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**КОНСУЛТАТИВЕН СЪВЕТ ЗА ЧЕРНО МОРЕ /КЧМ/  
CONSILIUL CONSULTATIV PENTRU MAREA NEAGRA**

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**BLSAC Activity report - 2022**

Title of the meeting	Date	Place	Key results of the meeting (brief summary of the minutes)
<b>Inter AC Secretariats and Chairs Coordination Meeting</b>	18.01.2022	Videoconference	<p>On the meeting was discussed the Horizontal topics of shared interest for ACs for 2022: Identification of topics and coordination of work programme priorities; Proposals for setup of joint AC (Working Group/Focus Group) meetings; Appointment of lead coordinators for each topic; Information by DG MARE of these topics at Inter ACs / Joint AC groups.</p> <p>Also was discussed the decision making processes for joint AC consultations and streamlining of urgent consultations by fast-track procedure.</p> <p>Financial and administrative issues with Commission: Processing and payment of Annual Grant Agreements; Format of Inter-AC meetings and public/general consultations; Interpretation during Inter-AC coordination meetings with MARE; Implications of new funding model ("lump sum" method).</p>

Inter ACs meeting	19.01.2022	Videoconference	<p>The meeting was attended by Mr Daniel Buhai, Mr Yordan Gospodinov, and Mrs Elena Peneva. In the pre-lunch session, Dr. Gospodinov made a speech on the pollution of the Black Sea from the inflow of rivers, as well as on the eutrophication of the sea. He emphasized the greater need for attention of fishermen as extractors of raw materials and more administrative and financial support for fisheries and aquaculture at sea. He also highlighted some technical issues (aspects mentioned also by other participants) with the information required and the transmitted common questionnaire for examining the action plan and its specific and in-depth environmental focus. Dr Gospodinov underlined that BISAC actively participated in initiatives for helping fishermen, processors and aquaculture at the onset of the COVID-19 crisis. He welcomed the new Chairman of BISAC and thanked for the perfect organization and the virtual holding of the meeting. Dr Gospodinov expressed special gratitude for the exposition of Ms Charlina Vitcheva, Director-General of DG MARE. The meeting was organized by the Commission (DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries; DG Environment) with the participation of their representatives, observers from the Member States and from the European Parliament.</p> <p>At the meeting it became clear that the focus will be mainly on fishing opportunities, because they have a socio-economic aspect and are the basis of our activities. A request was made to the AC to actively participate in the signing of the new programs of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF). It is necessary to act innovatively in a situation of food crisis.</p> <p>On the topic of the growing desire of economic operators to build wind farms in the sea and the conflict they will cause from the occupation of fishing fields, it was explained that: Navigation corridors will remain in the areas of the wind farms and that there will be no restrictions on the construction of aqua farms, and vessels up to 24 meters in length will be able to fish there without restrictions. From the overview study of the effects of offshore wind farms at the legal and socio-economic aspects were highlighted: the needs for quantitative studies to assess the monetary value of the loss of fishing and aquaculture, case-by-case arrangements between developers and local fisheries organisation, and also early engagement in discussions and planning, on a continuous basis and by taking into account the fishery and aquaculture needs.</p> <p>Regarding underwater noise, EC Decision 848/2017 was indicated and the permissible values are listed in indicator 11. Dr. Gospodinov emphasized that international exercises with underwater explosions are being held in front of Bulgaria and Romania and we are witnessing the disappearance of passage fish for some time and the death of young dolphins, for which we have no evidence about the reason, but only state the fact. The same happens after an ultrasound study for the presence of oil or gas fields. Gospodinov asked whether DG Environment's project for the protection of the marine environment, led by Ms Maud Casier, had included this study and how it affected fish and mammals.</p> <p>Serious attention was paid to the financing of the ACs, as well as to the sustainability of the food system. This will have a wide scope and an impact assessment will be mandatory.</p> <p>At the end of the meeting were highlighted the next meetings planned for 2022.</p>
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<p>WG 6 - Working conditions in fishing</p>	<p>23.02.2022</p>	<p>Videoconference</p>	<p>The meeting was attended by Mrs. Pinelipi Belecku from the EC, Mrs. Yordanka Chobanova from the EC, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov from the Institute of Oceanology Varna, Mr. Mihail Leonov State Secretary Ministry of Agriculture in the field of Fisheries, Romania, Mr. Gheorghe Vacaru Director-General in the Managing Authority of the Operational Program for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs - DGP AMPOPAM, Mr. Eduard Diaconeasa- DGP AMPOPAM, Mrs. Andrea Ionascu - National Center for Maritime Programs in the Black Sea, Mr. Gabriel Popescu Director of the National Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture / NAFA / Constanta, Mr. Madar Ciprian labor inspector from the Directorate for Labor and Employment, Tulcea District.</p> <p>Mr. Daniel Buhaimentioned that the working conditions in fisheries in both Bulgaria and Romania are very difficult. Small-scale fisheries (SSF) uses very outdated and poorly equipped vessels that are dangerous to work with. Fishing conditions in the Black Sea are difficult, fishermen are at risk for their lives, and in the last three years there have been many unfortunate incidents in Romania with a fatal end. First of all, ways must be found to improve the vessels. Fishing facilities for small-scale fishermen also need improvement as well as providing them with more modern radars and means of localization. Also, many of them are not well prepared for this profession, with the exception of experienced fishermen, there are many young ones who sometimes do not comply with the worse conditions at sea, and this is a prerequisite for accidents. In Romania, a huge challenge for the whole sector is the lack of unloading sites.</p> <p>Mr. Yordan Gospodinov said that Bulgaria has a larger number of small-scale fishermen, based on the 370 km of coastline. Of the total fishing fleet of 1 846 vessels, about 600 of them rarely fish - these are the smallest boats, which are usually family-run and have no interest in undergoing any training because, according to them, fishing skills are hereditary and are passed down from generation to generation. Excluding the vessels, about 1000 boats fish commercially, some of them only seasonally, but there are also those that fish all year round and they represent a significant part of the catch in Bulgaria. The fisheries program is separated from the agricultural program and the policies pursued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and they are very rarely focused on the fisheries sector.</p> <p>Mr. Eduard Diaconeasa: Under the new program in Romania investments are planned to improve working conditions, as well as infrastructure. Following is a presentation on "Project for the Aquaculture and Fisheries Program 2021-2027". The following measures are foreseen in the new program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- modernization of fishing equipment and fishing vessels;</li> <li>- improvement of the fishing infrastructure - modernization of the port of Midia; provided funds for the construction of unloading sites and fishing shelters for storage and warehousing of fishing equipment. It is necessary to identify exactly where these places are and who the owners are, and the investment must be justified in places accessible to fishermen.</li> </ul>
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<p>FG 1 - Small-scale fishing</p>	<p>23.02.2022</p>	<p>Videoconference</p>	<p>The meeting was attended by Mrs. Pinelipi Belecku from the EC, Mrs. Yordanka Chobanova from the EC, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov from the Institute of Oceanology Varna, Mr. Mihail Leonov State Secretary Ministry of Agriculture in the field of Fisheries, Romania, Mr. Gheorghe Vacaru Director-General in the Managing Authority of the Operational Program for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs - DGP AMPOPAM, Mr. Eduard Diaconeasa- DGP AMPOPAM, Mrs. Andrea Ionascu - National Center for Maritime Programs in the Black Sea, Mr. Gabriel Popescu Director of the National Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture / NAFA / Constanta, Mr. Catalin Balaban from the SSF Association in Zhurilovka.</p> <p>Mr. Catalin Balaban from the SSF Association in Zhurilovka: presents some challenges to the SSF of Romania. The association it represents was established in 2007. The fishermen in it are from five communities, both from the Danube Delta and from the coastal areas of the Black Sea. The main problem for fishermen is the access to the Black Sea, the previous strait that existed to the Black Sea is closed. The lack of ports and infrastructure is another important issue that needs to be addressed. Last but not least is the lack of fishing shelters, places where fishermen could stay overnight if the weather does not allow them to go fishing. SSF from Zhurilovka carry out its activities in the Danube Delta Reserve, so there are many obstacles to the construction of such shelters in this area. The shelters made by the fishermen are made of nylon and you can't stay in them in worse weather conditions. Another important aspect is finding a solution to diversify fishing. Most fishermen catch only anchovies and Danube mackerel. If there are opportunities to catch other species, there will be additional opportunities for these fishermen, as well as ports where tourists can come and visit these fishing villages. The creation of a fisheries market is also needed in this area in order to present fishermen's catches there, which will attract buyers and give greater value to production. It would be good to have other additional activities to support fishing communities. Information on European fisheries funds does not reach a large number of fishermen and they do not have the opportunity to search the Internet.</p> <p>Mr. Eduard Diaconeasa: is aware of this difficulty for fishermen - to provide their own co-financing, which was an obstacle in the programming period 2014-2021. There are cases in which funding reaches 100%, especially for coastal fishing. A new program is now being developed, and simplified application opportunities for fishermen need to be developed. There are already 100% funding mechanisms in place, such as payment when an invoice is presented.</p> <p>Mrs. Pinelipi Belecku: He gave a presentation on "Small-scale fisheries in the Black Sea." The main components of the SSF Regional Action Plan for the Mediterranean and Black Sea RPOA-SSF are: Scientific research; Data collection; SSF management measures; Value chain. SSF's participation in the decision-making process; Capacity building; Decent work; Participation of women in the sector; Climate change and the environment. Mrs. Pinelipi Belecku: adds that the new fisheries fund supports sustainable fishing and its low environmental impact.</p>
