



More fish for tomorrow

Contribution

Negotiation of Protocol to the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement

European Union (EU) - Senegal

Priorities of artisanal fishing



As negotiations are currently resuming between the European Union and Senegal, representatives of artisanal fisheries organisations are highlighting their priorities.

These were discussed in a concerted way with their Gambian and Mauritanian colleagues last January¹. Indeed, artisanal fisheries professionals in these three countries are advocating a concerted approach to the negotiations, given the regional dimension of a number of issues addressed in the negotiations between the EU and their respective countries. The fact that negotiations between the EU and Senegal, on the one hand, and the EU and Mauritania, on the other, are taking place during the same period² is an opportunity to move towards a concerted vision of the partnership agreements between the two countries and the EU.

The priorities of Senegalese artisanal fisheries professionals include:

1- With regard to resources access:

➤ **Access to small pelagic**

With regard to the existing protocols, it is very positive that the EU pelagic trawlers fleets do not have access to small pelagic trawlers in Senegal.

If the Protocol is to be renewed in 2019, it is important to maintain this achievement, which should apply to all foreign fleets.

However, the greatest concern for small pelagic remains that access to sardinella and horse mackerel is allocated in Mauritania to foreign fleets, particularly those of the EU, Russia, Turkey, China (Poly Hondone) in the absence of a regional management framework, while stocks of sardinella and horse mackerel are considered to be overexploited. It is important for

¹ On the 23rd and 24th of January 2019, the African Confederation of Artisanal Fisheries Organisations (CAOPA) organized in M'Bour (Senegal) a workshop for a concerted approach to the negotiations of fisheries agreements in 2019 between the EU, Senegal and Mauritania. The workshop brought together nearly twenty participants: representatives of national artisanal fisheries organisations from Mauritania and Senegal, as well as professionals, men and women from Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire, who shared their experiences with fisheries agreements. The IMROP Research Institute was also represented, as well as CAOPA's partners, such as CAPE. After the two days of discussions, a series of priorities were identified for the negotiations.

² The current protocol between the EU and Senegal will expire on 19 November 2019, and the current protocol between the EU and Mauritania will expire on the 15th of November 2019. Discussions for renewal will therefore be held at the same time, although the recent elections in Mauritania indicate that the current EU-Mauritania protocol may be prolonged.

EU to promote concretely the regional management of these resources, as the SRFC has also been advocating for years.

The first step, which the EU must support in the context of partnerships with Senegal and Mauritania, is to improve research on small pelagic³, and to develop, with adequate financial and human resources, an intensive cooperation between research institutes: this cooperation should include dialogue between researchers and people in the fishing sector, especially artisanal fisheries, to take into account their empirical knowledge, and also to improve data on local fishing effort and catch. In addition, given their importance, the social, economic and food security aspects of the exploitation of these resources should also be studied.

Secondly, the negotiations with Senegal and Mauritania also provide an opportunity to support consultation between these countries to set catch limits and share these catches. Indeed, even if management proposals have been made by the SRFC, even if both Senegal and Mauritania have ratified the Convention on Minimum Access Conditions of the SRFC, which calls for this concerted management of shared stocks, nothing concretely exists today in this regard⁴.

The explosion of fishmeal factories in Senegal, as well as in Mauritania and Gambia, is a disaster for coastal communities that depend on fish. This uncontrolled development continues to favour a high demand for small pelagic, especially sardinella⁵.

At a workshop held in Senegal in June 2019, organized by APRAPAM in collaboration with CAOPA, representatives of the artisanal fishing sector in the region called for the definitive closure of the existing fish meal factories. Women processors in particular denounced the competition they face with fish meal factories for fish access. Then, the NGO Greenpeace

³ As for the CRODT, we have been informed that this research institute has not received the funds allocated to it in Senegal's State budget since 2015. This situation is not acceptable if the EU considers that the CRODT is the Senegalese reference point for fisheries research in the context of the partnership for sustainable fisheries with Senegal.

⁴ At the PO meeting in Mbour, it was proposed to relaunch the NPF/CONIPAS Joint Commission, active between 2008 and 2011, to jointly promote this concerted approach at the level of their respective governments. It was also suggested that such a joint commission between Senegalese and Gambian professionals should be set up.

⁵ The Mauritanian government's recent decision to limit the quantity of round sardinella intended for flour to 10,000 tons per plant/year (which will be gradually reduced in the coming years) is far from being a sufficient measure. On this point, see <https://cape-cffa.squarespace.com/new-blog/2018/10/15/round-sardinella-key-for-food-security-in-west-africa-is-further-declining>

published a report⁶ supporting this request from professionals. Demonstrations by professionals against the location of fish meal factories are still taking place in Senegal, Mauritania and the Gambia.

As the EU's partnership agreements want to be based on the promotion of sustainable resource management and food security, it is important for the development of fish meal factories, which negatively affects resource conservation and food security, to be addressed in the negotiations.

➤ **Access to hake**

The black hake stock is now considered by CECAF as a shared resource between Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and Gambia. Recent FAO figures indicate overexploitation: 17,000 tons of catches throughout the sub-region with a potential of 10,900 tons.

In Mauritania, a particular problem is that by-catches of hake by other demersal and pelagic fishing vessels reach or even exceed targeted catches of hake.

