



## NEWS FROM THE DECK

*The monthly newsletter of the*

*Low Impact Fishers of Europe*

October 2016

### MAIN NEWS OF THE MONTH

#### ✚ LIFE members from all over Europe gather in an inspiring Congress in Warsaw

Member organizations and invited guests met in Warsaw, Poland, on the 29th of October to celebrate LIFE's work in support of the small scale, low impact fishers of Europe. Speaker after speaker representing LIFE member organizations from the Canaries to northern Finland and the length of the Mediterranean Sea up to the Scottish Coast provided fascinating insights into their way of life, the fishing gears and methods they use that have such a low impact on the marine environment and the challenges and opportunities they face on a daily basis. **A ground breaking initiative between AKTEA, the network of women in fisheries, and LIFE** was confirmed at the Congress with members supporting the creation of a distinct women's section within LIFE. This section will provide a partner platform and specific support for women who are the often-invisible element in small scale fisheries. Members overwhelmingly **endorsed the continued direction of travel for LIFE** and the ever growing and positive influence of the platform at European level.



Pictures <https://myalbum.com/album/LUy8sDaHx3Tf>

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meD8agSXVKQ&t=2s>

#### ✚ The Low Impact Fishers of Baltic and North Sea Countries gather during the Warsaw Workshop



The day before the Congress the **Low Impact Fishers of Germany, Poland, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and The Netherlands**, as well as potential members from Lithuania, met in Warsaw for a workshop organized by LIFE in cooperation with the New Economics Foundation.

The morning session focused on how to positively influence policies at national and European level, while the second part was dedicated to more

specific topics such as **Advisory Councils and ITQs**, including a valuable contribution by Evangelia Georgitsi, Legal and Policy Officer at DG Mare (EU Commission).

The event has been an opportunity to strengthen the network of small-scale fishers in the Region, to discuss the priorities on the agenda such as quotas, labelling and climate change, and explore new means of cooperation for sustainable coastal communities.

Pictures <https://myalbum.com/album/q4ziOTeFYtZy>

Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeRdKyRgAzQ&t=3s>

## OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

- ✚ On the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> October LIFE's Deputy Director Brian O'Riordan travelled to Tenerife (Spain) to participate in the second review of a research project funded under the DG Mare call for **"support measures for small-scale fishing"**. The project aims to identify organizations representing sscf throughout the area covered by the Southwestern Waters AC (SWWAC), analyze the effectiveness of the representation and identify training needs for fishers and the organizations. The list of organizations the project has drawn up for Portugal, Spain and France can be considered to represent 95% of vessels under 12 meters, but in Portugal it is probable that 30-40% of the sscf do not belong to any organization. Brian O'Riordan also attended the working group meeting for demersal species at the **South Western Waters AC**. The Environmental NGOs have withdrawn from the SWWAC in protest over the Membership of Bluefish, an industry lobby group, as part of the "other interests". Also attending the meeting were representatives of the French PPPAF and of Cofradia El Hierro ( Canary Islands ).
- ✚ On the 5<sup>th</sup> Jerry Percy met with Tris Lewis from **"Funding Fish"** to discuss just what "effective implementation of the CFP" means in a LIFE context. "Funding Fish" ( <http://fundingfish.eu/> ) is an initiative of funding partners helping to develop projects for investment in order to achieve sustainable fisheries in Europe. The meeting was followed in the same area with a meeting in Bristol of the **"Fish 4 data" project**. This is a particularly valuable initiative that LIFE is happy to **contribute to on the basis of the clear and increasing need for the collection and processing of data relevant to the small scale fleet**. LIFE's view is that every fishing boat is in effect a floating laboratory and able, and often willing to be used as such. By taking this approach, and vitally, agreeing on a common data 'language', we hope to bridge the all too common gap between fishers and fisheries scientists.
- ✚ On the 5th October Kasia Wysocka, Member of LIFE Board of Directors, and LIFE staff attended the conference **"Baltic 2016: a small sea with management problems"** in Gdynia, Poland. The (mostly) scientific event outlined a good part of troubles around the ecosystem and fisheries management in the Baltic Sea, including an accurate description of issues faced by SSCFs in the Region. In response to two presentations on ITQs in the Baltic Sea, LIFE representatives quoted the Danish example where, since 2007, in no less than 49 ports SSCFs have been put out of business by the excessive concentration of quota in the hands of few operators. LIFE will continue to raise awareness on **the risks stemming from ITQs and similar quota allocation systems for the small-scale fleet**, which on the contrary should be protected and given preferential access in accordance with the reformed CFP. The same LIFE team participated in the first meeting of the Baltic Fisheries Forum on the 25th of October, with LIFE's Baltic and North Sea Coordinator presenting the perspective of SSCFs on the newly adopted Multispecies Plan for the Baltic Sea.
- ✚ LIFE's Executive Director Jerry Percy attended a meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> in London where he had the opportunity to provide a **LIFE view of Brexit** and its potential implications on both a UK and EU level

