

## Understanding the ways and the dynamics of collaborative innovation processes: the case of the maritime cluster of the Algarve region (Portugal)

João Pedro Valadas da Silva Monteiro<sup>a\*</sup>, Paulo Alexandre Neto<sup>b</sup> and Maria Teresa Noronha<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Regional Directorate of Agriculture and Fisheries of Algarve and Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics, University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal; <sup>b</sup>Economics Department and Center for Advanced Studies in Management and Economics, University of Évora, Évora, Portugal; <sup>c</sup>Faculty of Economics and Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics, University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal

(Received 21 November 2013; accepted 26 March 2014)

The Algarve region has always showed a close relationship with the sea as a result of its excellent natural conditions, historical and cultural reasons, and notorious know-how related with traditional maritime activities, such as fisheries and fish processing, and naval industry; more recently, nautical activities, such as tourism and recreational boating, have been gaining increased importance. The region is also well infrastructured in terms of public R&D institutions which are important cornerstones of the regional and national innovation systems. Through surveys carried out over a population of firms related to fisheries, aquaculture, fish processing and trade, nautical tourism, naval construction, and repair and shipping, we intend to: (1) characterize the innovation processes adopted by the Algarve's firms of the maritime economy and evaluate some of the main outputs generated by R&D activities promoted by the regional innovation centers; (2) analyze the potential externalities linked to the production and dissemination of information from knowledge spillovers and knowledge networks; and (3) assess the strategic interest associated with the use of knowledge-intensive service activities regarding their role as sources and/or facilitators of innovation in customer organizations, or as carriers of innovation, when they help in transferring knowledge between or within organizations.

**Keywords:** maritime cluster; innovation; knowledge-intensive service activities

### 1. Introduction

The main purpose of this paper is to assess what are the most relevant behaviors in use by the actors of the maritime cluster of the Algarve region regarding the adoption of collaborative innovation processes. To do so, we will test the following propositions:

- (1) The insufficient degree of consolidation and the incipient role still played by networks formed by agglomeration or geographical polarization of companies and business organizations, public institutions and regulation bodies, and other stakeholders that interact with them;
- (2) the persistence of an apparent misalignment of priorities and behavioral logics between “those who produce knowledge” and their “potential customers”;

---

\*Corresponding author. Email: [jomonteiro@drapal.g.min-agricultura.pt](mailto:jomonteiro@drapal.g.min-agricultura.pt)