



How can digitalization support SSF management in compliance with EU rule of law

Small-scale fishers' perspectives, expectations and needs

*Fish X Conference
27 September, Brussels*

Who we are?



Uniting Small-scale Fishers across Europe to achieve fair fisheries, healthy seas and vibrant communities





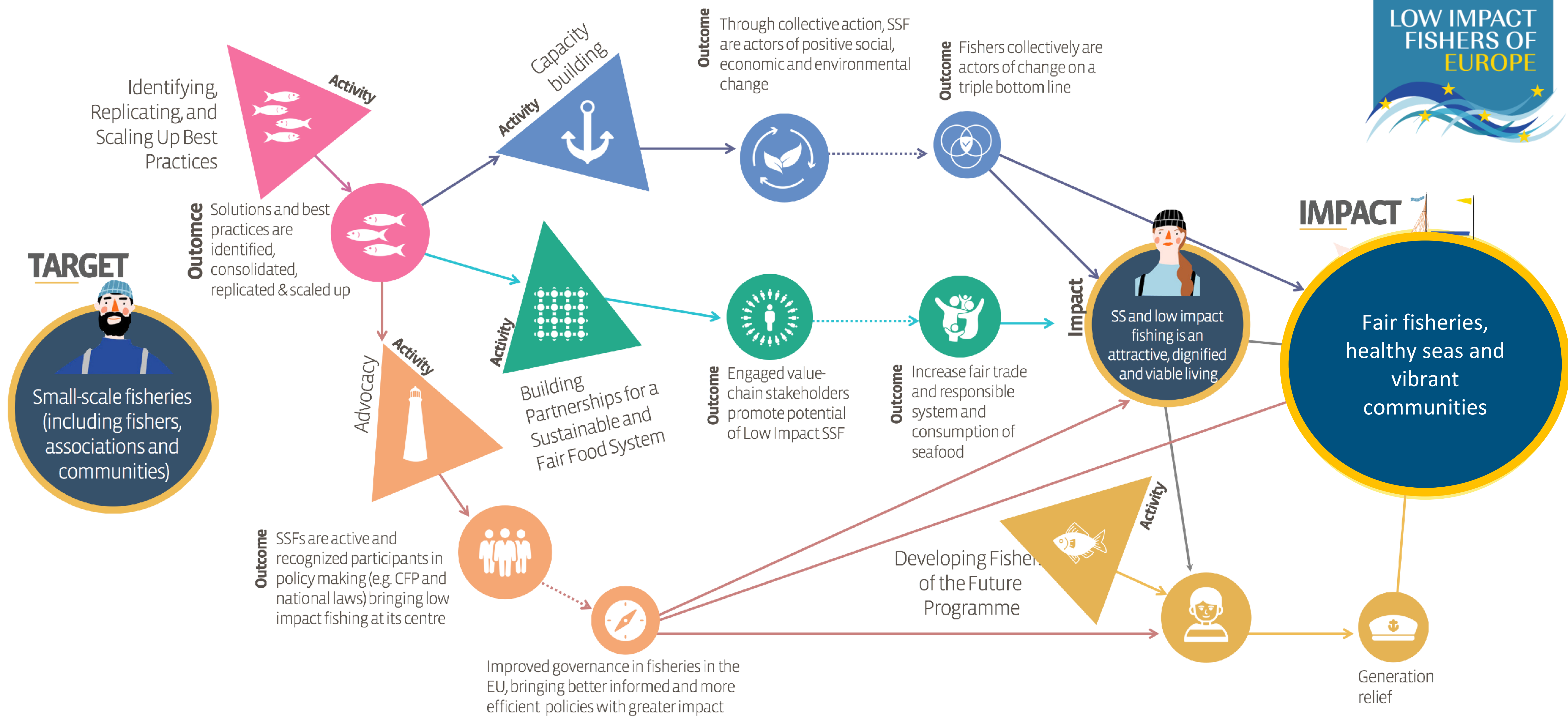
33 SSF organizations

15 Member States

10,000 Small-scale fishers

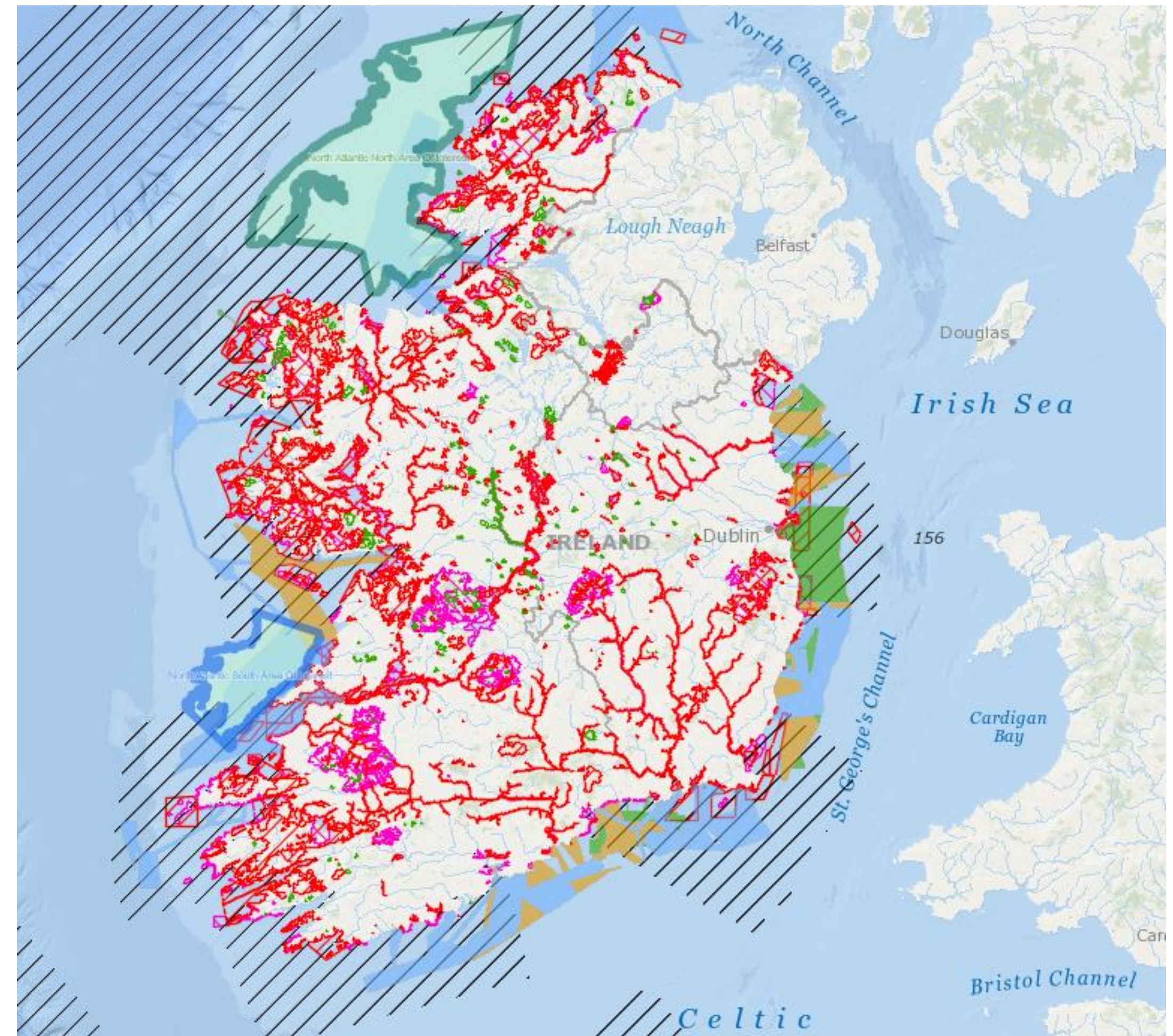
Elected board of Directors of SSF fishers, representing 3 basins

Secretariat- 3,5 membres of staff



OVERALL CONTEXT OF SSF

- **General lack of fish**
- Importance, role and benefits of SSF are hugely underestimated
- Represent 76% of the fleet, 50% of the employment but **only 5,8% of the catch**
- **Lack of visibility** with data gaps for small-scale fisheries
- Absence of evidence \neq Evidence of absence
- Article 17. **Invisible** in the allocation of fishing quotas and lack of access to markets
- **Potential displacement** against the Blue economy developments, offshore renewable energy, environmental designations MPS, etc.



