



**Project no.: FP6-022771**

## **PROFET POLICY**

**'FISH POLICY FLOW'**

Instrument: FP6 – Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area

Thematic Priority: Scientific Support to Policies

### **Raising Public Participation and Awareness Deliverable 33**

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<b>Project co-funded by the European Commission within the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006)</b>		
<b>Dissemination Level</b>		
<b>PU</b>	Public	PU
<b>PP</b>	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
<b>RE</b>	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission	
<b>CO</b>	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission	
<b>19</b>	Services)	

## **I. Executive Summary**

While public participation and awareness was not the main theme of PROFET POLICY, since the main target ‘audience’ was the range of stakeholders within the aquaculture and fisheries value chain, a range of different project components have served this purpose.

This has been achieved by transparency of operation and publication of the project’s products – primarily through the website of PROFET POLICY – which are the RTD Project [Technical Leaflet] summaries and the workshops.

The need for improved communication efforts of both the fisheries and aquaculture sectors has been highlighted as a major conclusion of the PROFET POLICY workshops. Policy makers on European aquaculture and fisheries and National and European research programmers need a pan-European view to better understand the gaps in policy and RTD requirements. Nonetheless, it is also necessary that national RTD programmes can interact and reach out across borders.

Public interest is difficult to measure since the general public were not directly addressed by the project’ activities. Nonetheless, the Description of Work indicated the following:

‘The public awareness on food production, referring both to fisheries and aquaculture, is important. Fish farming needs to reassure the public that its profession is acceptable and provides no health risks while fisheries is regularly subjected to criticism related to overfishing and sustainable stock management.

PROFET POLICY looks to make better known the actions being taken, through policy development and European RTD, to assure the sustainability of both sectors. Consequently, efforts will be made to inform the public of the results of the Workshops and to increase awareness of the role and contribution of European RTD to development.’

The main channel of communication – for access to information - has thus been the public website, while the Project partners have used their networks to promote both the activities and results of PROFET POLICY. Each workshop has been accompanied by Press Releases – in local and specialised press – and up-front publicity on PROFET POLICY events has been accompanied by use of the individual Project Partner networks (e.g. EAS & AquaTT newsletters).

## **II. Activities undertaken**

It was realised quickly in the project timeline that few scientists involved in European RTD were fully aware of the European policies that affect directly the European fisheries and aquaculture sectors, leading to the preparation of the background policy documents that accompanied the technical leaflets compilations. The project has been congratulated by many project participants on these since they provide a comprehensive background to the gaps and needs for European RTD.

On the other hand, operators within fisheries and aquaculture appreciated the presentations made RTD project representatives within the workshops, since these were usually short but comprehensive – providing results and an overview of the issues to be resolved in order to provide an answer to a solution.

A significant achievement of PROFET POLICY has been to provide an environment, within the workshops, to help bridge the gap in understanding these issues, both for the professional and RTD participants.

### **A. The Public Website**

Profetpolicy.info was initiated in November/December 2006, following agreement on design and content.

- During the year 2007, visits moved from 4-600 per month to over 1,000 per month, with page downloads of nearly 13,000 month (106,000 during the year).
- During 2008, an average of 2,000 visits per month were recorded, with page downloads peaking at over 40,000 per month during September/October (277,000 during the year)..
- During 2009, visits dropped slightly to 1600/month but with page downloads remaining at over 20,000/month (130,000 to June).

These visit/download figures clearly follow the activity peaks within the project timeframe within which most of the workshops were organised (November 2007-November 2008).

### **B. Technical Leaflets**

It was agreed by the project partners that maximum exposure of the Technical Leaflets should be pursued and the FEAP (through the website of the European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform ([www.eatip.eu](http://www.eatip.eu))) and the European Aquaculture Society (through the CONSENSUS website ([www.euraquaculture.info](http://www.euraquaculture.info))) have contributed to this aspect.

Although difficult to measure exactly, the duplication of the Aquaculture Technical Leaflets/Library components of Profetpolicy.info within the public website of the EATIP (in February 2009) also led to a sudden increase in the viewing of this site, which was launched in February 2009. This moved to over 2,500 visits per month with 10-15,000 pages being downloaded monthly.

Popular downloads can be identified – in PDF format – since these are only counted when the download button has been used (i.e. are not confused with ‘spider’ activity).

*Nonetheless, extreme caution must be applied here since the dates of uploading the individual TLs differed, meaning less exposure for the more recent additions.*

However, from a brief overview of this data, one can see that the following themes have been the most popular within the aquaculture TLs:

- *Environmental Impact of aquaculture*
- *Sustainable fish feeds*
- *Fish Welfare*
- *Food Safety*
  - Traceability
  - Contaminants
- Diseases (salmon)
- Network results on sustainability
- Diversification and conservation
  - Freshwater aquaculture alternatives
- Training courses in aquaculture (mainly finfish)

One could project therefore that the 4 top topics also represent public interest while the more technical projects would be more RTD/professional.

For fisheries, the following pattern emerged (*with the same qualification for data interpretation*):

- Fishing technologies and gear
- Marine protected areas and management systems
- Future/Impact of research
- Predation

Although a highly subjective conclusion, it appears that there was more professional/RTD interest in the fishing TLs as opposed to issues of more public interest.

