



European
Commission

STORY OF THE MONTH

SUPPORTED BY THE **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)**



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Member State:

Belgium

EMFF measure:

Marketing measures

Keywords:

- Sustainable Production
- Small scale fisheries
- Efficiency
- Marketing
- Training and Research

Operation phase III:

2016-2017



BUDGET

Total operation budget:

€243,464

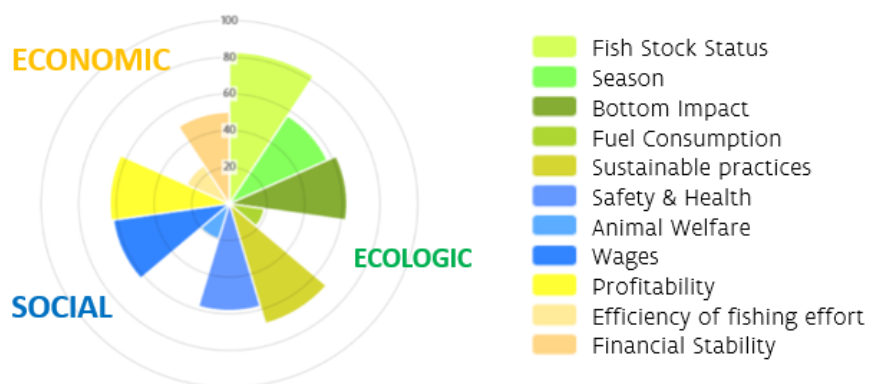
EU budget contribution:

€121,732

Operation description

The VALDUVIS tool was developed by the Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. It measures the environmental, social and economic sustainability of Belgian fisheries, providing a graphic representation of this information based on an evaluation of official electronic logbook data from the fishing vessel. This phase of the project was developed with an EU budget contribution from the EMFF of around €122,000, matched by equivalent national funding.

Aspects of the electronic logbook such as the type of gear, the catch area, the catch composition and the date of capture are analysed to produce a sustainability score for the fishing trip. Additional social and economic indicators are sourced from the National Bank. These are independent of the fishing trip but essential for sustainability calculation. The scores of the 11 indicators involved are visualised to indicate the sustainability of a particular fishing trip and its catch.



The VALDUVIS star visualisation shows the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the catch. The further the score along the radial, the better it is.



INTRODUCTION OF THE BENEFICIARY

Coordinating institute:

The Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO)

Further details:

<https://valduvis.be/>

VALDUVIS on Youtube

[Belgian fishers are evolving](#)

Background

The tool was developed through a series of scientific projects. The methodology to calculate sustainability scores according to trip-level information was developed in VALDUVIS I (2012-2014). This was tested in collaboration with four pilot vessels in the second phase of the project (2014-2015). An online platform (www.valduvis.be) was also developed, where vessel owners can consult their sustainability score. Now in its third phase (2016-2017), participation is expanded to more than 50 vessel owners, representing 80% of the Belgian fleet. This was followed by the establishment of a market recognition 'Visserij Verduurzaam' as a means of communication, led by the Rederscentrale Producer Organisation. The next phase of the project will look at how VALDUVIS could be used as a tool to inform consumers about seafood sustainability.

Outcome

- 80 % of the Belgian fleet using the tool.
- Improved collaboration between ILVO scientists and fishermen.
- Development of a voluntary programme to assist fishermen who want to improve their sustainability score. Vessel-specific plans to maximise the sustainability of their catch can be provided.
- Market recognition for participating vessels and additional leverage for those using the scheme to improve their score.

Stakeholder participation

Stakeholders representing several different viewpoints were involved from the start of the project. The tool was developed for a diverse group of users: fishers, fishing organisations, governments, researchers, fish processors and traders and, in the long term, even consumers. The preparation of a communication strategy was fundamental and needed to be tailored to these different end-users, so that information could be transmitted as clearly as possible.

Although the tool needs participation from the fishing fleet to be successful, this is easily achieved due to the useful resource it offers fishermen to become more efficient and improve their business.

The fishermen are guided in an improvement program and are obliged to have yearly meetings with scientists to discuss the indicators and steps to be taken. The strategy to improve sustainability is formulated by a local NGO in cooperation with the Producer Organisation and scientists.

Participation in VALDUVIS also further streamlines the collection of data from the fleet by the Flemish Government and its provision to the European Commission, adding further value to inform policy decisions and research.



Launch of the Visserij Verduurzaam in June 2018. Vessels improving their score over 3 years will be awarded this special market recognition.