



farnet

MAGAZINE



- ▶ The challenges of measuring CLLD impacts
- ▶ Innovating along the local supply chain
- ▶ Fisheries areas and the migrant crisis
- ▶ Reports from Scotland, Menorca and Southern Finland
- ▶ Lessons for fruitful cooperation



Contents

Photographs (pages):

Sönke Biehl CC BY-SA 2.0 (1), Ian Oliver (5), Jean-Luc Janot (5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30), FARNET Support Unit (6), Anastasios Perimenis (12, 13, 14), Jean-René Bilongo (13), Pia Smeds (13), Vito Manza (14), Maarit Tiittanen (14), Belgian FLAG (15), Larnaca & Famagusta FLAG (17, 28-29), North Kaszuby FLAG (20, 32), Barycz Valley FLAG (27), Danube Delta FLAG (29), Dello Stretto FLAG, Oeste FLAG (32), Cornwall & Isles of Scilly FLAG (32), Tirschenreuth FLAG (32).

Cover: Boat in the port of Ciutadella (Menorca, Spain).

Journalists:

Jean-Luc Janot, Eamon O'Hara.

Other contributors:

Thomas Binet, Pedro Brosei, Urszula Budzich-Tabor, Yves Champetier, Serge Gomes da Silva, John Grieve, Lily Hoo, Sabine Kariger, Stephanie Maes, Marie Solot, Lorena van de Kolk, Monica Veronesi Burch, Gilles van de Walle.

Production:

DevNet geie (AEIDL/Grupo Alba) / Kaligram.

Contact:

FARNET Magazine, FARNET Support Unit
Rue de la Loi 38, boîte 2
B-1040 Brussels
+32 2 613 26 50
info@farnet.eu – www.farnet.eu

FARNET Magazine is published by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission. It is distributed free on request.

FARNET Magazine is published once a year. This issue is available in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

Editor: European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Director-General.

Disclaimer: Whilst the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries is responsible for the overall production of this magazine, it is not responsible for the accuracy, content or views expressed within particular articles. The European Commission has not, save where otherwise stated, adopted or in any way approved any view appearing in this publication and statements should not be relied upon as statements of the Commission's or the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries' views. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this publication, nor does the European Commission or any person acting on its behalf accept responsibility for any use made thereof.

© European Union, 2016.

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

Printed in Belgium on recycled paper.



A year in the life of the Forth FLAG (Scotland, UK): A local transition with a FARNET touch 4
2015-2016 has been an important transition year for all EU Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) and especially for the Forth FLAG, whose participation in FARNET activities helped it to get through this transitional period and to use the opportunity to prepare for the road ahead.



Report: Ready to set sail (Menorca, Spain) 8
Building on the area's local assets, long experience with the LEADER programme and unspoilt environment, the island of Menorca is now preparing to extend the participatory approach to bolster the development of fisheries and other coastal activities.



Coastal fisheries areas, CLLD and the migrant crisis 12
Three-way interview with Jean-René Bilongo (Italy), Anastasios Perimenis (Greece) and Pia Smeds (Finland).



Innovating along the local supply chain 15
Innovation and adaptation to new trends, along with a proactive approach to opening up new markets, will be essential to ensuring a sustainable and viable future for the small-scale sector in many fisheries areas.



Lessons for fruitful cooperation 19
Cooperating with other local groups can allow FLAGs to find complementarities or the critical mass to increase the impacts of their actions.



Report: Success and succession 22
The ESKO FLAG has supported a range of projects to strengthen every aspect of the small-scale fishing value chain in the Gulf of Finland, from training and revitalisation through to marketing and cooperation.



Measuring CLLD 27
The challenges of demonstrating results and longer-term impacts of local development in fisheries areas.



Editorial

“One of the new challenges of the 2014-2020 period is the increased focus on results”

The first full year of the second period of FARNET has gone by. It has been a busy time for all involved in fisheries CLLD during which over half of foreseen FLAGs have already been selected and most of them are expected to be so by the end of 2016.

However, this process has been very different from one area to another. Many FLAGs were created on the basis of existing and well-experienced FLAGs – as was the case for the ESKO FLAG featured in the **Finland** reportage. In other places, entirely new FLAGs have been set up, often building on their LEADER experience – as in Menorca (**Spain**). In **Scotland**, a drive for better coordination of EU funds has led to a new, merged FLAG being created from three FLAGs from the 2007-2013 period. Everywhere, following the principle of bottom-up local development, FLAGs are deciding on the most suitable strategies and partnerships in order to tackle new challenges and benefit from the opportunities of fisheries CLLD.

One of the new challenges of the 2014-2020 period is the increased focus on **results**. In the past most FLAGs tried to monitor the result of their work and a recent study by the FARNET Support Unit revealed that, on average, each EFF Axis 4 FLAG supported the creation of nearly 22 new jobs¹. However, in this period FLAGs will have to pay even more attention to achieving and demonstrating results with the introduction of a common monitoring and evaluation system, with indicators, such as the number of jobs and businesses created. Many FLAGs will also try to capture the longer-term and more qualitative impacts of CLLD as is discussed in this magazine through an article drafted in collaboration with a group of evaluation and CLLD experts.

Many FLAGs are looking at improving the marketing of their local catch, as highlighted by stakeholders from the Menorca and ESKO FLAGs. Much, however, has already been done in the past and innovative and creative solutions are needed to continue improving the added value at different stages of the supply chain. Ideas such as understanding consumption trends, identify-

ing new market opportunities, partnering with science and acting as a catalyst for change are presented in this magazine. These form the main topics of the FARNET seminar on “*Boosting business along the value chain*”, held in October 2016 in Thessaloniki.

Another challenge that a growing number of FLAGs will have to address in the future is promoting **social inclusion** at the local level and, in some cases, dealing with influxes of migrants and refugees. The three-way interview in the “*People*” section shows some of the issues and potential solutions for fisheries communities based on experience in Greece, Italy and Finland. Taking into account the importance of this topic for many fisheries areas and for the European Commission, FARNET will continue to work on social inclusion in 2017.

To deal with these challenges and opportunities, FLAGs can learn and exchange experience through **cooperation** with other FLAGs. In 2007-2013, the CLLD approach in fisheries areas was still new and there were relatively few cooperation projects (some of them described in the article on “*Lessons for successful cooperation*”). We very much hope that these examples and the opportunities for networking created by FARNET will encourage more FLAGs to cooperate in this period.

With over half of foreseen FLAGs already selected implementation is proving quicker than in the previous programming period. This is a testament both to the capacity and social capital built up among CLLD stakeholders, and to the interest generated by local development over the past programming period. However, while this is a result in itself, FLAGs are now expected to not only bring more added value to their areas, but also to be able to account more precisely for their performance. We expect the new multi-funding possibilities and enhanced cooperation will give FLAGs the necessary leverage to meet the challenges ahead.

Frangiscos Nikolian,
Head of Unit (A/3 – Structural Policy and
Economic Analysis), Directorate-General
for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

¹ Estimate based on a survey of 308 Axis 4 FLAGs (of which 179 responded) carried out in May 2016.

A year in the life of a FLAG

THE FORTH FLAG [SCOTLAND, UK]

A local transition with a FARNET touch

2015-2016 has been an important transition year for all EU Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), and especially for the Forth FLAG, a “new” Scottish FLAG which combines the former Scottish Borders, East Lothian and Fife FLAGs. Participating in FARNET activities has helped the new Forth FLAG to get through this transitional period and to use the opportunity to prepare for the road ahead.

“The Brussels ‘Sailing towards 2020’ FARNET conference in March 2015, which ended the 2007-2013 programming period, was a very instructive experience for me because we could see lots of different projects and meet many FLAG facilitators. I could see that a lot of them have a good economic development background, and many also have experience in the fisheries sector, but an understanding of economic and business development is most important”, says Hugh Williams, Principal Officer at the Scottish Borders Council, who coordinates EMFF-CLLD² and LEADER in south-eastern Scotland.

The Scottish government asked the three FLAGs operating on the south-eastern coast of Scotland in the 2007-2013 period – Scottish Borders, East Lothian and Fife – to become one single FLAG, called “Forth”, as it now covers both sides of the Forth estuary (“the Firth of Forth”). The advantages of this merger lie in the increased scale of the FLAG, with its greater critical mass of fisheries and fisheries interests and, consequently, the ability to sustain a greater and more specialised level of dedicated support.

Strength in unity

“We are more than happy”, says Helen Rorrison, Fife representative on the FLAG board. *“The previous period, which only started in Scotland in 2012, was a sort of initiation in terms of partnership work and project support. We did not have enough funding to hire a coordinator in Fife. Now, with a dedicated coordinator for the Forth FLAG, it will be much easier, despite longer distances and the risk that some stakeholders may not attend meetings so regularly.”*

“We are making the most of the connections we already had at regional level”, says fellow FLAG member, John McMillan, a Councillor for East Lothian. *“Projects promoters are now able to be clearer about specifying project aims and delivery, it makes things easier. The transition also went very well because development officers knew the regulations.”*

“We learn from each other”, adds Alasdair Swan, chairman of the Dunbar Harbour Trust. *“Working together encourages us to ask necessary questions about project sustainability.”*

“This wider programme is a catalyst, it gives new blood. The three Councils have seen the benefits of the previous programme. There are common challenges and many synergies between the three areas, and it’s good that we can keep the enthusiasm of the old FLAGs”, says Susan Smith, who is responsible for economic development at East Lothian Council. *“Tasks are clear, the relationship is good... We share the same issues and the same values, and that common goal unites people”,* concludes John McMillan.

² Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) as funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).



▲ St. Abbs.

Multi-funded diversification

Based on a widespread consultation with business and community groups in 2014, the three territories' new local development strategies (LDSs) link two EU funding streams – rural development funding through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD / "LEADER"), and fisheries area development funding through the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF). In each area – Scottish Borders, East Lothian and Fife – a LEADER Local Action Group delivers the EAFRD elements of the LDS, whilst the single Forth FLAG draws together and delivers the EMFF elements of all three LDSs.

The coast of the Scottish Borders and East Lothian has a long history of marine resource use. The area's main communities: Eyemouth, St Abbs, Coldingham, Burnmouth, Dunbar, North Berwick and Cockenzie/Port Seton, have traditionally relied on fishing as the main source of employment, and a close connection exists between these coastal communities and the sea. On the northern shore of the Firth of Forth, the Fife fisheries area includes 17 settlements,

from Burntisland to St. Andrews. The fishing sector is the largest employer in the area and therefore an important part of the economy. In addition to the sea's economic value, the area also has a rich natural heritage, with several voluntary, national and international nature conservation designations, and outstanding coastal scenery. It is one of the most popular places for diving tourism in Europe, with several attractive coastal resorts, which also cater for seaside holidaymakers, sailing activities, walkers and golfers.

