



Program: FP7 Cooperation

## Deliverable D5.2

Project acronym:	EUROSHELL
Project title:	Bridging the gap between science and producers to support the European marine mollusc production sector
Project coordinator:	Comité National de la Conchyliculture (CNC)
Grant agreement number:	312025 – FP7 KBBE 2012.1.2-11
Funding scheme:	Coordination Support Action
Deliverable number 5.2	Poitou-Charentes workshop report

## REPORT OF THE POITOU-CHARENTES REGIONAL FORUM

MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup> 2013

### ATTENDEES

- AUBIER Annie, shellfish farmer, Syndicat des Affineurs Expéditeurs du bassin de Marennes Oléron
- BAUDET Francis, shellfish farmer, Syndicat Conchylicole de Hiers Brouage Nodes
- BECHEMIN Christian, IFREMER
- BERTIN Michel, shellfish farmer, Association A PRO MARAIS
- BEYNAUD Jean-François, shellfish farmer, Syndicat des producteurs d'huîtres du territoire rétais
- BLACHIER Philippe, director of CREEA
- BROSSARD Nicolas, quality service manager, CRC Poitou-Charentes
- CHAMPEAU Laurent, director of CRC Poitou Charentes
- COUGOT Roger, President of « L'huître pédagogique »
- COUTANT Catherine, shellfish farmer in la Tremblade
- ERIPRET Mariella, Euroshell project manager, CNC
- ETIENNE Monique, IFREMER
- FOKI Romain, Shellfish Project manager, SMIDAP
- GABORIAU Philippe, shellfish farmer, Syndicat de protection ostréicole du littoral charentais
- GIGAROFF Hervé, teacher, Lycée de la Mer de Bourcefranc
- GILLARDEAU Thierry, shellfish farmer
- GRASSET Michel, shellfish farmer, Syndicat Rive Gauche de la Charente
- GUILLAUMIE Bruno, European affairs, CNC
- GUYAU Patrick, Vice-President of CRC Pays de la Loire
- JARNAN Nadine, CRC Poitou-Charentes
- KERAUDREN Hélène, project manager, CRC Pays de la Loire
- MILLE-CLAIRE Corinne, Lycée régional maritime et aquacole de La Rochelle
- MORANDEAU Philippe, CRC Poitou-Charentes
- PARACHE Alain, Lycée de la Mer
- PAUWELS Aline, director of the « Cité de l'Huître »
- PEREZ Marianne, director of the CFPPA

- PERRAUDEAU Amélie, FLAG leader « Pays Marennnes Oléron »
- PIQUET Jean-Come, IFREMER
- PRIVAT Freddy, shellfish farmer
- PRIVAT Adrien, project manager, CPIE Marennnes-Oléron/ Association IODDE
- PROU Jean, IFREMER – partner of the project Euroshell
- RHONE Charlotte, Environment project manager, CRC Poitou-Charentes
- RUNIGO Michel, director of the Lycée régional maritime et aquacole de La Rochelle
- SOUBIELLE Marc, shellfish farmer, EARL Anthias
- SUIRE Jean Pierre, shellfish farmer, Groupement Qualité Huîtres Marennnes Oléron
- VIAUD Gérald, President of the CRC Poitou-Charentes
- VOISIN Frédéric, organic shellfish farmer

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Mariella Eripret thanks all participants of this day for accepting the invitation to the second regional forum of the European program Euroshell.

She presents the project and the objectives of the day (see annex 1).

Euroshell aims to identify current and future challenges that the European shellfish sector is facing and to create the conditions for improving knowledge transfer between science and industry and for a better integration of industry needs by the research.

The project focuses on identifying the underlying factors that hinder the effective management of knowledge in the sector and organizes regional forums to facilitate dialogue between companies and researchers, focusing on the development of an effective methodology for knowledge transfer.

It is proposed firstly, to establish an extension network, and secondly, to define a common vision for the future of the sector and identify key targets for research that could be integrated into the European Aquaculture Platform for Technology and Innovation (EATIP). It will also provide opportunities for cooperation with Fishery Local Action Groups (FLAGs - Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund) of the European fishing areas network (FARNET).

Participants are then invited to present themselves, by profile, telling their name, the number of year of experience, where they work, what they producer or work on, etc.: farmers first, then scientists and finally extension workers.

