

## AQUAMED 1st Open Multi-Stakeholder Meeting

On the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2012, the **AQUAMED** 1st Open Multi-Stakeholder Meeting took place in Rome. The aim of the meeting was to identify the research priorities in the Mediterranean aquaculture sector and to explore the potential benefits of setting up a Mediterranean Stakeholders Platform (MSHP). Around 60 stakeholders from the industry, government and research sectors from 13 Mediterranean countries participated in the meeting (Algeria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey).

**AQUAMED** is an EU Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) supporting the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean region. Stakeholders from 13 Mediterranean countries were invited to join the project's researcher partners in order to develop a common Action Plan to support the establishment of a MSHP. The purpose of the MSHP will be to avoid duplication and fragmentation of research efforts, and to stimulate long-term cooperation and coordination between policy-makers, the aquaculture industry and RTD performers in the Mediterranean.

Several project observers such as the European Aquaculture Society (EAS), the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) were represented as well.

To set the scene at the meeting, results relating to the aquaculture sector (including political and socio-economic characteristics) collected as part of the **AQUAMED** project for each Mediterranean country participating in the project were presented to the stakeholders. Then all the participants were asked to identify the research priorities grouped per Thematic Area (TA) by completing the Delphi Survey, an interactive forecasting method.

The collated results and the ranking of the TAs were discussed during the second day of the meeting when participants were facilitated to review and comment on the results. The meeting concluded with a practical exercise that involved outlining an Action Plan for each of the main TAs ranked in the Delphi Survey.

The meeting was very interactive and saw a proactive contribution from all stakeholders involved. This meeting represented the first step towards a common sharing of goals to facilitate the successful and sustainable development of the aquaculture sector in the Mediterranean region. The results of the meeting will form the core basis for developing the MSHP and for the final **AQUAMED** project event planned to take place by June 2013.

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More information and materials relating to the project are available on the **AQUAMED** website: [www.aquamedproject.net](http://www.aquamedproject.net). The event report will be shortly available on the website as well.

If you would like to arrange an interview with the **AQUAMED** project team, please contact the Project Officer Emma Bello Gomez to arrange a suitable time: +353 (0) 1 475 8713 or email [emma@aquatt.ie](mailto:emma@aquatt.ie)

**This press release has been issued by AquaTT, the AQUAMED project dissemination partner.**

## **Note to Editors**

IFREMER is the project coordinator of this project on behalf of EFARO, with AquaTT as its dissemination partner. The AQUAMED project has received funding from the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n° 244999.

**EFARO** - The European Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Organisation is a non-profit organisation, created in 1989 in order to achieve greater cohesion and coordination of fisheries and aquaculture research. EFARO's main focus is the delivery of new applied knowledge in the field of scientific support for policies in the European Community and associated States.

**IFREMER** is a public institute of industrial and commercial nature which develops scientific expertise in monitoring, use and promotion of coastal seas, monitoring and optimising aquaculture products, promoting scientific advices on fisheries resources for a sustainable fishing, exploring the seafloor and the ocean biodiversity, forecasting ocean circulation, marine ecosystems evolution, and manages vessels and underwater vehicles for the French scientific community. It has been involved for 30 years in research in aquaculture and in the study of marine biology and aquatic ecosystems.

**AquaTT** is an international foundation which provides project management and training services to support the sustainable development of Europe's aquatic resources. AquaTT's mission is to bridge the knowledge gap between the dynamic R&D environments and the progressive commercial sector. AquaTT supports its target audiences through the provision of support services and through participation in, and coordination of EU projects and initiatives in the area of knowledge management including customised dissemination, education, training and technology transfer.

Detailed partner profiles are available on request.