

## REPORT

Meeting: **EFARO Webinar: the future of bottom-trawling**

Parties: **policy-makers, researchers, fisheries and environmental stakeholders**

Date: **31 March 2023**

Location: **MS Teams**

Chair: **Luc van Hoof**

Rapporteur: **Tamara Talevska**

The EFARO webinar on the future of bottom-trawling was attended by over 100 participants, reflecting the overall importance as well as the controversial nature of the method. The event was aimed at spurring discussion on whether there is a future for bottom trawling and what this future might entail. Different types of gears and their characteristics were presented and weighed against each other, including with concerns of potential for seabed disturbance, unintended bycatch with conservation implications (benthic invertebrates important for biodiversity, seabed integrity, fish food and nutrient cycling etc.).

### **Seabed mapping**

The ICES evaluates the status of seafloor and benthic habitats at the greatest risk of human activities with satellite imagery mapping out the benthic species and using it for benthic community models. There are currently 4 regional assessment of the impact of trawling. Model evaluates Relative Benthic State RBS (1=at carrying capacity, 0= nothing is left). Assessed being the effects of mobile bottom fishing on benthic biota with a systematic review protocol.

Depletion is the fraction of fauna destroyed by trawling: different gears have different effects on seabed – depending mostly on the gear's depth, i.e. Otter trawl penetrates only a few cm in the seabed causing a depletion of cca 6% of benthic fauna.

Other results on seabed depletion:

- Beam trawl: 12%
- Collar dredges: 20%
- Hydraulic dredges: 40%

With penetration depth, the depletion rate can be estimated.

Concerning the recovery rate of the benthic community it was noted that different habitats have different resilience levels, depending on the sediment composition. The recovery rate was faster for muddy sediments and slower for gravel sediments.

Applied RBS and recovery data are used in a model to predict the state of the seabed in 24 regions. The North Sea the area was marked green, meaning that relative BS is 0.8 – 20% of benthic community biomass in the region is lost.

Worst performing region is the Adriatic with less than 20% of benthic biomass left.

In North America, South America, Australia, and New Zealand there is less trawling, resulting in a better state of the benthic environment compared to the EU.

RBS at Fmsy: the seabed status was high in regions where catches of trawled fish stocks met the accepted benchmarks for sustainable exploitation. If target fish are managed well, benthic communities will be in a good state. The opposite is true where overfishing occurs.

Regional average status relative to an untrawled state was high in 15 regions, and low in three regions in Europe. Across all regions, 66% of seabed was not trawled. Environmental benefits accrue from effective target fishing.

This model is also used by MSC to assess fisheries impacts on seabed; and by ICES to provide advice. A useful visualisation of trawling impact and effort can be found in a set of interactive html files that can be downloaded here: [https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/dataset/ICES\\_data\\_outputs\\_of\\_EU\\_request\\_on\\_how\\_management\\_scenarios\\_to\\_reduce\\_mobile\\_bottom\\_fishing\\_disturbance\\_on\\_seafloor\\_habitats\\_affect\\_fisheries\\_landing\\_and\\_value/18600380](https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/dataset/ICES_data_outputs_of_EU_request_on_how_management_scenarios_to_reduce_mobile_bottom_fishing_disturbance_on_seafloor_habitats_affect_fisheries_landing_and_value/18600380)

### **Low-impact fisheries**

A just transition to low impact fisheries was presented by the representative of Seas at Risk. [Blue manifesto](#) was published by the SaR on the topic.

In the Atlantic, many stocks remained overfished and the overall objective of fishing all stocks at MSY advice by 2020 would not be met. The Mediterranean is the worst performing region.

It was acknowledged that fishers are afraid of losing their livelihood, however, it was noted that the more the ocean is depleted the less fish will be available. The question arises: how do we strike a balance, how do we transition?

More than 50% of European waters are bottom trawled compared to 14% globally. Blue carbon and climate mitigation aspects are contingent upon ecosystem functionalities and services. Recovery time is estimated at 7.5 and 15 years, depending on the habitat, after one single pass of a trawl, indicating long-term effects on the seafloor. A major problem with bottom trawling is that it is extremely non-selective, it comprises 93,2% of all discards in the EU, constituting a waste of natural resources.

It was noted by SaR representative that bottom trawling was not essential for food supply – an example was given for sandeel as catch not intended for human consumption but as feed for aquaculture, the same was stated for sprat and blue whiting. Atlantic cod is also heavily overfished.

Fish consumption has heavily increased from 9kg in 1960, 2020 20,5kg (globally) 24,4 kg (Europe). Concerning the carbon footprint of animal seafood and plant-based foods it was

stated that bottom-trawled seafood products have a higher carbon footprint than some land-based meats.

On costs of the ban on bottom trawling in MPAs, it was noted that the net ecosystem impact is much larger than costs. After 3 years, a ban would result in net benefits. There are also socio-economic consequences with small scale coastal fisheries under pressure in the current situation. LIFE called on the Commission to move to sustainable fisheries in a transition to low-impact aquatic food system. The report on alternatives to bottom trawling: [Report: Exploring Alternatives to Europe's bottom trawl fishing gears - Seas at Risk \(seas-at-risk.org\)](https://seas-at-risk.org)

### Policy measures

The recently published Action Plan addresses fair and just transition for all, through rethinking of economy and business model of fisheries and diversification of income sources. Localised value chains through community-supported fisheries are essential, with value placed on the stewardship of fishers.

