- France thanked EFCA for all the work and also the EC for the work on the margin of tolerance.

The Chair closed point 2 of the agenda by thanking the ED for the excellent presentation and indicated that the Board took note of the information provided.
3. **AB42-03. ADOPTION OF EFCA’S ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

The Chair presented the point for adoption and remarked that, following the consultation period, a revised version of the document is available on Fishnet. The document will be notified to the relevant EU institutions and will be made public on the Agency website.

The Acting Head of Unit North Atlantic, North Sea and Baltic Sea (Unit 2) and the Head of Unit Mediterranean, Black Sea, Indian Ocean and South Atlantic (Unit 3) provided then a summary of the Annual Report and its main figures.

They informed that in 2023 the Agency had an implementation of 98 percent of the annual work programme with a budget execution of 99.94. Regarding the six JDPs, it was commented that the number of inspections conducted at sea and at shore for all the JDPs were 44,993, among which in 4,230 at least one suspected infringement was detected. Besides, the Agency worked on the planning for this year’s JDPs and also on the assessments of the 2022 JDPs. Regarding the implementation, there were 29 specific actions taking place in the framework of the North Sea, Baltic Sea, and Western Waters JPDs, and nine specific campaigns implemented in the framework of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea JDPs. The relevance of the application of last tolls during the sea inspections was pointed out.

It was clarified that the increase of the suspected infringements was not necessarily a consequence of an increase of non-compliance, but could be a result of a better targeting system and a better risk assessment. It was also explained that 70% of the infringements were related to the recording and reporting obligation while the number of overall infringements due to the landing obligation continue to be very low, a reflection of the problems on detectability with the current control tools.

The Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with the UK was defined as a key element of the North Sea and the Western Waters JDP and, in 2023, there was a higher involvement also with the technical groups of the two JDPs. In relation to the EFCA support to the control expert groups, it was reiterated that the Agency continued to provide support to the regional control expert groups in particular, regarding the implementation of the landing obligation and of the pilot projects on REM that are being conducted in the Baltic Sea, North Sea, and North Western waters. The reports on the evaluation of compliance with the landing obligation were finalised.

Regarding training activities, efforts have been done in order to introduce a more systematic approach in the different training courses, aligning them with the sectorial qualification framework. 2,400 EU Member States and third countries officials have passed EFCA training activities (including e-learning platform). On the international dimension, EFCA activities have been focussed on supporting the EC in the context of RFMOs. Thereby, the Agency participated in four missions related to fight against IUU to third countries together with EC. Besides, in 2023, the project PESCAO came to an end: it brought a new approach in the cooperation with third countries applying a more operational approach and introducing some seeds for expansion in the future for other potential regions of interest to the EU.

Concerning the European Coast Guard cooperation, the multipurpose maritime operations continued, namely in the context of the Adriatic Sea. The Coast Guard Handbook has become really a good reference point to have a first entry door to what is being done across the different domains.
EFCA also organised jointly with Belgium, the European Coast Guard Forum seminar on the use of innovative fisheries surveillance and inspection techniques.

Furthermore, the weighing project brought to work together Member State experts and officers preparing legislation from the EC in a very participatory way and based on the best technical advice. Control technologies are an instrumental tool that EFCA is facilitating for Member States using operational tools to monitor potential restricted areas.

Later on, EFCA presented a summary on the horizontal activities: regarding communication and representation, it was worth highlighting the positive feedback from members of the Advisory Board on social media communication; ICT information security is progressing as the availability rate of ICT systems and ICT security incidents reported and registered confirms that things were really carried out very efficiently and professionally; in administrative and governance processes, the good rate of female gender balance at EFCA is another highlight. It has been a very demanding year for HR, with the recruitment processes and new colleagues coming in.

The Chair opened the floor for interventions. The EC representative explained that their comments to the text were mostly precisions, clarifications, to align the language in the report to certain policy language: one was related to the relations with the UK in particular, and the role of EFCA in this context. Another clarification point on the language was on the landing obligation.

