



Annual report 2023



*Shoal at the Maldives
photo: smartart, Pixabay*



Shoal between kelp
Photo: Isaac Mijangos, Pexels

The people behind fair-fish

Employees

“Nothing is as constant as change.” This quote, which is attributed to Heraclitus of Ephesus, also proved true in 2023.

two people left fair-fish:

Andreas Stamer ended his collaboration with fair-fish on 30 April 2023. We would like to thank him for his commitment.

Our founder, long-time Managing Director and President Billo Heinzpeter Studer, stepped down from all his functions on 8 May 2023. His pioneering ideas and his work for the fishes remain the foundation of fair-fish. We thank him from the bottom of our hearts.

New people came:

fair-fish hired Yannick Rohrer so that we can do more for (farmed) fishes in Switzerland, Austria and Germany. From 1 July 2023, he developed a concept for advising farms in Switzerland, Germany and Austria as the “Fish welfare research transfer” project manager. Together with intern Melanie Ocasio, he also started updating the basic data of the fish test, which had not been updated in previous years due to many failures.

Jenny Volstorf, who was already the director of the fair-fish database, took over the co-management of the Carefish/catch project together with João Saraiva, the head of the partner organisation FishEthoGroup. Together with María J. Cabrera-Alvarez, Caroline Marques Maia and intern Joly Ghanawi, Jenny Volstorf continued to develop the fair-fish database in 2023. Towards the end of the reporting year, the team proudly announced that the brand new fishing section of the database (Catch branch) had gone online.

Both Jenny Volstorf and Sebastian Scholz, the Web and Database Manager at fair-fish, were able to benefit from a permanent employment contract from 1 January 2023. The workloads of Managing Director Fausta Borsani, Jenny Volstorf, Sebastian Scholz and Yannick Rohrer were set at 70 percent or increased to 70 percent from 1 July 2023. This will help them to cope with the workload better and with less “self-exploitation”.

The employees of “Team Switzerland” were fully integrated into the fair-fish team in the reporting year: Regula Horner continues to work in fair-fish’s administration department. She communicates with our valued donors and keeps the fair-fish



address database up to date. Our long-standing partner Andreas Rügger provides us with the technical basis for the address database, hosting and mailing. Larissa Puma, the head of the fair-fish school project, had several school assignments again in autumn following a period of study abroad. Rolf Frischknecht took over responsibility for fair-fish's social media in the middle of last year with a workload of 20 per cent. Peter Jossi conducted research into the Swiss retail trade, which was followed up by Managing Director Fausta Borsani.

New for the current year 2024 is that Caroline Marques Maia, Joly Ghanawi and Goran Andrijašević have finalised a service contract with fair-fish directly. The former work in the fair-fish database and Goran has taken over social media, while Rolf Frischknecht has ended his many years of work at fair-fish as of 31 March 2024.

Board

Members of the Board in 2023: Billo Heinzpeter Studer as President until May 2023, Diether Grünenfelder, Nina Otter, Adrian Horst, Daniela Gschweng (elected to the Board at the Extraordinary General Meeting on 8 March 2023), Sabine Wirtz and Walter Sánchez-Suárez (elected to the Board at the General Meeting on 16 May 2023). Diether Grünenfelder stepped down from the Board at the General Meeting in May and Nina Otter at the end of September 2023. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Nina Otter and Diether Grünenfelder. The Board of Directors met six times in 2023.

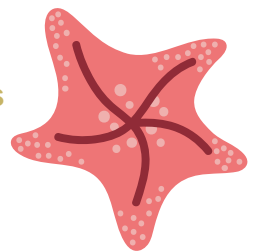
Members

At the Extraordinary General Meeting on 8 March 2023, 15 new members were admitted, increasing the number of members from 5 to 20. The members with voting rights for the 2023 General Assembly are

therefore, in alphabetical order: Michèle Abouchar, André Affentranger, Culum Brown, Fausta Borsani (Managing Director of fair-fish), Diether Grünenfelder, Rolf Frischknecht (employee until 31 March 2024), Daniela Gschweng (fair-fish Board), Regula Gschweng (Managing Director of fair-fish), Regula Gschweng (Managing Director of fair-fish). March 2024), Daniela Gschweng (fair-fish Board member), Regula Horner (employee), Adrian Horst (fair-fish Board member), Urs Moser, Nina Otter (retiring fair-fish Board member), Thomas Janssens, Sebastian Scholz (fair-fish employee), Walter Sánchez-Suárez (fair-fish board member), Beat Schumacher, Regina Studer, Billo Heinzpeter Studer, Tobias Sudhoff, Sabine Wirtz (fair-fish board member), Jenny Volstorf (fair-fish employee). As the new Articles of Association of 8 March 2023 stipulate that only one third of members may be employees, agents and licensees of fair-fish, the name is followed by whether they are fair-fish employees. As of 1 April 2024, four out of 20.

