



Aquamed Draft report WP9

**Deliverable 17 – Proposed Structure of the Multi-Stakeholder Platform and
Potential Sources of Funding**

Authors of the document: Rigos George and Noam Mozes

Project coordinator: Jean Paul Blancheton

E-mail: jean.paul.blancheton@ifremer.fr

Project website address: www.aquamedproject.net

Contents:

1- Proposed structure of the multi-stakeholder platform

- 1.1- Background
- 1.2- The structure of the platform during the AQUAMED project
- 1.3- The core group
- 1.4- The NCP group – AQUAMED project partners
- 1.5- The Multi-Stakeholder (SH) group – Invited SH
- 1.6- Proposed future Structure
- 1.7- The GFCM context
- 1.8- CAQ's members participation
- 1.9- Participation of Non-Med countries
- 1.10- Frequency of meetings
- 1.11- Proposed activities

2. List of funding resources

- 2.1- Established entities-organizations
 - 2.1.1- General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)
 - 2.1.2- European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform (EATiP)
- 2.2- Ongoing FP7 EU calls (ETPs, ERANET, COST etc)
- 2.3- Forthcoming EU calls (Horizon 2020)
- 2.4- Regional funds

1- Proposed structure of the multi-stakeholder platform

1.1- Background

The Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSHP) is a forum created by the AQUAMED project aiming to contribute to the development of sustainable Mediterranean aquaculture, by identifying common constraints and implementing a prioritised plan of action (POA) in the research sector. The AQUAMED project included members of 13 countries around the Mediterranean and additional members from other countries and international organizations.

By bringing together stakeholders (SH) to develop and implement research priorities, it was intended to ensure that future research funding is strategic, coordinated and orientated towards the key challenges of the production sector whilst respecting the principles of sustainability. The AQUAMED project aimed to produce three main products: 1) Recommendation to the EU, international organizations and national governments on research priorities, 2) Database on research activity and SH in the Mediterranean, 3) an active MSHP that will contribute to the creation of an action plan and its implementation, and that will continue its activities during at least five years after the end of the AQUAMED project.

The AQUAMED project has collected information on research institutes, research projects and relevant SH, and also surveyed national aquaculture status, governance and sector profile. These information sets were used to create databases and typology analysis, and provided the basis and background for the establishment of a MSHP.

In the following sections the structure of the platform during the AQUAMED period will be discussed, and a future structure will be proposed.

1.2- The structure of the platform during the AQUAMED project

Within the AQUAMED work-frame, nine work-packages (WP) were defined, including Multi-SH consultation (WP3) and setting up and sustaining of the MSHP (WP9). WP3 (conducted by AquaTT) provided strong and essential support to content issues and to administration and organization of establishing the MSHP and together with WP9 (coordinated by G. Rigos and N. Mozes, with the support of H. Kara) were in contact with the AQUAMED partners and other SH, creating all together the structure of the MSHP.

1.3- The core group

The organization, consultation and decision making process was performed by a core group that included the WG leaders of WP1 (Consortium management, J.P. Blancheton and M. Callier), WP3, WP6 (Typology, S. Mathe), WP7 (Needs and recommendations, G. Marino) and WP9. This core group of 6-7 people conducted intensive meetings using mainly skype (in some cases on a weekly basis) and some face to face meetings before, during and after the platform meetings at a frequency of about 2-3 times a year.

1.4- The NCP group – AQUAMED project partners

The AQUAMED team was composed of partners from 13 countries, each being a National Contact Point (NCP) of these countries and members from other (non MED) countries and international organizations, creating a group of around 20 people. All major decisions related

to the MSHP and all important progress towards the establishment and operation of the MSHP were brought to agreement of the AQUAMED members. The NCP were also playing a role being the direct contact to the SH and to information source in their own country. The AQUAMED member group meet at a frequency of about once a year (and in some case 2 times a year). In the case of AQUAMED, the composition of the group was mainly from the research sector, with smaller number of members from the policy making, industry and NGOs sectors. This is in accordance to the orientation of the platform that is focusing on research recommendations.

