



NEWS FROM THE DECK

The monthly newsletter of the

Low Impact Fishers of Europe

November 2018

MAIN NEWS

LIFE's BOD approves important changes in management and new registration to Belgium

29/11 Brussels (Belgium): In the light of LIFE's achievements across Europe in the past four years and the uncertainty stemming from Brexit for UK-based bodies, **the Board of Directors gathered and approved a plan for the organization's further development and growth.** Amongst the most important changes are those in management, with Jeremy Percy stepping down as Executive Director and Brian O'Riordan being subsumed from Deputy Director to Executive Secretary, and moving LIFE's registration from the UK to Belgium. This will allow the organization's activities to be centralised in the heart of Europe, while developing a case by case membership arrangement for non-EU European associations, including those based in the UK. The BOD appointed the three administrators (pictured right) of the new Belgium-registered LIFE as follows: Kasia Wysocka (from Poland, as President), Ger de Ruyter (from the Netherlands, as Treasurer), Gwen Pennarun (from France, as Secretary). LIFE is proud to be amongst the few fishers' organisation worldwide being chaired by a woman! LIFE's reviewed Constitution is also available upon request to communications@lifeplatform.eu. More information here http://lifeplatform.eu/life_restructuring/.



Disappointing International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) on Bluefin Tuna management



12-19/11 Dubrovnik (Croatia) – On its 21st Special Meeting, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) agreed on a recovery plan for Eastern Bluefin tuna. However, **despite promises to reincorporate small-scale fishers into the fishery, the provisions in the agreed management plan fell short.** No specific allocation of quota was made to small-scale fishers, and the sector is inadequately defined. Prior to the meeting LIFE has written to ICCAT's Chair, Mr. Raul Delgado, welcoming the EU's Draft Recommendation to ICCAT on establishing a Multi-annual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean and making recommendations to ensure that small-scale fishers were to be allocated the fair proportion of the annual increase of quota. The letter was then disseminated to officials, decision-makers, sector representatives, NGOs and stakeholders. It is available here: http://lifeplatform.eu/iccat_21_meeting/.

OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

06/11 Gdynia (Poland) - LIFE Directors Wolfgang Albrecht and Kasia Wysocka, as well as Bengt Larsson, Hans Jacob Jensen and Rafał Bocheński from LIFE's Member Organizations, together with LIFE staff, participated in the joint meetings of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council's General Assembly and Executive Committee (ExCom). **The new ExCom chair, Esben Sverdrup Jensen from Denmark's Pelagic Producer Organization, was unanimously elected by the General Assembly.** LIFE congratulates the new ExCom chair on his new role and is ready to cooperate to see a much-needed improvement in the situation of Baltic small-scale fishers on many fronts. The ExCom discussions centered around the **results of the 2019 fishing opportunities negotiations, with most of the time devoted to the situation of cod stocks**, highlighted by a protest of Polish anglers touched by the bad situation of Eastern cod. LIFE Members duly criticized the Council's decisions on spawning closures (removal for the Western stock; only one month for the Eastern stock). Discussions were also held on the Western herring, where BSAC's focus group will continue to discuss a long-term management strategy, as well as on the Danish public report highlighting the bad management of EMFF funds (<https://www.europeaninterest.eu/article/eu-fisheries-laws-improper-management-danish-ministry-environment-food-report/>).

6/11 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE attended a press conference in the European Parliament organized by the NGO Bloom. The meeting highlighted that despite the European Parliament vote in January 2018 to ban fishing with electricity, **the triologue negotiations (involving the Parliament, the Commission and the Council) on the Technical Measures Regulation are being directed by those with an interest in maintaining the status quo**, in particular the lobby of the Dutch industrial trawler's fleet. More information on this crucial campaign here <http://www.bloomassociation.org/en/analysis-mato-compromise/>

08/11, Tallinn (Estonia) – the Estonian Fisheries Information Centre organized a very interesting scientific seminar on the **interactions between fisheries and the growing population of cormorants (*Phalacrox carbo cinensis*)**. The participants received detailed information on the situation in Denmark, Finland and Estonia, highlighting that fish predation by cormorants is a complex problem in a number of coastal, estuarine and inland waters. Isolated management actions led at national level and based on Article 9 of the European Bird Directive are not bringing good results. It seems that availability of food and climatic conditions – like harsh winters – are having strong impacts on the population. **Many participants stressed the need for more regional and EU-level cooperation to deal with this important problem.**

13-15/11 Palma de Mallorca (Spain) – LIFE staff and Mediterranean Director Christian Decugis participated **in a meeting on small-scale fisheries organised by MEDPAN, the network of Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas managers.** One of the main topics of the initiative was the importance of co-management in MPAs management, and LIFE representatives were able to explain the importance of such an approach. The panel included Federico Gelmi (LIFE member from Pantelleria), Santo Castorina (MPA Ciclopi Island) and Giusy Donato-Mancuso (fishermen association from Ganzirri in Messina).



