



NEWS FROM THE DECK

The monthly newsletter of the

Low Impact Fishers of Europe

May 2018

MAIN NEWS

✚ Small-scale fishing sector gets deserved place in Baltic decision-making with 4 LIFE members taking seats in the Executive Committee of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council

8-9/05, Copenhagen (Denmark) – The recent meetings of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council's (BSAC) Executive Committee (ExCom) and General Assembly (GA) resulted in the **election of LIFE Member Organizations Fischereischutzverband Schleswig-Holstein (Germany), Darłowska Group of Fish Producers and Boat Owners (Poland), Foreningen for Skånsomt Kystfiskeri (Denmark) and Svenska Yrkefiskare Ekonomiska Förening (Sweden) in the new BSAC Executive Committee for the years 2018-2021!** We congratulate our Members for their commitment and constructive approach to the work of BSAC, which has made this historic achievement possible. LIFE will spare no effort to continue supporting its Members within the daily activities related to this Advisory Council. We very much hope that other member organizations will follow this example by joining their regional Advisory Councils Executive Committees, so as to make the voice of the sector heard in the recommendations to the European Commission. In that same setting, the General Assembly (GA) has not managed to elect the new Chair of the Executive Committee following the departure of Mr. Reine Johansson; BSAC's Honorary Chair Steve Karnicki has agreed to step in *ad interim* to successfully complete the election process until the extraordinary GA meeting in November. It is also worth noting that the **submission on European eel management from Wolfgang Albrecht, LIFE's German Director, was met with considerable attention from both fisheries and NGOs representatives and will serve as a basis for further negotiations on the matter, one that attracts the interest of many players of the sector.**



✚ LIFE action in the Mediterranean reinforced by new presence on the ground in Italy

15/5 Palermo (Italy) – In the framework of its three years project “Mainstreaming small-scale low impact fisheries in the Mediterranean” funded by the MAVA Foundation, LIFE reinforces its presence on the ground in order to provide increased support to the small-scale fishing communities in the region. **Following a comprehensive interview process Prof. Iuri Peri was selected to help LIFE in this important task across Italy but with special attention given to Sicily.** Iuri is a researcher in the University of Catania and has extensive experience in agri-fish economics and supporting fishing communities on the ground. He speaks fluent Italian, English and French and will surely be a valuable addition to the LIFE team, generating positive changes both nationally and at European level. Next month he will be joined by another new member of the team based in Malta. During the first week in his new role of Project Manager for Italy, Iuri attended a meeting organised by regional authorities on a new fisheries bill relating, amongst other things, to the distribution of Bluefin Tuna quota (more information below, on 23/5). Meet Iuri Peri in our first interview to him available here: <http://lifeplatform.eu/meet-iuri-peri-lifes-new-project-manager-italy/>

OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

- 3/5 Bristol (UK) – LIFE’s Executive Director Jeremy Percy expressed his personal view on **the impact of Brexit on UK small-scale fisheries** in a dedicated article published on LIFE website and subsequently on the UK magazine Fishing News. The future seems rather gloomy (“... from a Sea of Opportunity to a Sea of Despair...”): lack of access to quota, the landing obligation from 2019 and the overall decline of the small-scale fisheries sector appear to be only but underpinned by the array of promises to get UK waters back, the “bait on the Brexit hook”. Full article available here: <http://lifeplatform.eu/future-british-fishing/>
- 10/5 Gland (Switzerland) – Following a tough selection process, **LIFE Mediterranean Coordinator and Communications Officer have been selected by the MAVA Foundation and the coaching organisation Common Purpose to take part in their “Leaders for Nature Academy”**. The Academy is a programme specifically addressed to professionals working in conversation of the MAVA partners network and aims to provide them the tools, through training and seminars over a period of one year, to maximise the impact of their work. LIFE staff will have the chance to meet with other selected organisations and identify new opportunities for the LIFE team and its members.
- 14/5 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE Brussels Team attended the **“Hearing on the Landing Obligation and Choke Species in Multispecies and Mixed Fisheries”**, organized in the European Parliament by the Pêche Committee. In the words of Alain Cadec, Member of the European Parliament and Chair of the Pêche Committee: *“The diagnosis is very clear: uncertainty, difficulty, complexity... I don’t regret voting against the Landing Obligation”*. However, the landing obligation has been approved and will enter into force in January 2019. For small-scale fishers, LIFE fears that the zero-discard policy could well become a zero-fishing, zero-income policy. For more details see the dedicated article here (in English) <http://lifeplatform.eu/choking-landing-obligation/>
- 15/5 Brussels (Belgium): Ahead of the trilogues (involving the Parliament, Commission and Council) on the Technical Measures Regulation, which includes the provision on the use of pulse fishing, **LIFE and Bloom continued their one-to-one meetings with Fisheries Attachés and Members of the European Parliament to advocate for a total ban of this destructive practice used by the Dutch trawling fleet which is generating devastating impacts for the North Sea resources and small-scale sector**. In this light, they had specific meetings with the Finnish Delegation, the Assistant of the Spanish Member of the European Parliament Gabriel Mato, and Italian Member of the European Parliament Renata Briano. The Triologue process is still at a relatively early stage, but the last meeting under the Bulgarian Presidency is due on June 19th. There are rumours that if a deal is not done then, the Technical Measures Regulation may be withdrawn under the incoming Austrian Presidency. Such is the uncertainty.
- 17/5 Spain and Slovenia - LIFE’s Mediterranean and Black Sea Coordinator was in touch with Ms. Jerneja Penca, a research fellow in small-scale fisheries at the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI University) in Slovenia. Jerneja requested a meeting to discuss matters falling within her work and research interests. She is currently pursuing a research project on transnational private environmental governance and the use of regulations for empowering small-scale fishers. She was interested in learning more on the French-Spanish Synepesca initiative, the MAVA project and **ways to promote small-scale fisheries in the northern Adriatic area**.
- 17/5 Koszalin (Poland) – Polish LIFE Members Wolinska, Darlowska and Środkowopomorska and LIFE staff participated in a scientific conference on the **“state of the Baltic Sea fish resources and the environment”**. Opened by a high-level government representative, the conference gave a comprehensive overview of matters relevant to fishers, including trends to be expected for the main fish stocks for 2019, ecological situation and developments of the Baltic Sea, fish diseases, predator-fisheries interactions, as well as a looks at the economic situation of different fleets, with some speakers calling for **positive discrimination in favour of the small-scale fisheries, given i.a. their particularly difficult economic situation noted now**. LIFE is happy to continue cooperating with other stakeholders in pursuing this laudable objective.

- ✚ 22/5 Brussels (Belgium) – On World Biodiversity Day, the LIFE Brussels team participated in an event in the European Parliament for the launch of an exhibition on “Marine Life and Litter”. A study which gathered **data on marine litter over thirty years with a focus on Ireland was presented**. Irish Member of the European Parliament Liadh Ní Riada reminded that 80% of the Irish sewage and industrial waste is discharged into the sea and highlighted the vast improvements taken to address the growing marine litter problem. A number of solutions and recommendations have also been put forward in relation to the EU plastic strategy and waste regulations.

- ✚ 23-24/05, Warsaw (Poland) – LIFE staff participated as active observer in the **8th meeting of HELCOM-FISH working group**. Among the multitude of documents analyzed and processes presented, of particular importance are: the agreement to organize a joint conference with the HELCOM-SEAL group in 2019 to discuss the constructive and non-lethal solutions to the impact of the increased seal population on fisheries, as well as generally noted willingness of scientists and managers to receive more data from small-scale coastal fishers, not only in relation to fisheries, but also i.a. Maritime Spatial Planning. We also note with satisfaction the **impact our members have had in outlining “Ecologically Significant Biological Areas” in the framework of the global Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) process, thanks to the outstanding efforts of Tero Mustonen from Kesalahti Fish Base/Snowchange Cooperative, LIFE members from Finland**. More information here: <https://portal.helcom.fi/meetings/FISH%208-2018-509/MeetingDocuments/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

