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## WORKGROUP ON BLUE GROWTH

FINAL DOCUMENT

Split, 17th October 2018.

### ***1. Introduction***

The subject of the discussion of the workgroup was **FOOD FROM THE SEA – STATUS AND THE OUTLOOK**. Coordinators were Bari Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Cosmo Albertini and Ancona Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Stefano Fiorini, and the University of Montenegro, Mr. Aleksandar Joksimović, with the support of Mrs. Danica Poparić-Majić, Split County Chamber.

The moderator was Mr. Joksimovic, and key note was presented by Mr. Mišura, Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Croatia, who presented the current situation in croatian fisheries and mariculture with the emphasis on the Adriatic-Ionian region.

Presentations were followed by reputable scientists and people involved in fishery business, which presented international marketing experience of fishery products, branding and raising awareness about the need to increase consumption of fish, about the latest scientific knowledge and new species in the Adriatic Ichthyofauna due to climate changes, and about the potential socio-economic consequences for sea fisheries of the region, as well as mechanisms for more effective funding of Blue growth at EU level, and all in order to achieve sustainability of the fisheries and the reduction in the import of fishery products into the EU from third countries.

In the argued discussion forty participants identified the same or similar problems, and came to the conclusions in order to contribute and to define the future proposals of the joint European projects in accordance with the Blue Economy.

### ***2. Strategic guidelines***

- Considering that EU today imports more than 60% of its consumption of fish (including freshwater fish), a common policy of fisheries the EU stresses is the development of mariculture as one of the priorities of the production growth.
- Mariculture is today one of the fastest-growing food production in the world, ecologically acceptable and controlled and as such has a great growth potential.
- In Europe, more than 70% of consumption takes place in a system of wholesale, it is therefore necessary to define the strategy of the Blue marketing how to gain access to the branding and consumption of fish in the retail sector.



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- All changes in marine ecosystems have a certain effect on users of marine bio-resources, primarily on marine fisheries. The impact of climate change in the Adriatic Sea is the cause of the occurrence of a number of new species of fish and crustaceans, and the effects can be both positive and negative in the economic sense.
- Special marine reserves within the Natura 2000 areas, such as the Mali Ston Bay in Croatia, can be tourist attractive and environmentally acceptable for the cultivation of shellfish and, as such, a successful example of the viability of mariculture and tourism.
- Implementation of the latest technological innovations in fisheries and mariculture, raises competitiveness and environmental justification of the production.
- It was extremely emphasized the importance of regional cooperation, especially through bilateral or trilateral projects financed by EU funds.
- It was emphasized the participation of women in all aspects of fisheries, from the catch to the sales.
- New image and the role of fishermen was recognized, not only as someone who is on the boat and catches the fish, but the person who participates in all activities related to innovation, and synergy in clusters, someone who takes advantage of IT technologies, and finally someone who participates in decision-making.

### **3. Conclusions**

- It is essential to provide the sustainability of the natural resources of the sea and water, and to raise the awareness of consumers in developed countries, especially about the value of the Mediterranean diet.
- A successful cross-border cooperation on projects of mutual interest that include hydrographic, physical, chemical, geological and biological research of the state of sea and shore in the Adriatic-Ionian area, is essential in the provision of future planning in Blue sector's growth.
- The current scientific and professional cooperation, as well as the current joint projects with countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region are at a high level, and especially intensive are the joint efforts in order to achieve bio-sustainability of the marine waters in front of the bodies of the European Commission.
- The achievement of the desired potential fisheries and mariculture is impossible without the introduction of new technological innovations, therefore, a platform for innovation and the development of fisheries represent the centre of knowledge and expertise dedicated to the research and development of fishing activities and



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support to the fishing sector through technical, scientific, economic and managerial knowledge for the economic and ecological development in accordance with the Blue economy.

- Marketing projects carried out by the Chambers of Commerce, croatian project Fish from Croatia – Eat what it's Worth Eating, and italian project Pappa Fish in schools, are examples of good practices to be followed because they contribute to local consumption of fishery products, achieving their corresponding valuation, and the construction of culture and raise the consumption of fish.
- The future of this sector is in the stronger emerging into producer organisations (FLAG) and in the greater valorization of the activities and products of fisheries, all aimed at the sustainability of fisheries and the reduction of the import of fishery products into the EU from the third countries.
- Clustering in mariculture and fishery is necessary in order to implement the active cooperation with all scientific and professional institutions and in strengthening capacity for the withdrawal of European funds.
- The development of cross-border clusters in Blue technologies and mapping technological competencies of the companies that belong to the Blue sector also is the basis for an effective, practical cooperation among the relevant stakeholders.
- Chambers of Commerce should continue to be the promoter and strong link between all stakeholders in fisheries and mariculture, and also in the promotion of the consumption of fish at the national level and in tourist consumption.
- It is necessary to include even more intensively and to ensure the participation of representatives of all countries, in particular the representatives of scientific institutions from UNIADRION network.
- Food from the sea, in a free or a controlled cultivation, is the food of the future, and with the continuous control of anthropogenic activities which may lead to the endangering of marine resources, we need to work together even more intensively on the international cooperation through the identification of common problems and in order to find adequate solutions, and finally to the define new joint projects in accordance with the Blue economy.