However, across the entire area now covered by the Forth FLAG, the fishing industry, which has switched from pelagic "wet" fish to high value crab and lobster fishing, has long been in decline. Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) provided an opportunity for revival by supporting existing and growing sectors such as tourism and food and drink. "The local strategy for Fife is social enterprise focused", says Helen Rorrison. "We try to link small-scale local producers with tourism, but there are several communities where this work has still to be reinforced. We need more coordination to promote local production and tourism."



▲ Eyemouth harbour.

Diversification is the key word. "We have published calls for project proposals in the Council's newsletters and in local papers, but there is no real need, as many promoters have already expressed interest. About eighteen projects are already in the pipeline", explains Rosalind McArthur, the Forth FLAG facilitator.



**Edinburgh (8-10 December 2015):
“Implementing CLLD across the ESI Funds”**



Hosted by the Forth FLAG, this first FARNET transnational seminar of the new programming period took place in Edinburgh, Scotland, from the 8-10 December 2015. It provided new opportunities for managing authorities (MAs) of the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds to learn, inspire and get inspired about the implementation of the CLLD approach, foster better cooperation, and ensure the most efficient use of the funding available.

The possibility of supporting CLLD has now been extended to all the ESI Funds. Uptake under the EAFRD and the EMFF is already quite significant, while the ERDF and ESF are now also adopting this approach and this is expected to greatly boost the impact of EU funding at local level.

CLLD has an important role to play in addressing many of the challenges currently facing Europe, and projects and initiatives developed in this context could benefit from appropriate interventions from more than one fund.

This seminar aimed to assist MAs in launching their CLLD programmes, while strengthening cooperation between the ESI Funds at EU level, and between MAs at national and regional level, with a view to encouraging a better integration of the funds locally.

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/implementing-clld-across-esi-funds-edinburgh-uk-8-10-december-2015>

**Helsinki (24-26 May 2016):
“Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas”**



The second FARNET transnational seminar, “Results oriented CLLD in fisheries areas”, took place in Helsinki, from the 24-26 May 2016. Over 90 FLAGs, but also representatives from the World Bank, the EC Joint Research Centre and the FAME Support Unit, took part in discussions on improving CLLD results on the ground and measuring impacts.

In total, over 140 participants from 19 countries exchanged views on ways to develop better strategies, learn how to use SMART indicators and targets, design better monitoring systems, steer the delivery of fisheries CLLD and assess the broader impact of FLAG work.

This event was also an opportunity to take stock of tools and methods used by FLAGs and Managing Authorities in the 2007-2013 period, or recently designed by new FLAGs starting their operations for the 2014-2020 period. These tools were presented in an interactive “tool fair”, where FLAGs and other CLLD stakeholders from around Europe showcased their best methods for gathering, analysing and interpreting data from their beneficiaries and territory. From participative websites to employment observatories, those tools provide a panoply of ideas on how to ensure a regular, efficient and sometimes fun way of measuring and demonstrating CLLD results.

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/results-oriented-clld-fisheries-areas-helsinki-finland-24-26-may-2016>

These projects concern training in secondary schools (raising awareness of maritime careers, fish processing and safety measures on board), diving tourism (an important local activity which lacks accommodation) and harbour development (infrastructure that benefits the whole communities). *“Here in Eyemouth, we also look seaward”,* says Grahame Sinclair, chairman of the Forth FLAG. *“We have been campaigning for two years to be chosen as the bridgehead for an offshore wind farm, which is soon to be constructed in this part of the North Sea. This is a community project because it would mean quite a few jobs onshore and the skills are here. An EFF Axis 4-funded marketing plan has enabled us to put Eyemouth on the map for renewables. The new programme will allow us to continue lobbying at this crucial time.”*

**A long tradition
of community-led local
development...**

“We don’t have many projects exclusively for fishermen”, says Hugh Williams. *“All projects must benefit the whole community, and this is not contradictory – a renovation project on the seafront, for example, benefits everybody, and people, both fishermen and other citizens, understand this.”*

Community-led local development is not something new in south-eastern Scotland. The region can rely on a dense network of voluntary organisations, and citizens are keen to mobilise for causes that concern both the fisheries sector and the population in general, such as the creation of a “voluntary marine reserve” 35 years ago –

FLAGS HISTORY

Community consultations
+ strategy development

FARNET CALENDAR

the UK's first – or the recent campaign to buy a lifeboat to be based at St Abbs harbour (several hundred thousand pounds were collected in a few months).

"This part of Scotland has been familiar with fisheries and community-related programmes ever since the PESCA initiative³ in the 1990s", says Bryan McGrath, Chief Officer for Economic Development at the Scottish Borders Council. "PESCA left a very positive impression. It was the first time that people had the opportunity to help shape a locally-led programme. Axis 4 of the EFF did not, therefore, start from scratch. It received a positive engagement, enthusiasm and understanding right from the beginning, and it led to some good projects. So we start the EMFF-CLLD programme in a good position, and FARNET has also been very helpful by giving us a wider, and very rewarding, EU perspective."

... in a European networking context

Bryan McGrath, who participated in this year's FARNET seminars (see boxes) is effusive about FARNET added value: *"With FARNET, we can take advantage of other people's grey matter and use their great ideas in our local context. The Helsinki seminar, for instance, was a real refresher course in strategy development. Issues raised there made me realise that we had to reassess our strategy more quickly than I expected, because I now think that it is too broad and that we need to be more focused and specific about our objectives. Helsinki called for a results-oriented strategy. We have to ask ourselves: 'have we really identified the specific problems we are trying to resolve?'*

In that sense, the 'objective tree' methodological tool that was shown at the event and the exercise to formulate the objectives were very useful."

Hugh Williams agrees and highlights another added value of the European fisheries areas network: *"I attended the Edinburgh seminar on the multi-funding approach and it was very informative. FARNET's diversity means that a lot of expertise can be shared, and even less experienced participants feel that they can also contribute. FARNET is not just about learning but also about giving, and you don't need to be an expert to contribute."* ■



▲ One of the most popular places for diving tourism in Europe.

³ The PESCA EU Community Initiative on the restructuring of the fisheries sector was implemented in 1994-1999.

FORTH (Scotland, UK)

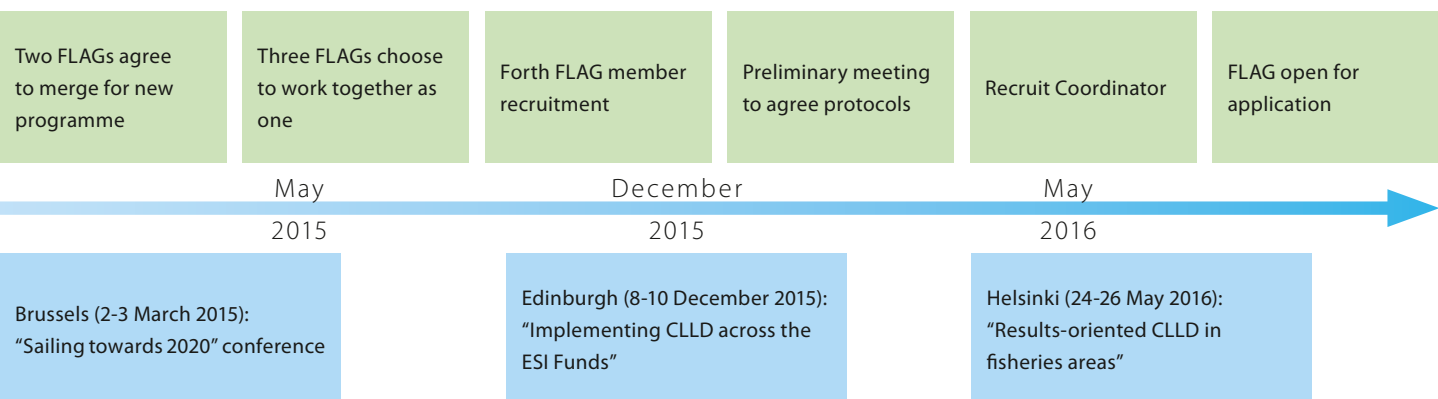
Area:
330 km²

Population:
57 000 inhabitants

Density:
173 inhabitants/km²

FLAG Budget	EUR			
	EU	National	Private	Total
Total	1 013 500	337 500	-	1 351 000

CONTACT
The Forth FLAG
 c/o **Rosalind McArthur**
 EMFF Programme Coordinator
 Harbour Office, Gunsreen Basin, Eyemouth, TD14 5SD, Scotland
 Tel: +44 1835 825117
rosalind.mcarthur@scotborders.gov.uk



Report

COMMUNITY-LED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN MENORCA [SPAIN]

Ready to set sail

Building on long experience with the LEADER programme and on the area's local assets, including an unspoilt environment, the island of Menorca is now preparing to extend the participatory approach to bolster the development of local fisheries and other coastal activities. The island's FLAG has been organising information meetings, mobilising the local community and developing its strategy.

"We're fighters!" exclaims Maria del Pilar Gonzalez-Ruiz. Last year, she left behind her successful fishmonger's business and opened a charming restaurant, "Can tanu", in a picturesque street near the port of Fornells, on Menorca's north coast. When asked about the needs of the local fisheries sector and communities, her response is robust: "Fishing is essential to local development," she explains. "We have a great tourism industry here and strengthening the fisheries sector and local communities will only make Menorca more attractive. We need to promote local small-scale fishing, showcase its benefits and strengthen ties between culture and fishing – perhaps by setting up a fishing museum run by local fishermen. Under the new regional law, we can even start a dedicated pesca-tourism industry. We're certainly not short of ideas!"

Menorca was designated a biosphere reserve in 1993, and has long had its own LEADER Local Action Group (LAG). The Menorca LEADER Association (*Associació Leader Illa de Menorca*, ALM) comprises representatives of the Island Council, the island's eight local authorities, several other public institutions and a number of businesses and private organisations. Over the last 20 years, it has supported hundreds of projects (97 between 2007

and 2013 alone) – mostly agriculture and inland rural environment projects. Although the island's three *cofradías* (fishermen's guilds) are members of the ALM, none of its projects have targeted local fishing directly. "Like the biosphere reserve, the LEADER programme has had a profound impact on Menorca," argues Javier Ares Garcia, the island's recently appointed Environment Minister and President of the ALM. "But for political and economic reasons, EFF Axis 4 was omitted from the Operational Programme for the Balearic Islands – much to the detriment of the fisheries sector which has benefited from few local development projects so far."

"A lack of human resources was another issue preventing the implementation of EFF Axis 4" adds David Doblado, who was appointed in 2013 to oversee the creation of a Menorca FLAG within the ALM.

This time around, the ALM is determined not to miss the opportunity for community-led local development (CLLD) in fisheries areas. The association has stepped up its institutional activities and has made technical preparations for the FLAG, including carrying out a detailed analysis of the fisheries sector, facilitating stakeholder coordination and ensur-



▲ Workshop in Es Mercadal to prepare the local strategy.

ing the participatory development of a local strategy, involving face-to-face interviews, questionnaires and several workshops.

