

《Healing a dying sea》

Beginning on the 1st of June, China's coastal cities will start the summer fishing moratorium. Despite the ban being introduced in order to sustain aquatic species, sea fisheries are still struggling to support the livelihood of local fishermen. CCTV reporter Guan Yang went to the Bohai Sea in Northeast China's Liaoning province to find out what measures have been taken to rehabilitate marine resources.

Good catch, good life, that's what it was like for the fishermen around China's northeastern Bohai sea 30 years ago.

But when overfishing far exceeds the regenerative capacity of the fishery resources, the sea simply dies.

And it is happening now.

"This is a vicious circle for the fishermen: when they don't catch that much fish, they tie the holes of the net smaller; resulting in less fish in the sea. The amount of fish we catch in 100 days now would take us just 10 days back in the days," said Li Guangfu, fisherman in Xingcheng, Liaoning province.

So overfishing and using fishing nets with smaller holes than allowed, together with pollution and land reclamation, are the major causes of today's situation. Facing the decline of fishery resources, laws have been introduced in recent years, and we are seeing a new prospect.

"After cracking down on the use of unauthorized nets, the total yield of fish is slowly picking up compared with the previous year," said Chu Yaoqi, officer of Oceanic and Fishery Admin, Liaoning province.

As the country is pouring heavy investments into healing the ocean, a more proactive and immediately effective action to take, is to release billions of hatchlings into the sea during the fishing off season. But does repairing the damages of the sea require constant public funding?

And such a move is a clear sign that China's marine management has been gradually improving.

Fishing is one of the oldest professions in human history. But its becoming harder and harder to make a living along the country's coast line. Many fishermen today have to sail further from the shore and they spend more time at sea but with little to show for it. The question is: are we willing to catch less today to make tomorrow better?