

# Closing conference of the AdriAquaNet Project in Zadar, Croatia

17 June 2022 | Zadar, Croatia & Udine, Italy

## Post-event press release

**The partners of the AdriAquaNet project presented the results of the joint work in a public conference at the Hotel Kolovare in Zadar on 2 June 2022.**

The statements of political administrators and representatives of companies in the sector testify to the usefulness and immediate application of the innovations implemented by the partnership.

The AdriAquaNet project - Improving innovation and sustainability in Adriatic aquaculture, funded by the European cross-border cooperation program INTERREG VA Italy-Croatia 2014-2020 is coming to an end after three and a half years of work. The project planned that the public presentation of the results achieved by the 12 project partners take place both in Croatia and in Italy, to facilitate the involvement of public authorities and interest groups in both states.

**On 2 June, the 12 partners of the project presented the results in the first of two public conferences, which was held in the Hotel Kolovare in Zadar from 10.30 to 14.30.**

This event attracted a lot of interest among the key players in the sector, because, as was revealed in a press conference that opened the conference, Europe has not achieved productive self-sufficiency in the seafood market and, in fact, only satisfies 36% of its needs. Since fisheries are regulated by quotas, necessary to protect natural populations of fish and other marine species, the future of supplying consumers with these products lies in sustainable aquaculture, which respects the environment, the health of fish on farms and is attentive to offer the market high quality nutritional products.

**Tatjana Boroša Pecigoš**, director of the Aquaculture Service of the Fisheries Directorate of the **Ministry of Agriculture of Croatia**, said that the drafting of the national aquaculture development plan for the programming period 2021-2027 is underway. The objectives are to increase the productivity of aquaculture, its resilience to climate change, increase the sector's competitiveness, contribute to the development of rural and coastal areas and encourage





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Indeed, in Croatia aquaculture is a strategic productive sector: "**... it is one of the best segments of Croatian agriculture and food industry**", said **Dragan Kovačević**, vice president of the **Croatian Chamber of Commerce for Agriculture and Tourism**, thanks to strong exports. He noted, however, that fish consumption in Croatia is below the European average by 20%.

The next INTERREG VI A Italy-Croatia 2021-2027 cross-border cooperation program, which is expected to be approved by 2022, provides for **strong investments in the economy of the Adriatic Sea and therefore also in aquaculture**, said **Lovro Jurišić**, Project Manager in the Joint Secretariat of the **Interreg Croatia - Italy Program**.

The **Cromaris** company is the main producer of farmed fish in Croatia. Production manager **Dane Desnica** said the company expects to supply more than 12,000 tons of fish to the market this year, which would represent a 12% growth in production over last year. The director himself, at the end of the conference, reiterated that "**the results achieved by the AdriAquaNet project are concrete and useful for innovating the production and market of farmed fish**".

According to **Boris Habrun**, director of the **Croatian Veterinary Institute**, partner of the project, the innovations developed by the AdriAquaNet project, which have aroused the greatest interest are the **new feed formulas, new vaccines and new molecules for strengthening the natural immunity of farmed fish**. Very important are the scientific data that demonstrate that **farmed fish has high nutritional quality**, which must be the basis for correct consumer information.

**Snježana Zrnčić**, who coordinated the scientific work of the Fish Pathology Laboratory of the **Croatian Veterinary Institute**, explained that by replacing fishmeal, derived from fishing activities, with new protein mixtures of plant origin and obtained from insects, it is possible to exploit vital resources for feeding fish, without therefore changing the ecological balance of the sea. This approach corresponds perfectly to the principles of the circular economy and environmental sustainability.

**Marco Galeotti**, coordinator of this large research & innovation project from the **University of Udine**, stated "**the project has achieved all the expected results**" and hoped for the continuation of the activities of this network of Italian-Croatian research institutions and companies, as recommended by **Davor Zanella**,



Advisory Board of the project and professor at the **University of Zagreb**.

The **next conference** will take place at the **University of Udine**, on **20 June 2022 from 2 pm to 7 pm**, in the Aula Strassoldo (room 3) of the Department of Law and Economics, in via Tomadini 30 / A, 33100 Udine (UD), Italy).

#### ADRIAQUANET WEB SITE

[www.italy-croatia.eu/adriaquanet](http://www.italy-croatia.eu/adriaquanet)

#### Details

Priority: Blue innovation.

Duration: 01.01.2019-30.06.2021.

Coordination: Università di Udine

Funding: € 2 740 MLN from the European Regional Development Fund and € 483 600 from national funds.

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