



NEWS FROM THE DECK

The monthly newsletter of the

Low Impact Fishers of Europe

December 2016 and January 2017

MAIN NEWS OF THE MONTHS

✚ LIFE members from Ireland visit the EU Institutions with LIFE staff

From the 5th to the 7th of December Seamus Bonner and Enda Conneely from the LIFE member organization Irish Islands Marine Resource Organization (IIMRO) visited Brussels to meet with DG MARE officials and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), to explain about their organization, the issues that concern them, what they are hoping to achieve and what they have achieved to date.

The outcomes of the meetings included being invited to Croatia by MEP Ruža Tomašić for a conference on small-scale fisheries and receiving a proposal to **undertake an “own initiative report”** (an important political instrument within the European Parliament that could pave the way for a new legislative proposal)

on the importance of “Small-Scale Fishing in Small Islands” by Portuguese MEP Ricardo Serrão Santos. In addition, they will have the opportunity to hold an event, with the support of MEP Marian Harkin and LIFE staff, **during which they will screen the film “A Turning Tide in the life of Man”**, that tells the story and struggles of western Irish islands communities, and organize a panel to raise awareness on the topic in the presence of several MEPs and EU Commission officials. The event will be held in March.



✚ LIFE elected by a large majority as member of the ExCom of the Market Advisory Council (MAC).

LIFE achieved a milestone by getting voted onto the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Markets Advisory Council (MAC). The MAC is a relatively new AC and includes Members organizations from the “value supply chain” (60%) and “other interests” (40%). The 60% includes: Primary Producers (a-catching sector and b-aquaculture sector); Processors, Traders, Suppliers and Retailers; and Workers. The 40% includes: NGOs (environmental and others) and MSC. So far consumer groups are absent. The catching sector is represented by vessel owners (Europêche and now LIFE) and Producer Organisations. The three working groups cover EU Production (including Common Market Organization regulation, impact of landing obligation, etc.), EU Markets (supply, imports, social and environmental aspects of trade, consumption trends etc.), and EU Consumption (labelling, sanitary issues, control, etc.).

OTHER NEWS FROM AROUND THE EU

- ✚ 5/12 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE staff attended as observers the **Inter ACs meeting organized by the European Commission**. Among many topics discussed, the Commission sought to clarify the **extra financing for the working fishers' participation in the activities of the Advisory Councils**, advising to use a 50% increase in the per diem and accommodation allowance. In the margins, LIFE was able, inter alia, to learn more on a conference on post-2020 fisheries financing, planned in Estonia for October 2017.
- ✚ 6/12 London – LIFE's Executive Director attended **Oceana's 'Celebrating our Oceans' event** where he took the opportunity to discuss both European and global fisheries management with some of the experts present including Professor Daniel Pauly, the leading proponent for sustainable fisheries around the world.
- ✚ 7/12 Brussels (Belgium) – The Plenary of the Committee of the Regions adopted an Opinion on the draft Technical Measures for Conservation Regulation, which LIFE's Deputy Director Brian O'Riordan had advised on as "Expert". Importantly the Opinion included a **proposal for amending the provisions seeking to liberalize pulse trawling**, which the Commission and Parliament must take account of. For more details: <http://cor.europa.eu/en/news/Pages/europes-local-leaders-call-for-the-eus-common-fisheries-policy-to-be-regionalised.aspx>
- ✚ 8/12 Tangier (Morocco). Christian Decugis, LIFE Director for the Mediterranean, attended the "**2016 Forum of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean**", organized by MedPan and other partners. In particular, he played an active part in a session called "Small-scale fisheries and MPA/fisheries reserves: how to achieve successful management and sustainable livelihoods", where examples of fisheries management within MPAs/fishery reserves were discussed. The session referred to the outcomes of the *Regional Conference on Building a future for sustainable small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea* held in Algeria earlier this year (see previous newsletter) and to the *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines)*. Christian Decugis gave a presentation with a focus on "Small-scale fisheries and MPA/fisheries reserves: how to achieve successful management and sustainable livelihoods" with a focus on **the case of the MPA of Cap Roux (Var, France) promoted and co-managed by local small-scale fishers**. He demonstrated how SSFs, in the framework of co-management, can lead projects committed to sustainability, and generate positive benefits, including financial ones, via monitoring, pesca-turismo [fish tourism] and the spill-over effect in neighboring areas.
More info: <http://www.medpan.org/en/forum-des-amp-de-mediterranee>
- ✚ 8/12 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE staff met with Marina Albiol Guzman, Member of the European Parliament EU/ Spanish United Left Party. Ms Albiol is from a fishing family in Valencia, and is a Member of the Committee on Petitions. As a result of the meeting, she has asked a parliamentary question to Commissioner Vella on small scale fishers getting **access to Bluefin Tuna quota**.
- ✚ 12/12 Barcelona (Spain) – LIFE staff met with the Catalan NGO "Submón", to learn more on the project "**PeixDeCustòdia**" supported by Barcelona's City Council to promote local and responsible fish consumption. The project involves a number of local fishmongers and restaurants and promotes products fished with low impact selective gears.