One such workshop was held on 2 June at Es Mercadal, a community centre in the middle of the island. José Carlos Macias, a fisheries consultant and expert based near Cádiz, presented the draft strategy – developed in conjunction with the LAG – to an audience of around 30 people (fishermen, local authorities, business owners and representatives of environmental and cultural organisations). The strategy's main objectives are to improve the sustainability and competitiveness of the fisheries sector; to promote job creation and social cohesion; to help protect the island's natural and cultural heritage,



▲ Mahón is the second largest natural harbour in the world.

fish stocks and marine environment; to raise the profile of local fishing; to diversify coastal activities; and to strengthen local capacities and promote innovation.

"We now need to fine-tune these objectives so we can quantify expected outcomes," explains Gonçal Seguí, Director of the ALM. *"We mustn't be too ambitious, or we'll set ourselves up for disappointment. We need to strike the right balance between what we want and what's actually achievable."*

Miguel Truyol, the Island Council's head of rural and marine affairs, supports this view. *"It's all about managing expectations. We need to encourage people to get involved without giving them false hope."*

From land to sea

Taking what has worked for agriculture and rural environment and adapting this to fisheries is the task facing the GOB (*Grup Balear d'Ornitologia i Defensa de la Naturalesa*), an environmental organisation founded in 1977 and that now has over 1300 members. *"Our focus is on biodiversity and sustainable resource management,"* says Miquel Camps, GOB's territorial policy coordinator. *"We adhere to the*



▲ Paco Gonzalez, a shellfish farmer in Mahón.

concept of 'stewardship' – here in Menorca, this involves both farmers and fishermen. Around 15 years ago, we signed an agreement with the three cofradías to create a marine reserve off the north coast of the island. In 2011, we published a sustainable fisheries guide, but the economic crisis meant we didn't have sufficient funds to implement the guidelines throughout the entire production chain. The EMFF-CLLD initiative will help us to address this."

The OBSAM is the socio-environmental observatory in charge of the monitoring of the Biosphere Reserve of Menorca. As part of its mission to raise the local population's awareness about sustainable food production, the observatory developed *"Agroxerxa"*, a web portal dedicated to promoting the island's food products. The

new portal, launched in June 2015 with the assistance of LEADER, gives consumers access to some 500 local products, 86 of which come from the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. In total, 100 producers, 250 shops and 75 restaurants are represented – and all have signed a quality charter and a free information-sharing agreement. *"At just €22 000, this has been a successful and low-cost initiative,"* says project coordinators David Carreras, Mireia Comas and Eva Cardona. *"A team of six people identified the very best producers and restaurants on the island. "Fra Roger", an online gastronomy platform that's been running for several years, was extremely useful thanks to its contact database. Agroxerxa was launched a year ago and attracts around 1000 visitors per month – mostly local residents. We now want to reach out to tourists by having the portal translated into English. We also plan to work with Fra Roger to produce recipes based on the products available. Users will then be able to find whatever they need on the island."*



Raising the profile of local fishing

Joana Barcelo is a future FLAG member and former President of the Island Council. She has now returned to her previous role as the Director of the covered market in Ciutadella – Menorca’s other ‘big’ city. The market is home to six fish traders, each with their own boat, which sells dozens of

species of fish and seafood. A feast for the eyes, and for the palate!

“Look at this ‘Slow Food’ poster here,” observes Joana. “Look at all the restaurants around the market, which will cook your market-bought fish for you. Fra Roger also offers a set menu and small group cookery lessons for €20. In my view, short supply chains and direct selling are central to local

development. We need to establish a quality label for fisheries produce here in Menorca. But first we need to improve warehousing facilities on the island. Then we’ll also be able to export excess winter catches to the rest of Spain. This will drive up prices and income for fishermen. There are no fish auctions in Menorca, so markets like this are a price reference for the sector.”



▲ Fornells is an important fishing port.



▲ The fish market in Ciutadella.

Menorca FLAG: establishment timetable

As the timetable below indicates, establishing the Menorca FLAG has been a long-term process:

2013

- > **March:** Initial discussions within the *Associació Leader Illa de Menorca* about the possibility of applying to the EMFF
- > **March-April:** Information-gathering about the EMFF, FARNET and FLAGs
- > **May:** Attendance at the “EMFF Axis 4 in Spain” seminar in Madrid

2014

- > **April:** Field visit to the Fisterra-Muros-Noia FLAG (Galicia)
- > **May:** *Associació Leader Illa de Menorca* general meeting, first mention of an EMFF application
- > **June:** Attendance at the meeting of the Spanish FLAGs network
- > **September:** Attendance at the FARNET [SW.FLAG.Lab](#) event in Barcelona
- > **October:** Launch of a socio-economic study on fishing in Menorca
- > **October:** Field visit to the Levante Almeriense FLAG (Almería)

2015

- > **February:** *Associació Leader Illa de Menorca* management committee meeting – the Menorca Island Council and the LAG agree to establish a FLAG; David Doblado is given the task of drawing up an EMFF 2014-2020 development plan
- > **October:** A consultant is commissioned to define the Menorca FLAG’s strategy
- > **October:** Attendance at the “Community-led Local Development” seminar in Madrid

2016

- > **February:** First strategy development workshop in Menorca – “Fisheries, EMFF and FLAG”
- > **May:** The *Associació Leader Illa de Menorca* general meeting approves the changes to its articles of association and regulations and formally establishes a rural committee and a fisheries committee
- > **June:** Second strategic workshop in Menorca – “FLAG: participatory local development strategy”



Because of its small size and double insularity, Menorca has no fish auctions – unlike other regions of Spain. Fishermen deliver their catches to the *cofradía*, which then weighs the fish and issues an official receipt. *“The system has its advantages and disadvantages,”* explains Pere Oliver Reus, an academic at the Spanish Institute for Oceanography (*Instituto Español de Oceanografía, IEO*) – another future FLAG partner. *“Fishermen have contracts and fixed annual prices with their own customers – restaurants, fishmongers and supermarkets. The fish you see here have already been sold. The problem is that the prices may be lower than would be achieved at auction.”*

The IEO works closely with the *cofradías* and has introduced several innovative technologies, including a new trawling net deployment system that reduces damage to the seabed and decreases fuel consumption. *“Our role is to improve fishing methods – reducing the impact and cost of fishing – and to make it easier for fishermen to sell their produce. Our latest plan is to follow the example of Palamós, in Catalonia, and use the large amount of free space at the Mahón cofradía to create a brand new fishing centre. This would include a visitor information centre, a teaching room, where people could learn to cook lesser-known fish species, a soup and marinade production unit, and a common area where visitors could prepare and eat their own fish and enjoy a drink. The FLAG should help us to secure the funding we need and get everyone involved around the table.”*

Jaime Gomila, President of the Ciutadella *cofradía*, is also determined to get all the stakeholders together. His aim is to persuade his peers from Mahón and Fornells to form a marketing cooperative which could be supported by the FLAG. *“As their name suggests, fishermen are good at fishing, not selling. A Menorca-wide cooperative would allow us to store winter catches and process some of this fish. There are no canning factories on the island. With a cooperative, we’d be able to create one. We need to move away from a seasonal fishing model and increase the value chain.”*

A win-win situation

Will the arrival of CLLD ensure the success of all these projects? David Doblado is optimistic and the signs are certainly positive, with plenty of work going on behind the scenes over the last two years, and information meetings with potential beneficiaries suggesting the existence of many other projects (overhaul of the Cape de Cavalleria lighthouse museum, the touristic promotion of a shellfish farm in Mahón, etc.). Several leaders have also emerged within the FLAG, including Maria de Pilar (mentioned above), Carolina Moreno Torres (cultural animator) and Rafael Oliver (head of a lateen sail enthusiast club).

“These are all passionate people,” says David. *“They’ve been waiting for this opportunity for many years. Fishermen have long expressed their frustrations. Menorca has plenty going for it but we’ve failed to tap into the potential of CLLD and the participatory approach. It’s a challenge for everyone, myself included, but in the end it’s a win-win situation.”* ■



▲ The Cavalleria lighthouse.

MENORCA (Spain)	
	<p>Area: 649 km²</p> <p>Population: 94 383 inhabitants</p> <p>Density: 136 inhabitants/km²</p>
<p>CONTACT Grup d'Acció Local de Pesca de Menorca 5 Plaça de la Biosfera E-07702 Mahón (Menorca) galp_menorca@cime.es</p>	

People

Coastal fisheries areas, CLLD and the migrant crisis



The current refugee crisis is proving to be particularly challenging for Europe.

The FARNET community feels very concerned about this situation and the impact on coastal and fisheries areas, with fishermen often at the forefront of the tragedy.

This interview aims at contributing to the debate on the possible role FLAGs can play in addressing such an important issue.

The *FARNET Magazine* interviewed three people who deal with this issue on a daily basis: **Jean-René Bilongo**, immigration coordinator for the Italian Federation of Agro-Industrial Workers, **Anastasios Perimenis**, the manager of the Lesvos FLAG in Greece, and **Pia Smeds**, adviser for the Aktion Österbotten FLAG in Finland.

FARNET Magazine: Jean-René, can you briefly describe your organisation and its missions in relation to the reception of refugees?

The Federation of Agro-Industrial Workers (FLAI) is a branch of the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) trade union. We represent workers in the primary sector, including the processing industries and, of course the fisheries sector. In terms of welcoming refugees, the Confederation is quite active in this area. For example, in 2011 the CGIL established a permanent observation, monitoring and information centre for migrants arriving in Lampedusa. The CGIL has offices throughout Italy dedicated to assisting migrants and protecting their rights.

As for the FLAI, despite being a federation, we are particularly committed to the protection of migrants who are exposed to, and often victims of, exploitation and what we call "corporalship" i.e. illegal and criminal intermediary organisations. Hundreds of thousands of migrants work in the primary sector, where there is a serious risk of exploitation. We have adopted a very practical approach that we call "street union." We meet workers wherever they are to inform them about their rights and legal standards. We are also involved in the Trade Union Network on Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Migration. Finally, we try to help potential migrants and ex-migrant workers in their country of origin. In Tunisia we have three information and assistance offices. We also have similar offices in Senegal and we have inter-union cooperation agreements with Morocco, Romania and Bulgaria.

Fishermen are often at the forefront of this tragedy. In what way are they involved?

Jean-René: A few years ago, fishermen in Sicily were much more involved, before the launch of the Italian and EU patrol and rescue at sea initiatives – Mare Nostrum, Triton and other operations. But even today, cooperation with fishermen is essential, especially when it comes to launching SOSs to rescue drifting boats. Every time there is an emergency, Italian fisheries workers are ready and willing to play their part.

