



NEWS FROM THE DECK

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

October 2018

MAIN NEWS

Bluefin Tuna: a management plan that should give low impact fishers their right to fish back

17/10 Brussels (Belgium): **The European Commission – DG Mare held a consultation to prepare for the annual meeting of the ICCAT** – the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna with industry and NGO representatives. LIFE took the opportunity to call for a fair proportion of the annual increase of the Bluefin Tuna quota to be allocated, directly from ICCAT and ring-fenced, to low-impact fishers. For this to happen, the decision-making process needs a definition of artisanal or small-scale coastal fisheries to be agreed upon. LIFE insists that such a definition must first and foremost be based on the use of low impact gears, **specifically hand lines and/or pole and line gears** that have the lowest impact on the environment and least by-catch compared to other gears that target

Bluefin tuna. LIFE also welcomes the elimination of the 5-tonne cap on the small-scale fleets but underlines that it should be paired with **a specific clause to prohibit transferability** to ensure that new quota transferred to Member States for coastal artisanal fishing **is non-transferable to other fleet segments** including purse seiners and large-scale long-liners. LIFE does not agree with the proposed measure to extend **the purse seine season and states that a variation of 20% in the adjustment of fishing capacity for that fleet is too high**, strongly recommending maintaining fishing capacity in line with the TAC. More information on the matter are available here http://lifeplatform.eu/bft_ssfs/



Danish public report unravels shady mismanagement of the EMFF in favour of a part of the industry

24/10 Copenhagen (Denmark) - In October Denmark's National Audit Office, the Folketinget Rigsrevisionen, published a report analysing the management of the national allocation of the 2014-2017 European and Maritime Fisheries Fund intended to enable the proper implementation of EU's Common Fisheries Policy. Its findings highlight **a general improper management of the fund by the Danish Ministry of Environment and Food and the need for some of irregularities detected to be investigated further by the European Antifraud Office (OLAF)**. Findings include:

- the EU penalty point system was not applied correctly, which led to 24% of the examined funding being provided to fishers who would have been excluded from receiving funding had it been managed according to the rules;
- the requirements for selection were applied incorrectly or only vaguely, leading to the amount of funding provided being excessive or incorrect in up to 75% of the cases examined;
- incidents where applicants and contractors, contrary to the regulations, have been mutually dependent on each other, asked for offers and traded with their own companies, which clearly indicated the “use of front men and fraud”.

LIFE and its Danish member organisation FSK believe that the inadequate and incorrect management of this important financial instrument is unacceptable. It resulted in fraudulent applications being supported mainly in favour of the industrial sector. The full version of the report is available in Danish <http://www.rigsrevisionen.dk/publikationer/2018/12018/> while

a summary is online in English: <http://uk.rigsrevisionen.dk/publications/2018/12018/> . LIFE and FSK are working closely and following the developments of this matter.

OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

8/10 Brussels (Belgium): LIFE staff was invited to take part in a meeting with a Galician delegation organized by Spanish MEP Ana Miranda at the European Parliament. The meeting highlighted the vulnerability of small-scale fisheries (particularly the shellfish sector) in Galicia. At the end of the meeting MEP Gabriel Mato took the floor to explain the work carried out by the Parliament for the drafting of new 2021-2027 European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. **LIFE is worried that some MEPs are trying to water down the wording contained in the initial proposal of the Commission** that, under the new program, would allow to give special attention and benefits to the small-scale fleet (under 12 meters, non-towed gears) by allowing such support to be allocated to other parts of the fleet as well, such as trawlers.

9/10 Brussels (Belgium): LIFE staff attended the hearing in the European Parliament on “The Landing Obligation: a state of play before its full implementation in January 2019”. The meeting saw the participation of many MEPs sitting on the PECH Committee, EU Commission’s representatives and stakeholders. **Most of the sector was hoping that the Commission would provide clarifications and solutions on how to tackle the numerous challenges for a proper implementation the landing obligation starting January 2019, but unfortunately nothing concrete was put on the table** other than encouragements to the sector to make additional efforts to comply with the new regulation. The case of small-scale fishers, the biggest part of the European fleet, was not even mentioned. A disappointing initiative that reinforces the idea that decision-makers and all the sector are heading towards a “landing obligation storm”. For more information see the article on our website: <http://lifeplatform.eu/landing-obligation-state-of-play-in-the-ep/>. That same day, LIFE staff met with Odran Corcoran, Policy Advisor to Irish political party Sinn Fein, to discuss on how to safeguard small-scale fisheries in the framework of the new EMFF.

