

INTERNATIONAL

Slow Fish Campaign: Understanding the Oceans

The network is growing, consolidating and getting more structured locally around fishing communities, while engaging a broader public, including youth. The general message and areas of focus are embracing the complexity of the issue and helping the voices of fishing communities be heard.



A report by Serena Alaimo

The campaign is gaining recognition amongst fisher organizations and international institutions. We now have the possibility of developing local messages within a global campaign, while focusing mainly on alternative value chains.

[Meetings, Events and Networks](#)

Events at all levels are critical moments for bringing participants together, introducing new participants (the network has shown it can be very inclusive) and engaging in a on going dialogue that brings many perspectives and solutions into an evolving collective vision of a healthy future for fisheries and coastal communities.

The network has started a collective dynamic, moving towards self organizing thematic and practical activities at local, regional and global levels.

[Slow Fish 2013](#)

The Slow Fish event, held in Genoa, Italy on May 9 12, saw the participation of 60 delegates from Europe, North and South America, South Africa and India. This allowed the strengthening of relationships and exchanges within the network and the deepening and confirmation of the themes the network chose to work on and promote during the last encounter at Terra Madre, and inspired delegates to organize local or national campaigns or smaller convivial events with a focus on collective responsibility.

A dedicated space for delegates hosted daily activities such as workshops and discussions, as well as public conferences, which were organized to raise awareness on the issues of privatization, co management and forage fishing.

Ocean grabbing and privatization

We had the opportunity to listen to the stories of fishers from Chile, South Africa and North America, as well as academics, that reflect a growing trend in current fishery policy. The network has agreed that privatization and quota systems are a major, shared threat, with fishing communities being wiped off the map at an alarming rate, largely due to these policies.

Co management

Many examples, from Spain, France, Colombia and Ecuador, of successful management of local resources involving local stakeholders in the decisional process were shared. Some involve centuries old institutions, some have less than 10 years of experience, but all are based on sharing and preserving natural resources, local knowledge and the empowerment of local communities. Co management is a good example of an alternative solution to top down management and privatization.

Forage fishing

The result of a long study on the Peruvian anchoveta fishery was presented to us (8% of the total world catch, the largest biomass fished in the world, all to become animal feed). Fish oil and fishmeal production represent 40% of the total world catch, and it then goes to produce other, less healthy, less sustainable proteins.

Before and after the event, articles were published on our websites and social media concerning these issues, and a fast response group was constituted to respond quickly to policy and/or industry communications and effectively voice the networks' demands, reactions or suggestions.

Here is some material published:

Ocean Grabbing and Privatization

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/news/dettaglio_news.lasso?idn=96

The Fallacies of ITQ

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/news/dettaglio_news.lasso?idn=98

Fisheries Rights in South Africa

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/news/dettaglio_news.lasso?idn=99

How to Fix the World's Seas

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/news/dettaglio_news.lasso?idn=103

How Fish is Transformed into Feed

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/pagine/eng/news/dettaglio_news.lasso?idn=97

Reaction of IFFO (The Marine Ingredients Organisation) to the fish feed article

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/filemanager/news/Letter_fish_feed_article.pdf

Fast response group's answer to IFFO's reaction

http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/filemanager/news/fish_feed_response.pdf

Network activities

Line of Action decided by the network during Slow Fish: As Slow Food is a solution oriented grassroots organization that promotes good, clean and fair food, the main actions the association can undertake involve giving value to local fish. This includes promoting the whole range of seafood that local environments provide, with particular attention paid to seafood that does not (yet) have a high commercial value. This pushes fishers higher up in the value chain, while raising awareness on current fishing policies. Slow Food has a similar strategy for grains and GMOs, for example.

Education and awareness raising, as usual, are key. This does not prevent the development of other specific actions, of a more technical or activist nature for example, where and when the network is capable of doing so.

The network identified the need to form smaller working groups to deal with the following: a Slow Fish Manifesto, to explain what Slow Fish stands for as a network; documentation on policies; education kits; our stand on aquaculture; a strategy/event for the South Pacific; a strategy/event for the Northern Seas; a strategy/event for the Spanish and the French networks, etc.

Slow Fish Istanbul

Slow Fish Istanbul, which took place over four days from October 17-20, brought together players from all parts of the fishing world to explore the complex issues related to sea resources

in the Balkans: an Albanian chef, a Bulgarian Greenpeace activist, a representative from the Turkish Ministry of Fisheries, a formerly illegal fisher turned campaigner and a wise beyond his years Greek teenage harpoon fisher, along with hundreds of others. Through film screenings, presentations and debates, a range of issues were addressed, including aquaculture, dams and canals and the privatization of the oceans, as well as consumer responsibilities and the past and future of fisheries.

Meeting of the Northern Seas Network

Twenty members of the Northern seas network, including new participants, some of them artists, met on Lotoseninseln in Germany for two days of workshops and discussions. The topics were centered around co management, the creation of fair value chains and the organization of a traveling exhibition during summer 2014, with events organized in different port cities to celebrate artisanal fishing culture as well as the diversity of the marine ecosystem. Some of these events will be linked by a sailing cargo vessel, bringing products and materials from one community to another. A Slow Fish Manifesto for the Northern Seas (<http://www.slowfood.org.uk/slow-fish-manifesto/>) was created immediately after the event.

