MINISTERU GĦALL-IŻVILUPP SOSTENIBBLI, L-AMBJENT U TIBDIL FIL-KLIMA

Skema ta' Waqfien Permanenti tal-Attivitajiet tas-Sajd 4 ta' Settembru sat-30 ta' Settembru, 2015

Bastimenti Eliġibbli: Bastimenti MFA jew MFB bil-lampara jew tat-tkarkir skont ir-Reġistru Malti tas-Sajd.

Data tal-Għeluq għall-Applikazzjonijiet: It-30 ta' Settembru, 2015, f'nofsinhar. Applikazzjonijiet li jaslu tard ma jiġux milqugħa.

Applikazzjonijiet u linji gwida: (http://vafd.gov.mt/proposals), Uffiċċju *Customer Care*, Ministeru għal Għawdex jew Koperattivi tas-Sajd.

Se jsiru żewġ sessjonijiet ta' informazzjoni nhar id-9 ta' Settembru, 2015 fis-Sala tal-Parroċċa ta' Marsaxlokk fid-9.00 a.m. u fil-Ministeru għal Għawdex fi Pjazza San Franġisk fis-1.30 p.m.

Aktar informazzjoni tista' tinkiseb mill-Uffiċju tal-*Customer Care* tal-Korp Intermedjarju għall-Fond Ewropew tas-Sajd fil-Ministeru għall-Iżvilupp Sostenibbli, l-Ambjent u Tibdil fil-Klima, 6, Triq Ħal Qormi, Sta Venera fuq Tel. Nru. 2292 6223 bejn is-7.30 a.m. u s-1.30 p.m., mit-Tnejn sal-Ġimgħa (festi pubbliċi eskluży) jew permezz ta' *email* lil: (christopher.francalanza@gov.mt). L-applikazzjonijiet jintlaqgħu fl-istess uffiċċju sad-data tal-għeluq indikata.

L-4 ta' Settembru, 2015

MINISTERY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Permanent Cessation of Fishing Activities 4th September – 30th September, 2015

Eligible vessels: Lampara or trawling MFA or MFB vessels as per Malta Fishing Vessel Register.

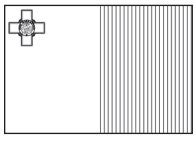
Closing date for applications: Wednesday, 30th September, 2015, noon. Late applications shall not be considered.

Applications and guidelines: (http://vafd.gov.mt/proposals), Customer Care Office, Ministry for Gozo or Fishing Cooperatives.

An information session will be held on Wednesday 9th September 2015 at the Marsaxlokk Parish Hall at 9.00 a.m. and at the Ministry for Gozo at St. Francis Square, Victoria at 1.30 p.m.

Further information may be obtained from the Customer Care Office of the European Fisheries Fund Intermediate Body c/o Policy Developement and Programme Implimentation Directorate, Ministery for Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change, 6, Triq Ħal Qormi, Sta Venera on Tel. No. 2292 6223 from 7.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) or by email to: (christopher.francalanza@gov.mt). Applications shall be received by the closing date at this office.

4th September, 2015



Programm Operattiv tas-Sajd 2007-2013
Proġett Parti Finanzjat mill-Unjoni Ewropea
Fond Ewropew għas-Sajd (FES)
Rata ta' Ko-Finanzjament: 75% Fondi UE; 25% Fondi Nazzjonali



Investment f'Sajd Sostenibbli

Fisheries Operational Programme 2007-2013
Aid Scheme part-financed by the European Union
European Fisheries Fund (EFF)
Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% National Funds

Investing in sustainable fisheries

MINISTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

APPROVED by the Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change

Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan for Lampara Fishery

Policy Development and Programme Implementation
6, MSDEC Offices,
Triq Ħal Qormi
Santa Venera

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Description of the Lampara Fisheries in Malta (Fleet and Fishing Areas)

3. Conditions of the Lampara fisheries

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Annex I

Detailed list of Lampara fishing vessels[1]

[1]Annex I is not being published online to ensure confidentiality of data. It may be reviewed at the offices of the Intermediate Body.

