



fair
fish



Annual Report 2022

fair-fish international

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

The people behind fair-fish

Last year was marked by many changes in the team. Rahel Salathé (1) who has been in charge of editing the FishTest since the end of 2019, was also in charge of the fair-fish part of the new Carefish/catch project from 2021 and was co-director on the Executive Board. Unfortunately, she dropped out for a longer period of time due to health reasons; we agreed on an end of the cooperation as of 30 June 2022.



Photos: pad

The previous Executive Director Billo Heinzpeter Studer (2) also fell out in spring 2022 due to major surgery and had to organise the repeated search for a new Executive Board from his hospital bed. At the beginning of July, we elected Andreas Stamer (3) as Scientific Director to take over the tasks of Rahel Salathé, and at the beginning of September we won Fausta Borsani (4) as Executive Director. This meant that the hand-over of operational activities could begin. Unfortunately, Andreas Stamer was also absent several times for health reasons. The follow-up costs of the sick leave were largely insured, but the 2022 project goals for Carefish/catch and FishTest were only partially achieved.

Fortunately, we were able to count on two people who have been working with fair-fish for years: Jenny Volstorf (5, director fair-fish database) and Sebastian Scholz (6, web and database manager), as well as the Team Switzerland formed in 2020 with Rolf Frischknecht (7, lead), Regula Horner (8, administration), Larissa Puma (9, school project) and Peter Jossi (10, politics).

The members of the Board in 2022 were: Billo Heinzpeter Studer (Civiale del Friuli) as President, Nina Otter (11) (Paris), Jenny Volstorf (Berlin), Rahel Salathé (Denens, until June) and Dieter Grünenfelder (12) (Zurich). In a retreat of the Board and the team in August in Friuli, we determined, among other things, the strengthening of our structures. This includes, from 2023, a composition of the Board according to the rules of good governance, to which we attached little importance in the pioneering and building phase: clear separation of strategic and operational decisions, no more employees on the Board. Strengthening also includes increasing in the number of the members entitled to vote, so far limited to a small group of people in the past, in order to protect the still young association and its funds.

Cover:
A school of Blackfin barracudas (*Sphyraena qenie*)
(Photo: Bernard-Dupont/Wikimedia)

Motivating vision, clear goals

In the August retreat, we reformulated our vision: “We want to change people’s perception and behaviour towards fish. To do this, we rely on science and communication.” That is why we set ourselves the following goals: In ten years, fair-fish will be the contact point in Europe for questions about fish welfare, environmental protection and fair trade in fisheries and aquaculture. In five years, fair-fish will have branches in three European countries and will be financed to a considerable extent by individual donations.

We are looking for allies

Our commitment to fish welfare will be successful but as a shoal. We can only achieve our ambitious goals if many people support us. That’s why we are looking for people who communicate with us as FAIR-FISH ALLY and get actively involved.

More here:
fair-fish.net/en/ally/

Presentations

Last year, fair-fish was a prominent guest in the media four times: in February, twice on the first German television programme SWR Wissen and SWR odysso, in March in the Swiss magazine Frauenstimme, and in July in National Geographic Germany. See: fair-fish.ch/news/media/

At last year’s Summer Shoal, fair-fish was present with various presentations, see:
fair-fish.net/en/wo > [summer-shoal](#) > [summer-shoal-2022/](#)

fair-fish database

In 2022, we changed the name of the database from FishEthoBase to fair-fish database¹ in order to underline its relation to fair-fish. The fair-fish database investigates how well fish might feel in aquaculture. It has existed for 10 years and is constantly being developed.

In 2022, we started to update the oldest fish profiles. In addition to developing new profiles, this is crucial to keep the database up to date. The first four thoroughly overhauled profiles concern the fish species European seabass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), Gilthead seabream (*Sparus aurata*), Rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), and Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*). We were able to contribute the new knowledge gained in this update to a report² by the FishEthoGroup for the EU Aquaculture Advisory Council.

For 2022, we have reached the target of creating 20 profiles (16 new profiles, 4 updates of existing profiles). We also launched a completely new website with better usability, new design, and new features. We made many improvements to the formatting and rating of the profiles. However, the overhaul came at the expense of creating new species profiles. We have taken this into account in planning for the following year.

¹ see fair-fish-database.net

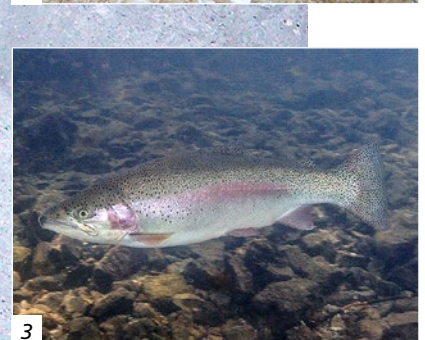
² Saraiva, João L., Jenny Volstorf, María J. Cabrera-Álvarez, Pablo Arechavala-Lopez. 2022. Using ethology to improve farmed fish welfare and production. (ccmar.uaq.pt/sites/ccmar.uaq.pt/files/aac_ethology_and_welfare_final.pdf)

