Axis 4 Factsheet: Spain

Geographical map: Spain

1. Context in which Axis 4 is being developed and main challenges faced.

Spain, with almost 8 000 km of coastline, is home to the biggest fisheries industry in the EU. With its position at the far southwest of Europe, the country enjoys an entry into both the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, while offering good conditions for fresh water aquaculture.

Its population of some 46 million inhabitants consumes an average of 41 kilos per head of fisheries products each year[1] which makes the Spanish, behind the Portuguese, the second biggest consumers of fish in the EU.

The Spanish fisheries industry can be broken down into inland, coastal, offshore and distant water fishing, aquaculture and processing. The industry in Spain is modern, efficient and competitive, and boasts an impressively wide range of products. National catches account for over 200 different species. Mussel farming also has a particularly long tradition in Spain, the world leader in blue mussel production, as does shellfish gathering which is socially important in many coastal areas.

Employment in fisheries makes up about 0.5% of overall employment in Spain with approximately 93 000 jobs split into fishing (54 000), processing (27 000) and aquaculture (12 000)[2]. In terms of full time equivalents, employment in fisheries stood at 74 262 in 2006[3]. However, in many coastal communities fishing and processing constitute a major source of employment rising almost to 50% of overall employment in some villages.

Spain’s most important fishing region is the north where most of the fish from the North Atlantic and other fishing regions is landed and processed. Vigo´s port in Galicia, for example, handles and trades more fish for human consumption than almost any other port in the world. Indeed, Galicia accounts for 47% of Spain´s fleet in terms of power, followed by Andalusia at 20%, the Basque Country at 13% and the Canary Isles at 9%[4].

Spain´s fleet of 11 400 boats is the EU´s third most significant fleet in terms of number of vessels and engine power, however, in terms of tonnage (461 071 Gross Tons), it accounts for almost 25% of all EU vessels which is more than double the second largest EU fleet (the UK at 206 000 GT)[5]. This is partly explained by the fact that Spain is so active in international waters. Indeed, its fleet includes a high proportion of very large freezer trawlers, tuna purse seiners, and long-liners.

Spain produces over 1 million tonnes of fisheries products per annum, more than any other EU country (France is number 2 with a little less than 800 000 tonnes) - 71% of which is from sea fishing, with aquaculture accounting for 28% and inland fishing just 1%. This means that Spain catches 15.48% of the total EU catch, representing 23.4% of the value of EU fisheries production: in other words about €2.8 billion per year[6].

The current economic crisis in Spain is having significant repercussions in Spanish coastal areas, with many workers from the construction sector trying to enter or return to the fisheries sector, while many

[1] FAO 2005 (measured in live weight)
[2] Employment in the fisheries sector: current situation (FISH/2004/4)
[3] Spanish Operational Programme, 2007-2014
[4] http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/structural_measures/archives/summary_structural_interventions/es_en.htm
[5] Eurostat 2008
[6] Eurostat 2008

positions in the harvesting sub-sector are covered by immigrant workers. The slump in consumption of the higher priced fish species is also affecting the lucrative Spanish seafood market. As such, the creation of new types of jobs is vital. At the same time Spain´s fishing communities possess centuries-old fishing traditions and expertise in seafood processing, a rich resource to be taken advantage of when designing coastal development strategies.

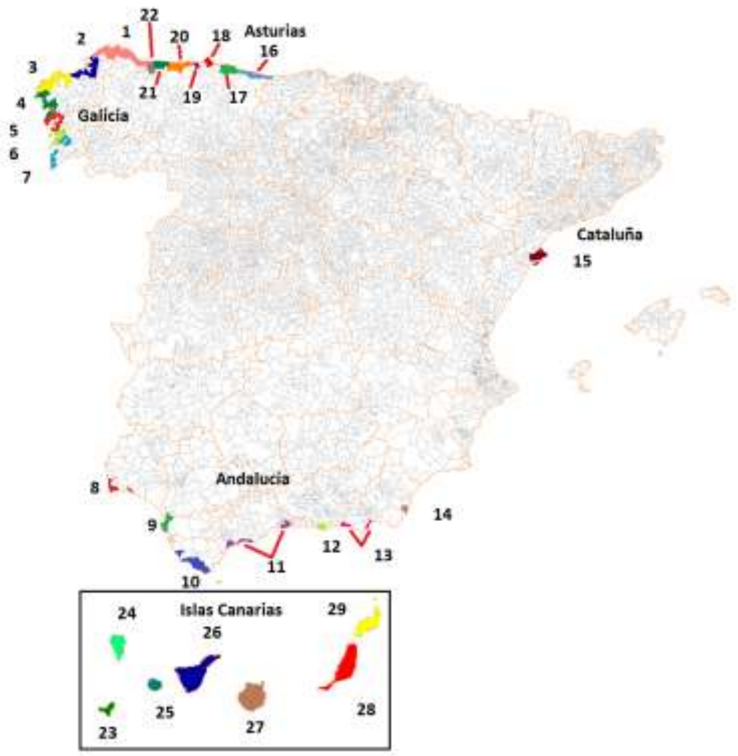
2. The national response in terms of Axis 4