MSFD review and Commission's Fisheries Package were presented. In relation to MSFD, it was noted that only 30% of MS have been able to determine D6 (Seafloor integrity ensuring good functioning of the ecosystem) and that clear definitions are essential for effective implementation of safeguards. Values of this descriptor should be endorsed by June 2023. The objective of MSFD is to achieve Good Environmental Status and ecosystem-based approach, which requires threshold values. Bottom fishing contributes up to 95% of physical disturbance. Reductions in the footprint of bottom fishing are needed to help achieve MSFD goals. One solution could be shifting from peripheral to core fishing areas.

It was noted that the EU Action plan on protecting and restoring marine ecosystem for sustainable and resilient fisheries builds on existing legislation. It was stressed that it is a policy document not a legal proposal.

It was noted that more emphasis should be put on how to reach the objectives from Habitats and Birds directives.

Challenges in relationship between fishers and environment:

- improve gear selectivity and address bycatch of sensitive species,
- protection of seabed,
- energy transition and knowledge and governance framework for its implementation
- prioritisation of Natura 2000 areas

Gear selectivity and sensitive species:

- Promotion of new innovative techniques to boost selectivity;
- Limits for incidental bycatch in MSFD;
- Gradual approach (2023 for harbour porpoise and common dolphin); 2024 others, 2030 the remaining;
- European eel: management plan

#### Protecting the seabed:

- Request to focus on MPAs and phase out bottom fishing by 2030;
- Prioritisation for Natura 2000 sites under Habitats directive, protecting marine species and seabed;
- Map of Natura2000 sites where management measures to phase out bottom fishing will be applied.

#### Measures:

- Actions in CFP and energy transition
- EU funding available
- Further data collection, research and innovation

#### Governance and process:

- Prioritisation: asking MS to focus on most urgent measures (sensitive species, MPAs etc);
- Expert group to support MS;
- Roadmaps by MS

#### Energy transition:

- Increasing energy efficiency;
- Adopting renewable and low carbon energy sources;
- Energy transition partnership: high level event on 16 June in Brussels.

### Discussion

Regarding the recovery rate towards unfished states, it was noted that we need to know how unfished levels look like i.e. estimate what the unfished state is. Not all studies have integrated completely unfished locations, but with regression it can be extrapolated what is unfished.

*What is the future of the bottom trawl? Is there any?*

It was noted that in Denmark, 75% of the value of fishing is caught in 10% of its waters. Static gears are not the panacea and they pose issues for cormorants. Active gears are essential to ensure a viable catch.

It was noted that bottom-trawling has a future, however it needs to become more sustainable to protect the most vulnerable species/habitat. It was believed that there can be a sustainable fishing activity.

*What is the horizon to make a gear more sustainable?*

A switch to low impact gear will mean that less fish is harvested. The population will not eat less, and therefore we will have to import or increase land-based production. The impact of increasing areas for agriculture production should be put in the balance.

Another participant noted that bottom-trawling shouldn't be seen as black and white, there are very dynamic habitats in some seas where the disturbance from bottom trawling might not be that big of an issue. Disturbance also depends on how deep the gear goes into the bottom – there is room for developing new gears with less impact.

A study on spatial distribution of fisheries and habitats shows that some of the most interesting habitats to be saved were not in places where the fishing occurred. We could learn from the agriculture industry on precision farming with small and careful interventions for using pesticides, nutrients... Precision fishing with bottom trawling could be a sensible approach.

### **ANNEX: MS Teams chat**

[10:21] Henrik S. Lund

In the Kattegat, fishing is only done on muddy seabed approx. on 25 percent of the area. Why is the area then highly affected?

[10:22] PATTERSON Kenneth (MARE)

Thanks for presentation. How does the species composition of the benthos vary at different RBS ?

[10:23] Serena Rivero

Do you have more specific maps for the North Sea? Showing detailed differences? (now the whole map for the North Sea is coloured green, but where are the blue/red areas?)

[10:24] Mark Dickey-Collas

thank you Jan Geert for a strong evidence based presentation.

[10:27] Luca van Duren

Different areas have different susceptibility to trawling, e.g. the very dynamic sandwave area in the southern North Sea has fewer macrobenthic species than more stable areas. Is this reflected in the parameter 'r' (the recovery speed)? How is this parameter established?

[10:31] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

How long has the study been conducted not the reference years but samples taken ? Have these samples been taken from the same transects at the same time period? Can you show the slide in the presentation that compares the vast increases in fish numbers in non trawled waters to the numbers in Trawled waters?

[10:31] Mark Dickey-Collas

sprat and blue whiting through bottom trawling?

[10:31] Henrik S. Lund

Fishing for sandeels takes place exclusively on dynamic sandbanks. Bottom impact here will be very very low..

[10:33] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

There seems to be a clear lack of knowledge in the chat of the methods of fishing for different species but we can if consulted can address this lack of knowledge. Like science if its bad or incorrect we make bad decisions as a result.

[10:35] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Have we someone here who operated in small scale fisheries to speak ?

[10:37] Edward Farrell

Whitefish and Pelagics provide lower CF and more nutrition than land based animal proteins. Bianchi et al 2022 - <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43247-022-00516-4>

Assessing seafood nutritional diversity together with climate impacts informs more comprehensive dietary advice  
Communications Earth & Environment - The highest nutritional benefit of seafood with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions would be achieved by consuming wild, small fish and salmon from the open...

