



2014 Italian Presidency
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“WHAT FUTURE FOR FISHERIES IN THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN BASIN?”

29TH - 30TH OCTOBER 2014, TERMOLI (MOLISE REGION, IT)

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

At European level, conservation, management and exploitation of living marine resources, and the processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products are regulated by the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The Union budget finances the implementation of the CFP through a single fund, the European maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF), either directly or in the context of shared management with Member States. The scope of the 2014-2020 EMFF includes financial support for: the conservation of marine biological resources, for the management of fisheries and fleets exploiting those resources, for fresh water biological resources and aquaculture, as well as for the processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products.

In this context, with the sole exception of the financial measures in favor of the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs), the 2014-2020 EMFF **does not provide financial support in favor of the implementation of transnational and/or cross-borders programs covering fisheries and/or aquaculture topics.**

The technical and political debates that took place in the two days seminar of Termoli provided clear and unambiguous elements about the **crucial role that transnational and cross-borders programmes (implemented in the framework of the ETC) played, and still play, in supporting and encouraging the development of a fisheries and aquaculture sector, consistently with the CFP's goals.**

On the basis of the results achieved by projects funded in the framework of 2007-2013 ETC programmes, in Termoli representatives of Regional governments, fisheries and aquaculture sector, NGOs, scientific community have identified 3 major axes of intervention, which are strategic in order to improve the competitiveness and the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the Mediterranean area and, especially, in the Adriatic-Ionian basin:



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- **Enhancing evidence based policy making:** contrarily to the hypothetical abundance of data and technical advice arising from specialized bodies on fisheries management and research, an effective fisheries monitoring system is still inadequately adapted for the Mediterranean Sea and for the its marine ecoregions. The main reasons are related to insufficient harmonized data and information available on fish stocks and catches; partial data on the evolution of fleets and on their potential dynamics and, poor co-ordination on research programs and activities within countries sharing ecoregions and among ecoregions. These gaps (status of exploitation of the fish stocks; on spawning behaviors and spawning grounds of main Mediterranean commercial fish species; on impact of climate change and pollution on marine living resources; etc.) are one of the main challenges that must be faced by EU and Mediterranean decision makers. During the Termoli seminar, concrete examples were given underlining the important role played by and the high added value related to the implementation of a transnational approach in this field (for instance see presentations of [MED-AC](#), [GFCM](#), [BLUEMED](#), [Med-IAMER](#), etc.). Fish and marine life do not go by national, regional or local administrative boundaries. Ensuring a transnational approach in the framework of activities of data collection and technical analyses would guarantee the development of comprehensive scenarios for Mediterranean and Adriatic-Ionian decision makers. Hereafter are some concrete examples of initiatives that should be developed by ETC transnational projects in the 2014-2020 programming period in the Mediterranean area:

Activities to be developed by 2014-2020 ETC transnational projects in the Mediterranean area and, especially in the Adriatic-Ionian basin.

- **harmonization of existing national and regional data bases**
- **setting-up of data bases** for instance on: socio-economic impacts of the Common Fisheries Policy; impacts of pollution and/or climate change on Mediterranean and/or Adriatic-Ionian marine living resources; overall catches of fish species with high probability, for fishing operators, of producing and placing on the European and/or Mediterranean sea food market; volume of discards landed - Art.15 of the CFP; etc.
- **development of studies on:** the impacts of pollution and/or climate change on Mediterranean marine living resources; new fishing practices and fishing gears ensuring higher levels of selectivity and reducing discards and by-catches; spawning behaviors and spawning grounds of main Mediterranean commercial fish species (e.g. straddling stocks); new methodologies improving production of bivalve molluscs; aquaculture production of new and/or non-indigenous fish species; innovative solutions for adding value to fisheries and aquaculture products; new models of co-management and/or exploitation of Marine Protected Areas; prototypes of “the fishing vessel of future”; methodologies and quality indicators for new eco-labels covering Mediterranean and/or Adriatic-Ionian fisheries and aquaculture activities; etc.

- capitalization and dissemination of best practices on fisheries and aquaculture topics, such as: fishing practices and fishing gears ensuring high level of selectivity and reducing discards and by-catches; technical solutions for fishing vessels ensuring lower levels of CO2 emissions and/or water pollution; production and marketing models ensuring added value to fisheries and aquaculture products; models of sustainable co-management and/or exploitation of Marine Protected Areas; multiannual national, regional and local management plans for Mediterranean and/or Adriatic-Ionian fish stocks and aquaculture products; etc.

