

Management tools for small-scale fisheries in Europe: a review

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Summary

For decades, EU fishery policy has focused on large-scale fishing, disregarding small-scale fisheries (SSF), even though these are worth around 2 billion euros annually (25% of the revenue generated by EU fisheries), account for 80% of the EU fleet (approx. 85,000 vessels) and employ over 40% of EU fishers (90,000). Only recently SSF are gaining centre stage at the EU scale with the 2014 reform of the Common Fisheries Policy calling for, amongst other things, a move towards a differentiated management regime for SSF, increased participation of fishers in the decision-making process, and the implementation of co-management arrangements. However, there is a general lack of knowledge and data on SSF and its management. For these reasons, we conducted a literature review in order to assess which management tools are used to manage SSF in Europe, the factors influencing their performance using critical indicators, such as sustainable levels of biomass, number of employments, fishers' empowerment and acceptance of regulations. We found that management of SSF in Europe is done through input (mostly gear restrictions), output (mostly Territorial Use Rights for Fishing and TACs) and technical measures (mainly marine protected areas). Most tools employed are considered to be successful or partially successful. Results from this review can contribute to increase knowledge about SSF in Europe and help guide the selection of appropriate tools to increase the chances of successful SSF management at a time this sector is having its relevance increasingly recognized at the EU and global scales.