Seminar Highlights

FARNET TRANSNATIONAL SEMINAR FOR FLAGS

VIGO (GALICIA), SPAIN 13 - 15 MARCH 2018

Fisheries Local Action Groups and local resource management

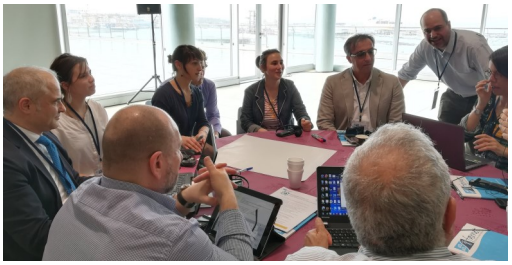
Organisers: FARNET, at the initiative of the European Commission

Hosts: the Xunta de Galicia, the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and the Environment and the Vigo – A Guarda FLAG

Participants: Almost 100 FLAG representatives from all 20 Member States implementing fisheries CLLD

The promotion of sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities is at the heart of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and its financial instrument, the EMFF.

FLAGs are uniquely placed to support and encourage the development of more inclusive local resource management processes by linking different local actors (e.g. fishing associations, Producer Organisations, local government bodies, NGO's, national parks…) and becoming catalysts of initiatives. Ultimately, FLAG support to local resource management initiatives will contribute to achieving Good Environmental Status (GES) of European waters and to the Aichi target 11 of 10% coverage of seas by protected areas by 2020 (in particular, by facilitating the setting up of more marine protected areas). FLAGs can actively contribute to a bottom-up approach to local resource management, supporting local activities to improve sustainability and environmental conservation.

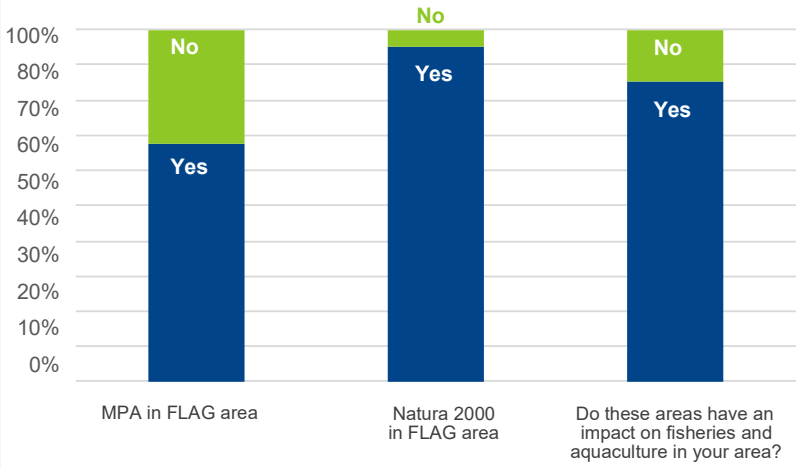


We share a common objective: healthy and productive seas and oceans, and we look forward to working together to get there.

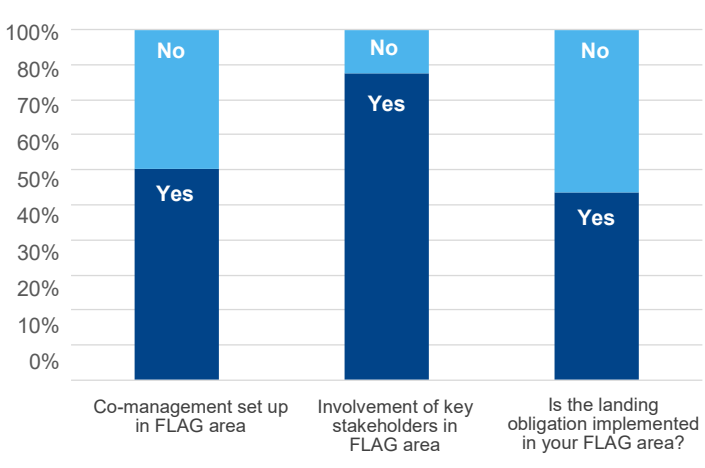
Matjaž Malgaj, Head of Unit
Marine Environment & Water Industry,
DG Environment

