

Latvian OP first to be approved



In December 2014, the Latvian Operational Programme (OP) for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) became the first to be approved by the European Commission.

The OP has a total public budget of €183.6 million, including an EU contribution of €139.8 million. Of this total, €15 million (ca 8.2%) has been allocated to Union Priority 4 (UP4) – Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) in fisheries areas. In Latvia, UP4 will focus exclusively on coastal areas, and the number of FLAGs may consequently drop from 24 to 7, leading to higher budgets per FLAG compared to the last period. As the current holder of the EU presidency, Latvia recently opened the ‘Sailing towards 2020’ conference (see below). Its priorities in relation to fisheries policy include the sustainable management of fisheries resource.

Sailing towards 2020: and the winners are...



The ‘[Sailing Towards 2020](#)’ conference took place on the 2-3 March in Brussels and attracted a record 450 participants from 27 different countries, including representatives of 154 FLAGs. The event was opened by the European Commissioner, Mr. Karmenu Vella, and offered a dynamic exhibition of 42 Axis 4 projects as well as screening 8 FLAG-made videos. The voting for the “best projects in the exhibition” saw three winners: “[Gastronomy for chefs](#)” (North Kaszuby FLAG, Poland) for the social prize, “[Currican artisanal processing](#)” (Mariña Ortegale FLAG, Spain) for its economic benefits and “[Aquamar for improved water quality](#)” (Bytow FLAG, Poland) for its environmental contribution. The winners of the #FLAG-made video awards were: “[O cabaz do mar](#)”, (Além Tejo FLAG, Portugal), “[Supporting Fishermen 2.0](#)”, (Terre di Mare, FLAG, Italy) and “[Pesca](#)”, (Arcachon FLAG, France). Congratulations to the award winners and thanks to all those FLAGs which submitted videos – the remaining selection can be seen on our [Youtube channel](#).

Atlantic FLAGs discuss European Fisheries Villages Network



During the Atlantic Stakeholder Seminar in January 2015, 14 Atlantic FLAGs met with over 50 other stakeholders to exchange experience in promoting fisheries and maritime related tourism, and to put in motion the development of an Atlantic cooperation project: the “European Fisheries Villages Network”. The aim of this network would be to bring together areas with a common interest in exploiting their fisheries character for local development purposes. Its role would include joint promotional activities, the exchange of good practice, and supporting fisheries stakeholders in communicating their activities. In addition to cooperation support provided by the new [Atlantic Support Unit](#) set up by DG MARE, FLAGs were also encouraged to make provision for such a network in their local development strategies. [More information and next steps](#).

Belgian-UK cooperation on community supported fisheries



Encouraged by contacts and ideas introduced during FARNET's '[Marketing the Local catch](#)' seminar in Stockholm, the Belgian FLAG is currently looking into the possibility of developing a fish basket scheme. As part of this process, it recently invited Jack Clarke, manager of the SoleShare Community Supported Fisheries (London, UK), to an event in Belgium to discuss the *do's and don'ts* of setting up such a scheme. The event attracted a diverse audience, including fishermen, researchers and seafood restaurant managers, and had a positive impact in terms of promoting this type of short chain marketing. [More information is available here in NL.](#)

FishSAFE with an EFF supported App



In line with the European Union's efforts to [increase safety at sea](#), the [European FishSAFE](#) project recently launched the FishSAFE Companion App, a reference and educational tool to enhance the safety of fishermen in the North Sea. The App provides images and text describing potential surface and subsea hazards from offshore oil and gas operations. It contains an interactive quiz section and images of and information about the contours and dimensions of many objects commonly located offshore. A must have for all fishermen. [Watch a demo](#) / download it on [GooglePlay](#).

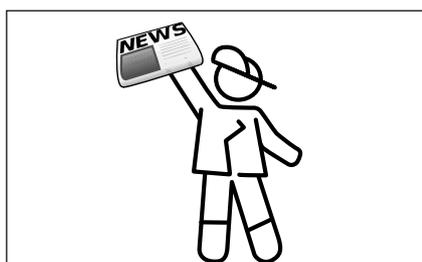
Transatlantic cooperation on small scale fisheries



In January, the [Ría de Pontevedra FLAG](#) in Galicia, Spain, welcomed a delegation from the State of Quintana Roo, Mexico, who were investigating new ways of supporting small scale local fisheries. The group learned about small scale fisheries in Galicia and the kinds of support provided to fishermen to help them improve the management and profitability of their businesses. The FLAG organised visit also included exchanges with the area's fishing organisations, the *cofradías*, a demonstration of how fish

auctions are organised in Galicia, and a presentation on www.pescadoartesanal.com, a FLAG-supported online platform for the sale of small scale fisheries products.