## **WORKSHOP 1 – VISION OF THE SHELLFISH SECTOR**

As an introduction to this workshop was presented the European Aquaculture Platform for Technology and Innovation (EATIP). Technology platforms, implemented in 2000 at the

initiative of the European Commission, aims to bring together public and private actors (producers, scientists, elected officials, local authorities, other experts ...) of a sector with high technology potential to define a long-term vision on the needs in terms of research. This allows the European Commission to focus its tenders in accordance with the actual needs of different technology sectors. There are about forty platforms in all areas (energy, transport, food, etc..).

For the aquaculture sector, the EATIP was created in 2007. As part of this platform, a document on the vision of the aquaculture sector has been formulated following regional consultations across Europe (Aquainnova project). But the shellfish sector is poorly represented. Indeed fishfarming prevails. But it is also a communication tool and a document that is enforceable against Commissioners, who must take it into account. It is therefore essential that the shellfish sector is better integrated into the vision.

Euroshell is an opportunity for shellfish farming to take a better place in this platform. It is in this context that an exercise on the vision of the sector has been proposed to the participants of the forum.

The goal was to define a common vision for the sector and to identify priorities for research. It was asked to the participants to comment on the schema of the vision of the shellfish sector, proposed by EMPA with a few additions from the vision of EATIP (see schema in Annex 2): do you agree with this view? Are there elements to add? Are there some to remove? Can you clarify these ideas with examples? What are the most important elements?

This document was sent to participants a few days before the date of the forum, so that they could start to think about it.

Participants were divided into four mixed groups of nine persons, to facilitate speaking. Each group consisted of 3-4 producers, 1-2 scientists, 2-3 extension workers and 2-3 CRC representatives (employees or elected).

After an hour of discussion, a reporter from each group presented a summary of the discussion of his group in plenary session. Here is what came out from the discussions.

## I/ Territory-environment

### **1) Water quality**

Clearly, the quality of the environment has emerged as a priority conditioning the sustainability of shellfish farming in the medium and long term. Water quality is the first concern. Indeed, the natural balance is hammered because of the presence

of contaminants without being able to act on the partial or total removal of them. It is unfortunate that professionals must adapt their way of working according to the pollution they suffer from while in the absence of pollution, the situation would be much more comfortable to work.

It is therefore essential to focus research on the impact of pollutants on the health of shellfish (eg, pesticides), and how to eradicate the sources of pollution.

The lack of knowledge on the subject penalizes the sector by depriving it of means to weigh on some trade-offs.

Indeed, at present, the profession has few levers truly effective in reversing the trend marked by a continuing degradation of estuarine ecosystems.

## **2) Sanitary monitoring**

Meanwhile, we must give to professionals the means to anticipate sanitary crisis that increase.

Health issues have been much discussed. They were qualified as major economic risks for companies.

The participants ask for:

- The development of predictive tools to be responsive to face crises (closures);
- An improved environmental monitoring (e.g. Vigo) and information towards professionals with a more reactive monitoring network;
- The development of techniques that allow companies to adapt themselves (innovative equipment, closed-circuit, water treatment techniques, etc.)

## **3) Access to the coast**

The development of aquaculture is facing problems of sharing the territory and environmental protection measures.

Indeed, the coast is a source of space conflicts between different activities that take place on it: tourism, urbanization, industry, agriculture, aquaculture, protected natural areas...

To ensure the sustainability of shellfish farming, it is necessary to implement measures to protect the territories, and in particular territories where shellfish farming is exercised.

There are various measures of territory protection (marine parks, marine SCoT, Natura 2000 sites ...) emanating from a good initiative in the beginning but eventually prove to be regulatory barriers to shellfish farmers.

However, shellfish farming provides ecosystem services and thus could be totally compatible with these protective measures.

Environmental groups sometimes come in conflict with the interests of production while shellfish farming and environmental protection go hand in hand.

#### **4) Ecosystem services**

Shellfish are sentinels of the environment. They indicate whether the water is good or bad. A comparison is made between shellfish farmers and beekeepers. Bees are also sentinels of the environment, and beekeepers, like shellfish farmers, are not masters of their territory, but they suffer the consequences of environmental degradation.

Shellfish provides ecological services (or ecosystem services). Indeed, it can purify / clean up the water. It is necessary to take this into account and to use it as a defence of shellfish farming. Moreover, this represents a significant economic weight. We must do some research on these aspects and quantify the services provided.

#### **5) Management of wild natural beds**

This item has been added to the scheme presented.

It is essential to manage wild natural beds and to continue the natural collection to preserve biodiversity and the quality of products. We can not depend solely on hatcheries.

