



NEWS FROM THE DECK

*The monthly newsletter of the
Low Impact Fishers of Europe*

June 2018

MAIN NEWS

The implementation of the EMFF: a complex process to the benefit of the small-scale sector

20/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE’s Brussels team attended the **“Hearing on the Implementation of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF): Achievements since 2014 and perspectives after 2020”** held at the European Parliament at the presence of the European Commission. Speakers from different EU countries lamented long and complex implementation process at Member State level, with the representative of a Spanish Fish Producer Organisation who claimed that, up to June 2018 “not a single Euro has been received by any fisherman or fishing agency in Spain”. She also said that the EMFF excludes women shellfish gatherers and other women operators in the fishing sector who don’t work on boats. There are clearly issues with the red tape which impede fishers to access those funds. Fleet generational renewal and the need to train new professionals were also mentioned. German Member of the European Parliament Ulrike Rodust questioned the element in the new EMFF about grants for young fishers to buy second hand boats. “No vessels are available” she said. “They have been bought up by large companies in order to access the quota”. The European Commission’s DG Mare representatives underlined that despite a reduction of 5% in the overall budget available, **the new proposal will be a big step forward for small-scale fisheries, with preferential treatment and a rate of financing of up to 100% support for some projects, and access to some exclusive funds, e.g. for engines and second-hand vessels. There is also a requirement for all Member States to include an action plan for small-scale coastal fishing, whatever the fleet size.**

New EMFF regulation available on the link <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52018PC0390&from=EN>.

AKTEA, the European network of women in fisheries and aquaculture, lands in Cyprus and Malta

20-22/6 Zygi (Cyprus) and Qormi (Malta) – AKTEA s Spokesperson went to **Cyprus** to meet up with LIFE Members of the Zygi Fishers Association and explore the possibility **for local women to establish a Cypriote network or to join the Mediterranean movement**. With the help of Stella Stylianou, a fisher’s daughter, they identified interested women in the area. AKTEA will also get in touch with the islands’ national fishers federation to get additional contacts. The journey continued in **Malta where AKTEA’s Chair and Spokesperson visited local fishing communities** and met with potential members. During these visits fisherwomen explained to AKTEA the main problems they face as women and as small-scale fishers. They struggle to develop new activities and to give recognition to the role played by women. Malta was also an opportunity for AKTEA and LIFE to **attend the event “Food from the Sea” organised by the Too Big to Ignore (TBTI) network**. Local fishing families came to listen to several speakers and enjoyed the seafood prepared by local professional chefs. AKTEA spoke about the important contribution of women to family enterprises. More info: <http://toobigtoignore.net/opportunity/food-from-the-sea-is-sajda-u-t-tisjira-in-malta-june-2018/>.



OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

31/5 Darłowo (Poland) – LIFE staff met LIFE Members from Darłowska for detailed discussions on the **new advice published by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) for the Baltic Sea for 2019**. The discussions on the Eastern Baltic cod stock, of fundamental importance for this organization, took most of the time spent together. The question of grey seals' impact on small-scale fishers, as well as ideas to add value to their products, were also extensively covered.

7/6 Brussels (Belgium) – Around 50 participants from EU institutions, NGOs and other organizations attended the event organized by LIFE, Lonxanet Foundation, Farnet, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Costa Sostibile FLAG, on the **“Os Miñarzos – Fin da Terra” project**, in the context of co-management of small-scale coastal fisheries, Marine Spatial Planning, and the Blue Economy. For a full report see <http://lifeplatform.eu/meeting-report-co-management-brussels-7-6/>.

8-11/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE's Deputy Director met with the **Cyprus, Austria, and Poland Permanent Representation** in Brussels to discuss the Technical Measures for Conservation Regulation and pulse trawling. Austria will take over the Presidency of the European Council of Ministers on July 1. The Cyprus Fisheries Attaché, Mr Lavrentios Vasiliades, is very supportive of small-scale fisheries, and is proud of Cyprus's achievement in reducing its trawler fleet down to 2 vessels; Poland is also very supportive of small-scale fishers and would be open to trawler exclusion zones in the Baltic.



8/6 Paris (France) – On the World Oceans Day, LIFE Administrative Officer attended the final **Award Ceremony of the gastronomic competition “Olivier Roellinger” held at the UNESCO Headquarters**. Following a number of contests which took place across Europe during the year and where LIFE members acted as members of the jury, young chefs who proved the culinary abilities as well as their commitment towards preserving fish stocks and diversity were selected. The 2018 edition of the competition was yet another opportunity for LIFE to reaffirm its support for such initiatives, empowering young professionals to take action in resource conservation and to raise awareness on sustainable fishing practices.

