

Theme session E

initial 12 months of work revealed that the amount of relevant law and policy was immense and that the overlapping nature of many of the laws, including relating to jurisdictional boundaries was a challenge.

This paper will demonstrate the complexity of the legal and policy framework for marine planning, with a focus on the North Sea. It will argue that notwithstanding the intricacy of the legal and policy landscape that an awareness of it, or at least access to appropriate knowledge about it, is essential for marine planning for regional seas. It will consider the balance between providing an encyclopaedia of North Sea law and policy and the ability to create and maintain a marine planning network to facilitate effective cooperation in this planning marine region.

Keywords: North Sea, marine spatial planning, legal framework, cooperation, maritime spatial planning directive

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Parallel session 2 – Tuesday 31/05 (10h30-12h30)

E2-103

Political overfishing: Social-economic drivers challenge sustainability goals

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Despite having defined sustainable use of marine resources as a global and internationally highly ranked policy goal, overfishing remains to be a severe worldwide problem. Within the European Union total allowable catch limits continue to be set above scientifically advised, and unsustainable levels. These political decisions are seemingly made without any scientific, or transparent decision-making background. Here we show that decisions on harvest levels were driven by socio-economic forcing factors, and are not related to ecological stock status. Instead, economic factors (i.e. unemployment rates), as well as socio-cultural factors (i.e. per capita fish consumption) significantly affected the decision making process. Increasing socio-economic pressures led to higher deviations between advised and agreed TACs. Our results demonstrate that socio-economic factors need to be taken into account, if the triple bottom line of equally respecting social, economic as well as conservation goals shall be reached. There is a clear need in worldwide fisheries management to include these aspect already in the advise process in order to provide a sound and transparent basis for political management decisions.

Keywords: GAM, TAC setting, economic drivers, social drivers, interaction, decision making, fisheries

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