List of Abbreviations

AFM:	Armed Forces of Malta
CFP:	Common Fisheries Policy
EFF:	European Fisheries Fund
EU:	European Union
DFA:	Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
F:	Fishing mortality (index of the quantity of fish killed by fishing)
F0.1:	The fishing mortality (amount of fish killed) for the maximum sustainable harvest (highest production of fish). This is the target reference point for the fishery
Fmax:	The ultimate fishing mortality which can be supported by the fishery, beyond this point the fishery is over fishing the stock.
FEAP:	Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan
FMZ:	Fisheries Management Zone consisting of marine waters under Malta's jurisdiction
FPO:	Fisheries Protection Officer
FVR:	Fishing Vessels Register
GT:	Gross Tonnage
IB:	Intermediate Body for European Fisheries Fund
kW:	Kilowatts
LOA:	Length overall
MFA:	Registration in Fishing Vessels Registry denoting Commercial Full-Time vessels
MFB:	Registration in Fishing Vessels Registry denoting Commercial Part-Time vessels
MPF:	Malta Police Force
NM:	Nautical Mile
VMS:	Vessels Monitoring System

1. Introduction

This Fisheries Effort Adjustment Plan (FEAP) defines the actions that the Maltese fisheries authorities intend to take to implement the measures defined and described in the Maltese Fisheries Management Plan for the lampara fishery which was adopted as per Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) 1967/2006 through the Implementation and Enforcement of certain Fisheries Management Plans Order (LN354/13).

It presents the actions aimed to reduce the lampara fishing fleet in order to achieve a more sustainable lampara fishing sector.

The planned reduction of the fishing effort in lampara fishery from 2013 to 2015 is the backbone of the Maltese Fisheries' conservation actions in this sector.

2. Description of the lampara Fisheries in Malta (Fleet and Fishing Areas)

2.1 The Maltese lampara Fishing Fleet

As of 30 June 2015 the lampara fleet authorised to work within the FMZ consists of 14 boats having an overall tonnage of 462.99 GT, a total main engine power of 2,801.59 kW. The average length for the fleet is of 16.5m length overall, with an average tonnage of 37.62 GT and average engine power of 218.6 kW.

In 2014, lampara production amounted to 928 metric tonnes (with a market value of €4,133,089) which represents 39% of the total landings by weight and 27% of the selling value. In the same year, landings of Chub Mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*) and European sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) represented 88% and 6% of the 'lampara' landings respectively.

	No of Vessels	**GT**	**kW (main eng.)**
MFA	14	462.99	2,801.59
MFB	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total	**14**[2]	462.99	2,801.59

Source: Community Fleet Register, 2015

2.2 Fishing Areas

The scope of the lampara fisheries management plan concerns the waters under Malta's jurisdiction (25nm Fisheries Management Zone).

3. Conditions of the Lampara fisheries (and stock)

All stocks targeted by the Maltese lampara fishery are stocks shared with Sicily due to the population distribution over the Malta Bank, which connects the Maltese Islands with Sicily.

[2]Fom the 17 vessels registered in 2013 one vessel has been scrapped and a further two vessels have exited the lampara fleet on their own initiative.

Stock assessment information for the Central Mediterranean is at present not available for Chub Mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*) and Round Sardinella (*Sardinella aurita*). At present, efforts are being made at international fora, such that stock assessments of the relevant species will be performed in collaboration with Italy.

Maltese catches of *Scomber japonicus* and *Sardinella aurita* amounted to 248.3 tonnes and 192.8 tonnes respectively in 2012. This represented 34.73% of *S. japonicus* and 61.27% of *S. aurita* catches made by the Maltese and Italian fleets considered together, which in total amounted to 1,029.6 tonnes when both species are considered together.

In 2013, Maltese catches of *S. japonicus* and *S. aurita* increased to 303.2 tonnes and 216.8 tonnes respectively. This represented 38.07% of *S. japonicus* and 82.33% of *S. aurita* catches made by the Maltese and Italian fleets considered together, which in total amounted to 1059.7 tonnes when both species are considered together. This shows a strong increase in Malta's catch contribution relative to 2010, when the total production amounted to just 120.91 metric tonnes.

