

SUSTAINABLE OYSTER FARMING THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Nord-Ostron (“Northern Oysters”) is a three-year project within the EU Interreg program (Interreg IVA Kattegat-Skagerrak) and aims to strengthen the Scandinavian co-operation between research and industry in the marine sector. Farming of the European flat oyster, *Ostrea edulis*, provides a model case study for the long-term goal of building collaborative structures that support innovations and business growth in the marine sector.

Oyster farming beneficial to the environment

Sustainable use of marine resources is a common responsibility for the three countries in the Kattegat-Skagerrak (KASK) region. Globally, aquaculture of fish and shellfish is today the most expanding food sector, producing healthy and ecologically sound alternatives to traditional fishery. Additionally, mussel and oyster farms have positive effects on the marine environment since filter-feeding bivalves have the potential to reduce eutrophication effects. Hence, increased bivalve farming is in line with the European strategies for the development of a sustainable aquaculture sector.

Ostrea edulis is a valuable resource

The European flat oyster is a delicacy highly sought after. It is native to Europe and has been cultured for more than a century along the Atlantic coast. However, in the 1970s the production was drastically reduced due to infectious parasitic diseases in many areas. The Scandinavian populations have so far been unaffected and represent a valuable resource that can be exploited for farming purposes. There is currently a growing industrial interest to culture *Ostrea edulis* in the KASK region. This region has favorable characteristics for farming of filter-feeding bivalves due to the high nutrient content in coastal waters, which results in rapid growth rates and produces a premium quality shellfish.

The Nord-Ostron Project establishes collaborative efforts

The three main issues of the Nord-Ostron project are collaboration to stimulate innovation, development of new technologies for oyster farming, and communication. Technological development and knowledge-transfer of farming methods adapted to the regional coastal conditions is necessary for expansion of the aquaculture industry. The shellfish industry in the KASK region is currently dominated by small companies, who lack financial resources to invest in research and development for oyster farming. The Nord-Ostron project therefore establishes collaborative efforts between scientists, hatcheries, shellfish producers and marine innovation networks in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, to achieve the critical mass needed to develop a Scandinavian oyster farming industry. The Nord-Ostron project has come a long way in its implementation, all three countries are involved and work innovatively with the aim of strengthening entrepreneurship in the marine sector.



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The Nord-Ostron project is coordinated by Mare Novum - Center for Marine Innovation and Business Development at University of Gothenburg in Sweden. Mare Novum provides counseling support for development of research-based innovations and business projects focusing on marine applications. The center also mediates cooperation between industry and others e.g. in joint R&D programs, arranging forum for discussions and seminars in relevant topics and support in commercialization of innovative ideas.

For more information, please visit the project website:

www.marenovum.se/Nord-Ostron/index.html

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