



- Press release -

Solidarity with the men and women in Senegalese artisanal fisheries:

Mundus maris says NO to 56 licences for overfishing

A wide range of Senegalese artisanal fishing organisations expressed public outrage and concerns of having learned from the press and social networks that exchanges of letters took place between the Ministry of Fisheries and Maritime Economy and the GAIPES (a Grouping of Shipowners and Industrial Exporters of Senegal) in connection with ministerial promises of industrial fishing licenses and / or "Senegalisation" of 56, mainly Chinese, vessels for 12 files submitted to the Consultative Commission for the Award of Fishing Licences (CCALP). In fact, six Chinese tuna and shrimp boats are already sailing for Senegal and Guinea Bissau.

The organisations denounce the irregular process in full lockdown of the covid-19 crisis of wanting to force a remote agreement by the CCALP by a selective appeal to members, while it has been years since the Senegalese Government froze the issue of coastal demersal fishing licenses by Decree n° 5166 of August 08, 2006. To this was added the freezing of the registration of new artisanal canoes by decree n° 6397 of August 29, 2012. All these measures aim at reducing fishing effort in Senegalese waters. This has been considered excessive for years and is the main cause of the fall in catches since the 2000s as shown by research results of Senegalese and international researchers collaborating in the Sea Around Us (see graph below)¹.

These scientific catch reconstructions also show that, although the official catch recording has improved, a significant part of the extractions is not registered and therefore hides the extent of over-exploitation. This over-exploitation is strongly felt at the industrial level, but even more so among artisanal fishers and the entire value chain for small pelagics². As the Vice-President of *Mundus maris* in Senegal, Aliou Sall, says: "*Foreign industrialists often benefit from considerable public subsidies from their States. This increases the disadvantages of artisans in developing countries, although they work very hard. Stopping bad subsidies at the level of the World Trade Organization (WTO) is part of the solution together with the suppression of all types of new licenses.*"

By way of reminder, *Mundus maris* has been working in Senegal for years in support of an ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF), among other things, by producing a teaching kit for the FAO on the subject. More concretely, our organisation has contributed to the popularisation of the EAF in several primary and secondary schools, located in fishing communities. Likewise, we have organized several itinerant sessions to popularise the content of EAF among fishers and other actors in the value chain: micro fish sellers and fish mongers³. Echoing the results of research, we denounced since 2013 the fact that the Senegalese public budget loses significant amounts from illegal, unreported and unregulated catches, in particular by industrial vessels. Catch statistics about artisanal fisheries are

1 <https://www.seararoundus.org>

2 Bâ, A., J.Schmidt, M. Dème, K. Lancker, C. Chaboud, P. Cury, D. Thiao, M. Diouf, P. Brehmer, 2017. Profitability and economic drivers of small pelagic fisheries in West Africa: A twenty year perspective. *Marine Policy*, 67:152-158.

3 <https://www.mundusmaris.org/index.php/en/projects/proj2013/673-fishmongers>

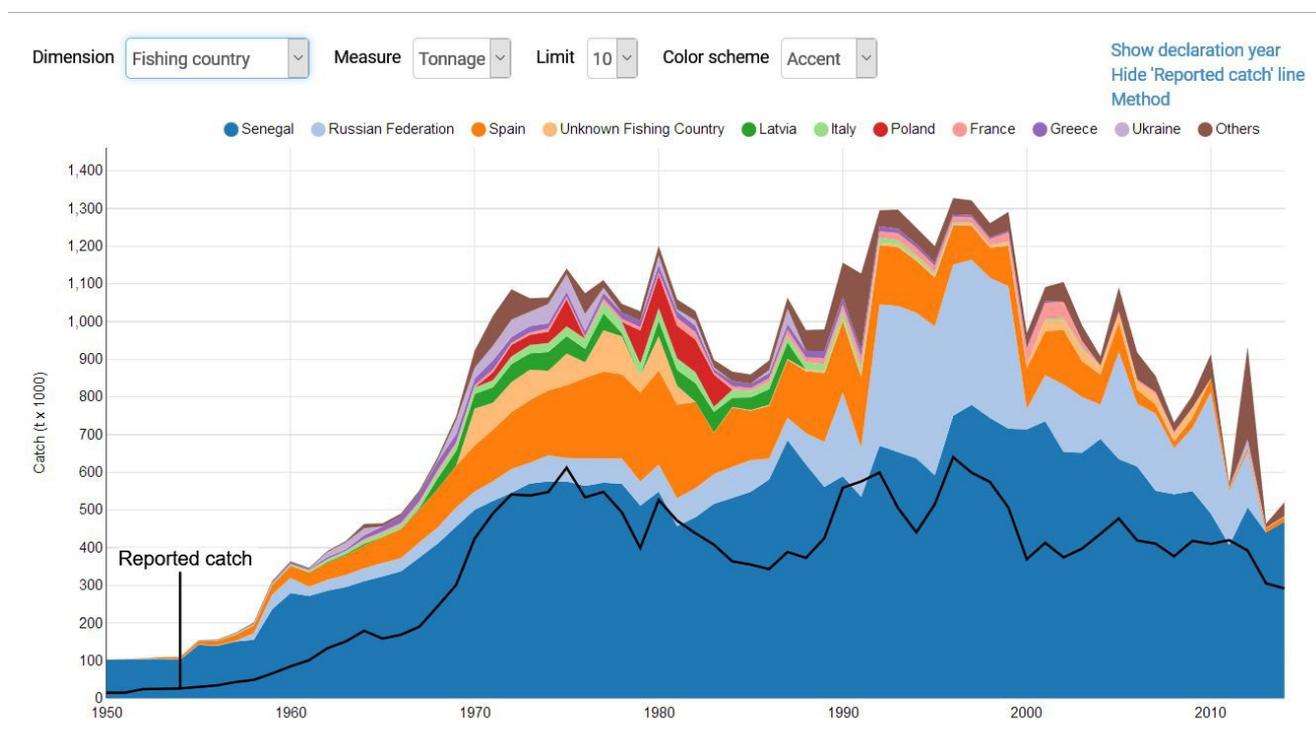
also incomplete and deserve a clear improvement to better appreciate their importance.

At the end of 2018, in the presence of men and women from all fishing sectors and regions of Senegal, we inaugurated the Small-Scale Fisheries Academy in the premises of the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) in its West Africa regional office in Dakar.

The aim of this academy is to strengthen the planning and sustainable management capacities of individuals and communities in order to contribute to the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for ensuring sustainable small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication (SSF Guidelines)⁴. The academy is intended as a space for free and respectful exchange, common learning and co-production of knowledge shared by a wide range of people and organisations wishing to promote social and technological innovation if necessary for prosperous and sustainable artisanal fishing.

We here express our firm support for the demands of the women and men in the artisanal fisheries aiming at transparency, a better management of resources for the benefit of the populations, and at renouncing the granting of other licenses for the already fully exploited or over-exploited resources irrespective of vessels flying a foreign flag or being "senegalised". We share the opinion of professionals that this is a crisis deserving of special attention from the President of the Republic.

The space of the academy can be used for seeking long-term solutions. *Mundus maris* is interested in any collaboration contributing to the protection and sustainable management of the country's resources for the populations.



Dakar, May 11, 2020. For more information contact : info@mundusmaris.org

4 <https://www.mundusmaris.org/index.php/en/projects/2018/2077-ssf-dkr-en>