



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

For the third 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.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Animal Rights Dr Anton Refalo announced that this is a scheme where fishermen will be benefiting from reimbursements of up to a maximum of €2,700 following necessary maintenance and professional 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 90 vessels that benefited from the sum of just over €100,000.

There are 228 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.

Hon Minister Anton Refalo iterated the importance of disseminating information about the required maintenance and care for this type of vessel, 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. He encouraged 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 April and applications will be accepted between 5 and 16 April, while in November, the Department of Fisheries will be receiving the tax receipts of the expenses incurred. For more information call 22926831/9.