

## Call for a MSc research project

### Perceptions of drivers of change and local ecological knowledge of small-scale fisheries in Catalonia

**Research context:** Globally, small-scale fisheries likely land nearly half the world's seafood, playing a critical role in food security and nutrition (Smith and Basurto 2019). Historically, small-scale fisheries have received little attention in Europe. However, increasing concerns about unsustainable practices and subsidies have put the focus on them (Pascual-Fernandez et al. 2020). In Catalonia, small scale fisheries represent 5% of the national small-scale fleet and 48 % out of the total of the region. It has been suggested that in order to support coastal marine ecosystem-based management strategies toward and sustainability, researchers and practitioners should consider fishers' local practices and local ecological knowledge on management and on historical human-induced disturbances.

**Description and objectives:** The aim of the MSc thesis will be to investigate the perceptions of drivers of change and the local ecological knowledge among fishers in two small-scale fisheries (SSF) in Catalonia. Specifically, we aim to characterize two small scale fisheries in the provinces of Barcelona/Girona, and the locally perceived changes in the marine environment and fished species. The study will include primary data collection (i.e. fieldwork). The student is expected to 1) conduct semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders of the fisheries, and 2) conduct focus group discussions about changes and adaptations in the marine environment. The student shall further analyse the data collected through mixed methods (Qualitative and quantitative analysis).

**Requisites:** Student of the Master in Interdisciplinary Studies in Environmental, Economic and Social Sustainability (MEISAES, ICTA-UAB) or alike. The student must be fluent in Catalan and/or Spanish (read, written and spoken) and have good command in English. Familiarity with social science methods of data collection and data analysis will be an asset.

**Technical details:** The thesis will be directed by Irene Iniesta Arandia (ICTA), Sara Miñarro and (ICTA) and Laura Calvet Mir (ICTA). We expect that a revised version of the MSc Thesis could be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication.

**If you are interested on writing your MSc thesis on this topic, please contact**  
[irene.iniesta@uab.cat](mailto:irene.iniesta@uab.cat)/[sara.minarro@uab.cat](mailto:sara.minarro@uab.cat)/[laura.calvet@uab.cat](mailto:laura.calvet@uab.cat)

#### Literature:

Pascual-FernándezJJ, Pita C, Bavinck M. (2020). Small-Scale Fisheries in Europe: Status, Resilience and Governance. Springer.

Smith H and Basurto X (2019) Defining Small-Scale Fisheries and Examining the Role of Science in Shaping Perceptions of Who and What Counts: A Systematic Review. Front. Mar. Sci. 6:236.