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Executive Committee meeting	24.02.2022	Videoconference	<p>The meeting was attended by videoconference: Mrs. Ancuta Kazimirovica from National Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture /NAFA/, Romania and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanya Stamatova, Deputy Executive Director of Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture /EAFA/. Mr. Hristo Panayotov - Executive Director of EAFA, Burgas also joined the opening.</p> <p>It was decided that the General Meeting (GM) of BISAC to be held in two days on 13 and 14 April 2022, starting at 13.30, in Varna at the Hotel "Roslin Dimyat"</p> <p>Mr. Yordan Gospodinov presented the activity report of BISAC for 2021, prepared by the Secretariat. The report was voted for adoption of the text and its submission in this form to the BISAC General Meeting.</p> <p>Mrs. Ivelina Balanova, in her capacity as an accountant, presented the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) of BISAC for 2021 and a shortened balance sheet – as per the requirements of the Bulgarian law. Despite all the restrictions in 2021 BISAC managed to implement all the planned activities in its Work Program. For seven and a half months, BISAC has been working online without funding due to delays in payment by the EC. For 2021 there are enough membership fees collected for the expenses incurred. Financial discipline has been observed over the past year and BISAC has not gone beyond budgeted costs. The accumulated loss from previous years is decreasing.</p> <p>Ms. Petya Zhelezarska - registered auditor presents the audit report to BISAC members. The funding received from the EC in 2021 amounts to EUR 127 584. The funds spent are EUR 141,185, of which 90% should be covered by the EC and their amount is EUR 127 067. All expenses incurred during the year are related to the activities of BISAC and are supported by reliable documents. As in the previous year, the costs incurred are less than budgeted and this is a result of the Covid pandemic, which restricts the gathering of people and most BISAC events have been through online platforms. The membership fee received during the year was enough to cover the 10% of expenses for the account of BISAC, but as in previous years there are many uncollected membership fees. For everything that has been reported, there are supporting documents in accordance with the budget and it is properly documented.</p> <p>The documents for membership of the Association “Bulgarian Association of Fishermen, Processors and Traders of White Sand Mussel <i>Donax Trunculus</i>” from Bulgaria, represented by Mr. Svetlozar Vassilev were considered and the Association “Danube Identity” represented by Mr. Adrian Ampleev. The Executive Committee voted and decided that they will become a full members after paying the entrance fee of BGN 100 and the membership fee for the current year in the amount of EUR 2128 for fishing organisation and EUR 300 for NGOs with environmental focus, and compliance with the BISAC Statute.</p> <p><a href="https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-ex-com-24.02.2022-en.pdf">https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-ex-com-24.02.2022-en.pdf</a></p>
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ACs Secretariat meeting	25.02.2022	Videoconference	<p>On behalf the BISAC the meeting was attended by Mrs Elena Peneva and Ms Anca George. On the agenda the focus was given to the new Delegated Act on the functioning of Advisory Councils which has recently been published. Mrs Pascale Colson gave a short presentation on the new provisions featured in the legislative act. The meeting was kicked off with two administrative matters as per agenda, namely the future planning of AC meetings and financial matters concerning the lump sums methodology to be introduced in 2022.</p> <p>Mrs Rumjana Georgieva, DG GROW, joined the meeting to provide an update on lump sums. She explained that the Commission has been reviewing historical budgets from 2016 on as a reliable reference point. With the new lump sum methodology, it is assumed that budgets and work programmes are stable, however for the ACs who for any reason did not have a stable budget/programme, this was taken into account when deciding on lump sums. Georgieva clarified that the Commission is currently examining the budget forms together with the financial services and preparing the necessary documentation to ensure continuity for the 4-year FPAs. She mentioned that the positive side of lump sums is that they are dependent on the work programme, meaning that the lump sums can be fixed and applied multi-annually when the environment is stable. If the workplan changes, the budgets will need to be adjusted. The idea is to step away from the realized costs considerations and step towards evaluating deliverables. The ownership of the realization of deliverables is placed onto ACs. The deliverables are considered realization of workplan, the number of meetings and the number of advice papers. As long as the work programme is implemented sufficiently the ACs will be entitled to a 100% lump sum.</p> <p>Mrs Pascale Colson went on to present modifications introduced by the new Delegated Act on the functioning of Advisory Councils (DA, Act).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Each ACs shall designate at least one vice-chairperson belonging to the OIG. The WG might also have vice-chair from the OIG, however this is not compulsory.</li> <li>2. The GA and ExCom shall ensure balance and wide representation of all stakeholders, in particular of OIGs and SSF. OIGs having less resources shall be able to benefit from a lower fee, stressing the importance of wide representation of all stakeholders.</li> <li>3. Recommendations shall comply with CFP objectives and follow principles of transparency, respect of all opinions, they shall be adopted with consensus when possible, and dissenting opinions shall be recorded in case of no consensus. Colson mentioned that some ACs have in the past provided recommendations which were not in line with the CFP, which in the view of the Commission is a waste of time and resources.</li> <li>4. Performance review shall be executed every 5 years by an external and independent contractor.</li> <li>5. The DA establishes criteria for classifying members under the two categories: Sector organisations and Other Interest Groups.</li> </ol>
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INCDD Timmod project	28.02.2022	Via videoconference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• participant: Anca Gheorghe</li><li>• The national Validation Workshop organized within TIMMOD Project (“Promoting Technology Innovation in Environmental Monitoring and Modelling for Assessment of Fish Stock and Non-fish Resources”) in order to allow these stakeholders to familiarize and adopt project outputs and to replicate their harmonised structure in new tools built after project lifetime. Presentation of Draft Innovation Strategy to improve joint monitoring, data sharing and cross-border information exchange systems in compliance with MSFD and DCF.</li></ul>
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<p>WG 2 - Impact of climate change on fisheries'</p>	<p>15.03.2022</p>	<p>Rosslyn hotel Dimyat and videoconference</p>	<p>The meeting was attended by Mrs. Pinelipi Belecku of EC DG Maritime Affairs &amp; Fisheries, Mrs. Yordanka Chobanova from EC DG Maritime Affairs &amp; Fisheries, Mr. Hristo Panayotov – Managing Director of EAFA Burgas, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov IO Varna, Mr. Ivan Ivanov – EAFA Burgas, Mrs. Miroslava Robinson – Water Directorate, Varna, Mr. Victor Nita – Grigore Antipa Institute, Constanta, Mr. Eduard Diaconeasa - DGP AMPOPAM, Mr. Gabriel Popescu, Director of NAFA Constanta. A presentation by Mr. Violin Raykov on "Influence of environmental and climate factors on fish stocks and populations" followed.</p> <p>The warming of the planet's oceans has many consequences. Changes in ocean temperature can have a wide impact on marine species and biodiversity, as well as on human activities. Higher ocean surface temperatures can increase water vapor in the atmosphere, affecting the weather both at sea and above land. Ocean warming in coastal areas can cause algae and bacterial outbreaks to bloom, which can be dangerous to marine life, human health and industries relying on tourism and fisheries. The average annual sea surface temperature has risen in all European regional seas. Further ocean warming is expected in the future, potentially exceeding 3 ° C by the end of this century in a high-emission scenario, with slightly lower warming for the Atlantic than for other regional seas. The warming of the world's oceans is leading to rising sea levels and shifting coastal boundaries, sinking and emerging islands. During warming, the primary production changes - algae blooms, water pollution, changes in fish growth (this is the most characteristic effect observed) - shortening of individuals, premature spawning, changes in population migrations. Very interesting is the phenomenon called the effect of oxidative stress (OS), which the Institute of Oceanology has been working on in a current project under the Research Fund, observing 7-8 species of fish of commercial interest. An example is given of the Majid species, with markers found in the gills and liver measuring new oxidative stress. Disturbance of the pro / antioxidant balance in both organs is clearly demonstrated. However, there are differences in oxidative processes in both organs. The pro / antioxidant balance in the liver is more strongly influenced by the background factors of the aquatic environment (ie the presence of pollutants, pH) and no relationship has been found with body size. The mejid is a good example of a demersal species and is indicative of how the environment affects fish. These results, although preliminary, show that OS is induced in the gills and liver of the bear in response to various environmental factors, including the impact of fisheries.</p> <p>A presentation by Mr. Costin Timofte from 'Mare Nostrum' NGO followed. It was on: "Consequences from the impact of climate change on biodiversity". In the Black Sea basin, the temperature is rising relatively slowly. Long-term data related to the average winter temperature in the Black Sea show synchronous fluctuations with a periodicity of 8 to 10 years, but there is a long-term upward trend of 0.25 ° C. The coastal waters of the Black Sea warmed in the twentieth century and, according to various reports, average annual temperatures could rise by another 2-3 ° C by 2100. Compared to other seas, the biodiversity of the Black Sea is slightly different. Most</p>
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species (85%) come from the Mediterranean via the Bosphorus. <https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-wq-2-en.pdf>

The following are emphasized in the presentation as major threats to the biodiversity in the Black Sea:

- eutrophication (hypoxia, anoxia);
- damage along the coast;
- non-native species;
- fishing and exploitation of living resources;
- climate change.

