



Press release

# MEDARTSAL promotes the revival of artisanal salinas as a means to stimulate local economy and preserve biodiversity and culture

*On the International Gastronomy Day, IUCN-Med and the University of Cádiz presented an unprecedented project dedicated to artisanal Salinas. Three Spanish artisanal Salinas (two in Cádiz, one in Murcia) will benefit from the MedArtSal activities, which were announced during a technical session held in Cádiz.*

**Cádiz, Friday June 18, 2021** – The MARAMBAY natural and leisure resort in the Bay of Cádiz Natural Park was the setting chosen to present the MedArtSal project – an international project aiming to sustainably develop artisanal salinas by providing specific support on economic, environmental and governance issues.

The Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation of IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) in collaboration with the University of Cádiz was in charge of organising this presentation event. Funded by the EU through the ENI CBC Med Programme, the MedArtSal project addresses common challenges in four Mediterranean countries: Italy, Spain, Lebanon and Tunisia. In Spain, four artisanal salinas are already benefiting from it.

On the first anniversary since its launch and to celebrate the 2021 International Day of Sustainable Gastronomy, the project partners gathered to present the progress and project milestones, as well as discussing the future of artisanal salt pans.

An active discussion on how to enhance the territorial value of artisanal salt pans in a local and global context engaged representatives from the salt industry, relevant personalities, journalists specialising in food and land management, private and public stakeholders and staff involved in managing the natural area and fostering social and economic innovation.

**Daniel Sánchez Román**, local councillor for Land Management in the Department of Sustainable in Cádiz, underlined the need to promote public and private collaboration to revive and support the artisanal salt pans in the Bay of Cádiz. He also stressed the efforts undertaken by the regional administration to review the park's management plan in order to promote sustainable activities that complement the traditional salt production and aquaculture. Additionally, Rafael Martín Ballesteros, conservation director of Bahía de Cádiz Natural Park offered an overview of the initiatives carried out in the natural park.

## Grants awarded to salinas

As the outcome of the Spanish call for grants, the innovative projects that are planned to be rolled out in salinas for the next months were presented, including las Salinas de Marchamalo (by Asociación ANSE) in Murcia, together with Centro de Recursos Ambientales Salinas in Chiclana, Salina San Vicente and Salina Preciosa y Roqueta (Marambay) in the province of Cádiz.



*"The selected proposals are the ones that best translate MedArtSal's principles of innovation in salt production and environmental protection into actions"* stated **Catherine Numa**, IUCN project coordinator

An allocated budget of €60,000 per project will allow to roll out innovative pilot projects and diversified activities, as in the proposal "**Sustainable cultivation of microalgae through raceways for diversification in Salina Preciosa y Roqueta**" (Cádiz), which supports the development of a system to cultivate microalgae, which can be commercialised within the food or health sectors. Likewise, the project "**Benefiting from the natural resources in salinas for health and leisure**", in Salina Santa María de Jesús (Chiclana de la Frontera, Cádiz) will utilize the resources provided by the salina, such as macroalgae, mud and salt, to develop a new line of cosmetic products. With the support of MedArtSal, these new products will build a pilot case of commercialization and further use in their salt spa.

"**Adaptation to the environment and salt production in Salina San Vicente**", in San Fernando (Cádiz) is a proposal that seeks to restore and reactivate the old salt mill building - an important element of the cultural heritage in this Salina. Used as a physical store, it will help to promote tourist activity in the area. Of the all the salt flats that existed in San Fernando, this is the only one that has survived, having remained active since 1725. Finally, the project of "**Restoration of Salinas de Marchamalo**" in Cartagena (Murcia), will be implemented by Asociación de Naturalistas del Sureste, which has obtained a concession for this abandoned salina and intends to restore it to return it to productive activity. This proposal will focus on recovering the salt water circuit in a part of the salina, to recover salt production and the associated socio-economic, environmental and cultural values.

The importance of accessing the Salina La Esperanza as a central university service was also highlighted throughout the presentation. "Having access to a salina has allowed us to carry out all the necessary experiments so as to transfer the tested results directly to the companies benefiting from the aid," explained Macarena Castro, project coordinator from the University of Cádiz

Participants were able to attend a demonstration of artisanal fishing in the estuary and a culinary demonstration, consisting of a ceviche with prawns from the estuary accompanied with seaweed provided by Suralgas. This was followed by a lunch with typical products from the salt marsh, such as oysters from Estero Natural, prepared by the Marambay kitchen team and paired with wines from the Caballero-Lustau Wineries.

An exhibitory space was enabled for the local companies 'Productos La Salá', 'Estero Natural', 'Suralgas', 'Mar Natural' and 'Ostras de Cádiz', which are all small and medium-sized companies developed around to artisanal salt flats.

For more information, photographs and interviews, please contact:

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### **About IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation**

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,400 Member organisations and the input of more than 17,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. The IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation opened in Malaga (Spain) in October 2001 with the core support of the Spanish Ministry of Environment and the regional Government of Junta de Andalucía. The Centre's mission is to influence, encourage and assist Mediterranean societies to conserve and use sustainably the natural resources of the region and work with IUCN members and cooperate with all other agencies that share the objectives of IUCN.

Website: [www.iucn.org/mediterranean](http://www.iucn.org/mediterranean) | Facebook: IUCNMed | Twitter: @IUCN\_Med

### **About MedArtSal**

MedArtSal - Sustainable Management of Artisanal Salt Mines of the Mediterranean - is funded by the European Union through the ENI CBC Med program. The total project budget is € 3.2 million and the EU contribution is € 2.00. € 9 million (90%). MedArtSal is a 3-year project that aims to promote the sustainable development of artisanal salt pans, providing specific support on economic, environmental and governance issues related to salt production. By addressing common challenges in 4 Mediterranean regions (Italy, Spain, Lebanon and Tunisia), the project aims to promote the development of a sustainable and adaptable management model that encourages the territorial valorization of artisanal salt pans. The project is led by CUEIM - University Consortium for Industrial and Business Economics (Italy) and has the support of partners such as Association for the Development of Rural Capacities (Lebanon), Fair Trade Lebanon (Lebanon), IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, MEDSEA Foundation (Italy), Saida Society (Tunisia), the University of Cádiz (Spain) and the Tunisian-Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, CTICI (Tunisia).

Website: <http://www.enicbcmed.eu/home>