



## POSITIVE INCENTIVES COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

*Task 18 of the Biodiversity Plan “The Power of Voluntary Action”*

Case Study (Spain)

# Spain’s Biodiversity Foundation And its Pleamar Programme

FUNDACIÓN BIODIVERSIDAD



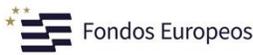
Organizers



**aliarse**

# CASE STUDY 1. Spain's Biodiversity Foundation

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## Summary

The **Biodiversity Foundation**, part of the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, has as founding mission: "to preserve biodiversity and ecosystems and drive forward a change in the economic, social and cultural model".

In recent years, its work as a European fund manager has been consolidated, allocating around 830 million euros to the financing of more than 3,000 projects through calls for grants. With this same aim in mind, it has promoted and worked on major conservation projects that have made it possible to protect emblematic and to drive forward the Natura 2000 marine network in Spain.

The **Pleamar Programme** was created in 2017 to integrate fisheries' management policies with those for the protection of the marine environment and to promote the sustainability of Spanish fisheries and aquaculture in the context of the blue economy. This programme, co-funded by the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund, EMFAF, co-finances projects aimed at protecting marine biodiversity, reducing and managing waste, improving the knowledge and management of marine protected areas, such as those belonging to the Natura 2000 network, reducing bycatches and making the most of discards, and strengthening partnerships between the scientific community and the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

## Case Study

### About Biodiversity Foundation

The Biodiversity Foundation is a public sector foundation (F.S.P.), created in 1998, and forming part of the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge. Its mission is to preserve biodiversity and ecosystems and to promote a change in the economic, social and cultural model. Its lines of action seek to generate a positive impact on biodiversity and to enable a change in our lifestyles to ensure that future generations can live in harmony with nature.

One of the main aims of the Foundation's work is the effective management of public funds, a task we have been working on since 2001 and which, since 2021, and thanks to the Next Generation programme and the implementation of the Spanish Government's Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (PRTR)2 , has significantly increased our impact and funding capacity.

In this context, the Biodiversity Foundation faces a new and ambitious challenge: to build on the achievements of more than 25 years of history and move forward with the implementation and management of more ambitious, transformative projects which can be replicated in other contexts, and which make a genuine contribution to an ecological, fair and egalitarian transition. This new context is the backdrop for the calls for grants, within the framework of the PRTR and the European Structural and Investment Funds, to fund projects that improve biodiversity, combat climate change, develop green jobs, boost the bioeconomy and boost science and research-based knowledge. But also, projects that promote the renaturalisation of urban spaces to improve the well-being of the people who live there and their resilience to the challenges of climate change.

One of the strengths of the Biodiversity Foundation are its partners, the entities it works alongside, and which include a diversity of sectors: Conservation NGOs, the academic sector, the private sector, science, the rural world, local and research organizations, entrepreneurs... all of them are key players in promoting a real change in model.

Through its work over the last 25 years, the Foundation has contributed to protecting and restoring part of our marine and land surface and to improving the conservation status of nearly 200 species, including the Iberian lynx, the brown teal, the loggerhead turtle and the posidonia. To this end, it has co-financed more than 3,000 projects and worked with more than 2,000 entities, allocating more than 830 million euros through calls for grants and channeling more than 110 million euros of European funds to project financing.

### Pleamar Programme

To ensure the environmental and socio-economic sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture in Europe, the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) was introduced in the 1970s. And for the implementation of the CFP in European Union territory, a structural fund - the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) - was set up in 1993, which remained in force until 2006. It was subsequently renamed the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) until 2013. During this period, 28 projects were managed for an amount of €3,319,177.

For the period 2014-2021, this instrument was renamed the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Once the EMFF Operational Programme (OP) was approved, the Biodiversity Foundation was designated as the Intermediate Management Body, with the aim of supporting the fisheries and aquaculture sector in its growing commitment to more sustainable activities devoted to the protection and conservation of biodiversity and natural heritage.

To this end, the Biodiversity Foundation, in collaboration with public and private organizations and entities that share these objectives, launched the **Pleamar Programme**. It brings together the fisheries management policies of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the biodiversity conservation policies of the Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge.

It sets out to:

- ✚ Promote the improvement of fishing and aquaculture activities on the Natura 2000 Network and other marine protected areas and to boost the management, recovery and monitoring of these areas.
- ✚ Promote aquaculture with a high level of environmental protection and resource

efficiency.

