

**GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR ENHANCING
THE PARTICIPATION OF SMALL-SCALE FISHING
SECTOR IN DECISION-MAKING:
EVIDENCE FROM ATLANTIC
CASE STUDIES IN EU**



Good practice guidelines for enhancing the participation of small-scale fishing sector in decision-making:

Evidence from Atlantic case studies in EU
MARE/2014/04-SI2.723886

Partners involved in MARE/2014/04-SI2.723886



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MARE Project coordination:
Arantza Murillas-Maza (AZTI)

MARE team Project:
Iriondo, A.; García Allut, A.; Pazos, C.; Montero, M.; and Aranda, M.

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PRESENTATION

THE PROJECT MARE/2014/04-SI2.723886, ENHANCING SMALL SCALE FISHING SECTOR'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING, is a European Commission initiative designed to **analyse and reinforce the participation of the small-scale fishing fleets in the decision-making processes. The project is designed to strengthen the small-scale fisheries (SSF) influence** on all the levels, from the local organisations to the European decision space. It has been undertaken by a consortium coordinated by AZTI, with the participation of the Lonxanet Foundation and the Traditional Fishery Group of the South Western Waters Advisory Council (SWWAC, also identified as CCS).

Reinforcing the participation, influence and visibility of the SSF is not synonymous with the elimination or restriction of the management rules;

such rules must be followed since these small-scale fleets are involved in the exploitation of resources. However, their representation should be improved if they are to access effectively the new management measures that best fit this segment of the fleet. This is a very heterogeneous segment, with many different skills and technologies employed. A specialised, perhaps even regional, coastal management could contribute to the sustainability of this subsector without damaging the sustainability of the industrial fleets. The principle of equity must be satisfied; this involves a fair management. **To this end, the guide presents a list of good practices formulated after the exchange of experiences between the different regions within the scope of the MARE project.**

INTRODUCTION TO THE METHODOLOGY

Governance Goodness Framework



Foto: Serge Larzabal

Good governance must be based on understanding the extent of representation of SSF stakeholders at different decision-making fora. The MARE project examines the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders as well as the available objective data. The quality of governance affects the degree of participation and influence of SSF stakeholders in decision-making. **The main purpose of the project is to establish whether, and to what extent, the standards embodied in the PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE are satisfied.**

Good governance principles, illustrated in page 7, were assessed in several case study areas.



Good governance principles, illustrated below,
were assessed in several case study areas

Community
Perceptions

Incentives

Legal nature



Good Governance Principles: Definitions



Legitimacy

Stakeholders must act with integrity and commitment. Legitimacy is associated with the processes of representation of an organisation or a collective. These processes must be participatory and democratic, so that the representativeness of an organisation is perceived as legitimate by other actors and institutions.



Accountability

The governance structure must allow the stakeholders to participate in decision-making institutions, fora, etc. The representatives are answerable to their constituency. The SSF and its representatives must be willing to achieve improvements by promoting sustainable activity, a sense of responsibility and commitment.



Inclusiveness

This governance principle depends on the degree of participation at different decision stages, i.e. the ability of stakeholders to participate in decisions. Inclusive management should involve the currently marginalised stakeholders. It has to be made clear whether the term refers to the mere presence of stakeholders in the different fora (passive) or to their ability to influence the decision-making by active participation. The active participation should mean taking part in the definition, development and assessment of new management actions.



Transparency

The level and quality of the information transferred from the top to the bottom levels, in particular from the European to local level through the governance structure in place. However, the bottom-up information flow is also an important factor in achieving the true transparency.



Connectivity

The representative bodies should effectively connect with other (governing) bodies. There is a relationship between the private and public organisations which, despite their differences, should be aligned and collaborate to achieve the same objective (the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the fisheries).



Fairness

All the stakeholders (artisanal and industrial segments) should be treated fairly by the same representing organisms.



Resilience

Resilience is the ultimate goal of the governance. It is the capacity to withstand pressure and adapt to changes in the management environment. The resilient organisations are flexible, can learn and respond efficiently to the challenges of the socio-economic, political and environmental nature.



