



Fisheries management in the Mediterranean

Managing SSF in MPAs

WWF Mediterranean Marine Initiative

01, October 2019, Roma

Interreg 
Mediterranean

 FishMPA 


- 80% of fish stocks are experiencing overfishing. There are too few fish and too many fishers.
- Most of the resources targeted by SSF are not included in the assessed stocks
- Most of the species protected by the MPAs are not included in the assessed stocks

- In the Mediterranean, fishers and fish co-evolved throughout the centuries, but in these days the equilibrium is broken and the crisis is biting both the fish populations and the fishers' livelihood.



- Plus, climate change is dramatically warming up everything



- 
- The increased demand of seafood and mis-management that fails to account for local context has led to this state of crisis.
 - All decision in the last 50 years were top-down decision.
 - Fishers don't feel guilty. They do not think it's their responsibility.
 - Enemies are the Brussels bureaucrats and the pollution.



The most common way to fish in the Med is through towing a net on the bottom





Small scale fishers are only fishing with passive gears. They set nets on the bottom and then wait fish to be entangled. For this reason, SSF are taken into account as more sustainable compared to trawlers, however also they can have an impact in the actual context

- In this context, free access is no more an option and fisheries have to be managed.
- Reduction of fishing effort has to be combined with spatial and temporal measures, plus control and enforcement





Middle-size trawlers (15/20 meters long) should be phased out. Policies and political actions are strongly pushing in that direction. We are witnessing it, in particular in Europe.





Since the overall fishing effort must be reduced, the “old fishermen” will be accompanied to retirement, and vessels will be decommissioned.

Fishing effort and capacity must decrease

The rest of the workers will have two options, being embarked on big size trawlers or buying small boats and become SSF fishers.

Despite the crisis, most likely SSF fishers will increase in number

- Spatial protection is insufficient.
- Management is absent/infrequent or not effective
- Contribution to the rebuilding of the stocks is under assessments
- Connection between MPAs and Fisheries Management still underestimated or not estimated
- If FRAs (national and International) are or not Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) is still a question. How to measure effectiveness

Spatial protection has to increase as much as effective management



Co-management is a collaborative and participatory process of regulatory decision making between relevant representatives of user-groups, government agencies, research institutions, NGOs and others.

Participatory processes and co-management are mushrooming in the Med.



The RPOA-SSF is a political commitment setting forth concrete actions to be carried out over the next ten years (until 2028) in order to strengthen and support sustainable small-scale fisheries in Mediterranean

Participation of small-scale fisheries in decision-making processes is key

- FishMPABlue1 analysed the management of small-scale fishery within and around protected areas and identified improvements to be implemented through an innovative governance toolkit.
- FishMPABlue2 tested such a toolkit to demonstrate its effectiveness in achieving expected results.