Thematic Community on Sustainable Tourism

2nd Community Building event
Making Tourism more sustainable!
Sharing methodologies for a joint action

Proceedings
executive summary

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Objective
The 2nd Community Building event of the Med Sustainable Tourism Community aimed at harmonising activities in terms of developing common approaches and strategies and testing approaches through pilot demonstration actions.

The participants had the opportunity to exchange their approaches and methods towards sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean and work together in thematic groups to better achieve this goal.

Outcomes

Short welcome by Panteion University
Moderator: Roberto Grassi (Arco Latino)
Rapporteur: Alyssa Clavreul (Plan Bleu)

Introduction by the hosting partner: Panteion University
- Rector of the University: Ismini Kriari
- Chair of the social sciences department: Yannis Psycharis

Ice breaking activity - UNIMED
Moderator: Roberto Grassi (Arco Latino)
Rapporteur: Alyssa Clavreul (Plan Bleu)

The video of the Community was presented to the participants, who were asked to form small groups and to write on a post-it their feelings about this video: build our community messages.
- What do you like and don’t like
- What would you change
- Why?

The groups of projects responded with short statements, providing the groups’ opinions about various aspects, such as music, infographics, maps, messages etc.

Introduction to the event and horizontal activities
Moderator: Roberto Grassi (Arco Latino)
Rapporteur: Alyssa Clavreul (Plan Bleu)

- Communications activities (Emilia Stoduto)
- Community building activities (Dora Papatheocari & Spyros Niavis)
- Capitalisation activities (Nelly Bourlion & Alyssa Clavreul + Marie Mathilde Basile (DEFISMED))
- Conclusion of our activities by Roberto Grassi (LP)
Questions and answers

Roberto Montanari (CO-EVOLVE): an issue of the programme and projects is how to highlight and involve local stakeholders. Indeed, we should highlight there is something about working with local communities: How to share our results and messages with these local communities? We should take opportunities, for example when there is a possibility to translate our messages and results, or potential synergies with existing platforms. Our work with local communities can be highlighted in the community video, as well as the keywords of each project. Projects are well represented and specific objectives are well identified.

InnoBlueGrowth representative: Keywords is exactly what other HPs (and external persons to the community) need in order to understand the other communities (such as the Sustainable Tourism Community). We have a lot of projects, and keywords help to understand what exactly the community is working on.

Marie-Mathilde Basile (associated partner): regarding « Take The Med » platform, it is possible to add elements on the platform in order to adapt it to the Community => contact Marie-Mathilde.

Working cluster #1- Strengthening sustainable and responsible tourism

Working group 1.1- Capacity building & stakeholder engagement
Moderator: Alyssa Clavreul & Nelly Bourlion (Plan Bleu)
Rapporteur: Andrea DiGirolamo (Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion) & Roberto Montanari (Emilia Romagna Region – project CO-EVOLVE)

Alyssa Clavreul form Plan Bleu (PB) opened the meeting of the WG 1.1- Capacity building & stakeholder engagement introducing and explaining the methodology of the working group. She asked to the participants to introduce him/her self and the respective modular projects. After each presentations there will be a Q&A session.

Alyssa Clavreul invited the projects to present in brief their PowerPoint presentations, the representatives of the Modular Projects (MP) gave a short presentation answering some questions about their respective projects.

The projects presenting were: EMBLEMATIC, MEDFEST, SIROCCO, TOURISMED, CASTWATER, ALTERECO, BLUEISLANDS, MITOMED+, CO-EVOLVE, BLUEMED (see https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B-zy6N0MYB37bENVLVN3aWRXWEk).

Following the working group session, the moderator Alyssa Clavreul and Nelly Bourlion from Plan Blue and the two rapporteurs, Andrea Di Girolamo from AIE and Roberto Montanari (Emilia Romagna Region – project CO-EVOLVE) prepared a PowerPoint presentation as restitution and conclusion of the session to be exposed the next day during the event closing.
Working group 1.2- Sustainability assessment

Moderator: Dora Papatheochari (Panteion University)
Rapporteur: Anna Martinez Codina (Provincial Council of Barcelona) & Styliani Florou (InnoBlueGrowth Horizontal project)

The first part of the working group, the representatives of the Modular Projects (MP) gave a short presentation answering a set of questions about their projects. The projects presenting were: ALTERECO, BLUEMED, CASTWATER, CO-EVOLVE, DESTIMED, EMBleMatiC, MEDFEST, MITOMED+, SIROCCO (see https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B-zy6N0MYB37bENVLVN3aWRXWEk). After the presentations, Panteion University opened the discussion stating that MP share common methods, and common indicators ground such as ETIS. The challenge of adapting methods to local needs and data availability was discussed among the Community taking into account the different types of tourism development.