Engagement

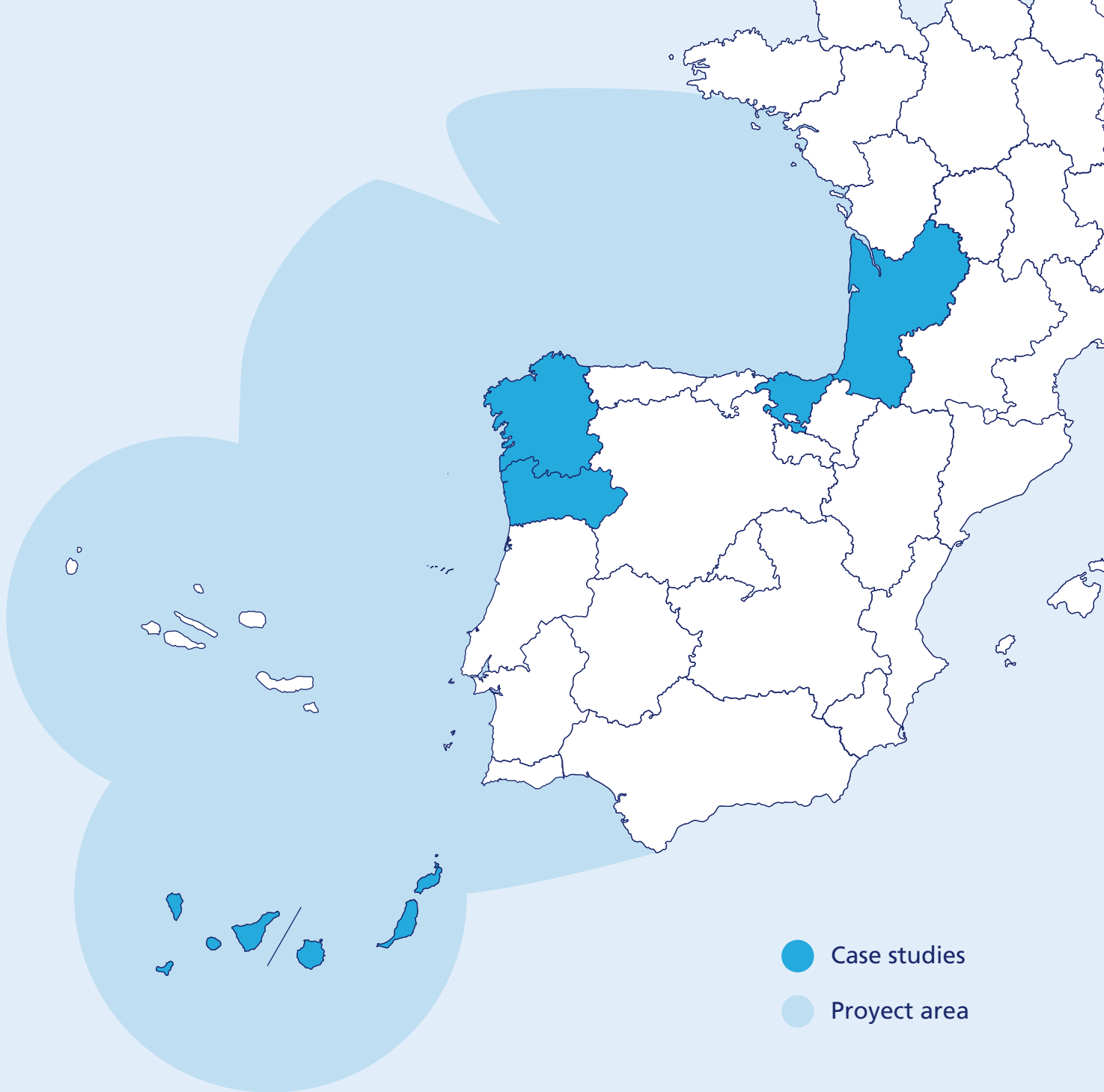
Engagement encompasses the accountability and inclusiveness principles. It is the ability to participate in decisions and use the opportunities to challenge the rules.

