



Weeks 9- 10

BSRAC news and meetings

Focus Group Meeting (BS RAC and PELRAC) on Western Baltic herring 9th March 2010

The two RACs met in Copenhagen. This was reported to be a very good meeting, and the participants reached an ad hoc agreement on several points, and a set of conclusions was produced. The results and conclusions from this meeting will be presented to a BS RAC Pelagic WG. A date for that meeting will be fixed as soon as the non-paper from the Commission arrives.

Meeting with BS RAC vice-chair Ewa Milewska on 10th March

This gave the BS RAC Chair Reine Johansson and me the chance to get an overview of what we're working with, to plan ahead and to prepare for the meeting the day after with the Polish authorities. Piotr Predki from WWF joined Ewa. We discussed among, other things, the following subjects:

- Update on the Focus Group meeting of 9th March, and pelagics in general
- Status on salmon
- Selectivity in cod and discards
- Work programme for the year 2011 – 2012 and the future role of the RACs
- Flatfish and contacts with HELCOM

It was agreed that from now this should on be a regular feature of BS RAC work with a yearly/bi-annual meeting.

Meeting with Polish authorities on 11th March 2010, Warsaw

This was a very successful meeting, and the BS RAC was given a very warm welcome by the Polish authorities. At a separate meeting, the Vice-minister Kazimierz Plocke gave us a good amount of time, and invited the BS RAC chairman to give a brief health check of the RAC and to map out the areas of work for the year ahead (salmon, evaluation of cod plan, LTMP for pelagics). Mr Plocke pointed out that he was happy with the good, fruitful cooperation with BSRAC and was happy with the BS RAC's agenda for the year ahead. But there was a lot of work ahead, and of particular importance for Poland were: the fishing stock of western herring and an understanding the socio-economic consequences of this; salmon was a key issue and he hoped for a good assessment of the salmon resources, and the anticipated evaluation of the multi-annual plan for cod. So the work of the BS RAC complemented this very well. The BS RAC put forward the idea of holding a conference under or in connection with the Polish presidency in 2011, to deal with the subject of regionalisation, which was an important subject for the reform of the CFP. Poland would have to give this some thought. After this there was a very informal meeting with the civil servants at the ministry, and there was a full and detailed discussion of the following subjects: control, selectivity in the cod fisheries, long-term management for pelagic species, review of the cod plan, CFP reform, MSC certification, auction halls, and Ewa Milewska gave an update on the Polish Round Table. At this meeting, Marcin Rucinski (Director of Fisheries) handed us a copy of the Polish position paper on CFP Reform (contact BS RAC secretariat if you want a copy). And contact me at the Secretariat if you want more detailed information on these meetings.

Commission and EP news and meetings

How did the Commission seminar on small-scale fisheries meeting go? 25th February 2010

Jesper Kobberø ((ASECO) has kindly sent a short report from the meeting. Roughly translated, he informed that the Commission had invited various stakeholders to this seminar. The Commission asked for suggestions for a common definition of what singles out small-scale fisheries from the other sectors of the fisheries. Some participants suggested dividing small-scale fisheries into two sub-groups: in-shore and off-shore small-scale fisheries, since there are big differences in the gear used, species caught, vessel size, and so on in the two groups. There was a discussion of different ways of categorising the fishing vessels, using:

- 1) Vessel size: a) length, b) KW, c) horse power d) tonnage (of landings)
- 2) the gear used
- 3) the distance from the shore where the vessels fish

The Commission expressed the wish to make it possible for legislation or a set of laws to be passed locally and invited suggestions as to which fora could assist in this. The Commission stressed that there were already criteria at EU level which divide fishing boats according to size. This was done in connection with:

