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Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality,
The Netherlands



-Report-

- Workshop on Priorities in the field of socio-economic and other research related to fisheries*
- Summary of Priorities*

Oostende, 25 April 2007

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Den Haag , July 2007

Introduction

One of the deliverables of workpackage 4 ‘Coordination and linkages between fisheries and socio-economic research, and other disciplines’ is a report on the current status of socio-economic research in the field of fisheries, including type of research, institutes involved etc. This State of the Art report was delivered in March 2007. It was distributed to the MariFish partners and posted on the MariFish discussion board for a virtual workshop. On basis of this State of the Art and the comments of the partners a high level statement was formulated which summarises the State of the Art paper and focusses on the future need and priorities of socio-economic research.

During the meeting of the Workpackage Management Group in Oostende, this high level statement was discussed in a workshop. This report gives an overview of the discussions in the workshop and as a result of this discussion it presents a revised high level statement, now called *Summary of Priorities for Socio-economic Research Related to Fisheries*.

Discussion on the High Level Statement

The workshop involved discussing the High level statement from a variety of viewpoints.

Pavel Salz outlined the content of the High level statement. He underlined the involvement of EAFE and 9 other socio-economic institutes who have in fact been closely involved with the formulation of this high level statement. This statement has also been discussed with some of the fisheries economists of the Economics Unit in DG Fisheries to discuss the role of economics in fisheries management.

Regarding the direction of the workshop, the participants were asked to choose between two options. The workshop could either be directed on how the contents of the High Level Statement could be improved or, if Partners were happy with the High Level Statement, it could be adopted and discussions based around how it could be applied and what role Marifish can play in it.

After the introductions of Pavel Salz and Ellen Hoefnagel, there followed a fundamental discussion about the High Level Statement. The discussion concentrated on the following issues:

- is there a need for a High Level statement on socio-economic research?

Some partners pointed out that socio-economics already formed part of the STECF. It was therefore already incorporated in the “advice-structure” at EC level. It was also remarked that the ICES is not a funding structure. Besides, it is evident that socio-economic research can deliver relevant contribution to fishery management, so “what’s new”. Why put emphasis on this aspect in this High Level Statement?

- the role of Marifish

It was noted that the objective of MariFish was to identify research needs and cooperation in research. According to some it was not the task of Marifish to put proposals forward about organizational aspects and new “research and advisory” systems. That’s a political decision. According to some partners the High Level Statement was more of a “lobbying” paper rather than a paper that identified research needs.

- the content of the High Level Statement

Linked with the former issue, some partners thought that the focus of this High Level Statement was too much on the organizational aspect. It was noted that the paper should focus more on the priorities of socio-economic research, which was actually done in the second part of the paper. It was suggested that the title “High Level Statement” needed rewording and suggestions such as “Overview of priorities of socio-economic related research to fisheries” were put forward.

The conclusion of the discussion was that there was no consensus about the content of the High Level Statement. Therefore it was decided to concentrate the workshop on the content.

Workshop

It was proposed to apply the Six Thinking Hats method. The 'Six Thinking Hats' is a technique that helps to look at a subject from a number of different perspectives. It helps to make better decisions. It avoids lengthy discussions between individuals by obliging everyone to look at the given topic from the same perspective. As such, it helps understand the full complexity of the subject, and spot issues and opportunities which might otherwise be overlooked. Each perspective has its own coloured hat and by "wearing a different hat" everyone can look at a subject from different views.

The white hat focuses on the available data. The red hat is about intuition. The black represents the pessimistic viewpoint, the yellow hat the optimistic viewpoint, and the green hat creativity. The blue thinking hat is the overview or process control hat.

During the workshop the attendants had to look with a different "hat" at the High Level Statement. Their comments and suggestions were noted on a flip-chart as below. Taking each perspective in turn the following views and comments emerged regarding the High Level Statement.



White Hat thinking (enough available information)

- are there examples of application?
- Is there evidence of statements?
- References?
- what does it cover, what data/ research are we talking about?
- definitions of key terms: economic and social sciences
- who is the owner? Who signs it?



