

Project Summary

Promoting fish markets and a fish culture

FLAG: Noord Holland

Noord Holland, The Netherlands

Project overview

In Noord-Holland three markets have transformed the act of buying fresh fish into a cultural and culinary experience where customers can also learn about fishing and the “route to market” for their plaice or hake. As local tourism attractions, these markets are now providing wider benefits for the area and other regional certificated food products.



Life in the harbours of the municipalities of Texel, Den Helder and Den Oever had slowed down over the years. During the fishing season, the only activity in those harbours was the auction where locally landed fish was sold directly to wholesalers and big companies. The need to restructure economic activities and generate new ones, as well as reconnecting the general public with the fisheries heritage of the area, was therefore considered vital.

With this in mind, the Noord-Holland FLAG has supported and facilitated cooperation between markets in the municipalities of Texel, Den Helder and Den Oever in undertaking structural investments (market facilities to sell fish to the general public and education centre) and in jointly developing a website (www.versevis.nl) and other promotional tools, including flyers, displays and information points. This has transformed the act of buying fresh fish in the area as well as providing opportunities to join workshops on how to prepare fish. This enhanced market experience has also been extended to other locally produced products such as cheese, vegetables, meat and organic produce, and during the summer tourists are even treated to dance shows and a harbour choir performed by local actors.



Key lessons

- **Relevance to FARNET themes:** Attracting private investment, attracting local visitors and tourists, opening up new markets, encouraging competitiveness, diversification activities for fishing organisations.
- **Results:** As a result of this project, tourists and local visitors can now buy fresh fish in these harbours and new shops have been encouraged to set up. Cooperation between the fishermen, the local shops and tourist organisations has also developed.

In 2010 the Den Oever fish market started with annual sales standing at €125 000 (15 000 KG fish). This figure rose in 2011 to €135 000 (18 000 KG of fish) with the market attracting 10 000 visitors in just 40 Saturdays. In Den Helder the fish monger set up in the auction sold 50 000 KG of fish in 2010 for a value of €225 000 which was maintained in 2011. In Texel, the fish market was relocated to what is now called “*Oude vismarkt*” (Old fish market). It is working particularly well, selling more than 200 000 KG in 2011 for a value of over €1 million.

- **Transferability:** This project started in Den Oever and the concept was soon transferred to Texel and Den Helder harbours (25km from each other), prompting collaboration between the three municipalities. This type of project is very relevant for fisheries areas where local marketing channels for fish landed are absent or underdeveloped.
- **Final Comment:** A successful project to revitalise harbour areas through the sales and promotion of local fish and cooperation with partners outside the fisheries sector.

Total cost and EFF contribution

Total project cost: € 318 000

- EFF Axis 4: € 61 374
- National/ Regional: co-financing: € 61 374
- Private matching funding: € 195 000

Project information

Title: Promoting fish markets and a fish culture

Duration: initially 2010-2012 but due to be extended

Case study date: April 2012

Project promoter

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