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## *Sustainable futures for fisheries areas*

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Jean-Luc Janot (1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 24, 25, 28-29),  
FARNET Support Unit (3), European Commission (4),  
PKAK (7), IFHVP (12), FLAGs (15-23),  
Martina Buchholz (27, 28), H.-J. Fiedler  
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## Journalists:

Jean-Luc Janot, Eamon O'Hara.

## Other contributors:

Monica Burch, Carlos de la Paz, Susan Grieve,  
Paul Soto, Gilles van de Walle.

## Production:

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## Contact:

FARNET Magazine, FARNET Support Unit,  
rue Saint Laurent 36-38, B-1000 Brussels  
+32 2 613 26 50  
[info@farnet.eu](mailto:info@farnet.eu)  
[www.farnet.eu](http://www.farnet.eu)

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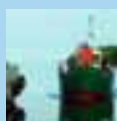
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Member of the European Commission, responsible for Maritime Affairs  
and Fisheries



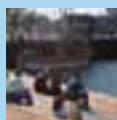
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## Editorial

“A portfolio of projects that illustrate the many ways in which local partnerships, bringing together the fisheries sector and other stakeholders, can start to make a real difference.”

This issue of the *FARNET Magazine* arrives at a critical point in the evolution of EU Fisheries policy. In July 2011, the Commission published its proposals for the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, and in November it will publish its proposals for the future European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. At the same time, the other jointly managed EU funds (the regional, social and agricultural funds) are preparing their proposals, including ideas for better coordination of local development, which will have major implications for the fisheries sector and for fisheries areas.

In future issues of this magazine we hope to provide space for debating how these changes might affect fisheries areas, and the potential role that local, community-led initiatives like Axis 4 can play – alongside other policies. However, we still do not have enough information for this debate. So, in this issue, our aims are more modest – although equally relevant. Axis 4 is still a relatively new initiative and we are constantly approached by people, both from within and outside the fisheries sector, who ask, “what exactly does it do?” And what practical relevance does it have for the lives of people living in fishing communities? Stakeholders who are active in fisheries partnerships also often ask for concrete project examples from other countries. In light of this, we have devoted most of this issue to providing you with a portfolio filled with project descriptions that illustrate the many ways in which local partnerships between the fisheries sector and other stakeholders can start to make a real difference.

To set the stage, Maria Damanaki, the European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, gives an interview where she explains the hopes that the Commission has for local, community-led initiatives like Axis 4 in the future. This is followed by the first of two country reports, this time from Estonia. The second report, later in the magazine, comes from Germany. Both illustrate how projects supported by Axis 4 can be adapted to meet the needs of different types of areas while using the same community-led method: joint improvements to small scale port infrastructure in Estonia, and building on fishing heritage to create a base for tourism in Germany.

However, the central part of the magazine is given over to succinct but extremely rich presentations of 30 Axis 4 projects from eleven countries. To obtain this information, the FARNET Support Unit wrote to all fisheries local action groups (FLAGs) that were known to have selected projects, asking them to present two that illustrated the potential to bring tangible benefits in terms of jobs and income, and that also demonstrated the advantages of the Axis 4 approach. With the Commission’s support, the current “portfolio” was then selected, with the aim of showing a broad range of project types as well as a wide geographical coverage. All of these examples will be showcased at an exhibition in Brussels on the 3-4 November.

When reading these project descriptions, you must remember that Axis 4 is a young initiative, and that many projects are at a very early stage. In fact, some countries have still not selected any projects at all and are, therefore, not represented. However, while being aware that these small scale initiatives are by no means a panacea, we believe that you will be surprised by the ingenuity, energy and commitment that can be mobilised when local people are given the means to explore solutions to their own problems. We invite you to find out more about how local, community-led initiatives can benefit fishing communities by digging deeper into these examples.

**Paul Soto,**  
Team Leader, FARNET Support Unit

# Interview

## Maria Damanaki:

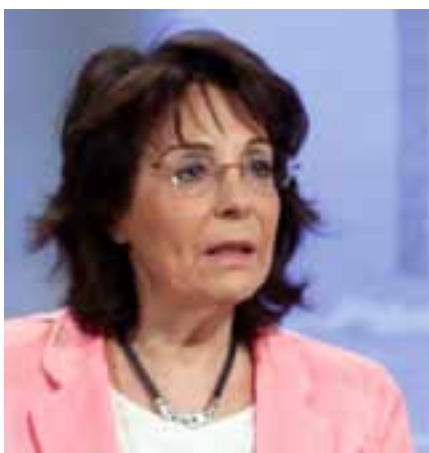
*“The specific needs of fisheries-dependent communities will be highlighted in the future Partnership Contracts, allowing existing FLAGs to carry on their activities if they are selected in a framework which will facilitate access to complementary sources of funding.”*

**FARNET Magazine: The Communication on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) indicates that “the Commission is committed to working actively to promote growth and jobs in coastal fisheries and aquaculture-dependent communities.”<sup>1</sup> Can you expand on this, and in particular on what role you see for “community-led” local development in contributing to this objective? Do you think that the approaches promoted within Axis 4 of the EFF (European Fisheries Fund) can deliver the growth and jobs expected?**

Europe’s fisheries policy is in urgent need of reform. Our vessels are catching more fish than can be safely replenished. Three out of four stocks in European waters are overfished. This is not about preserving fish for our grandchildren, but for ourselves. We have to make fishing environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable.

Only then European fisheries will be able to supply EU citizens with healthy food for the years to come. Only then will the fisheries sector be prosperous again, independent from subsidies and able to create new jobs and growth in coastal areas.

The figures show that the reform is necessary: in the last 10 to 15 years, the employment in the fisheries sector has been decreasing by 2% to 3% per year, on average. Because of dwindling catches and low wages, fishing lost its appeal as a career choice for young people. Our fishermen are ageing and they catch less and less fish. Only 40% of the fish we consume comes from Europe. The reform is a chance to stop this decline: restored fish stocks mean more fish for fishermen to fish for and a better future for them and their families.



**Maria Damanaki,**  
*European Commissioner  
for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries*

Let’s be honest: in the short term the loss of jobs is likely to continue and it will hit fishing-dependent communities hard. But we are not going to leave them to themselves: we want to support attractive job alternatives (also through Axis 4), both in and outside the fishing sector, for communities whose income depends on fishing. There are many opportunities to diversify the local economy towards new activities in tourism, environmental protection, or knowledge-based economy. We believe that local actors, such as public authorities and industry, are best placed to unlock this “blue” growth and employment potential in the broader maritime sector, and to mobilise their communities to benefit from these opportunities.

**The Commission’s proposal for the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), adopted in June 2011, foresees a budget of EUR 6.7 billion for maritime and fisheries policy, most of which would be spent within the framework of a “European Maritime and Fisheries Fund” (EMFF), the successor to the current EFF. Can you give some initial indications as to the likely content of this new fund? Will it also address broader issues related to Maritime Policy? What role could local development play in the future EMFF?**

The Commission will propose a reformed maritime and fisheries financial instrument, which will be structured around four pillars: Smart and Green Fisheries, Smart and Green Aquaculture, Sustainable and Inclusive Territorial Development and Integrated Maritime Policy. This new instrument will replace the current EFF (European Fisheries Fund), but with some major changes, such as the re-deployment of the inefficient system of direct fleet subsidies, in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy.


<sup>1</sup> Brussels, 13.7.2011

COM(2011) 417 final **Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy**



This new fund will bring together all the existing instruments<sup>2</sup>, including those supporting the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP). More importantly, the IMP will be part of the new Common Strategic Framework that the Commission is preparing for the post-2013 period. This is a new coordination mechanism that will define how the five shared-management funds (EMFF, ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund and EAFRD) will contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy. The inclusion of the IMP in this framework will ensure that in the future maritime policy is mainstreamed in the investment priorities of all these funds.

We expect local development to make an important contribution to the key Europe 2020 objectives of strengthening innovation and creating jobs. Local communities are the best source for new ideas and innovations addressing the problems they face. So, in the future we would like to strengthen the support we provide to these communities, as well as to promote networking between all the local actors involved in community-led local development. Networking and exchange is an essential source of information and inspiration in fostering innovation in fisheries-dependent areas. Networks such as FARNET will, therefore, remain a vital resource for local communities.


 ***In April 2011, the Commission, with the support of FARNET, organised a conference on, “The future of local development in fisheries areas (post-2013) – How to improve the impact of EU interventions at local level”. On that occasion, representatives from the Commission’s agriculture, regional policy and employment directorate generals presented their own proposals with regard to “community-led” local development. We understand that funds supporting these other policy areas will support actions similar to the current Axis 4 of the EFF, but target different types of groups or territories. How will the coordination of these policies be ensured? What will be the role played by instruments such as the Common Strategic Framework and the Partnership Contracts?***

Axis 4 of the EFF was inspired by the long-established Leader programme. For over 20 years, Leader has supported local development in rural areas of the European Union in a very successful way. However, in the current period we have identified the potential for better coordination between Leader and Axis 4 of the EFF: this can reduce overlaps, and administrative burden and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of both funds.

At the same time, the success of Leader and of Axis 4 has led the other Commission’s Directorate-Generals with responsibility for shared-management funds to foresee a larger role for community-led local development in their new policy frameworks.

This broadening of the menu of funds available creates a new opportunity to foster integrated local development strategies, using the range of financial support available in the different funds. However, it also makes the issue of coordination between the funds even more critical.

The Common Strategic Framework will include a section describing the role that community-led local development is expected to play in the 2014-2020 period, and how coordination between the different strands of funding should be organised. The Partnership Contracts will then specify how this will work in each Member State. The specific needs of fisheries-dependent communities will be highlighted in these Contracts, allowing existing Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) to carry on their activities if they are selected in a framework which will facilitate access to complementary sources of funding.

 ***Local actors involved in existing FLAGs are worried that a late adoption of the new financial proposals might result in a break in the support provided for FLAGs. This could be detrimental for the mobilisation of local actors, which is crucial to the success of Axis 4 of the EFF. What is the timeline for the adoption of these new proposals? Do you foresee that existing FLAGs will continue to receive support?***

I am very aware of the legitimate concerns of local actors in relation to this issue. The full package of proposals for the new financial instruments should be adopted by the Commission before the end of the year. After that, they must be discussed and jointly agreed by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. At this stage, it is impossible to predict how long this co-decision process will take, especially since the adoption of the financial instruments is also dependent on the adoption of the Union’s overall budget for 2014-2020.

