



ARIEL PROJECT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

“TOWARDS AN INNOVATION NETWORK FOR SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE GROWTH IN ADRIATIC AND IONIAN AREA”

The ARIEL project

ARIEL is a project co-financed under the INTERREG ADRION Programme 2014/2020. The project – coordinated by the Institute for Biological Resources and Marine Biotechnologies of Ancona - has involved 9 organizations from 4 Countries:

- Italy (Marche Regional Authority, Sicilian Regional Authority)
- Croatia (Public Institution RERA SD for Coordination and Development of Split Dalmatia County, Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries)
- Montenegro (University of Montenegro Institute for Marine Biology of Kotor, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)
- Greece (Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, Region of Western Greece)

ARIEL aims to promote technological and non-technological solutions for innovation speed-up and up-taking of small-scale fishery (SSF) and aquaculture (AQ) sectors, fostering regional and transnational cooperation among research - policy - entrepreneurs in the Adriatic-Ionian (AI) basin.

To this, institutional and scientific partners worked together as a knowledge network with regional small-scale fisheries and aquaculture operators from 2018 to 2020, setting the framework conditions for a transnational Innovation community.

PERMISES

Background of the ARIEL Network

Among its objectives, the ARIEL project, financed under the first call of proposals of the INTERREG VB ADRION 2014 -2020 Programme, foresees the setting-up of a fully functional knowledge Network of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture actors at regional and transnational level for innovation speed-up and up taking in the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

The Network is set-up by founding members represented by the ARIEL institutional and scientific partners with a double aim:

- Ensuring a harmonized approach in designing, implementing and capitalizing the project actions and results achieved within the ARIEL lifespan, based on a common and shared "Vision" and ARIEL Policy and technical recommendations Paper.
- Ensuring the ARIEL Network capitalization and enlargement after the project end, based on two project milestones: the ARIEL policy and technical recommendation paper and the ARIEL Memorandum of Understanding.

Goals and duration of the ARIEL Network

The ARIEL Network is a voluntary and informal association established for promoting cross-border dialogue, interactive approach to innovation and knowledge exchange between small-scale fisheries and aquaculture actors, allowing their members to work on fields of common interests in the aim of contributing to smart, sustainable growth of coastal communities of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion.

The ARIEL Network duration is five years.

The activities of ARIEL Network activities

The ARIEL Network main activities are the following:

- To enlarge and follow-up the ARIEL cooperation and knowledge network set-up and promotion within the project among the multilevel actors of the small-scale fisheries and aquaculture at regional and transnational level
- To share and exchange knowledge
- To endorse horizontal and quadruple helix approaches and cooperation among small-scale fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders in forthcoming initiatives as a key to achieving innovation
- To support the development of a favorable legislative and programming framework and science-based policies
- To support small-scale fisheries and aquaculture enterprises in making their business more sustainable and competitive, developing favorable conditions
- To provide/support the access to tools, services and technological infrastructure to speed-up innovation, promote knowledge on innovative technologies for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture sectors
- To provide innovation support services for small-scale and aquaculture operators
- To scout further cooperation opportunities at regional, national and transnational level within the framework of the signatories' respective institutional duties and responsibilities.

ARIEL Network membership

Founding members

The ARIEL Network founding members are the following organizations:

- National Research Council - Institute of Biological Resources and Marine Biotechnologies (Italy)
- Marche Region – Fisheries Economy Department, Sicilian Region (Italy)
- Sicily Region - Mediterranean Fisheries Department (Italy)
- Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries (Croatia)
- Public Institution RERA SD for Coordination and Development of Split Dalmatia County (Croatia)
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro
- University of Montenegro – Institute for marine biology (Montenegro)
- Hellenic Center for Marine Research (Greece)
- Region of Western Greece (Greece)

The founding members constitute the ARIEL Network Coordination Board, chaired by the CNR-IRBIM of Ancona or by a delegated member.

Members and participation

The participation to the Network and its activities is free of charge and based on a voluntary commitment.

The Network is opened to public and private bodies and physical person (administrations, research and university, enterprises, associations, fishermen, NGOs) operating in the small-scale fisheries and aquaculture sectors at EU and international level who formally adhere - in writing - to the present Memorandum of Understanding (template <https://www.arielbluecommunity.eu/membership/>). The signed Memorandum of Understanding shall be sent (via e-mail/post) to ARIEL Network Secretariat.

