

PRESS RELEASE – JANUARY 19th 2012

APROMAR, CTAQUA and IGIC to collaborate in the optimisation of offshore aquaculture

The work developed by the Spanish Association of Marine Aquaculture Producers (APROMAR) is focused on various priority objectives including improving technological training in companies dedicated to aquaculture and designing new processes to optimise profitability.

Focused on these objectives, the producers association has begun working on a project to develop a technology capable of measuring fish biomass levels in offshore aquaculture cages. This technology will develop processes to determine production levels, the average size of the fish and the total number of specimens, at any given time and under commercial production conditions.

This innovative project may provide a solution to one of the most important and widespread technological problems related to aquaculture: establishing biomass levels in real time. Having this information would provide important advantages for this type of production, including optimisation of food, reduction of environmental footprint, real evaluation of population and control over fish escapes.

In order to develop this initiative, APROMAR will collaborate with the Andalusian Aquaculture Technology Centre (CTAQUA) and the Research Institute for Integrated Management of Coastal Areas (IGIC) of the Valencia Polytechnic University. Specifically, CTAQUA will be in charge of coordinating the project's scientific-technical development and the IGIC will participate in the technological development of new processes to control fish culture.

The project is called "*Designing technologies to calculate total fish biomass levels in offshore aquaculture facilities,*" and the budget is € 214,000. The Spanish Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs, through the General Secretariat of Marine Affairs, will provide € 175,000 as part of funding for the Technological Development of Fishing and Aquaculture for 2011.

It should be pointed out that the project's scope of action is on a national level and it will be developed within a timeframe of two years. According to the established schedule, the results will be revealed in February of 2014. The project was launched with a meeting in Seville held last December 14th at the headquarters of the Andalusian Businessmen's Association.

Spain, a pioneering country in offshore aquaculture, hopes to become a leader in this type of applied research initiative as well as the development of innovative production technologies focused on the sector's sustainability.

About Ctaqua

Ctaqua works for the aquaculture sector in various lines that include Environment, Food and Nutrition, New Species, Pathology, Applied Engineering and Commercialisation, with excellent results.

With finished projects in the lines mentioned above, this year Ctaqua reinforces the services it offers with the implementation of new facilities in El Puerto de Santa María, which will allow for the development of new projects in the test centres, workshops and laboratories equipped with the latest technology.

The modern two-story building houses the nutrition, diversification, mollusc, crustacean, phytoplankton and zooplankton rooms on the ground floor. The microbiology and pathology labs, transformation room and the engineering room are also located on this level. The technical offices, physicochemical, materials and food technology labs are located on the upper level.

The premises will allow Ctaqua to consolidate its work and become a reference in R+D+I management for the aquaculture sector, as well as a driving and essential force to generate added value for companies in the sector.

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