#### **6) Adaptation to environmental changes**

Climate changes are affecting the environment and ecosystems. We need to improve our understanding of these changes in order to better adapt.

#### **7) Relationship with local stakeholders**

Research supports professionals but also elected officials to guide spatial development policies they put in place. Elected officials base - or at least, should base - their decisions on the results of scientific research. Hence the importance of conducting research with professionals, enabling them to present arguments to defend their work.

## **II/ Market**

### **1) Develop new markets**

The shellfish market grows outside of Europe, particularly in Asia. It is therefore important to follow the trend. A research on potential export markets has to be done.

In general, participants consider that more market research should be done to match production to demand. Rather than producing first and then look for opportunities, it would be better to ensure that there is sufficient demand to then produce and sell at a good price.

Demand should also be created and therefore, it is important to communicate better.

### **2) Develop communication**

To better sell a product, one has to communicate about its qualities.

The introduction of labels, certifications, PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) can promote the products.

Communication abroad should also be strengthened to develop export.

### **3) Diversify marketing methods**

Supermarkets and hypermarkets represent a good market share (40% according to one participant). Direct selling is also a widespread marketing mode (60 to 70% according to the same participant). It is necessary to maintain a large share of direct sales in order to reduce dependence on supermarkets and prevent any monopoly.

Other circuits related to our time (online orders, AMAP - associations supporting small farming- , baskets of products ...) seem difficult to implement given the specificity of shellfish: fresh and alive products of which the purchase is subject to consumer confidence. However, there are systems such as « panier poisson-coquillages » (shellfish and fish basket) developed in the Etang de Thau that work well.

### **4) Improve marketing**

Participants discussed the need to improve marketing with better distribution and delivery of products, optimizing the transport of goods, better packaging of products, etc.

Pooling marketing was mentioned (eg cooperative). It would help improve all these aspects mentioned above.

### **5) Diversify the activity**

Diversification is practiced on a small scale. "Pescatourism" for example, grows a bit, but it is seen more as a burden than a benefit, especially because of all regulatory obligations related to it (safety rules ...).

Diversification is often hampered by the territory competition. The tasting of products for example generates competition with traditional restaurants. Moreover, this activity is considered full-fledged, independent of the production activity. "This is another job."

#### **6) Establish a level playing field within and outside Europe**

Establish fair rules is a utopia. Certainly, it would be desirable because in the current context where prices outside of France are very low while exports are booming, it would balance the relations and ensure "free and not distorted competition". But the producers do not believe in this possibility.

In addition, cultural differences make it difficult to work together even within Europe: between English-speaking countries (culture of cooked food, sanitation) and the Latin countries (culture of living food, control of the environment, but difficulty to manage the water catchments), attitudes are very different. Holland, for example, is culturally a trading nation, with buy-sell activities.

#### **7) Processing products**

Research is also required on the processing of products, as new ways of consuming emerge and it is necessary to offer new types of products.

### **III/ Product – production**

#### **1) Health**

Producers, though legally responsible, do not control all the elements to ensure the health of the consumer. They master the production process, but not the environment.

Shellfish health and disease depend largely on elements that producers cannot control. They have therefore not been very much detailed, although their knowledge is considered crucial and obviously needs to be strengthened.

Just as the life cycle of the species, on which there is still much to discover. The marine area is indeed less known than terrestrial space.

#### **2) Management of wild natural beds**

This item has been added to the scheme presented. It is also linked to the "environment" component. Indeed, it is necessary to better manage wild natural beds to allow better natural collection and ensure the good condition of wildlife and the preservation of biodiversity.

### **3) Development of new technologies**

Participants consider the need to develop new technologies for:

- Packaging and processing products,
- Diversify species (find alternatives to *Crassostrea gigas*)
- Be able to produce offshore to limit conflicts of use.

## **IV/ Management and governance**

### **1) Simplification and consistency of regulatory texts**

Producers face administrative difficulties, because of the profusion of regulatory texts on the one hand, and the contradiction between the texts themselves, on the other hand.

In addition, they express the need for a better regulatory framework for the management and governance of the profession: who does what?

### **2) Representation of the profession in front of decision-making bodies**

Producers are wondering if they are sufficiently well represented within the State or the European Union. Representation is important for lobbying.

### **3) Socio-economic data**

Participants consider that there is a lack of knowledge and statistical studies on the profession in general. It is essential to conduct more comprehensive and reliable studies on the business: market conditions, economic importance of the sector, sociological knowledge, companies' needs, economic sustainability of companies, etc.

It is also necessary that these data are available and accessible to professionals themselves.