The Austrian representative had one question concerning the number of inspections in the North Sea: in 2022, there were more than 2,000 while, in 2023, there were only around 1,300. The HoU 2 explained it was likely due to Brexit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed action</th>
<th>Adoption of the Annual Report 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Basis</td>
<td>Article 32(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) 2019/473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Article 48 of AB Decision No 19-W-5 of 29 August 2019 concerning the Financial Regulation of the European Fisheries Control Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Adopted by consensus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **AB42-04. CHARTERING OF MEANS STATE OF PLAY AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES**

The Acting Head of Unit Operational Support (HoU 4) underlined the excellent opportunity of having three offshore patrol vessels chartered since 2023 and also air surveillance dedicated to fisheries control. In terms of air surveillance, there was a substantial upgrade with 86 hours air surveillance in 2022 to more than 600 hours air surveillance in 2023, supporting Ireland, Poland, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Malta, Denmark, Croatia, Greece, Portugal and third countries such as Cape Verde.

Also, EFCA chartered means have been able to cover JDP areas when required by MS, including the JDPs in the Mediterranean sea, Western Waters, North Sea and Baltic Sea, NAFO and NEAFC. All this is only possible due to the support of Member States, which is paramount. The deployment of the EFCA chartered means is primarily dedicated to fisheries control, but EFCA means have the capacity to support other coast guard function activities, in cooperation with EMSA and Frontex. The primary focus is on JDP activity but it is possible to contribute to other activities such as the Multipurpose Maritime Operation organised by EFCA in cooperation with EMSA and Frontex in the Adriatic Sea last year in the context of the context of the Mediterranean JDP.

The results of 2023 show significant performance and results, with 523 inspections and 199 suspected infringements. Also, overall there were 142 inspectors on board the EFCA chartered OPV
in 2023, which is an important factor to be underlined as EFCA relies and works together with MS fostering standardisation and experience sharing.

EFCA also relies on the cooperation with EMSA in terms of having additional capacity for oil pollution response at sea to support MSs, if requested. EFCA has already two vessels equipped and a third vessel is planned to be equipped as well. In terms of environmental sustainability, EFCA operates the chartered means the most efficient and effective way to reduce fuel consumption and emissions.

On the state of play of the activities, the specific contracts for the EFCA OPVs are extended until 30 September 2024; EFCA is part of the new call of Frontex for fixed wing aircrafts; there is a light RPAS and SatCom provided by EMSA on board the OPV Ocean Sentinel. Thanks to mutual cooperation with Portugal DGRM, OPV Ocean Protector is planned to receive the pollution response equipment and the use of AIS transponders in the OPVs will be optional while increasing LRIT frequency for discrete tracking of vessels.

In terms of future perspectives, currently EFCA is targeting 340 days of charter for each OPV in 2024 and EFCA regrets that aerial support is not yet available as it depends on Frontex interinstitutional framework contract. In 2025, EFCA is estimating around 300 days of charter for each OPV, as there were increases in terms of daily running costs and services and EFCA is in close contact with EC to find an optimal solution in this regard. Mutual dialogue is ongoing and it is expected that in October 2024 there is the final SPD and budget for 2025 to be presented and adopted.

The following comments were expressed by the MS and the EC:

- Italy thanked for the presentation and suggested to have in the data provided a statistic related to the average number of suspected infringement by inspection, which can be very informative. Also, Italy considers that the deployment of EFCA means is a key part of the control activities and underlined that Italy is one of the main contributors of inspectors on board the EFCA means. Italy considers the presence of the EFCA OPV as a deterrent of IUU fishing of third countries. Italy has many examples, especially in the central Mediterranean Sea, where vessels of third countries such as Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria may be operating inside Italian territorial waters. Italy mentioned to need support from EFCA and the OPV is crucial.

- France supports the views of Italy, that there is an EFCA OPV for the whole year in the Mediterranean Sea and also that EFSA OPVs are patrolling the EEZs of Member States, not only in mainland Europe but also in the outermost regions. France acknowledges that there are control issues with third countries in Greece, Cyprus and Italy but France has also issues in the outermost region of French Guyana with IUU fishing of neighbouring states in the EEZ of France. For France it is important that both, the Eastern Mediterranean Sea and also the outermost regions are patrolled the most efficient way.

- Poland thanked the presentation and highlighted that for the international dimension of EFCA’s OPV, the NEAFC area is also important. Poland underlined that, based on a recent experience in NEAFC with a third country vessel that questioned the rights of the EFCA OPV and the manoeuvre, it is necessary to be prepared for different situations and challenges in the international dimension with the presence of the EFCA OPV. Also, the feedback from all inspectors of Poland is that the technical skills of the EFCA OPV crew are very high standards and thanked EFA for having the opportunity for Polish inspectors to gain experience outside the Baltic Sea.