Geographical area

The MARE project performs the analysis across a selected geographical area. The culture or philosophy of developing a strong participation (including all the stakeholders) in the decision-making process might lead to a new-style governance of the South-Western Waters area (ICES zones 8, 9 and 10 (waters around the Azores)) and CECAF zones 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2.0 (waters around Madeira and Canary Islands), which is especially relevant to the SSFs.

The project is a case study-based analysis; it examines specific geographical areas. However, the outcomes are not solely associated with these regions. The conclusions might be extrapolated to other Western Waters regions. The case studies were selected to (i) provide sufficient geographical coverage, (ii) examine the regions most relevant to SSF in terms of the number of vessels and the related economic activity and (iii) to observe the participatory processes at different levels (local, regional and European). The French and Portuguese case studies (Aquitaine and North of Portugal) are particularly good examples of a centralised management system, in contrast to the Spanish cases (regionalised/decentralised models).

Case study	Area	Country
Aquitaine	ICES zone	France
Bay of Biscay	ICES zone	Spain
Galicia	ICES zone	Spain
North of Portugal	ICES zone	Portugal
Canary Islands	CECAF zone	Spain
Traditional Fisheres Working Group (CCS)	European level, ICES and CECAF zones	Spain, France and Portugal



GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES: EVIDENCE FROM ATLANTIC CASE STUDIES IN EU

This guide identifies good practices that should reduce some of the identified weaknesses and threats, increase the opportunities and strengthen the SSF governance.

Good practice guidelines will be provided to improve the involvement of the SSF in the advisory and decision-making processes. The aim of the guidelines is to identify and propose specific actions for the future SSF management, under a workable co-management system. Such actions

should contribute to the consolidation and strengthening of the involvement of the bodies and organisations representing SSF sector.

The guidelines are based on the output of several focus groups and interviews with stakeholders in all the case studies covered in this project. Comparisons of the collected qualitative data were conducted.



Foto: Fundación Lonzanet



Good practice 1

Move towards a community-focused governance as a way to exploit the opportunities to change or influence decision-making



Accountability

Conventional SSF management constrains the potential of this sector to participate in decision-making. A community-based approach should be encouraged to replace the traditional top-down government-based model.

Specific actions to follow this approach in the short-to-medium term, at the local and regional levels, are given below.

- Promote participatory processes by **creating working groups** for specific topics or initiatives.
- Promote participatory processes by organising **workshops, focus**

groups and meetings with stakeholders.

- Create **local-sector working groups**, facilitating the activity of small organisms, such as the *cofradías*.
- Identify **fisher groups of reference**, including the fishers with the highest levels of responsibility towards the SSF governance.
- Identify well-known and reliable **external agents** to energise these participatory processes. **The civil society** should be considered

an appropriate agent for this action, e.g. **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and trade union organisations**. Other third parties should also be considered, (such as **scientific research institutes**). These are usually well known to the governance stakeholders (fishermen, administration, etc.). They are especially useful as leaders in very large, atomised regions and in the cases where lack of confidence among the stakeholders is apparent.

- **Use an online database identifying these external agents.** This should improve and complement the existing internal capabilities of the SSF organisations. The project contributes to such an online database; publicly available (<http://mare.azti.es/action-1/>).

- Promote the introduction of co-management tools by creating **co-management committees** at local and regional levels. These tools should be implemented to advance decentralisation at these levels.
- Promote **self-management at local/regional levels** even when a national and/or European legislation is in place (e.g. the allocation of fishing possibilities, introduction of certain technical measures, etc.). To this end, additional actions should be performed:
 1. **Organise meetings and workshops** to identify the topics that could be managed at the local or regional levels.
 2. Improve the **motivation of stakeholders** to increase their involvement and degree of responsibility.

Good practice 2

Empowerment of SSF representatives through co-management



Accountability

A set of actions to be implemented in the long term should be defined. They should be designed to promote the participation of SSF fishermen in decision-making and encourage co-management, leading to the democratisation of the management of fishery resources. Some of the most important actions are listed below.

