

Recommendation N° 26:

Impact of the increase in fuels prices, on the Fishery Sector in the Outermost Regions

At this moment, considering the war in Eastern Europe, whose instability is repercussing for the other countries, the European Outermost Regions (ORs) are also being confronted with increasing prices, in various sectors. The difficulties of the Covid19 pandemic are still being felt and now, the increase in the costs: in raw materials, in transport and, in a galloping way, in fuels, which is turning the professional fishing activity unaffordable. These added difficulties, pose a huge challenge in the maintenance of the activity of the fishing sector, in our territories.

Since the price of the fish is not keeping up with the current production costs, shipowners predict that fisheries income may not compensate the fixed costs of the activity and have already started to leave their vessels moored at the pier, as a way of reducing their losses.

We also recall that in the ORs there are several families that depend on the work of a single member of the household to live, so shipowners and fishermen in our coastal communities are very worried and apprehensive about their near future.

Thus, we highlight the difficulties reported by the ORs:

French Guyana:

Fuel for vessels has risen in the last weeks, bringing added difficulties to fishermen.

Azores:

Consider that the increase in fuel prices is making the sector economically unviable, because, since the beginning of 2021, diesel for fisheries has risen 113% and, consequently, the expenses associated with fishing activity had doubled.

Madeira:

Since the last year, diesel for fisheries has increased approximately 40 cents and this past week (21st to 25th of March) the increase was of 17 cents, with no forecast for a drop.

Besides the vessels with a diesel engine, there are also some small fishing vessels powered by gasoline, which pay for fuel at the same prices charged as for the population (in general), which now is around 2,10€/L.

The increase in fuel, are not accompanied by the value of the fish, whose average value has been stagnant for quite some time.

Canary Islands:

Fishermen were greatly affected by the increase in the price of diesel, assuming an extra cost, which cannot be reflected on to the price of fish for the final consumer. Organizations from the fishery sector, support that the fleet should stop their activity.

Mayotte:

Fuel has increased significantly in recent weeks, forcing some vessels to stop their activity.

Considering the above mentioned, **CCRUP considers that is urgent to determine fair and adequate support measures for the fisheries sector in the ORs, avoiding the imminent stoppage of the fishing sector** in our territories, with the consequent economic and social difficulties that this will carry.

The President of the Executive Committee of the CC RUP,

(David Pavón González)