- Malta echoed the intervention of Italy and underlined the importance of the EFCA OPV presence in the Mediterranean Sea.

- Cyprus also supported what was mentioned by Italy, France and Malta and also underlined the importance of having the EFCA OPV in the Mediterranean Sea and thanked EFCA for the JDP implementation and for having the EFCA OPV and an Italian Coast Guard OPV in the Levante Sea, which was very important. Cyprus proposed EFCA to explore the possibility
of having two EFCA OPVs at the same time in the Mediterranean Sea as it is a wide region with specific points during the year with IUU fishing both in the Straits of Sicily and also in the Levante Sea.

- The EC thanked for the presentation and noted that the comments provided by MS underline the importance of having active OPVs, which goes hand in hand with the responsibilities of MS of implementing proper monitoring and control activities in their waters and beyond. The EC also took note of the challenges that EFCA is faced with and that the work should continue to minimise any type of negative impacts in terms of budget availability. The EC will support EFCA on the process of forecasting and taking any necessary mitigating measures for 2025 and 2026. Also, the EC will support EFCA in terms of starting preparing for the period 2026-2028 as there would be a need to prepare the next open call.

- CCRUP thanked EFCA for the control in the areas of the outermost regions and thanked France for brining up the issue of the French Guiana.

- Portugal also thanked for the presentation and asked if the technical specifications of the three vessels could be provided to the AB members.

The ED thanked all MS, in particular France, Italy, Cyprus and Malta for the support to OPV Ocean Sentinel in the Mediterranean, underlined the intention of the Agency to continue with the OPV in the Mediterranean Sea and took note of the request for two OPVs on specific points in the Mediterranean Sea. She also underlined the importance of the EFCA OPV as a platform for the exchange of inspectors, exchange of experience and best practices. It was also clarified that the Call for Expression of Interest for legal advisers on maritime law is to support the EFCA patrols. EFCA also stressed that in terms of patrols and regarding the point raised by Poland, the paramount for EFCA is always safety first and that the proposal of Italy in terms of additional information on performance indicators (KPIs) is to be considered also in global context of having them or not, for example, EFCA is also doing inspection for the verification of the last haul. EFCA will also provide the technical specifications of the three vessels to Portugal.

The Administrative Board took note of the information provided in writing as well as orally, at the meeting.

5. **AB42-05. DRAFT SPD CONTAINING THE MWP 2025-2029 AND AWP 2025**

The Chair recalled that the draft for the agency’s Single Programming Document containing the Multiannual Work Programme 2025-2029 and the Annual Work Programme for 2025 has been adopted by the Administrative Board in October 2023. The draft has been transmitted to the Commission, which was notified in January 2024 and expected to give its opinion before July 2024. The draft will then be presented to the Administrative Board again in October 2024.

The Head of Unit Strategy and Cooperation (HoU 5) presented the draft Single Programming Document with the multiannual objectives and areas of intervention, as well as the Annual Work Programme 2025 with the draft budget for 2025 and the draft operational objectives. He confirmed that the final draft incorporating the Commission’s suggestions shall be presented to the Administrative Board in October 2024. The final draft will also contain the Annual Strategic Plan under the Tripartite Working Agreement with Frontex and EMSA and the strategy for the cooperation with third countries.

The Chair thanked HoU 5 for the clear presentation and stressed that input is most welcome at the end of 2024. The Netherlands representative asked whether it was possible for EFCA to produce material within the scope of their initiative for staff training, in order to assist EU companies with the implementation of an IUU catch system. He further asked whether EFCA will play a role in assisting MS with the implementation of the new Control Regulation regarding recreational fisheries or engine power.
The EC representative highlighted the multiannual international relations strategy is an important element of the draft SPD, as it determines the way EFCA will be working with international organisations and third countries. He noted that there is a good discussion ongoing with EFCA on the issues. He also added that the new Control Regulation is quite clear on the areas where EFCA's contribution is needed.