for small scale fishers. The meeting was called by Peter Aldous MP for Waveney [east coast including Lowestoft from where the director used to fish]. Mr Aldous is a member of and Honorary Secretary to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fisheries as well as a member of the Environmental Audit Committee and therefore influential [and supportive] in UK political terms.

- ✚ On the 8th LIFE staff joined a meeting held in Tarragona, Spain, with a number of LIFE's member organizations and other relevant actors of the Mediterranean and Canary Islands, involved in the **fight for a fairer allocation of Tuna Quota** and compliance with Article 17 of the CFP. The meeting produced a common position on the issue agreeing on the next steps to take. The official PR is available here <http://lifeplatform.eu/ssfs-spain-ask-icaat-dedicated-quota-bluefin-tuna/>
- ✚ Late evening of the 10<sup>th</sup> of October saw the conclusion of **negotiations on Fishing Opportunities for the Baltic Sea for 2017**. Whilst not physically present in Luxembourg, LIFE exerted some impact on the negotiations through its Action Plan for Western Baltic cod released this summer and presented to national and European officials in the past weeks. A number of points of LIFE's Plan have been taken on board by decision-makers, such as: prolonging the spawning closure, regulating recreational fisheries, making extensive use of EMFF. Crucially, Commissioner Vella called on the Member States to make use of Article 17 to reallocate the remaining Western Baltic cod quota to small-scale low impact fishers who have no alternative to it (official video: <http://video.consilium.europa.eu/en/webcast/0670f38a-158d-44c1-b763-c9a53e096f3f>, starting around 06:10 ).
- ✚ On the 11th LIFE Brussels' Staff attended the Workshop at the European Parliament on **"Recreational Fishing and the Long-Term Management of Sea Bass"**, organized by the European Anglers Alliance (EAA) and Chaired by UK MEP Richard Corbett. The agenda of the EAA has much in common with LIFE: to gain recognition and respect for the sector, and to demonstrate that they fish in a responsible and sustainable manner. One speaker defined recreational fishing as any sort of fishing that is not commercial. One specific area of mutual interest is the quest for fully documented fisheries, and there may be scope for some collaboration on this.
- ✚ LIFE management and staff had a virtual meeting [via Skype] with Funds Specialist Charlotte Gobin to determine **the shape and content of the "LIFE Umbrella Strategy 2017 – 2027"** that was then officially presented at the LIFE Congress in Warsaw.
- ✚ On the 13-14th LIFE attended **its second meeting as official member of the MEDAC** (Mediterranean Advisory Council) in Ajaccio, Corsica (France). The agenda was filled with important subjects for SSFs: Multiannual plan for the western Mediterranean Countries; socio-economic impact of the CFP reform; recreational fisheries and the preparation for the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) meeting. LIFE spoke in the name of its members for each of the topics. In particular, LIFE urged MEDAC to encourage the EU Delegation to ask ICCAT for a minimum TAC for polyvalent low impact small scale fleets using hook and line gears. Unfortunately, MEDAC agreed not to present any opinion or resolution regarding ICCAT issues.
- ✚ LIFE staff met with **German MEP Ulrike Rodust** on the 12th. The meeting provided an opportunity for LIFE to present its position on seabass and Western Baltic cod. Mrs Rodust assured LIFE staff that the German government took the situation in the Baltic very seriously, and saw the way forward as scrapping and tie ups, using EMFF (4 million Euros are available) for compensation. She did not respond yet to the issue of quota reallocations to the small-scale sector. That same day, the team met with Mr Sebastian Barkowski, Polish Deputy Permanent Representative, who welcomed LIFE and encouraged the Baltic and North Sea Coordinator to keep the national administration informed on LIFE's activities.