Anastasios: Having already implemented an Axis 4-EFF programme in 2011-2015, we have had a very close cooperation with local fishermen, especially coastal fishermen, and we received a lot of information of how the refugees and migrant crisis affected their lives. The stories are beyond human imagination. Even the most hardened fishermen, who regularly come up against the forces of nature, are reduced to tears when they tell these stories. It is a matter of life and death, and the situation took everyone by surprise. In Lesvos, within a month or so, we had 50-60 boats arriving every day, or even more, and the boats were not suitable or properly equipped. The traffickers on the Turkish coast were, in many cases, sending people to almost certain death. Fishermen were a vital link in the effort to save lives. The law says that they cannot interfere, they have to assist on notifying the coastguard, but in many cases they just had to help, there was no time to wait and the numbers were overwhelming. At the same time, many coastal villages and fishing communities were badly affected. Imagine what it's like in a small quiet village of 200-300 people, when suddenly, late at night, 2-3 rubber boats arrive with 150-200 wet, terrified refugees (how many people from Afghanistan have seen water or sea before or even know how to swim?), and the local families have to come to their assistance with only their own means...

That was the story in the summer/autumn of 2015. The situation is much better organised now. Most of the arrivals are handled by the coastguard, before reaching land. Still, the politics is delicate and local people and fishermen do not really understand or question it.

**Jean-René Bilongo****Anastasios Perimenis****Pia Smeds**

Can the fisheries industry play an active role in this issue?

Jean-René: In Italy, we had problems in the past because of the law that prohibits fishermen from helping migrants who are adrift. They risked being accused of inciting or abetting clandestine immigration. The FLAI raised this issue and, with the fishermen, organised a major public event entitled "Rescue at sea is not a crime." The risk was very real. A fisherman could have been trialled for helping a makeshift boat adrift. No fisherman has ever been convicted, but it was like a sword of Damocles over their heads. Obviously, no fisherman could not and cannot help but to respond to the sight of a boat of migrants adrift, even if it means a loss of earnings for these workers: while rescuing migrants, fishermen are obviously unable to do their job. In addition, there was the risk that a trawler would be confiscated if it landed with the corpses of dead migrants. It was absolutely necessary to remedy this injustice and the FLAI achieved that.

Anastasios: The same applies in Greek Law, so the risk is high. Fishermen had to take this risk and in my personal opinion they should not have to do this. It is not their job to save lives and be exposed psychologically to such tragedy. I strongly believe that there should be an overall and effective, Europe-wide system of assistance at sea. The national infrastructure of any EU country cannot cope alone, and this issue is beyond the idea of borders. But of course it also gets complicated in terms of the politics...

Anastasios and Pia, have your FLAGs been active in welcoming refugees in your areas?

Anastasios: The issue of FLAGs getting involved also puzzles me. Should a FLAG get involved in an issue for which it has no expertise? What is the role of FLAGs: rescuing and comforting refugees or carrying out their mission of implementing strategies for the viability and well-being of a coastal area?

Of course on a humanitarian level there should be no doubt about it, and yes, we put all our means available to use. But the question

is: do we not have the ability and the capacity to put together, on an EU-wide basis, the response needed? Do we really need the FLAGs' assistance? If so, then at the very least we need to look again at issues such as eligibility...

I remember last year we investigated all sorts of possible ways of using Axis 4 EFF funds to deal with the migrant situation. We made proposals on real practical initiatives and they were all considered "non eligible" on a future audit basis...

So as a FLAG, yes, we got involved but not with EU funds, and in the summer of 2015 it was mainly with our own on small amount of funds and private contributions...

We have to bear in mind that the situation in Lesbos is very specific. It is not a destination for immigrants or refugees, it is a transit stop. All these people, about 4 000 – 4 500 at a time, have another destination in mind so they feel trapped.

In our new CLLD strategy we have included actions related to refugee issue, mainly on the concept of Hot-Spots and the local management of public space. But it is uncertain what the near future might bring, so it feels too early to talk about integration.

Pia: The refugee crisis is affecting all of Europe, including Ostrobothnia. We have a long tradition of work related immigration, providing labour in agriculture during the summer, for example strawberry picking, or in greenhouses or collecting berries in the forests for berry companies. Because of this, immigration and refugees are a natural part of our CLLD strategies at Aktion Österbotten. Within the LEADER programme, we have several projects dealing with refugees and integration into the local community. We launched one project that aims to integrate and find housing for refugees in the countryside for example.





Pia, Anastasios, how can fisheries become an additional “entry-point” for refugees in their integration process, and how can CLLD / fishermen play an active role in this?

Pia: Within the FLAG we have had some queries on project ideas linked to refugees, but none have been financed yet. One project proposes to focus on young refugees, introducing them to fisheries and improving their wellbeing through experiencing nature together with local fishermen. But not all fishermen are interested in this sort of activity, as it requires knowledge that is not part of a fisherman’s ordinary work (e.g. other languages, culture). Also, legislation and insurance regulations do not allow fishermen to transport others in their fishing boat unless it is registered for this purpose. So, finding the right fishermen with the right kind of fishing boat is a challenge.

Anastasios: Integration of refugees is a delicate issue, which definitely requires serious thought and deliberation within the local community. You cannot oblige a community to be open and to suddenly integrate a number of people of different cultures, religions, customs, etc. So yes, in principle it is possible, and in my personal opinion even necessary, but there must be proper deliberation and understanding on both sides. This takes time and effort. The FLAG could play a part in this and I am confident that if correctly done, could provide real and viable solutions. For now it seems difficult, however. Even at a European level, I think there is too much fear...

Is CLLD the right level for refugee support and inclusion?

Anastasios: If allowed, yes of course, because it is part of the principle of the bottom-up approach, so the deliberation process can solve many issues. I am afraid that in its core actions it cannot be of great assistance, however, because as Pia explained, legally refugees cannot initiate projects and I am not certain that legally they can even participate...

Also in a local community such as Lesvos, with more than 50% youth unemployment, this issue raises a lot of questions...

Pia: CLLD is, in general, a good channel for refugee support and inclusion. Associations have found CLLD a good means of carrying out integration projects. But, it would be even more effective if migrants themselves could take an active part in project planning and implementation, and not only be on the receiving end. At the moment, it is more top-down from their perspective. The most effective migrant inclusion would be to let the migrants be active in projects. At present, refugees themselves cannot initiate projects, because the application has to be signed by an association or a company. As long as refugees can only participate but not initiate, their introduction into any area is dependent on other people.

Interviews conducted in August 2016.

This interview helps place into perspective some of the realities linked with the refugee crisis in fisheries and aquaculture areas in Europe. It also highlights the fact that there are no easy solutions but some can be developed thanks to the good will of all involved. FLAGs and FARNET will continue to work together on this topic in the coming years with the start of a work package on social inclusion in fisheries and aquaculture areas, which will include a focus on FLAG and refugee integration. ■



Focus

▲ Chefs and fishermen promote the A l'Ostendaise restaurant in Belgium.

Innovating along the local supply chain

The small-scale fisheries sector in the EU faces a series of challenges. Innovation and adaptation to new trends, along with a proactive approach to opening up new markets, will be essential to ensuring a sustainable and viable future for the sector in many fisheries areas.

Fish and shellfish have become global commodities, to be traded, stored and shipped around the world. Flows of these commodities depend on consumer preferences in different countries, and on the capacity and competitiveness of a given fisheries area (workforce wages, ease of doing business, ease of logistics...) to process and store products, and access the relevant markets.

At the same time, demand for fisheries products in Europe is growing, in particular for local, sustainably caught, premium products. However, the small-scale fisheries sector in the EU is, in many cases, failing to capitalise on this evolving demand, which could support a forward looking and thriving industry. Indeed, the sector faces a series of challenges, and tough competition from better organised and highly specialised fisheries companies, including from abroad, is a reality for much of the fisheries sector around Europe. Options should thus be explored to increase in a sustainable way the added value of the catch along the supply chain and possibly to generate additional sources of income for the small-scale operators and their dependants.

Overcoming some of these challenges will depend on the extent to which businesses along the fisheries supply chain can better meet consumer demands and better differentiate local fisheries products in an

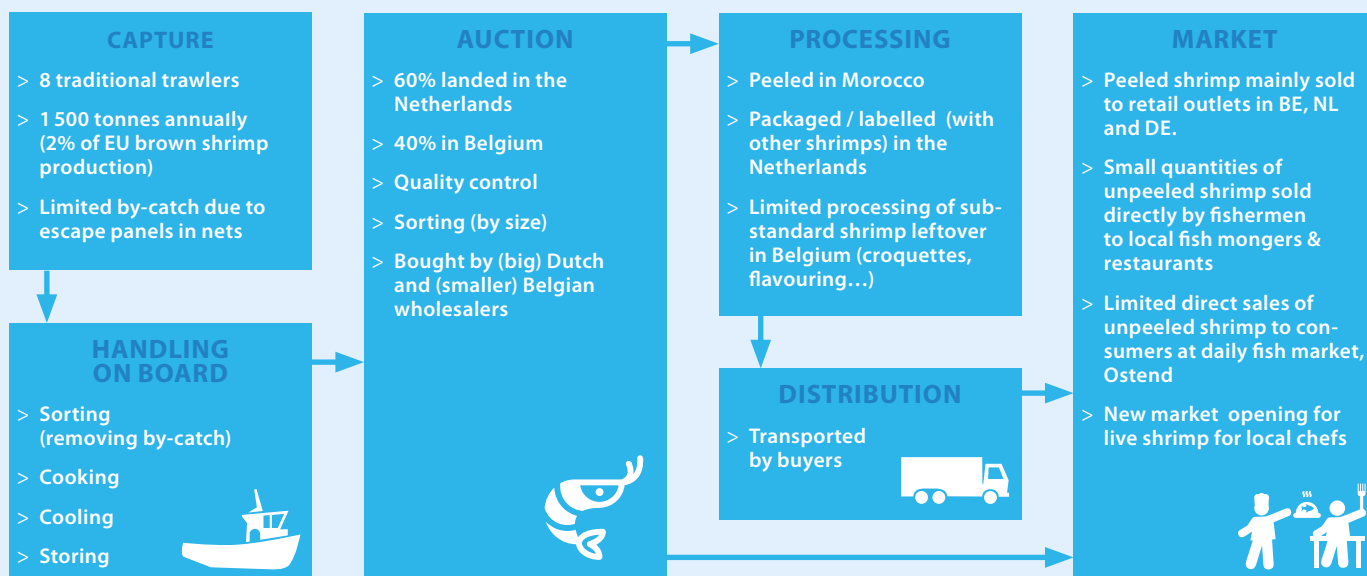
increasingly competitive market. Innovation and adaptation to new trends, along with a proactive approach to opening up new markets, will also be essential to ensuring a sustainable and viable future for the sector in many fisheries areas.

Under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, **FLAGs have the opportunity to support innovation at all stages of the supply chain of fishery and aquaculture products**⁴. However, what type of innovation should they promote? And at which points of the supply chain would support be most effective? In order to adopt a strategic approach to promoting new products, new activities and new ways of doing business in the fisheries sector, FLAGs will need to take an in-depth look at the different fisheries supply chains in their areas.



