

# FINAL POSITION PAPER

---

Deliverable Number D.3.4.1

Project Acronym	ARGOS
Project ID Number	10255153
Project Title	Shared Governance of Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Activities as Leverage to Protect Marine Resources in the Adriatic Sea
Priority Axis	3 - Environment and cultural heritage
Specific objective	3.2 - Contribute to protect and restore biodiversity
Work Package Number	WP3
Work Package Title	Governance framework
Activity Number	3.4
Activity Title	Update of crossborder management models for fisheries according to projects findings
Partner in Charge	PP1 – Veneto Region
Partners involved	LP-PP2-PP3-PP4-PP5-PP6-PP7-PP8-PP9-PP10-PP11-PP12-PP13
URL	<a href="https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/argos">https://www.italy-croatia.eu/web/argos</a>
Status	Final version
Distribution	Public
Date	June 2023

<b>Report</b>	FINAL POSITION PAPER
<b>Description</b>	the final summary of the ARGOS project through the main results that emerged and the prospects for the future development of activities in the Adriatic area
<b>Version</b>	V.1
<b>Author</b>	PP1 Veneto region - Agriteco

The ARGOS project aimed at establishing a common governance framework in which all institutions responsible for fisheries and aquaculture act jointly in the management and protection of shared biological resources, under the best scientific guidance.

All the activities developed were directed towards the definition of common measures, potentially extendable to the entire Adriatic area, focused both on the protection of the marine environment and on fisheries and aquaculture activities.

This **position paper** sums up the main findings and proposals that emerged during the Adriatic Advisory Committee's discussions and through the several deliverables produced by the ARGOS partnership.

### 1. Permanent Adriatic Advisory Committee for Adriatic governance

The peculiarities of the Adriatic Sea require an own governance, shared among all the states bordering it. A permanent Adriatic Advisory Committee, that operates in accordance with European laws, is responsible for providing advice for the governance and the maritime space planning, with regards to fisheries and aquaculture sector. It should be composed by technical experts as representatives of institutions, scientific experts and fisheries and aquaculture professionals. The running of the Committee should be based on a shared responsibility of all participants, in order to ensure trust and true interest by fisheries and aquaculture operators in the participation.

### 2. Inclusion of other countries bordering the Adriatic Sea in the permanent Adriatic Advisory Committee

The Adriatic Sea cannot be managed according to political boundaries, as it has common resources, stocks and ecological dynamics affecting the whole basin. This considered, the governance of Adriatic resources should be done encompassing countries borders, acting on GSA17 and GSA18 as a whole. There is urgent need, therefore, to include in the permanent Adriatic Advisory Committee not only all the EU countries bordering the Adriatic Sea (e.g. Italy, Croatia and Slovenia), but also neighbouring countries as Montenegro and Albania.

### 3. Adriatic Approach in Fisheries

Acting often with insufficient information, fisheries policy-makers and managers must try to couple the needs of short terms earing performances owned by fisheries operators and the principles of economic and social sustainability. From this point of view the "Adriatic approach" is aimed at balancing the different interests on the biological resources, with reference to the necessity to integrate the conservation needs with the necessities expressed by fishers and aquaculture operators.

Bearing in mind the specificities of the Adriatic Sea, Adriatic Advisory Committee will develop and promote a special "Adriatic Approach in Fisheries" which will be based on the principles of bottom-up and participatory approaches, as well as on the principles of adaptive management and ecosystem based management.

#### 4. Data collection managed at Adriatic level

Currently, the official data collections on Adriatic resources is conducted according to the framework of DCF (in the EU countries) and to the framework of DCRF (in the non-EU countries). It is crucial to activate specific campaigns to gather data at the local level, to describe specific scenarios of the local communities as a way to valorise them and contribute to the protection of local resources and environments.

For instance, as tested in ARGOS, the widespread use of low-cost and low-burden tracking devices able to automatically collect, transmit and analyse relevant Small Scale Fisheries data streams, could support an efficient and stable acquisition of positional data of small fishing vessels, crucial to define the main exploited fishing grounds and the occurring fishing pressure. It enables a new promising monitoring method that could effectively include small-scale fleets in the collected parameters and support the making process of new scientific-based policies. Collected data should represent the basis for both the definition of new measures for the management of fishing effort and to monitor the impact of small scale fisheries in the environment.

#### 5. The role of fisheries and aquaculture in the Adriatic maritime spatial planning

The permanent Adriatic Advisory Committee would bring to the Adriatic level a unified but very strong voice for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in the scenario of maritime spatial planning activities, referring both to Marine Protected Areas and also to other anthropogenic interventions.

Maritime spatial planning tools, considering environmental and economic aspects, can result in complex data-demanding models such as DISPLACE, an agent-based modelling platform for simulating bioeconomic dynamics and clarifying options for sustainable and viable fisheries in presence of other marine sectors. Modelling the interactions between fishing effort and stock dynamics, as well as the economic weight of fisheries on a highly spatial disaggregated scale, is crucial in a framework of broader spatial planning, marine management and stakeholder involvement. It is important to develop tools for the evaluation of impacts, as support for decision making processes, involving all parties (not only managers and academia but also all the stakeholders), also to develop a collective understanding on the matters. Common discussion platform, based on quantitative predictions of impacts and beneficial/detrimental effects, shul de be the starting point for any new maritime spatial planning initiative.

#### 6. The establishment of allocated zones for aquaculture (AZAs) and their role in the marine environment and in the maritime spatial planning

Aquaculture areas must be planned by assessing abiotic and biotic parameters, defining not only the suitability of an area but also the possible types of farming. Allocated zones for aquaculture (AZAs) must be seen as natural anthropized environments for which constant monitoring inside and outside the defined boundaries becomes essential in order to keep any impacts under control.

## 7. Maritime spatial planning must be integrated with land-based planning

Any planning conducted on maritime spaces must always consider and be harmonised with the on-shore and in-land special planning. This is particularly true for fisheries and aquaculture activities, among other sea-based activities, since their specific needs in terms of processing capacities and logistics of fish products market.

## 8. Fishery local management improvement on Adriatic scale

The Adriatic Advisory Committee promotes the strengthening of the local fishery resources management on Adriatic widescale, setting up artisanal fishers and farmer involvement in the decision processes and into the effective setting up of fishery co-management plan of the coastal areas. The inclusion of stakeholders in the management process through participatory approaches can ensure, on one hand, the inclusion of the main players of the economic system as well as the best sentries in the field and, on the other hand, it can facilitate the acceptance of future management plans.

## 9. Proactive role of fishers in data collection

Fishers are the repository of peculiar socio-economic data, especially in the small-scale scenario. Given the specificities of the Adriatic Sea fisheries, the factual involvement of fishers is essential for successful in-deep socio-economic analyses, as a basis for the definition of local management measures. This could apply also for the monitoring processes of the pressure affecting fishing stocks, such as the one from alien species, to whose which fishers act as early-warning.

## 10. Socioeconomic and risk analyses should be an integral part of management plans

Management plans must also be based on socioeconomic and risk analyses focussed on proposed measures, including analyses and estimations of effects and consequences on the fleet management and therefore in the local economies of coastal communities.

## 11. Sustainable fisheries in Natura 2000 areas

Ecosystem based approach to fisheries management is the only solution for sustainable fisheries in Natura 2000 areas. It can only be achieved through project cooperation of the management authorities competent respectively for fisheries activities and Natura 2000 areas.