

BLUE SMART

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BLUE SMART - Newsletter no. 1

Welcome to the pages of the first project newsletter Blue Education for Sustainable Management of Aquatic Resources – BLUE SMART

Some of the first newsletter topics are:

BLUE SMART - The project is co-financed by the European Union funds

The BLUE SMART project is co-financed by the European Union, i.e., by European Maritime and Fisheries Fund as a part of the Call: Blue Careers in Europe, announced by the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME). Below you can read more about the call for proposal and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises.

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Project background

The development of aquaculture is one of the strategic guidelines of the development of fisheries in the Republic of Croatia. In the near future, the blue economy will lack professional staff who will be able to continue the development of fisheries within the principles of sustainability, with a

scientific and interdisciplinary approach, which is one of the main reasons for the establishment of a new graduate study "Sustainable Management of Water Ecosystems" at the University of Zadar and the development of vocational education and training courses within our project. Read how the project originated and what were the main preconditions for writing a project proposal.

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Project consortium

The project consortium is composed of four partners. Some of the selection criteria for the project partners were previous experience in the thematic areas of the project, experience in the implementing international projects and successful co-operation on previous projects, technical skills and commitment to project implementation, and the dissemination and use of project results. Get familiar with our project consortium consisting of: University of Zadar-Department of Ecology, Agronomy and Aquaculture, Cromaris d.d., WWF Adria and Agency for Rural Development of Zadar County (AGRRA). Page 5



University of Zadar - Department of Ecology, Agronomy and Aquaculture

The BLUE SMART project leader is the Department of Ecology, Agronomy and Aquaculture of the University of Zadar. Find out more about them!

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First project meeting

The project consortium held the first project meeting on January 20, 2017. Find out how it was!

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BLUE SMART - The project co-financed by the European Union funds

BLUE SMART project received grant under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund as part of the call „Blue Careers in Europe“ Announced on February 29, 2016 by the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EASME). Call for proposal was open until May 31, 2016., and was focused on developing competences in the blue economy.

- The main objective of this call was to increase employment opportunities for different target groups (students, employed, unemployed, etc.) in the blue economy sector;
- The focus of the call has been put on the integration of educational institutions with enterprises, public administration and associations to provide adequate education;
- Total funds provided for this call of proposal was 3.452.000,00 €
- The maximum EU co-financing amounted to 80% of total eligible costs;
- In total, 125 proposals were evaluated as part of the „Blue Careers in Europe“ and „Blue Labs – innovative solutions for maritime challenges“ call for proposals;
- Six projects was positively evaluated within „Blue Careers in Europe“ and four within „Blue Labs“ call for proposals;
- The project BLUE SMART is one out of six positively evaluated projects within the "Blue Careers in Europe" calls for proposals".



EXECUTIVE AGENCY FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (EASME)

EXECUTIVE AGENCY FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (EASME) on behalf of the European Commission, among other things, manages the majority of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

MORE INFORMATION ON THE:
<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/>



Department of ecology, agronomy and aquaculture of the University of Zadar started with his work in 2006.

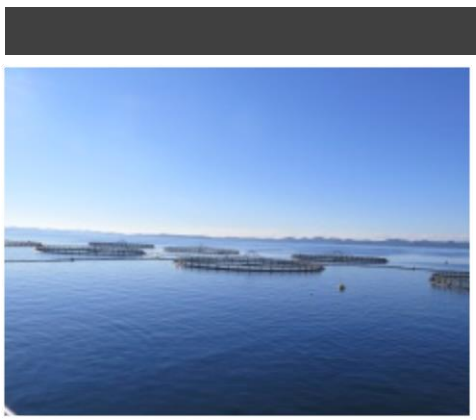
University of Zadar - Department of ecology, agronomy and aquaculture

Zadar has a centuries-old university tradition, the longest in Croatia: following the tradition of ecclesiastical education, first mentioned in the 10th century, a Dominican higher education institution *Studium generale*, later known as the *Universitas Iadertina*, was founded as early as 14 June 1396.

Today, the University of Zadar is the largest integrated University in the Republic of Croatia, which includes 25 university departments. Departments perform studies on three levels: undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate. The total number of students is around 6000, and the University employs a total of 594 staff, out of which 353 are assistants and professors.

Department of ecology, agronomy and aquaculture of the University of Zadar started in 2006, when first workers in the field of natural and biotechnical sciences were employed. In the academic year 2010/11 Department organizes and starts undergraduate study: "Applied Ecology in Agriculture" with the first generation of students. In the academic year 2012/13 starts another undergraduate study: "Underwater Science and Technology". Both studies are structured in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. Master study programme "**Sustainable Management of Aquatic Ecosystems**" is planned to start, through the BLUE SMART project, in the beginning of the academic year in October 2017.





Aquaculture is one of the fastest growing food production activities in recent years, with an average annual growth rate of 6-8% per year.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture today accounts for almost half of the world's supply of aquatic products for human nutrition with annual production reaching 63.6 million tonnes.

