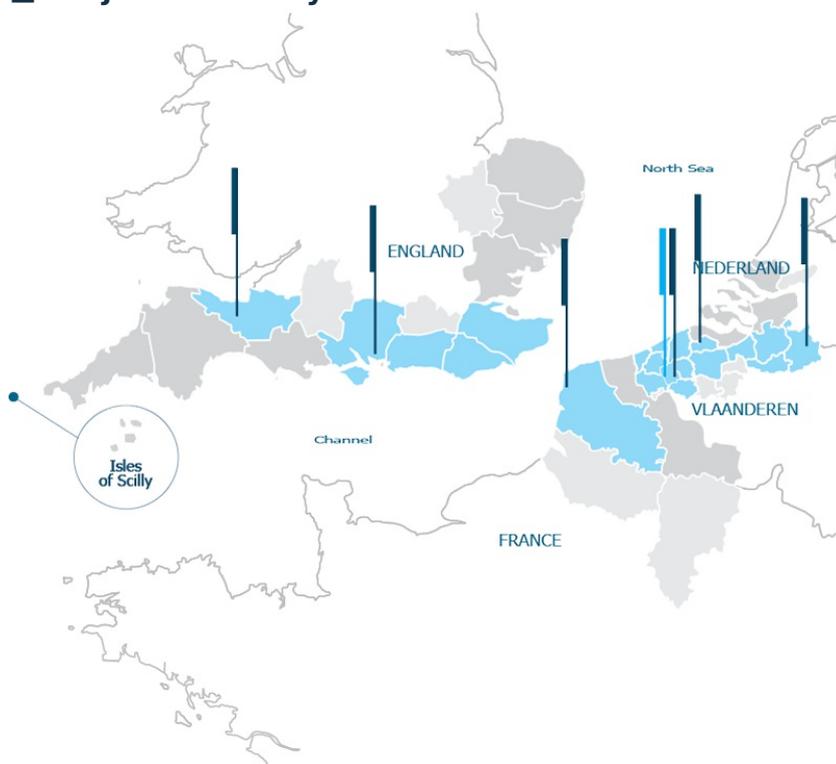


# FISH AND CHIPS

## Agro Food & Fisheries Complex (AFFC)



### ■ Project summary



The “Fish and Chips” project intends to promote economic development, competitiveness and innovation among food companies in the 2-seas area. Throughout the project, the participating regions will collaborate on themes such as new and existing product research and development, as well as the promotion of entrepreneurial skills in the food production sector. Thanks to this, the project will create a strong regional identity for its products and a cross-border platform to build effective sectorial networks. Also, access to market will be improved by developing innovative distribution solutions and by promoting concepts such as the “Taste Academy” with cross-border

culinary workshops. A strong 2 Seas food network (fish, vegetables, farm produce, dairy products and seafood) will strengthen the food identity of each region and will contribute to economic growth.

### ■ Activities

#### What was the project trying to achieve?

1) Stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship, two factors determining economic growth and employment rate within the food sector and its related sectors in the 2-seas area. 2) Promoting the development of the regional and new cross-border networks, to tackle the common economic challenges and opportunities together. The most important challenge and objective of Fish and Chips focuses on the reinforcement of the market position ( accessibility of the

market) with respect to the participating European economic centers. The collaboration between the regions will advance the internationalisation of the regional economies and lead to enduring contacts between food enterprises in various 2-seas countries. Networking and learning from each other's good practices will be beneficial to the innovation processes in the regions and will strengthen the economic tissue, society and welfare of the regions. 3) The key characteristic of the project is the ability to generate cross-border contacts and activities allowing different networks to work in unison or in parallel with each other. The diversity of products offered by the different regions and the broad variety in methods used by the different project partners creates an interesting cross-pollination. Knowledge about the use and characteristics of products is transferred to all partners involved and hence multiplies itself (multiplier effect). 4) Reinforcing the partner's regional identity by stimulating innovation and developing a stronger and more positive communication about 'food'. The project also intends to anticipate the changes within the ever evolving society; the quest for more information by citizens and the worldwide use and spreading of digital data by companies demands a swift response.

### **What were the activities implemented?**

The partners of Fish and Chips have been collaborating on 3 main activities, next to their common preparation and communication actions. Firstly, the partners have been promoting product innovation and PMCs (= Product Market Combination). They gathered inspiration on a fact finding trip to Piemonte (and the University of Bra) as well as on the IFE (International Food and Drink Event) in London. Packed with good ideas, the partners developed several new products and product-market combinations in their proper regions. These culinary and touristic results have been presented to press and travel agents via several cross border visits. Secondly, Fish and Chips has supported existing and created new networks of food and drink businesses. Through a series of workshops and cross border B-2-B meetings, not only existing networks of food and drink producers have been able to develop in a more professional way, but also new networks were launched. The concrete support and guidance has been partially organized through a time bank concept. This system invited the project partners to buy and sell expert time, in light of sharing knowledge. Finally, the project has been aiming at making the market more accessible, not only for small scale producers, but also for consumers. Several regions implemented new distribution platforms for regional food and drink producers. Some of these platforms also deliver to retail markets. Joining forces and acting as a network has proven to be more efficient in collaborating with retail markets and as such open up a broader market. Also through food fairs and social media campaigns, regional producers have been able to find better access to the market in general. The creation of Taste Academies in several Fish and Chips regions allowed producers and consumers to learn from each other, in order to close the gap between these groups and to raise awareness and knowledge among them.

