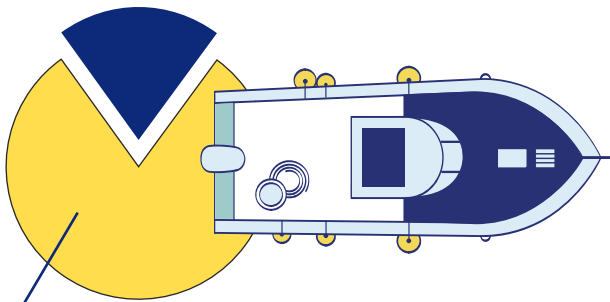


BlueMove



Facilitating access
to European subsidies
for sustainable
small-scale fisheries

Small-scale fishers' contribution



Small-scale fisheries (defined by the European Union as vessels <12 meters), represent more than 80% of the European fleet.

Environmental value

Passive gear fleets account for 17% of total CO₂ emissions (for 34% of production in value). Their pressure on the fish stocks is much lower.



Challenges to address

Overfishing and environmental change impact on fish habitats and stocks

Small-scale fishers are the first to experience the loss of biodiversity and suffer directly from the depletion of fish stocks. In some countries, invasive species such as the blue crab destroy fishing gear and kill valuable local species.

Social and economic viability

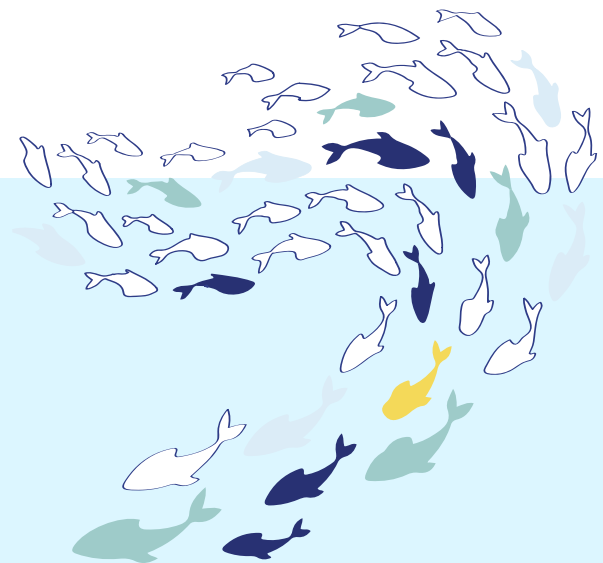
Rising energy prices are having a significant impact on the gross margin of companies, even though small boats consume less fuel per ton landed than pelagic or bottom trawlers. Most vessels are more than 30 years old. The fishers are also ageing, with young people showing little interest in the sector.

Economic value

Vessels <12 meters using passive gear generate 10 times more jobs per ton landed than industrial pelagic trawlers. Thirty-three per cent of total landings are produced by small-scale fisheries, which represents 37% of added value: fish are sold at a better price on average.

Cultural value and knowledge

Small-scale fishers are pillars of the culture, the economy and the social life in European coastal cities. They are also an uncountable source of ecological knowledge.



Bycatch of vulnerable species

More than half of accidental catches of sensitive species, marine mammals and birds in particular, are caused by inshore passive vessels.

Regulatory complexity and compliance burden

Digitalization can be analyzed as a burden and an opportunity to modernize the fleet and attract a new generation of small-scale fishers.

Leveraging European subsidies to finance their transition

The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) provides support to fishing organisations for developing innovative projects ensuring that aquatic and maritime resources are used sustainably to ensure:

- Food security
- Growth of a sustainable blue economy
- Healthy, safe and sustainably managed seas and oceans

However, very few small-scale fishers benefit directly from European aid.

The 'Time for a U-turn' report by French NGO Bloom indicates that the industrial bottom trawler fleet receives 5 times more subsidies per job than coastal vessels using passive gear, and twice as much per kilogram landed.

