

# Spanish fishing company settles dispute

The Spanish fishing company Inpesca has settled a dispute over allegations of illegal fishing in Mozambican waters.

The "Txori Argi" was seized on 14 March 2012 whilst fishing for tuna inside Mozambique's Exclusive Economic Zone. It was ordered to dock in the northern port of Nacala, where inspectors found 1,200 tonnes of tuna on board, worth more than 2.5 million US dollars. It is believed that most of this was caught outside Mozambican waters.

The excuse given by the captain of the "Txori Argi" was that he entered Mozambican waters inadvertently. He claimed the boat was chasing a school of tuna, and the ocean currents dragged it into the Mozambican Exclusive Economic Zone.

The boat was released after Inpesca provided a bank guarantee, promising to pay within ten days a fine of 34 million meticaïs (about 1.2 million dollars) imposed for the offence. However, the fine was never paid.

According to the trade journal Undercurrent News, the settlement has cost Inpesca 700,000 dollars. However, as a result of the settlement the boat stays off the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission's illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing vessel list.

Spain's national association of tuna freezer vessels ship owners, which represented the boat when it was first charged by Mozambique, confirmed, "Mozambique has returned the fishing licenses to the vessel, so the case is settled. The vessel never stopped fishing, and now it is settled, it continues to fish".

Source: [allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com).