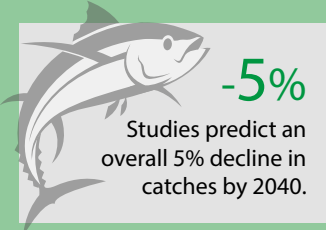
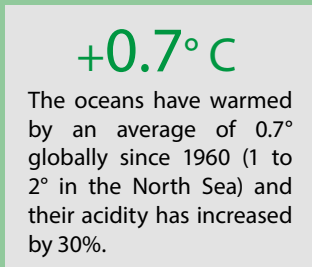


SUSTAINABLE SEA FISHING IN THE ERA OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Marine environments provide humanity with numerous essential services, including food supplies, biodiversity reserves, oxygen production and climate regulation.



Rising sea temperatures and acidification due to climate change, which will only increase in the coming decades, are already having dramatic consequences (as ably demonstrated by scientists) on ocean flora and fauna, and therefore on the human activities that depend on them. As a result, fish growth and reproduction have declined, with populations migrating to colder, less accessible waters.



For the French and European fishing industry, which has been severely disrupted by the implementation of Brexit, the challenge is particularly ambitious. The goal is to rapidly and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to eventually achieve carbon neutrality, while preserving fishery resources and

ecosystems. Only by becoming truly sustainable can the sector maintain the socio-economic activities it generates and continue to provide consumers with fresh, seasonal seafood.

In order to achieve these objectives, the ESEC calls for greater efforts on the part of fishermen to adopt practices that are less taxing on fishery resources. These fishermen should be aided in making the necessary transition to ecosystem-based management. Reaching this goal will require technological innovations, reorganisations, and the dissemination of more expansive knowledge and data.

The ESEC is therefore making recommendations that involve all stakeholders: professionals in the fishing industry and its sectors, the government at all levels, local authorities, scientific bodies, associations, and not least consumers themselves. These recommendations also draw upon national and European public policies, in particular the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which is due



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to be reformed in 2022, as well as the related financial resources such as the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

Given the importance of the overseas maritime areas, a report on their specific problems is attached.

THE ESEC'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve dialogue between fishermen, scientists, environmental protection associations and trade unions, within a collaborative inter-ministerial framework, at the European, national and local level
- Using Ifremer's SEXTANT tool, compile fishery data from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) as well as data from fishermen, in order to provide the necessary information to improve practices, training, etc.
- Extend the Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) approach to a growing number of species in order to initiate a transition to multi-species ecosystem-based stock management for each fleet, which would eventually replace the single-species MSY, by including this recommendation in the 2022 CFP reform
- Under the supervision of the Ministry for the Ecological Transition, ensure that fishermen and NGOs are involved in identifying and setting the rules for marine protected areas where the level of protection should be increased, while prioritising the creation of new fishery conservation areas
- Allocate a significant share of quotas to fishermen, especially young fishermen, who practice responsible and selective fishing, defined by official European specifications established with all stakeholders
- Take advantage of the new 2021–2027 EMFAF framework to increase the share of support granted to selective fishing gear with low impact on ecosystems and protected species
- Better account for the effects of climate change on the geographic migration of fish, in order to adjust the quotas each year, particularly for emerging species
- Strengthen controls on fishing areas, particularly in French Guiana, to combat illegal fishing
- Continue expanding initial training for fishermen on environmental and climate change considerations, and strengthen the continuous training schemes that address these topics
- Carry out a scientific assessment on technical solutions to reduce the carbon cost of vessels, fishing techniques and port facilities, in order to:
 - quantify their cumulative projected contribution to the 2050 carbon neutrality commitment;
 - open up broad consultations between all stakeholders to examine these solutions and their funding mechanisms, including a redistributive tax on fossil fuels;
 - ramp up R&D work;
 - plan organisational measures.
- Recycle reusable parts of old boats and promote the construction of eco-designed fishing boats, eventually banning non-recyclable synthetic materials
- With funding from the EMFAF, the Recovery Plan and the regions, implement port-related measures:
 - adapt them to sea level rise;
 - facilitate their access to next-generation boats;
 - reduce their carbon impact and improve waste management;
 - increase the safety of seafarers.
- Unify the various procedures used to certify aquatic products based on the sustainability of their fishing methods, with the eventual aim of setting up a European label
- Encourage the consumption of local, fresh and seasonal fish:
 - enlist fishmongers and supermarkets to raise consumer awareness;
 - review labelling regulations;
 - ensure that the provisions of the Egalim Law on institutional catering are effectively applied to seafood products.