- ✚ 23/5 Palermo (Italy) - As a first step of LIFE action for an increased presence of small-scale fishers in Italian decision-making process, LIFE’s new Project Manager for Italy Iuri Peri attended the Sicilian Fisheries Advisory Commission for the presentation of a new legislative bill elaborated by the local Mediterranean Fisheries Department and having at its centre Sicilian small-scale fisheries. **It is the first time in 18 years that the Sicily Region takes action for direct decision-making on the fisheries sector as an alternative to the centralised, national one**. The bill, entitled “Sicily and Mediterranean fisheries: identity and economics of the sea” calls for the right to regional law-making and focuses on three aspects: Mediterranean identity, technical measures and the strengthening of management plans and “COGEPAs” (*a local consortium of small-scale fishers*). **Amongst other matters, the piece of law drafted by the local authorities focuses on the new allocation of quota of Bluefin Tuna**. Following the recommendations by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) back in November 2017 and subsequent EU transposal, Italian quota for Bluefin Tuna have been increased by 20%, from 3,298 tonnes to 3,894 tonnes (Italian Fisheries Ministry website <https://bit.ly/2JfQ3Oz>). The Sicilian Department for Agri-fish matters had put forward to the National Fisheries Ministry direct requests to fill in the historic gap on Bluefin Tuna quota through a fair reallocation to artisanal fisheries. However, the national Ministry did not take those requests into account and opened the way to an allocation based, once again, on the historic track record of the three previous years. For this reason and for the first time, the local authorities have decided to open the way to a formal dispute of the validity of the Ministerial decree.

- ✚ 23-24/5 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE is a full member of the Market Advisory Council (MAC) ExCom and General Assembly, and in this light attended the Executive Committee, General Assembly and Working Group meetings. One of the topics discussed was the MAC Guidelines on Production and Marketing Plans of Producer Organisations. LIFE invited Jim Pettipher, CEO of the UK Coastal PO (*the first producer organisation exclusively composed by small-scale fishers*) to express his point of view on Guidelines on Production and Marketing Plans for Producer Organizations drafted by the MAC, which lack reference to CFP social objectives of SSF. However, the Chair of the Working Group, Mr Sean O’Donoghue, did not give the floor for the intervention stating that **the “representative participation of small-scale producers in producer organisations is not a remit of the Market Advisory Council”**.

- ✚ 24/5 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Brussels team attended the “Eyes on the Flyways” conference organised by BirdLife International (*an international NGO advocating for the protection of birds*), at the Museum of Natural Sciences. The conference was the opportunity for stakeholder groups (including agriculture, hunting and fisheries) to discuss issues faced by those bird species prioritised in terms of conservation. Among the identified treats: land use changes, marine litter, habitat loss or degradation, climate change and hunting. **In relation to fisheries, every year gillnets and longlines have a bycatch of more than 200,000 seabirds in EU waters, according to SPEA, BirdLife Partner in Portugal**. LIFE

underlined its interest in fostering cooperation between its members and researchers in the search for mitigation measures and testing of innovative bird-proof gears.

