

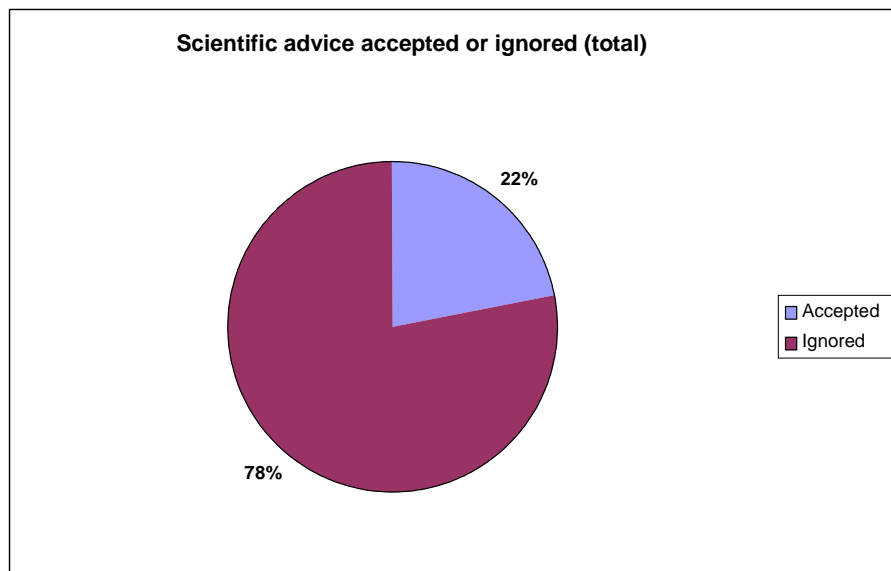
Oceana Briefing prepared for the 9 September 2008 EP Hearing “A stronger dialogue between scientists and fishermen for a renovated CFP”

Time for science – based fisheries management
Oceana analysis of what has been lost while not listening

It is widely accepted that EU fisheries are facing a bleak future, the main cause being the depletion of fish stocks. It has been estimated that 88%¹ of EU stocks are overexploited. Despite the fact that several hundreds of marine species are commercialized in the EU, less than 40% are scientifically assessed and managed by means such as Total Allowable Catches (TACs); the remainder lack this management and catch limits. Moreover, 80% of scientific recommendations on TACs have been continuously ignored.

Over the last 20 years, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has produced over 1,500 scientific opinions for the EU and other governments in the North-Eastern Atlantic for the correct management of fish stocks. However only 350 (22%) have been properly followed into effective catch limits. These figures are illustrated in Oceana's analysis on quota and catch data by European fleets over the last two decades².

This situation must be urgently changed. A key step to be undertaken for achieving sustainability is the effective application of scientific advice in European Union fisheries management. Also essential is increasing dialogue between scientists and fishermen in order to improve reliable data availability and to manage those fisheries that still are carried out without any assessment and management measures.



Source: Oceana ²

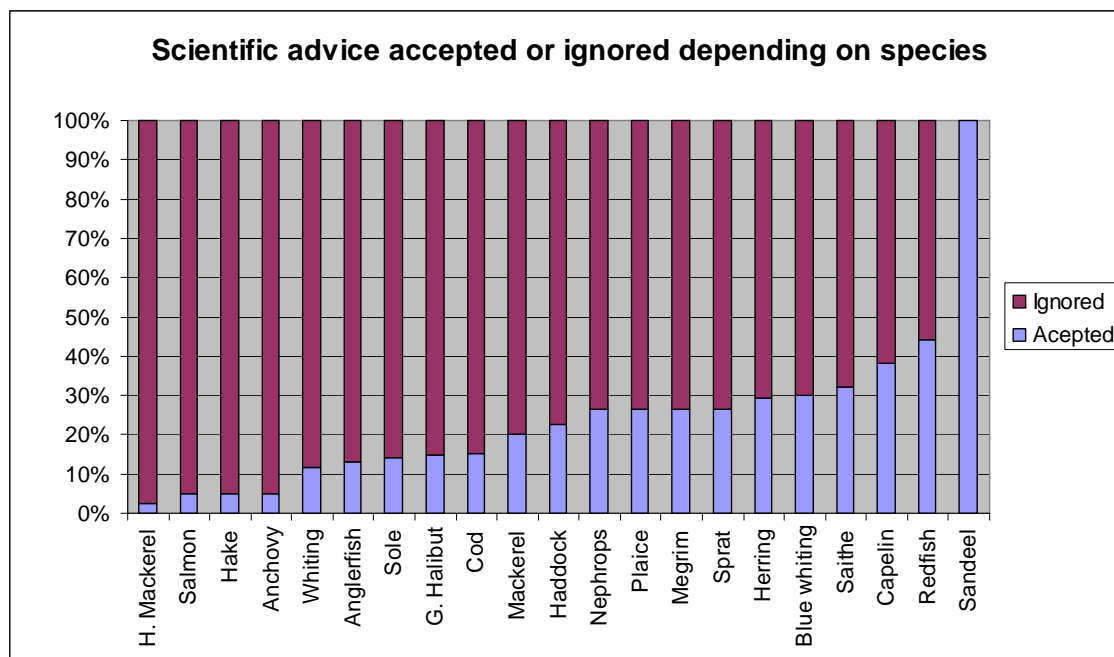
¹ http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press_corner/press_releases/2008/com08_41_en.htm

² Oceana, elaboration from ICES database (1986-2006) and TAC's agreed by the Council of Ministers of the EU in that period. December 2007.

Horse mackerel, salmon, hake, anchovy, whiting and anglerfish are the species for which scientific criteria for their exploitation have been followed least (less than 15% of scientific advice implemented).

In the case of anchovy, over 95% of scientific advice was ignored, and furthermore, TACs were agreed which exceeded those advised by 35%. For cod, quotas 25% higher than those suggested by ICES were permitted and 85% of the advice given was ignored, or for hake, where quotas were 30% higher than suggested and 95% of advice was ignored.

With this data nobody should be surprised that European fish stocks are in such a disastrous situation.



Source: Oceana ²

The poor management of fisheries has led to widespread over-exploitation of the Atlantic's fishing resources. In the Mediterranean the situation is even worse, with a total lack of effective and appropriate management measures such as quotas or minimum landing sizes for a number of commercial species.

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) cannot be considered the EU's instrument for the management of fisheries, ensuring sustainable exploitation of living aquatic resources if decision makers continue to disregard scientific advice.

Oceana asks for a precautionary and ecosystem-based approach, with all commercial fish stocks managed and the total implementation of scientific advice in EU fisheries. The current overexploitation of fish stocks must be halted. Sustainability, both biological and economical, in Community fisheries depends on a drastic and urgent change to the status quo.

Oceana is an international organization that works to protect and recover the oceans in the world. Our crew of marine scientists, economists, lawyers, and other contributors are achieving specific and concrete changes in the legislation to reduce the contamination and to prevent the irreversible collapse of fish stocks, to protect the marine mammals and other forms of marine life. With offices in Europe – Madrid (Spain) and Brussels (Belgium), in North America – Washington (DC), Juneau (Alaska), Los Angeles (CA), and in South America – Santiago (Chile). More than 300,000 collaborators and cyberactivists in 150 countries have already joined Oceana. For more information, visit www.oceana.org

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