

Recommendation n° 44

Review of Criteria relating to the Fleet's State of Balance

Member States (MS) must submit an annual report to the European Commission on the capacity of their fleet in relation to fishing opportunities. These capacity balance reports must follow a set of guidelines adopted by the Commission in its Communication to the European Parliament and the Council in 2014 «*Guidelines for the analysis of the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities according to Article 22 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy*».

The Member States' reports, were designed in response to a situation of overcapacity and systematic overfishing in EU continental waters and are based on biological sustainability, economic and vessel utilisation indicators, which we consider are not adapted to our artisanal fleets and to the reality of the Outermost Regions (ORs), where overcapacity and overfishing do not occur.

In some French ORs, there is a lack scientific data on the state of fishery stocks. As a result, Member States are unable to include the data requested by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) in the annual report sent to the European Commission, which allows to prove the balance of their fleets. The difficulty in collecting data is not only due to the lack of scientific resources in the territories, but mainly due to the lack of adequate infrastructure for landing and storing fresh fish, which support data collection. For some ORs, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) foreign fishing is so important, that it completely biased the figures for potential landings.

Even in the ORs, where there are infrastructures and protocol mechanisms systematized, for collecting data, from the fishing and scientific sectors, we note that national and European data do not always coincide with the information provided by our fishermen to the competent authorities. This can lead to gaps and errors, compromising – eventually – the evaluation of quota allocations.

Considering the above mentioned:

The Outermost Regions Advisory Council (CCRUP) recommends to the European Commission:

- 1- Study and adaptation of the criteria, for analysing the balance between fishing capacity and fishing opportunities, to the reality of artisanal fishing in the ORs;
- 2- Study and adaptation of the requirements of these criteria, based on the real possibilities of compliance in some of the ORs.

The CCRUP also recommends to the Member States:

- 1- Creation of scientific research programmes for the ORs, taking into account that current data collection is insufficient to allow the adequate allocation of national supports.

The President of the Executive Committee of the CCRUP,

(David Pavón González)