DESTIMED stated that the project focuses on include an aspect that people will worry about and to link sustainability and quality of the experience for tourists. Regarding the four pillars, they were chosen in order to tackle what was more important, this is to say, to prioritise.

SIROCCO highlighted that indicators have also a policy dimension. ETIS is ISO-focus and Eurostat does not provides data about transit tourists. There is a need for making ETIS operational for each sector that each MP deals with: to detect what is the minimum relevant data. How to collect data about tourists behaviour is another challenge.

The MP suggested different actions that could be carried out within the community including:

- To create a summary chart of methodologies in order to facilitate the identification of synergies among MP
- To organise a technical workshop to specifically work on indicators
- To build a “community of indicator systems”
- To have an online brief of methodologies and also links to what are sets of indicators for each project. In the long term: select what are the minimum set of indicators.
- To develop a guidance about how to use the data combining indicators in order to be more practical.
- To share how projects tackle specific issues/challenges.
- To share data bases of MP among the community.

Following the working group session, the moderator (Dora - Panteion University) and the rapporteurs (Anna - DIBA and Styliani Florou – INNOBLUE GROWTH Horizontal Project for the Blue Growth Community) preapred the presentation of the conclusions of the session to be exposed the next day during the closing of the event.
Working group 1.3- Alternative and innovative tourism models
Moderator: Spyros Niavis (Panteion University)
Rapporteur: Josep Rodriguez (Provincial Council of Barcelona) & Leticia Ortega (ALTER ECO project)

Within the first part, Modular projects presented highlighted their main focus answering to 4 main questions. The projects presenting were: ALTERECO, BLUEISLANDS, BLUEMED, CASTWATER, CONSUME-LESS, DESTIMED, EmBleMatIC, MEDCYCLETOUR, MEDFEST, MITOMED+, SHAPETOURISM, SIROCCO, TOURISMED (see https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B-zy6N0MYB37bENVLVN3aWRXWEk).

The second part of the working group was structured around an open discussion. Similarities and differences among projects were highlighted.

EMbleMatIC identified similarities with several projects like MEDFEST or TOURISMED in aspects like similar aims and tools (Eco-itineraries), focus on slow tourism, added value in territories, connection public-private sectors...In general, many projects are developing alternative models to mass tourism.

SHAPETOURISM and MITOMED have strong connections about creating a model to sustainable tourism management, also with DESTIMED. Focus on how territorial assets can be an attraction to allow deconcentrating of tourism flows and on the valorisation of local resources

ALTERECO proposes a sort of guide for tourist destination connecting the results of different projects. Compilation of offer on the same page

Standards, labels, transnational and local itineraries are also common tools developed by several projects.

Working cluster #2- Implementing innovative approaches in the Mediterranean coastal and maritime areas

Working group 2.1- Western Mediterranean region
Moderator: Josep Rodriguez (Provincial Council of Barcelona) & Alyssa Clavreul Plan Bleu)

Rapporteur: Anna Martinez Codina (Provincial Council of Barcelona) & Jeremy Sampson (DestiMED project)

During the first part of the session, representatives of the Modular Projects gave a short presentation about their implementation areas by answering specific questions. The projects presenting were: ALTERECO, BLUEISLANDS, CASTWATER, CO-EVOLVE, CONSUME-LESS,
The second part of the session was dedicated to an open debate. Modular Projects highlighted the need of the availability of information within and among the Community. To know what is been doing and what is planned in order to “share the journey” with the rest of the community. Some of the MP stated that even though some potential synergies could be detected, it is difficult to expand or modify the pilot activities due to they are already planned and MP find that is a pity to lose that experience. The delay of the web platform was a drawback for facilitating the dissemination and exchange of information between MP. The discussion also included the need to involve stakeholders to Interreg MED events. Finally, the moderators recalled that next Community Building event will take place in Rome end February and will be focused on results.

