

Marine Nature Conservation in Europe 2006



“Regional fishery closures in Europe as a
management tool”

Stralsund 8-12 May 2006

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North-East Atlantic Region



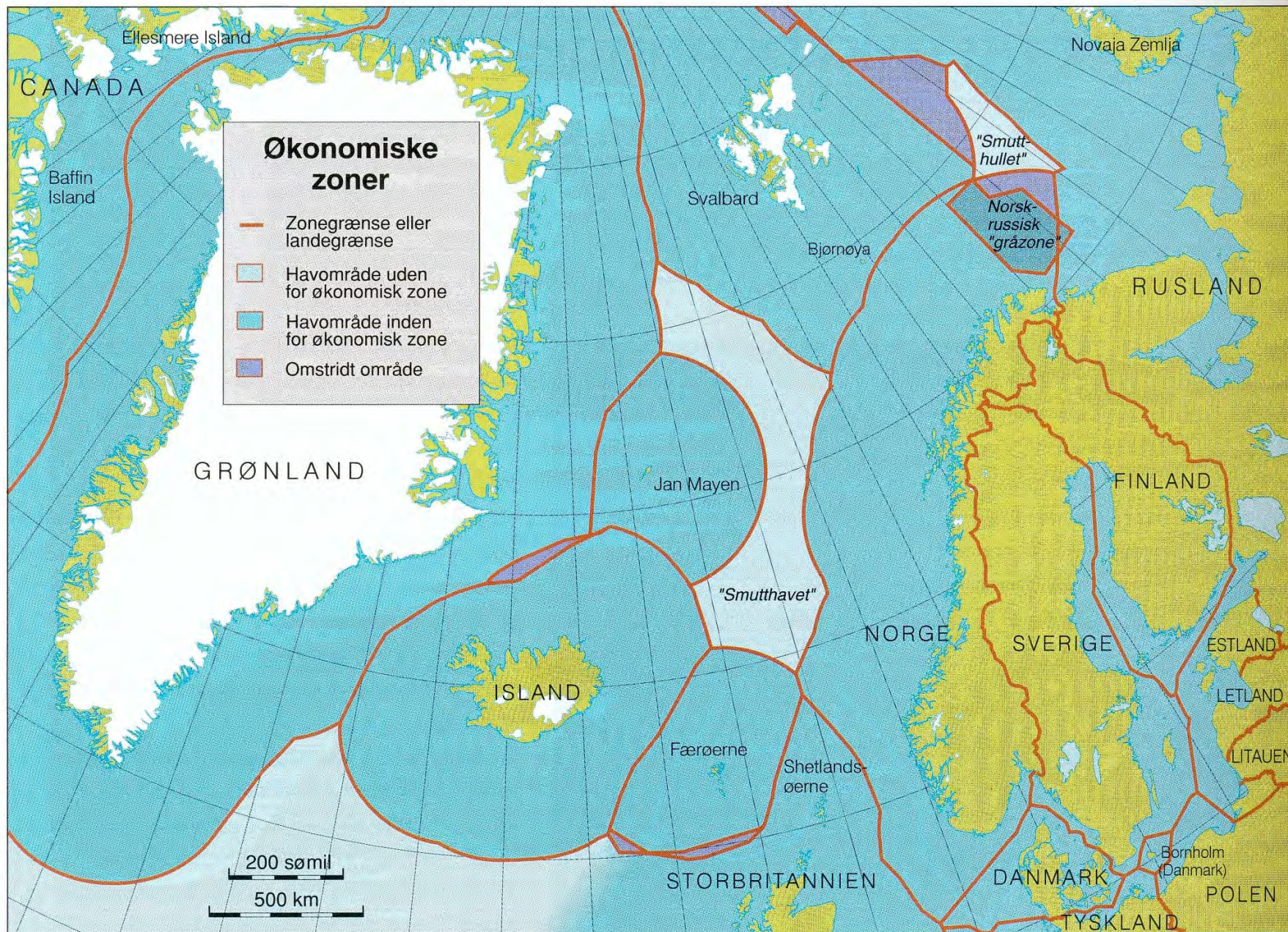
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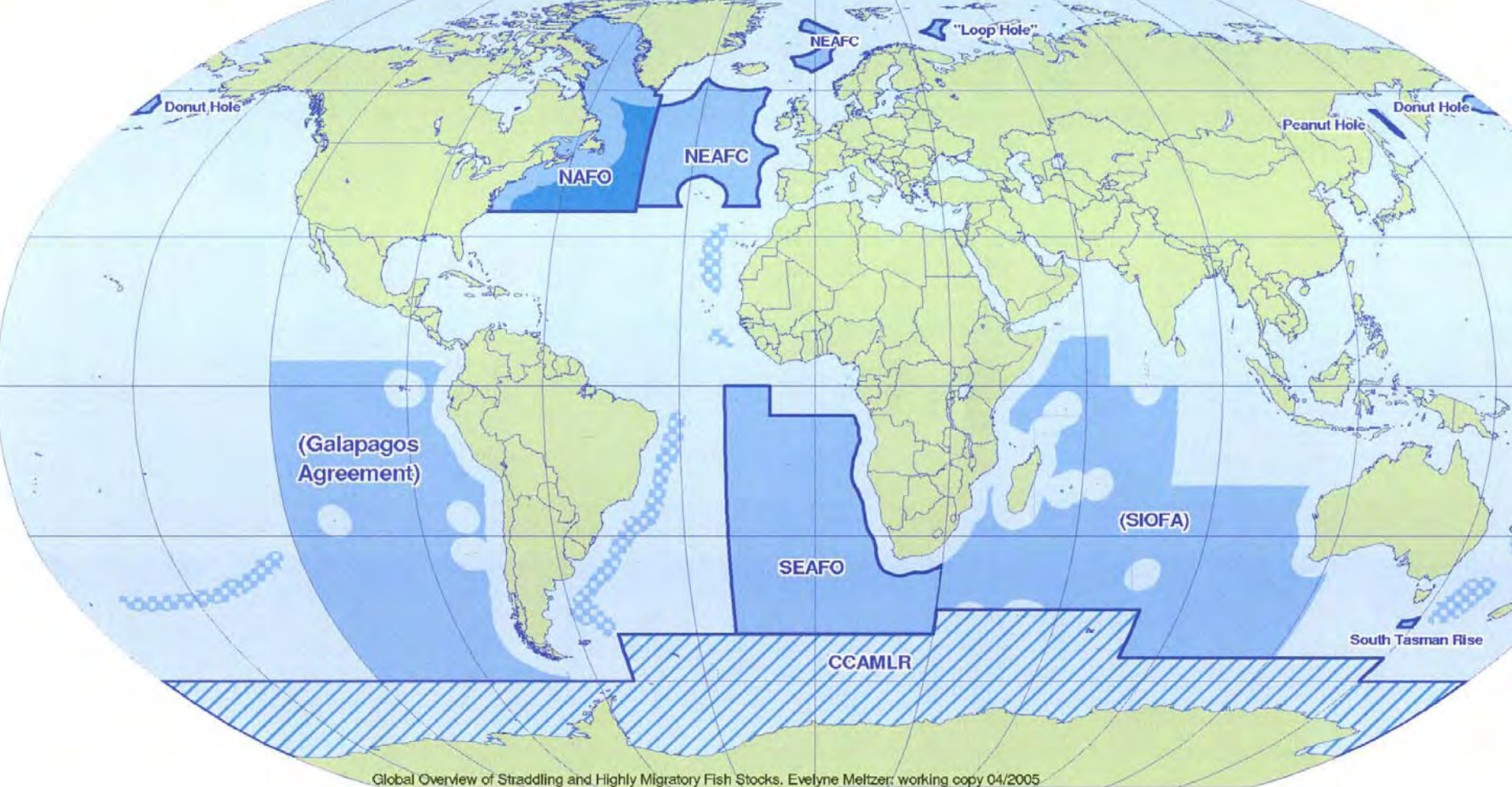
Global Overview of Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. Evelyne Meltzer: working copy 04/2005