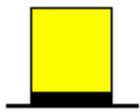
Red Hat thinking (intuition)

- It already exists in STECF
- It is extremely logical
- Conclusions are missing
- Mix of research priorities and short statements
- Good last sentence
- Too much lobbying paper
- Good and important message
- Dialogue needed is highlighted
- Consistent with DEFRA-paper
- Clash between natural and social science paradigms
- Dialogue difficult
- Lack of budget



Black Hat thinking (criticism)

- Politicians don't listen to socio-economic research either
- The wrong people read it
- Short term research (STECF)
- There are no common tools and no consensus, too early for ICES
- too much uncertainty in socio-economic research, it will be no better than biological advise
- the statements are sometimes controversial
- Missing a link to State of the Art (priority in topics)
- ICES is no funding structure, you can criticize ICES structure too
- domination of natural science in research
- MariFish does not give advise



Yellow Hat thinking (OPTIMISTIC)

- The high level statement has contributed to discussion
- The second half of the paper is ok
- The action plan + anticipation process is useful
- It is a step forward in bringing soc.-economic research into fishery management
- priority topics as an orientation
- the message is a concise way of putting soc-economic research on the map



Green Hat thinking (CREATIVITY)

- top down approach
- what are the management needs for soc-economic research in the coming 10 years?
- Identify management changes
- Soc-economic research and data needed, short list of priorities
- Role of EAFE - invite EAFE for list of research priorities (9 soc-ec. institutes are consulted)
- Communicate High Level Statement to EC
- Soc-economic research opportunity for Marifish Call (collaborative research)
- Priorities : EC or science?
- Make strong proposals, there is money
- National programs on Soc-economic science inventory
- priorities set by ministries c.q. funders
- Look at projects - ecosystem approach, multidisciplinary approach
- Loss of independence?

At the end of the workshop it was concluded that at this moment there were mixed views about what should be the content of the high level statement, if there was any need for a “statement” at this moment, and what the role of Marifish was in this. It was agreed that partner 4 would distribute a revised paper in which the views of the Partners should be taken into consideration.

It resulted in the following working document:

Marifish working document

SUMMARY OF PRIORITIES FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESEARCH RELATED TO FISHERIES

Introduction

This document, prepared under the MariFish ERA-NET project, summarizes the findings of three background documents¹ and reflects the discussion held by the project partners. The document presents priorities in two respects: a/ content of socio-economic research which will be required in the coming years and b/ organizational set-up, which will make the execution of this research possible.

The main thrust of the document stresses the need to promote cooperation and achieve consensus on relevant issues. Incorporation of the results of socio-economic research into fishery management decisions can only be achieved if the decision makers are confident that there exists a sufficient level of consensus on priorities among the involved scientific institutes and/or individual scientists. Comparable to ICES position on state of stocks and environment, it is desirable to develop common scientific positions on relevant socio-economic issues.

Aim

The aim of this document is to specify priorities for socio-economic research in relation to fisheries in order to achieve synergy with natural sciences and to integrate these socio-economic sciences into fishery management decisions.

Contribution of economics and other social sciences to fisheries

The contribution from economics regarding fisheries measures is probably not much different from other sectors, in particular when related to environmental protection:

- Fisheries is primarily an economic activity, with a cultural / traditional component. It is a human activity, taking place under the constraints of the natural environment. Economics and social sciences can provide relevant and independent contributions to the analysis of problems which arise and to the formulation of the required management policies.
- Economic behavior (pursuit of profit and survival) in combination with common property² leads to tragedy of the commons and excessive exploitation levels.
- Fisheries is driven by market incentives and cultural attitudes. Therefore policy should preferably exploit the market forces (create incentives in a desired direction - by taxes, fees, etc). Policy should attempt to avoid introducing measures which go against market forces since this usually proves unsuccessful (e.g. stressing survival of small producers in times when economic trends are quite the contrary may not be economically realistic).
- Economic analysis is sometimes confused with political statements aimed at protecting specific private interests. Economics is an established science dealing with efficient use of scarce resources. Economics is not concerned with distribution of the benefits (many small or few large producers). That is a political decision. Economics and other social sciences can produce clear assessment of costs and benefits (not only in monetary terms) of planned and/or implemented policies. Such analysis is complementary to the analysis by natural sciences. Combination of the various disciplines offers a more holistic view of the situation, the problems and possible solutions.

¹ P. Salz and E. Hoefnagel, State of art in European fisheries research in economics and other social sciences, Marifish working paper, February 2007

P. Salz and E. Hoefnagel, Note on status, role and outlook of socio-economic research on fisheries, discussion paper prepared for the meeting of 23-24.11.2006, final version December 2006

Report of the meeting of the heads of main European institutes involved in economic and social science research, held on 23-24.11.2006 in The Hague

² Or situation where property titles are not well defined and protected.