Lack of access to subsidies for SSFs is due to the complexity of applying for funding and the difficulty of providing up-front capital. In fact, EMFAF subsidies are only paid once the project is completed, and all expenses and invoices must be sent to the EMFAF authorities.

The time between the submission of the application and the final payment of the grant can take between 1 and 3 years.



There is scope for redirecting negative subsidies towards sustainable small-scale fishing projects.



BlueMove — Our assistance

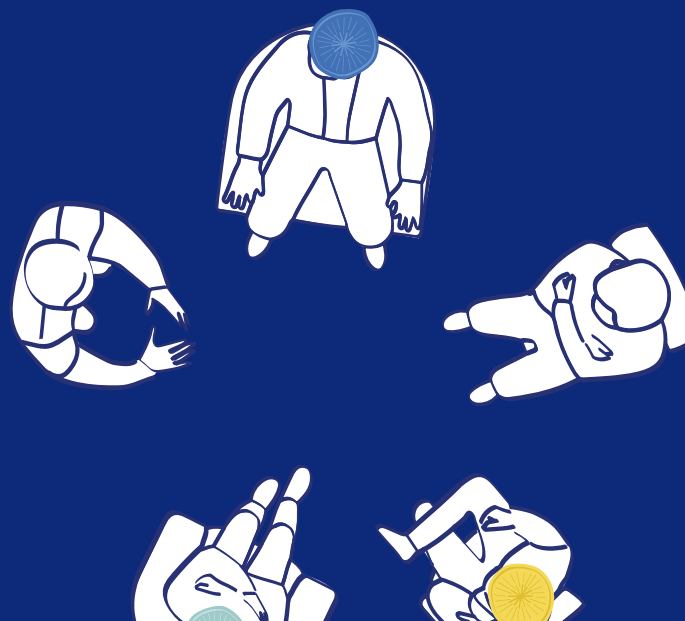
BlueMove is a non-profit organization initiated by BlueSeeds and the WWF in 2022. It aims to develop sustainable fishing practices by increasing the use of European funding for small-scale fishers in the Mediterranean. BlueMove offers:

Technical support

for the fisher to prepare a robust project proposal for submission to the EMFAF authorities

Pre-financing

thanks to partnerships with banks, in the form of micro-credits for the fisher to start the project before getting subsidised



Development

2021 - 2022

A pilot project led to 111 applications from fishers from Croatia, Greece, France and Italy. Thirty-seven eligible fishers were supported to increase their selectivity and their place in the value chain, raising €2.4 million in European subsidies.

2022 - Now

During the new EMFAF programming period 2021-2027, BlueMove started its activities in Croatia thanks to a collaboration with the WWF Adria, Ante Sladoljev as a technical assistant and the financial institution ZEF.

2023 - Now

Deployment was also initiated in Greece and Cyprus involving financial institutions, the EMFAF management authorities, NGOs and associations including the WWF, marking the first stages of BlueMove's activities in these two countries.

Success story



Antonio Divoje,
small-scale fisher
in Lastovo,
Croatia

I have successfully implemented two projects that I submitted to the EMFAF with the help of the WWF Adria.



With the grant, I improved the hydrodynamics of the vessel's hull by upgrading the bow part of the keel, installing spoilers and side fins, and by correcting the curvature of the stern part of the boat. I also installed an autopilot and solar cells. I have significantly improved the energy efficiency of the vessel, reduced fuel consumption, and therefore operating costs.

To improve safety, I modernized the complete cabin, together with electrical installations, windows and doors. I modernized the sanitary room, and I installed an anti-slip surface, as well as railings on the roof of the cabin and the deck.



BlueMove is a non-profit organisation. It has been granted approval under article 238 bis 4 of the French General Tax Code by the tax authorities, which allows to receive grants and provide financial assistance and support services to small and medium-sized enterprises in the small-scale fishing sector.

BlueMove

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