[10:38] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

What are we subjected to here ?

[10:38] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Is this a political broadcast or a serious discussion?

[10:39] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

chair can we stop this rhetoric?

[10:41] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

There are many Advisory councils open to this presenter are they a participant?

[10:42] Gérald Hussenot

No reflexions concerning less impact studies for bottom trawls, selective engine, intelligent trawl doors, and so on

[10:45] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**Serena Rivero**

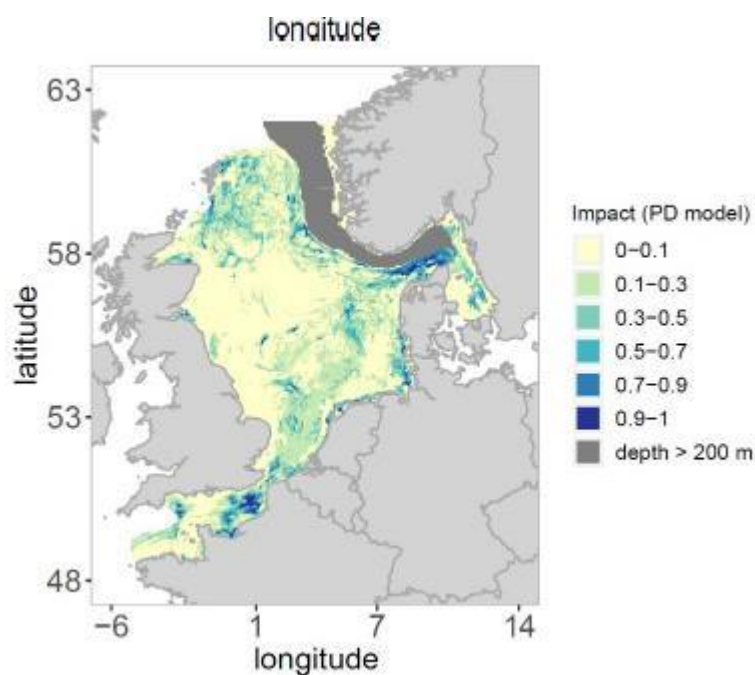
Do you have more specific maps for the North Sea? Showing detailed differences? (now the whole map for the North Sea is coloured green, but where are the blue/red areas?)

ICES. 2021. Working Group on Fisheries Benthic Impact and Trade-offs (WGFBIT; outputs from 2020 meeting). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:70. 46 pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8223>.

[10:45] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**Serena Rivero**

Do you have more specific maps for the North Sea? Showing detailed differences? (now the whole map for the North Sea is coloured green, but where are the blue/red areas?)



ICES. 2021. Working Group on Fisheries Benthic Impact and Trade-offs (WGFBIT; outputs from 2020 meeting). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:70. 46 pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8223>.

[10:45] STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)

Thank you for your presentation , Tobias.

It is well known that during the past years the EU fishing effort and fishing capacity have been well declining. The socio-economic graph you presented shows an increase in kW. How come and based on which data? The LIFE/Our Fish report you referred to does not include such a graph.

Many thanks!

[10:46] Mark Dickey-Collas

question for Jan Geert : where would pulse trawl fit in the analysis of gear impact compared to beam and otter trawl? <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.6020>

Request from the Netherlands regarding the impacts of pulse trawling on the ecosystem and environment from the sole (*Solea solea*) fishery in the North Sea  
Description not yet available.

[10:47] Tobias Troll

**STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)**

Thank you for your presentation , Tobias. It is well known that during the past years the EU fishing effort and fishing capacity have been well declining. The socio-economic graph you presented shows an increase in kW. How come and based on which data? The LIFE/Our Fish report you referred to does...

Employment data is from OECD: [Employment in fisheries, aquaculture and processing \(oecd.org\)](https://www.oecd.org/employment/)

[10:47] john lynch (Guest)

Thank you Tobias

[10:47] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**Luca van Duren (External)**

Different areas have different susceptibility to trawling, e.g. the very dynamic sandwave area in the southern North Sea has fewer macrobenthic species than more stable areas. Is this reflected in the parameter 'r' (the recovery speed)? How is this parameter established?



We take account of the effects of natural disturbance by looking at the life histories in the unfished situation Hiddink, J.G., Jennings, S., Sciberras, M., Bolam, S.G., Cambiè, G., McConnaughey, R.A., Mazor, T., Hilborn, R., Collie, J.S., Pitcher, R., Parma, A.M., Suuronen, P., Kaiser, M.J. and Rijnsdorp, A.D. 2019. Assessing bottom-trawling impacts based on the longevity of benthic invertebrates. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 56: 1075-1083.

[10:48] Luca van Duren  
**Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)**

We take account of the effects of natural disturbance by looking at the life histories in the unfished situation Hiddink, J.G., Jennings, S., Sciberras, M., Bolam, S.G., Cambiè, G., McConnaughey, R.A., Mazor, T., Hilborn, R., Collie, J.S., Pitcher, R., Parma, A.M., Suuronen, P., Kaiser, M.J. and R...

Thanks!

[10:48] Jochen Depestele  
**Mark Dickey-Collas (Extern)**

question for Jan Geert : where would pulse trawl fit in the analysis of gear impact compared to beam and otter trawl? <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.6020>

See Rijnsdorp et al 2020: [Mitigating seafloor disturbance of bottom trawl fisheries for North Sea sole \*Solea solea\* by replacing mechanical with electrical stimulation | PLOS ONE](#)

"Using Vessel Monitoring by Satellite and logbook data from 2009 to 2017, we estimate that the trawling footprint decreased by 23%, the precautionary impact indicator of the benthic community decreased by 39%, the impact on median longevity of the benthic community decreased by 20%, the impact on benthic biomass decreased by 61%, and the amount of sediment mobilised decreased by 39%."

