

The landing obligation in European small-scale fisheries

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the discard problem on small-scale fisheries (SSF) in Europe. The study combines a literature review, and qualitative and quantitative methods to provide new scientific evidence on the implications of the landing obligation on European SSF.

The literature review, of the peer-reviewed and grey literature, identified studies documenting the discard problem in SSFs in developed countries under different fisheries management tools. We combined the literature review with an online expert consultation which included the opinion of fisheries experts engaged in SSF globally (e.g. fisheries scientists, representatives from NGOs and fishers organizations) to collect detailed information on the current knowledge about discards in European SSFs. We have also used the case study of the Galician (NW Spain) gillnet fishery to analyse their attitudes and perceptions towards the technical measures which could contribute with the comply of the discard ban and the necessary capacity/technological adaptations would to be adopted by the owners of small-scale fishing vessels, including the affordability of setting up a separate storage area in their vessels, and the capability to handle the harvested catches on board.

Finally, we have used quantitative methods to carry out an impact assessment of the new policy under a maximum sustainable yield framework. The profits of the fleet under landing obligation were lower in short term and long term. The decrease was mainly derived from the loss of fishing opportunities of stocks not subject to TAC and quota system.

Keywords: Discards, Common Fisheries Policy, landing obligation, small-scale fisheries, Europe

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