- ✚ Support the fisheries sector's mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- ✚ Reduce the impact of fisheries and aquaculture on the marine environment.
- ✚ Strengthen the positive interactions of fisheries and aquaculture with the environment.
- ✚ Optimize the marketing of fishery and aquaculture products and support the diversification of activities.

Since its creation, the Pleamar Programme has been coordinated through 5 calls for grants for a total amount of 30 million euros. A total of 416 proposals were received, resulting in 135 projects finally approved and implemented, which have served to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of the triple helix projects in the maritime domain, represented through the scientific, sectoral and conservation components.

These projects were developed by 70 public and private entities with more than 2,300 workers involved in their implementation. More than 10,300 people in the sector have been trained through them, but the most outstanding aspect is the scope of the actions carried out, as the beneficiaries have exceeded 13 million people.

In the current period 2021-2027 FB has taken over the management of the European Maritime Fund for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EMFAF) for an amount of EUR 29 million. It will be divided into two calls for proposals and is expected to fund around 90 projects.

## CASE STUDY 2. The Pleamar Programme in action: Selected examples

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### Summary

Since its launch, the Pleamar Programme has supported a total of 135 projects through 207 operations, with a total budget of almost 24 million euros, to which the EMFF has contributed just over 16 million euros, making a very significant contribution to strengthening the participation of the fisheries sector in the implementation of the Birds, Habitats and Marine Strategies Directives and in improving the management of fishing activities in Natura 2000 Network sites.

This case study highlights **7 projects** regarded as exemplary, due to the involvement of actors, the innovation contributed, the excellent technical and economic implementation and the impact in terms of communication. By way of example, some of the projects implemented in the Pleamar programme during the EMFF period (2014-2021) that have been called exemplary due to the good results obtained have been attached:

## Case Study

### **1. RESCAP PROJECT. Conservation and recovery of gorgonian and soft coral populations through ecological restoration and the mitigation of fishing impacts**

The overall aim of this project was to implement and assess the feasibility of ecological restoration actions and the mitigation of the impacts of artisanal fisheries on benthic communities dominated by gorgonian and soft corals. Other aims include:

- ✚ Monitoring active restoration of gorgonians and corals using underwater robotics
- ✚ Transfer of knowledge to other fishermen's associations on the importance of gorgonian and soft coral restoration.
- ✚ Involvement of society in the restoration of gorgonians in marine protected areas and dissemination of the project.

#### **Results:**

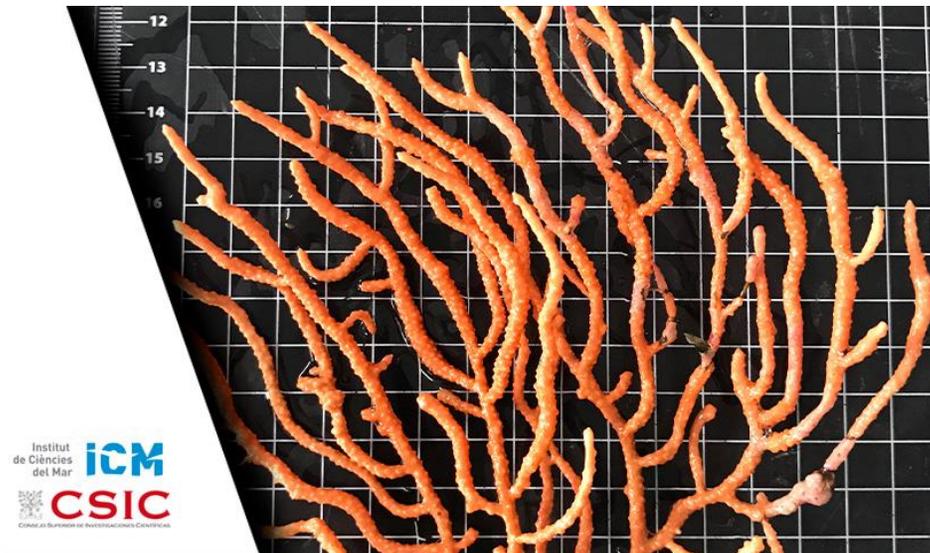
- ✚ The RESCAP V project is the fifth and final stage of the RESCAP project, financed in the calls of the Pleamar Programme 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 of the Biodiversity Foundation, co-funded by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The RESCAP V project highlights the close collaboration between scientists and fishermen, whereby they have managed to develop an innovative method for the restoration of gorgonians and soft corals, having managed to restore 1120 colonies in their natural environment this season, reaching more than 4,000 gorgonians restored in 5 years.
- ✚ The results were successful, with more than 80 % of the gorgonian colonies surviving for a whole year after being transplanted and returned to the seabed. This has been demonstrated by the use of state-of-the-art underwater robotics which monitor the restored population to ensure that it is in a perfect state of conservation.
- ✚ The fifth call included, for the first time, a knowledge transfer action in the fishermen's guild of Formentera, a pilot test in which more than 100 gorgonians were restored thanks to the collaboration of only two fishermen of the 14 fishermen belonging to the guild. Furthermore, the presence of the project in the media, once again this year, lent the study great visibility thanks to the appearance of both researchers and fishermen in 16 television and radio programmes.

