

# TOURISM

Paper 17  
May 2017



Calella Palafrugell, Spain

## Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean: State of Play and Strategic Directions



2017  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
FOR DEVELOPMENT

**Authors**

Jérémie Fosse (eco-union) and Julien Le Tellier (Plan Bleu), in collaboration with Luca Santarossa and Emanuela Manca (consultants), and Tom Tambaktis (Plan Bleu, internship).

**Editors**

Thierry Lavoux and Jean-Pierre Giraud (Plan Bleu)

**Acknowledgements**

This report was developed in 2016-2017 by the Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (Plan Bleu/RAC) under the guidance of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UN Environment/MAP), with input from other RACs, namely SCP/RAC, PAP/RAC, and SPA/RAC.

Particular thanks go to Gaetano Leone and Tatjana Hema (UN Environment/MAP), Magali Outters (SCP/RAC), Zeljka Skaricic and Sylvain Petit (PAP/RAC), Daniel Cebrian (SPA/RAC), Anne-France Didier (French Ministry of the Environment), Aziza Akhmouch and Delphine Clavreul (OECD), and Alyssa Clavreul (Plan Bleu) for their guidance and advice, as well as proofreading and substantive inputs.

This report was prepared and published with the support of the French Development Agency (AFD), in partnership with Plan Bleu.

**Graphic design and production**

Final layout and production were prepared by Hélène Rousseaux (Plan Bleu).

Photos credits: Miquel Fabre 2014 (cover), Pixabay (p. 23 & 26)

**Legal notice**

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Plan Bleu concerning the legal status of any State, Territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of their frontiers or boundaries.

The analysis and conclusions expressed in this report are those of its authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Plan Bleu and the French Development Agency (AFD).

**Copyright**

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part and in any form for educational or non-profit purposes without special permission from the copyright holder, provided acknowledgement of the source is made. Plan Bleu would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication that uses this publication as a source. This publication cannot be used for resale or for any other commercial purpose whatsoever without permission in writing from Plan Bleu.

© 2017 Plan Bleu, 15 rue Ludwig van Beethoven, Sophia-Antipolis, 06560 Valbonne, France

**For bibliographic purposes this volume may be cited as:**

Fosse, J. & Le Tellier, J. (2017). *Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean: State of Play and Strategic Directions*. Plan Bleu. Valbonne. (Plan Bleu Paper, 17)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Acronyms and abbreviations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
1.1. Background	8
1.2. Regional context	8
1.3. Tourism sector	8
<b>2. State of Mediterranean tourism</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1. Tourism in the Mediterranean	9
2.2. Tourism products and impacts	13
2.3. Critical issues	15
<b>3. Review of institutional frameworks</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1. International frameworks	18
3.2. European frameworks	20
3.3. Mediterranean frameworks	21
3.4. National strategies and relevant stakeholders	23
<b>4. Building a vision and strategic directions for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1. A Vision for Mediterranean tourism	24
4.2. Overview of objectives and strategic directions	24
<b>5. Objectives, Strategic Directions, and Actions</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>6. Implementing, financing and monitoring the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean</b>	<b>36</b>
6.1. Institutions, players and processes	36
6.2. Financing the implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean	40
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Annexes</b>	<b>43</b>
Annex 1: MSSD 2005-2015: Orientations and Actions related to Tourism	43
Annex 2: MSSD 2016-2025: Strategic directions and Actions related to Tourism	44
Annex 3: SCP Regional Action Plan Objectives and Actions on Tourism	45
Annex 4: Strategy on tourism for selected Mediterranean countries	46
Annex 5: Stakeholder type and role in Sustainable Tourism	47
Annex 6: Strategic directions, Actions and Activities for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean	48

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

---

AFD: French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement)

CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity

COP: Conference of the Parties

CSR: Corporate Social (or Societal) Responsibility

CU: Coordination Unit

CSO: Civil Society Organization

DMO: Destination Management Organization

EC: European Commission

EEA: European Environment Agency

EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

EMAS: European Eco-Management and Audit Scheme

EBRD: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

EIB: European Investment Bank

EU: European Union

GSTC: Global Sustainable Tourism Council

H2020: Horizon 2020 Cooperation programme in the Mediterranean

ICZM: Integrated Coastal Zone Management

IGO: Intergovernmental Organization

ISO: International Standards Organization

ITA: International Tourist Arrivals

MAP: Mediterranean Action Plan

MCSD: Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development

MEDPOL: Programme for the Assessment and Control of Marine Pollution (UN Environment/MAP)

MICE: Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events

MSSD: Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UN Environment/MAP: Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme

RACs: Regional Activity Centres

REMPEC: Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea

SAP BIO: Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean Region

SEA: Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEMCs: Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries

SCP: Sustainable Consumption and Production

SCP AP: Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production for the Mediterranean

SD: Strategic direction

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SDMO: Sustainable Destination Management Organization

SMEs: Small and Medium Enterprises

STP: Sustainable Tourism Programme

UfM: Union for the Mediterranean

UN: United Nations

UN CSD: UN Conference on Sustainable Development (also known as Rio+20)

UNFCCC: UN Framework for Climate Change

UN Environment: United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNWTO: United Nations World Tourism Organization

WTC: World Heritage Center (UNESCO)

WTTC: World Travel and Tourism Council

3S: Sea, Sand and Sun

10YFP: 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (UN Environment)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over time the Mediterranean region has developed a unique blend of tourism activities associated with sea, health, sports, nature, business, as well as cruise and culture, offering consistent employment (11% of total employment) and economic growth (11% of regional GDP)<sup>1</sup>. However, the economic growth due to tourism development has often been to the detriment of environmental integrity and social equity. Sea-Sand-Sun (3S) dependency, weak governance and degradation of cultural heritage, environmental pollution and resource depletion, contribution to climate change and climate vulnerability, political insecurity and social instability, economic and human capital leakage are some of the issues that threaten the long-term sustainability of the Mediterranean region and the tourism sector itself (Table 1).

**Table 1: Summary of key issues identified in the Mediterranean tourism sector**

Theme	Issue
Environment	1. Environmental damage to natural ecosystems and resources
Social	2. Social inequity, precarious work and basic rights not afforded
Economy	3. Low economic benefits, lack of differentiation, and weak resilience capacity
Culture	4. Alteration of cultural heritage, traditional values and local identities
Governance	5. Unreliable monitoring, weak governance, and ineffective collaboration schemes

Source : Plan Bleu

Under the auspices of the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention, the recently approved regional sustainability frameworks such as the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025) and the Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production for the Mediterranean (SCP AP) are completing the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol) and making a contribution to tackling some of these issues. But inherent societal characteristics and the exponential development of the tourism sector are generating a need for a dedicated set of actions to be included in Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean to be implemented by regional, national and local policymakers and stakeholders under the following shared vision:

**Promote sustainable Mediterranean tourism in which visitors and hosts enjoy balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships and value the unique Mediterranean environmental, human and cultural heritage, while ensuring inclusive socio-economic development, taking into account the carrying capacity of healthy natural ecosystems, and developing complementarity between various economic activities at the tourist destination level.**

Looking at the gaps between the vision and the issues identified makes it possible to list a set of Objectives and Strategic Directions for integrating the basic pillars of sustainability for the environment, society, economy, culture, and governance into the tourism sector (Table 2).

In order to successfully implement the proposed Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, relevant international institutions have been identified to coordinate specific objectives, directions or actions. These include: UN Environment/MAP and its Regional Activity Centres (technical coordination), UNWTO and UNESCO (thematic expertise), OECD (policy knowledge, economic governance), European Union (funding mechanisms) and Union for the Mediterranean (political support).

While the costs associated with developing content for the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean are relatively low, the budget for implementing the actions recommended could be significantly high and will require innovative financial instruments. In particular, lack of public funding increases the need to attract private and alternative investments to finance concrete actions and activities. Finally, a comprehensive, transparent and reliable monitoring system with relevant indicators has to be built to support the implementation and follow-up of the Strategic Directions that should be fully integrated within the MSSD 2016-2025.

**Table 2: Objectives and Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean**

Objective	Strategic Direction
<b>1. ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY:</b> Measure, reduce and mitigate the environmental impacts of tourism, while reducing territorial imbalance between coastal areas and hinterlands	1.1. Assess and monitor the environmental pressures and impacts from tourism activities on natural ecosystems and their carrying capacity
	1.2. Support the mainstreaming of resource efficiency, cleaner technologies, environmental management and eco-labelling schemes for green tourism facilities, products and services
	1.3. Identify, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged coastal, marine and land-based ecosystems
	1.4. Balance territorial tourism development between coastal areas and hinterlands
<b>2. SOCIAL PROGRESS / EQUALITY / INCLUSIVENESS:</b> Provide for social rights, decent work, equal opportunities, and basic resources for local communities	2.1 Promote and support the creation, ownership and development of local sustainable tourism businesses
	2.2. Develop an inclusive and responsible tourism sector that promotes decent jobs, provides for social rights and integrates disadvantaged groups, in particular women, youth and minorities
	2.3. Facilitate access to education, skills development, learning programmes and training courses on sustainable tourism for tourism industry workers and local communities
	2.4. Promote sub-regional, national and local tourism development, and encourage social tourism policies at the national and local level
<b>3. ECONOMIC SUCCESS / DEVELOPMENT / PROSPERITY:</b> Develop a resilient, competitive and innovative tourism industry, products and services, promoting a better balance between tourism and territories' economies at the destination level	3.1 Facilitate innovation, diversification and resilience of tourism products and services
	3.2 Monitor, assess and attract investment in green, local and circular businesses within the tourism sector
	3.3 Enable the development of agriculture, handicraft and community business at the local scale (destination), promoting synergies between different economic sectors
<b>4. CULTURAL HERITAGE / ASSETS:</b> Protect and value cultural heritage and assets through balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships	4.1 Identify, value and protect cultural heritage, local identity, and traditional knowledge
	4.2 Disseminate tools and procedures for assessing and monitoring the cultural impacts of tourism
	4.3 Raise awareness, educate and build capacity in responsible and sustainable behaviours
<b>5. SHARED GOVERNANCE:</b> Ensure inclusive, effective and transparent policy design, implementation and monitoring	5.1. Strengthen monitoring, implementation of and compliance with Barcelona Convention its protocols and other regional policy instruments and initiatives supplemented by national approaches
	5.2 Enhance transparent and inclusive dialogue and collaboration between local and national policymakers, the tourism industry, business community, and populations at all levels (local and national)
	5.3 Promote inter-sectoral planning, policy-making and monitoring of the whole tourism chain/cycle, with appropriate governance tools

Source : Plan Bleu

<sup>1</sup> WTTC (2014). Economic impact of Travel & Tourism in the Mediterranean

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter explains the logic of this report, sets the context for the relevance of the tourism sector in the Mediterranean region and introduces the scope of the study.

## 1.1. BACKGROUND

This chapter is based on previous publications related to the state of tourism activities and their impacts in the Mediterranean<sup>2</sup>. It also takes into account recent regional policy frameworks such as the MSSD 2016-2025 and the SCP AP, approved by the Conference of Parties of the Barcelona Convention (COP19, Athens, Greece, 9-11 February 2016), and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) endorsed by the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

## 1.2. REGIONAL CONTEXT

For the scope of this work, the Mediterranean consist of the twenty-one riparian countries that are the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention<sup>3</sup>, plus the State of Palestine, located in Southern Europe, Western Asia, the Middle East and Northern Africa, sharing a similar climate, geography and coastline, as well as historical commercial and cultural links. Demographic growth, rapid urbanization and tourism development explain the significance of coastal development in the Mediterranean basin.

Today, around 487 million people live in Mediterranean countries<sup>4</sup>, with a population increase of 17% from 2000 to 2013, with a higher concentration in Northern and Eastern Mediterranean countries and in shoreline areas (one third of the population of Mediterranean countries live on the coast).

<sup>2</sup> Plan Bleu (2016). Tourism and sustainability in the Mediterranean: key facts and trends, Working document, <http://planbleu.org/fr/publications/tourism-and-sustainability-mediterranean-key-facts-and-trends>. See also publications available at: <http://planbleu.org/en/activites/tourisme>

<sup>3</sup> Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2014). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision

## 1.3. TOURISM SECTOR

Tourism is a major pillar of Mediterranean economies, offering consistent employment (11.5% of total employment in 2014) and economic growth (11.3% of regional GDP)<sup>5</sup>. In the Mediterranean basin, tourism is vital for many countries. If we take into account the economy of exclusively coastal areas, tourism represents over 70% in terms of Production Value and Gross Value Added (GVA)<sup>6</sup>.