11-12/6 Tallinn (Estonia) – LIFE Members from Denmark, Germany and Poland, together with LIFE staff, attended the **Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC) Joint Working Group**, mainly to discuss the ICES advice for the Baltic Sea for 2019. With a **controversial “zero catch” advice for Western Baltic herring** which, if followed through by the managers, would destroy many small-scale fishing communities. Taking into account the further worsening of the Eastern cod situation and many other aspects, such as a recovery of Western cod based on a single strong year class, our Baltic Members have a particularly challenging year ahead. Luckily, our views are taken into account, even if some matters we raise, such as the need to decrease the large-scale pelagic fishing effort in the Central Baltic, are difficult to progress due to the many interests represented around the BSAC table.

13/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Brussels staff participated to the “EU for Talanoa Conference” organised by the European Commission as part of the EU's contribution to the Talanoa Dialogue, an international process to take stock of the collective and individual efforts towards the goals of the **Paris Agreement on climate change**.

12-13/06 Sète (France) – LIFE staff attended two days of meetings of the Mediterranean Advisory Council. The issues discussed included Executive Committee-related matters and the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy with respect to the proposal on the Technical Measures Regulation, the Control Regulation and the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). **However, the most crucial point on the agenda was the Western Mediterranean Multiannual Plan (WestMed MAP)**. Most MEDAC members had sent their written contributions to the Secretariat prior to the meeting, and an examination of the proposed Regulation took place, article by article. The discussion was quite intense in relation to

some key points, such as on the flexibility of the regulation and **the proposal to have trawl-free zones in bathymetries lower than 100m depth during periods of three months**. LIFE, as always, gathered its members ideas and needs and sent a written contribution to the MEDAC, contribution which is visible here <http://lifeplatform.eu/life-westmed-map/>. The Executive Committee of the MEDAC will agree on July the 5th on its final opinion on the WestMed MAP and publish it here http://en.med-ac.eu/pareri_lettere.php. LIFE is currently working on possible amendments to the WestMed MAP which will be sent directly to the different Members of the European Parliament and European Commission's officials in Brussels in early September.

✚ 14/06 Montpellier (France) – LIFE took advantage of the meetings of the Mediterranean Advisory Council in Sète to gather its Mediterranean team, which is has been growing recently, and hold an **internal planning and coordination** meeting of its MAVA project, thus agreeing on the next priorities and strategies for the Region.

✚ 14-15/6 Szczecin (Poland) – LIFE staff met with a team of fisheries scientists of the Western Pomeranian Technical University to prepare an EMFF project application to **test seal-resistant (and seal-safe) gears with extensive participation of small-scale fishers**. The second day was devoted to a conference to present and discuss the **ICES advice** mentioned before (30/5 and 11-12/6) where representatives from LIFE Member organization Wolinska participated, asking tough and as yet unanswered questions on the decrease of the local stock of pike-perch. **Eastern cod** was the main conference focus: scientists from the Polish Sea Fisheries institute have informed about a specific advice sought from ICES on extending the closure covering the Bornholm Deep, the last functioning cod spawning ground – something that LIFE Members dependent on cod have long called for. The results of this process will be available in late September, just in time for the decisions of Fisheries Ministers in October.

✚ 16/6 Brest (France) – Katia Frangoudes, Spokesperson for AKTEA, was **interviewed by the French radio “France Culture” in the framework of a programme dedicated to women in fisheries**. Katia spoke about the first steps on the women in fisheries movement in France which developed in the nineties in solidarity to the husbands who were carrying out strikes. Today women working in fisheries worldwide still face a number of social challenges, not least the fact that after the divorce it is very difficult to get recognition for their role in support of the family business, leaving them with very little economic support. The full podcast is available here: <https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/lsd-la-serie-documentaire/marins-24-femmes-de-mer>.

✚ 19-20/6 Malaga (Spain) – LIFE s Mediterranean coordinator attended a first **coordination meeting of all the “MAVA partners” (organisations funded by the MAVA Foundation)** focusing their work on the Alboran Sea. The meeting intends to coordinate efforts, promote synergies and identify the relevant targets and indicators that will serve in the next three years in this specific Sub-region.

✚ 20/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Brussels staff attended the **“Save the European Eel: Europe’s own ivory trade”** event held in the European Parliament. It discussed the scale and scope of illegal capture and trade of glass eels. This is a massively remunerative commerce, but with very low risks for its practitioners (very low levels of penalties). Given the central role in the illegal trade played by China, according to the Member of the European Parliament Ricardo Serrao Santos, it should be awarded a red card for supporting IUU (*illegal fishing*) activities. Details of the event and presentations can be accessed on the URL link: <http://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/events/event/save-the-european-eel-europes-own-ivory-trade/>; a Press Release is available on <http://www.sustainableeelgroup.org/2018/06/21/experts-call-for-eu-action-to-tackle-the-illegal-eel-market-2/>.

