

INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ADRIATIC SEA CONCLUSIONS OF THE TWO-DAYS PANEL DISCUSSION OF THE INNOVAMARE PROJECT

The online round table of the project “InnovaMare «Blue technology - Developing innovative technologies for sustainability of Adriatic Sea” within the Interreg Programme Italy – Croatia 2014-2020, ended with over 100 participants. The initiative, organized by Unioncamere Veneto, was addressed to Italian and Croatian policymakers and stakeholders in order to facilitate the debate, the transfer of knowledge and the exchange of good practices within the field of the protection of the Adriatic Sea through the use of technologically advanced robotics and new monitoring systems.

The first day focused on the levels of healthiness and pollution of the Adriatic Sea, paying attention to the most critical aspects faced in the management of the seabed monitoring systems. The results of the evaluation have showed how about the 81% of the habitats and the 63% of the species are affected by a bad state of conservation. In their respective speeches, **Vedran Nikolić** and **Eleni Hatziyanni** (European Commission – DG Environment) have highlighted the Union’s objectives and projects for the future, among which it is possible to find the objective of improving the levels of energy produced by the sea and renewable resources in order to reach the 40GW by 2050.

The second day focused on monitoring systems and prevention of sea pollution through the use of robotics and new technologies for the protection of the Adriatic Sea. Specific projects have been presented such as aquaculture practices realized in Dubrovnik and the technology of the smart buoys netH2O of Elements Works, which allows the autonomous monitoring and the acquisition of data about pollution level and the seabed without the use of subwater personnel. Finally, Marco Bibuli from CNR and Stefano Gelli from Leonardo showed the practical application of these technologies to infrastructures and offshore platforms.

Another important topic of the two days long panel discussion has been the debate on the importance of the process to foster the creation of an ecosystem for innovation. Examples of important European-level research centers have been brought forward as points of reference for the projects aimed at resolving the pollution problems of the Adriatic Sea. The sustainability of the Adriatic Sea represents the mission of the strategic project InnovaMare. This mission it’s pursued through the creation of a model of innovation ecosystem aimed at bringing together those companies, public entities, research and development centers and the academic world engaged in the field of underwater robotics and pollution monitoring sensors.

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