- a) applying for EU funds
- b) control obligations

But these criteria are insufficient, and the Commission wants a more flexible system which can perhaps vary from region to region. Many stakeholders looked for 'objectives,' and the Commission replied that that was a question of biological sustainability. The Commission also mentioned that it was even more a question of maintaining and creating workplaces and part of a bigger plan to move the fisheries sector towards being more viable. The Commission mentioned that the fishing fleet in six member states receives more money by way of subsidies than the value of the catches landed. It was also mentioned that it wasn't only in the southern states that there were massive subsidies, but that also the UK and Denmark gave huge subsidies. The source of the subsidies is different, but the end result is the same. The Commission found this situation untenable and predicted that the fisheries sector would come under increasing pressure from various sources such as the WTO and the consumer. In addition to wanting organic and social sustainability, the consumer is also asking for economic sustainability.

Kim Kær Hansen (Danish Fishermen's Association) has also sent a summary from the meeting. In this summary it is pointed out that the first part of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the small-scale sector in the EU. Subjects covered capacity across the different regions, age of the fleet, public aid in the different EU countries to a reduction in capacity, landings, value of landings, employment on board, safety and energy efficiency. There was also a discussion of what exactly an EU definition of this sector should be. The majority taking part felt that it would not be appropriate to come up with an EU definition of small-scale fisheries, as this would lead to inflexibility. It should be left to the individual member states to define this – or even the regions or the local communities. Small-scale fisheries was so diverse that it could not be compared from country to country. So it was essential to let the member states and/or regions themselves to decide on this. However, a few participants did feel that it was necessary to make a definition of the sector, because small-scale fisheries should be protected. The current EU definition of a small-scale vessel is max. 12 metres long, and some participants felt that this definition was insufficient. Some felt that an EU definition could be used as a supplement or as a minimum requirement to the definition by each national member state. In the table at the end there is a series of points that could be considered when defining small-scale, "medium sized vessels" and large-scale vessels. In the vertical columns are: length, tonnage, horse power, distance from coast, number crew on board, time spent at sea, capital. Although it's in Danish, it's easy to follow.

See Jesper's and Kim's (sorry in Danish only) here:

<http://www.bsrac.org/archive/Newsletter/Weeks%209-10/Jesper%20Kobberoe%20report%20small%20scale%20fisheries.pdf>

<http://www.bsrac.org/archive/Newsletter/Weeks%209-10/From%20Kim%20Kaer%20Summary%20%2025%20%20februar%202010.pdf>

Reply from the Commission to specifications of BACOMA and T90

The Commission has sent their reply to the BS RAC letter from December. See here:

http://www.bsrac.org/mod_inc/?p=itemModule&id=1408&kind=11&pageId=1084

EP resolution on CFP Reform

From the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee we have been informed of the EP resolution of 25 February 2010 on the Green Paper on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. Follow this link:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0039+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

Note in Para 20 Recommends the creation of regional management bodies involving MS and stakeholders to play a key role in governance and application of good fishing practice

Note in Para 88 on the role of the RACs and 89 call for a stronger regional element in decision-making

The recent meeting of the Advisory Board of the Community Fisheries Control Agency 2nd March 2010

A final report from this meeting will come soon. Reine Johansson, Chair of BS RAC represented the BS RAC. At this meeting it was informed that there will be a Seminar on Control and Compliance in NAFO-NEAFC 15-16 April 2010 in Vigo, which is organised with the collaboration of the CFCA. The idea is to show the problem of non compliance and to show what the current situation is. All the RACs will be invited.

The FARNET newsletter for February is here:

http://ddata.over-blog.com/xxxyy/2/93/64/98/2010-Newsletter/FARNET_Newsletter_2010-02_EN.pdf

Markets related seminars, Madrid 14th and 15th April 2010

The Commission informs us that DG MARE in partnership with the Spanish Presidency will organize two seminars in the framework of the CMO reform. The first one (April 14) will focus on communication and promotion of fisheries and aquaculture products. After a presentation of the communication in the agri-food sector in general, the specifics of seafood products will be analysed as regards image, perception, nutritional content and durability. In the afternoon, there will be a presentation of different initiatives from different stakeholders, ranging from producers to retailers and including inter-branch organisations. The second one (April 15) will discuss the supply of the European market for seafood. After a description of the current situation in terms of production and imports, the conditions of access to the European market and the impact on imports on the profitability of the European fisheries and aquaculture sector will be analysed. These seminars will gather about one hundred participants: Stakeholders (ACFA), RACs, Member states representatives, MEPs, OECD, and FAO.