At the end of the working group cluster, the moderators and rapporteur drafted the conclusions to be presented during the closing session.

**Working group 2.2- Adriatic-Ionian region**
Moderator: Roberto Grassi (Arco Latino)
Rapporteur: Andrea DiGirolamo (Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion) & Maria Irene Suplizio (EMbleMatìC)

Roberto Grassi form BleuTourMed_C3 project opened the meeting informing that the WG is divided into two parts: 1st part MPs presentations and 2nd part open discussion. In the first part the representatives of each Modular project gave power point presentations answering the following questions about their project.
1- Which are the implementation areas in the specific part of the Mediterranean region?
2- What kind of activities is foreseen to be implemented?
3- What are the challenges and gaps identified so far?

The projects presenting were: EmBbleMatìC, MEDFEST, MITOMED+, SHAPETOURISM, SIROCCO, BLUEMED, CASTWATER, CO-EVOLVE, DESTIMED, MEDCYCLETOUR (see https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B-zy6N0MYB37bENVLVN3aWRXWEk). The synthetic table of implementation areas can be found in the extended version of this document.

Roberto Grassi opened the second part of the session dedicated to an open debate. He putted on a table some questions such as:
- Referring to your project, do you encountered specific problems in this area?
- Are you able to involve stakeholders and policy makers of this specific area in the project activities?
• Are there any specific problems that characterize this area?
• How to overcome any problems encountered in this area?

Modular Projects highlighted that the problems encountered in AI area are more less the same problems of the entire MED area. MPs underlined the difficulties in gathering useful data (different standards among different countries, different sources of national, regional and local data). In pilot areas lack of data at local level is a common problem for the majority of the projects. Another difficulty is related with the involvement of policy makers especially at regional level (this happened especially in countries such as Italy with a regional decentralised government system), most of the time policy makers are not well informed about the implementation and results of the project. So the MPs have experienced different level of sensitivity of the policy makers.

Some projects have expressed the needs to increase the level of involvement of regional stakeholders, as well as, to have the support of external experts for the consultation process of the stakeholders.

Other projects recalled the strong need to inform the governing board of the EUSAIR strategy about the progress reached by the modular projects of the Community. It is important to inform and get aware the governing board about the different activities performed by the Community.

MPs has manifested a strong need to sharing information and data within the Community of Modular projects proposing also to create a “big map” of data developed by the community. The delay of web platform affected the exchanging of information and data among the community.

Finally, the moderators recalled that in Rome in February will be organised the nect Community Building event. The event will be mainly focused on concreate project results.

At the end of the working group cluster, the moderators and rapporteur drafted the conclusions to be presented during the closing session.

**Working group 2.3- Aegean-Eastern Mediterranean region**

Moderator: Spyros Niavis (Panteion University)
Rapporteur: Dora Papatheochari (Panteion University) & Kostas Zapoundidis (EMbleMatIC project)

Eight MPs presented their pilot areas at the Aegean-Eastern Mediterranean region. The projects presenting were: **BLUEMED, EmBbleMatIC, MEDFEST, SIROCCO, BLUEISLANDS, CASTWATER, MITOMED+, CO-EVOLVE** (see [https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B-zy6N0MYB37bENVLVMaWRXWEk](https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B-zy6N0MYB37bENVLVMaWRXWEk)).

The synthetic table of implementation areas can be found in the extended version of this document.

