

USE CASE



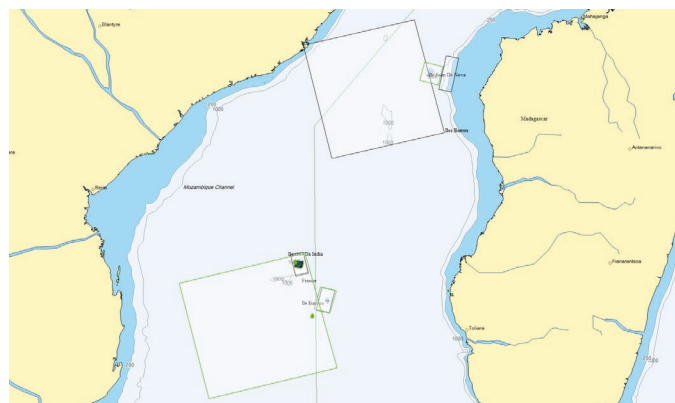
FISHERIES CONTROL – FRANCE INDIAN OCEAN

France's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is the second largest in the world. In the Indian Ocean, the French EEZ consists of many islands and atolls in which over four thousand species of marine life can be found. Some endangered fish species live only in these waters, making the ecosystem around the island particularly precious and vulnerable. However, given the prevalence of these highly valued marine species, Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing can be a threat to its unique biodiversity.

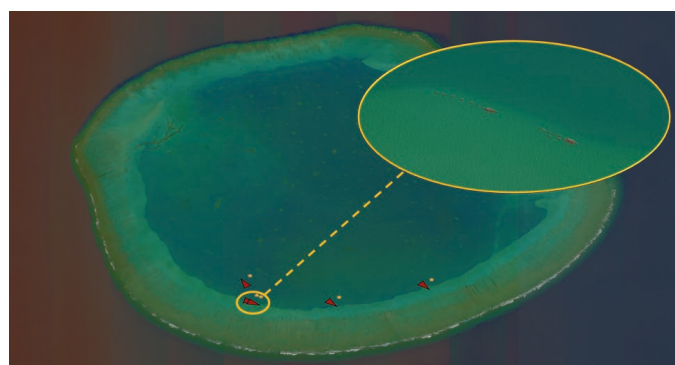
Following their earlier experience with the use of satellite technology, the French Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) began to use the Copernicus Maritime Surveillance (CMS) service extensively since 2021. Routine monthly requests are topped up with short-notice requests in case of operational need, helping French authorities plan and optimise specific patrol missions in the Southern Indian Ocean.

For example, in June 2022, after detecting suspected targets in the lagoon of the Bassas da India, a protected area closed to fisheries, a short notice request for CMS was launched. Satellite imagery and the vessel detection service helped French authorities to detect and intercept a vessel that had originated in Madagascar. The vessel was found to have a significant quantity of illegally caught red snapper onboard.

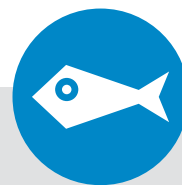
Only a month later, CMS services detected five fishing vessels in the protected area. A French fishery patrol vessel was rerouted to the zone, where the subsequent control operation in Bassas da India led to the seizure of 1320 kg of the threatened sea cucumber species, 150kg of fish, 62 harpoons, 28 under water guns, and scuba diving devices.



Bassas da India is a marine protected area located approximately halfway between Mozambique and Madagascar



Users observed fishing vessels operating in the area thanks to satellite imagery and vessel detection



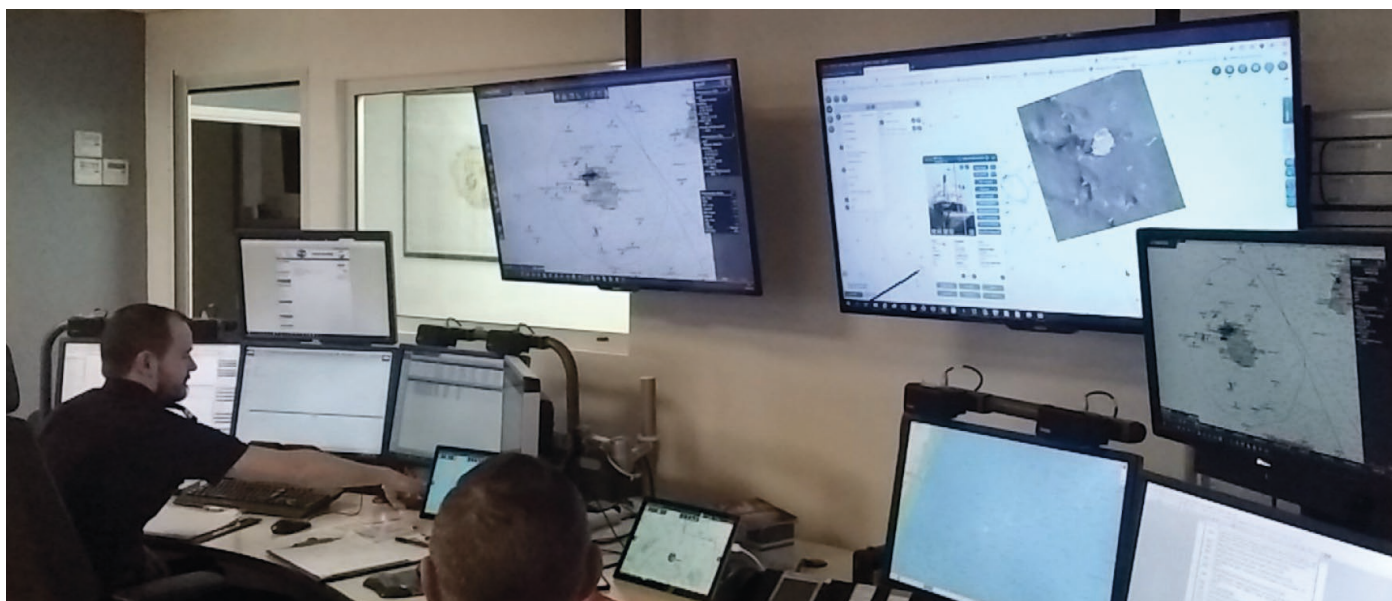
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The vessel was found to have fish and handcrafted fisheries equipment on board. The captain declared to have approximately 100 kg of red snappers onboard. The fish products were destroyed, and the fishing equipment was seized.

A month later, in July 2022, through CMS services provided in the same area, 5 fishing vessels were detected. A French fishery patrol vessel, operating in French EEZ in the North of the Mozambique Channel, 700 nautical miles from Bassas da India, was immediately rerouted and headed south for 3 days. The control operation in Bassas led to the inspection of 6 fishing vessels with nearly 200 fishermen onboard and the seizure of 1320 kg of holothurians, 150kg of fish, 62 harpoons, 28 under water guns, and scuba diving devices.

Copernicus is the Earth Observation component of the European Union's Space Programme which looks at our planet and its environment for the benefit of all European citizens. It offers information services that draw from satellite Earth Observation and in-situ (non-space) data. The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) is the Entrusted Entity responsible for implementing the Copernicus Maritime Surveillance service on behalf of the European Commission (DG-DEFIS).

If you are interested in CMS for the purposes of fisheries control, and your country is a member of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), please contact EFCA by sending an email to copernicus@efca.europa.eu



French authorities were able to launch a control operation in the area

emsa.europa.eu/copernicus

Get in touch for more information

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