

FISHERS ARE INCREASINGLY MORE AWARE AND RESPONSIBLE, DEMANDING EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD

The experience gained through this project, especially via the **Case Studies**, tells us that on the part of the **small-scale fishing** workers there is an increasingly widespread and deep-rooted awareness about the importance of respecting the rules, and there is a growing need for rules that ensure the protection of resources and therefore the sustainability of small-scale commercial fishing. The information gathered and the meetings held enabled the formulation of a number of concluding remarks which are summarised below.

According to the stakeholders, the existence of **conflicts** with other sea-based activities (other professional fishing, sport fishing, recreation, transportation of goods and passengers, extractive activities, etc.) as well as a perceived decline in resources, highlights the need for the regulation of each activity and the enforcement of these rules through a greater control.

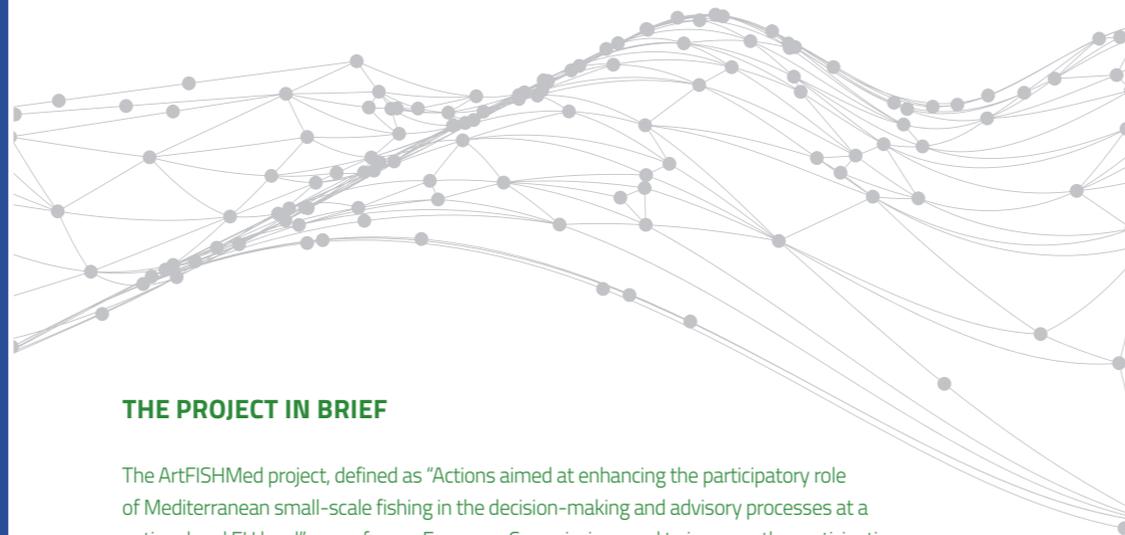
The increased knowledge and acceptance of the rules goes hand in hand with a growing awareness of the importance of being consulted in order to **influence decision-making**. There is also an awareness of the need to adopt rules that take into account the real needs and the wealth of knowledge within the sector which runs parallel with the actual usefulness of rules aimed at protecting the resources.

It is becoming a more widespread belief that the comparison and **exchange of experiences**, primarily among the workers who carry out their activities in a homogeneous area and within the common framework of European standards, is a first and indispensable step towards the effective representation of the sector.

Fishers feel the need to have their voice more strongly heard and they are aware that by **joining together** they can better make their case.

Representation and **Participation** are perceived as opportunities to give strength to and to protect the interests of the sector and become a priority for the fishers in order to give an actual contribution to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of small-scale fishing in the Mediterranean, which ultimately is the primary purpose of the sector regulations.

Small-scale fishing needs everyone's contribution:
please e-mail us at
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THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

The ArtFISHMed project, defined as "Actions aimed at enhancing the participatory role of Mediterranean small-scale fishing in the decision-making and advisory processes at a national and EU level", arose from a European Commission need to increase the participation of small-scale fisheries in policy management. A key tool for consultation and for the support of the sector's needs is representation.