4. Legal Framework

This lampara Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan takes into consideration the following:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 of 21 December 2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea, amending Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1626/94The provisions of Articles 21, 22 and 23 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund;
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 498/2007 of 26 March 2007 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 on the European Fisheries Fund;
- The provisions of Articles 21 and 22 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund;;
- Articles 6 and 9 of Council Regulation (EC) 2371/2002 of 20 December 2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the Common Fisheries Policy
- Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of The European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC ;
- Implementation and Enforcement of certain Fisheries Management Plans Order (LN354/13)
- Management of the Lampara Fishery Order (LN 407/13)

5. Expected results in terms of fishing effort levels

According to the management plan for the lampara fishery, the Maltese authorities have decided to introduce at least a 20 % reduction (3 vessels) in line with the precautionary approach on the 2012 lampara capacity in terms of number of vessels reduction of the fleet through permanent cessation which is to be concluded by end of 2015.

One vessel having a GT of 43.16 and 246 KW has already been scrapped through a previous call for permanent cessation in 2013. It follows that the said scheme reached (and indeed exceeded) the goals of capacity reduction in terms of kW and GT but not in terms of number of vessels. To this effect, a further

Permanent Cessation Scheme should be published to seek a reduction in fishing capacity of at least a further two (2) vessels. It is expected that a further two (2) vessels are scrapped under the forthcoming scheme.

6. Measures contemplated in the FEAP

Measures for the adaptation of the community fishing fleet in our Fisheries Operational Programme include the permanent cessation of fishing activities under Priority Axis 1 of the European Fisheries Fund 2007 – 2013. The rationale for this measure is the sustainable utilisation of fisheries' resources and fleet management. Malta faces a number of challenges in terms of:

- Reaching a balance between fisheries resources and fishing capacity;
- An aging fishing fleet; and
- The seasonal nature of the fishing activity.

The general objective of this measure, which will be implemented in the framework of this Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan, is to adjust the fishing capacity of the Maltese registered lampara fishing fleet, and to manage the fishing effort in accordance with the aims of the Common Fisheries Policy. The adjustment of fishing effort during period 2013-2015 will be achieved through:

- Reduction of a number of lampara fishing permits;
- Permanent decommissioning of lampara fishing vessels currently actively involved in the actual take up of wild fish stocks, are 5 years old or over and are in the MFA category;

The permanent cessation of fishing activities of a fishing vessel may be achieved only by:

- Scrapping of the fishing vessel;
- Reassignment under the flag of a Member State Registered in the Community for activities outside fishing activities;
- The reassignment of the vessel for the purpose of the creation of artificial reefs;

Other permanent cessation actions, apart from the ones mentioned above, unless planned for by other FEAPs, shall not be eligible for funding.

7. Control measures and expected results

The control measures employed by the Maltese authorities include:

- The maintenance of a database containing data relevant to the lampara fishing fleet;
- Control and enforcement measures taken by the Armed Forces of Malta and the Malta Police Force (According to Chapter 425 of the National Legislation (Fisheries Conservation and Management) (Cap. 425), all members of the AFM and MPF are Fisheries Protection Officers (FPOs) for the purpose of the act);
- Irrespective of their length overall, all lampara vessels are fitted with a tracking system and are requested to complete a catch logbook in order to better monitor their fishing activity. In addition the fishing capacity in terms of GT and dimensions of the gear are not allowed to increase;
- Supervision at designated ports, and at the national fish market by the FPOs

These control measures are leading to a more stringent and effective control of the fishing activity carried out by the Maltese lampara fishing fleet. This ensures that the relevant EU and National regulations are observed.

8. Duration, monitoring and reporting of Lampara fishing Effort Adjustment Plan – Permanent Cessation Scheme

8.1 Duration

The duration of the present FEAP is set at 2013-2015, being consistent with the implementation of the EFF in Malta.

8.2 Monitoring

The Maltese authorities are fully committed to the approved management regime for the lampara fisheries in view of its risk of over exploitation, and its importance to the local fishing industry. The implementation of the Permanent Cessation Scheme shall be monitored using the tools offered by the European Fisheries Fund monitoring system, such as the reporting obligations in the main EC Regulation (annual implementation report and mid-term evaluation report), as well as regular meetings of the EFF Monitoring Committee.