— RFMO Boundary






North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)

★ Headquarters: London, England





Global Overview - Straddling Fish Stocks

-  RFMO Boundary
-  Proposed Regulatory Area (not yet adopted or not yet in force)
-  Other Unregulated High Seas Areas where Straddling Fish Stocks Occur
-  CCAMLR
-  NAFO Regulatory Area

Some initial remarks

- Nobody will contest that closing areas to human activity should have a beneficial effect on conservation.
- The big question is how much or rather how little has to be closed to meet a given target
- Exaggerated claims of closed areas as the solution to all problems, even boosting human activities, have not been helpful
- Closed areas face precisely the same problems as other management tools

How to turn off the dialogue

- Misleading reports on fisheries for ex. the interactive map from the Sea Around Us Project on trends in fish stock abundance in the North Atlantic from 1950 – 1999
- Exaggerated anecdotal or circumstantial evidence on the benefits of marine reserves
- The political opinion that fisheries in general are the main human threat to the oceans
- Single observations on fisheries and their effects

Task at hand

- Sustainability, a socio-economic concept, takes precedence and encompasses every other objective in fisheries management
- The RFMOs attempt to establish fisheries management systems in the high seas supporting, supplementing and compatible with systems in sea areas under national jurisdiction
- The general principle of subsidiarity should mean that regional and local management has a better chance of succeeding than global initiatives and at least there is a much better chance of a integration of environmental concerns into fisheries management

The management framework

- Fisheries managers have to plan, develop and manage fisheries in ways that address the multiple needs and desires of society and maximise the flow of benefits over time from marine resources.
- At the same time, the management framework shall reduce the risk that impacts lead to irreversible or avoidable changes to ecosystems and biodiversity.
- Fishing is the only human activity in the oceans that is totally dependent on healthy ecosystems and clean oceans.

The management framework

- Fisheries cannot avoid having an impact on the marine ecosystems in the process of producing seafood from healthy fisheries.
- Fishing communities and societies must be allowed to pursue their legitimate business of establishing economic development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs

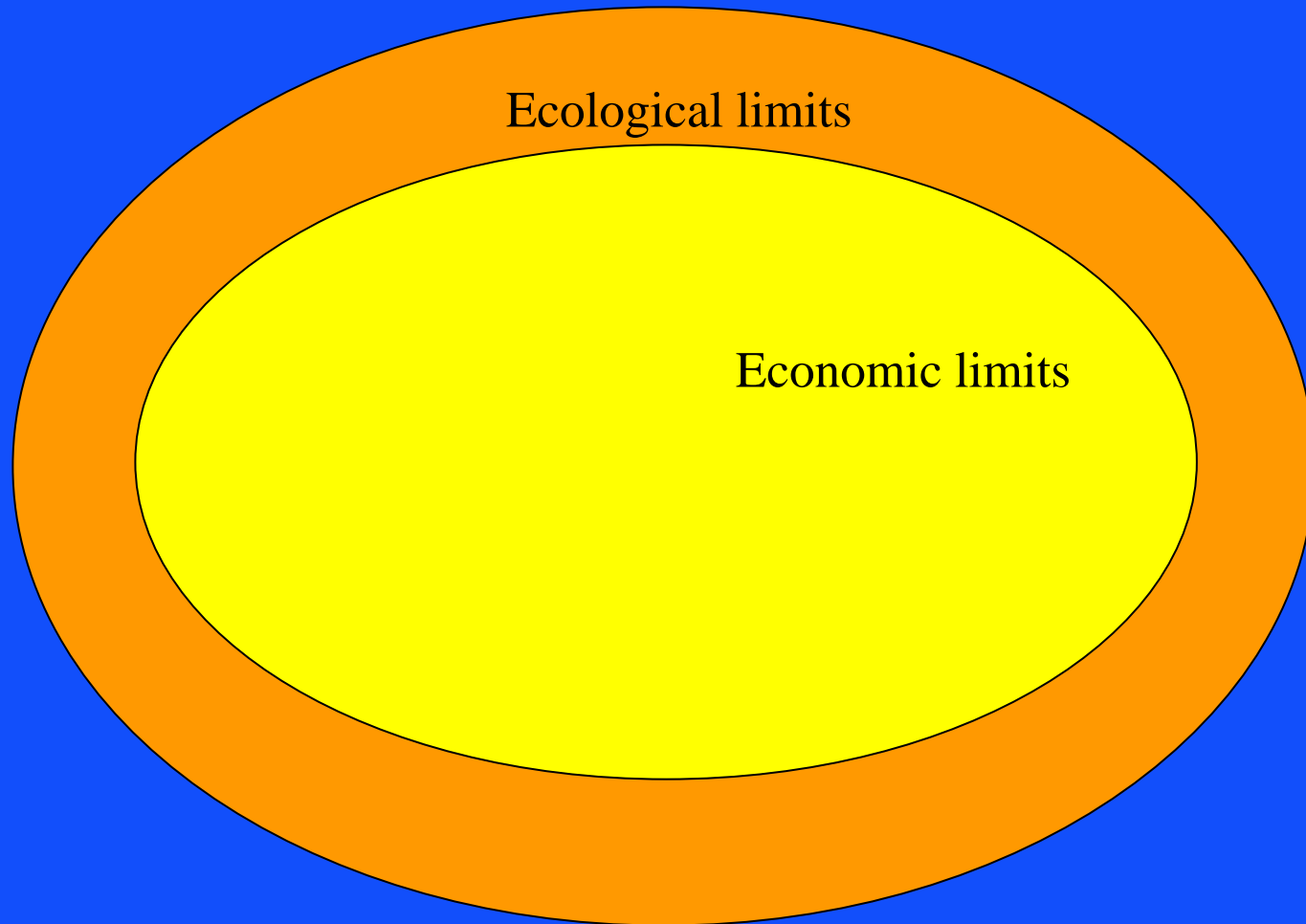
The management framework

- Target species fisheries are managed by measures aiming at controlling the overall exploitation level - catch or effort quotas - and the exploitation pattern, the fishing pressure on different age classes.
- Proposals for habitat preservation often arises from conflicts between different fishing gear, especially passive and active fishing gear.

The management framework

- There is at present a lot of investment going into gear modifications to mitigate the impact of fishing gear on habitats
- Under efficient regulatory frameworks an increasing use of “proxy” property rights tends to move regulation from the politicians and administration to the discipline of the market

Ecological og economic limits



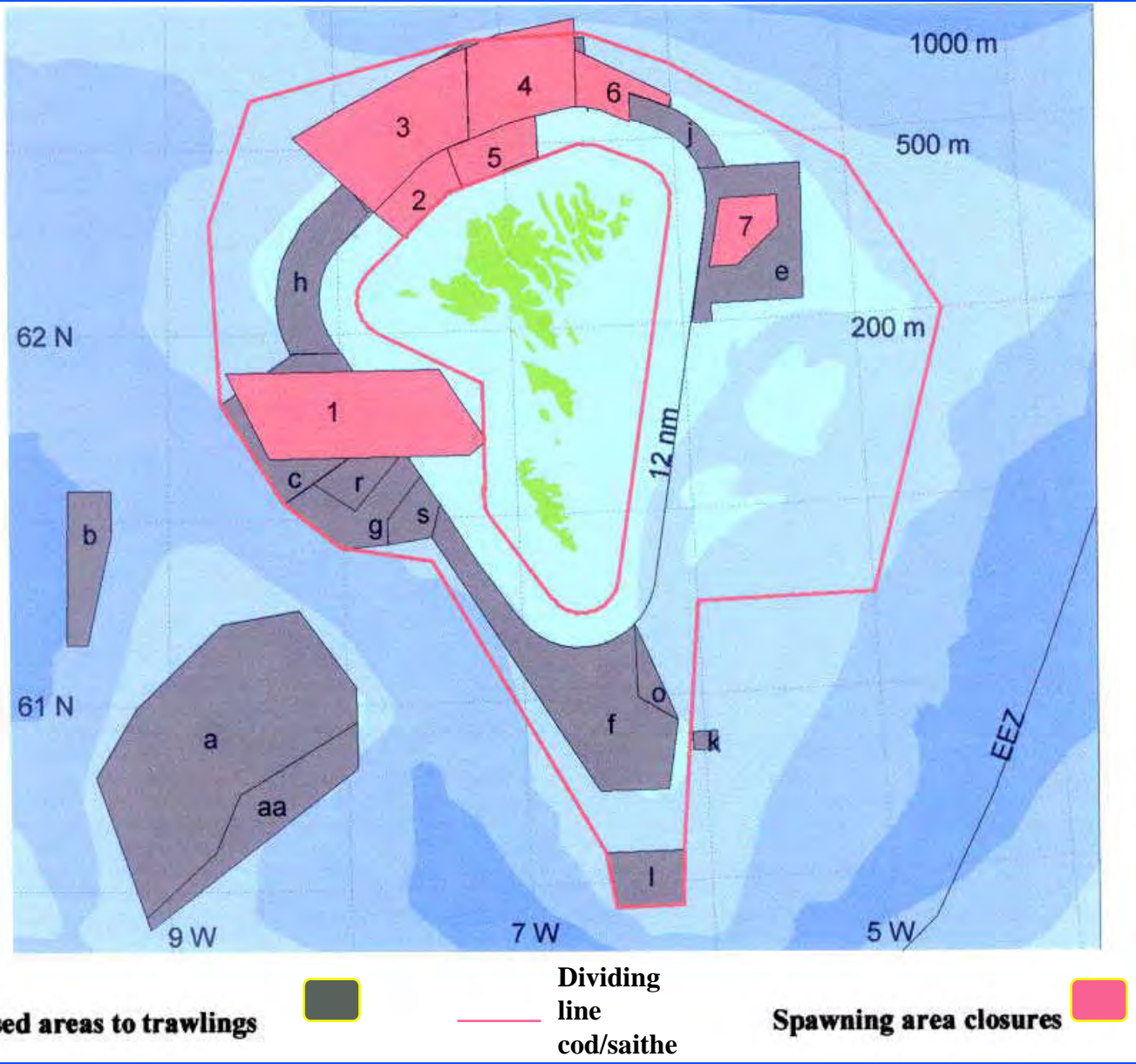
Areas closed to fishing

- Areas closed to fishing are a common tool in the fisheries management. They are i.a. known to affect the exploitation pattern
- It is also one of the oldest more often than not arising from gear conflicts
- They are to a varying extent used by NEAFC Contracting Parties. Closing areas to protect juvenile fish is common. (The Rockall Box in NEAFC.