- Recognise the legitimacy of the participants in the creation of **co-management models**.
- Develop mechanisms for **equal, inclusive and proactive participation**.
- Increase transparency in communication, paramount for building trust.

- Establish mechanisms for **horizontal and periodic communication**.
- Strengthen the **sense of the responsibility of the promoter group**.
- **Increase connectivity** with other stakeholders (NGOs, politicians, scientists).
- **Participate in decision-making at parity** with the public administration.
- **Engage a facilitator** to be involved throughout the process to improve the level of trust and the mediation/conflict management.
- Promote a **systematic dynamisation conducted by an external actor** to reinforce the motivation.

Good practice 3

Improvement of top-down information transfer (from the EC to local levels)



Transparency

The new approach, designed to improve the small-scale governance, should use the data from different decision-making fora and other sources. It should be communicated to all stakeholders, reaching the fishers at the local level, and then employed in decision-making. The following actions could be put into effect:

- **Training** to improve the level of functional literacy in the sector.
- **Promoting the use of digital tools to access the European-level information.**
- National administration should **provide information on catches in real time.** Web-tool implementation.
- **The EC should improve the communication** with the local/regional levels via the official SSF representatives, established

networks and the local, regional and national administration.

- Representatives should **boost the knowledge transfer related to European issues.** The below actions could be implemented:
 1. National / regional administrations could promote **public discussions on European matters.**
 2. **The European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) economic support should be used** to increase the capacity of the representatives to manage and transfer the information.
 3. **Meetings with fishers** should be organised on a periodic basis.
 4. **To solve the absenteeism problem,** the key fishers should be nominated using a rotation system.
 5. **The external agents,** who could help in the information transfer on a periodic basis, should be engaged.

Good practice 4

Effective and transparent bottom-up flow of basic information (from local to national level) to ensure a fair share of fishing resources or fair application of MSP



Transparency

There is an urgent need to reinforce the basic data supply on catches, landings, discards or effort, and to improve its bottom-up flow from the local to national levels in real time. This information is needed to propose new management rules complementing the existing regulations (e.g. quota allocation). Active and effective participation of the fishers in decision-making will be only possible if they are involved in the processing of the basic information. The following actions should improve the information flow.

- Promote the use of digital tools to report the weekly activity of vessels of less than 10-m length.
- Support training of the fishers in the use of digital tools.

- Use the EMFF opportunities to support investment in new digital technologies.
- Develop collaborative platforms for representative vessels to collect good-quality data in real time. Incentives are needed to increase the responsibility of the fishers towards this objective.
 1. High degree of fisher responsibility is required. Meetings between fishers and local/regional scientists should be organised to explain and strengthen the incentives.
 2. Encourage the investment in new devices assuring quality data collection.
 3. Identify new incentives (apart from the quota allocations). For example, the visibility of the SSF activities is highly relevant during the development of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP).

Good practice 5

Improve the active participation in decision-making by strengthening the capacity of representative organisations and fishers



Inclusiveness

As the SSF might contribute to the overexploitation of some fishing resources, any proposal/initiative coming from this sector should include sustainability analysis. This does not always happen, reducing the power of the organisations to propose changes. To increase the active participation, the measures building up the capabilities of the SSF organisations and of the fishers themselves should be supported.

Specific actions should be implemented to improve the levels of active participation:

- Provide updated reports on biological, economic and

environmental status of the resources.

- Introduce and maintain technical assistance to compensate for the limited capacity of fishers and their representatives to participate in decision-making.
- Support the introduction of **external agents**, who may help in promoting and leading the proposals (e.g., NGOs, trade union organisations or scientific research institutes).
- Use an online, publically available database identifying the potential external agents. This project contributes to such a database.

- **Identify the incentives (economic, environmental, etc.) increasing the responsibility of fishers towards the SSF governance.**
- **Support training activities to improve the knowledge of basic scientific, legal and policy matters.**
- **Facilitate access to economic resources** allowing the participation

in the decision-making:

1. Use the **EFMM resources** provided for this purpose. **Use technical assistance** and/or external agents to circumvent the bureaucratic obstacles in the access to these resources.
2. Use similar resources provided by the already existing Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs).