Slow Fish in Canada and the Month of Fish

Slow Food Canada announced the creation of Slow Fish Canada. The month of October was dedicated to fish and saw the organization of 10 events across the country, valuing underloved species and educating consumers about Canadian marine species and how to cook them. The guiding principles are included in a declaration of "How to Celebrate Good, Clean and Fair Fish."

Slow Fish New England

Slow Fish New England kicked off in New England with a two week youth led program at New Hampshire's annual Fishtival event on September 14, 2013. Throwdowns, cooking classes, workshops and film screenings were on the menu. The program was partially hosted at the University of New Hampshire. The regional group started working on a Manifesto.

Slow Fish in Ecuador

The network in Ecuador decided to work on planning a Slow Fish South Pacific event in Quito in 2014.

Slow Fish in Brazil

The Brazilian networks have translated part of the Slow Fish website in order to publish it on the Slow Food Brazil website to encourage interest on the issue. The Florianopolis network is focusing mainly on this issue, with an on going conversation via a mailing list, the exchange of experiences, information and ideas on the subject and the engagement of local cooks.

Slow Fish in Patagonia

The network in Argentina announced it is working on the creation of a seafood producers' market.

Slow Fish Med

The expanding French Mediterranean network, already very active on the coast of Var and emerging on the Côte d'Azur, officially launched a Slow Fish Med program at the Grandes Tables de la Friche in September, focusing mainly on forgotten fish species and the promotion of the Prud'homies management model for fishers.

Slow Food Youth Network

The youth network was very active in Italy during the Slow Fish event, engaging people and deepening knowledge about political and culinary issues. The culmination was a huge eat in organized for 300 people, featuring local sustainable fish. They also organized cocktail and chatting sessions every afternoon with finger food prepared with local fish. The youth network took the Peruvian anchoveta campaign to heart and organized a recipe contest and prize ceremony. In the USA, the youth network has taken the lead in spreading the Slow Fish campaign across the country, starting with New England, where the campaign was officially launched.

Chef Networks

Specific work has been done to highlight the role of chefs and restaurants in changing current fish consumption trends and to engage them on this subject. The Italian Slow Food Chefs' Alliance

has received communications on this matter and a conference was organized during Slow Fish, which included chefs from the French Mediterranean network and chefs from the Dutch Alliance. All Slow Food groups working on the issues of fisheries are finding local chefs to support and engage in the campaign, working on undervalued species and a short value chain.

Towards Terra Madre Indigenous

Greater effort is being put into contacting and engaging indigenous communities within the Slow Fish campaign in the Americas, from the British Columbia and Nova Scotia first nations to the Mapuche in Chile. Conversations are focused on understanding the specific challenges and characteristics of indigenous fisheries, from tenure rights to cultural practices. These relationships are oriented towards creating a focus on indigenous issues during Terra Madre 2014, in preparation for Terra Madre Indigenous in India in 2015.

Slow Food Barcelona

Convivia from Catalunya, as well as the KM 0 network, with the Barceloneta Cuina association and the local shrimp fishing community (the Barcelona shrimp) organized an evening event in September, with a round table debate followed by tastings of different local fish, to highlight local fish resources.

Biodiversity Projects

Traditional fish products and techniques are also present in Slow Food's biodiversity projects, with four new fish Presidia and 11 new Ark of Taste seafood products in 2013, and increased prospects and tools for new fish products and communities to join these projects in 2014.

New Presidia

Lampedusa Salted Round Sardinella

<http://www.slowfoodfoundation.com/italian-presidia/details/4582/lampedusa-salted-round-sardinella>

Lake Garda Carpione

<http://www.slowfoodfoundation.com/italian-presidia/details/5170/lake-garda-carpione>

Lake Iseo Traditional Dried Shad

<http://www.slowfoodfoundation.com/italian-presidia/details/4615/lake-iseo-traditional-dried-shad>

presidia/details/4615/lake-iseo-traditional-dried-shad

Lake Como Sun Dried Missoltino

<http://www.slowfoodfoundation.com/italian-presidia/details/5409/lake-como-sun-dried-missoltino>

New Ark of Taste Products

- Koryushka, Russia
- American paddlefish, United States
- Atlantic sturgeon, United States
- Fermented shark, Iceland
- Sun dried salted cod, Iceland
- Traditional dried haddock, Iceland
- Lake Como missoltino, Italy
- Fiche maschie a stocchetto, Italy
- Dried sturgeon, Romania
- Manx kippers, United Kingdom
- Bloaters, United Kingdom

Aquaculture

Slow Food has reaffirmed its position against intensive open pen carnivorous aquaculture, in response to existing challenges in Ireland. We have started to work on the creation of an international aquaculture committee. This will be a strong area of focus in coming years.

