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## Report

### **Seminar on the practical implementation of the new features of the Common Fisheries Policy regulation into EFCA Joint Deployment Plans**

**Dubrovnik, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

The EFCA (European Fisheries Control Agency) organized a seminar that was held in Dubrovnik on 15<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> January. The stakeholders, including the RACs, were only invited to participate on the second day.

At the meeting there were more than ten experts from the EFCA and DG MARE. There were also two members of STECF/JRC, as well as representatives of the European public administrations. In particular, the Mediterranean regions were represented by delegates from Spain, France, Slovenia, Croatia and Cyprus. I participated on behalf of RAC MED.

The Chair of the meeting was Pascal Savouret, executive director of the EFCA, together with Ernesto Penas Lado, from DG MARE.

The aim of the meeting was to illustrate the difficulties presented by the reform to the CFP, where the landings obligation is concerned, to the public administrations of the Member States,

On 15<sup>th</sup> January, according to the summary made by Dr Penas Lado, the Commission's intentions were illustrated regarding monitoring and control activities to be implemented by the single Member States.

Dr Savouret underlined that the EFCA will assist the Commission and the Member States in the development of common methodology for monitoring and control that will make it possible to guarantee the effective application of the new EC regulations. The EFCA will prepare a series of technical recommendations that will cover the various activities necessary to make sure that control activities are incisive; these will include both direct control on land (when fisheries catches are landed) and at sea (observers on board, controls carried out by the coastguard, video cameras) as well as monitoring and registration documents that will be requested.

Where the use of video cameras on board is concerned, the issue of personal data protection was raised. Dr Penas agreed that, although their use could be well received by consumers as a guarantee that fisheries activities are correct and sustainable, the installation of on-board video equipment will be proposed on a voluntary basis.



On 16<sup>th</sup> January, the work carried out to date by the STECF/JRC was illustrated, as described in the reports of the meetings held in Varese and Dublin. It was brought to the meeting's attention that the guidelines will be prepared together with ICES and published in March.

The Regional Plans being prepared by the Baltic Member States through the Baltic and Pelagic RACs were briefly illustrated

The representatives of these two RACs did not give specific details of the measures that will be included in the final documents. For example, they were not able to specify yet whether the *de minimis* option will be taken into consideration, for which species and in what measure. Another important aspect that has not been clarified is that relative to the monitoring and control activities.

One aspect that was made clear, was their intention to request exemption from the landings obligation where fisheries using passive gear are concerned (trap-nets, pots, pond nets, etc.) and for sea trout bycatch from gillnets.

Where improved gear selectivity is concerned, it will be stated that no measures are to be proposed due to the lack of specific studies that verify the applicability of the measures and their effects on the profitability of fisheries activities.

Both RACs expect to complete a draft Regional Plan by the end of February, to be followed by a final document to be presented to the Commission by the end of March.

During the meeting, the positions that had already been officially communicated to the Commission by RAC MED on the problems related to the landing of discards were reiterated. In particular the meeting was reminded of the issues related to the cost of storing and disposing of these products, which could lead to additional expenses for the fisheries enterprises, with consequent negative effects on employment levels.

Roberto D'Ambra

