

Press release

**Food safety and seafood quality:
ANSES and the Nord-Pas de Calais regional council sign a memorandum of
cooperation**

For the *Fête de la Mer* ("Sea Days Celebration"), ANSES and the Nord-Pas de Calais regional council signed a memorandum of cooperation on 10 July 2015 before the Mayor of Boulogne-sur-Mer, also a member of the French Parliament. The aim of this memorandum is to pool resources to develop research in the field of food safety and seafood quality in the Nord-Pas de Calais region.

Specialised in fishery products and aquaculture, the Boulogne-sur-Mer site of ANSES's Food Safety Laboratory develops methods for the detection, characterisation and quantification of pathogens (microorganisms and parasites) and chemical contaminants present in fish, shellfish and crustaceans. It provides public authorities with scientific expert assessments on the quality and safety of these foodstuffs to help them with decision making.

Today, ANSES and the Nord-Pas de Calais regional council signed a memorandum of cooperation in order to develop and support regional research resources for the quality and safety of seafood.

This memorandum of cooperation, which is especially strategic with regard to the laboratory's objectives and outlook for the future, will enable ANSES's Boulogne-sur-Mer site to integrate a centre for research excellence and is also testimony to its enduring presence in the region.

Providing regional support for research

This memorandum aims to ensure that the collaborations already begun are maintained over time, both with the *Université du Littoral Côte d'Opale* (ULCO) and with the regional council. The objective is to realise a base-building project which will enable ANSES to contribute even further to the regional growth of the *Campus de la Mer* project, the AQUIMER competitiveness cluster, and to future projects on the study of the marine environment, its resources and the quality of seafood products, in the framework of the CPER (State-Regional Plan Contract) for marine and coastal research in the Côte d'Opale.

This support will take the form of financial aid by the regional council for hosting PhD students, the acquisition of research equipment and material, exchanges between scientists from various institutions, and the organisation of scientific events.

ANSES's technological platforms that have been developed on the national level will be made available to the Boulogne-sur-Mer laboratory and to the fishing sector, so that they may benefit from cutting-edge technology (high throughput sequencing, high throughput genomics facilities, mass spectrometry, etc.) to investigate topics of interest such as bacterial resistance to antibiotics, the safety of aquaculture products or the potential health impact of microplastics in consumed seafood products.

Buoyed by the specific challenges of the fishery product sector, the expertise deployed and the vitality of its laboratory's enduring presence in the region, ANSES will continue to make scientific investments in its Boulogne-sur-Mer site, in the context of a joint project with the region and the ULCO in particular.