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# Managers' Perspective: Past, Present, and Future The Development of EAFM

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# The Past



## The Past

What is EAFM?

How is it implemented?

- Gradual incorporation of ecosystem elements vs. “Paradigm shift”
- practical thinking vs. “I want it all, I want it all, I want it all, and I want it now”
- What is actually possible to do?



## The Past

What is possible?

- Ideally, we would like to base our management on all the different components of the marine ecosystem
- Endlessly complicated system – we will never understand it fully



## The Past

### Science based management

- Confidence in scientific conclusions is essential
- Low-confidence conclusions must not undermine higher-confidence conclusions



## The Past

If perfect EAFM is not possible:

- EAFM impossible – waste of time?
- Accept imperfectness – apply it by incorporating additional knowledge into our management as it becomes available



## The Past

The marine ecosystem is infinitely complex.

Human activities in ABNJ are not.

- We are not managing the ecosystem
- We are managing human activities – taking account of ecosystem aspects to the extent that we can



# The Present





## The Present

The overall objective of fisheries management is to sustainably provide food.

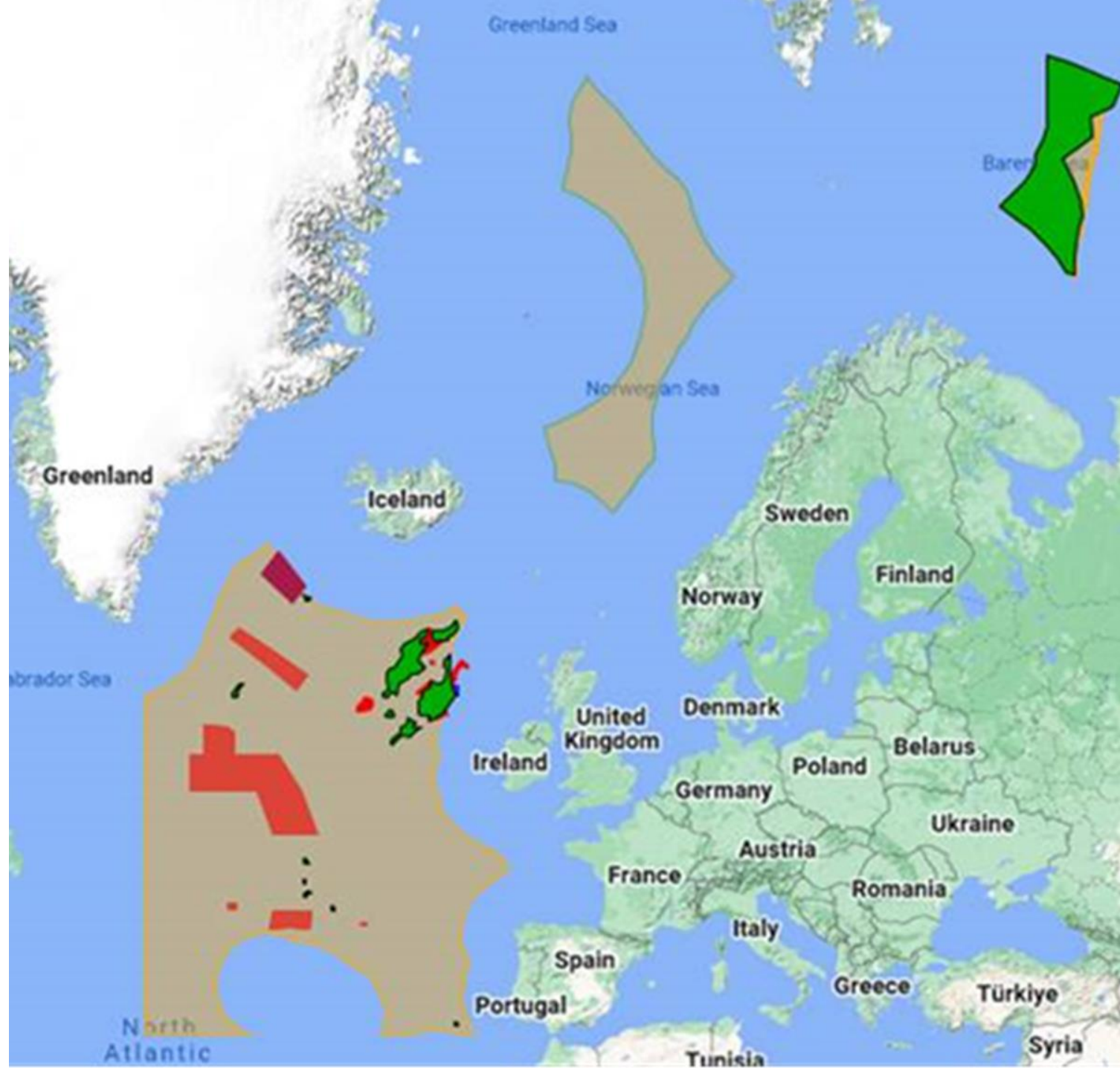
- No “fish baby fish” and no “close it all down”
- Fisheries management must be practical
- The key issue is results – the simpler to implement and enforce the better



## The Present

Fisheries management.

- Previously focused only on target species and other economically important species
- Now a much wider focus – VMEs a good example
- Much more sophisticated than “ban bottom trawling”





## The Present

EAFM both strengthens single stock management and goes beyond it.

Stock assessments incorporate changes in temperature, salinity, food availability, etc. by e.g. measuring growth and average weight.

Interaction with other parts of the ecosystem: other fish, birds, benthic habitat, etc.



## The Present

We must not look at the whole world as one monolith.

- Some have a sophisticated system that should be improved further
- In other cases, single-stock management on a scientific basis would be a massive step



## The Present

Who is actually implementing EAFM?

- “First world problem”?
- How developed does a system need to be to be “proper EAFM”?



## The Present

EAFM is a process – all fisheries management that is trying to improve is on that road.

- A step in the direction of improving fisheries management is a step towards an ever better EAFM
- We are all doing it – but not same situations



## The Present

Must recognise the different situations and encourage appropriate steps in the process:

- Not run before we can walk
- However, improve “walk” and aim for running
- If you can run, do that – if you are running, try to run faster





## The Present

Development cooperation – essential element.

Many States will realistically not take significant steps without it.

- RFMOs must also take this into account
- Work together to improve things for all



# The Future



## The Future

What is the best way forward?

Is it an aim in itself to have as complicated an approach as possible, given the complexity of the marine ecosystem?

- Again, practicality and implementability is the key for any manager



## The Future

EAFM the type of issue where the perfect can very easily become the enemy of the good.

- Something good that can be implemented is much better than something that seems perfect but cannot really be implemented properly

## The Future

Easy to say “we must take account of every ecosystem component” but very far from being easy to actually do it.

- The reason we stay away from utopian overambitious ways of doing things is that we genuinely want to implement EAFM

## The Future

“Incorporate everything” and “paradigm shift” notions have not completely disappeared.

- When we are criticised from that direction – we must not get too spooked
- We must do our job as managers and explain that we are doing what is sensible



## The Future

Practical solutions are the only way forward.  
They can be very different in different places.

- Adding area-based measures to multispecies management regimes
- Making a vessel registry more functional
- Improving scientific single-stock assessments



## The Future

Perhaps we can someday have a near-comprehensive basis that takes account of most of the elements in the marine ecosystem.

- None of us likely to live to see that day
- Must do our job as managers properly by being practical and adding new elements to our management as they become available