15-16/11, Simrishamn (Sweden) – Bengt Larsson from LIFE's Swedish Member Organization SYEF and LIFE staff participated in the **Baltic Fisheries 2020 conference.** The first day was devoted exclusively to the growing population of grey seals and how to deal with their increasing impact on mostly small-scale fisheries, with the newest information from science and important projects, such as the one led by ESKO FLAG (<https://balticfisheries.com>). The second day was devoted to crucial fisheries management matters, bringing about a welcome change in tone in discussion about allocation of fishing opportunities. **Many speakers highlighted the benefits of treating fisheries as one of the key elements of coastal communities and were critical of ITQ-based systems.** High-level officials present at the conference, including the head of Sweden's rural development office, made clear that decisions in relation to quotas will be made following a thorough analysis of consequences, including social ones. Positive attention was given to the situation and needs of small-scale fishing communities. More info:

<http://www.landsbygdsnatverket.se/vadarlandsbygdsnatverket/verksamhetsomraden/fiskeochvattenbruk/tidigareaktiviteter/konferensenostersjofiske2020.4.4c6ca46b16724f1cf99ca729.html>

21-22-27/11 Brussels (Belgium) – The fisheries committee of the European Parliament should have voted on amendments to the proposal of the European Commission – DG mare for a Regulation establishing a Multi-annual Plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Western Mediterranean Sea (West Med MAP). However, **the vote was delayed by the rapporteur at the request of industry representatives from Italy, France, and Spain.**

22/11 Warsaw (Poland) – WWF Poland launched an **international campaign called Fish Forward** (<https://www.fishforward.eu>). This large initiative will be present in almost 20 countries (14 EU Member States and 5 developing countries according to the website) aimed mostly at awareness-raising and getting in touch with business communities – all this in a pretty general context of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Whilst the campaign is generally positive about small-scale fishers, some of its actions, e.g. Consumer-guides will advise not to eat some of the species important for our community, such as Eastern cod and European eel. WWF staff clarified they meant no harm to small-scale fishers using low impact fishing gears, but it remains to be seen if the campaign messages will be nuanced to take account of small-scale fishers. We are ready to help in this task.

27/11 Var Region (France) – French fisher Benoît Guérin contacted LIFE to inform about the Péla-Med project, an initiative supported by the Carasso foundation and France Filière Pêche **to reinforce small-scale fisheries in the region of Var, on the French Mediterranean coast.** Among the main objectives of the project: fighting against illegal fishing, acquiring knowledge on commercial and recreational fisheries in the area, rebuilding stocks and economic prosperity. Local fishing associations (Prud'homies) will take part in the project through a coordination committee and will work in close cooperation with scientists and other stakeholders. More information are available here: <http://planetemer.org/actions/pela-med>

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

LIFE members march with the other sector organizations against pulse fishing

3-5/11 Nieuwpoort (Belgium) and Boulogne-sur-mer (France) - **Fishers from Belgium, France, the UK, the Netherlands and other member states gathered in ports to protest against the Dutch industry using pulse trawlers to fish in the North Sea**, targeting mainly sole and plaice, with devastating consequences on the fishing grounds and threatening the livelihoods of hundreds of small-scale fishers. The European Parliament voted for a total ban on pulse back in January 2018, but the provision is now stuck in a complex triologue process on the Technical Measures for Conservation Regulation (which involves three European organisations: the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council) and subdued to the pressure of Dutch-driven industrial fisheries interests that are putting the adoption of such a decision at risk. The demonstration was followed by a Press Conference organised by the NGO Bloom (see above 6/11). A video is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wu5IGA5iLjQ&t=0s&index=2&list=LLHjOZM3NCyFY2q9Ap_wOT1Q



+ Aktea's mission to Galicia between institutional events and work on the ground



5-6/11 Santiago de Compostela (Spain) - Katia Frangoudes and Marja Bekendam represented AKTEA at the First **International Conference on Women in Fisheries organized by the Spanish government**. The conference's main focus was the presentation of the "Santiago de Compostela Declaration", an important text for equal opportunities in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Prior to the event, **they visited two members organizations of the network that are based in the region**: Amarcarril (pictures left) and Mulleres Mar Arousa. Amarcarril women's highlighted the difficulties they are facing, the need to anticipate the age of retirement to 65 and to set up a regional certification for shellfish that would allow to improve the marketing of their products, while Mulleres Mar Arousa is working on gender equality and securing women's role in leadership positions within local and national fishers' organisation. More information here: <http://akteaplatform.eu/category/news/>