CHALLENGES

- Fishers increasing age profile
- Decreasing Incomes
- Increasing administrative burden
- Lack of new entrants and generational renewal
- Safeguards needed to protect vulnerable communities and ways of life





ONE STEP CLOSER...

An **ambitious and holistic** control Regulation fit for the purpose of effective control **and enforcement** in both commercial and recreational fisheries is crucial for the proper functioning of the CFP.

Digitalization of the fisheries sector and **full traceability** of fishery and aquaculture products, and **combat IUU**

Awaiting the rubber stamp on it in the European Parliament plenary in October

PECH committee approves deal on new EU fishing control rules

Press Releases PECH 4 hours ago



Fisheries MEPs backed the results of the negotiation with the Council regarding the overhaul of EU fisheries control rules, to reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

The [preliminary agreement](#) on new EU fisheries control rules was approved with 20 votes in favour and 8 against in the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee on Tuesday.

The agreement foresees an obligation for masters to report catches via electronic logbook regardless the size of the boat. In case of boats with less than 12 meters, this report should be more simple through the use of a new tool and by reporting only once at the end of the fishing day, says the text. Processed products will also be traceable along the food chain after five years, on the basis of a study carried by the Commission.

To guarantee respect for the so-called [landing obligation](#), EU vessels of 18 meters or more that may pose a high risk of non-compliance will have to have on-board remote electronic monitoring (REM) systems, including closed-circuit television (CCTV). This should be put in place four years after the entry into force.

More details on the outcome of the negotiations between EP and Council is available [here](#).

Quote

"Today we are one step closer to the digitalisation of the fisheries sector and full traceability of fishery and aquaculture products. This regulation provides new tools and more flexibility that will make work easier for fishers, fully respecting the sustainability of marine resources. It was not easy and it took us time, but the result is that we have reached a balanced agreement and the best possible regulation" said the rapporteur [Clara Aquilera](#) (S&D) (FS)

A STEP FORWARD HAVING MORE RELIABLE DATA...

