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“El proceso de transparencia del ICES es una reacción a la crítica”

Carmela Porteiro, una interlocutora de excepción para el sector pesquero por los cargos que ocupa y por su trayectoria profesional, describe cómo aborda el Consejo Internacional para la Exploración del Mar la participación de la industria pesquera en sus procesos de análisis de la información. Aunque es una experiencia piloto, la investigadora cree que se puede llegar a formas avanzadas de participación.

PESCA INTERNACIONAL.- Hay un proceso en marcha para que la industria pesquera organizada de ámbito comunitario participe en el análisis de las recomendaciones científicas que hace el ICES, entre otros organismos, a la Comisión Europea para regular la explotación de los stocks...

Carmela Porteiro.- En el ICES se ha iniciado un proceso para que la asesoría científica que presta a la Comisión Europea, entre otros organis-

mos internacionales, en lo que respecta a gestión de pesquerías sea transparente y valora actualmente la participación, como observadores, de las ONGs ambientalistas y de la industria pesquera, considerada en un concepto amplio. En el año 2003, durante la reunión de delegados, se planteó este tema a propuesta del máximo órgano de gobierno del ICES. El Buró dirigió a todos los Estados Miembros del ICES una pregunta sobre este proceso. Este año 2004

reliability crisis comes about. To add to the situation, if others appear, saying something different to what the Canadian and European scientists maintain, then there is a need to find a midway point to reach some kind of agreement. In this type of situation, things are looking bad. I think that, on that score, the industry can help us a great deal by providing us or by validating criterion to determine which data are closest to reality. It is a matter of dialogue and of conviction about which information is closest to reality as well as being the most useful.. I remember when the negotiations started with the then European Economic Community, at the end of the 1970's and early '80's. Spain arrived with catch data far below the real figures. What our interlocutors said was striking: we accept your data, you can carry on catching what you say you are catching ... That measure cost us scrapping.

P.I.- The Maguire Report, commissioned by Galicia's extractive industry, got a few backs up ... A.G.G.- As far as the controversy over the report by Jean-Jaques Maguire is concerned, I am all in favour of sounding out different opinions. It would have been useful for Maguire to have attended in Halifax. In the deliberations, whoever is important and has something to say should take part, although I think that in this case, it was the community researchers who were right. Research

should be a more open activity.

P.I.- Even though it is not on the agenda for the ICES meeting in Vigo, some steps forward have been made to get the sector to take part in the scientific recommendations of the hundred-year-old Danish research body ...

A.G.G.- Yes, in fact, thoughts have been stirred at the ICES on how to influence and involve the industry in the scientific thinking processes and in evaluating the resources. These measures, however, are defined in the long term. This step, which is logical, has been termed as "transparency". Before fully involving the industry in this process, it would be appropriate for the sector to know which bodies the information and analysis pass through, how it is evaluated and how the recommendations made by the Commission are reached. Naturally, we would have to consider the community fishing industry becoming involved with a better developed organizational capacity, and this aspect has been discussed at length and has been mentioned, for example, to Europeche. The practical implications of involving the industry have also been evaluated, and possibilities have been looked at ranging from the technicians and experts having access via television screen on the deliberations of the scientists, to having them present in the same room so that they can discuss issues. From one extreme to the other. I think that

in the scientific world everyone agrees that we should be more transparent to the other parties, particularly in this case speaking about the industry, so that the sector can understand, as best as possible, all the jargon, terminology and way in which the scientists work, as a first step, as I see it, for their joining in on the analysis and research, and thus achieving a closer collaboration. P.I.- There are some efficient paradigms of this: Norway, United States ...

A.G.G.- As in everything, perfection is very difficult. In the United States, for example, researchers comment that quite often (I don't quite know how to put this) they feel uncomfortable, tense or as if they had been put under a microscope each time they make a scientifically based statement. And the American system being what it is, some opinions have it that in this particular scientific community, if they say something that the industry does not like, they may lose their job. That is unthinkable here in Europe. I think that the formula is for transparency and collaboration to make everyone feel comfortable and safe when it's a matter of getting down to work. We need to avoid this feeling of watching each other.

P.I.- Just in closing, do you have a firm opinion on the TACs and quotas system ... ?

