Illegal fisheries

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Overview

• The work within EFFACE has included work on illegal fisheries
• For the EU, the regulatory context is the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)
• May seem odd to discuss in session of wildlife related crime, but:
  – Fisheries is extraction of living resource with its own biological value
  – Fisheries can damage other non-target species/habitats
  – An objective of the CFP is the conservation of marine biological resources
Environmental crime and fisheries

• How does the concept of ‘environmental crime’ relate to fisheries?
• Fisheries look at IUU fishing – illegal, unreported and unregulated. For CFP there are:
  – rules on access to waters – to control which vessels have access to which waters and areas
  – fishing effort controls – to limit fishing capacity and vessel usage
  – technical measures - to regulate gear usage and where and when fishermen can fish
• Unregulated fisheries are obviously not a crime – but IUU often considered together
• IUU fishing depletes fish stocks, destroys marine habitats, distorts competition, puts honest fishers at an unfair disadvantage
Enforcement

• Fisheries is interesting in wider EFFACE context for several reasons, e.g.:
  – Inspection system based around Joint Deployment Plans that establish the planning of the fisheries control means to be deployed by MS
  – Union inspectors carry out inspection and surveillance of fishing activities in EU waters, outside the zones under sovereignty of MS
  – To facilitate the collaboration between MS and MS and the EFCA, the EFCA has designed and created a collaboration information sharing tool called Fishnet (restricted access)
  – Vessel monitoring system - a satellite-based method of transmitting position data from a fishing vessel to the control authorities. It allows authorities to monitor fishing vessels in near real time to target control and check the historical positions of a vessel for compliance with catch records and restricted areas
Influencing behaviour

• Key driver is economic – traditional view of fishers weighing up costs and benefits of actions
• But field evidence shows decisions not always follow a purely economic decision
• For example, co-management regimes (working with fishers to create management regimes) can affect behaviour
Rights based management

• Various forms of RBM, e.g. fishing rights based on quota, access to territories, etc., held by individuals, groups, communities, etc. Most are transferable.
• Commission sought to introduce tradable quotas in last CFP reform – unsuccessful but MS can have their own RBM systems, e.g. in how to allocate fishing consistent with the agreed Total Allowable Catch.
• RBM is shown to have benefits for fishers (e.g. profits) and for fisheries (e.g. reduced overfishing)
Lessons

• Fisheries work within EFFACE shows value of strong regulation, co-operation on enforcement and benefits of new information

• It also shows value of alternative approaches that change to relationship of fishers to fisheries that can deliver better compliance and better outcomes