

Prof. Clara Ulrich, DiscardLess coordinator

4 years in the landing obligation in Europe: Where do we stand, what have we learnt?



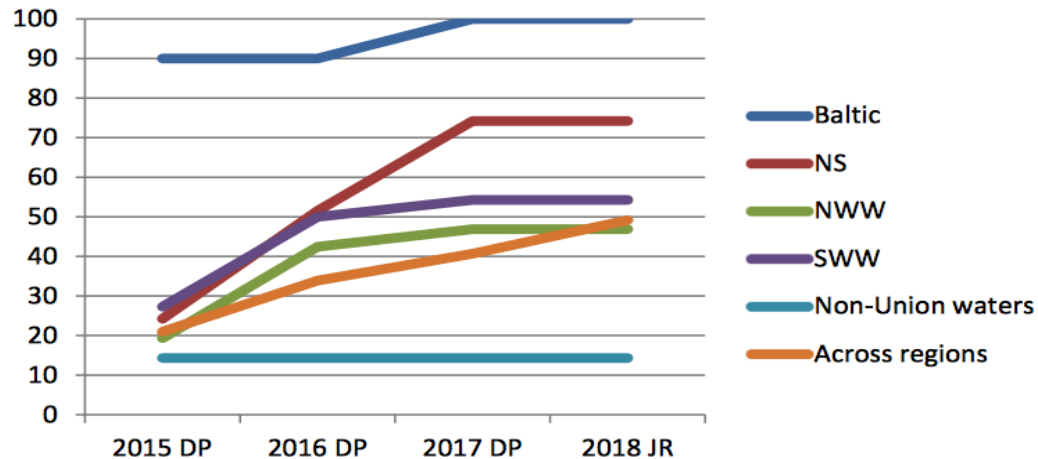
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-3-030-03308-8>



Where did we stand at the end of 2018?

Progresses on the regulatory side / regionalisation

- 19 Regional Discard Plans adopted since 2014, laying down the calendar of implementation (species*fisheries) and the exemptions (high survivability, de minimis)



Percentage of TACs partially or fully subject to the LO by sea basin and year

- Scientific foundations for evaluation of discard plans and implementation progresses (ICES, STECF) : exemptions, monitoring of undersize landings, member states reporting
- Changes in the control operations (“Last Haul” Eur. Fisheries Control Agency)

STECF PLEN 18-01,
SWD/2018/329



Where did we stand at the end of 2018?

- *Progresses on reaching common understandings on discard causes and choke species*

Choke categories:

- Category 1: Sufficient quota at Member State level, but poorly distributed within a country
issue at PO/individual level
- Category 2: Sufficient quota at EU level but insufficient at Member State level,
relative stability issue
- Category 3: Insufficient quota at EU level, **overfished stock**
- Category 4: Economic choking.

*Worst in NWW
(STECF 18-02)*

- 10 stocks high risk
- 17 stocks moderate risk



Choke situations not really observed yet! Only speculations on what may happen if the landing obligation is fully enforced!!

RESPONSIBILITIES PREVENTING CHOKES UNDER THE LANDING OBLIGATION

IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Make legislative proposals to deliver a workable LO

CO-DECISION



Achieve coherence between different EU regulations & achieve overarching CFP objectives

MEMBER STATES



Work in council on delivering CFP objectives

SCIENCE



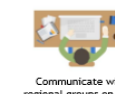
IN THE CAPITAL

MEMBER STATES



Develop and apply quota flexibilities through national legislation & regional cooperation

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Communicate with regional groups on joint strategies and objectives

PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS



Quota management aimed at minimising choke

NGOS



Work constructively on finding solutions through Advisory Councils

SCIENCE



IN THE HARBOURS

PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS



promoting compliance and voluntary measures

FISHERMEN



At sea application of selectivity & avoidance strategies.

SCIENCE



NSAC 2017

positive

-

Where did we stand at the end of 2018?



But VERY LITTLE visible progresses so far....