FG 2 - Fishing for picked dogfish”	15.03.2022	Rosslyn hotel Dimyat and videoconference	<p>The following attended the meeting: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov from the IO Varna, Mr. Ivan Ivanov from EAFA, Mr. Dobrin Lechev from EAFA Burgas, Mrs. Eleonora Fikasova from EAFA Burgas, Mr. Gabriel Popescu, Director of NAFA Constanta.</p> <p>A letter sent by NAFA Romania regarding data on the catches of shark (picked dogfish) for 2021 was presented. The following was declared and filed with the Agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incidental catch by 01.06.2021 – 300 kg;</li> <li>• Catch using longlines by 01.06.2021 – 387 kg.</li> </ul> <p>It is also stated in the letter that since 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021, after establishing a total allowable catch (TAC), 40 vessels have been granted permits for fishing picked dogfish, for longlines for picked dogfish, with a fixed quota of 13.5 tons.</p> <p>After presenting the letter from EAFA Bulgaria, for picked dogfish catches by years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2017, 50451,4 kg of picked dogfish were caught by 34 fishing boats;</li> <li>• In 2018, 10082,4 kg of picked dogfish were caught by 37 fishing boats;</li> <li>• In 2019, 16765 kg of picked dogfish were caught by 53 fishing boats;</li> <li>• In 2020, 47511,6 kg of picked dogfish were caught by 57 fishing boats;</li> <li>• In 2021, 19652,2 kg of picked dogfish were caught by 51 fishing boats.</li> </ul> <p>These are the quantities of dogfish caught in Bulgaria, including incidental catch, using longlines.</p> <p><a href="https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-fg-2-en.pdf">https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-fg-2-en.pdf</a></p>
Meeting of Pech Committee	18.03.2022		<p>The theme of the meeting was "State of play in the implementation of the common fisheries policy and future perspectives". On behalf BISAC the meeting was attended by the chairman - Mr Daniel Buhai.</p> <p>He made a presentation and at the end, and pointed that Bulgaria and Romania expecting a recovery of the fishing sector after the pandemic, but the war in Ukraine is setting a very unclear and unpredictable climate in terms of the evolution of fishing permits, catches, and stock. This war along with the political and humanitarian crisis is also an environmental threat, that is posing our resources in danger. Resources that for some of us represent their only income.</p> <p>The maritime national border of Romania is approximately 10 km away from Snake Island, island which is presently occupied by the Russian Navy, and this fact is creating big problems for the Romanian fishermen in that area that have the best catches of turbot (half of the national quota).Evidently, it is discouraging and dangerous to fish nearby.</p> <p>Clearly, the fish and seafood market is dramatically affected in the last period because of the conflict, the fuel cost almost doubled, and as you know fuel is the main component in the fish and seafood price."</p> <p><a href="https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/index.php?page=publications">https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/index.php?page=publications</a></p>

<p>Working group on vulnerable marine ecosystems and essential fish habitats (WGVME-EFH), including a Black Sea session</p>	<p>22-24.03.2022</p>	<p>Via videoconference</p>	<p>From BISAC secretariat, the meeting was attending online by Anca Gheorghe. During the “GFCM Working Group on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems and Essential Fish Habitats (WGVME-EFH)” the GFCM Secretariat presented a summary of relevant existing spatial management measures, including both GFCM FRAs and national fisheries restricted areas, as well as their status, including measures and scientific monitoring plans. A sub-session on the Black Sea took place – “Spatial management in the Black Sea”, during which Lyudmil Ikonov presented the “Eco-System Based Coastal Management for Developing a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Black Sea”; Emma Gileva from Black Sea NGO Network Bulgaria, presented the “Bulgarian Natura 2000 MPAs in the Black Sea”; the Romanian Natura 2000 MPA network was presented by Victor Niță, from NIMRD Grigore Antipa, “Scientific background for future FRAs designation study” and “Fishing Regulations in Turkey with special focus on vulnerable ecosystems, essential habitats and FRAs” by Onur Hasaltuntas.</p> <p>The GFCM Secretariat presented the database on sensitive benthic habitats and species, its functioning, and features, including the data call mechanism and a summary of the work done towards the mapping of the existing fishing grounds in the deep sea.</p>
<p>EFCA Advisory Board meeting</p>	<p>4.04.2022</p>	<p>Via videoconference</p>	<p>The BISAC secretariat was represented by Mihaela Mirea. During the meeting each ACs representatives to present their activities since the last Advisory Board meeting.</p> <p>The BLSAC thanked everyone for their support and referred to the unpredictable and complicated situation they were facing and gave information on the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o They are currently focused on stressing the need to set up the necessary infrastructure at port to ensure a clear and transparent application of the LO, and to ease the control and data collection.</li> <li>o Attention was drawn to the mines that have been spotted at sea by the fishermen. Some are afraid to continue fishing, especially close to the border, but they are risking lack of support to their families and local communities.</li> </ul> <p>This situation has decreased IUU fishing from Ukrainian and Turkish fleet, but the military actions and equipment caused by the crisis in the area pose a serious risk for the entire ecosystem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Continue to work with the Member States to improve control and data collection in order, together with the required infrastructure, to put the CFP into practice.</li> </ul> <p>During the meeting were presented EFCA’s Annual Report 2021 and EFCA’s Single Programming Document. Also, were discussed aspects related to rotation of the Advisory Board representative in the EFCA Administrative Board.</p>