⁴ Article 63 (1a) of the EMFF (Reg. No 508/2014)

Value chain or value drain?



Source: developed by the Belgian FLAG (2007-2013)

This starts with the fishing or production activity for each species and extends right through to where and by whom they are eventually consumed, including how they are transported, traded, processed, packaged and marketed. Support can then be targeted at those activities that need strengthening and can have the most impact on the sector's success, and on ensuring that value generated stays in the area – a challenge that many fisheries areas grapple with.

Capitalising on new opportunities

In order to identify and assess potential opportunities for local fisheries businesses, FLAGs will need to stay abreast of evolving trends. Whether it be the product or service itself, its image, price or marketing channel, these all need to be tailored to an identified target group at a given time by adapting them to meet evolving needs and demand.

Certain general trends can be observed in Europe: increasing expectations regarding customer choice; high demand in most EU countries for filleted white fish without bones; a growing demand for shellfish; increasing online purchasing habits; and a general evolution towards higher sustainability requirements. However, at local level, each species and even boat size will have its own value chain which will all have different abilities to respond to shifts in the market. Some trends may even be in conflict: take for instance the increasing demand for sustainably sourced fish and, at the same time, a growing preference for an increasingly narrow range of species.

FLAGs must be proactive in identifying the different trends that are relevant for the multitude of professionals along their local fisheries and aquaculture supply chains. What is the demand for their most prevalent fish species, including for species that are abundant but under used? What are the consumption patterns locally and how are they evolving? But also, are the national or international markets for these species growing or declining? And how do consumption patterns affect processing, distribution and marketing operations?

Successful responses to some of these challenges may already be found in other fisheries areas around Europe and, thanks to FARNET, the fisheries areas network, FLAGs can play an active role in supporting the transfer of innovations happening at local level from one context to another.



▲ In Ciutadella (Menorca), some restaurants will cook fish bought by customers at the market.



▲ A pesca-tourism boat in Castro (Adriatico Salentino FLAG area, Italy).

Opening up new markets

Having studied the challenges and opportunities that new trends may present to different local stakeholders, FLAGs have an important role to play in ensuring that their areas adapt as effectively as possible. Turning new opportunities into real markets is a crucial part of this.

This could be a new market segment, such as public institutions or specific cultural or ethnic minorities, or it could be new geographic locations: nearby cities, rural areas or even other countries. In either case, FLAGs should make sure that potential project promoters wishing to tap into new market opportunities have done their research, including on competitors. Indeed, whether we are talking about a fisherman selling his produce directly in a nearby city, developing a range of fresh or frozen fillets for school canteens, a clear idea of the qualities that potential customers are looking for in their fish, and how they expect it to be prepared and packaged, is essential if it is going to guarantee sufficient sales to justify the costs involved in accessing that new market.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, many FLAGs funded market research and feasibility studies for new products, helping to open up a series of new markets for local fisheries and aquaculture products. In



▲ Promoting seafood in schools in the Larnaca & Famagusta FLAG area, Cyprus.

other cases, the project promoter carried out the necessary research in advance and the FLAG provided financial support for the material costs of bringing that product to market. Some examples include: a Greek processing company, which worked with fishermen to bring blue crab, previously discarded as by-catch, to Asian communities in Greece and six other EU countries; a cooperative processing plant set up to provide local school, hospital and other canteens with ready-to-cook fillets of local and previously underused fish species; and two unemployed women from Galicia, Spain, who partnered with an expert in Madrid to sell their artisanal canned albacore tuna to their capital city – and subsequently in Mexico!

However, opportunities to innovate and boost business along the supply chain do not need to be limited to those involved

in catching, producing or processing fish. FLAGs may also want to study opportunities at other stages of the supply chain, including trading, distribution and marketing. By mobilising their networks and reaching out to new partners, FLAGs may be able to help local fishermen to secure contracts with a regular buyer for catch that is harder to sell. This happened in Kuusamo, Finland, where individual fishermen, without sufficient freezer storage, could not guarantee sufficient quantities to be credible partners for certain big retailers. However, with FLAG support this situation was turned around⁵. Other fisheries areas are also looking into investing in freezer storage, which not only gives them the vital capacity to decide when and how much fish they sell, but also opens up new business opportunities by providing freezer services to other food producers. As we continue to move into the age of convenience, online purchasing and delivery, distribution services also present a range of new business opportunities – as well as challenges!



⁵ For more information see the FARNET good practice on the project here <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/preparing-fish-handling-centre-flag-kainuu-koillismaa-fi>



▲ Cultivating algae for use in medicines at GIRM (Oeste FLAG area, Portugal).

Strategic partnerships

Whatever elements of the local supply chain FLAGs aim to target, success will depend on finding the right partners. Indeed, in an increasingly competitive world, specialisation is the order of the day. New actors in any field will need to work with experienced professionals in order to mobilise the necessary expertise and networks to develop new products and services and access new markets. However, **innovation is also, increasingly, a collaborative endeavour, based not only on new products but also on new ways of doing business and new types of partnerships.**

Indeed, it was by bringing together producers, processors, contract caterers and public bodies that the **Côte Basque FLAG** in France succeeded in developing a market for ready-made filets of lesser-known species in school and hospital canteens. And, it was by working with fishermen, fish farmers, processors and the local municipality that the **Kainuu-Koillismaa FLAG** in Finland managed to better organise local supply and raise funds to develop the necessary infrastructure. Certainly, fishermen and aquaculture producers will have to build strategic alliances amongst themselves in order to influence supply (e.g. through producer organisations or joint sales platforms), but partnerships with other parts of the fisheries supply chain (e.g. fish auctions, processors...), as well as with other sectors (public sector, local restaurants, tourism...), are equally important if new and sustainable ways of doing business are to emerge.

Putting science in business

One particular sector that FLAGs should keep in mind in this context is research. The ability of a FLAG to connect its local fisheries businesses to science and research can be a powerful tool for innovation along the supply chain. A series of FLAG projects have already supported the development, testing and/or market launch of new fishing techniques, new cooking and cooling procedures (e.g. to extend the life-span of local shrimp), and new uses for certain fish extracts (e.g. omega 3, chitin, astaxantin...) in the pharmaceutical and bio-medical industry.

Involving research organisations in the development of the FLAG's local strategy and associating them with the partnership is a vital step to capitalising on the potential that science has to contribute to a more innovative, competitive and forward-looking sector. Some countries have a dedicated platform to bring together the fisheries sector with science and research (e.g. PTEPA in Spain⁶), and in many areas FLAGs will have nearby marine institutes or other research organisations that are well placed to drive innovation in the local fisheries sector. FLAGs must be proactive at engaging with them.

This can generate a win-win situation for both partners and the local community. On the one hand, FLAGs can make funds available for specific research ideas or tap into existing funding that is available for research and that can benefit the local fisheries sector and related businesses. On the other, and very importantly, by associating industry and research, FLAGs can help to ensure that research funds are spent on projects that truly benefit the local community. Keeping research attuned to the "real world" and ensuring market uptake of knowledge developed is a vital role that FLAGs can play if that knowledge is not to remain on a shelf.

Innovative local supply chains and thriving businesses

FLAGs have a unique opportunity to act as catalysts for change in fishing communities, but their ability to do so will depend on a series of factors, including the specific challenges that the different types of fisheries in their areas are facing. Above all, **FLAGs will need to develop a thorough understanding of these fisheries, their value chains, the associated trends, and the opportunities that exist to innovate and boost local businesses at different stages of the supply chain.** FLAGs must take a strategic approach to addressing weaknesses in the fisheries sector and then forge the necessary partnerships to develop the knowhow and markets necessary to make local fisheries more dynamic, innovative and competitive in a changing world.

For more information on Adding value to local fishery and aquaculture products or Marketing the local catch, see the relevant FARNET Guides: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/publications/guides> ■

⁶ **Plataforma Tecnológica Española de la Pesca y la Acuicultura** (The Spanish Technological Platform for Fisheries and Aquaculture): <http://www.ptepa.org>

Cooperation

Lessons for fruitful cooperation

Cooperating with other local groups can allow FLAGs to find complementarities or the critical mass to increase the impacts of their actions.

Cooperation was one of the seven key features of LEADER, the bottom-up approach to rural development, which has now become known as Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) and is applied under all European Structural and Investment Funds. However, when LEADER first started, “cooperation” was understood in the general sense: working together (with relevant stakeholders, usually from the local area) towards a common goal. Spontaneously, Local Action Groups (LAGs) took this principle further and started to cooperate with other LAGs, outside their area. This type of cooperation between LAGs was subsequently enshrined in EU legislation and remains a core feature of CLLD today. Indeed, under fisheries CLLD, the number of cooperation projects is one of just three output indicators of the programme.

By cooperation, we mean the development of a common activity or product but also the exchange of experience or transfer of knowledge from one area to another. Cooperating with other local groups can allow FLAGs to find complementarities or the critical mass to increase the impacts of their actions. This can take place among neighbouring FLAGs, for example, in order to protect or promote a common resource; at national level, for example, around a common theme such as pesca-tourism, which might imply a



new market activity and, potentially, the modification of national legislation; or at transnational level, to address common, often basin-wide, challenges. By working with actors from other areas, FLAGs can leverage in additional ideas and expertise to a project and increase their capacity to react to trends that go beyond the local level.

However, cooperation, especially when transnational, can be challenging for various reasons, including physical distance and language barriers, but also due to different rules and procedures sometimes put in place at national or regional level. Indeed, the 2007-2013 period saw relatively few cooperation projects and only a minority of these projects went beyond study visits and exchanges.

Early indications suggest, however, that in 2014-2020, and now that CLLD is sufficiently established in many fisheries areas, FLAGs will be more ambitious. With this in mind, we interviewed a few of the FLAGs who were brave enough to attempt cooperation in the first programming period of fisheries CLLD. The following reflections aim to give some food for thought to those FLAGs considering cooperation in the future.





▲ Renovated traditional boat at an interpretation centre in the North Kaszuby FLAG area, Poland.



▲ 'Gastronomy for Chefs' campaign, organised by the North Kaszuby FLAG, Poland.

The Northern Fisheries Trail: cooperating with neighbours

Nine FLAGs from three different Polish regions collaborated in a project to promote fisheries-related tourism called the **Northern Fisheries Trail**. This involved work on eight different themes, ranging from the promotion of fisheries traditions and modern day fishing and aquaculture, to environmental and educational actions, the fostering of cooperation among producers and the promotion of local products. Together, the partners set up a fisheries tourism centre in all nine FLAG areas, each one with a different thematic focus. They also engaged in the joint promotion of attractions, tourist accommodation and fisheries related gastronomy.

