



# Ensure good governance

The future Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) must define a governance framework that ensures policy is decided and implemented at the most appropriate levels and in a transparent way, with the meaningful participation of the stakeholders in order to achieve the desired objectives.

## Desired policy

OCEAN2012 would like the following characteristics reflected in the new CFP:

- differentiation between long-term strategic and operational management decisions;
- a four-step process of setting long-term objectives, determining available fishing resources, assessing the amount of fishing power needed, and allocating access;
- obligation to following scientific advice when setting fishing limits;
- more involvement of stakeholders in operational issues and implementation;
- detailed implementation;
- proper feed-back and evaluation mechanisms and adaptive management approaches;
- consistency with other EU policies, such as environment and development; and
- increased transparency and access to information.



## Change decision making

To achieve long-term sustainable fisheries, OCEAN2012 proposes that the process of decision-making be fundamentally changed. We suggest that the Council and Parliament focus on the overarching vision and long-term objectives of the CFP and leave the detailed implementation to more appropriate bodies such as the Commission, Member States, or decentralised management bodies.

We are convinced that regionalisation and decentralisation has an important role to play in the success of the reformed CFP, with policy objectives matching the realities of each region, and operational management brought closer to the affected stakeholders, preferably on a fishery-by-fishery basis. However, the setting of management objectives and targets for common resources must remain the responsibility of central public authorities.

We do not believe that decision-making power should be given to ACFA and RACs; nor should participation of stakeholders be restricted to the existing structures. Decentralisation and greater stakeholder participation must be underpinned by transparency and accountability. Clear and common objectives and measurable targets are needed, as well as rigorous control and enforcement by centralised authorities where relevant.

OCEAN2012 proposes decision-making on fisheries in four steps:

### Step 1: setting long-term objectives:

The Council of Ministers and the European Parliament jointly decide long-term objectives such as the desired level of abundance of fish stocks, in line with relevant directives and agreements such as the 2008 Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (see section Improved Policy Coherence below). In addition, they should:

## Background

The failure of the current CFP, and the resulting overfishing of resources in EU waters and abroad, can be attributed in large part to the way in which decisions are currently made. Detailed management measures are decided at the highest political level: the Council of Ministers and now the European Parliament, both of which are moved largely by short-term, often national or regional, economic interests. The CFP is also undermined by a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

The flaws in decision-making are aggravated by the lack of meaningful participation of stakeholders. The current stakeholder advisory bodies at EU level, the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (ACFA) and the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), are dominated by industrial sector interests, to the detriment of small-scale, artisanal fisheries and civil society interests. A lack of transparency and access to relevant information further aggravates the situation.

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- agree a set of environmental and social criteria to allocate access to resources;
- give a clear mandate (limited in time and regularly reviewed) to the Commission, Member States, and/or other management bodies to ensure delivery of these objectives based on the steps below; and
- set up a framework to evaluate implementation, ensuring timely improvements if objectives are not reached.

#### Step 2: determining available fish resources:

Scientific bodies determine the available fish resources (e.g. how much fish can be sustainably caught). Scientific advice on fishing limits must be heeded.

#### Step 3: determining desired fishing power:

Scientific and management bodies determine the amount and type of fishing capacity is appropriate for the available fish resource.

#### Step 4: determining access to fish resources:

Local or regional management bodies allocate access to the resource (e.g. who should be allowed to fish and where) according to an agreed set of environmental and social criteria. This would bring significant decentralisation, and could be done on an ecosystem/regional/local basis.

- the right to fish should be granted to those who contribute most to the overarching objectives of the CFP, gradually replacing the current quota allocation system (see Briefing Paper 4); and
- local fishing communities should have primary access.

#### Joined-up policy:

In all future management of fish stock exploitation, greater coherence with other EU policy areas is crucial,

in particular with development and environment policy enabling Member States to meet targets under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, as well as international environmental protection and development obligations.

#### Evaluation, transparency and knowledge-building:

The new CFP must contain tools that enable regular feedback on, and evaluation of, the implementation of objectives and the achievement of targets and timelines. Sanctions should ensure timely improvements and incentives should be created to encourage a culture of compliance. Meaningful stakeholder participation is only possible with transparency. OCEAN2012 recommends that among others the following are publicly available:

- data on all landings by individual vessels (as it is in the USA and Norway);
- aggregated Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data - at minimum to scientists (as in the USA and Norway);
- data on long distance fleets (these should also be available to Third Countries where EU fleets are active); and
- impact assessments and evaluations of Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs).

FAO guidelines on stakeholder information and participation published in 2009 could provide guidance for the CFP reform. Efforts should be supported to build knowledge and skills to ensure better stakeholder participation in governance of, for example, coastal fishing communities.

OCEAN2012 is an alliance of organisations dedicated to transforming European Fisheries Policy to stop overfishing, end destructive fishing practices and deliver fair and equitable use of healthy fish stocks.

OCEAN2012 was initiated, and is co-ordinated, by the Pew Environment Group, the conservation arm of The Pew Charitable Trusts, a non-governmental organisation working to end overfishing in the world's oceans.

The founding members of OCEAN2012 are the Coalition for Fair Fisheries Arrangements (CFFA), the Fisheries Secretariat (FISH), nef (new economics foundation), the Pew Environment Group and Seas At Risk (SAR).