Over time, Mediterranean destinations have developed a unique blend of tourism products covering leisure, health, sports, nature, business, as well as cruise and culture. However, the economic growth associated with the tourism sector has often been to the detriment of environmental integrity and social equity. Sea, Sand and Sun (3S) dependency, weak governance, environmental pollution, resource depletion, climate change vulnerability, political insecurity and social instability, economic and human capital leakage, degradation of cultural heritage are some of the issues that threaten the long-term sustainability of the Mediterranean region and the tourism sector itself.

## 1.4. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

This report builds on the recent regional and international literature on tourism and sustainability to shape guidelines and recommendations for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean. Ultimately, these guidelines could be endorsed by regional stakeholders, such as the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSDD) and the Parties of the Barcelona Convention. In particular, this report analyses the critical environmental, social, economic and cultural issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure the development of sustainable and inclusive Mediterranean tourism. It also proposes a set of Strategic Directions and Actions to structure this future strategic framework for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean.

It is important to highlight that this report does not pretend to promote a definitive position on the issues mentioned but instead aims to provide facts, evidence and arguments that could contribute to a constructive and solid debate among regional and national stakeholders.

<sup>5</sup> WTTC (2014). Economic impact of Travel & Tourism in the Mediterranean

<sup>6</sup> Plan Bleu (2014). Economic and social analysis of the uses of the coastal and marine waters in the Mediterranean

# 2. STATE OF MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM

This chapter presents the state of play of tourism activities in the Mediterranean, identifies impacts and analyses critical issues that endanger the sustainability of the Mediterranean and the tourism sector itself.

## 2.1. TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

### 2.1.1. A growing economic sector

Thanks to its unique combination of mild climate, rich history and culture, exceptional natural resources and proximity to major source markets, the Mediterranean is the world's leading tourism destination in terms of both international and domestic tourism with more than 300 million International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs) representing 30% of total world tourists for 2014. ITAs have grown from 58 million in 1970 to nearly 314 million in 2014, with a forecast of 500 million by 2030<sup>7</sup>. Half of these arrivals are in coastal areas.

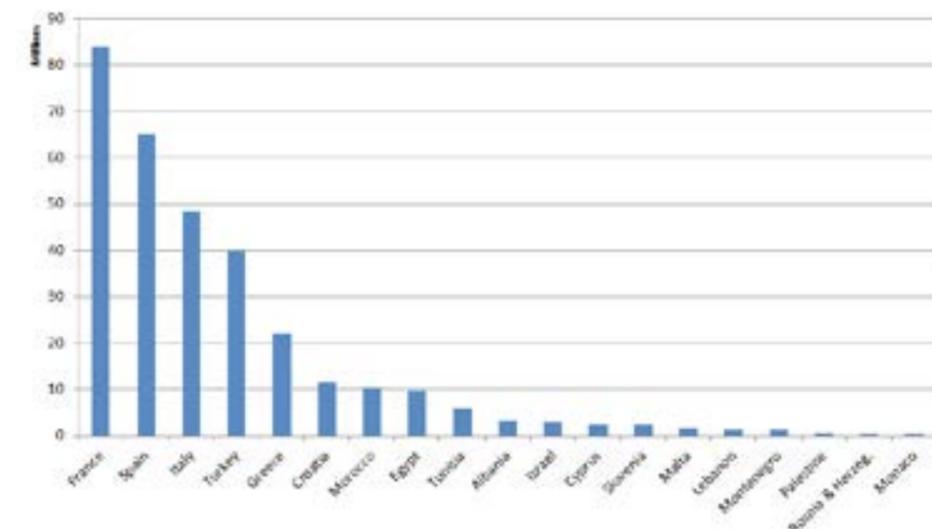
The tourism sector is extensively developed in Northern Mediterranean countries, such as France, Italy and Spain, and has significant growth in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries such as Egypt and Turkey over the last decade.

The top five destinations in Mediterranean countries – France (84 million ITAs), Spain (65), Italy (48), Turkey (40) and Greece (22) – represent almost 83% of the region's total arrivals in 2014.

### 2.1.2. A dynamic but unstable industry

The tourism sector is very sensitive to external and internal turbulences. Nowadays three simultaneous crises are affecting Mediterranean tourism: social conflicts and political turmoil; terrorism and insecurity; and economic slow-down and unemployment. An effect of the shocks linked with security and safety is the so-called “connected vessels effect”, i.e. the fact that some flows towards traditional Southern Mediterranean country destinations (seaside but also historical centres and archaeological sites) are diverted towards similar destinations in the Northern Mediterranean, considered safer.

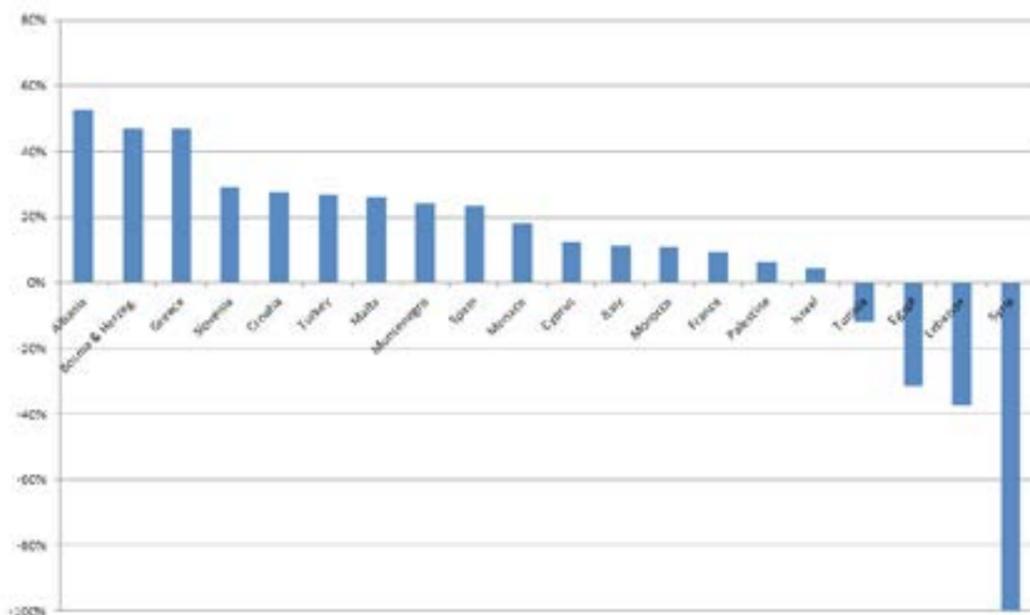
Figure 1: International Tourist Arrivals in the Mediterranean countries (Mio, 2014)



Source: Plan Bleu, 2016 (based on UNWTO Data, 2016 – no data available for several Mediterranean countries)

<sup>7</sup> UN-WTO (2011). Tourism in the Mediterranean

Figure 2: Change in International Tourists Arrivals in the Mediterranean countries (2010-2014)



Source: Plan Bleu, 2016 (based on UNWTO Data, 2016 – no data available for several Mediterranean countries)

It is therefore possible to divide the Mediterranean basin into four distinct geographical groups:

- **North Western Mediterranean countries** (France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, and Spain) where the development of tourism is already mature and ITAs represent more than half of the Mediterranean total;
- **North Eastern Mediterranean countries** (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia, plus more mature Greece and Cyprus) are experiencing a real “boom” as emerging or renewal destinations;
- **South Western Mediterranean countries** are experiencing varied economic dynamics: Tunisia is strongly impacted by a difficult security environment while Morocco is seeing constant growth and Algeria has not yet really entered into the international tourism market;
- **South Eastern Mediterranean countries** present two different situations: a constant decrease in tourism over the last five years for Egypt, Lebanon and especially Syria, due to internal political and security issues, and a significant increase for Turkey – although recent internal events will probably slow down this increase – and moderate growth for Palestine and Israel.

**Box 1: The impact of terrorism and disasters on tourism flows**

Over recent years, terrorist groups have specifically targeted tourist, travel and leisure hotspots in Sousse and Tunis (Tunisia), Istanbul (Turkey), Paris and Nice (France), etc. The immediate effect on a destination’s travel and tourism can be swift: after the Paris attacks in November 2015, the occupancy rate at hotels fell by 21% the next day. Turkey, which has had a series of bombings in 2016, has seen its tourism drop by 10% in February 2016 compared to the previous year. According to a recent study<sup>8</sup>, it takes an average of approximately 13 months for a place to recover from a terrorist attack. While this may seem long, tourism takes even longer to recover from diseases (21 months), environmental disasters (24 months), and political unrest (27 months). The perception and image of destinations in the south and east of the Mediterranean are often general and undifferentiated for tourists from northern countries, so that disturbance in a distant destination creates a sharp decline of arrivals in other destinations even those that are stable and secure.

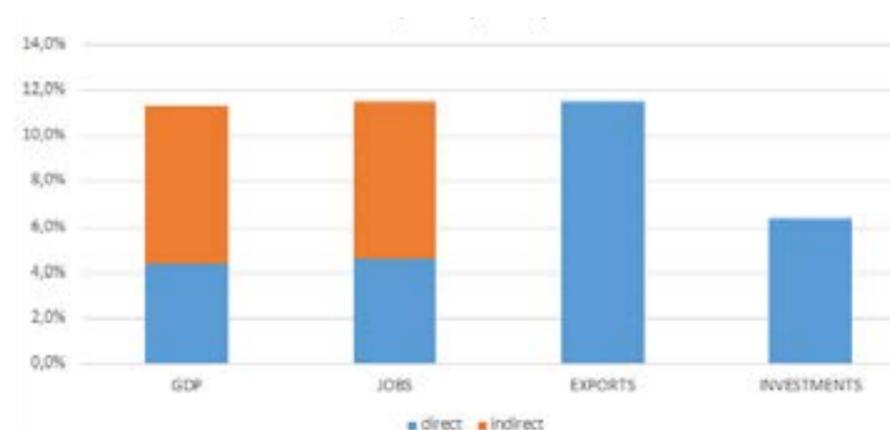
<sup>8</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/news/terrorism-has-the-smallest-impact-on-tourism-industries/>

Figure 3: Mediterranean International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs) trend (1995-2014)



Source: Plan Bleu, 2016 (based on UNWTO Data, 2016)

Figure 4: Economic impact of Mediterranean tourism



Source: Plan Bleu, 2016 (based on WTTC data, 2015)

### 2.1.3. The value of international tourism

Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in the Mediterranean region, particularly for countries (or regions within countries) with limited industrial or agricultural development. As shown below (Table 3), an overall analysis of Mediterranean countries shows a positive trend for the future, taking in account all the main relevant economic indicators.

### 2.1.4. Macro-economic trends

As far as the Mediterranean is concerned, this region is currently facing a “Blue Gold Rush” according to a recent WWF study<sup>9</sup>. It states that without a long-term vision for sustainable development, the Mediterranean Sea will not be able to sustain our economy and our well-being: sea-related activities, including maritime transport, tourism, aquaculture and many others, are predicted to expand substantially over the next 15 years. This is creating growing competition for limited space and marine resources which will result in even greater pressure on an already stressed ecosystem (Figure 5).

9 WWF-France (2015). Blue Growth in the Mediterranean Sea: the Challenge of Good Environmental Status

## 2.2. TOURISM PRODUCTS AND IMPACTS

This sub-section explores the main tourism products available in the Mediterranean region and reviews the associated impacts on local environmental, economic and social ecosystems.

### 2.2.1. Coastal tourism

Mediterranean coastal tourism has benefited and contributed to the democratization of the holiday dream, offering easy-to-reach and affordable leisure breaks through the so-called 3S (Sea, Sand and Sun) model. All-in-one packages including low-cost airlines, comfortable accommodation and cheap food, have massively increased tourist flows towards the Mediterranean coasts. Over the years, the 3S model has been extended to include different facilities, including golf courses, swimming pools, leisure parks, etc. Visitor travel patterns have also evolved: whereas at the beginning they used to spend their holiday at the same place for a longer period, nowadays they prefer to get away more often during the year for shorter stays away from home.

In general, the relationship between the economic benefits, usually captured by large international operators, and the induced social and environmental transformation at destination level remains problematic. Local communities are increasingly concerned to preserve their natural, economic and social assets from negative impacts, which may arise from the development of facilities for tourism purposes. Coastal tourism represents many of the problems associated with uncontrolled human activities<sup>10</sup>.