Areas closed to fishing

- The Faroe Islands are probably one of the most extreme examples with respect to using closed areas. Almost 40 % of the fishable area is closed permanently and/or seasonally to trawls and other gear

The Faroe Islands System of closed areas



Ice- landic closur es

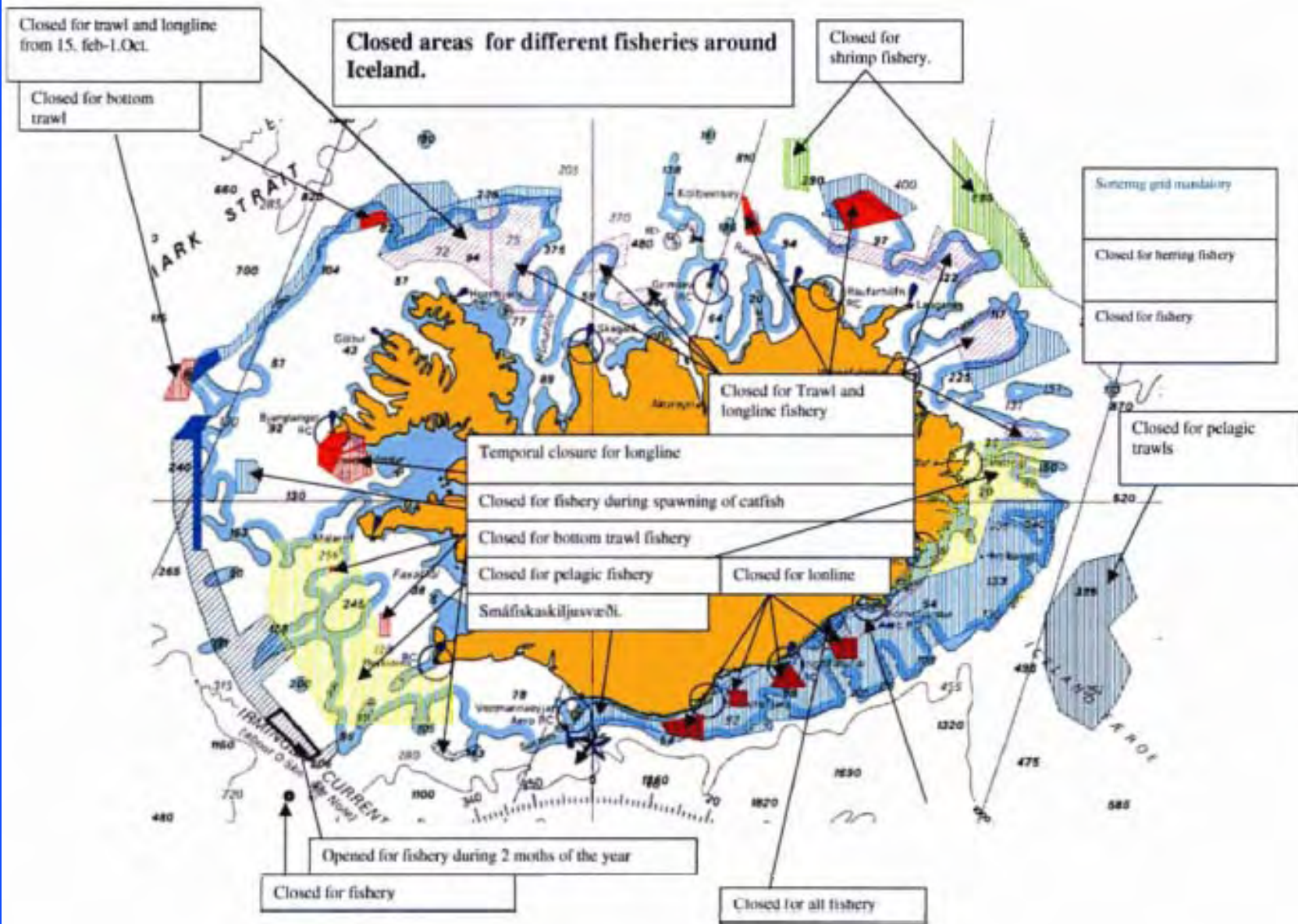


Figure 1.2.2.9

Overview of closed areas around Iceland in 2004. The boxes are of a different nature and can be closed for different time periods and gear type.

Closed areas as fisheries management tools

- Norway, Iceland and the Faroe Islands close areas on short notice if the percentage of juveniles or by-catch goes above a certain number.

Norway separates areas between gears in the fishery for spawning cod in Lofoten in late winter and has closed some cold water coral areas for trawling

