



WWF

POSITION  
PAPER

MAY  
2011

## WWF Experience from the Field: Review of the EU and Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement

### Context

WWF is working hard to ensure the current reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) delivers healthy fish stocks and sustainable and profitable fisheries in Europe and beyond. The External Dimension of the CFP must meet the following general asks and principles\*:

- Good governance & transparency, including funding and policy reform, transparent Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs), an enforced “catch surplus” condition in FPAs and policy coherence for development.
- Exclusive EU rights to negotiate the terms and conditions of FPAs, before distant water fleet owners can then negotiate license costs with the coastal state, consistent with the broader fisheries management agreement.
- Reflagging should not be an option for avoiding capacity alignment, by continuing to fish elsewhere.
- Long Term Management Plans established for all fisheries.
- The same principles of regional fisheries management must apply in the EC and externally.
- Appropriate involvement in RFMOs and strengthened control measures, in particular for Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

### Issue

The present FPA between the European Community and Mauritania covers the period 1st August 2006 -31st July 2012, with a financial contribution of EUR 305M paid to Mauritania for the period of 2008-2012. This includes EUR 65M earmarked for sectoral support to fisheries. Of this, EUR 4M have been allocated for the protection of the Banc d'Arguin ecosystem, in which WWF has always had been intetest and has played a major role in protecting artisanal fisheries here. A further EUR 156M is planned for 2008-2013 from the 10th European Development Fund, of which about EUR 26M is designated for the removal of sunken ships from Nouadhibou Bay to improve the safety and industrial activities in the bay.

This FPA allows Community vessels from 12 Member States to fish in Mauritanian waters and is the most important FPA for the EC, both in financial and economical terms.

The Mauritanian FPA is due to be renewed in 2012 and the discussion on renewal has started.

### The Socio-Economic Assessment of Mauritanian Fisheries

Fishing is a major component of the national economy (50% of exports and 30% of budget revenue). However, there is a lack of dynamism in the private sector, especially in terms of industrial development of local value added through processing and enhancement of production. The actual share of the sector's contribution to nominal GDP remains in the order of 5.3%.

For three decades, the Mauritanian fisheries resources have supported intense fishing activity on different stocks, with a total volume of catches of around 600,000 tonnes.

\*- for the WWF Position Paper on External Dimension please visit [www.wwf.eu/fisheries](http://www.wwf.eu/fisheries)

Over 90% of the catches from Mauritanian EEZ are either landed abroad or trans-shipped in the Bay of Nouadhibou. Of the fish landed in Mauritania 95% are exported and only 10% of these exported products undergo any processing. There needs to be a better integration of fisheries in the national economy through increased local processing and the increasing of processing plants' capacity. The benefit of EU contributions to infrastructure (port) development are not clear. It is estimated that there have been two contributions estimated at EUR 60M.

### EU Impact

The current status of fishing capacity is characterized by the dominance of the FPA with the European Union, in particular for the octopus fishery. This represents great value for the Mauritanian economy. However, the octopus fishery is now overexploited, with overfishing in excess of 30% effort according to the latest data. According to recent scientific data on the status of fish stocks, catches recognized to be European account for at least 52% of the total allowable catch for octopus, 63% for crustaceans, 54% for hake, 26% for tuna and 17% for demersal fish other than black hake.

### Fisheries Management

The reviews conducted by the Global IUU Fisheries Enforcement Workshops mentioned Mauritania as a place where IUU fishing posed serious problems. However with the strengthening of surveillance and inspections at the port of Nouadhibou the fight against IUU fishing is improving. Currently the national fisheries are managed using technical measures such as: mesh size, minimum size of species caught, rigging, zoning and no take areas. The current management system should move towards a system of Rights Based Management that is a hybrid combining royalties on sales and ITQs. The proposed system would share the resource rent between the owners and users in fair proportions.

#### In Summary:

- This year the WWF Western African Marine Ecoregion (WAMER) office will carry out an ex-post evaluation of the FPA. The results of this evaluation should provide information on the cost benefit ration of the agreement.
- Already it is clear the current Mauritanian FPA does not meet certain criteria spelled out in the original agreement text. Thus, in the new agreement these shortcomings must be addressed and improved.
- While the IUU situation in Mauritania is improving, the level of control and pace of progress has to be maintained.
- Long Term Management Plans (LTMPs) for octopus and shrimp must be set out and implemented. These must include an ecosystem approach to management.
- Adverse impact of EU fishing fleets on the artisanal fisheries along the whole Mauritanian coastline should be minimised further and it is important to monitor the EUR 4M allocation for the Banc d'Arguin National Park to ensure the investment meets its declared objectives, including protecting the fisheries resource and the people who depend on it.
- Fishing in Mauritania is characterized by low processing capacity of seafood, which does not allow Mauritania to capture a significant portion of its value added, this should be changed.

#### For further information:

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