#### Gender equality

- ✚ Promote fair remuneration, avoiding precariousness, the pay gap and gender-based job classification.

#### Sustainable development

- ✚ Promotes sustainable fishing



## **2. LANDERPICK PROJECT: Development of a remote launching and collection system for underwater multi-parametric observatories.**

The implementation of this final stage aimed to move forward with the prototype with a second improved version, as well as to finalise the work in the El Cachucho SAC commenced in LP2, as well as to expand the sampling system to other deep areas of the Intemares project.

Finally, a plan for monitoring environmental conditions in other deep national areas of the Natura 2000/Intemares Network was developed, based on landers fleets, involving research and management staff from different regions and disciplines.

At the final stage of the project, the dissemination work was reinforced, including the publication of a demo video and participation in an international MarTech congress.

Results:

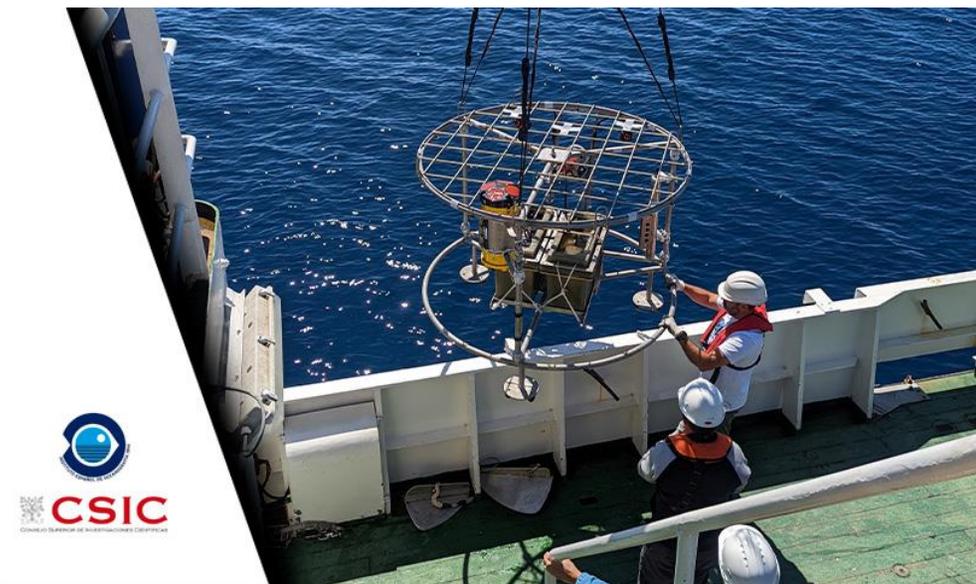
- ✚ Driving forward the prototype vehicle, with a second, improved version.
- ✚ Completion of the work on the El Cachucho SAC commenced in LanderPick-2.
- ✚ Expansion of the sampling system to other deep Intemares areas.

Gender equality

- ✚ It promotes fair remuneration, avoiding precariousness, the pay gap and gender-based job classification.

Sustainable development

- ✚ Promotes sustainable fisheries



### **3. REMAR PROJECT: Environmental stewardship for the reduction of waste in the protected marine area of the Galician Atlantic Arc.**

The REMAR project sought to reduce marine waste throughout the Galician Atlantic Arc, through the implementation of various actions such as waste collection days at sea and on land, raising awareness and information campaigns on the damage caused to the Natura 2000 Network, training for professionals in the fishing sector, supervision of waste management practices on board small fishing and recreational vessels, inter alia. In a cross-cutting way, it had the commitment to make visible and empower people with intellectual disabilities as drivers of change in environmental and social challenges, and to contribute to gender equality.