Different boxes in the North Sea

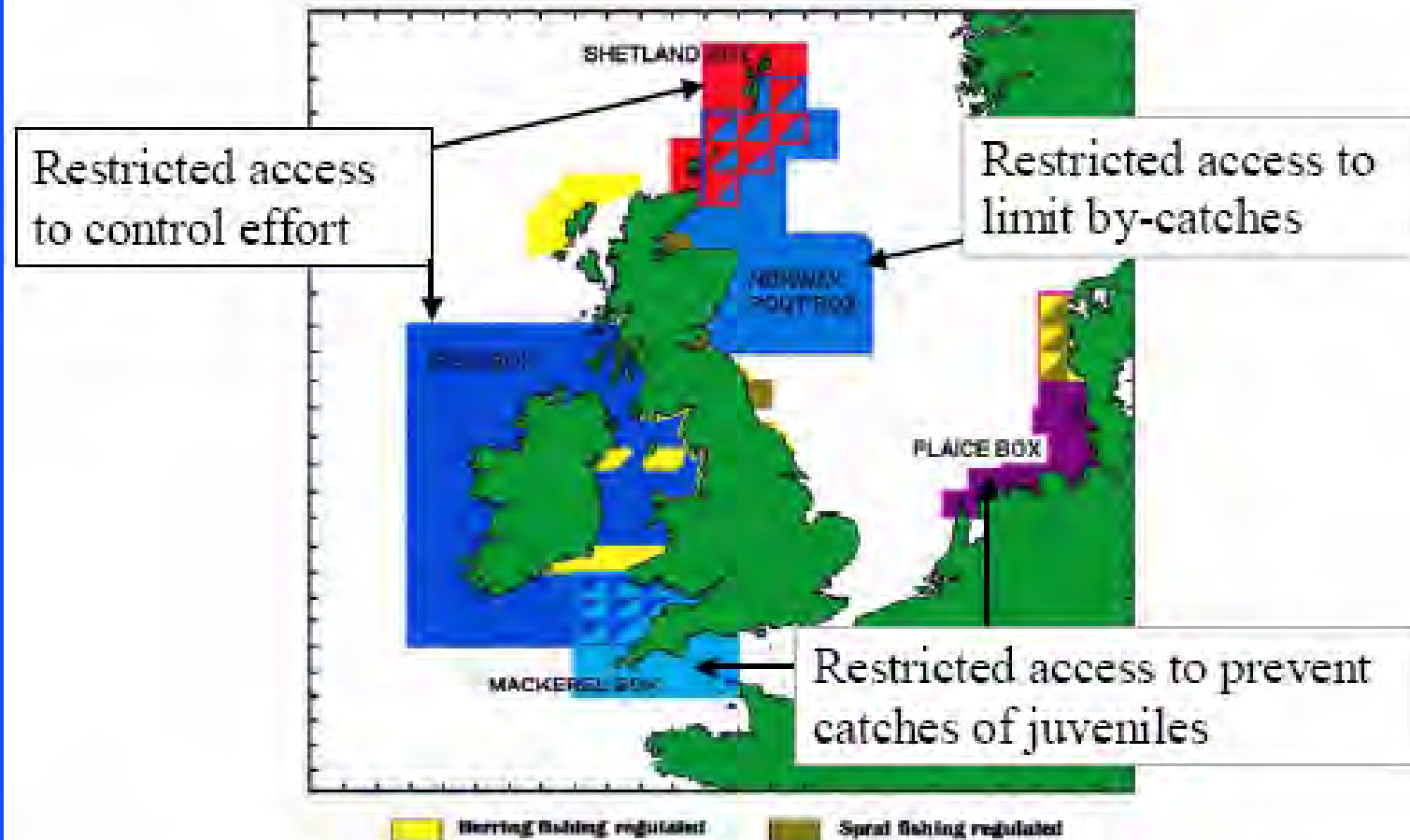


Figure 1.1.1 Historic and current spatial restrictions on effort entering the fisheries around Ireland and Shetland, designed to limit catches of juvenile plaice and mackerel, disturbance of spawning herring and by-catches of juveniles of other species of gadoids in the Norway pout fishery.

Closed areas as management tools

- For a long time there has been very little research into the effect of closed areas.
- Scientific fisheries advice has almost entirely concentrated on assessing stock status and calculating annual TACs
- The UNFA commitments are very much focussed on single species criteria and have not made it easier to consider other management tools.
- It is, therefore, difficult to get precise scientific advice how to set up closed areas and their effect on for example the exploitation pattern, overall fishing mortality or relation to management reference points.

Marine Protected Areas FAO COFI 2005

- i) **Agreed** that the use of MPAs as a fisheries management tool should be scientifically based and backed by effective monitoring and enforcement and an appropriate legal framework.
- ii) **Agreed** that MPAs were one of a number of management tools and that they would be effective in combination with other appropriate measures such as capacity control.

Marine Protected Areas FAO COFI

iii) **Noted** that RFMOs would need to develop means of interacting with other relevant IGOs, in particular in the environmental field, including the CBD, and other organizations such as IMO, when there was a need to exclude non-fishery human activities within an MPA on the high seas.

Short presentation of NEAFC

- NEAFC goes back a long time. The present Convention is signed in 1980 and entered in to force in 1982.
- It reflects the discussions and negotiations of UNCLOS.
- There are at present 6 Contracting Parties, Estonia, the EU, Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation.
- NEAFC was “a sleeping beauty” until 1995. The signing of the UNFA sparked new life in the organisation.

Short presentation of NEAFC

- From 1995 and onwards all major fisheries in the NEAFC Regulatory Area have been brought under regulation and NEAFC has systematically adapted the requirements in international law and instruments, i.a. science based management, effective surveillance and inspection transparency, fast track dispute settlement, and effective tools against IUU fishing.

The situation in NEAFC

Table 3. Landings from the NEAFC Regulatory Area in 2003
(Unit: tonnes)

Source: NEAFC Statistics and Convention Area compared.

Stocks	Landings RA	Landings Total
Norwegian spring spawning (Atlanto-Scandian) herring	110,059	773,000
Blue whiting	883,130	2,365,319
Mackerel	30,439	617,000
Oceanic S. mentella	69,036	149,439
Rockall haddock	4,656	6,148
Total	1,097,320	3,910,906

Deep sea fisheries

In November 2002 NEAFC decided to take on the regulation of deep-sea species

In deep-sea fisheries long-lines, bottom trawls, semi-pelagic trawls and bottom gill nets are used, which all can affect demersal habitats. Some of these fisheries are very mixed

Fishing mortality exerted by deep-sea fleets on deep-sea stocks is not known. A lot more knowledge is necessary to bring the management of these stocks into an ecosystem context. Hopefully ICES will come deliver some of this in