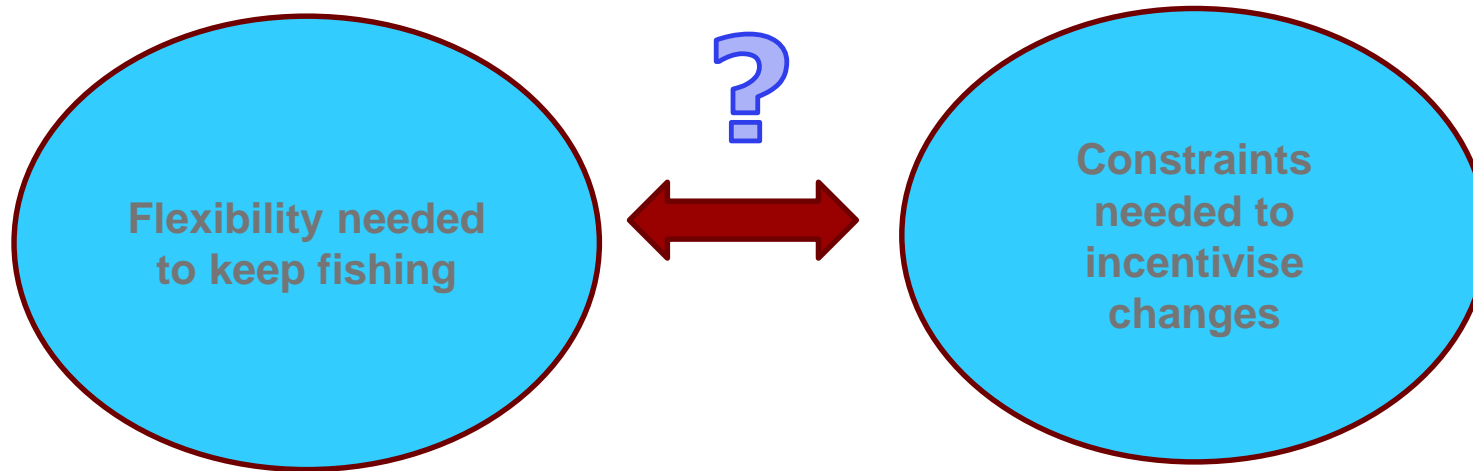
- Reported / Landed discards very low
- No obvious changes in selectivity/behaviour
- Very little use of EU operational funding (EMFF) allocated to landing obligation
- Still strong reluctance of the fishing industry
- Control and implementation very low

But also...

- TAC increases (“top-ups”) but discarding continues...
- Removal of TACs...
- Changes to prohibited species (dogfish)...
- MultiAnnual plans with Fmsy upper...
- Reduction in the number of stocks with MSY advice...
- Bycatch TACs on zero-catch advice...

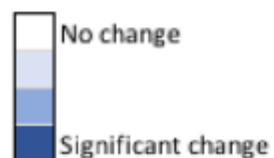
STECF PLEN 18-01, SWD/2018/329
Borges et al., 2018 10.5281/zenodo.1238588

The landing obligation dilemma



- Different approaches in different Member States

	Steps taken to comply with landing obligation																Control and compliance steps						Socio	Safety						Use of	ports and vessels	Problems		
Q	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
MS																																		
Belgium																																		
Bulgaria																																		
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STECF 2018 Assessment of whether Member States did report significantly more steps towards the implementation of the landing Obligation in 2017 compared to 2016

Member States not listed did not report to EU for 2017

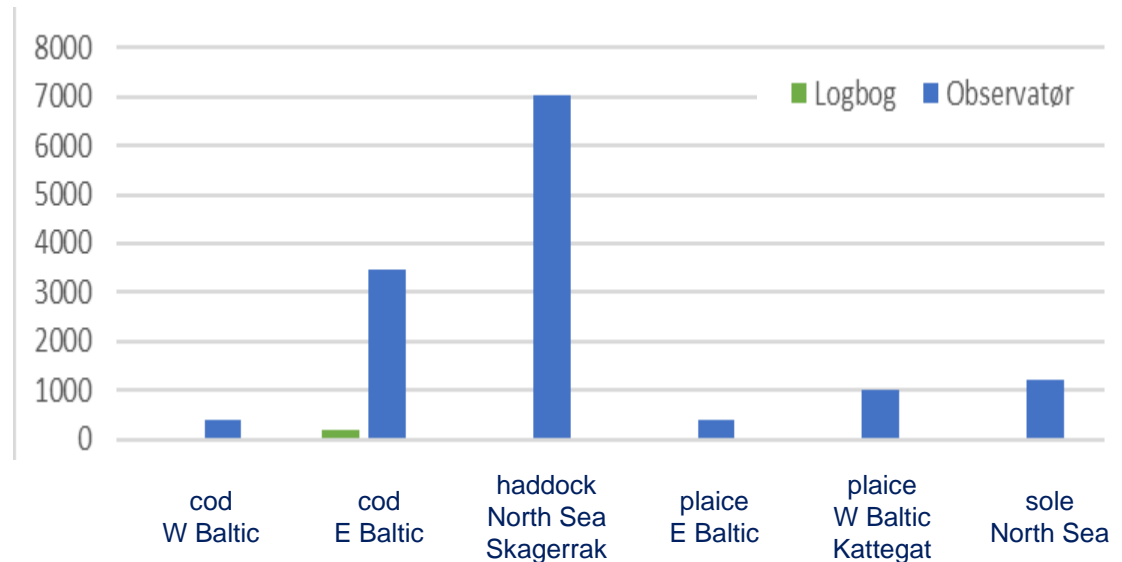
Which consequences?



