

CONCLUSION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

08 October 2021, via videoconference

CONCLUSIONS

Participants

Advisory Board representatives: Ms Rosa Caggiano (MEDAC), Mr José Beltrán (PELAC), Mr Alexandre Rodríguez (LDAC), Mr Julien Daudu (LDAC), Mr Esben Sverdrup-Jensen (BSAC), Mr Daniel Voces (MAC), Mr Pedro Reis Santos (MAC), Mr Kenn Skau Fischer (NSAC), Ms Tamara Talevska (NSAC), Ms Mo Matthies (NWWAC), Ms Mihaela Candea-Mirea (BISAC) Mr Yordan Gospodinov (BISAC), Ms Daniela Costa (ORAC), Ms Chloé Pocheau (SWWAC), Mr Luis Vicente (SWWAC),

Administrative Board members: Ms Theoni Papadopoulou (Greece)

European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA): Dr Susan Steele (ED), Mr Pedro Galache (HoU 3), Ms Cristina Morgado (Deputy HoU2), Ms Patricia Sánchez Abeal (HoS P&C), Mr Miguel Nuevo (HoS JDPs & RC).

0. Approval of the Agenda

The meeting was opened by the ED warmly welcoming the Advisory Board representatives.

The participants were reminded of the conflict of interest and data protection rules.

The draft agenda was presented by the ED.

The agenda was approved.

1. Introduction and state of play: Advisory Councils (ACs) state of play

The ED gave the floor to the ACs representatives to present their activities since the last Advisory Board meeting,

The LDAC representative took the floor and gave an outline of their mission:

- Their mandate includes all waters not subject to the jurisdiction of the EU (both EEZs of third countries and international waters in the high seas). Its main objectives are to prepare and provide evidence-based advice and recommendations to the EC and Member States to contribute to the implementation of the external dimension of the CFP. The LDAC is working on a wide range of issues from SFPAs to RFMOs and with other international organisations such as ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT and FAO.
- Since its creation in 2005, they have been actively engaged in the field of monitoring, control and surveillance in fisheries and in particular in promoting an enhanced role and mandate of

the EFCA in assisting the Commission to implement the international dimension of the CFP. They regularly discuss with DG MARE about the state of play of the implementation of Fisheries Control, the IUU and the SMEFF Regulations and measures to increase transparency and reporting of fishing activities by both EU and non-EU vessels. They have been producing advice on trade policy issues, the promotion of level playing field for fishing products or the control of imports and traceability.

- They are committed to continue actively engaging with EFCA and look forward to welcoming EFCA in their next meeting of their Executive Committee (30 November in Madrid), where they will hold an open dialogue on the state of play of the External Dimension of the CFP and future challenges and opportunities together with DG MARE (Directorate B), Spanish Ministry of Fisheries (SGP-MAPA) and Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FITI).

Since the last Advisory Board meeting, the LDAC has engaged in the following activities:

- In May 2021, they adopted a fully-fledged piece of advice containing recommendations to progress and leverage in achieving an even level playing field for EU and non-EU fisheries products and fishing operations. This advice covered, amongst other things, IUU fishing, the implementation of the SMEFF, SFPAs and RFMOs. They have called for EFCA to play an active role in these areas.
- In the context of regional sustainable fisheries management in West Africa, they called on the EU to support efforts towards the regional management of shared resources in the region with, on the long term, the establishment of a non-tuna RFMO covering West African waters. On the short term, they believe that the EU should, amongst other things, proactively support specific cooperation between West Africa neighbouring countries with which it has an SFPAs and/or dialogue under the EU IUU Regulation, and this in order to gradually move towards a concerted management of resources.

As for the future, the issues of interest for the coming months are:

- A joint advice of the MAC and the LDAC on fostering the EU's leadership was agreed with the aim to reducing the detrimental impact of flags of convenience in the fishing sector. Their recommendations include the need to prioritise action on States having adopted policies of the convenience, while providing support to partner countries and other MS, to increase their capacity to fight IUU fishing and effecting fundamental reforms of their fisheries policies.
- They continue following very closely developments in RFMOs, particularly in ICCAT (tropical tunas and sharks) and in IOTC, in respect of which they have concerns about the increasing number of Parties objecting to Resolution 21/01 on yellowfin tuna.
- They will also be active in the promotion of labour and social issues related to fisheries in the EU agenda and in the international arena, and they will continue to follow the ongoing evaluation of SFPAs and the review of the EU Fisheries Control System.
- They also follow the work of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT as regards fisheries management and control in West Africa and more particularly the implementation of a regional observers programme at sea and regional harmonised port inspection scheme and the preparation of a compendium/mapping of fisheries legislation in relation to FAD management and control in African countries in the Atlantic; and they cooperate with them notably on SFPAs.

