

# *The Future of Small-Scale Fishery Markets in the Mediterranean*

*Social, Environmental, Economic  
and Governance Aspects*

*Abstracts of the Symposium  
Izola, 6 October 2020*





LabMAF

DEVELOPING A LABELLING SCHEME  
FOR MEDITERRANEAN SMALL-SCALE  
AND ARTISANAL FISH PRODUCTS

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# Can ICT Tool Effectively Contribute to Pursue Long-Term Sustainability Targets in Small-Scale Fisheries Segment? Preliminary Results on the Adoption of a Virtual Marketplace (VirMa) in Artisanal Fishery Sector

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*Abstract.* Small-scale fisheries play a key role in poverty alleviation and eradication, other than food nutrition and sustainable utilization of marine resources. This activity is one of the most relevant in the fisheries sector, especially for coastal communities, both in terms of employees and catches (representing 90% of the world's capture fishers and fish workers). Similarly, for Mediterranean riparian countries the small-scale fisheries are crucial in sustaining the region's coastal communities, where they represent over 80% of the total number of fishing vessels. It is widely recognized that the fishery sector is currently facing serious challenges, with 78% of fish stocks exploited outside safe biological limits, as reported by the State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries (FAO, 2018). In this context, a series of initiatives are in place to pursue ambitious targets: promoting at once a sustainable future of the planet under an economic, social and environmental point of view, contributing to the poverty eradication, improving socio-economic situation of fish workers, enhancing the progressive realization the right to adequate food, and providing guidance for state and stakeholders for the participatory policies that are ecosystem friendly.

During a consultation of small-scale fishers in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, several issues have emerged, especially related to the market aspects, such as competition, lack of common strategies, logistical and organizational deficiencies, and access to new markets. Although small-scale fishers represent the focal players in their respective value chain, they are receiving scarce economic benefits for their products. Aiming at achieving long-term sustainability from an economic, social and biological resource perspective, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) were adopted to develop a tool able to explore new markets, increase focus on promotion and marketing, and potentially contribute for making pricing methods more transparent and consistent. The concept behind that tool is to safeguard the interest of small-scale fishers by enabling them to obtain prices and profits that let them achieving the sustainability targets. In this view, in order to explore the potential capability of ICT tools to effectively contribute to promote economic, social and environmental targets for small-scale fisheries, we developed an experimental virtual marketplace (VirMa) for smart technology devices.