General Assebly meeting	13-14.04.2022	Bulgaria, Varna Rosslyn hotel Dimyat and videoconference	<p>On the meeting was adopted adoption of the 2021 Annual Activity Report of the BISAC and the annual financial report. Also was discussed and the financial situation of the BISAC and the collected membership fees for 2022. The proposal to extend the deadline for the payment of the membership fee until July 31 was adopted.</p> <p>It was discussed to be made a recommendation for the emergency need for financial assistance for the fishing sector, processors of marine products, trade and aquaculture follow. . Overall, two guidelines for proposals for compensation for fishermen are formed:(1) compensation of the difference in the operating costs of active fishermen due to the increased price of electricity and fuel; (2) offsetting losses caused by non-working days during the threat period from floating mines in the Black Sea.</p> <p>Concerning the Statute changes Mr. Daniel Buhai expressed the fact that first of all, the address of the office in Romania must be updated in the Statute. On the other hand, a legal opinion has been requested for obtaining a tax number of the office of the BISAC in Romania in order to be able to benefit from the law on sponsorship in the country. Discussions followed and this topic was postponed for discussion at the next meeting of the General Assembly.</p> <p><a href="https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-ga-13-14.04.2022-en.pdf">https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-ga-13-14.04.2022-en.pdf</a></p>
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Inter ACs meeting	29.04.2022	Videoconference	<p>The meeting was attended by the whole Secretariat of the BISAC. Ms Andersson Pench announced the agenda of the day. She referred to the economic consequences of the invasion of the Ukraine which has generated an unprecedented economic crisis. Since the beginning of the war, the Commission has actively followed the concerns of stakeholders and closely monitored the socio-economic situation and assessed its impact. Ms Andersson Pench announced the different blocks of the meeting: one will be dedicated to all the possible options the Commission has considered to support the European operators and to help them both during the immediate crisis and towards a transition to a more resilient future operating model (a new State Aid Framework, the crisis mechanism of the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) and a legislative amendment to the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Regulation). DG MARE and DG COMP will provide explanations on the measures proposed. The second block of the agenda focuses on energy transition. Beyond the immediate answer to the crisis, there is an even more urgent need to develop efforts in terms of decarbonisation of the fishing sector. Ms Andersson Pench announced that, in the third block of the agenda, DG MARE will give an update on the outcome of the stakeholder consultation on the common fisheries policy (CFP) and the common market organisation (CMO). The Director introduced the new Deputy Director-General of DG MARE, Mr Sadauskas, who started on 1 April 2022. Mr Sadauskas introduced himself. His main responsibilities in DG MARE are the implementation of the maritime policy and blue economy. One of the primary objectives is the Ocean Mission, which has to produce results by 2030.</p> <p>Mr Eoin MAC AOIDH (DG MARE/D3, referred to the unprovoked aggression of Russia against Ukraine, which has caused a very serious situation for business all across Europe and affected fishery, aquaculture and processing. He explained that the Commission has been listening to stakeholders and MS to assess the extent of the problem and tried to find solutions that can be developed and deployed quickly. There are three mechanisms that the Commission has worked on, has activated or is in the process of activating. The objective is to provide urgency support that businesses can continue to operate.</p> <p>The next point of the Agenda was the energy transition in the fisheries sector. The aim would be to develop, along with stakeholders, advice and best practices on possible modifications or adaptations that could be done to fishing vessels. Mr Ricardo BATISTA (DG MOVE) presented the main elements and objectives of the FuelEU Maritime regulation proposal. Main concept of FuelEU is that it is a regulation focused on the quality of fuel and demand and promotion of uptake of renewable and low-carbon fuels. The regulation establishes a framework assessment for different energy options, also establishes limits for Green-House Gas (GHG) intensity of the energy used on-board. The targets are a 6% reduction by 2030 and a 75% reduction by 2050.</p> <p>Ms Agnieszka ZAPLATKA (DG RTD/C/3) then presented Waterborne Transport Research and Innovation (R&amp;I) in Horizon Europe. Mr Gabriel MIALOCQ (CINEA/C/3/2, Green Research and Innovation) gave a presentation about CINEA and how the agency is instrumental in implementing the European Green Deal through the various programmes, that the agency manages (Horizon Europe; Innovation Fund; LIFE; CEF).</p>
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<p>Focus Group 3 - <u>Rapana Fishing</u></p>	<p>10.05.2022</p>	<p>Hotel Continental Forum, Constanta and videoconference</p>	<p>Mr. Hussein Özdemir, Coordinator of the Blacksea4fish project, gave a presentation on the topic: "Studies with a trawl of the rapana in the Black Sea". The studies were conducted in the fall of 2020 and 2021, and in the spring of 2021. The aim is to conduct the first standardized scientific study of rapana in the Black Sea in order to obtain information on the abundance, length and age composition of this species. The studies were carried out on merchant or research ships equipped with an engine of at least 186 kW (250 hp). The trawling speed is from 1.5 to 2.0 knots and the duration is 30 minutes. The mesh size of the trawl net is 72 mm and the size of the beam trawl is 3 m. The samples were made at a depth of 5-15 m; 15-25 m and 25-35 m. The presentation clearly shows the places with the largest accumulation of rapana, as well as detailed characteristics of the dimensions.</p> <p>The conclusions drawn from this study are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the first cooperative standardized scientific study of rapana in the Black Sea, conducted according to the same protocol;</li> <li>• This initiative will continue in the coming years;</li> <li>• The results are preliminary, as this is the first stage of the study (the results of the 2nd and 3rd studies are still being processed):</li> <li>• Rapana is agglomerated to a depth of 20 m;</li> <li>• The average length of the rapana is 60 mm;</li> <li>• The highest abundance and biomass are registered in the northwestern part of the Black Sea;</li> <li>• The largest specimens are registered in the deepest waters.</li> </ul> <p>Following is a presentation by Mr. Victor Nice from the Institute for Marine Research and Development in Constanta "Grigore Antipa", on the topic "Expedition to study the rapana venus with a beam trawl off the Romanian coast". The methodology of the research conducted by the Institute is in accordance with the protocol provided by GFCM on the Blacksea4Fish project, standardized in the demonstration expedition organized in Trabzon. A Turkish trawl was used, towed by the research ship "Steaua de Mare 1" with an engine power of 570 hp. The conclusions of the expedition are the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The total weight of the catch is 400 kg in the autumn of 2021;</li> <li>2. The total number of specimens taken is 10,050 measured individuals;</li> <li>3. The composition by age classes - from 3 to 12 years;</li> <li>4. The highest values of abundance and biomass of rapana are in autumn;</li> <li>5. The total values of rapana biomass for 2021 are estimated at 8 007 tons, which shows a declining trend in the available stock in the study area.</li> </ol>
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<p>Working Group 5 - <u>Recreational fisheries</u></p>	<p>10.05.2022</p>	<p>Hotel Contintental Forum, Constanta and videoconference</p>	<p>Mr. Yordan Gospodinov made a brief overview of the recommendation sent by the BISAC in connection with recreational fishing in 2021 to the Ministries of Agriculture of Bulgaria and Romania and to EAFA and NAFA. The proposals made were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for catch data collection from recreational fishing, due to information that the same gear is used for recreational fishing and commercial fishing, and sometimes recreational fishing is transformed into small-scale fishing because the sale and the realization of the caught fish is sought;</li> <li>• Better control over fishermen, engaged in recreational fishing in the Black Sea by boat - a way to report catches via SMS;</li> <li>• Information campaigns for recreational fishing, organized by the Ministry, with information on allowable catches for own consumption and permitted fishing gear.</li> <li>• Clear distinction between recreational fishing and sport fishing.</li> </ul> <p>Mr. Alexandru Simeonov from NARA Romania explained that the recreational fishing in Romania starts in May, and fishermen have the obligation to send a completed catch slip online to NAFA. The online platform of the National Fisheries Agency is currently being updated. Information on the quantities caught is sent to the Data Collection Institute. NAFA issues permits for recreational fishing to individuals, not boats. Also, amateur fishermen must comply with fishing bans at certain times of the year. The amount of fish that can be retained from this type of fishing is up to 5 kg, which is for personal use.</p> <p>Mr Daniel Buhai: proposes that the BISAC make a recommendation to the authorities for stricter control of recreational fisheries and that this recommendation mention specific measures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher fees for recreational fishing by boat in the Black Sea;</li> <li>• Disposal of the quantities of fish caught in the sea in excess of those permitted by law - 3 kg for Bulgaria and 5 kg for Romania;</li> <li>• Boats engaged in recreational fishing to have a special signal system;</li> <li>• To limit the trips to the sea of amateur fishermen;</li> <li>• To fill in the catch slip, which should be sent electronically to the Fisheries Agency;</li> <li>• To develop a set of legislative sanctions for violators;</li> </ul> <p>In the conclusion of the working group, it can be said that much stricter control and better regulation of recreational fishing is needed in order to avoid unfair competition with small-scale fishing. There is a need to emphasize the need to facilitate the collection of data from this activity and, last but not least, to reduce the possibility of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing disguised as recreational fishing.</p> <p><a href="https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-wg-5-recreational-fishery-en-t.pdf">https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-wg-5-recreational-fishery-en-t.pdf</a></p>
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<p>- Focus group 6 - <u>Marine litter</u></p>	<p>11.05.2022</p>	<p>Hotel Ferdinand, Constanta and videoconference</p>	<p>Mrs. Alena Petrikovikova made a presentation on the following topic: "Fishing devices in EU legislation, related to the marine litter".</p> <p>Mrs. Petrikovikova acquainted the members of the BISAC with aspects of the <b>Directive for Reducing the Environmental Impact of Certain Plastic Products (EU) 2019/904</b>. First, she pointed to the extended liability schemes for manufacturers of fishing devices containing plastic, which cover separate collection, transport, treatment and awareness-raising measures. The EC has also revised the <b>Port Reception Facilities Directive (EU) 2019/883</b>. The changes are related to the reduction of ship-generated litter in the sea via combination of incentive and enforcement measures, and it is the responsibility of the Member States to set up appropriate port reception facilities. A new requirement for all ships, including the fishing vessels and recreational crafts, is to deliver all their litter before departure. Particular emphasis is placed on marine litter from ships, including this one from fishing ships and fishing devices, passive fishing litter, and the preparation by Member States of an adequate separate collection plan, litter collection and treatment plans, as well as electronic reporting and information exchange. Since 1 January, 2022 the Member States must report on the quantity and characteristics of passive fishing litter delivered to the ports, as the reporting is mandatory and voluntary. The mandatory one includes the total mass and total volume of all passive fishing litter, and the voluntary one - the mass and volume of passive fishing litter, sorted by material type.</p> <p>Mihaela Candea-Mirea mentioned that BISAC has sent recommendations regarding the marine litter, to both Member States - Bulgaria and Romania, so that the legislation can be implemented, but they have not been taken into account, even those for the construction of port facilities for litter collection. On the other hand, some members of the BISAC have dedicated their work to the collection of marine litter and are looking for ways to better implement the European directives.</p> <p>Mrs. Madalina Galacki - a researcher at the Grigore Antipa Institute, made a presentation on the following topic: "The bottom litter condition in Romanian coastal waters". The Institute's survey was conducted with a bottom trawl by a team of researchers from the Department of Living Marine Resources, and monitoring activities were carried out on benthic litter at depths between 12 and 65 m, in the sector between Vama Veke and Sulina. The methodology of the guide, applied in the European maritime area, has been used and the observance of the MEDITS protocol, 2017 has been taken into account. Bottom trawling is used for sampling of demersal fish, as well as for collecting litter from the seabed of 22 / 27-34 m, by towing fishing facilities.</p> <p>Mr. Costin Timofte from the NGO "Mare Nostrum" made a presentation on the topic: "Black Sea free of nets (Net free Black sea)".</p> <p><a href="https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-fg-6-marine-litter-en-t.pdf">https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-fg-6-marine-litter-en-t.pdf</a></p>
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Inter ACs meeting	12.05.2022	Videoconference	<p>The meeting was attended by Ms Mihaela Mirea.</p> <p>Mrs Valerie Tankink asked all Secretariats about the state of play by each AC in the implementation of the new provisions of the EU Delegated Act 2022/207 and invited them to take the floor and present their current situation or share any issue.</p> <p>Ms Mihaela Mirea informed they have already had new elections and it was decided to postpone the election of the Vice-Chairs in order to decide better the requirements under the new Delegated Act. They will put the new criteria for the classification of members in the future amendment. Regarding the Performance review they will start the procedure this Autumn.</p> <p>Other discussed topics were the planning of the meeting and the lump sums. Rumjana Georgieva, DG MARE-Unit 1, presented the status and the novelties related to the new method of funding through the lump sums.</p>
Meeting with Ms Charlina Vicheva and representatives of DG MARE	13.05.2022	Congress Center, Burgas, Bulgaria	<p>The Chairman, the Secretariat and members of the BISAC met with Ms. Charlina Vicheva and representatives of DG MARE at the Congress Center in Burgas. The meeting discussed important issues for the BISAC and, first of all, the need for financial support from the Member States Bulgaria and Romania. So far, the BISAC has not received such financial support, which reflects those wishing to join the Advisory Council - the main obstacle is the high membership fee for fisheries organizations. Another topic for discussion was the desire of the BISAC to have more meetings between the two national fisheries agencies NAFA and EAFA, to which representatives of the BISAC should be invited. The chairman of the BISAC also raised the question that so far the authorities in the two Member States have not incorporated into the legislation any of the recommendations made by the BISAC. The topic of high inflation and rising prices of goods and services was also touched upon and how this will affect the BISAC budget. The very important topic of decarbonisation is also being discussed and Ms. Vicheva advised BISAC to work hard in this direction as well.</p>
European maritime day	19-20.05.2022	Ravena, Italy	<p>The meeting was attended by the Chairman of the BISAC – Mr Daniel Buhai. During the thematic sessions and meetings were presented aspects related to: Sustainable blue economy for green recovery, Maritime spatial planning and stakeholder engagement, The Sustainable Blue Economy implementation through smart specialization, CINEA Funding opportunities for blue economy, High level session on Maritime Security: The role of the EU agencies in promotion of maritime security and safety, and more aspects related to the oceans. Also, this event is a good opportunity to meet EC representatives and other authorities involved in the oceans aspects, including fishing and aquaculture.</p> <p>The European Maritime Day (EMD) is the annual two-day event during which Europe's maritime community meet to network, discuss and outline joint action on maritime affairs and sustainable blue economy. It features a large number of excellent speakers, thematic sessions, stakeholder workshops and project pitch sessions organised by stakeholders and the European Commission as well as hundreds of B2B meeting opportunities. EMD targets professionals from businesses, governments, public institutions, NGOs and academia.</p>

