

# ATLANTIC AREA

Transnational Programme

The programme is based in the European Union's regional policy which seeks to reduce structural disparities between EU regions, foster balanced development throughout the EU and promote real equal opportunities for all. Based on the concepts of solidarity and economic and social cohesion, it achieves this in practical terms by means of a variety of financing operations, principally through the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. For the period 2007-2013, the European Union's regional policy is the EU's second largest budget item, with an allocation of €348 billion.

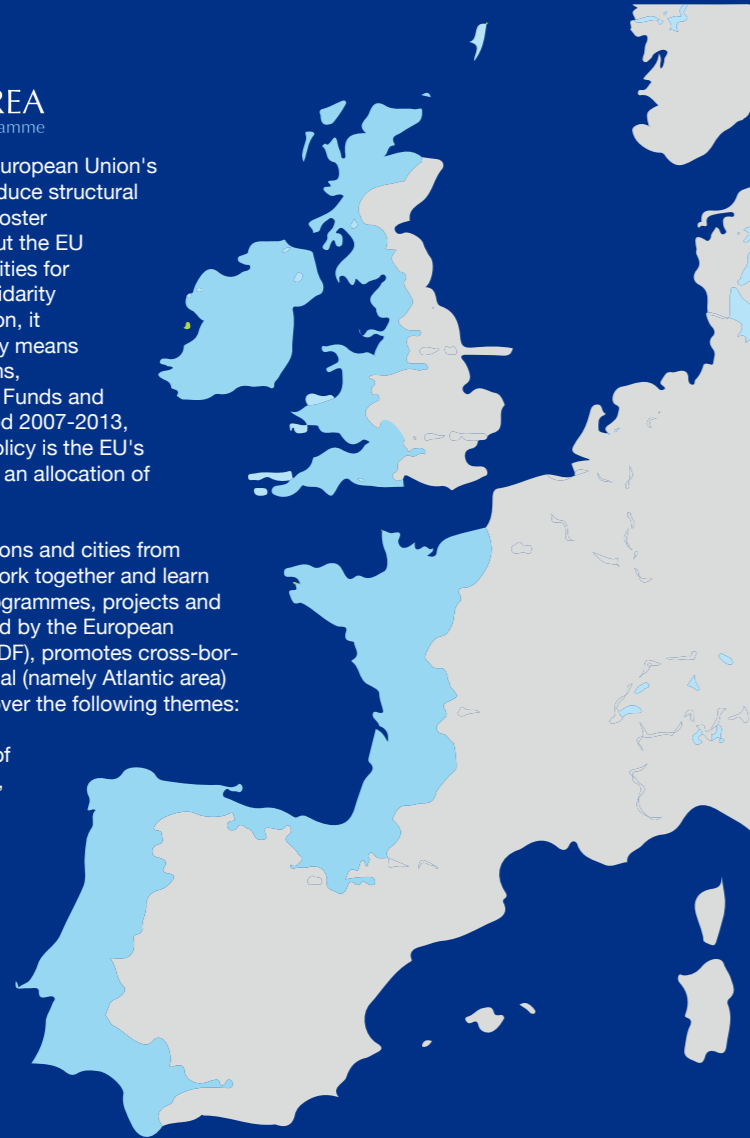
Cohesion policy encourages regions and cities from different EU Member States to work together and learn from each other through joint programmes, projects and networks. This objective, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), promotes cross-border, interregional and transnational (namely Atlantic area) cooperation programmes that cover the following themes:

**Innovation:** especially networks of universities, research institutions, SMEs;

**Environment:** especially water resources, rivers, lakes, sea;

**Accessibility:** including telecommunications, and in particular the completion of networks;

**Sustainable urban development:** particularly polycentric development.



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## LABELFISH PROJECT

The LABELFISH project is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Atlantic Area Programme to 65% (€1,256,335) of the total cost (€1,932,823).

LABELFISH relates to the labelling of seafood and traceability of fish and seafood, which has been mandatory within the EU since 2005. Full implementation of these rules requires adequate management of traceability information as well as availability of analytical techniques to verify such information. One important aspect of verifying implementation of traceability and labelling legislation is the ability to identify and authenticate biological species. In recent years, a substantial amount of effort has been invested in the development of methods for genetic identification of commercial fish species. However, there is still need to standardise methodologies across European control laboratories, and also to update databases and genetic profiles of commercially relevant species. Doing this will ensure a standardised approach regardless of the country, or laboratory, where the analyses are performed.

By setting up a network of laboratories and national control bodies, and standardising analytical techniques for genetic traceability and labelling of seafood products in the European market, LABELFISH aims to protect European consumers and SMEs involved in fisheries and aquaculture in the Atlantic regions.

## LABELFISH OBJECTIVES

Regions of the Atlantic area are characterised by an intense economic and social relationship with marine resources. Most of them are linked with important fishery and aquaculture industries. For these regions, seafood traceability and labelling are essential, as their products may be under

threat from low-cost, third country imports. Imports which could potentially be of doubtful origin and/or which may have been handled or produced under inadequate controls.