+ FSK satisfied for the victory in the strait of Øresund

15/11 Øresund (Denmark) - Back in 2013 a demonstration led by fishermen and supported by environmental NGOs started a long battle to protect important fishing grounds and habitats against sand and gravel extraction in the area of Øresund (a strait which forms the Danish-Swedish border). Over the years, fishers and their supporters committed to such a protest, met with politicians and received the attention of local media. **Thanks to their action, the Northern part of Øresund will eventually not be impacted by the issuing of any new license for extraction**, thus ensuring the protection of fishing grounds that are vital for the livelihoods of local small-scale fishers. More info here (in Danish): <https://www.tv2lorry.dk/tema/sandsugning-i-oeresund> and here <https://www.helsingordagblad.dk/2018/11/14/nu-faar-vi-fred-i-oeresund/>

+ The French platform for small-scale fishers (PPPAF) and Brittany's bass hand-liners furious for bass management

27/11 Rennes (France) – In a recent press release LIFE members from France raise the alarm on the catastrophic situation of the bass stock in the Bay of Biscay. For the whole year 2018 commercial bass fishery in the Bay of Biscay is limited to a total of 2240 tonnes. At the end of November, only 10% of this amount was left, which led to limitations for the whole sector, whatever the gear, just ahead of the busy Christmas season. LIFE members denounce this national management system that allows the large-scale industry to fish massively at the beginning of the year, leaving nothing but crumbs to the small-scale sector. **They ask the EU to urgently decide for a total closure in February and March and to avoid the increase of the minimum size to 42cm**. On the other hand, regarding the area North of the 48° parallel, they approve the proposal of the Commission to keep the same strict measures from 2018 next year in order to enable a rebuilding of the stock. However, the French National Sea Fisheries Committee's position, which is supposed to represent the entire national fisheries sector, favours, once again, the interest of the large-scale fleet over sustainability and local livelihoods. Full press release (in French): <http://www.plateforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=665>

+ Swedish member Bengt Larsson interviewed on the radio

29/11 Ronneby (Sweden) - LIFE representative from Sweden was interviewed on the Swedish radio by reporter Karl-Johan Vannmoun who was very interested in learning more on the plight of small-scale fishers. Bengt explained about **the difficulties faced by the sector, such as the decline of fish stocks and the need to protect local communities' livelihoods**. The reporter was very receptive and he might be interested in carrying out other interviews with a broader a European perspective. The full programme is available here: <https://sverigesradio.se/avsnitt/1190022>

Great commitment of Pescartes for the project “Pescado con Arte”

19-28/11 Almería (Spain) - LIFE member Pescartes participated to the set up and coordination of a series of initiatives dedicated to fish and fine cooking under the umbrella of the project “Pescadores con Arte”. **The initiative was articulated during different days and locations and included a number of diversified activities including cooking shows, workshops, round tables and exhibitions.** The events proved to be a great opportunity to raise awareness on the importance of consuming local and fresh fish, the need to protect fish stocks and the heritage of local fishing communities which have been for centuries the backbone of this part of Mediterranean Spain. The project benefitted from the support and patronage of a number of bodies, including the Biodiversity Foundation, Carasso Foundation, LIFE, the University of Almería and others.



PRESS REVIEW AND INTERESTING READING

Great expectations in the Med and Black Sea (English)

http://lifeplatform.eu/expectations_med_blacksea/

Demonstration on pulse fishing (English and French)

<http://www.brusselstimes.com/business/13017/belgian-fishermen-protest-against-competitors-who-fish-with-electricity>

<https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/en/2018/11/03/flemish-fishermen-protest-against-electro-pulse-fishing-in-the-n/>

<https://www.ouest-france.fr/economie/action-de-pecheurs-boulogne-sur-mer-pour-protester-contre-la-peche-electrique-5831930>

<https://www.parismatch.com/Actu/Societe/Boulogne-sur-Mer-250-personnes-manifestent-contre-la-peche-electrique-1585346>

LIFE writes to ICCAT’s Chair (Spanish)

http://www.industriaspesqueras.com/noticias/en_portada/66032/life_valora_la_propuesta_de_plan_de_gestion_para_el_atun_rojo_y_demanda_cuota_propia_para_los_artesanales.html?hash=ba2c924341cc9886d87e09bddbb6625903d5178c

Panel on women in fisheries in Slow Food (English)

<https://www.slowfood.com/queens-of-the-sea-women-in-fishing/>

Preliminary results of the Baltic Sea and Cormorants project (English)

<https://balticfisheries.com/news/>

Report from the INTERREG Cherish project (English)

<http://www.snowchange.org/2018/11/wave-knowledge-traditional-wisdom-captures-steps-for-traditional-knowledge-and-cultural-heritage-of-fisheries/>

LIFE member from Finland on the issue of black carbon (English)

<https://www.politico.eu/article/sauli-niinisto-black-carbon-finnish-leader-targets-donald-trump-and-vladimir-putin-in-climate-change-drive/>

Gendering Change in Small-scale Fisheries (English)

<http://toobigtoignore.net/special-issue-gender/>

This Newsletter is a simple snapshot of our external activities. In addition, the LIFE staff in Brussels, Poland, Spain, Italy and Malta 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.