



NEWS FROM THE DECK

The monthly newsletter of the

Low Impact Fishers of Europe

February 2018

MAIN NEWS

Small-scale fishers gain increasing influence in the Baltic Sea Advisory Council as FSK from Denmark is the fourth LIFE member organisation to join the General Assembly

In the course of the month of January, LIFE members from Denmark, Foreningen for Skånsomt Kystfiskeri (FSK - <http://skaansomtkystfiskeri.dk>), filed an application to become members of the General Assembly of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC). Advisory Councils (ACs) are stakeholders-led bodies that provide the European Commission and Member States with recommendations on fisheries management. Attendance is key to influencing European fisheries policies (more information in LIFE's Tutorial n°3 <http://lifeplatform.eu/tutorials/>). The application has gone through all the necessary procedures within the BSAC, and **the Secretariat officially announced late February that FSK's application has been accepted**. LIFE is proud that its members from Denmark decided to engage in this process, following the steps of members from Poland, Germany and Sweden. LIFE team will continue to do its utmost to help members shape the regional fisheries policy so that it meets the needs of small-scale, low impact fishers and the wider marine environment!



Mediterranean small-scale fisheries: time for a state of the art of decision-making process

The month of February marks the start of the activities led by LIFE within the framework of its three-year project funded by the MAVA Foundation, but it is also the right time **to take stock of the situation for small-scale fisheries in the Region**. It's been two years since, in March 2016, the General Fisheries Commission of the Mediterranean (GFCM) held the Conference "Building a future for sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea" in Algeria (<http://www.fao.org/blogs/blue-growth-blog/building-a-future-for-sustainable-small-scale-fisheries-in-the-mediterranean-and-black-sea/en/>), which evolved into an official plan to support sustainable small-scale fisheries included in the "Mid-term strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of the Mediterranean and Black Sea" (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7340e.pdf>). In 2017, March was marked by the "MedFish4ever" Declaration (<https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/inseparable/en/medfish4ever#quicktabs-medfish4ever=6>), a concrete engagement signed by all Mediterranean Member States to work together for sustainable fisheries through the involvement of the small-scale fishing sector. Following on from those steps a "High-level meeting on small-scale fisheries" is going to be held in September 2018 in Malta, where a "Regional Action Plan for small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea" will be signed. LIFE members and staff have been following this process from the start, attending working groups and providing written and verbal contributions. In the light of this next important event LIFE's Mediterranean group is currently



working to prepare the next steps, gathering contributions for the regional action plan, so as to make its voice heard as a whole. **LIFE encourages all Med members who have not yet been, for one reason or another, fully involved in the process to get in touch with LIFE staff in order to play an active role in these consultations and help to shape their own futures and that for the Mediterranean Sea overall.**

OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

✚ 5-16/2 Brussels (Belgium) – On the 16th of January the European Parliament voted for a total ban on pulse fishing, a form of electric trawling used by a significant number of boats mainly based in the Netherlands. However, for the ban to be effective, it still has to undergo the trialogue negotiations (discussions between the European Parliament, European Commission and Council of the Ministers – see newsletter of January). For this reason, current and future months are a sensitive timing advocacy-wise; **LIFE’s Deputy Director Brian O’Riordan and representatives of the NGO Bloom met with the Fisheries Attachés of the Permanent Representations of Ireland, Germany, Latvia and Belgium to discuss the matter in the light of the legislative process ahead.** Both the Irish and the German Attachés took the incomprehensible line that if LIFE lobbies against pulse fishing then it means that it is in favour of beam trawling. The Belgian Attaché pressed LIFE on its position for the trialogue negotiations and underlined how its final decision will eventually mostly depend on the recommendations of scientific institutes. LIFE has highlighted time and again the first hand observations of our members from the UK, Belgium, France and the Netherlands of the damage done by this method of fishing that appears to strike at the very bottom of the food chain and then up (official testimonies are available here <http://lifeplatform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Testimonies.pdf>).

✚ 6-7/2 Thorupstrand (Denmark) – LIFE team for the Baltic and North Sea organized an exchange of best practices under the title **“Survive and Thrive: adding value to policy and production by small-scale fishers”**.

Members from Poland, Sweden, Latvia, The Netherlands, Finland and Germany, alongside a number of stakeholders from across the Region had the opportunity to visit the thriving fishing community of Thorupstrand, a village on the northern coast of Denmark, to discuss how the fishers cope with the challenges posed by fisheries management and quota allocation in the country. In particular, they countered the introduction of an



ITQ-based quota management system in late 2000s which favored large-scale interests by setting up a collective system to buy quota to be held in a community pool. The 2nd day of the meeting, the group focused on market strategies and channels, such as labels, fish box schemes and work in cooperation with Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) and Chefs.