➤ **Enhancing a more competitive and sustainable fishing and aquaculture sector.** Although there has been some progress made over the last few years, a lot could still be done to improve sustainability and competitiveness of the fisheries and aquaculture sector. In the hearings of the Termoli seminar concrete examples have been given underlining the high added value related to the implementation of a transnational approach in this field (for instance see presentations of [NEMO project](#), [FishMPABlue project](#), [ECOSEA project](#), [Distretto di Pesca Nord Adriatico](#), etc...). Indeed, setting-up an effective transnational coordination/cooperation around the Mediterranean Sea still remains one of the main objective and/or concrete solution in order to ensure a more sustainable exploitation of EU marine living resources. Hereafter some concrete examples of initiatives that should be developed by ETC transnational projects in the 2014-2020 programming period in the Mediterranean area:

Activities to be developed by 2014-2020 ETC transnational projects in the Mediterranean area and, especially in the Adriatic-Ionian basin.

- training and capacity building sessions and/or initiatives on fishing and aquaculture topics, such as: fishing practices and fishing gears ensuring higher levels of selectivity, and reducing discards and by-catches; innovative solutions for fishing vessels aiming to reduce CO2 emissions and/or water pollution; sustainable co-management and/or exploitation of Marine Protected areas; diversification of fisheries and aquaculture activities (e.g. pescaturismo; ittiturismo); etc.
- **setting-up of and/or development of pilot actions** : new cross-border and/or transnational multiannual management plans for commercial fish stocks; new marketing solutions for fisheries and aquaculture products; experimental fishing practices and fishing gears ensuring higher level of selectivity, and reducing discards and by-catches; diversification of fisheries and aquaculture activities (e.g. pescaturismo; ittiturismo); transnational eco-labels for fisheries and aquaculture activities; an *ad hoc* programme for mobility and transnational training of Mediterranean fishermen and aquaculture producers; etc.
- **awareness raising campaigns** promoting the high quality brand of Mediterranean Sea-

Food (e.g. development of new Mediterranean Sea Food routes)

- **supporting networking and clusterisation** of small and medium fishing and aquaculture enterprises (e.g. setting-up collaboration and synergies among fisheries and aquaculture producers, Mediterranean Research Centers and/or universities, Fisheries Local Action Groups –FLAGs; etc.).

➤ **The Fisheries and aquaculture sector vs. other uses of Mediterranean waters.** Over the last 20 years at European level there have been a high and rapidly increasing demand for maritime space for different purposes, such as: installations for the production of energy from renewable sources, oil and gas exploration and exploitation, maritime shipping, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, the extraction of raw materials, tourism, etc... All these marine economic sectors compete directly with fisheries and aquaculture sector in order to exploit European marine waters and coastal zones. During the Termoli seminar, delegates have pointed out the high added value of the introduction of a transnational approach in the conception and implementation of pilot actions of maritime spatial planning (for instance see presentations of the [MedTrends project](#); [ADRIPLAN project](#); etc.). In this context, there was a wide awareness about the fact that maritime spatial planning is a cross-cutting policy tool enabling public authorities and stakeholders to apply a coordinated, integrated and trans-boundary approach. Hereafter are some concrete examples of initiatives that should be developed by ETC transnational projects in the 2014-2020 programming period in the Mediterranean area in order to reduce conflicts between fisheries and/or aquaculture and the other relevant Mediterranean and Adriatic-Ionian marine and maritime economies and/or sectors:

Activities to be developed by 2014-2020 ETC transnational projects in the Mediterranean area and, especially in the Adriatic-Ionian basin

- **delivering of scenarios of and/or conception and implementation of maritime spatial plans** at Mediterranean and sub-regional levels (e.g. Adriatic-Ionian basin; Alboran Sea, Aegean Sea);
- **development of regional and local marine cadasters** at Mediterranean and at sub-regional level (e.g. Adriatic-Ionian basin; Alboran Sea, Aegean Sea);
- **studies on different exploitation of Mediterranean waters:** these studies should mainly focus on the environmental and socio-economic impacts that existing and/or new exploitations (made by other economic sectors fishing and aquaculture) of the Mediterranean waters could produce vis-à-vis the Mediterranean and Adriatic-Ionian fisheries and aquaculture sector.