The IB for EFF will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the grant schemes to be co-funded by the EFF. Site visits (on the spot controls) will be made to verify the consistency between submitted documents and actual works carried out. Controls will be put in place to ensure that all conditions linked to the permanent cessation of lampara fishing vessels are applied in a proper manner and the relative fishing licenses and gears are permanently decommissioned.

8.3 Reporting

According to the EFF Regulation 1198/2006 Article 67, by 30th June each year, the Managing Authority shall submit an annual report on the implementation of the Operational Programme to the Commission. This report will include the status vis-à-vis the implementation on the ground, and will include appropriate comments showing the actual reduction in the number of lampara licenses, the reduction of both the GT and the engine power (expressed in kW) from the Malta Fishing Register.

9. Other Measures

Other measures of reduction of fishing effort such as the reduction of fishing days, closed seasons etc., may be introduced in line with EC Regulations and National Legislation, as deemed appropriate.

10. Conclusion

The general objective of this FEAP is to adjust the fishing capacity of the Maltese registered lampara fishing fleet, and to manage the fishing effort in accordance with the aims of the Common Fisheries Policy, resulting in a more sustainable fishing sector.

The implementation of this Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan is expected to result in a reduction of fishing capacity of the Maltese lampara fishing fleet, as a result of the implementation of the permanent cessation scheme.

In this way, the Maltese authorities would be adjusting the lampara fishing capacity in order to achieve a stable and sustainable balance between fishing opportunities and fishing capacity, by reducing the GT and kW in the Maltese lampara fishing sector.

Annex I - **Detailed list of Lampara fishing vessels**

No.	FVR Number	Vessel Name	CFR Number	Vessel Length	Primary Engine Power KW	GT
1	MFA0012	Michelangelo	MLT00MFA0012	16.00	164.12	24.03
2	MFA0032	Ariete I	MLT00MFA0032	14.37	135.77	19.51
3	MFA0050	Joan of Arc	MLT00MFA0050	14.00	164.12	19.49
4	MFA0134	Lorenza Madre	MLT00MFA0134	20.00	164.12	70.21
5	MFA0163	Madonna tal-Karmnu	MLT00MFA0163	18.90	134.28	42.71
6	MFA0184	Gedeho	MLT00MFA0184	4.78	7.46	0.68
7	MFA0274	Anna Marie	MLT00MFA0274	14.10	134.28	14.81
8	MFA0306	Dolores	MLT00MFA0306	21.90	298.40	49.80
9	MFA0321	Ġużeppi	MLT00MFA0321	17.57	246.18	37.22
10	MFA0333	Elena I	MLT00MFA0333	19.66	286.90	46.01
11	MFA0512	Madonna tal-Aħrax I	MLT00MFA0512	11.97	201.42	9.78
12	MFA0515	Ta' Mattew	MLT00MFA0515	27.00	671.40	96.67
13	MFA1297	Indri	MLT00MFA1297	7.30	52.22	2.07
14	MFA7343	Carmena	MLT000001045	17.55	140.92	30.00

MINISTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

APPROVED by the Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change

Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan for Bottom Otter Trawl Fishery

Policy Development and Programme Implementation
6, MSDEC Offices,
Triq Ħal Qormi
Santa Venera

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Description of the Bottom otter trawl Fisheries in Malta (Fleet and Fishing Areas)

3. Conditions of the Bottom otter trawl

4. Legal Framework

5. Expected results in terms of fishing effort levels

6. Measures contemplated in the FEAP

7. Control measures and Expected results

8. Duration, monitoring and reporting of Bottom otter trawl Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan – Permanent Cessation Scheme

9. Duration, monitoring and reporting of Bottom otter trawl Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan – Temporary Cessation Measure

10. Other Measures

11. Conclusions

Annex I

Detailed list of Bottom otter trawl fishing vessels[1]

[1]Annex I is not being published online to ensure confidentiality of data. It may be reviewed at the offices of the Intermediate Body.