- Similarly, they follow the developments of IOC around the EU-funded ECOFISH project for the Western Indian Ocean.
- They remain interested in the developments of the EU funded project PESCAO where EFCA is a relevant actor in relation to the promotion of good governance and coordinated sub-regional approach to fisheries control.
- They look forward to actively participate and contribute to the third five-year external independent evaluation of the Agency 2017-2022. They were actively engaged in the second five-year external independent evaluation (2012-2016), promoting EFCA's international operations and found that this contribution was duly taken into account.

The representative of the MAC presented the main tasks carried out during the last period:

- Their main focus is the fisheries policies with an impact on the market, but the control is playing a key role when it comes to marketing of fishery products not only in the EU but also outside the EU.
- They produced advice on IUU fishing activities by Ghana's industrial trawl sector and the impact on the EU seafood market. A very significant problem in Ghana's industrial fleet was identified and many of these products, namely cuttlefish, octopus and squid were reaching the European market, having an impact. The MAC recommended to set up coordination efforts and use the tools within the IUU regulation including the carding system to address this situation. As a response, the Commission (EC) promised to intensify the monitoring and exchanges with Ghana and informed them that from 2020 DG MARE has requested EFCA to conduct an analysis of samples of catch certificates and processing statements. This resulted in a yellow card that was issued to Ghana.
- They produced another advice on IUU and the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030. The advice focuses on IUU fishing stating that there are some links between biodiversity decline and IUU fishing activities. The advice is calling on MS for zero tolerance approach against IUU as part of their commitments under their biodiversity strategy. It also aims at ensuring sufficient resources to monitor and manage all types of European maritime protected areas (MPAs), to continue to develop a digitalised catch system, to ensure well enforced traceability covering all seafood products and imported products and better alignment of import control schemes. The EC replied that they fully agree to the zero-tolerance approach which is enshrined not only in the Green Deal strategy but also in the biodiversity one. On the catch system, they are waiting for a legal basis to be adopted. The EC is engaging with stakeholders to make sure that the system functions and operates in practice.
- On Market State cooperation, the EC reminded that the EU has signed joint statements with both the USA and Japan to actively fight against IUU. The EC reminded that funding is available in the new EMFF to provide financial aid to ensure the effective management and control of MPAs.
- On the Brexit advice about control, when it comes to the Brexit Adjustment Reserve, it refers to some of the measures that can be covered by their reserve comprehend support to ensure the functioning of borders, customs and fisheries control.
- The joint MAC/Long Distance advice on the flag of convenience was triggered by the latest EC's report on the implementation of the IUU regulation. One of the challenges described by

the EC relates to non-EU flag state selling their flags to non-EU countries operators, among other issues. The advice focuses on two main recommendations, first to fully implement existing measures designed to close the loopholes offered by non-compliant flags of convenience and finally to use these bilateral relationships with partner countries and international fora to reduce the impact of flags of convenience in fisheries.

The representative of MAC further highlighted that together with the application of the fisheries control they attached a lot of importance to ensuring that the products in the market are legal. Advice has also been given on the carding system.

The EFCA ED stressed the importance of the joint advice on the flags of convenience and looked forward to receiving the advice.

The representative of the MEDAC gave information on the following points:

- She raised their concern for the unauthorised Egyptian fleet carrying out fishing activities especially in the area of the Strait of Sicily, without taking into account the GFCM recommendations. Malta and Cyprus raised the issue last year and the MEDAC sent a letter to the Commissioner. The members of the MEDAC have again raised their concern about this complex situation. Their main concern is that in practice, Northern African countries do not frequently follow the GFCM recommendations on Control. For the Adriatic Sea and the Western Mediterranean area the members are satisfied with the control carried out by EFCA within the JDP.
- Presently, the efforts of the MEDAC are concentrated on a huge amount of draft GFCM decisions that the EC is presenting during the annual session of the GFCM at the beginning of November.

