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Agenda item:	5
Subject:	Adoption of the 2014 Activity Report
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The Assembly is invited to consider and adopt the approve the 2014 activity report



Activity Report 2014

For adoption by the AGM 2015

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SAR staff
May 2015

Highlights

2014 was a crucial year for the **Marine Strategy Framework Directive**, with countries starting on the development of their programmes of measures, and the Commission publishing its Article 12 evaluation of the first phase of implementation. Seas At Risk (SAR) was invited to speak at the HOPE conference organised by DG Environment to launch its Article 12 Assessment, and organised a well-attended NGO workshop in the same week, in which NGOs agreed on a number of joint actions to be taken on the programmes of measures. SAR coordinated the drafting of a position paper with NGO priorities for programmes of measures, which was widely disseminated to NGOs and administration and which is actively used by NGOs in the consultations on programmes of measures.

Work on **marine litter** proved another highlight for SAR in 2014, as we worked to cement the link between the implementation of a circular economy and a reduction in marine litter. Policy makers sat up, listened and integrated marine litter concerns into policy documents on a circular economy for Europe, including a headline reduction target for marine litter. SAR communicated this vital message in numerous ways, including several leaflets with key policy messages, a fun animated video, and a conference held in the European Parliament. The video was a new communication avenue for SAR but was very successful, portraying a difficult and complex topic in a catchy manner. The EP conference enabled discussion on the importance of a circular economy to marine litter reduction in more complex detail with policy makers and a wide range of other stakeholders, and greatly increased awareness of this issue. After the conference, a networking event was held to mark SAR's 25th anniversary. Some 100 people, from the EU institutions, members, other NGOs and stakeholders participated.

A major milestone was passed when the EU agreed the terms of an EU system of monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of **ship GHG emissions**, and this is undoubtedly a highlight for SAR's work in 2014. SAR, working with others, has been pushing for an EU initiative on GHG emissions for ships for some years, and published an important report on MRV in 2013. While this is an MRV initiative rather than a measure to tackle rising emissions, it is an essential first step (if you don't measure something you can't regulate it) and an important signal to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) that the EU is serious about the climate impacts of shipping and determined to act if they do not. This will now feed into the IMO's own work on a global system of MRV, where SAR has also been active with a number of submissions focussing on the need for transparency and the inclusion of the correct information, as well as a side event at the 66th session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee.

Activities

A number of successful events were organised during the course of the year including 3 policy workshops (on MSFD and aquaculture) and 2 side events at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

2014 also was the year of SAR's 25th anniversary which we marked by organising a well-attended marine litter seminar in the European Parliament, followed by a networking dinner event that drew many participants.

Seas At Risk (SAR) was invited to speak at numerous events, including high level ones such as the HOPE conference.

Lobby work was undertaken in respect of all of SAR's policy priorities. SAR actively participated in and/or prepared various submissions to numerous meetings associated with the EU institutions and in meetings of the UNFCCC, IMO, the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission, and OSPAR. SAR has also regularly reported to members on discussions taking place at these events.

In addition to regular briefings to fisheries ministers, SAR also coordinated two joint NGO position papers (on the MSFD and on aquaculture) which were widely disseminated and used.

The building of capacity among SAR's membership was achieved through assembly meetings, policy workshops, email, skype communication, the intranet and twitter.

The public web site continued to play an important role, allowing SAR to communicate effectively with the outside world.

Press work took place on a number of issues. SAR has updated its web pages and has sent several press releases, regular newsletters, and news alerts as developments took place. In addition, SAR has greatly enhanced its use of Twitter as a communication channel to media, stakeholders and decision makers.