List of Abbreviations

AFM:	Armed Forces of Malta
CFP:	Common Fisheries Policy
EFF:	European Fisheries Fund
EU:	European Union
DFA:	Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
F:	Fishing mortality (index of the quantity of fish killed by fishing)
F0.1:	The fishing mortality (amount of fish killed) for the maximum sustainable harvest (highest production of fish). This is the target reference point for the fishery
Fmax:	The ultimate fishing mortality which can be supported by the fishery, beyond this point the fishery is over fishing the stock.
FEAP:	Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan
FMZ:	Fisheries Management Zone consisting of waters under Malta's jurisdiction
FPO:	Fisheries Protection Officer
FVR:	Fishing Vessels Register
GT:	Gross Tonnage
IB:	Intermediate Body for European Fisheries Fund
kW:	Kilowatts
LOA:	Length overall
MFA:	Registration in Fishing Vessels Registry denoting Commercial Full-Time vessels
MFB:	Registration in Fishing Vessels Registry denoting Commercial Part-Time vessels
MPF:	Malta Police Force
NM:	Nautical Mile
SCSA	Subcommittee on Stock Assessment
VMS:	Vessels Monitoring System

1. Introduction

This Fisheries Effort Adjustment Plan (FEAP) defines the actions that the Maltese fisheries administration intends to take to implement measures aimed for the reduction of the Maltese bottom otter trawler fleet.

In particular, it will execute the measures defined and described in the Maltese Fisheries Management Plan for bottom otter trawlers as per article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) 1967/2006 through the Implementation and Enforcement of certain Fisheries Management Plans Order (LN354/13).

Additionally, it shall seek to follow the advice presented by the European Commission in Document 8506/15, whereby the Commission suggested a reduction in fishing effort to reduce fishing mortality for Deep-water pink shrimp and European Hake within GSAs 12-16 exerted by the fishing fleet by 25 %. This recommendation was based on the advice provided in the Scientific Committee Report (4-6 February 2015) whereby the stocks are considered to be over exploited and the management advice was to reduce the fishing mortality. To this end, this document shall be construed to be a FEAP in terms of Article 22 of EC 1198/2006 as well as the document establishing the plan for a national decommissioning scheme as per Article 21 (a) (vi) of the same regulation.

It presents the actions aimed to reduce Malta's bottom otter trawl fleet in order to achieve a more sustainable bottom otter trawl fishery sector within the 25-nautical miles Fisheries Management Zone and GSA 15.

2. Description of the bottom otter trawl Fisheries in Malta (Fleet and Fishing Areas)

2.1 The Maltese bottom otter trawl fleet

The Maltese bottom otter trawl fleet can be divided into two 'sub-fleets': one composed of vessels which are authorised to fish both within the FMZ and the high seas whilst second 'sub-fleet' of vessels which are legally restricted to operate on the high seas only.

As of 30 June 2015, the trawler fleet authorised to fish within the FMZ consists of eight (8) boats having an overall tonnage of 826.88 GT, a total main engine power of 2,548.82 kW This represents less than 2% of the number of vessels registered in the Commercial fishing register. The vessels in this fleet are on average 25.6m long, have an average tonnage of 158.2 GT and average engine power of over 412.79W.

While the trawler fleet authorised to fish on the high seas consists of nine (9) boats having an overall tonnage of 1800.14 GT, a total main engine power of 4525.82kW. One of these vessels has been re-assigned to another category during 2015.

Annex I contains a comprehensive list of all registered trawlers indicating whether they are licensed to fish within or without the FMZ.

In 2014, total trawler production amounted to almost 173.65 metric tonnes (with a market value of €1,821,540) which represents 7.24% of the total landings by weight and 11.83% of the sales value. For the same year the main species landed were: striped red mullet (*Mullus surmuletus*) - 17.8%, king prawns

(*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) - 14.4%, pink shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) - 12.1%, Mediterranean hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) - 9.2% and red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) - 6.9%.

2.2 Fishing Areas

The scope of the present document concerns the following fishing areas fished by the Maltese bottom otter trawl fisheries fleet:

- the FMZ; and,
- the high seas within the Mediterranean geographical Sub-Areas (GSAs) 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 where Maltese bottom-otter trawlers fish.

