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Minutes

Of BISAC Working Group 3 meeting

7 July 2020

Topic: Marine Strategy Framework Directive application in Black Sea; mainly D1-cetacean, D3 - Commercial fish and shellfish, D4: Food webs, D10 - Marine litter.

On July 7, 2020 in Pomorie, Grand Hotel Pomorie, a meeting of BISAC Working Group 3 took place with the following agenda:

1. Presentation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Mihaela Mirea.
2. Presentation D1-cetaceans, D3 - Commercial fish and crustaceans, D4 - Food webs, D10 - Marine litter, Good Ecological Status and threshold values;
3. Discussions, comments and opinions;
4. Comments on the NWWAC SUP recommendation,, support decision and proposal to the GA;
5. Comments on EC decisions setting standards in the circular design of fishing gear;
6. Recommendations;

Participants: Mr Marian Paiu, Mr Vasil Raichinov, Mr Dimitar Kanariev, Mrs Lyubov Georgieva, Mr Danko Penev, Mr Alexander Trapchev, Mr Plamen Kamburov, Mr Mr. Kiril Zheglev, Mrs. Dimitrina Kostova, Mr. Buhai Dragos.

The meeting was attended by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov, Institute of Oceanology, Varna, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galin Nikolov - Executive Director of NAFA, Burgas, Mr. Maxim Aurel from ANPA Constanța via video connection.

The meeting was opened by Yordan Gospodinov - President of BISAC. Participants and guests greet BISAC members. Welcome speech by Mr Galin Nikolov.

Item 1 on the agenda: The moderator and chair of the working group, Mihaela Cîndea-Mirea, introduced the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The aim of the strategy is to achieve and maintain a good ecological status of the marine environment by 2020. The main pressures on the environment are overfishing, chemical pollution, oil and oil compounds

pollution, introduction of non-native species, climate change. Ms. Căndea stated that she will address only a few aspects related to fishing, because the problem is complex and quite voluminous and will present the descriptors 1,3,4 and 10, namely D 1 - cetaceans, D 3 - commercial fish and shellfish, D 4 - food webs and D 10 - marine waste. There are many criteria for each descriptor of the directive and behind each criterion - additional descriptions that determine the good state of the marine environment.

Item 2: Mr Marian Paiu introduced the topic: Supporting the implementation of the MSFD in the Black Sea by establishing a regional cetacean monitoring system (D1) and noise monitoring (D11) to achieve an ecological status good (GES). The project is co-financed by the European Commission through DG Environment and was implemented with the cooperation of 9 partners from the Black Sea countries and the ACCOBAMS Secretariat (Agreement for the Conservation of Black Sea Cetaceans [Mediterranean and contiguous Atlantic) with headquarters the Monaco.

Item 3 on the agenda: Discussions:

Mr. Marian Paiu explained that the role of BISAC is to explain to its member associations, and to their members, that it is important to report incidental catches of cetaceans. In Romania, upon verification, it turns out that there are no such by-catches. A threshold value for by-catches of cetaceans for Bulgaria and Romania has not yet been established. It is proposed that this threshold be 1% of the existing population. However, as there is no ongoing research and no accurate information on the number of cetaceans caught accidentally, it is necessary to work with scientific institutes and fishermen. For example, 1% of the existing population in the area off the coast of Bulgaria is 295 cetaceans (a number that can be called a bycatch of dolphins).

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Violin Raykov - To the extent that there is information about Bulgaria, this by-catch threshold has not been reached.

Item 4: BISAC members took into account the recommendation prepared by the NWWAC (Northwest Water Advisory Council) on the implementation of the Single Use Plastic Directive and the operational aspects of the Waste Collection Plan.

Discussions remain as to whether BISAC should support this recommendation.

