

## **STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY FOR AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES, FOOD AND ANIMAL RIGHTS: BOAT RESTORATION SCHEME**

For the fourth consecutive year, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture within the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Animal Rights will be assisting the fisheries sector through national funds.

This is a scheme where fishermen will be benefiting from reimbursements of up to a maximum of €2,700 following necessary maintenance and professionally workmanship on traditional fishing vessels. He added that these types of vessels beautify our ports from Marsaxlokk to San Pawl il-Baħar, from Malta to Gozo and make a cultural and tourist contribution.

In last year's scheme there were 128 vessels that benefited from the sum of just over €160,000.

There are 223 vessels eligible under this year's scheme. These vessels are all made of wood and built before 2007, and include the *luzzu*, *kajjik*, *firilla* and *frejgatina*. Whilst the vessels are towed, Maltese and Gozitan fishermen incur various expenses for maintenance such as paint, wood, woodwork and other raw materials. Such expenses are eligible for refund under this scheme.

It is very important to maintain the required maintenance and care for these types of vessels, given that it requires skill and workmanship for which the owner needs to fork out substantial amounts. Without such assistance, there is a risk of losing these vessels once and for all from the Maltese fishing fleet. The Department encourages fishers to seize this opportunity and submit their applications to the Department of Fisheries to be able to benefit from the scheme.

The scheme is launched in March and applications will be accepted between 14 and 28<sup>th</sup> March, while in November, the Department of Fisheries will be receiving the fiscal receipts of the expenses incurred. For more information call 22926831/22926859.