11-12/10 Rome (Italy) – **The Mediterranean Advisory Council’s 4th meeting of the year was held**, characterized by an extensive and relevant agenda to be discussed. It included the Executive Committee and the Working Group on Large Pelagics. On the latter, in the light of the upcoming ICCAT meeting, the referee for the EU Commission, Javier Vazquez, provided details on the EU proposal to establish a “**Multiannual Management Plan for Bluefin Tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean**” (that would potentially include a small-scale fisheries definition). A Working Group on recreational fisheries was also reorganized and will start its works having Ms Laura Pisano from the EAA (European Anglers Alliance) as new coordinator. The bulk of the discussions took place during Working Group 1 (on the “Implementation of the CFP”) where participants reviewed the state of the art of a number of proposals, including on the **EMFF, the Control Regulation, the upcoming GFCM annual session and the “Western Mediterranean Multiannual Plan”**. LIFE contributed to the works on a number of those matters, but it is only after formal discussions with all its members in the weeks to come that it will circulate its agreed formal position papers to the MEDAC and other institutions. For more information see <http://med-ac.eu/> or ask for the minutes of the meeting to med@lifeplatform.eu

10/10 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE staff attended a workshop organized by Farnet in the framework of the **European Week of Regions and Cities**. The initiative gave participants an overview of the functioning of **Community-led Local Development (CLLD) and Fisheries Local Action Groups** supported by European Structural Funds. Speakers included decision-makers, experts and local stakeholders who explained the benefits of using a bottom-up approach for the sustainable development of fisheries. More information here: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet2/news-events/events/community-led-local-development-clld-eu-funding-bottom_en

12/10 Brussels (Belgium) – Bengt Larsson of LIFE’s Swedish Member Organization SYEF and LIFE staff participated in a **bilateral meeting with the European Commission (DG MARE)**. The discussions focused on Baltic Sea fishing opportunities for 2019, with special attention paid to: the expected TAC level for Western Baltic herring stock, an array of questions around Eastern Baltic cod stock (summarized in a LIFE Action Plan available here: <http://lifeplatform.eu/action-plan-for-eastern-baltic-cod/>), as well as the decisions needed to sustain a single strong year class of Western Baltic cod. The situation

of European eel, as well as negative consequences of increased grey seal population for small-scale fishers across the Baltic Sea have also been raised. The atmosphere of the meeting was very positive, and LIFE noted high interest among the DG MARE interlocutors in our priorities just ahead of the crucial decisions on Baltic fisheries for 2019. However, LIFE points raised in Brussels **were only partially reflected in the decisions of Fisheries Council of Ministers in Luxembourg reached in the evening of 15 October**. Whilst its call to safeguard small-scale fisheries for Western Baltic herring was heeded with the avoidance of a fishing moratorium (a TAC cut of 48% was decided with a promise of additional safeguard measures at national level), the decisions about both cod stocks are surprising and worrying – in particular as to the spawning closures. It is hard to understand why spawning protection has been completely erased in the West, where the hope for a sustained stock recovery hangs on just one strong year class of 2016. Similarly, for the Eastern cod, the spawning closure was reduced to just one month, which will not help this troubled stock. Details here: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/10/15/baltic-sea-council-decides-on-how-much-can-be-fished-in-2019/>

15/10 Brussels (Belgium): LIFE staff met with Mattia Bonfanti, **assistant to Italian and Sicilian MEP Michela Giuffrida**, to discuss the new EMFF proposal and related amendments.

16/10 Brussels (Belgium) – The President of the Fisheries Committee of the European Parliament, MEP Alain Cadec, **hosted the screening of “Vents Contraires”**, a documentary by Sibylle d'Orgeval and Chloé Henry-Biabaud tracing the rise and fall of the French fishing sector from post war to present. Depressingly, none of the lessons portrayed in the film seem to have been learned. In fact despite the recent improvements towards the development of more sustainable fisheries, the industrial sector still struggles to learn from its errors of the past and greed prevails on the general interest, thus leading to the disappearance of small-scale fishing communities.

18-19/10 Brussels (Belgium) – LIFE is a member of the General Assembly and Executive Committee of the Market Advisory Council. In this specific occasion it attended the works of Working Group 1 and 2 where LIFE's main contribution was in crafting the response to the Control Regulation amendments, **covering sales of amounts of less than 5kgs** (minority opinion) and electronic monitoring (<https://marketac.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MAC-Opinion-Fisheries-Control-System-11.2018.pdf>).