<p>Working group 3 – Marine Aquaculture</p>	<p>23.06.2022</p>	<p>Astor garden hotel, Varna Bulgaria and via ZOOM</p>	<p>A number of interesting presentations were made at the meeting. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galin Nikolov from Thracian University on the topic: "Marine aquaculture - prospects for development in Bulgaria". The number of registered mussel farms in Bulgaria is growing annually. In 2020, their number reached 32. Unfortunately, a small part of them function - only 50%. A significant number of farms are completely abandoned, but without the removal of floats and collectors, which, in addition not only has a negative aesthetic effect, but also causes serious dissatisfaction among local fishing communities, which are prevented from using the waters of the abandoned mussel farms, and pose a danger to vessels, too. Also of great importance is constructing demonstration centers whose objectives are to increase confidence in the existing potential for aquaculture development in the Black Sea. These centers are useful tools for local and national administrations to evaluate new projects, taking into account the differences: degree of aquaculture development, environmental conditions and characteristics, expertise and experience available in countries. The Central Fisheries Scientific Institute in Trabzon, Turkey and the National Institute of Marine Research and Development (NIMRD) - "Grigore Antipa" in Constanta, Romania have provided infrastructure and laboratories to build aquaculture demonstration centers for knowledge extension and technology exchange. A similar center is to be built in Bulgaria. Regarding the legal framework, the presentation has not described the administrative requirements and obstacles for establishing an aquaculture farm in the Black Sea. There are eight administrations to go through, in order to register such a farm. The operators have to comply with six laws, each of which has by-laws, i.e. the registration of an aquaculture farm requires a lot of efforts on behalf of the future producer, going through various institutions and it takes minimum six months.</p> <p>The next is a presentation by Mrs. Mihaela Mirea on the topic: "WG 2022 - Aquaculture"; Brief overview of the work of the BISAC focus group, dedicated to Marine Aquaculture in 2021 and the submitted recommendation on this topic, which states that the procedure for obtaining permits for construction of a Black Sea aquaculture farm should be simplified, as well as one-stop service for applicants and obtaining permits should be introduced. The recommendation also states the need to build the legal framework in Romania, regarding marine aquaculture, as well as to conduct a study by the Romanian authorities together with scientific institutes which are the most suitable areas along the Romanian Black Sea coast, related to growing aquaculture. Last but not least, the legislation between Bulgaria and Romania regarding aquaculture in the Black Sea, should be harmonized, so that fair competition exists. The conclusions of the presentation are, as follows:- Access to space and water should be facilitated, in order for aquaculture in the EU to continue growing;-Reducing unnecessary bureaucracy for permitting new aquaculture farms;-Further limiting the impact on aquaculture, as well as promoting the types of aquaculture that are most beneficial for the environment and climate; - Improving animal health and welfare; ensuring that aquaculture adapts to climate change and contributes to climate change mitigation; -Providing more and better information to consumers and citizens about aquaculture in the EU;-Promoting research, innovation and development of relevant skills;-Promoting diversification of production, in order to increase the supply of aquaculture products, especially new promising species in the EU, such as algae or marine invertebrates (including molluscs or other invertebrates);</p>
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<p>Working group 4 - Spatial planning of fisheries.</p>	<p>24.06.2022</p>	<p>Astor garden hotel, Varna Bulgaria and via ZOOM</p>	<p><a href="https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-wg-4-spatial-planning-of-fisheries-en.pdf">https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/minutes-wg-4-spatial-planning-of-fisheries-en.pdf</a></p> <p>The meeting was attended by the following participants: Dr. Victor Nita – “Grigore Antipa” Institute, Dr. Magda Nenciu – “Grigore Antipa” Institute in Constanta, Mrs. Stefka Nikolova – EAFA, Prof. Dr. Galin Nikolov – Trakia University, Mr. Bogdan Ghinea – Ministry of Territorial development of Romania, Mr Alexandru Simeonov – NAFA Constanta, Mrs. Ivelina Aleksieva – Ministry of Environment and waters of Bulgaria, Mrs. Kety Balaci – NAFA.</p> <p>Following is a presentation by Mr. Bogdan Ghinea on the topic: "Maritime Spatial Planning". The main principles of the plan for the development of marine territories are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preservation and protection of biodiversity. The good ecological status of the marine environment, the protection of natural wealth and the restoration of marine biodiversity are a prerequisite for economic activity and an opportunity for sustainable economic development;</li> <li>• Utilization of Black Sea resources. The development of the blue economy contributes to the sustainable use of marine resources, to the creation of new economic opportunities and jobs for coastal communities;</li> <li>• Justifying decisions with empirical evidence and in collaboration with stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p>Decisions on the use of maritime space are based on data analyzed in relation to territorial specificity and on cooperation with stakeholders, including bodies and institutions of central and local public administration, business circles, academic circles, civil society and the general public. The legislative framework of the Maritime Territories Plan in Romania is: Directive 2014/89/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning; Government Ordinance No. 18/2016 on maritime space management; Government Decision No. 406/2017 on the approval of the Regulations for the organization and activities of the Committee on the Organization of the Maritime Space; Government Decision No. 436/2018 on the approval of the Methodology for the development of the maritime spatial plan.</p> <p>A presentation by Dr. Magda Nenciu follows on the topic: “Establishing the suitability of the Agigea-Eforie area for designation as Allocated Zone for Aquaculture (AZA) and for unlocking the potentiality of mariculture in Romania”. Allocated Zones for Aquaculture (AZAs), considered as an essential tool towards the sustainable development of mariculture, play a special role in maritime spatial planning despite being limited and crowded by uses in the Romanian coast. An AZA is a maritime area where the development of aquaculture takes precedence over other uses. The identification of an AZA results from the zoning processes through participatory spatial planning, through which administrative bodies (in Romania, the National Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture) legally establish that certain spatial areas in a region have priority for the development of aquaculture. The study area pre-selected for potential establishment as AZA at the Romanian coast – Agigea-Eforie, is based on expert knowledge of its suitability for aquaculture development. The conclusions from the presentation are that the area is suitable for finfish farming at sea at depths greater than 20 m (covering about one third of the pre-selected polygon), while shellfish farming could be developed within the whole area in Agigea-Eforie. Regarding the uses’ compatibility, corroborated with stakeholder consultation it can be concluded</p>
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			that in the Agigea-Eforie North area there are no potential conflicts with other uses of the maritime space, and the selected area for potential AZA designation is not overlapping with maritime traffic routes, fishing areas, military areas or other types of activities. The zoning process for the formal and official establishment of this AZA should follow a participatory approach, be transparent, coordinated by the responsible authority (Romanian National Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture) and carried out in cooperation with the different authorities involved in aquaculture licensing and leasing procedures and monitoring – Romanian National Sanitary, Veterinary and Food Safety Authority, Romanian Waters National Administration etc. Once established, the AZA should be based on legal and regulatory provisions, and ultimately integrated into the national legislation.
Workshop on sea basin dimension -NH	7.07.2022	Via videoconference	The workshop was attended online by Anca Gheorghe, form part of BISAC Secretariat. This workshop explored synergies and clustering between EMFF and EMFAF projects at sea basin level. It presented success stories, information, and funding options for project coordinators to consider with the objective of establishing synergies and increasing cooperation within and between sea basins The workshop featured presentations from the sea-basin assistance mechanisms and Interact. Further, an interactive session fostered synergies and cooperation between project beneficiaries. <a href="https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/node/7204">https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/node/7204</a>
LitOUTer	14.07.2022	Tulcea	The workshop was attende in person, in Tulcea, by Dragos Buhai, representing BISAC. WORKSHOP, 14-15 July 2022, “MARINE LITTER PROBLEM IN THE BLACK SEA - TOGETHER FOR COMMON SOLUTIONS” organized by Mare Nostrum NGO under the project “Raising Public Awareness and Reducing Marine Litter for Protection of the Black Sea Ecosystem” (LitOUTer) BSB 785, with the focus on marine litter issue. The participants that attended the workshop were from Black Sea riparian countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Georgia). During the presentation Mr. Buhai presented BISAC activity and the recommendations issued by BISAC related to the marine litter problem.

