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Joint Event

Microbiol Curr Res, Volume 3
ISSN: 2591-8036

8th European Clinical Microbiology and Immunology Congress
&
3rd World congress on Biotechnology
June 12-13, 2019 | Edinburgh, Scotland

Marine biotechnology as a support for the development of the blue bioeconomy in the EU H2020 framework

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The marine environment includes incredible biological and chemical diversity, which are still largely unexploited. Marine microorganisms possess secondary metabolites that assist in survival and defence in these harsh habitats. Particularly, marine resources are involved in added-value products and processes in the food, cosmetic, pharmaceutical and bioprocess industries. Bioprospecting for these natural products are important to the EU Blue bioeconomy, which is focused on creating employment, boosting economic growth, and contributing to a healthier and sustainable society. Since, the seas and oceans play a pivotal role in driving the EU economy, its contribution to achieving the goals of the EU H2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth cannot be overlooked. However, additional growth can be acquired by developing sectors that have a high potential for sustainable jobs and growth. To fully exploit these promising biological resources, new strategies in the pipeline as well as a new cohort of cross-disciplinary trained scientists are needed to overcome existing bottlenecks for the production of high value biomolecules.

Donatella de Pascale is the coordinator of the following H2020-MSCA projects:

The H2020-MSCA-ITN-ETN: **MarPipe** is a Research and Training Network program of 11 academic and industrial partners based in 8 European countries working in collaboration to train 11 Early stage researchers in the field of marine drug-discovery focused on antimicrobials and anticancer compounds. **The H2020-MSCA-RISE**: Ocean Medicines is a network of academic and SMEs across Europe and Africa, with proven experience in training and endowed with state-of-the art scientific and technical expertise and infrastructures, aimed at fostering young marine biodiscovery scientists from the development of a new drug to its commercialization, innovation and possibilities of entrepreneurship. A general overview of the major achievements obtained from these two project will be given in order to highlight the recent progress in this field.

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