However, FLAGs can carry on their activities until the end of 2015, if they have sufficient budget for that. As it stands, we have proposed that the Member States should finalise the selection of all new groups (for the next programming period) by the end of 2015 and that existing groups should be eligible to apply again. These provisions should ensure that there will be no gap in the funding provided for local development. ■

***Interview conducted (in English)  
in September 2011.***

<sup>2</sup> In the 2007-2013 period, the European Fisheries Fund provides the core financial support, but is completed by several other financial instruments supporting other elements of maritime and fisheries policy (IMP, control, governance, etc). The regrouping of these instruments in a single financial Regulation should provide synergies and allow a significant reduction of the administrative burden, in terms of programming, management, monitoring and evaluation, both for Member States and the Commission.

## Report

### AXIS 4 IN ACTION ON THE SHORES OF LAKE PEIPSI [ESTONIA]

# Ports ahoy

**On the Estonian side of Lake Peipsi, which forms the border with Russia, collective actions, supported and stimulated by Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF), have led to the upgrading of fishing ports, the development of tourism and an increase in the direct sale of local products with a strong involvement of fisheries stakeholders.**



▲ Fish festival in Kasepää.

Despite the morning drizzle, the crowd is growing all the time at the “Festival of Kalevipoeg<sup>3</sup>, Fish and Water”, at the fair-ground in Kasepää (population 500). “There are lots of people, but this is not going to be the year that we beat our 2007 record of 12 000 people...” predicts Toivo Kivi, a local fisherman, who also happens to be a councillor, the president of the local development association, and the person responsible for organising parties and festivals for the fisheries local action group (FLAG) of Lake Peipsi.

Covering 3 500 km<sup>2</sup>, more or less equally divided between Estonia and Russia, Lake Peipsi is the fourth-largest lake in Europe and the largest Axis 4 fisheries area in Estonia (3 155 km<sup>2</sup>). There are about 300 fishermen active on the lake, but only about 10% of them are self-employed. The rest are employed by the ten private com-

panies that hold most of the lake’s fishing rights. “These companies are highly vertically integrated, each controlling the entire chain, from capture to export, which is their main market: 90% of production is shipped to Central Europe,” explains Urmas Pirk, President of the FLAG and the Fishermen’s Association of Lake Peipsi. At least 500 local people work in the fishing industry and fish is a major regional resource.

Since 2003, four fish festivals, including the Kasepää festival, have been held during the summer in four different lakeside villages. The contribution of Axis 4 to these events (EUR 25 000 in 2010 and 2011) represents a form of collaboration, which the FLAG is very keen to promote. “This is a good platform for cooperation and local networking,” says Andri Plato, director of the FLAG. “To organise these festivals and agree on the activities people need to talk,

consult and communicate. The seven or eight meetings required to prepare each event nurture a strong local dynamic. This is essential in a border area, which has large communities of Russian speakers and ‘Old Believers’<sup>4</sup>.”

Sirli Nellis, coordinator of the Estonian Fisheries Network, adds: “All these stands that combine fish with other products are a good way of promoting fishing, gastronomy and local culture. The FLAG is also very visi-

<sup>3</sup> Hero and title of an Estonian epic. Kalevipoeg has superhuman strength, and is a sort of “Estonian Hercules”.

<sup>4</sup> Populations of the Orthodox religion that broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church when they rejected the reforms introduced by Patriarch Nikon in 1653. They took refuge on the Western (Estonian) shore of Lake Peipsi, where they are now a Russian-speaking farming community of about 10 000 people.



▲ Back from fishing on Lake Peipsi.

ble. From the outside, it is also an excellent event for the image of a region which, traditionally, has not attracted many visitors, despite its many assets. Incidentally, as you can see, Estonian Television is here."

While keeping an eye on the enormous pot of fish soup simmering on a fire in front of the FLAG stand, which is being filmed by the TV crew, Toivo Kivi confirms: "These festivals attract many people to the region and are also an opportunity for those who have left and those who stayed to meet up. The ripple effect on local artisans and entrepreneurs is significant, not to mention the fish: since we started these festivals we've noticed that people are eating more and more fish, at all times of year, to the point where there are now shortages sometimes! This is why it is important to set up cold stores at the ports, so as to be able to store more fish."

## Private ports

The FLAG, the Association for the Development of the Peipsi Fisheries Area (*Peipsi Kalanduspiirkonna Arendajate Kogu / PKAK*), has 215 members, including 164 from the fisheries sector, 28 representatives of civil society, 15 representatives of municipalities and eight business people. It has set itself five priorities: redevelopment of the ports (60% of the budget), promoting tourism and the area's fishing heritage (25%), direct sales and processing (7%), socio-economic diversification (4%) and training (4%). These priorities are also supported by cross-sectoral collective action: creating a website, market research to promote direct sales, training for fishermen on tourism and other diversification opportunities, and the purchase and provision of an excavator for redeveloping the ports.



▲ Dredging of a port with a floating excavator.

"Estonia has about 500 fishing ports and landing sites. All of these are privately owned, with the exception of a few that are owned by municipalities," says Juhani Papp, Head of the Fishery Development Bureau in the Ministry of Agriculture.





▲ The quay in the port of Omedu is in need of renovation.

*"This situation, which is unique in Europe, poses a structural problem in terms of competitiveness, in comparison with other countries, as local, self-employed fishermen must invest in the ports. The dilapidated condition of these small ports is also problematic in terms of silted channels, safety and quality (refrigeration, equipment storage...). The ports are privately owned, but because redevelopment can benefit the entire sector and the territory, Axis 4 of the EFF allows us to take action in this regard. 52% of the Axis 4 budget in Estonia is devoted to the redevelopment of ports; it is a choice made by the fishermen themselves. Locally, the FLAGs selected the 63 ports that were considered to have the best prospects and enough users. Fourteen were selected around Lake Peipsi."*

In the Estonian context, 'port' generally means a landing site or simple harbour consisting of a narrow channel of varying length, leading to a small basin that can shelter a few small vessels. A small quay or pier is often the only facility. On the Estonian side of the lake, only two ports have a fuel station on the quayside.

The ports selected for investment all required major dredging work. The FLAG, therefore, decided to invest Axis 4 funds in the purchase of a floating excavator. "You might be startled, but we consider this to be one of our key projects as it goes far beyond the simple purchase of a backhoe, however sophisticated and versatile it may be. This is a real collective action, which brings together the NGO Peipsi Association (MTÜ Peipsi Ühendus), six municipalities and the 14 port owners concerned," explains Urmas Pirk.

## Community-led actions

The activities undertaken at the ports usually follow a similar process and cover more or less the same works: a non-profit association is formed, bringing together local fishermen and the port owner; after the dredging and widening of the channel, the construction or reconstruction of the quay can begin. This often includes a refrigerated building and/or a warehouse, and the building of a recreational area. The investment of public funds in private infrastructure is balanced by the establishment of the non-profit association, which ensures free use of the port (apart from electricity and other charges) by the non-owner fishermen.

In the village of Omedu, Mihhail Guz is a fisherman and dried fish producer. He sells 3-4 tonnes of roach in Estonia and Latvia every year, where dried fish is a very popular accompaniment to beer. "Five or six years ago, the smelt disappeared completely from Lake Peipsi. Previously, we caught at least 10 000 tonnes a year, which we also dried." Hoping to offset this loss by deriving greater value from the fish that remained, Mr Guz modernised his facilities, at his own expense. His company, which employs three people and is supplied by five self-employed fishermen, has premises on the quayside of the small port, which he also owns. But the quay is crumbling, the channel is narrow and shallow, and the whole port has the appearance of being neglected, which contrasts with the more modern facilities. The plan, therefore, is to use Axis 4 funding to restore the quay, to build an ice plant, and to redevelop the surrounding area.





▲ Most of the filleted fish is exported.

With a workforce of 25, Profit Pluss focuses on the filleting of perch and pike-perch, one-third of which come from fishermen employed by the company itself, and two-thirds from Estonian, Finnish and Russian suppliers. *“Initially, we were only fishermen and wholesalers,”* says Mark Sumnikov, Deputy Chairman of the company. *“In 1999, we decided to generate more value from our production by moving into filleting. We produce 300 tonnes of filleted fish every year, all of which is exported to Switzerland, Germany, France and the Netherlands.”*

The company does not own the port of Sassukvere, which it uses, but has signed a long-term lease with the municipality that owns it. This is a port that has not been touched since Soviet times. Its channel is shallow and the old wooden pier is far too narrow. Axis 4 funds were sought to help with the dredging and widening of the channel, as well as the building of a concrete dock, twice as large as the existing one, and a building to store equipment. The total cost of the project is EUR 400 000, with 80% coming from Axis 4 and the rest from the NGO, Sassukvere Port (MTÜ Sassukvere Sadam). In addition to Profit Pluss, 30 fishermen and 15 boats will benefit from the investment.

*“Without Axis 4, we could not have done this,”* Mark points out, *“and I must say that the FLAG was a great help in terms of procedures and guidance.”* Work began a few months ago, but a next step is already planned: the creation of a recreational area, including an amusement park and a network of footpaths.

Because it is much larger than the others, and was modernised in 2004 with funding from the FIG<sup>5</sup> and SAPARD<sup>6</sup>, the port of Kallaste is perhaps the only one on Lake Peipsi that conforms to the image that most people might have of a port. It belongs to the Kallaste Kalur fishing company, which owns 26 vessels, including six large boats. Here, the intervention of Axis 4 is limited to dredging the channel and the purchase of a forklift. *“Given its relatively recent renovation, there was no need to invest more on this site,”* says Urmas Pirk.

In Varnja, the port operated by NGO, Varnja Development (MTÜ Varnja Arendus) is much smaller. The owner of the port wanted to offer a better and safer service to its thirty or so users (fishermen, boaters and tourists), so he turned to Axis 4 to seek assistance for dredging and widening the channel, and for installing floating pontoons, to improve quality and safety. The total cost of the project came to EUR 65 000, with 75% paid by Axis 4. *“For me as a fisherman, the support from Axis 4 suits this kind of collective actions very well,”* says Kaimur Nurk, the NGO’s spokesperson, a self-employed fisherman and tour operator.