The contribution of other social sciences regarding fisheries management is complementary to the economic one. The social science message is roughly:

- Fisheries is an economic, social and cultural activity
- In some situations communities are capable of managing a 'common'. State intervention and private property are certainly not always the solution to the tragedy of the commons.
- Legitimacy and efficacy will be enhanced by community involvement in the decision-making process. E.g. co-management.
- (Regional) institutions need to be developed, recognized and supported in order to give communities and stakeholders tools to perform management tasks.
- Social sciences are concerned with the effects of management measures on the ecosystem and the community.
- Social sciences study the rationality of human behavior, also what seems "irrational" behavior.
- Social sciences include the analysis of all kinds of institutions within fisheries including the scientific communities and management communities.

Economic and social research is complementary to research in natural sciences. The three areas generate knowledge on different dimensions of the fisheries problems, namely economic scarcity, behavior, institutions, decision-making processes, the stocks and environment. They can deliver an independent as well as integrated (multidisciplinary) contribution to assessment of the fisheries management issues. While monodisciplinary research is well established, new innovative approaches to multidisciplinary research still need to be developed.

Contribution to the Common Fisheries Policy

The research priorities in relation to economics and other social sciences are closely related to the broad political priorities set at the EU and international level, in particular the Johannesburg convention (pursuit of MSY level of production and ecosystem approach), Lisbon agenda (aiming at dynamic and efficient economy), Gothenburg agreement (stressing the need to create sufficient employment) and the *White paper on European Governance*.

Economics and social sciences can provide a valuable contribution within the advisory framework of fisheries management in all five principal pillars of CFP:

- Conservation - stock and effort management and compliance and control

Decisions on TACs and effort levels entail socio-economic consequences which may have to be taken into account for example when assessing the required compensation or short term impact on employment and income. Drivers of (non)compliance lie in the social and economic conditions of the individual producers.

- Structural policy and capacity management

Structural policy is closely related to the economic reality of level of the sector. The willingness to decommission vessels or to invest in innovation depends on the profitability level. The scope of the European Fisheries Fund entails not only the catching sector, but also fish processing, aquaculture and the fishing communities. The extent to which communities will benefit fully from the support offered depends on the existing social and economic dynamics. All these topics can be analyzed by ESS, which can provide valuable insights for preparation, implementation and evaluation of policy.

- Technical measures and discarding

Discarding is at present one of the most prominent topics on the management agenda, attempting to reduce overall negative ecosystem effects. It has been recognized that discarding finds its origins in economic and moral decisions. Technical measures affect significantly the productivity level. Clearly ESS analysis has a role to play in this area.

- Market policy

Fish markets are globalized. EU depends for more than 50% on imported fish. Competition is increasing, with rapidly developing aquaculture in many parts of the world. Consequently prices of fish received by EU producers do not reflect the actual scarcity (state of stocks) in EU waters. This market failure needs to be addressed and economic analysis should indicate the way forward.

Quality and safety requirements of fish products will increasingly be reflected in certification and quality labeling systems. The marketing role of these labels need to be assessed.

- 3rd countries policy

Access for EU fleets to third countries waters is becoming more restrictive, as they develop their own fishing sector. Furthermore, Illegal Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) is high on the agenda when it comes to exploitation of waters outside the 200 nm limits. These developments are driven by economic incentives and have economic and social effects on EU producers. These effects need to be properly understood, but also for example the socio- economics of IUU.

Main research priorities for 2007-2010

Apart from the contribution to the main areas of CFP, described above, the following areas can be considered as main priorities for research in economics and social sciences in the coming years:

- Property rights

EC has initiated discussion on the role of property rights and rights based management (RBM). In its Communication (SEC(2007)247) it expresses the need for research into present national arrangements in this area and the lessons which could be drawn for the future EU arrangements.

- Economic performance and incentives

Economic state of the industry determines how it will respond to economic or administrative incentives. The Data Collection Regulation generated the basic data, which allows assessment required in this respect. Similarly to annual assessment of stock, the Commission wishes to have also an annual assessment of the economic performance of the fleets.

- Regional development and integrated coastal zone management

European Fisheries Fund (EFF) as well as European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) stress the importance of diversified economic basis of rural (and coastal) areas. EFF aims to strengthen the fishing communities and offer the perspective for the future. The extent to which they will be able to exploit the existing opportunities (with or without support) depends on social attitudes (e.g. entrepreneurship) and economic situation. ESS research into these areas can provide relevant information and contribute to the achievement of the set goals.