[10:48] Tobias Troll  
**STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)**

Thank you for your presentation , Tobias. It is well known that during the past years the EU fishing effort and fishing capacity have been well declining. The socio-economic graph you presented shows an increase in kW. How come and based on which data? The LIFE/Our Fish report you referred to does...

Data of fishing capacity comes from here: [Sustainability | Free Full-Text | Economic, Social, and Environmental Impact of a Sustainable Fisheries Model in Spain \(mdpi.com\)](#)

[10:49] john lynch (Guest)

In your slide on socio economic consequences you show a graph for vessels with power of 0 to 25 KW and 2000+ KW the majority of the EU fleet lies between these two

[10:49] NIKOLIAN Frangiscos (MARE)

In the Fisheries and Oceans package emphasis is added on the need for research and development on more innovative gear / less bottom impact, more selectivity and less fuel dependency. This research can be supported by the national OPs of EMFAF.

[10:50] Serena Rivero

How is the unfished situation established without reference areas?

[10:50] john lynch (Guest)

Also the employment graph is good as it is stable over the recent period which would indicate sustainable fishing

[10:51] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**PATTERSON Kenneth (MARE) (External)**

Thanks for presentation. How does the species composition of the benthos vary at different RBS ?

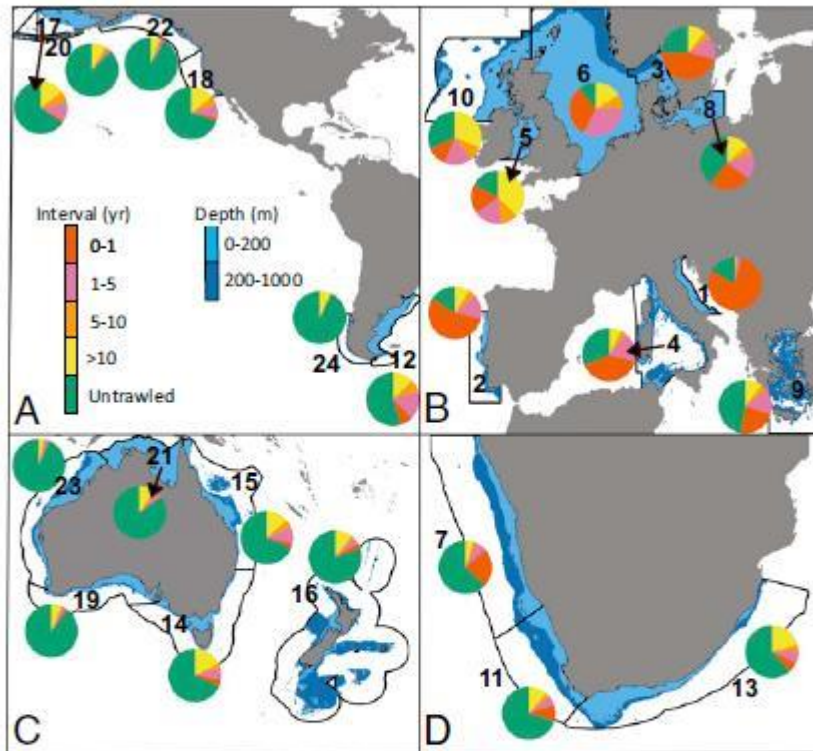
We expect a shift in dominance from long-lived to short-lived species with increasing fishing intensity. Their morphology also affects their sensitivity, and sessile epifauna (e.g. soft corals, sponges, sea pens) are particularly sensitive to trawl impacts. At the same time you can expect a decrease in species richness.

[10:54] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**Henrik S. Lund**

In the Kattegat, fishing is only done on muddy seabed approx. on 25 percent of the area. Why is the area then highly affected?

Actually, about 50% of what we called the Kattegat is fished more than once a year (but this includes the eastern Skagerrak). From Amoroso et al. 2018 Bottom fishing footprints on the world's continental shelves. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 115: E10275-E10282.



**Fig. 2.** Mean interval between trawling events and the proportion of unfished area at depths 0–1,000 m for regions in (A) the Americas, (B) Europe, (C) Australasia, and (D) Africa. Black lines indicate boundaries of study regions, pale blue tones indicate depths of 0–200 m in the study regions, darker blue tones indicate depths of 200–1,000 m in the study regions, and all deeper areas and areas outside study regions are shown in white. In all numbered regions, the proportion of bottom trawling included in this analysis exceeds 70% of total activity (Table 1). Region codes follow Fig. 3 and Table 1.

[10:55] Serena Rivero

Alice can you explain more the shift from peripheral to core areas? What does this concretely mean?

[10:56] Paul THOMAS EAPO (Guest)

**Serena Rivero**

Alice can you explain more the shift from peripheral to core areas? What does this concretely mean?

This refers to an ICES advice on the tradeoff between fisheries and the seafloor: [https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/report/EU\\_request\\_on\\_how\\_management\\_scenarios\\_to\\_reduce mobile bottom fishing disturbance on seafloor habitats affect fisheries landing and value/18638630](https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/report/EU_request_on_how_management_scenarios_to_reduce_mobile_bottom_fishing_disturbance_on_seafloor_habitats_affect_fisheries_landing_and_value/18638630)

[10:56] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Can I ask where can we get the evidence that fishing is labelled to contribute to 95% of the Sea bed.