With most TLs (that were published early in the website history) recording downloads between 250-350, one can estimate that some 70-80,000 individual TL downloads have been made (from profetpolicy.info). This exposure needs also to be added to the 1000 TL compilations distributed at/after the workshops.

The website can, however, be considered to be the widest distribution mechanism of the technical leaflets.

### **C. Policy documents**

The policy documents were equally or even more popular than most of the Technical leaflets.

For aquaculture the most popular concerned (in descending order):

1. Aquaculture Welfare
2. Sustainable Feeds
3. Food safety and quality
4. New Technologies
5. Environmental issues

This almost reflects the TL download review.

For fisheries, the same view gives:

1. Ecosystem approach to fisheries management
2. Scientific advice to fisheries management
3. Socio-economic dimension of fisheries
4. Technical measures

This is slightly different to the TL distribution, where the topics concerning fisheries management were to the front.

A broad summary view would indicate that it is the 'hot topics' on both fisheries (management) and aquaculture (welfare, food safety, sustainable feeds...) that were the most popular within the Policy review section, perhaps reflecting higher public interest.

#### **D. Workshops**

While the workshops were publicised through the Project partners' websites and local press releases, in addition to the efforts made within the project's website, the target audience was composed primarily of sectoral professionals, RTD scientists and policy-makers. Few public participants are to be recorded, with the exception of NGO representatives and, in certain cases, the press.

#### **E. Press Releases**

A wide range of press releases and articles were made – primarily in liaison with the organisation of the workshops, where the local press were targeted. A selection of these has been provided as a project deliverable.

#### **F. Radio/TV interviews**

Several radio and TV interviews were made during workshops; these were often made during or just after the opening session where a presentation by a local politician was usually organised

In addition, an interview on research needs and PROFET POLICY achievements was made within the Stakeholders Meeting of the EATIP for a video prepared on behalf of DG MARE of the European Commission (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009).

Written press articles usually provided the positions/opinions of the opening session while radio/TV interviews were made with the senior politician present (often the Minister or General Secretary responsible for fisheries/aquaculture) and the workshop chairman. Inevitably, these were in the language of the location of the workshop and achieved as a small press conference outside the actual workshop.

These interviews were achieved at the following events:

Location	Country	Workshop Theme	Date
Bergen	Norway	Coldwater Marine Aquaculture  <b>'RTD requirements for coldwater marine aquaculture'</b>  <i>Dr. Lars Horn/Courtney Hough – with local press</i>	16 March 2007
Vilnius	Lithuania	Baltic Sea Fisheries  <i>Ms D.K. Prunskiene, Minister of Agriculture of Lithuania/Workshop Chairman (Mr. Victor Hjort) – local press/radio/TV</i>	19 April 2007
Dublin	Ireland	<b>Atlantic fisheries</b>  <b>'Technical Conservation Measures'</b>  <i>Michael Woods, Minister for the Marine/Sean O'Donoghue (Workshop Chairman) to local press/radio/TV</i>	13 September 2007
Athens	Greece	Mediterranean Marine Aquaculture  <b>'What future for Mediterranean Aquaculture?'</b>  <i>Mr. A. Kontos - Minister of Rural Development and Food , Mr.T. Skilakakis - General Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. P. Papastavrou - President, Hellenic Export Promotion Organization – Mr. John Stephanis FEAP President in Press Conference for local press, radio, TV stations</i>	22 November 2007
Warsaw	Poland	Continental Freshwater Aquaculture  <b>'Governance in Continental Freshwater Aquaculture'</b>  <i>Mr. Marek Gróbarczyk - Minister responsible for aquaculture, Jacek Juchniewicz, President of the Polish Trout Breeders Association with local press and radio.</i>	13 December 2007

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Vigo	Spain	Atlantic Fisheries, Marine cage & shellfish culture <b>‘Integrating Fisheries and Aquaculture with Marine Environment Protection’</b>	20 November 2008
<i>Me Carmen Paz Marti - Sec Gen del Mar, the Mayor of Vigo, Javier Garat - Sec.Gen. Confederación Española de Pesca (CEPESCA) with local press and TV</i>			

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### III. Conclusion

With the fisheries and aquaculture policy interest added to the dissemination and communication on European RTD achievements, the media has shown specific interest, specifically where the workshops were seen as a local event of importance (e.g. Spain, Ireland, Greece...)

The presence of the press in the opening sessions and the accompanying news articles illustrate this.

The website and TL compilations proved to be very successful products of the project’s dissemination of European RTD achievements in fisheries and aquaculture. Web searches on individual projects summarised within Profet Policy often come up first in search engines and many individual sites on fisheries and aquaculture have also established links to the project’s website.

The levels of workshops attendance demonstrated clear interest from the professional and RTD sectors, while policy-makers were quick to understand the importance of the project’s focus. Nearly all of the workshops succeeded in attracting the Minister responsible for fisheries/aquaculture or a senior ministerial representative.

In conclusion, the project has succeeded – in a cost-effective manner – of achieving its prime dissemination goals and has widened this, as much as possible, to include public awareness of its activities and products.