A.G.G.- It's a fairly old, well-known one: tradition and the conception of the Latin world goes against

está considerado como piloto de esa experiencia y se resuelve invitando a la industria y a las ONGs a tres grupos de trabajo determinados. Esto servirá para comparar los datos que se utilizarán en las evaluaciones con los que la industria tiene. Una vez que se procesen esos datos, los grupos de trabajo volverán a reunirse con la industria para presentar las conclusiones. Las opiniones de los países miembros del ICES están divididas respecto a cómo debe implementarse la participación de la industria en los procesos de análisis de la información, pero existe coincidencia en la necesidad de contrastar los datos del sector y los de los científicos y de que tanto representantes de la industria como de las ONGs participen en calidad de observadores.

P.I.- ¿Cómo se justifica esa necesidad de mayor transparencia del trabajo de los científicos?

C.P.- Lo que se pretende es una mayor implicación del sector pesquero en el análisis de los datos que justifican las medidas de gestión recomendadas para las distintas pesquerías. Esperamos lograr una mejor aceptación y comprensión de las regulaciones para asegurar su cumplimiento. No obstante, todos estamos interesados en el ICES en que este método de traba-

jo no derive en la creación de un "lobby" de presión a los investigadores en cuanto a las decisiones. Este mismo asunto de la transparencia se discutió en la ACFM, lo que originó un intercambio de criterios bastante duro: no todo el mundo está de acuerdo y hay prevención acerca de que la presencia de la industria pueda resultar, en alguna medida, intimidatoria para los investigadores. Otro aspecto que preocupa es la influencia que puede tener esa participación en la independencia de los científicos. En cualquier caso, la representación de la industria deberá estar respaldada por una organización reconocida de ámbito internacional y en un número limitado. Supongo que el sector tendrá que hacer un esfuerzo de profesionalización. En este sentido, una posible opción puede ser un representante de Europeche. Otra de las cuestiones que se estudian es una representación del sector en función de las áreas geográficas que sean tratadas en el comité y que sean competencia del ICES.

P.I.- ¿Qué calendario está planteado para concretar esa reforma?

C.P.- De momento se trata de una experiencia piloto, para ver cómo funciona. La industria está invitada a

Para poder valorar las repercusiones económicas y sociales de las medidas de gestión de los recursos, tienen que existir modelos desarrollados de análisis

reuniones en este año 2004 y también en 2005. El Buró tiene la última palabra y considera que la transparencia es necesaria, aunque no todo el mundo esté de acuerdo en la manera de concretar un método de trabajo. Lo que hay que señalar es que la industria tendrá acceso a la documentación que respaldan nuestras recomendaciones y dictámenes para hacer comentarios y proponer alternativas, antes de que la ACFM los remita a la Comisión Europea para estudiarlos. Yo misma he hecho una propuesta en este sentido, acerca de que si en algún momento surgiera la necesidad de hacer una evaluación alternativa a las realizadas por el grupo de trabajo, se presente en un documento y sea discutida, pero anteriormente a su traslado a la ACFM. Se trata de que la industria no sea una convidada de piedra. De momento se trata sólo de una pro-



the TACs and quotas system. It is a system which is difficult for the Mediterranean mentality to grasp. In fact, this system is rejected outright and I am convinced that it is not very efficient. The main advantage of the TACs and quotas system is its simplicity: there is nothing as simple as deciding on the total acceptable catch, whatever it may be, and dividing it into proportional parts among the member states. These in turn, subdivide it, for example, into autonomous communities. To a certain extent, it's a system that makes first come, first served possible, and this leads to an increase in fleet capacities. Other matters must be considered here, such as the consequences of the TACs for specific and multi-specific fisheries. Several alternatives are available, such as individual TACs and quotas – transferrable or non-transferrable – which would make it possible to administrate the quota to exploit it to gain maximum performance. The TACs and quotas are based on a police-like control over catches ...

Carmela Porteiro. Chief Researcher in the ICES Fisheries Programme at the IEO, and Spanish representative on the ACFM, the ICES Advisory Committee on Fishery Management

"The transparency process in the ICES is a reaction to criticism"

Carmela Porteiro, a leading interlocutor for the fishing sector because of the positions she holds

and her professional career, explains how the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas tackles the participation of the fishing industry in its process of analyzing information. Although this is a pilot experience, this researcher believes that there may be further participation in the future.

