

# EFCA IN BRIEF

---





ISBN 978-92-9209-018-0  
doi: 10.2835/20146  
© European Union, 2013

Reproduction is authorized provided the source is acknowledged.

# EFCA MISSION

---

The European Fisheries Control Agency's mission is to promote the highest common standards for control, inspection and surveillance under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

---

The EFCA brokers operational cooperation between and gives assistance to Member States and the Commission. It organises coordination and cooperation between national control and inspection activities and assists the Commission and Member States by providing training to Member State inspectors and trainers in order that CFP rules are respected and applied effectively and in a uniform manner.

The work of the Agency has clear added value. It contributes to a level playing field for the fishing industry so that obligations are observed and everyone in the sector is treated equally, wherever they might be operating. Secondly, it contributes towards sustainable fisheries by enhancing compliance with existing conservation and management measures to the benefit of present and future generations.



## Working Together

As an independent executive body, the Agency works closely with the European Commission, Member States, Regional Advisory Councils and, where appropriate, third parties such as Regional Fisheries Organisations. Each has a particular role to play in making sure that the EU fisheries policy operates in the most sustainable manner possible.

The Common Fisheries Policy requires that Member States ensure effective control, inspection and enforcement of the rules and cooperate with each other and third countries in achieving these aims. This involves coordinating activities on land and in European Union and international waters, as well as where fishing takes place in third-country waters as appropriate. The Agency is designed to enhance this cooperation so that legislation is implemented in a systematic, uniform and effective way. Pooling separate efforts makes it possible to overcome any shortcomings which may arise due to the different resources and priorities national authorities allocate to their own controls and inspections. Uniform inspection procedures by national inspectors also make it possible to document all cases of non-compliance in a transparent manner.

Enforcing CFP rules remains the full responsibility of Member States. Each Member State is obliged to follow up on all cases of non-compliance discovered by its own inspectors and to impose deterrent sanctions according to national rules and procedures.



## International Role

The Agency's remit is not confined to control and operational cooperation on fishing control by the Member States in European Union waters, although these are its first priority since they stretch from the Black Sea in the east to the Atlantic in the west, and the Baltic Sea in the north to the Mediterranean in the south. In principle, its mission covers any zones where European vessels fish. The EU is obliged by a number of international agreements and by its participation in Regional Fisheries Organisations to carry out controls and inspections on vessels operating outside EU waters. This is especially true for the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).



# CONTROL & INSPECTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

---

To achieve sustainable fisheries, there must be a culture of compliance throughout the fishing industry. Ensuring that this culture exists is one of the principle objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The European Fisheries Control Agency helps to work towards this objective.

---

To enforce common fisheries policy rules, there is a control system in place which is designed to ensure that only the permitted quantities of fish are caught, to collect the necessary data for managing fishing opportunities, clarify the roles of EU countries and the European Commission, ensure the rules are applied to all fishers and operators in the same way with harmonised sanctions across the EU, and ensure that fisheries products can be traced back and checked throughout the supply chain from net to plate.

The system is laid down in the Control Regulation which entered into force on 1 January 2010 and which thoroughly modernised the EU's approach to fisheries control. The control system applies to all fishing activities in EU waters, and to all fishing carried out by EU fishing vessels and EU nationals, wherever they may fish. It also applies to recreational fishing of sensitive fish stocks and aquaculture in so far as they are covered by rules at an EU level.

Fisheries rules and control systems are agreed on at EU level, but implemented by the Member States by means of their national authorities and inspectors. The European Commission has its own inspectors who can visit national authorities at any time to check whether they are implementing EU rules correctly. To encourage closer collaboration and exchange of best practice, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) organises joint control campaigns, where inspectors from different EU countries join forces.



# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

---

The Agency is an independent body established by European Union law. It is governed by its Administrative Board, which consists of six representatives of the Commission and one for each of the Member States. The EFCA is managed by an executive director.

