



NEWS FROM THE DECK

The monthly newsletter of the

Low Impact Fishers of Europe

November 2017

MAIN NEWS

✚ ICCAT 2017: historically high bluefin tuna quota – but what about small-scale fishers?

From the 14th to the 22nd of this month, the 25th ordinary meeting of The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) was held in Marrakech, Morocco. Contracting Party Countries decided to increase the Bluefin Tuna TAC significantly up to 2020 but, at this stage, failed to consider how a fair allocation could be made to small scale fishers. Prior to the meeting, LIFE lobbied for the interests of



its members within decision-making fora, sent over 60 letters to decisions-makers in Brussels and at Member State level and disseminated widely its latest documentary “Blue Hope Tuna” starring LIFE members from Malta, France and Spain (<https://vimeo.com/240133802>). **LIFE will continue its action to ensure the interests of the small-scale fleet are not put aside** in the framework of the allocation at Member State level. More information on LIFE’s website [http://lifeplatform.eu/bft-iccat-](http://lifeplatform.eu/bft-iccat-ssfs/)

[ssfs/](http://www.platforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=567) and in the PR by LIFE Members from France PPPAF <http://www.platforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=567>

✚ Fundacja MARE and LIFE at the forefront for a cleaner Baltic Sea

Ghost nets are a major issue for marine conservation, devastating marine flora and fauna and generating long-terms damage. In order to fight this major issue, Fundacja Mare (<http://fundacjamare.pl/en/>) launched a large-scale retrieval project off the coast of Poland. Five organizations of Polish fishers, **including three LIFE Members – Darłowska Group of Fish Producers and Fishing Boat Owners, Wolin Fishermen Association and Mierzeja Boat Fishermen Association** – decided to join the project and contribute to fight this dramatic issue. Today, the retrieval actions are pursued by **533 small boats** in the 12-mile zone, coordinated by the fishers’ organizations themselves, targeting both ghost nets and other marine litter. They use retrieval methods having a minimal impact on the environment, with special attention given to the seabed. Thanks to this initiative, a total of **140 tons of ghost nets** have been retrieved so far. More information: <http://lifeplatform.eu/fundacja-mare-life-cleaner-baltic-sea/> .



OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

- ✚ 3/11 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE hosted a meeting at its premises of **small scale bass fishers (hook and line, and nets) from the UK (NUTFA), France (Plateforme de la Petite Pêche Artisanale Française) and the Netherlands (LIFE NL and NetVISwerk) to discuss the ICES advice for 2018**. ICES recommend zero catch for 2018, notes that a 60% reduction in fishing effort is needed, and that recreational fisheries took over 50% of the catch in 2016. The meeting served as an opportunity to gather the views of the attendees, work on a common position and prepare for the official meeting with DG Mare of 13/11 (below).
- ✚ 07/11, Gdynia, Poland – Rafał Bochenski from Polish LIFE Member Darłowska, together with LIFE staff, attended the meeting of **BSAC Executive Committee (ExCom)**. Mirek Daniluk of Poland's Association of Sea Fishermen represented LIFE's German Director Wolfgang Albrecht who was unable to attend. The morning session was devoted to the selectivity in bottom trawls question, with a number of technicalities discussed. Mirek asked about the **importance of trawling time and seasonality in assessing selectivity**, and LIFE staff enquired about the **practice of nullifying selective properties of trawls by certain operators**. Michael Andersen, Chair of BSAC's Demersal Working Group, responded that it was important to ensure compliance with the rules. The meeting also briefly discussed the outcome of the October Fisheries Council and finally managed to elect an ExCom vice-chair, Andrzej Bialas of the NGO Oceana.
- ✚ 8/11 Brussels (Belgium) – Social Dialogue Committees are European fora where employers and workers meet to discuss topics involving the two sides of industry (employers and workers). LIFE had an informal meeting with Ment van de Zwan and Daniel Voces from Europêche, involved in the Social Dialogue Committee for Fisheries, to discuss **the social dialogue process in fisheries in the EU**. Mr van de Zwan highlighted that the focus is sea safety and working conditions, and the objective of Europêche is to get sea safety included as an objective in the next CFP.
- ✚ 13/11 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE met with DG Mare and recreational fishers' representatives **to discuss the bass situation, in the context of ICES advice and the issue of fishing opportunities for 2018**. In representation of LIFE member organisations Ger de Ruiter (LIFE NL), Albert Jan Maat (NetVISwerk) and Jean-François Plessis (PPPFAF) attended, supported by LIFE staff. Following the meeting, the European Commission published a non-paper (the raw material that will be processed by the Council in the view of the Council meeting 11-12 December) suggesting a total fishery closure on bass fishing North of the 48th parallel, with a derogation granted to hook and line fishers, who are allocated 4 tonnes, with a 2 months closure from February 1 to March 31, 2017. Recreational anglers would have a 6 months season from July 1 to December 31, during which they may only catch and release - no fish may be retained on board.
- ✚ 14/11, Copenhagen (Denmark) – Iben Wiene Rathje from LIFE's Danish Member Organization FSK and LIFE staff participated in an event presenting **Oceana NGO's work on the social and economic value of the reconstruction of EU fisheries**. A particularly interesting thread of the discussion was about sharing the benefits from fishing at MSY level, with both LIFE representatives alluding to the negative consequences of the Danish ITQ system for many coastal communities and small-scale fishers. Oceana's European Director, Lasse Gustafson, replied by saying that **"if you want to prioritize profit margins, favor large-scale sector; if you want to prioritize jobs, favor small-scale sector."** **At LIFE, we very much agree with this statement.**
- ✚ 14-15/11, Copenhagen (Denmark) – Hans Jacob Jensen from FSK and LIFE staff have been active as **Observers at 7th HELCOM-FISH Group meeting**. Helcom is an intergovernmental organization working for the protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area. It touched upon many matters i.a.: seal-fisheries interactions, impacts of different fishing practices on sea floor and benthic communities, projects on improving knowledge about sea trout stocks and engagement on ghost nets retrieval.
- ✚ 15/11 Rome (Italy) and Brussels (Belgium) – Launched in June 2015, The Family Farming Knowledge Platform (FFKP) is the FAO's platform that gathers digitized quality information on family farming from all