1.5- The Multi-Stakeholder (SH) group – Invited SH

The platform is the forum of the SH that are joining together for meetings and discussions. The SH are selected by the NCP of their country as key persons of the different four sectors: industry (producers), policy making (governments), researchers and NGOs. It is aimed that there will be a balanced representation of all countries and of all sectors. The communication to the SH was done by the core group, mainly by WP3 and by the NCP or the project coordinator. The number of SH ranged between 50 to 70 (60 in average), including the AQUAMED partners. During the AQUAMED project two platform meetings were conducted. In these meetings, research priorities were discussed and action plan was proposed.

1.6- Proposed future Structure

A proposed structure is described in the Terms of references (TOR) of the MSHP (deliverable 12 of the AQUAMED project). This structure includes Assembly of stakeholders, Board of coordinators, Operating Council and Secretariat.

Stakeholder Assembly

The Stakeholder Assembly will be composed by stakeholders from all member countries and from all four main sectors: Industry, Research, Policy makers, NGOs and others. It will be responsible for nominating a Board of coordinators and approval of the operational (including administrative) actions of the platform, under the GFCM.

Board of coordinators

The Board will be composed of representatives of each country and will take the role of being the national contact point (NCP). The Board of coordinators will propose the Chairpersons/facilitators of the Thematic Areas and Working Groups of the MSHP, presenting these nominations for approval by the Assembly.

Operating Council

The Operational Council will manage and operate the platform. The Council is proposed to be composed of 6-8 persons (50:50 Industry and Research, 50:50 North Africa and Europe), keeping a balance between the interests different of the SHs of the aquaculture sector in Mediterranean.

Secretariat

The Secretariat role will be to provide administrative and organizational support, including meeting organization and communication activities. This role is to be played by GFCM.

For the purpose of clarity, the following table is comparing the platform structure during the AQUAMED period and the suggested structure in the TOR

<i>During AQUAMED period</i>	<i>Suggested structure in the TOR</i>
MSHP (60 invited SH)	Stakeholder Assembly
AQUAMED partners (20 persons)	Board of coordinators + TA and WG leaders
Core group (6-8 persons)	Operating Council
WP 3 (AquaTT, 2-3 persons)	Secretariat, management and financing

1.7- The GFCM context

Since the GFCM has recently embraced the AQUAMED MSHP and is about to formalise the platform as a subsidiary body the proposed structure will be evaluated and adopted to the GFCM management procedures.

However, few comments should be pointed out concerning the platform structure considering the shift of the MSHP from its AQUAMED phase to the GFCM phase.

1.8- CAQ's members participation

As an initial suggestion, the participating members (or related representatives) of the Committee of Aquaculture (CAQ) might be considered as potential partners of the MSHP, representing the policy making sector of each country, being potentially the NCP of their country.

1.9- Participation of Non-Med countries

Since the GFCM and eventually the CAQ include the Black Sea as competent areas the MSHP will probably need to consider adding countries that are not Mediterranean countries. That may imply conducting similar or at least a brief process of evaluation and assessment of research priorities for that region. Alternatively, a MSHP of the Mediterranean can start operate and within the coming years a parallel Black Sea platform will be established and later even be combined.

1.10- Frequency of meetings

As the general assembly of the CAQ is taking place once every two years, it is suggested that the MSHP general assembly will follow this frequency of a general meeting once every two years. However, the Board of Coordinators should probably have an annual meeting while a core group or operating council should have a more frequent activity.