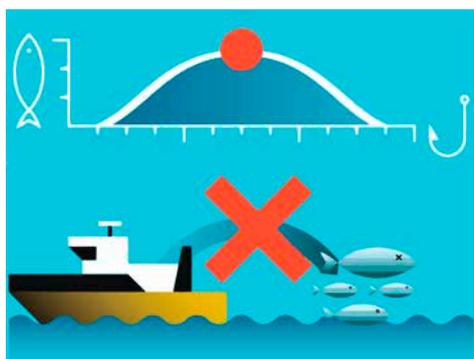
Axis 4 in the news



Axis 4 is increasingly attracting the attention of the media across Europe. Some recent coverage included: **France:** [the newspaper "SudOuest"](#) dedicated an article to the positive uptake of Axis 4 in Arcachon, where fishermen and oyster producers are calling for "*More Axis 4 please*"; in **Germany** the Fisch Vom Kutter project was featured on [the European TV Channel, Arte](#); and in **Belgium**, the #FLAGmade video, produced by the Westvlaanderen FLAG, was the subject of an [article in fishnews.eu](#), explaining how Axis4 has helped Belgian fishermen develop new marketing

opportunities for lesser known species. Has your FLAG or a local Axis 4 project attracted media attention? Tell us, at info@farnet.eu and on social media FARNET.

A visual guide to the CFP and EMFF

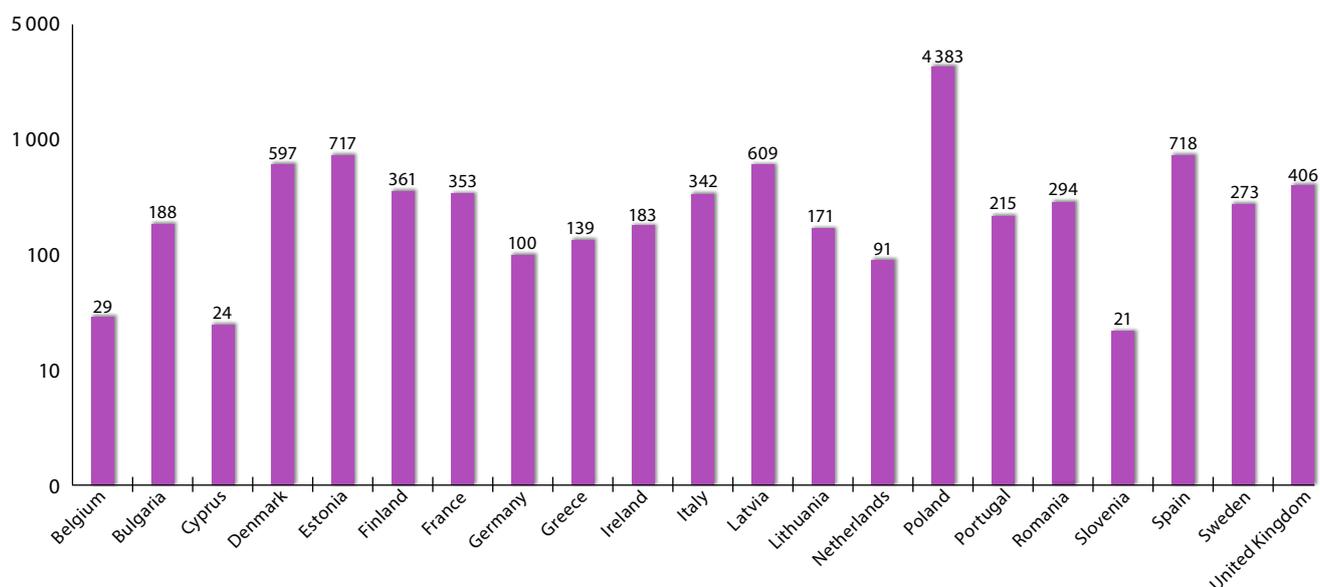


A picture is worth a thousand words, which is why DG MARE have decided to publish a series of posters that explain, through the use of images, the major changes and opportunities in the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). From [Blue Growth](#) to landing obligations, these [infographics](#) will help you to better understand what's involved.

State of play: 10 214 projects and counting!

By March 2015, the 312 FLAGs now active across 21 Member States had supported an estimated 10 214 projects¹.

10 214 Axis 4 projects



■ Number of projects

Forthcoming events and activities

24 March 2015	Smart & Blue: Black Sea Stakeholders Forum	Sofia, BG
24-25 March 2015	MED Mediterranean Cooperation Programme final event	Brussels, BE
26-27 March 2015	Kick-off conference of the Maritime Stakeholders Platform in the Baltic Sea region	Kiel, DE
21-23 April 2015	Seafood Expo Global	Brussels, BE
28-29 May 2015	European Maritime Day	Piraeus, EL

¹ This figure is based on information provided voluntarily by managing authorities up to March 2015.

Other news

First meeting of Rural Networks Assembly



The first meeting of the [Rural Networks Assembly](#) (RNA) took place on the 26 January 2015 in Brussels. The Assembly is the main governance body of the two networks supporting the implementation of EU rural development policy: the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) and the European Innovation Partnership network for agricultural productivity and sustainability (EIP-AGRI). The RNA consists of representatives of national

rural networks, managing authorities, paying agencies, LAGs, agricultural advisory services, agriculture research institutes, rural civil society and local authorities.

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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 others working in this field. Contact: info@farnet.eu

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