Meeting on the implementation of the Deep-Sea Access Regulation	26.07.2022	Via videoconference	<p>On 26 July 2022, DG MARE organized a stakeholder meeting on implementation of the Deep-Sea Access Regulation in view of the preparation of the ICES advice on Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) in EU waters, including data collection.</p> <p>Representatives of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) presented two stakeholder workshop reports: "Stakeholder workshop report on EU regulatory area options for VME protection (WKEUVME), 2020" and "Stakeholder workshop report to disseminate the ICES deep-sea access regulation technical service and scope the required steps for regulatory purposes (WKREG), 2019", as well as the two ICES advice: "ICES. 2022. EU request for a Technical Service to provide data output of the ICES 2021 advice on the deep-sea access regulation (ref. (EU)2016/2336) as coordinates for EU waters area only" and "ICES. 2021. EU Request to advise on the list of areas where VMEs are known to occur or are likely to occur and on the existing deep-sea fishing areas (ref. (EU)2016/2336)". The meeting was attended online by Mihaela Mirea, from BISAC secretariat.</p>
Conference on the project "Natura 2000 in the Black Sea"	31.08.2022	Varna, Bulgaria, Golden Tulip hotel	<p>Mrs. Elena Peneva was present at the meeting on behalf of BISAC. The meeting is organized by the Ministry of Environment (MOEW). Scientists from the Institute of Fish Resources Varna, Institute of Oceanology, Basin Directorate, Maritime Administration and others were present.</p> <p>Ms. Asya Doneva from the Ministry of the Environment, Project Manager presented a presentation on NATURA 2000 in the Black Sea. The expected results were indicated, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to provide a comprehensive methodological approach for the study of the distribution of types of natural habitats, habitats of species and their population in the marine spaces of Bulgaria, as well as determining their nature protection status;</li> <li>- to establish the distribution and conservation status of species and types of natural habitats in the marine part of the NATURA 2000 network in Bulgaria;</li> <li>- synchronization and optimization of data collection and reporting processes under the Habitats Directive;</li> <li>- Determining new/updating boundaries of marine protected areas.</li> </ul> <p>Beneficiary of the project is the Directorate "National Service for the Protection of Nature" MoEW. The financing is BGN 11,734,980, the deadline for implementation is 04/30/2024.</p> <p>The target species are: Tursiops truncatus, Phocoena phocoena, Carago (Danube mackerel- Alosa immaculata) and Small Carago -Alosa tanaica.</p>

Regional Workshop: Technology Innovation and Market Opportunities	13-14.09.2022	Gdansk, Poland	<p>This workshop was attended by Dragos Buhai.  <a href="https://eurofish.dk/events/2022-09-regional-workshop-gdansk/">https://eurofish.dk/events/2022-09-regional-workshop-gdansk/</a>  Organised by Eurofish International Organisation in collaboration with the Ministry for Agriculture and Rural Development, the Polish Association of Fish Processors, and the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute (MIR), the event included presentations by international experts in fish processing technology and in market opportunities for fish products.</p>
Sustainable blue economy and aquaculture in EU regions	22.09.2022	Videoconference	<p>This event was attended as live streaming participant by Anca Gheorghe, from BISAC secretariat.  <a href="https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/events/sustainable-blue-economy-and-aquaculture-eu-regions-2022-09-22_en">https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/events/sustainable-blue-economy-and-aquaculture-eu-regions-2022-09-22_en</a>  During the event the invited panellists presented good practices projects related to aquaculture, the benefits for EU regions of aquaculture as part of the broader blue economy, examples of successful integration of aquaculture in EU regions, synergies with other blue economy sectors, and use of EU funds.  How aquaculture development and the preservation and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity can work hand in hand, and how to communicate and give value to the contribution of aquaculture to those environmental objectives. And were also presented examples of the management of aquaculture activities in EU regions that provide ecosystem services.</p>