1.11- Proposed activities

The future role of the MSHP, following the defined objectives in the TOR, is suggested to focus on the following activities:

- Advising the GFCM, EU and National policies on research priorities and recommendations.
- Assisting in updating databases (Research institutes, Research projects, SH)

- Monitoring sustainable Indicators for the development of the aquaculture production in the competent areas
- Supporting activities on specific R&D innovative opportunities – identifying topics for regional research collaboration and promoting international collaborative activities.
- Advancing technology transfer activities by promoting workshops and conferences on aquaculture sustainable development

2- List of funding resources

2.1- Established entities-organizations

2.1.1- General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

GFCM was approved by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Conference as early as in the 40's and entered into force in 1952. GFCM is instrumental in coordinating efforts with other relative organizations and governments to effectively manage fisheries at regional level. It has the authority to adopt binding recommendations for fisheries conservation and management in its Convention Area and plays a critical role in fisheries governance in the Region. Specifically for aquaculture in the Mediterranean region, GFCM implements its policy and activities through the Secretariat and operates during the intercessional period by means of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) established in 1995. Recently GFCM officially embraced the new Aquamed MSHP as a result of continuous discussions and contacts as well as specific presentations (Rome 2011 and Paris 2013) during the project period. GFCM will apparently aid with the Secretarial and administrative role of the MSHP and probably include the MSHP meetings in its assigned future meetings.

This collaboration has several strengths and opportunities since GFCM is an established organization in Mediterranean area with all Mediterranean countries participating, is already funded by the member countries and no membership fee will be thus required, is focused on Mediterranean challenges, is connected to FAO, has a strong involvement of N. African countries, encourages more effective interaction of the two regions (S. European-N. African), considers also other concerns than research and has good adaptability in the Euro-Med political process. Moreover, Black Sea countries could join the alliance. Some attention has to be given towards the fact that GFCM currently exists as a more advisory body with regulatory orientation, lacks good connection with the EU commissions, it may diverge from original target of Aquamed MSHP (i.e. research in aquaculture) and finally become a 'sterile' political tool. The above issues should carefully handled during the process of collaboration.

2.1.2- European Aquaculture Technology and Innovation Platform (EATiP)

EATiP is an international non-profit association dedicated to developing, supporting and promoting aquaculture and, especially, technology and innovation in aquaculture in Europe in order to: i) establish a strong relationship between aquaculture and the consumer, ii) Assure a sustainable aquaculture industry and iii) consolidate the role of aquaculture in society.

Discussions concerning the possible collaboration of Aquamed MSHP and EATiP have initiated during the project period. The Aquamed MSHP may become a legal entity through the membership of its participants to EATiP. The general assembly of EATiP has been set for September 2013 where an official demand from the Aquamed MSHP to become the regional Mediterranean platform of EATiP is to be evaluated. Such collaboration has several advantages derived from the EATiP focus on research and pure industrial needs where industry has strong involvement, the easy adoption of the existed mechanisms for operation (similar thematic areas), the adaptability into an ongoing EU process and the excellent connection with EU bodies and commissions with great possibility to directly affect EU funding orientation. Some concerns which should be considered include the fact that a Med type sub-group is existed within the EATiP body but without representation of Southern Med countries, the possibility of required membership (except for those SHs-partners already registered) and that the Southern Med needs are currently under-represented and their coverage-funding will likely face some difficulties from the EU side.

2.2- Ongoing FP7 EU calls

European Technology Platforms (ETPs) are industry-led stakeholder alliances charged with defining research priorities in a broad range of technological areas. ETPs provide a framework for stakeholders, led by industry, to define research priorities and action plans on a number of technological areas where achieving EU growth, competitiveness and sustainability requires major research and technological advances in the medium to long term. Some European Technology Platforms are loose networks that come together in annual meetings, but others are establishing legal structures with membership fees. They work on developing and updating agendas of research priorities for their particular sector. These agendas constitute valuable input to define European research funding schemes. Since they are developed through dialogue among industrial and public researchers and national government representatives, they also contribute to create consensus and to improve alignment of investment efforts. Avoiding duplication and making the most of poles of excellence and best practices is one of the great challenges of European research, and ETPs are a very good vehicle to improve synergies.

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is one of the longest-running European frameworks supporting cooperation among scientists and researchers across Europe. COST is a flexible, fast, effective and efficient tool to network and coordinate nationally funded research activities, bringing scientists together under light strategic guidance. COST is based on networks, called COST Actions, centered around research projects in fields that are of interest to at least five COST countries. The domain of Food and Agriculture could actually cover the platform objectives. This domain covers all aspects of research in the field of agricultural and food sciences in its widest sense. COST actions are **open** throughout their lifetime to new members and are **adaptable** in terms of internal organisation and strategy. Thus, COST Actions are especially well suited to pursue **new ideas through collaborative efforts** and to build communities around science and technology topics.

