

Regional Aquaculture Conference 2014

9-11 December 2014, CIHEAM-IAM Bari, Italy

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Blue Growth in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea:
Developing Sustainable Aquaculture for Food Security



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Mediterranean and the Black Sea governments join forces towards sustainable aquaculture development and food security

Bari, Italy – About **140 participants**, representatives of governments and international organizations, delegates, experts and professionals from Mediterranean and Black Sea countries (Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Morocco, Montenegro, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine) just met in Bari, Italy, on 11 December 2014, to discuss about the future of aquaculture in the region in light of Blue Growth and food security issues. The Regional Conference on “Blue Growth in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea: developing sustainable aquaculture for food security” was organized by the Italian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, together with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and in cooperation with the European Commission and the Italian Ministry of Agricultural Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF). This event took place at the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies of Bari (CIHEAM Bari), Italy.

The authorities and representatives of interested countries in the region and of international organizations gathered to exchange their views on the most salient issues connected to sustainable aquaculture development in the Mediterranean region and concurred that a strong commitment of governments was necessary to face the main challenges ahead and meet the needs of the sector taking into account current environmental and socio-economic concerns.

Aquaculture has strong potential to provide solutions for food security and to ensure sustainable growth in the region and, as such, it is a key component of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative. *“The question is not if aquaculture can be food for the future, it has to be. There are very bright prospects for the region since aquaculture in the Mediterranean is at a very advanced stage”* said Árni M. Mathiesen, Assistant Director-General of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of FAO.

In light of the major role this sector is called to play in the future, it is necessary to make substantial progress to make sure that it will grow harmoniously, taking into account the most important issues connected to good governance, healthy environment, effective response to market demand, and innovation development. *“Constructive cooperation and exchange between countries are essential, in particular in the Mediterranean region, to*

increase the performance of this sector” said Giuseppe Castiglione, Under-Secretary of the Italian Ministry of Agricultural Food and Forestry Policies.

At the end of the Conference, all participating countries reached a consensus on the need to foster cooperation and implement coherent and coordinated strategies to face challenges ahead and ensure the sustainable and responsible growth in the sector in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, addressing its most strategic areas. *“Discussions among participants were very fruitful and laid the foundations for future cooperation. We are grateful to CIHEAM Bari for their warm welcome and excellent hospitality and to our partners Eurofish and IUCN for the fruitful collaboration”* said Stefano Cataudella, President of the GFCM. *“Concrete actions to support the Conference conclusions should be examined by the GFCM at its 39th session due to be held in Italy in May 2015”* added Abdellah Srour, Executive Secretary of the GFCM.

For further information, please visit the conference website www.aquaculture2014.org