



FLAG Factsheet: Ostrobothnia

Kustaktionsgruppen i Österbotten

Country: Finland

Region: Österbotten

Area: Kokkola, Larsmo, Kronoby, Jakobstad, Nykarleby, Vörå, Korsholm, Vasa, Malax, Korsnäs, Närpes, Kaskö, Kristinestad (13 municipalities and cities)

Code: FI202

Operational: 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming periods

AREA

Description of the area and its main challenges

Ostrobothnia is narrow coastal area which forms part of the Kvarken archipelago. This archipelago of rocks and boulder clay was formed during the last ice-age, about 10 000 years ago and is subject to isostatic uplift of about 1 cm per year or 1 m per century. This has led to the creation of many islands, inlets and lakes and made the archipelago famous for its geological formations. It has been granted UNESCO Natural World Heritage status in 2006. Most of the land area of the FLAG is covered by low forest.

The local economy is characterised by primary sector production as well as universities and high tech industry such as in the energy sector. The area is also one of the most important fisheries regions in Finland.

The main challenge in fisheries is to maintain a viable industry and attract young people to continue in the business. The FLAG also wants to preserve the rich cultural traditions within the sector.

Population: 160 000

Population Density [Inhabitants/ km²]:24

Surface [area/km²]: 6 750

Coastal or inland: coastal

Protected areas: Natura 2000 (187 000 ha)

Total employment in fisheries: 628

1. **Fishing:** 486
2. **Aquaculture:** 30
3. **Processing:** 112

Women employment in fisheries: 80

STRATEGY

Short summary of the FLAG strategy

The FLAG's idea is founded on the conviction that there is hope for the future within fisheries and that this hope can be channelled through commitment towards local society and business.

The FLAG purpose is to support an approach where fisheries are part of a sustainable development of the whole area. New knowledge and diversification are intended to help stakeholders to create profitable businesses and promote a healthy and vibrant coastal society. The Ostrobothnia LAG-FLAG promotes a responsible and sustainable development within all areas of fisheries and related themes through:

1. Maritime innovations – strengthened competence and innovation platform
2. The sea connects – higher social capital and sustainability
3. Blue bio economy – a versatile business structure
4. The coast as a resource – lively coastal societies and interaction
5. Ostrobothnia and the Baltic Sea on a stable ground – international strategy
6. Administration and activation

Importance of the following objectives for the FLAG strategy

Objective	Priority (1 is low, 5 is very high)	% of the budget allocated to them in the strategy
Adding value, creating jobs, and promoting innovation along the fisheries chain	5	16
Supporting diversification	4	14
Enhancing and capitalising on the environmental assets	4	14
Promoting social wellbeing and cultural heritage	4	14
Strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development	4	14

Budget information

Total public budget allocated to the FLAG for 2014-2020: € 1 300 000

EMFF: € 611 000

Member State co-financing: € 689 000

Source of co-financing: National and local (municipalities)

Multi-funding: Yes.

Project examples and ideas

Sustainable aquaculture - fish farming

The purpose of the project is to spread knowledge of new farming technologies, start new businesses and create job opportunities in the sector. A clear ambition of the project is to work on the ecological footprint of the industry.

Storgrynnan – Nämpräs fish harbour

The aim of the project is to propose activities in the Nämpräs fishing harbour focusing on environmental “low impact” activities as a good practice for other harbours, improving the fishing industry and the infrastructure of the area (use of wind power) and create new opportunities. A participatory approach is foreseen to include professional fishermen.

Management Plan fish perch and pike

The aim of the project is to design management plans (catch and preservation) for perch and pike in Ostrobothnia together with fishermen and fisheries associations.

Calls for projects

The FLAG has a continuous process with no specific deadlines. The board meets six times a year to select/approve projects.

Thematic expertise and cooperation

Building on the experience of the 2007-2013 period, the FLAG aim is to cooperate with different organisations, from research centres to entrepreneurs and from local to international stakeholders.

In education, a project carried out with Agrifood Research Finland (MTT), one of the biggest research centres on agriculture in Scandinavia, on teaching children about fish and fisheries as well as sustainable development led to the development of material for teacher education in the whole Finland.

In the biofuel sector, the FLAG cooperated with Novia (university of applied science, FIN), Österbottens Fiskarförbund (Ostrobothnian Fisheries Association, FIN), IFHVP (Institut Français des Huiles Végétales Pures, France), and the French FLAG Côte Basque – Sud Landes.

There is no specific budget for cooperation: all activities are carried out as part of the selected projects.

PARTNERSHIP

Lead partner or Responsible Legal Entity

LAG Aktion Österbotten r.f.

FLAG members

Larsmo municipality, Ostrobothnian Fisheries Association, ProAgria (agricultural advisory association), Luke (environment research institute), local fishermen and entrepreneurs.

Number of individuals on main decision-making body/ board: 11

% of public actors (on the decision-making body): 33

Number of individuals/organisations in partnership/ general assembly: 9

% of fisheries actors (in the partnership): 36

% of environmental actors (in the partnership): 9

% of other private / NGO sector actors (in the partnership): 27

Number of contracted staff in FLAG [FTE]: 1,3

Links with LEADER or other CLLD groups:

The FLAG covers the same area as the Österbotten LAG, with which it has a common local development strategy, shares its legal structure and offices and exchanges information daily.

Contact information

President/Chair, organization: Gun Kapténs (chair of FLAG working group), Mats Brandt (chair of Aktion Österbotten board), Mathias Högbäck (Aktion Österbotten, manager)

FLAG Manager: Jessica Sundman; Mikael Nygård to the end of January 2017

Email: Jessica@aktion.fi mikael@aktion.fi

Telephone: +358 504652565 +358 503081379

Postal address: Handelsplanaden 18 A 65100 Vaasa

FLAG website: www.aktion.fi

Facebook: Aktion Österbotten

Video: Film on fisheries in the region: <https://vimeo.com/136585717>

Language information

Native language: Swedish

Language	Basic level	Intermediate level	Good level
English			x
Finnish			x
German	x		