

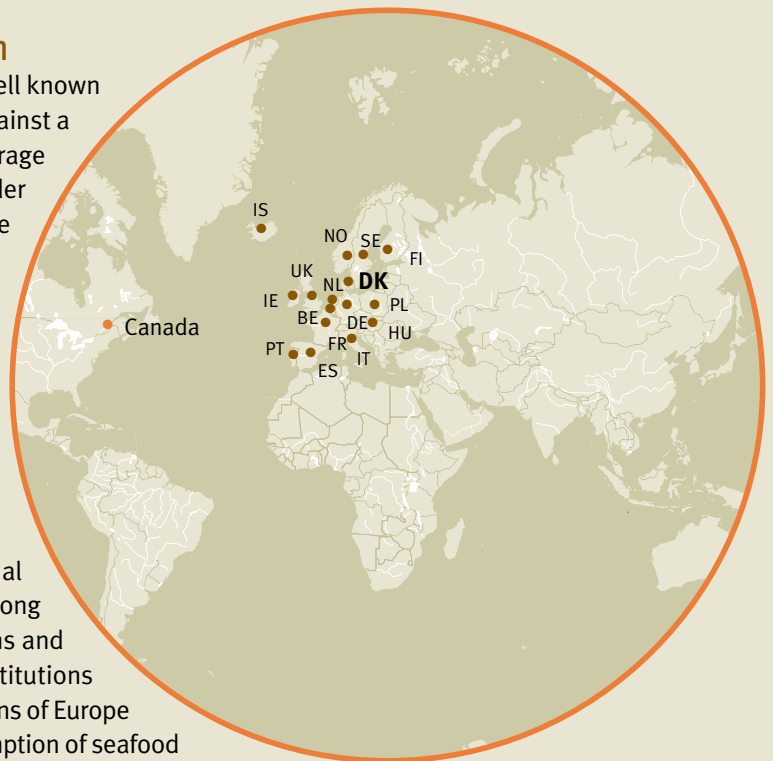
Fish – a quality food for better health



INTEGRATED PROJECT

Background/description of problem

In general, the health benefits of eating fish are well known but need more quantification. Fish may protect against a wide range of conditions, so the EU wants to encourage its citizens to eat more of it. Wild fish stocks are under threat and fish farming has expanded to supply the market. More needs to be done to reduce the aquaculture-related risks of water pollution and the contamination of wild strains of fish. European consumers want to be sure that the finfish and shellfish they buy is of good quality and safe to eat.



Project profile

The SEAFOODplus project is studying the nutritional aspects of seafood and its quality and safety. In the long term, it will contribute to reducing health problems and preventing some major human diseases. Many institutions and organisations from the marine and fishing nations of Europe are studying the production, marketing and consumption of seafood and its safety and health risks and benefits. Consumer attitudes to fish and its products, and how much they eat of them, will be studied. Useful by-products will also be sought from fishy waste.

International aspects

Many aspects of this programme have a global application. Any human living anywhere can obtain the same health benefits from eating fish, while allergic reactions are widespread. Fish farms face similar problems worldwide, and even market and consumer aspects can be adapted to foreign situations.

Socio-economic significance

SEAFOODplus will have the following long-term socio-economic impacts:

- It will make a safety study of toxic and beneficial effects from eating seafood
- It will raise public awareness that fish is a healthy food and encourage greater consumption
- It will make fish farming more profitable and less polluting by researching products from fish waste
- It will introduce traceability into the fish supply chain to encourage consumer confidence.



INTEGRATED PROJECT

Basic project information

Full project title: Health improving, safe seafood of high quality in a consumer driven fork-to-farm concept

Duration: 60 months

Starting year: 2004

EU funding: €14.4 million

FP6 instrument used: Integrated Project

Project coordinator:

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Third country partner(s) involved:

AquaNet – Canada's Research Network in Aquaculture (Canada)

Project website: www.seafoodplus.org

EC scientific officer: Ciaran Mangan, ciaran.mangan@cec.eu.int

Scientific significance

The project will contribute to the following scientific areas:

- Quantification of the effectiveness of omega-3 fatty acids and other fish-sourced biomolecules in combating heart disease, cancer, inflammatory bowel disease and irregular heartbeat
- The effects of eating fish on the health of younger people
- Standard universal methods to detect some viruses and bacteria in susceptible shellfish and early-warning systems for viral contamination
- The genetics of farmed fish and factors that improve their food quality.

Project outcomes

- A study of consumer attitudes to fish and design of new fish products that meet these expectations
- Identification of functional food products that can be extracted from fish waste, both from farmed and wild fish
- Considerations of fish consumption
- The establishment of a framework for farming European fish to environmental, ethical and quality standards.