Given Spain´s political structure, the creation of local action groups falls under the jurisdiction of the regional governments. Six out of 17 autonomous regions have taken the decision to implement Axis 4: Andalusia, Asturias, Cantabria, Catalonia, Galicia and Canarias, all of which are coastal regions and have directed funds solely at coastal areas. These six regions are responsible for allocating budgets and defining the conditions and requirements for selecting the relevant areas and FLAGs (Fisheries Local Action Groups).

In total, 4.58% of Spain´s €1.13 billion EFF budget (2007-13) has been allocated to Axis 4 which implies some of the largest FLAG budgets in Europe. However, total public funding for Axis 4 varies enormously between the six regions: from €40 million for the current period in Galicia to just €1 million in Cantabria.

3. The areas and their key characteristics

Spanish coastal areas are extremely diverse, ranging, geographically, from areas on the northwest Atlantic coast of Galicia, to areas in the Bay of Biscay and on the southern Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Andalusia and Canarias. These include areas facing intense pressure from urbanisation as well as protected areas of rich flora and fauna. The six regions each defined their specific criteria for selecting their fisheries areas and, based on these criteria, carried out a pre-selection of the areas that they considered eligible for Axis 4.



Andalusia, for example, focused on population density; decreases in the fleet, days of activity, landings and employment in fisheries, as well as income from fishing activities and other socio-economic indicators related to the decline of the fishing. Based on these criteria, it pre-selected 7 areas, four of which are, interestingly, not continuous areas. These areas include 16 out of Andalusia´s 25 ports but not those ports such as Huelva, Cádiz, Almería, and Málaga which are provincial capitals. In general the areas display a high dependency on a fishing sector that relies on sales of fresh fish and has been heavily affected by reductions to the fleet and poor first sale prices.

The development of other sectors such as tourism varies significantly along Andalusia´s 800 km coastline, home to the famous tourist destination, the "Costa del Sol" - as does population density. Indeed, while the eastern Almería area counts some 140 inhabitants/km2, this rises to almost 730 inhabitants/km2 in the Málaga fisheries area.

Galicia, among the most important fishing region in Europe, looked especially at dependency on fishing and decline within the sector in terms of volume and value of landings as well as reductions to the fleet. It also took into account the scenario in each area without further growth in the sector. With these in mind, it also selected 7 areas covering the whole of its 2000 km coastline. These areas differ significantly from one end of the region to the other. While some cover fertile "*rías*" with their rich biodiversity ranging from shellfish to birdlife, others, such as the easterly tip of Finisterra, are characterised by a harsh and rocky Atlantic coastline with a long history in maritime fishing.

Catalonia, for its part, found just one area eligible for Axis 4 when taking into account low population density and the percentage of population working in the primary sector, and particularly in fisheries. The delta area of the river Ebro, an area known for its important nature reserve but also characterised as one of the poorer, rice producing areas of Catalonia was selected.

Asturias took into consideration the presence of fisheries activities including processing plants and fish auctions, but also the historic ties of the potential areas to fishing ports, the homogeneity of the area and the existence of local development partnerships already present in the area. As a result the whole of the coastline except from its three largest towns with over 20,000 inhabitants was considered eligible and 7 groups are currently under selection in the following areas: Río Eo; Navia-Porcía; Entre Cabos; Bajo Nalón; Cabo Peñas; Cabo Lastres-Punta Olivo and Oriente (groups 19-25 on map).

Cantabria: Based on the dependence on fisheries in the area, the decline of fishing and pressure from tourism. Most of the Cantabrian coast has been designated as eligible (with exception of the big cities). However, the process of implementing Axis 4 saw significant delays and work to select two FLAGs has been re-launched in 2012.

Canaries: All 7 Canary Islands were selected to have a FLAG, in each case covering all coastal municipalities.

In total, therefore, 31 groups are planned in Spain, 29 of which have been selected and are up and running in Galicia, Andalusia, Asturias, Catalonia and Canarias. These can be seen in the table below.