Results

The following results and impacts were achieved during 2014:

- An enhanced awareness of the impact of shipping on climate change; of the scale and impacts of marine litter; of the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the need to revise deep water fisheries management; of the need for a shift to low impact fisheries; of the importance of the MSFD and Blue Growth developments.
- After many years of pressure from SAR and other eNGOs, the EU adopted a monitoring, reporting and verification system for EU ship greenhouse gases. This is an important and necessary first step on the road to properly regulating ship GHG emissions in Europe.
- On fisheries, SAR remains a focal point for issues discussed both in Brussels-based European institutions and Advisory Councils. SAR and allied NGOs are increasingly recognized as valuable stakeholders that contribute constructively to AC discussions.
- The Council and Parliament Briefings providing guidance on the implementation of the CFP have raised SAR's profile within the European institutions and national governments. SAR is increasingly recognised as a reliable source of information by these decision makers.
- Marine litter has risen high on the policy and regulatory agenda, both in EU and OSPAR, in particular through SAR's work on the revision processes of the Port Reception Facilities Directive and the EU waste legislation package. SAR also organised a high level seminar in the European Parliament, helping to draw the attention of policy makers and stakeholders to the need for a circular economy as a solution to the marine litter problem.
- The MSFD entered a crucial stage with Member States starting the development of their programmes of measures. SAR ensured a continued involvement in the MSFD implementation process through participation in CIS meetings, by coordinating NGO responses to the Article 12 review of implementation by the Commission, and by publishing an NGO position paper with priorities for the MSFD programmes of measures.
- An enhanced involvement of NGOs in the Blue Growth policy processes, and in particular in the follow-up on the proposed Directive on Maritime Spatial Planning and developments in deep sea mining.
- SAR has now firmly established a leading and coordinating role in NGO involvement in the setting of aquaculture policies and coordinated a joint NGO position with priorities for environmentally

responsible aquaculture which is widely disseminated and used to influence EU and national policies.

- SAR's membership stands better informed about EU and other international activities affecting the marine environment.
- Sound organisational finances and improved communications.

Organisational Developments

Generally speaking, SAR has worked with improved efficiency achieving much with a modest budget.

In 2014 SAR has increased its workforce to 5.7 full time employees, recruited a part time financial manager, and increased the time of the (replaced) communication officer. Staff continued to invest in longer-term funding applications and in broadening the funder base, so as to achieve an enhanced financial stability for the organisation in the medium and long term.

SAR continued to implement its mid-term policy strategy agreed in 2012, with an effort to focus on fewer issues worked on in greater depth. Therefore, SAR continued to focus in 2014 on 7 key policy issues. The need to provide support to members on a number of other issues means there is a natural limit to how far the organisation can narrow its area of work, and SAR continues to strive to strike this balance.

We believe that these improvements will not only make our work more effective, but they will also make SAR a more attractive umbrella for national organisations.

Membership in 2014

At the end of 2014 Seas At Risk had twenty five member organisations from fifteen countries and three international member organisations

Belgium	Sea First Foundation Natuurpunt
Croatia	Sunce
Denmark	Danmarks Naturfredningsforening Levende Hav
France	Surfrider Foundation Europe France Nature Environnement
Germany	BUND – Bund für Umwelt- und Naturschutz Deutschland
Greece	Mediterranean SOS network Archipelagos
Ireland	Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment
Italy	Legambiente
Netherlands	Stichting De Noordzee Waddenvereniging
Norway	Norges Naturvernforbund
Portugal	Liga Para a Protecção da Natureza Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território e Ambiente
Spain	ENT Foundation

Sweden	Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen
Switzerland	OceanCare
United Kingdom	Marine Conservation Society
	Environmental Investigation Agency
International	European Environmental Bureau
	Project Aware
	World Animal Protection

Funding in 2014

In addition to membership fees, Seas At Risk received funds from the following external sources:

- The European Commission (DG Environment);
- The Adessium Foundation;
- The Pew Charitable Trusts;
- The Waterloo Foundation;
- The Oak Foundation;
- The MAVA Foundation;
- Patagonia;
- The European Climate Foundation;
- Climate Works.