#### **Results:**

- ✚ 10 ports and more than 100 vessels were audited for waste management.
- ✚ Awarding of more than 90 "Buque azul" guarantee seals, a badge created by AMICOS in the RE-MAR I project to identify those vessels that stand out for their good practices in the management of the waste generated.
- ✚ Drawing up of a report with proposals for improvement in the management of waste from ships.
- ✚ Training 107 people, 79 of them belonging to vulnerable groups, in topics related with the current needs of the fishing sector and the opportunities afforded by the blue economy.
- ✚ Development of 40 marine waste collection actions, one tonne in total, with the participation of more than 1,500 people: young people, workers and users of recreational

companies, linked to marine environments and fishermen's guilds/shellfish collector associations.

- ✚ Dissemination of an awareness campaign in different schools, ports and beaches in the area of influence of the Galician Atlantic Arc. In total, almost 60 awareness-raising days in which more than 4,000 people participated.
- ✚ Generation of audiovisual material to complement the task of disseminating information to reduce the amount of marine waste.

### Equality

- ✚ This involves improving accessibility for people with disabilities.
- ✚ Promotes the integration of socially excluded groups.



#### 4. REDUCE PROJECT: Towards a responsible fishing gear management system.

The aim of the project was to develop an initial diagnosis of the main materials that make up the fishing gear (nets and components) most representative of the Spanish fleet. To this end, visits were made to ports, in addition to an analysis and development of a map of the main actors involved in the manufacture, marketing and use of fishing gear, which will allow us to establish in a participatory manner a roadmap to follow in order to apply the SUP Directive in the Spanish context, establishing a proposal for a management system.

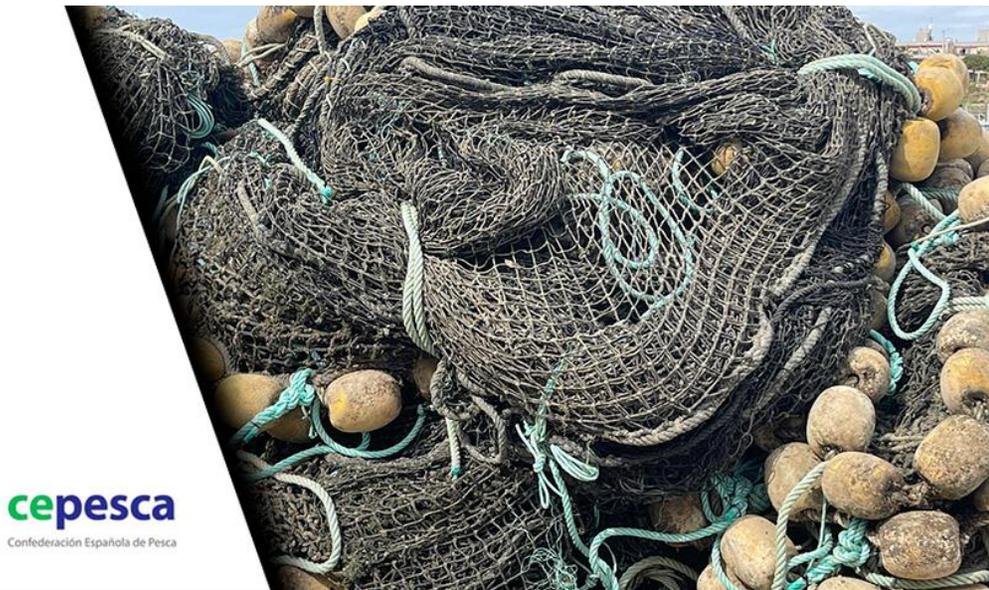
What's more, the project carried out an analysis of the life cycle and degradation of the main fishing gear components.

Results:

- ✚ It was determined that nylon fishing gear would, a priori, be more easily thermo-mechanically recyclable than high-density polyethylene (HDPE) fishing gear, with the chemical process being the most suitable for the latter.
- ✚ A roadmap proposal was also drawn up to establish the procedure to be followed for the effective implementation of a management protocol.

Sustainable development

- ✚ Promotes sustainable fishing of discarded fishing gear and nets in Spanish ports



## **5. REDMAR PROJECT: Platform for the employment of women on board in the REDMAR Network environment.**

This project sought to encourage and promote equal access to employment opportunities for women on board fishing vessels.

Its aims are: to strengthen the REDMAR Network for the exchange of good practices on equality, safety and the environment, to introduce the gender perspective at Maritime-Fisheries Training Centres and to create a platform to promote equal access to employment opportunities for women graduates.

