



New Benchmarking Tool to Measure Aquaculture Performance in the Mediterranean

Press Release: March 2019

Exciting news for the Mediterranean aquaculture industry, as **PerformFISH**, an EU-funded Horizon 2020 project, has developed an innovative industry-led tool to measure sea bass and sea bream aquaculture performance in the region. For the first time ever, sea bass and sea bream producers will have access to an accurate and standardised system allowing them to benchmark the efficiency of their own production, to define realistic targets according to peak performances and to identify inefficiencies in their production cycles.

This system will also compare the performance of the companies within Mediterranean local areas as well as at a regional level. Companies will be able to rank their performance relative to the performance of other producers in the sector. The tool was developed based on the principal of anonymity and will allow producers to measure the efficiency of their own production practices.

The tool is based on 55 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) due to be adopted by the industry, which will serve to estimate the technical efficiency of companies, including losses and diseases, feed efficiency, fish growth and the use of chemicals, as well as environmental and economic performance, and fish welfare.

“We have completed a thorough consultation process with the industry” said Giovanna Marino from ISPRA, “Our aim was to build a system that reflects the differences in production systems and technologies used by industry, the different industrial scales of the companies participating and the different climate conditions at aquaculture sites across the Mediterranean.”



Training Workshop carried out in Rome Italy with representatives of the companies testing the Benchmarking system

The system is currently being tested by 33 companies operating in Spain, Italy, Greece, France and Croatia, and includes hatcheries, land-based and sea-based grow-out facilities. These companies represent the 70% of sea bass and sea bream producers in Europe. The real-time data provided by the companies, from past seasons and new production cycles, will form a baseline that will be used to establish quantitative production targets, to evaluate the success of PerformFISH interventions on performance, and sector sustainability.

By the end of the project, this tool could be made available to all sea bass and sea bream producers across the Mediterranean, improving the competitiveness and efficiency of the industry in the region overall.

For the wider Mediterranean aquaculture industry, this advance will allow producers to improve their environmental footprint as well as the welfare levels of their animals, which will help to improve consumer perception of the sea bass and sea bream aquaculture products.

For more information on the project, visit the project's website at www.performfish.eu.

For more information and press queries, contact Emma Bello Gómez, AquaTT Senior Project Manager, email: emma@aquatt.ie.

Notes for Editors

This work has been carried out in the framework of the EU-funded project PerformFISH which aims to ensure sustainable growth of the Mediterranean aquaculture industry, based on consumer perceptions and real market requirements. The project outputs will produce knowledge and innovations to support fish farms in current and future economic and environmental conditions in a socially and culturally responsible manner. The project received funding under the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, Grant Agreement no. 727610. The project will run for five years from 2017 to 2022.

The **PerformFISH** consortium of 28 partners represents leading organisations in their respective fields of work from 10 different European countries. The project is coordinated by University of Thessaly, Greece. AquaTT is the project dissemination partner.

The **Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)** is a governmental research Institute under the supervision of the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea (www.isprambiente.gov.it/en).

The **Istituto di Scienza e Tecnologie della Informazione (CNR-ISTI)** is one of the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR) institutes. It consists of 16 Labs, addressing different aspects of computer science <https://www.cnr.it/en>.