- ✚ 28/5 Barcelona (Spain) - The “Sand-eel co-management committee” celebrated its Annual Plenary meeting at the Fisheries, Agriculture and Food Department of the central office of the Government of Catalonia. LIFE’s Med coordinator was invited to participate as representative of LIFE’s Member Organization MedArtNet Spain. Among the main topics were a summary of the fisheries status (a review of catches and overall evaluation of the measures implemented by the sand-eel fishing sector) and an overview of scientific monitoring based on 2017 data. Both fishers and scientists agreed that 2017 showed improvements compared to 2016, a year which was difficult with the fishery having to close in advance despite important management measures implemented following the agreement of the Committee. The scientists confirmed the fishers’ thoughts on the fact that there seems to be a correlation between **higher average temperatures in the month of December 2015 (coinciding with the spawning season) and the low levels of biomass of the sand-eel stock in the following year (2016)**, therefore demonstrating the important link between environmental factors and the viability on this particular species.
- ✚ 29/05, Copenhagen, Denmark – LIFE’s Baltic and North Sea Coordinator had an **overview meeting with our Danish Members, Foreningen for Skånsomt Kystfiskeri (FSK)**. They discussed an array of projects and initiatives geared towards the improvement of small-scale fisheries situation in Denmark, including with the use of the newly gained FSK’s Executive Committee seat at BSAC. It was a pleasure, and equally a best practice and source of inspiration, to have a good part of the talks over a lunch made from the seafood provided by the Thorupstrand small-scale fishing community!
- ✚ 30/5 Barcelona (Spain) – LIFE’s Mediterranean and Black Sea Coordinator Marta Cavallé met two young scientists interested in carrying out a study in Costa Brava, Catalonia, on the cetaceans that live in the area and the interactions between the animals and the local fishing fleet. **Marta Cavallé explained how in different areas in the Mediterranean (Sicily, Croatia, Cyprus) the interaction of the small-scale fisheries sector with some species of dolphins is certainly relevant and generating socioeconomic consequences**. She underlined LIFE’s interest in cooperating on such evaluation that could provide relevant information, including socioeconomic parameters, and bring possible solutions to the benefit of both cetaceans and the small-scale fishers sector.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

✚ IIMRO launch a public campaign on the Heritage Fishing License

17/5 Arranmore (Ireland) - In past months LIFE members from Ireland, Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation (IIMRO),- dedicated additional time and energy to push forward **the approval by public authorities of a Heritage License**



Bill that would allow to allocate a small percentage of the Irish national quota to the islands’ fishers, thus preventing island populations from dwindling. The final approval of the bill by the Irish Joint Committee on Agriculture, Food and the Marine being in the last stages of the legislative process, IIMRO launched a campaign addressed to decision-makers to support the piece of legislation, thus finally allowing polyvalent small-scale fishers who have been penalised by decades of inappropriate fisheries policies to obtain a non-transferable community quota. LIFE supported its members by sending a letter to the Joint Committee, advocating for the preservation of a way of life, in social, economic, cultural and environmental terms that is under massive threat. IIMRO’s Press Release and LIFE’s letter are available here: <http://lifeplatform.eu/iimro-pr-heritage-license/>

✚ LIFE members from France and Spain kick off their joint project on the valorisation of fishing products

8– 10/5 Port-la-Nouvelle (France) – LIFE French members Syndicat Professionnel des Pêcheurs Petit Métiers d'Occitanie (SPMLR) and Arts Menores Costa Brava (Spain) organized **the kick-off meeting of their joint project Synepesca**, funded by the Carasso Foundation, in the south of France. The initiative aims to foster French-Spanish synergies towards a better valorization of small-scale coastal fishing products and sharing SPMLR's expertise acquired in the framework of the development of their label Golion to allow the young association Arts Menors Costa Brava to learn from their experience and implement a similar initiative in their harbors. LIFE staff attended the meeting to help with translations and the administrative management of the project.



✚ AKTEA member Asociación Amarcarril launch their new brochure

28/5 Carril (Spain) – Amarcarril, member of AKTEA, is an organisation of shellfish gatherers women based on the coast of Galicia, a region in North-Western Spain. Through their association they organise **a number of activities addressed to tourists of all ages and especially children, to allow the discovery of the Region and of the fascinating activity of shellfish gathering**. They recently produced a leaflet to give an overview of their initiatives and provide direct contacts. The full brochure is visible here (in Spanish) <http://akteaplatform.eu/amarcarril-brochure/>

PRESS REVIEW AND INTERESTING READING

LIFE Scottish members and the impact of Brexit (English)

<https://www.politico.eu/article/brexit-scotland-fishing-industry-divide/>

Sicily region against national ministry on Bluefin Tuna allocation (Italian)

<http://www.cronachedigusto.it/archiviodal-05042011/330-il-caso/25076-la-sicilia-contro-il-ministero-gil-75--delle-quote-tonno-nazionali-in-mano-a-12-barcheq.html>

Uk fishermen and Brexit (English)

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/11/brexit-uk-fishermen-fishing-industry-quotas-uk-government>

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 .