

# INdIGO

## INnovative fishing Gear for Ocean



### NEWSLETTER 7

March 2023



**FINAL MONTHS OF ACTIVITY FOR THE INdIGO PROJECT**



**REGISTER FOR THE CLOSING EVENT**



**FILT, AN SME FROM NORMANDY WORKING ON INdIGO**



**A RECYCLING SOLUTION FOR END OF LIFE FISHING GEAR IN SUSSEX**



**PORTRAITS FROM SMEL AND CEFAS**



**NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE INdIGO PROJECT**



## Final months of activity for the INdIGO project

It has been just over 3 years since the 10 partners of INdIGO started their activities with the objective of reducing marine plastic pollution generated by fishing and aquaculture activities.

Today, the project is coming to a close as the funding from the Interreg France (Channel) England programme will end in June 2023. As the last 3 months are dedicated to the project closure and reporting, the partners will stop their activities at the end of March.

For the organisations involved in INdIGO, it is therefore time to start drawing the first assessments and thinking about future collaborations!

### INdIGO – Some achievements!

In INdIGO, the idea was to combine approaches by working both on the preventive aspect, by improving the collection and recycling of used fishing gear, and on the search for alternative solutions. Focusing mainly on scientific aspects related to biodegradable materials and the improvement of the circular economy, the project also devoted significant effort to economic and social sciences and to the involvement of fishermen and the general public. Key achievements include a survey of 200 French and English fishermen, the Fish&Click participatory science programme, an economic study, publication of best practice guides and harbour recycling guides...

Here are some of the lessons learned from these 3 years of work:

- The implementation of biodegradable fishing gear in the fisheries sector in the Channel area is technically very challenging. Support for research and innovation needs to be maintained. Research into biodegradable plastics in the marine environment is still in its infancy and needs to be continued as this type of plastic is much less harmful and could offer a viable solution to reduce plastic at sea. In addition it would reduce the effects of ghost fishing and other problems associated to microplastics in the ocean.
- There is a lack of an industrial/commercial network at the European level to produce innovative nets, from new materials through to finished products. There is also a lack of local companies capable of recycling certain types of plastics from used fishing gear, such as trawls.





# IN THE NEWS

- Solutions will emerge by bringing all actors around the table, including, researchers, fishermen, port authorities, gear manufacturers and sellers, recyclers, public policy makers, etc. Good practices do exist, but it may be necessary to coordinate good initiatives at more local, territorial levels.
- Fishermen are open to change and to adopting more sustainable practices. They will need to be supported, kept informed and placed at the centre of change.

On our website, you will find a project summary presenting some of the conclusions of the INdIGO project on the following topics:

- End-of-Life (EOL) and Abandoned, Lost or Otherwise Disposed of (ALDFG) fishing gear: the fisherman's perspective
- Recycling and collection (Best Practice Guide and Harbour Guide)
- Alternative solution
- Acceptability of biodegradable fishing gear

**All project deliverables will be published progressively on the following page: <https://indigo-interregproject.eu/en/deliverables/>**



## Visit to Brussels to present the results of INdIGO



On 24 and 25 January 2023, 7 members of the INdIGO project had the opportunity to present the results of the INdIGO project in Brussels. On the agenda were several meetings at the European Parliament, the European Commission (Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries - DG MARE), the Permanent Delegation of Brittany to Europe...

The meetings enabled us to take stock of the situation regarding plastic waste management and to discuss solutions for reducing plastic pollution from fishing and aquaculture activities.

Among the people we met were MEPs Catherine Chabaud, Pierre Karleskind, Stéphanie Yon-Courtin and Caroline Roose, some of whom will be closely following the results of INdIGO, a project they consider essential for the health of the oceans and the future of small-scale fishing.

## IN THE NEWS

### Register for the INdIGO closing event



The INdIGO partnership is organising its closing event on 22 March 2023 in Lorient.

The aim of this closing seminar is to present and disseminate the results of the project to fisheries and aquaculture professionals and any other organisation interested in the subject.

The programme includes presentations by the INdIGO project partners. Experts from outside the project are also invited to explain their work in order to enhance the presentations and exchanges.

The event will take place from 8.45 am to 5.30 pm at the Cité de la voile in Lorient. The event is also available to attend online

[Find all the practical information and the programme here!](#)

### Fish&Click photo exhibition



In the framework of the INdIGO project, Ifremer has developed a public research programme, Fish&Click, which consists of identifying lost fishing gear at sea and on the coast through public awareness and participation. Fish&Click will come to an end this spring and will conclude with a 3-month photo exhibition. It will take place from 30 March to the end of June 2023 in a room at the Marinarium of Concarneau.



## BUT ALSO



### FILT 1860, a Normandy company involved in the INdIGO project

Jean-Philippe and Catherine Cousin run FILT, a French company located in Normandy that produces nets. The company was founded in 1860 and manufactures several types of nets: shopping nets, baby carriers, hammocks but also nets for aquaculture.



