

A Collaborative Approach for a Responsive Fishery

As a result of the revised Common Fisheries Policy’s Landing Obligation, fishermen face new challenges in managing their fishery. Through innovative technical measures and flexible approaches to quota management, fishermen across Europe are working to adapt to the new framework.



David Stevens and his brother Alec are skippers of Newlyn-based vessel the ‘Crystal Sea’ in the United Kingdom. They work in a mixed fishery of 25 different species and have come to terms with the demands of the landing obligation through the UK ‘Catch quota Trial’ run by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), which involved experimenting with ways to work successfully under the discard ban.

The trial involved:

- The MMO awarding the Crystal Sea a small amount of **extra quota to enable flexibility**, and allowing David to **experiment with gear methods for improved selectivity**
- The Crystal Sea fully documenting their fishing activities with **onboard cameras**
- The Crystal Sea providing **data-based feedback** to policy makers and scientists

Outcomes included:

- An 87% **reduction in juvenile catch** and a **reduction in discarding to 2%**
- Addressing questions on why policy reform doesn’t match well with the realities of fishing on the water, as well as suggestions on to improve this
- Demonstrating the value of offering **incentives for industry to cooperate**, which enable important investments to be made in the fishery

- Highlighting the security that comes with a **longer term quota plan**
- Accelerating the process of **utilizing data for policy** and informing European and national policy and regulatory frameworks
- David inspiring other industry members to improve the long-term sustainability of their fisheries by tackling challenges presented by the landing obligation head on
- <http://www.seafoodchampions.org/category/2016-seafood-champion-awards/2016-seafood-champion-awards-finalists/>



In discussing his involvement in the Catch Quota Trial, David stressed that **full documentation** is not just about enforcement, but also about effective **real-time data collection**.

Gear experimentation

The crew of the Crystal Sea use a control net against which they test all modifications to measure their effectiveness. Cefas comes aboard once a year to test these methods independently. This year's improvement involved using an 'exciter' in the tunnel of the net below the SQMP square mesh panel, which entices more fish to escape.

About full documentation

"Member States shall ensure details and accurate documentation of all fishing trips and adequate capacity and means for the purpose of monitoring and compliance with the obligation to and all catches..."

Article 15(13) of the Common Fisheries Policy

A non-exhaustive list of options includes:

- Electronic Monitoring (EM) Systems
- On-board observers
- Electronic logbooks, at-sea weights and fish tickets
- Reference fleets

When selecting an appropriate monitoring system it is important to take into account factors such as the characteristics of the specific fishery, who will own the data, and how it will be shared and utilised. For more information and guidance please see Environmental Defense Fund's *EU Discard Reduction Manual* (<https://www.edf.org/oceans/eu-discard-reduction-manual>).

Environmental Defense Fund

<https://www.edf.org/europe>

@EDFOceans_Europe

+44 20 3310 5909

europe@edf.org

David Stevens

<http://crystalseafishing.co.uk>

@CrystalSeas118

Environmental Defense Fund

1st Floor Bank Chambers

6-10 Borough High Street

London

SE1 9QQ

T +44 203 310

5909

europe@edf.org

edf.org

New York, NY / Austin, TX / Bentonville, AR / Boston, MA / Boulder, CO / Raleigh, NC

Sacramento, CA / San Francisco, CA / Washington, DC / Beijing, China / La Paz, Mexico