OVERVIEW

FLAGs and protected areas*



FLAGs & co-management*



*Based on registration data of 183 FLAGs

Developing & setting up co-management at local level

Co-management is a form of fisheries management which seeks to involve local communities in the governance of their local resource. It yields many benefits such as better adaptation of management measures which in turn lead to improved compliance due to local buy of self-designed management rules. Still co-management processes are underused throughout the EU and FLAGs are uniquely placed to support the development of such initiatives.

But how does it work in practice? What role can FLAGs have in establishing local fisheries co-management?

Co-management at local level

- Strengthening user involvement (training, participation in meetings, etc.).
- The federation of local stakeholders and facilitating communication, taking into account existing opinions (as exemplified by the fishermen guild project in Denmark and the Swedish co-management group).
- Participating in the improvement of scientific knowledge through the implementation of studies calling on the participation of users (cf. "participatory research").
- Reinforcing compliance with the regulations by setting up self-monitoring procedures (possibility for users to participate in the monitoring of their fishing zones).

To help the EU policy level to realistically reflect the local context, it is important to find fora and initiatives that take into account local concerns.

Sebastian Linke, Senior Lecturer
University of Gothenburg, Sweden

It is vital to have the empirical knowledge of fishermen recognized within the framework of local management systems, involve all FLAG members in a common vision of their marine territory. This will help put in place a flexible and adaptive governance system in a constantly evolving context.

Benoit Guerin, International Consultant
BG Sea Consulting, France

Encouraging local actions for ecosystem restoration

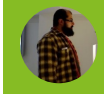
The European Union is committed to achieving the Aichi Target 11 requiring 10 % coverage of its seas by protected areas by 2020. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are increasingly recognized as useful tools for fisheries management and are a concrete measure defined within the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). MPAs can also be considered as instruments to protect fishing grounds from illegal and unregulated practices. The designation of such protected areas is also a key component of the EU “Birds & Habitats” Directives. Hence the drive for the establishment of MPAs and Natura 2000 areas is likely to continue in the years to come. However, while these protected areas benefit ecosystems, they also regulate fishing and aquaculture activities. FLAGs can encourage the participation of fishermen in fisheries governance and thereby help them become more proactive in protecting and monitoring fishing ecosystems, all the while facilitating dialogue and ensuring good cooperation.

What role do FLAGs have in ecosystem conservation and restoration? How can FLAGs be involved in setting up MPAs? How can they ensure fishermen involvement in the process?

Management in Natura 2000/protected areas

- A FLAG can bring together stakeholders to gather knowledge and set the stage for consultation, involving the local fisheries sector and policy makers with scientific assessment to set up a protected area.
- Before setting up an MPA, FLAGs can coordinate research such as information collection, mapping local activities taking place and carrying out socio-economic analyses or impact analyses as in the project on improving the governance of artisanal fisheries (Spain).
- FLAGs can assist local stakeholders in designing fishery management measures within the MPA, helping to implement effective surveillance and control systems in collaboration with the fishermen. An example is the project safeguarding a protected area to increase spawning grounds (Poland).
- Help the local community recognize that fish caught in the MPA can be considered an added-value, promoting the MPA as a marketing tool and highlighting the sustainability of their fishing activities.
- Encourage local producers to take initiatives such as organizing awareness activities in collaboration with NGOs and other associations, demonstrating the benefits of protected areas to local marine users and the community.

MPAs are more than protecting the seas, they are also about creating viable economic solutions.



Raul Garcia Rodriguez
Fisheries Officer, WWF Spain, Spain

The key to success is the endorsement of an MPA by the fishermen and other main stakeholders of a community. A local consensus will help create the necessary socio-economic and environmental balance.