---

The Agency began operating in January 2007. Its seat is at Vigo in north-west Spain.

---



## Administrative Board

The Board ensures that the Agency functions correctly and effectively. It sets the Agency's priorities and work programme, adopts its budget once it has been approved by the European Parliament and the Council, reports to Member States and the European institutions and appoints the Executive Director. In addition, the Board adopts a multiannual approach and a staff policy plan, as well as fixing indicators to monitor the implementation of the work plan.

Board members are appointed on an individual basis. They all have relevant experience and expertise in fisheries control and inspection and are required to sign a declaration of interest. They are appointed for a renewable five-year term.

The Board usually meets twice a year. Its chairman is Mr Jörgen Holmquist and its deputy chairman is Dario Cau (Italy). Both positions are for a term of three years.



## Executive Director

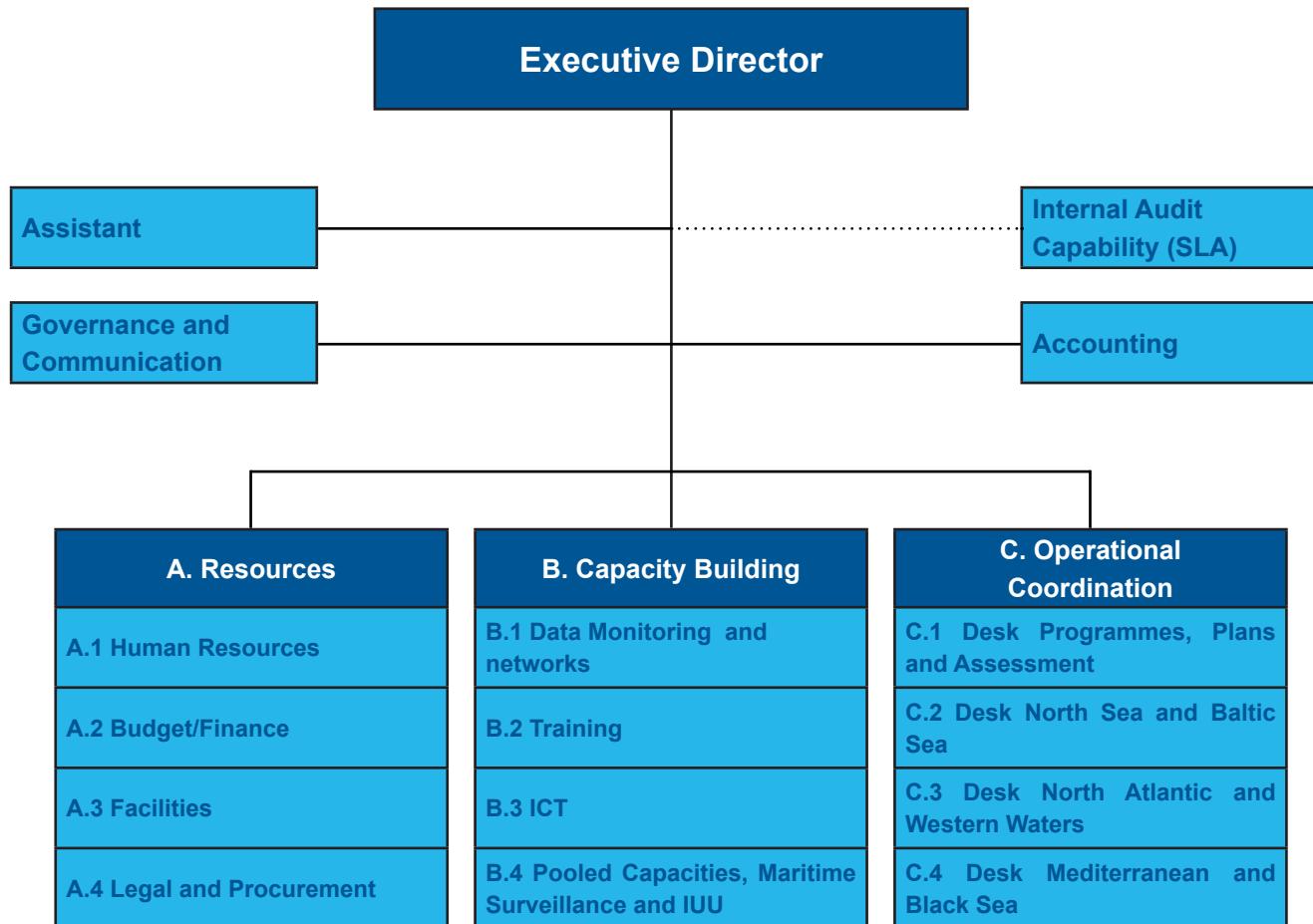


The Executive Director is responsible for the execution of the Agency's operational activities and general management. He drafts the annual budget proposal and work programme following consultation with the Commission and national authorities. He is answerable to the Administrative Board. The appointment is for a term of five years. The current Executive Director is Mr Pascal Savouret.

## Advisory Board

One of the basic elements of the 2002 reform of the Common Fisheries Policy was to increase participation by the fishing industry and other relevant parties in fisheries management and the policy making process through Regional Advisory Councils (RAC). The Advisory Board provides a forum for conveying the views of RACs.

## Organisational Structure



**Budget 2013: 9.216 million €**

**Staff: 63 staff members**





# MULTIANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2013 - 2017

---

The Agency will concentrate on a number of core tasks during the period 2013-2017, taking into account the overarching objectives of achieving compliance and level playing field, the expectations of Member States and the European Commission, the legal framework governing the EFCA activities and the resources available.

---



**The main priorities for this period are as follows:**

## Operational Coordination

The Joint Deployment Plans are the vehicle through which the Agency organises the deployment of the national human and material means of control and inspection by the Member States. They relate to fisheries according to a Specific Control and Inspection Programme or an international control scheme.