Project background

The development of aquaculture is one of the strategic guidelines of the development of fisheries sector in the Republic of Croatia. As one of the leading regions in Croatian aquaculture, Zadar County has defined the priority areas for aquaculture development by implementing the principles of Integrated Coastal Area Management (ICAM). It is expected that in the near future there will be an increase need for a qualified staff in the "blue sector" in the Zadar County as well as in the Republic of Croatia and the European Union. The newly created professional staff must be able to continue the development of the fishing sector on the principles of sustainability using a scientific and interdisciplinary approach.

the need to establish principles of good planning and integrated coastal area management, by promoting and encouraging practices that contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, as well as increasing knowledge and skills in the area. Therefore, the University of Zadar decided to build a strong local consortium composed of the main actors in educational, public, promotional and fishery sector. The purpose is to promote and support the development of career opportunities in the „blue economy sector“.



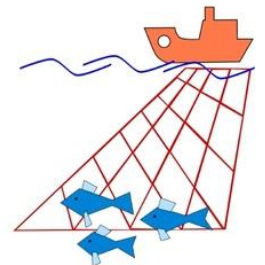
Strong mariculture

In the Republic of Croatia the most important species in mariculture are: sea bass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*), sea bream (*Sparus aurata*), bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and oyster (*Ostrea edulis*).

The general objective of the project BLUE SMART is to create new skills and competences in blue economy sector and increase the employability of current and future sectors' workers in the Zadar Country.

The activities that the project will implement address two specific objectives:

- 1) To create conditions for training of a new generation of students and professionals equipped with the appropriate skills to match the needs of the blue sector industry
- 2) To provide people already working in the field with the new skills required.



The first specific objective will be achieved by creating conditions for the establishment of a new graduate study "Sustainable Management of Water Ecosystems" while the second specific objective will be achieved by design of a Training Course for the Vocational Education and Training in „Introduction to sustainable fisheries practice“

Operational Programme for support of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in Croatia revealed that roughly 25.000 people are employed in the fishery sector in Croatia. More specifically, around 30% of these employees work in this sector in Zadar County (these estimates take into account the fish processing industry that is strongly represented in Zadar County).

Since the aquaculture sector is the strategic sector of Zadar Country development, it is often characterized by relevant local and national strategies as an emerging sector with high growth potential and job creation. However, all data shows a great lack of educated labor force, which will only grow even more in the coming years, in parallel with the growth of the sector.

Prior to writing the project proposal, research was conducted involving the most relevant blue sector entities at the local level.

The research carried out has confirmed the above mentioned sector data. Research has also shown



70% of the Croatian mariculture production takes place in the Zadar County area.



25.000 people are estimated to be employed in the blue sector in Croatia.



National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development 2014-2020 (NSPA)

NSPA as a strategic document defines the objectives and priorities of aquaculture development for the period 2014-2020. The general objectives are to strengthen the social and business-political environment for the development of aquaculture, to increase the national consumption of aquaculture products and to increase employment in aquaculture, with the contribution to the development of local communities.

Development and Growth Aims for Individual Segments of Mariculture and Freshwater Aquaculture (2014-2020)



Marine aquaculture

- Fish hatcheries
Increase of production to 40,000,000 of juvenile fish while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Fish farms (except tuna)
Increase of production to 10,000 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Tuna farms
Production of minimum 3,000 tonnes, depending on fishing quotas, zootechnical and market opportunities
- Marine rainbow trout farms
Commercial production while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Shellfish hatcheries
Production of a minimum of 20,000,000 shellfish juvenile while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Shellfish farms
Increase of production to 5,000 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability

Freshwater aquaculture

- Hatcheries and nurseries of warm water species
Increase of juvenile fish production while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Warm water species farms
Increase of production to 5,000 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Cold water species hatcheries
Increase of juvenile fish production while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability
- Cold water species farms
Increase of production to 1,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability.

First project meeting

The first project meeting of the Blue Education for Sustainable Management of Aquatic Resources project - BLUE SMART was held on 20 January 2017.

The meeting was held at University of Zadar, Department of Ecology, Agronomy and Aquaculture. During the meeting, the objectives of the project were discussed in detail. Each partner presented their own experiences that could contribute to the better implementation of the project: WWF

Adria presented its rich experience in the implementation of European projects, Cromaris d.d. has pointed to the problems in practice with which their employees and blue sector employers in general meet, AGRR is working on similar European projects and developing online courses, while the University of Zadar presented its current scientific work and features that will be implemented in the new study "Sustainable management of water ecosystems".

Partners shared ideas about project dissemination and promotion on social networks. The project already has its own Facebook page and Twitter profile, which is updated at least twice a week. Stay tuned to find out news about our work on the project!



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Project consortium

The project consortium for Blue Education for Sustainable Management of Aquatic Resources – BLUE SMART is composed of four partners from Zadar Country. Some of the selection criteria for the project partners were previous experience in the thematic areas of the project, experience in implementing international projects and successful co-operation on previous projects, technical skills and commitment to project implementation, and the dissemination and use of project results.