<sup>5</sup> Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (2000-2006).

<sup>6</sup> The pre-accession agricultural instrument (SAPARD) was an aid to agriculture and sustainable rural development for the accession countries of Central and Eastern Europe during the pre-accession process in 2000-2006.



▲ Direct selling of fish is an established tradition in certain parts of the area.

## Peipsiland

In most cases, it is expected that the redeveloped ports will also serve as points of sale for fish and other regional products.

Direct selling is not new in the local culture and certain parts of the territory have practised it intensively for a long time: the communities of Old Believers usually sell their fish and onions along the roads. Further north, between Kasepää and Lohusuu, for example, over about ten kilometres of the Tartu-Jõhvi highway, a score of quaint wooden kiosks and stalls sell smoked and dried fish to motorists and tourists. Judging by the numbers of cars and buses stopped outside these little roadside kiosks, business seems to be thriving.

*"What is actually missing in order to expand and strengthen direct sales is a cross-sectoral approach, which brings together and publicises the players and products,"* says Eve Külmallik, a counsellor in the Fishery Economics Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. *"In Estonia, generally, fishing is a particularly conservative sector because the professionals, all fairly old, are not accustomed to the market economy. The fact that they must now be responsible for their own marketing is an upheaval that is difficult for them to accept. Organising themselves into cooperatives is not some-*



▲ Selling smoked and dried fish to passing motorists.

*thing they are willing to consider because the image of cooperatives is associated with the Soviet era "fisher's kolkhozes". We felt the same negative perception before the FLAG was launched: we had to argue hard to convince the fishermen that they would not be collectivised! Due to the highly vertically integrated nature of fisheries in the Peipsi region, they don't have problems selling to export markets. It would be good, however, to strengthen domestic direct marketing, and therefore the Peipsi FLAG's proposal, together with other FLAGs in Estonia, for an internet portal to modernize direct sales is a sensible one."*

Another good idea: the creation of a territorial brand that could be called "Peipsiland" is also being considered, and a coordinator was hired jointly by the FLAG and the four local LEADER groups to develop

the concept. *"The purpose is to make it known that 'Peipsiland' is about nature, lakes and fish, as well as the best onions and cucumbers in Estonia,"* says Andri Plato, in the confident tone of an advertising executive.

## Fishing and tourism (and vice versa)

It is widely recognised that the Lake Peipsi area – coastal and inland – has tremendous tourism potential, which remains largely untapped. Exploiting this potential requires cooperation between fishermen, anglers and Axis 4.

In Voore (population 300), Axis 4 provided 60% of the EUR 38 270 which enabled the municipality to create a picnic area for anglers beside a local pond. They now have the facilities at their disposal to prepare, grill, smoke and eat their catch.

Nearby, another tourism project has benefited from Axis 4 support. In winter, Janno Tomson takes tourists ice-fishing. A grant of EUR 3 750 enabled him to buy five boats, which he uses in summer for a different type of recreational fishing. *"I call it 'getting value for money,'* says a delighted Urmas Pirk. *"That's a small grant but it can generate business activity for years."*



▲ Axis 4 support is being sought to improve access to the lake.

Near the village of Änkküla, on their “Mist Farm” (*Udu Talu*), Mati and Terje Karmas have created an outdoor centre that consists of bungalows, camping areas, saunas and a children’s playground. The site is beside a large lake and in order to improve the service offered, as well as the quality of fish they prepare for tourists, the Karmas applied for a contribution from Axis 4 to the construction of a jetty, a boat ramp and a small cold store. Here again, the emphasis is on port facilities, albeit on a smaller scale.

Indeed, when Toivo Kivi is asked about his dream as a “local developer”, he replies: *“The ports we saw in Sweden during our recent study trip there... I hope that in ten years, we will also have ports like that here!”*

Meanwhile, on August 13, 2011 in Kasepää, the Peipsi FLAG fish soup is ready to be served, and three dozen eager customers have already formed an orderly queue. It is past noon, the weather is improving, and the festival is now in full swing. ■

#### PEIPSI (Estonia)



#### Area:

3 155 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Population:

30 723 inhabitants

#### Density:

10 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>

#### Axis 4 Budget

#### EUR

	EU	National	Private	Total
Total	3 115 500	1 038 500	1 200 000	5 354 000

#### CONTACT

**PKAK (Association for the Development of Peipsi Fisheries Area)**

c/o Andri Plato

Kasepää vald, Sõpruse 149,

49503, Jõgevamaa, Estonia.

+372 77 626 25 (+372 50 89 426)

[pkak@pkak.ee](mailto:pkak@pkak.ee)

<http://www.pkak.ee>



PEIPSI KALANDUSPIIRKONNA  
ARENDAJATE KOGU



## Focus

### A SHOWCASE OF AXIS 4 PROJECTS FROM ACROSS THE EU

# 30 ways to create sustainable



The thirty projects presented in the following pages will be showcased at a FARNET Conference in Brussels on 3-4 November 2011. Demonstrating the energy, inventiveness and innovation unleashed by the Axis 4 approach, these projects should not be seen as a ranking of the best projects, but rather as a taster of the rich and diverse ways in which local, community-led approaches can contribute to the sustainable development of fisheries areas.

As you read through these projects, or if you are lucky enough to have the opportunity to attend the exhibition and speak directly with the many committed project promoters, you will recognise five distinctive features.

#### Bridges within and from fishing

**Firstly, the projects show that there are two main ways in which local community-led approaches, such as Axis 4, can generate income and jobs for hard pressed sectors like fishing.** On the one hand, many projects develop new products, activities and linkages within the local fisheries supply chain. Examples include new products from low value species, discards or by-products, shorter commercial circuits, and training for fishermen. On the other hand, there are numerous examples of projects which build bridges between the fisheries sector and other sectors of the local economy, such as tourism, or social and environmental services. In both cases, the additional income and jobs for fishing communities come from better coordination between complementary activities.

#### Both big and small

**Secondly, the projects show that local strategies can be used to invest in both very small and (relatively) large projects.** Project budgets range from just EUR 7 600 for the promotion of

fishing cabins in Sweden to over EUR 1.7 million for the reconstruction of a historic building to create a multifunctional space based around a local fish restaurant in the Netherlands. The size of the projects supported is really a strategic choice of the FLAG and MA. For example, while French FLAGs, which have a relatively modest Axis 4 budget, tend to focus on smaller, “immaterial” investments like studies and preparatory animation, the Dutch FLAGs, with a similar Axis 4 budget, tend to concentrate on a limited number of relatively large productive projects. The lesson is that investment strategies must be adapted to fit institutional and local economic realities.

#### Different types of project for different types of area

**Thirdly, FLAGs can invest in a wide range of different types of project.** FLAGs are far more than just a local office for organising calls for tender and distributing grants. For the sake of simplicity, we have organised the projects into four main types: direct (mainly physical) investment in local businesses; investments to improve marketing and distribution channels; “soft” investments, such as research and development, training, awareness and image building, which create the conditions for local development; and finally, investment in small scale supporting infrastructure.



# fisheries areas

Taken in isolation, some of the projects may seem puzzling. Why for example, does Estonia use Axis 4 to invest in small port infrastructure, while France focuses on small “soft” projects to “grease the wheels” of local development? To find the answers, we invite you to dig deeper into each project and place it within its local and national context. But for the present, the most important message to retain is the importance of FLAGs operating across an integrated range of project types, which, taken together, make the most of their specific local assets.

For example, on its own the French project “Pescatourisme 83” did not create any jobs; but it is included here because it is a good example of how a FLAG can support a sequence of studies, training, administrative reform, and pilot actions, which together can create the conditions for future projects to increase and diversify fishermen’s income. Indeed, it can be seen that some relatively small Axis 4 projects, like the preliminary support for the Fish House in Kuusamo, Finland, are being used to prepare the way to lever in far larger investments by other axes of the EFF and other funds.

## Involvement leads to innovation

**Fourthly, the projects illustrate that, under the right conditions, the involvement of local actors can unleash energy, inventiveness and innovation.** For example, the investments in local businesses have supported the emergence of a range of new products and processes, including barnacle pâté, crab stock, seaweed products, the use of fish waste for fishmeal, social enterprises for injured fishermen, and projects which build on fisheries and aquaculture traditions to diversify into tourism.

The focus in the projects targeted at improving distribution channels is exemplified by the “0 KM” concept. These projects all aim to reduce the miles, or the distance, between locally caught fish and the consumer. But the methods vary from GSM messaging systems for the “Fish from the Boat” project, to seafood baskets, to the promotion of local fish markets.

The soft investments, aiming to create the conditions for local development, support a range of activities, from research into new products such as leather items from fish skin, to training for fishermen to take advantage of new opportunities, to the promotion and awareness raising, both of the area in general and of local fishing assets in particular.

Lastly, the projects dealing with small scale infrastructure range from investments in small scale coastal fishing ports, like in Estonia, to fishing village renewal in Germany, angling infrastructure in Latvia, and mussel growing areas in Greece.

Most, if not all, of the projects offer something new. But even when a project seems to be fairly standard you will generally find that the local partnership has enriched and adapted it to local conditions.

## Reaching all parts of Europe


**Finally, the geographical spread of projects reflects the speed with which different countries have implemented Axis 4.** The partnerships in some countries are still in the process of formation and many have not yet selected any projects. So, while we have tried to provide examples from as many countries as possible, there is a higher representation of projects from certain (mostly northern) European countries. Undoubtedly, a key determining factor in the speed of implementation and, hence the numbers of projects, is the effectiveness of governance and delivery systems. This does not mean that these systems can or should simply be transplanted from one country to another, but there is still a big margin for learning and improvement in this area.



