

Spanish overfishing funded by EU subsidies

Written by Administrator

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An investigation by the [International Consortium of Investigative Journalists](#) has found that billions of euros in subsidies built up Spain's bloated fleet and propped up a money-losing industry. All the while companies systematically flouted the rules while officials overlooked fraud and continued to fund offenders. Ernesto Penas Lado, director of policy and enforcement at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, said that "Spain has earned its bad reputation." The Spanish fishing industry has received more than €5.8 billion (more than \$8 billion) in subsidies since 2000 for everything from building new vessels and breaking down old ships to payments for retiring fishermen and training for the next generation, an unprecedented analysis by ICIJ shows. Subsidies account for almost a third of the value of the industry. Simply put, nearly one in three fish caught on a Spanish hook or raised in a Spanish farm is paid for with public money.

According to the ICIJ investigation, the subsidized Spanish fleet has cultivated an extensive record of flouting the rules while officials overlook fraud and continue to dole out aid to vessels that break the law. More than

80 percent

of subsidized fishing companies that were fined in Spain for fishing infractions – and then lost subsequent court appeals – continued to receive subsidies.

[One Spanish shipowner received](#)

more than €8.2 million in subsidies even while his company or its affiliates faced more than 40 accusations of illegal fishing and US\$5 million in fines. More here

This leads to the question: Why is the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans continuing to play footsie with these "bad boys" of Europe, bending over backwards to cooperate with them in NAFO, which has become thoroughly discredited, and sending high level officials to Spain, e.g. ADM Science, to pretend all is well? Is it because the Harper government is so committed to a Canada-EU trade deal that it is prepared to sell out conservation and Canadian fishing interests?

TAGS: sustainable, fisheries, sustain, fish, Spain, fishing pirates, illegal fishing, EU subsidies
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