

Strengthening regional cooperation in small scale and recreational fisheries data collection (FishPi)

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Abstract

Small scale and recreational fisheries (SSF and RFS) are important economic and social activities in many European inshore coastal areas. Despite their differences, these fisheries present analogies which justify a similar approach. They have reduced mobility, which makes them dependent on local and regional ecosystems, and focus their impact on coastal fish resources and habitats. Unlike large scale fisheries (LSF), official statistics are limited for SSF, and they are missing for RFS. Data on catches and effort are therefore dependent on sampling, which has traditionally hampered the understanding of these fisheries, and underestimated their impacts.

The CFP moves towards a regional approach in fisheries management, and FishPi is a European project aiming to strengthen regional coordination in fisheries data collection. For SSF and RFS, a plan for the design and implementation of a regional data collection scheme has been proposed, highlighting three key needs:

- The harmonization of data collection methodologies, to ensure that collected data can be merged and used at a regional level to fulfill end-user needs;
- The definition of the type of data to collect, distinguishing between core variables and additional variables defined regionally. Geospatial data collection, essential for Marine Spatial Planning, should be considered. The selection of relevant fisheries to sample should take into account, among other issues, the potential underestimation of statistics, species length structures (which may be different than for LSF), discards and by-catch rates
- A regional data base adapted to the specificities of SSF and RFS (i.e. transversal variables coming from sampling and not from a census).

Key words:

Small scale fisheries, recreational fisheries, regional coordination, data collection

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