## How the projects were chosen – and why

The thirty projects were selected on the basis of submissions made by Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs):

- > In June 2011, the FARNET Support Unit asked managing authorities (MAs) and national networks to contact all the FLAGs that were known to have selected projects. Each FLAG was invited to send a description of up to two projects.
- > In their submissions, FLAGs were required to show how the projects led to tangible economic benefits in terms of jobs and/ or income, and contributed to addressing some of the major challenges facing their fisheries area. They were also asked to illustrate how the community-led, local approach of Axis 4 contributed to the success of the projects.
- > The FLAGs submitted information on a total of 96 projects, all of which will be added to the stock of project examples on the FARNET website.
- > The final selection of 30 projects, outlined below, was made by a panel of FARNET staff and external experts and validated by the European Commission. The selection was based on the criteria mentioned above, while also seeking to ensure a balanced representation of the wide range of projects that Axis 4 can support, both in terms of geographical spread and types of actions.

 Numbers refer to the project stands at the FARNET conference in Brussels (3-4 November 2011).



## Focus 30 ways to create sustainable fisheries areas

### SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES:

adding value to fisheries, utilising by-products, new local products, tourism, the environment, the social economy...



#### NEW PRODUCTS FROM GOOSE BARNACLES – Stand 03



Axis 4 played a fundamental role in supporting a group of 27 shellfish gatherers to set up a company that would develop and market new products from goose barnacles, a highly sought-after shellfish in Spain. The new products include natural canned barnacles and barnacle pâté with seaweed, which are now sold in gourmet outlets around the country. The idea is to add value to smaller sized bar-

nacles, which are harvested to avoid them colonising the larger and more profitable barnacles but which fetch a considerably lower price. The project has taken these 27 barnacle gatherers into new areas of activity in which they are learning new skills and set to generate extra revenue while strengthening the market for their raw material. This project cost EUR 131 667 and received a grant of EUR 45 833 from the [Ría de Vigo FLAG](#) (ES07).



#### SMOKED WEEVER FISH – Stand 29



Danish fisherman and restaurateur, Bent Rulle, saw an opportunity to change people's perceptions of the underexploited weever fish, and at the same time bring in additional revenue to the island of Læsø. Indeed, although Mr Rulle would regularly catch weever fish, the species is widely known for the venomous spine it carries on its back and consumption was therefore low. Supported by [FLAG](#)

[Læsø, Samsø, Ærø](#) (DK10), which provided a grant of EUR 35 000, Mr Rulle invested EUR 145 526 in kitchen equipment, enabling him to prepare this lesser used fish for sale in his fish shop and restaurant. As the fish is smoked at the local smoke house, the full added value of the product is retained on the island. The creation of 'smoked weever fish' has added a new product to the range of local delicacies on offer to residents and visitors at the fishing port of Østerby.



#### CRAB STOCK FOR EXPORT – Stand 30



The [FLAG FiskeriLAG Midt-Nord](#) (DK02), in Denmark, is supporting an experienced local food manufacturing company, Carnad A / S Logstor, to develop a new product for the Japanese market – 'crab stock'. Production of this new product, which is expected to create 15 new jobs, six in the fishing industry and nine in processing, is set to bring both economic and environmental benefits to the area. Indeed, the Limf-

jord area has seen the crab population double in the last ten years and this product aims to make use of this new resource, while also keeping the population at sustainable levels. The longer term aim is to export 'crab stock' more widely to markets throughout the world. Axis 4 contributed EUR 250 245 (20%) to this private sector-led, which involves a total investment of EUR 1 251 225.



## Focus 30 ways to create sustainable fisheries areas



### THE INTEGRATED FISHERIES OUTLET – Stand 23



Mogens Klausen is a former travelling fishmonger, who decided to settle in Hune (North Jutland, Denmark) and develop a new integrated fish catering business. With Axis 4 support, he developed a shop, a restaurant and a small processing workshop, all under the same roof. Customers now have the option of either buying fresh local fish from the fish counter, trying one of the exciting recipes in the restaurant, or selecting a smoked herring, mackerel or salmon from the

numerous preparations available from the smokery and processing plant. Mogens' outlet is located in a popular tourist area, which means a very busy summer season but difficult winters. Still, the restaurant aims to remain open the whole year round in order to offer potential visitors a pleasant experience in the winter time as well, thereby helping to extend the tourist season. This project, which saw a total investment of EUR 700 000, has already created 15 new jobs locally. The [FLAG North Jutland](#) (DK01) contributed EUR 45 000 to the purchase of some specific smoking equipment.



### A SHELLFISH NURSERY OPENS TO TOURISTS – Stand 04



Paco and Rubén have taken a different path to the other fishermen in their families. Building on their experience of fishing and the traditions of their area, their ambition is to bring the sector closer to the public through tourism, cuisine and education. The local sand dunes and lagoon are among the natural assets that have contributed to the protected status of the small fishing village of Corrubredo, Spain, as well as to the area's popularity with tourists. However, this potential is largely underdeveloped and the tourist season is very short. Having bought and restored an abandoned shellfish

nursery in Corrubredo, Paco and Rubén have worked with the [Ría de Arousa FLAG](#) (ES05) to put together a project to revive and diversify the nursery's activities, with a view to breathing new life into the village. The FLAG is contributing 41.7% of this EUR 466 177 diversification project, which will include a nursery that will be open to the public and a fishing trail in the surrounding area, where a traditional fishing boat and its tools will also be put on display. There will also be a restaurant where local dishes will be served. The project is set to employ 14 local people as cooks, waiters, guides, sales assistants as well as in administration and management.



### A YOUNG FISHERMAN DIVERSIFIES INTO TOURISM – Stand 35



In Haparanda, Sweden, Oscar Innala, a 22 year-old fisherman, is developing a fishing and tourism business in the archipelago where his family has fished for many decades. With a grant from the [Haparanda FLAG](#) (SE11) of 50% of the total cost of the EUR 7 600 project, Oscar is promoting "fishing camps" through online and printed media. These camps are located on three different islands, which were previously used for commercial fishing. They allow visitors to dis-

cover the area through fishing tours or boat trips in the archipelago, where Oscar shares his experience of fishing, or to relax in the sauna and cabins on the waters edge. This business is really about allowing visitors to tailor the activities they want to engage in, based on how they want to discover the area, while also enjoying the best possible conditions for a unique archipelago experience, under the guidance of a passionate, motivated and enterprising young fisherman.



### DE BOET: LOCAL FISHING HERITAGE PUT TO GOOD USE – Stand 25



This project involves the renovation of an old building, "De Boet" ("the Shed"), which was originally used for building traditional wooden fishing boats and later as offices for the local steam ferry. The renovated building, located in the heart of the fishing village of Urk (Flevoland, the Netherlands), will be a multifunctional space, centred on a famous local fish restaurant. The restaurant will be integrated into a wider tourist package, where customers will be allowed to

bring back fish bought from the local fish auction, learn how to cook it and then enjoy it in the special atmosphere of the building, thereby reinforcing the links between the tourism and fisheries sectors. The project, which is being supported by the [FLAG Flevoland](#) (NL03), is expected to regenerate Urk's port area, bring new revenue and create 4-8 new jobs. The total investment is EUR 1 713 205, 10% of which is provided by Axis 4.





## FISHMEAL FROM FISH WASTE – Stand 12



In Andalusia, the [Huelva FLAG](#) (ES08) has supported a new activity by the aquaculture company, *Salinas del Astur*, which breeds and commercialises sea bass, guilthead and white sea bass. With support from Axis 4, the company purchased new machinery, which allows it to produce its own, high quality fishmeal from the unwanted fish and waste produced at the fish auction. This waste, which was previously incinerated, has been turned into a valuable resource,

which has important ecological benefits, while also helping to keep production costs down. The project has started on a small scale, producing fishmeal for the company's own aquaculture activities. However, a later stage foresees the collection of leftovers from a neighbouring fish auction (Isla Cristina) in order to produce enough fishmeal to supply other fish farms in the area. The project saw a total investment of EUR 31 176, of which 22.5% came from Axis 4. To date, one new job has been created.



## A FISHING ASSOCIATION DIVERSIFIES ITS ICE PRODUCTION – Stand 18



After a reduction in the number of fishing boats based in La Ametlla de Mar, Spain, the local fishermen's organisation, or "*Cofradía*", was confronted with the prospect of having to lay off two of its staff members, who worked to supply the fishing boats with ice. However, with support from the [Delta del Ebro FLAG](#) (ES15), rather than closing its ice-production activities, the *Cofradía* decided to expand and seek out new markets. With a grant that covered 40% of the total

investment needed – EUR 198 610 – the *Cofradía* adapted its ice making equipment so that it could produce ice-cubes for local restaurants and bars. Taking advantage of the touristy nature of the area, the *Cofradía* linked up with the local tourism agency and local distributors to secure clients for what is already proving to be a profitable activity. The fishermen's organisation is now enjoying increased revenue and, at the same time, two local jobs have been saved and one new one created.



## NEW PRODUCTS FROM SEAWEED – Stand 24



Danish waters produce high quality seaweed which, until now, has not been exploited commercially as there is no tradition of eating seaweed in Denmark. However, with the recent growth in the sushi market and New Nordic Cuisine, the Danish [Small Islands FLAG](#) (DK14) and the [Bornholm FLAG](#) (DK13), both situated in remote areas where depopulation and a loss of business opportunities are serious concerns, have identified a new opportunity: the two FLAGs are cooperating in a project to create and develop a range of new local products that use seaweed as a raw material. With a

grant of EUR 84 492, 54% of the total cost of EUR 158 253, this project brings together local producers, including fish farmers, mussel growers and processors to promote the sustainable cultivation, harvesting and processing of seaweed. One of the most exciting aspects of the project is the range of partners working together over quite a large area. The project is expected to create many new jobs and generate additional revenue for the areas concerned.



## Focus 30 ways to create sustainable fisheries areas



### FISHING ADVENTURE CENTRE – Stand 20



This project aims to preserve the fisheries character of local areas on the island of Rügen (Germany), all of which present a certain degree of dynamism and potential for creating linkages with tourism and other local sectors. The objective is to help fishermen diversify their activities and develop additional sources of income, while also improving the image of the local fishing industry. Some of the existing fishing facilities will therefore be redesigned and upgraded. The existing fish hall in Sassnitz, for example, will be turned into an attractive market place. This will be supported by

the development of an “Information and Angling Centre”, which will offer boat trips to tourists to watch working fishing boats, as well as providing information about other visitor activities linked to fishing and angling. The project will also explore possibilities for further developing pesca-tourism in Germany, as tourists are currently not allowed onboard working fishing boats. At present, pesca-tourists can only observe from other vessels. The total cost of the project is around EUR 550 000, to which the Rügen FLAG (DE04) will contribute EUR 210 000. A minimum of three jobs are expected to be created in direct sales, angling and pesca-tourism.