3. Conditions of the bottom otter trawl fishery (and stock)

Available landings data for the Maltese trawl fishery contains records of at least 128 different taxa.

An analysis of trends in total landings of important target species (giant red shrimp, pink shrimp, hake, red mullet and striped red mullet), compared to landings of all other species combined during 2006-2011, revealed that (1) landings of giant red shrimp remained relatively stable during 2006-2010 but increased in 2011, (2) pink shrimp and hake landings underwent several fluctuations during the six year period analysed, (3) landings of red mullet and striped red mullet combined, increased considerably during 2006-2008, and have been steadily decreasing since, and (4) there has been an important increase in the relative contribution to total landings by other species. The latter effect is due to an increase in landings of a variety of species, of which six were of particular importance during 2006-2011: common cuttlefish (*Sepia officinalis*), blue whiting (*Micromesistius pouassou*), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), common pandora (*Pagellus erythrinus*), golden shrimp (*Plesionika martia*) and unicorn octopus (*Scaergus unicirrhus*).

Stock assessments were carried out at a regional level. All of the stocks assessed were shown to be overexploited. For demersal species, the Maltese trawling fleet is overall catching the amount of fish expected under desirable fishing mortality rates. In addition, when taking into account the Maltese share of total landings made in the Central Mediterranean and for the demersal species, it is clear that any action taken by the Maltese authorities to address overexploitation in the area will not have an effect on the status of the stock.

Nevertheless, the same regional stock assessments indicate that while Malta is fishing the pink shrimp sustainably, the fleet is overexploiting stocks above $F_{0.1}$ levels - both for the giant red shrimp and hake.

4. Legal Framework

This bottom otter trawl Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan takes into consideration the following:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 of 21 December 2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea, amending Regulation (EEC) No 2847/93 and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1626/94The provisions of Articles 21, 22 and 23 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund;

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 498/2007 of 26 March 2007 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 on the European Fisheries Fund;
- Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of The European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC ;
- Implementation and Enforcement of certain Fisheries Management Plans Order (LN354/13)
- Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/2 on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom trawling fisheries on demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily, pending the development and adoption of a multiannual management plan

5. Expected results in terms of fishing effort levels

The bottom otter trawling fleet in 2011 had a combined GT of 3351 and 9501 kW. Within this fleet the capacity authorised to be used within the FMZ was equivalent to 1057.65 GT and 3701.1 kW.

The Management Plan for bottom otter trawlers adopted in 2013 by means of the Implementation and Enforcement of certain Fisheries Management Plans Order (LN354/13) in line with Article 19 of Council Regulation (EC) 1967/2006 established that the Maltese fisheries authorities would be reducing fishing effort through the introduction of a capacity reduction plan aiming at a precautionary 20% reduction in capacity and a reduction in effort by a further 10% through the introduction of a temporary cessation for the period spanning from 15 August to 15 September.

Since 2013, when the first version of the Fisheries Effort Adjustment Plan for the Bottom Otter Trawl Fishery was published, four (4) vessels operating in the Fisheries Management Zone have been scrapped, resulting in a total reduction of 1152.28 kW and 230.77 GT. This represents a permanent reduction of 22% in terms of GT over the fleet capacity operational in 2011 in the Fisheries Management Zone. Another 9% reduction was achieved due to the suspension of the fishing licence of one of the trawlers as a result of a Court Order for the immobilisation of the vessel. The objectives of the Management Plan were deemed as achieved through the 2013 Permanent Cessation Scheme coupled with the suspension of one of the licences as a result of the immobilisation of the vessel in question by Court order. Further reductions were achieved as indicated in Table 1 below.