After the project presentations, a discussion followed. Its main points are:
- Explanation by CO-EVOLVE on how they would like to implement the sustainability toolkit in their pilot areas (synergies with SIROCCO & CASTWATER)
- BLUEISLANDS, SIROCCO & CASTWATER share common indicators such as waste produced by cruise ships and probably a common pilot area (Limassol).
- CO-EVOLVE shares some concerns:
  1. Lack of data at municipal level
  2. Difficulty to compare data
  3. Different areas in the same region
  4. Need for comparing data before and after
- BLUEISLANDS acknowledges the difficulty in obtaining inputs on waste from hotel owners (same concern expressed by DestiMED)
- Proposal from the participants to propose, as a Community, a list of data to be collected in a European level
- MITOMED+ identifies indicators with the municipalities and discuss the possibility to collect data
- Possibility of synergies between MITOMED+ & BLUEISLANDS in terms of greening beaches
- Different target groups have their difficulties, i.e. private actors have their interests as priority while public authorities have full agendas
- BLUEISLANDS’ approach is not to engage all stakeholders in all activities of the project
- Challenge to identify, invite stakeholders who have conflict of interest and bring them together in a workshop
- Unclear legal framework leading to unclear jurisdictions among stakeholders and, thus, conflicts of interest

Debriefing with the Community
Moderator: Dora Papatheochari (Panteion University)
Rapporteur: Alyssa Clavreul Plan Bleu)

The Horizontal project provided the MPs the opportunity to express their expectations and assessment of the horizontal activities of the event and in general through the use of post-its.

The wider INTERREG MED Community
Moderator: Roberto Grassi (Arco Latino)
Rapporteur: Dora Papatheochari (Panteion University)

The session was dedicated to the presentation of the wider INTERREG MED Community introducing also the PANORAMED project.
Sophie Scarvellis has presented the INTERREG MED architecture including the 8 communities and 14 projects of the Sustainable Tourism Community and shared initial information about the PANORAMED.
Presentation on the web platform
Moderator: Spyros Niavis (Panteion University)
Rapporteur: Andrea DiGirolamo (Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion)

Spyros Niavis gave the floor to Sophie Scarvellis form Joint Secretariat of the Interreg Med Programme. She presented the figures of the Web platform explain, how the MPs can exploit this tool for building the online community of Modula projects and invited MPs to share the message to their Communication officers.

Training session
Moderator: Spyros Niavis (Panteion University)
Rapporteur: Anna Martinez Codina (Provincial Council of Barcelona)

Internal Community database

The internal database is one of the main deliverables of the BleuTourMed_C3 project. Panteion University (Spyros Niavis) introduced it to the Sustainable Tourism Community showing how to use it.

Spyros clarified the following issues that the audience enquired about:
- The database will be open access and available for free.
- Everybody can provide inputs sending the information by email.
- The keywords are specified manually and the process is done in two ways: the Keywords from papers and completed manually by the person who creates the entry.

Externalising the community – Communication playbook (UNIMED)

UNIMED (Emilia Stoduto) presented the Communication playbook. She explained what has been done during the event and asked few question to the representatives of the MP. Only few knew about the videos. More (about 15 people) knew about the newsletter. She stated that there is room for improvement about the communication channels and insisted about the benefits and importance of working together with the MP. Emilia described the options to deep in the collaboration providing support for disseminating publications, events, and more specific activities such as supporting in issue press releases or communication material to disseminate after an event. She invited the communication officers to get in touch with UNIMED and recalled that there will be an online forum on the web platform and also the possibility of creating a mailing list with communication officers.

Conclusions and closing
Moderator: Roberto Grassi (Arco Latino)
Rapporteur: Andrea DiGirolamo (Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion)
Roberto Grassi introduced the agenda of the session:

- Conclusions of the WGs by the respective Rapporteurs
- Signing of the Declaration
- 3.1 Common calendar
- community looking forward and closure

**Conclusions of the WGs**

Leticia Ortega from ALTERECO and Josep Rodríguez from Barcelona Provincial Council gave the first restitutions as conclusion of the **Working Group 1.3 - Alternative and innovative tourism models**.

Regarding type of tourism models used by the MPs, there are different approaches followed by the project:

1. Alternatives to mass tourism (sun and beach) taking benefit of local/regional resources in thematises like underwater heritage, culinary heritage, ecotourism in protected areas, mountains, fishing tourism, cycling tourism or med identity.
2. Reducing the impact of tourism activities (water composition, waste generation, less consume).
3. Measuring the sustainability it development of indicators and tools for planning.

Common elements and concerns raised by the majority of the modular projects:

- diversification of tourist offer
- Deconcentration of tourism flows
- Breaking the seasonality
- involvement of stakeholders and local communities.