✚ 08/2 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Brussels team attended a “critical review workshop” for a study commissioned by DG Mare on **the economic benefits of MPAs**. One of the main issues raised was how to ensure appropriate governance, and the central importance of co-management. The sustainability of MPAs, the need for synergies between stakeholders to create win-win situations, and mechanisms to manage conflicts were also discussed.

✚ 13/2 Stockholm (Sweden) – LIFE Coordinator for the Baltic and North Sea area has been invited to participate in the 2nd meeting of the Steering Group of Transnational Cooperation (TNC), a project bringing together **14 Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) from Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Germany to mitigate the impact**

of high populations of grey seals and black cormorants on coastal small-scale fishers. The discussions centered around the management of the project and preparing a survey to be filled by 20 fishers from each FLAG area in order to evaluate the economic impact of grey seals and black cormorants' predation on coastal fisheries. The project partners encourage all FLAGs to participate so as to get as many contributions as possible. More information here: <https://balticfisheries.com>

- ✚ 14-15/2 Gothenburg (Sweden) – A representative of LIFE's Danish Member organization FSK, Hans Jacob Jensen, together with LIFE staff, attended the meeting **HELCOM-FISH PRO group, a long-term project aiming at improving the knowledge of coastal fish stocks.** A mostly scientific meeting, it allowed LIFE to comment on project developments and prepare to share knowledge on the matter. The development of recreational fishing was also a topic in the agenda, as well as the need to avoid unnecessary competition with sustainable, low impact small-scale commercial fisheries. Additional details on the outcomes of the meeting are available here: <https://portal.helcom.fi/meetings/FISH-PRO%20II%205-2018-440/MeetingDocuments/Outcome%20of%20FISH-PRO%20II%205-2018.pdf>

- ✚ 19/02 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE's Brussels team met with the European office of Slow Food, with the aim to provide an update on each other's agenda and activities. Throughout the discussion, Slow Food highlighted the need for a **comprehensive "Common Food Policy" at EU level**, that they have been promoting for some time. The importance of cooperation between Slow Fish and LIFE on issues of shared interest, such as consumers-related policies, was also reaffirmed.

- ✚ 20/02 Rome (Italy) - The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) published the report "Women's participation and leadership in fisherfolk organizations and collective action in fisheries". **The aim of the study is to elaborate a state of the art for the participation of women in fishers' organizations as members and leaders, as well as to identify best practices.** Katia Frangoudes, Spokesperson for AKTEA – LIFE's 'women in fisheries' partner network - contributed to the study with insights and suggestions. Among the different examples of women-led organisations examined in the paper, the case of shellfish gatherers in Galicia and the advocacy agenda of AKTEA are particularly relevant in a European perspective. The full document is available on AKTEA's website <http://www.fao.org/3/I8480EN/i8480en.pdf>

- ✚ 20-22/02 Jjel (Algeria) – MedPan, a network representing Marine Protected Areas managers, organised a meeting in Algeria to discuss effective ways of managing MPAs. **A LIFE delegation composed of representatives of members from Spain (Pescartes and Arts Menors Costa Brava), from Italy (Associazione**



Pescatori di Pantelleria), LIFE's Director for the Med Christian Decugis and two members of LIFE staff attended. The three days initiative allowed LIFE fishers to meet with MPA managers from Algeria, France, Italy, Turkey and Tunisia. The meeting was the first of its kind and marked the first activity undertaken by LIFE as part of the work funded by the MAVA Foundation. Participants agreed on 20 recommendations that fishers and MPA managers believe should be given prime attention in order to ensure the fruitful management of Marine Protected Area.

- ✚ 20-21/02 Rome (Italy) – In the framework of the latest meeting of the Mediterranean Advisory Council (MedAC), the proposal "Input for a Regional Plan of Action to support sustainable small-scale fisheries" was put forward by the "other interests" group, the one representing 40% of seats in the MedAC and including NGOs and recreational fisheries organizations. The proposal emphasizes how the above-mentioned action plan, the final version of which will be officially signed by decision-makers in Malta in September 2018, **should**

embed provisions that ensure preferential access to fishing rights to low impact small-scale fisheries and establish no-trawling zones within 150m depth coastal areas. Other key measures such as the establishment of coastal area management plans, proper control and surveillance mechanisms, data collection, scientific advice and scientific research were mentioned. Although LIFE could not be physically present as the dates overlapped with the initiative on MPAs in Algeria, its contribution was provided in written form prior to the meeting.