Jesper Kobberø (ASECO) and Alex Olsen (AIPCE-CEP) have indicated their interest and we have notified DG Mare.

Other news and meetings

Action to postpone the April rule for the Baltic cod fishery – by the Baltic Fishermen’s network: negative reply from DG Mare: a case for more simplified decision-making post CFP-Reform

We reported last time about the initiative by the Baltic Fishermen’s Network (an organisation bringing together Baltic fishermen, chaired by Kim Kær Hansen) to ask for a dispensation from the normal closed period in April in areas 22 -24 (stated in the multi-annual plan for cod) due to the extreme winter weather conditions. The Danish fishing newspaper “Fiskeritidende” reported in week 10 (on its front page no less) that the Commission will not open the fishery in April. DG Mare understand the problems that ice and cold temperatures have caused for the Baltic. However, it would just take too long to go through the EU consultation process (co-decision, as a result of the Lisbon Treaty) to re-open the fishery in time (it could take two to five months to go through the co-decision process). The Danish Fishermen’s Association has also taken this problem up at national level in Denmark, and the Danish Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries has also discussed this with the DG Mare. But the reply is the same: it is not possible to change the cod management plan with the procedures that are currently laid down and which require consultation with the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. As Ole Poulsen (Head of International Affairs at the ministry) points out in Fishing News: the only way to deal with such a situation is to take this into account when the rules are made. Fast decisions can only be made if the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament are responsible for overall, more general rules, and the Commission fills in the framework.

Draft report on the economic benefits of Maritime Spatial Planning

Mr Han van Midden, *Manager of the Company* Policy Research Corporation, has written to us an informed that in September 2009 Policy Research started a study project on the economic benefits of Maritime Spatial Planning in the European Union. For this purpose many stakeholders from all European Union Member States bordering one or more sea areas were contacted and interviewed. Han and his colleague Leen van Cauwenberghe came to the BS RAC Conference in October 2009 and made contact with a few BS RAC members. The input that was obtained proved to be of great importance for the study content and work process. Han writes that since the BS RAC was one of these stakeholders, he would like to thank us for our cooperation. The input that was collected has been processed and a main report, two case studies and 22 country fact sheets were drafted. Here is the website where the relevant documents can be downloaded:

<http://cruisetool.policyresearch.eu/msp/index.php>

All documents are still in draft and are currently under revision by the European Commission. As stakeholder we are invited to also provide comments/feedback on the work. All comments will be reviewed and, if necessary, incorporated in the relevant sections of the report. The deadline for delivering comments is **Sunday 21st March 2010**. Any comments sent in after Sunday 21st will not be accepted. Please contact: Mr

Han van Midden, at:
Parklaan 40

3016 BC Rotterdam
The Netherlands

Tel: +31 (10) 436 0364

Gsm: +31 (6) 15 86 76 32

Fax: +31 (10) 436 1416

han.van.midden@policyresearch.nl

International Conference on MARINE ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT – HOW TO MAKE IT SUSTAINABLE? 26th –27th May 2010

The Nordic Council and the Government of Greenland have sent us this information on the Nordic Cooperation in Fisheries 2010. See the link here:

http://www.bsrac.org/mod_inc/?p=itemModule&id=1448&kind=4&pagel=1227

And seminars on fish stocks, The Norwegian Fishery Forum 2010 7th –8th April 2010

Here is an updated programme for these seminars, which deal with fisheries development assistance.

