



2021

Seminar on Fisheries Science



MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE 2021 SEMINAR ON FISHERIES SCIENCE

1. WHAT INSIGHTS WERE GAINED

“Marine protected areas are an investment for a better future for fisheries. By protecting the ocean, we preserve our fisheries.” (Dr Joachim Claudet)

Marine protected areas (MPAs) represent a core element of the European Union Biodiversity Strategy, which states that at least 30% of the European Union waters should be protected by 2030 and 10% are to be strictly protected by then. Aims include promoting biodiversity as well as providing benefits for fisheries. Sustainable fisheries management supports a safe future for our ocean as it secures food provisioning, resilient ecosystems, and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. Achieving synergies between biodiversity conservation and fisheries management objectives in MPAs works best when stakeholders, and especially fishermen, are involved in the planning and co-management.

2. TAKE-AWAY MESSAGES

MPAs are an investment for a better future for fisheries. There is scientific evidence that substantial benefits for fisheries materialise but it may take some time before they do. In this phase, public and / or private support to fishermen is very important. Well-designed and effectively managed MPAs can offer benefits and constitute a great opportunity, both for the environment and for fisheries.

MPAs need clear conservation objectives and management measures based on the best available scientific advice. We need strong science and data to assess how effective MPAs are, how we can ensure the enabling conditions are in place, and how to dynamically adjust management measures when conditions change.

The sea can be much more productive if it is well managed. The “Torre Guaceto MPA experience” shows that more fish and larger fish can be caught by applying adaptive management in cooperation with stakeholders. On a local scale, this confirms scientific advice and shows very good prospects for improving livelihoods of fishermen while reducing impacts on the marine environment.

Involve all stakeholder in the process of planning and implementing MPAs. MPAs work best where fishermen are involved in their design and management – a climate of trust and cooperation needs to be installed to create buy-in and sense of ownership. Stakeholders have – naturally and not surprisingly – differing opinions about what, why, and how protecting and about how much of MPAs. It is important to observe how the costs and benefits of MPAs are distributed between different groups. And we need to keep up the dialogue involving all - fishermen/industry, NGOs, scientists and MPA managers on the ground – to make sure that we take into account all the knowledge and all the considerations.