



Sustainable futures for fisheries areas



On the 3-4 November 2011, over 350 participants, including Axis 4 beneficiaries, FLAGs, policymakers and administrators, took part in a major conference in Brussels to present the first results of Axis 4 and to explore its future potential.

A highlight of the event was an exhibition of 30 Axis 4-funded projects from across Europe. The projects covered a range of themes, from the direct sale of fish and seafood, to new product development, tourism, environmental protection and more. Four short films portraying the personal stories of beneficiaries from Denmark, Germany, Spain and France were also screened. Further information is available on the [FARNET website](#) or in the special conference edition of the [FARNET Magazine](#).

French FLAGs look to the future



France held its second annual Axis 4 conference in St Raphaël on the 28-30 September. The event brought together representatives of FLAGs, the managing authority and paying agency, as well as stakeholders such as the National Fisheries Committee and the National Aquaculture Committee. The discussion focused mainly on issues such as the need to ensure a smooth transition to the next programming period, the need for FLAG to have sufficient resources for animation, and the importance of ensuring that the fishing community remains at the heart of Axis 4. There were site visits to three local (Var) Axis 4 projects.

Mediterranean cooperation projects get underway



In the framework of the annual Axis 4 event in France (see above), FLAGs from France, Spain and Greece came together to launch four cooperation projects, in the areas of direct sales via restaurants, coordination of tourism products linked to fisheries and the environment, adding value to Mediterranean fish species through a recipe book, and educational activities to raise awareness of the fisheries sector. Greek and Spanish FLAGs are also cooperating on the subject of development in environmental protection areas. The participating FLAGs now plan to establish a formal Mediterranean Network. [More details.](#)

Second round of Polish FLAGs selected



At the end of July, the Polish managing authority for Axis 4 announced the selection of the second round of FLAGs. In all 22 new FLAGs have been selected, which brings the total number of Polish FLAGs to 48. The total budget allocated in this round is equivalent to approximately €110 million, in comparison to about €210 million in the first round. In general, the new FLAG budgets are smaller (the average is about €5 million) and the majority of new groups are inland. [More details.](#)

Nordic-Baltic meeting of rural and fisheries networks



A first joint meeting of rural and fisheries national networks from the Baltic-Nordic region took place in Tallinn, Estonia on the 13-14 September 2011. Representatives of Axis 4 managing authorities, the European Commission, the European Network for Rural Development and FARNET also took part in the meeting, which opened with presentations on the state of play of programme implementation in each country. The rural and fisheries networks then held separate meetings. The fisheries networks discussed the potential for future cooperation and the setting up of a wider Nordic-Baltic network of FLAGs, to take account of the fact that not all the Baltic countries have a national FLAG network. Nordic-Baltic rural and fisheries networks plan to meet at least once per year. [More details.](#)

New German network of fisheries areas

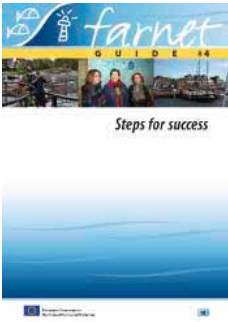


The six German Länder that participate in Axis 4 of the EFF and the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection have agreed on the creation and funding of a German national network of fisheries areas. The network will be coordinated by the Bremerhaven FLAG, in cooperation with the Economic Development Agency of Cuxhaven, which is a member of the Lower Saxony FLAG. The inaugural meeting of the network is planned for early 2012. More details from the [Bremerhaven FLAG.](#)

Bulgarian meeting



A meeting of Bulgarian FLAGs, prospective FLAGs and national authorities took place in Shabla, on the Black Sea coast, at the end of September. The purpose of the meeting was to consider challenges in implementing Axis 4 in Bulgaria and to plan steps to address these. A proposal on the establishment of a short term working group to address identified and emerging issues, and involving representatives of the FLAGs, managing authority, paying agency and certification authority was agreed. [More details.](#)



New FARNET publication: Steps for success

The FARNET Support Unit recently published a [new guide for FLAGs](#) moving from the planning and development phase to becoming fully operational. The guide is designed to complement the first FARNET guide, the [Start Up Guide for FLAGs](#), and focuses on three main themes: managing effective partnerships; cultivating private sector involvement and investment; and active project development and selection.

