

**Mundus maris: Questions for the Q&A of Ocean Governance EP event  
7/11/2023**

Thanks for a wide range of interesting information that should help us all on the road to ratification and implementation of the 30x30 agreements with complementary frameworks under CBD, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the Law of the Sea with the BBNJ. Collaborations between MPA managers across the seas is certainly a very important building block. I have **two related questions and one suggestion**:

- It is no secret that **many MPAs exist mostly on paper** in remote areas with little or no effective enforcement. You will have seen a recent assessment titled "Stakeholder Perceptions Can Distinguish 'Paper Parks' from Marine Protected Areas" publicly accessible at <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/14/15/9655> What is the strategy to transit to strongly protected MPAs to truly allow some biodiversity and ecosystem recovery? In this context, it is worth noting that the biggest impact is from subsidised industrial fleets, which are mostly not economically viable without the subsidies. Some of these were also found repeatedly involved in cases of forced labour and other unlawful practices.
- **Small-scale fishers produce about a quarter of the global marine wild food** supplies, similar to what global trawling produces, but with much superior employment in excess of 100 million people yet, without the significant bycatch and harmful ecosystem and climate effects of the latter.  
Because small-scale fishers mostly have restricted ranges of operations they may lose their livelihoods if MPAs are placed on their former fishing grounds. This will then not only affect the fishers, but also all operators along their value chains, including women typically in charge of fish processing and marketing.  
Despite the Directives for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries adopted by FAO's Committee of Fisheries in 2014 these people tend not to have a voice in marine spatial planning and blue economy investments.  
How can MPAs siting be done with informed consent of the small-scale fishers, men and women directly depending on the resources and what mechanism are being put in place to ensure access to at least basic social services like health care and education and development of alternative economic activities?
- **Proposal:** The UN Ocean Conference in Nice 2025 could set a shining example and offer a form of participation to some representatives of the more than 100 million small-scale fishers (SSF) who depend very directly on the protection of marine biodiversity and healthy and productive ecosystems. When not pushed into survival mode, these fishing communities use low impact methods and produce for human food rather than for animal feed as many industrial fishers do, the latter thus destroying rather than producing food. **NB** most fish reduced to fish meal and oil for feed is food grade. It must not be either food or feed. It must be FOOD.  
The SSF Cluster of the large civil society platform "Rise Up for the Ocean" supports small-scale fishing communities and their demand for being taken seriously by combining ocean protection and recovery with low impact use.