- ✚ 21/02 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE staff participated in the conference **“Countdown to 2020: how far has the EU come in ending overfishing?”** organized by Pew, an international NGO. LIFE’s Baltic and North Sea Coordinator took the opportunity to highlight some issues relating to the Baltic region, including the struggles of small-scale fleets and the worsening situation in terms of discards. The organizers took note of such a position, but the overall view of the European Commission, represented in the panel by EU Official Maya Kirchner, on the management of European stocks was generally positive, in particular regarding the need to achieve Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) and the good profits made by the large-scale EU fleets. Many speakers, including Javier Garat, representative of Europêche, agreed that the attention of policymakers should now be directed to supporting small-scale fisheries and coastal communities. More detailed information here <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/about/events/2018/countdown-to-2020-how-far-has-the-eu-come-in-ending-overfishing>
- ✚ 26/2 - LIFE participated in a conference call with a number of organizations who are part of the “Small-scale Fisheries Working Group” of the GFCM. The main topic of discussion was a “matrix” (or set of criteria) that the group is currently elaborating **to define more in depth small-scale fisheries and to identify the characteristics of each specific fishery in the Med.** The matrix will also allow all concerned to get a clearer understanding of the differences between the small-scale and large-scale sectors, but without leading to any division between the two. LIFE, after consultation with its Mediterranean members, provided its input and views on a number of parameters to help with the research.
- ✚ 28/2 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE Brussels team attended an event in the European Parliament on “Fostering dialogue for the sustainable use of fisheries resources” organised by the consultancy EBCD. Panellists acknowledged the valuable work of **regional management organisations, and called for greater cooperation between regional, national and international bodies.** Matjaz Malgaj, Head of Unit “Marine Environment and Water Industry” (DG ENV), also reminded the meeting of the importance of this discussion in the context of the Food Security that the planet is facing. For further information see <http://ebcd.org/event/cbd-sustainable-ocean-initiative-fostering-dialogue-sustainable-use-fisheries-resources/>.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

- ✚ **Kick off of Pescartes latest project along the coast of Murcia- Almería**



30/1 Almería (Spain) – Member from Spain, Pescartes started the first activities of its project “Pescados con Arte” (Fish with Art), recently approved and funded by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Environment and by the Biodiversity Foundation. The project, carried out in cooperation with a local association working for public interests, Asociación Columbares, **aims to raise awareness among the general public of the social, environmental and cultural value of local fish products caught with low impact small-scale techniques and to promote their consumption.** The first initiatives –consisting of gastronomic demonstrations in restaurants and food markets - proved to be very successful and well attended, bringing small-scale fishers closer to consumers. Among the topics

tackled were the importance of the conservation of marine resources and the role played by small-scale fisheries and responsible consumption.

✚ If approved, the Heritage Licence Bill promoted by LIFE Members in Ireland could pave the way for thousands of small-scale fishers working on islands across Europe

1/02 Dublin (Ireland) – LIFE Member from Ireland, The Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO), has been working since 2014 on the approval of a “Heritage License Bill” that would give local islanders preferential access to fishing rights by granting special licences to those commercial fishers who are residents on islands. The benefits would be twofold: allowing small offshore islands to survive and prosper, and encourage sustainable fishing by reducing, among other things, pressure on non-quota species such as crab and lobster. In a vote held on the 1st of February within the national parliament all the opposition political parties supported the Bill but the government, following legislative advice from the Department of the Marine, said it could not do so as the text would be illegal under the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). **On their side, IIMRO met extensively with elected representatives and EU commission officials who have assured them that the measures meet all criteria within the CFP, particularly Article 17.** The legislative battle for official approval is therefore far from over but one that IIMRO is determined to engage in with all its means and with the full support of LIFE. The successful implementation of the Bill could allow the island heritage model to be used as a template for the wider inshore sector in Ireland and across Europe.

✚ The French Platform for small-scale fisheries (PPPAF) holds its General Assembly and plans a legal action at European level on the issue of Bluefin Tuna

16/2 Guilvinec (France) – The 6^o General Assembly of the Plateforme Petite Pêche Française (PPPAF) was held in Brittany. During the meeting, a number of issues were highlighted including the lack of representation of the rights of small-scale fishers in national fora (such as in the National Committee); abnormal regulations that not only prevent fishers to work in a polyvalent way but also favour destructive fishing techniques; denied access to official structures such as Producer Organisations and the catastrophic situation of the Atlantic bass stock. **Overall the meeting underlined a number of matters that demonstrate the need to continue the work at both national and European level to ensure that policies reflect the needs of the small-scale fleet** (Full PR here <http://www.plateforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=594>). In parallel, the Platform is pursuing its lobbying action for a fair distribution of the Bluefin Tuna quota. Back in April 2017, alongside other organisations, **it submitted an official plea to the French State Council** but since then, and despite the increase in the overall tonnes attributed to Europe and as a consequence to France (who passed from 4187 tonnes in 2017 to 4934 tonnes this year) following the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) meeting back in November 2017, not much has changed, and the share of fishing rights is still being granted to large-scale interests, in particular to seiners and trawlers. The Platform is therefore planning to move up a gear and file an official complaint to the European Court of Justice.