- ✚ 15/12 Brussels (Belgium) - Individual Transferrable Quotas (ITQs) lead to a concentration of rights in the hands of few operators, increase inequality in the fisheries sector and negatively impact small scale fisheries. LIFE published a paper, **reviewing Rights Based Management (RBM) and suggesting practical alternatives for rights to be allocated in ways that are fair and with adequate safeguards in place** to protect vulnerable small scale fisheries and their communities. The paper is available in 8 languages at: <http://lifeplatform.eu/itqs-road-no-return/>

A number of newspapers and stakeholders disseminated the information, of which a selection is made available at the end of this newsletter in the “Press Review” section.



- ✚ 15/12 Copenhagen (Denmark) – LIFE’s Director for Germany Wolfgang Albrecht and LIFE staff actively participated in the **Baltic Sea Advisory Council Working Group on the Technical Measures Regulation**. LIFE positions established in written comments have been staunchly defended on matters such as, for instance, **going back to a 38 cm minimum size for Baltic cod**. The meeting shows how important it is for all LIFE Members to be active in their respective ACs – our strength is in numbers, not only in the coherence of our positions.
- ✚ 19/12 Madrid (Spain) - Rafael Centenera, Deputy Director for International Agreements of the Spanish Fisheries Ministry, and LIFE staff met to further discuss a fair allocation of access rights to Bluefin tuna for the Spanish small-scale fleet. Centenera has been positive about including a tuna quota in the Strategic Management Plan for small scale fisheries although he referred to the **need to pass the threshold of 28,000 tons caught in total by the Spanish fleet to consider raising the quota and modifying the way it is allocated**, thus including SSFs. He will consider the idea of including the small-scale sector in the next 2017 Fisheries Plan. LIFE confirmed its intention to provide written comments on the draft “Ministerial Order/ Directive for the regulation of the Bluefin tuna fishery in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean”, as we did on January 6th.
- ✚ 19-20/12 Madrid (Spain) - Spanish members Pescartes, Medartnet Spain, Cofradia del Hierro and LIFE staff had a series of meetings with Spanish senators and deputies from the main parliamentary groups and political parties of the National Fisheries Commission **to introduce LIFE and explain the urgent need for a fair allocation of fishing rights, especially with regards to SSFs and Bluefin Tuna**. LIFE staff and members were generally satisfied with the meetings although there is still much to do.
- ✚ 22/12, Barcelona (Spain). LIFE staff attended the **Presentation of the “Priorities and Call for Proposals for the EMFF funds in Catalunya”**, to be able to inform its members on the number of opportunities for SSFs in the region. More info: <http://agricultura.gencat.cat/ca/ambits/pesca/ajuts-fons-europeu/ajuts-fons-europeu-martitim-pesca/>
- ✚ 30/12 Władysławowo and Kuźnica (Poland) - LIFE staff together with Mirek Daniluk, a small-scale fisherman from Sztutowo and a long-time ally and supporter of LIFE, held **two meetings to present LIFE along Poland’s coast**. A warm welcome and positive comments were given to LIFE in Władysławowo at the management board meeting of the **Association of Sea Fishermen**, an umbrella organization comprising a majority of small-scale fishers. Another meeting, held in Kuźnica, was mainly focused on the severe consequences Baltic small-scale fishers face from seal predation on the most valuable items of their catch, such as salmonids.

- 7-9/1 Malta – LIFE’s Executive Director Jeremy Percy and staff did a field trip to Malta to start reinforcing the SSF network within the island. Jeremy Percy gave a presentation at the seminar **"Measures to support small scale fisheries in the EU Mediterranean water"**, organized by



Aquabiotech, a consultancy company that works in partnership with other bodies from Greece and Cyprus. The following days, they had the opportunity to visit fishing communities in various parts of the island (**Marsaxlokk, Wardija, Gozo**), to better understand their needs and how LIFE could support these potential members in the near future. LIFE also provided comments to the Maltese Government Consultation on the Draft Bill *"Fisheries Conservation and Management Act and to provide for the establishment of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Consultative Council and for matters ancillary thereto"*.