[10:57] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**Patrick Murphy (Guest)**

Can I ask where can we get the evidence that fishing is labelled to contribute to 95% of the Sea bed.

Foden, J., Rogers, S.I. and Jones, A.P. 2011. Human pressures on UK seabed habitats: a cumulative impact assessment. *Mar Ecol Prog Ser*, 428: 33-47.

[10:57] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Thank you

[10:57] STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)

**Tobias Troll**

Data of fishing capacity comes from here: Sustainability | Free Full-Text | Economic, Social, and Environmental Impact of a Sustainable Fisheries Model in Spain (mdpi.com)

Thanks. That's a strange one. What the graph in the research paper shows is an increase in the EU capacity of the >2000kW vessels after the 2004 EU enlargement.

[10:58] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)**

Foden, J., Rogers, S.I. and Jones, A.P. 2011. Human pressures on UK seabed habitats: a cumulative impact assessment. *Mar Ecol Prog Ser*, 428: 33-47.

This is a good study comparing the footprint of different impacts, although renewables will have increased quite a bit since 2010

[10:58] Mark Dickey-Collas

methods for assessing adverse effects on seabed  
<https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.21674084.v1>

EU request to advise on methods for assessing adverse effects on seabed habitats  
ICES advises on the suitability and shortcomings of different indicators and indicator methods for assessments of adverse effects on seabed habitats. The indicators are specifically evaluated for M...

[11:01] Tobias Troll  
**STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)**

Thanks. That's a strange one. What the graph in the research paper shows is an increase in the EU capacity of the >2000kW vessels after the 2004 EU enlargement.

Do you have different/more accurate data on the evolution of the fishing fleet in the EU? We would be very interested

[11:01] Henrik S. Lund

Natura2000 areas are designated to protect specific habitats and species. Now the EU wants to extend the protection, but the areas have not been designated on the basis of that. This is a huge problem.

[11:02] STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)  
**Tobias Troll (Guest)**

Do you have different/more accurate data on the evolution of the fishing fleet in the EU? We would be very interested

[https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-common-fisheries-policy/fishing-fleet\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-common-fisheries-policy/fishing-fleet_en)

[11:02] Paul THOMAS EAPO (Guest)  
**Tobias Troll**

Do you have different/more accurate data on the evolution of the fishing fleet in the EU? We would be very interested

[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa/search\\_en](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa/search_en)

Here you can access the fleet register with the list of all operating vessels in the EU. You can choose the date and the year

[11:03] Jörg Berkenhagen (Gast)

**Paul THOMAS EAPO (Guest) (Gast)**


[https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa/search\\_en](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa/search_en) Here you can access the fleet register with the list of all operating vessels in the EU. You can choose the date and the year

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dd/fleet>

like 1

[11:03] Jong, dr. ing. M.F. de (Maarten) (gast)

**Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)**

 ICES. 2021. Working Group on Fisheries Benthic Impact and Trade-offs (WGFBIT; outputs from 2020 meeting). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:70. 46 pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8223>.

cant find this specific map, would love to share it with my fisheries colleques at the Ministry...

[11:03] Henrik S. Lund

If areas are to be closed to bottom gear, then new areas must be designated specifically for this.

[11:03] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Can you list the mobile fishing activities you speak of in your presentation?

[11:04] Serena Rivero

**Jong, dr. ing. M.F. de (Maarten)**

cant find this specific map, would love to share it with my fisheries colleques at the Ministry...

Same, I can't find the map


[11:05] Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Gast)

is there any justification to close bottem trawling in all marine bird protecting areas?

like 2

[11:07] Serena Rivero

**Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff) (gast)**

 ICES. 2021. Working Group on Fisheries Benthic Impact and Trade-offs (WGFBIT; outputs from 2020 meeting). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:70. 46 pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8223>.

Could you mail this to me at [s.rivero@noordzee.nl](mailto:s.rivero@noordzee.nl) ?

[11:07] Bruno Nicostrate

**STAMOULIS Antonios (MARE)**

[https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-common-fisheries-policy/fishing-fleet\\_en](https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/facts-and-figures/facts-and-figures-common-fisheries-policy/fishing-fleet_en)

Can you give a description of the table columns please?

[11:07] Luca van Duren

**Jong, dr. ing. M.F. de (Maarten) (gast) (Guest)**

cant find this specific map, would love to share it with my fisheries colleagues at the Ministry...