- On the 18<sup>th</sup> LIFE's Executive Director Jerry Percy attended Farnet's 3 days Conference in Kefaloniki (Greece). At the request of the Director of Farnet, LIFE attended one day of the Farnet three day conference to provide a singularly fishers eye view of the ways and means of **effective engagement between the small scale sector and Fisheries Local Action Groups [FLAG's] across Europe**. Apart from facilitating the engagement debates within the meeting, the Director was also able to make contact with a number of FLAG managers as a means of accessing their fisher networks to provide information on LIFE and the support we can provide. These contacts have already begun to bear fruit. *Photo @Farnet*



- On the 19th, LIFE and member organizations from France, PPPAF and SPMLR attended the **ICCAT Stakeholder meeting with DG Mare in Brussels**. The initiative was aimed at providing an exchange of views ahead of the forthcoming ICCAT meeting from 14 to 21 November. The meeting participants included environmental NGOs (Pew, WWF, Oceana) and industry representatives (national and EU level associations), and included some ACs. LIFE highlighted the issue of fair Bluefin tuna quota allocation for the small-scale sector, described in a letter sent to Commissioner Vella. The letter is available here <http://lifeplatform.eu/letter-commissioner-vella/>
- Increasing populations of predators, such as grey seals and black cormorants, are a big challenge to small-scale low impact fisheries in the Baltic area. On 20th October, LIFE staff attended a conference organized in Warsaw by the Polish fisheries administration to discuss the **EMFF-funded compensation scheme**. Best practice examples were presented by speakers from Finland and Sweden. The main message of the conference was that it is vital to ensure that the detailed financial and technical solutions are elaborated in cooperation with the small-scale fleet.

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

- Member organizations ADPAM and Cofradia El Hierro meet with the Spanish government**

On the 13th ADPAM and Cofradia del Hierro took part in in the meeting organized by **the Spanish Administration in Madrid to prepare the ICCAT meeting**. Both member organizations expressed the great unfairness to which SSFs have been victims in the past years, especially on the Mediterranean coast, having been prevented access to the resource. They asked the Spanish administration to apply Article 17 of the CFP and Article 8 of the recently approved transposition of the ICCAT recovery plan, both in the letter and spirit of the law. In particular, LIFE members ask for a specific quota for small-scale coastal fleets in Mediterranean and eastern Atlantic, set at ICCAT level.
- Pescartes teaches the basics of fisheries to young students**

Member organization from Spain Pescartes hosted the students of the school "IES Jose Luis San Pedro" from Madrid, who came to Cabo de Gata from the 24 to the 27 of October. The students had the opportunity to learn more about this unique and protected natural environment, and to meet the local community. Pescartes carried out a



training on the basics of fisheries and explained **the functioning of the gears and techniques used by the fishers** to support their livelihoods.

**The French PPPAF urges its national government to support the EU Commission’s proposal on bass**

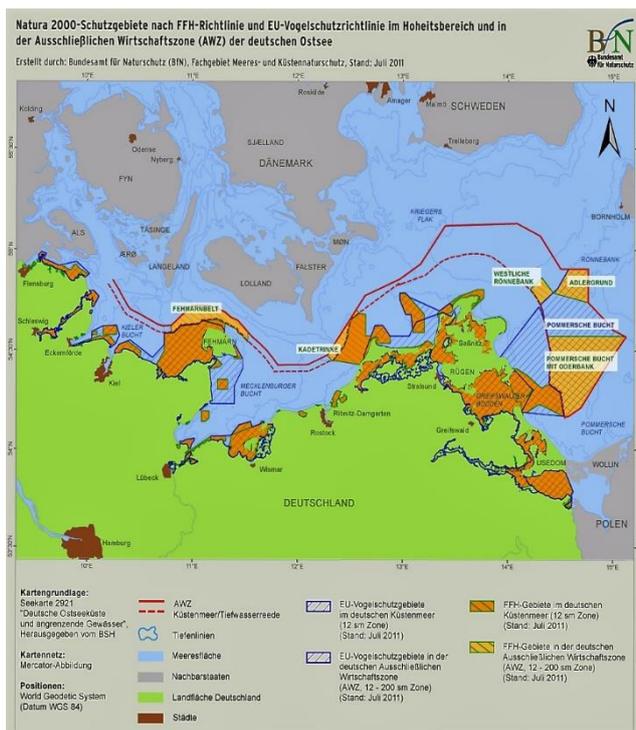
The extensive and accurate lobbying work carried out by the French Platform for Artisanal Fishers (PPPAF) and its members shows its first results. The Platform and Liners from Brittany applaud the EU Commission's proposal **to exempt them from the closure of the bass fishery in 2017** and ask the French government to support it. However, they also underline their worry for the lack of management measures in the Bay of Biscay that could lead to a collapse of the stock in the near future. Full Press Release available here: <http://www.platforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=466> .