✚ 20/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE’s Deputy Director went the European Parliament for the Fisheries Committee discussions on the Commission’s proposal for amending the Fisheries Control Regulation. The Rapporteur for the Fisheries Control Regulation, MEP Isabelle Thomas, said the EU needs a “Control”, not a “Penalties” Regulation. Ms Valerie Laine from the EU Commission’s DG Mare replied that response to infractions needed to be dissuasive, proportionate, in line with the seriousness of the violation, and taking into account all principles of the law. DG Mare feels that it is unlikely that a new Control Regulation will be implemented before 2023; explaining that there would **be 3 basic reporting requirements for**

small-scale fishers (under 12 metres, non-towed gears) – time of departure for fishing, time of return, and quantity of catch.

21/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Deputy Director attended the **“Exchange of views on establishing a Multi-annual Plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Western Mediterranean Sea”** at the European Parliament. The meeting kicked off with presentations from “experts”, who included industry representatives from Italy, Spain and WWF. Nothing very new. The industry defended trawling. The Italian large-scale industry said that there is no need to reduce fishing effort, and that the specific characteristics of the sea need to be better taken into account (as regards closed trawl season/ area), and areas where a ban already exists should be reviewed. The Spanish representative said that the 70% of the fishers were members of fishing *Cofradías* (*national fishers associations*), and that no other organizations were needed.

21/6 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Deputy Director attended the **“Exchange of views on ICES scientific opinion 'Comparison of the ecological and environmental effects of pulse trawls and traditional beam trawls when exploiting the North Sea sole TAC”** in the European Parliament. Members of the European Parliament were quite divided in their views and positions, between those who are opposed to pulse, those who are indifferent and those who are pro-pulse. The most outspoken was the French Green MEP Yannick Jadot who accused the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) of failing in their scientific, ethical and political responsibilities in their evaluation of the impact of pulse in the sole fishery; Dutch MEP Peter van Dalen, well known to be pro-pulse, focused on attacking Bloom, the NGO who has been actively against such a gear. The best intervention was from UK MEP John Flack (Conservative East of England), who underlined how the “Parliament is the people’s voice. Parliament has spoken, let’s stick with what parliament has said” (referring to the vote against pulse of the Parliament’s plenary in January). The ICES representative was not convincing in defending the impartiality of the ICES evaluation, or that it had not been influenced by the pressure of the Dutch Government and beam trawling sector.

22/6 Catania (Italy) – LIFE Project Manager for Italy met with Prof. Giuseppina Carrà who is in charge of fisheries research in the University of Catania. Following his presentation of LIFE’s mission in support of small-scale fisheries, Ms Carrà suggested to subscribe a **Memorandum of Understanding between LIFE and the University** in the view to work together in the framework of the project “Diverso”, an initiative on the diversification of fisheries activities lead by the Sicilian Regional Fisheries Department. Among the activities of the project are the valorisation of seafood products and cooperation between researchers and the industry for the protection of marine resources and cultural heritage. More information of the project is available in Italian on the dedicated website: <http://www.pescadiverso.com/>.



26/06 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Brussels’ staff attended two meetings in the European Parliament. The first one, **“Making fish farming sustainable - Innovative & eco-friendly solutions to tackle escapees, sea lice and other challenges”** gave an overview of the current challenges faced by the Aquaculture sector, namely sea lice, escapees, and need to find sustainable sources of feed. The second meeting was on **“The landing obligation and discards survivability: How to assess and improve discards survival?”**. The round table discussion focused mainly on exchanges between large-scale interests and NGOs. For industrial fisheries, Denmark (Mr. Michael Andersen), the Netherlands (Mr. Pim Visser) and Scotland (Mr. Michael Park) took the floor, all stating that the sector is doing as much as possible to comply with the new rules of the landing obligation; on the contrary Seas at Risk NGO (Ms Monica Verbeek) underlined that because of a number of exceptions (e.g. in terms of species) the implementation is too slow. NGOs want observers on board and increased monitoring.

27/06 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE Brussels’ staff were invited to represent LIFE members from Ireland IIMRO – Irish Islands Marine Resources Organisations – for the screening of the **movie “A turning tide in the life of Man”** (a film that tells the story of one fisher John O’Brien and his journey to Brussels to get to grips with the reform of the CFP <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4174514/>) organised by the Italian 5 stars Movement political group. Italian Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Rosa D’Amato of the Fisheries Committee reminded the importance of safeguarding EU small-

scale fisheries, “which can and must be a factor of environmental and social sustainability”. LIFE Deputy Director updated on the CFP and developments in the Irish islands and highlighted what still needs to be achieved.

