



European
Commission

STORY OF THE MONTH

SUPPORTED BY **Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs)**

The octopus pots in Senegal



GENERAL INFORMATION

Country:
Senegal

SFPA measure:
Sectoral support

Keywords:

- Octopus
- Clay pots
- Artisanal fisheries
- Support to women

Framework agreement 2014 2019:

Entered into force on 20 November 2014 and can be tacitly renewed for additional periods of 5 years.

Protocol 2019 2024:

Renewed and implemented since 19 November 2019.

Operation description

Under the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Senegal, 15,000 octopus clay pots were submerged this year in Senegalese local waters to form artificial reefs and a habitat for octopus to reproduce. The clay pots were made by women living in villages near Mbour, like Nguéniene. The immersion of octopus clay pots is part of the support for small-scale fishing under the SFPA. Irène Mingasson, Ambassador for the EU to the Republic of Senegal, officially launched this year's immersion of the clay pots on 12 September 2019 in Guéréo, near Dakar.

The artificial breeding beds provided by the clay pots increased the production of octopus considerably since the practice started in 2006. This generates significant revenues at community level which benefit the local woman making the clay pots, the artisanal fishermen and -women who have a high value and abundant octopus stock to fish from, and the local fish merchants selling to octopus. Hence, the octopus pots not only preserve and restore the ecosystem and increase the octopus biomass but they also support the local artisanal fisheries by maintaining an economically viable activity.





INTRODUCTION OF THE BENEFICIARY

Beneficiary name:

CLPA: Local Communities of Fishermen

Objective:

Sustainable management of octopus and enabling of local communities

Where is the organisation located?

La Petite Côte, Senegal

Further details:

<https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements/senegal>



BUDGET

Total financial contribution:

Decreasing €1,808,000 to €1,668,000 per year over 5 years

Sectoral support for the fisheries sector:

€750,000/year

Production of the clay pots by local women

The immersion of the octopus pots started in 2006 with the fishermen of Mbour as a local initiative. Initially 500 clay pots were submerged. Overtime, more coastal communities, including Joal, North Sindhia and South Sindhia, started submerging pots locally.

Local women make the clay pots based on traditional knowledge passed on through generations. Women who have inherited the knowledge from their grandmothers passed it on to the other women in the communities. The work is done under rudimentary conditions and sometimes without pre-financing. The raw material for the pots are crushed clay and limestone. One person can approximately produce 10 to 20 pots a day. With the production of the clay pots, the women not only revitalize the octopus fishing, but are also better able to support their families.

However, the production of the clay pots is not a permanent activity spread over the year as the women would wish. The women only work during the dry season. In order to multiply their sources of income, they produce other accessories to sell in the local and sub-regional market, such as censers and couscoussiers.

Scientific background

The common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*) is a highly valuable fisheries resource that sells at high price on the international market, such as in Japan and Europe. Octopus fisheries is therefore a significant source of income for Senegalese fishermen. The species lives near the shore on the seafloor in different habitats such as rocks, coral reefs and grass beds.

The idea of octopus pots originates from Japan and the experience was passed on to the Senegalese. However, the idea of using clay instead of plastic pots is a Senegalese modification and allows for a non-polluting way of promoting an increase in octopus biomass and the management of fisheries resources. Overtime, the clay pots naturally dissolve and they have to be replaced annually. With the creation of a suitable habitat for octopus, other species such as squid, cuttlefish and their symbionts will also increase, which will have a positive effect on the entire ecosystem.

SFPA with Senegal

The SFPA with Senegal (2014–2019) and the new implementing Protocol (2019–2024) allow access for EU fishing vessels to Senegal's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to fish for tuna and a limited amount of demersal species like black hake. In return, the EU pays for access rights and further financially contributes to the sustainable development of the fisheries sector in the partner country and the enhancement of their overall fisheries governance capacity (surveillance and control, fight against illegal fishing, scientific capacity etc.). Moreover, to support local employment, the protocol foresees that Senegalese sailors aboard European ships make up more than a quarter of the sailors.

Conservation measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), which is the competent regional organisation, have to be respected.

The clay pot project is one of the activities carried out in the SFPA framework to create artificial reefs. Another action consists in immersing old and clean fishing vessels off the Dakar Peninsula.

Outlook

For the future, the president of the women's potters would like to acquire quality equipment for crushing limestone and clay, which is currently done in a traditional and artisanal way. Furthermore, a storage room to be able to store the pots and raw materials as well as an oven to cook the pots would be beneficial for the potters in order to work as much as possible during the dry season and to make the finished products available on demand and on time.

Operation sustainability and relevance

The EU has a network of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) in the Atlantic, the Indian and the Pacific Ocean. A SFPA builds on the principle of fishing for surplus stocks and focuses on resource conservation and environmental sustainability. It incorporates clauses concerning the respect for human rights.

International fisheries governance is a priority for the EU. Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) are a transparent, coherent and mutually beneficial tool that enhances fisheries governance for sustainable exploitation, fish supply and development of the fisheries sector in SFPA partner countries. Moreover, SFPAs help the EU build partnerships with third countries that go beyond the area of fisheries opening new perspectives for job creation, supporting wider economic links and activities, and contributing to address the causes of illegal immigration.

SFPAs are aligned with the EU's Common Fisheries Policy, which set the principles and objectives of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements. These are to ensure that fishing activities of EU vessels outside EU waters are based on the same principles and standards as those applicable under EU law. Furthermore, SFPAs contribute to ensuring efficient data collection, monitoring and surveillance measures.

The development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector is one of the Senegalese government's priorities, focusing especially on demersal stocks like octopus. The aim is to sustainably manage fisheries' resources in a participative and inclusive way.



Arnaud Appriou (*Chargé de mission* of the EU Delegation in Senegal) attends an official ceremony for the immersion of clay pots in Pointe Sarène near Mbour.

