

USE CASE

EFCA SUPPORT TO JOINT CONTROL OPERATION “KUTA” IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PESCAO PROJECT

In West Africa, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) supports the Sub-Regional Commission on Fisheries and the Fisheries Committee for the West Central Gulf of Guinea through the project 'Improved regional fisheries governance in western Africa (PESCAO)'. EFCA's actions are carried out in close cooperation with these two organisations, and with the fisheries control authorities of 13 countries that are members: Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

From 2 to 14 May 2019 EFCA requested CMS support for operation 'Kuta', a specific control operation in West African Waters. EFCA requested images and vessel detection services aimed at detecting:

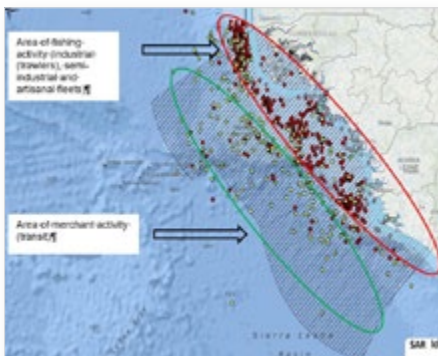
- fishing vessels (trawlers, long liners and purse seiners) and associated vessels (reefers);
- transshipment activities (fishing vessels alongside reefers);

- vessels from 10 to 80 metres in length.

The routine service request consisted of the delivery of synthetic-aperture radar (SAR) images over an area of interest covering more than 370.000 km², encompassing the Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry and Sierra Leone territorial waters and exclusive economic zones. In total, 18 SAR images were delivered with 1343 vessels detected, of which 473 could be identified using information from vessel reporting systems at EMSA, and 870 could not.

This information enabled the partners in the operation to define target areas and vessels with suspicious behaviour. Further analysis of the activity of a number of reefers in the area t revealed suspicious behaviour, possibly linked to illegal transhipments.

The coastal state concerned concluded that illegal activities had occurred in its waters, resulting in sanctions being applied to two reefers and a bunkering vessel.



Satellite images provided to Operation Kuta help detect vessels along the West African coast, both those reporting their positions by other means (correlated) and those not reporting (not correlated). Credit: EFCA



The support from CMS enabled partners to identify suspect vessels. Credit: EMSA



Photo of one of the suspect vessels taken during the operation. Credit: EFCA

Get in touch for more information

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CREDITS

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