Results:

- ✚ The REDMAR Network added twelve new entities. Several workshops were held on equality (education and business sector linked to the sea), safety (prevention of occupational hazards) and the environment (marine waste).
- ✚ In order to integrate the gender perspective at educational centres, several workshops were held.
- ✚ A web platform was also created to promote employment opportunities for female graduates, with the publication of job offers.

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination:

- ✚ All actions incorporate the gender perspective, which is the basic principle underlying the project.

Sustainable development:

- ✚ Promoting greater sustainability of fishing activity through the analysis of specific problems (labour risks or waste management etc.).

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## 6. BAJUREC PROJECT: Prevention of waste generation and its inappropriate disposal in the marine environment, focusing on inshore and recreational fishing vessels.

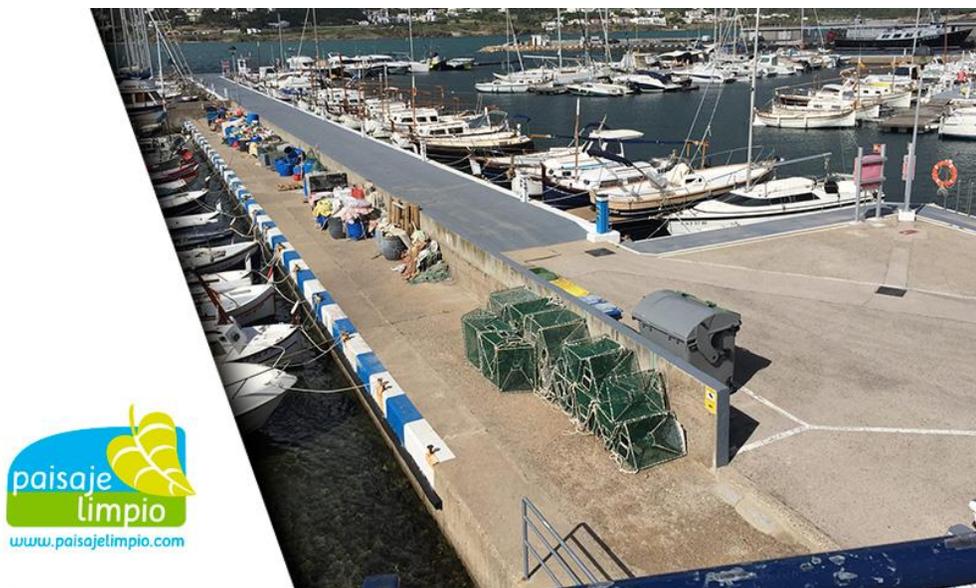
The project carried out actions aimed at gathering objective information on the situation of waste deposit infrastructures at the fishing ports of the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands and Ceuta, acting in marine protected areas. The project covered the collection of data at 45 fishing ports (33 autonomous and 12 state ports) in the aforementioned areas. The results collected at each port were included on the database already created in BAJUREC III, which has interactive content and is based on a geographic information system, allowing the current situation of waste disposal infrastructures at Spanish fishing ports to be known.

Results:

- ✚ Comprehensive information has been obtained on the state of the waste disposal infrastructures.
- ✚ Each port or group of ports (with the same state or autonomous community management) has been analysed to detect failures and propose solutions. This has involved visits to 325 fishing ports.
- ✚ Statistical studies have been carried out and subsequently sent to the competent authorities.
- ✚ A GIS map has been produced from the information obtained.

Sustainable development

- ✚ Promotes sustainable fisheries



## **7. ACUFLOT PROJECT: Interactions between offshore aquaculture and floating wind energy: challenges and opportunities towards the "ecological transition" of the Spanish maritime space.**

The project aimed to provide managers and the aquaculture sector with knowledge and tools for the future development of the Maritime Spatial Management Plans, POEM (Decree 363/2017). To this end, the opportunities afforded by Spanish waters for the combined use and development of aquaculture and floating wind energy joint ventures in the five Spanish marine demarcations were assessed.

Results:

- ✚ The results show that at a national level, the areas offering the best opportunities for multi-use between aquaculture and wind production are located in the Mediterranean region.
- ✚ In the Cantabrian and Atlantic region, suitable locations are specific areas in the provinces of Asturias, Cantabria and the Basque Country.
- ✚ The local study carried out in Gran Canaria showed that the south of the island has optimal conditions for combining wind energy production with the cultivation of crops.

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination

- ✚ Parity is encouraged. 50% of the project staff are women.

Sustainable development

- ✚ Promotion of innovative projects that improve the sustainability of aquaculture facilities. As well as seeking opportunities for the use of maritime space with other sectors to identify opportunities for development.