Fishery area	Area/ km^2	population	Pop density/ inhabitant/km^2
1. Mariña-Ortegal, Galicia	557	85 827	154
2. Golfo Artabro, Galicia	518	226 689	437
3. Costa da Morte, Galicia	818	75 102	92
4. Seo de Fisterra-Ría de Muros/Noya, Galicia	427	66 258	155
5. Ría de Arousa, Galicia	383	151 946	396
6. Ria de Pontevedra, Galicia	291	149 490	513
7. Ría de Vigo-Baixo Miño, Galicia	329	127 315	387
8. Huelva, Andalucia	230	52 992	230
9. Cádiz Gulf, Andalucia	292	108 731	373
10. Cádiz Estrecho, Andalucia	674	122 996	182
11. Málaga, Andalucia	422	306 876	727
12. Granada (Motril), Andalucia	109	56 605	518
13. Western Almería, Andalucia	150	89 081	596
14. Eastern Almería, Andalucia	103	14 304	139
15. Litorial Costa del Ebre, Catalonia	510	74 000	145
16. Oriente de Asturias	397	22 300	56.17
17. La Sidra	373.8	1 366	49.93
18. Cabo Peñas	148	21 500	145
19. Bajo Nalón	43	6 022	138
20. Ese-Entrecabos Valley	1564	38 502	25
21. Navia-Porcía	273	20 891	76.5
22. Oscos-Eo	209	8 298	39
23. El Hierro	268.71	10 960	40.79
24. La Palma	708.32	86 996	122.16
25. La Gomera	369.76	22 259	60.20
26. Tenerife	1928.06	254 087	131.17
27. Gran Canaria	1292.38	234 000	181.14
28. Fuerteventura	1 659.74	103 167	62.16
29. Lanzarote	845.94	142 517	167

4. The selection process

Following the pre-selection of the eligible areas mentioned above, a call for proposals was published in five of the regions for local partnerships and their development strategies. Applications were evaluated on three broad areas: 1) the quality of the local development strategy; 2) the composition of the partnership and 3) the group´s management and solvency capacity.

Groups in Spain were given between one month (Canarias) and three months (Galicia) to prepare their applications, however in certain cases, such as Galicia, the evaluation of the applications was followed by a meeting in which candidates received feedback and extra time to make improvements to their strategies before re-submitting them. The rest of regions gave two months to prepare and submit applications.

Catalonia was the first region to finalise the selection of its group in March 2009, followed by Galicia in July/August 2009, and Andalusia at the end of 2009. Asturias finalised it in mid-2010 and Canarias at the end of 2011. Cantabria has not yet begun the process of selecting the 2 groups it plans to create, but is currently in discussions with local actors prior to publishing its call.

5. The groups

As the traditional bodies in Spain for facilitating organisation within the coastal fisheries sector and representing their interests in the broader community, the *cofradías*[7] tend to be heavily involved in the Spanish FLAGs. Indeed, many of them have years of experience in promoting local development within the sector. Regions such as Galicia and Andalusia have in fact stipulated that a minimum of 50% of actors in the decision-making body of the partnership should be representatives from the fisheries sector - many of these actors are from the *cofradias* as well as from producer associations and associations of women shellfish gatherers which figure particularly strongly in Galicia.

Public bodies also tend to be highly participative in EU programmes in Spain, and Axis 4 of the EFF is no exception. The Spanish FLAGs generally count about 20-25% (and 50% in the case of Catalonia) of their members from public bodies such as local councils, town halls and chambers of commerce, with the remaining 25-30% coming from other private actors (especially tourist companies), NGOs and often nature reserves.

Regarding links with LEADER groups, the situation varies significantly from one region to another. In Galicia, where budgets of between €4-10 million per FLAG permit and where fisheries has traditionally been relatively independent from agriculture, FLAGs were set up completely separate from LEADER groups. FLAGs in Asturias, on the other hand, have all been formed within LEADER groups with a separate strategy and a specific fisheries related committee, while in Andalusia and Canarias some the FLAGs are integrated with LEADER groups while others are separate.

Again, both in terms of contracted staff in the Spanish FLAGs and those on the decision-making body, this varies from one FLAG to another. The decision-making bodies are made up from anywhere between 10 and 30 individuals, while the contracted staff ranges from one part-time person in those FLAGs with very small budgets to a team of three full time staff in some Galician FLAGs.

6. The strategies

Objectives laid down in the Spanish operational programme for sustainability in fisheries areas include the following priorities: sustainable local development; employment and economic diversification; environmental quality of the coast; and regional, interregional and transnational cooperation. These priorities are reflected in both the regional priorities and those incorporated into the individual strategies, some of which expect to fund, for example: marine reserves, diving schools, fishing tourism and guided tours of regenerated coastal and fisheries areas.