The ED emphasised that requests from MS are taken very seriously. Communication is a key part for the harmonisation and coordination of fisheries control and having a unified message is fundamental to EFCA. The HoU 5 added that EFCA has a general mandate to support the training of MS inspectors, however, the IUU implementation as addressed by the NL representative needs to be coordinated with DG MARE, as they are leading this project. He mentioned that there will be new guidelines for training in 2026. He reassured that the EC representative's comment has been noted, and that the new Control Regulation provides a clear overview of the areas where EFCA must be incorporated on request or in support to the Commission. Modalities will be discussed, and more information will be provided at the meeting in October 2024.

| The Administrative Board took note | Of the information provided in writing as well as orally, at the meeting. |

6. **AB42-06. ADOPTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD’S RULES OF PROCEDURE**

The Chair underlined the importance of the Administrative Board adopting precise Rules of Procedure. It is key that there is a consensus on how to operate, on the scope of the Administrative Board’s mandate, and how to function in the context of the review that has been made of the Founding Regulation. He reminded that as of October 2024, there will likely be an additional Administrative Board member appointed by the European Parliament. This will change the dynamic and authority of the Board, bringing new elements to discussion. Therefore, the Chair concluded it was a good time to adopt clear rules in order to implement the mandate given to the Board as a body more confidently.

The Head of Sector Strategy and Communication (HoS U5) explained that EFCA proposed to adopt new rules of procedure for the Administrative Board and repeal the current ones. The main change in the rules of procedure derives from the recent amendments to EFCA’s Founding Regulation, by which the European Parliament may appoint one member and one alternate to the Administrative Board, without the right to vote. Besides, the new rules also include an article on Conflict of Interest and a new article detailing a clear procedure for inviting observers to the AB meetings.

The Chair thanked HoS U5 for her presentation and added that he would like to highlight the importance of the terminology used here, as observers, advisers and experts are different types of colleagues attending the Board meetings, and the difference in interventions, presence, and attendance.

The Austria representative asked for clarification on whether the observer should be specifically from the European Parliament or if it could be any kind of observer. HoS 5 clarified that the representative of the European Parliament would be a Board member, though without the right to vote. In these new rules, besides the article on the European Parliament Board members, there is an additional article describing the procedure on how a Board member can propose to bring an observer to an EFCA Board meeting.

The Chair also confirmed that the European Parliament will appoint a member for the Administrative Board, and that this person will not be an observer.

The new rules of procedure were adopted by consensus
7. **AB42-07. STAFF REGULATION IMPLEMENTING RULES**

The Chair brought the attention to the fact that the Staff Regulation implementing rules is a point for decision.

The Head of Unit Corporate Services (HoU 1) explained that the update was very straightforward and basically a formality because it consists of a direct application by analogy of the rules adopted by the Commission. Moreover, the rules will be implemented by the Paymasters Office which handles salaries and pensions of all the staff of European Institutions. This particular one concerns certain coefficients for transferring in and out from pension pots from other schemes into the EU system.

The Chair concluded the adoption of the implementing rules for the staff without no votes against neither abstentions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed action</th>
<th>Adoption of the Staff Regulation implementing rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Basis</td>
<td>This decision adopts by analogy:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Commission Decision C(2024) 1038 of 21 February 2024 amending Decision C(2011)1278 final on the general implementing provisions for Articles 11 and 12 of Annex VIII to the Staff Regulations on the transfer of pension rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Adopted by consensus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. **AB42-08. REPORT FROM THE WORKSHOP ON EFCA’S ROLE AND ACTIVITIES**

The Chair expressed his enthusiasm and gratitude about the workshop of the previous day and gave the floor to the ED to provide a brief review.

The ED thanked everyone for their participation in the workshop and proposed to have similar workshops at future Board meetings. She suggested that, for a detailed account of the workshop results, one could refer to the document provided by her in the following days. She explained that the workshop focused their discussions on two questions:

1. Which were the main priorities for the administration and is EFCA addressing them effectively?
2. How can EFCA best assist in the upcoming period?
The questions were looked at under regional cooperation, operational support, empowering excellence, bringing innovation and cooperation together, in other sea areas, and in administrative responsibilities of the Board and its members. The ED concluded that there were great ideas for the agency to take forward in each of the areas and thanked everyone for their participation.

The Italy representative suggested to wait for the different implementing acts of the Control Regulation before further discussions.