*Catherine and Jean-Philippe Cousin, managers of FilT*

Since the beginning of the 2000s, mussel farmers have asked the company to try to find solutions to limit this marine pollution with biodegradable nets to replace polyester and polypropylene nets. «In 2003, Canadian mussel farmers asked us if we could offer them nets knitted with biodegradable materials. We were unable to respond to their request because we had neither the skills nor the financial means to embark on this improvement of our products,» explains Jean-Philippe Cousin. Thus, joining the INdIGO project

allows us to work in partnership and to have all the skills to best meet the needs of mussel farmers. FILT brings to the project its experience as a producer of nets and ropes and almost 50 years in mussel farming.

### Participating in a European project, a challenge for an SME

«For an SME, participating in the Interreg INdIGO project was a real challenge,» explain the managers. Indeed, European programmes are part of a complex but interesting universe to understand. The complexity of the procedures, and in particular those linked to the reporting of expenses, is real, but with the support of the lead partner it is feasible. «People are often surprised that an SME from Normandy would participate in a European project,» explains Catherine Cousin. «Many small and medium-sized enterprises think that they cannot access European funds because they are too small. However, this is not the case. However, they stress that the SME must be large enough to carry out its professional activity while meeting the demands of such a European project. Indeed, 10 years ago, FILT would not have been able to participate for this reason.

## BUT ALSO



In addition , thanks to its partnership in the INdIGO project, FILT's managers have seen that participating in such a project can be complex but not inaccessible. Jean-Philippe and Catherine Cousin highly recommend it to other SMEs that may have an important role to play in European projects.

**For more information:**

Check the website [FILT 1860](https://www.filt1860.com)



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## BUT ALSO



**Sussex Wildlife Trust and Odyssey Innovation seek to bring recycling end of life gear to Sussex fishers.**

**INdIGO's Plymouth team have recently been involved in site visits to look at how the NRS (Net Regeneration Scheme) offered by Odyssey Innovation could be expanded to harbours and fisherman in Sussex.**

Eve Gadd (Research Assistant, INdIGO) went up to meet Nikki Hills from Sussex Wildlife Trust who has been proactive in gaining interest from harbours and fishers to set up a similar model to that which currently happens in the southwest with net/fishing gear recycling. Sussex Wildlife Trust had done some pilot collections over the last 2 years as part of their Wild Coast Sussex project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund with help from local Bognor Regis fisherman Clive, offering himself and his lorry as the courier service. Now, together the focus is on regaining momentum in



*Eastbourne (Sussex Recycling Scheme)*

setting up a permanent recycling model which is efficient, cost-effective, and usable for the stakeholders.

Sussex presents some different challenges to those we have seen in Cornwall and Devon not to mention the obvious added travel distance which must be factored in (the material is currently collected at Exeter City Councils facility for all Odyssey NRS operations before it is sent/ processed for recycling). However, visiting Shoreham, Eastbourne, Newhaven and Worthing, the conversations with fishermen were positive and all were keen to be able to have this as a permanent solution for their end-of-life gear in the future and avoid sending it to landfill, many suggested locations in which they could collect and store the material themselves.

The coastal office in Worthing has been particularly proactive in getting a system in place for their fisherman who operate from the beach, so they're ready for them to start collecting gear that meets the recycling guidelines and storing it at a place which has been offered by the council until there is enough to warrant a shipment to Exeter. They hope to launch this option soon at their next fishermen's meeting in late September. Nikki is now busy organising a net amnesty

## BUT ALSO



for Shoreham port where we will be able to see the types and quantities of gear coming through. This will hopefully help provide insight and incentive to encourage the port to become involved with the scheme and to engage with fishers in order to see if the NRS scheme could offer a solution for their waste management. Additionally Amanda Burton and Eve Gadd from the University of Plymouth headed up to Shoreham last September to present at the sustainability week about the INdIGO project.

The next few months will be crucial in trying to set up a successful and well received NRS scheme in Sussex but with the collaboration of Sussex Wildlife Trust, Odyssey Innovation, Exeter City Council, and INdIGO we are optimistic that we can offer a solution to end of life gear here soon.



*Shoreham harbour*

If you have any enquiries on this particular topic or are a fisherman operating on the Sussex Coastline and want to hear more about the recycling that could be coming soon to your area - feel free to email - [eve.gadd@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:eve.gadd@plymouth.ac.uk)



## **Laurence HÉGRON MACÉ, head of the marine fisheries division at SMEL**



*Laurence Hégron  
Macé from SMEL*

Laurence HÉGRON MACÉ holds a Master's degree in Marine Sciences and currently works at SMEL (Synergie mer Et Littoral) as an engineer and head of the marine fisheries division. Laurence implements the monitoring of marine resources of several regional fisheries in order to propose, in cooperation with professional fishermen, management measures favourable to sustainable and responsible fishing.

