



## MARITIME FORUM

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# Study 2007-03 lot 4: An analysis of existing Rights Based Management (RBM) instruments in Member States and on setting up best practices in the EU

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In Europe there is a wide variety of management systems based on fishing rights, like ITQs and fishing licences, in use. This study gives an overview of these systems and shows lessons we can learn from those experiences.

### **Why this study?**

The way in which fishing rights, such as quotas and licences, are distributed among vessels has direct effects on the profitability of the fisheries. This was one of the conclusions of the Commission's communication on improving the economic situation in the fisheries published in 2006. Although the distribution of fishing opportunities is something Member States decide themselves, the Commission thought it was necessary to have a wider European debate on the different existing and possible ways of management of the fishing rights. In order to have this discussion, the Commission launched a website and invited stakeholders to comment. In addition this study on Rights Based Management was initiated to further inform and spur the discussion.

### **Goals**

1. Give an overview of which RBM systems we have in the EU at this moment
2. Based on this overview: what are the effects of having a RBM system
3. Based on these experiences: what are the 'best practices'

### **Results**

The reports come in two parts; in part one the RBM in the EU are analysed. In part 2 a country by country overview is given for Spain, Portugal, Malta, Italy, Slovenia, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Cyprus, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

RBM systems come in very many different forms. It can either be a system of allocating fishing rights to fishermen, fishing vessels, enterprises, cooperatives, or fishing communities. And they can be either non-transferable licensing (Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, UK, France, Spain); limited transferable licensing (as in the UK, Norway and France); community catch quotas (in the EU collective

quotas allocated to Producer Organisations); individual non-transferable effort quotas (France, UK, Belgium and Iceland for example allowable fishing days or total number of pots in for example the crab or lobster fisheries); individual transferable effort quotas (Tradable fishing days (Spain's '300 fleet'); fishing capacity (Sweden)); individual non-transferable catch quotas (Germany, UK, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, France, Belgium); vessel catch limits (Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, UK); individual transferable quotas (Iceland, Norway, Poland) and territorial use rights in fisheries (lakes and some coastal areas in Sweden).

Usually a market will emerge where these rights are sold, transferred and leased. Even in the case where officially the rights cannot be traded, when they are for example linked to a vessel, rights will be traded, in this case the vessel will be sold together with those rights. Transferability has resulted in a concentration of fishing rights in some cases (e.g. Spain, Denmark).

Markets for rights have resulted in an increase of the price for the fishing rights. This results in high entry costs for new fishermen. In addition, the initial allocations for quota-based systems are usually based on historical track record. Once rights have been allocated, it can become difficult for others to become a fisherman since you will have to buy a vessel and all the rights (licence, quota allocation). In for example the UK and Denmark there are specific programmes to help people to become fishermen, either by starting in the small-scale sector, or by leasing quota.

Protection of small-scale fisheries is a concern for a number of Member States, and has been addressed in a number of ways: by limiting transferability; by the establishment of territorial use rights in fisheries; and by reserving a proportion of national quota for the small-scale segment.

In general it is hard to say whether systems based on fishing rights have an effect on discards. However, tradable quota rights can enable fishermen and POs to optimise the species mix to reduce discards.

RBM systems will not be the best solution for all fisheries. A vital factor in getting the best results is an industry that demonstrates a responsibility for stewardship of the resource.

This study provides information on factors that one should take into account when wanting to implement a RBM system. For example the fact that the RBM system needs to be designed to fit local circumstances and objectives. Also introducing a RBM system can be quite costly. Rights require enforcement, because of the potential impacts of illegal activities. In order to get a well working system stakeholders must be fully involved in decisions taken by Member States in developing a market for fishing rights.

## Reference

Full title	An analysis of existing Rights Based Management (RBM) instruments in Member States and on setting up best practices in the EU Part 1: Analysis of existing Rights Based Management (RBM) instruments Part 2: Catalogue Of Rights-Based Management Instruments In Coastal EU Member States
Organisations	MRAG, IFM, CEFAS, AZTI Tecnalia & PoEM
Full report	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/publications/studies_reports_en.htm#rbm">http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/publications/studies_reports_en.htm#rbm</a> [2]

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