- Governance,

Good governance criteria are participation, transparency, coherence, effectiveness and accountability. Participation and transparency in particular have been better established through Council Regulation (EC) No 657/2000 of 27 March 2000 “on closer dialogue with the fishing sector and groups affected by the common fisheries policy”. RACs are a result of this regulation. Further ESS research is needed: into the role of stakeholders, linked to compliance and legitimacy issues; into coherence of policy measures with other regulations and measures; into effectiveness of policy making; into institutional analysis and decision-making processes: and into the question who is accountable for what.

- Impact assessment, required for all new policy measures since 2003 (COM(2002) 276 final)

Impact assessment is the process of systematic analysis of the likely impacts of intervention by public authorities. It is as such an integral part of the process of designing policy proposals and making decision-makers and the public aware of the likely impacts.

Social scientists can contribute to impact assessment by analysing: the issue that the policy/proposal is expected to tackle; the possible added value to the Community; the main objective the policy/proposal is supposed to achieve; the main policy options available to achieve the objective; the impacts - positive and negative - expected from the different options identified; how results and impacts of the policy/proposal can be monitored and evaluated.

- Fishermen's behaviour

ESS can give relevant insight into the social, economic, and cultural driving forces of individual fishermen and their group behaviour. To understand these driving forces, knowledge of impacts of policy on fishing communities is necessary. Fishing community profiles can be provided by ESS.

- Multidisciplinary methods

Although ESS can deliver relevant independent contribution, cooperation between social and natural sciences is needed to address the complex issues of human impact on natural environment. It seems necessary to develop new innovative ways of combining qualitative and quantitative analysis arising from different disciplines into one coherent holistic assessment. Next to this the incorporation of the knowledge of stakeholders, like fishermen, is a challenge that can be advanced by ESS research and methods

Organizational requirements

General

A priority is to create the right conditions for an effective involvement of ESS in future dialogue on fisheries management. Such conditions include effective and efficient organisation of the research in order to address the above priorities, and to respond flexibly to new information needs.

Organization of research

Research takes place at both the fundamental and applied levels and are complementary. At present ESS research into fisheries is driven by its potential for application. However, it is essential to create conditions for execution of fundamental research, allowing development of new concepts and theories for monodisciplinary as well as multidisciplinary analysis. *'There is nothing more practical than a good theory.'*

Contribution of economics to management policies takes place through various national platforms and STECF at the EU level. Other social sciences are not involved. At present economists are expected to answer questions at short notice without allowing an in depth analysis or extended research to take place. This seems an unsatisfactory practice. It is proposed that an 'anticipation process' is adopted which would formulate expected questions and organize the required research. The 'anticipation process' would be composed of the following phases:

1. Preparation and regular updating of a list of required ESS (impact) assessments, possibly by STECF in cooperation with the Commission. Such lists can also be prepared at the national or RAC level. Specifically this implies to review the annual agenda of STECF and the work plan of DG Fisheries and identify areas where ESS contribution would be relevant.
2. Specification of Terms of Reference for each assessment.
3. Appointment of the executing research team
4. Execution and delivery of the assessment
5. Peer review of the assessment by STECF (or another peer group)

Satisfactory implementation of the 'anticipation process' and delivery of relevant research results require to initiate an 'action plan' along the following lines:

- a. Organize the use of data and research results in relation to the advisory system, i.e. planning the research process to deliver required advice at specific points in time.
- b. Create proper conditions for the transmission of the ESS assessment to the management process. Conditions refer in particular to:
 - creation and recognition of tools (theoretical concepts, models, databases, etc.),
 - development of communication means (formats for reporting).

- c. Strengthen the dialogue between the 'demand and supply' of ESS assessment, i.e. attention needs to be given to:
 - creation of a platform at which the dialogue can take place,
 - the formulation of relevant and answerable questions,
 - applicability of delivered results.
- d. Intensify co-operation among ESS scientists and develop procedures to formulate consensus on major issues.
- e. A number of other social scientists should be appointed to STECF.

The required research can only be done when the appropriate funding is available. This applies to fundamental as well as applied research in economics as well as other social sciences. In view of the increasing importance of ESS to fisheries management, it is desirable to set up working structures comparable to ICES (and funded from national and EU sources), albeit on a smaller scale.