EFCA HoU3 highlighted that in the Egyptian case, a campaign in the Eastern Med, in cooperation with Cyprus, was dedicated last year to detect possible illegal activities. Some sightings were carried out but only for EU vessels and no illegal activities were detected. In the past, some sightings of Egyptian vessels were found and communicated to the GFCM. Attention is being paid to possible illegal activities in these areas. The JDP for 2022 is under preparation and the risk assessment will take into consideration in the risk the possible illegal activities of third countries, and will try to mitigate it with the specific control campaigns. Next year, EFCA hopes to restart cooperation with Northern African Mediterranean countries in control, including the promotion of training of inspectors in those countries.

The North Sea AC representative thanked EFCA for its involvement in their work and informed about the following points:

- They have been working with the Scheveningen Group on the discard plan for the North Sea area, including the southern part, trying to help improving the efficiency of the discard plan.
- Following the recent revision of the regulation of Technical Measures, there is still some work to do. Fruitful discussions have taken place with MS in this respect.
- The Scheveningen group is working on the use of CCTV. The North Sea AC has requested them to be more involved in this project. MS surrounding the North Sea have arranged to select two vessels to have cameras installed on board. At the moment, in Denmark there is a project on the use of CCTV in the Kattegat for some trawl fisheries. He highlighted the usefulness of EFCA's technical guidelines on the functioning of CCTV and on technical

requirements for the implementation of REM on board fishing vessels. They have issued a paper on legal aspects, which they are ready to share, but he reiterated that they would like to have a paper on these matters from EFCA.

- Brexit has huge implications on fisheries in the North Sea. The UK is issuing licenses to go fishing in UK waters and the conditions of the licenses sometimes change from week to week, which makes very difficult to know what legislation is in force. Some set up at EU level would be beneficial to all.

The ED stated that EFCA is following up very closely the control issues in relation with UK. In relation to the CCTV, EFCA would be keen to receive the Danish paper as EFCA is working on REM and considering the data protection issues. The legislation in each MS is different and is not normally an area that EFCA would go into but it is worth considering.

The representative of the NWWAC focused on the following:

- For a number of years, they have a standing focus group on control. It has been closely following the developments of the control regulation and produced a piece of advice on it in 2018.
- They produce an annual advice on the discard plan for the NWW waters.
- They produce yearly advice on choke species in the North Western Waters. In 2015-2016 they developed a very specific tool for analysing mitigation opportunities. In light of Brexit, they are currently updating it to take into account the new difficulties regarding choke identification and mitigation.
- They produce advice on technical measures. Since July 2021 they have three Working Groups to reflect the changes from Brexit. They address specific issues relating to the geographical areas and they also have a horizontal working group that addresses overall issues, such as the impact of climate change or pollution in the oceans.
- They produced a report on the workshop on the implementation and enforcement of the Landing Obligation which was held in collaboration with EFCA and the NWW MS Control Expert Group in July 2020.
- They held a workshop on 29 September 2021 with EFCA and the Member States Control Expert Group of the NWW on Article 27 of the Technical Measures regulation, the catch composition, mesh sizes and the landing obligation. DG MARE confirmed that fishers have to comply with both the catch composition rules and with the landing obligation. It was agreed that the NWWAC would try find a common approach, possibly with other ACs that might be interested and contact the MS on this issue. They also mentioned the action plan to conserve fisheries resources and marine ecosystems for which the technical measures regulation report will be used.
- As regards the future, the NWWAC is greatly impacted by Brexit as it plays a role in nearly all of their work. Currently they are following closely the technical measures that the UK is implementing in their waters. They are working closely with their Member States on this and on the licensing. Concern is felt across the AC that many of the issues that the NWWAC members have are being pushed into the Specialised Committee for Fisheries and they are not getting any answers because the work of this Committee is delayed. The Committee will start working properly in 2022 and they had expected the work to begin in the autumn of

2021. They are following up on the control arrangements with the UK after Brexit and have produced a series of questions for the EC on this. The EC sent a reply and the focus group control will follow up on it.

- They are looking forward to a potential meeting with EFCA regarding the NWW JDP where members would like to provide feedback on the risk assessment and they expect from EFCA a general update on the implementation.
- All publications are available on the NWWAC website www.nwwac.org in English, French and Spanish.

The ED agreed that the Brexit aftermath is very difficult for everybody and further mentioned that EFCA is always open to have a meeting with the ACs in relation to the JDPs.

