



What FLAGs for the future?



The FARNET Advisory Group has embarked on an exciting programme of work to explore how FLAGs can best position themselves for the future.

In the coming months, the members of the Advisory Group will conduct a series of case studies to try to find answers to three interrelated questions: firstly, how to enhance the contribution of FLAGs to solving the challenges faced by the fisheries sector; secondly, how to strengthen the value added of FLAGs to the broader development of fisheries areas; and finally, how to ensure that delivery systems are effective and simple enough to get the

most out of community-led initiatives. The results will feed into a FARNET conference on "*organising fisheries areas for a sustainable future*", to be held in the Pays d'Auray, France, in November 2012.

French FLAGs engage in ICZM process



In March, French FLAGs participated in a national meeting for stakeholders involved in activities related to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). The meeting was organised by the French territorial development agency, DATAR, and a key objective was to look at ways of improving coordination between actors and initiatives in coastal areas. The Pays d'Auray FLAG presented its experience in developing and exploiting synergies between a FLAG strategy and a longer term spatial planning strategy, known as a SCOT (*Schema de Cohérence Territoriale*). The French FLAG network and FARNET also attended the meeting and participated in discussions on the setting up of a network of actors involved in ICZM. A decision on this is to be taken before the end of 2012.

Romania approves 14 FLAGs



At the end of March, the Romanian managing authority announced funding allocations for 14 FLAGs. Two of these FLAGs are already active, while the remaining 12 are expected to be formally confirmed in June, once a required contestation process is concluded. A total of €59m has been awarded to the 14 groups, which includes five FLAGs located on the river Danube, two coastal FLAGs, three around the Danube Delta, and four inland, lake-based FLAGs. The biggest budget was awarded to Tulcea (the main delta FLAG), which will receive €20m, with the neighbouring Galati FLAG to receive €5.8m. The other FLAGs were all awarded between €1.5m and €3.5m.

Bulgaria finalises FLAG selection



In Bulgaria, a second tranche of FLAGs has now been approved, with the three Black Sea coastal areas of Primorsko-Sozopol-Tzarevo, Pomorie-Nessebar and Byala-Avren-Dolni-Chiflik all signing contracts with the managing authority on the 30 March. This brings to six the number of FLAGs now approved in Bulgaria: four coastal FLAGs, one on the Danube, and one lake-based group in the Rhodopi mountains. The Axis 4 managing authority in Bulgaria has also recently appointed a new management team.

Ireland selects its first FLAGs



It is expected that two FLAGs will be up and running in Ireland by the end of May 2012. A national launch of Axis 4 is also foreseen for around the same time. The two FLAGs will be located in the coastal areas of Wexford, in the southeast, and Galway, in the west of the country. FLAGs in Ireland will have strong links to the existing network of Leader LAGs, with these first two groups involving multiple LAGs. A total of six FLAGs are foreseen overall. The Axis 4 implementing authority, Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), has also set up a National Implementation Board, the first meeting of which took place in March 2012, to facilitate communication and cooperation between Axis 4 stakeholders.

Young film makers go on location



Two French FLAGs recently approved support for a project that will allow young people from their areas to produce short films about sustainable fishing practices in different parts of Europe. The goal is to offer two groups of eight young people from the Pays d'Auray and Cotentin FLAG areas the opportunity to discover and report on initiatives in different countries. The films produced will then be used to promote wider awareness of issues related to sustainable fishing, as well as to stimulate discussion on the future of fishing as an occupation and way of life. The project promoters are currently seeking information on suitable projects, ideally involving young people. [Further details here.](#)

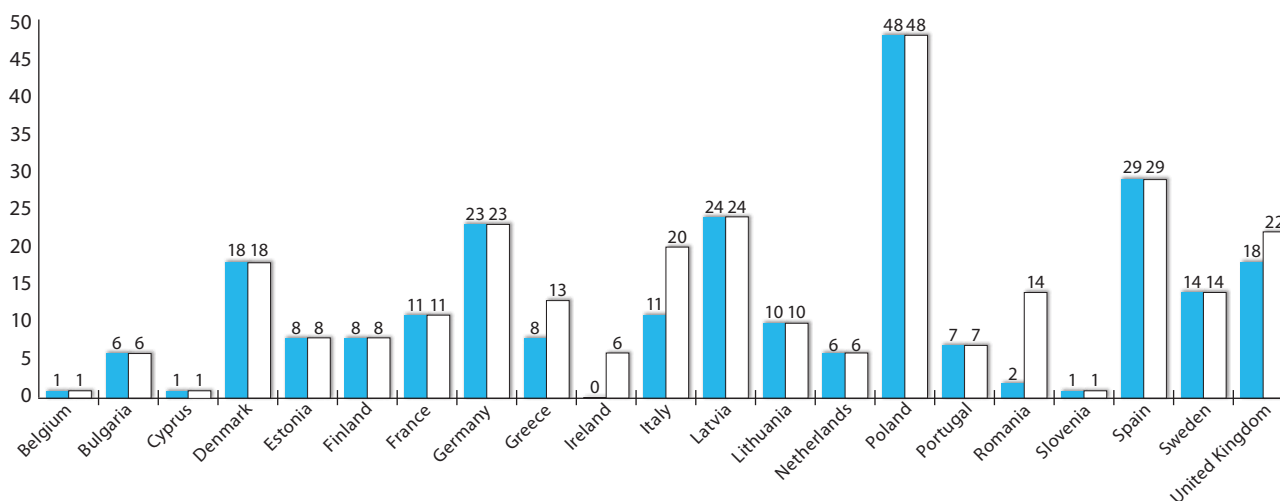
Focus on green growth in fisheries areas



Final preparations are now being made for the FARNET conference, “*FLAGS: drivers of green growth in European fisheries areas*”, which takes place in Olhão, Portugal, from the 4-6 of June 2012 (see FARNET newsletter no. 15). To coincide with this event, green growth will also be the theme of the next edition of the FARNET magazine, which will be published at the end of May, and of a new FARNET guide, to be published later in the summer. [More details...](#)

State of play: 254 FLAGS with approved strategies

By April 2012, a total of 254 FLAG were active in 20 Member States. Amongst the newcomers, six groups were recently selected in Italy, one in Slovenia, three in Bulgaria and two in Romania.



■ Number of groups with approved strategies by April 2012 □ Number of groups planned

Forthcoming events and activities

4-6 June 2012	FARNET seminar: “FLAGS, drivers of green growth” in European fisheries areas	Olhão (PT)
8-11 October 2012	Open Days – 10 th European Week of Regions and Cities. Workshops on community-led local development in fisheries, rural and urban areas	Brussels (B)
13-15 November	FARNET seminar: “Organising fisheries areas for a sustainable future”	Pays d’Auray (F)

Other news

Commission proposes single programming tool



On the 14 March 2012, the European Commission presented a draft proposal for a “Common Strategic Framework” (CSF), which is designed to guide Member States and regions with their programming for the period 2014-2020. The CSF translates the targets and objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy into investment priorities for the “CSF Funds”(European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and the Cohesion Fund). The aim is to make it easier to combine these funds so as to maximise the impact of EU investments and their contribution to European objectives. Comments on the draft proposal can be sent to the European Commission by e-mail (REGIO-CSF@ec.europa.eu). [More details...](#)

Send us your news

The FARNET newsletter is a resource 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. Contact: info@farnet.eu

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