



LINKS. ENTANGLEMENTS. SYNERGIES.

Ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management.
A policy perspective



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BALTIC SEA CONTEXT – LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL

EU level

The EU Common Fisheries Policy

- Obligation to implement ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management (EBFM) – Art. 2.3*
- EBFM explained as a „one-way street”, i.e. fisheries affecting ecosystem
- A rather complicated definition (Art. 4(9)**), also based on one-way street thinking
- All major EU Institutions involved
- Regional approach strengthened through i.a. the work of BALTFISH

The EU (Marine) Environmental Policy

- Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and its implementation in Member States
- Good Environmental Status (GES) obligation
- The present status of affairs vis-a-vis GES descriptors
- Ongoing work towards update of GES descriptors
- All major EU Institutions involved

Other/UN

HELCOM

- Coordinating platform for the regional implementation of MSFD in the Baltic Sea
- Fisheries considered an important factor affecting the ecosystem but sometimes not fully understood
- The FISH group brings together the fisheries and environment stakeholders
- Activities of various other working groups have an indirect effect on the situation of fisheries

* of the CFP Basic Regulation (1380/2013); *the CFP shall implement the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management so as to ensure that negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem are minimised, and shall endeavour to ensure that aquaculture and fisheries activities avoid the degradation of the marine environment.*

** *ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management' means an integrated approach to managing fisheries within ecologically meaningful boundaries which seeks to manage the use of natural resources, taking account of fishing and other human activities, while preserving both the biological wealth and the biological processes necessary to safeguard the composition, structure and functioning of the habitats of the ecosystem affected, by taking into account the knowledge and uncertainties regarding biotic, abiotic and human components of ecosystems;*

NATURE OF THE LINKS (1/2): „THE TWO WAY-STREET”

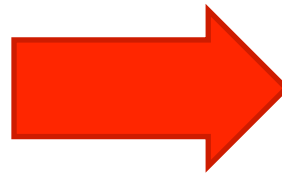
In an EU regulatory context, EBFM is understood one-way:
fisheries affecting the broader ecosystem

...but this does not reflect the whole reality...

EBFM should be understood as a „two-way street”

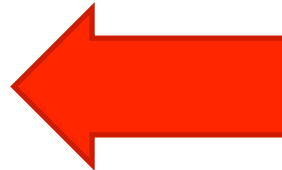
Fisheries impacting the ecosystem

- Effects on targeting fish stocks
- Effects on non-target species (fish and others)
- Impact on habitat
- Other indirect effects on the marine foodwebs