In particular, the following issues have been identified with coastal tourism:

- Linear and coastal urbanization (littoralization), consuming the precious but very limited resource of coastal areas;
- Water pollution, waste generation and marine littering;

- Overconsumption of scarce natural resources (water, etc.), in particular during seasonal periods (summer);
- Land degradation, biodiversity losses and decrease of the aesthetic value of landscapes;
- Greenhouse gas emissions due to energy mismanagement and inefficiencies;
- Obsolescence of 3S model, low level of competitiveness, resilience and innovation;
- Poor quality of employment generated (seasonal, low salaries, unqualified, often part-time, etc.);
- Economic leakage, i.e. unbalanced distribution of tourism-generated revenues;
- Lack of integration of sustainable tourism needs in planning for other sectors.

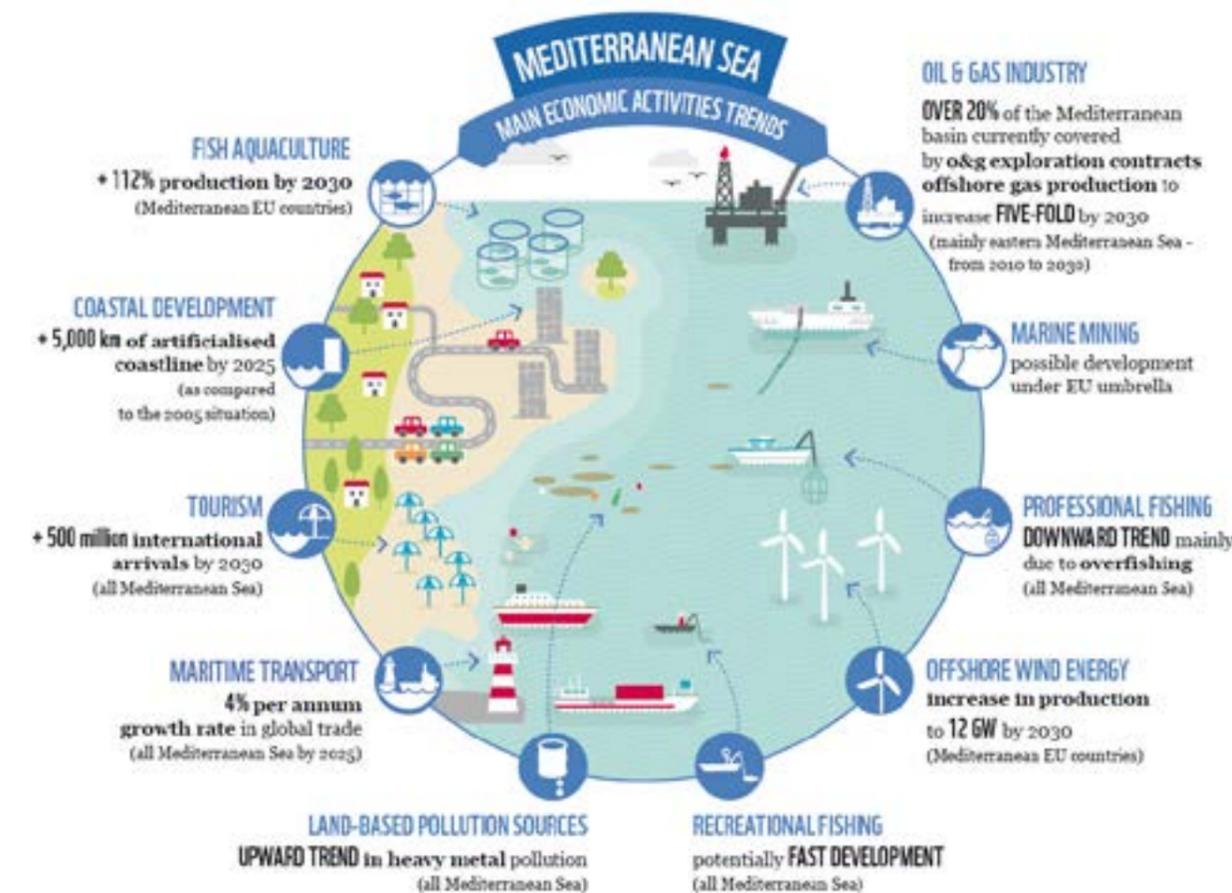
10 Plan Bleu (2012). Tourism in the Mediterranean: A driving force for sustainable development? Notes #24

Table 3: Economic impact of travel and tourism in the Mediterranean

Economic indicator	Trends	2014	2025
GDP (direct contribution)	The direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD 402.1bn (4.4% of total GDP) in 2014, and is forecast to rise up to 2.9% in 2015 and to rise by 3.0% annually (pa) over the next ten years to USD 556.6bn (4.8% of total GDP) in 2025.	USD 402.1bn (4.4% of total GDP)	USD 556.6bn (4.8% of total GDP)
GDP (total contribution)	The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD 1,019.0bn (11.3% of GDP) in 2014, and is forecast to rise by 2.9% in 2015 and to rise by 2.8% (pa) over the next ten years to USD 1,375.5bn (11.9% of GDP) in 2025.	USD 1,019.0bn (11.3% of GDP)	USD 1,375.5bn (11.9% of GDP)
Employment (direct contribution)	In 2014 Travel & Tourism directly supported 7,795,000 jobs (4.6% of total employment). This is expected to rise by 3.4% in 2015 and rise by 2.2% (pa) over the next ten years to 10,006,000 jobs (5.1% of total employment) in 2025.	7,795,000 jobs (4.6% of total employment)	10,006,000 jobs (5.1% of total employment)
Employment (total contribution)	In 2014, the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment, including jobs indirectly supported by the industry, was 11.5% of total employment (19,628,000 jobs). This is expected to rise by 2.9% in 2015 to 20,197,500 jobs and rise by 1.8% (pa) over the next ten years to 24,217,000 jobs in 2025 (12.3% of total employment).	19,628,000 jobs (11.5% of total employment)	24,217,000 jobs (12.3% of total employment)
Visitor exports	Visitor exports generated USD 313.7bn (11.5% of total exports) in 2014. This is forecasted to grow by 3.7% in 2015, and grow by 3.5% (pa) over the next ten years to USD 457.8bn in 2025 (11.0% of total exports).	USD 313.7bn (11.5% of total exports)	USD 457.8bn (11.0% of total exports)
Investments	Travel & Tourism investments in 2014 were USD 113.4bn, or 6.4% of total investment. It should rise by 3.1% in 2015, and rise by 3.3% (pa) over the next ten years to USD 162.4bn in 2025 (7.0% of total investment).	USD 113.4bn (6.4% of total investment)	USD 162.4bn (7.0% of total investment)

Source: Plan Bleu, 2016 (based on WTTC data, 2015)

Figure 5 : Macro-economic trends in the Mediterranean



Source: WWF, 2015

## 2.2.2. Cruise tourism

The Mediterranean Sea features among the biggest cruise areas in the world: it reached 27 million passengers in 2013, with a sustained increase of around 5% per year. Cruise infrastructures remain focused on northern shores: 75% of Mediterranean ports are in Italy, Spain, France, Greece, Croatia and Slovenia, while 9% of ports are in Turkey and Cyprus; and 7% in Northern Africa<sup>11</sup>.

In addition to this unbalanced geographical distribution, the cruise business is highly concentrated in the hands of a few multinational companies that can afford the massive investments needed to finance and operate modern cruise boats. Although modern facilities and ships have significantly reduced their environmental impacts, it remains a major source of air, noise and marine pollution due to the capacity of the new boats that can accommodate up to 8,000 passengers, equivalent to the size of a small Mediterranean town. “Air pollution from such nautical behemoths is getting worse every year as cruising becomes the fastest growing sector of the mass tourism industry and as ships get bigger and bigger”<sup>12</sup>. The arrival of such large numbers of visitors in compact Mediterranean cities creates severe conflicts on space use and negatively impact the travel experience of visitors.

In particular, the following issues have been identified with cruise tourism<sup>13</sup>:

- Waste production, marine littering, and significant air pollution;
- Water pollution caused by cruise sewage systems and untreated wastewater;
- Dependency on large international companies;
- Poor visitor experience and unbalanced interaction with local communities;
- Conflict over space use and overcrowding of urban areas;
- Unbalanced distribution of tourism-generated revenues;
- High seasonality and associated effects;
- Lack of monitoring systems on tourism flows and impacts.

## 2.2.3. Nature-based, rural and ecotourism

Nature-based, rural and ecotourism are products designed to be sustainable, responsible and community-based activities. In particular ecotourism has been successfully developed within national parks, nature reserves and marine protected areas all over the Mediterranean countries, aiming to contribute effectively to nature and biodiversity conservation through the generation of local incomes that can be reinvested into the restoration and protection of vulnerable ecosystems.

One rural tourism experience, agro-tourism, has grown exponentially in most Euro-Mediterranean countries since the 1980s, combining a blend of agriculture and tourism that offers hosting communities’ social, environmental and economic benefits. It has helped to increase revenues for farmers and contributes to creating local jobs through rural restaurants and accommodation, where visitors can taste typical farm products and enjoy the hospitality of local communities, which enhances their appreciation of the cultural, educational and recreational aspects of rural areas.

However, there are some issues related to nature-based, rural and ecotourism, in particular:

- Unknown alteration to natural environment, in particular in vulnerable ecosystems;
- Lack of independent environmental impacts assessments and monitoring schemes;
- Difficulties properly identifying and promoting truly sustainable tourism activities;
- Fiscal leakage due to geographic spread and individual businesses prominence;
- Limited hosting capacity and higher cost for visitors;
- Limited public control/regulation of rural and eco-tourism, which need to remain “niche tourism” in order not to create negative reverse effects on the local population and territory.

## 2.2.4. Cultural tourism

Mediterranean cities, particularly historical capitals, are well appreciated all over the world. In recent decades, the attractiveness of cultural cities has grown thanks to the restoration of historical centres, development of modern museums and large awareness-raising campaigns in international markets. In addition, one of the new opportunities for cultural tourism is religious tourism – especially in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries (SEMCs) – which already accounts from 15% to 20% of international tourist arrivals, not only from Europe or other long-haul destinations, but also from the Mediterranean region itself<sup>14</sup>.

However, there are clear negative impacts related to these products. In particular, the following issues have been identified with cultural tourism:

- Conflict over space use due to overcrowding of urban areas;
- Standardization and internationalization of shopping, accommodation and services offering;
- Alteration to local cultural identity and gentrification;
- Decrease in the aesthetic value of historical and cultural sites;
- Unbalanced relationships between inhabitants and visitors due to the cultural, social and economic gaps;
- Lack of public regulation and market structuring;
- Vulnerability to (geo-)political instability and insecurity;
- Poor governance and weak destination management.

## 2.2.5. Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events (MICE) tourism

The MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Events) sector is growing quickly all over the world. Professional gatherings, thematic conferences, cultural events and incentive trips are particularly attractive for Mediterranean destinations as they usually take place off-season, in diverse geographic locations and have a high expenditure capacity. The fact that Europe is a large source market for MICE – in particular, Germany, UK and France – make it easier for Mediterranean destinations to win part of this niche market.

Although the MICE industry is moving slowly towards sustainability through the implementation of environmental and social management schemes required by more responsible operators and customers, the arrival of large number of tourists with high purchasing capacity in usually expensive facilities does not contribute to maintaining a balanced, respectful and fruitful relationship between visitors and inhabitants.

In particular, the following issues have been identified with MICE tourism:

- Conflict over space use due to overcrowding of urban areas;
- Standardization of shopping and food & beverage offering;
- Lack of stable monitoring systems on tourism flows and impacts;
- Lack of sustainable/green service providers for MICE
- Poor interaction between visitors and inhabitants;
- Superficiality of visitor experience;
- Unbalanced distribution of economic and social benefits;
- Dependency on international markets and global operators

## 2.3. CRITICAL ISSUES

### 2.3.1. Methodology

Reflection on the existing issues, challenges and gaps shows that the approach to tackling a phenomenon such as tourism which generates pressures in the Mediterranean region arising from different driving forces, needs to be holistic. Analysis of the literature and previous policy frameworks shows that tourism cannot be considered an isolated field of activity, because its cross-cutting nature means it is affected by and involves many other human activities and natural ecosystems.

In this report we have therefore decided to structure the analysis around the basic sustainability approach, i.e. distinguish the main pillars of this concept (environmental, social, economic and cultural) in order to identify critical pressures from the various forms of tourism. A fifth component on “governance” has been added to integrate participation issues with stakeholders into the whole value chain and life cycle of tourism products and services.

### 2.3.2. Previous assessments

In 2011, an assessment of the implementation of the initial Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD 2005-2015) was carried out by the Overseas Development Institute<sup>15</sup>. The study identified gaps and pending issues as a basis for updating the strategy for the following periods. More recently, Plan Bleu undertook a review of the tourism component of the MSSD 2005-2015<sup>16</sup>, identifying and segmenting relevant issues to be addressed by regional policies (Table 4).