These actions have now been rewarded with the Marine Stewardship Council eco-certification (MSC) of two fisheries. Since 2016, she has been looking into the recycling of fishing gear at the end of its life. Her investigations focus mainly on an inventory of plastics in gear and on assisting ports in setting up local collection and recovery channels for materials. At the metropolitan level, she is part of a network of actors working on this issue, which is coordinated by the Coopération Maritime (the french federation of maritime supplying cooperatives). She has participated in several projects (SEAPLAST, PECHPROPRE) and currently INdIGO and FIRENOR.

## **Adil BAKIR, Principal Scientist – Microplastics Cefas (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science), UK**

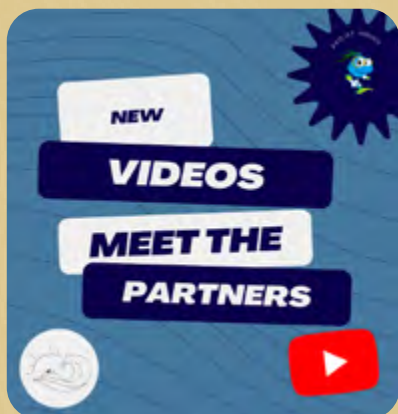


*Adil Bakir, Cefas*

Adil has been involved in the field of microplastic research for about 10 years starting as a postdoctoral researcher for a Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) funded project at Plymouth University in the UK investigating whether microplastics pose a physical and/or chemical threat in the marine environment. Adil joined the marine litter team at Cefas in 2018 and is currently leading the Cefas microplastic laboratory aiming at developing faster and cheaper techniques for the monitoring of microplastics in environmental matrices.

Within the INdIGO project, Adil is the project lead for Cefas activities which included the design and dissemination of a technical and a psycho-ergonomic questionnaire targeted at fishermen as well as conducting the natural ageing of the new materials at sea and in accelerated conditions under controlled parameters (i.e. controlled sunlight exposure).

Want to know more about the partners involved in the INdIGO project, check our Youtube channel



Visit the project's [Youtube channel](#) to discover new videos presenting the partners involved in the project.

## University of Plymouth's INdIGO team is expanding

Two new staff have recently joined the INdIGO team at the University of Plymouth.

They are Christopher Tomlin, a PhD student with Jasper Graham-Jones who is in charge of INdIGO for the University of Plymouth and Alistair Dixon, a research assistant on a pilot project on dismantling and recycling activities.



*Christopher Tomlin and Alistair Dixon*

## Emma Le Moing, intern on the INdIGO project

Emma Le Moing, student at the University of South Brittany, joined CompositIC from January to March 2023 as an intern on the INdIGO project.

Her internship allowed her to discover the workings of European project management, especially the communication activities. She made videos of the partners and visuals for social networks, prepared articles for the newsletter, updated the website, helped organise the closing event... "I am pleased to be able to take part in such a project and to discover the work of a project manager".





## INdIQUIZ, test your knowledge !



Want to test your knowledge about fishing nets environmental impact and possible alternatives? Participate in the INdIGO quiz developed by students from the Master in Regional and European Project Management at the Université Bretagne Sud

[Click here to start the quiz](#)

## British Ports Association and INdIGO host online fishing gear recycling webinar for the UK



On the 17th of February 2023 the online webinar in collaboration with BPA attracted 35 participants with many port and harbour authorities joining from across the UK and the channel islands.

Speakers covered topics such as setting up recycling schemes, the Net Regeneration Scheme and how that operates in the UK, why we need to do more to recycle... Representatives of Newlyn and Mevagissey Harbour talked about their experiences of recycling. The webinar also included an opportunity for attendees to join smaller break out rooms to hold round table discussions on what challenges they faced. Overall, this was a successful webinar with many great discussions and insights for everyone involved.

[Download the harbour guide](#)

## Good Practice Guide



The INDIGO project has recently launched its Good Practice Guide to help the public, beach clean organisations and volunteer groups adopt good habits to improve recycling. The guide was produced by the University of Plymouth who are a key partner in this project.

The Good Practice Guide has been designed as an informative, illustrative and easy-to-read leaflet to inform the general public about the effects of marine plastic pollution and the possibilities of recycling marine litter.

[Download the Good Practice Guide](#)

## Interactive map of tidal bins in the Channel



Paul Santiard, a first-year student in Nature Management and Protection, did a two-month internship at SMEL as part of the INDIGO project. One of his tasks was to travel along the coastline in order to list all the tidal bins from Avranches to Barneville-Carteret.

The aim was to have visual information on the presence of the bins, as well as some essential information such as their postal addresses, and some information about the frequency of bin collection, the estimated quantities, and the method of management by the commune.

These indications are the result of numerous exchanges with the communes during his visits.

[Link to the interactive map](#)

## CONTACT

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## RESEAUX SOCIAUX