Several connections were identified in WGs among MPs. For instance EMBLEMATIC/MEDFEST/TOURISMED or SHAPETOURISM/MITOMED/DESTIMED

Main barriers and gaps identified in building effective models

- Lack of coordination between the different administrative levels.
- Limited resources and capacities on the ground.
- Legislative barriers and restrictive regulations.
- Lack of reliable and harmonised data.
- Heterogeneity of local and national contexts.
- Lack of awareness of values and benefits of sustainability for the market

How projects plan to implement the developed methods in the project’s pilot areas:
• Preliminary studies and monitoring measures.
• Development of tools and test in pilot areas (itineraries, new packages, new tourist products, local action plans adapted to each territory, green beach model, use of ICT tools, indicators...)
• Implementation of quality labels and standards.
• Awareness raising campaigns involving local stakeholders.
• Marking briefs and promotion actions.
• Capacity building actions to improve sustainable management of tourist resources.
• Networks of collaboration.

Main outputs that could be regarded as direct means for sustainable tourism development
• Development of tools (open data platforms, thematic portals, quality standards).
• Sustainable management action plans and strategies.
• Transferability plans.
• Guidelines and policy recommendations.
• Awareness and capacity building to stakeholders.
• Promotion actions.
• Networks.

Styliani Florou from InnoBlueGrowth Horizontal project and Styliani Florou from InnoBlueGrowth project presented the conclusions of Working Group 1.2- Sustainability assessment

Methods used for measuring sustainability:
1. Systems of indicators ETIS as the basis BUT there is a need for flexibility and adaptation to local needs (level) and different types of tourism (model), prioritization
2. Monitoring tools
3. Value chain analysis
4. Sensors for measuring tourist flows and carrying capacity
5. Surveys to local stakeholders

Barriers in building effective assessment methods
• Lack of data at the destination and local level
• Lack of harmonized information
• Data not coordinated, not transferable, not compatible
• Reluctance of the private sector to provide data
• Lack of the authority to mandate the data

• Unclear definition of tourism destinations
• Local regulation and legislation issues
Results of the discussion

1. Develop a map of the Community’s methodologies
2. Organize technical meeting focusing on indicators
3. Select the minimum set of indicators that we need as a Sustainable Tourism Community and highlight the data gaps on this set
4. Share databases among the MPs
5. Links with InnoBlueGrowth Horizontal project

Roberto Montanari from CO-EVOLVE and Andrea Di Girolamo from BleuTourmed_C3 presented the conclusions of Working Group 1.1- Capacity building & stakeholder engagement.

How did you select the pool of stakeholders to engage in your project?
- No strict methodology followed to take contact
- Direct contacts from already known partners
- Selection of stakeholders at early stage, already in application form
- Selection related to the outputs and their possible impact on the project’s targets

Most important barriers
- Discrepancy among stakeholders’ profiles (eg: Dialogue between private and public sector, different centers of interest)
- Skepticism from stakeholders—Difficulties to explain the benefits for them
- Some stakeholders difficult to approach (eg: big companies)
- Different legal frameworks from different sites
- Lack of data (sometimes considered private, time consuming)
- Mainstreaming results and findings into concrete actions (policy makers) at med scale

Next steps towards stakeholder engagement examples of next activities (depending on the projects):
- Organisation of participatory workshops
- Online consultations (time saving, and interactions maintained)
- Monitoring of the stakeholders engagement and methods adaptation
- Stimulate the participation through explaining the potential benefits for the stakeholders
- Constitute a relevant group of active stakeholders to carry the message (lobbying)

Expected contribution towards capacity building
- Share with MP’s stakeholders other BleuTourMed community findings (eg: good practices)
- Stakeholders actively participate in preparation of action plan
• Enhance dialogue capacity between local stakeholders in the identification of problems and shared solutions
• Enhance collaboration capacity in implementing common and integrated actions (eg: local business and fishermen)
• Put pressure on national and EU institution to reach a common policy on sustainable tourism

Jeremy Sampson from DESTIMED Project presented together with Anna Martínez Codina (Bleutourmed_C3) the conclusions of Working Group 2.1 Western Mediterranean region