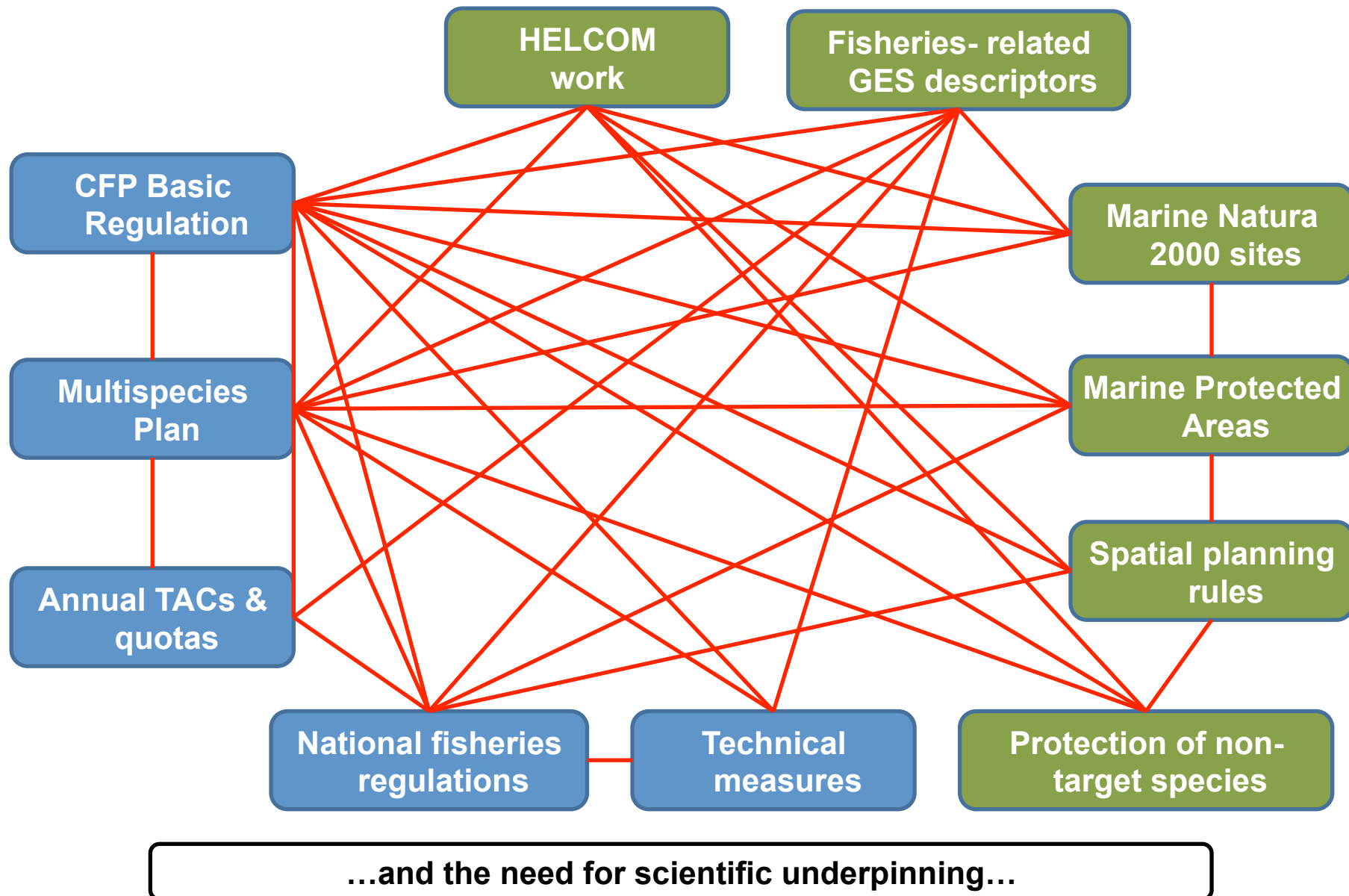


Ecosystem impacting the fisheries

- Interactions between fish species
- Effects of other species, eg. Predators, parasites
- Hydrological characteristics (temperature, salinity, oxygen content, pollution level)
- Marine litter
- Other marine human activities



NATURE OF THE LINKS (2/2): „THE ENTANGLEMENT”



The current governance system is not well-suited for implementing EBFM, at least in the Baltic region

HOW TO MOVE FROM ENTANGLEMENTS TO SYNERGIES - POLICY

Need a deep re-think of the governance system to implement EBFM

Move beyond sectoral silos at European, regional and national level

Do away with the tradition of fisheries-environment conflict...

...look for mutual advantages instead

Focus at sea basin level to take full advantage of regionalized policymaking

Move gradually and avoid excessive ambition

HOW TO MOVE FROM ENTANGLEMENTS TO SYNERGIES - PROCESS

Respect

Adopt „live and let others live” approach instead of negative language and mutual accusations



Involve

Share information on policy developments in a transparent manner



Listen

Ensure that the policy process involves those closest to the sea



Understand

Identify ecosystem needs and fishers' needs in the longer run



Trust

Assist in developing positive relations between ecosystem and fisheries policy actors



Seek good solutions together

use synergies and cooperation approach
to gradually move towards EBFM

be patient and gentle on the way 😊