The priority for the 2013-2018 Multiannual Work programme is to succeed in the evolution towards regional, multispecies and continuous Joint Deployment Plans in force and coordinate control activities of Black Sea Member States. This process will require improving regional risk management and develop a method for assessing cost effectiveness and the impact of control activities within the framework of the new SCIP model currently being developed by the Commission and discussed with the Member States, which is to be further defined by the future Regional multispecies SCIPs.

## Capacity Building



In the field of training, the priorities are the core curricula of development and maintenance, including the training of trainers, the integration of IUU best practice gained during visits to third countries, and regional training.

With regards to the support of Member States, of the European Commission and horizontal support of Agency activities, the priority lies in the development and enhancement of ICT projects and the maintenance and updating of present ICT systems, as well as the improvement of EFCA operations room facilities, reflecting on the definition of procedures and systems for monitoring a possible discard ban, maritime surveillance based on the evaluation of pilot projects and possible new developments, and the acquisition of means for the Member States.

## Cooperation with third countries on Commission request

Operational cooperation with third countries may be envisaged, in particular with Norway in the North Sea, and Pelagic Western Waters JDPs, Russia in the Baltic Sea and NAFO-NEAFC, Canada, the USA, the Mediterranean, and Black Sea third countries.

Seminars on operational activities will be organised, and two focus groups will be set up to assess compliance levels and other factors in the JDPs with the aim of evaluating general trends in compliance levels and assessing the cost effectiveness of control operations.



# KEY RESULTS IN 2012



During 2012, five JDPs were successfully implemented: cod fisheries in the North Sea and Western Waters, cod and salmon fisheries in the Baltic Sea, pelagic fisheries in Western Waters, NAFO & NEAFC and bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic Ocean. The EFCA has focused on improving the quality of cooperation by fully taking on board the move towards the regional control areas.