Key added value of cooperation: *The trust built up among the participating stakeholders which has formed a basis for further activities, many of which have been incorporated into the local development strategies of the nine FLAGs for the 2014-2020 period.*

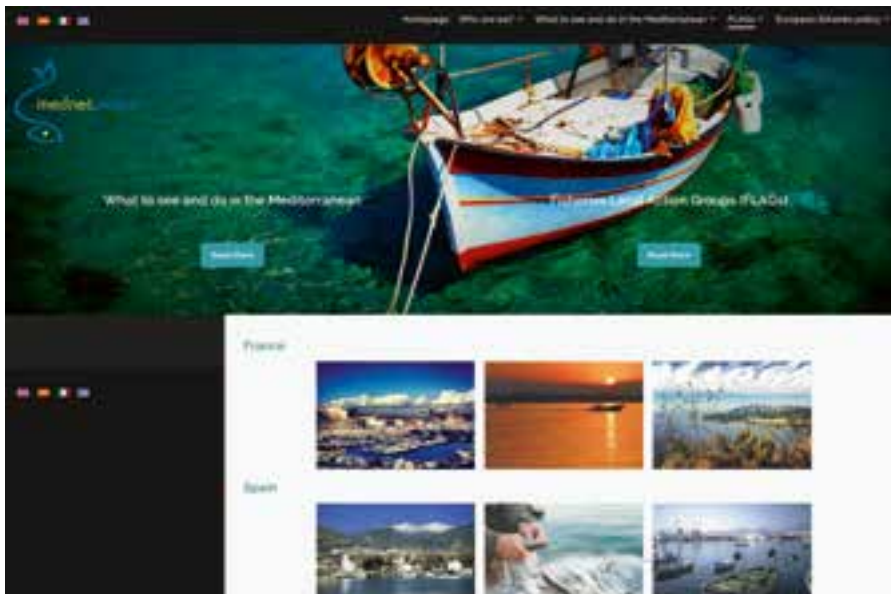
- 🕒 **Tip 1:** *Don't try to walk before you can crawl – **start cooperating close to home** before trying to be more ambitious.*
- 🕒 **Tip 2:** ***Ensure activities are sustainable in the long term.** In the case of this project, the centres have continued to operate into the current programming period and many of the activities they undertake are funded from other sources (i.e. they are not dependent on continued FLAG support).*

Gastronomy for chefs: foreign study visit inspires local cooperation project

This project started as a study visit by the **North Kaszuby FLAG** (Poland) to Lake Vanern in Sweden, where the **local FLAG** had supported a **project** to help raise awareness among catering students of the sustainable sourcing of local fish. North Kaszuby was exploring ways to better promote its local cod and herring. Based on what it learnt in Sweden, the FLAG undertook a cooperation project with its neighbouring Kaszuby FLAG, to train students in six catering schools on how fish is caught and processed and on preparing regional fish dishes. This helped to develop local understanding of the potential of locally-caught fish as a valuable food source.

Key added value of cooperation: The exchange with Sweden sparked **new ideas** for Polish fisheries areas, while the resulting cooperation project allowed Polish FLAGs to **share the costs** of organising the training, which **extended its reach** by covering two FLAG areas.

- 🕒 **Tip 1:** *Make sure you have a very clear idea of what you want to visit and **its relevance to your area**. In this case the North Kaszuby FLAG discovered that certain activities undertaken in the Swedish catering school were not permitted in Poland. Be ready to **adapt ideas to the specific context** of your own area.*
- 🕒 **Tip 2:** *Be sure to **find the right partners and associate all the relevant stakeholders**, including decision-makers. The fact that the school directors took part in the study visit was, for example, instrumental in securing support for a new course in the Polish catering schools. Involving well-known chefs also boosted the attractiveness of the course to the students. Cooperating with a FLAG area facing similar challenges ensured the relevance for both parties and led to continuing collaboration among stakeholders, even after the project finished.*



▲ The Mednetpesca website.

Mednetpesca: developing Mediterranean-wide cooperation

Mednetpesca is an ambitious attempt by 19 Mediterranean FLAGs from France, Spain, Greece, Cyprus and Italy to put local fisheries activities and products at the heart of the Mediterranean coastal identity. Together, they have set up a website to promote fisheries related tourism activities, restaurants selling local fish, and environmentally protected sites on the Mediterranean coast. This involved the gathering of information in each FLAG area, which was then presented on a common website, along with an interactive map.

Key added value of cooperation: Initiated working relations between a critical mass of FLAGs around shared priorities and brought a Mediterranean perspective to efforts to raise awareness of small scale-fisheries and new activities such as pesca-tourism.

👉 **Tip 1:** Do not underestimate the **time and energy needed** to ensure effective leadership and coordination, as well as developing ownership among all participating FLAGs. This is particularly true when trying to maintain momentum among a large number of partners that might not meet on a regular basis.

👉 **Tip 2:** Make sure all partners have a **clear idea and common understanding of the project objectives**, and that **responsibilities** for the various actions are explicitly laid out (e.g. in a partnership agreement). In this case, it also proved helpful to have **country coordinators, with good language skills**, who liaised with the lead FLAG and with the participating FLAGs in their own countries. ■

EU legislation for the 2014-2020 period (CPR Art 32, 34 and 35 and EMMF Art 64) allows FLAGs to support:

- > Regional or national cooperation
- > Trans-border and transnational cooperation
- > International cooperation

- > Cooperation with other FLAGs
- > Cooperation with CLLD groups from other EU funds (e.g. LEADER groups)
- > Cooperation with non-EU funded public-private partnerships implementing similar community-led development programmes

FLAGs may implement cooperation projects themselves or support a relevant local organisation to implement a cooperation project.

Report

STRENGTHENING THE FISHERIES SECTOR IN SOUTHERN FINLAND

Success and succession

The ESKO FLAG has supported a range of projects to strengthen all aspects of the small-scale fishing value chain in the Gulf of Finland, from training for young fishers through to marketing and cooperation.



▲ A typical private fishing port in the Gulf of Finland.

After a long journey through narrow, winding forest roads, we finally reach our destination: a solitary red house standing at the bottom of a small inlet. There are hundreds of isolated dwellings like this dotted across the Finnish countryside. But the boat moored at the jetty and the traps and nets lying on the sand tell their own story. This is not a typical Finnish 'summer house'. It is a fishery. The building is owned by Tanja Åkerfeldt, a 35-year-old fisherwoman who took over her father's business two years ago. "Dad still does some fishing, but he's getting on a bit and it's my job now to run the business," she explains.

For many years now, Tanja has been taking the family's catch of salmon, common whitefish, pikeperch and other local fish species to the Friday market in Söderkulla. Now, however, she is also involved in the

fishing, spending the rest of the week out on the water. "I didn't do much fishing before. I had a basic idea of how it worked, but I certainly wasn't a professional. When Dad couldn't do the job any more, I had no option but to take over. I didn't want to move away. I also didn't want to go back to school to spend countless hours learning about theory. So I got in touch with the Uusimaa Fishing Association to see what my options were."

The solution came from Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). The association is a member of the ESKO FLAG and one of the FLAGs main priorities is to ensure that small-scale fishing traditions are passed on to the next generation. In 2012, the FLAG decided to launch a new practical-oriented training programme for young people interested in making a career in fishing. "Tanja was the catalyst," explains

Christian Linden, FLAG Vice-President and project manager. "But we were already aware of a latent demand for this training. It came mainly from young men, fishermen's sons, who were learning on the job but lacked the technical knowledge needed to be a professional, sustainable fisherman in today's world. Young people can certainly make a career out of fishing, but the future lies in sustainable fishing. They need a solid grasp of the methods and technologies so they can store their catches properly and maximise their value. We decided that the best way to achieve this would be through a short, master and apprentice-style training programme."



▲ Fisherman and fishmonger, Antero Halonen.

Master and apprentice

The programme was launched in early 2013, after six months of administrative procedures. Since then, a total of 10 apprentices (Tanja being the first) have completed a six-month course under the watchful eye of eight 'masters'. The programme – tailored to the needs and knowledge of each apprentice – covers a wide range of topics, including: techniques for catching different fish species in different seasons; where and when to lay traps, how to store and prepare fresh fish for sale, safety at sea, and how to respect resources and the marine environment. Each apprentice is involved in drawing up a personal training plan and a contract is then signed with the trainer, who receives up to €1 000 per month. This pay was also extended to the apprentices. "We've enjoyed strong support and practical assistance from the government," says Esko Taanila, fisheries coordinator within the ESKO FLAG. "Basically, we were told to do what we thought was best. The government was interested only in the outcomes." The outcomes are plain for everyone to see, with the Uusimaa region now having eight new professional fishermen.



▲ Master and apprentice: Christian Linden and Tanja Åkerfeldt.

"Under the 2014–2020 fisheries CLLD programme, we're now preparing to run the project again, with six new apprentices in the eastern part of our region," adds Teemu Tast, head of the southern Finland fisherman's association and FLAG president. "The average age of the fishermen here is 58. Without a changing of the guard, there might be no professional fishermen left on this coastline in the next 7 to 10 years."

The ESKO (Etelä-Suomen Kalatalousryhmä, or Southern Finland Fisheries Group) FLAG covers the coastline of the Gulf of Finland, extending to the east and west of Helsinki. Stretching 400 km, from Hanko to the Russian border, the area roughly coincides with the historical provinces of Uusimaa (known as Nyland in Swedish – the language spoken by the majority of fishermen in the region) and Kymenlaakso in the east, around the Kymi river. In total,

the region has 56 full-time and 150 part-time fishermen. The FLAG is a partnership between two fishermen's associations, 13 coastal municipalities, several LEADER groups and a number of associations. Between 2009 and 2013, the FLAG supported 60 projects – 32 group projects and 28 individual projects – all focusing directly on coastal fisheries. "We are continuing in the same vein in the 2014–2020 period, this time with three main priorities: bringing young blood into the sector, improving infrastructure, and strengthening the value chain," explains Esko Taanila.



From cooperation to a cooperative?



▲ Fisherman Mikael Lindholm.

The visit for this report coincided with the fifth meeting of three FLAG representatives from Finland and Estonia, held at the home of Holger Sjögren, a retired but still active fisherman in Kotka, Finland. The meeting was attended by Esko Taanila (ESKO FLAG) and two of his Estonian counterparts, Kaido Vagiström (Harju Kalandusühing FLAG) and Enno Nurk (Virumaa FLAG). The purpose of the meeting was to work on an idea for a highly innovative cooperation project – to create a joint Finnish/Estonian fishing cooperative, operating on both sides of the Gulf of Finland.

“Small-scale fishing in Finland and Estonia is unique due to the local stocks and methods used,” says Esko. “The production conditions are very favourable, but we lack the means to develop our businesses and market our catches. There is no producers’ cooperative in Finland. There are four in Estonia, but only for trawl fisheries and aquaculture.”

As well as creating a cooperative, the idea would also be to install new equipment at ports on both sides of the Gulf of Finland. *“Such a structure would make us stronger, more professional and more competitive, while also enabling us to achieve better prices and revenues for fishermen,”* says Kaido.