More info:

<http://eastmedfishers.eu/>

[https://socialdialogue.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MSDEC/Pages/Consultations/DraftBill-FisheriesConservationandManagement\(Amendment\)Act,2016.aspx](https://socialdialogue.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MSDEC/Pages/Consultations/DraftBill-FisheriesConservationandManagement(Amendment)Act,2016.aspx)

- 11/1 Warsaw (Poland) - Polish Members Śródkowopomorska, Darłowska & Mierzeja, together with LIFE staff, attended **Poland’s EMFF Monitoring Committee** meeting where they discussed various matters with the newly appointed DG MARE Head of Unit for Baltic and North Sea EMFF programs. 2017 will be a key year for implementing the EMFF across Europe and an opportunity for LIFE members to develop many projects. The EU Commission’s staff was impressed by LIFE’s work and supportive of its values and goals.
- 13/1 All LIFE staff attended the first **staff meeting** of the year in Brussels where we discussed and finalized our strategy and priorities for 2017 based on the previously agreed annual budget. It was clear that the need for LIFE across Europe continues to grow with every week and that success breeds success, even if it surely but steadily increases our workload.
- 19/1 Barcelona (Spain) - LIFE staff met with two scientists of the Institut de Ciències Del Mar de Barcelona (ICM-CSIC). The aim of the meeting was to learn more about MINOW, a project carried out by ICM aiming at **monitoring and testing techniques to reduce discards**, mainly relating to trawlers but also gillnets and trammel nets. The project gathered data on the discard rates of certain SS fisheries and suggested best practices to follow. LIFE will disseminate the information as soon as it is available, and is ready to be more involved in the project. The meeting also allowed the Institute and LIFE to foresee partnerships in future projects.
- 19/1 Brussels (Belgium) – Politico is a Brussels-based European affairs weekly newspaper that hosts high-level conferences and debates bringing together professionals across a wide range of EU-related disciplines. LIFE has been invited to a breakfast where the Editorial team introduced the **new journalists that will focus on fisheries and environment topics**. An occasion to learn more on the agenda for 2017 of other fisheries stakeholders and to underline the need for additional coverage of small-scale fisheries related matters within the press.
- 20/1 Brussels (Belgium) - LIFE Director for the Mediterranean and LIFE staff have been invited by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the EU Commission to attend a meeting in relation to the **"Ministerial Conference" that will be held in Malta next 29th and 30th of March**

aiming at the signature of a common declaration “to launch a new governance” for EU and non-EU Mediterranean countries. An ambitious target that is the continuation of a roadmap that started in Catania last year and part of the Medfishforever campaign (reported in previous newsletters). LIFE commented on the draft common declaration and suggested minor modifications, being pretty satisfied with the wording as presented. LIFE plans to attend the event and in this regard had the opportunity **to provide DG Mare with a list of Members and supporters** (from Malta, Cyprus, Spain, Italy) to be invited at the Conference. The draft declaration in English and French is available upon request to LIFE staff.

✚ 23/1 Darłowo (Poland) - LIFE Polish Members Śródkowopomorska, Darłowska & Mierzeja, together with other small-scale fishery organizations and LIFE staff, took part in a meeting focusing on the preparation for a large EMFF-funded project aiming at **cleaning coastal zones of ghost nets and marine litter**. In addition, Polish Members took the opportunity to underline the serious problem of the increasing grey seal population that is destroying their catches.

✚ 24/1 Brussels (Belgium) - RARE is an American NGO with its roots in the conservation of rare species (hence the name) in developing countries. In recent years, it has started to engage in fisheries conservation, led by the “needs and demands of communities”. They asked to meet LIFE staff to present their work that aims to “get the conversation going” between local communities and government at all levels. Their work is focused in developing countries but they **are starting to work at a European level as well, mainly fundraising and lobbying**. They are interested in generating a critical mass of support towards recognizing the importance and value of small scale fisheries at international and national level as producing food and other benefits in a sustainable way.



✚ 28/01 Roses (Catalonia, Spain)- LIFE members Arts Menors Costa Brava, Medartnet Spain and staff attended the “1st seminar on Conservation and Use of the Catalan Coast”. An occasion to highlight the main challenges and best practices in the Region and recall that with the appropriate management measures SSFs can be empowered in their role of guardians of the sea. Participants agreed that **Cataluña’s fisheries department “Governance bill”**, that should be approved soon this year and sets a legal framework for co-management, gives hope to move on a more positive scenario, solve governance problems and improve the status of stocks. More info: <https://www.facebook.com/jornades.litoral.catala/>

✚ 30/01 Barcelona (Spain) – LIFE’s Mediterranean Coordinator had a Skype call with Kim Stobberup, consultant for the European Commission on the reform of the CFP and possible threats and opportunities of the Blue Growth strategy. Main topics discussed: the situation in the Med in relation to the state of key stocks, the importance of SSF and the different management regimes in place, based primarily on technical measures. It has been an opportunity **to highlight how the Blue Growth EU strategy does not seem to clearly address fisheries** and how small scale fisheries should on the contrary be an integral part of it.

