

NSAC Conference on the future of CFP
"QUO VADIS, CFP? A North Sea perspective on the future of
Common Fisheries Policy"
Edinburgh, 12 September 2024

Background

In February 2023, 10 years after the last Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform¹, the Commission published the Fisheries and Oceans Package with Communications on Energy Transition, Marine Action Plan, and implementation of the CFP. In its communication on the latter, the Commission concluded that a CFP reform is not required and that implementation efforts should be stepped up.

Despite these conclusions, in March 2024, the Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Virginijus Sinkevičius announced a full evaluation of the CFP.

Through the years the NSAC provided its input on numerous aspects of the CFP, including advice on the [CFP Report](#), [decarbonisation of the EU fishing fleet](#), the [functioning of the Landing Obligation](#), and [Innovative Fishing](#). Through dedicated working groups (i.e. NSAC/NWWAC Social Aspects FG), the NSAC provided input on [social aspects](#), [vessel safety](#), [generational renewal](#), [recreational fisheries](#), and is working on other social indicators, such as mental health and well-being. In its Communication, the Commission also stated it will focus on developing scientific advice in support of the ecosystem-based approach to EU fisheries management (EBFM), through steering the dialogue with the scientific community and stakeholders. As input to this, the NSAC submitted its advice on [Stakeholder engagement in ICES Advice request formulation](#), but also on [climate change and North Sea fisheries](#), and is currently working on guidelines on stakeholder engagement in ICES/STECF scientific advice request formulation. Regarding measures proposed on the implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive and fishers involvement in the collection of marine litter and the use of biodegradable elements in fishing gears, we advised with past [advice on circular design of fishing gear](#) with endorsement of the [Multi-AC Advice on the implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive](#).

All this work shows NSAC's dedication to thorough and consistent implementation of the CFP and related legislative acts. However, as recognised by the Commission, more work is needed, particularly on concepts mentioned in the CFP and not fully utilized, such as the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management (EAFM), or those not mentioned but topical, such as co-management. Governance needs to be improved to foster trust and

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1380>

legitimacy. A thought must be given to the post-Brexit/post-TCA arrangement with the United Kingdom, but also third countries such as Norway, to ensure fishing continuity and cooperative political relations. We need to think about how we can improve science with robust fisheries data and how relationships and trust can be enhanced between different actors (scientists, fisheries managers, politicians, industry, and civil society). All this and more will be the thread of the CFP conference, organised on the margins of NSAC's annual General Assembly and the 20th anniversary celebration in Edinburgh. The outcome shall inform the new EU Commission's mandate following the EU elections and feed directly into the public consultation on the CFP evaluation.

Subject-matter

The conference entitled '**QUO VADIS, CFP? A North Sea perspective on the future of Common Fisheries Policy**' will focus on important fisheries management aspects overlooked, not fully implemented, or ignored.

Following an opening address by the NSAC Chair, **DG MARE Director-General Charlina Vitcheva** will address the audience and allow approximately 30min for questions, with priority given to NSAC members.

The two panels of 3-4 panelists will discuss the following topics in a three-hour session:

- I. **Panel A: GOVERNANCE**
 - internal and external governance
 - e-governance
 - sustainability certification

- II. **Panel B: SCIENCE**
 - Global Biodiversity Framework and implications for fisheries
 - co-management and precision fishing
 - social sciences for sustainable fisheries

Each panel will be opened with 10-15 min presentations by each panelist, followed by a panel discussion where panelists will be responding to questions from the audience. Participants are invited to frontload questions by sending them to the Secretariat ahead of the event to allow the response to be effectively addressed by the panelists.

Core questions

- To what degree can current CFP issues be resolved with tweaks in existing legislation?

- Has regionalisation delivered its intended benefits and how could it be improved?
- What does e-governance have in store for fisheries and fisheries managers?
- How can sustainability certification drive transformation in fisheries?
- How can stakeholders help advance EBFM?
- Is co-management a viable alternative to top-down/control and command management?
- How can we advance integration of social sciences for a full-spectrum sustainability?

Time and place

- 12 September 2024, 13.00-17.00 UK
- Edinburgh, Scotland

PROGRAM

12.30-13.00 Registration & coffee

13.00-13.05 Welcome & Introduction

13.05-13.15 Opening address by **NSAC Chair Kenn Skau Fischer**

13.15-14.15 Keynote: **DG MARE Director-General Charlina Vitcheva** + exchange of views

14.15-15.30 Panel A: Governance

Pavel Kogut & Troels Jacob Hegland: Future Governance under the CFP: Implications for fisheries of the Rise of E-Governance

Joost Paardekooper: Management of shared stocks: Brexit and post-2026 arrangements with the UK

Christine Absil: MSC certification as a driver for sustainability

Exchange of Views 30-45 min

15.45-17.00 Panel B: Science

Mark Dickey-Collas: The implications for European fisheries of the Global Biodiversity Framework and its 2030 targets

Hans Polet: Precision-fishing and co-management driven by high-quality real-time data as a viable alternative to prohibition

Marloes Kraan: Social sciences for sustainable fisheries

Exchange of Views 30-45 min

Closing by NSAC

Moderated by: Tamara Talevska