The MEDAC, project partner together with the Italian institute Unimar, as Mediterranean Advisory Council is the main instrument of fisheries representation being made up of the major professional organisations from the European Member States bordering the basin.

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Small-scale fishing and representation
THE ARTFISHMED PROJECT:
METHODOLOGIES
AND RESULTS

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The Project activities were divided into **4 Phases**: a summary of the methodology and achievements is provided for each one.

PHASE 1 - MAPPING OF THE ORGANISATIONS

Construction of a **Database of the representative Organisations** from the Member States of the Mediterranean. This detailed research, also carried out with the help of MEDAC, enabled the creation of a database of the organisations which represent at different levels the small-scale fishing sector, available on a map on the website. The research produced a list of about 300 organisations, about 200 of which are contactable by e-mail, mainly made up of associations of fisheries workers, cofradías, prud'homies, chambers of commerce, FLAGs and transnational organisations of the sector.

All the listed organisations were asked to complete a **Questionnaire**, translated into seven languages, to collect information and opinions about their perception about the sector's representation. The 45 completed questionnaires covered a large part of the organisations contacted, as many are members of associations that completed the questionnaire on behalf of all their associates. From the answers, an indication has emerged of an unsatisfactory level of representation of small-scale fisheries within the institutions. More detailed results are published on the website.

Details of the results are published on the www.artfishmed.eu website, which was designed as a reference tool for the dissemination and exchange of information within the sector.



FLEET: from the EU Fleet Register, a database has been created of those fishing vessels which fall within the official definition of small-scale fisheries and which are operating in the Mediterranean. The database is available on the website.

PHASE 2 - SMALL-SCALE FISHING IN MEDAC

All documents produced by MEDAC from its establishment (minutes of the meetings, opinions and letters) were analysed in detail in order to highlight what issues were faced regarding small-scale fishing. The **database of documents** is available on the site with associated keywords to enable a thematic search, together with an annotated summary of contents.

PHASE 3 - CASE STUDIES

The implementation of **three Case Studies** allowed the direct participation of fishers in the project and the development of models and best practices.

Based on an explicit request by the European Commission, the studied areas were the region of the Northern Adriatic, respectively in Italy (Veneto), Slovenia and Croatia (Istria), which share history and production activities that always have been developed in this area.

Each Case Study followed a work plan structured as follows:

1. team building: the selection of local experts based on their experience in the field
2. identification of the ports based on the significant presence of small-scale fisheries, the availability of facilities for events, previous contacts with fishers and logistical issues. Chioggia, Caorle (Italy), Piran, Koper, Izola, Strunjan (Slovenia), Poreč, Pula (Croatia) were the main ports involved
3. preliminary investigation of the local sector (fleet, fishing companies, associations, administration)
4. identification of fishers, information gathering and preparation for project activities
5. contact with local authorities, associations and research institutes
6. planning and carrying out a campaign of research with the fishers via questionnaires and interviews
7. publication of an information brochure about the project, translated into English, Italian, Slovenian and Croatian and the tools available for international, national and local representation within the sector. Publications to be distributed to the stakeholders identified in the case studies



8. organisation of a mutual exchange event for each case study, with the active participation of the fishers in the discussion along with the working groups and any other stakeholders
9. sharing of the results of the case studies and of the project

PHASE 4 - THE NETWORK

Using the database of the organisations developed in Phase 1 and the information gathered during the case studies as a basis, a **network was created among stakeholders** developing specific tools for the exchange of information. The biggest of these tools, a pilot web portal of small-scale European fisheries in the Mediterranean, is a platform for the sharing of information, relevant documentation and useful contacts. The portal has been designed as a reference tool for finding and sharing useful information channels for the sector.

As a result of the contact details put together via the case studies and the database of the associations, a mailing list was created, to which a newsletter was distributed communicating the project results, the documents produced and any news affecting the industry. To promote the exchange of experience and information, via the newsletter and the website, it was possible to create an opportunity for the promotion of MEDAC activities whilst at the same time facilitating the construction of a network of contacts among stakeholders and other interested parties.

Do you think that associations can play a role in representing the interests of fishermen of the small-scale fisheries?

