

LIFE EU Bycatch project 'CIBBRiNA' – factsheet

Coordinated Development and Implementation of Best Practice in Bycatch Reduction in the North Atlantic Region

Background

Incidental bycatch has been identified as one of the major threats to marine species worldwide. In recent years, there have been several developments demonstrating a need from an international perspective for coordinated effort to tackle this problem. The CFP Technical Measures Regulation calls on Member States to minimise, and where possible eliminate, the catches of specimens of protected species and in the Data Collection Framework there is an obligation to monitor bycatch these species. Also other EU directives, such as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Birds and Habitats Directive have taken up obligations to monitor and mitigate this threat. In 2019, a group of 25 NGO's filed a complaint at the European Commission against 15 EU Member States to meet their requirements with regards to bycatch. This was followed by a [letter](#) from Commissioner Sinkevičius to all EU Fisheries and Environment Ministers, calling upon them to implement measures to reduce the incidental bycatch of sensitive species. Lastly, the US Marine Mammal Protection Act has imposed an extensive procedure on all nations exporting fisheries products to the United States, to report on their measures to reduce bycatch of marine mammals.

Scope and objectives

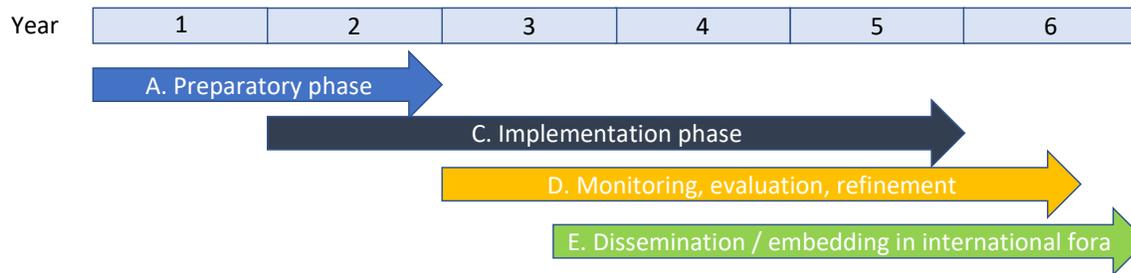
The main objective of this project is to achieve EU cross-border cooperation and fisheries engagement to establish regional monitoring programmes, building on existing national programmes, to achieve a step change in the reliability of bycatch rate estimates and further develop, test, and implement effective mitigation measures for the incidental bycatch of marine mammals, birds, turtles and non-commercial fish in the most important gear types, such as static and pelagic gears. The regional scope for this project is Northeast-Atlantic and Baltic Sea. The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands aims to submit a proposal for EU funding (under the LIFE programme) in cooperation with relevant EU-stakeholders from governmental organisations (fisheries and environment), the fisheries sector, research institutes and NGO's to jointly achieve this goal. It is very much emphasised that this project is not intended to duplicate any efforts already undertaken, but rather build on work being done in other fora, such as ICES, or the CetAMBIcion project.

Main timeline of the EU LIFE call for proposals (expected dates, not published yet):

- Publication of the call: end June 2021
- Deadline for submission of full proposal: November 2021
- Earliest possible starting date of the project: July 2022.

Short project outline

In accordance with the template for LIFE-proposals, the project actions are divided into A (preparatory), C (conservation), D (monitoring), E (dissemination) and F (project management)-actions. For a detailed description of the actions, please refer to the proposal outline.



- A. Preparatory phase: development of assessment framework and action plan;
- C. Implementation phase: conservation actions - field monitoring and demonstration of mitigation measures;
- D. Monitoring and evaluation: analysis of information, assessing effectiveness and feasibility of measures
- E. Dissemination of the results and efforts aimed at structurally embedding the methodology and measures in international agreements

Request from countries

The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands has already been in contact with a considerable number of stakeholders from EU Member States, including B, DE, DK, ES, F, IR, LT, PL, PT, S, as well as Norway and the United Kingdom, who can participate as associated partners. For this project, it is fundamental to establish a targeted cooperation between a number of parties, including environmental as well as fisheries policy makers and fishermen, as well as scientists. IGO's and NGO's are also requested to consider participation. Prerequisite for participation is an open view towards potential solutions to minimise bycatch.

An EU LIFE proposal relies on 60% to 75% EU funding¹ and 25% to 40% co-finance from the contributing country. The level of funding highly depends on the number of participating countries, but also the number of vessels and the types of monitoring and mitigation methods trialed. For the 6 year period we aim for an annual contribution of €50.000,- to 100.000,- co-finance per country to participate. All partners within a country can contribute to the 25% to 40% co-finance². Ideally, we would like one organization to act as the main contributor for a country. The other parties can then contribute to that organization, in-kind or financially.

The Fisheries Directors are requested to consider partnership and commitment to the CIBBRINA project, and to consider taken the leading role within their respective countries.

Further information:

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¹ The co-financing rate can be up to 75% if at least half of the total estimated project costs are used for actions to improve the conservation status of priority habitats or species listed in the EU's birds and habitats directives.

² The co-finance contribution can be financial or in-kind, however from public organisations the financial contribution needs to be 2% higher than the in-kind contribution (i.e. the total costs of permanent staff working on the project).