Chloë Webster, Scientific Supervisor
MedPAN Network, France

Promoting sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive is calling for the achievement of Good Environmental Status (GES) of EU marine waters by 2020, placing fishing activities in the context of wider sustainability issues. Still, the drive towards more sustainable activities requires a change in existing practices at the different levels of the supply chain (from the catching to the marketing of the products). More selective and sustainable fishing practices, the implementation of the landing obligation and environmental certification are some of the key aspects of the drive towards sustainable fisheries and aquaculture activities.

Indeed, certification can be an indicator of good fisheries management. Not only can it help give prominence to a fishery – thereby opening up new market opportunities – but also improve the public image of the fishing sector in its area.

On the other hand, the landing obligation's primary objective is to reduce unwanted catch but its implementation can sometimes be difficult in practice at local level. How can FLAGs help local fishing communities to take over its application and find options to anticipate or deal with consequences?

Certification and monitoring

- FLAGs can help identify truly motivated fishermen (or a Producer Organisation) and support them in carrying out each step of the certification process, even when evaluating label options. It is crucial to have a strong involvement of fishermen from the very first step, as was the case for the certified octopus fishery project (Spain).
- Certification requires in-depth initial research. Before beginning the process, it is important to gather as much information as possible about the fishery (mapping, stock analysis...). A Fishery Improvement Project, like the one for the brown crab fishery project (UK), is an excellent pre-assessment tool to move forward with sustainability recognition. It is first and foremost a way to create a partnership with the private sector and though certification is not necessarily the end goal, it can be lead to it.
- Sustainable fisheries also entails traceability, one that can be ensured across the entire supply chain. To do so, it is vital to work from the beginning with all those involved at every stage of the chain.
- FLAGs can take part in the development of innovative tools to monitor local fisheries resources and activities while encouraging their use by fishermen, thereby helping to reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) by utilizing the knowledge of fishermen, as in the monitoring project for the protection of fish resources (Latvia)

The question is not "to certify or not to certify" but rather to find the best sustainable fisheries practices.

Alberto Martin, Fisheries Manager,
Marine Stewardship Council, Spain - Portugal

Certification doesn't have to be a heavy financial investment. Cooperation among FLAGs is the key, not only to share costs, but also to facilitate the process and determine which label out of the many available is the best option.

Thomas Hojrup, International consultant and Professor of Ethnology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Fishing gear innovation and landing obligation

- FLAGs can ensure the close collaboration of the industrial sector developing innovative fisheries technology with scientists and fishermen, as they can help research and test new fishing gears.
- Innovation doesn't have to necessarily mean new technology, but rather can be built on the fishermen's experience from daily practice, as was the case for the project on reducing bycatch of endangered species (Finland) and for the project using fish traps as an alternative (Germany).
- The monitoring and mapping of discards is very important to identify and quantify market opportunities and help avoid the need for costly new technology. Unfortunately, there is still a lack of research carried out in FLAG areas on adding value to discards, as exemplified by the project on mapping discards (Spain).
- Discards are not garbage! Consider other possible markets.

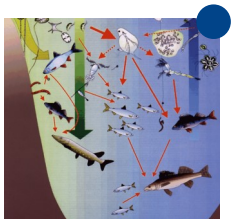
Don't forget to consider that other Member States may have very different traditions and habits, therefore less commercial species in one area may be considered valuable in another FLAG's area.