✚ German Members elect their President during Annual Meeting



17-18/02 Eckernförde (Germany) – The **Annual Meeting of Fischereischutzverband Schleswig-Holstein**, was held. Members **unanimously re-elected their Director, Wolfgang Albrecht, as President of the Association** (Mr Albrecht, pictured left, is also LIFE’s Director from Germany). A number of national measures were discussed, including the closure timing for the eel fishery as well as spatial planning measures and environmental protection. The meeting was also a good opportunity to discuss relevant issues with guests from Administration and policy fora, including German

Member of the European Parliament Ulrike Rodust. LIFE's Baltic and North Sea Coordinator attended as well. The meeting was followed by a series of visits to local harbors and discussions with the fishers about the way forward for the development of small-scale fisheries in the area of Schleswig-Holstein.

Members from Finland advocate to include traditional knowledge into official ecological management processes

19-24/02 Helsinki (Finland) - Tero Mustonen from Snowchange Cooperative attended the high-level "Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas in the Baltic Sea" organised by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Snowchange contribution focused on ensuring that "Indigenous and Local Knowledge" (ILK) is taken into account when official evaluation processes analyse the ecological and biological value of marine areas. **He stressed the importance of traditional knowledge guarded by indigenous groups (such as Livonians, Izoras, Votians and Saami) Scandinavian seal hunters and small-scale fishers.** He took the opportunity to flag the concerns of German and Swedish small-scale fishers for the impact of trawling around Fehmarn Island (a small island off the northeast coast of Germany, in the Southern Baltic Sea). Another topic on the agenda was the Russian large-scale project Nord Stream II, an offshore pipeline that will transport natural gas into the European Union and on which LIFE's Baltic and North Sea Coordinator is actively working to raise awareness on the impact that such a project will have on fishing grounds.

NEW MEMBERS ON BOARD

Latvijas Zvejnieku Federācija (Latvian Fishers Federation)

At LIFE's workshop in Thorupstrand, we had the opportunity to officially welcome a new LIFE Member from Latvia. Their members operate from ports and small beach harbors in the Liepaja region, fishing for herring, cod, flounder, salmon and over 20 other coastal species. **They have 103 boats with an average size of 8m, using gillnets, hooks & lines, traps, as well as traditional seines; some of their fishing takes place in freshwater.** Established in 1999, the Federation is tasked with defending and developing coastal and inland fishing interests at national and international level, enhancing the cultural heritage of traditional fishing, as well as ensuring successful generational change in small-scale fisheries.



Amarcarril (Shellfish Gatherers of Galicia - Spain)



It is with great pleasure that AKTEA and LIFE welcome Amarcarril, a newly formed women-only association based in Galicia (Spain). Amarcarril was created to represent the interests of shellfish gatherers and decided to join **AKTEA to get in touch with other women's associations across Europe** and to cooperate in a number of projects and activities. If you are interested in the mission of these proactive ladies, do not hesitate to follow the association on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/amarcarril/>

PRESS REVIEW AND INTERESTING READING

Article in Yemaya on the need for formal recognition of women's work in fish processing and trade worldwide (English)

<https://www.icsf.net/en/yemaya/article/EN/56.html?limitstart=0>

LIFE Scottish members and Brexit (English)

<http://www.thenational.scot/news/16033731. There-d-be-no-point-in-going-out-to-sea-Creel-fishermen-on-Brexit-s-devastating-impact/?ref=fbshr>

NGOs joint letter denouncing illegal discarding in Denmark (English)

http://balticsea2020.org/images/Bilagor/letter_to_Ellemann.pdf

This Newsletter is a simple snapshot of our external activities. In addition, the LIFE staff in the UK, Brussels, Poland and Spain respond to a vast range of queries related to our sector and continuously develop and promulgate policies related to small scale, low impact fishing and fisheries.

Our Regional Directors, all working small scale fishers, also promote the values and benefits of coastal fishing.

Would you like additional information on a specific event, project or initiative? Don't hesitate to contact us at communications@lifeplatform.eu or follow us on Facebook on Low Impact Fishers of Europe or on Twitter on @LIFEplatformEU

Interested to engage with women working in fisheries? Get in touch with AKTEA via contact@akteaplatform.eu or on Facebook on AKTEA women in fisheries and Twitter on @AKTEAwif