<p>FG 5 - Conservation of birds, species and habitats of Community interest in the context of fisheries and aquaculture.</p>	<p>27.09.2022</p>	<p>Nessebar, Bulgaria and via ZOOM</p>	<p>The following people attended the meeting: Mrs. Yana Velina of the Ministry for the Environment and Water; Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov – Institute of Oceanology, Dr. Victor Nita – Grigore Antipa Institute, Mrs. Pinelopi Belecku – DG MARE, Mrs. Oana Stancovici-Bianu, Mrs. Steliana Bejan and Mrs. Adina Iuliana Miu of the National Agency for Environmental Protection Constanta, and Mrs. Doina Cioaca – NAPNA, Romaina.</p> <p>A presentation by Mrs. Ivelina Voynova, President of the Bulgarian Black Sea National Association, on the topic: "Protection and conservation of birds, species and habitats of interest to the Community in the context of fishing and aquaculture" followed. Mrs. Voynova acquainted the members of the BISAC with some of the European and Bulgarian documents concerning the essence of the subject.</p> <p>Followed a presentation by Mr. Marian Paiu, NGO "Mare Nostrum" on the topic: "Conservation in the context of fisheries and aquaculture".</p> <p>Followed a presentation by Dr. Victor Nita from the "Grigore Antipa" Institute on the topic: "Marine Habitat in Romania – Scientific Basis for Sustainable Management of Fisheries and Aquaculture". The analysis of recent GFCM statistics reveals that 97% of monitored fish stocks (including in the Black Sea) are overexploited, so taking action to counter this phenomenon is essential. In addition to implementing the general provisions of the Common Fisheries Policy, the establishment of spatial limits can help protect Essential Fish Habitats (EFH), thus reducing pressure on stocks. This can be achieved through the creation of "Fisheries Restricted Areas" (FRAs-Fisheries Restricted Areas), which is in full compliance with the GFCM2030 strategy, which aims to implement effective spatial measures to reduce the impact on vulnerable species, sensitive habitats and key fish habitats meeting conservation objectives at the international level.</p> <p>Followed a presentation by Assoc. Dr. Violin Raykov on the topic: "Biodiversity and the state of populations - a key element for the protection of ecosystems in fishing areas "An ecosystem approach for assessing the biodiversity and state of populations of key species of fish from the Bulgarian Black Sea coast "".</p> <p>Followed a presentation by Ms. Doina Cioacă from the National Agency for Protected Natural Areas (NAPNA) on the topic: "Marine Protected Areas - Romania". In total, there are 10 protected marine areas under Natura 2000, of which 9 correspond to the Habitats Directive and 1 to the Birds Directive (SPA). In Romania there is also one national protected area (Vama Veche – May 2). 9 of the areas are managed by the Protected Areas Agency and the remaining 2 are managed by the Danube Delta Management Authority DDBRA (ARBDD).</p>
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Executive Committee of the BISAC	28.09.2022	Nessebar, Bulgaria and via ZOOM	<p>Agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening of the meeting, election of chair of the meeting, minute-taker and teller;</li> <li>2. Determining the place, date, time and agenda for the General Assembly of the CSCM;</li> <li>3. Discussions about the financial situation of the KSChM. Membership fee paid for 2022;</li> <li>4. Presentation of the draft budget for 2023;</li> <li>5. Proposals and comments on the Work Program for 2023;</li> <li>6. Proposals for topics of working groups in 2023;</li> <li>7. Consideration of received applications for membership. Accepting new members.</li> <li>8. Any other business.</li> </ol> <p>Mr. Dinu Dobrin from NARA, Romania, also attended the meeting via a video-conference connection.</p> <p>Was decided the deadline until the end of October should be set for the payment of the membership fee for 2022. Also, letters of final warning for the payment of membership fees for two years should be sent to the association "Friends of the Black Sea" and the Association for sea fishing "Tomis". A reminder email has to be sent to other members who have not paid.</p> <p>A draft budget for 2023, which is to be presented at the General meeting on 24th November 2022, was put to the vote.</p> <p>A draft of the work program for 2023 of the BISAC prepared by the Secretariat of the association was presented. 2 General Assemblies, 2 Management Boards, 6 working groups and 6 focus groups are planned.</p> <p>The following new members were accepted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fishing Association Golovita, Tulca District, Romania, represented by Mr. Balaban Catalin; Unique Company Identifier (UCI): 21300302 – members of the association – small-scale fishermen;</li> <li>2) Federation of Fishing Organizations in the Black Sea, represented by Mr. Laurentiu Mirea – representatives of small-scale fisheries;</li> <li>3) Foundation Institute for Environmental Modernisation, with Chairman Mr. Lyudmil Hristoforov Ikonov – association of the group of other parties interested in the sea; UCI: BG103567505;</li> <li>4) Organization of the producers of Black Sea mussel, with Chairman Mr. Velislav Nikolov Vangelov; UCI: 206431874;</li> </ol> <p>The offer for evaluation of the activity of BISAC by an external evaluator for 5 years was discussed. The offer by Agency Strategma Ltd was accepted.</p>
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Work Meeting - NATIONAL AGENCY FOR FISHERIES And AQUACULTURE, Romania	07.10.2022	Online	BISAC was invited by NATIONAL AGENCY FOR FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE (Romania) to was invited to participate in the work meeting and discussions regarding the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment. At the work meeting participated online Dragoş Buhai, representing BISAC.
Inter ACs meeting	11.10.2022	Via ZOOM	<p>The meeting was attended by Ms Elena Peneva. DG MARE gave an update on key files and exchange of view on the involvement of the ACs in the work ahead. Financial matters were discussed.</p> <p>Vincent Guerre mentioned the intense consultation of stakeholders as a valuable input on the CFP report. He explained that DG MARE is preparing the report in the form of a communication to be accompanied by a staff working document. This is an important deliverable, a legal requirement and important step to analyse the implementation of the policy. It will focus especially on policy tools and governance, looking at successes and shortcomings, without triggering a legislative reform. The adoption date is not clear yet, but the communication will be published by end of the year. He stressed that the communication will be the start of a new process and an opportunity to further engage with stakeholders. ACs will be key actors in this process. This deliverable is strictly linked to the Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems, to be published soon.</p>
EFCA Advisory Board Meeting	24/10/2022	Vigo, Spain	<p>The meeting was attended by Mihaela Mirea Candea, representing BISAC secretariat.</p> <p>The main topics presented are related to the recommendations issued by the BISAC: enforce consultation for MSP in order to avoid conflicts with wind farms, MPAs and tourism and for changing, restriction and introducing ban of fishing gears; alignment of mullet minimum size and ban period introduction for Romania and Bulgaria; finalizing and operationalization of port facilities; war effects in fishing activity (seize periods and decrease due to high prices of fuel). It was reiterated the invitation and the welcome of EFCA in BISAC meetings.</p> <p>Each ACs representatives to present their activities since the last Advisory Board meeting in April 2022. BLSAC informed that despite the situation in the area, the work of the BLSAC has continued without hiccups on a hybrid mode. During the year the fishing activity decreased due to the risk of finding mines at sea. Currently the main reason for the decrease is the fuel cost. One of the main topics that is being followed up in the BLSAC is the impact of the Maritime Spatial Planning in the Black Sea on the fisheries sector. The BLSAC has issued recommendations on the minimum reference size for the conservation of <i>Mullus barbatus</i> in the Black Sea and on the fishing gear regulations in the Black Sea. BLSAC welcomed EFCA to participate in their meetings together with ANPA and IARA.</p> <p>Currently the Advisory Board representative is the MAC and the alternate, the LDAC until 1 March 2023. From 2 March 2023 until 1 March 2024, the representative will be the LDAC, and the alternate, the CCRUP.</p>

EFCA's Five-Year Evaluation Seminar	25 October 2022	Vigo, Spain	<p>On behalf of BISAC, the seminar was attended in person by Mihaela Mirea, from the secretariat.</p> <p>The Agenda of the seminar included:</p> <p>Welcome &amp; Introduction to the agenda</p> <p>Presentation of main evaluation findings</p> <p>Session 1 - EVOLUTION OF OPERATIONAL COORDINATION &amp; ASSISTANCE TO COOPERATION – The panel explore possible new avenues for control activities in the context of the JDPs inter alia on the international scope of JDPs, the increased integration of EU environmental policy in the CFP and others.</p> <p>Session 2 – AN ORGANISATION READY FOR THE FUTURE: SMARTER INFORMATION SHARING AND NEW CONTROL TECHNOLOGIES - The digital transformation presents significant challenges as well as opportunities for public administrations in the years ahead. The area of Fisheries control is no exception, where new control technologies are emerging.</p> <p>Session 3 - INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION &amp; IUU CHALLENGES - The activities of EFCA in the international dimension are included in the EFCA Single programming document from 2022. This is a result of the implementation of the working arrangement between the Commission and EFCA and provides clarity and the necessary programming as regards the different activities to be implemented.</p> <p>Session 4 – IMPLICATIONS OF UPCOMING REGULATIONS AND WIDER EU POLICIES - The implementation of EFCA's operational activities requires strong coordination between the Agency, the European Commission and Member States. The framework of this evaluation is an opportunity to take stock of how cooperation with EU agencies have helped EFCA fulfil its mandate in a more efficient and coherent way and what possibilities it brings in the future.</p>
SSF Forum workshop "Handling equipment and simple vessel adaptations to improve post-release survival of vulnerable species bycatch in small-scale fisheries"	28 October 2022	Videoconference	<p>The workshop was organized by World Wide Fund (WWF) and General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). The topic addressed the incidental catch of vulnerable species in fisheries including in small-scale fisheries is a conservation issue in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Within the context of the MedBycatch project, during this workshop session were presented and discussed best practices, issues, and hands-on solutions regarding the handling of bycatch of vulnerable species in small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean. Experts and small-scale fisheries workers will present and share their knowledge and experiences. Was presented a study made by WWF and were highlighted some conclusions and recommendations that were identified within this study. Also, were presented aspects related to capacity building presentation, activities with the fishing sector to reduce bycatch, a good practice guide created for fishermen with info/good practice, an identification guide for protected species with info on how to protect them, an application for fishermen to collect data and some training sessions.</p> <p>The workshop was attended online by Anca Panait, from part of BISAC secretariat.</p>

45 session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)	7-11 November 2022	Tirana, Albania	<p>The meeting was attended online by Mr. Yordan Gospodinov. Black Sea Fisheries Management:</p> <p>The commission particularly praised the work on priority species in the Black Sea reference to the BlackSea4Fish project. To advance the path towards ensuring the sustainability of priority stocks, the Commission agreed to further improve data quality through data continuation preparatory meetings and improvement of stock assessment capabilities. To this end he approved proposed roadmaps for finalizing Black Sea and European anchovy reference assessments sprat and improve the ratings of shark and saffron. The Commission welcomes the finalization of the thyroid reference value with newly assessed values reference points that reveal an overexploited and overexploited stock with stable fishing mortality. Considering the state of depletion of the shark in the Black Sea and the lack of information on this species the Commission approved a concept note for a research program in response to Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/10 on management measures for sustainable shark fisheries in Black Sea (geographical subarea 29) (Annex 25/A), as well as a roadmap for improving shark rating. The Commission welcomes the efforts made to advance the implementation of the regional plan of Action on Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea (RPOA-SSF), in particular efforts to engage stakeholders at the regional level, emphasizing the importance of providing a platform to fishers to exchange regularly with each other.</p>
Inter ACs meeting	17.11.2022	Via videoconference	<p>The meeting was attended by the BISAC Secretariat. The first point of the meeting agenda was the presentation of the outcome of the stakeholder consultation feeding into the preparation of the CMO report. Also was marked the key points for AC work in 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Strategic foresight initiatives ('Fishers of the future')</li> <li>b. European year of skills.</li> </ul> <p>The second part of the meeting was dedicated of the Deep-sea access implementation: stakeholder feedback mechanisms in view of the upcoming ICES advice - Discussions on how to improve stakeholder consultation/involvement.</p> <p>Ecosystem based Approach to Fisheries Management – was made a Presentation of the study recently published.</p> <p>The final point was the financial and organisation matters: AC membership: how to encourage organisations to get interested and involved in AC work and Financial matters: update on state of play of the introduction of the lump sum and answers to any specific questions/issues raised by ACs.</p>