Mr. Kiril Zheglev: Everyone wants the seas to be clean, but there are many conditions. First of all, the organization must be very good. Vessels catch a lot of waste, but 90% of it is not waste from fishing gear. 99% of fishing gear in Bulgaria is not made of single use plastic. On the other hand, fishermen in the Black Sea are poor and conservative and repair their gear. For fishermen to collect waste, they must have a financial interest and a well-developed system. Because the waste is made of plastic, wood, metal, rubber and is a heterogeneous material, none of the fishermen will wait for someone to come ashore to transport the waste they have collected. On the other hand, ships themselves have nowhere to collect this waste. Many military and explosive munitions left over from World War II were also confiscated. Their transfer procedure is very complicated, long explanations are needed on how and where the explosive was caught and often the ship that found this type of waste does not

return to fishing for a few days. To avoid all this long and complicated procedure, the fishermen throw the munition found, back into the sea.

Ms Lyubov Georgieva: In Bulgaria, the fish net removal procedure is currently complicated. The RIEW code is required for the waste found. This takes time. Also, only certain landfills accept waste with the appropriate code and it can be shown that the landfill in question is hundreds of kilometers away. If the state wants, this system can be organized without problems. For example: if you declare to ANPA that you have a certain type of fishing gear, you must also have a code for it - a document issued for the recycling of the gear in question. The idea is for the fishermen themselves to clean up, the money to come from them and not wait for someone to pay them.

Mr. Kiril Zheglev: I do not agree with Mrs Georgieva's position. 90% of marine litter does not come from fishing nets or other devices. We do not know of any fisherman who deliberately throws his nets into the sea. If there are reception points in the ports, everyone will want to hand over the waste found there at sea.

Ms. Mihaela Mirea: The letter from NWWAC is just a recommendation to the EC. If BISAC wishes to send to the Member States as well, it can adapt it to the existing conditions in Bulgaria and Romania. The Port Facilities Directive applies to both fishing and passive fished waste. Facilities for the reception of both types of waste must be built in ports. Regarding the issue of where the funding will come from, the EC proposes that it be done from the European Maritime and Fishery Fund. There is also an initiative for extended producer responsibility - to have the so-called "green fee" for the purchase of fishing gear that will be used to recycle these gears.

Mr. Plamen Kamburov: There are 12 certified ports in Bulgaria - 2 state and 10 municipal. Each port must sign a contract with a waste collection company for the disposal of different types of waste.

Mr. Vasil Raichinov: Fishermen are the people who want the sea to be clean. It is difficult to collect marine litter, because even if it is located in the sea, the next day it is not in the same place. No matter how much waste a fisherman collects, there must be a place to land it in the port. It is not difficult to organise this, after all, every municipality has a contract with landfills for waste disposal. There are several different institutions in the waste collection, and disposal chain and it is difficult for them to work together in Bulgaria.

Ms. Mihaela Mirea: In Romania, as in Bulgaria, there are no facilities for collecting marine waste in ports, and in Romania there are not even ports. Probably not all the examples and suggestions in the NWWAC recommendation are appropriate and apply to the Black Sea, but they can be taken as an example of good practice. This recommendation is very helpful to the fisheries sector. What is new is that it brings clarity to some issues and makes the directive more practical.

Mr. Yordan Gospodinov: He reminded everyone that BISAC has been regularly considering the issue of marine litter for 2 years. A round table on this topic was organized in 2018, as well as a working group in 2019. Fishermen must have a financial interest in waste collection.

Support for this NWWAC recommendation will be put to the vote at the BISAC General Assembly on July 9-10, 2020.

Item 5: Discussion of EC decisions on setting standards for the circular design of fishing gear follows. The idea is for fishing gear to be durable and long-lasting, specially adapted to the aggressive conditions of the marine environment.

Mr. Yordan Gospodinov: EMFF in the new programming period 2021-2027, provides funds for the replacement of existing fishing gear with new ones, in accordance with the new requirements.

Ms. Mihaela Mirea: There are currently no exact requirements for this new design. The first step is in the direction of research to find new materials that are sustainable and useful. The EC Decision in question informs the fishing community of what exists before the new requirements enter into force.

The meeting was closed.

Minute made by: Mrs. Elena Peneva

Chair of the Working group: Mihaela Mirea

Chairman of BISAC - Dr. Yordan Gospodinov