Here is the link to the report: [https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/report/Working\\_Group\\_on\\_Fisheries\\_Benthic\\_Impact\\_and\\_Trade-offs\\_WGFBIT\\_outputs\\_from\\_2020\\_meeting\\_/18621800](https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/report/Working_Group_on_Fisheries_Benthic_Impact_and_Trade-offs_WGFBIT_outputs_from_2020_meeting_/18621800)

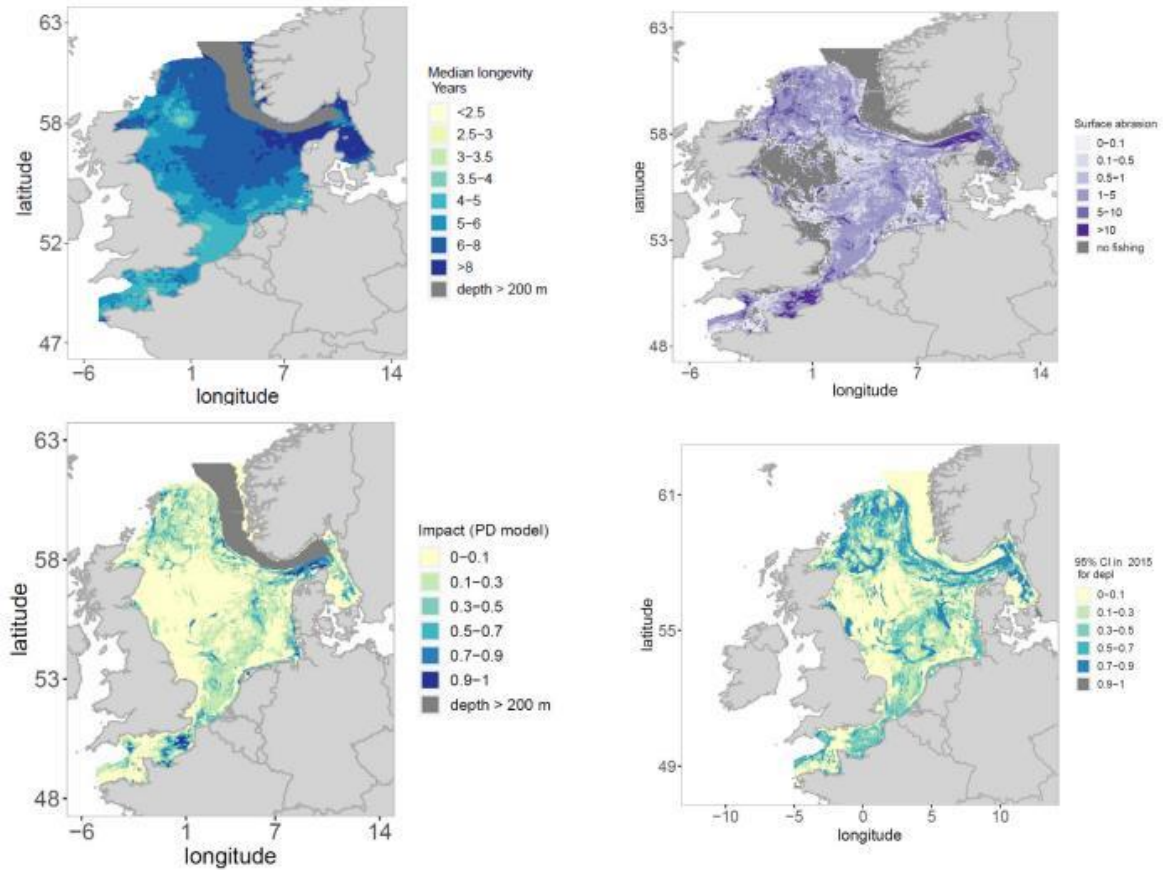
Working Group on Fisheries Benthic Impact and Trade-offs (WGFBIT; outputs from 2020 meeting)  
The Working Group on Fisheries Benthic Impact and Trade-offs (WGFBIT) develops methods and performs assessments to evaluate benthic impact from fisheries at regional scale, while considering fishe...

[11:07] David Vertegaal



**Assessment results**

Status in year 2018 of North Sea.



**Figure 2.1.** North Sea maps of i) predicted median longevity (top left); ii) surface (0-2cm sediment depth) based on VMS and logbook data for all mobile bottom-contacting gears (top right); iii) relative benthic impact (bottom left), and iv) Uncertainty of the depletion rates (95 percentile); (bottom right).

[11:08] Mark Dickey-Collas

I would like to remind participants that ICES reports are the foundation for ICES advice, but they are not formal ICES advice

[11:08] Tobias Troll

**Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Guest)**

is there any justification to close bottem trawling in all marine bird protecting areas?



ecosystem based / whole site approach to MPA management [Emerging themes to support ambitious UK marine biodiversity conservation - ScienceDirect](#)

Emerging themes to support ambitious UK marine biodiversity conservation  
Healthy marine ecosystems provide a wide range of resources and services that support life on Earth and contribute to human wellbeing. Marine Protecte...

[11:09] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Francisco with all due respect this is not a challenge this is the end of our Industry. It is complete madness

[11:10] RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)

**Patrick Murphy (Guest)**

Can you list the mobile fishing activities you speak of in your presentation?

Detailed info in the Marine Action plan document - The list includes boat dredges, mechanised dredges including suction dredges, bottom otter trawl, otter twin trawl, bottom pair trawl, beach seines, Danish seines (anchored seine), pair seines, Scottish seines (fly shooting seine), boat seines and beam trawl

[11:11] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

**Patrick Murphy (Guest)**

Can you list the mobile fishing activities you speak of in your presentation?

Hi, Patrick. In the action plan is referenced the gears. Please., check the footnote 44

[11:11] BELIN Alice (ENV)

Yes, they are listed in the Action Plan, I can provide you the list.

**RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)**

Detailed info in the Marine Action plan document - The list includes boat dredges, mechanised dredges including suction dredges, bottom otter trawl, otter twin trawl, bottom pair trawl, beach seines, Danish seines (anchored seine), pair seines, Scottish seines (fly shooting seine), boat seines an...