The main objective of LABELFISH is to set up a network of entities interested in developing a common traceability strategy, using standardised and innovative analytical techniques of genetic traceability and labelling of seafood products in the European Atlantic areas. Under this general objective are specific objectives:

I) Analysis of fish traceability and fish labelling in markets of the Atlantic Region. This objective involves the analysis of the implementation of traceability schemes in the seafood industry (fishing fleets, fishing industry and auctions), studies of the state of seafood labelling at auctions and markets, the perception of consumers of seafood traceability and labelling, and the analysis of the effectiveness of the control of labelling by competent authorities. The seafood labelling studies will focus on the most commercially important species in Atlantic area, specifically in the countries involved in the project. Some of these species are cod, tuna, anchovies, ling, sole, monkfish, haddock and hake.

II) Standardisation of fish authenticity and genetic traceability methodologies. This objective aims to compare the current techniques used for fish species authentication and control of traceability, and to build a genetic database that will allow harmonisation and standardisation of methodologies at the European level.

III) Atlantic network for species authenticity and labelling. We aim to establish a network of laboratories, entities, companies with expertise and capacities in fish traceability, seafood labelling and fish authenticity. This network will interact by holding workshops for exchanging of methodologies, personnel and results. The final objective is

to create a framework for the creation of a European network for fish authenticity and control of traceability.

Protection of European consumers and SMEs will be achieved by ensuring consumers' rights to correct product information and by implementing reliable genetic traceability and authentication tools for the protection of market niches.



## WHO WE ARE

### 1. IIM-CSIC (Spain)

The project is led by IIM-CSIC in Spain (Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas, from CSIC). IIM-CSIC has pioneered development of genetic traceability methods for fish authentication, participating and leading national and European framework projects, for over 20 years. For many years IIM-CSIC has been involved in developing analytical techniques to identify and authenticate fish species.

### 2. IPMA, I.P. (Portugal)

The Portuguese Institute for the Sea and Atmosphere - Department for the Sea and Marine Resources is devoted to carrying out research, technological development and dissemination activities on fisheries and aquaculture, as well as the upgrading and processing of high quality seafood products. In LABELFISH, IPMA ensures implementation of activities to harmonise procedures and analytical techniques on control of genetic traceability and labelling of seafood.

### 3. IFREMER (France)

IFREMER, the French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea, contributes to knowledge of oceans and their resources. The IFREMER STBM team has a long record in developing methods for marine species and fish product identification/authentication. The team has been involved in many related European projects such as FishTrace and FishPopTrace.

### 4. INDIGO ROCK MARINE RESEARCH STATION (Ireland)

Indigo Rock Marine Research Station is an Irish not-for-profit organisation working to develop marine and fisheries science, through participation in research programmes, regional development and training initiatives. In LABELFISH, INDIGO take a leading role in dissemination activities.

### 5. THE UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD (United Kingdom)

The University of Salford (USAL) Conservation Genetics Team focuses on ecological and evolutionary mechanisms in generation and maintenance of biodiversity; primarily in aquatic environments. They are one of the UK's leading hubs for seafood genetic identification. Their projects include investigations of finfish, molluscs, crustaceans and mammals with collaborative links spanning across 20 countries, on the continents of Europe, Africa and North America.

### 6. MAX RUBNER INSTITUTE (Germany), Department of Safety and Quality of Milk and Fish products

MRI deals with application-oriented research on milk, fish and related products. An important focus is the improvement of product safety, hygiene and quality along the processing chain. Process and product quality control require development of analytical/sensory methods to improve product composition, ascertain origin, detect changes to food from processing, and to characterise value-determining substances.

### 7. BORD LASCAIGH MHARA (BIM) - IRISH SEA FISHERIES BOARD (Ireland)

BIM is the Irish State agency responsible for developing the Irish seafood industry. They provide a variety of supports and technical expertise to the Irish seafood industry. As the associated Irish partners, BIM bring a vast body of knowledge on the Irish seafood sector to the LABELFISH project.

### 8. LABORATOIRE SERVICE COMMUN DES LABORATOIRES DE MARSEILLE (France)

The SCL (Service Commun des Laboratoires) is a network of 11 laboratories and a direction unit in Paris which works mainly for the DGDDI (French customs) and the DGCCRF (Anti-Fraud body). The Marseille laboratory specialises in seafood and a number of other products and: 1. Analyse samples intercepted by DGCCRF and DGDDI. 2. Develop new methods for issues as they arise. 3. Provide technical and scientific support to French and European administrative bodies.

### 9. SECRETARÍA GENERAL DE PESCA (MINISTERIO DE AGRICULTURA, ALIMENTACIÓN Y MEDIO AMBIENTE) (Spain)

MAGRAMA (Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain), through the Secretaría General de Pesca, control fishing activities throughout the whole production chain, imports and trading. This includes providing traceability

control coordination and information for consumers about seafood products.

### 10. DEFRA (United Kingdom)

The UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has a remit covering a number of areas relevant to LABELFISH including sustainable development and fisheries. The Department encourages sustainable food production to secure an environmentally sustainable and healthy food supply. Defra closely collaborates with, and provides extensive support to, of the University of Salford in LABELFISH.

### 11. PUESTO DE INSPECCIÓN FRONTERIZO DE VIGO PUERTO (Spain)

Puesto De Inspección Fronterizo De Vigo (PIF de Vigo) is a border inspection post approved for control of animal products for human consumption. Veterinary controls carried out at PIFs aim to verify that animal products entering the EU comply with all European regulations. PIF de Vigo monitors largest amount of seafood of all PIFs and so is a vital contributor to the LABELFISH project through their knowledge of seafood traceability law implementation.