<p>WG 1 - Selectivity of fishing gear</p>	<p>23.11.2022</p>	<p>Continental Forum Hotel, Constanța, Romania, and via ZOOM</p>	<p><a href="https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/3.minutes-wg1-fishing-gear-23.11.2022_en.pdf">https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/3.minutes-wg1-fishing-gear-23.11.2022_en.pdf</a></p> <p>Assoc. Dr. Violin Raikov gave a presentation on a topic "Selectivity of fishing gear- principles, importance, measures". The general conclusion of the presentation was that there is a need to introduce new technical measures - determination of mesh size for nets, the requirement for selective gear to reduce unwanted catches, specifications for the design and use of gear and measures to minimize the impact of fishing on the sea , ecosystem and environment. Following is a presentation by Dr. Victor Nita and Dr. Magda Nencu on the topic " Pilot study for scientific justification of the removal/revocation of the obligation to discard the turbot catch in accordance with Commission Delegated Regulation (2021) 2065/25.08.2021". In accordance with this Regulation, the landing obligation provided for in Article 15(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 shall apply in the Black Sea to fisheries targeting turbot (<i>Psetta maxima</i>) with gillnets nets (fishing gear code (5) — GNS) Fulfillment of the landing obligation. The final results of the pilot study were submitted to NARA Romania, which in turn sent them to the European Commission through a joint letter signed with the Bulgarian partners (IARA). The Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) evaluated the data and concluded that the information provided is extremely valuable, considering that it represents the first initiative to assess the survival rate of turbot caught with nets in Black Community waters sea. Therefore, the derogation from the obligation to unload the turbot has been extended until 31 December 2024. Mr Yordan Gospodinov made the conclusion that for fishermen, sprats, mullet and turbot are one of the most important species in the Black Sea, and although their main goal is fishing and realization of added value, it is very important for them to preserve the species for future generations . This is dictated by the fact that generations of experts, material base and enterprises that require raw materials have been created. Although the EC is increasingly allocating funds to aquaculture, fishing remains the main source of livelihood for coastal regions, therefore the BISAC should work in the direction of supporting scientific findings, which would be the basis for future issued recommendations.</p>
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<p>FG 4 - "Bycatch of vulnerable species"</p>	<p>23.11.2022</p>	<p>Continental Forum Hotel, Constanța, Romania, and via ZOOM</p>	<p><a href="https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/2.minutes-fg4-bycatch-23.11.2022_en.pdf">https://www.blaceu.eu/en/doc/2.minutes-fg4-bycatch-23.11.2022_en.pdf</a></p> <p>Was made a presentation by Mr. Costin Timofte from the NGO "Mare Nostrum" on the topic "Black Sea free from fishing nets ( Net free Black Sea )". The "Net free Black Sea" project of the NGO Mare Nostrum is an initiative introduced at the local level and has several goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of ghost fishing gear from two areas between Cape Midia and Vama Veche;</li> <li>• Creating a working network for effective knowledge transfer between the research world, industry, local government and local communities;</li> <li>• Raising awareness of the social, economic and environmental damage caused by ALDFG in the Black Sea region.</li> </ul> <p>The implementation period is from May 2022 to April 2023 and is financially supported by the Small Grants Program of the Ocean Conservancy and the Global Ghost Gear Initiative, where the NGO Mare Nostrum is the only member organization from the Black Sea.</p> <p>The Chairman of the BISAC – Mr Buhai emphasized that especially in Romania, as far as the bycatch of sturgeon in the Danube delta area is concerned, the fishing there is done after the isobath limit, which is 20 m, and the reproduction of this species is below 20 m. The large vessels engaged in fishing for sturgeon sprat and rapan, work after a depth of 20 m and bycatch is minimal. Another very important aspect is the introduction of the monofilament nets for catching turbot, which became possible after a scientific study conducted by the "Grigore Antipa" Institute, together with the "RO-Pescador" association. The survey itself was financed by the members of this association, who provided ships, crew and funds for its conduct. As a conclusion, it can be said that most of the scientific research carried out in Romania is at the initiative and with the assistance of the fishing associations and not by the authorities. Last but not least, the losses suffered by the fishing sector due to the war in Ukraine should be mentioned, for which the EC reacted very quickly and prepared a legislative framework for determining compensations, and the BISAC also sent a recommendation with proposed criteria for granting aid since spring, but so far no framework has been drawn up by the Romanian government for such assistance. With this, BISAC wants to warn about the slow implementation of some measures taken at the European level, which are essential for the sector.</p>
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BISAC General Assembly	24.11.2022	Continental Forum Hotel, Constanța, Romania, and via ZOOM	<p>The Agenda was the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>T.1 Opening of the meeting, determination of the leader of the meeting, election of the recorder and enumerator;</li> <li>T.2 Introduction of officials and guests, greetings;</li> <li>T.3 Analysis of paid membership fees for 2022. and the financial situation of BISAC.</li> <li>T.4 Implementation of the Work Program for 2022.</li> <li>T.5 Adoption of work program of BISAC for 2023.</li> <li>T.6 Adoption of the Budget for 2023 of the BISCA;</li> <li>T.7 Determining the amount of the membership fee to the BISAC for 2023;</li> <li>T.8 Selection of a registered auditor;</li> <li>T.9 Election of the vice-chairpersons of the BISAC.</li> <li>T.10 Others;</li> </ul> <p>Mrs. Ivelina Balanova, in her capacity as the accountant of BISAC, presented the paid membership fees for 2022 in table form.</p> <p>According to item 4 of the agenda: Mr. Yordan Gospodinov briefly presented the implementation of the Work Program of the BISAC for 2022. This document must be adopted by the Executiv Committee at its next meeting and presented to the General Assembly. For 2022, BISAC has held the scheduled meetings of the General Assembly - 2 in number; 2 meetings of the Executiv Committee and all planned work and focus groups. Representatives of the BISAC have participated in all meetings of the DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the EC, as well as in many international forums.</p> <p>According to item 5 of the agenda: Mr. Yordan Gospodinov presented to the members of the General Assembly draft of the 2023 Work Program of the BISAC, consistent with the ODA and the 2020-2030 strategy of the BISAC. For 2023, 2 meetings of the General Assembly, 2 meetings of the Executiv Committee, 6 Working Groups and 6 Focus Groups are planned. The following is a vote on the adoption of the work program of the BISAC, adding to it the exchange of experience with another Advisory Council.</p> <p>According to item 6 of the agenda : Mrs. Mihaela Mirea presented a draft budget of the BISAC for 2023, which for the first year coincides with the lumpsum method, which the EC adopted for the Advisory Councils. The proposed budget refers to the expenditure amounts that the BISAC has had in previous years, updated with the last year's inflation rate, as well as the number of new members. All costs have increased compared to previous years, this also applies to the rental of meeting rooms, hotel accommodation, technical equipment, translation services, etc. The following is a vote on the adoption of the BISAC budget for 2023 and accepted.</p> <p>On item 7 of the agenda: Mr. Daniel Buhai proposes to have differentiated membership fee rates for 2023 for small-scale fishermen, environmental organizations and commercial fishing associations, with their amount as follows:</p>
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			<p>According to item 9 of the agenda : Discussions will follow on the election of the vice-chairpersons of the BISAC, who according to the Regulation must be from the group of other stakeholders in the sea, and not from the fishing associations.</p> <p>Mr. Dragos Buhai proposes for this post Mr. Marian Paiu from the NGO Mare Nostrum, who is one of the founders of the BISAC. Mr. Paiu is very well acquainted with the work of the BISAC, actively participates in the meetings of the association and has given a number of presentations in the working and focus groups. With the condition that the next mandate after 3 years will be the election of a member from the Bulgarian side.</p> <p>Mrs. Lyubov Georgieva: The proposal for rotation of the post is very reasonable, but let the members comply with it and when the chairman is Romanian, then the vice-chairpersons should be Bulgarian. Mr. Ludmil Ikonomov from the "Institute for Ecological Modernization" Foundation is proposing for this post.</p> <p>After discussion the candidacy of Mr. Marian Paiu for the position of vice-chairpersons is put to the vote. Voted FOR - 7 votes. Against - 8. The proposal is not accepted.</p> <p>The candidacy of Mr. Lyudmil Ikonomov for vice-chairpersons is put to the vote.</p> <p>Voted FOR - 8 votes . Against - 7 - the proposal is not accepted, because according to the Regulation, the choice must be made by consensus.</p> <p><a href="https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/1.minutes-ga_24.11.2022_en.pdf">https://www.blsaceu.eu/en/doc/1.minutes-ga_24.11.2022_en.pdf</a></p>

Chairman of the BISAC  
Daniel Buhai