You: Our donors and allies

Without people like you who are reading this, without allies who are interested in fair-fish, who are happy about our work, who support us with information, donations and legacies – without special people like you, fair-fish would not exist.



Continue to help us! Tell us what you think in the latest Ally survey at fair-fish.net/ally. Share your ideas with us, tell us what's on your mind. Write letters, emails and messages on social media, letters from readers to newspapers that publish articles related to fishes and aquatic animals. Draw attention to the work of fair-fish. Help raise awareness of fishes, their suffering and their welfare and tell your friends and acquaintances about us.

Pipefish close-up
Photo: Thomas Bannenberg, Pexels



Motivating vision, essential goals

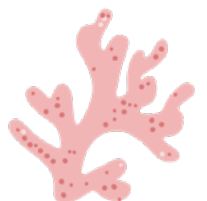
The vision of fair-fish has also motivated us in 2023: “We want to change people’s perception and behaviour towards fishes. To do this, we rely on science and communication.”

Due to the departure of Billo Heinzpeter Studer, the drafting of the associated non-competition agreement and the current situation on the fundraising and donations market, we have set ourselves less ambitious medium-term goals than in 2022. Instead of aiming for country spin-offs in three European countries by 2027 in the reporting year, our main goal for 2023 was to become a single, strong fair-fish and to secure and further develop our Swiss and international projects beyond 2024. We are well on the way to achieving this. In 2023, we set ourselves the goal of stabilising and activating our donor base. We have succeeded: With the same

donor base of around 950 donors in 2023 compared to 2022, we were able to collect almost CHF 20,000 more donations than in 2022.

We also set out to provide fresh impetus to the aquaculture scene in Switzerland and German-speaking Europe. We have succeeded in doing so with regard to the statements and articles on salmon farming, whether in Switzerland, Scotland or Norway, as well as Yannick Rohrer’s new concept for aquaculture advice.

We have made many new contacts and revitalised old ones so that fair-fish now has a stronger presence. In 2024, we also want to focus on the further development and financing of existing projects.





Projects

fair-fish database

Put simply, the aim of the database is to show how fishes are faring during breeding or catching.

We presented the fair-fish database to a scientific audience at

three international conferences in 2023 (see also page 9). Our aim is not only to remain networked, but also to raise the profile of the fair-fish database among experts.

Farm branch

We adjusted the targets for the farm branch for 2023 because too little time was budgeted for creating and reviewing the profiles. No time had been set aside for necessary discussions on design and web-site changes or for content-related discussions outside of the profiles. This made itself felt: in 2022, we were only able to achieve the ambitious goal of 20 profiles by postponing the internal review for a large proportion of them. However, this now has to be rescheduled, which will delay the timetable for subsequent years.

The farm branch of the database has been expanded with the following new profiles: Pike (*Esox lucius*).

These *profiles* have been updated and renewed:

- *White leg shrimp* (*Penaeus vannamei*)
- *Carp* (*Cyprinus carpio*)
- *Egli* (*Perca fluviatilis*)
- *Atlantic salmon* (*Salmo salar*)

These *profiles* from 2022 were reviewed internally:

- *Bream barbel* (*Barbonymus schwanenfeldii*)
- *Pengba* (*Osteobrama belangeri*)
- *African flag knifefish* (*Papyrocranus afer*)
- *Arapaima* (*Arapaima gigas*)

Catch branch

After months of intensive discussion and research, we were proud to launch the Catch branch of the fair-fish database online in 2023. In the long term, the new branch will cover the world's most common wild-caught species. We record all situations along the catching process that endanger the good welfare of fishes and show possibilities from the scientific literature to minimise suffering. However, there are major gaps in our knowledge. The welfare of



Tinfoil barb
Photo: Casper Somia, Pexels

fishes in fisheries is still a young topic. The fair-fish database is intended to help increase knowledge. The first two species in the Catch branch have already been added in 2023: Peruvian anchovy (*Engraulis ringens*) and Atlantic herring (*Clupea harengus*), both caught by purse seine net. Our work and the fair-fish database have met with great approval. This is shown, among other things, by the letters of recommendation from scientists and experts who work with the fair-fish database.