During the last three years, the days of activity of JDPs have been reasonably constant. In 2012 the slight increase in days of activity was followed by a more significant increase in the number of inspections at sea. The total number of inspections coordinated within the framework of the JDPs during 2012 was close to 9,000 in the JDPs coordinated by EFCA. Overall, there was a decrease in the ratio of suspected infringements detected per inspection made, with the exception of the JDPs for cod and salmon in the Baltic Sea and pelagic fisheries in Western Waters. The Administrative Board's decision to create two focus groups to assess compliance levels will help the EFCA better assess these figures, as well as the general trends related to compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy in the EU.

There have also been advances in the pursuit of a level playing field. Training is a key aspect in this regard, and it also contributes to improvements in the quality of coordination and inspections. During 2012, a total of 295 inspectors from Member States participated in EFCA training actions. Apart from the regional workshop training actions, the Agency also coordinated and facilitated the elaboration of Core Curricula courses for the training of trainers of national fisheries inspectors and EU inspectors. With respect to training workshops in support of regional cooperation, 13 training workshops were organised by the EFCA with Member State officials.

The assistance provided to the Member States and the Commission has been of special importance this year, in particular in the area of data monitoring and networks. Much progress has been made in the development of EFCA information management systems with the enhancements to the EFCA Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), the development of the EFCA Electronic recording and Reporting System (ERS) and the definition of the EU Electronic Inspection Report (EIR).

Moreover, during the Bluefin Tuna Joint Deployment Campaign, and in close cooperation with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), a pilot project was set up with regards to Maritime Surveillance. It assessed the added value of enriching the existing global picture of the EFCA-VMS system with additional layers of information with a view to creating a comprehensive vision of maritime activities.

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a large school of barracuda swimming in clear, blue ocean water. The fish are silvery with dark stripes and are swimming in various directions, creating a sense of movement.

# TOOLS TO IMPROVE THE CULTURE OF COMPLIANCE IN EUROPEAN FISHERIES

---

A EFCA CONTRIBUTION

---

## REGIONAL CONTROL AREAS

The fishing industry in different Member States (MS) operates throughout European waters, and the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is considering a wider involvement of stakeholders and MS authorities at the regional level.

Regional challenges call for regional solutions. However, until now control and enforcement has chiefly been the responsibility of costal and flag MS, with little cooperation being achieved on a regional level.

Against a background of increasingly limited financial resources, Regional Control Areas could promote the best use of human and material resources pooled by MS in a coordinated way, creating European added value through the following means:

- Cost-effective use of national control resources
- Uniformity and effectiveness of control
- Increased transparency of control activities
- A level playing field for the fishing industry

### What is the vision for Regional Control Areas?

The human and material control resources of MS are quite stretched at the moment and it is of paramount importance to develop more strategic and integrated control plans at the EU level.

The development of Regional Control Areas covering all relevant fisheries and activities of the CFP could be explored in order to trigger a more cost-effective, rational and complementary joint deployment of human and material resources. Extended and permanent sharing of timely intelligence and data should also be envisaged in this context. Such an approach would facilitate the optimal implementation of common priorities and benchmarks, common risk management procedures and the common assessment of regional control operations.



## **What is the role for the EFCA?**

Building upon MS potential, and through its highly qualified and experienced team, the EFCA is able to play the role of initiator and catalyst in regional cooperation by providing Member States with the framework support best suited to organising a rational and coordinated deployment of inspection and surveillance assets, thereby avoiding an unnecessary concentration of control human and material resources based solely on national priorities.



## **What are the next steps?**

The new Specific Control and Inspection Programmes (SCIPs), provide a unique opportunity to further advance the concept of Regional Control Areas. By providing the adequate legal framework, SCIPs should facilitate the definition of common fisheries priorities and benchmarks at a regional level. A more integrated alignment between National Control Plans and Joint Deployment Plans could be envisaged in this respect.