Good practice 6

Empowering the SSF organisms and enhancing their connectivity



Connectivity

There are many channels for connecting all the stakeholders involved in governance in all the regions. However, the connections could be reinforced by the organisms that can support such connections, and in particular, strengthen the connectivity between the SSF fishers and their organisations. These connections are usually maintained using tools such as email; some other tools (e.g. WhatsApp groups) could be created and employed.

Here are some actions to enhance the stakeholder connectivity:

- **Create cross-border networks with the economic support of the EMFF.** The already existing organisms

should be connected in the regions sharing the resources exploited by the SSF or those sharing the SSF-related transversal topics.

- **Promote the participation of the newly created networks in the decision-making processes.**
- **Create unofficial committees, exclusive to the SSF, under the umbrella of regional organisations** (federations, associations). Such unofficial commissions have been created in some regions to address the specific issues or concerns of the small-scale fleets.
- **Use the EMFF opportunities** to finance the creation of networks and collaborations between fishing sector and scientific bodies.

Good practice 7

Improving the SSF identification and visibility under a common-interest framework to increase the legitimacy



Legitimacy

- Fora for collaboration within and between fishing sectors and with other actors in public and private realms usually bring good results. When the knowledge is shared, the actions are perceived as legitimate. This allows addressing the problems of heterogeneity of the fleets and to pursue the common interests. The European CCS fora are a good example.
- **Agree on the definitions to be adopted in specific contexts/ proposals.**



Foto: Fundación Lonxanet

Good practice 8

Make the SSF less vulnerable and economically better equipped to face the governance changes needed to assure the resilience of this sector



Resilience

The SSF governance could be improved by using the opportunities provided by the EMFF. However, there are at least three concerns. Firstly, the Member States usually include the coastal small-scale fishery Action Plans within the EMFF operative programmes; however, some aspects of these plans do not translate into eligible costs. Secondly, the introduction of costs of governance innovation into Action Plans needs reinforcing using (i) innovation in fisheries through management and organisation systems, (ii) support of FLAGs or (iii) advisory services such as professional services on innovation in governance and (iv) partnerships between scientists and fishermen.

Thirdly, it is necessary to facilitate the access of the SSF representatives to the EMFF. The advisory services, including advice on applying for EMFF support, are among the eligible costs. This opportunity is almost unknown to the stakeholders. This is one of the reasons why the information on the EMFF funding should be improved; the stakeholders will not apply for the funds if they are not aware of their existence.

Actions to be implemented could:

- Make sure that the **regional operative programmes include eligible costs related to the coastal SSF Action Plans**. Public discussions and open dialogue with the regional administration are needed.

- **Promote the innovation in governance** as a part of the coastal SSF Action Plans. Public discussions and open dialogue with the regional administration should be compulsory.
- **Consider obtaining technical assistance**, mainly for small organisations, to circumvent the bureaucratic obstacles in the access to the EMFF economic resources.
- **Encourage the SSF representatives to use the EMFF regional and national support** to improve the SSF governance.
- **Use EMFF advisory services to facilitate obtaining the EMFF support.**
- **Encourage the SSF representatives to access the EMFF funds devoted to Community-led Local Development** via projects presented to the FLAGs.



Good practice 9

Enhance the access to the European decision space: more effective consultation processes



Several principles

The consultative processes promoted by the European Commission (EC) are of high relevance to the CCS as they can increase its influence. These processes do not always allow effective participation because the EC usually involves CCS at the late stage of the proceedings, when only comments on the specific EC proposals can be submitted. The consultations could be relevant to the activities of the already existing Traditional Fishery Working Group (CCS); however, they should be improved to promote a transparent and efficient active participation.

Actions to improve the access of the SSF to the European decision space:

- The **proposals from the EC to the CCS should be anticipated** and advice sought at the early stages of their preparation.
- The **mechanisms of decision processes should be explained** to the stakeholders.
- **All proposals should be accessible online** throughout the decision-making process.
- The proposals from the EC should reach the CCS **within a time margin sufficient** to translate them and to prepare and deliver the relevant CCS comments.
- The EC should make it clear to **what extent the proposals can be affected** by the advice from the

Traditional Fishery Working Group; the CCS should be aware of the extent of the European consultation space for each case considered.

