



WWF Scotland
Little Dunkeld, Dunkeld
Perthshire PH8 0AD

Tel: 01350 728200
Fax: 01350 728201
ISDN: 01350 728276
wwfscotland.org.uk

PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

Common Fisheries Policy Reform - MEP briefing

August 2011

Summary

- WWF Scotland welcomes the opportunity to brief Scottish MEPs about our position on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform. Fisheries makes up a huge part of the Scottish coastal economy and it is in Scotland's interests to ensure that the Reform improves the health of Scottish seas and the profitability of the fishing industry. WWF Scotland urges MEPs to commit to supporting the difficult political decisions that need to be made to deliver a reform that is ambitious and progressive.
- The Commission's initial proposals, published on 13 July 2011, make some progress towards sustainability – such as clear conservation objectives and multi-annual plans – but more needs to be done over the next 18 months to secure the much needed reform.
- WWF believes the only way that the CFP reform can succeed is to ensure:
 - Sustainable management – every commercial fishery must be managed under long-term management plan designed to ensure the sustainable management, recovery and rebuilding of fish stocks and marine ecosystems.
 - Effective regionalisation – fisheries must be managed regionally, linking fishing rights and responsibilities to improving ecosystem health and enhancing the resilience of our fleets to achieve environmental and economic sustainability.
 - Fair fishing abroad – the principles of the policy must apply to all European fisheries and fishing boats wherever they operate in the world's oceans.
 - Improved quality – an integrated and coherent set of policies across the supply chain, so that fishermen adapt their activities to market demand, avoiding waste and adding value at all stages along the way, from net to plate.

Background

The Scottish fishing industry lands about 70% of total UK landings, and the main species targeted by the demersal whitefish fleet are cod, haddock and whiting, caught in a mixed fishery. The need for change in the Scottish fishing industry to fish less and fish better is clear in a recent report by the independent panel of the Inquiry into the Future of Fisheries Management (IFFM)¹. Through WWF Scotland's membership of the Scottish Conservation Credit Scheme (SCCS), we have worked to move fisheries management towards conservation. Long-term management led by regional stakeholders – on the model of the SCCS - is a key reform priority for WWF.

¹ Report of an Independent Panel, Inquiry into the Future Fisheries Management, Edinburgh 2010



Director of WWF Scotland: Dr Richard Dixon
President: HRH Princess Alexandra,
The Hon Lady Ogilvy KG, GCVO
Chair: Ed Smith
Chief Executive: David Nussbaum

WWF-UK a charity registered in England and Wales number 1081247 and in Scotland number SC039593, a company limited by guarantee registered in England number 4016725. VAT number 733 761821. 100% recycled paper
Registered office: Panda House, Weyside Park, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1XR

WWF's Reform priorities – and our reaction to the Commission's proposals

WWF believes it is possible to deliver radical change if the right proposals are put forward and supported by Ministers and MEPs throughout the process. However, unless certain key elements are changed, this vision can not be realised.

- 1. Sustainable, long-term management – Every commercial fishery must be managed under a Long-Term Management Plan (LTMP) designed to ensure the sustainable management, recovery and rebuilding of fish stocks and marine ecosystems.*

The Commission's proposals establish clear conservation objectives, such as the need to restore and maintain fish populations at Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) by 2015, and multi-annual plans, which are welcome developments. However, crucial delivery mechanisms, time-frames and responsibilities for developing these plans are still lacking and need to be established. WWF also has concerns that there is little vision on aligning fleet capacity with available resources. Transferable Fishing Concessions (TFCs) are proposed as the main stand-alone tool to deal with overcapacity, yet are likely to be inflexible and lack the safeguards needed to prevent fleet concentration or to address failure to meet conservation goals.

- 2. Effective regionalisation – With long term management plans in place, fisheries management will be devolved to stakeholders at the regional level. This management will include responsibility for developing, implementing and adapting LTMPs and will link fishing rights and responsibilities to improving ecosystem health and enhancing the economic resilience of the fishing fleets.*

A clear co-management mechanism is absent from the Commission's proposals. A genuine decentralisation of fisheries management and the recognition of stakeholders at a regional level (e.g. Member State decision makers, scientists, industry representatives, NGOs) is essential to achieve sustainable, and regional management system.

- 3. Fair fishing abroad – The principles of the CFP must apply to all European fisheries and fishing boats wherever they operate in the world's oceans. The CFP has influence beyond its borders, so we must aim to export best practice to other fisheries.*

It is disappointing to see so little in the Commission's proposals on taking the lead in global fisheries governance. Clear targets, measures and deadlines are needed to ensure this happens.

- 4. Improved quality – In order to maximise value for the consumer, an integrated and coherent set of policies right across the supply chain is needed, so that fishermen catch adapt their practices to market demand, avoid waste and add value from net to plate.*

While WWF welcomes the commitment to end discards, the proposal concentrates on a simplistic ban rather than finding longer-term solutions. The creation of markets (fishmeal and pet-food) for fish below minimum conservation size will still undermine the recovery of stocks. WWF believe the focus should be on reducing removal from the sea - incentivising more selective gear and fishing practices which should result in lower discarding.

WWF-Industry Alliance for the Reform of the CFP

WWF recognises the broad range of interests in CFP Reform, and have brought together a strong Alliance of leading associations for European seafood processors and retailers - the EU Fish Processors' and Traders' Association, AIPCE-CEP, Eurocommerce and Euro Coop - to push for solutions to the crisis of European seas and fisheries, supported by the Scottish White Fish Producers Association, SWFPA. For more information, please visit <http://bit.ly/CFPalliance>

Contact	Eva Groeneveld, Public Affairs Manager
Email/Tel	egroeneveld@wwfscotland.org.uk / 07766 150944