



NEWS FROM THE DECK

The monthly newsletter of the

Low Impact Fishers of Europe

December 2017 and January 2018

MAIN NEWS

Large-scale project for the Mediterranean to be led by LIFE for three years with the support of the MAVA Foundation



The Mediterranean Sea is one of the richest marine environments worldwide but is also in urgent need of effective management solutions to protect its biodiversity and socio-economic heritage. Thanks to the financial support of the MAVA Foundation (<http://en.mava-foundation.org/>) **LIFE is launching the project “Mainstreaming Small Scale Low Impact Fisheries in the Mediterranean” (2018-2021)**. In line with the overall objectives of LIFE, it aims to bring small-scale fishers to the core of decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods, with a focus on 2 areas: the Alboran Sea and the Strait of Sicily. The project is articulated in a range of actions covering inter alia: the participation of fishers in EU and international fora, co-management and marine protected areas, data gathering, bluefin tuna quota, the regulation of recreational fisheries, producer organisations and the reinforcement of AKTEA – the women in fisheries network. The latter will strengthen its action with an ad-hoc **workshop dedicated to women in fisheries** taking place during the second year of the project. The first step of this new initiative took place on the 30 and 31st of January in Rome, where LIFE staff met with MAVA representatives and other stakeholders to coordinate on the work to be carried out.

Massive support to LIFE for the vote on pulse fishing

On 16/1 The Members of the European Parliament gathered in the plenary session in Strasbourg to **vote on the dossier of the Technical Measures Regulation**, a piece of EU law including a number of measures meant to achieve the objectives of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy such as regionalisation, avoidance of unwanted catches and minimisation of the ecosystem impact of fishing gears. One of the amendments included the lift of restrictions on pulse fishing in the Southern North Sea for a subsequent spread to other sea basins. This worrying scenario **triggered a massive mobilisation across Europe**, involving organisations such as LIFE and Bloom, LIFE members from France, the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands, NGOs, Members of the European Parliament of all political parties, scientists, journalists and stakeholders. A fierce battle between the “for or against pulse fishing” took place for weeks in the EU Institutions premises, in the media and on social networks. Eventually, with 402 votes for 232 against, **the European Parliament voted for a total ban on pulse fishing**. A significant battle has been won, but the war is far from over. We will have to keep a careful eye on the **trialogue process** (involving the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council) through which the content of the Technical Measures will be negotiated over the coming months. More information on this exciting campaign in the **dedicated press review in annexe to this newsletter**.



OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

- ✚ 29-11/01-12 Stockholm (Sweden) –Danish Member FSK and LIFE staff participated in **HELCOM’s seminar on the future of European Eel management in the Baltic Sea region**. The meeting had two goals: improve the availability and quality of the data on eel used by scientists and discussing possible management and control measures ahead of December Council of EU fisheries ministers. LIFE gave the example of efficient eel reporting practices in German waters, made available by its German Director. The outcome of the workshop and other detailed documents are available here <https://portal.helcom.fi/meetings/FISH-M%205-2017-92/MeetingDocuments/Forms/AllItems.aspx>
- ✚ Brussels (Belgium) - In early December the LIFE Brussels team met with DG Mare services to discuss the process towards establishing a **Mediterranean-wide Action Plan** for small scale fisheries, due to be launched in September 2018 at a “High Level Conference” organized by the GFCM in Malta.
- ✚ 7-8/12 Ustka (Poland) – LIFE’s Baltic and North Sea Coordinator took part in a conference on the “**Rational use of living marine resources**” organized by the Polish Fish Market Development Association (<http://srrr.org.pl>). He presented LIFE to an audience composed by many scientists and fish market players and **explained LIFE’s vision of low impact fisheries**, inter alia by relying on the scientific paper “Individual transferable quotas, does one size fit all?” (Available here <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X1730146X>) stemming from the work of LIFE members from Denmark, FSK. The conference also focused on marketing strategies and consumer-facing initiatives.
- ✚ 08/12 Brussels (Belgium) – Following increased interest by LIFE members for setting up small scale producer organisations, LIFE commissioned the report “Fishy Business” ahead of the Fisheries Council. The aim of the report is to investigate whether Member States properly recognise and regulate their Fish Producer Organisations (POs). Findings confirm **that most quota are held in the hands of a few large companies**. LIFE urges the EU Commission to carry out an urgent review of its Member States’ POs’ compliance with Articles 14 and 16 of the Common Organisation of the Markets Regulation. A copy of the report was delivered to all Member of the European Parliament and to the Fisheries Ministers of all Member States. More information and report available in EN, FR, ES, NL, PL, DE, DK <http://lifeplatform.eu/fishy-business-fish-pos-eu-2/>
- ✚ 11/12 Warsaw (Poland) – LIFE noted that the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (HaV) allocated an **extra 150 tons of Western cod quota to trawlers** (on top of 120 tons allocated in October). This quota should have been left where it was originally allocated – with the small-scale, low impact cod fishery segment in Sweden, using passive gears in the most sustainable way. More information <http://lifeplatform.eu/sweden-wbc-ssfs-risk/>
- ✚ 11-23/12 Messolongi, Preveza and Mixaniona (Greece) – AKTEA – LIFE’s platform partner dedicated to women in fisheries - spokesperson Katia Frangoudes **met with local fishing communities, and in particular with fisherwomen**. Many of them operate on boats in areas such as lagunas, closed seas and bays. They work alone or with their husbands and are declared under the social security system of farmers. AKTEA is planning to follow-up with another meeting in Greece in the course of the spring to delve more into their contribution to fisheries’ harvesting and help them set up their own organization.
- ✚ 11-12 Brussels (Belgium) – Two days and two nights of difficult negotiations by Fisheries Ministers in the traditional December Council yielded **some good results for LIFE priority stocks – seabass and European**