Pesca Internacional.- There is a process underway for the organized community fishing industry to participate in analyzing the scientific recommendations of the ICES, among other bodies, for the European Commission to regulate stocks regulation ...

Carmela Porteiro.- A process has started up at the ICES so that the scientific assessment on fisheries management given to the European Commission – among other international bodies – will be transparent, and it is now evaluating the participation, in the capacity of observers, of environmentalist NGOs and of the fishing industry, considered in the broad sense of the word. In 2003, during the delegates meeting, this issue was brought up by the head of the ICES. This year, 2004, it is considered as a pilot experience involving the industry, NGOs and three work groups. This will serve to compare the data to be used in the industry's evaluations. Once these data are processed, the work groups meeting up again with the industry to present conclusions. Opinions of the member countries in the ICES are divided over how to implement industry participation in the information analysis processes. But there is a

consensus over the need to compare data from the sector with data from the scientists and over the need for both industry and NGOs to participate as observers.

P.I.- How do you justify this need for greater transparency in the scientists' works?

C.P.- What is needed is a greater involvement of the fishing sector in analysing the data to justify the management measures recommended for the different fisheries. We hope to achieve a greater acceptance and understanding of the regulations to ensure compliance. We at the ICES, however, interested in this work method not leading to setting up a "lobby" on the researchers as far as decisions are concerned. This matter of transparency was discussed at the ACFM, which led to an exchange of fairly tough criterion: not everybody agrees and there is some caution as to the presence of the industry being intimidating for researchers. Another worrying aspect is the influence that this participation might have on the independence of scientists. In any case, industry representation should be backed by an organization acknowledged in the international arena and in a limited number. I expect that the sector will have to make an effort to become professionalized. One possible option there may be to have a Europeche representative. Other issues being looked into include a representation of the sector based on the geographical areas to be dealt with on the committee and that they be the competence of the ICES.

puesta. Por otra parte, nuestros métodos de revisión de los datos garantizan en todo momento la solidez e independencia de nuestros informes. Cuando los trabajos llegan a la ACFM para su revisión final, están debidamente contrastados.

P.I.- Los requisitos de representatividad para la industria son claros ¿Cuáles son las condiciones para decidir qué ONGs ambientalistas pueden estar presentes?

C.P.- Supongo que se convocará a las organizaciones acreditadas en el ICES. Es una cuestión pendiente. El criterio general es dar la oportunidad a que las ONGs estén informadas de estos procesos y digan lo que tengan que decir.

P.I.- Desde la industria extractiva se puede tener la percepción de que estos organismos internacionales de investigación tan prestigiosos, como el ICES o el comité científico de la NAFO, constituyen una especie de "establishment" incontestable...

C.P.- Este esfuerzo de transparencia se puede interpretar también como una reacción a la crítica. Para mantener su prestigio el ICES tiene que abrirse a que la gente opine. No es club privado ni cerrado, es ante todo una organización científica y todos los argumentos que estén encima de

la mesa tienen que ser científicos. No valen posiciones del tipo "me dijeron que un barco capturó...". Todos queremos una mejor gestión, un acercamiento, un mejor conocimiento, una mayor comprensión del lenguaje. Por ejemplo, Noruega es un país en el que los científicos trabajan muy próximos a la industria y son mucho más perceptivos acerca de lo que la industria pretende. En ICES se ha reflexionado sobre la terminología que empleamos y habrá cambios. La gente confunde, por ejemplo, "fuera de los límites biológicos de seguridad" con "extinción". Se pierden matices. Hay especies cuya explotación comercial se ha tornado inviable en determinadas aguas, lo que no quiere decir que se hayan extinguido. La ACFM ha cambiado algunas terminologías este mismo año. Una de las novedades más importantes es que la gestión estará basada en el ecosistema, para considerar otros factores que influyen, como el impacto humano, condiciones ambientales, cambio climático, características de las pesquerías en el caso de que sean mixtas, multiespecíficas o monoespecíficas.

P.I.- A pesar de la gran complejidad de las medidas que en diversos aspectos aborda el ICES, en realidad se trata de un camino que mejorará

la explotación de los recursos...