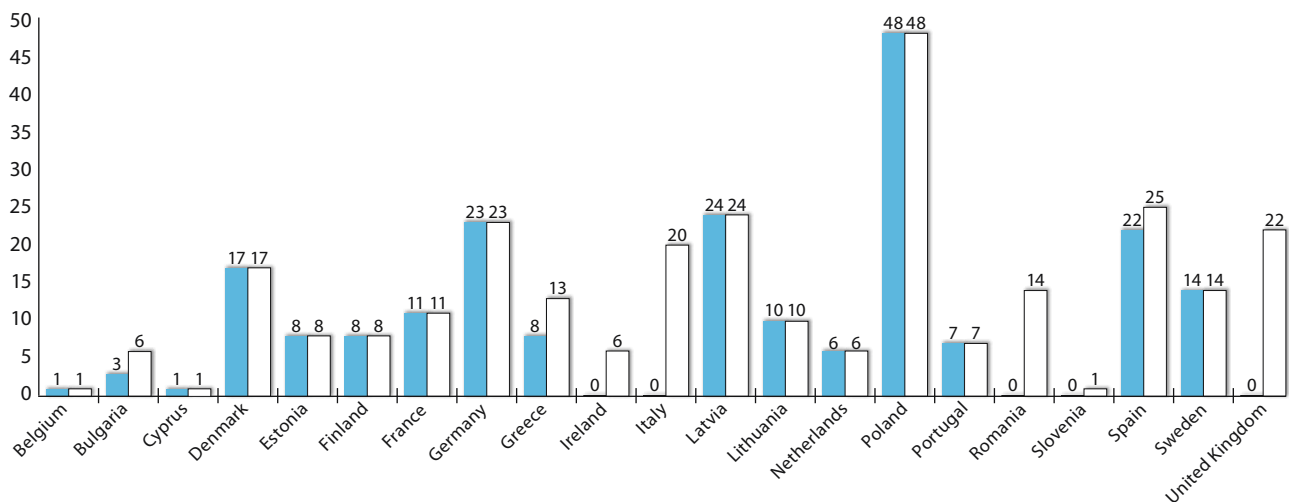
Catch of the day!



If you ever wondered what FARNET team members do during their free time then watch out for some familiar faces in your fisheries area. During September, team members John Grieve, Gilles van de Walle and Susan Grieve (UK geographical expert) visited the area of Thurso in Caithness, in the far north of Scotland, where Gilles landed his first Atlantic salmon. Thurso is home to two excellent fisheries related projects, both of which will be featured in a forthcoming FARNET guide on diversification: the River Thurso salmon angling tourism project, and the Captains Galley seafood restaurant.

State of play: 211 FLAGs with approved strategies

At the end of October 2011, there were 211 FLAGs in 16 Member States with approved strategies. Since the last update, 22 new FLAGs have been selected in Poland, three in Lithuania and one in Germany.



■ Number of groups with approved strategies by October 2011 □ Number of groups planned

Other news

EU funding for “community led” development



In October 2011 the Commission approved a package of legislation laying down the guiding principles for Cohesion policy from 2014-20. This includes a [General Regulation](#), which opens up the possibility of using four key funds (the Regional Fund, the Social Fund, the Rural Development Fund and the Fisheries Fund) for financing “community led” development strategies which follow similar principles to both Axis 4 and LEADER. Under this approach, fisheries areas could benefit from being able to manage several funds in a much more coordinated way. The details of how this can best be achieved in different countries and different types of fisheries areas will be the focus of discussion in the coming months.

Second Congress of the Spanish network of women in fisheries



The Spanish network of women in fisheries held its annual meeting in Malaga on 24-25 October. The event focused on the theme of entrepreneurship, with workshops for associations and training in new technologies and business and project development. See the [Congress website](#).

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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