The ORAC representative began her state of play by saying that the ORAC was a privileged AC since EFCA ED and the EFCA HoU3 attended their last General Assembly.

She also explained that most fisheries had problems due to the recreational fishing in some areas because it is increasing the number of recreational vessels that fish for commercial purposes. In the French outermost regions, namely French Guiana, the problem of IUU is more significant, since this territory is in mainland (south America) so they have third countries, some as neighbours, that fish illegally in their waters. It is also true for the Outermost Regions that are closer to mainland or other territories. She also acknowledged that they had problems with drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) around the Atlantic for tuna fishing. They wondered whether they could get help from EFCA.

She mentioned that people were complaining that out of the overall budget distribution for fisheries policy, because few was spent on inspection, and in her opinion, there were maybe enough regulations but not enough control measures.

She also referred to the recommendations produced on IUU in the Outermost regions, on Control in recreational fishing and on FADs in the context of the conservation and management of Atlantic tuna.

The ED commented that even without a mandate to be active through a JDP in the operational areas, EFCA would still be able to assist in training inspectors and with the provision of support to the Member States concerned on their request.

The HoU 3 thought that the participation in the ORAC meetings permitted to know directly what the situation was. He also informed there were some areas in which EFCA needs a mandate by the Commission to be active.

The LDAC representative intervened about the sightings of non-EU vessels engaged in IUU activities just to inform that the LDAC had been following quite closely the implementation of the IUU Regulation and the carding system, and also the related performance analysis in RFMOs. They were trying to be more pragmatic to focus that advice on a country-by-country basis and see how to cooperate with those countries. He stressed that LDAC has been discussing a possible issue linked to illegal gear used by some vessels with Moroccan flag, and they were quite adamant to do some advice on it. He explained that many of their fishers and NGOs had seen a lot of large-scale pelagic driftnets in ICCAT regulatory area which is an internationally forbidden practice ruled by an UN resolution.

The PELAC representative referred to the difficult for the PELAC after the situation with COVID. However, they maintained meetings and focus groups on topics such as post Brexit, climate change, control regulation, technical measures management, or recovery plans on the different species managed by the PELAC, the green energy impact on commercial fishing stocks, landing obligation and discards. They worked closely with scientific bodies to improve knowledge about fisheries.

PELAC was working internally on the possibility of collaborating with the ex-UK members to see the possibility of maintaining contact with them by promoting a focus group or inviting them to participate at some meetings. PELAC also sought a certain reciprocity which, for them, would be important for the fisheries.

PELAC stressed the need to continue with the good collaboration between the agency and the ACs, and the importance that EFCA staff members could continue to attend their official meetings.

PELAC shared the recommendations produced on IUU in the Outermost regions, on Control in recreational fishing and on Fish aggregating devices in the context of the conservation and management of Atlantic tunas.

The ED thanked him for his presentation and confirmed the importance, both for the advisory boards and for the agency, of maintaining an excellent relationship and collaboration with the ex-British members.

The SWWAC's representative introduced their state of play by saying they are having their meeting in Santiago de Compostela, and maybe EFCA could attend.

This year SWWAC was able to keep with their usual agenda on ICCAT meetings, especially the bluefin tuna with the MEDAC, on the policy statement and socioeconomic issues within the sector.

They had several new topics, like the dolphin bycatch in the Bay of Biscay, which had been an important issue for the last two years and they have now published advice.

Under the petition from their French Members, they also published some advice on red lobster. The issue was the lobster size difference between the Member states in particular France, Spain, and Portugal. The SWWAC had been asking to have the same size for everyone in their area, but they were still waiting for an answer from each Member States.

The ED supported the importance of the good relationship between the agency and the advisory boards as they could be like eyes and ears on the ground hearing what was going on and where the most serious issues were. The ED raised the point regarding the different minimum sizes in the Member States but stressed that this type of problems would be outside the mandate of the EFCA.

The BSAC representative stated they had had a very close cooperation with EFCA. The latest action was a special session in May 2021 with EFCA focusing on control issues relevant for the Baltic Sea, with discussions on salmon on eel and the problems with the by-catch quota.

BSAC highlighted the main issue is that they have very limited quota available, and they are operating with by-catch quota so that that provides them with a certain situation in terms of control. Unfortunately, it would look like 2022 would be another year where they would be dealing with very small quotas. BSAC appreciated on what was done in terms of cooperation between EFCA and the national authorities.