## **■ Results**

### **What were the key results of the project?**

-miniMiummm: activity center for young kids (age 4 to 10) : in order to raise awareness on food from farm to fork  
-Taste Academy: demo kitchen infrastructure where several target groups can learn about sustainable food (e.g.: workshops on fish, forgotten vegetables, cooking with

leftovers..) -Taste and Test Lab: for consumer tests on food products -Distribution networks and pilot actions were set up in the several regions. -Market study on regional products (+ publication) -new PMCs (product market combinations) in the partner regions: e.g. salty potatoes, eal bite, cookie crumble with hop shoots, beer cycling route, Somerset cider map, beer boxes... -food hampers in Somerset for the self catering tourists -book / publication: "Stad aan de Stoof" on regional producers -calendar, promoting regional produce -local catch app: app to promote the catch of the day -new producers associations -food fairs in the diverse partner regions - cross border business events - guides and other instruments to support the food and drink industry (e.g.: cross border guide: successful product market combination in the agrofoodindustry) - Fish and Chips movie in order to market the regions (regional branding)

### **Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?**

All regions addressed the following target groups: • The entrepreneurs of the agrofood sector: they have been given the chance to extend their network in their own region. Several distribution networks were set up. Cross border B2B meetings were set up in order to learn from one another. Tools were developed to help agro food businesses to improve competitiveness and innovation (Taste & Test Lab, local catch app, pmc guide, social media workshops, ...) • The local and regional authorities: are benefitting from the fact that their regions were put on the map as agrofoodregions (the so called regional branding). The authorities were also given to chance to be present at events and meetings, in order to get to know their own businesses, as well as foreign businesses and organisations. In the long run, Fish and Chips addresses the following beneficiaries: • The consumers and inhabitants of the project regions: they got to know regional products and producers better, e.g. through food fairs, publications, the Taste Academies etc. • The border regions and their inhabitants • The schools: through for instance the miniMiummm, youngsters are informed about the food chain and a healthy lifestyle.

### **What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?**

The effects for food and drink businesses in all of the regions have been very clear. The entrepreneurs have been benefitting from improved digital marketing & apps, distribution opportunities, better international relations and more collaboration between businesses. As such, since entrepreneurs have been able to boost their businesses, the economic state of the regions has been influenced positively. Next to positive effects for the agro food businesses, also the general public has been benefitting from the project. They have better access to local, fresh food, and have gotten to know the producers and their products 'next door'. Schools and other groups get to know more about food from farm to fork in the Miummm activity center, as well as the Taste Academy that is now open for the public. The seeds for new innovative food fairs were planted. In the future most of the food fairs will exist, in order to demolish the barriers between food producers and consumers.

### **■ Distinctiveness**

#### **What was the real added-value of doing this cross-border project?**

Forming a cross border partnership within the Fish and Chips project, gave all collaborating partners a lot of benefits: \* creating and sharing knowledge through the time bank of flying

experts (e.g.: distribution models were set up in several partner regions); \* learning best practices such as the Local Catch App (that is now even being picked up beyond the Interreg 2 Seas region); \* enhancing reputation of the regions through a common communication action plan (regional branding); \* increasing innovation (for instance by making (better) use of social media, testing products in the Taste and Test Lab, etc.) By forming this partnership, a lot of new ideas / outcomes came out of the project, especially since a lot of the partners have different fields of expertise (broader curriculum and shared staff leads undeniably to better use of resources).

### **Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?**

The cluster projects TASTE 2 Seas and Tourfish gave us the chance to meet new partners that are also working on food and food-related themes. The expertise of new knowledge partners made sure that some of the project results now will get scientific support, in order to take the results to a higher level. E.g.: The Flags were interested in the Local Catch App , as well as the City of Hastings. E.g.: The University of Ghent and VIVES are both interested in working with the new Taste and Test Labs E.g. : The Taste Academies and the miniMiummm will be used to raise awareness on a healthy lifestyle and food in general. Similar initiatives have been contacting the partners in order to set up future partnerships (LEM / Brighton and Hove Food partnership / Kids University for Cooking...)

### **What are the key messages , key lessons learned you would like to share?**

Within forming a partnership, and managing a project with several partners, it is very important to:

1. Develop a clear focus and defined purpose by defining shared values, objectives, deliverables, activities etc.
2. Define a strict timing and deadlines
3. Communicate efficiently (internally and externally)
4. Use protocols to address (regional / cultural) differences
5. Stimulate intense partners interaction through digital tools and partner group meetings (face to face)
6. Be clear about tasks and funding (open communication)

## ■ Project Information

<b>Title</b>	Agro Food & Fisheries Complex (AFFC)
<b>Total project budget</b>	€ 3 690 079
<b>ERDF</b>	€ 1 837 702
<b>Priority &amp; objective</b>	Priority 1 b. Promote and encourage entrepreneurship and the development of new cross-border commercial initiatives
<b>Timeframe</b>	2011-07-01 - 2014-09-30
<b>Lead partner</b>	Vlaams Huis van de Voeding vzw
<b>Project Coordinator</b>	Brigitte Smessaert(rebecca.verhaeghe@west-vlaanderen.be)