eel. On seabass, the Council heeded the calls for minimizing the by-catch allowances for trawlers, capable of doing the most damage to this endangered stock, leaving a set of minimum “survival” quotas for small-scale, low impact fishers dependent on seabass, although the amount of 5 tonnes was considered to be insufficient in Brittany (France) especially for vessels with two fishers on board, who will have to ask for external financial support. A tightened reporting regime and inclusion of recreational fishing in the picture are also steps in the right direction. On eel, a total ban scenario was thankfully avoided, but the enacted measures will not yield the desired results without i.a. tightening controls (including glass eel fisheries & trade) and tackling the main causes of non-fisheries related eel mortality. More effort on improving **data availability for scientists** is equally a must.

- ✚ 12/12 Klaipeda (Lithuania) - LIFE Baltic and North Sea Coordinator **met with representatives of the fishing community of the Klaipeda Region** to present LIFE and answer their questions, many of which were quite concrete and detailed. The audience was composed of i.a. small-scale and umbrella organizations, local scientists and administration representatives in charge of Lithuanian EMFF funds; Small-scale fishers organizations were interested by LIFE’s work, in particular on the potential cooperation on projects adding value to local product and on the issue of invasive species, as there is an increase in the presence of round gobies in Lithuanian coastal waters. LIFE is eager to continue the cooperation!
- ✚ 23/12 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE’s Deputy Director Brian O’Riordan attended the Market Advisory Council Working Group 1 meeting. LIFE’s report “Fishy Business” – highlighting the regulation and management of Producer Organisations (<http://lifeplatform.eu/fishy-business-fish-pos-eu-2/>) - was vociferously **criticised by the Dutch Producer Organisation representative**, who felt that the title of the report was denigrating, and that the report’s focus was on allocation issues. His view was not widely shared.
- ✚ 24/12 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE’s Brussels team attended a cocktail organised by Conxemar - the Spanish Association of Wholesalers, Importers, Manufacturers and Exporters of fish products and Aquaculture – for the Presentation of a new **Catalogue of Commercial Species** they produced. The event was attended by a number of Members of the European Parliament, European Commission officials and stakeholders and was an opportunity to exchange on a number of hot topics, including the vote on pulse fishing.
- ✚ 25/1 Brussels (Belgium) - An event was organized in the European Parliament on **recreational fisheries** by Romanian Member of the European Parliament Norica Nicolai. She is rapporteur of the pending EP’s own initiative (INI) report on the “State of play of recreational fisheries in the European Union”. There was wide support for recreational fisheries being included more centrally in the CFP. More information here: <http://www.eaa-europe.org/european-parliament-forum/ep-recfishing-forum-events/>.
- ✚ 29-30/01 Copenhagen (Denmark) – LIFE’s German Director Wolfgang Albrecht and LIFE staff attended the **meeting of the Executive Committee of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC), as well as a workshop on recreational fisheries organized in cooperation with Baltfish**. The BSAC’s budget now contains a **sizeable allocation for interpretation, so we strongly encourage our Members to participate in the future BSAC work more actively!** The work priorities for 2018-2019 include: seals’ impact on fisheries, further action on European eel in the region and beyond, as well as working group meetings dedicated to control issues. The workshop on recreational fishing highlighted a growing interest for this part of the sector, especially with regards to management and data collection. On a more worrying note, ICES scientists’ findings on Eastern Baltic cod are not positive. We must do much more to help this stock to improve– for the sake of Baltic small-scale fishers and ecosystems. More information on both days here <http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/Joint-BALTFISH-BSAC-workshop-on-recreational-fishe> and here [http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-\(2\)](http://www.bsac.dk/Meetings/BSAC-meetings/BSAC-Executive-Committee-(2))
- ✚ 30-31/1 Barcelona (Spain) – It is with great pleasure that LIFE staff informs its members and followers that LIFE’s Mediterranean Coordinator, Marta Cavallé, is back on duty after her maternity leave. Marta will hit