- The EC should provide the proposal text for each new consultation process, **accompanied by a background overview document** describing the context.
- **The connectivity between the Traditional Fishery Working Group and the scientific and political fora should be strengthened.** The weaknesses in connectivity reduce the chances of SSF participation in decision-making.
- SSF representatives are aware of their limited technical and

economic capacity, which makes it difficult to participate in the various fora. Specific actions could be implemented to reinforce the links between the institutions.

1. A list of liaisons with various institutions should be prepared and kept updated for all the SSF actions undertaken by these organisations.
2. Specific programmed CCS meetings, in particular those of the Traditional Fishery Working Groups, should invite representatives of these institutions.

Good practice 10

Enhance the active participation of SSF representatives in the European decision-making via the Traditional Fisheries Working Group (CCS)



Several principles

Actions to increase and strengthen the active participation of the traditional working groups:

- **Improve the composition of the group to reflect better the SSF interests** (i.e. ensure appropriate representation of the component fleets).
- Define the specific purpose of the group. In the case of the SSF, there are many definitions due to many geographical areas, fleet structures, targeted species and fishing techniques involved. This makes it difficult to formulate a European definition applicable to all regions. The group will have to deal with different interests of the participants; a practical solution is needed.
- **Introduce participatory tools** in some of the meetings of the Traditional Fisheries Working Group to increase active participation.
- **Provide the CCS and other fora with scientific and technical support** from their respective administrations.
- **Encourage the use of economic resources** to facilitate the participation of all representatives in the working groups.
 1. Request and use EMFF funding.
 2. Access the EMFF funds devoted to Community-led Local Development through projects presented to the FLAGs.
- **Assess actively the impact of the accepted proposals** promoted by the Traditional Fisheries Working Group and evaluate the results of collaboration with the rest of European scientific and political organisms.

Good practices: North of Portugal 11

To promote a comprehensive associationism in the fishing sector



Accountability

All shipowners and crew members should belong to one of the existing associations. A high level of associationism is the basis of good governance; this has not been achieved in this region.

Some urgent actions should be carried out to remedy this unsatisfactory situation:

- **Meetings and workshops with fishers** (ship owners and crew members) should be promoted and organised by the national administration and regional associations.
- **The incentives** which might increase the responsibility of fishers

towards the SSF governance **should be identified.**

- **This process must be led by external facilitators**, i.e. civil societies such as NGOs and trade unions, research institutes, qualified agents from the national administration, etc. Some urgent actions should be carried out to improve the situation.
- To identify the existing fishing organisations, clearly establishing the representation of fishermen. Pilot studies are needed to identify organisations that could lead an active representation.

Good practices: North of Portugal 13

To create formal multi-level structures for representation of the fishing sector, integrating the existing and new organisations



Accountability

Actions to be carried out:

- **A public discussion** should be initiated, including all the stakeholders involved in fishing sector representativeness, **to promote the creation of higher-level organisations.** Currently, all fisherman associations are multisectoral and at the local level; there are no high-level bodies representing the common interests of fishermen.
- **The incentives** that might help to enhance the responsibility of the fishers **should be identified.**
- **External facilitators** must lead this process, i.e. civil societies such as NGOs and trade unions, research institutes and even well-known and reliable agents from the national administration, among others.
- **The economic opportunities provided by the EMFF should be utilised.**
- To promote a more formal connectivity between the national government, the already existing associations and the potential multi-level structures of representation. A public protocol of communication and connectivity between the leaders should be prepared.

SUCCESSFUL GOOD PRACTICES

Information integration in Basque SSF and power in decision-making

SSF Managers need to be well informed of the SSF activity to develop the appropriate representativeness. To create an optimal data collection system, the Basque scientists from AZTI research institute have proposed collaboration with local administration and the small-scale fishers (under 15-m LOA). **A new monitoring systems, tracking the vessels, catches, ... in real time, were installed on a voluntary basis. This improved the information on the fishing activities by gathering spatial- resolution data (starting in 2012).**

Mision

To increase the transparency of bottom-up information flow, empower small-scale representation.