Which consequences for fisheries data?

- Discrepancies between discards estimates
- Fisheries observers less accepted onboard
- Potential bias (changes in behaviour when they are onboard)
- Knowledge on discard volumes more uncertain

unwanted catch 2017 (ICES)



What's the catch???

L - Landings
B – Below MCRS (BMS)
D – Observed Discards
R – Reported Discards



Which consequences for the scientific advice?

- Data more complex
- Data more uncertain → Increased uncertainty in the stock assessments
- The "Unwanted Catch" schizophrenia!
- STECF Data cannot be made public anymore!

The Discards-who-cannot-be-named



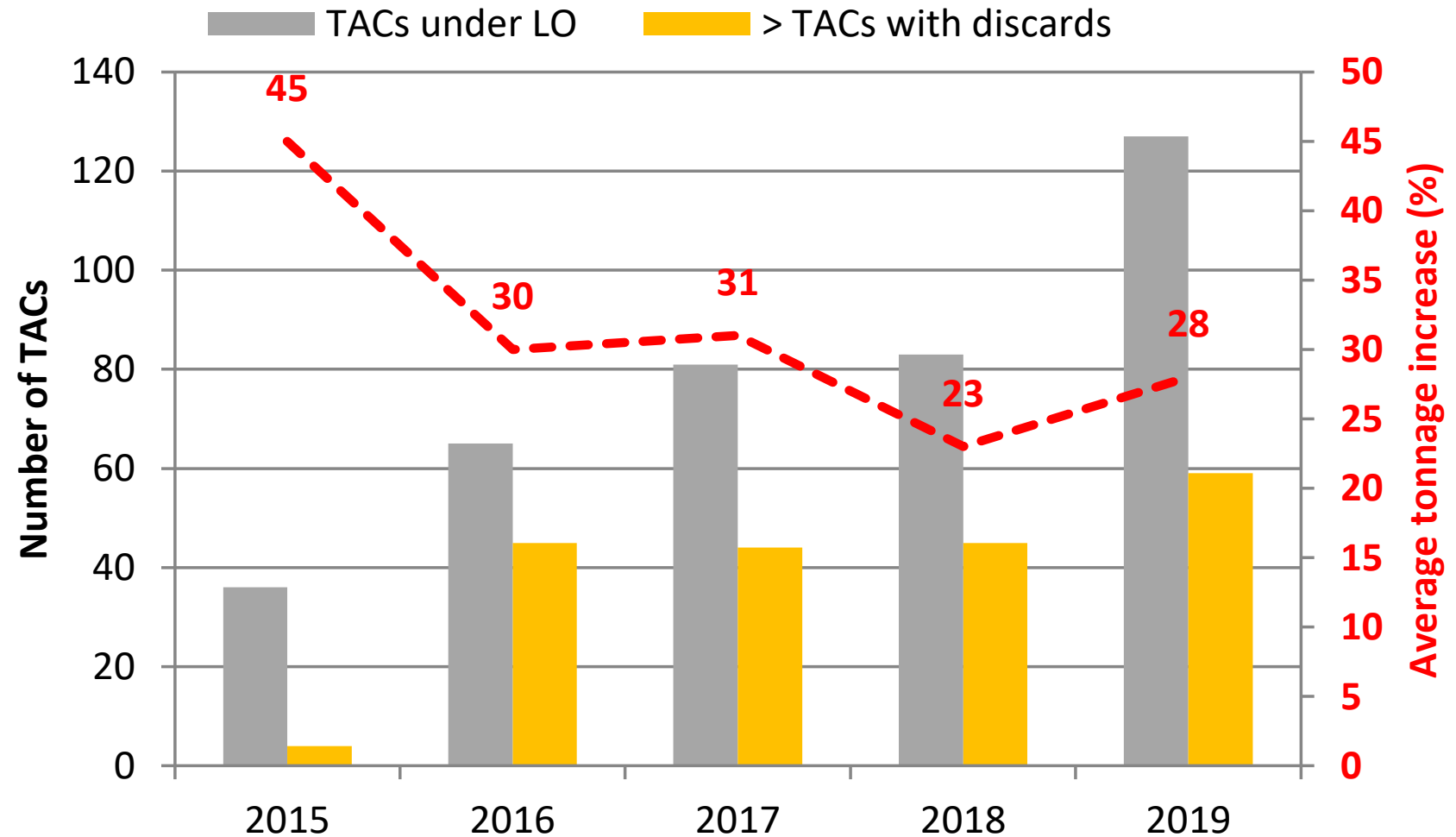
- ICES "Catch advice" is much more difficult to formulate and understand
- The exemptions and uplifts are not easily monitored/accounted for in the advice

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the proposed EU multiannual plan (MAP) for the North Sea is applied, catches in 2019 that correspond to the F ranges in the MAP are between 7451 tonnes and 21 644 tonnes. According to the MAP, catches higher than those corresponding to F_{MSY} (12 801 tonnes) can only be taken under conditions specified in the MAP, whilst the entire range is considered precautionary when applying the ICES advice rule.