Partners on the project are: University of Zadar, (P₁ project leader), Cromaris d.d. (P₂ –partner), WWF Adria (P₃ – partner) i Agencija za ruralni razvoj Zadarske županije, Agency for Rural Development of Zadar County (AGRRA) (P₄ – partner).

[University of Zadar](#) is the largest integrated University in the Republic of Croatia, which includes 25 university departments. Departments perform studies on three levels: undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate. The total number of students is around 6000. The University employs 594 people, 353 in teaching and 239 in other university services.

[Cromaris d.d.](#) is the largest Croatian company in the aquaculture sector. Cromaris is a company specialized in growing, processing and sale of indigenous Adriatic fish and shellfish, e.g., sea bass and sea bream growing and processing. Even 90% of their production is exported to other EU countries. It is a Croatian aquaculture leader with more than 300 employees. The corporate headquarters, fish sorting and processing facility are located in Zadar. The company has five farms, two of which are located in Istria (northern Adriatic), and three in the area of Zadar (central Adriatic).

[WWF Adria](#) is a branch of the World Wide Fund for Nature or shortened WWF. WWF Adria covers the territory of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia. It has been active in Croatia since 2000 (although officially established in 2015), and its work focuses mostly on protected areas and freshwater ecosystems. Their purpose is nature conservation and environmental protection and its primary scope is the conservation of the natural environment, biological diversity and ecological processes in the Adria and Mediterranean regions.

[Zadar County Rural Development Agency \(AGRRA\)](#) is a public institution established in 2013 by the Zadar County. AGRRA coordinates and implements the activities related to Zadar County rural development and follows national and EU strategies with the aim to harmonize legislation on regional and local level with the agricultural and rural development policies; preservation of biological and landscape diversity with the sustainable use of natural resources; development of diversification of sustainable economic activities in rural areas; development of sustainable agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture with an emphasis on environmental protection; development and implementation of pilot projects in agriculture, fisheries and rural development.

PROJECT CONSORTIUM



[University of Zadar - Department of ecology, agronomy and aquaculture](#)

University of Zadar includes 25 university departments. Master study programme "Sustainable Management of Aquatic Ecosystems" is planned to start, through the BLUE SMART project, in the beginning of the academic year in October 2017.



[Cromaris d.d.](#)

Cromaris is a company that specializes in growing, processing and sale of indigenous Adriatic fish and shellfish. It employs more than 300 people and has five farms.



[WWF Adria](#)

WWF is one of the world's leading non-governmental and non-profit organizations for nature conservation. WWF Adria was established in 2015 with headquarters in Croatia with the aim of preserving the natural environment, biodiversity and ecological processes in the Mediterranean region and the Dinaric area.



[Zadar County Rural Development Agency \(AGRRA\)](#)

Zadar County Rural Development Agency - AGRRA is a public institution established by the Zadar County with the aim of developing sustainable agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, with an emphasis on environmental protection.



From the media (in Croatian language)

Sveučilištu u Zadru odobren EU projekt vrijednosti tri milijuna kuna za obrazovanje u plavom sektoru

Odjelu za ekologiju, agronomiju i akvakulturu Sveučilišta u Zadru zajedno s partnerima je za projekt „Blue Education for Sustainable Management of Aquatic Resources – BLUE SMART“ odobreno sufinanciranje EU iz Europskog fonda za pomorstvo i ribarstvo (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) EMFF na natječaju: „Blue Careers in Europe“. Ukupna vrijednost projekta je 399.493,00 €, a odobrena EU sredstva iznose 319.593,00 €, odnosno 80%.

Nositelj projekta je Sveučilište u Zadru (Odjel za ekologiju, agronomiju i akvakulturu), a partneri su: Cromaris d.d., WWF Adria, te Agencija za ruralni razvoj Zadarske županije AGRRA.

Projekt je započeo s provedbom 01/01/2017., te će trajati do 31/12/2018. godine.

Cilj projekta je stvaranje novih vještina i znanja u sektoru plavog gospodarstva i povećanje zapošljivosti sadašnjih i budućih radnika ovog sektora u Zadarskoj županiji.

Za postizanje spomenutog cilja tijekom prve godine projekta izradit će se program te pokrenuti novi diplomski studij „Održivo upravljanje vodenim ekosustavima“ na Sveučilištu u Zadru. Kroz drugu godinu projekta će se izraditi otvoreni on line tečaj iz područja uzgoja i prerade ribe, odnosno dobre proizvođačke prakse u ribarstvu i akvakulturi. Kroz projektne aktivnosti stvorit će se uvjeti za osposobljavanje novih generacija studenata i stručnjaka s odgovarajućim vještinama, te pružiti ljudima koji su već zaposleni nove potrebne vještine, koje odgovaraju realnim potrebama sektora ribarstva kao jedne od najvažnijih gospodarskih grana Zadarske županije.

SOURCE

[Poslovni.hr](http://www.poslovni.hr)

<http://www.poslovni.hr/hrvatska/sveucilistu-u-zadru-odobren-eu-projekt-vrijednosti-tri-milijuna-kuna-za-obrazovanje-u-plavom-sektoru-323409>



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