The two branches of the fair-fish database were an important contribution by fair-fish to the two projects Carefish/farm and Carefish/catch.

Carefish/farm

In addition to the work on the fair-fish database, the Carefish/farm project was mainly handled by the partner FishEthoGroup in the 2023 reporting year. The most important results: Activities in the areas of training for auditors, courses, research and participation in conferences. Several scientific papers and book chapters were published and others submitted. Particularly noteworthy from a fair-fish perspective is a report on improvements in aquaculture¹, which fair-fish also contributed to. The Aquaculture Advisory Council used this as the basis for making recommendations to the European Commission: In order to bring about improvements for fishes in aquaculture, attention should be paid to the behaviour of fishes (ethology). And the European Commission has responded²! We feel hon-

oured. The Commission is committed to the welfare of fishes and lists future projects to improve it.

Carefish/catch

Together with four partners, fair-fish has initiated the pioneering Carefish/catch project to reduce suffering in fishing. The initial results of the four-year project assess fish welfare in gillnet and seine fishing. The report on gillnet fishing (esszett.cloud/s/8CQos3JA3SbG5tD) found that some species are dead on arrival on board (e.g. striped mullet), while others suffer for hours in agony on deck (e.g. two-banded sea bream). A second report, on seine and encircling nets (esszett.cloud/s/dYWmitK697RFmfW), once again highlighted the biggest shortcoming of industrial fishing: it hardly ever uses stunning and slaughter methods.

One aim of the project is to develop fish welfare guidelines for the "Friend of the Sea" label.

Aquaculture counselling

In the reporting year, fair-fish developed an innovative advisory concept to improve the welfare of fishes in farms. We want to inspire fish farmers in Switzerland, Germany and Austria and support them in creating better living conditions for their animals.

To develop the concept, project manager Yannick Rohrer contacted non-governmental organisations, fisheries authorities, research institutes and special-ist agencies. He also received a list of all registered

¹ Saraiva, João L., Jenny Volstorf, María J. Cabrera-Álvarez, Pablo Arechavala-Lopez. 2022. using ethology to improve farmed fish welfare and production. (https://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AAC_ethology-and-welfare_final_with-annex.pdf)

² <https://aac-europe.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Reply-to-AAC-Rec-fish-ethology.pdf>

farms from the veterinary authorities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. We then sent a questionnaire to 85 Swiss, 129 Austrian and 145 German farms. fair-fish received responses from 3 per cent of respondents. All of them described the welfare of the fishes as very important. However, only 50 per cent see a positive effect of this in production and marketing.

fair-fish will begin implementation in 2024, i.e. sit down with operators of small and medium-sized fish farms and develop individual proposals for improving the conditions under which these fishes are kept.

Fish test

The fair-fish fish test enables consumers to find out whether the fish they want to buy in the shop or order in a restaurant is “okay”. The fish test uses current data to assess whether the fishes in question are fished sustainably and whether a credible label is available. It also weighs up the impact of a particular fishing method on the environment. In the reporting year, Yannick Rohrer updated the background data for the fish test with the help of intern Melanie Ocasio – a lengthy and time-consuming task that had been put on hold for years due to sickness absence and staff changes. When this work is completed in 2024 (now with the help of intern Laura Kamp), we will relaunch the “Fish Test” page.

School project

We endeavour to make children feel and experience the sea so that they can take responsibility and treat the marine habitat as well as fishes and other living creatures with goodwill and respect. The fair-fish school project, which was implemented in

five classes in 2023, is finding more and more enthusiastic supporters among teachers, children and parents. It is met with curiosity, interest and enthusiasm. The feedback from the classes and teachers is extremely positive and motivating. The lessons are free of charge. Teachers in Switzerland are welcome to contact us if they are interested!

The aquarium fish website “aquarienfisch.ch”

The page on keeping ornamental fish was translated into French in the reporting year. This site was handed over to Rolf Frischknecht, who owns the URL, on 31 March 2024.

Further activities and co-operations

fair-fish is opposed to new land-based salmon farms. The main reason is that the salmon’s natural behaviour is very restricted in the facility.

fair-fish is also committed to the biodiversity initiative throughout Switzerland, is involved in the project for a Swiss animal parliament and participates in the “Swiss oCHean Network” exchange network, which communicates via the “Signal” messaging app. Nationally, we work with the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) and the Bern University of Applied Sciences (BFH) in the field of aquaculture and internationally with the Aquaculture Welfare Standards Initiative (AWSI). Fischwissen.ch is our contact for aquaristics.

fair-fish is a member of the Swiss Aquaculture Coordination Centre. We also maintain a dialogue with Swiss Animal Protection (STS), Aquaviva, the Swiss Fishing Association (SFV) and the Fish Knowledge Centre.