### 2.3.3. Issues identified

From the picture of the current state-of-play of the tourism in the Mediterranean and outcomes of previous assessments, it cannot be denied that current trends indicate that local and regional pressures are dramatically increasing and threaten both the environmental and social sustainability of destinations as well as the economic viability of the sector. Despite increasing awareness of the societal risks linked with tourism development, sustainability principles are not yet widely applied in facility and destination management. Many problems are still unsolved, numerous challenges are not yet tackled, and several issues have not been finalised.

The key issues affecting the main pillars of sustainability related to the tourism sector are summarized in Figure 6 and Table 5 below.

11 Cruise activities in MedCruise ports: Statistics 2013, MedCruise Association (2014). Available at: [http://www.medcruise.com/sites/default/files/cruise\\_activities\\_in\\_medcruise\\_ports\\_statistics\\_2013.pdf](http://www.medcruise.com/sites/default/files/cruise_activities_in_medcruise_ports_statistics_2013.pdf)

12 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/may/21/the-worlds-largest-cruise-ship-and-its-supersized-pollution-problem>

See also: <http://ecobnb.com/blog/2013/07/how-does-cruise-ships-impact-on-the-environment/>

13 Cruises and Recreational Boating in the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu (2011) – Available at: <http://planbleu.org/sites/default/files/upload/files/2-1-EN-Croisiere%26plaisance.pdf>

14 Tourism in the MED 11 Countries, CASE – Center for Social and Economic Research (2011)

15 Assessment on the implementation of MSSD for the period 2005-2010, June 2011, ODI Report, UN Environment/MAP.

16 Plan Bleu (2016). Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2005-2015: Assessment of Tourism Component

Table 4: Tourism-related issues from MSSD 2005-2015 assessment

Issue	Explanation
Seaside tourism dominance	Tourism consists mainly of a seasonal seaside resort model. Around 637 million tourists (international and domestic) are expected in the region by 2025. About half of them will stay in coastal regions.
Inequitable distribution of tourist incomes, lack of control by local stakeholders	The intense competition between tourist destinations is exacerbated by the business practices of major tour operators and the lack of capacity at local level to control unsustainable trends in the development of tourism.
Standardization of tourist supply, saturation of mature destinations	There is a certain standardization in the supply of tourist facilities and a loss of quality in established or developing destinations. This situation has been encouraged by public policies which emphasize tourist numbers rather than added value, diversity and socio-cultural development. While tourism is important for the economy in many countries, the benefits have not had much impact on local development.
Negative externalities of tourist activities	Environmental impacts in such areas as gas emissions, noise, waste generation, the use of space, and the degradation of landscapes, coasts and ecosystems are not accounted for in national economic statistics relating to tourism.

Source : Plan Bleu, 2016

Figure 6: Critical issues identified in the Mediterranean tourism sector (infographic)



Table 5: Critical issues identified in the Mediterranean tourism sector

1 ENVIRONMENTAL damage to ecosystems and natural resources	
1.1	Soil degradation and land fragmentation due to the construction and operation of tourist and travel facilities (resorts, hotels, ports, airports, etc.) as well as delivery of products and services (field trips, etc.); Linear and coastal urbanization (littoralization).
1.2	Alteration of coastal ecosystems and biodiversity losses, due to the construction and use of tourist facilities.
1.3	Waste generation, water and marine pollution, due to travel and tourist facilities (resorts, hotels, cruises...).
1.4	Air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, due to fossil-fuel use for transportation and facilities heating/cooling.
1.5	Noise and light pollution in urban areas and in natural environments, due to transport, mass crowds and facility operations.
1.6	Natural resource depletion, in particular fresh water, energy and food, by tourist facilities (resorts, hotels).
2. SOCIAL inequities, precarious jobs and basic rights not afforded	
2.1	Limited ownership of tourism-related businesses by locals, generally running informal, precarious and small businesses.
2.2	Disputes over resource sharing (especially water and energy) between inhabitants and tourist facilities, compounded by climate change.
2.3	Conflict over space use due to overcrowding and exclusion from historical areas, cultural sites and tourist facilities, gentrification phenomena.
2.4	Poor quality of tourism jobs (informal, seasonal, unqualified, part-time, badly paid).
2.5	Wastage of scarce energy, water and food due to mismanagement of tourist facilities or services.
2.6	Leakage of human capital due to the attraction of tourist jobs among the youth that takes them out of school too early.
3. Low ECONOMIC benefits, lack of competitiveness and weak resilience capacity	
3.1	Obsolescence of traditional Mediterranean tourism models (3S: Sea, Sand, Sun; mass tourism...).
3.2	Unbalanced distribution of tourism-generated revenues between asset owners/managers and local stakeholders (economic leakage).
3.3	Dependency on foreign tour-operators and international markets.
3.4	Insufficient investment in innovation and research, upgrading assets and human capital development.
3.5	Weak management of tourist and travel facilities, with poor resource efficiency rate and low margins.
3.6	Lack of resilience to climate change, geopolitical turbulence and security incidents.
4. Alteration of CULTURAL heritage, traditional values and local identities	
4.1	Alteration of local identity due to standardization, homogenization and globalization of tourist facilities and products.
4.2	Degradation of authenticity and aesthetic, historic and cultural values of city centres, natural landscapes and heritage sites due to overcrowding and proliferation of gift and souvenir shops.
4.3	Unbalanced relationships between inhabitants and visitors due to cultural, social or economic gaps.
4.4	Lack of awareness, knowledge and sensitivity of visitors to local cultural values, traditions and heritage.
4.5	Superficiality of tourist experience which does not offer a fruitful and fair exchange between the local population and visitors.
5. Unreliable monitoring, weak GOVERNANCE and ineffective collaboration schemes	
5.1	Low involvement of local communities in planning and management of tourism activities and facilities.
5.2	Inexistent or ineffective dialogue and cooperation schemes between stakeholders at local, national and regional level.
5.3	Partial, unreliable and inconsistent data on tourism flows, impacts and trends.
5.4	Weak implementation and poor enforcement of local, national and regional regulations.
5.5	Poor resilience to (geo-)political instability, social turbulence and insecurity incidents that damage the reputation and attractiveness of destinations.
5.6	Lack of cooperation and integration between and with other sectors (agriculture, housing, etc.) at planning, financing and operation phases.

Source : Plan Bleu, 2016

Once the main social, environmental and economic issues associated with the tourism sector have been identified, a Vision can be drawn up and a set of Objectives, Strategic Directions and Actions can be proposed for moving towards sustainable Mediterranean tourism (Chapter 4).

## 3. REVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter presents the global and regional institutional frameworks applicable to sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean region.

### 3.1. INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

In order to ensure consistency between Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean and existing international and regional frameworks, an overview of the main relevant international policies follows.

#### 3.1.1. The UNWTO and UN Environment sustainable tourism principles

In their report "Making Tourism More Sustainable"<sup>17</sup> published in 2005, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) identified twelve aims for sustainable tourism described below (Box 2). It sets out a broad sustainable tourism agenda which is as much about delivering economic benefits to destinations and communities, through competitive, viable tourism businesses and job creation, as about minimizing adverse impacts on natural and social ecosystems.

#### 3.1.2. The Rio+20 Declaration

In 2012, renewed efforts to clarify environment and development interaction took place at the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UN CSD), and were expressed in The Future We Want Declaration, aimed at ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. It states (Box 3) that well-managed tourism can contribute significantly to sustainable development, as it is inter-connected with other economic sectors, and demands:

- The support of sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building;
- The promotion of investments in sustainable tourism, especially for eco-tourism and cultural tourism SMEs;
- The drafting of guidelines and regulations for promoting and supporting sustainable tourism.

#### Box 2: UNWTO and UN Environment aims for sustainable tourism

- 1. Economic viability:** To ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to continue to prosper and deliver benefits in the long term.
- 2. Local prosperity:** To maximize the contribution of tourism to the prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally.
- 3. Employment quality:** To strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
- 4. Social equity:** To seek a widespread distribution of economic and social benefits from tourism throughout the recipient community, including improving opportunities, income and services available to the poor.
- 5. Visitor fulfilment:** To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, disability or in other ways.
- 6. Local control:** To engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making about the management and future development of tourism in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders.
- 7. Community wellbeing:** To maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.
- 8. Cultural richness:** To respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctiveness of host communities.
- 9. Physical integrity:** To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes, both urban and rural, and avoid the physical and visual degradation of the environment
- 10. Biological diversity:** To support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife, and minimize damage to them.
- 11. Resource efficiency:** To minimize the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.
- 12. Environmental purity:** To minimize the pollution of air, water and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors.

Source : UNWTO and UN Environment, 2005<sup>18</sup>

18 UN-WTO and UN Environment (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers

#### Box 3: Sustainable tourism in *The Future We Want* Declaration

130. We emphasize that well-designed and managed tourism can make a significant contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development, has close linkages to other sectors, and can create decent jobs and generate trade opportunities (...)

131. We encourage the promotion of investment in sustainable tourism, including eco-tourism and cultural tourism, which may include creating small and medium sized enterprises and facilitating access to finance, including through microcredit initiatives for the poor, indigenous peoples and local communities (...).

Source : UN CSD, 2012<sup>19</sup>

19 <http://icr.un-wto.org/en/content/rio20-future-we-want>

#### 3.1.3. The UNWTO 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP)

In 2014, UNWTO launched the 10YFP Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP) as part of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) endorsed at the Rio+20 summit. Its vision is "*a tourism sector that has globally adopted sustainable consumption and production practices resulting in enhanced environmental and social outcomes and improved economic performance*". The objectives of the programme are presented below (Table 6).

Table 6: UNWTO and UN Environment 10 Years Sustainable Tourism Programme - Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating SCP patterns in tourism related policies and frameworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating SCP principles and objectives for sustainable development</li> <li>• Monitoring policy implementation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration among stakeholders for the improvement of the tourism sector's SCP performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data sharing and exchange of information</li> <li>• Fostering stakeholder collaboration and joint action</li> <li>• Capacity building for stakeholders</li> <li>• Establishing monitoring frameworks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering the application of guidelines, instruments and technical solutions to prevent and mitigate tourism impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing integrated tools for use at destinations and in tourism enterprises</li> <li>• Research and action on priority issues of the tourism value chain</li> <li>• Influencing consumer choice and behaviour</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing sustainable tourism investment and financing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting use of sustainable tourism investment and financing tools</li> <li>• Enabling and mainstreaming sustainable tourism investment and finance</li> </ul>

Source : UNWTO and UN Environment, 2015<sup>20</sup>

20 <http://sdt.un-wto.org/sustainable-tourism-10yfp>; <http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/brochure10yfpstpenupdated17oct2016.pdf>

#### 3.1.4. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within this agenda, seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were defined. While all of them have an impact on the tourism sector<sup>21</sup>, some SDGs are explicitly related to tourism (Box 4).

21 <http://www.e-un-wto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284417254>

#### Box 4: SDGs related to tourism

**Goal 8.** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all:

- Target 8.9: By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products

**Goal 12.** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns:

- Target 12.b: Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products

**Goal 14.** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development:

- Target 14.7: By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

Source: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – SDGs, 2015

17 <http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/DTIx0592xPA-TourismPolicyEN.pdf>

### 3.2. EUROPEAN FRAMEWORKS

At the European level, the main legal and policy references are the documents developed by the European Commission (EC) and related European institutions.

#### 3.2.1. The European Commission

In 2010, the Ministers of Tourism of EU countries adopted a declaration “Towards a socially responsible tourism model” (Madrid Declaration, 15 April 2010)<sup>22</sup>. In this declaration, some sustainability-related suggestions are proposed, as follows:

- Mainstreaming tourism into Community policies and ensuring adequate coordination of the various policy initiatives which may impact tourism;
- Facilitating access to holidays to groups with impaired mobility or those who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged;
- Raising awareness about the importance of innovation, research and information and communication technologies for the competitiveness of the EU tourism industry;
- Mainstreaming sustainability into sectors related to tourism (transport, solid waste, water treatment, among others).

In 2014, the Communication on “European Strategy for more growth and jobs in coastal and maritime tourism”<sup>23</sup> was issued by the European Commission (Box 5). This document focused on the challenges to be addressed and proposed a strategy to enhance the sector’s sustainability and competitiveness.