### STABLE JOBS FOR INJURED FISHERMEN – Stand 17



A social enterprise (“Atelier des Gens de Mer”) has been established in France, creating six full-time jobs for injured fishermen in fisheries and other marine activities, such as net mending. Axis 4 funding was used, *inter alia*, for the purchase of equipment to adapt working conditions to the needs of the disabled workers. The enterprise was supported by the [Marennes Oléron FLAG](#) (FR05), which contributed

22% of the total investment of EUR 89 271. The project also included a comprehensive assessment of the needs of former fishermen with disabilities, in order to facilitate their reintegrate into the labour market. The business model is now being transferred to Arcachon, where 60 jobs for people with disabilities are envisaged.

## IMPROVED DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS: direct sales, short chains, new distribution platforms...



### FISH FROM THE BOAT – Stand 19



Jan Meyer has been fishing since 1973, but with the evolution of the fishing industry, he has increasingly seen low or highly fluctuating prices for species such as cod or flounder, which are generally sold via wholesale. This project aims to tackle this issue by selling part of the catch directly to the final customer. By developing an innovative new website, Jan and his son are now able to inform customers about their catch in “real time”. Indeed, the project, which is supported by the [AktiveRegion Ostseeküste FLAG](#) (DE13), is successfully exploiting the increasing demand for fresh, local fish as well as

advances in information technology. With the [www.fischvomkutter.de](http://www.fischvomkutter.de) website, fishermen can send details of their catch via SMS while at sea and customers can see where, when and what fish are available. Coupled with information boards at the landing sites and a brochure, “Fisch vom Kutter”, the project is increasing the amount and value of direct sale of freshly caught fish in the region of Ostseeküste, as well as fostering links between producers and customers. The project cost EUR 20 000, of which 48% was provided by the local FLAG.



## PROMOTING FISH MARKETS AND A FISH CULTURE – Stand 27



The Noord-Holland FLAG (NL04) has supported and facilitated cooperation between markets in the municipalities of Texel, Den Helder and Den Oever in undertaking structural investments (market facilities, education centre...) and in jointly developing a website ([www.versevis.nl](http://www.versevis.nl)) and other promotional tools, including flyers, displays and information points. By using a range of different media, the three

markets have transformed the act of buying fresh fish into a cultural experience, where customers can also learn about fishing and the “route to market” for their piece of cod, plaice or hake. This enhanced market experience has also helped to position the markets as local tourism attractions, providing wider benefits for the area. The total cost of the project was EUR 318 000, of which 38.6% came from public co-financing, including half from Axis 4 of the EFF.



## FISH AND SEAFOOD BASKET SCHEME – Stand 08



This project aims to develop and market fish and shellfish baskets in six villages around the Thau lagoon, which do not currently have outlets offering fresh produce from the lagoon. It builds on a small scale initiative currently offering such baskets in just one village. The two-year project aims to bring fishermen and local associations together

to raise awareness among the local populations and develop a market for local, fresh and seasonal fisheries products from the lagoon. With Axis 4 of the EFF and national co-financing, the [Thau FLAG](#) (FR09) has funded 50% of the EUR 77 250 investment, which covers studies on possible pick-up points and times of delivery, as well as local events and workshops to generate support.



## TRACEABILITY AND LOCAL CONSUMPTION – Stand 09



In the Minho and Lima areas of Portugal, coastal and freshwater species have both a cultural and economic importance. To give greater visibility to the work of local fishermen and also to consolidate the sustainability of their activities, the [FLAG Norte](#) (PT01) is supporting two projects, covering the whole distribution chain, from the sourcing to the consumption of local seafood. The Certpiscis project (total cost EUR 22 689.94, with 52.5% from Axis 4) involves a study carried out by the AquaMuseum of Rio Minho on the development of a traceability scheme for freshwater species caught in the Minho river (such as shad or marine lamprey). The scheme would involve the whole distribution chain, fostering contacts between fishermen, retailers, restaurants, the public, maritime authorities, municipalities, tourism offices and researchers. The second pro-

ject, CEVAL, concerns the development of the brand “km 0”, or “zero miles”, which will help identify locally produced food, including inshore seafood. This initiative of the entrepreneurship platform of the Minho and Lima areas (total cost EUR 119 570, with 46% from Axis 4) will link up restaurants and chefs with fishermen and primary producers in the area, providing the former with new knowledge and information about local products and the latter with new market opportunities. By strengthening the image of local products, modernising sales points and organising “show cooking” events, both projects are expected to have a positive effect on the gastronomic reputation of the area, not only among the area’s food enthusiasts but also among potential visitors looking for quality seafood products.



## Focus 30 ways to create sustainable fisheries areas

### PREPARING THE GROUND:

studies, training and skills, promotion and awareness-raising...



#### **AXIS 4 STUDY LEADS TO A EUR 2.7 MILLION FISH HOUSE – Stand 38**



Activities funded by Axis 4 played a crucial role in leveraging in a larger investment (from Axis 2 of the EFF and local municipal funds, giving a total of EUR 2 700 000) for the development of a fish handling centre in Kuusamo.

This is a new concept in Finland; combining the needs of both fishermen and the processing industry under the same roof. The [Kainuu-Koillismaa FLAG](#) (FI06) financed the preliminary surveys and the feasibility study (total cost: EUR 23 250) and, based on the

positive results, supported cooperation among local stakeholders (fishermen, fish farmers and fish processors), which eventually led to a joint venture for the larger project. It also advised the municipality in applying for funding from Axis 2 of the EFF. As a result, there is now a large logistics centre in the town of Kuusamo, providing excellent opportunities for local actors to develop their business operation and for local cooperation. Already, six new jobs have been created in fisheries companies and two new jobs in processing.



#### **PROMOTING COCKLES LOCALLY – Stand 06**



Cockle picking has a long tradition in Anllons. Today it is carried out by professional shellfish gatherers, mostly women, who are organised into a non-profit association, which is also responsible for ensuring the sustainability of the resource.

However, such associations have typically not been involved in activities further along the value chain. Indeed, until recently the cockles collected by the shellfish association of Anllons were sold wholesale, at the auctions, before being transported to the large urban centres in Spain. The [Costa da Morte FLAG](#) (ES03) has, therefore, supported an integrated chain of activities to raise public awareness of cockle pick-

ing in the area and to improve the image of the product with a view to ensuring more of the product is sold and consumed locally. This included training sessions for local chefs, the development of packaging and presentation materials for the cockles, and the development of other promotional material and a recipe book. The association has also opened its doors to the public, with a series of open days, including tasting sessions. The project cost EUR 37 310 (90% of which came from the FLAG) and is already starting to pay dividends: four local restaurants and a number of individuals are now buying cockles directly from the shellfish gatherers' association, which now envisages further diversification activities and new products.



#### **SUSTAINABLE USE OF LOCAL FISHERIES RESOURCES – Stand 36**



In the Lake Vänern area of Sweden, inhabitants are well aware of the environmental quality of the lake they live by. They were less aware, however, of the local fish species which, if sustainably managed, could provide a valuable, local alternative to imported fish products.

Two projects supported by the [Lake Vänern FLAG](#) (SE07) are now helping to promote the sustainable use of local fish species, one through awareness-raising among catering students, fish suppliers and restaurants, and the other through exploring better use of the local vendace (*Coregonus* sp.) species, currently used primarily for its eggs. Both projects aim to promote wider community involvement, bringing together young people, fishermen, universities and local enterprises. For the first project, the Laguar-

dia school in Lidköping received a grant of 50% of the EUR 30 760 required to run a series of training courses, where catering students met with local fishermen to learn more about local fish species and how to prepare them. The second project, led by the Food & Health Concept Centre AB, brought together fishermen and several public and private partners to explore how to make use of by-products generated when extracting vendace eggs, which are sold as a delicacy. The project received a grant of 30% of the total cost of EUR 65 930. These two projects, which started independently, have now developed links and ideas to combine solutions and competences.





## TRIALLING PESCA-TOURISM – Stand 05



This project transfers and adapts pesca-tourism experience gained in Italy to the context of fishermen in the Var, France. Over a three year period, local actors, supported by Axis 4, have worked to establish the conditions necessary to promote pesca-tourism in the area. Fishermen have worked with local and regional authorities, environmental groups and the tourism department of the Var in order to put in place appropriate safety rules, ensure the necessary adaptations to fishing boats, and develop a coordinated tourist offer

that could be promoted through the local tourist offices. Between 2009 and 2010 a total of 12 boats were equipped and approved for pesca-tourism activities. The fishermen involved have been seeing additional revenue of 30-70% for days when they take tourists out to demonstrate their profession. The total cost of this project was EUR 277 590, 31.9% of which was covered by the [Var FLAG](#) (FR10). The experience is already being transferred to other areas in France and discussions are underway to harmonise standards for pesca-tourism around the country.



## TOURISM TRAINING FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN – Stand 39



The number of professional fishermen in Sodankylä, Finland, has halved since the early 2000s and the remaining 20 fishermen were eager to find ways to complement their income by diversifying into tourism. However, they lacked the skills and knowledge to make this a reality. Following discussions with the [Northern & Eastern Lapland FLAG](#) (FI07), a group of specialists were brought together to develop and deliver a tailor made training package. This has equipped 14 of the 20 local fishermen with the qualifications,

safety certification and skills they need to develop and offer a successful tourist package. Study visits to tourism companies also formed part of the training, allowing fishermen to forge contacts with other tourism operators and learn from experts in the field. A further 10 days of training focused on product development, pricing and customer service and was complemented by seven days of personalised study and guidance. The training course, which has already spawned a number of tourism products, cost EUR 78 000, of which the FLAG contributed 90%.