Lisa Borges, International Consultant
consultancy company FishFix, Belgium

Market of inspiration

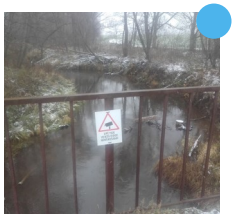
Vakava: a network for marketing unwanted catch

Establishing a local network to connect different stakeholders interested in improving the marketing of unwanted fish catch and underutilised fish species. Instead of working in parallel, experiences and study results can now be shared. More



Monitoring activities for biodiversity conservation

Developing a system to monitor fisheries activities and improve its resource management, setting up activities for both recreational and commercial fishing, including trainings and the acquisition of monitoring equipment. More

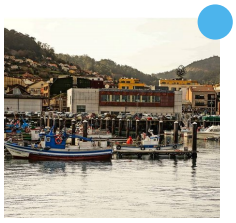


How to set up a Marine Protected Area

Active for a long time in protecting its natural resources, the fishing sector of Conil (Spain) has been working these past few years on the legal and administrative requirements to create an MPA, carrying out investigative research as well. More

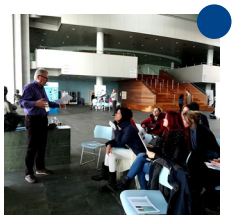
Implementing discard management

A three-phase study to determine the consequences of discard management as required by the CFP, clarifying the challenges artisanal fisheries face, the impacts it can have aboard fishing vessels and the management of the discards once landed. More



Inshore Fisheries Forum

Regional Inshore Fisheries Forums were set up, allowing local representatives and other marine users to make proposals for management and technical conservation measures to national forums. More



Sea urchin co-management

Professional fishermen, scientists and local administration services working together on a monitoring system for sea urchin populations, with daily catch limits, unique fishing open season and a limit to the number of professional operators. More

Fishery Improvement Project: brown crab fishery

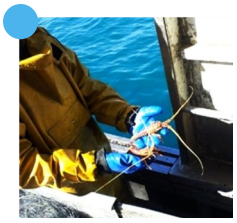
Building knowledge and a management framework for local inshore fishery stocks by linking fishermen, scientists and processors, including an evidence base for Marine Stewardship Council accreditation and formalising management principles. More

MSC certification for local octopus fishery

The octopus fishery became the first in the world to receive the Marine Stewardship Council certification thanks to four small-scale fishing organisations teaming up to differentiate their product from others and to draw attention to the sustainability of their fishery. More

EU-wide lobster stock restoration

Emblematic of Western Europe and the Mediterranean, the project aims to restore France's stock within ten years thanks to a bottom-up management system based on the knowledge and experience of fishermen. More

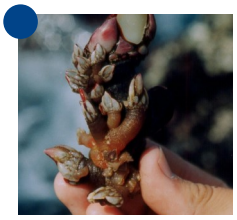


New structure for interactive dialogue

Creating an interactive and permanent structure of dialogue between fishermen, scientists, administrations and NGOs, establishing a common methodology including activities and action points to carry out monitoring of the area. More

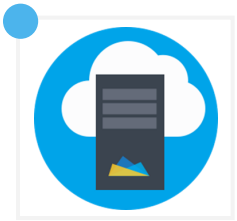
AL Percebe: co-management of the goose barnacle

Evaluating and improving the state of goose barnacles and its management through knowledge exchanges between scientists and fishermen, envisaging the recovery of the exploited area, economic valorisation and disseminating good practices. More



Telecapeche: an e-technology monitoring system

Providing real-time data to local fisheries and aquaculture committees from fishermen and shellfish gatherers, to monitor and process data quickly for rapid responses to sensitive stock management issues. More



● Developing & setting up co-management at local level

● Management in Natura 2000/ protected areas

● Promoting sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities

The small-scale fishermen from the estuaries of southern Galicia are faced with the challenge of fishing in the Atlantic Islands National Park. With the help of three FLAGs — Arousa, Pontevedra and Vigo - A Guarda — it was possible to encourage fishermen to share information on their fishing practices and thereby ensure the integration of this information in the development of management measures of the National Park. This cooperation project has supported the local *cofradías* to be a part of a working group with the National Park administration, analysing the collected data regarding their fishing activities. In effect, the project has allowed the FLAGs and the fishermen's associations to integrate the co-management structure that is working on the sustainable development of the National Park.

Participants enjoyed a guided tour of the Cíes Islands, a beautiful site of the National Park.