Basis	Total catch* (2019)	Wanted catch** (2019)	Unwanted catch (2019)	$F_{total}^{\#}$ (ages 2–6) (2019)	F_{wanted} (ages 2–6) (2019)	$F_{unwanted}$ (ages 1–3) (2019)	SSB (2020)	% SSB change***	% TAC change^	% Advice change^^
ICES advice basis										
EU MAP^^^: F_{MSY}	12801	11800	1001	0.202	0.168	0.063	54818	-1.13	-18.4	-18.6

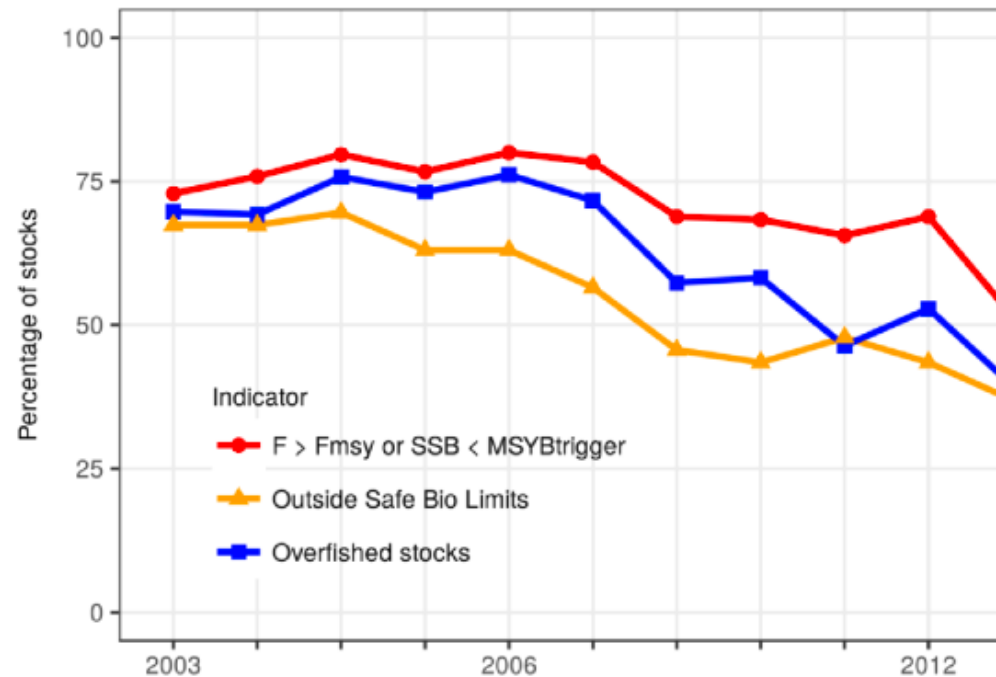
Which consequences for the TACs?



Which consequences for MSY?

- Risk of Increasing fishing mortality!!
- STECF CFP Monitoring: The positive trends from pre CFP reform are reversing

<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/cfp-monitoring>





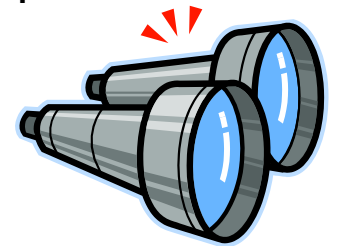
Summary – 4 years on with the Landing Obligation

- A lot has happened – and yet nothing has happened (not even the doomsday prophecy)...
- The landing obligation has triggered an intense dynamic of dialogue and awareness that wouldn't have taken place otherwise
- The LO has remained very unpopular in the fishing industry. Its objectives remain unclear and little supported by the national administrations
- The obligation to bring to land is more controversial than the obligation to reduce (and register) discards
- Control and enforcement are absolutely insufficient. The current procedures cannot control the LO effectively. But new cost-efficient tools are available (EM, genetics..)
- TACs have been increased but discarding continues. This goes against the MSY objectives
- There are too many regulatory constraints and contradictions, which complicate further the implementation



Looking ahead...

- Everything starts now!! 2019 is key milestone year
- Transition to results-based management... Control and monitoring is primordial!
- TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY of **ALL CATCHES** vs. FLEXIBILITY



THANK YOU