



Press Release

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Strengthening women's leadership and investment readiness in Mediterranean and Black Sea aquaculture

Women aquaculture professionals from eight Mediterranean and Black Sea countries completed an advanced training programme aimed at strengthening their leadership and investment readiness within a rapidly evolving aquatic food sector. The 2026 edition of the Women in Aquaculture training series was hosted in İzmir, Türkiye on 19–21 January. The programme combined technical site visits with peer exchange and expert input, enabling participants to analyse different operational and business models and to better understand how investment, innovation and sustainability interact in practice.

The programme focused on investment readiness, targeting women active across aquaculture value chains who are seeking to scale operations, improve financial viability, and navigate increasingly complex production and regulatory environments. Participants included aquaculture entrepreneurs, farm and hatchery managers, operations and production managers, processors, researchers and public sector professionals, reflecting the diversity of women-led roles across the region.

By the end of the programme, participants reported increased confidence in evaluating investment opportunities, a clearer understanding of how technical and operational choices affect financial viability and the identification of concrete next steps for business development and collaboration. Participants highlighted the value of hands-on site visits, which helped translate theory into practical experience and showcased the diversity of roles and career paths within the aquaculture sector. Participants also noted that the opportunity to directly observe and sample products during the visits helped demonstrate the high-quality taste and presentation standards achieved by women-led processing companies, reinforcing the importance of value addition and market positioning.

"Seeing different companies and women-led businesses first-hand made the training especially meaningful," noted one participant. *"The training was a truly valuable and inspiring experience, both professionally and personally,"* said another participant. *"Sharing experiences and perspectives with other women in the aquaculture sector created an empowering environment and strong collective energy."*

Beyond individual skills development, the programme strengthened peer exchange among women professionals from across the Mediterranean and Black Sea region, supporting the development of networks for continued collaboration.