**Copenhagen’s citizens enjoy the fresh products of FSK**

On Saturday the 29th of October LIFE member FSK (Denmark) and two partners held an event in Copenhagen **to raise awareness on locally caught, sustainable fish from low-impact fisheries**. Plaice, turbot, flounder, cod and trout were filleted on the spot and sold to the public at reasonable prices. Talented chefs prepared tasty dishes and the public asked many questions on quota, local species and coastal fisheries in general. Given its success, the event will be held again in spring.



**German member Fischereischutzverband focuses on Natura 2000 and the Cod Crisis**



German administrations are asking stakeholders to provide their contribution to draw the management plans for the Natura 2000 sites established in 2006. Fischereischutzverband Schleswig Holstein provided its input in an extensive document, focusing inter alia on the three miles zone in the Western Baltic and **underlining the vital role played by small-scale fishers using passive gears to guarantee conservation and biodiversity in the area**. In addition, in the light of the western cod crisis and the cuts decided earlier this month by the EU Fisheries Council, Wolfgang Albrecht, LIFE Director and Representative of the association, is having a series of exchanges with the **Minister for Fisheries of Schleswig Holstein** for him to take action and support the measures suggested by LIFE’s Members Action Plan, thus ensuring long-term solutions to the benefit of both the sector and the stock.

## NEW MEMBERS ON BOARD

In addition to the members who joined since the beginning of 2016, the following organisations officially became part of LIFE this month:

### Arts Menors Costa Brava (Spain)

Recently established with the support of LIFE, it represents 6 fishers and vessels of 6-10 m length, using polyvalent gears (mainly hook and line, nets and traps). The aims of the organization are to promote and defend the sustainable and responsible small scale fishing sector in the province of Girona. Some of the fishers are also founders of the “**Projecte Sepia**”, a very positive initiative to restore cuttlefish stocks through best practices and simple but effective techniques.



### Cofradía de Pescadores Nuestra Señora de Los Reyes (Spain)



Located in the small island of El Hierro (Canary islands), it is the most southern organisation of LIFE. It represents 40 fishers and 37 vessels of 5-13 meters' length, mainly using hooks and lines such as handline for blue fin tuna. The fishers are involved in interesting projects, such as the creation of an Marine Protected Area that has become a scientific model and case study. Their President, Fernando Gutierrez, is also representative of the Regional Federation of Cofradías in Canary islands and is making the fight for a fairer allocation of **Bluefin tuna quota and compliance with Article 17** of the CFP one of his priorities.

*Photo @islagraciosa.blogspot*

### Zygi Fishermen Association (Cyprus)



Based in Zygi, it has 40 fishers and 34 polyvalent 8-10m length vessels, using hooks and lines, gillnets and entangling nets for a great variety of local species. The aim of the association is to promote **the sustainability of the profession and of fish stocks**, protect the rights of small-scale fishers and develop beneficial cooperation with other relevant parties in Cyprus and abroad who share common interests and common concerns for the industry. It is LIFE's first member from Cyprus and we are all very excited to have them with us!

*Photo @Peter Gallager*

*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 some additional information on a specific event, project or initiative? Don't hesitate to contact us at [communications@lifeplatform.eu](mailto:communications@lifeplatform.eu) or follow us on Facebook on Low Impact Fishers of Europe or on Twitter on @LIFEplatformEU*