1 *Dicentrarchus labrax*. European seabass (photo: Bjoertvedt/Wikimedia)

2 *Sparus aurata*. Gilthead seabream (photo: Julien Renoult/Wikimedia)

3 *Oncorhynchus mykiss*. Rainbow trout (photo: Liquid Art/Wikimedia)

4 *Salmo salar*. Atlantic salmon (photo: Hans-Petter Fjeld/Wikimedia)





Meeting of fair-fish and FishEthoGroup in October in northeastern Italy.
From left to right: Andreas Stamer, Billo Heinzpeter Studer, Pablo Arechevala-Lopez, Fausta Borsani, João Luis Saraiva, Jenny Volstorf, Carlos Lemos, Maria Cabrera-Álvarez, Diether Grünenfelder
(photo: Sebastian Scholz).

A friendship that continues

The two organisations fair-fish international and Fish Ethology and Welfare Group (FishEtho-Group) have decided to reorganise their partnership. The FishEthoGroup was founded four years ago as a scientific spin-off from fair-fish in order to establish scientific cooperation at a university. Both partners work together successfully on various projects and pursue a common vision.

While friendship persists, the desire for greater independence has emerged. The partners intend to continue working together, but they want to better communicate their own achievements and project contributions and render them more visible – and leave the door open for cooperation with others. A corresponding Memorandum of Understanding sets the principles.

Carefish/farm III

The third part of the Carefish/farm project was mainly worked on by the FishEthoGroup (FEG). The main results: Activities in the fields of research, consulting, training, and scientific publications. Several scientific papers were submitted, e.g. a publication on the “right” stocking density in aquaculture¹ or a book chapter on fish welfare in fish farming², as well as technical publications and several presentations. The FEG’s advisory work on the welfare of fish in aquaculture and the related training courses were also of growing importance last year.

¹ Saraiva JL, Rachinas-Lopes P, Arechavala-Lopez P. Finding the “golden stocking” density”: A balance between fish welfare and farmers’ perspectives. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*. 2022; 9: 930221. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2022.930221.

² Saraiva, JL, Arechavala-Lopez, P, and Sneddon, L. The welfare of fish in aquaculture systems. In: Knight A, Phillips C, and Sparks P (Eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Animal Welfare*; Thames, UK: Taylor and Francis; 2022.

Carefish/catch

Our research project Carefish/care to reduce animal suffering in fisheries made progress. In cooperation with four project partners, we explored the issue of animal welfare in fishing which has been given little attention so far. One of the main goals of the project is to develop guidelines for the "Friend of the Sea" label, which, as a project partner, first helps to determine the fish species and fishing methods to be studied.

A second part is being added to the fair-fish database which summarises the animal suffering caused by different fishing methods and possible improvements. The structure is in place and the first profiles of fish species and fishing methods have been drafted.

The Portuguese project partners CCMAR and FishEthoGroup have developed a vitality scale and protocols to assess the condition of caught fish. For trammel nets (three-layer gill nets), concrete measures to reduce animal suffering have already been defined. Samples are taken from the catch on board fishing vessels to assess the condition and vitality of different fish species and to measure the level of stress in their blood.

The DeMoS institute analyses the economic feasibility of guidelines for fisheries taking animal suffering into consideration. It pursues an artistic approach to an individual encounter with fishes and conducts intensive discussions with stakeholders such as fishermen and consumers. The results are evaluated with the help of a mathematical model.

The international certification scheme Friend of the Sea will eventually incorporate the findings of the research project into its fishing guidelines, similar to what it has already done with the findings from our Carefish/farm project for its fish farming guidelines.

FishTest

Due to the sickness absences of the three persons involved in the FishTest mentioned on page 2, it was not possible in the reporting year to assess further fish species and finally extend the test to aquaculture. The amount for the hours not worked (12,000 €) was therefore set aside for the following business year.

On the other hand, we have reviewed and improved the information on the existing 141 wild fish assessments.

Projects in Switzerland

The school project, which had been planned for a long time but was suspended due to the pandemic, could finally be carried out in seven primary school classes after the summer. The reactions were positive throughout and the project will be continued.

The ornamental fish campaign already designed by our Team Switzerland in 2019 resulted in the advisory platform aquarienfisch.ch with helpful information on suitable fish species and their keeping in the year under review. The French counterpart poissondaquarium.ch was prepared for the coming year.



School lesson with fair-fish: I know it! I know it!
(Photo: Cyrill Harder)



A school class making a difficult catch in the surging sea.
(Photo: Cyrill Harder)

Carefishcatch at sea: scientist and fisherman each do their job. (Photo: Flávia Carvalho)



A scientist takes blood to determine the condition of the fish.
(Photo: Ana Marçalo)

Solid finances

In 2022 we earned much less than in the previous year, when we received a very large donation for the multi-year Carefish/catch project. Our work in 2022 was mainly covered by provisions from this donation and from the multi-year Carefish/farm project (use of funds in the income statement). This is reflected in the balance sheet in a decrease in assets and long-term liabilities as well as in a slight profit compared to the accounting loss in the previous year.