In addition, the Spanish strategies tend to have a strong focus on strengthening the competitiveness and value added of fisheries, including measures to encourage shorter circuits, better labeling and traceability systems and business skills of fishermen. Stronger organisation of local fisheries actors to ensure more effective resource management and access to markets is a particularly high priority for Galicia, for example. Andalusia adds to this list a focus on transnational and regional cooperation, while a number of groups highlight social cohesion and gender equality as issues to be tackled while one FLAG in Galicia plans to open up coastal tourism to people with disabilities.

[7] Bodies representing the interests of the fisheries sector and acting as bodies for consultation and cooperation with the Regional Administration. Their members are largely local fishermen and small boat owners as well as other actors from the sector.

7. Key features of administrative and financial systems

EFF Budget 2007-2013 and public funding from national and regional level

% of EFF Budget on Axis 4	EFF Budget on Axis 4 / €	National and Regional Funding/€	Total Public Funding / €	Average public funding per group / €	Number of groups
4.58	51 872 817.48	30 790 207.49	82 663 024.97	260 000 – 10M	31

This table hides significant variations in funding between the Spanish regions with Galicia counting on an Axis 4 budget of €40 million (€24 million from the EFF and €16 million from national and regional funds), while at the other end of the scale, Cantabria has a total budget of just €1 million (€200 000 from the EFF). Andalusia counts on a total Axis 4 budget of €24 million (€18 million EFF), Asturias €8.4 million (€4.6 million EFF), Catalonia €3 million (€1 million EFF) and Canarias €4.9 million (€2.66 million EFF).

Administrative procedures are broadly similar across the regions, although there are important differences regarding who controls the payment to the final beneficiary:

- FLAGs receive advance payment from Regional Administration: in Galicia and Catalonia this is 10% of total budget which is to cover their running costs. Canarias advances 33% of the annual amount for running costs in the case of the two largest FLAGs (Gran Canaria and Tenerife) and 50% for the rest of its groups. In Andalusia and Asturias, the whole annual budget for running costs and projects to be funded is transferred at the beginning of each year.
- Local actors (potential beneficiaries) present projects to the FLAG
- Selection committee of FLAG considers and selects projects (in some cases, e.g. Catalonia, the FLAG may adapt or add conditions before agreeing to fund a project).
- FLAG decides the level of funding to be extended to proposed projects and refers selected projects to the Regional Administration for eligibility checks.
- (In Galicia, Catalonia and Canarias) Regional Administration delivers the funding directly to the final beneficiary at the request of the FLAG.
- (In Andalusia and Asturias) the FLAG itself receives and manages all funds and therefore makes the payment to the final beneficiaries
- FLAG responsible for the follow-up necessary to ensure effective implementation of projects

8. Networking and capacity building

At regional level, the FLAGs are in contact with each other while some enjoy informal exchanges. At national level, an official support network for the FLAGs called the Spanish Network of Fisheries Groups (Red Española de Grupos de Pesca) was launched in March 2010 and is responsible for organising plenary and technical meetings to facilitate the sharing of experiences between FLAG representatives. This network also has a dedicated website where FLAGs can find information on Axis 4 projects supported around the country: www.gruposaccionlocalpesca.es

At the same time, different types of support are provided in the regions, with Asturias, for example, promoting cooperation and coordination with local LEADER groups and the Council for Rural Affairs, and Galicia providing ongoing direct support to the groups. For example, the Galician Regional Government (the Xunta) have organised awareness-raising and training seminars for FLAG managers and local stakeholders as well as developing a comprehensive website. Moreover, during the stage in which the potential FLAGs were preparing their applications, the Xunta produced a substantial candidates´ guide. Andalusia in the meantime has set up a formal regional FLAG network.

9. Any resource or idea that may be of interest to other countries

Spain has significant experience in local development – both thanks to its LEADER history and that of the *cofradías* which often provide sources of inspiration for fisheries-related projects that fit within the Axis 4 philosophy. Many of its women´s associations of shellfish gatherers also offer excellent examples of local organisation and collective resource management while regions which have implemented the Pesca Community Initiative are a source of rich experience - in particular the Basque Country which still supports its own brand of regionally funded coastal development.

The tools that Galicia developed to support its local groups in the start-up phase also provide ideas for Managing Authorities or National and regional Networks considering how best to assist their groups in the early phases of development. And, Andalusia´s Manual of Procedures is a good example of how MA´s can provide clear guidance for FLAGs in their operational phase.

10. Contacts and links

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