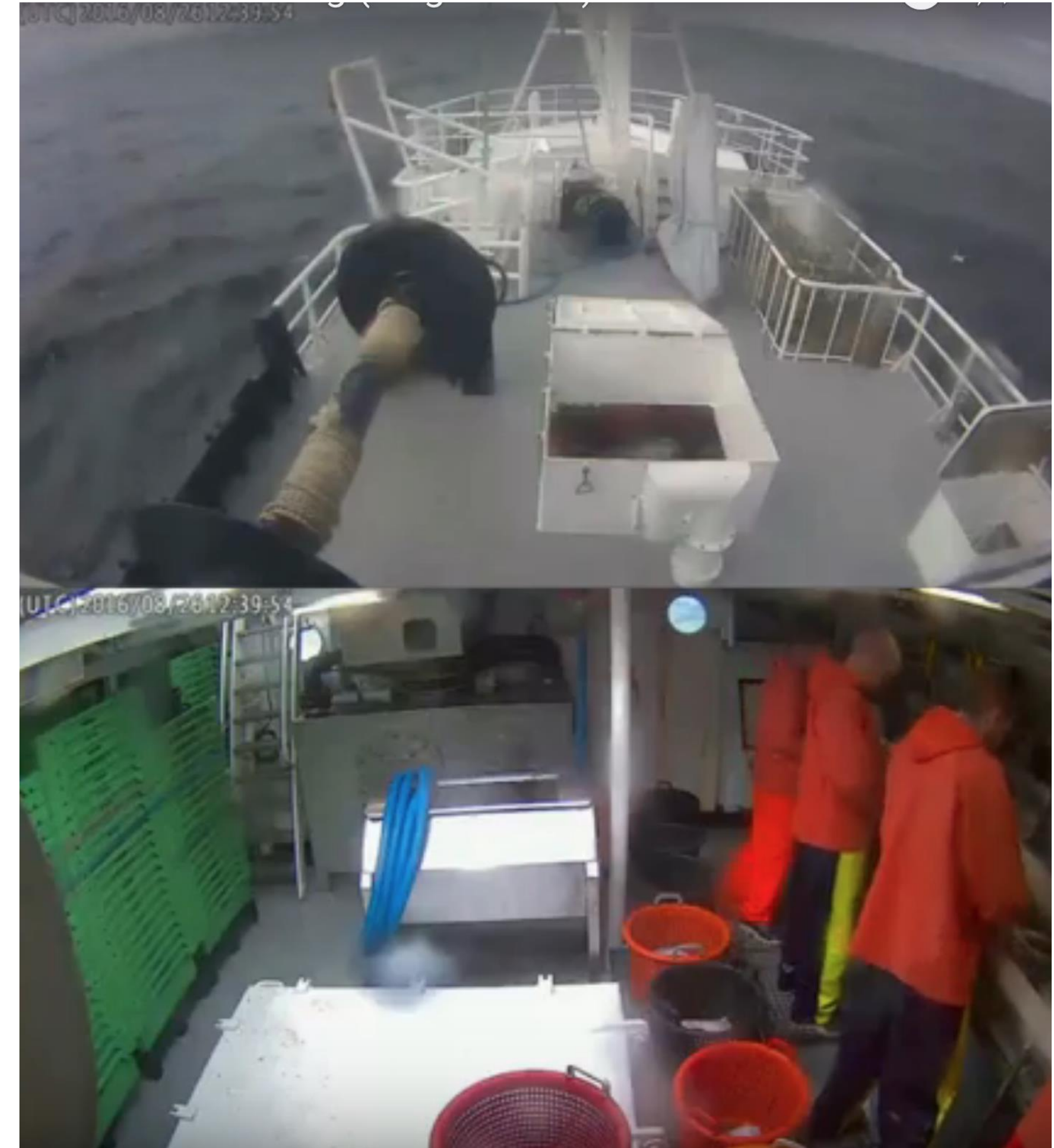


Holistic regulation - LIFE has called for the inclusion of recreational fisheries in the CFP and the Control Regulation (data collection and reporting of catches, serious infringements)

Increased monitoring & tracking of all vessels

- REM systems and CCTV (+18m)
- Systems to track the position of all vessels, incl SSF
- Electronic reporting for all vessels, irrespective of size

But cannot forget that implementation system used and approach is going to be **MS driven**.



...HOWEVER ENFORCEMENT OF EU LAW IS KEY



NGOs hope Dutch authority's court appearance could set EU precedent

ClientEarth and Low Impact Fishers of Europe are bringing the legal action have brought legal action against the Dutch Food and Consumer Safety Authority for not enforcing EU fisheries control laws

By Undercurrent News | Sept. 19, 2023 09:13 BST



📷 Dutch beam trawler. Credit: ClientEarth

- MS enforcement is still very poor
- Control with unequal treatment with unequal consequences

Enabling **fraud, huge quantities of illegal fish entering EU markets** and overfishing to keep happening with **impunity**

Huge consequences for the marine environment and future of SSF.

LIFES URGES EU AND MEMBER STATES

- **Digitalisation can be of support but cannot substitute MS enforcement** (more inspection, specially focus on those of higher impact)
- New control rules implementation must ensure **a level playing field across Europe** with **interoperability between different technologies** as standard

- **Initial period: More carrot and less of a stick policies in place**

Dialogue, bottom-up approach to CO-DEVELOP the electronic tools and electronic log books for SSF, including at sea trials and, training courses & financial support to SSF operators to install, maintain and use appropriate equipment. Lessons learned from the UK case study

- Take into account **aging sector** (measures to avoid expelling this part of the sector)
- **Specially on the fact that SSF will need to report catches BEFORE landing**

Details and mechanics on how this is going to be done and implications in fining.

- **Safeguards of data used** and how is organized, who can access it and how
- Make sure technology actually **reduces administrative burden and not increases it even more. Simple!**



THANK YOU



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***Fair Fisheries, Healthy Seas &
Vibrant Communities***