

Mozambique Strengthens Commitment to Combat IUU Fishing

By FINSA reporter

18 March 2021



It has taken many years but now the government of Mozambique has formally endorsed a two-year plan to strengthen capacity to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Do you remember the story of the notorious fugitive toothfish poached that escaped detention in Maputo Bay, Mozambique in April 2018? Then three weeks later after an incredible [three-week trans-Indian Ocean chase](#) involving Sea Shepherd and INTERPOL, the Indonesian navy intercepted F/V STS-50.

This is just one example of how important it is that there is transparency of fishing vessel monitoring data in ports systems that rapidly leads to understanding a vessel's activity. [Port State Measures, Africa Works to Curb IUU Fishing](#)

Technical assistance

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has prepared the plan and will provide the Mozambican authorities with help in the form of technical assistance to implement the [FAO Port State Measures Agreement to](#)

Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA).

The work plan extends to complementary international instruments. This includes a review of the Fisheries Policy and legal framework to facilitate implementation of the Mozambican Fisheries Regulations (REPMAR), in force since January 2021.

Other areas of focus are:

- the review and implementation of the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Policy and Strategy including though databases of entry and exit from the Mozambican Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and electronic logbook;
- the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in line with the requirements of the PSMA;
- the design of an inter-agency mechanism of cooperation and coordination to combat IUU fishing;
- and training on port inspections, on the implementation of the SOP and enforcement.

Making changes

Although Mozambique first became a Party to the PSMA in 2009, it has only been since 2014 that the country has been working at strengthening its policy, legal, and operational frameworks.

Mozambique Security Threats Impact Fishing

The country is now positioned to take concrete actions where a foreign vessel seeking entry into its port is suspected of involvement in IUU fishing.

According to the Minister of Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries of Mozambique, Augusta de Fátima Charifo Maita, more than 60% of the country's population

depends heavily on the sea as its main source of subsistence, with fishing a key area for Mozambique.

Mozambique Marine Species Protection Welcomed

“By its nature, the Indian Ocean is a place of abundant fishing resources that sustain a thriving fishing industry whose commercial value makes the region one of the main targets of IUU fishing, hence technical assistance. FAO’s role is paramount for the region,” he said.

.....