✚ 31/1 Warsaw (Poland) – LIFE Directors Wolfgang Albrecht from Fischereischutzverband (Germany) and Kasia Wysocka from Srodkowopomorska (Poland), together with LIFE staff, attended the **Executive Committee of the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC)**. Whilst not (yet) full ExCom Members, they were very active at the meeting, putting forward a proposal for an improvement in the BSAC’s language regime, which currently hinders the full participation of those of us who happen to speak less-than-

perfect English. Among many items discussed, the TABACOD project is especially worth mentioning. It aims at solving the cod age-reading problem, which has been preventing scientists from properly understanding the Eastern Baltic cod stock situation for too long. More information here: <http://www.tabacod.dtu.dk> - <http://www.balticsea2020.org/english/alla-projekt/rovfisken/fishery-ongoing-projects/369-tagging-project-to-map-the-cods-growth>

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

✚ LIFE members from Spain join a rally in Madrid to call for a fair allocation of quota for small-scale fisheries

16/12 Madrid (Spain) - Various SSF from all over Spain, but especially from the Mediterranean coast, (including LIFE member organisations Pescartes, Medartnet Spain, Cofradia del Hierro, Plasepes and ADPAM), joined in a peaceful demonstration in Madrid's Plaza del Sol to express their worry and perspectives on the need for a fair and sustainable allocation of access rights to fishery resources, in particular to Bluefin tuna.



✚ The french platform PPPAF worried for the Bass fishery in the Bay of Biscay

14/12 Rennes (France) – While the French platform is satisfied by the measures approved by the December Council for the area north of the 48° parallel, that recognized the social and environmental value of the small-scale fleet, it expresses its worry for the lack of improvements in the Bay of Biscay. The measures approved by the French government, such as an annual limit to 2490 tonnes and the increase of the minimum landing size to 38 cm, are too weak, and the lack of winter closure in February and March opens the way to trawlers, seiners and big netters. All this will negatively impact on the already catastrophic situation of the liners fleet. More information: <http://www.platforme-petite-peche.fr/?p=494>

✚ ADPAM amendments integral part of a new fisheries bill



28/1 Valencia (Spain) – As anticipated in the previous newsletter, in November, LIFE member from Spain ADPAM attended the Parliament of the Valencian Community (an autonomous community of Spain) to provide comments and amendments to a new fishing bill for fisheries management in internal waters that was in a consultation process. This month the Parliament of “Les Corts Valencianes” approved during a plenary session all the amendments suggested by ADPAM and those are now an integral part of the new bill.

WELCOME ON BOARD

In addition to the members who joined during 2016, the following organisation officially became part of LIFE this month:

Stowarzyszenie Rybaków Łódziowych “Mierzeja” (Poland)

(Association of Boat Fishers “Mierzeja”)



Operating in the Polish waters of the Vistula Lagoon and in the open Baltic Sea from the Vistula Peninsula, *Mierzeja* counts 74 boats under 8 meters in length. They exclusively use static gear, including a special kind of herring trap for their landmark fishery called “herring harvest” during the spawning herring migration to the Lagoon. They also fish many other species, such as cod, flounder, plaice, pike-perch, trout, perch, eel, salmon or bream. They sell their fish through intermediaries or to local restaurants where possible. They have joined LIFE to improve the economics of small-scale fishing and exchange experiences with other LIFE Members from across the EU.

PRESS REVIEW

Please find below a selection of the newspapers and magazines who shared the information on LIFE’s ITQ report.

<https://www.undercurrentnews.com/2016/12/16/low-impact-fishers-warn-swedish-itqs-will-hurt-coastal-communities/> (English)

<http://fishingnews.co.uk/news/reject-itqs-urges-eu-inshore-group/> (English)

<http://www.fiskerforum.dk/en/news/b/itqs-a-road-of-no-return> (English)

<http://www.fishsec.org/2017/01/10/life-rejects-individual-transferable-quotas/> (English)

http://www.industriaspesqueras.com/noticias/en_portada/53180/los-artesanales-cuestionan-los-beneficios-de-las-cuotas-transferibles.html (Spanish)

<http://www.gospodarkamorska.pl/Rybolowstwo/stanowisko-life-w-odniesieniu-do-systemu-indywidualnych-kwot-zbywalnych.html> (Polish)

http://www.lemarin.fr/secteurs-activites/peche/27383-la-petite-peche-europeenne-contre-les-quotas-transferables?_id=1484122363123 (French)

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 or follow us on Facebook on Low Impact Fishers of Europe or on Twitter on @LIFEplatformEU