See here:

http://www.bsrac.org/mod_inc/?p=itemModule&id=1449&kind=4&pageId=1227

A thank you from FOOD CERTIFICATION INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

From Melissa McFadden, Fisheries Assessment Co-ordinator, Food Certification International Ltd.

“On behalf of FCI and the assessment team I would like to convey our gratitude to you and your staff for providing information and giving your time to speak with the team last week. Feel free to contact me in the future if you have any further information or have additional questions. The team will be moving forward towards the next stage of the assessment and as stakeholders you will be kept informed via email.

Thank you again for your participation, the team enjoyed their visit to Denmark and hope to return in the not too distant future”.

Maps on the Baltic and pipeline laying from FOGA

From FOGA we've received maps for week 9 and week 10 on the activities in the Baltic in connection with laying the gas pipelines in the Baltic: For example, in week 9 there were the following operations:

SEA HORSE: laying stones in 1/3 – 30/3

EDDA FREYA: clearing mines 17/3 – 30/3

BOURBON PEARL: installation of mattress: 23/3 – 30/3

CASTORO 6: pipe laying starts on 1st April

And if you want to follow this more, and receive the weekly updates, then contact Ellen Knudsen ek@foga.dk

And who are FOGA?

FOGA's aim is to supply assistance of experienced fishing skippers as marine advisers to the offshore-industry and to contribute with establishing communication between the fishery and offshore industry and thereby create a cooperative environment.

See here:

<http://www.foga.dk/>

What exactly does Eurofish do?

In the link below from a website called TV Europa, there is a film interview with Anca Sfetcovici, Head of Project Unit, Eurofish. She tells about the work done by Eurofish, how it started and what the challenges are for the organisation. This interview is followed by information on the EU Control Regulation, and then a bit on small-scale fisheries – what to do to preserve the small-scale fisheries sector. See here:

<http://www.tveuropahd.com/video/80/fisheries-aquaculture-interview-with-eurofish>

Reports and documents from meetings of the North Western Waters RAC

NWW RAC has just held a series of working group meetings and a working group on spatial planning. If you're interested in the presentations, you can look here:

http://www.nwwrac.org/Meetings/Meetings_ENG/Navigation.php?language=English

ICES meetings for the coming weeks and months

From Helle, at ICES, (thanks) we have been sent a list of ICES meetings in the Advisory Process that stakeholders are welcome to apply to observe at.

See here:

http://www.bsrac.org/archive/Newsletter/Weeks%209-10/AdvisoryMtgsICES_2010.pdf

Note the date for the Baltic Sea Fish Stocks.

The 17th meeting of ASCOBANS is coming up 21st –27th April 2010

From Ms Heidrun FRISCH ASCOBANS Coordinator / CMS Marine Mammals Officer:

We would like to alert you that documents for the 17th Meeting of the ASCOBANS Advisory Committee, which will be held at the 'Eden Project' in Cornwall, United Kingdom, from 21-23 April 2010, are now being uploaded regularly at:

<http://www.ascobans.org/index0502.html>.

Please be reminded that papers intended for discussion, reports of any meetings you attended on behalf of ASCOBANS and suggestions for the list of Dates of Interest should be submitted to the Secretariat in the week of 15 March 2010, if at all possible, in order to allow timely circulation for the meeting. Annual National Reports for 2009 are due on 31 March 2010. Please use the new report form adopted at MOP6 in September 2009, which was attached to our message of 14 January 2010. We would like to use this opportunity to remind you to submit your registration form to the Secretariat at your earliest convenience. It is attached again for your ease of reference. If you have registered for the meeting but not received a confirmation, please re-send your registration, as it may not have reached us. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ana and me at:

ascobans@ascobans.org

or +49 228 815 2416.

www.ascobans.org / www.cms.int

The Seas At Risk latest newsletter is here

<http://www.seas-at-risk.org/>