Finally, BSAC warmly thanked the interest of EFCA in their work on the reviewing the CFP and the participation of EFCA staff in this process.

The ED thanked the representative of BSAC and stated that EFCA was aware of the critical situations in the Baltic, and that this was part of their joint deployment plans (JDPs) and the ongoing planning. She also thanked the compliments to EFCA and thanked the team for their work in collaboration with the national authorities on some of the controllable catches.

The representative of the BISAC explained that due to the poor pandemic situation in their country, the Black Sea Advisory Council had to repeatedly postpone the joint meeting on fisheries control with the national fisheries and aquaculture agencies in Romania and Bulgaria.

She mentioned the landing obligation as a topic of relevance to EFCA, since most of the interested parties had asked for better communication and information on the landing obligation in the Black Sea. In addition, BISAC held an additional meeting devoted to turbot fishing and the change of the prohibition period which the Advisory Council supported for the current year but had requested intensive studies for next year.

She also mentioned two new topics on their work program: recreational fishing and aquaculture. About recreational fishing, she informed they had felt the need to better collection of the data. Moreover, there should be better control over the quantities fished within the framework of this recreational fishery.

She underlined the need for a joint meeting with the authorities in Member States and the EFCA, a long-awaited meeting in the Black Sea.

The ED thanked the BISAC representative for her presentation and confirmed the very good working relations thanks both to the proactivity in the Member States and to the very good working team within the EFCA and that this could be seen during the JDP Steering Group meeting with Bulgaria and Romania.

The ED said it would therefore be very important to work closely together to resolve the issues. Regarding the aquaculture, although it was an important issue, it did not fall within the mandate of EFCA.

2. EFCA's Annual work programme 2021 implementation

The ED gave the floor to the EFCA Head of Unit Coast Guard and International Programmes and Deputy Head of Unit EU Waters and North Atlantic, who presented the implementation of the Annual work programme 2021:

- Joint Deployment Plans
 - Preliminary figures of inspections and suspected infringements for 2021 were displayed
 - Mediterranean Sea and Black Sea JDP's update:
 - In the Mediterranean Sea, the BFT campaign was coordinated virtually between May and July.
 - In the Black Sea JDP, it was implemented the multipurpose maritime operation in the Black Sea that enhanced the inspection capacity.
 - Cooperation with UK

- A virtual coordination network for the WW and NS was established in 2021 chaired by the EFCA and having as members the MS of the two JDPs. The primary objective of the network is to have a situational awareness picture to MS of activities impacted by the UK departure. The group analyses the diversions of the technical measures with the UK, examines the licence conditions and informs the control authorities at MS level. It also supports to Coastal States MSC working group on pelagics and to UK /Norway/EU MSC group for the NS shared stocks. In 2021 an updated risk assessment related with Trade and Cooperation Agreement has been performed.

The NWW AC representative enquired whether it would be possible for the ACs being directly concerned by the works of this network, to have access to some of the information such as legislation or publications that are shared with the MS. NWWAC further wondered if it would be possible for the ACs to participate as observers in some of the workshops in order to better share information with their members.

The ED replied it needed to be considered internally and would get back on that.

- Implementation of Remote Electronic Monitoring
 - REM pilot projects by Regional Groups: Two projects have been endorsed by the High-Level Groups of BALTFISH and Scheveningen. In North Western Waters, the REM pilot project operational plan is being finalised for presentation to the HLG.
 - EFCA has received requests for assistance: On national projects from DK, IE and CY; on the use of REM in NAFO for vessels with repeated serious infringements and on a pilot project for shared pelagic stocks in the NE Atlantic.
- EFCA is in the process of reactivating the REM WG: a Plenary Group is planned and will be composed of representatives of all MS and the EC, there will be subgroups by region with the MS involved in REM pilot projects. EFCA will report to the CEG and EFCA JDP SG.
- European cooperation on Coast Guard state of play
 - The Coast Guard Practical Handbook was adopted in July 2021 by the Commission, and will be kept updated by EFCA in cooperation with Frontex, EMSA, the Commission and the MS. A contribution agreement is close to be finalised with DG MARE to provide resources to EFCA to put it in practice.
 - The annual strategic plan was adopted by the three agencies and included as part of the EFCA SPD 2022.
 - In the European Coast Guard Function Forum, in cooperation with Croatian authorities in November there will be a seminar on modern control technologies.
 - The cooperation with other agencies (EU SatCen, ESA and EUSPA) is being formalised to promote activities and cooperation in areas of new technologies of fisheries control.
- EFCA has continued the cooperation with the EC and MS in the international dimension and the fight against IUU fishing. EFCA has been cooperating and participating with the EC and the MS in the ICCAT and GFCM related meetings and giving continuous support to the EC and MS in the implementation of the IUU Regulation, also in some specific cases and missions related to UK.

