



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

Launch of ITUNNES Project:

Enhancing Tuna Stock Assessment through European Science-Sector Collaboration

27 June 2024

Last week, on June 17th, in Pasaia, Spain, AZTI hosted the kick-off meeting of the ITUNNES project, that aims through European institutes and sector collaboration to foster the implementation of effective management measures for tropical tunas at tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (t-RFMOs, i.e. IOTC and ICCAT).

This ambitious scientific project, scheduled to last two years, aims to enhance the performance of stock assessment models, as well as complementary ecosystem and climate models, by deepening our understanding of key biological information on tropical tunas (yellowfin, skipjack, and bigeye). To achieve this objective, the consortium is developing an efficient and coordinated sampling scheme in both the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, aiming to collect around 4,000 samples.

Anne-France Mattlet, director of Europepeche Tuna Group, explains: “By providing new information for more robust stock assessments and sharing the new knowledge produced with a broad range of stakeholders, this project will undoubtedly benefit and optimise conservation and management measures based on the best available science within Regional Fisheries Management Organisations.” Europepeche Tuna Group and its members - ANABAC, OPAGAC and ORTHONGEL, the three associations of frozen tuna producers in the EU - are actively involved in the design of the sampling methodology and sharing the data needed to achieve the project results.

About the project:

The ITUNNES project, funded by the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), is lead by AZTI and joins several European partners: the French Institut for research and sustainable development (IRD), the Spanish Oceanographic Institute (CSIC-IEO), Secretaria Regional Do Mar E Das Pescas Madeira E Açores (DRPM-MADEIRA, DRP-AÇORES, respectively), and Europepeche. Both the Centre De Recherches Océanologiques (CRO, Ivory coast), and the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation, INC (ISSF, USA) are associated partners to the project.

See the project webpage: <https://www.azti.es/en/proyectos/itunnes/>

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