



## Activity Report 2012

### Highlights

#### **Deep sea fisheries and CFP reform:**

For several years, Seas At Risk has been promoting an urgently needed revision of the EU access regime for deep sea fisheries, the main piece of legislation for the management of European deep sea fisheries. Due to the political sensitivity of the file, the review process was delayed several times, which made it difficult to keep up the pressure, but Seas At Risk continued working at all possible levels of engagement in the process through presentations, position papers, and meetings with officials and Commissioners Damanaki and Potočník.

The work culminated this year in the publication of a very ambitious Commission proposal for a new access regime for deep sea fisheries. It includes several of the policy objectives that Seas At Risk had promoted, most importantly a phase-out of deep sea bottom trawling, the most damaging deep sea fisheries method, as well as prior impact assessments and improved reporting. While the proposed access regime could be improved on several aspects, it would, if adopted without changes, improve vastly the protection of vulnerable deep sea ecosystems and the sustainability of deep sea fisheries.

Similarly, Seas At Risk has been working intensely on the CFP reform process for several years and in 2012 mainly focused on the European Parliament with the OCEAN2012 coalition and in close coordination with other NGOs through position papers, submissions, contribution and participation in events and meetings. At the end of 2012 the European Parliament had not yet voted on its first reading on the CFP reform proposal, but the opinion of the parliamentary Environment Committee and the report of the Fisheries Committee are very promising and support several of SAR's and OCEAN2012's policy priorities, including an objective to fish stocks at sustainable levels by 2015.

#### **Marine litter**

Seas At Risk's work on marine litter took a flight in 2012 with a focus on raising awareness about the importance of setting ambitious marine litter reduction targets across Europe. SAR published a joint NGO guidance document on target setting that was dispersed across its network, and promoted the findings of the guidance document at public events and international decision making forums throughout the year. Seas At Risk's produced an open letter to ministers which was signed onto by over 30 other organisations and sent to all European Ministers calling for ambitious target setting. Although the targets proposed by Member States were not as ambitious as SAR had wanted, the majority of Member States set targets to reduce marine litter by 2020, the first time such a legally binding goal has been proposed. The campaign was supported by multiple organisations across Europe, gaining

considerable press coverage both in the Brussels based media and Europe wide and has the additional effect of raising awareness of the wider need to tackle the growing problem of marine litter.

### **Marine Strategy Framework Directive**

A two day Seas At Risk policy workshop was attended by 25 NGOs from all European regional seas. It led to the subsequent development of joint guidelines to support NGOs in the public participation process on their national marine strategies. A survey held among NGOs yielded responses from 30+ NGOs across the EU and allowed Seas At Risk to gauge the quality of the public participation processes and of the initial reports the countries have submitted. A paper with the findings of the survey was presented at the Marine Strategy Coordination Group.

### **Activities**

A number of successful events were organised during the course of the year including 2 policy workshops (on MSFD implementation, and low impact fisheries and CFP reform), 2 side events at IMO, and a meeting of the European Seas Environmental Cooperation (ESEC) network. SAR was invited to speak at numerous events. In addition, SAR produced a brochure on mandatory speed limits in shipping and a report on low impact fisheries and the CFP reform of which the findings were promoted at various events.

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

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, and this often involved joint-NGO press releases and statements. Seas At Risk has updated its web pages and has sent several press releases, regular newsletters and news alerts as developments took place. In addition, Seas At Risk is more and more using Twitter as a communication channel.

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

### **Results**

The following results and impacts were achieved during 2012:

- An enhanced awareness of the impact of shipping & fisheries on climate change; of ocean acidification, of the scale of the problem and impacts of marine litter; of the need to substantially reform the CFP and revise deep water fisheries management, and of the need for a shift to low impact fisheries.

- Work at the IMO and EU level on GHG emissions from shipping has ensured continued civil society pressure on the development of market-based mechanisms and efficiency standards for new ships, but importantly has also seen growing interest in the possibility of more immediate measures, including regulated slow steaming, for existing ships.
- The OCEAN2012 coalition maintained its role as key stakeholder in the CFP reform process, and grew further to over 170 members. At the end of 2012 the European Parliament had not yet voted on its first reading on the CFP reform proposal, but the opinion of the parliamentary Environment Committee and the report of the Fisheries Committee supported several of SAR's and OCEAN2012's policy priorities, including the promotion of low impact fisheries. The Council's first reading however was less ambitious.
- A SAR report on the promotion of low impact fisheries in the context of the CFP reform was disseminated to stakeholders and policy makers to further the debate on the CFP reform.
- The Council and Parliament Briefings providing guidance on the implementation of the CFP have raised the profile of Seas At Risk within the European institutions and national governments, which increasingly turned towards Seas At Risk for further information/guidance/queries on Commission proposals relating to fisheries.
- A substantial increase in the profile of the problem of marine litter and in regulatory interest in taking action to solve it..
- An enhanced involvement of NGOs in the MSFD implementation process following a Seas At Risk policy workshop, the publication of guidelines for NGOs and the participation in CIS meetings.
- Work at the OSPAR Commission contributed to discussions on the setting of environmental targets in the context of MSFD implementation.
- A membership better informed about EU and other international activities affecting the marine environment.
- Sound organisational finances and improved communications.

## **Organisational Development**

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

In 2012 SAR has slightly increased its workforce to 4.6 FTE and recruited an intern. 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 long term.

Beyond this SAR has reviewed its mid-term policy strategy in the light of recent policy developments, with a continued effort to focus on fewer issues worked on in greater depth. Therefore, SAR continued to focus in 2012 on climate, shipping, fisheries and pollution issues. Of course a balance has to be achieved and 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.

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**

At the end of 2012 Seas At Risk had sixteen national member organisations from thirteen countries and one international member organisation:

Belgium	Sea First Foundation
Denmark	Danmarks Naturfredningsforening Levende Hav
France	Surfrider Foundation Europe
Germany	BUND - Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland
Ireland	Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment
Italy	Legambiente
The Netherlands	Stichting De Noordzee Waddenvereniging
Norway	Norges Naturvernforbund
Portugal	Liga para a Protecção da Natureza Grupo de Estudos de Ordenamento do Território e Ambiente
Slovenia	EcoVitae
Spain	ENT Foundation
Sweden	Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen
United Kingdom	Marine Conservation Society
International	European Environmental Bureau

## **Funding in 2012**

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

- Adessium
- The European Commission (DG Environment)
- The European Climate Foundation
- The Dutch Ministry for Environment, Housing and Spatial Planning (VROM)
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- The Waterloo Foundation
- The Oak Foundation
- The European Outdoor Conservation Association (EOCA)
- Patagonia
- BUND