- On PESCAO, the contract was due to expire in 2022, but arrangements are on-going to extend the contract for 1 year more until 2023. EFCA will receive additional funds that will permit to continue promoting activities also to cooperate in the operations and providing aerial support in these areas. In 2021 EFCA has given support in two joint control operations of the SRFC, including aerial surveillance. EFCA is also supporting the FCWC to set up an FMC applicable to all the countries in the organisation.

For 2022 there are other international projects envisaged:

- e-fishmed, a virtual regional academy for the Mediterranean: EFCA is working on a contribution agreement with the EC that will allow to work with the Northern African countries and MS during three years.
- Support fisheries control in Algeria, discussions are in progress for a contribution agreement with the EU Delegation in Alger. The role of EFCA will be to improve the legislation and VMS installation in the Algerian vessels and update of the FMC.
- Project ECOFISH, discussions are on-going with the IOC for a service contract to support several areas of the project.
- Chartering of control means by EFCA:

Due to the increase of funds in 2021, EFCA has moved from one to two patrol means chartered: the Lundy Sentinel will operate until 2022 and the OPV Aegis has been chartered until March 2022. An open call for tender for three vessels is in progress. On air surveillance, discussions are on-going to use of aerial means for fisheries control.

- Pool of Union inspectors

EFCA has requested MS to assign EU inspectors to be deployed at EFCA OPVs. The MS will decide on long-term assignments or short-term ones. There will be SNEs that will act as Union inspectors when on board of EFCA OPV. The reply from MS is positive and EFCA is encouraging them to confirm their interest in the establishment of this pool, whose members will not only be deployed at EFCA OPV but will also work in EFCA's coordination centre, which will be a good opportunity for capacity building, level playing field and share of experience.

The ED remarked that the most significant challenge for 2022 is the increase of the chartered means and in resources and projects.

The representative of LDAC asked for more detailed information on the state of play of the regional fisheries monitoring control centre in West Africa.

The HoU3 replied that EFCA collaborates with two fisheries management regional sub-committees in the area of PESCAO, namely the SRFC, which is more advanced in the operational joint activities, and the FCWC, who aim at launching a regional fisheries monitoring centre in Ghana. The role of EFCA has been to support the FCWC for the tender process and for the creation of the standard operational procedures.

EFCA may also support the preparation of a scheme for regional observers. There are running contacts of the FCWC with COMHAFAT. The FCWC will not have an additional year to finish the project but if EFCA has the budgetary means, it will be able to support both organisations to progress on this joint effort.

The Head of Sector JDPs and Regional Cooperation referred to the REM WG and related work, stating that the legal aspects of the data would be one of the issues to be addressed according to the terms of reference of this working group. As mentioned by the EFCA ED, it is a very complicated issue that depends on national legislation in most cases. This working group will be reporting to Control Expert Groups and to JDP SGs and it will keep the ACs informed of the progress made through EFCA's regular participation in the ACs meetings.

In addition, EFCA is updating the evaluation of compliance with the landing obligation with the different regional groups and will be probably organising some joint meetings with the ACs, scientific groups, the EC and interested stakeholders to present the results in the summer 2022 for some regions for the period 2018 to 2020.

3. EFCA's draft Single Programming document: Multiannual work programme 2022-2026 and Annual work programme 2022

The Head of Sector Policy and Communication presented the consultation cycle of the SPD. The SPD covers a 5-year period (2022-2026), the first draft was adopted in October 2020 by the Board, and then EFCA took into consideration the comments from the Commission's opinion received in June 2021. EFCA had streamlined the document, limiting the number of the KPIs, and making a direct link between the multi-annual objectives and the areas of intervention so the structure is clear for everyone. EFCA set up a task force from the Administrative Board to work in the KPIS. Moreover, EFCA followed the new template and guidelines proposed by the Commission for the different agencies for their programming documents.

