



# The Mediterranean Platform of Artisanal Fishers (MedArtNet), a contribution of the artisanal fishing sector towards sustainability

First Symposium First Regional Symposium on Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea

27–30 November 2013, St. Julian's, Malta

MedArtNet   
Mediterranean Platform of Artisanal Fishers

Great importance of artisanal and small-scale fisheries in the Mediterranean

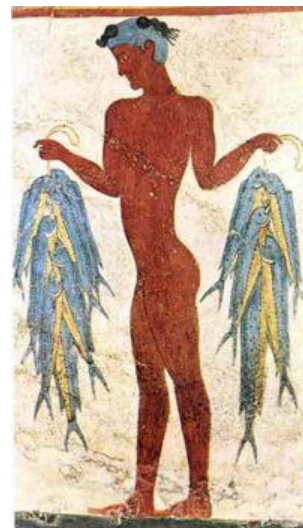
Artisanal and small-scale fisheries in the EU represent > 80% of the fishing vessels

50% takes place in the Mediterranean Sea



Vital role in the sustenance of coastal communities and livelihoods

Essential source of nutritious food and employment



## Viability of artisanal fishing as a productive system is under serious threat

- Abandon of the activity
- None generational replacement
- Marginal role
- Impoverishment
- Emigration



## Viability of artisanal fishing as a productive system is under serious threat

**Existing organizations** of the fishing sector have not been able to come up with an effective and sufficient solution to the problems in small-scale artisanal fishing sector.

Some of the **hurdles** that have so far stood in the way of **common sector solutions**

- Atomisation in the sector (locally and all over Europe)
- Opposing interests
- Lack of representation
- Local vision of the world



Fishermen and fishing organizations decided to join together and build up a process of **representation**

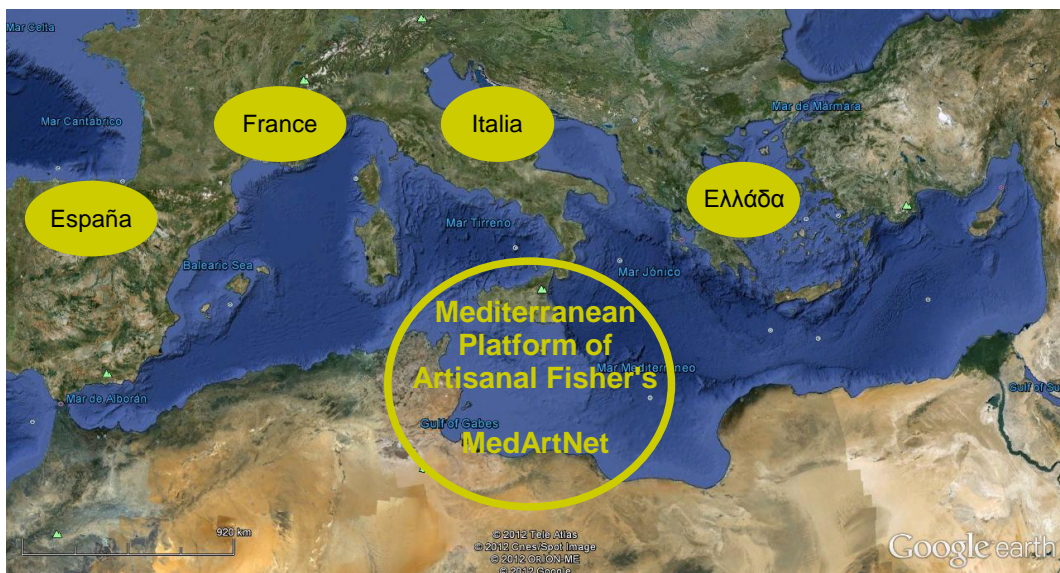
Provide practical **solutions** to the sector's problems within a framework of sustainable development

## What does unite us?

- Common work area
- Problems and concerns
- **Values and attitude**
- Vision about the future of fishing

- Entrepreneurs in a process of transformation.
- Common commitment
- Shared -responsibility
- Need to reach sustainability
- Value of the public interest and common good

A significant and original example of organization and collective action for artisanal fishermen in the European Mediterranean



## Arenys de Mar Manifesto, 2011



Gathered together at the El Calisay Cultural Center (Arenys de Mar, Catalonia) on the 18th and 19th of February 2011, minor-gear members of several fishing communities from Greece, Italy, France and Spain desire to start a process for consolidating common wills focused on the promotion of the recovery of fish stocks –which are currently declining– and on the creation of a platform for representing common interests in front of local, regional, national and Community administration.