“By definition, the fisherman’s task is to fish, not to sell,” insists Kaido. *“The cooperative would deal with all marketing aspects and, by processing the fish on a much larger scale, we could achieve better margins and target bigger markets, in Finland, Estonia and elsewhere.”*

The next step will be to draft a business plan to convince funding authorities (which have already shown a positive interest in the project) and, more importantly, fishermen, of the merits of the project. *“Fishermen are individualistic and don’t have time to set up a project of this scale. As I already said, there is no tradition of fisheries cooperatives in Finland. We have to start from scratch. But there is definitely a need. The fishermen are aware of this, but cannot address it. Our role as FLAGs is to ease the burden, to change mentalities, to initiate new ways of addressing the challenges we now face, and to create the best conditions to develop innovative responses.”*



Revitalising ports

The FLAG’s second priority – improving infrastructure – involves renovating, and in some cases converting, the region’s ports. As well as upgrading existing landing areas (installing new jetties and loading equipment), the group has also undertaken more substantial work at 12 fishing ports along the coast. The ultimate aim is to inject new life into these ports, which have suffered from the impacts of quotas and plummeting demand for some species – with severe environmental consequences.

Conversion work is currently underway at six municipal ports (Loviisa, Kuusinen, Klamila, Kotka, Inkoo and Hanko), focusing either directly or indirectly on fisheries. This work includes modernising equipment and storage facilities, renovating buildings to host fishmongers and boost direct sales, and establishing new tourist shops, community and training spaces and exhibition venues.

Another six smaller ports have specialised in so-called ‘elimination fishing’. The Gulf of Finland has large numbers of bream and roach – species that affect water quality and drive away other, more coveted species such as salmon, pikeperch and common whitefish.



▲ Kotka harbour.



▲ A fishmonger in Kotka harbour.

“Our parents used to eat a lot of bream and roach, but rising living standards have seen demand for these species plummet,” explains Antero Halonen, a fisherman and fishmonger from the port of Kotka. “The same can be said for herring, which isn’t a popular dish here in Finland any more. Herring was once considered as excellent common food, but it is now used mainly as low-price animal food for the fur industry. For environmental and economic reasons, bream and roach need to be cleared from the coastal waters. Yet the catches must not be allowed to go to waste. These smaller ports have, therefore, been entirely overhauled with these particular catches in mind, with the fish then exported to Russia via Estonia. “Everything was going swimmingly,” adds Esko, pointing to the unused equipment at a new fish landing port. “Some fishermen had even made so-called ‘elimination’ fishing their primary occupation. Then came the Russian sanctions in 2014. They won’t be in place forever and we may see a revival of this type of fishing in the future but we’re not holding our breath. We’re looking for new outlets for our catches in Estonia and Germany, and supporting campaigns to get people to eat less common catches again.”

Doing more with less

Another recent problem has been a decline in salmon stocks – a fish that accounts for 50% of some fishermen’s total revenue. “Hydroelectric power plants are required to restock salmon but since 2010, in the Kymi river region in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland, they only do this in the rivers, no longer in the sea,” explains fisherman Mikael Lindholm. “This has led to a notable decline in stocks since 2014. This year, 2016, is a complete disaster. At an estimate, I would say my catch is down by about 80%.”

But Mikael is ready to face the challenge ahead. A former factory foreman, he became a professional fisherman in 2004 and has since expanded his business, investing in a smokehouse, a dryer and a mobile fishmonger’s van. “Fishing is also a business. You have to get the best value you can from your catch. The older generations didn’t see it that way. They were quite happy just fishing. They didn’t have to think too hard about it. These days, if you don’t work hard to extract value from your fish, you’ve got no chance of making a viable business.”

Small-scale fishing in the Gulf of Finland has already proven resilient in crisis situations. In 2011, the WWF’s [Sustainable Seafood Guide](#) placed Baltic salmon and common whitefish on the red list. “All of a sudden, the market didn’t want these fish any more. Our income plummeted literally overnight,” recalls Teemu Tast. “It was really unfair. The WWF figures covered the Baltic as a whole, ignoring the fact that the Gulf of Finland has its own unique stocks and fishing methods, such as the use of ‘trap nets’. We had to do something, so we decided to commission a study as part of our efforts to obtain the MSC label⁷.”



⁷ Marine Stewardship Council https://www.msc.org/?set_language=en.

Forum

The FLAG set up a committee of professional fishermen and representatives of environmental organisations to oversee the study. It was carried out by LIVIA, the Fishermen’s Education and Research Institute, and concluded that trap-net fishing (see box) – a popular method used across the Gulf of Finland – was indeed a sustainable technique. This is because, unlike gill-net fishing, unwanted catches are released back into the water alive. “Our study was much more detailed than the WWF version, because it covered the entire value chain,” explains Teemu.

As a result of the study, the WWF removed restocked salmon and also common whitefish from its red list. The steering committee, aware of the need to establish ongoing cooperation between fisheries stakeholders, set up a ‘Gulf of Finland Fisheries Forum’, which now meets regularly, bringing together 33 different representatives from six sectors (professional fishing, recreational fishing, the environment, research, the government and water area owners).

The ESKO FLAG plans to use the 2014–2020 fisheries CLLD programme to build on and expand the work it has done since 2009. “Fishing is too important to be ignored here,” concludes Teemu Tast. The proof of this is everywhere to be seen, including the two salmon on the coat of arms of Pyhtää, the town where five local authority officials from the Gulf of Finland recently met to discuss the next steps in the port improvement programme. ■



▲ Municipal authorities meet to discuss port conversion projects.

ESKO (Finland)				
		<p>Area: 5 915 km²</p> <p>Population: 855 000 inhabitants</p> <p>Density: 61 inhabitants/km²</p>		
FLAG Budget	EUR			
	EU	National	Private	Total
Total	490 000	676 000	500 000	1 666 000
<p>CONTACT Etelä-Suomen kalatalousryhmä ESKO c/o Esko Taanila Sepra ry, Helsingitie 1 A, FIN-49460 Hamina Tel. +358 44 3774516 esko.taanila@sepra.fi – http:// www.sepra.fi</p>				

Perspective

Measuring CLLD: the challenges of demonstrating results and longer-term impacts of local development in fisheries areas

The 2014-2020 programming period sees an increased emphasis on achieving – and demonstrating – results under the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds. Evaluation is now a compulsory element of all Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) strategies and three common results indicators have been introduced for strategies funded under the EMFF, namely: jobs created, jobs maintained and businesses created. However, local development is about much more than the immediate results, and the impacts go well beyond the number of jobs and businesses that a Local Action Group has helped to support. CLLD in fisheries and aquaculture areas should contribute to the sustainable development of these areas, the sort of development that takes place gradually and over time, improving economic, but also social and environmental wellbeing.



▲ Tourism development near a fishing pond in the Barycz Valley FLAG area, Poland.

However, measuring the broader and longer-term impacts of this sort of development throws up a series of challenges, which experts and practitioners have grappled with for decades. By its very nature, CLLD consists of an integrated set of small-scale actions (training, environmental actions, direct support to businesses, networking activities...), each contributing to one or more strategic objectives, such as developing a more competitive local fisheries sector. However, assessing the combined effects of different but complementary investments, especially when small-scale, is complex. Furthermore, many of these actions (e.g. innovations developed and trialled at local level before being scaled-up) have knock-on or indirect effects that are difficult to foresee or measure, so capturing the net effect attributable to a FLAG intervention is a real challenge. So too is

the fact that many of the impacts of CLLD are qualitative and can, therefore, be difficult to measure (capacity, social capital, quality of life...). Some also take time to materialise, often longer than a single programming period.

On top of the complexities of how to measure CLLD impacts, local strategies are part of a broader policy context and should contribute to EU and national objectives. A question that arises, therefore, is: how to aggregate the outputs and impacts of a series of local development strategies, each with their own specific objectives, drawn up in response to locally perceived opportunities and needs?





▲ Reconstruction of a traditional boat in the Alto Minho FLAG area, Portugal.

Indeed, even if a number of common indicators can be found to measure CLLD around Europe, they will never be able to fully represent the real impacts of each local development strategy or be fully comparable, given the different contexts of each area. But does this mean the successes – or failures – of local development should not be measured? And does it mean that we cannot expect to have an EU picture of the impacts of CLLD?

Clearly not; beyond the obligation to justify the use of public money, investing time and effort in capturing the impacts of CLLD is **fundamental if we are to know to what extent the work is proving effective, or not**. It is only by developing a system that allows the FLAG to gauge its progress in achieving objectives that it can draw lessons and improve the quality and effectiveness of its work.

Assessing impacts goes beyond simply looking at results; we need to see what sort of change is being brought about as a consequence of the work of the FLAG. In broad terms, we need to know the extent to which CLLD is contributing to the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture areas. But more specifically, have FLAG actions helped to improve the resilience of the local fisheries sector? Have they contributed to a more diversified local economy? Have they strengthened civic participation and local capacity? Below, we take a look at some potential areas in which FLAG strategies may aim to bring about change – and the challenges of finding appropriate indicators to measure the related impacts.

Economic impacts

Discussions with FLAGs at the FARNET seminar, “**Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas**”, revealed that many were primarily concerned with improving the local economy, focusing in particular on the fisheries sector. Examples of some FLAG objectives identified include: “reviving the local fisheries sector”, “safeguarding the future of fisheries”, “making fisheries a nicer job through better (social) support structures”, and also achieving a “more balanced local economy”.

How do we measure such ambitious objectives? Ensuring a strong degree of realism is important. In the context of widespread decline in the fisheries sector, reversing certain trends is likely to be beyond the scope of most FLAGs, especially given the relatively modest budgets at their disposal (on average around €2-3M over six years). Helping the local population to adapt to new scenarios, for example, through skills development, awareness-raising and supporting innovative business ideas or partnerships, might be more feasible.

Data collected to measure CLLD must, therefore, focus on those things that FLAG support can really affect. The numbers of young people joining the fisheries sector as a result of FLAG support, the numbers of new businesses created, or the **increased income** of beneficiaries might be indicators of success. Attributing changes in general employment levels to FLAG support, on the other hand, is likely to be difficult. However, while such quantitative figures give us a good insight into some of the outcomes of FLAG work, they are not enough to demonstrate the wider impact of CLLD.

There are also many impacts of FLAG activities that are not captured by purely economic indicators, but that help to make **local communities more resilient**. FLAGs highlighted, for example, the role of networks as vital support mechanisms for local fishermen and entrepreneurs. While the number of new networks and the number of fishermen and other businesses involved can be measured quite easily, the contribution that such networks might have on reviving the local fisheries sector is harder to assess. Such impacts require qualitative analysis, which makes national or EU level comparisons more difficult but is essential to really understanding changes that are taking place.

Social impacts

CLLD also brings less visible social benefits, such as a strengthened social fabric, **improved quality of life**, thanks to increased income, or **greater individual fulfilment** as a result of better working conditions.

