

## Press Release “MERMAID project”

A year has been completed since the official commencement of the research project MERMAID, EU framework “The Ocean of Tomorrow”, in which Kefalonia Fisheries has been invited to participate.

This specific project has a total duration of 4 years and is realized with the financial contribution of the E.U.

This research project brings together the forces and knowledge of 28 participating bodies (universities, research institutes, small-medium enterprises and the industry) from 13 countries (Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, UK, Italy, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, Poland and Turkey), and has a total budget of 7,4 million Euro. The group represents a broad range of expertise from hydraulics, wind engineering, marine environment, socio-economics, aquaculture etc.

The purpose of the project is to investigate the potential and to develop the design of multi-use off-shore platforms, aiming to develop activities such as energy extraction from wind and waves, aquaculture (fish, crustacean, seaweed), marine transport etc. with the use of shared structures, given that the forecast for the future is that the oceans will be subject to a massive development of marine infrastructures. The aim of this project is to develop functional structures (multi-use platform) which will support the combination of multiple activities, whilst decreasing their individual financial and environmental costs.

MERMAID hopes to contribute to the fulfillment of the objectives for sustainable development set by the European Union, through various Strategy plans, Directives and international agreements (i.e. the Marine Strategy, the Energy Strategy, the Kyoto Protocol etc).

In the MERMAID project, four offshore test study sites with typical environmental characteristics are considered:

- The Mediterranean Sea- a typical sheltered deep water site
- The Baltic Sea- a typical estuarine area with fresh water from rivers and salt water
- The trans-boundary area of the North Sea-Wadden Sea- a typical active morphology site
- The Atlantic Ocean- a typical deep water site

Kefalonia Fisheries S.A. represents the Mediterranean Aquaculture sector in this consortium and participates in those Work Packages which aim to determine the financial and environmental aspects which must be taken into consideration during design of this multi-use platform, from the aquaculture point of view, evaluate the benefits and challenges of moving aquaculture offshore, and contribute to the design of the platform model. Kefalonia Fisheries S.A. has also been assigned a specific Work Task which deals with the investigation of the suitability of a specific area in the Mediterranean for development of aquaculture activities on a multi-use platform, the identification of the requirements of such an activity and the determination of the design specifications.

The project will be completed by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

Project website: [www.mermaidproject.eu](http://www.mermaidproject.eu)