



# Making the Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation deliver on sustainable fisheries

European Parliament - Public Hearing : Evaluation of the Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation (1967/2006)

Brussels, 16 December 2013

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# Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006: a long awaited piece of legislation

- WWF worked actively in the context of the 2001-2002 CFP Reform in support of the improvement of the outdated Council Regulation(EC) No 1626/94
- WWF warmly welcomed the new Regulation, much more comprehensive and including innovative conservation-oriented aspects (e.g. protected habitats and FPAs), but warned against the potential inefficiency of management plans if reduced to be a mere vehicle to justify tailor-made derogations
- To WWF, **fisheries-specific management plans should be the cornerstone for sustainable fisheries in the Mediterranean** and the recovery of overfished stocks



## Excerpt of WWF position paper (October 2003)

*« WWF regards with strong concern the possibility envisaged in the document to achieve selective derogations of many of the provisions on technical measures subject to the elaboration of a Management Plan. [...] We alert of a strong danger that, in practice, the very concept of management plans would be perverted so as to be used as an excuse to merely justify tailor-made derogations of the common rules. Indeed, Article 17 (later 19) on Management plans for certain fisheries in territorial waters seems to be designed with the latter purpose »*





# A matter of scales: tailor-made management versus centralized micromanagement

- The Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation was the last piece of legislation issued from the 2001 CFP Reform and is based in the old paradigm of Brussels-based micromanagement
- Centralized micro-management undermines the potential for a rational management of coastal fisheries adapted to local specific features. Linking derogations to rigid technical measures to management plans was aimed at overcoming this major limitation
- But by so doing, management plans mostly focused on justifying technical derogations to the detriment of addressing sustainable fisheries in a comprehensive way



**In May 2010 WWF  
submitted to the  
European Commission  
its review on the  
performance of the  
first 3 years of  
implementation of the  
Mediterranean  
Regulation**



**WWF Review: How Well Has the “Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation”<sup>1</sup> Been Implemented?**



Credit: Sergi Tudela/WWF Mediterranean

Published by WWF Mediterranean, May 2010

<sup>1</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006

# WWF's performance review (2010)

- Based on a standard survey conducted in France, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain
- Serious shortcomings regarding the protection of sensitive habitats (particularly, coralligenous and mærl beds), the establishment of Fishing Protected Areas and **no management plans in place** despite being mandatory as from December 2007
- Many irregular situations in the field, and apparent lack of sufficient political will from MS
- Unclear process for the adoption of management plans (who does what) was identified as a key failure. Elaboration of a document on implementation guidelines was strongly advised by WWF



## Excerpt of “WWF review: how well has the Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation been implemented?” (May 2010)

*« We believe management plans should be the cornerstone of fisheries management in the Mediterranean, but their strength should go beyond that envisaged in the current Regulation. Management plans should never be formulated as a way to escape the standards and justify particular derogations. On the contrary, we believe that the reformed CFP should establish the common standards to be applied to them, and the right set of management measures be adopted tailored to every singular case. Management plans must be mandatory for every fishery in the Mediterranean and their successful implementation must be guaranteed by institution of a participatory process for their adoption and implementation. Key to the success of any management plan is that it be developed, implemented, monitored and reviewed by a **co-management committee** comprising the right mix of stakeholders from the MS(s) involved.»*



# 2010-2013: Towards a gradual improvement?

- According to the latest data submitted by the European Commission, substantial improvement has occurred in the last 3 years on the number of management plans and fishing protected areas adopted by MS
- Still, according to WWF's information, management plans adopted often fail to focus on comprehensive measures tailored to the recovery and sustainable management of the specific fish stocks. In some extreme cases, they just compile pre-existing technical measures formerly scattered in different legal texts and focus on technical measures on gear use rather than on managing fishing effort to ensure stock rebuilding
- This contrasts with the dire overfishing status of most fish stocks assessed the last years
- Compliance with protection of sensitive habitats is still a major issue





# The future: a lot of potential if political will exists

- The Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation, however, offers a lot of **potential** for efficient action in support of sustainable fisheries but only if it is accompanied by positive political will in MS
- This is best exemplified by the unique management scheme adopted in the case of the Catalan sand-eel fishery, based on an advanced **Co-management Committee** with fishers, administrations, scientists and NGOs jointly managing the fishery on an adaptive way
- Management plans under the Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation can be a suitable delivery mechanism for the new fisheries management approach in the new CFP based on stakeholder involvement and aimed at **recovering stocks above MSY levels**



# The future: increasing selectivity to minimize discards

- Management plans under the Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation also offer the best opportunity to implement the new CFP policy to minimize discards through increasing selectivity
- Selectivity provisions within the context of a **discards minimization plan** should be requested for all management plans already adopted under European Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006, as well as for any new management plan



# The future: delivering on regionalization through the Mediterranean Fisheries Regulation

- Management plans under European Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 represent the best opportunity to implement in the Mediterranean the novel regionalization approach embraced by the new CFP
- Cross-national management plans should be developed within the framework of Med Reg's Articles 18 and 19; such plans should be implemented through **multi-stakeholder co-management committees** (which would be eligible for EMFF funding according to the amendment adopted by the EP to Article 35 of the EMFF proposal)
- Regionalization processes should be conducted with strong participation of the Mediterranean RAC, which could facilitate and oversee them







Merci!