

Recommendation n.º 43

**About “Assessing Spillover from Marine Protected Areas to Adjacent Fisheries: (...)Outermost Regions”**

Considering MRAG Europe’s study on the “Assessing Spillover from Maritime Protected Areas (MPAs) to Adjacent Fisheries: Baltic Sea, North Sea, Western Atlantic Waters of the European Union, and Outermost Regions”, the Outermost Regions Advisory Council (CCRUP), hereby recommends, that the opinion of our members be valued on the following issues

**(4944)** What type of stakeholder category are you?

R<sub>1</sub> (Azores – Pelagics): Fisheries Sector.

R<sub>2</sub> (Madeira – Pelagics): Fisheries Sector.

R<sub>3</sub> (Azores - Demersal and Benthic): Fisheries Sector.

**(4959)** Where do you land the majority of your fish?

R<sub>1</sub> / R<sub>2</sub> / R<sub>3</sub>: Auction.

**(4960)** What primary fishing gear do you use?

R<sub>1</sub>: Pole and line.

R<sub>2</sub>: Pole and line, surface longlines.

R<sub>3</sub>: Hand lines, bottom longlines and surface longlines.

**(4961)** What are your main target species?

R<sub>1</sub>: Tunas (*Thunnus spp.*).

R<sub>2</sub>: Bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), Albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*), Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*).

R<sub>3</sub>: Red sea bream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*), Blackberry rosefish (*Helicolenus dactylopterus*), Conger (*Conger conger*), Forkbeard (*Phycis phycis*), Alfonsin (*Beryx decadactylus*), Splendid alfonsin (*Beryx splendens*), Atlantic wreckfish (*Polyprion americanus*), Offshore rockfish (*Pontinus kuhlii*), Black scabbardfish (*Aphanopus carbo*) and Blue jack mackerel (*Trachurus picturatus*).

**(4963)** How aware are you of regulations and management measures of the MPA?

R<sub>1</sub>/R<sub>2</sub>/R<sub>3</sub>: They know the laws in force regarding the MPA.

**(4964)** Where do you regularly fish?

R<sub>1</sub>: In and beyond the MPA.

R<sub>2</sub>/ R<sub>3</sub>: Beyond the MPA.

**(4965)** Is this the same place you regularly fished before the MPA was established? If not, please explain where you fished before.

R<sub>1</sub>: Yes.

R<sub>2</sub>: No.

R<sub>3</sub>: Yes.

**(4968)** How frequently do you fish inside the MPA?

R<sub>1</sub>: Every fishing trip.

R<sub>2</sub>/ R<sub>3</sub>: Never.

**(4969)** How frequently do you fish adjacent to the MPA?

R<sub>1</sub>/ R<sub>2</sub>: Every fishing trip.

R<sub>3</sub>: It depends on the areas in which we wish to fish.

**(4970)** How frequently do you fish outside the MPA?

R<sub>1</sub>/ R<sub>3</sub>: Every fishing trip.

**(4971)** How frequently do you fish in both?

R<sub>3</sub>: They fish beyond the MPA on every trip.

**(5008)** Since the establishment of the MPA, are you experiencing changes in your catch?

If so, what are these changes?

R<sub>1</sub>: No.

R<sub>2</sub>: There is definitely less catching.

R<sub>3</sub>: There has been no increase in available stocks in the areas adjacent to the MPA.

**(5010)** Are there specific species that have become more abundant inside the MPA or adjacent to the fishing ground since the implementation of the MPA?

R<sub>1</sub>/ R<sub>2</sub>: In case of tunas, as they are migratory species, they do not remain in the protected area and do not therefore apply.

R<sub>3</sub>: Empirically, it seems that the available stocks of Red sea bream and Atlantic wreckfish in the MPA have increased, however the stocks existing prior the creation of the MPA were never quantified, so it is impossible to measure them accurately.

**(5011)** To what extent do you believe spillover from the MPA has contributed to the recovery of overexploited fish populations in adjacent fisheries?

R<sub>1</sub>: It has no impact on pelagics fisheries.

R<sub>2</sub>: It doesn't help at all.

R<sub>3</sub>: Larval exportation and occupation of empty spaces by juvenile fish may occasionally occur.

**(5012)** To what extent do you agree that fishers' catches in this area are higher now than before the MPA was established?

R<sub>1</sub>: It has had no impact on pelagics fisheries.

R<sub>2</sub>: They totally disagree; less fish are being caught.

R<sub>3</sub>: They disagree, as no-one knows the size of the population existing prior to the creation of the MPA.

**(5013)** To what extent do you agree that fisheries in this area benefit economically by having the MPA?

R<sub>1</sub>: It has no impact on pelagics fisheries.

R<sub>2</sub>/R<sub>3</sub>: They totally disagree, you can't fish in the MPA.

**(5014)** To what extent do you agree the designation of an MPA/area in where fishing is limited in this area has led to an increase in revenues for fisheries?

R<sub>1</sub>: It has no impact on pelagics fisheries.

R<sub>2</sub>: They totally disagree, the creation of the MPA has reduced fishermen's income.

R<sub>3</sub>: They disagree. Essentially, the creation of an MPA reduces fishing space and consequently fishermen's income.

**(5015)** To what extent do you agree that the fishing community in this area feels their fisheries livelihoods are more secure after the MPA was established?

R<sub>1</sub>: It has no impact on pelagics fisheries.

R<sub>2</sub>: They totally disagree, fishermen are against the MPA.

R<sub>3</sub>: They disagree, as they have no idea of the size of the population existing prior to the creation of the MPA.

**(5016)** In your opinion, are there more fishers than before the MPA was established?

R<sub>1</sub>/R<sub>2</sub>: No.

R<sub>3</sub>: The number of professional fishermen is falling.

**(5051)** In your opinion, is the MPA acting as a conservation tool, a fisheries management tool or both? Please explain your response.

R<sub>1</sub>: Tuna fishing is allowed in the MPA.

R<sub>2</sub>: No, the type of fishing practiced is sustainable, on a "fish by fish" basis, and it cannot be regarded as a conservation instrument in the case of tuna as it is a migratory species.

R<sub>3</sub>: The MPA in itself does not guarantee the conservation or management of resources; additional measures are required.

(5052) Rate the level of agreement with the statement “In order to develop commercial fisheries, certain areas of the MPA should be permanently closed to fishing”. Please explain your answer.

R<sub>1</sub>/R<sub>2</sub>: They totally disagree, the type of fishing gear used is sustainable and a reserve can co-exist with this type of fishing.

R<sub>3</sub>: They agree, provided that the number of restricted-fishing MPAs is limited and that they are geared to both commercial and recreational fishing.

(5063) Is the MPA helping to protect and improve biodiversity or does it benefit fisheries and fishing communities? Or both? Please explain.

R<sub>1</sub>/R<sub>2</sub>: No, because it further limits the areas that can be fished, thereby giving rise to lower levels of income. The lack of monitoring, which is a determining factor in these cases, is not being dealt with appropriately.

R<sub>3</sub>: There is no continental shelf in the Azores and they fish on seamounts, a significant distance from the coast (of the islands). Offshore MPAs in the Azores are a recent creation and the results are basically unknown, as no studies on the size of the stocks existing before and after the implementation of the MPAs have been carried out in these areas.

Considering the above mentioned, the **CCRUP recommends that the European Commission value the opinion of our members** regarding the *«assessing spillover from maritime protected areas (MPAs) to adjacent fisheries: Baltic Sea, North Sea, Western Atlantic Waters of the European Union, and Outermost Regions»*.

The President of the Executive Committee of the CCRUP,

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(David Pavón González)