Communication Tools

Slow Fish Website Content

Profiles of new entrants in the network (chefs and fishers) and news and articles from different contributors were published regularly, along with coverage of the most important events organized by the Slow Food/Slow Fish network around the world.

The website (<http://www.slowfood.com/slowfish/>) attracted 163,000 visitors, with 140,000 unique visitors. This corresponds to more than a 100% increase of visitors, and within that, 400% more French visitors and 300% more Germans. 14% of visitors are returning visitors, slightly less than in 2012.

Other Communication Channels

Material published on the Slow Fish website was rebroadcast on slowfood.com, on the Slow Food International Facebook page and in at least one

international newsletter out of two containing news relating to Slow Fish (the newsletter has a readership of 100,000 people and is distributed in eight languages). Slowfood.it had ample coverage of the Slow Fish event in Italian and highlighted the privatization issue.

Articles on fishing issues were also published in the Slow Food Almanac 2013, on the Slow Europe website and in the Slow Food Companion (distributed to all new members).

The Slow Food press office has sent 13 press releases on the campaign, during the event and throughout the year, and has counted almost 100 press mentions in print, on radio and on television. Interactivity The Facebook Slow Fish group now has 530 members.

Traceability

The pilot project, started with the Wadden Sea Traditional Fishers Presidium (Netherlands), has already had good results. Fish are now individually labeled with a unique code and end consumers can easily trace back when, where and by whom their fish was caught. The same work has begun with the Quintana Roo lobster fishing community in Mexico. The first fisher profiles are now on This Fish, along with information on the species and fishing techniques.

Training for Slow Food Staff and UNISG Students

Internal training sessions were organized for Slow Food staff. The first was a few months after the Terra Madre meeting and dealt with the direction the campaign has taken and the challenges coordinators face in their countries while working on these issues, and set out some principles for a collective strategy. The second one, before Slow Fish, dealt specifically with the subject of privatization and co management, and brought in Carsten Pedersen, an expert from the network, who works in South Africa and on European fishery policies.

Carsten Pedersen also gave a presentation titled “The Masifundise Organization: For Sustainable Fishing” on May 6 followed by a debate with a packed audience at the University of Gast-

ronomic Sciences, as part of the university’s curriculum on fisheries issues.

Monitoring and Publication of Comments on CFP Reform

In 2013, as we wait for the new CFP to come into effect, our main actions have been as follows: On July 6, Slow Food, in collaboration with Ocean2012, organized a conference within the Caffèina Festival in Viterbo, “Non fare il pesce lesso! Ricette per un mare di sostenibilità” to raise people’s awareness on the importance of the European Parliament vote on CFP expected on July 10. The outcome of the vote and Slow Food’s response is mentioned here:

http://www.repubblica.it/ambiente/2013/07/05/news/pesca_europa_mediterraneo_62453134/

http://www.lastampa.it/2013/07/06/scienza/ambiente/focus/pesca_sostenibile_ambientalisti_no_ai_sussidi_europei_mvPS1kV-kLMVbzKiZcvetpN/pagina.html

Slow Food took part in a meeting with targeted Members of the European Parliament and attended the plenary vote on the EMFF in Strasbourg, France, on October 21 23. Slow Food co signed a letter on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund to be sent to the EP’s head of delegation and to the members of the Fisheries Committee on July 2.

During the Slow Fish event in Genoa, on May 9, Slow Food organized the conference “Fishing Regulations and Future Prospects.”

Michèle Mesmain, the Slow Food coordinator for the Slow Fish campaign, participated in the talk “Fish Stock Dilemma” with the EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damani.

http://www.euronews.com/2013/03/28/fish_stock_dilemma/

Slow Food published the article “Is European Fishing Getting Into Deep Water?” to comment on the fact that on July 10 the European Parliament’s Fisheries Committee voted in favor of reintroducing subsidies for the construction of new fishing vessels and fleet modernization.

http://www.slowfood.it/slouurope/eng/news/187510/is_european_fishing_getting_into_deep_water

Campaign Collaborations

Slow Fish has highlighted the importance of the anchoveta campaign in Peru and the Who Fishes Matters campaign in the USA and has continued to participate in the Ocean2012 coalition.

Missions

Missions to Canada, Norway, Spain, Ecuador, USA, France (Mediterranean and Brittany), Istanbul and Alaska have given a better understanding of how participants in the Slow Fish network are engaging locally as well as strengthening existing relationships, finding new contacts and motivating the network to participate actively in the campaign, with members contributing with local engagement to a global network and communication strategy.

Avenues Not Pursued Under the Slow Fish Campaign

The Slow Fjord meeting on April 11 was very promising. Good examples of existing initiatives in Norway, Sweden and abroad were described to the participants, showing how it is feasible to leverage on local identity, culture and tradition to create a strong regional image and economic opportunities. Participants from the local administration and organizations, as well as citizens and producers, showed interest in the project's concept. However, even though the Slow Fjord project continues its journey, fishers from the Hardanger Fjord have decided not to engage, so the project currently focuses mainly on farmers.

Period:

since May 2012

Funding 2013:

42.500 Euro

Project partner:

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