



## Senegalese fishermen call for help against looting by foreign trawlers

 FAIR-FISH INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION · MONTAG, 27. APRIL 2020 · 3 MINUTEN  4 Mal gelesen

**The Fisheries Minister of the West African Republic of Senegal plans to issue 56 new fishing licences for Chinese trawlers. (1) This would be a sell-out of fish stocks which are already dangerously over-exploited. The domestic fishing industry is countering this with a nationwide campaign aimed at getting the President of the Republic to stop issuing licences. Senegalese fishermen and journalists are working on a video documentation of the problem, which is to be distributed through channels at home and abroad. fair-fish international supports this work with a starting contribution and asks for additional donations.**

Dozens of foreign fishing vessels are already making use of Senegal's fish stocks, including 38 from Europe alone, along with trawlers from Asian countries and Russia. The campaign of the Senegalese fishermen is not only directed against the new licences for Chinese trawlers, but also against the disorderly allocation to foreign fishing vessels in general.

Tens of thousands of local small-scale fishermen, but also the small local industrial fishing fleet, are increasingly running out of fish, and so the raw material for the artisanal fish processors and for the workers in the local fish factories is also becoming increasingly scarce. Fish is traditionally one of Senegal's most important products and has provided work and income for hundreds of thousands. If the fishermen return more and more often without fish, the only option left for them is to migrate to Europe to feed their families. (2)

Based on long-standing contacts on the spot (3) fair-fish international has decided to support the campaign of the Senegalese fishermen and especially the production and distribution of a video documentary in Senegal (among others on local television) and in Europe with an initial amount of 2.000 Euros. In order to be able to increase this first starting amount, we ask for donations.

Recipient: Association fair-fish.net, note: "Senegal", Bank: Postfinance, Berne  
Donations in Euro: IBAN = CH51 0900 0000 9136 2602 9, BIC = POFICHBEXX  
Donations in francs: IBAN = CH68 0900 0000 8503 8259 6, BIC = POFICHBEXX

### Fish stocks already severely overexploited

In 2012, the then Minister of Environment and Fisheries, Haidar el Ali, had pushed through the newly elected government to terminate all licences for foreign trawlers for deep-sea fishing, especially Russian vessels. The corrupt previous government had distributed the licences "just like that", and the money collected for this purpose disappeared somewhere, presumably in the Paris bank accounts of some ministers. (4)

Unfortunately, el Ali, a veteran of the Senegalese ecological movement, has resigned after just over a year as minister. He did not trust the new government either and preferred to continue his educational work from the outside to protect the environment and natural resources, as he had done in the past.

The situation of the local fishing industry will be made even more difficult from 2021 onwards by the exploitation of oil and gas deposits off the coast of one of the most important fishing areas in the north of the country, near Saint-Louis. Here, too, the Republic is selling off raw materials to foreign companies; the local population will once again see only the disadvantages of this.

### A combative fisheries and civil society

The Senegalese fishing industry, together with civil society, had already stood up to the government once before: In 2006, they broke the negotiations on the continuation of the old fisheries agreement with the EU when the latter refused to meet the demands of local fishermen. (5) The "Fisheries Partnership Agreement" between the EU and Senegal, signed in 2014, provides for a few improvements and, in particular, states to only use resources left over by local actors. (6) In doing so, the EU has to some extent responded to the demands of local fishermen. However, only a small proportion of industrial fishing in Senegalese waters is carried out by European vessels; the lion's share is taken by Asian trawlers—under much more ruthless conditions.

*Billo Heinzpeter Studer*

(1) <https://www.lequotidien.sn/delivrance-de-nouvelles-licences-les-pecheurs-de-saint-louis-dans-la-meme-barque-que-le-gaipes>

(2) <http://www.fair-fish.ch/aktuell/migration/>

(3) <http://www.fair-fish.ch/de/english/>

(4) <http://www.fair-fish.ch/blog/2012/05/07/senegal-entzieht-fanglizenzen/>

(5) <http://www.fair-fish.ch/wissen/politik/index2/>

(6) [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements/senegal\\_de](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements/senegal_de)