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TASCMAR: Development of new tools and strategies to overcome existing bottlenecks in the discovery and application of biomolecules derived from the sea

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TASCMAR is a collaborative research project funded under the EU Horizon 2020 programme and aspires to develop new tools and strategies to overcome existing bottlenecks in the discovery and application of marine-derived biomolecules, with a focus on the theme of anti-ageing. Marine biotechnology remains an emerging field involving the discovery and the application of products and processes derived from marine organisms. In comparison to terrestrial natural products (NPs), marine organisms possess the capacity to produce a huge diversity of molecules with unique structural features and biological potency. On the other hand, ageing of the population has become a worldwide demographic trend. According to WHO by 2040, the global population aged 65 and over is estimated to reach 1.3 billion (14%) of the total population and, consequently, the prevalence of age-related diseases (e.g. cardiovascular diseases, metabolic disorders, neurodegeneration, cancer, etc.) will significantly increase. Taking into consideration the aforementioned issues, the TASCMAR project aspires to develop new tools and strategies in order to overcome existing bottlenecks in the biodiscovery and industrial exploitation of novel marine derived biomolecules (secondary metabolites and enzymes) with applications in the pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, cosmeceutical and fine chemicals industry. Exploitation of neglected and underutilized marine invertebrates and symbionts from the under-investigated mesophotic zone, of existing and targeted new collections from global marine biodiversity hotspots will be combined with innovative approaches for the cultivation and extraction of marine organisms from lab to pilot-scale. The activities in the project will be continuously evaluated for their socio-economic and environmental impacts to reach a compromise between industrial development and sustainable growth.

Biography

Carolina Alonso Pozas has completed her graduation in Marine Sciences from the University of Cadiz. In addition to collaborating in various research projects at the Spanish Institute of Oceanography she complemented her training with the completion of a Master's in Sustainable Management in Marine Systems and a Master's in Integrated Quality Management. In close connection with the Fisheries sector, she has been a Fishery Observer in vessels of Newfoundland waters (Canada) in support of the control of the Community Fisheries Policy. Since 2005, she has been working in Fisheries and Aquaculture for Andalusian Government in Spain.

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