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OVER 600 FISHERS IN THE ALGARVE COMMIT TO THE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE OF OCTOPUS FISHING

- **The Co-management Committee for octopus fishing in the Algarve, established this month by the Portuguese Government, has received support from over 75% of licensed fishers in the region.**
- **The primary aim of this shared management model is to promote and ensure the sustainability of octopus stocks and fisheries, requiring the full collaboration of all stakeholders.**
- **The committee's management plan, grounded in scientific knowledge, will focus on monitoring, oversight, and adding value to the fishery.**

The official decree establishing the **Co-management Committee for octopus fishing in the Algarve** has been published, receiving support from more than 75% of licensed octopus fishers in the region and **involving 17 Fishermen's Associations and Producers' Organisations**. This strong endorsement highlights the **fishing communities' interest in adopting a participatory and shared management model**.

The Algarve accounts for more than half of Portugal's total octopus landings by volume. The significant support from octopus fishers in the Algarve for this co-management initiative **represents a crucial step towards achieving more sustainable fishing practices in Portugal**, given the fishery's national importance.

The **co-management** model operates through a committee comprising representatives from the government, fishers, scientists, non-governmental organisations, and enforcement agencies, thereby **sharing responsibility among all stakeholders**. For Oceano Azul Foundation, this **governance model** offers an opportunity to enhance the value of the resource and improve the incomes of fishing communities through the adoption of sustainable practices.



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To support the committee's decision-making and increase the **value of octopus**, the next steps will involve securing governmental funding for the co-management committee and implementing value-adding measures. In this regard, **the Oceano Azul Foundation has funded an "Economic Study for the Enhancement of Algarve Octopus"**, conducted by Natural Business Intelligence (NBI), which will soon be available for the public. This study outlines a range of measures, from ambitious to incremental, that could be adopted in the future. One example is the development and use of a sustainable fishing certification label, enabling consumers to confirm they are purchasing sustainably managed products.

The proposed measures are based on various factors, including scientific knowledge about the species, the fishery and its impacts, market analysis, and consumer behaviour at local, national, and international levels. The measures also incorporate input from stakeholders and lessons from successful case studies that could be adapted for the Algarve octopus fishery.

The implementation of **co-management for octopus fishing represents the first step in a long-term vision that guarantees fair socio-economic conditions while valuing the traditional lifestyle of the region**. This vision, **reliant on the commitment of all stakeholders**, aims to ensure profitable and sustainable fisheries that are socially equitable, attractive to younger generations, and supportive of a balanced ecosystem that secures the future of octopus fishing.

The [ParticiPESCA](#) project, initiated in 2020, was led by ANP | WWF in partnership with the Portuguese Institute for the Sea and Atmosphere (IPMA), the Centre for Marine Sciences of the University of Algarve (CCMAR), and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). It was funded by the MAR 2020 Operational Programme and co-financed by Oceano Azul Foundation. This will be the second co-management committee established for a fishery in Portugal, following the creation of the Co-management Committee for Goose Barnacle Harvesting in the Berlengas Nature Reserve in 2021.



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About Oceano Azul Foundation

Oceano Azul Foundation was established in 2017 with the mission of contributing to a healthier and more productive ocean. Operating under the motto *From the ocean's point of view*, the Foundation focuses on key areas such as ocean advocacy, ocean conservation, and ocean policy, frameworks, and economics, while also prioritising education and ocean literacy. Guided by a science-based approach, the Oceano Azul Foundation integrates these concepts into its projects, which span areas such as literacy, conservation, sustainable fisheries, awareness campaigns, the blue economy, and capacity-building. The Foundation collaborates with governments, other foundations, and civil society organisations, as well as international entities like the UN and the EU, to advance the global ocean agenda.

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