✚ 28/06 Madrid (Spain) – Macarena Molina, from LIFE Spanish member organisation Pescartes, attended on behalf of LIFE the **2nd Social Participation Committee of the Intemares Project**. This second meeting used a participatory approach with the aim of contributing to the development of the draft Strategy for Training and Capacity building in the Marine Areas of the Natura 2000 Network.

✚ 28-29/6 Copenhagen (Denmark) – The discussions on 2019 ICES advice for Baltic stocks continued at the **Baltic Sea Advisory Council Executive Committee (ExCom) and BALTFISH Forum**, with the presence of LIFE Members from Denmark, Germany, Poland and Sweden, as well as LIFE staff. An unusually long and detailed set of BSAC recommendations for 2019 TACs and accompanying measures was finalized and presented on the 2nd day to managers at the BALTFISH Forum, containing i.a. **detailed information on the economic dependence of LIFE Member Organization Fischerei-Freest on Western herring fishery**. There was also a discussion on grey seals’ and cormorants’ impacts on fisheries, and the interim chair suggested to **seek candidates for the BSAC ExCom chair also from outside** the group of General Assembly Members; ExCom members have until the end of July to vote on this proposal; with Commission threatening to stop funding the BSAC if the ExCom chair crisis is prolonged, the situation is particularly delicate now.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

✚ **Great attendance for the traditional rowing competition in Sweden, but more training needed for LIFE’s Coordinator!**

16/06, Ronnebyhamn (Sweden) – LIFE Swedish Members SYEF have co-organized an important event for the Blekinge Region, **the Sillarodden fest**, which attracted more than 3 thousand visitors! LIFE is proud to have sponsored the winner’s prize for this year’s edition – a meticulously recreated model of a traditional herring sailing fishing boat, used at the turn of XIX and XX centuries. **“Sillarodden” is essentially a rowing contest, organized to mark a centuries-long tradition of coastal herring fishing**, where the fishermen would fish it through the night, and their spouses would transport the catch to the Ronneby market, to ensure it is sold as soon as possible to retain quality. This tradition is re-created in the rules of the Sillarodden contest, where the winning team must not only be the first one at Ronneby’s main square, but also be the first to sell all the herring. The rowing team with LIFE’s Baltic & North Sea Coordinator on board finished 6th this year, which is largely his fault as he broke an oar! 😊

✚ **Members from Italy, LIFE and AKTEA selected by the FAO as best practice**

27/6 Rome (Italy) – Since some years already, LIFE members from Sicily, Associazione dei Pescatori di Pantelleria, decided to make an important commitment towards sustainability and to reduce the lengths of their nets from 5000 to 1500 meters. This best practice attracted the interest of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of the FAO who invited them **to present their sustainable fishing practices to decision-makers and stakeholders at the "High-level conference on sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea" that will be held in Malta in September**. In the framework of the meeting, they will be **joined by LIFE and AKTEA who have also been selected to take part in the panels for the “reinforcement of small-scale fisheries networks” and “women in fisheries”, respectively**. All



relevant information, including the Draft Programme and the Regional Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, alongside the pre-registration link, are available via the conference website at:

LIFE supports AKTEA, the women in fisheries network
www.akteaplatform.eu

<http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/ssf2018>. Please note that **the GFCM has (limited) funds available to cover guests' participation, therefore requests should be made to the GFCM Secretariat as soon as possible** by submitting a completed funding request form (available on the "Registration" page of the conference website) via email, to gfc-secretariat@fao.org. Do not miss this opportunity and sign in!

PRESS REVIEW AND INTERESTING READING

Oceana NGO on global fisheries policies (English)

<http://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/391300-how-to-save-the-oceans>

Le Monde on the objectivity of ICES advice on pulse fishing (French)

https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2018/06/21/la-science-convoquee-dans-le-bras-de-fer-sur-la-peche-electrique_5318589_3244.html

Bass turns the corner? On June 29 ICES published its advice on Sea Bass fishing opportunities for 2018, replacing the advice given in July 2017. This provides for an increasing trend in total removals, with 880 tonnes recommended in 2018 and just over double that for 2019, 1,789 tonnes. In October 2017, ICES had advised that when "the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catch (commercial and recreational) in 2018" (English)

<http://ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2018/2018/bss.27.4bc7ad-h.pdf>

Fishers and environmental organisations call on the European anti-fraud office to open a formal investigation about electric fishing

<http://www.bloomassociation.org/en/fishers-and-environmental-organisations-call-on-the-european-anti-fraud-office-to-open-a-formal-investigation-about-electric-fishing/>

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