



European
Commission



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Partner country:

Republic of Mauritius

Framework agreement (2014 - 2020):

Protocol (2017 - 2021)

Keywords:

- Small-scale fisheries
- Semi-industrial fisheries
- Sectoral support

STORY OF THE MONTH

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

Semi-industrial fishing boats in Mauritius

Operation description

Mauritius is a small island nation in the Indian Ocean about 2,000 kilometres off the southeast coast of Africa. The European Union (EU) and the Republic of Mauritius have developed a strong relationship in the fisheries sector through their Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA). Under the SFPA scheme, the EU provides support to the fisheries sector of developing nations. In Mauritius, fishing is a major industry and local production provides employment and income for the inhabitants of the coastal regions. Fish is the main source of protein in the local diet.

As part of the support provided by the SFPA, the EU granted financial assistance to purchase semi-industrial fishing vessels to two fishing cooperatives, Yéyé and Serenity. Investing in fishing gears needs to be managed well to ensure sustainable returns.

Yéyé Offshore Fishers Cooperative Society, composed of six fishers, acquired a semi-industrial fishing boat through a grant scheme. Judex Rampaul, the head of the cooperative, said: "*Access to semi-industrial fisheries is a rapid shift from family livelihood to business management*". The fishing boat measures 18 metres in length and was built in Sri Lanka by CeyNor Foundation in 2018. The boat can sail for two weeks without docking along the island's waters (Saint Brandon, Nazareth and Salha de Maya) with a crew of twelve fishers. The fishers use various fishing equipment such as fish traps, longlines, hook and line. Each trip can bring in total catches of up to six tons of fish. "*We want to succeed because we want to show that fishers can run a business as any other people in Mauritius. Serenity cooperative is the first example. We will follow up on it, and others will as well. We must change the mentality of our fisher folk!*" Judex Rampaul said.



INTRODUCTION OF THE BENEFICIARY

Beneficiary name:

Yéyé and Serenity fishermen cooperatives

Objective:

Technical assistance for purchasing canoes and semi-industrial boats

Where is the organisation located?

Port Louis, Mauritius

Further details:

<https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements/mauriti>
[US](#)



BUDGET

Total financial contribution:

€575,000 per year over 4 years

Sectoral support - fisheries sector:

€220,000

Sectoral support – development of blue economy

€135,000

In the Serenity fisherman cooperative, Mohamedally was the first beneficiary of the grant scheme in 2014. His boat, The Serenity, was also been built in Sri Lanka. After six years of navigation, Mohamedally bought a second fishing boat, which he decided to call The Renaissance. Mohamedally said: *"Managing a semi-industrial fishing boat is similar to running a business: strategic decisions can have immediate financial consequences. Our business plan must carefully estimate the running costs, such as fuel, ice and maintenance, and the trading aspects. This is a real challenge for fishers - to work with figures and not only with hooks!"* Another risk is buying a hull without safety equipment, such as the Automated Identification System (AIS), the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), very high frequency (VHF) radios or life rafts.



The SFPA also provide support for the purchase of small fiberglass boats for the artisanal fishers. Jacques-Henri Desmarais is a small-scale fisherman who was selected to attend a duty training course in Italy under the EU circular migration framework. Back in Mauritius, he opened a fish shop in 2016, using EU funds. *"Then I applied for the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement grant scheme and received the initial subsidy for buying a fishing boat which I equipped with a GPS and an echo sounder. I can now fish up to the 12 nautical mile zone."* He also trains other fishers and they all supply the restaurants with fresh fish while his wife manages a fish shop. *"This success is not only mine; it is also my wife and my daughter's success. She recently graduated from higher education;"* Jacques-Henri says, adding: *"I am more than a fisherman: I am an entrepreneur"*.

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) with Mauritius

The agreement with Mauritius (2014–2020) and the implementing Protocol (2017–2021) grant EU fishing vessels access to Mauritius' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Together with the SFPA with the Seychelles, it is part of a network of Agreements in the Indian Ocean giving EU vessels access to waters where tropical tunas are abundant. Furthermore, conservation measures adopted by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), which is the competent regional organisation, have to be respected.

Operational sustainability and relevance

The EU's SFPAs network includes partner countries in the Atlantic, the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. The EU pays for access rights and 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.)... The SFPAs promote sustainability, with a number of safeguards focussing on social, environmental and economic protection:

- Building on the principles of fishing for surplus stocks and resource conservation
- Incorporating clauses safeguarding the respect for human rights.
- All EU vessels are subject to the same rules and level of control and transparency.

International fisheries governance is a priority for the EU. SFPAs are a transparent, coherent and mutually beneficial tool that enhances fisheries governance in terms of sustainable exploitation, fish supply and development of the fisheries sector in SFPAs partner countries. Moreover, SFPAs help the EU build partnerships beyond the mere scope of fisheries with third countries, opening new perspectives for job creation, supporting wider economic links and activities and contributing to address the causes of illegal immigration in other regions of the world.

SFPAs are also aligned with the EU's Common Fisheries Policy. Their goal is to ensure that EU fishing activities outside EU waters are based on the same principles and standards as those applicable under EU law. Another goal of the SFPAs is to support the establishment of a high quality governance framework, ensuring efficient data collection, monitoring and surveillance measures.