## ONLINE PROMOTION OF FISHING TOURISM – Stand 28



Seatrout Fyn, which is run by the ten municipalities on the Danish island of Funen, received Axis 4 support from the [Fyn FLAG](#) (DK04) for the development of a website to promote the island as a location for sea trout fishing ([www.seatrout.dk](http://www.seatrout.dk)). The multilingual website aims to provide potential customers with all the information required to make their visit a success, including fishing locations, the availability of fishing gear, guides and different accommodation

options. The project builds on work already undertaken by Seatrout Fyn to restore waterways and develop a hatchery. The goal is to establish Funen as “the best place for inshore fishing”. One part-time web editor position has already been created by the project, which is also providing other important spin-off benefits for the local economy. The total cost of the project was EUR 84 000, of which 50% came from public co-financing, half of which came from the EFF Axis 4.



## SCALLOP SHELLS FOR AGRICULTURE – Stand 13



This project aims to bring fishing, aquaculture and agricultural actors together to explore the potential for recycling shells left over from shellfish production for use in liming the fields of local farms. The 24-month project will study and assess the viability of setting up a recycling plant, as well as determining where the plant could be located and which land would benefit from calcium enrichment from the ground shells. The project, which is still in the initial phases, is costing EUR 176 000, 41% of which is supported by a grant from

the [Cotentin & Bessin FLAG](#) (FR02). As well as funding the preliminary studies and tests of the fertiliser developed, this stage of the project will also develop a system for collecting, stocking and treating the shells. If the results of this first stage prove favourable, a second stage will aim to lever in higher levels of funding to set up the plant – including private financing from local shelling companies and fishing organisations, which currently have to pay to dispose of waste shells.



## Focus 30 ways to create sustainable fisheries areas



### BRINGING FISHERMEN AND FARMERS TOGETHER TO TACKLE WATER POLLUTION – Stand 15



In the [Pays d'Auray FLAG](#) (FR04), France, Axis 4 is supporting efforts to reduce water pollution, a serious problem for local oyster producers. CAP 2000, an association of fishermen, shellfish producers and farmers aims to improve water quality and the overall sustainability of coastal primary activities. With support from Axis 4, the association is now setting up local CAP 2000 groups, involving professionals, local authorities and other stakeholders, in order to enable the

identification and reduction of sources of bacteriological pollution impacting on local shellfish producing areas. Specifically, CAP 2000 will facilitate access to information on water quality in each shellfish basin. Local groups will then be guided on how to assess this information and will carry out further analysis to better identify sources of pollution. The ultimate goal is to develop a local plan of action, which assigns specific responsibilities by sector.



### LINKING UP WITH THE BIOMEDICAL INDUSTRY – Stand 16



In Portugal, the "*caranguejo pilado*", or swimming crab, is an abundant species, which is commonly caught in the nets of seine fishermen and subsequently discarded. The species could, however, be a source of biological compounds, such as chitin and astaxantin, which are used by the pharmaceutical and biomedical industry as nutritional additives, as well as in water treatment and tissue regeneration. Recognising this potential, a local polytechnic institute, with the sup-

port of the [FLAG Oeste](#) (PT04), has set up a pilot study, in partnership with fishermen, biomedical companies and other research institutes, to assess the potential of the species as a source for these compounds. The study will also define the processes of extraction and the distribution circuits which would need to be set up in order to exploit this resource, while ensuring the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. This project received a grant of EUR 14 763, 55% of the total cost of EUR 26 842.



### LEATHER FROM FISH SKIN – Stand 40



The fisheries sector along the west coast of Finland faces two main challenges: remaining economically viable and attracting young people to the sector. Following a study trip to Sweden, the local [Österbotten FLAG](#) (FI02) decided to promote the use of fish skin, a by-product of fish processing, to generate additional revenue. Fish skin was an unused resource in the area and there was very little knowledge of how it could be exploited. The project aimed to inform and train local fishermen in the handling of fish skin in order to safeguard the quality of the raw material. It also organised the

gathering of raw material, and supported the purchasing of the required processing tools and the training of local fishermen and other actors in the tanning, sewing and development of fish skin products. The project trained a total of 15 people and produced a manual for fishermen on how to handle fish skin to be used for leather production. A number of business ideas have emerged from the project, including the production of fish skin items to sell at Christmas markets and craft fairs, or alongside other product lines that established companies are already selling. The total cost of the project was EUR 22 907, 81% of which came from the FLAG, including Axis 4 funds and national co-financing.

## INFRASTRUCTURE:

ports, landing sites, coastal infrastructure, processing plants...



### SUPPORTING ORJAKU PORT – Stand 32



Axis 4 funding has contributed to the development of the port of Orjaku, in Estonia, which is now a working fishing port. This is a long term dream come true for local fishermen and tourism providers, who worked closely with the [Hiukala FLAG](#) (EE02) and local municipality throughout the three phases of the project. The first phase, which has now been completed, involved the upgrading of the quay; the second phase concerns the installation of the necessary infra-

structure for services such as water and electricity. This is due to be completed in November 2011. The third phase will involve the development of facilities for fishermen and leisure users (storage rooms for gear and boats in winter time). The first two stages of the project will cost EUR 296 367, with 80% coming from Axis 4. The improved facilities will improve the viability of fishing in the area and encourage businesses to diversify into maritime activities.



### CAPITALISING ON THESSALONIKI'S NEARBY MUSSEL PRODUCTION – Stand 11



With the support of Axis 4, and in consultation with local fishermen and mussel producers, the municipality of Delta is leading efforts to improve the local infrastructure in this relatively unknown, protected fisheries area, which accounts for over 60% of Greece's mussel production. The project will improve facilities such as aquaculture shelters but also infrastructure necessary to receive visitors. This is an integrated public project to create the conditions to better

exploit local fisheries activities and traditions, as well as diversification opportunities arising from the proximity to nearby urban centres like Thessaloniki, with more than a million inhabitants. One of the aims of the project is to eventually attract visitors to a series of tourist routes that will link local fishing and tourism operators that commit to meeting certain quality standards. The [Thessaloniki FLAG](#) (GR03) is covering the total cost of this project (EUR 360 000) with Axis 4 and national co-financing.



### ATTRACTIVE FISHERIES AREAS: FISHERIES AND EDUCATION – Stand 33



This project, initiated by a local angling and tourism organisation, aims to revitalise the area around Lake Burtnieku, Latvia, which has a large but unexploited fishing potential, and to encourage – in the longer term – young people to consider fishing as a potential career option. Thanks to support from the [From Salaca Till Ruja FLAG](#) (LV15),

EUR 16 700 has been invested in the purchase of small scale equipment and infrastructure to facilitate the organisation of training for young fishermen and anglers, environmental education activities and sports events and competitions. Three new jobs were created through complementary activities financed by the local municipality, and the area's overall attractiveness has been enhanced, thus creating further opportunities to diversify local incomes.



### FISHING VILLAGE TO ADD VALUE TO THE HARBOUR AREA – Stand 21



The somewhat industrial looking harbour area of Bremerhaven (Bremen, Germany) was the target of a project that aimed to increase its attractiveness while also developing new outlets for fisheries products. A small, rustic fishing village was established at the port entrance, made up of 11 thatched huts, based on traditional fishing huts from the year 1906. These are now run by H-J Fiedler, a seafood delicacy company, and are used to offer services to visitors such as catering, tourist information and the sale of fish and local prod-

ucts. The total cost of the project amounted to EUR 395 000, to which the [Bremerhaven FLAG](#) (DE17) contributed EUR 158 000 (40%). The project has helped to improve the attractiveness of the area (attracting large media coverage and visitors), thereby helping to improve sales in other local shops as well as leading to the creation of two new jobs in the new sales outlets. The project has received several entrepreneurship awards. The same FLAG has also supported a traditional festival focusing on the theme of fisheries products. ■

## Report

DIVERSIFICATION IS CONTINUING  
IN CUXHAVEN AND BREMERHAVEN [GERMANY]

# Tourism with a fisheries flavour

**For about fifteen years, the German North Sea fishing ports located between the Weser and the Elbe have been trading on their tourism potential, but the products, equipment and activities need to be brought up-to-date. That is where Axis 4 comes in.**



Everything seems bigger at the mouth of the River Elbe: out on the water, huge container ships sail, tirelessly, in and out of Hamburg; on the shore, dozens of huge wind turbines lie in waiting, ready to be shipped out to sea. "Here is a piece of our economic future," says Marco Witthohn, fisheries manager at the Cuxhaven Economic Development Agency. "Offshore wind power... even though it is just a start, and for the moment, many of the jobs created here are in welding and assembly."

But while awaiting the rise of the "green" economy, it is the "blue" economy that has been the mainstay of Cuxhaven (population 50 500) since the town was founded in 1902. Cuxhaven remains the largest fishing port in the Land of Lower Saxony, and one of the largest in Germany. About

1 400 jobs depend directly or indirectly on the fishing and fish processing sectors. "The numbers were much higher just a few years ago," says Marco Witthohn. "I can't remember the figures for the town off the top of my head, but for Cuxland, the district of Cuxhaven, several hundreds of fishing-related jobs were lost in the last decade..."

With some nice beaches, lots of green open spaces and several charming districts, Cuxhaven is a major tourist destination, but its three million overnight stays and 250-300 000 day trippers each year are not enough to stop the shedding of jobs or the exodus of young graduates. "We lose on average about 200 people each year," laments Werner Leschner, coordinator of a socio-professional integration project running in the port.

This is why the Structural Funds and the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) have been so important. "This part of Lower Saxony is eligible under the Convergence objective<sup>7</sup>; Cuxhaven gets a lot of EU aid and we always need to arbitrate between two priorities, industry or tourism," explains Marco. "With Axis 4 of the EFF, we chose to focus on the modernisation of tourism based on fishing activities and products."

<sup>7</sup> In the context of European regional policy, the "Convergence" objective aims to improve the factors leading to a convergence of Member States and their least developed regions. In Lower Saxony, Lüneburg which is where Cuxhaven is located, is covered by a system of transitional convergence ("phasing-out").





▲ The boardwalk in the fishing port of Bremerhaven.

## Force 10

In this regard, the most iconic and most financially important project (EUR 7 million, including EUR 5 million provided by the ERDF<sup>8</sup>) is undoubtedly “Windstärke 10” (Wind Force 10). This is a new maritime museum, which will be housed in a former herring market hall, the first built in the port. The project will see the merger of two existing institutions, the Shipwreck Museum and the Fisheries Museum. “The former belongs to the municipality,” says Jenny Sarrazin, Windstärke 10 Project Manager, “and is based on the archives and objects that an enthusiast, Peter Balters, has collected since 1962. The Fisheries Museum was founded in 2003 by an association of fishermen and others who love the sea. It currently receives 17 000 visitors annually. It is a successful attraction which will work even better as part of a more ambitious museum project.”

