

Post-doctoral position within the framework of the IPREM project: Impact of fishing gear on the seabed and ecological resilience of the environment

Trawling and dredge fishing cause the disturbance of seafloor habitats, but the ecological resilience in fishing areas remains largely understudied, especially in Normandy.

Documenting the environmental impact of fishing activities would allow for a better overall management of fisheries, notably with regard to access to protected areas, the interaction with environmental NGOs, and the requirements of local fisheries labels.

The first phase of the IPREM project will consist of a literature review, allowing to link the available scientific knowledge with the needs of fishing professionals. This will include the following tasks:

- To characterize the seabed based on available mapping data: sedimentology, benthic habitats and activity of the fishing vessels of Normandy.
- To determine the state of knowledge regarding the resilience of the previously identified seabed types, in particular after bottom trawling.

The acquisition of such information will allow assessing either the environmental impact of these types of fisheries, or the knowledge gaps needing to be filled at a second stage.

The IPREM project will be conducted in partnership with the CRPMEM (Regional Committee for Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture) of Normandy, OPN, FROM NORD, NFM (professional fishery partnerships), the University of Caen Normandy (the laboratories BOREA and M2C), Ifremer, SMEL and CSLN.

Job description

During this 10-month postdoctoral position (March to December 2021, with possible extension in 2022), the candidate will carry out activities in the following three thematic sections:

Section 1: Literature review

- Evaluate the impact of fishing gears depending on the different types of seabed (rocky/soft bottom).
- Conduct an exhaustive literature review focusing on the habitat characteristics of fishing grounds in Normandy (sedimentological and granulometric mapping), as well as on the sensitivity of benthic habitats (sensitive, resistant and resilient areas).
- Superimpose the above maps with maps documenting fishing vessel activity and the usage of different fishing gears (for example the WGFBIT abrasion map; map of cumulative usages) by using the Halieutic Information system of Ifremer.
- Carry out an analysis focusing on fisheries and fishing gears specific to Normandy
- Research bibliographic elements concerning fish population dynamics (for example: CRPM/IFREMER study within the framework of COMOR)
- Identify knowledge gaps on habitats and the impact of different fishing gears

Section 2: Dissemination of information to marine professionals

- Promote the information among fisheries professionals
- Synthesize the literature review found in the section 1.
- Organize communication actions: project feedback workshops for professionals in the fisheries sector and training organizations, flyers ...

Section 3: Drafting of research projects

Based on the acquired knowledge, the identified gaps, and in collaboration with the project partners, set the priority research themes for medium to long term.

The project themes may relate, among other things, to:

- The resilience of seabed habitats for which insufficient data are available
- Reducing the environmental effects of fishing gears considered to have the most impact

Required qualifications

PhD in Biological Oceanography, Marine Ecology

English / French bilingualism required

Expertise in coastal marine environments

Proficiency with mapping GIS software tools

Skills

Good communication and networking skills

Creative, proactive and with a good sense of synthesis

Independent worker with good team working skills

Proficient writing skills in French and English

Experience in coordinating scientific projects or programs would be a plus.

Employer

Organisation des Pêcheurs Normands, 4 Quai Philippe – 14520 Port en Bessin

10-month fixed-term contract, with a possible extension if more funding is obtained

Recruitment at Post-doctoral level at an index corresponding to the level of study and professional experience of the candidate.

The successful candidate will be positioned in the premises of the University of Caen Normandie and Ifremer Port-en-Bessin within the framework of the partnership hosting agreements. Travel is foreseen within the Normandy and Hauts-de-France regions to meet the project partners. Travel expenses will be covered.

Starting date: as soon as possible, and at the latest 1st March 2021

Please send your application (CV, the contact information for minimum two references, and a motivation letter) before 31st January 2021 to:

Manuel EVRARD, Directeur, OPN – 4, quai Philippe Oblet 14520 Port en Bessin

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And

Jean-Claude DAUVIN, Professeur Emérite de l'Université de Caen Normandie, 24 rue des Tilleuls, F-14000 Caen, co-responsable du projet IPREM

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An interview with the selected candidates will take place in the beginning of February 2021, with a jury composed by the different project partners, face-to-face or remotely depending on the candidate's availability.