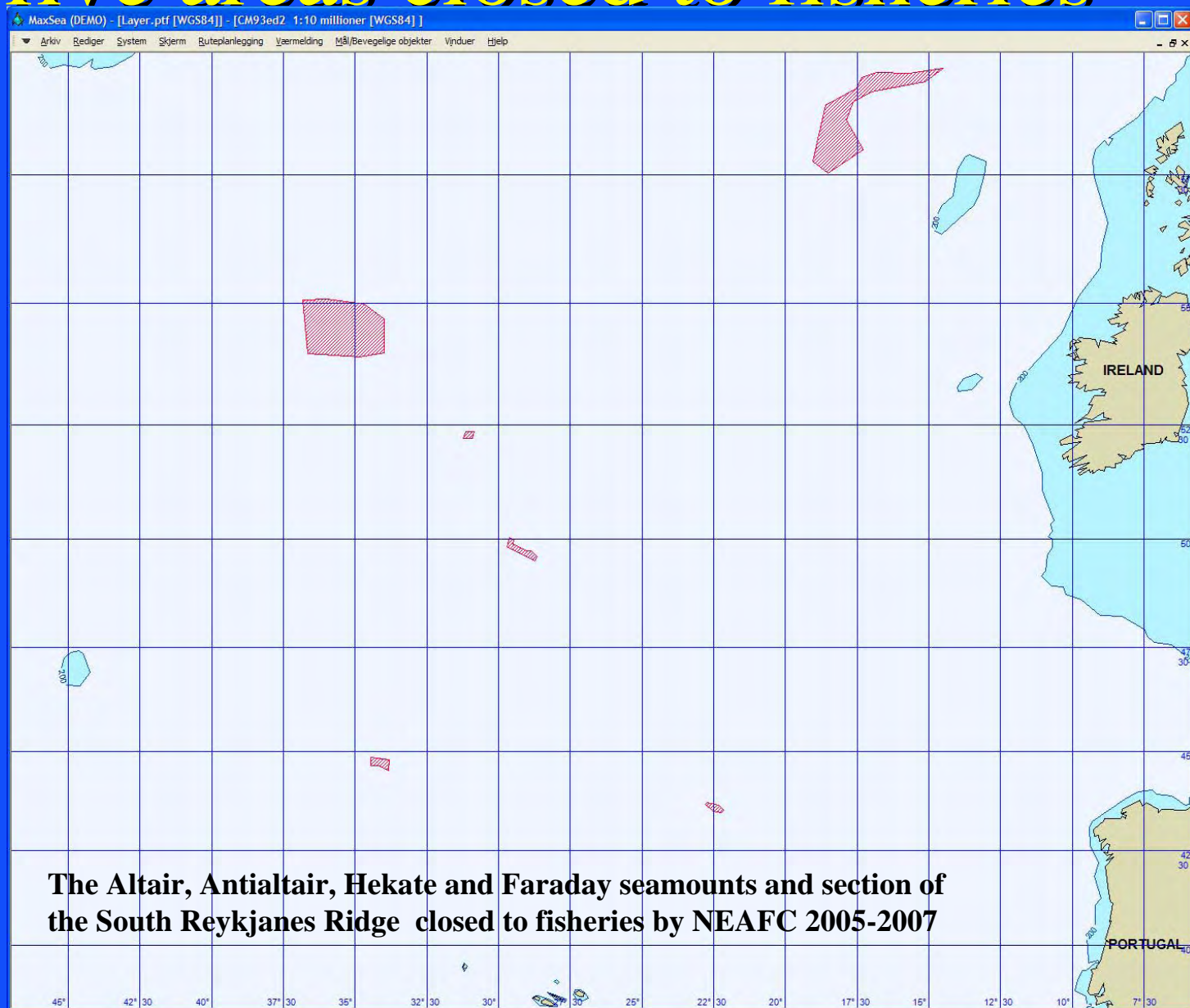
June this year

Five areas closed to fisheries

In November 2004 NEAFC by consensus adopted a recommendation closing 5 areas for all fishing gears.

The Hekate, Faraday, Altair and Antialtair seamounts and a area of the South Reykjanes ridge.

The five areas closed to fisheries



From areas closed to fisheries to MPAs

NEAFC has closed 4 sea mounts and a larger area in the South Reykjanes Ridge for all fishing gears temporarily. What next?

Recent responses to requests for advice on closed areas from ICES has not been encouraging.

The discussion on closed areas led to a proposal for amendment of the Convention so it comes more in line with recent international developments and directly allows NEAFC to address problems outside strict fisheries management.

Updating the NEAFC Convention

1. The Commission shall perform its functions in order to ensure the long-term conservation and optimum utilisation of the fishery resources in the Convention Area, providing sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits.
2. When making recommendations in accordance with Article 5 or 6 of the Convention the Commission shall in particular:
 - a) ensure that such recommendations are based on the best scientific evidence available;
 - b) apply the precautionary approach;

Updating the NEAFC Convention

c) take due account of the impact of fisheries on other species and marine ecosystems, and in doing so adopt, where necessary, conservation and management measures that address the need to minimise harmful impacts on living marine resources and marine ecosystems; and

d) take due account of the need to conserve marine biological diversity.

3. The Commission shall provide a forum for consultation and exchange of information on the state of the fishery resources in the Convention Area and on the management policies, including examination of the overall effects of such policies on the fishery resources and, as appropriate, other living marine resources and marine ecosystems.

From areas closed to fisheries to MPAs

The introduction of MPAs is very strongly advocated for reasons of conservation and protection of biodiversity.

There is a case for integrating concerns of other legitimate users of the oceans into this process.

Fisheries is just one human activity in the oceans. What about other users?

From areas closed to fisheries to MPAs

Quotation from Technical advice issued by
CBD, Convention on Biological Diversity

”MPCAs are not cost less instruments. Their creation and ongoing management will require substantial investments from governments or communities, and most MPCAs have impacts on existing users of the marine and coastal environment. The costs need to be offset by the benefits that MCPAs provide.”