The social impacts of CLLD can be far reaching and it is important not to underestimate the variety of social benefits that FLAG support can bring to local communities. A project, for example, that brings together stakeholders that have never before worked together – fishermen and local restaurants, for example – will forge new relationships within the community. While the primary aim of the project might have been to increase the quantity of local fish sold to local restaurants, thereby increasing the fishermen’s income and the quality of fish in the restaurants, these new relationships also help to build relations and trust among community



▲ Fishermen and FLAG meeting in the Larnaca & Famagusta FLAG area, Cyprus.

members, which can become a base for mutual support. This **social capital** opens the door to a whole range of future possibilities: restaurant space made available for local meetings or events; new activities such as cookery classes or demonstrations; strengthening local identity around a common resource (local fish), etc. The possibilities are as numerous as the individuals involved and the networks to which they are connected.

But how do we measure social capital or its impacts? A 2010 working paper on, “**Capturing impacts of LEADER and of measures to improve Quality of Life in rural areas**”, developed by the European Evaluation Network for Rural Development, proposes looking at increased trust between different members of the community, increases in the number of people who are motivated to volunteer locally, and whether local identity has been strengthened. The World Bank’s National Community Empowerment Programme in Indonesia also uses trust as a proxy indicator for social capital, as well as networks, community events and cooperation activities.

We can also consider potential impacts on **social cohesion** and **civic participation**. To what extent have minorities or hard-to-reach groups been mobilised? Here, we could, for example, look at the proportion of project beneficiaries that are fishermen, women, young people, migrants or other target groups. We could also try to capture the different types of interactions between these groups and to what extent they have developed a shared vision for the future or a sense of joint responsibility for their area.



▲ A typical fishing boat in the Danube Delta FLAG area, Romania.

Environmental impacts

Although many FLAG strategies focus on socio-economic development in fishing communities, a healthy environment, and in particular a healthy marine and/or aquatic ecosystem, is a precondition for a sustainable fisheries sector and for safeguarding the jobs that depend on it. The quality of the environment also contributes to the attractiveness and image of the area and, therefore, to the quality of life of residents, as well as to the potential for certain economic activities, such as tourism.

Recognising the importance of the environment, most FLAGs dedicate a certain proportion of their budget to environment-related projects. Actions may be targeted, for example, at improving or maintaining the **health of local fish stocks, improving water quality** or **combating climate change**. These kinds of impacts are difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to measure given the barriers to isolating single causes of changes in, for example, water quality or climate change. However, FLAGs can look at the extent to which specific fish species are exploited, including, for example, the contribution of introducing more selective fishing gear. A reduction in the use of fossil fuels can also be measured as a proxy for combating climate change. Any transition to more sustainable aquaculture practices (including organic production) can also be observed.

The paper mentioned above on capturing the impacts of LEADER also looked at environmental impacts. It identified “improved ecosystem services and environmental amenities” as one area to consider but it also pointed to the **involvement of the local population in environmental management** as a tool to ensure increased awareness, responsibility and care for the environment⁸.

A holistic approach to local development

The potential economic, social and environmental impacts mentioned above are just a few of those that FLAGs may be aiming to achieve in their areas. The important point here is that **the integrated nature of CLLD aims at a holistic approach to local development, which goes beyond solely economic impacts such as increased employment or revenue**. It recognises that material wellbeing – and here we can add access to infrastructure and services (transport, IT, health services...) – is interdependent with social (including cultural) and environmental wellbeing.



⁸ Guidance on FLAG-funded environmental actions can be found in the FARNET guide on “Green growth in Europe’s fisheries areas”: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfs/cms/farnet/farnet-guide-6-green-growth-europe%E2%80%99s-fisheries-areas>

If FLAGs are to support the sustainable development of their communities, they will need to help improve not only economic conditions, but also social and environmental conditions. However, they also need to be able to demonstrate the improvements achieved.

Capturing change

Above, we have offered a few ideas for measuring potential impacts of FLAG support. These are, however, just some among many examples of how FLAGs might capture the impact of their work. What matters is that FLAGs **find indicators (or proxies) for the main objectives of their local development strategy**. These may be quantitative (e.g. the number of young people starting up in fisheries as an indicator for the sector's revival) or qualitative (e.g. an improved perception of the future of fisheries in the local area, based on surveys, for example, conducted at the beginning and again at the end of the programming period).

Whatever the indicators, experience shows that they should, where possible, be established in close consultation with **local stakeholders** and, in particular, by promoters whose projects will be expected to contribute to the FLAG's strategic objectives. Local project promoters will be best placed to identify the impacts they expect their projects to have and what indicators might be the most relevant, realistic and feasible to actually measure. Involving project promoters in designing a process to measure the effects of their actions, including the choice of indicator, can help to strengthen ownership. It can also ensure that data collection is seen as a useful exercise, which can contribute to improving a given project, including during its life-cycle, thereby benefiting the project promoter, rather than simply creating an additional burden.



▲ Redevelopment of the old fishermen's quarter in Viana do Castelo, Portugal.

To be most effective, data collection and assessment should be built into the FLAG's work right from the design stage of the local strategy. **Measuring certain changes can be simple if planned and if information is collected at the right time**. Indeed, certain baseline data at the outset of the programme is fundamental if change is to be measured further down the line. FLAGs will need to explore what might be the most effective ways of capturing the results and impacts of their work. This includes weighing up the costs and time involved, deciding what is appropriate and possible to measure locally, as well as the kind of information that can realistically be gathered. There can be situations where measuring certain effects becomes so complex and expensive that the costs greatly outweigh the potential benefits; or worse, they could divert resources away from animation and project development work. Indeed, the costs (time, human, monetary...) must be proportionate to the FLAG budgets – and they need to serve a purpose: in particular, **helping to understand to what extent the FLAG is having a positive impact in its local area and what it should change to improve that impact**.

Ultimately, it is up to each FLAG to decide what **combination of tools** they use to capture and demonstrate the benefits they are bringing to their communities.

The challenge is then to build a picture at **national and at EU level**. What is the sum of all this local change? In quantitative terms, and given the profound changes within the fisheries sector in recent decades, the impacts are likely to be as modest as the budgets allocated to CLLD. However, the longer-term and qualitative impact of **engaging and connecting local stakeholders, trialling innovative ideas and building human capital**, though hard to capture, will certainly be fundamental to triggering and fostering change in local fisheries communities. To date, no single EU model or method exists for measuring this change, but by sharing successful tools and communicating results from around Europe, we can perhaps build up a greater appreciation of some of the direct and indirect effects of CLLD in fishing communities.

This article incorporates reflections from Lily Hoo, World Bank Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Yves Champetier, FARNET Advisory Group and Thomas Binet, Director of VertigoLab and FARNET Geographic Expert for France.

For more information about measuring CLLD, see FARNET guide: "Results oriented CLLD in fisheries areas: 6 practical factsheets": <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/farnet-guide-11-results-oriented-clld-fisheries-areas-six-practical-factsheets> ■

FARNETwork



Country | M€: EMFF budget for CLLD | Number of FLAGs with approved strategies / Number of FLAGs planned (information estimated by the FSU as of Sept. 2016)

FARNET latest publication

FARNET Guide #10: **“Starting CLLD implementation in practice”**

As of the 2014-2020 programming period, the bottom-up methodology to local development can be funded by any of the European Structural and Investment Funds under its new name: Community-Led Local Development. This guide presents examples of applying CLLD under the different ESI Funds: EMFF, EAFRD, ESF and ERDF from the perspective of Managing Authorities and local actors.

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/farnet-guide-10-starting-clld-implementation-practice>

FARNET Guide #11: **“Results-oriented CLLD in fisheries areas: six practical factsheets”**

The Common Provisions Regulation lays out specific requirements for CLLD regarding planning, delivering, measuring and demonstrating the results of local development strategies. This guide is composed of six factsheets, including real-life examples, designed to help FLAGs ensure better results through developing strategic objectives, selecting indicators and setting targets, collecting data and managing information, and adopting a results-oriented approach in all activities of the FLAG.

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/cms/farnet/farnet-guide-11-results-oriented-clld-fisheries-areas-six-practical-factsheets>

FARNET and other policies

This section proposes links to other policy initiatives which are relevant to the work of the FLAGs. In many cases FLAGs are already active in areas linked with these priorities. Concerted action at EU level could help maximise the impact of local initiatives. FLAGs are therefore strongly encouraged to look at creating linkages between their local development strategies and these wider initiatives.

- > **#MEDfish4ever:** DG MARE has developed a new strategy to improve the state of fish stocks in the Mediterranean. Key to this strategy is raising awareness about the urgency and scale of the problem at hand, but also to mobilise immediate and determined action by all, including the southern and eastern countries of the Mediterranean. <https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/inseparable/en/medfish4ever>

- > The European Commission adopted an **Atlantic Action Plan** in March 2013 to revitalise the marine and maritime economies of France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom. Its key priorities are to: 1) promote entrepreneurship and innovation; 2) protect, secure and develop the potential of the Atlantic marine and coastal environment; 3) improve accessibility and connectivity; 4) create a socially inclusive and sustainable model of regional development <http://www.atlanticstrategy.eu/>

CLLD in practice



FLAGS, fishermen and researchers study “the human touch for open communication” (Dello Stretto FLAG, Italy)

“I was told I would face ‘unfriendly people’, ‘not willing or used to communicate’, but instead I met with a community ready to share their stories, life and struggle with the sea. I debunked a myth!” Read the full #CLLDstory online at farnet.eu



Reviving the tradition of fish markets in Gdansk (North Kaszuby FLAG, Poland)

In Poland, CLLD has been a central tool to promote cooperation between fishermen and organisations involved in maintaining fisheries heritage. Read the full #CLLDstory online at farnet.eu



Bridging science and fisheries to demarcate goose barnacles origins (Oeste FLAG, Portugal)

“This project facilitates the traceability of goose barnacles harvested in the Berlengas islands. It is an innovative method, which could easily be transferred to areas with similar issues.” Read the full #CLLDstory online at farnet.eu



Social Return on Investment: FLAG results are real... and measurable! (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly FLAG, UK)

In UK, The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly FLAG (2007-2014) commissioned an analysis of the Social Return on Investment in order to measure the impact of its animation activities. It found that each euro invested by the FLAG brought a social return of €5.45 in benefits to the local community. Read the full #CLLDstory online at farnet.eu



“FISCHtival” building links across cultures through the love of seafood (Tirschenreuth FLAG, Germany)

“With FISCHtival we showed that food and music are the easiest bridges that we can pass to support integration of newcomers in the local community.” Read the full #CLLDstory online at farnet.eu

Subscribe

To receive the *FARNET Magazine* or the FARNET newsletter, please send your contact details (name, organisation, address, e-mail and phone number) to: info@farnet.eu

Send us your news

FARNET publications are resources for all those engaged in building a more sustainable future for Europe’s fisheries areas. Please send us news and information on your activities which might be of interest to other groups or actors working in this field. In particular, we would like to hear about your successes and achievements, important events and announcements, and also your ideas or proposals for exchanges or cooperation with other fisheries areas.

info@farnet.eu

Meet us online