Multiannual objectives	Areas of Intervention
1. Enhanced coordination of fisheries monitoring control and surveillance	Operational Coordination
2. Promote compliance through an effective and harmonised application of Union inspection procedures	Assistance to Cooperation
3. Assist the EU in its international dimension in accordance with article 30 CFP Regulation	International Dimension
4. Provide operational support to national authorities in Coast Guard functions	EU cooperation on Coast Guard

The annual objectives had been broken down in the Annual work programme for 2022 which could be listed as follows

a) Operational Objectives:

1. Effective coordination of joint fisheries control operations
2. Development of methodologies and fisheries information systems in support of MCS activities
3. Development of training on MCS activities
4. Analysis for the weighing process of fisheries products in the Member States and strategy
5. Support the EU in the implementation of the external dimension of the CFP

6. To strengthen compliance through the implementation of EU international projects as regards fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance
7. Support to fisheries control and other national authorities working in the field of Coast Guard functions
8. Implementation of the Project on the Coast Guard handbook and the results of the Coast Guard qualifications Network

The operational activities could only be supported by an efficient administration and horizontal tasks:

b) Horizontal tasks:

9. Promote a culture of compliance of the Common Fisheries Policy and foster the European Union value
10. Ensure the smooth and secure functioning and availability of administrative and operational applications
11. Ensure sound management and efficiency in key governance and administrative processes

In the framework of the implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the UK, and in order to provide the necessary operational capacity for assisting the Member States and the European Commission in the monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries as required by CFP, EFCA had received additional resources from the EU Budgetary authorities for the coming year, described in the following points:

The increases reflected:

- In the staff expenditure, 16 new establishment plan posts (4 already granted under 2021 budget) and 6 external staff (2 already granted in 2021)
- In the administrative expenditure, an increase of 4.6% due to the overhead expenditure increase forecasted
- The operational budget would increase by 61% in 2022 in respect of 2021 budget. The reinforcement of the chartering means, as well as the additional investment in the operational information systems of EFCA required additional resources. The increase caters for the new charter contract of 3 offshore fisheries patrol vessels (1 vessel up to 2021).

In addition, that work programme would also include:

- the three projects assigned to EFCA by DG MARE and subsidised by grants under the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF):
 - The virtual regional training academy on fisheries control and inspection (e-fishmed)
 - The coast guard qualifications network and the CGF handbook
 - Study on the weighting process of fisheries products
- A new project for the cooperation with Algeria
- The extension of the existing PESCAO grant

The presentation concluded presenting the agency's budgets for the year 2022 (€35 634 297).

4. The way forward: draft Single Programming document: Multiannual work programme 2023-2027 and Annual work programme 2023

The Head of Sector Policy and Communication presented the 2023 draft Single Programming Document (SPD). She informed the ACs that the draft SPD should be presented to the Board in October for adoption, and it would mirror the main areas of intervention and objectives as the 2022 SPD. The Draft SPD 2023 should be completed throughout the year. The draft budget allocated for 2023 was presented (29 757 000).

The ED took the floor and mentioned that the five-year review was approaching and informed that the EFCA had launched a call for tender for it. EFCA would be looking again for the ACs support and help.

5. Rotation of the Advisory Board representative in the EFCA Administrative Board

The rotation of the Advisory Board Representative in the Administrative Board of EFCA was presented. It was mentioned that the current ACs representatives for the period of 2 March 2021 until 01 March 2022 in the EFCA Administrative Board were PELAC (Pelagic Advisory Council) as the representative and MAC (Market Advisory Council) as the alternate.

From 2 March 2022 to 1 March 2023, the AC representative to the Administrative Board meeting would be MAC (Market Advisory Council) and the alternate, the NWWAC (North Western Waters Advisory Council).

The ED thanked PELAC for having actively participated as a representative of the ACs in the Administrative Board meetings and welcomed the alternate, the MAC who would be the new representative from 2 March 2022.

6. AOB

No subject was discussed or added in the AOB.

The ED closed the meeting by thanking all ACs members for their participation and that she would be delighted to meet them in person next time if the Covid situation would allow it.

The ED reiterated to the ACs that the EFCA will continue to support and work with them and thanked them heartily the warm welcome she had received in her new position within the agency.