The following is a summary of the capacity reductions achieved since 2011 for the Maltese bottom otter trawl fleet:

Mechanism	Capacity reduction		
	No. of Vessels	kW	GT
2013 Permanent cessation Scheme	4	1,152.04	230.77
Suspension of fishing licence	1	410.00	95.00
Administrative procedure	1*	369.27	196.76
Voluntary temporary re-assignment	1*	470	95.77
Total	7	2,401.31	618.3

Table 1: Bottom Otter Trawler Fleet - Capacity reduction since 2011 (* denotes vessels operating on high seas)

Recommendation GFCM 39/2015/2, in Article 10 states that "CPCs that have introduced, since 2010, fishing capacity reduction measures or fishing effort restrictions, including through the establishment of spatio-temporal closures, shall be encouraged to ensure that such measures, or their effects, are maintained. If no such measure has been taken, the CPCs shall adopt them in their national management plans, by the end of 2015."

To date, the Maltese authorities have, through the Implementation and Enforcement of certain Fisheries Management Plans Order (LN354/13) adopted fishing capacity reduction measures within the FMZ but not within the rest of the GSAs 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

Accordingly, in line with the precautionary principle, noting pressures by the local bottom otter trawlers on the giant red shrimp and hake, in order to consolidate the capacity reductions within the FMZ whilst establishing a capacity reduction measures for the local bottom-otter trawling fleet operating on the high seas, Maltese authorities intend to achieve such a reduction in fishing capacity on a permanent basis as follows:

- An overall permanent reduction of the current bottom otter trawler fleet of at least 10% over the whole fleet active in 2011. This translates into a reduction of three (3) vessels (estimated equivalency of 379 GT and a power of 1010 kW). This reduction is to be apportioned as follows:
    - A 10% permanent reduction of the current fleet operating in the FMZ. This translates into at least 1 vessel (estimated equivalency of 88 GT* and a power of 184 kW);
    - An additional 7% reduction of the whole fleet which translates into a reduction of about 2 vessels from the entire fleet (estimated equivalency of 291 GT* and a power of 826 kW*)

* based on average values.

6. Measures contemplated in the FEAP

Measures for the adaptation of the community fishing fleet in our Fisheries Operational Programme include the permanent cessation of fishing activities under Priority Axis 1 of the European Fisheries Fund 2007 – 2013. The rationale for this measure is the sustainable utilisation of fisheries' resources and fleet management. Malta faces a number of challenges in terms of:

- Reaching a balance between fisheries resources and fishing capacity;
- An aging fishing fleet; and
- The seasonal nature of the fishing activity.

The general objective of this measure, which will be implemented in the framework of this Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan, is to adjust the fishing capacity of the Maltese registered bottom otter trawl fishing fleet, and to manage the fishing effort in accordance with the aims of the Common Fisheries Policy. The adjustment of fishing effort during period 2013-2015 will be achieved through:

- Reduction of a number of bottom otter trawl fishing permits within the fishing areas identified above;
- Permanent decommissioning of bottom otter trawl fishing vessels currently actively involved in the actual take up of wild fish stocks, are 5 years old or over and are in the MFA or MFB category;

The permanent cessation of fishing activities of a fishing vessel may be achieved only by:

- Scrapping of the fishing vessel;
- Reassignment under the flag of a Member State Registered in the Community for activities outside fishing activities;
- The reassignment of the vessel for the purpose of the creation of artificial reefs;

Other permanent cessation actions, apart from the ones mentioned above, unless planned for by other FEAPs, shall not be eligible for funding.

7. Control measures and expected results

The control measures employed by the Maltese authorities include:

- The maintenance of a database containing data relevant to the bottom otter trawl fishin fleet;
- Control and enforcement measures taken by the Armed Forces of Malta and the Malta Police Force (According to Chapter 425 of the National Legislation (Fisheries Conservation and Management Act) (Cap. 425), all members of the AFM and MPF are Fisheries Protection Officers (FPOs) for the purpose of the Act);
- A Vessel Monitoring system has been installed on all bottom otter trawler fishing vessels, providing 30 minute coverage of movements of all such vessels when engaged in this fishing activity;
- Supervision at designated ports, and at the national fish market by the FPOs

These control measures provide a stringent and effective control of the fishing activity carried out by the Maltese bottom otter trawl fishing fleet. This ensures that the relevant EU and National regulations are observed.