We wish to express the following intentions:

The Platform of Minor-Gear Fishers of the Mediterranean is created, which is open to all traditional fishers from the Mediterranean coast who share common objectives and are willing to cooperate and unite efforts in order to achieve these objectives.

We defend artisanal fishing as a potentially sustainable activity among the activities which exploit fish stocks, and we search for real commitment for the protection and recovery of fish stocks and the marine environment.

We look forward to working together with the scientific community in order to ensure that our activity follows real sustainability parameters and also to develop common action lines.

We want the resources to have an economic value adjusted to the current necessities of fishers –an economic value which enables them to live on a sustainable fishing activity– and that this economic value positively affects marine ecosystems in that its value increases in order to reduce fishing efforts and to allow for the recovery of the stocks. In this sense, we wish to enhance a more just commercialization, more committed with the sea, through the certification of products or the search for alternative ways of trading.

We want traditional fishing to be recognized as a respectable profession and *modus vivendi*, and that traditional fishers are considered repositories of a rich cultural legacy.

We wish to communicate and disseminate our initiatives to the general public, institutions and public administrations.

We ask administrations (local, regional, national and Community) to work in order to enhance and support those activities which may guarantee an ecologically rational use of resources, and that non-respectful practices towards marine ecosystems are not subsidized any more.

We claim that the knowledge which we have of the marine environment and fishing resources is an invaluable heritage which must be recognized and preserved.

We ask, given our knowledge of the marine environment, the right to be recognized as environmental managers and to actively participate in the development of marine resources management policies.



## Our vision A world where artisanal fishermen...

- ... Can exercise their profession as a dignified, sustainable and self-sufficient livelihood with prospects for the future
- ... Guaranteeing future generations the chance to keep on doing what their parents and grandparents did
- ... Are involved in and co-responsible for building a fairer and more sustainable world
- ... Are valued and recognized by society as custodians or guardians of the Mediterranean Sea



## Our mission

To promote, foment and defend responsible and sustainable artisanal fishing in the Mediterranean as a dynamic element of the coastal communities in the Mediterranean

Place artisanal fishermen –owners of valuable Traditional Ecological Knowledge– as agents of change towards sustainability and as the main actors in the co-management of resources and ecosystems in the Mediterranean Sea



6 principle strategic objectives



## Our mission... 6 strategic objectives

- ✓ Representation and participation in decision taking process. Promotion of co-management
- ✓ Develop a sustainable activity in all its dimensions (economic, social and environmental)
- ✓ Social recognition
- ✓ Recognition of their local ecological knowledge
- ✓ Fair trade committed to the sea
- ✓ Dissemination, awareness and cooperation

## From philosophy to action. Results obtained so far

### **Build the basis of the Platform, with clear tangible results in all six targets....**

- Developments in the representation of MedArtNet in national and international political forums, specially at the European Parliament on the process of the CFP Reform
- Engage the implementation of a co-management plan for the sand-eel in Catalonia (Spain)
- Different processes for creating co-managed MPAs which are in different stages of completion in Greece and France
- Support and cooperation in various calls for scientific projects
- Set up of direct trade strategies for artisanal fishing products with cooperatives and catering companies in Catalonia (Spain)
- Engage and collaborate on the creation of a similar network at the North African countries

## Difficulties and challenges

### **Aware of the internal difficulties...**

- Different languages spoken, that prevent an fluent communication
- Economical barrier, that prevent from attending to events, hold personal meetings (collective reflection and decision taking)
- Different digital literacy among members

### **Among the difficulties in the socio-political and economic European context...**

- Obtaining greater legitimacy and social support for the network
- Legitimate presence of other organizations in the fishing industry whose interests collide with those of MedArtNet
- Obtaining improvement and stability in the economic resources available for the ongoing process of consolidation

## Opportunities

- Medartnet as a tool for the implementation in the Mediterranean Sea of the "*Voluntary Guidelines to ensure sustainable small-scale fisheries*" promoted by FAO
- Develop local initiatives
- Construction of a new culture in the artisanal fishing sector
- Encouraging a Mediterranean Sea where fishing will be more sustainable in all dimensions
- Improving community development while helping to ensure food security and poverty alleviation in this area



The Mediterranean should once again be the sea that can contribute to guaranteeing food for its peoples, and provide services to mitigate poverty, such as small-scale artisanal fishing

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