over the world; including national laws and regulations, public policies, best practices, relevant data and statistics, researches, articles and publications. **Today it counts more than 100 contributors worldwide and thanks to the input of LIFE, content on small-scale fisheries is now available as well.** LIFE and FFKP celebrate their cooperation to raise awareness on the immense environmental, social and economic value of local fishing communities. More info here <http://lifeplatform.eu/life-and-ffkp/>

- ✚ 15/11 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE Brussels Office interviewed candidates for the position of **trainee Office Manager, and selected Tania Gesto Casás from Galicia**, who will join the team on Monday 4 December. Tania worked previously in Brussels and has experience in translation, administration and events management. She speaks English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. Welcome to LIFE, Tania!



- ✚ 16/11 Brussels (Belgium) - DG Mare organized an expert group meeting on the Control Regulation to gather stakeholders' views on the Commission's initiative to revise the Fisheries Control System. The Control Regulation is the EU tool to ensure compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy, and this revision aims to strengthen enforcement, fisheries data and to reduce the administrative burden. It is being rushed through with the intention of having a proposal ready for the European Parliament to discuss by April 2018. **The revision will have important implications for vessels under 12 metres, which until now have been exempted from VMS and catch reporting.** More info: https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/control_en
- ✚ 16-17/11, Simrishamn (Sweden) – Bengt Larsson from LIFE's Swedish Member Organization SYEF, together with LIFE's friend & ally Glenn Fridh and LIFE staff, participated in the Östersjöfiske 2020 (Baltic Sea fisheries 2020) conference. The Conference was dominated by the Alliance of 17 Swedish Coastal Municipalities, led by Simrishamn, and discussed a number of topics such as added value of products from local fisheries and seal-fisheries interactions. LIFE's Baltic and North Sea Coordinator presented **"LIFE's 4 Strategic Directions for the Baltic Sea – policy representation, added value to products & data collection, making small-scale fishers the stewards of the marine environment"**, gaining broad support from the participants. LIFE puts great hope in further cooperation with Swedish small-scale, low impact fishers and the alliance of their local authorities!
- ✚ 21/11 Brussels (Belgium) - The PECH Committee of the European Parliament voted on amendments to the Technical Measures Regulation for Conservation (2016/0074(COD)). Deputies **voted to lift restrictions on electric pulse trawling**, a controversial gear that is being promoted by the Dutch government and DG Mare before adequate research or controls are in place. Despite this unwelcome result, LIFE and other stakeholders will continue their fight against this dangerous gear ahead of the plenary vote in Strasbourg in early 2018. LIFE's Director attended a meeting in London, called by the Dutch pulse interests and presented evidence from small scale fishers from the UK, Belgium, France and Holland highlighting the damage done by electric pulse trawls, turning parts of the southern North Sea 'into a desert'. The Dutch scientist present admitted that they still did not understand everything that the use of pulse gear does to the seabed and our Director suggested that the activity should be restricted to only Dutch waters until they could prove that it did not have any negative effects on the wider marine environment. More info http://lifeplatform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Paper_Pulse_EN.pdf

✚ 28-29/11, Liepaja (Latvia) – LIFE staff had the opportunity to present LIFE to Latvian small-scale fishers and contribute to the NESUfish project led by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), by i.a. showing practical **examples of novel approaches to markets that add significant value to small-scale fishers' catches**, based on Bengt Larsson's (member from Sweden) direct marketing via the www.fiskonline.se website. The project aims to improve the understanding of the situation and needs of small-scale fisheries communities in Northern Baltic; the elaboration of a larger project proposal to support them is also planned. More information on MSC website (in Polish) <https://www.msc.org/informacje-prasowe/informacje-prasowe/nowa-inicjatywa-msc-na-rzecz-zrownowazonego-rybolowstwa-maloskalowego-na-morzu-baltyckim>



