

## Meeting of the Atlantic Arc Commission's Fisheries and Aquaculture Working Group

1 March 2017 – Les Sables d'Olonne (Pays de la Loire, France)

### Conclusions

#### I – PRESENTATION BY GIUSEPPE SCIACCA, Senior Policy Officer, CPMR (see [PPT](#))

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- Meeting with DG MARE on 8 February 2017: this was the first discussion with European regions about the post-2020 EMFF. The European Commission has been very attentive about current issues and participants' proposals for immediate and post-2020 modifications of the regulations.
- CPMR questionnaire on the EMFF: 28 regions have already responded, and it is still possible to send a response.

An initial analysis of the results has already been presented, and further analysis will be undertaken in the coming months. The first messages emerging are:

- The CFP and EMFF system of governance is not good. The CPMR calls for a new, more inclusive system of governance, and for regional operational programmes;
  - The rules are too inflexible and take insufficient account of different sectors' specific circumstances;
  - There is still too much uncertainty about how to interpret European regulatory texts which entail too many risks for the stakeholders;
  - Measures should be more closely tailored to real needs of the different sectors.
- Timetable
    - April: CPMR workshop
    - September 2017: Seminar in Palermo on the future of the CFP and the EMFF in the Mediterranean.
    - 12/13 October 2017: the CPMR will be invited to the interministerial discussions (recognition of the quality of discussions, in particular on 8 February). The CPMR will be able to give its opinion on EMFF implementation and future plans at a meeting with ministers from the 28 EU Member States. These will be the first discussions on the post-2020 period.
    - 18/20 October 2017: CPMR General Assembly in Helsinki
    - 1st quarter of 2018: European Parliament hearing

## II – DISCUSSIONS

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### - EMFF governance and implementation

In France, regional projects dealt with at national level have not been carried through, and there are governance problems at central government level.

There are also problems concerning commitment appropriations in other countries: in Italy, for example, no EMFF money has been committed; in Spain, Galicia also faces serious difficulties (Priority 4 aside) as well as major national restrictions (such as the financing of boats where there are family ties).

There are major inconsistencies in the EMFF/CFP regulations, especially with regard to the landing obligation measure, which takes no account of market considerations and obliges people to give up the activity before the problem occurs. And in the mussel farming sector, for example, there is a big need for innovation in production, but if the regulations are strictly applied, it is impossible to be cost-effective.

Measures to support partnerships between scientists and fishermen (Article 28) are very important, but they are under-funded. They focus exclusively on resources management, but they need to go further and support the renewal of the generations of entrepreneurs, for example.

Difficulties encountered in implementing the regulations also arise as a result of the creation of several levels of obligation. The CPMR must successfully convey its message about the need for flexibility and for measures to be tailored to the needs of businesses.

In France, consideration should be given to the issue of whether to regionalise the implementation framework, without necessarily ending up with regional programmes.

### - Quotas / Multiannual plans

The experience of the Baltic regarding multiannual management plans is not one that should be replicated. The approach was highly targeted and there was little consultation with businesses.

The Atlantic Arc calls for a multi-target approach in order to avoid situations where management plans are inapplicable.

Furthermore, the President of the Pays de Loire Regional Fisheries Committee (COREPEM) said he believed that the challenge of the decade will be to get through discussions on total allowable catches (TACs) and quotas in December, as they hinder the implementation of measures.

### - Brexit

An Atlantic Arc Commission paper on [general consequences of Brexit for the Atlantic Regions](#) addresses the fisheries sector, namely concerning the consequences for access to fishing areas, relative stability, the budget, cooperation and exchanges, on the implementation of directives (the MSFD, Natura 2000, etc.).

The fisheries sector is already very vulnerable and it could be destabilised by the UK's departure from the EU. Norway might take advantage of the EU's loss of power on these issues. Fisheries mapping exercises should be undertaken in order to understand everyone's respective interests.

Ireland has indicated that it is obviously very concerned about the restoration of borders with Northern Ireland. This would have major consequences on trade. There is also a significant problem concerning the renegotiation of TACs, as Ireland could be a big loser.

Brexit is also a big challenge for Galicia, mainly because its fleets fish extensively in British and Falkland Islands waters, bringing in catches worth over €250 million.

Many questions arise: what will become of the maritime Natura 2000 areas established by the UK? How will the country manage its departure?

The European timetable is another source of concern, in particular the renewal of the European Commission and the European Parliament elections in 2019. This will also be when the two years of negotiations between the EU and the UK come to an end.

### - **Tools for mapping fisheries**

COREPEM presented the Valpena mapping tool (see [PPT](#)), which is financed by the industry itself and part of a scientific programme at the University of Nantes. It works very well in France and has been used in studies on wind farm developments, for example.

It might be interesting to launch a dialogue on this tool with several pilot regions, to identify funds and to further develop it at European level.

In Galicia, regional authorities have developed a similar tool which uses sensors to undertake analyses to determine fishing areas, what has been fished, and even the state of the sea (acidity, for example). The tool was launched by the regional government in collaboration with the fishing industry.

### **III – PRESENTATION OF THE SABLES D’OLONNE FISHING PORT AND OF THE REGION’S FISHING ACTIVITIES BY THE VENDÉE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND COREPEM (see [PowerPoint presentations](#))**

Next steps proposed:

- Continuation of the CPMR questionnaire survey on EMFF implementation and discussions with DG MARE to prepare a CPMR technical position on fisheries by the end of 2017 (meeting with Élisabeth Gresser / Workshop in April / interministerial meeting in October / hearing at the European Parliament in the first half of 2018);
- Internal discussions within the Atlantic Arc Commission on fisheries mapping tools and support for their development from European Institutions, in particular as they are useful for future debates on Brexit;
- More vigorous action to be taken on the call for a two-year moratorium on the zero discards target, together with a socio-economic impact study.