<sup>22</sup> <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%209864%202010%20INIT>

<sup>23</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/policy-overview/index\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/policy-overview/index_en)

#### Box 5: European strategy in coastal and maritime tourism

- Addressing environmental pressures by:
  - promoting ecotourism, using the EMAS and Ecolabel indicators;
  - promoting implementation of the Protocol to the Barcelona Convention on Integrated Coastal Management and Maritime Spatial Planning and Green Infrastructure;
  - promoting strategies on waste prevention, management and marine litter to support sustainable coastal and maritime tourism.
- Promoting an innovative, sustainable and high-quality offer by:
  - supporting new products, promoting attractiveness and accessibility of coastal and marine archaeology, maritime heritage, underwater tourism, eno-gastronomic activities;
  - developing European Tourism Quality principles, aiming to increase consumer security and confidence in tourism services.
- Insularity and remoteness – seeing opportunities in geographical constraints by:
  - encouraging the diversification and integration of coastal and inland attractors, including through transnational thematic itineraries like cultural, religious or ancient trade routes.

Source: European Union, 2014

#### 3.2.2. The tourism sector in Europe

Published to coincide with the European Tourism Day in 2015, the “Tourism for Growth and Jobs Manifesto”<sup>24</sup> highlights the key policy priorities for the tourism sector, including industry, business and environmental associations, on topics ranging from skills and qualifications to sustainability and competitiveness of Europe’s tourism sector (Box 6).

#### 3.2.3. European initiative of Sustainable Tourism for Development

In 2013, the Development and Cooperation Agency of the European Commission published a paper co-written with the UNWTO on “Sustainable Tourism for Development”<sup>25</sup> aimed at enhancing the common understanding and commitment of the EU and development assistance agencies around the world in support of sustainable tourism. Five pillars and seventeen sub-pillars were defined covering key topics and issues to be promoted by sustainable tourism policies (Box 7).

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.tourismmanifesto.eu>

<sup>25</sup> Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook, UN-WTO & EuropeAid (2013)

#### Box 6: The Tourism for Growth and Jobs Manifesto

- Strategic planning for an environmentally sustainable tourism industry (including systems, technology and infrastructure) in order to contribute to climate protection and sustainable job creation;
- Ensure EU financial support for long and mid-term tourism initiatives on the European level covering the whole value chain;
- Identify and support good practice in capacity and destination management so (...) the quality of the visitors’ experience is safeguarded;
- Sustain employment in the tourism sector and promote fair working conditions for all employees, including key sub-sectors where recruitment and retention remain a challenge.

Source: *Tourism for Growth and Jobs Manifesto*, 2015

#### Box 7: UNWTO and EU pillars for Sustainable Tourism for Development

##### 1. Tourism policy and governance

- 1.1 The position of tourism in development policies and programmes
- 1.2 Tourism policy and regulatory framework
- 1.3 Tourism governance and institutional setup

##### 2. Economic performance, investment and competitiveness

- 2.1 Measuring tourism and its contribution to the economy
- 2.2 Trade, investment and the business environment
- 2.3 Brand, marketing and product positioning
- 2.4 Resilience and risk management

##### 3. Employment, decent work and human capital

- 3.1 Human Resources planning and working conditions
- 3.2 Skills assessment and the provision of training

##### 4. Poverty reduction and social inclusion

- 4.1 An integrated approach to poverty reduction through tourism
- 4.2 Strengthening pro-poor tourism initiatives
- 4.3 The inclusion of disadvantaged groups in the tourism sector
- 4.4 The prevention of negative social impacts

##### 5. Sustainability of the natural and cultural environment

- 5.1 Relating tourism to natural and cultural heritage
- 5.2 Focusing on climate change
- 5.3 Enhancing sustainability of tourism development and operations
- 5.4 Measuring and monitoring tourism impacts

Source: UNWTO and European Union, 2013

### 3.3. MEDITERRANEAN FRAMEWORKS

At the Mediterranean level, the main reference remains the decisions, protocols and strategies approved by the Contracting Parties of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention).

#### 3.3.1. The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD 2005-2015)

The initial version of the MSSD was adopted for the period 2005-2015. It addressed tourism sustainability issues as one of the seven priority fields of action and through four objectives and ten orientations (Table 7).

Table 7: MSSD 2005-2015 Objectives and Orientations related to Tourism

Objective	Tourism-related orientation
1. Contribute to economic development by enhancing Mediterranean assets	- Promote Sustainable tourism - Enhance value of Mediterranean assets and diversify tourism - Increase added value of tourist economy for local communities in developing countries
2. Reduce social disparities by implementing the Millennium Development Goals and strengthen cultural identities	- Develop tourism to help promoting social cohesion and cultural values
3. Change unsustainable production and consumption patterns and ensure the sustainable management of natural resources	- Reduce tourist pressures in environmental hot spots - Better temporal and spatial management of tourist flows
4. Improve governance at the local, national and regional levels	- Regional cooperation, ecotourism framework programme, labelling - Local governance - Economic tools. Tourism pay-back formulae - Carrying capacities

Source: MSSD 2005-2015

A more detailed analysis of the actions related to sustainable tourism can be found in Annex 1.

#### 3.3.2. The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025)

At their 19th Ordinary Meeting (COP19) held in February 2016, the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention adopted the revised MSSD for the period 2016-2025. Designed through a comprehensive and inclusive process involving key regional and national stakeholders, this Strategy does not identify a specific objective on tourism, but the tourism component features under various strategic directions (Table 8).

Table 8: MSSD 2016-2025 Strategic directions and Actions mentioning Tourism

Objective	Strategic direction
Objective 2: Promoting resource management, food production and food security through sustainable forms of rural development	2.1 Promote the sustainable use, management and conservation of natural resources and ecosystems
	2.4 Promote inclusive and sustainable rural development, with a specific focus on poverty eradication, women's empowerment and youth employment, including equitable and sustainable access to basic local services for rural communities
	2.5 Ensure access of local producers to distribution channels and markets, including the tourism market
Objective 3: Planning and managing sustainable Mediterranean cities	3.1 Apply holistic and integrated spatial planning processes and other related instruments, as well as improved compliance with respective rules and regulations, to increase economic, social and territorial cohesion and reduce pressures on the environment
	3.3 Promote the protection and rehabilitation of historic urban areas
Objective 4: Addressing climate change as a priority issue for the Mediterranean	4.4 Encourage institutional, policy and legal reforms for the effective mainstreaming of climate change responses into national and local development frameworks, particularly in the energy sector
Objective 5: Transition towards a green and blue economy	5.3 Promote sustainable consumption and production patterns

Source: UN Environment/MAP, MSSD 2016-2025, 2016

A more detailed analysis of the actions related to sustainable tourism can be found in Annex 2.

### 3.3.3. The Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production for the Mediterranean (SCP AP, 2016)

The SCP AP was approved at COP19, along with MSSD 2016-2025. The SCP AP is structured around four key economic sectors for the Region and tourism is one of them. For each sector, the SCP AP lists a set of operational objectives and actions. The following operational objectives are given for the tourism sector:

- **Objective 3.1:** Develop and promote practices and solutions to ensure efficient use of natural resources and reduce environmental impacts of tourism, respecting spatial, ecological, and socio-cultural carrying capacities of the destination;
- **Objective 3.2:** Promote regulatory, legislative and financial measures to mainstream SCP in the tourism consumption and production area, to reduce tourism seasonality creating green and decent jobs and to promote local community engagement and empowerment; and,
- **Objective 3.3:** Raise awareness, capacities and technical skills to support sustainable destinations and green tourism services, and promote the development of appropriate marketing and communication tools to ensure a competitive sustainable Mediterranean Tourism.

Finally, in the Annex "Roadmap for implementation", regional activities are listed for each priority area, where estimated costs, indicators, flagship initiatives, and key partners are also set out (see Annex 3).

### 3.3.4. The Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM Protocol, 2008)

ICZM is recognized as the way forward for the sustainable development of coastal zones and is characterized by a distinctive integrated approach to providing solutions to the complex environmental, social, economic and institutional problems of coastal areas. The ICZM Protocol was developed to provide a common legal framework for the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention to promote and implement ICZM in the Mediterranean. The Protocol entered into force in 2011, meaning that the Protocol is now binding and has become part of EU law. The ICZM Protocol provides specifications related to tourism activities, particularly in Articles 9 on "Economic Activities"<sup>26</sup> and 12 on "Islands"<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Tourism, sporting and recreational activities

<sup>27</sup> Take into account the specific characteristics of the island environment and the necessity to ensure interaction among islands in national coastal strategies, plans and programmes and management instruments, particularly in the fields of transport, tourism, fishing, waste and water.

### 3.3.5. The Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SAP BIO, 2003)

Faced with the complexity and size of the pressures on marine and coastal biological diversity, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention decided that they needed a concerted strategy to address them. The initial version of the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SAP BIO) was adopted by the Contracting Parties in 2003 to guide countries over the following fifteen years in planning and implementing biodiversity conservation activities, supported by the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC).

The general aim of SAP BIO embraces "promoting bio-conservation-friendly sector policies, procedures and techniques, in particular related to fisheries, tourism, agriculture and forestry". It seeks, among other things, the promotion of "sector-based policies (tourism, agriculture, etc.) that encourage biodiversity preservation". It identifies the interference of other human activities occurring in the coastal zone, mainly tourism, as a problem which affects the conservation of marine biodiversity in MPAs.

## 3.4. NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

### 3.4.1. National strategies for sustainable tourism

A growing number of Mediterranean countries are active in developing and promoting sustainable tourism strategies. A selection of national strategies are provided in Annex 4. This is a useful basis for promoting peer learning and sharing experiences directly between countries.

### 3.4.2. Relevant stakeholders

Tourism is a multi-faceted activity. A full range of stakeholders are involved along the whole value chain or are affected by it, directly and indirectly. A brief summary of main stakeholders in the Mediterranean tourism context and their role in promoting sustainable tourism can be found in Annex 5.



Marbella, Spain

# 4. BUILDING A VISION AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

This chapter proposes a Vision, Objectives, Strategic Directions and Actions to promote sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean, ensuring that they are consistent with the existing international and regional frameworks covered in the previous chapter.

## 4.1. A VISION FOR MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM

MSSD 2016-2025 is built around the following vision: “A prosperous and peaceful Mediterranean region in which people enjoy a high quality of life and where sustainable development takes place within the carrying capacity of healthy ecosystems. This is achieved through common objectives, strong involvement of all stakeholders, cooperation, solidarity, equity and participatory governance”.

The SCP Action Plan for the Mediterranean has its own vision, which is as follows: “By 2027 a prosperous Mediterranean region is established, with non-pollutant, circular, socially inclusive economies based on sustainable consumption and production patterns, preserving natural resources and energy, ensuring the well-being of societies and contributing to clean environment and healthy ecosystems that provide goods and services for present and future generations”.

In order to define a Vision for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean which is consistent with the visions above quoted, we can identify some key elements, as follows:

- The need to raise the awareness of all tourism-related players on the uniqueness and fragility of Mediterranean natural, human and cultural assets;
- The key role given to local communities, and the concern that the majority of tourism-based benefits must be addressed to them;
- The urgent need to recover the essential meaning of tourism, i.e. the discovery of different cultures and the journey as a way to meet such cultures and grow in openness of mind;
- The importance of an effective governance model, involving domestic and foreign stakeholders, based on participatory processes and accountability;
- The deep belief that competitive tourism in the Mediterranean has to focus on a high quality offer, and that this must be based primarily on environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Taking into consideration these elements and the overall vision expressed in MSSD 2016-2025, the vision for improving the sustainability of the tourism sector in the Mediterranean region within the next decade can be set out as follows:

*Promote sustainable Mediterranean tourism in which visitors and hosts enjoy balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships and value the unique Mediterranean environmental, human and cultural heritage, while ensuring inclusive socio-economic development and taking into account the carrying capacity of healthy natural ecosystems, and develop complementarity between various economic activities at the tourist destination level.*

## 4.2. OVERVIEW OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In line with the logical structure used for the MSSD 2016-2025, a set of long-term Objectives and Strategic Directions (SDs) are proposed to tackle the issues identified above.

### 4.2.1. Issues and Objectives

For each category of issues identified (Table 9), a related Objective is proposed in order to set out an ambitious but achievable long-term aim, with each one of the Objectives covering one aspect of sustainable tourism, as follows:

- 1. Environmental integrity:** Measure, reduce, and mitigate the environmental impacts of tourism activities and facilities, while reducing territorial imbalance between coastal areas and hinterlands;
- 2. Social progress:** Provide for social rights, decent work, equal opportunities, and basic resources for local communities;
- 3. Economic success:** Develop a resilient, competitive and innovative tourism industry, products and services, promoting a better balance between business sectors in tourist destinations and territories;
- 4. Cultural heritage:** Protect and value cultural heritage and assets through balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships;
- 5. Shared governance:** Ensure inclusive, effective and transparent policy design, implementation and monitoring.