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NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

✚ LIFE members from Ireland tour Scotland to present the film *Atlantic*

9/11 Isle of Barra (Scotland) - Risteard Ó Domhnaill's 2016 film *Atlantic* takes on the powerful interests carving up Ireland's ocean resources. With Brexit now on the horizon, *Atlantic* provides a timely reminder of just how crucial the questions of sovereignty and sustainability have become. **One of the fishermen appearing in the film is Jerry Early, Chair of LIFE member IIMRO, the Irish Islands Marine Resource Organisation.** Since the ban on drift netting for wild salmon, he has been fighting to regain his fishing rights while foreign super-trawlers operate with impunity just offshore. During the month of November, he toured a number of locations in Scotland (such as the Isle of Barra and Glasgow) to talk about his battle and facilitate meetings with island fishermen and local fishing industry representatives. In LIFE, we cannot recommend this film more highly. It is a "must see" for anyone interested in marine matters and worth watching for the cinematography alone. A moving and important film.



✚ Project on the marketing of small-scale fisheries products by LIFE French and Spanish members approved

27/11 Paris (France) – The dossier presented by members from France SPMLR and Spain Arts Menors Costa Brava with the support of LIFE for the funding of the SYNEPESCA project has been accepted by the Daniel & Nina Carasso Foundation. The project will be developed over two years and focus on best practice exchanges between the two partners to enhance knowledge, skills and tools for the valorisation and marketing of small-scale fisheries products building upon, inter alia, the previous positive experience of the French members with the label they created, Golion (<http://www.golion.fr/>).



✚ Project on by-catch involving LIFE members from Germany makes it to CMS COP12 in Asia

27/11 Philippines (Asia) - Over the past months, LIFE members from the German association Fischereischutzverband took part in a project to test PAL devices to prevent Harbour Porpoises by-catch in the gillnet fishery (<http://lifeplatform.eu/german-members-save-porpoises-entanglement/>). Thanks to its

innovative approach, the research has been included as best practice in the online magazine of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations' Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) which was held in Manila (Philippines – Asia) from the 23 to 28 October 2017. Learn more in Magazine n°2 (green cover) - page 82-83! <http://www.cms.int/en/news/tracks-now-available-extended-online-version>

✚ LIFE members from the Netherlands bring the seabass and eel issue to the attention of national authorities

27/11 Netherlands – **LIFE member NetVISwerk had the opportunity to share its vision on seabass and eel management with Carola Schouten, the new Dutch minister for Agriculture and Fisheries.** Miranda Bout, member of NetVISwerk who runs a small scale coastal fishery firm with her husband and son, voiced the concerns of the small scale fixed net fishers in the Netherlands. In 2016 they were almost forgotten in Brussels and for 2017 a zero quota looms at the horizon. NetVISwerk hopes that the Minister will have the time to amend some parts of the proposal of the Commission. NetVISwerk appreciates the assistance of LIFE and hopes to coordinate with small-scale fishers from the UK and France. Miranda hopes to be able to put her apron on next year as well to clean seabass and mullet caught by her husband and son.

WELCOME ON BOARD

In addition to the members who joined since the beginning of 2017, the following organisation officially became part of LIFE and/or AKTEA this month:

✚ Asociación de mulleres do mar de Arousa

(Fisherwomen organisation from the Arousa Sea – Galicia (Spain))



The association joined AKTEA, LIFE's partner dedicated to women in fisheries. The group counts 1300 members, working as shellfish harvesters, sellers, net menders, wholesalers, traders, shipowners or involved in the family business. They want the role played by women in fisheries to be more visible, including in leadership positions, and to improve gender equality in our sector. You can follow them on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mulleresmardearousa/> and Twitter @mulleresArousa. Welcome Ladies!

PRESS REVIEW

Finland: Puruvesi winter seining and Snowchange receive national recognition for cultural heritage (English)

<http://www.snowchange.org/2017/11/puruvesi-winter-seining-and-snowchange-receive-national-recognition-for-cultural-heritage/>

Euractiv: ICCAT and the rise in quota of Bluefin Tuna (English)

<http://www.euractiv.com/section/energy-environment/opinion/disgraceful-behaviour-by-the-eu-at-high-level-tuna-meeting-in-marrakesh/>

EU Commission PR on Bluefin Tuna and ICCAT (English)

https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/eu-leads-international-efforts-restore-sustainable-tuna-stocks_en

Impact of ITQs on Danish small-scale fisheries (English)

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X1730146X>

French fishers against the vote of the PECH Committee on pulse (English)

<http://www.lemarin.fr/secteurs-activites/environnement/29976-peche-electrique-le-statu-quo-jusquau-vote-en-pleniere>

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