

***Fisheries management measures in an MPA: socioeconomic impact assessment and governance issues in the case of the German small scale gillnet fisheries around the island of Fehmarn in the Baltic Sea***

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## **Summary**

To study whether the high level (Europe wide) point of view on fisheries policy objectives can be useful to shed light not only on the objectives discussion but also on the problem of micro-management a further step is taken by performing consultations with several actors around the German fisheries. Ecological, economic and social objectives developed inside the project SOCIOEC (Socioeconomic effects of the future CFP) are presented to fishermen, fishermen representatives, manager and environmental representatives in an attempt to fine tune them and make them suitable to serve as benchmarks for an impact analysis of current and future management measures.

## **Introduction**

One of the contributions of the new CFP has been a stronger emphasis on MPAs and the possibility of a larger participation of stakeholders through regionalisation. The project SOCIOEC studies the socioeconomic effects of the new European fisheries management framework regulation, and in one of its case studies, the German small scale fisheries in the Baltic Sea around the island of Fehmarn, it aims at applying its framework of analysis to the fisheries management measures established inside a Natura 2000 MPA, in an area where several other MPAs belonging to different regions and countries also exist and where different power relationships among stakeholders affect the governance of the fisheries.

## **Materials and Methods**

The framework implies identifying management objectives, analyzing the incentives created by the management measures and the governance arrangement under which they operate. The expected result is a more comprehensive, integrative impact assessment. In the case study analysed the management process involved setting time restrictions to fisheries to protect other species (harbor porpoises and sea ducks) and establishing a cooperation between management, fishermen and science through a voluntary agreement. The objectives of the different stakeholders where derived from legal texts, professional newspapers and interviews. From the analysis of the governance mechanism chosen for the management the incentive for compliance where analysed based on public statements and interviews. With the tools developed in SOCIOEC we aim at further developing the methodology of impact assessment for data poor cases as this, which, in our case, involves searching for multiple sources of data and consulting the fishermen and their representatives for additional information. The data collected under this study will contribute to check the quality of existing quantitative data, as well as to complement it with qualitative data that was not available up to now. Another methodology that was incorporated to the study was the use of new categories of fishery dependent data obtained through interviews.

## **Results and Discussions**

Inside the framework of policy objectives delivered by SOCIOEC (see deliverables 2.1 and 2.2,) the objectives of the management measures were identified as being “minimizing bycatch of vulnerable and protected species”, a long term ecological objective at the level of society and to “ensure viable coastal communities”, a long term social objective. Both objectives are explicitly mentioned in the text of the agreement. However, the compatibility of those objectives, especially in the short term, was contested by the fishermen, also backed by the first results of an economic impact assessment of the measures. Some fishermen have declared the agreement to be a minor bad, and have accepted it

because they considered a previous version of the agreement even worse. A fishermen representative has also declared that they accepted it and would fulfill it because otherwise they would not be granted another chance to cooperate. These findings set some doubts on the quality of the agreement and this might compromise the compliance with it.

The fact that similar levels of governance, as the government of the neighboring federal states of Low Saxony and Mecklemburg Western Pomerania have not applied equivalent measures to protect the same species also detracts legitimacy to the measures. This occurs in spite of the measures having been accepted under what can be formally considered an intermediate/ high degree of governance (Raakjaer et al. 1999), with elements of partnership (measures are decided, to a certain extent, in cooperation with the fishermen) and even delegation (a scientific body is set to decide independently important aspects)

The impact of other issues on the incentives of the fishermen to cooperate also include the lack of acceptance from the managers of the fishermen's knowledge to avoid the sea ducks by voluntarily avoiding their feeding grounds (see Voyer et al. 2013) as well as other inputs from scientists of different countries setting doubts on the ecological effects of the measures.

## References

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