C.P.- La preocupación es obtener un mejor entendimiento por parte de todos los que explotan los recursos y generan una actividad económica. Lo que nosotros intentamos es conocer el estado de los recursos y proponer las medidas más apropiadas. Tal vez de esta experiencia piloto surjan posibilidades más avanzadas de participación.

P.I.- Otro de los cuestionamientos que han hecho expertos del sector pesquero y observadores cualificados, es que en los comités científicos hay muchos biólogos pero pocos economistas...

C.P.- El Consejo Científico del ICES utiliza información biológica y medioambiental. No tiene ningún tipo de información socioeconómica y no tenemos desarrollada dentro de nuestra organización ningún tipo de estructura que analice valores socioeconómicos. La UE, dentro de su comité científico, analiza esos aspectos. Yo creo que está más avanzada la investigación biológica que la económica. Para valorar la repercusión social y económica de las medidas de gestión tienen que existir modelos desarrollados de análisis. Nosotros proporcionamos alternativas muy matizadas de explotación y son los gestores quienes deciden. ↓

P.I.- What is the schedule for implanting this reform?

C.P.- For the time being, it's a pilot experience to see how it works. The industry is invited to meetings this year 2004 and in 2005 too. The Bureau has the last say and considers that transparency is necessary, although not everybody agrees on the way to set up the work method.

What is important is that the industry will have access to the documentation backing our recommendations and rulings to make comments and propose alternatives before the ACFM sends them to the European Commission for studying. I have tabled a proposal myself in this regard, about if, at any time, there is a need to make an alternative evaluation to those already made by the work group, for it to be presented in a document and discussed, but before it is sent to the ACFM. It is a matter of the industry not just sitting there. For the time being, this is only a proposal.

Also, our methods for reviewing data at all times ensure the solidity and independence of our reports. When works arrive at the ACFM for final review, they have been duly checked.

P.I.- The requirements for industry representation are clear cut. What are the prerequisites for deciding on the presence of the environmentalist NGOs?

C.P.- I imagine that the ICES will call on accredited organizations. That is still pending. The general criteria is to give the NGOs an opportunity to be informed of these processes and for them to say

what they have to say.

P.I.- From the extractive industry's viewpoint, these prestigious international research bodies, like the ICES or NAFO's Scientific Committee, may be taken as an unquestionable kind of "establishment" authority ...

C.P.- This effort to achieve transparency can also be interpreted as a reaction to criticism. To keep its prestige, the ICES has to open up so that people can express their opinions. It is not a closed, private club – it is, more than anything, a scientific organization and all the arguments on the table must be scientific ones. Opinions of the type, "they told me a ship caught ..." are not valid. All of us want better management, an approach, better knowledge, a better understanding of the language. For example, Norway is a country where the scientists work very closely with the industry, and they are far more perceptive about what the industry is looking for. At the ICES, thought has been given to the terminology we use, and there will be changes on that score. People confuse, for instance, "outside the biological safety limits" with "extinction". Shades of meaning are lost. Some commercially exploited species have become non-viable in certain waters, which does not mean to say that they have become extinct. The ACFM changed some of the terminology this year. One of the most important innovations is that management will be ecosystem based, to consider other influential factors such as human

impact, environmental conditions, climactic change, the characteristics of fisheries depending on if they are mixed, multi-specific or mono-specific.

P.I.- Despite the enormous complexity of the measures which the ICES deals with, in reality, the road ahead will improve exploitation of the resources ...

C.P.- The concern is to obtain a better understanding by all who exploit the resources and generate economic activity. What we set out to do is to be aware of the state of the resources and propose the most suitable measures. Perhaps more advanced participation possibilities will arise from this pilot experience.

P.I.- Another point raised by the experts in the fishing sector and qualified observers is that there are a fair number of biologists but few economists on the scientific committees ...

C.P.- The ICES Scientific Council uses biological and environmental information. It does not have any type of socio-economic information and we have not developed any type of structure, within our organization, to analyze socio-economic values. The EU, within its scientific committee, analyzes these aspects. I think that biological research is far more advanced than economic research. In order to evaluate the social and economic impact of management measures, there have to be developed analysis models in place. We provide highly detailed alternatives on exploitation and it is the managers who take the decisions.