22/10 Rome (Italy) - In the light of the recently approved “Regional Plan of Action for Small-scale Fisheries” and of LIFE's participation in the “Friends of the Small-Scale Fishers Platform”, in the past months LIFE's Mediterranean Coordinator engaged in a number of **formal discussions with the Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) on the set up of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two parties**. On the 22nd of October was held the 42nd session of the GFCM and it is in this framework that such **Memorandum was officially approved**, at the presence of LIFE's Project Manager for Italy. This cooperation is an important step to strengthen LIFE's action in the Mediterranean and to foster inclusive decision-making process in the Region. For more information: <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/meetings/info/es/c/1145657/>

23/10 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE was visited by Australian fisherman Tom Robinson, who has developed a **iPhone-based App** driven system for electronic catch reporting. More information here <http://deckhandapp.com/>

24/10, Helsinki, Finland – LIFE staff has taken part in a Steering Group meeting of **the Baltic Seals & Cormorants project, run by 14 FLAGS from Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Germany, and led by the ESKO FLAG**. The project enters a crucial phase of implementation now: the scientific validation and analysis of a staggering amount of data (just under 41 thousand records!) compiled on the basis of 220 structured interviews with mostly small-scale fishers from across the Baltic Sea, designed to understand the economic impact of increased seals' and cormorants' populations on small-scale fishers' communities. LIFE puts many hopes in this project and its potential to find solutions allowing small-scale fishers' communities and predators to co-exist in a sustainable way.



✚ 25/10 Aci Trezza (Italy) – During the week of the 25th of October, **LIFE’s Project Manager for Italy met the fishers of Aci Trezza, in the region of Sicily.** A small fishing community which, as in other areas of the Mediterranean, adapted and diversified its activity along the years. It is worth mentioning how a specific group of eight fishers (including young fisher Santo, pictured left) authorised to work in the waters of the MPA “Isole Ciclopi”, for **the past five years has been committed to reduce its fishing pressure by limiting the downing of their trammel nets to only a couple of hours per day.** This allows on the one hand to provide consumers with a product which is fresher and healthier than that which has been left for ten hours in the nets, and on the other to reduce the interactions with the dolphins of the area which are used to predate the fish while it is entangled underwater. The fishing community did not manage to register as a formalised group yet, for instance by setting up an official cooperative, and LIFE is available to provide support to this end.

✚ 30/10 Bali (Indonesia) – The Government of the Republic of Indonesia hosted the fifth “Our Ocean Conference” in Bali, an initiative focused on generating commitments and taking actions to maintain the sustainability of our oceans. It convenes participants from countries across the globe to ensure diverse perspectives from various stakeholders, including governments, commercial sectors, financing entities, scientific communities, civil society organizations, and young leaders. In the framework of this large-scale international event **LIFE’s Project Manager for Malta Alicia Said was invited to participate as speaker during the side-event “Building Equity into Sustainable Seafood Sourcing”** organized by the International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF) and other partners. In her presentation, Alicia highlighted the importance of equity in fisheries, especially by putting livelihoods and communities at the heart of fisheries policies. More information here: <https://ourocean2018.org/>



NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

✚ Aktea represents the rights of women and promotes gender equality in international settings



22-26/10 Chiang Mai (Thailand) - In the framework of the “3rd World Small-Scale Fisheries Congress” Aktea was invited to provide its contribution on the topic of gender equality in small-scale fisheries. **At the core of this initiative was the mapping of collective women initiatives worldwide.** 20 participants from Latin and Central America, Asia and Africa shared their knowledge about this issue. AKTEA’s representatives explained the network’s action to foster gender equality and fairness in European small-scale fisheries. The round table agreed that such a mapping will allow to reinforce the movement’s visibility and will serve as a tool to advocate for the recognition of women’s rights. Throughout the Congress two sessions were dedicated to gender equality. The first focused on gender relations in the fisheries and

aquaculture sectors in the light of globalization while the second was dedicated to Asia and the issues of migration, poverty and discrimination. The event was also attended by **LIFE’s Project Manager for Malta Alicia Said who gave a plenary presentation about issues pertaining to EU governance in the context of small-scale fisheries** and promoted realistic alignments between the Sustainable Development Goals and the Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines.

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

PRESS REVIEW AND INTERESTING READING

The impact of Brexit on Eu fisheries (French)

https://www.lemonde.fr/referendum-sur-le-brexit/article/2018/10/23/comment-le-brexit-risque-de-bouleverser-la-peche-europeenne_5373245_4872498.html?fbclid=IwAR0PyTg7Uw_Oviudj7_s-WYsBBb8icXjl8lfZjivbabH2YyEVZCmvHcm7vQ

Danish press on EMFF report (Danish)

<https://politiken.dk/indland/art6756182/Fiskere-fik-penge-i-strid-med-loven>

<https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/politik/rapport-fiskere-fik-penge-i-strid-med-loven-i-meget-kritisabel-forvaltning>

Scottish aquaculture blames wild salmon for lice infestation (English)

<https://www.salmon-trout.org/2018/10/30/salmon-farming-industry-blames-wild-fish/>

Eu parliament votes for a ban on single-use plastics (English)

<https://www.dw.com/en/european-parliament-votes-for-ban-on-single-use-plastic/a-46016607>

Who owns UK quota? (English)

<https://unearthed.greenpeace.org/2018/10/11/fishing-quota-uk-defra-michael-gove/>

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.