WWF: Analysis on consistency between measures to conserve marine resources, standards of maritime safety and working conditions within the CFP, its state of play and options for the future

Terms of Reference for consultancy

WWF wishes to ensure a legislative consistency between measures to conserve marine biological resources and standards of maritime safety and working conditions. WWF firmly believes that protecting and restoring nature cannot be separate from the benefit of people and the planet; more resilient ecosystems have already delivered opportunities for job creation and help to sustain livelihoods. However, in some EU Member States, the transition to sustainable fishing being a source of high quality jobs remains low and access to marine resources is not fully conditional on the impact of fishing activities. This undermines economic incentives to move towards low impact fisheries. Quality of employment, specifically in terms of wages and safety, is lacking in some fisheries and continuing with “business as usual” will have severe negative impacts on the viability of the most vulnerable coastal communities. The current situation of reduced yields, poor profitability and a highly uncertain future in some fisheries may offer a window of socio-economic opportunity to restructure the EU fishing fleet. This could be an opportunity to improve energy efficiency hand-in-hand with decreasing fleet capacity, operation costs and lower catches while sustaining and possibly increasing income for more prosperous coastal fisheries.

In the context of the evaluation and the revision of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) beginning in 2021, this study aims to provide guidance to EU policy makers on how to establish a level playing field within the EU fleet:

(i) Ensure the framework of the CFP contributes to a fair standard of living for those who depend on fishing activities, bearing in mind various aspects of coastal fisheries and socio-economic issues (article 2 of the CFP);

(ii) Review where gaps stand in collecting socio-economic data necessary for sustainable fisheries management (including within the seafood value chain) in Member States (article 25); and

(iii) Ensure equality and equitable opportunities for all to benefit from healthy marine resources (Article 17).

A couple of issues identified as examples:

- Examining the internal dimension of the CFP, fair socio-economic conditions mostly address the impact of fishing on the environment, the history of compliance, the contribution to the local economy and historic catch levels. Member States are responsible for allocating fishing opportunities and for providing incentives for fishing vessels to deploy selective fishing gear or to use fishing techniques with reduced environmental impacts, such as reduced energy consumption or habitat damage (article 17). Today, this objective is not fully implemented and mechanisms, including financing instruments such as EMFF, must be better targeted to help the development of low impact fisheries and secure their access to marine resources (increased share of quotas, etc.) as well as to the European market.
Looking at the external dimension of the CFP, the EU must ensure that seafood products entering the market after being caught outside EU waters are not subject to any human rights abuses and are fished in a sustainable manner. This reinforces sustainable efforts and best practices of the EU fleet operators, keeping them competitive and sustaining their livelihoods. Increased transparency and traceability of seafood products is needed to ensure a level playing field with foreign fishing vessels exporting to the EU market.

This study will provide recommendations to EU decision makers to increase coherency between measures to conserve marine biological resources, standards of maritime safety and working conditions that contribute to the European Green Deal and fair recovery plans, according to the CFP.

Project Objectives & Methodology

- Comparatively gather information on the state of play of the implementation of the socio-economic dimension of the CFP in EU Member States in order to identify gaps and weaknesses
  - Indicators could touch on the detention of pelagic vs demersal species between small-scale fisheries and large-scale industrial fleets
- Provide a framework to assess the socio-economic impacts of selected fisheries (e.g. bottom trawling, small-scale fisheries) and opportunities to benefit from the marine resources
  - The framework could be developed based on internationally recognised best practices in terms of safety and working conditions for fishers, such as ILO Convention No 188, other International Maritime Organization's standards as well as the current EU regulations
  - The international dimension should be taken into account to make sure low impact EU fishing are not in competition with foreign fisheries with less requirements in terms of human rights

The future – recommendations to increase sustainability of fisheries in the CFP by incorporating the socio-economic dimension

- Challenges – consider the challenges of having a transition towards low impact fisheries from a socio-economic perspective and defined management gaps
- Opportunities – consider the benefits of managing fisheries in the EU in more sustainable ways, taking good working conditions into account; provide a projection of economic benefits, if possible
- Recommendations – Provide clear recommendations to EU decision makers on appropriate measures to resolve the legal inconsistencies between the various legal instruments adopted by the EU, inconsistencies for which fishers are paying the price
- Alternatives – consider alternative management measures (e.g. trade measures, consumer information) within the EU legal framework that would need to be amended to contribute to the goals of the CFP.

Delivery on the above described work will largely require desktop research work, synthesizing information available from websites, online publications and other materials. There is a general expectation that facts are cross-checked with key experts in the region and further information gathering via interviews may be required. The first point of reference for these interviews should always be WWF staff in the EU who can then provide guidance on the key areas of concern and further desired insights.
Deliverables & Proposed Timeline

- By 14 September – Appointment of consultant/signature of contract
- By 5 October – Preliminary draft outline and research plan (including priority interviews)
- By 16 November – Draft Report completed
- By 15 December - Delivery of Final Report following comments from WWF

Instructions for Applicants

WWF is seeking a consultant with expertise in the field of fisheries management and, in particular, the socio-economic aspect of the CFP. Experience working with and knowledge of the challenges faced by the fisheries sectors in the EU would be a major advantage. The ability to synthesise technical information and excellent report writing skills (in English) are essential.

Proposals should include the relevant background of the consultant(s) involved, CVs of consultants who will participate in the project, and a cost estimate for the project. Interested experts, institutions and or consortia should send their letter of intent with the relevant documents to the contact below by email no later than close of business Friday 7 September. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Project Manager:

Dr Antonia Leroy
Head of Ocean Policy
WWF European Policy Office
Rue du Commerce 123, Brussels, Belgium
Email: aleroy@wwf.eu
www.wwf.eu