

CIESM Congress Panel 6 – 'Sustainable Fisheries?' – Short summary of key point

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summary by Sybille van den Hove

The Panel focused on options for sustainable fisheries, but also more broadly for sustainable relations to our marine environment. It looked in particular at interfaces between science and society, science and policy, science and stakeholders.

Three main themes were addressed across the five presentations:

1. **Knowledge:** including science, monitoring (including citizen science) and indicators.
2. **Actors:** scientists, fishermen, managers, the public, the media, governments and administrations, the private sector, ...
3. **Processes and governance:** including participation, co-management, the ecosystem approach and integrated management across areas, sectors and levels.

Ferdinando Boero presented the innovative CIESM Jellywatch programme. **Ernesto Azzurro** addressed some potentialities and limits of fishermen participation in biodiversity monitoring programmes. **Pilar Pereda** presented two examples of fisheries co-management in Spain, including one dating back to the 1960's. **Yves Henocque** focused on marine spatial planning in the Mediterranean. Finally, **Doug Wilson** discussed governance arrangement and the dilemmas of cooperation between fishers, scientists and policy.

During the discussions between the panel and the audience, the following key topics were addressed:

- On processes and governance, the need to share and learn from experiences (distant in space or time) was stressed, as well of the necessity to link across spatial and political scales. Key challenges in this regard relate to sustaining, upscaling and transferring practices.
- On data collection and monitoring, the importance of trust in knowledge and in knowledge holders was underlined. In particular the importance of scientist trusting lay knowledge and of stakeholders and the public trusting scientific knowledge.
- Ecosystem approaches to management must go beyond single species, fish only, or individual habitat types towards embracing the whole ecosystem and its functioning.
- The importance of step by step approaches was stressed.
- An increased dialogue (in quantity and in quality) between institutions and actors at all levels was recognised as necessary to support transitions to, and implementation of, sustainable management of our relations to the marine environment, and sustainable fisheries in particular.

- Key building stones for sustainable fisheries governance were deemed to include:
 - Ecosystemic science
 - Monitoring of non-fish species
 - Action on overcapacity for fishing
 - A reduction of harmful and perverse subsidies
 - Networks of marine protected areas
 - An approach taking into account broader development issues
 - Taking into account geo-political and economic factors
 - Increased participation of all actors
 - Modifying property right regimes

- The responsibility of scientists to inform, exchange, reach out and provide support to decision-making and management processes was highlighted.
- The importance of interdisciplinary science to allow for looking at the broader picture was stressed by several panel members and participants. In particular, understanding of environmental forcing, ecosystem functions, human behaviour and global socio-ecological systems requires interdisciplinary approaches.
- Many participants recognised the importance of strategic planning of research allowing to move towards more systemic approaches and providing the possibility to include not so "immediate" topics, e.g. the jellyfish issue.
- The specific issue of aquaculture was briefly addressed, stressing that it is too often looked at independently of fisheries, whereas it can be unsustainable for many reasons, e.g. because farmed fish are fed with wild fish (e.g. Peruvian anchovies), or because the large carnivore species are needed in the wild for a balanced ecosystem, as in the example of the proliferation of jellyfish stemming in part from the reduction in populations of its predator species.
- It was also stressed that invasive species are a serious issue of concern in the Mediterranean and that too little research on the topic is carried out, in particular research accounting for the specificities of the Mediterranean basin and research on potential mitigation measures.