The majority (86%) of the expenses in 2022 were for the projects (including the salaries and fees paid for them) and remained at the level of the previous year. The remaining personnel expenses (13% of the expenses, mainly administration), on the other hand, increased by 43% compared to the previous year, which is not surprising given the personnel changes during the year.

Financially, fair-fish is on solid footing for the next two years thanks to provisions for projects. However, the relatively low equity capital (just under 7% of total turnover) reveals the medium-term need for new funds. fair-fish has two years to go after it. Before all, it must succeed in raising funds without earmarking (donations and legacies) in order to alleviate the existential dependence on individual projects and foundations.

As in the previous year, the expenses and income of Team Switzerland are already included in the consolidated financial statement 2022 of fair-fish international.

Balance sheet and annual accounts

We would like to thank Arn Treuhand (Lyss) for the smooth cooperation in the accounting and Winco Treuhand (Winterthur) for the efficient audit.

Balance sheet as per 31 December 2022	2022 EUR	2021 EUR
Liquid assets	2'359'467.81	2'801'808.58
Other short-term receivables	596.30	26'913.74
Accrued income and prepaid expenses	14'150.10	1'129.40
Current assets	2'374'214.21	2'829'851.72
Financial assets	171'379.00	162'977.89
Fixed assets	171'379.00	162'977.89
Total assets	2'545'593.21	2'992'829.61
Liabilities from deliveries and services	10'901.20	4'091.05
Other short-term liabilities	15'283.85	8'015.05
Other short-term liabilities board member	7'464.45	3'091.92
Accrued liabilities	55'648.49	9'500.00
Short-term debt capital	89'297.99	24'698.02
Fund Carefish/catch	1'235'512.00	1'802'520.00
Fund Legacy Ringier	952'960.64	952'960.64
Fund Team Switzerland	92'058.05	73'788.45
Fund Germany	7'474.35	7'503.37
Long-term debt capital	2'288'005.04	2'836'772.46
Debt capital	2'377'303.03	2'861'470.48
Association's assets	131'359.13	334'634.08
Annual loss/profit	36'931.05	-203'274.95
Equity	168'290.18	131'359.13
Total liabilities	2'545'593.21	2'992'829.61

Income statement	2022 EUR	2021 EUR
Donations	309'203.62	2'470'228.38
Legacies	39'544.25	898'605.60
Use of funds	567'008.00	497'480.00
Gross revenues from deliveries and services	915'755.87	3'866'313.98
Revenue reductions	0.00	0.00
Net revenues from deliveries and services	915'755.87	3'866'313.98
Projects	755'562.49	755'767.24
Allocations to funds	0.00	3'252'960.64
Projects and fund allocations	755'562.49	4'008'727.88
Gross profit I	160'193.38	-142'413.90
<i>Gross margin I</i>	17.5%	-3.7%
Staff costs	74'895.12	46'334.36
Services of third parties	39'552.04	33'590.96
Gross profit II	45'746.22	-222'339.22
<i>Gross margin II</i>	5.0%	-5.8%
Room expenditure	4'494.25	3'000.00
Property insurance, fees	221.35	108.25
Administrative expenses	23'925.90	25'787.44
Advertising expenses	1'333.75	1'372.65
Other operating costs	5'588.60	5'349.61
Other operating expenses	35'563.85	35'617.95
Operating result	10'182.37	-257'957.17
Financial income	40'641.12	56'139.88
Financial expenses	-13'892.44	-1'457.66
Annual loss/profit	36'931.05	-203'274.95

Thanks and outlook

The commitment and competence of the Board and team members made it possible to continue fair-fish's activities despite illnesses and personnel changes during the year and set the course for the future at the same time. For this, all those involved deserve a big thank you!

Above all, we would like to thank the many donors and sustaining members who have supported fair-fish financially and morally for many years. This group persons is the basis of our work. In the coming year, we will devote more energy to expanding this group.

However, we can tackle large projects solely because we may always count on the support of foundations. Last year, the following foundations promoted our work: Open Philanthropy (for the Carefish/farm III and Carefish/catch projects), Dreiklang (fair-fish database), Edith Maryon (FishTest), the Graf Fabrice, Elisabeth Rentschler, Malou and Werner Dessauer foundations (ornamental fish project), as well as the foundations Poristes and PETRAM (without earmarking). We are very grateful to all these foundations!

We are looking confidently to the next and the following years. fair-fish has become stronger in terms of personnel and is in the process of adapting its structures to the size of the tasks it has taken on.

Cividale and Uster, 2, May 2023



Billo Heinzpeter Studer
Präsident



Fausta Borsani
Geschäftsleiterin



*Children playing at the Barcola in Trieste.
(Photo: Billo Heinzpeter Studer)*