Key drivers

- Strong involvement at the local level (collaboration between a research institute, regional administration and SSF fishers).
- Economic support in place.
- More than 10 years of collaboration between the involved stakeholders.
- Incentive: improving the reputation of the segment in comparison with other maritime users.



Foto: Azti

Governance principle followed



High degree of fisher responsibility. Self-imposed measures for data collection.



Very good connectivity between fishers, scientists and administration at local/ regional level.

Scope: where the impact is produced

Regional and/or national

Stakeholders driving the good practice

Regional research institute, regional administration

Trade-off

None

Sector or subsector involved

SSF

The establishment of the Os Miñarzos co-managed Marine Reserve of Fishing Interest SSF and power in decision-making

The creation of the Os Miñarzos Marine Reserve of Fishing Interest is an initiative promoted and developed by the small-scale fishermen of the Cofradía of Lira (A Coruña, Galicia) to increase catches and incomes by improving the resource management. The initiative started in early 2002 and ended successfully, with the publication of the Decree/Xunta de Galicia in April 2007 and **the creation of the Marine Reserve of Fishing Interest (MRFI) Os Miñarzos.**

Mision

It is the perception of many fishermen that fishery resources are becoming increasingly scarce. They also believe that the recent increase in fishing effort might have exacerbated the problem. They propose **the introduction of co-management model in the newly created MRFI.**

Key drivers

- Successful past experiences of the Cofradía of Lira.
- Confidence in the external actor who led the process dynamisation.
- Progressive decrease in the resources of the SSF fleet revealed by the participatory SWOT analysis.
- Tools and actions to reinforce motivation.
- Strong motivation of fishermen and high receptivity of all political parties.

Governance principle followed



A rarely used co-management system in place.



External actor dynamises the process.

Scope: where the impact is produced	Local
Stakeholders driving the good practice	Local cofradía, NGO
Trade-off	Yes - high atomisation of the SSF, also conflicts with other fishing sectors
Sector or subsector involved	SSF



Foto: Fundación Lonxanet

Regionalisation of technical measures for the clam stock and self-management in the Bay of Arcachon

The fishery of the Japanese clam stock (*Venerupis philippinarum*) was introduced in the Bay of Arcachon at the end of the eighties. This is a very important local fishery in France and the stock represents their main source of revenues. The local fishermen have been promoting and implementing stock assessments since the year 2000. They promoted and set up an intra-basin management system based on a range of technical measures such as limiting the number of fishing licenses and the closure of certain maritime areas for reproduction. **All these measures were locally self-adopted.**

Mision

To change the EU technical regulations. Regionalisation - to develop local coastal management of the European-level regulation. Economic profitability is also involved.

Key drivers

- Few fisher groups are involved and the fishing interests of these groups are similar.
- There is an economic incentive.
- Lack of updated/new biological/economic impact assessment reports.
- Poor biological state of the clam stock.
- Potential difficulties in controlling and enforcing the minimum sizes, market problems.



Foto: Serge Larzabal

Governance principle followed



High degree of fisher responsibility.



A good collaboration between French fishery committees, IFREMER and CCS.

Scope: where the impact is produced	Local
Stakeholders driving the good practice	Fishers via regional and national french fishing committee, CCS
Trade-off	None
Sector or subsector involved	SSF

Development of an SSF management plan in the waters of Fuerteventura

Fuerteventura is an area with a high biodiversity and the region already contains some Special Conservation Zones. The fishing activities are entirely of a small-scale nature. A working group was created in November 2016 during the first workshop organised by the NGO WWF, where the analysis of the Fuerteventura small-scale fishing sector was presented by this NGO. The aim was to develop a management plan that would address all aspects of fishing and would be implemented from 2018 to 2022, through the national and regional regulations.

Mision

A participatory process promoted by a third party (the NGO WWF) to develop an SSF management plan in a conservation area. Conservation and fishing control, surveillance and monitoring issues.