### **4) To promote and develop human capital**

Participants found it important to add to the schema the notion of training. It is essential to the sustainability of shellfish farming. The better we are formed, the more we are able to face some difficulties.

Some participants deplored the lack of oystermen while this is a great profession to enhance the products.

Overall, participants found very interesting the exercise of exchanging points of views and comprehensive reflection on the sector. Some have even said that they would like this discussion to be conducted in all CRC.

## **WORKSHOP 2 – EXTENSION NETWORK**

The afternoon was dedicated to the theme "knowledge transfer."

The purpose was introduced by a presentation of the *Centre Régional d'Expérimentation et d'Application Aquacole* (CREAA) by its director, Philippe Blachier (see presentation in annex 3, in French).

Then the participants were divided into four mixed groups of nine people, as the workshop on the vision but differently constituted to ensure that everyone can talk to each other.

Questions were sent in advance to participants so that they could start thinking about knowledge transfer. The same questions were asked by the facilitators to start the debate. The discussion was free, the questions being a means to open discussion.

- What is knowledge transfer for you?
- What are the structures that you know, that transfer knowledge? Towards the general public? Towards producers?
- What other structures could do that?
- Why is there no extension network in the shellfish area?
- How to create one that works?
- What resources (human, financial, technical ...)? Who, how, where? ...
- What are the needs of producers and researchers in terms of knowledge transfer?
- What would be the benefits? Difficulties?
- If you were to implement this extension network, how would you do?
- Etc.

After 45 minutes of discussion, a reporter from each group presented a summary of the discussion of his group in plenary session. Here is what came out from the discussions.

### General observations:

Participants think that the dissemination of knowledge is not enough in the industry. Professionals are familiar with traditional farming but have no scientific knowledge.

How is it that in agriculture, especially in the post-war period, transfer of knowledge worked well between scientists and farmers while no extension system has been implemented in the shellfish industry? Just because shellfish farmers have never expressed this need...

IFREMER transfers knowledge towards the CRC but not to professionals and often only in times of crisis, which creates a climate of mistrust and tension.

The CRC does not hold enough public meetings. However, they are not always easy to hold as professionals do not participate easily and are not always very attentive...

For its part, IFREMER notes that conferences organized in the exposition of *La Tremblade* do not necessarily passionate professionals. Few are present while the Institute needs them.

In general, the participants note that it is not easy to find people who want to get involved. The need to motivate professionals is raised.

The lack of communication is partially due to the *Direction Départementale des Territoires et de la Mer* ( French State) who put a barrier between scientists and professionals.

The problem of transparency of scientific organizations is also highlighted.

Example: mortalities were observed in Ireland last year and Ifremer said it was not aware of it.

A critic is made on the fact that the report of the Oyster World Congress has not been broadcast, while the CNC has published it on its website. There is a lack of transmission of information even within the industry.

The professionals present yet expressed interest in being informed about what is happening across the world.

### Ideas on knowledge transfer:

#### **Who transfers knowledge?**

Everyone cannot be an extension worker. It requires some teaching skills, interpersonal skills ... The person has to be legitimate and neutral, neither a scientific nor a professional, but who has enough knowledge to know how to convey.

In order to transfer well the information, it is essential to establish a climate of confidence, a balanced relation. The scientist must show some humility when he explains his research, he should not be condescending. He must be able to explain that his results may be valid only at a given time and place, that he encounters difficulties in conducting his study, etc. On the other hand, the recipients of the study (professionals) should be indulgent, they need to understand the reality of a research work (hazards, specific context ...) and should not expect immediate results. Research can extend over a long period of time.

A good transfer of knowledge implies an adjustment of the language, the vocabulary used. Scientists do not use the same vocabulary as producers. The vocabulary also differs by region.

Some suggest creating jobs of aquaculture consultants or advisers.

These extension agents may play a role in scientific watch, collecting information, gathering, overlapping, synthesizing and disseminating it.

Organizations such as technical centers (CREAA, SMEL, SMIDAP, CEPRALMAR ...), professional organizations, CRC or CNC, vocational colleges, associations transferring knowledge to the general public (*Cité de l'Huître*, for example), FLAGS could "host" extension agents.

A system at the national level could bring all stakeholders (ministries, training centers, scientists, professionals, representatives of CRC, CNC ...) and oversee everything.

The importance of networking between stakeholders is emphasized.

Information can be transferred from scientist to engineer / teacher / extension worker who then makes the link with the professional. Or it can be transferred directly without intermediaries.