The end



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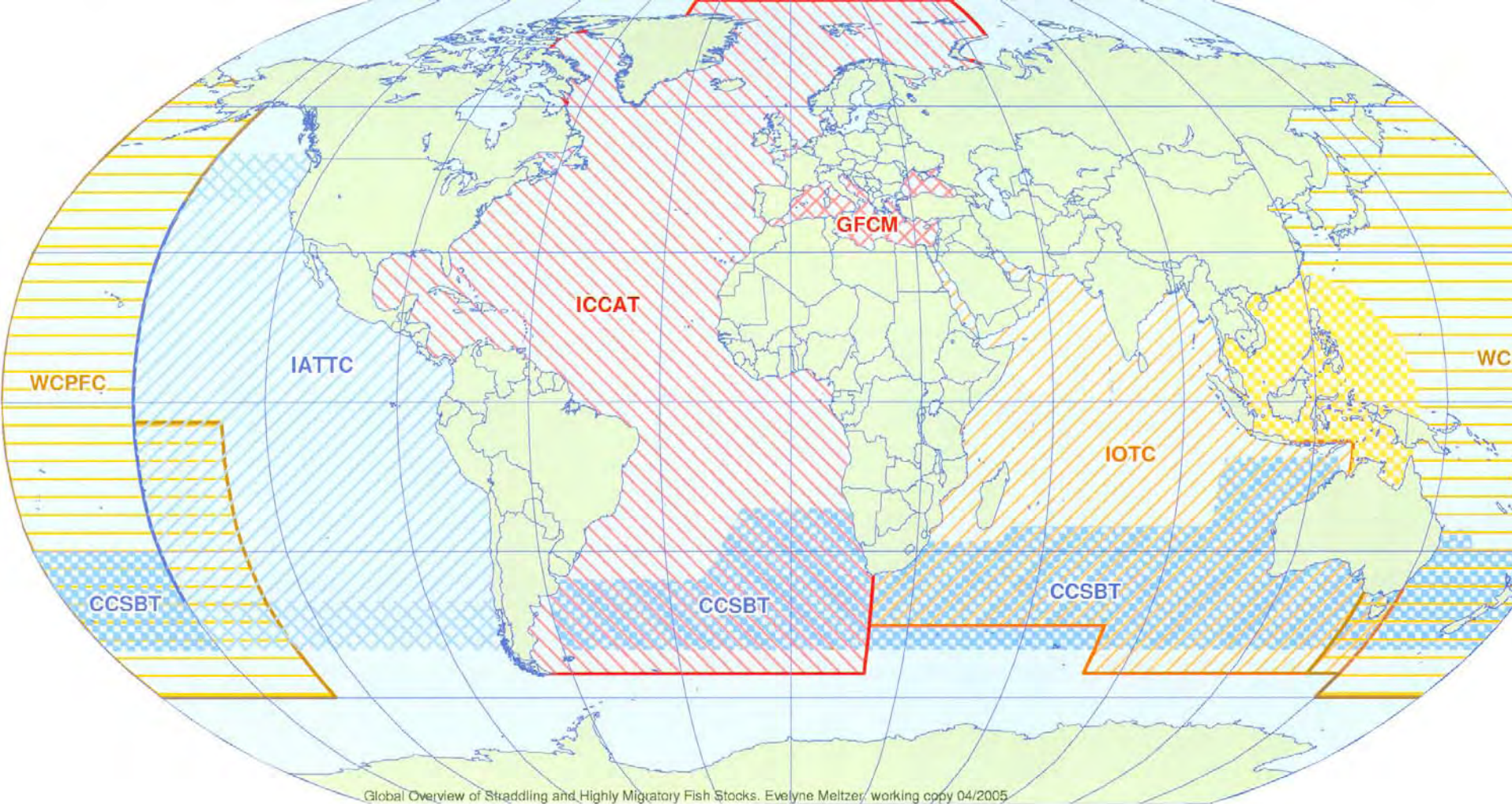
— RFMO Boundary

★ Headquarters: London, England

Professional presentation

:Coming from the Faroe Islands

- Degree in Marine Ecology, Univ. of Copenhagen
- Worked as scientist 1969 – 1985. Chairman of the ACFM of ICES 1980-1982
- Director of Fisheries in the Faroe Islands, 1986-1996, heading bilateral and multilateral fisheries negotiations. Chairman of NAFO 1989-91 and NAMMCO 1992-1995
- International work for ICES 1982-1985, as Fisheries Officer, and NEAFC from 2001-
- Participated in the second to the fourth Meeting of Regional Fisheries Bodies
- I am not representing NEAFC, but speak in a personal capacity



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Map Projection : Robinson

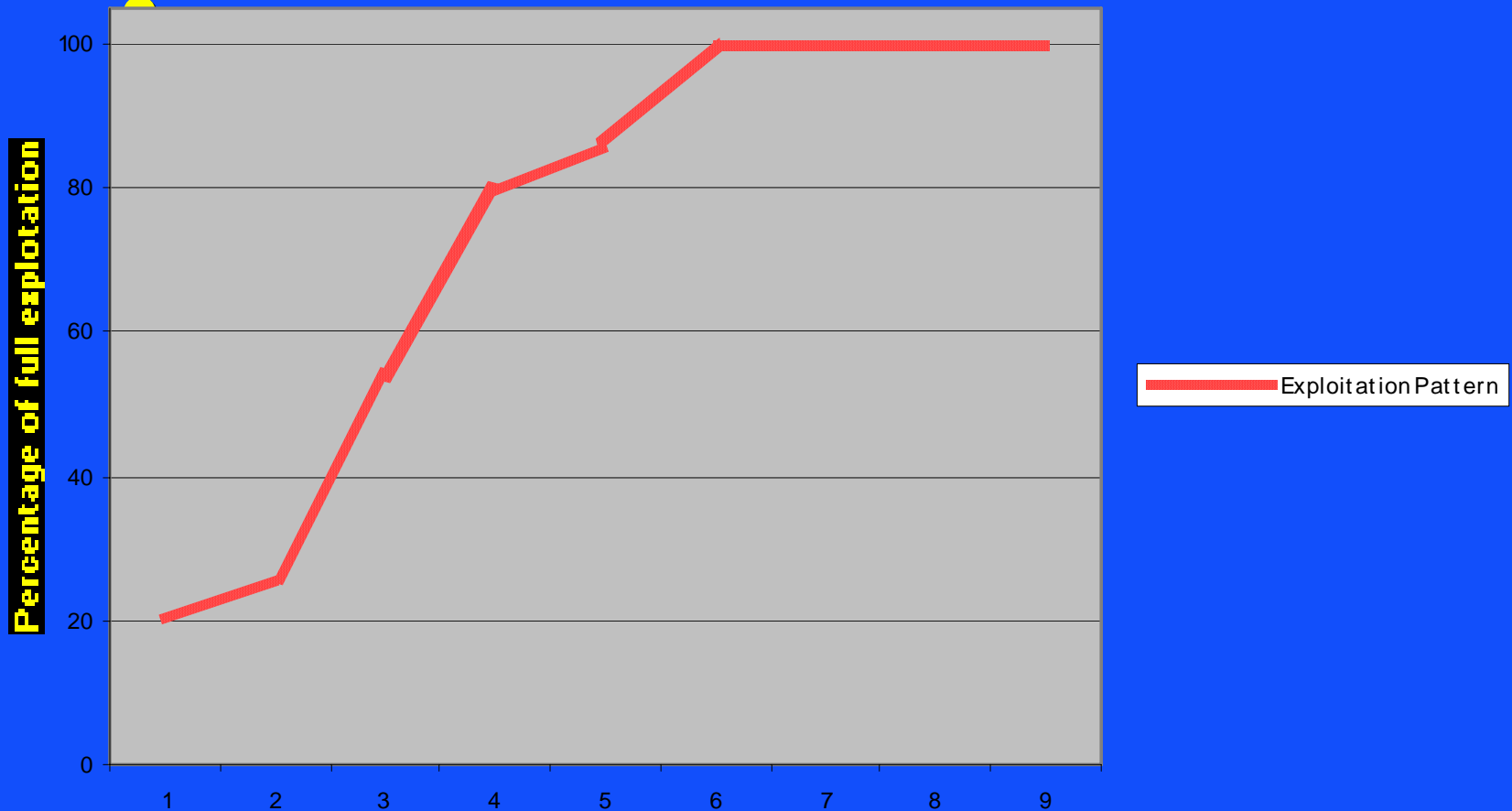
Global Overview - Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (Tuna and Tuna-Like)