Key drivers

- The need to regulate fishing activity in a conservation area.
- The region has limited marine space for small-scale fishing activity; there is a threat of illegal fishing.
- The fishery consists of a homogeneous fleet involved entirely in small-scale fishing.
- An external agent (NGO) promotes the initiative.
- A working group (WG) engaging a large variety of stakeholders, i.e. fishing sector, public sector, NGOs, academia



Foto: José M. Ortiz Sánchez

Governance principle followed



The Spanish government provides flexibility to accommodate a management plan.



The promoter is legitimated even though it does not belong to the governance framework.



All actors concerned participate (WG) in the development of the management plan.

Scope: where the impact is produced	Local
Stakeholders driving the good practice	NGO
Trade-off	None
Sector or subsector involved	SSF

Community control regulation system for SSF

A new proposal was sent to the EC in 2014 asking for an exemption for the SSF. The vessels shorter than 15 m in length, making fishing trips of less than 24 h, should not be obliged to transmit their catch data electronically or to send prior notifications. This should apply even in the cases of catches subject to a management plan. However, such vessels should complete a landing declaration.

Mision

Modification of EU control regulations; the imposed requirements were inappropriate for the small fishing vessels.

Key drivers

- Transversal topic discussed in the Traditional Fishery Working Group (CCS).
- The availability of the CCS capabilities.

Governance principle followed



The structure is in place.

Scope: where the impact is produced	European
Stakeholders driving the good practice	Traditional fishing working group - CCS
Trade-off	None
Sector or subsector involved	SSF , under 15-m length overall



CONCLUDING REMARKS

- The agents involved in fishing activities (fishermen, representatives of brotherhoods and federations in Spain, fishing committees in France, fishery associations in Portugal and the regional, national and European administrations) often find it difficult to influence the decision processes.
- To take the first step towards the strengthening of participation, the ultimate decision makers must be willing to give up some of their power.
- In the existing consultation processes, the passive participation (presence) of the agents, is strong. However, the active participation, which allows influencing the decision processes, is rather weak.
- Many consultation processes, established at different levels of decision-making, are not carried out under the best conditions. E.g. the proposals sent from the EC to the CCS are complex and, usually, not accompanied by context information that could help the consulted agents to form and express their opinions.
- There is no real European decision space with well-defined “rules of the game”.
- A good network of well-connected agents is necessary; more than 300 organisations exist in the studied region but the capacity to be connected is often not the case.
- The connectivity is often broken (in very atomised regions), generating multiple parallel representations of the sector.

- Other factors reducing the capacity of small organisations, representing the small-scale fleets exclusively, are their poor economic resources and limited access to the funding from the EMFF. As a result, such organisations often neglect the representation tasks in favor of administration or sales management.
- It should be mentioned the issues generated by the lack of a consensual definition of a small-scale fleet. When a uniform and strong sector is not clearly identified, the ability to exert its influence at higher levels (above the local or regional level) is severely limited.
- Another limiting factor is the poor transfer of information (on captures, effort, etc.) from the local level to the higher levels of decision-making. The quality of top-down information transfer (from EC to the local level) on the daily issues (e.g. fishery closures, quotas, etc.) is acceptable.
- However, this information flow is almost non-existent when it comes to addressing the global, more distant issues, such as the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, the Consultative Committees, or the introduction of new European regulation. There seems to be no need (or intention) to protect the small-scale fleets to the detriment of other sectors.
- Reinforcing the participation, influence, and visibility of the SSFs should be enhanced. Their representation should be improved so they can access the new management measures best suited to this segment. A differentiated, and even regional, coastal management can contribute to the sustainability of this sub-sector, without affecting the sustainability of industrial fleets. The principle of equity must be satisfied, and fair management principles should be followed.



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CONTACT



Arantza Murillas-Maza, Ph.D.
AZTI - Marine Research.
Sustainable Fisheries Management



amurillas@azti.es
+34 667 174 395



Txatxarramendi ugartea z/g
48395 Sukarrieta, Bizkaia (SPAIN)

www.mare.azti.es



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