Figure 7: Objectives for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean (infographic)



Table 9: Links between Issues and Objectives

Issue	Objective
1. <b>Environmental</b> damage to ecosystems and natural resources	1. Measure, reduce, and mitigate the <b>environmental</b> impacts of tourism activities and facilities, while reducing territorial imbalance between coastal areas and hinterlands
2. <b>Social</b> inequity, precarious jobs and basic rights not afforded	2. Provide for <b>social</b> rights, decent work, equal opportunities, and basic resources for local communities
3. Low <b>economic</b> benefits, lack of competitiveness and weak resilience capacity	3. Develop a resilient, <b>competitive</b> and innovative tourism industry, products and services, promoting a better balance between tourism and territories' economies at the destination level
4. Alteration of <b>cultural</b> heritage, traditional values and local identities	4. Protect and value <b>cultural</b> heritage and assets through balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships
5. Unreliable monitoring, weak <b>governance</b> and poor collaboration schemes	5. Shared <b>governance</b> : Ensure inclusive, effective and transparent policy design, implementation and monitoring

Source: Plan Bleu, 2016

#### 4.2.2. Links between SDGs, MSSD 2016-2025, SCP AP, ICZM Protocol and SAP BIO

A crosscutting analysis of the links between the Objectives for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean and relevant institutional frameworks such as the SDGs, MSSD 2016-2025, SCP AP, ICZM Protocol and SAP BIO is set out below in Table 10, showing the connection between regional and global policies to avoid potential gaps and make the most of synergies.

**Table 10: Links between the Objectives for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean and the SDGs, MSSD 2016-2025, SCP AP, ICZM Protocol, and SAP BIO**

Objective	SDG	MSSD 2016-2025 (Objective)	SCP AP (Objective)	ICZM Protocol (Article)	SAP BIO
1. Environmental integrity	6, 12, 13, 14, 15	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3.1	5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19	18a7, 18a8, 18a9, 18b1, 18b2, 18b3, 18b4, 30a1
2. Social progress / equality / inclusiveness	2, 4, 8, 10	2, 3, 5	3.2	9, 14, 15, 25	18a2, 18a4, 18a9, 18b5
3. Economic success / development prosperity	1, 8, 9, 17	3	3.3	9, 10, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25	18a1, 18a3, 18a4, 18a9, 18a10, 18b2, 18b5, 18b6, 30a1
4. Cultural heritage / assets	11, 16	3, 6	3.3	12, 13, 15, 25	18a5, 18a6, 18b6, 30a1, 30a4
5. Shared governance	16, 17	2, 3, 6	3.2	7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 25, 28	18a2, 18a10, 18b3, 18b4

Source: Plan Bleu, 2016



Greece

## 5. OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, AND ACTIONS

For each Objective, a set of Strategic Directions (SD) is proposed in order to move towards sustainable tourism. These Strategic Directions are also translated into concrete Actions and Activities (Table 11 and Annex 6).

**Objective 1 “Environmental integrity”: Measure, reduce and mitigate the environmental impacts of tourism, while reducing territorial imbalance between coastal areas and hinterlands**

If recreating the integrity of ecosystems can no longer be a realistic goal, as they have already been severely impacted (but not only by tourism), a clear commitment must be made to reduce environmental pressures, and protect and restore biodiversity hotspots. The negative environmental externalities of tourism activities and facilities should be analysed through comprehensive environmental impact assessments and balanced using innovative compensation schemes during development, planning and operational phases of tourism development. These actions should be undertaken in a systemic, consistent and transparent manner at local, national and regional level, through enforcement of existing regional protocols (Barcelona Convention, CBD, UNFCCC...).

In order to achieve Objective 1, the following Strategic Directions and Actions are proposed:

- **SD 1.1: Assess and monitor the environmental pressures and impacts from tourism activities on natural ecosystems and their carrying capacity.** Tourism projects, initiatives and activities should be systematically planned, assessed and monitored – ex-ante and ex-post – through internationally recognized tools and procedures for evaluating, reducing and compensating for negative environmental externalities on natural ecosystems.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 1.1.1: Identify, adapt and promote Environmental Assessment tools (such as EIA, SEA, carrying capacity) applicable to tourism initiatives.** Different tools could be offered according to the needs, size and complexity of the assessments to be undertaken. Such tools should be scientifically supported, easy to identify and use. The results of the analysis should be widely shared and available to all stakeholders through open online platforms. The publication of guides, handbooks, online tools will be supplemented with technical trainings for key stakeholders.

- **Action 1.1.2: Engage with donors and funders to integrate effective, transparent and systematic Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) during all phases of tourism projects, in particular planning, funding, construction, operation, and refurbishment.** Training and dissemination activities should raise awareness and support good use of the tools by targeted stakeholders. International, national and local donors and funders should publicly commit to integrating such tools in their evaluation processes and to sharing their analysis through online platforms so that relevant stakeholders can have access and comment on results. A charter with sustainable principles for Mediterranean investment tourism should be published.

- **SD 1.2: Support the mainstreaming of resource efficiency, cleaner technologies, environmental management and eco-labelling schemes for green tourism facilities, products and services.** Travel and tourism activities and facilities are heavy consumers of natural resources, in particular energy, water and food, in areas where scarcity and vulnerability are increasing due to climate change impacts and population increase. Greening of the whole tourism supply chain is therefore essential through the use of resource efficiency tools, best practices, cleaner technologies, better environmental management processes and greener certification schemes.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 1.2.1: Identify, adapt and promote Best Available Technologies and Best Environmental Practices, environmental management procedures and eco-labelling schemes applicable to Mediterranean tourism facilities and products.** Such tools could be based on EMAS, ISO or third-party standards (Green key, Blue flag, etc.) and focused on specific sub-sectors (such as cruises, resorts, restaurants, museums, etc.). They could be facilitated through online platforms and promoted by public-private consortiums at national and local levels. A review of existing labels and a publication of handbooks (both off- and on-line) should be considered.
- **Action 1.2.2: Promote policies and strategies to support (technically and financially) the implementation of resource efficiency, Best Available Technologies, Best Environmental Practices in travel and tourist facilities, as well as the supply of greener products and services.**

This action promotes low-carbon transport (electric or hybrid vehicles, car-sharing or pooling, public transport, etc.), energy efficiency and water reuse (resorts and hotels); organic and local food supply (hotels and restaurants), zero waste policies (events, hotels, restaurants), etc. Activities should be coordinated at regional and national level through a strategic plan for tourism sub-sectors (cruises, resorts, hotels, etc.). Thematic and sectoral guides should be published and disseminated both on- and off-line to industry stakeholders.

- **SD 1.3: Identify, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged coastal, marine and land-based ecosystems.** The Mediterranean environment has been severely damaged by decades of mass tourism, in particular in coastal areas. It is therefore essential to identify, protect, value and restore vulnerable or damaged ecosystems, accelerating the enforcement of existing international policy frameworks as well as making the most of cooperation schemes (SAP BIO, MEDPOL Programme, H2020 Med, etc.).

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 1.3.1: Support programmes and actions to identify, monitor, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged marine, coastal and land-based natural ecosystems,** in a transparent, inclusive and participatory manner. Such programmes could be based on successful environmental policies at European level: i.e. Natura 2000, Marine Protected Areas, Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI)... Periodic assessments of vulnerable areas should be undertaken and published. Guides, handbooks, online platforms should be developed to promote good practices and successful initiatives in environmental protection and restoration.
- **Action 1.3.2: Identify, adapt and promote innovative compensation schemes financed by industry and visitors (tourism pay-backs, eco-taxes, public private partnerships, etc.)** to balance environmental impacts and develop dedicated funds for restoring damaged or vulnerable ecosystems. Such compensation tools should be tailor-made according to the characteristics of local territories and should be financed and managed by national and local authorities, tourism industry players or donors and funders. Technical trainings, handbooks and toolboxes should be developed at regional and national level.
- **Action 1.3.3: Develop a “nature-based solutions approach” through knowledge-sharing activities and pilot projects.** Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) are actions which use the natural functions of healthy ecosystems to solve environmental issues while providing economic and social benefits<sup>28</sup>. For example, creating green spaces in cities can increase tourism revenues, offer recreational opportunities for citizens, and help lower temperatures and pollution levels in urban areas.

NBS can therefore play a significant role in alleviating pressure from human activities and restoring sensitive ecosystems. Solutions applicable to the Mediterranean context should be identified, developed and implemented through pilot projects, in particular in tourist cities and coastal areas.

- **SD 1.4: Balance territorial tourism development between coastal areas and hinterlands,** through activities to promote ‘environmentally friendly rural areas’. Despite providing critical services (ecosystems/natural areas, labour force, food, handicraft, etc.) to coastal tourism areas, hinterlands are often neglected in territorial and tourism development planning. They should also benefit from coastal tourism through activities to promote ‘environmentally friendly rural areas’, tax redistribution, and financial investment to improve rural tourism facilities and public infrastructure. This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:
  - **Action 1.4.1: Promote inclusive territorial planning through empowerment of local and national policymakers, capacity-building programmes and knowledge-sharing activities.** By integrating and connecting the socio-economic needs of hinterlands and coastal areas into territorial planning, the tourism sector will be reinforced and become more competitive and resilient by providing better services to visitors and local citizens.
  - **Action 1.4.2: Promote rural tourism activities and facilities through public investment, tax redistribution and communication campaigns.** Hinterlands usually suffer from lack of visibility, poor infrastructure and weak investment. A special effort should therefore be made by public bodies to attract private investments and guarantee the socio-economic development of rural areas and fair sharing of tourism benefits between hinterlands and coastal areas.

**Objective 2 “Social progress / equality / inclusiveness”: Provide for social rights, decent work, equal opportunities, and basic resources for local communities**

The Mediterranean is a dense region in which tourism is deploying its activities and facilities in territories inhabited by local communities. The latter could lose access to scarce resources, in particular land, water, energy and food, in favour of foreign businesses and international tourists with higher purchasing power and more efficient supply chains. Locals are also often excluded from tourist facilities and areas, and they can feel discriminated against over foreign visitors with higher education levels and broader life opportunities. Local communities should therefore be granted direct social and economic benefits from the use of their territories in order to ensure fair, shared and inclusive local development that provides for social rights, decent jobs, equal opportunities, and basic resources for all inhabitants.

In order to achieve Objective 2, the following Strategic directions and Actions are proposed.

- **SD 2.1: Promote and support the creation, ownership and development of local sustainable tourism businesses,** in particular for disadvantaged groups such as youth, women and minorities. Local communities, often not well integrated into international trade, should be supported in order to give them the opportunity to create, own or develop sustainable businesses that provide them with access to the economic benefits of tourism in a decent and inclusive manner.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 2.1.1: Promote technical, managerial and entrepreneurship training courses, professional hubs and networking activities on sustainable tourism products and services.** Local entrepreneurs need to be empowered and supported to be able to develop, produce and deliver greener, locally-made and socially-inclusive products and services, often more complex and expensive than regular low-quality and volume-based alternatives.
- **Action 2.1.2: Support the creation and dissemination of dedicated funding schemes to launch and develop local sustainable tourism businesses.** These funds should be financed by international donor agencies and multilateral funders, as well as the tourism industry itself and national/ local banking systems. They should be managed by a broad range of public-private stakeholders at national and local levels. Publication of funding guides and capacity building activities should be undertaken to promote and disseminate innovative practices.
- **SD 2.2: Develop an inclusive and responsible tourism sector that promotes decent jobs, provides for social rights and integrates disadvantaged groups, in particular women, youth and minorities.** This Strategic Direction contributes to reducing socio-economic inequalities. Tourism should contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequalities within and between countries. It should therefore provide decent salaries, stable jobs and basic social rights to tourism industry workers and the unemployed but also contribute to the dissemination of good practices in other sectors and territories.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 2.2.1: Support public-private partnerships, programmes and policies to enhance social benefits, provide a social security net and guarantee basic resources to tourism industry workers,** including access to basic incomes, housing, food, energy and water services. These social programmes, both voluntary (through Corporate Social Responsibility programmes) and mandatory (through legislation) should be financed by the tourism industry and public authorities, through tax collection, and should include local stakeholders for effective governance. Guidelines, technical trainings and tools should be developed at regional and national level.

- **Action 2.2.2: Identify, adapt or develop labels and certifications to distinguish local, inclusive and responsible tourism facilities, products and services.** These labels and certifications should identify and highlight the social benefits of the Mediterranean tourist products and services promoted and delivered by inclusive and responsible community-owned businesses. A review of existing labels should be undertaken in order to select the most suitable ones and evaluate the potential need to create a new one. Publication of sectoral guides and organization of capacity-building and dissemination activities could supplement this action.