Since this species is one of the resources covered by the protocols with Senegal and Mauritania (and Gambia and Morocco), the EU must put in place, as part of the negotiations, a strategy to promote the sustainable exploitation of this resource.

In Senegal, local fishermen are concerned about the possible competition with the Cayar seasonal hake fishery, and are asking for guaranteed protection of their activity in relation to these trawlers.

By-catches (7% cephalopods, 7% crustaceans, and 15% other deep-sea demersal fish) are attractive to the two European trawlers involved in this fishery, given their high commercial value. However, these species are also harvested by the artisanal fishermen, and we therefore ask to limit them as much as possible.

➤ **Development of an artisanal tuna fishery**

Although Senegalese artisanal fleets do not target offshore tunas, artisanal fishing catches a limited quantity of tuna, and several canoes in Dakar are trying to specialize in catching these

⁶ 6 Greenpeace, Press release and report, June 19, 2019
<https://www.greenpeace.org/africa/fr/communiqués-de-presse/7229/greenpeace-lindustrie-de-la-farine-de-poisson-detourne-la-nourriture-et-les-moyens-de-subsistance-de-lafrique-de-louest/>

resources. The organizations of the sector believe that it would be important to see the possibilities of developing an artisanal tuna fishery in the coming years.

The EU should encourage discussions at regional level on the development of an artisanal tuna fishery as is the case in Ghana, and encourage Senegal to submit sustainable development plans for such a fishery to ICCAT.

Senegal should also fight against the negative effects of bait boat fishing: there is a strong exploitation of sardinella juveniles in Dakar, which is detrimental to the stock of small pelagic fish.

2- Sectoral support

The main problem is the lack of transparency in the choices for the allocation and use of sectoral support resources: it has already been reported that research has not benefited from these resources since 2015. The countries' annual reports for the European Union are not made public, and actions undertaken with the money from sectoral support are not identified as such. These problems must be addressed if the partnership agreement protocols are renewed in 2019.

There is no consultation with coastal communities either, even when artisanal fishing is listed as a beneficiary of sectoral support: the actions carried out do not meet the aspirations of these communities.

Even if the amounts of sectoral support are modest, especially in the case of an essentially tuna agreement such as Senegal, they can still support key actions for the development of the sector, such as what will be done in Côte d'Ivoire (strengthening a credit system for women) or in Mauritania (support for the construction of an artisanal port).

3- Creation of joint ventures

In the future, European private investment, including through the setting-up of joint ventures, is expected to play an important role in the future EU-Africa partnership. Currently, the protocol with Senegal already encourages the creation of joint ventures.

The EU's fisheries partnership negotiations with Senegal provide an opportunity to launch a public dialogue, including their respective fisheries sectors, including artisanal fisheries, and civil society to define a legal framework to ensure that joint ventures contribute to the development of sustainable fisheries.

This framework should be based on a set of principles to ensure that joint ventures operate in a transparent manner; do not compete with local artisanal fisheries; and are in line with sustainable fisheries development objectives.

This legal framework should ensure that joint ventures in the fisheries sector in Senegal contribute to economic, social and ecosystem conservation; respect the fundamental rights of those affected by such investments; encourage training and job creation, in particular for women and young people in the sector; and do not benefit from any dispensations or exemptions regarding compliance with fisheries, environment, health, labour and tax laws, etc. The framework should also ensure that they are in a position to ensure that they do respect the laws of the country in which they are based.

Any future investment through a joint venture should be based on a comprehensive assessment of local technical, environmental, economic and social conditions, the details of which will be made public. An assessment of existing joint ventures should be made on these aspects, as many of them operate in an opaque manner and do not contribute to a sustainable fisheries sector.

4- Transparency/Information/Participation

The situation remains unsatisfactory as regards knowledge of the overall fishing effort. The inclusion of the article on transparency in the last protocol with Mauritania is a positive step⁷, which should be generalised in the protocols with other countries, including Senegal.

At EU level, many efforts have been made to ensure transparency, with the texts of the protocols and joint scientific committees now available. An improvement would be to publish the reports of the joint commissions, as well as the annual reports of the partner countries on the implementation of sectoral support.

In Senegal, a serious assessment involving all the actors must be carried out as the Protocol Agreements are nearing their term: this will require the setting up of a committee to monitor the execution of these Protocol Agreements.

5- The embarkation of sailors

The embarkation of sailors on board European vessels is in itself positive, but should be linked to an obligation to train these sailors (training in fishing techniques, but also in safety

⁷ However, it must be acknowledged that even now, for example, the information on the various agreements signed by Mauritania with foreign entities has not yet been published.

on board, etc.). Artisanal fisheries actors are concerned about the decline in the resources allocated to monitoring, especially the number of observers.

On the other hand, it should be noted that Senegal has ratified ILO Convention C 188 on Work in Fishing, and that this Convention will enter into force in Senegal on 21 September 2019. The objective of this Convention is to ensure that fishermen, industrialists and artisanal fishermen enjoy decent conditions for working on board fishing vessels with regard to minimum requirements for work on board, conditions of service, housing and food, protection of safety and health at work, medical care and social security. These aspects are also part of the social sustainability of fisheries.

It would therefore be important for discussions between the EU and Senegal on a sustainable fisheries partnership to address the issue of support for Senegal's implementation of this Convention.

