



Transnational cooperation for Protecting Niche areas from marine corrosion and biofouling by green coatings and new test technologies



<https://pronicare-project.com>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/pronicare-project/>



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PRONICARE is a collaborative effort by six partners from industry and research from three different countries Norway, Germany and Malta.

## PRESS RELEASE for PRONICARE project

25 October 2023

AquaBioTech Group

### PRONICARE Hosts First Annual Project Meeting in Malta

On September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, the Mar-TERA funded ProNiCare project hosted its first Annual Project Meeting at AquaBioTech Group's facilities in Malta. The meeting highlighted the consortium's progression into its second stage, as well as the project's accomplishments and ongoing activities in the fields of anti-corrosion and anti-fouling coating development.

The two-day meeting was organised by project partner AquaBioTech Group in Mosta and was held both in person and online. Participation was limited to the various partners of the ProNiCare project, with participants consisting of a range of interdisciplinary researchers based in Norway at industry research partners SINTEF AS and Bioenvision, as well as scientists based in Germany at partners Alfred Wegener Institute Helmholtz Center for Polar and Marine Research, Ankron Water Services, and Kelvion Machine Cooling Systems GmbH.

The meeting began with a progress overview of the different tasks relevant to the work packages from each of the project partners. Topics covered included coating formulation and development, field and laboratory testing of anti-corrosion and anti-fouling properties, environmental fate and ecotoxicological testing, creation of an industry advisory board and regulatory advisory board, and dissemination strategy. In person attendees also received a tour of AquaBioTech's wet and dry



laboratory facilities, where ongoing ecotoxicology experiments are being conducted.

On the second day of the meeting, a project general assembly meeting was held at Villa Bigli in Kalkara. The attendees also participated in tours of Villa Bigli, the Esplora Science Center, and the National Aquarium. The ProNiCare researchers were also invited to participate in AquaBioTech Group's booth at Science in the City in Valletta on September 29<sup>th</sup>, which included ProNiCare as one of the featured projects.

The two-day meeting was highly successful and productive, and generated valuable insight as the project advances.

The ProNiCare project aims to address the urgent need to develop environmentally friendly and more cost-effective solutions for new antifouling coatings, following the ban of environmentally damaging tributyltin. This will be advanced in ProNiCare through use of high-tech nanomaterial-based formulations, creating a thin coating with functional antifouling and anti-rust additives in a green and eco-friendly product that will be tested in a newly developed innovative testing unit. ProNiCare project will also improve the understanding of biofouling propagation and protection of niche areas and offer best practices to address this maritime challenge.

For more information on the objectives and outcomes of the ProNiCare project: <https://pronicare-project.com/>

Project ProNiCare is funded by the MarTERA partners - Malta Council for Science and Technology, Norges forskningsråd – The Research Council of Norway, and Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz and is supported by the European Commission.





Photo 1. ProNiCare Consortium members take a tour of Explora Science Center as part of the Pronicare Annual Meeting.



Photo 2. Researchers share the progress of their work on ProNiCare at AquaBioTech Group facilities.



Photo 3. ProNiCare researchers participate in a tour of AquaBioTech Group's wet laboratory facilities.



Photo 4. Annual Meeting participants had the opportunity to participate in AquaBioTech Group's booth at Science in the City, which featured the ProNiCare project.



Figure 5. ProNiCare researchers at the end of a successful Annual Meeting.

**About the project:**

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<https://www.maritera.eu/projects/2021/pronicare>

**About MarTERA ERA-NET cofund:**

MarTERA is an ERA-NET Cofund scheme of Horizon 2020 of the European Commission. The overall goal of the ERA-NET Cofund MarTERA is to strengthen the European Research Area (ERA) in maritime and marine technologies as well as Blue Growth. The MarTERA consortium, consisting of 16 collaborating countries, has organized joint call that is co-funded by the EU for transnational research projects on different thematic areas in 2017. Furthermore, three joint calls without co-funding by the EU have been successfully launched by the MarTERA partners in 2019, 2020 and 2021. Additional joint activities are planned, in order to contribute to the national priorities as well as to the Strategic Research Agenda of JPI Oceans and WATERBORNE.

The focus of development in MarTERA is given to technologies (instead of sectors) due to their potentially large impact to a wide range of application fields.

<https://www.martera.eu/about-matera>