“Windstärke 10 is a development project which also represents the beginning of an urban development process and the revitalisation of a neighbourhood through tourism, which will ultimately cost in the region of EUR 25 million, at the very least,” adds Marco Witthohn. “We are going to combine it with an action under Axis 4, worth EUR 100 000 to 150 000, which involves redeveloping the area surrounding the museum and turning it into a kind of ‘forum’, which



▲ Jenny Sarrazin points to the future “Windstärke 10” museum.

will be both a reception centre and a starting point for tours of the fishing port. There will be an information booth, map, text panels, benches, games for children, etc.”

A sign-posting project, run by the FLAG, in partnership with *Fischwirtschaftliche Vereinigung* (FWV, the fisheries economic association), will provide an appropriate complement to the actions planned in the context of the new museum. A town map with signs to promote the port visit is currently in the design phase, using the same house style for the port and the museum. Along similar lines, Axis 4 has ‘already supplied EUR 15 000 to finance a

promotional documentary film about the local fishing industry<sup>9</sup>.

However, while Cuxhaven is the largest fishing port in Cuxland, it is not the only one: the district has three other ports, which are also the subject of a similar Axis 4 approach to revitalising tourism and promoting its synergies with fishing.



<sup>8</sup> European Regional Development Fund.

<sup>9</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdV\\_VpT8erg&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdV_VpT8erg&feature=related)



▲ Axis 4 contributed to the restoration of the Dorum lighthouse.

## The German national network of fisheries areas is launched

**The six German Länder that participate in Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) and the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection have agreed on the creation and funding of a national network of fisheries areas in Germany.**

Based in the fishing port of Bremerhaven, the network will be coordinated by the Bremerhaven FLAG, in cooperation with the Economic Development Agency of Cuxhaven, which is a member of the Lower Saxony FLAG.

The inaugural meeting of the network is planned for early December 2011, in Schleswig-Holstein. *"In the first instance, this will be a chance to get to know each other and to agree on common objectives and activities,"* said Michael Gerber of the Bremerhaven FLAG. *"However, following the interest expressed by several German FLAGs at the last FARNET seminar in Poland, we would also like to discuss the topics of pesca-tourism and fishing tourism."*

*"We have to build a 'we-feeling'",* adds Marco Witthohn of Cuxhaven. *"Regular meetings, hosted in turn by the different network members, to share information on projects and their impact in our areas, as well as assuring personal continuity are of central importance."*

The production of a publication on the development of the fisheries economy and tourism and the implementation of a joint exhibition on the theme of "Fish from German regions" are two other ideas that the network will discuss in the coming months. [gerber@fbg-bremerhaven.de](mailto:gerber@fbg-bremerhaven.de) and [marco.witthohn@afw-cuxhaven.de](mailto:marco.witthohn@afw-cuxhaven.de)

## Dorum

The port, where six fishing boats are registered, is very much the centre of life in the small town of Dorum (population 3 500). The town attracts a million overnight stays per year, but would like to extend the season by offering more attractions. EUR 500 000 from Axis 4 is being invested here, in four projects run by an association of local authorities:

- > The restoration of the port's impressive metal lighthouse, dating from 1887, which was transported at vast expense from Bremen in 2003 as compensation for nuisance caused by the construction of the container port of Bremerhaven located nearby. Cost of restoration: EUR 300 434, of which approximately EUR 225 000 came from Axis 4;
- > The improvement of port safety, by modernising the system of piles separating the fishing boats and pleasure craft (cost: EUR 141 600, of which EUR 102 744 comes from Axis 4). *"The work will be done entirely during the month of September 2011, so as to avoid disturbing the migratory birds that stop over here shortly afterwards,"* says Norma Warnke, director of the local building authority;





▲ Axis 4 has supported the expansion of the fishmonger's shop.

## Shrimp

- > The conversion of the *Ruth Albrecht*, a fishing boat which was decommissioned due to the fishing quotas and is now to take on a new function as an excursion boat (cost: EUR 140 000, of which approximately EUR 105 000 comes from Axis 4). *"It's an activity that is very successful and the ship that was used between 2000 and 2007 was no longer up to standard."*
- > The enlargement of the former Wadden Sea National Park centre, which will include an aquarium with five tanks that will be home to specimens of all the local fish species. Cost: EUR 140 000, of which approximately EUR 105 000 comes from Axis 4. *"This project fits well with the public swimming pool that we are renovating under the ERDF,"* says Christoph Nagelfeld, financial manager for the association of the municipalities involved. *"Tourism is our only real asset here,"* adds Christoph, *"we need to enhance it with more numerous and more interesting attractions."*

Further along the coast lies the port of Wremen (pop. 2000), which is also the subject of renovation work, starting with the raising of the quay (supported by Axis 2 of the EFF). Several Axis 4 projects, similar to those being undertaken in Dorum, are also planned for 2012.

But redevelopment of towns and ports is not the only component of the Axis 4-assisted tourism modernisation effort underway in Cuxland: the processing of local fishery produce is also high on the agenda.

Founded in Spieka-Neufeld in 1972, the Alwin & Siegfried Kocken company processes and sells 500 tonnes of shrimp annually, which it mainly buys from five local fishermen. It has five employees and generates a turnover of EUR 2.4 million annually. In the 1980s, Siegfried and Alwin's father invented and patented a machine to peel shrimps, but his two sons are still the only ones using it. In fact, it is still cheaper for shrimp to be peeled by hand in Morocco or elsewhere! Recently, the company has moved into direct sales, establishing a fishmonger's shop and a small restaurant in which it invested EUR 60 000, including EUR 18 000 from Axis 4, in equipping a kitchen and building a veranda which enlarges the sales area. Through this investment, it expects to create two additional jobs.

*"It's a smaller project but served as an example of a private project when we publicised Axis 4,"* says Marco. *"Here, private projects are mostly fairly small... The European Commission wants more than half of*



▲ Siegfried Kocken proudly displays the shrimp peeling machine invented by his father.

*the projects supported to come from the private sector but, in Germany, expensive projects are always public because private investors have to struggle to find the local public co-financing required. It's easier in countries where it is the State that provides co-financing."*





▲ A great place for kids.

## Fishing port shop window

We continue sailing along the coast of Cuxland, southwards to the mouth of the Weser and the city of Bremerhaven (pop. 150 000), an enclave of the Land of Bremen. The fishing port of Bremerhaven is a real hub of the fisheries industry in Germany. It is home to 400 companies employing around 9 000 people, including 70 companies employing 4 000 people in fish and food processing. About 30% of those employed in the German fish processing sector are based in Bremerhaven. 200 000 tonnes of fish fillets and 70% of fish sticks consumed in Germany are produced there annually. But here too, the emphasis is on tourism, culture and fishing.

Sebastian Gregorius, Marketing Manager at the FBG (*Fischereihafen-Betriebsgesellschaft*), the company that manages the fishing port of Bremerhaven, and the administration of the FLAG, recalls that, *"in 1986-87, we decided, with the strong support of the State of Bremen, to get rid of an urban eyesore covering 10 hectares in the heart of the old port. We immediately thought that the regeneration of the site should involve tourism."*



With support from the FIFG<sup>10</sup>, the Pesca programme<sup>11</sup>, the Land of Bremen and private investors, the regeneration took place in several stages between 1989 and 1996: the restoration and conversion of the former fish packing hall to accommodate 15 trade and catering companies, the creation of a large square and terrace on the waterfront, the construction of a hotel, and the transformation of the fishing port's former railway station into a shop-



ping and cultural centre. The idea of *'Schaufenster Fischereihafen'* (Ed.: fishing port shop window) is that people become immersed in the life of a fishing port. The total cost of the project was EUR 50 million, half of which came from private sources. The project has also triggered substantial spin-off investment and created some 150 new jobs.

With the arrival of Axis 4 in 2008, ideas for new projects flourished. "We studied several project ideas, including the restarting of a cable ferry service, which ultimately proved non-viable. Elsewhere, a splendid private-public partnership project called *'Fischkaihalle'* – the construction of the replica of an old fish market hall, a restaurant and a sea fish cookery studio – had also to be abandoned," explains Michael Gerber, project manager for the EFF at the FBG.

<sup>10</sup> Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (1994-1999 and 2000-2006).

<sup>11</sup> Community Initiative to support the diversification of areas dependent on fishing between 1994 and 1999.





▲ The former fish packing hall now houses shops and restaurants.

## Woodstock at the Fishermen's Village

Hans-Joachim Fiedler, who represents private enterprise on the FLAG, is a fish and seafood wholesaler. His company, which was originally set up in 1906, has more than 700 customers in Germany and abroad. *"In 1987, the threadworm (nematode) crisis lost us up to 70% of our turnover," the businessman remembers. "We, the entrepreneurs from the fishing port, knew we had to diversify and, with the association of port businesses, we thought of tourism as the most realistic alternative. In addition to the Schaufenster operation, we also considered organising events and in 1988, we held the first 'Fish Party', which attracted nearly 100 000 people. Since then, we have organised this kind of 'Fish Woodstock' in April each year, in addition to seven or eight other events centred around regional produce, as well as the 'Port Festival' and other events that are held every second week-end during the tourist season."*

With the revitalisation of the fishing port and this programme of events, everything was going wonderfully, but the Schaufenster Fischereihafen also had to co-exist with other tourist attractions,

located in Bremerhaven's inner city, in the old and new harbour, about three kilometres from the fishing port. Starting with a zoo and the national museum of shipping, this part of town has, over the last ten years, developed into a major cultural and tourism complex known as "Havenwelten" (Port Worlds). It includes a shopping centre, a hotel, a German emigration museum, and an innovative "Climate House" (Klimahaus Bremerhaven 8°Ost). *"The development of a tourist destination is a never ending project," says Michael Gerber. "This is confirmed by the results of ongoing evaluations, which are funded by the EFF. We have, therefore, decided to try to take advantage of the Havenwelten, and bring more tourists to the fishing port. And that's where Axis 4 came in..."*

In 2009, Hans-Joachim Fiedler proposed an investment of EUR 237 000 in the creation of a "Fishermen's Village", which complemented the existing tourist site. Combined with a contribution of EUR 158 000 from Axis 4, this enabled the development of a public space and the construction of 11 wooden houses, imitations of former



▲ A view of the Fishermen's Village.

fishermen's houses, which now accommodate shops specialising in seafood and other quality food products.