Thank you Evelien, I was looking for them 😊

[11:11] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

Colleagues already replied

[11:11] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

This comes from previous work

[11:11] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

It is all explained in the document

[11:12] Jan Geert Hiddink (Staff)

**David Vertegaal (External)**



A great visualisation of trawling impact and effort can be found in a set of interactive html files that can be downloaded here. It's a bit awkward downloading and unzipping, but I can guarantee it is worth it: [https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/dataset/ICES data outputs of EU request on how management scenarios to reduce mobile bottom fishing disturbance on seafloor habitats affect fisheries landing and value/18600380](https://ices-library.figshare.com/articles/dataset/ICES_data_outputs_of_EU_request_on_how_management_scenarios_to_reduce_mobile_bottom_fishing_disturbance_on_seafloor_habitats_affect_fisheries_landing_and_value/18600380)

ICES data outputs of EU request on how management scenarios to reduce mobile bottom fishing disturbance on seafloor habitats affect fisheries landing and value

The data product includes three folders: Regional assessments; Regional assessments of fishing pressure and impact for 4 different (sub-)regions and 22 subdivisions using quality-controlled VM...

[11:12] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

see STECF OWP 22-01

[11:13] Henrik S. Lund

The natura2000 areas were located and designated before the seabed was mapped. It is therefore relatively random where they are placed.

[11:14] Mark Dickey-Collas

Frangiscos - I missed the definition of the regional groups that you mentioned, which are they?

[11:15] Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Gast)

Alle

[11:16] RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)

**Mark Dickey-Collas (External)**

Frangiscos - I missed the definition of the regional groups that you mentioned, which are they?

Member States Regional Groups (Scheveningen Group, North Western Waters, South Western Waters, BaltFish, SudestMed, Adriatica, PescaMed). These MS Groups can submit joint recommendations under article 18 procedure of the CFP Regulation, for the COMmission to adopt as delegated act - after scientific assessment

[11:16] Tamara Talevska

Frangiscos could you tell a bit more about this special group of fisheries and environmental stakeholders? Aren't ACs exactly that?

[11:17] Mark Dickey-Collas

**RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE) (External)**

Member States Regional Groups (Scheveningen Group, North Western Waters, South Western Waters, BaltFish, SudestMed, Adriatica, PescaMed). These MS Groups can submit joint recommendations under article 18 procedure of the CFP Regulation, for the COMmission to adopt as delegated act - after scientifi...

Have these groups got legal status under the CFP?

[11:18] Mark Dickey-Collas

I am asking because the transparency of the operations and decisions of these groups is poor

[11:18] RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)

I do not know what you mean by legal status, but the CFP defines it 'the Member States having direct mangement interest' in such areas if they want to propose management measures. This is often per seabasin so the Member States Groups are organised like this

[11:19] Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Gast)

@Tobias: thanks, but this paper calls for more MPAs, but not for scientifically based reasons to change (or re-interpret) the objectives of the existent ones.

[11:19] Johanna Ferretti (Gast)

Why has COM opted for an Action Plan and not ordinary legislative procedure, e.g. reform of the discard ban?

[11:21] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

The operational programs have been submitted as a member of our Programs monitoring committee we have no ability to change it so can you explain what are our opportunities within the fund. Sorry Francisco but our frustrations are not properly recognised or should I say acted on by the commission.

[11:23] BELIN Alice (ENV)

**Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Guest)**

is there any justification to close bottom trawling in all marine bird protecting areas?

The plan puts in place a prioritisation exercise starting with N2000 areas protecting the seabed and non-bird species, discussions will be held in the context of the implementation of the action plan with experts and stakeholders regarding the other sites afterwards. It's important to know that 'bird-only' sites in offshore waters represent only about 3% of the total N2000 networks. Others are coastal and in the large majority of cases overlap with areas designated for the protection of the seabed and marine species.

[11:23] RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)

**Mark Dickey-Collas (External)**

I am asking because the transparency of the operations and decisions of these groups is poor

Mark, this matter is actually raised in the Communication of the CFP - more specifically in the Staff working Document (annex). Actions are proposed by the Commission in the Communication to address this matter - improving the transparency - as a study found indeed that ACs are more transparent in the way they function and work, with clear ToRs etc. This is also due to the fact that ACs and its functioning are more described in the CFP Regulation (legally as you say).

[11:23] Patrick Murphy (Guest)

Thank you all for the presentations, I will leave my contributions in the comments. I think its better. Goodbye.

[11:23] Tobias Troll

**Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Guest)**

@Tobias: thanks, but this paper calls for more MPAs, but not for scientifically based reasons to change (or re-interpret) the objectives of the existent ones.

Well I believe the section on whole site approach makes a solid argument for holistic MPA management. The need for an ecosystem based approach is also inscribed in the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive. Seems like a no-brainer that you can't protect the birds isolated from the water they live from...

[11:26] BELIN Alice (ENV)

**Johanna Ferretti (Guest)**

Why has COM opted for an Action Plan and not ordinary legislative procedure, e.g. reform of the discard ban?

The Action Plan aims to incentivise Member States to better implement existing legislation, which is already quite comprehensive and if correctly implemented should ensure that the EU achieves its own marine protection objectives but also its international commitments. It is not the intention of the Commission to create new legislation.

