

## **Blue Legasea becomes national expertise centre**

The Blue Legasea marine cluster was named a Norwegian centre of expertise (NCE) by Torbjørn Røe, minister of trade and industry, at a ceremony in Oslo 8 th of November. Blue Legasea works for greater sustainable resource utilisation, value creation and profitability for Norway's fishing industry and adjacent sectors.

"This is fantastic news, and a recognition of the work done in our region by companies in the marine and biomarine industries," says cluster leader Wenche Uksnøy at Blue Legasea. "The fishing fleet, the processing industry on land and the big range of equipment manufacturers are working flat out every day to increase value creation in the sector."

Blue Legasea comprises 42 partners from the whole marine value chain, including fishing companies, land-based processing facilities, technology and equipment suppliers, and researchers, academics and clinical teams. The Biotech North cluster and the bioprospecting community in Tromsø will also be an important partner in the future.

"Our NCE application describes an ambitious project where the cluster will serve as a catalyst for increased national value creation for our member companies," explains Tormod Thomsen, chair of Blue Legasea and general manager at Firmenich Bjørge Biomarin.

"Recognition by the Norwegian cluster programme means that the project now has predictable operating parameters, which will have great significance for the industry both regionally and nationally."

Ingeborg Tennes at Aker BioMarine adds: "The purpose of the cluster is to strengthen Norway's competitiveness for capture, processing and product development, and marketing in the seafood sector. Aker BioMarine want to contribute to this work, and is pleased with this award as a recognition of the cluster's work."

## **Blue Legasea cluster**

### **Background**

Greater collaboration throughout the marine value chain and at the interface between marine and maritime industry is needed to enhance the profitability of Norway's fishing industry and to make the country a pioneer in sustainable value creation based on full utilisation of marine raw materials.

Blue Legasea aims to be a catalyst for a unique cross-sectoral collaboration which will strengthen value creation and competitiveness for its member companies and for Norway as a fishing nation.

Through radical innovations in catching, fishing and processing technology as well as an increase in the value of marine products, the cluster project can help to grow one of Norway's most important export industries.

Expertise and sustainable solutions from the cluster will help to increase value creation and exports in adjacent industries, have transfer value both nationally and internationally, and help to position Norway as a pioneering nation in meeting the UN's sustainability goals.

## **The Norwegian cluster programme**

Norway's cluster programme is divided into three levels: arena, Norwegian centre of expertise (NCE) and global centre of expertise (GCE). An NCE is the second highest level in the programme, which aims to support industrial clusters by contributing to greater innovation, expertise sharing, purposeful internationalisation and enhanced attractiveness for cluster companies.

Norway currently has 14 NCEs with companies which are asserting themselves within their field in the global market. Established in 2006, the NCE programme offers technical and financial support for development processes at cluster companies for up to 10 years.

ÅKP runs the NCE Blue Legasea cluster programme on behalf of the companies in the marine cluster. From before, this company is also responsible for the GCE Blue Maritime Cluster programme directed at the maritime cluster in the Møre region of western Norway.

For further comments, contact

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