



Women as key “innovators” in fisheries areas



Maria Damanaki, European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, underlines the role of women as “key innovators in fisheries areas, “contributing enormously to efforts to diversify and add-value to the work of fishing communities.”

Addressing a hearing in the European Parliament on 1 December 2010 on “Women and the sustainable development of fisheries areas”, Commissioner Damanaki emphasised that this was precisely what Axis 4 of the EFF aimed to support and she encouraged women and women’s organisations “to get involved in local partnerships” and to “make use of funds to add value to local fisheries products or to start businesses in sectors such as tourism, food or renewable energy.”

Over 100,000 women are already employed in the fisheries sector in the EU, but the Commissioner warned that many women were not officially registered and their role was often confined to low grade, unskilled tasks, with limited access to decision-making. To tackle these issues, she highlighted the need for better representation of women in decision making processes, and for improved networking and exchange at local, regional, national and European level.

Member States are currently evaluating to what extent the EFF has been used to promote equal opportunities and the Commission will launch a study in the coming months on employment and the role of women in the fisheries sector and coastal regions. The Commission will also organise a conference on the role of women in fisheries in the second half of 2011. The Commissioner’s speech is available on the Europa [website](#).

Following the Commissioner’s speech, a number of women’s organisations, including AKTEA, the European network of women’s organisations in fisheries and aquaculture, gave presentations, highlighting specific issues. Monica Burch from the FARNET Support Unit presented details of Axis 4, highlighting how it could be used to address some of the issues identified. Monica’s presentation is available [here](#). A discussion group on women in fisheries has also been initiated on the FARNET [web forum](#).

Adding value to local fisheries products



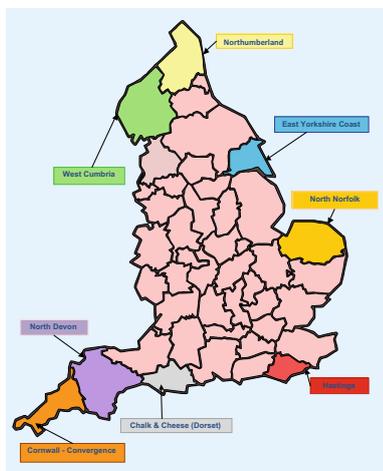
At the initiative of the European Commission, the FARNET Support Unit (FSU) organised a seminar in Almere (the Netherlands) on the 17-18 November 2010 on the theme of adding value to local fisheries products.

More than 150 participants, representing around a hundred FLAGs, managing authorities and other stakeholders attended the event, which aimed to provide FLAGs with advice and information on how to foster adding value processes in their fisheries areas.

The event included field trips to local Axis 4 projects, case studies, working groups and thematic discussion tables where European and international experts shared their experience in labelling, innovation, cooperation, direct marketing, marketing inland products and seafood safety and quality. There were also opportunities for networking and an exchange of ideas between participants

The conference presentations and conclusions are now available on the FARNET [website](#). In parallel, the FSU is also publishing a new guide on "Adding Value to Local Fishery and Aquaculture Products", which will soon be available on the FARNET website (in 11 languages). The latest edition of the [FARNET magazine](#) also focuses on the theme of adding value.

England selects six coastal FLAGs



In November 2010, six FLAGs were selected to implement the Axis 4 programme in England. Between them, the six FLAGs will share EFF co-financing of €4.6 million.

The successful FLAGs are located in Cornwall, Hastings, North Devon, West Cumbria, East Yorkshire and North Norfolk. However, England is operating on the basis of a two-stage selection process, with the FLAGs being selected in the first stage and funding allocations decided in the second stage, based on the submission of completed local development strategies.

Representatives from the six FLAGs will attend a developmental workshop in January, which will help them to finalise their strategies. To date, only the allocation for Cornwall, which is a designated EU Convergence area, is known (€985,000). All six English FLAGs will also be encouraged to bid for additional funding from other axes of the EFF, which has around Stg£38 million to help the fishing industry in England to adapt to changing needs.

In all, eight groups applied for the Axis 4 funding in England. Further details can be found on the managing authority [website](#)

Cyprus finalises the FLAG selection process



The Larnaca District Development Agency has been selected to implement the AXIS 4 programme in Cyprus, focusing specifically on the districts of Larnaca and Famagusta.

The new FLAG, which has a total budget of €2.87 million, including €2 million in EFF co-financing, will begin its activities in January 2011. It will cover an area of 255 km² on the southern and eastern side of the island. The FLAG area, which has a population of 72,367, contains eight of the 13 fishing ports on the island and is home to 49% of the island's fishers.

The FLAG strategy will focus on four main priorities: the balanced development of the local economy; improving the attractiveness of the area; enhancing the competitiveness of fisheries products and services; and developing the skills of the area's inhabitants. Further details from the [Larnaca District Development Agency](#)

Launch of the national network in France



The first official meeting of FLAGs and Axis 4 stakeholders in France took place in Arcachon on the 28-29 October. The event, which brought together over 60 participants, also saw the official launch of the French national network.

The meeting, which was organised by the Service and Payments Agency (ASP or Agence de Services et Paiement) in conjunction with the DPMA (National Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture), included workshops on "adding value to local products" and "tourism development", as well as a focus group animated by the FARNET Support Unit and a project visit organised by the local FLAG.