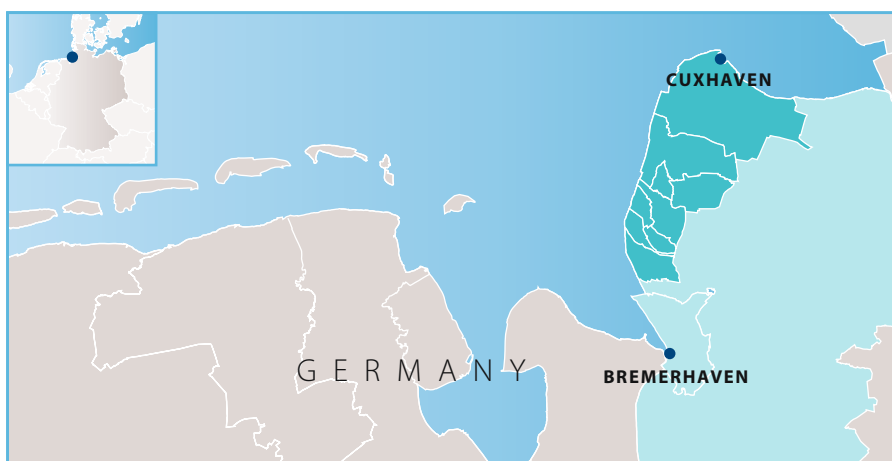


*"We are already receiving 700 000 visitors and we are heading towards one million... Really, the combination of private investments like this from Hans-Joachim Fiedler, and all the other companies and public infrastructure, we have managed to create a major attraction around our core competence, fish," says Michael Gerber.*

But the flagship project of the Bremerhaven FLAG is undoubtedly the renovation of the cultural complex built in 1995, in the former railway station for fish transport (*Fischbahnhof*), just across the street. In addition to some shops and kiosks, the site houses a 200-seat theatre, an aquarium designed along the lines of

Nausicaa in Boulogne-sur-Mer<sup>12</sup>, but much smaller, and a "*Seefischkochstudio*" a cookery training centre, where up to 100 people can learn how to cook seafood. *"We will not be touching the theatre, but all the rest has to change,"* insists Michael Gerber. *"The number of visitors has dropped from 70 000 to 50 000... The venue is showing signs of age. And the cookery studio, it's the same: people are no longer only interested in watching a chef concoct a dish; they also want to take an active part in the cooking..."* Underlining the need for modernisation, our tour continues to the current tasting room, which has no windows...

A budget of EUR 6 million from Axis 4 is already reserved for this project. The redevelopment concept and design will be completed by December 2011. A European call for tender will follow and the work is scheduled to start in mid-2012.



#### CUXHAVEN (Germany)

Axis 4 Budget	EUR			
	EU	National	Private	Total
Total	2 100 000	700 000	—	2 800 000

#### Area:

276 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Population:

63 571 inhabitants

#### Density:

230 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>

#### CONTACT

##### Marco Witthohn

Agentur für Wirtschaftsförderung Cuxhaven

Kapitän-Alexander-Straße 1

D-27472 Cuxhaven

+49 4721 59 96 14

[marco.witthohn@afw-cuxhaven.de](mailto:marco.witthohn@afw-cuxhaven.de)

[www.afw-cuxhaven.de](http://www.afw-cuxhaven.de)

#### FISCHEREIHAFEN BREMERHAVEN (Germany)

Axis 4 Budget	EUR			
	EU	National	Private	Total
Total	5 300 000	5 300 000	550 000	11 150 000

#### Area:

6.3 km<sup>2</sup>

#### Population:

247 inhabitants

(But 4 000 local jobs related to fish and food processing)

#### Density:

39 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>

#### CONTACT

##### Michael Gerber

Fischereihafen-Betriebsgesellschaft mbH,

Lengstr.1,

D-27572 Bremerhaven

+49 471 9732-152

[gerber@fbg-bremerhaven.de](mailto:gerber@fbg-bremerhaven.de)

[www.fischmarkt-bremerhaven.de/](http://www.fischmarkt-bremerhaven.de/)

[www.fbg-bremerhaven.de](http://www.fbg-bremerhaven.de)



"In parallel, we are considering innovative concepts that will make the site a must," adds Mr. Gerber. "For example, during the FARNET seminar in Poland<sup>13</sup>, I was looking for partners to build up cooperation with fishery museums in Europe. I was very interested in the idea put forward by a participant on showing how the same fish would be cooked in different countries." "Definitely!" enthuses Hans-Joachim Fiedler. "Consumers have been treated like children. What we need to do is explain the origin, as well as the biological and cultural context of the fish they are eating... How to prepare and present a dish is very important. The project must incorporate and always retain that educational dimension. This is also central to the very future of fishing." ■

<sup>12</sup> Theme park based on the sea and marine environments. [www.nausicaa.fr/](http://www.nausicaa.fr/)

<sup>13</sup> "FLAGS in business: promoting diversification in fisheries areas", Gdynia, Poland, 5-7 July 2011.

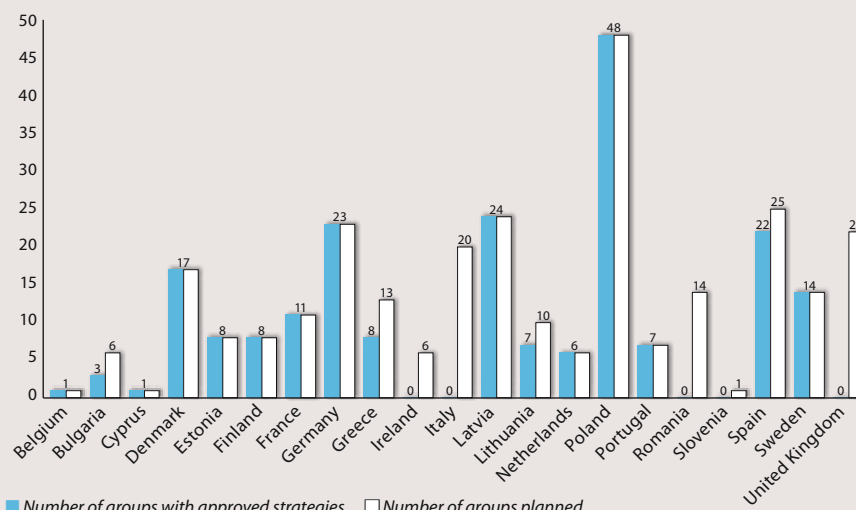


▲ Visitors learn how to prepare fish.

# FARNETwork

## > More than two hundred FLAGS with approved strategy

At the end of September 2011, there were 208 fisheries local action groups in 16 Member States with approved strategies.



## > Project examples and good practices online

With many FLAGS now up and running, FARNET is able to share some examples of work being carried out for the sustainable development of fisheries areas. In order to stimulate the imagination of local stakeholders, the same section of the website includes examples of relevant projects from other initiatives such as Pesca, FIGG, ERDF and Leader. Along with these project ideas, the section gathers additional resources and tools (handbooks, guidelines, networks and websites) that project developers might find useful.

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/tools/good-practices>

## > Methodological guides

The FARNET Support Unit has published four methodological guides: a "Start-up Guide for FLAGS" and a complementary dossier entitled "Steps for Success", a "Guide to Starting Cooperation between FLAGS" and a "Guide on Adding Value to Local Fishery and Aquaculture Products". These guides can be downloaded from the [FARNET website](#).

# FARNET Agenda

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
3-4 November 2011	FARNET Conference "Sustainable futures for fisheries areas – The opportunities and first achievements of Axis 4 of the EFF"	Brussels (B)
24-26 April 2012	European Seafood Exposition 2012	Brussels (B)
21-22 May 2012	European Maritime Day 2012	Gothenburg (S)



# Profile

**NAME:** Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF)

**OBJECTIVE:** The EFF may co-finance local projects for sustainable development and improvement of the quality of life in fisheries areas, complementary to other EU financial instruments.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** Twenty-one Member States implement Axis 4. An important innovation in the implementation of this axis is the emphasis on the territorial approach.

**TARGET AREAS:** "Fisheries areas" are areas with a sea or lake shore or including ponds or a river estuary and with a significant level of employment in the fisheries sector. The Member States select the eligible areas according to the following criteria: they should be small local territories (less than NUTS 3) that are coherent from a geographical, economic and social point of view. Support should be targeted either to sparsely populated areas or those where the sector is in decline or those with small fisheries communities. Member States can add further criteria for the selection of the areas.

**RECIPIENTS:** "Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGS)", i.e. a combination of public, private and civil society partners jointly devising a strategy and innovative measures for the sustainable development of a fisheries area. FLAGS are selected by the Member States on the basis of criteria defined in their operational programmes. It is expected that at least 200 FLAGS will be created across the EU.

**ELIGIBLE MEASURES:** Strengthening the competitiveness of the fisheries areas; restructuring, redirecting and diversifying economic activities; adding value to fisheries products; small fisheries and tourism infrastructure and services; protecting the environment; restoring production damaged by disasters; inter-regional and trans-national cooperation of actors; capacity building to prepare local development strategies; and the running costs of FLAGS.

**NETWORK:** All the stakeholders concerned with Axis 4 are organised around a "European Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET)", permitting wide dissemination (through seminars, meetings and publications) of innovative projects implemented for the benefit of fisheries areas and fostering transnational cooperation. The network is coordinated by the "FARNET Support Unit".

**DURATION OF THE PROGRAMME:** seven years (2007-2013), but projects can be implemented until the end of 2015.

**EUROPEAN UNION ASSISTANCE:** Priority Axis 4 has a budget of EUR 567 million of EFF funding for the period 2007-2013, to which must be added national public co-funding and private investment. It represents approximately 13% of the overall EFF budget (2010).

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