- **SD 2.3: Facilitate access to education, skills development, learning programmes and training courses on sustainable tourism for tourism industry workers and local communities.** Too often local communities suffer human capital leakage due to the attraction of unqualified tourist jobs and local students might leave educational system without being fully prepared for competitive and changing labour market. They should be therefore offered for specific social and educational net that guarantee access to education, skills development and life-long learning programmes at all stages of working life.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following action:

- **Action 2.3.1: Design, support and implement lifelong learning programmes and vocational training centres with a view to a sustainable tourism industry.** These programmes should integrate new needs and skills for sustainable tourism workers into curriculum development. The action should also promote content harmonization and knowledge-sharing tools at regional and national level. These educational schemes should be financed by the tourism industry and managed by local training and labour agencies or public-private consortiums.

- **SD 2.4: Promote sub-regional, national and local tourism development, and encourage social tourism policies at the national and local level.** Sub-regional, national and local tourism is an opportunity for Mediterranean countries to decrease their dependency on international markets, seasonality and large operators, while improving the ecological footprint of tourism activities (particularly associated with transport). It will also contribute to improving its resilience to internal and external shocks as national and local citizens are more reactive and supportive of local assets. Specific investment and communication actions need to be pursued to initiate or expand the domestic tourism sector.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 2.4.1: Accelerate the development of tourism activities and services adapted to the domestic market,** through the development of local and national strategies, support to the adaptation of international services to national standards, launch of special packages targeting specific communities or customers, etc.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-ecosystem-management/our-work/nature-based-solutions>

- **Action 2.4.2: Support local control and management of the domestic tourism market.** This action should be supported by communication, dissemination and marketing of domestic tourism activities. Commercial fairs, travel guides, media or marketing campaigns should be set up to specifically attract national and local citizens. Destination agencies and tourism administration should also integrate this sub-sector into its own activities.

**Objective 3 “Economic success / development / prosperity”:**  
**Develop a resilient, competitive and innovative tourism industry, products and services, promoting a better balance between tourism and territories’ economies at the destination level**

Most of the tourism industry is still using old business models based on low margins, high volumes and poor quality services (i.e. “Sea, Sand and Sun” model). In a highly competitive and volatile world, those products are becoming less attractive against alternative offers in other regions of the world. Mediterranean tourism is also vulnerable to the political, security and social turbulence that occurs in this complex region. Finally, tourism industry is impacted by long-term trends such as climate change and dependency on large foreign market players. Mediterranean tourism therefore needs to become more diverse, innovative, individualized, and quality based. It should enhance its resilience capacity by upgrading facilities, develop alternative products (nature tourism, health tourism, eco-tourism, etc.) and attract new kinds of tourists and investors (nationals, locals, thematic...).

In order to achieve Objective 3, the following Strategic Directions and Actions are proposed.

- **SD 3.1: Facilitate innovation, diversification and resilience of tourism products and services.** As explained earlier, the current Mediterranean tourism model should be reinvented to offer new products that are more diverse, unique and authentic to the territories where they take place. These activities should promote alternative tourism products (such as eco-tourism, cultural and business tourism, rural tourism, off-season tourism, local tourism, etc.) that increase the socio-economic benefits and decrease environmental pressures while enhancing resilience to external and internal shocks.  
 This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:
  - **Action 3.1.1: Support capacity-building activities, strategies and policies for developing alternative forms of tourism,** in particular in the field of ecotourism, cultural and business tourism, rural tourism, off-season tourism, local tourism, etc. This action aims to disseminate sustainable tourism initiatives in professional fairs, specialized networks and mass media channels. This could be implemented through marketing campaigns, attendance at international or national fairs, publication of thematic booklets or dedicated promotional websites or apps.

It could be financed and managed by industry and tourism authorities. Multiple activities in rural communities (e.g. guest houses run by farmers, pesca-tourism) should also be encouraged as a tool to enhance quality of life, diversify activity (multiple activities: tourism together with agriculture, handicraft, fishing, etc.), and maintain populations in rural areas and agriculture in countryside. Tourism and territorial agencies should support the development of national and local tourism diversification strategies and policies as well as capacity-building programmes.

- **Action 3.1.2: Coordinate capacity-building activities, national policies and local strategies to adapt tourist and travel facilities and services to environmental and societal risks.** The tourism industry needs to improve its resilience capacity to resist external shocks due to environmental risks (climate change) and societal risks (security, water-energy-food access, etc.). Sustainable businesses need to be empowered and supported to be able to develop, produce and deliver greener, locally-made and socially-inclusive products and services. This should be undertaken through the development of stakeholder training programmes, adaptation policies and plans at local and national levels.
- **SD 3.2: Monitor, assess and attract investments in green, local and circular businesses within the tourism sector.** Investment funds usually screen various economic and geographical sectors before deciding where to invest. It is therefore important to monitor, assess and attract national and international investment to finance sustainable tourism development that can be highly capital consuming, in particular during the development phase (i.e. construction of travel and tourism facilities). Special attention should be given to innovative sustainable activities such as eco-tourism, rural tourism, etc. that often have difficulty engaging with funders. Circular, local and green businesses should also be promoted to the tourism industry.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 3.2.1: Promote consistent tools and models for evaluating and assessing the contribution of the tourism sector to national and local economies.** Monitoring of investments and expenses in tourism should be carefully tracked and analysed to understand the distribution of its added value in the whole supply chain, and in particular in the local economy. Such models should be consistent with international standards and be shared in an open and transparent manner to catalyse peer-to-peer learning between different territories. Use of big data models could help to refine macro-economic analysis and traditional survey tools.
- **Action 3.2.2: Promote financial schemes, incentives and loans for investing in alternative tourism products and services** such as ecotourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, off-season tourism, local tourism, etc. Particular emphasis should be given

to promoting local, green and circular economic activities in the tourism sector. One of the main barriers to developing alternative tourism initiatives is lack of funding due to higher risks and lower volumes of such investments. Authorities and financial institutions should therefore design financial programmes adapted to the needs and characteristics of such projects. Innovative crowd and peer-to-peer funding by diaspora, tourists or industry should also be explored. Funding guides, investment handbooks and financial trainings should be developed and offered at regional and national level.

- **Action 3.2.3: Promote financial schemes, incentives and loans for mainstreaming tourism economic benefits into local communities hosting the tourism destination activities, including from chartering and cruising ships.** Small local tourism businesses frequently undertake business enlargement loans linked to potential tourism holding offers, and fall into control loops dependent on those holdings, which overturns local tourist economy management, with potential consequences including low local benefits, carrying capacity challenges and increase of environmental impacts. Chartering and cruising are also frequently out of the hands of local players, who contribute significant resources for low revenue in exchange. Specific actions to mitigate such situations would benefit sustainable tourism in the long term.
- **SD 3.3: Enable the development of agriculture, handicraft and community business at the local scale (destination), promoting synergies between different economic sectors.** Community businesses can provide high-quality, low-carbon and locally-made agricultural products, handicrafts or industrial goods to tourism facilities and customers. Specific actions should be implemented to promote synergies between different economic sectors and support the development of competitive local goods and services suppliers (circular economy, short channels).

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 3.3.1: Support the development of locally-made goods and services adapted to the tourism market,** through the implementation of sectoral strategies (agriculture, handicraft, etc.). This action aims to encourage small businesses to integrate international standards and launch special packages targeting specific communities or customers. This development of small businesses should also improve the resilience of the local economy in case of collapse of the tourism sector.
- **Action 3.3.2: Promote communication, dissemination and marketing of locally-made goods and services.** Commercial fairs, guides, media or marketing campaigns should be set up to specifically target large tourist operators as well as domestic or international visitors.

**Objective 4 “Cultural heritage / assets”: Protect and value cultural heritage and assets through balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships**

One of the most sensitive intangible issues associated with tourism concerns the cultural integrity of hosting communities, both in immaterial and material terms. Although trade and cultural exchanges have historically shaped the renowned Mediterranean culture, accelerated globalization patterns and economic standardization are altering local values and endangering community legacies. Volume-based offerings (3S model, cruises, etc.) and short journeys have also increased the disconnection between visitors and local inhabitants. There is a need to reduce this “gap” in order to recover the real meaning of tourism, i.e. a journey to meet different cultures and exchange with them.

In order to achieve Objective 4, the following Strategic Directions and Actions are proposed.

- **SD 4.1: Identify, value and protect cultural assets, local identity, and traditional knowledge.** Cultural values, local identities and traditional knowledge are intangible common goods that create, structure and define communities. These assets are very vulnerable to the impacts of hyper-globalization, massive arrival of foreign visitors and industrial standardization of large service providers (tour operators...). Such fragile cultural ecosystems, on which the Mediterranean legacy depends, should be promoted, valued and protected at the same level as environmental or economic assets.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 4.1.1: Identify vulnerable cultural hot spots and incentivize their protection and certification.** This action should be based on the successful experience of UNESCO in identifying and protecting intangible cultural heritage all around the world. Technical and financial support for vulnerable hot spots should be provided at regional and national levels.
- **Action 4.1.2: Raise awareness and promote cultural Mediterranean heritage.** Dedicated communication campaigns (both on- and off-line) should be designed and launched to increase knowledge of the unique Mediterranean cultural legacy and promote its value as a factor for peace and development. Websites and apps on Mediterranean heritage should also be developed and disseminated at national and regional levels.
- **SD 4.2: Disseminate tools and procedures for assessing and monitoring the cultural impacts of tourism.** Positive and negative impacts of tourism activities on the culture, traditions and values of local communities should be identified and analysed in a systematic and continuous manner. Negative externalities should be mitigated by educative actions towards visitors and local communities while positive outcomes should be disseminated through appropriate communication channels.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 4.2.1: Raise awareness and train stakeholders in cultural impact assessment tools and procedures.** Effective cultural impact assessment tools applicable to the Mediterranean context should be identified and promoted to policy- and decision-makers as well as the tourism industry and other stakeholders. Guides, leaflets, toolboxes, online assessment and knowledge-sharing platforms should be promoted.
- **Action 4.2.2: Integrate cultural impact monitoring and indicators into national and local tourism observatories.** Tourism observatories should integrate hard and soft monitoring schemes and public indicators in order to understand and follow up the positive and negative impacts of tourism on the culture and identity of local communities. NGOs and local stakeholders have to be included in this participatory process.
- **SD 4.3: Raise awareness, educate and build capacity in responsible and sustainable behaviours,** targeting local authorities, tourism businesses, tourist site managers, tourists, etc. Promotion of SCP patterns is essential for educating tourists, tourism industry workers, managers and policy- and decision-makers. It will help to improve the social and environmental behaviour of individuals while supporting the transition towards sustainable lifestyles and better quality of life.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 4.3.1: Promote educational programmes on responsible and sustainable tourism.** Specific activities (trainings, campaigns, booklets...) should be developed for each target audience (students, tourists, families, children, businesses, authorities, travel agencies, etc.) to explain the obligations and rights of visitors and travellers as well as the (positive and negative) impacts of tourism. Such activities should also provide information on good practices and recommendations to the different audiences on how to reduce their environmental footprint during their stay (i.e. not only inform but also give tips for action).
- **Action 4.3.2: Encourage longer, diverse and distributed (temporally and geographically) stays, trips and journeys.** This action is aimed at disseminating sustainable tourism activities that share the social and economic benefits all year long and within more extensive territories. Targeted communication campaigns and dedicated travel guides (both on- and off-line) should be developed. Use of big data could also be a powerful tool for analysing the current situation and promoting efficient behavioural changes.

#### **Objective 5 “Shared governance”: Ensure inclusive, effective and transparent policy design, implementation and monitoring**

The lack of effective governance (at local, national and regional levels) in a multi-sectoral activity like tourism is a critical missing element for steering the tourism industry towards sustainability. Good governance models for the Mediterranean context must be based on inclusiveness principles<sup>29</sup> that ensure the transparency and the involvement of all relevant players. Collaborative partnerships, particularly public-private partnerships, but also multi-stakeholder platforms should be promoted to foster collaboration and dialogue between the public, private and social sectors. Decision-making mechanisms have to be transparent and policy design processes must integrate all related sectors (energy, water, food, transport, education, etc.). Finally, the quality and consistency of data collection on tourism flows and related impacts should be drastically enhanced and shared in an open way to facilitate knowledge sharing.

Sustainable tourism policies will not reap their intended objectives:

- if the roles and responsibilities of all actors are not clearly allocated, and actions across levels of government are not coordinated;
- if decisions taken on tourism are not coordinated with decisions taken in other sectors;
- if capacity gaps among authorities responsible for tourism are not covered;
- if policy-relevant data and information on tourism does not guide decision making;
- if regulations on tourism are not enforced;
- if integrity and transparency frameworks are not in place to ensure trust and accountability;
- if all stakeholders are not involved; and
- if tourism policies are not regularly assessed.

