

POLICY BRIEF 6

EXTRA-SMEs
Interreg Europe



EXTRA-SMEs
PROJECT

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

EXTRA-SMEs is an Interreg Europe project that aims to foster the competitiveness, extraversion, and internationalisation of rural and coastal SMEs participating in aquaculture value chains.

To that end, the project brings together 8 regions from 7 countries to join forces and exchange experiences on:

- Simplification of administrative procedures.
- Expansion and access to new markets.
- Innovative value-added product solutions.
- Personnel up-skilling.
- Resolution of stakeholders' conflicts of interests.

The partners participating in the project are:

- The Region of Peloponnese in Greece
- The Region of Liguria in Italy
- The Northern Chamber of Commerce in Szczecin (NCC) in Poland
- The Bucharest-Ilfov Regional Development Agency (ADR-BI) in Romania
- The Lapland University of Applied Sciences (LUAS) in Finland
- The University of Patras (UPAT) in Greece
- The Western Development Commission (WDC) in Ireland
- The Public Institution National Regions Development Agency (NRDA) in Lithuania
- The Liguria Cluster for Marine Technologies (DLTM)



POLICY BRIEF OVERVIEW

The EXTRA-SMEs project brings together 8 partners from 7 countries to exchange experiences and practices on how to move from existing procedures in the management of aquaculture SMEs to the adaptation and greater exploitation of best practices and measures applied in the field. This policy brief is designed and expected to demonstrate successful cases of aquacultures' SME's internationalization and extraversion of aquaculture SMEs. It is based on the input study for the organization of the workshop on adopting simplified administrative procedures (A3.1). The policy briefs presents the key criteria of good governance, the identified areas of revision in partners' legislative framework and a series of recommendations for the application of simplified processes to alleviate existing barriers in aquaculture.

KEY CRITERIA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE AQUACULTURE SECTOR

Effectiveness

To create effective policies, relevant services should be provided in the most cost-effective manner and should be targeted to the aquaculture sector and consistent with the national policy objectives. This can be accomplished through the use of following strategies: horizontal (across different sectors), vertical (across different levels of governance), integration of the decision making process and multi-stakeholder participation.

Key points

- Cost-effective regulation
- Results-oriented regulation

Equity

Equity suggests that any policy measures for the development of aquaculture should consider the interests of all the groups affected, including those of future generations. This can be accomplished through consensus-orientation and institutional responsiveness.

Key points

- Consensus-orientated regulation
- Institutional responsiveness

Accountability

Accountability needs to be demonstrated by both the decision-makers, who ought to make decisions in an open way, upon consultation with all affected parties, and the aquaculture industry that needs to provide accurate information.

Key points:

- Openness in decision making
- Decision-making based on pre-established, transparent and known criteria and reliable information.

Predictability

Predictability of the rule of law is exhibited, for instance, through the transparency of criteria and procedures for license issuing and renewal, and taxation expropriation of land.

Key points

- Fair and consistent regulation and legislation
- Transparent, open and clear decision-making processes



EXAMPLE ON THE ADOPTION OF SIMPLIFIED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Norwegian Aquaculture Act (2005)

A “single-window” system for the processing of aquaculture license applications under which the applicant deals with only one body, namely the Fisheries Directorate, which in its turn coordinates with other relevant authorities.

Purpose and aims

The purpose of the scheme was to create a more efficient and expedient environment for the applicants and evidence. In addition, the Act established the legal right to transfer and mortgage aquaculture licenses.

Results

The results from the implementation of Norwegian Aquaculture act achieved to reduce processing time for licenses (from over a year to less than six months), a significant decrease when compared to evidence that suggests that the average time of completion takes between 2 to 3 years.

Transferability potential

The adoption of such an approach in other countries would require a careful consideration of the national legislation, institutional environment, business culture/ethics, and the possible ways that a transfer may be realized.

IDENTIFIED NEEDS FOR REVISIONS IN FRAMEWORKS OF GOVERNANCE

The following list presents the identified needs for revisions in frameworks of governance in partnership countries, as it was reported in their Multiannual National Strategic Plan developed in 2014-2015.

GREECE

- Establishing, adopting and implementing rules for the new aquaculture law (4282/2014 – Development of Aquaculture).
- Operation of the competent license authority.
- Establishment of a National Council for Aquaculture.
- Encoding environmental requirements for the establishment of new aquaculture sites.
- Releasing a handbook for the dissemination of permitting information (procedures, documents required etc.)
- Conducting training programs for the staff of the administration on the procedures.

ITALY

- Simplification of the legislative framework by adopting a “single law” for aquaculture.
- Creation of an ‘Aquaculture Platform’, an information forum to support enterprises and decision-makers.
- Creation of a ‘one-stop-shop’ at central level to support regional offices to respond to stakeholders’ needs.
- Improvement of statistical data collection in aquaculture.

POLAND

- Modification of data collection systems to bring them into line with EU standards.
- Improving the capacity of both administration and aquaculture technical branches to promote and administer modern, innovative aquaculture.

IRELAND

- Review and revision of the aquaculture licensing process, including the applicable legal framework.
- Development of a data management and information system with online aquaculture license application.
- Dedicated financial support to new entrants of the aquaculture sector.

FINLAND

- Review the permit processes in cooperation with the administration and stakeholders.

ROMANIA

- Identifying the potential for improving procedures and reducing administrative tasks.

LITHUANIA

- No additional simplification required.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTRODUCING SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURES IN GOVERNANCE

- Clear delineation of administrative and decision-making responsibilities and roles.
- Implementation of performance-based standards along with mechanisms for enforcement, reporting, and auditing for administrators.
- Cost-effective participation of non-state actors in the design and review of legal, regulatory and policy instruments for aquaculture.
- Administrative processes that minimize financial costs.
- Processes for appeal of administrative decisions.
- Implementation of coherent regulatory frameworks that are consistently and fairly applied.
- A predictable regulatory environment for aquaculture producers.
- A clear, transparent and timely process for applications, evaluations and appeals.
- Focused, targeted and cost-effective data collection, wide dissemination of research activities and findings and improved communication with the public by both government and the industry.
- Development of a “Best Practice Framework” for European aquaculture setting the principles and providing the basis for developing specific guidance on aquaculture regulation both at the EU and Member State levels.
- Improvement of the production process of existing species to reduce production costs or increase production volume or quality.
- Diversification through the breeding of new species, taking into consideration the trends and needs of the market.
- Development of new technologies, processes and practices for the quality assurance and traceability of products.
- Participation in special production schemes, such as organic or environmentally and socially responsible production, adhering by the relevant standards and receiving the corresponding certifications.
- Development of marketing and branding strategies by, for instance, creating or participating in, promoting a regional brand name by highlighting the product’s nutritional value.

PROJECT PARTNERS



**Region of Peloponnese
(EL)**



Liguria Region (IT)



**Northern Chamber of
Commerce in Szczecin
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**Bucharest-Ilfov Regional
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**Lapland University of
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University of Patras (EL)



**Western Development
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**Liguria Cluster for
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About Us

EXTRA-SMEs is co-funded by INTERREG Europe / European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

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