De Beaufort's flathead
Photo: Sean Robertson, Unsplash



*Person looking at fish in the water
Photo: Johannes Albert, Pexels*



Communication

In 2023, we published three fish-facts with exciting information about fair-fish international, fishes and marine life and all our projects - in Switzerland and around the world. We have portrayed our employees and aquatic life. There are also reports on fisheries, aquaculture, watercourses, beach protection and oceans. With the three electronic newsletters in German and English, we also sent out the link to the fish-facts for downloading, information about us and the projects, appeals for donations and news from friendly organisations worldwide.

We have updated our media database and sent out several media releases: against a salmon farming project in Mollis, on the reports of the Carefish/catch project and on the school project. We were also able to place a high-profile article on salmon farming in the magazine of the Swiss Consumer Forum. Thanks to our wealth of knowledge, we have provided infor-

mation to the media, accompanied final year and term papers and have also been asked to make small appearances, for example at the Ocean Day in Lyss.

We have modernised our social media channels and now communicate on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and X in German and English.

We want people to rethink their relationship with fishes and aquatic life, seas, waters and nature in general. In order to reach more people, including young people, with our ideas and projects, we conducted a process lasting several months in 2023 with the French graphic designer Margaux Averty, which resulted in a slightly different fair-fish logo and a fresh look.

We began the reorganisation of our fair-fish.net website at the end of the reporting year. It will be launched in 2024 with a new look and new content.

Pajama cardinalfish
Photo: Thomas Bannenberg, Pexels



Events and functions

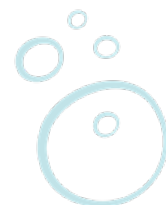
We present our findings at various congresses. In doing so, we continue to build on our worldwide network of exchange with colleagues in science and practice.

In the year 2023

- we presented a poster on the fair-fish database at the kick-off conference of the "Catch Welfare Platform" in Bergen, Norway:
catchwelfareplatform.com/programme/
- we were at the "Aquaculture Europe" in Vienna, Austria:
<https://aquaeas.org/Meeting/AE2023>
- we spoke online at the "Aquatic Life conference":
ali.fish/alc23
- we were at "Behaviour2023" in Bielefeld, Germany:
uni-bielefeld.de/fakultaeten/biologie/forschung/veranstaltungen/behaviour2023/

Summer Shoal for fish welfare 2023

fair-fish and its partners in the Carefish/catch project presented the 5th edition of the "Summer Shoal" conference on fish welfare in the Algarve in the reporting year - two full days of open-air presentations near the beach, followed by lively discussions among the participants sitting in a circle under the trees. There were no laser pointers and no projections, but plenty of opportunities to discuss fish welfare issues further. A unique exchange between experts with different backgrounds and interests: Science, consumption, representatives of NGOs, retail, politics, certification and industry.





Barracuda and some horse-eye jacks
 Photo: Wouter Naert, Unsplash

Finances

The 2023 financial statements can be found in the appendix to this report. The association year 2023 will close with an annual profit of EUR 5631.44. The profit is around EUR 30,000 lower than in the previous year.

On 1 January 2023, the "Team Switzerland" fund was fully integrated into the "fair-fish international" association and the fund was dissolved.

Significant deviations from the previous year:

- Sales increased compared to the previous year due to the cancellation of the fund and the donations recorded in Team Switzerland in the previous year.
- Project costs decreased compared to the previous year because the wages of the project participants were counted as labour costs.
- In comparison to 2022, personnel expenses rose considerably as Jenny Volstorf and Sebastian Scholz from Germany were newly employed. In the previous year, their work was accounted for as

expenses for freelancers and was therefore categorised as project costs rather than personnel expenses. In addition, Andreas Stamer was still employed until 30 April. Fausta Borsani's salary has now also been paid for a full year and Yannick Rohrer has been newly employed.

- Other operating expenses increased compared to the previous year, as a contract was drawn up with the company Omnitax AG with Billo Heinzpeter Studer.