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ARIEL Network working and governing modalities

The ARIEL Network strategic and operational functioning is ensured by the following bodies:

- The **Coordination Board**, composed by the ARIEL Network founding members, responsible for the general strategy of the Network, the organization of meetings, dissemination and communication of the Network activities.
- The **ARIEL Network Secretariat** established for the purpose at the CNR-IRBIM of Ancona with the tasks of manage the adhesion procedures, support the Coordination Board and networking activities.

And tools:

- **ARIEL virtual Innovation Community** (<https://www.arielbluecommunity.eu/>) where it is possible to share knowledge and experiences, search partners for projects and initiatives, find information and relevant publication, join the Network as a member

The Network members meet in plenary at least once a year in remote modalities, additional meetings in the form of “Working Groups” are also possible upon request of a member.

In case of meeting in presence, each member is responsible for incurring eventual costs (organizational, travel and accommodations costs) with its own budget.

Any costs incurred by the members shall be covered by the member itself.

THE ARIEL NETWORK MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The purpose of the present Memorandum of Understanding is to ensure an effective and efficient follow-up of the transnational and multi-actors cooperation Network for the small-scale fisheries and aquaculture innovation speed-up and uptake, initiated by the ARIEL project, financed by the INTERREG ADRION Programme 2014-2020.

By signing the present document, **signatories adhere to the ARIEL Network vision and goals and commit to its provisions**, acting as a fully functioning knowledge Network for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture innovation in ADRION communities

The signatories, partners of the ARIEL project and representatives of fisheries and aquaculture system, **acknowledge** the following:

Opportunities:

- Small-scale fisheries and aquaculture are key drivers for the ADRION communities' blue and smart growth
- Innovation may take different forms: a new idea can be a product, a service, production process or a new way of organising things that proves to be successful in practice
- The key role of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture sectors in promoting the development of regional product specialisations and marketing.
- The key role of regional and local authorities in promoting and supporting clustering initiatives and in supporting the provision of innovation services
- The key role of regional and national research centres towards science –based policies and in delivering innovation to socio-economic actors

Needs:

- Despite the different attitude to innovation and the different level of innovation in these two sectors, there is a common and raising demand - at both fishermen and fish farmers' level - for effective and concrete solutions to day-by-day needs
- The need of overcoming a linear approach to innovation towards an interactive model where practical and existing knowledge is valorised and exchanged in a systematic way in order to enhance the building of new blocks of innovation

Challenges:

- An improved regional and transnational governance of innovation is a horizontal challenge for all the ADRION communities
- More effective and target-oriented transfer of research outcomes to policy –makers and SSF and AQ operators
- Financial dialogue for alignment of innovation funding opportunities

In order to overcome the presented challenges and to achieve the objectives throughout the ADRION region, **the signatories approve the ARIEL policy and technical recommendations' paper for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture innovation (annexed to the present Memorandum), calling for action in the following aspects:**

- Data collection should be deepened and widened
- New approaches to innovation and SSF and AQ actors 'engagement
- Co-management should be put into practice
- Capitalization and better valorisation of practical knowledge
- Improving access to market and adding value of seafood products

The signatories hereby renew their commitment to:

- Enlarge and follow-up the ARIEL cooperation and knowledge network set-up and promotion within the project among the multilevel actors of the small-scale fisheries and aquaculture at regional and transnational level
- Share and exchange knowledge
- Endorse horizontal and quadruple helix approaches and cooperation among small-scale fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders in forthcoming initiatives as a key to achieving innovation
- Support the development of a favorable legislative and programming framework and science-based policies
- Support small-scale fisheries and aquaculture enterprises in making their business more sustainable and competitive, developing favorable conditions
- Provide/support the access to tools, services and technological infrastructure to speed-up innovation, promote knowledge on innovative technologies for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture sectors
- Provide innovation support services for small-scale and aquaculture operators
- Scouting further cooperation opportunities at regional, national and transnational level within the framework of the signatories' respective institutional duties and responsibilities.

The ARIEL Policy and Technical Recommendations Paper for small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in ADRION area

The ARIEL Policy and Technical Recommendations Paper forms an integral part of the present Memorandum of Understanding

Written and agreed by the ARIEL Network founding members, November 2020



Organization name: _____

Position: _____

Date and Place: _____

Signature
