

## THE PROJECT IN BRIEF



The **ArtFishMed** project ("Actions aimed to enhance the participatory role of Mediterranean small-scale fishing in the decision making and advisory processes at national and EU level") stems from the European Commission requirement to enhance the participatory role of the small-scale fishing sector in management policies, in respect to fishing sectors which are already strongly represented.

- It intends to promote the coming together and discussion between small-scale fishermen who operate in a common geographic area (Northern Adriatic) but come from different countries (Italy, Slovenia and Croatia), promoting three Case Studies in their respective countries to pursue further actions of awareness, involvement and information for operators.
- These discussions may in fact be useful to share common difficulties, problems, needs and interests and to encourage the initiatives to be proposed together in the context of the opportunities offered by the regulatory framework.
- As with other economic and professional fields, representation of one's own interests is definitely much stronger when a common front between operators is created, in order to carry forward proposals and demands with greater strength.
- At a wider level, the project foresees, among other things, also a census of the current situation in all member countries bordering the basin, a cognitive insight into the activities and documents of MEDAC, and the construction of a network between stakeholders through the creation of a dedicated web portal.

## THE PROJECT PARTNERS

**UNIMAR**, project coordinator, is an institute with headquarters in Rome that aims to contribute to research, knowledge and study of problems affecting the fishing industry concerning those of a biological, ecological, technological, economic, social, legal and training nature in order to promote the development and enhancement of fisheries, the fishing industry, aquaculture and coastal areas. Unimar is closely linked to trade associations: by virtue of this feature it makes use of a special relationship with the world of fishing and a regional network of researchers able to deepen the knowledge of the sector in direct contact with the world of production.

**MEDAC**, another partner in the project, is the Advisory Council for the Mediterranean. It is based in Rome and has the role of preparing opinions and providing technical solutions and suggestions on fishery management and socio-economic aspects of the conservation of Mediterranean fisheries for use by EU Member States and European institutions, with the aim of contributing to achieving the objectives of the CFP. Its 47 members include industry associations and institutions based in all EU Member States that border the Mediterranean, in addition to those at an international level.



"States and other parties should enhance the capacity of small-scale fishing communities in order to enable them to participate in decision-making processes"  
Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries. FAO, 2015

"Networking and exchange of experiences and best practices between stakeholders, including among organisations promoting equal opportunities between men and women, promoting the role of women in fishing communities and promoting under-represented groups involved in small-scale coastal fishing"  
Reg. (EU) 508/2014 EMFF, Art. 29



[www.artfishmed.eu](http://www.artfishmed.eu)



**UNIMAR**  
Via Nazionale, 243  
00184 - Rome (Italy)  
tel: +39 06.47.82.40.42  
fax: +39 06.48.21.097  
[www.unimar.it](http://www.unimar.it)  
[unimar@unimar.it](mailto:unimar@unimar.it)



**MEDAC**  
(EU Advisory Council for the Mediterranean)  
Via Nazionale, 243  
00184 - Rome (Italy)  
tel: +39 06.48.91.36.24  
fax: +39 06.60.51.32.59  
[www.med-ac.eu](http://www.med-ac.eu)  
[info@med-ac.eu](mailto:info@med-ac.eu)



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## SMALL-SCALE FISHING TOWARDS GREATER PARTICIPATION OF FISHERS IN THE SECTOR MANAGEMENT



## CONTEXT



**Small-scale coastal fishing** is hugely important for the entire Mediterranean basin both in terms of number of vessels, operators involved and catches, and from a cultural-historical, social and economic perspective.

According to the official definition by the European Commission, small-scale fishing is that practised by vessels having an overall length of less than 12 metres and not using towed fishing gear. 70/80% of the boats of fishing fleets of the European countries that border the Mediterranean meet this definition.

The characteristics of small-scale fishing differ greatly from other types of commercial fishing, for the size of the boats, the type of gear used and the variety of species caught: the typical catching methods in small-scale fishing generally have less impact and are more sustainable for the marine environment and stocks compared with activities practised by larger vessels.



### **Small-scale fishing: sustainability, tradition and respect for the environment**

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the main institutions responsible for the management of the sector pay particular attention and provide special treatment to the whole production sector of small-scale fishing in order to protect it, given the considerable difficulties they have to face on a daily basis.

## MANAGEMENT: POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS

- Management of commercial fisheries comes under the **jurisdiction of EU law**: this means that the rules are established by European institutions, namely the Commission through the Directorate General MARE, the Parliament and the Council, through norms called Regulations, which, once published, automatically enter into force in all European Union Member States.
- The individual Member States adopt the EU rules usually through the Ministries. The port authorities enforce such rules, undertaking, in particular, monitoring activities to ensure that these regulations are implemented.
- In addition to the relevant European and National institutions, other international and national bodies intervene in many cases in industry management policies, such as the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of FAO and the Regions.
- The Mediterranean fisheries management policy was reformed ten years ago in light of a broader European reform: since 2006, in fact, a significant Regulation has been dedicated to our sea (*Reg. EC 1967/2006 concerning management measures for the sustainable exploitation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Sea*), which transposes and adapts European management policies of the sector to basin specificities.



### **Make your voice heard!**

**Participation** is important for operators in order to make their voices heard, to support their own needs, to present their difficulties and represent their specific interests.

In order to give more strength to own requests it is necessary **to discuss and exchange experiences**, discuss and share your own points of view also at a European level, since the more general and more important decisions are taken at a supranational level.

## REPRESENTATION: ASSOCIATIONS AND EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES

- The rules seem therefore apparently imposed only from above at a supranational level, but in reality industry operators have the opportunity to participate in decisions: there are some representation bodies and channels which **contribute to set the management policies** adopted by European and national institutions.
- At a national level, in almost all European countries there are different types of **industry associations**, that, even with very different structures and procedures, gather and represent the interests of operators accommodating and giving importance to the needs of fishing and in particular to that of small-scale fishing.
- Internationally, the European Commission a few years ago set up **7 Advisory Councils**, in as many geographic areas, which have the task of gathering opinions and requests directly from the fishing industry through the professional member associations, belonging to the same geographical area. Specifically, the **Mediterranean Advisory Council - MEDAC** - which is based in Rome, and participates directly in the ArtFishMed project as partner, assembles the main associations of EU countries bordering the basin and aims to discuss and develop common proposals to be reported to European institutions, on the main management measures established or being developed in the European institutions.
- Regarding the issue of small-scale fishing, there are also several **other instruments** and management measures based on grassroots participation and self-regulation at a local level, promoted, and in some cases financed by the EU institutions themselves: among others, the small-scale fisheries management consortia, local management plans, coastal action groups (GAC or FLAG) and local trade associations.

