

“CEVIS”

New thinking in European fisheries management

Hitherto, European fisheries management has been based on a centralised ‘command and control’ regime, the Common Fisheries Policy, which is widely regarded by the fishing industry, the conservation community and other interested groups as having been less effective than it could have been in respect to both biological and economic sustainability. To increase the effectiveness of its fisheries management, the EU could implement a number of innovative approaches which have formerly been implemented in non-EU countries. However, for the right choices to be made, a thorough study of the various options and their applicability in the European setting needs to be conducted.

Biological robustness, economic efficiency, the cost-effectiveness of management activities and social robustness are four general objectives that are common to most fisheries management systems in the world. Undertaking actions to achieve any one of these objectives may however produce effects or trade-offs on the other objectives, which may generate conflicts and hurt individual or group interests. Innovations to management applied in other regions of the world show that smart mechanisms can be introduced to diminish negative effects of fisheries management when aiming at one or all of the aforementioned objectives.

CEVIS is an EU-funded project that **examines four ideas of innovative management by assessing them in respect to the four abovementioned objectives.**

These ideas are:

1. Participatory fisheries governance

Different forms of participatory government exist in fisheries management. When the focus is on participation by fishers one usually talks about co-management. Producer Organisations are examples of participatory governance in two respects: ‘downstream’ they allow producers to adapt production to market demand;

‘upstream’ they have also become an instrument of the industry’s quota self-management in some countries (e.g. UK, the Netherlands). The Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) that resulted from the CFP to enhance stakeholder involvement are also a form of participatory governance, although they only have an advisory role to play.

2. Rights-based regimes

These systems are based on rights to harvest a certain amount of fish of particular species, in designated areas and/or given periods of time. The form of rights-based system most commonly considered for Europe is Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs), which seeks to mimic terrestrial private property systems by establishing transferable rights to a portion of a quota.

3. Effort-control regimes

Effort control can be exercised in three basic forms. The first is to exclude certain areas from fishing by establishing marine protected areas or marine reserves. The second is to allocate the fishing effort among fishers, for example through assigning fishers days at sea. The third is to reduce the fleet capacity by buybacks.

4. Decision-rule systems

Decision-rule systems are self-binding mechanisms, which



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transfer decision-making power from administrations or politics to a system of more or less ‘automatic’ responses to certain developments or situations. Examples are harvest control rules and the so-called “Traffic Light method”. Neither of these systems has historically been used to any significant extent within the EU, where TACs generally have been negotiated on a yearly basis in the Council. The multi-annual recovery plans to help rebuild stocks that are in danger of collapse are an example of an EU harvest control rule system, which aims to make fish stock management subject to rules rather than political negotiations. However, the EU still uses these instruments in a hesitant and incomplete manner.

The CEVIS research has started with taking a closer look at cases of innovative fisheries management in Iceland, Alaska, Canada and New Zealand. Each of these countries has similar fisheries to those in the EU, but, unlike the EU, implemented one or a combination of the above mentioned types of innovations.

Based on this research, CEVIS will have two final products. The first is an **Innovation Evaluation Framework** made up of indicators of inputs and outcomes in relation to the four general management objectives. This will be an aid to fisheries managers wishing to assess the suitability of possible changes in EU fisheries

management practices. The second is a **report on four European case studies that evaluates the potential regime-level innovations for use in European fisheries management**. The four European test cases include one outside the EU, the Faeroe Islands, and three EU cases: the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the Western Shelf. This way, the CEVIS project will provide fisheries managers with insights into the operation of alternative regimes and help them to be better informed about the ecological, social, economic and legal consequences of implementing any particular management regime.

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