## CORE CURRICULA

The European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) supports the European Commission (EC) and Member States (MS) by coordinating and facilitating the elaboration of Core Curricula (CC). To give effect to its coordination duties and legal commitments, the EFCA should establish and develop a CC for the training of instructors employed by the fisheries inspectorate of MS and for the training of EU inspectors before their first deployment. In order to enhance the involvement of all stakeholders on the achievement of truly common CC for all inspectors across Europe, a Steering Group and a Working Group have been established with the participation of all MS and the EC chaired by the EFCA.

The joint drafting of CC courses is supported by a network of technical experts in the relevant fields of the Control Regulation who EFCA contracts to assist in the development of the CC. In order to have a solid basis for the development of training materials, a training expert was also contracted to advise on the methodology to be used in the development of the CC. A dual approach on the development of CC has been agreed with the Member States, ensuring that the CC encompasses a training handbook containing teaching materials for students and a training manual containing instructions for trainers. A regional and specific approach according to the fisheries is envisaged in this respect.

The development of the CC started with the development of modules on sea inspection as advised by the Working Group. Considering the weight of the course on inspection at sea within the CC project as a whole, and taking into account that it would greatly facilitate work on port inspections, it can be estimated that nearly one third of the CC has now been completed. It is envisaged that courses on finalising inspection, risk analysis and surveillance, transport, markets and IUU will be developed during the next phase.

The Core Curricula Development Platform (CCDP) is an online application that supports the collaboration of external experts, MS, EC and EFCA for the development of CC materials. This virtual collaboration tool provides the capacity to remotely draft and review CC documents. Authorised users are able to exchange, to track comments on the different versions of the documents, and to manage meetings, news, and announcements. It is envisaged that in the future the CCDP would assist in fisheries training to implement the CC courses and act as a tool for e-learning.



## EFCA INFORMATION SYSTEMS

EFCA information systems are designed to complement individual national systems. They aim to create a global view by providing an enhanced and enriched picture of the JDP operational area. These are unique systems developed by the Agency and made available to Member States to support enforcement of the CFP at the EU level. These electronic tools allow for a continuous real-time exchange of data and intelligence, thereby reducing the possibility of information being manipulated and limiting misreporting.

In an increasingly complex and technological fisheries control environment, the EFCA plays an important role in assisting Member States to develop their own systems in a manner that will ensure interoperability. The Agency also has to upgrade its own existing applications as well as build new systems for the coordination of control and enforcement.

FISHNET is the umbrella under which all EFCA operational systems are developed. FISHNET is a virtual coordination room and represents a major tool for EFCA and MS officials by providing access to all the relevant information needed to perform joint control operations. As in the case of an aircraft cockpit, the FISHNET single sign-on portal will provide secure access to an array of communication tools and applications. This access is provided on a “need to know” basis. The portal will support the safe transfer of and access to information by a variety of means, such as voice, instant messaging, video conferencing, collaborative document writing tools, and so on.



Each of the operational systems encompassed by the EFCA is a building block of FISHNET. The EFCA VMS system (satellite vessel positioning) has been in use for a number of years, and it is becoming enriched with data from other sources by means of various enhancements. A wide range of recording and reporting obligations are now electronic, such as catches, landings, sales, markets and transportation. The EFCA ERS system is designed to receive reports exchanged within the framework of JDPs, thereby allowing the real-time monitoring of vessels within the coordinated area. In the near future, electronic inspection reports (EIR) will also be managed in a similar fashion by the EFCA EIR system. In addition, a specific tool has been developed for JDP activity reports and risk analysis (JADE).

By allowing new capabilities for cross checking information, performing risk analysis and increasing the efficiency of inspections, FISHNET will provide a valuable operational tool to further reinforce the drive for a culture of compliance, thus establishing a level playing field across the fisheries sector.



## European Fisheries Control Agency

Email: efca@efca.europa.eu -- Tel: +34 986 12 06 10 -- Fax: +34 886 12 52 37  
Address: Edificio Odriozola , Avenida García Barbón 4, E-36201 - Vigo - Spain  
Postal Address: EFCA - Apartado de Correos 771 - E-36200 - Vigo - Spain