8. Duration, monitoring and reporting of bottom otter trawl fishing Effort Adjustment Plan – Permanent Cessation Scheme

8.1 Duration

The duration of the present FEAP is set at 2013-2015, being consistent with the implementation of the EFF in Malta.

8.2 Monitoring

The Maltese authorities are fully committed to the approved management regime for the bottom otter trawl fisheries in view of its risk of over exploitation, and its importance to the local fishing industry. The implementation of the Permanent Cessation Scheme shall be monitored using the tools offered by the European Fisheries Fund monitoring system, such as the reporting obligations in the main EU Regulation (annual implementation report and mid-term evaluation report), as well as regular meetings of the EFF Monitoring Committee.

The IB for EFF will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the grant schemes to be co-funded by the EFF. Site visits (on the spot controls) will be made to verify the consistency between submitted documents and actual works carried out. Controls will be put in place to ensure that all conditions linked to the permanent cessation of bottom otter trawl fishing vessels are applied in a proper manner and the relative fishing licenses and gears are permanently decommissioned.

8.3 Reporting

In line with Article 67 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund, by 30 June each year, the Managing Authority is obliged to submit an annual report on the implementation of the Operational Programme to the Commission. This report will include the status vis-à-vis the implementation on the ground, and will include appropriate comments showing the actual reduction in the number of bottom otter trawl licenses, the reduction of both the GT and the engine power (expressed in kW) from the Malta Fishing Register.

10. Other Measures

Other measures of reduction of fishing effort such as the reduction of fishing days, closed seasons etc., may be introduced in line with EU Regulations and National Legislation, as deemed appropriate.

11. Conclusion

The general objective of this FEAP is to adjust the fishing capacity of the Maltese registered bottom otter trawl fishing fleet, and to manage the fishing effort in accordance with the aims of the Common Fisheries Policy, resulting in a more sustainable fishing sector.

The implementation of this Fishing Effort Adjustment Plan is expected to result in a reduction of fishing capacity of the Maltese bottom otter trawl fishing fleet, as a result of the implementation of the permanent cessation measures. This will contribute to a reduction in negative environmental impacts.

In this way, we will adjust the bottom otter trawl fishing capacity in order to achieve a stable and sustainable balance between fishing opportunities and fishing capacity, by reducing the GT and kW in Malta's Bottom otter trawl fishing fleet.

Annex 1 - Detailed list of Bottom otter trawl fishing vessels active in 2015

CFR number	External Markings	Vessel Name	Gross Tonnage GT	Length over all LOA	Main Power kW	Zone of operation
MLT00MFA0047	MFA47	EOLO	54.72	19.3	185.01	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
MLT00MFA0081	MFA81	DEGRE	106.46	23.95	538	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
MLT00MFA0297	MFA297	HANNIBAL I	186.7	23.95	538	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
CYP000000780	MFA7197	STELLA DEL MARE II	85	23.7	184	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
MLT00MFA0309	MFA309	ZEUS	99.79	22.45	375.24	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
MLT00MFA0365	MFA365	ANGELA I	64	19.4	328.24	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
MLT000000406	MFA7082	LIBERTY V	95	23.9	410	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
MLT000000772	MFA6034	DIMITRA	145	23.4	447	FMZ/Strait of Sicily
CYP000000793	MFA6025	AGOSTINO PADRE	170	27.85	447.6	Strait of Sicily
IRL000I11129	MFA6035	SALVE REGINA	139.29	27.35	444.38	Strait of Sicily
MLT000000005	MFA31	MADONNA DI POMPEI	95.77	23.9	470	Strait of Sicily
MLT000000752	MFA6019	PADRE PIO II	280.08	23.85	448	Strait of Sicily
MLT000000773	MFA6033	ALEXANDRA I	165	23.9	448	Strait of Sicily
MLT000000806	MFA7101	DOLOREZITA	106	26.38	410.3	Strait of Sicily
MLT000000834	MFA6017	ROSNIK	300	35	447.6	Strait of Sicily
MLT00MFA0298	MFA298	MANWEL	225	32.8	514.74	Strait of Sicily
MLT00MFA0299	MFA299	SUNFISH	319	32.64	895.2	Strait of Sicily