

Report on the use of the MASTS PEER funding to undertake early stage H2020 networking at Ecopath30 conference.

The meeting

The proposal was to attend the Ecopath30 conference in order to meet with other Ecopath experts and to identify new collaborators so as to identify potential consortiums and ways in which to involve Ecopath ecosystem modelling in the H2020 Blue Growth call: Forecasting and anticipating effects of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture. The conference was held in Barcelona on the 9-12 November 2014. In advance of this meeting I approached (with assistance from Sheila Heymans) the relevant researchers to propose a meeting during the conference to discuss this opportunity. This meeting was held on Tuesday 11th November and in attendance was: Karen Alexander, SAMS; Sheila Heymans, SAMS; Marta Coll, France marta.coll@ird.fr; Chiara Piroddi, EU chiara.piroddi@jrc.ec.europa.eu; Sebastian Villasante, Spain s.villasante.arg@gmail.com; Simone Libralato, Italy slibralato@ogs.trieste.it; Jeroen Steenbeek, Spain drmbongo@gmail.com.

Due to my role as an Early Career Researcher with two years post-doc experience, it was not appropriate for me to lead a consortium, although I was very keen to be part of such a consortium. In the meeting, it was decided that it was too late in the process for a new consortium to be developed, but rather the strategy should be to join an existing consortium. The meeting participants knew of a number of consortia which had already been formed, led by research organisations in Turkey, Norway, Germany, Spain and Italy (and indeed a couple of the meeting participants had already been approached by existing consortiums). It was felt that the majority of these organisations had a fisheries focus, whereas SAMS had stronger expertise in aquaculture. This would potentially be a benefit in joining an existing consortium. We asked for the meeting participants to please keep us in mind in case any consortia they knew about needed aquaculture expertise.

Next steps

It was agreed that if anyone was approached by an existing consortium, we would look at bringing in other Ecopath colleagues. Since this meeting, SAMS has been approached by a meeting participant regarding the potential of joining an existing consortium and we are currently awaiting further contact.

It was also discussed at the meeting that there would be a Mediterranean call coming out in 2015 which would be similar to the one discussed above, but with a focus on the Med. The group will investigate the potential for forming a consortium further.

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