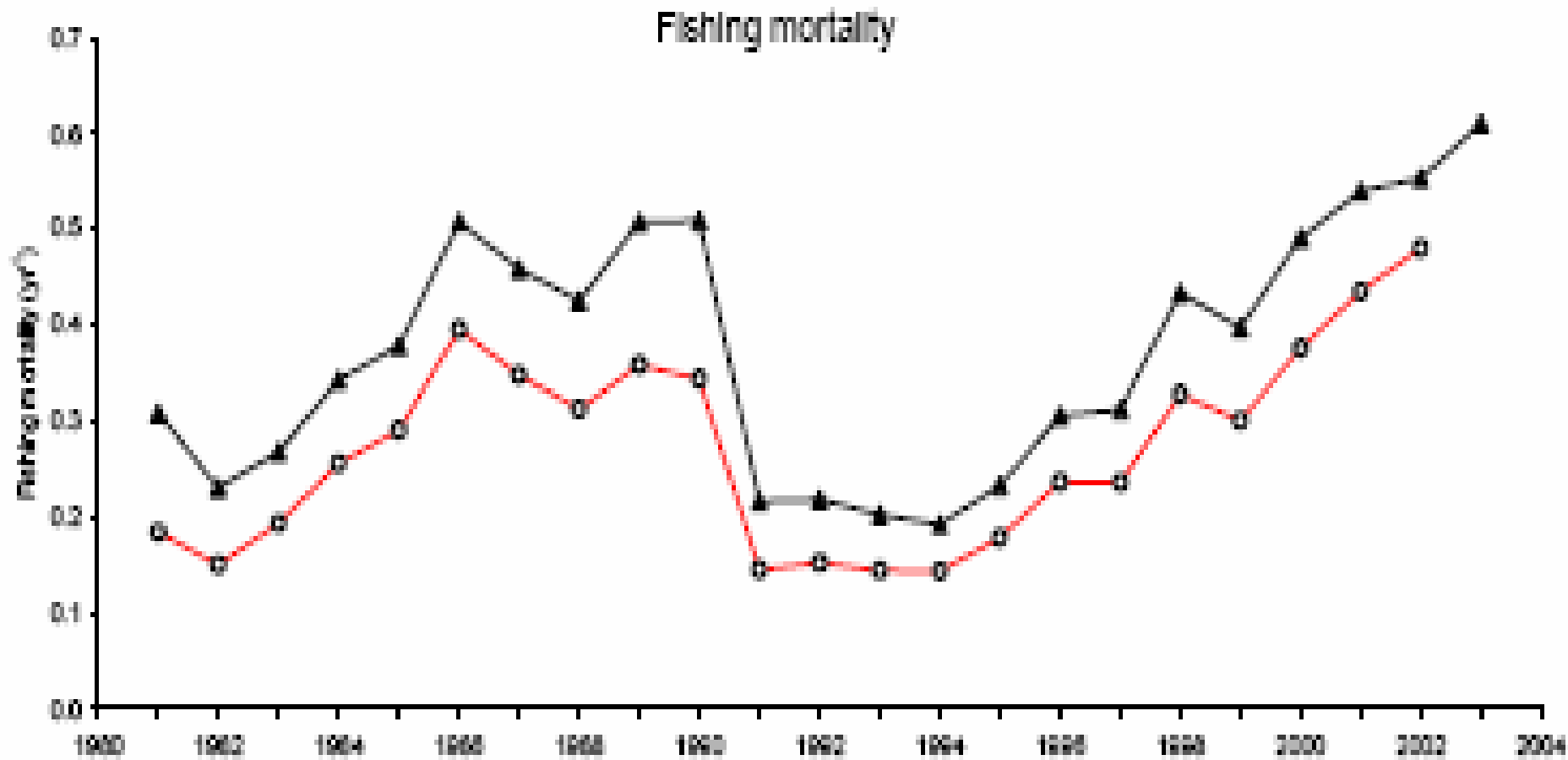


Managing exploitation

Exploitation Pattern Blue Whiting



Managing exploitation



Closed areas

FAO

- While an extensive scientific literature exists to document the ecological benefits of MPAs, the research had not yet matured to the point where MPAs could be recommended for wide application in an ecosystem approach to fisheries.
- Some new information has been accumulated. While a number of questions remain and hasty generalizations should be avoided, the role, potential effects and shortcomings of MPAs and reserves in relation to fisheries is becoming better understood, with a number of successful cases and failures from which lessons can be drawn