the ground running with the management of project **“Mainstreaming Small Scale Low Impact Fisheries in the Mediterranean” (2018-2021) supported by the MAVA Foundation**. She will soon be joined by other staff in the process of being recruited to reinforce LIFE’s Mediterranean team.

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Polish members lead the way on ghost nets

3 LIFE Polish Member Organizations got involved in this large-scale project **“Clean Baltic” promoted by the Mare Foundation** (<http://fundacjamare.pl/bip/fundacja/>) to retrieve ghost nets along the polish coast. Thanks to their action, 147 tons of marine litter were fished from the Baltic. You can follow LIFE fishers in action in the two exclusive videos documenting their commitment <http://lifeplatform.eu/polish-fishers-lead-way-ghost-nets/>



Representatives of Irish, French, Belgian and Dutch members raise their concerns on pulse fishing

LIFE members undertook a number of actions to lobby against pulse fishing in the course of the months of December and January, including **making their voice heard in EU fora and in the media**. Some of the statements included that of Jerry Early, Chair of LIFE members from Ireland IIMRO, who underlined in the magazine The Skipper how “small-scale fishermen are seeing first-hand the damage to fish stocks”, Ken Kawahara of French group PPPAF highlighted the danger of “public funding in support of such an impacting gear” during an event held at the European Parliament on 10/1 and Ger de Ruiter of LIFE NL stated how “The Netherlands went too fast on pulse fishing” in local press. LIFE’s Executive Director, who has first hand knowledge of electric fishing, was busy throughout the period leading up to the EP vote. Full statements: Jerry Early <http://www.maramedia.ie/latest-news-skipper/811-iimro-joins-call-to-ban-electric-pulse-fishing> - Ken Kawahara - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJ19j0pm-20> – Ger de Ruiter <https://www.pzc.nl/zeeuws-nieuws/nederland-liep-te-hard-van-stapel-met-pulskor~ae4146e1/>

LIFE member organisation from the Netherlands LIFE NL undergoing an internal reorganisation

The LIFE NL Foundation, represented by LIFE’s Director Ger de Ruiter, intends to make a fresh start and reinforce its membership base. Since 2012 LIFE NL worked on a voluntary basis to the benefit of small-scale coastal fishers. The massive threats posed by pulse fishing in the Netherlands prove the need to work and engage even more. **It is as never before vital to make the voice of the small-scale sector heard within decision-making process**, and to work with official authorities to develop policies that meet the needs of local fishing communities. LIFE NL will, as ever, continue to be independent so as to exclusively represent the interests of its members. Among the services offered: local, national and european representation, participation in decision-making process and timely updates. If you are interested to join, do not hesitate to contact them directly for more information: G. de Ruiter. ruiter51@zeelandnet.nl or Willem de Waal dewaal.overview@gmail.com

PRESS REVIEW AND INTERESTING READING

Special review on pulse fishing in annexe

PR by LIFE French Members PPPAF on the December Council

<http://www.plateforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=580>

The functioning of EU quota (English)

<https://marinedevelopments.blog.gov.uk/2017/12/05/december-council-eu-fish-quotas-cfp-uk/>

Anchovy stocks in the context of the Adriatic Management Plan (Italian)

https://www.ilgiornaledemarina.it/pesca-pesce-azzurro-affronte-dati-scientifici-ufficiali-per-accughe-e-sardine-consigliato-un-60/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook

Times coverage on Fishy Business (English)

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/four-fish-firms-get-90-of-quota-sppf06xhv>

Guide on financial support to SSFs organisations, (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese)

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/news-events/news/guidelines-strengthen-organizations-representing-small-scale-fishing-sector_en

Study on the role of women in Fisheries and Aquaculture in France (French)

<http://www.franceagrimer.fr/content/download/53817/520089/file/Synth%C3%A8se%20Place%20des%20femmes%20FAM%2021082017.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