ERA-NET initiatives (cooperation and coordination of research activities carried out at national or regional level in the Member States and Associated States through the networking of research activities conducted at national or regional level, and the mutual opening of national and regional research program) Discussions about the possibility of

MSHP involvement with running initiatives has already initiated with European Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Organisation (EFARO). The ERA-NET MED ERAMED_proposal in particular includes 15 countries (8 EU). It was submitted on December 2012 and is coordinated by CIHEAM. The consortium is composed by the ministers of research of the partner countries (political level) and will be in charge of the coordination with the 'Art. 185' initiatives, and with the other ERANETs and international initiatives.

European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) originated calls (ENPI-currently closed), which includes the North African countries involved in the Barcelona Process and which gained new momentum as the Union for the Mediterranean launched in 2008.

MIRA - Mediterranean Innovation and Research Coordination Action. The starting point of this INCO-Net is the desire to intensify knowledge-based cooperation between Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC) and Member States of the European Union as well as with countries associated with the 7th Research Framework Program. The call therefore aims to develop and support the EU-MPC dialogue, by bringing together MPC and EU policy makers and stakeholders in support of the general political dialogue structured by the Barcelona Process of Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and, more specifically, through the Monitoring Committee for the Euro-Mediterranean Science and Technology Cooperation, also named the Barcelona RTD. This project aims to help identify common interests in research areas, set-up S&T priorities, support capacity building activities, enhance the interaction between different cooperation instruments of the EC and the EU Members States. MIRA promotes activities to monitor, develop, promote and contribute to the creation of synergies among the different cooperation S&T programs between the Mediterranean Partner Countries and EU Member States, and foster the participation of the MPC in the Framework Program.

Med-Spring initiatives created to better link EU with Mediterranean countries. FORCE is a Med-Spring initiative and discussions about the possible involvement-synergy of the Aquamed MSHP with FORCE have been initiated. The Aquamed MSHP and the FORCE project offer a wide spectrum of Mediterranean and EU partners in the fields of fisheries and aquaculture, to better link research-innovation-markets and technology. FORCE bringing the assets of the MSHP into Med-Spring would: i) reinforce the regional impact FORCE, ii) Contribute to better valorise the trust built among the network of stakeholders by the Aquamed MSHP and iii) contribute to Med-Spring fulfilling its main goals including facilitation of a regional dialogue to provide societal benefits in the region and boost of potential investments to create jobs and facilitation of business opportunities among different projects in different countries.

U.S. Aid PROGRAM for Middle East Regional Cooperation (MERC) - This funding source supports collaboration on research and development projects between Israel and neighbouring Arab countries. A consortium from the existed Aquamed MSHP has already created for a scientific collaboration between Israel and N. African countries and submitted a proposal. The proposal has already passed the first stage of evaluation.

2.3- Forthcoming EU calls (Horizon 2020)

Horizon 2020 is the financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness. Running

from 2014 to 2020 with an €80 billion budget, the EU's new program for research and innovation is part of the drive to create new growth and jobs in Europe. Horizon 2020 still under discussion and key topics are currently being identified. Publication of Horizon 2020 by end of 2013 or more probably beginning of 2014. It appears however that the instrument will rely more on platforms, networks and expert groups and there will be fewer and bigger projects (big consortiums as the ones established by platforms). The role of the platforms in the new initiatives have to be clarified, but some of the main EU expectations for the platforms include : better link between research and industry, foster innovation and adoption of innovations, promote knowledge management, encourage the stronger involvement of possible financing entities and promote research with immediate return to the industry.

2.4- Regional funds

This financial source concerns funds to support collaboration between North African countries and also between North African countries with France. Possible continuation of the Aquamed MSHP operation could be also through projects funded by East Mediterranean countries.