

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





https://pronicare-project.com



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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 **PRONICARE** Project

for

Research Council



25 June 2024 AquaBioTech Group

ProNiCare Makes First Contributions to SETAC Europe in Seville, Spain

The Mar-TERA funded PRONICARE project reached an important milestone and successfully made its first contributions to the annual Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) Europe Meeting from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9th of May in Seville, Spain.

Malta-based ProNiCare project partner AquaBioTech Group and Norway-based partner SINTEF collaborated on a poster titled "Development of green coating solutions for the problems of maritime corrosion and biofouling", which was presented as part of a poster session at SETAC Europe 2024 dedicated to "Marine Ecotoxicology: Impacts and Problems of Maritime Corrosion and Biofouling". The poster covered topics including maritime niche areas, coating development and real-world testing, microfouling assays, ecotoxicity testing, and reached an international audience of marine and ecotoxicology researchers.

Although ProNiCare first attended SETAC Europe in 2023 with researchers from AquaBioTech Group, SETAC 2024 was ProNiCare's first opportunity to present ongoing research at an international trade conference. Knowledge exchange and building connections within the biofouling and ecotoxicology communities were key themes of this year's meeting. As Dr. Marina Maritati, EU Projects Coordinator and Molecular Biologist at AquaBioTech Group who represented ProNiCare at the meeting, commented: "SETAC is a wonderful experience and a great opportunity to network with professionals from all over the world. We participated in many interesting

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lectures that gave us an overview on the latest findings in this field of research, also, being the second year that we participated, we had the chance to meet again some of the connections we established during last year's meeting. In this occasion we presented posters that attracted the curiosity of many other colleagues and professionals." Dr. Adrian Love, Head of Aquatic Ecotoxicology and Principal Aquaculture Consultant at AquaBioTech Group who also represented ProNiCare at SETAC 2024, shared a similar sentiment: "SETAC is always very useful to keep updated on the latest developments in ecotoxicology, new technologies, upcoming regulations, and future directions. You always come away full of new ideas, new contacts, and renewed enthusiasm. We are really looking forward to building on the relationships we have developed with potential partners and growing our expertise."

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.

The PRONICARE project has received funding from the Research Council of Norway, The Malta Council for Science and Technology, and The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action Germany (BMWK) via the MarTERA - ERA NET co-fund scheme (under grant agreement No 728053-MarTERA) of the European Commission's H2020 initiative.

For more information on the objectives and outcomes of the ProNiCare project: https://pronicareproject.com/

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Photo 1. ProNiCare researchers Dr. Marina Maritati and Dr. Adrian Love represented ProNiCare at the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry's Annual Europe meeting from May 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024.



Photo 2. Dr. Marina Maritati engages with ecotoxicology researchers about ProNiCare's ongoing research during the Marine Ecotoxicology: Impacts and Problems of Maritime Corrosion and Biofouling poster session.





Photo 3. Dr. Adrian Love discusses ongoing work in the ProNiCare project during the Marine Ecotoxicology: Impacts and Problems of Maritime Corrosion and Biofouling poster session.





Photo 4. Poster submitted by the ProNiCare project to SETAC 2024 titled "Development of green coating solutions for the problems of maritime corrosion and biofouling".

## About the project:

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https://www.martera.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

