

Media Release

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China-Malta research collaboration: HatcheryMatch comes to a close

Malta Council for Science and Technology Deputy Director of Internationalisation Dr. Maria Azzopardi and Senior Executive of Internationalisation George Bugeja were special guests on Tuesday at AquaBioTech Group's research and innovation facility to celebrate the closing of the collaborative Sino-Malta research project HatcheryMatch.

The development of marine aquaculture requires a reliable supply of fish eggs and larvae in desirable quality and quantity from inland hatcheries, instead of depending on wild-caught fish, as 85% of marine stocks are under pressure and either fully exploited or overfished. Driven by this high pressure and demand, four partners from Malta and China worked together to solve the common problems in marine fish hatcheries, including low controllability, high labour dependence and compromised water quality. The recognition by Malta Council for Science and Technology to support this research through the Sino-Malta bilateral fund has been greatly appreciated.

HatcheryMatch was an ambitious project that aimed to develop an automated recirculating aquaculture system that would lower labour dependence and increase the survival rate of larval turbot. The partnership was formed between Maltese partners AquaBioTech Group and the Department of Food Sciences and Nutrition at the University of Malta and from China, Fishery Machinery and Instrument Research Institute and Qingdao Blue Granary Ocean Fishery Development Co. The project combined the knowledge and specialities of the partners to create four new automation technologies to be integrated into the pilot-scale marine hatchery.

At the project final event, guests attended scientific presentations and toured the ABT Innovia research facility, an advanced biosecure aquaculture research centre which offers specialist infrastructure in Recirculating Aquaculture Systems, or 'RAS' technology to the highest standards of Good Laboratory Practice and Good manufacturing practice. There they were able to see the diverse fish species that can be produced and some of the devices that were tested during the experimental development phase.

The relationships that were developed between the partners facilitated new ideas and skills which have been beneficial to all the researchers involved and there is much enthusiasm regarding future collaboration.

Further information:

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