### **What should be transferred?**

One should not disseminate knowledge in only one direction, from scientists to farmers. All the knowledge must be taken into account, including empirical knowledge. We must not neglect the experience of professionals. Moreover, scientists express themselves this need to acquire the knowledge gained in the field by producers.

There are not scholars on one side and ignorant people on the other. Knowledge is co-constructed, it is exchanged and expands by the contributions of each.

The information to be transmitted should be targeted on demand. It must be simplified without being misrepresented. The purpose must be adapted to the public.

We must be vigilant on all the information available, especially on the Internet. You can find everything and its opposite. This is why it is important to sort information and check its foundation.

The transcription of data should not lead to abuses, manipulations. It must remain faithful to the source.

There is a lot of scattered knowledge that needs to be gathered and then disseminated.

However, one must bear in mind that the results of experiments, research, depend heavily on spatial and temporal context and are therefore not always generalizable.

### **How to transfer knowledge?**

Several possibilities and ideas were mentioned:

- Public exchanges could be organized at regular intervals. Three per year seem desirable. Thus, stakeholders would not have to wait until all results are established and scientists could explain why a particular study advances slowly, why the results are delayed, what difficulties they encounter, in order to involve the recipients in these studies.
- IFREMER could reedit data sheets, as it did a few years ago and which were appreciated by professionals.
- regular information meetings could be organized by CREEA. Information transmitted by email is necessary but not sufficient, as many producers do not use computers so much. Some participants regretted the time when CREEA communicated more by visiting the farms. Professionals require more information from the CREEA.
- The establishment of newsletters, a website dedicated to the transmission of knowledge, etc. Reference is made to the blog "Ostrea" (<http://www.ostrea.org/>), led by a scientist, which is highly appreciated by some professionals. The advantage of this blog is that it provides a forum for interested people to express themselves, ask questions, provide feedback, tell what the situation is in their farm or region, etc. There is a need for exchange, whether physical or virtual.

These locations would allow a transfer of knowledge between professionals themselves. They could then share their knowledge. But is it possible? Individualism is often mentioned in this profession, and it could be an obstacle to the transmission of information, in particular because of competition between companies.

- The organization of visits of farms, trips and exchanges between different actors of the shellfish industry would facilitate the understanding of certain phenomena, of results of experiments, etc. besides creating links. Learning by example works better.
- More fun professional magazines could be created

## **PRESENTATION OF THE TOOLS DEVELOPED WITHIN EUROSHELL**

### **1) Mapping the sector**

Jean Prou, in charge of Work package 4 on useful tools for knowledge transfer, presented the mapping tool which is under development. With Sextant team of IFREMER and the data provided by the research and industry partners of Euroshell, he develops a map that will locate in Europe, the main areas of shellfish production, research centers, technical centers, training centers, professional, etc.

## 2) Knowledge database

Mariella Eripret presents briefly the knowledge database which is under development as part of the Work package 3 on the review of current knowledge. This database will be accessible on the Internet and will collect all the useful knowledge for the shellfish industry, whether it results from applied or basic research, empirical knowledge or gray literature, whether from European, national or regional projects, of past, present and future projects. The project partners are in charge of gathering about twenty projects per country.

This database will be available in the four languages of the project (French, English, Spanish and Italian) and will then be used and supplied by extension agents, scientists, professionals...

## PRESENTATION OF THE FLAG « PAYS DE MARENNES-OLÉRON » AND « BASSIN D'ARCACHON »

Amélie Perraudeau, leader of the FLAG « Pays de Marennes-Oléron » presents her group as well as the group « Bassin d'Arcachon » (see presentation in annex 4, in French).

## CONCLUSIONS AND EXCHANGES WITH PARTICIPANTS

Mariella Eripret thanks everyone for participating in this day of exchange. The report of the forum will be sent to all participants. The next forum will be held in the Mediterranean, then in Ireland, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands. The main ideas expressed in these forums as well as proposals and tools suggested by the project Euroshell will be presented at a second meeting of European stakeholders of the shellfish industry in January 2014.

An evaluation form was completed by the participants who found the day very interesting. These remarks were made:

- Better explain the objectives of the day and the project in general because some participants had not quite understood at the beginning of the day even if they better understood at the end;
- There was a lot to discuss and it would have taken more time for each workshop and for debate;
- Give more examples of knowledge transfer;
- Invite representatives of the State (e.g. *Direction Départementale des Territoires et de la Mer*) and local authorities (Region, Department) or elected officials.

The day ended at 17:15.