[11:28] Rikke Petri Frandsen

Would it be possible to share the chat after the meeting. It has many good references and would be nice to distribute to colleagues. Thanks 😊

[11:29] Henrik S. Lund

**BELIN Alice (ENV)**

The plan puts in place a prioritisation exercise starting with N2000 areas protecting the seabed and non-bird species, discussions will be held in the context of the implementation of the action plan with experts and stakeholders regarding the other sites afterwards. It's important to know that 'bi...

that is not the case in Denmark. Here bird protected areas overlap with key fishing areas.

[11:34] RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)

**Tamara Talevska (External)**

Frangiscos could you tell a bit more about this special group of fisheries and environmental stakeholders? Aren't ACs exactly that?

Tamara, this specialized group is meant on Member States level - like the Expert Group for Fisheries and Aquaculture. This is a formal 'portal' of the legislative procedure on delegated acts before they get adopted. Other stakeholders could join as observers, depending on the rules of procedure that is created for the specific Expert Group. For example, the European Parliament and the EFCA are observers to the current Expert Group for fisheries and aquaculture.

In this specific legislative procedure of putting joint recommendations into legislation. ACs should be/are consulted by Member State Regional Groups in the stage of creating the joint recommendation

[11:34] Mark Dickey-Collas

Henrik - those figures are for different things.

[11:35] BELIN Alice (ENV)

**Henrik S. Lund**

that is not the case in Denmark. Here bird protected areas overlap with key fishing areas.

From a quick look at the Natura 2000 viewer, most Natura 2000 sites in DK seem to protect seabed, species and birds: [Natura 2000 Viewer \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.eu/natura2000-viewer)

[11:35] BELIN Alice (ENV)

but a closer look may be needed

[11:40] Tobias Troll

Here the report on alternatives to bottom trawling that I referred to: [Report: Exploring Alternatives to Europe's bottom trawl fishing gears - Seas at Risk \(seas-at-risk.org\)](https://seas-at-risk.org/report-exploring-alternatives-to-europe-s-bottom-trawl-fishing-gears)

[11:44] CHEILARI Anna (ENV)

**Henrik S. Lund (External)**

The natura2000 areas were located and designated before the seabed was mapped. It is therefore relatively random where they are placed.

The choice of sites is based on scientific criteria specified in the directive. Member States first carry out comprehensive assessments of each of the habitat types and species present on their territory. They then submit lists of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs).

[11:45] John Lynch (Guest)

Despite tough sanctions talk Europe's direct purchases of Russian whitefish reached nearly \$1 billion last year

[11:46] Ulrich Karlowski - Deutsche Stiftung Meeresschutz (Guest)  
was there a future for coal miners?

[11:50] BELIN Alice (ENV)

ICES trade off advice from 2021 is very interesting in this regard and should be considered carefully in the broader context of maritime spatial planning: [EU request on how management scenarios to reduce mobile bottom fishing disturbance on seafloor habitats affect fisheries landing and value \(figshare.com\)](#)

[11:50] Henrik S. Lund  
**CHEILARI Anna (ENV)**

The choice of sites is based on scientific criteria specified in the directive. Member States first carry out comprehensive assessments of each of the habitat types and species present on their territory. They then submit lists of proposed Sites of Community Importance (pSCIs).

somewhat difficult to do when the seabed was not mapped

[11:52] BELIN Alice (ENV)  
**Henrik S. Lund**

somewhat difficult to do when the seabed was not mapped

Indeed Henrik and we are strongly encouraging Member States to increase investments in this area because it is very important for sound policy making and implementation of legislation.

[11:53] Mark Dickey-Collas

can Jan Geert please comment on the Carbon issue please?

[11:55] BELIN Alice (ENV)

To note that the Commission is planning to launch a study in 2024 to better investigate the seabed's carbon sequestration capacity and the links to pressures from human activities, including bottom fishing.

[11:55] BELIN Alice (ENV)

It is an action in the Action Plan.

[11:58] Mark Dickey-Collas

ICES is asked to review innovative gear every three years

[11:58] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

Indeed, Mark!

[11:59] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)

It will be the second!

[11:59] MOSET MARTINEZ Maria (MARE)



[11:59] LORINCZI Larisa (RTD)

Under Horizon Europe there is also research funded in understanding the ocean carbon cycle and the significance of the biological pump and the impact of human activities on it, such as fishing, energy and mineral extraction.

[12:01] Gérald Hussenot

Is aquaculture of tilapia fed by spirulina and quinoa the bottom trawling future? We think there are other solutions.

[12:02] BELIN Alice (ENV)

The Habitats Directive gives Member States the responsibility to design the measures that are needed to prevent deterioration in Natura 2000 sites and protect the sites. Member States should do this in coordination with stakeholders. But we see that in many cases Member States have not established these measures necessary. And the Action Plan is reminding them to do so.

[12:03] Tobias Troll

**Gérald Hussenot**



Is aquaculture of tilapia fed by spirulina and quinoa the bottom trawling future ? we think there are others solutions .

[Sustainable Seafood Initiative](#) | [Alternative proteins](#) | [GFI](#) - this will come quicker than we imagine

[12:04] RANSHUYSEN Evelien (MARE)

thank you **everyone** for sharing your comments, questions and concerns. It is of utmost importance that this dialogue keeps on going!

[12:04] Daniel Oesterwind (Gast)

Thanks for the great organized and interesting Webinar

[12:04] LORINCZI Larisa (RTD)

Thank you to all!

[12:04] Paul THOMAS EAPO (Guest)

Thank you very much !

[12:04] Christian von Dorrien / Thünen Institute (Gast)

Thanks for a good webinar!