Kind of foreseen activities
• Identification of indicators and data collection and monitoring
• Online platforms
• Pilot activities:
  • Creating new tourist products (offering diversification), capacity building, management plans, production of tools and impact assessment
  • Definition of quality and sustainability criteria
• Policy papers
• Transferability

Identified challenges and gaps:
• Lack of data and/or challenges for collecting it
• Harmonisation and Mediterranean identity (diversity)
• Investment from pilot and financial aspects
• Different national/regional legal frameworks
• Involvement of different kind of stakeholders and meeting/merging their interests
• Availability and affordability of technologies

Ideas from the open discussion:
• Involve stakeholders to Interreg MED events
• Finding synergies between the projects
• Importance of replicability and transferability of pilot activities
• Dissemination and visibility of the projects

Andrea Di Girolamo from Adriatic Ionian Euroregion as partner of Bleutourmed_C3 has presented the conclusions of Working group 2.2 – Adriatic-Ionian Region

A huge numbers of pilot sites are located in the Adriatic and Ionian Macroregional area

Basically all the MPs act in this specific area, mainly in this countries:
• Italy
• Croatia
• Greece
• Slovenia
• Albania (no others IPA countries, such as Bosnia Herzegovina and Montenegro)

Kind of foreseen activities
• Studies / Data analyse and elaboration of data
• Pilot testing (testing eco-sustainable models)
• New Touristic Itineraries and eco-itineraries
• Promotional activities
• Involvement of stakeholder for reaching consensus
• Strengthening the capacity of local tourism stakeholders (Trainings)
• Sustainable tourism development strategies

Identified challenges
• Strengthen the competences and the knowledge at local level
• Reaching consensus and awareness of local stakeholders
• Strengthen the experience exchange in the Euroregion
• Open dialogue with EUSAIR governing board
• Possible synergies among MPs and other ETC projects in the Area

Identified gaps
• Different territorial level of the decision makers (regional and national level)
• Lack of common sustainable tourism policies
• Lack of data and comparability of data
• Morphological diversity of the A-I area

The conclusions of Working group 2.3- Aegean-Eastern were presented by Kostas Zapounidis, EMBLEMATIC Project.

Implementation areas in the Aegean-Eastern Mediterranean region: Greece and Cyprus
• Rhodes
• Crete
• Limassol
• Larnaka

Gaps and Challenges:
• Lack of data at local (municipal) level
• Difficulties in comparing data (even in the same region)
• Need for monitoring systems
• Difficulties in engaging local stakeholders (especially the private sector)

Unclear legal framework -- unclear jurisdictions

HOW to:
- Identify and invite stakeholders with conflicts of interest
- Persuade them that the activities concern their interests

**Signing of the Declaration**

After the conclusions Roberto Grassi gave the floor to Alyssa Clavreul and Nelly Bourlion (BleuTourMed_C3) from Plan Blue. They presented in PPT the main elements of the “Athens declaration of the INTERREG MED Sustainable Tourism Community”. After the presentation all the MPs was called to sign the declaration.

**Common calendar**

This part of the session was dedicated to the presentation of the common calendar of the Community on sustainable Tourism. Dora Papatheochari, Panteion University and Alyssa Clavreul (Plan Blue) illustrated the updated calendar.

They highlighted the need of receiving inputs from Modular projects for updating the calendars. It is strictly necessary to inform the horizontal project on upcoming internal and external events.

It is very important to know what projects been doing and which events event are planned in order to have a common pictures of the initiatives on sustainable tourism in the MED area.

Finally, the moderators recalled the next Community Building events which will be held in February and April, both in Rome.

**Community looking forward**

As closure of the workshop, Roberto Grassi (Latin Arc) thanked all the participants presenting the PPT “community looking forward”. He highlighted that:

- new modular and integrated projects are going to join the community by February 2018
- opportunity to stay together as whole community will come soon:
  - Next community building meeting and 3.1 Midterm conference in February 2018 in Rome
  - Interreg MED Conference in Rome - April 2018
  - Capitalisation Workshop in Marseille - October 2018
  - Capitalisation Workshop in Croatia - March 2019
  - Final Conference in Barcelona in – September 2019

He also pointed out the importance of having: more connection in the community, stronger message and capitalization of results.