The Chair shared his concluding thoughts on the workshop, saying that in his view, everyone found interest in the interaction the previous day and he had had interesting discussions with many colleagues around the table. He requested a similar kind of exercise for the next meeting, as it would be very useful to meet before the Board meeting and exchange on points that need further discussion, as more time is needed in order to be better guided in how to make decisions. It might help to be more comfortable with, for example, long and complex documents like the Single Programming Document and get more clarity on the Board’s role and duties.

| The Administrative Board took note of the information provided in writing as well as orally, at the meeting. |

9. **AB42-09. AOB (NEXT MEETINGS)**

The Chair suggested to hold the next AB meeting in a presentational manner, especially because it will be the first time the European Parliament will participate. MS supported the idea, and the date was set for the 17 October. Prior to the meeting there will be a workshop, held on the day before in the afternoon.

He thanked all the EFCA team for the organisation and closed the meeting.

- Administrative Board Workshop on 16 October 2024 afternoon and the Administrative Board Meeting on 17 October 2024 morning
# ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS TO THE MEETING OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF THE EFCA
VIGO, 24 APRIL 2024

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Alternates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(BE) Belgium:</td>
<td>Mr Geert DEVOGEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(BG) Bulgaria:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CZ) Czech Rep.:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DK) Denmark:</td>
<td>Mr Kenneth JOENSEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DE) Germany:</td>
<td>Ms Anne LOOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EE) Estonia:</td>
<td>Mr Allar LEPPIND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IE) Ireland:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(EL) Greece:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ES) Spain:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(FR) France:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(HR) Croatia:</td>
<td>Ms Branka TANANDEK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IT) Italy:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CY) Cyprus:</td>
<td>Mr Yiannos KYRIACOU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LV) Latvia:</td>
<td>Mr Riikko VEINBERGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LT) Lithuania:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(LU) Luxembourg:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(HU) Hungary:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(MT) Malta:</td>
<td>Mr Bjorn CALLUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(NL) Netherlands:</td>
<td>Mr Mats SOTTHEWES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(AT) Austria:</td>
<td>Ms Margareta STUBENRAUCH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PL) Poland:</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(PT) Portugal:</td>
<td>Mr Ricardo SEGURADO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(RO) Romania:</td>
<td>Mr Marian AVRAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SL) Slovenia:</td>
<td>Mr Slavo SISKO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SK) Slovakia:</td>
<td>Mr Jan SUKOVSKY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(FI) Finland:</td>
<td>Mr Harri KUKKA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(SE) Sweden:</td>
<td>Mr Niclas TÖRNELL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

European Commission (EC):

- Mr Fabrizio DONATELLA
- Mr Stylianos MITOLIDIS
- Mr Jerôme BROCHE

Advisory Board representative:
Ms Daniela COSTA (Outermost Regions Advisory Council)

Observers:
Ms Sarah R. VITIELLO-FERRARA (EC)

---

1 Proxy from EC (DAK) for all items
2 Proxy from EC (CI) for all items
EFCA:
Dr Susan STEELE (Executive Director)
Unit 1 – Corporate Services
Mr Niall MCHALE (Head of Unit)
Unit 2 – North Atlantic, North Sea and Baltic Sea
Ms Cristina MORGADO (Acting Head of Unit)
Unit 3 – Mediterranean, Black Sea, Indian Ocean and South Atlantic
Mr Mario LOPES SANTOS (Head of Unit)
Unit 4 – Operational Support
Mr Vytautas LUKAS (Acting Head of Unit)
Unit 5 – Strategy and Cooperation
Mr Pedro GALACHE (Head of Unit)
Ms Patricia SÁNCHEZ (Head of Sector Strategy and Communication)
Ms Evvy MADARIAGA (Administrative Assistant Accountancy - Strategy and Communication)
Adopted Agenda of the 42nd meeting of the Administrative Board of the EFCA

on 24 April 2024
09h30 – 14h00
(D=decision; I=information)

1. Approval of the draft agenda
   D

2. Information from the Executive Director
   I

3. Adoption of EFCA's Annual Report 2023
   D

4. Charting of means state of play and future perspectives
   I

5. Draft Single Programming Document containing the Multianual work programme 2023-2029 and Annual work programme for 2025
   I

6. Adoption of new Administrative Board’s rules of procedure
   D

7. Staff Regulation Implementing Rules
   D

8. Report from the Workshop on EFCA’s role and activities
   I

9. AOB (next meetings)