France will hold its next national FLAG meeting in September 2011, in the department of the Var. Two thematic groups will also be set up: the first, focusing on ecotourism, will meet at the end of March 2011 in Corsica; the second, on product development, will take place at a later date on the Atlantic coast.

FLAG meeting and focus group in Sweden



On the 27-28 October, the Swedish board of fisheries organised a second national FLAG meeting, attracting 54 participants, representing 13 of the 14 FLAGs in Sweden.

The meeting was hosted in Västervik, a coastal town on the Baltic sea, in the "Kuslandet" FLAG area. Administrative training sessions and working groups dedicated to "cooperation" and "lessons learnt to date in Axis 4" facilitated an exchange of experience and knowledge between newly selected and more experienced FLAGs. Useful exchanges also took place with the FARNET Support Unit, which was invited to present its work and to organise a focus group. A full report on the focus group will soon be published on the FARNET [website](#).

Galician FLAGS learn from Dutch innovations



Representatives of the seven FLAGS in Galicia (Spain) took part in a study visit to the Netherlands in November, visiting their counterparts in the provinces of Zeeland and Nord Holland.

In Zeeland, the group visited a shellfish hatchery, an innovative project involving the cultivation of mussels on nets, and a research project on cultivating clams in an inland location. In Nord Holland, the main focus was on the weekly Den Oever fresh fish market, which has been successful in boosting local fish sales and in improving the image of fresh fish in the community. The study trip facilitated a lively exchange and helped to establish links between all the participating FLAGS. Further details on the FARNET [website](#).

Networking in the Baltic



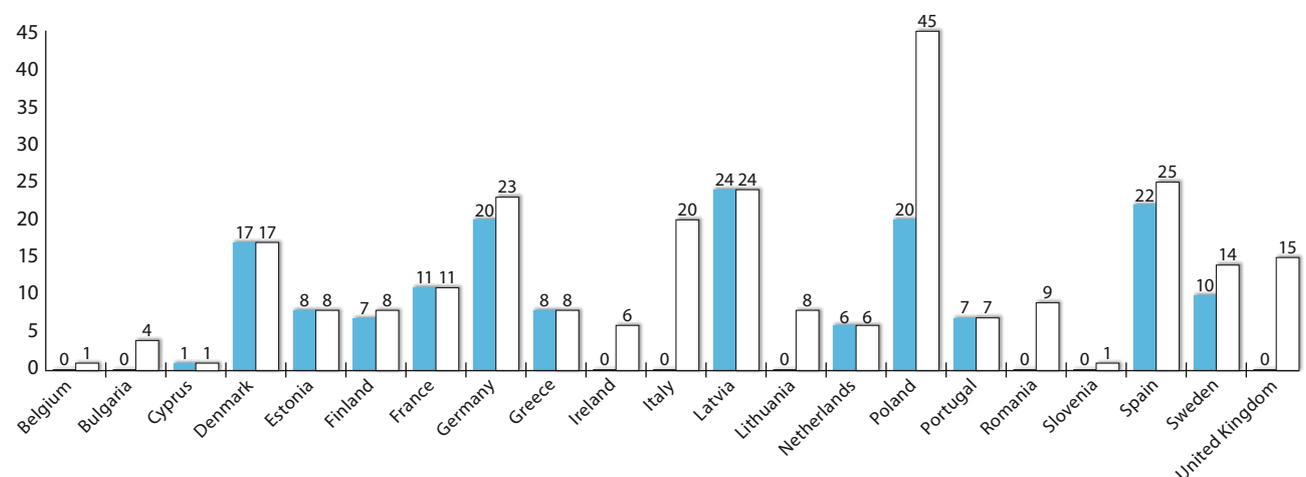
Representatives of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian fisheries networks met in Tallinn, Estonia, on the 5 November 2010, to explore opportunities for cooperation across the Baltic States.

The work programmes of all three national networks were presented and participants identified opportunities for the exchange of contacts and best practice, as well as for encouraging cross-border cooperation between FLAGS. The availability of information was identified as a priority need and the networks proposed creating databases with project examples, cooperation proposals, and fishing business and tourism information. Joint events for FLAGS will also be organised.

To formalise their commitment to cooperate, the three networks have proposed signing a cooperation agreement. More details on the FARNET [website](#)

State of play: 171 FLAGS with approved strategies

At the end of November 2010, there were 171 FLAGS in 13 Member States with approved strategies. Since the last update, one new FLAG, and its strategy, was approved in Cyprus and one in Denmark.



■ Number of groups with approved strategies in December 2010 □ Number of groups planned

Forthcoming events and activities

26-27 January	Managing authority meeting	Brussels
March	Catching up seminar	Sofia, Bulgaria

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

Editor: European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Director-General.

Disclaimer: Whilst the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries is responsible for the overall production of this newsletter, it is not responsible for the accuracy, content or views expressed within particular articles. The European Commission has not, save where otherwise stated, adopted or in any way approved any view appearing in this publication and statements should not be relied upon as statements of the Commission's or the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries' views. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this publication, nor does the European Commission or any person acting on its behalf accept responsibility for any use made thereof.