The balance sheet shows equity of EUR 247,132.26 as at 31.12.23 following the posting of profits. Cash and cash equivalents have decreased compared to the previous year and amount to EUR 1,808,381.37 as at 31 December 2023, of which EUR 1,527,960.64 is still tied up as funds.

We would like to thank Arn Treuhand (Lyss) for the excellent co-operation in accounting and Winco Treuhand (Winterthur) for the efficient audit.

Cuttlefish
Photo: Pawel Kalisinski, Pexels



Thanks and outlook

The commitment and expertise of the Board and team members have made it possible to continue and expand the activities of fair-fish despite many obstacles and personnel changes during the year. A big thank you goes to everyone involved!

Above all, however, we would like to thank the many donors and foundations that have supported fair-fish financially and morally for many years. In the reporting year, these were the Open Philanthropy Foundation, the ProCare Foundation, the Fondation Gérard Pierre, the Edith Maryon Foundation, the Graf Fabrice Foundation, the von Gundlach & Payne-Smith Foundation, the Elisabeth Rentschler Foundation, the Anna Maria and Karl Kramer Foundation and the Poristes Foundation. Other foundations do not wish to be mentioned by name. In the reporting year, we ran a successful fundraising campaign for the school project in Switzerland in collaboration with the digital donation platform "there for you".

We are confident about the years ahead. fair-fish has become stronger, more stable and better structured.

Uster, 22 May 2024

On behalf of the Board

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Horst'.

Adrian Horst, Member of the Board

On behalf of the office

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fausta Borsani'.

Fausta Borsani, Executive Director

Association fair-fish international
Talweg 159, CH-8610 Uster, +41 79 255 61 77, mail@fair-fish.net

**For donations in
Swiss francs:
IBAN: CH68 0900 0000 8503 8259 6**

**For donations in euros:
IBAN: CH51 0900 0000 9136 260
(SWIFT code: POFICHBEXXX)**

Balance sheet as per 31 December	2023 EUR	2022 EUR
Liquid assets	1'808'381.37	2'359'467.81
Other short-term receivables	331.01	596.30
Accrued income and prepaid expenses	14'247.88	14'150.10
Current assets	1'822'960.26	2'374'214.21
Financial asset	189'389.22	171'379.00
Fixed assets	189'389.22	171'379.00
Total assets	2'012'349.48	2'545'593.21
Liabilities from deliveries and services	17'330.23	10'901.20
Other short-term liabilities	7'926.35	15'283.85
Other short-term liabilities board member	0.00	7'464.45
Accrued liabilities	212'000.00	55'648.49
Short-term debt capital	237'256.58	89'297.99
Fund Carefish/catch	575'000.00	1'235'512.00
Fund Legacy Ringier	952'960.64	952'960.64
Fund Team Switzerland	0.00	92'058.05
Fund Germany	0.00	7'474.35
Long-term debt capital	1'527'960.64	2'288'005.04
Debt capital	1'765'217.22	2'377'303.03
Association assets	241'500.82	131'359.13
Annual loss/profit	5'631.44	36'931.05
Equity	247'132.26	168'290.18
Total liabilities	2'012'349.48	2'545'593.21

Income statement	2023 EUR	2022 EUR
Donations	85'256.67	534.58
Contributions to projects	254'114.11	308'669.04
Legacies	0.00	39'544.25
Subscriptions	1'452.15	0.00
Dissolution of funds	667'986.35	567'008.00
Gross revenues from deliveries and services	1'008'809.28	915'755.87
Revenue reductions	0.00	0.00
Net revenues from deliveries and services	1'008'809.28	915'755.87
Projects	665'956.85	755'562.49
Projects and fund allocations	665'956.85	755'562.49
Gross profit I	342'852.43	160'193.38
<i>Gross margin I</i>	34.0%	17.5%
Staff costs	303'787.50	74'895.12
Services of third parties	51'541.41	39'552.04
Gross profit II	-12'476.48	45'746.22
<i>Gross margin II</i>	-1.2%	5.0%
Room expenditure	251.05	4'494.25
Property insurance, fees	237.30	221.35
Administrative expenses	40'872.15	23'925.90
Advertising expenses	6'232.90	1'333.75
Other operating cost	2'402.28	5'588.60
Other operating expenses	49'995.68	35'563.85
Operating result	-62'472.16	10'182.37
Financial income	71'135.84	40'641.12
Financial expenses	-2'532.24	-13'892.44
Gross profit III	6'131.44	36'931.05
Extraordinary, non-recurring or off-period expenses	-500.00	0.00
Annual loss/profit	5'631.44	36'931.05