

**EFCA Online Advisory Board Meeting
8 October 2021 - 09:30 - 13:00**

LDAC Summary Notes prepared by Julien Daudu and Alexandre Rodríguez

Chaired by Dr Susan Steele – New EFCA Executive Director since 1 September 2021

State of play from the ACs - LDAC:

1. Introduction

- [Thanks]
- The LDAC's mandate includes all waters not subject to the jurisdiction of the European Union.
- Its main objectives are to prepare and provide evidence-based advice and recommendations to the European Commission and Member States to contribute to the implementation of the external dimension of the CFP.
- As such the LDAC is working on a wide range of issues from SFPAs to RFMOs and other international organizations such as FAO.
- We also deal with horizontal matters including reinforcing Monitoring, Control and Surveillance systems.
- The LDAC has been actively engaged since its creation in 2005 in promoting an enhanced role and mandate of the European Fisheries Control Agency in assisting the Commission to implement the international dimension of the CFP.
- In short, we have been long-time supporters of EFCA's international operations and have a strong interest in the work of the Agency in this respect.
- In our meetings we regularly discuss with DG MARE about the state of play of the implementation of Fisheries Control, the IUU Regulation and the SMEFF and measures to increase transparency and reporting of fishing activities.
- We also have been quite prolific in producing advice on trade policy issues, the promotion of level playing field or the control of imports and traceability.
- We are committed to continue actively engaging with EFCA and look forward to welcoming you for next meeting of our Executive Committee (30 November in Madrid), where we will hold an open dialogue on the state of play of the External Dimension of the CFP and future challenges and opportunities together with DG MARE (Directorate B), Spanish Ministry of Fisheries (SGP-MAPA) and Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI).

2. What has the LDAC achieved since the last Advisory Board Meeting?^{1,2}

- Since the Advisory Board last met in April 2021, the LDAC published a number of pieces of advice that have some relevance to fisheries control system outside EU waters.
- **Level playing field:**
 - In May, we adopted a fully-fledged piece of advice containing recommendations to progress and leverage in achieving an even level playing field for EU and non-EU fisheries products and fishing operations.
 - This advice covered, amongst other things, IUU fishing, the implementation of the SMEFF, SFPAs and RFMO/As.
 - I will not take you through the extensive set of recommendations developed but simply highlight that we have called to ensure that EFCA plays an active role in these areas.
- **Regional sustainable fisheries management in West Africa:**
 - In this advice, we called on the EU to support efforts towards the regional management of shared resources in the region.
 - With, on the long term, the establishment of a non-tuna RFMO covering West African waters.
 - On the short term, we believe that the EU should, amongst other things, proactively support specific cooperation between West Africa neighbouring countries with which it has an SFPAs and/or dialogue under the EU IUU Regulation, and this in order to gradually move towards a concerted management of resources.

3. A brief look at issues of interest to the LDAC in coming months

- Our next piece of advice, which is likely to be adopted and published very soon, is a joint advice of the MAC and the LDAC on fostering the EU's leadership in reducing the detrimental impact of flags of convenience in the fishing sector.
- Our recommendations should include the need to prioritise action on States having adopted policies of convenience while providing support to partner countries and other willing States to increase their capacity to fight IUU fishing and effecting

¹ Relevant to the mandate of EFCA.

² Additional work that may not be directly relevant to the mandate of EFCA: [LDAC Advice for NAFO 43rd annual meeting](#) and [EP-ETF-LDAC joint Letter requesting the transposition of key international legal instruments on Safety and Labour Standards in the Fishing Sector](#). This list excludes all publications relating to the functioning of the ACs and the impact of Brexit.

fundamental reforms of their fisheries policies. This is another area where the work of EFCA is important.

- On another note, we continue following very closely developments in RFMOs, particularly in ICCAT - in view of the upcoming meetings and management proposals for key stocks such as tropical tuna or shortfin mako - and in IOTC in respect of which I wish to echo concerns about the increasing numbers of Parties objecting to Resolution 21/01 on YFT. This will be part of our work in the coming months.
- We will also be active in the promotion of labour and social issues related to fisheries in the EU agenda and in the international arena. And we will continue to follow the ongoing evaluation of SFPAs and the review of the EU Fisheries Control System.
- We also follow the work of ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT as regards West Africa and more particularly the control of FADs, regional observers/port inspection protocols and the preparation of a compendium of fisheries regulations; and we also cooperate with them notably on SFPAs. Similarly, we follow the developments around the EU-funded ECOFISH project.
- We remain interested in the developments of PESCAO [in relation to the promotion of good governance, and coordinated sub-regional approach to fisheries control].
- Finally, we look forward to the third five-year external independent evaluation of the Agency (2017-2021) as we had actively engaged in the second five-year external independent evaluation (2012-2016), promoting EFCA's international operations³.

Additional comments / interventions made during the meeting (8 October 2021)

Intervention from Alex: In relation to Rosa Caggiano and Pedro Galache's comments on sightings of non-EU vessels engaged in IUU activities: in the LDAC we are also working in developing a fully-fledged advice in relation to Morocco as strategic partner. There is an ongoing issue with sightings of large-scale pelagic driftnets operating in Mediterranean and Atlantic in ICCAT RA. This an internationally forbidden practice according to UNGA Resolution 46/2015 with a very negative impact on conservation of marine living marine resources - The LDAC issued recently an advice on similar tone for IOTC:

https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC_Position_drifnets_Indian_Ocean_5March2021FINAL.pdf

Pedro Gamache informed that PESCAO project has been granted a 1-year extension that will serve to further develop a Regional FMC in Tema (Ghana) with FWCM (they also have an action more developed with SFRC) where both exchange of data between countries and training of inspectors and observers (in coordination with COMHAFAT?) will be included.

³ In this respect see:

https://ldac.eu/images/documents/publications/LDAC_Opinion_on_EFCA_Role_on_International_Dimension_of_CFP.pdf.

LDAC supports and welcomes the European Coastguard Unit Guide and digital cooperation and the regional fisheries management and control approach in West Africa.

Susan Steele announced that a tender will be launched soon in relation to the 5-year external independent evaluation and that contributions and active feedback from ACs will be much welcome and sought.