In order to achieve Objective 5, the following Strategic Directions and Actions are proposed.

- **SD 5.1: Strengthen monitoring, implementation of and compliance with Barcelona Convention protocols and other regional policy instruments and initiatives supplemented by national approaches.** The Barcelona Convention and its protocols are a critical policy framework for promoting more sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean region. However, it is often difficult, due to lack of information, to assess its level of implementation at local, national or regional level. Comprehensive data collection as well as transparent monitoring actions are therefore needed to ensure the enforcement of policy frameworks in an effective and collaborative manner.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 5.1.1: Reinforce implementation, monitoring and enforcement of local and national regulations related to MSSD 2016-2025, ICZM Protocol, SCP AP and SAP BIO.** The environmental impact of the tourism industry on natural ecosystems should be mitigated by the sound implementation and enforcement of existing regional, national and local regulations, guidelines and strategies aiming at reducing negative environmental externalities from tourism activities, in particular related to marine litter, water discharges, air contamination, food waste, etc. Public regulations, guidelines and strategies related to tourism, rural areas, cities and coastal management should be continuously assessed, at all levels (regional to local), to evaluate their efficiency, consistency and relevance in achieving the associated targets from ICZM, MSSD 2016-2025, SCP AP and SAP BIO. New policies should be developed and implemented to cover weak or missing regulations, in particular for emerging issues.
- **SD 5.2: Enhance transparent and inclusive dialogue and collaboration between local and national policymakers, the tourism industry, business community, and populations at all levels (local and national).** The tourism value chain involves a large number of players at international, national and local levels and from different sectors. Dialogue and collaboration between all stakeholders are therefore essential for equitably sharing valuable resources and fairly distributing socio-economic benefits, as well as for strategic planning at the destination level for a good balance between tourism and other economic sectors and activities. This should be undertaken in a transparent and effective manner through inclusive processes at local, national and regional levels.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 5.2.1: Extend the inclusive and Sustainable Destination Management Organization (SDMO) approach to local destinations.** DMO is a useful tool for institutionalizing sectoral public-private partnerships focusing mainly on economic development. Sustainable DMO (SDMO) includes environmental, social and cultural stakeholders and values, in addition to the traditional economic players and marketing actions. They should be financed and managed in a transparent, effective and inclusive manner. Guides, toolboxes, trainings and hubs are relevant activities to be developed at regional and national levels.

- **Action 5.2.2: Promote the creation of local and national multi-stakeholder observatories, dialogue and partnership schemes.** Such collaborative platforms can be informal (thematic or temporary) or institutionalized (permanent or with a legal form). A wide range of stakeholders should be invited to participate: NGOs, academia, businesses, local associations, etc. Guides, toolboxes, trainings and technical support should be offered at regional and national levels.

- **SD 5.3: Promote inter-sectoral planning, policy-making and monitoring of the whole tourism chain/cycle, with appropriate governance tools.** (e.g. information, awareness raising, participatory diagnosis, and observation systems). The tourism supply and value chain covers a wide range of public services: transport, energy, water, education, planning, environment, industry, finance, foreign affairs, etc. Collaboration and partnerships within and between public authorities, departments and ministries are essential for developing, approving and implementing ambitious, consistent and effective sustainable tourism policies.

This Strategic Direction can be implemented through the following actions:

- **Action 5.3.1: Promote cross-cutting and holistic planning through inter-ministerial committees and multi-sectoral platforms.** These committees could be organized on a permanent basis or through thematic task forces. They should be supported at the ministerial level by relevant departments: tourism, transport, foreign affairs, investment, trade, etc. Policy trainings and publication of guides and good practices should also be developed.
- **Action 5.3.2: Support the development and implementation of local and national strategies for sustainable tourism.** Ministries and departments concerned should be gathered to design and implement national strategies for sustainable tourism, in order to align all stakeholders and define common objectives, actions and indicators. These could be based on guides and methodologies published by regional or national stakeholders.

#### **Summary**

Table 11 below offers a summary of the Objectives, Strategic Directions and Actions.

For each Action defined a set of concrete Activities is proposed with the following information. A summary of proposed Activities is included in Annex 6 as a basis for discussion between stakeholders.

<sup>29</sup> Inclusive governance, through citizens' involvement, favours overall acceptance and makes implementation easier. <http://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/inclusive-governance.pdf>

Table 11: Objectives, Strategic Directions and Actions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean

Objective	Strategic Direction	No		
1. ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY: Measure, reduce and mitigate the environmental impacts of tourism, while reducing territorial imbalance between coastal areas and hinterlands	1.1. Assess and monitor the environmental pressures and impacts from tourism activities on natural ecosystems and their carrying capacity	1.1.1	Identify, adapt and promote Environmental Assessment tools (such as EIA, SEA, carrying capacity) applicable to tourism initiatives.	
		1.1.2	Engage with donors and funders to integrate effective, transparent and systematic Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)	
	1.2. Support the mainstreaming of resource efficiency, cleaner technologies, environmental management and eco-labelling schemes for green tourism facilities, products and services.	1.2.1	Identify, adapt and promote Best Available Technologies and Best Environmental Practices, environmental management procedures and eco-labelling schemes applicable to Mediterranean tourism facilities and products	
		1.2.2	Promote policies and strategies to support (technically and financially) the implementation of resource efficiency, Best Available Technologies, Best Environmental Practices in travel and tourist facilities, as well as the supply of greener products and services	
	1.3. Identify, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged coastal, marine and land-based ecosystems	1.3.1	Support programmes and actions to identify, monitor, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged marine, coastal and land-based natural ecosystems	
		1.3.2	Identify, adapt and promote innovative compensation schemes financed by industry and visitors (tourism pay-backs, eco-taxes, public private partnerships, etc.)	
		1.3.3	Develop a "nature-based solutions approach" through knowledge-sharing activities and pilot projects	
	1.4. Balance territorial tourism development between coastal areas and hinterlands	1.4.1	Promote inclusive territorial planning through empowerment of local and national policymakers, capacity-building programmes and knowledge-sharing activities	
		1.4.2	Promote rural tourism activities and facilities through public investment, tax redistribution and communication campaigns	
	2. SOCIAL PROGRESS / EQUALITY / INCLUSIVENESS: Provide for social rights, decent work, equal opportunities, and basic resources for local communities	2.1. Promote and support the creation, ownership and development of local sustainable tourism businesses	2.1.1	Promote technical, managerial and entrepreneurship training courses, professional hubs and networking activities on sustainable tourism products and services
			2.1.2	Support the creation and dissemination of dedicated funding schemes to launch and develop local sustainable tourism businesses
		2.2. Develop an inclusive and responsible tourism sector that promotes decent jobs, provides for social rights and integrates disadvantaged groups, in particular women, youth and minorities	2.2.1	Support public-private partnerships, programmes and policies to enhance social benefits, provide a social security net and guarantee basic resources to tourism industry workers
			2.2.2	Identify, adapt or develop labels and certifications to distinguish local, inclusive and responsible tourism facilities, products and services
2.3. Facilitate access to education, skills development, learning programmes and training courses on sustainable tourism for tourism industry workers and local communities		2.3.1	Design, support and implement life-long learning programmes and vocational training centres with a view to a sustainable tourism industry	

	2.4 Promote sub-regional, national and local tourism development, and encourage social tourism policies at the national and local level	2.4.1	Accelerate the development of tourism activities and services adapted to the domestic market
		2.4.2	Support local control and management of the domestic tourism market
3. ECONOMIC SUCCESS / DEVELOPMENT / PROSPERITY: Develop a resilient, competitive and innovative tourism industry, products and services, promoting a better balance between tourism and territories' economies at the destination level	3.1 Facilitate innovation, diversification and resilience of tourism products and services	3.1.1	Support capacity-building activities, strategies and policies for developing alternative forms of tourism
		3.1.2	Coordinate capacity-building activities, national policies and local strategies to adapt tourist and travel facilities and services to environmental and societal risks
	3.2 Monitor, assess and attract investments in green, local and circular businesses within the tourism sector	3.2.1	Promote consistent tools and models for evaluating and assessing the contribution of the tourism sector to national and local economies
		3.2.2	Promote financial schemes, incentives and loans for investing in alternative tourism products and services
		3.2.3	Promote financial schemes, incentives and loans for mainstreaming tourism economic benefits into local communities hosting the tourism destination activities, including from chartering and cruising ships
	3.3 Enable the development of agriculture, handicraft and community business at the local scale (destination), promoting synergies between different economic sectors	3.3.1	Support the development of locally-made goods and services adapted to the tourism market
3.3.2		Promote communication, dissemination and marketing of locally-made goods and services	
4. CULTURAL HERITAGE / ASSETS: Protect and value cultural heritage and assets through balanced, respectful and fruitful relationships	4.1 Identify, value and protect cultural heritage, local identity, and traditional knowledge	4.1.1	Identify vulnerable cultural hot spots and incentivize their protection and certification
		4.1.2	Raise awareness and promote cultural Mediterranean heritage
	4.2 Disseminate tools and procedures for assessing and monitoring the cultural impacts of tourism	4.2.1	Raise awareness and train stakeholders in cultural impact assessment tools and procedures
		4.2.2	Integrate cultural impact monitoring and indicators into national and local tourism observatories
	4.3 Raise awareness, educate and build capacity in responsible and sustainable behaviours	4.3.1	Promote educational programmes on responsible and sustainable tourism
4.3.2		Encourage longer, diverse and distributed (temporally and geographically) stays, trips and journeys	
5. SHARED GOVERNANCE: Ensure inclusive, effective and transparent policy design, implementation and monitoring	5.1 Strengthen monitoring, implementation of and compliance with Barcelona Convention protocols and other regional policy instruments and initiatives supplemented by national approaches	5.1.1	Reinforce implementation, monitoring and enforcement of local and national regulations related to MSSD 2016-2025, ICZM Protocol, SCP AP and SAP BIO
		5.2 Enhance transparent and inclusive dialogue and collaboration between local and national policymakers, the tourism industry, business community, and populations at all levels (local and national)	5.2.1
	5.2.2		Promote the creation of local and national multi-stakeholder observatories, dialogue and partnership schemes
	5.3 Promote inter-sectoral planning, policy-making and monitoring of the whole tourism chain/cycle, with appropriate governance tools	5.3.1	Promote cross-cutting and holistic planning through inter-ministerial committees and multi-sectoral platforms
		5.3.2	Support the development and implementation of local and national strategies for sustainable tourism

Source : Plan Bleu

## 6. IMPLEMENTING, FINANCING AND MONITORING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

This final chapter explores potential mechanisms for supporting the implementation, financing and monitoring of the actions recommended by the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean.

### 6.1. INSTITUTIONS, PLAYERS AND PROCESSES

This sub-chapter summarises the current institutions, organisations, players and processes associated with the development and implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean. It also proposes specific roles and activities for key regional stakeholders involved in related regional strategies such as the MSSD 2016-2025 and the Barcelona Convention in general.

#### 6.1.1. Review of regional stakeholders

Like the MSSD 2016-2025, implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean should be a collective process. Although facilitated by the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) system, it is the participation and active role of all stakeholders that will play a decisive role in its delivery.

- **MAP system:** The MAP system, which includes the UN Environment/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat and its components and regional activity centres (RACs), as well as the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), should provide leadership and technical guidance to the Parties and relevant stakeholders, as well as coordinating implementation actions and monitoring processes, facilitating best practice and best available experience sharing.
- **MCSD:** The Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development is a key organisation within the MAP system for supporting the development and implementation of the strategic directions for sustainable development in the Mediterranean. As a central point of reference which brings together representatives of the Parties and stakeholders involved with sustainable development, the MCSD should work closely, supported by the UN Environment/MAP

Secretariat and Plan Bleu, with relevant organizations for the effective implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean. In 1999, the MCSD formulated recommendations towards sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean<sup>30</sup>: these recommendations and proposals for action were the result of the works undertaken since 1997 by the MCSD on the tourism theme.

- **Mediterranean countries:** Mediterranean countries are invited to use the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean as a starting point for better integration of sustainable development into their national tourism policies. These strategic directions provide them with tools to build horizontal synergies between different sectors and vertical synergies between different levels of administration, from local to central and vice-versa. This will allow for better coordination and integration of tourism policies around the objective of sustainability.
- **Intergovernmental and regional and sub-regional institutions:** These institutions will create an important critical mass of significant national and regional players working towards sustainable and inclusive tourism development. They will also make possible more efficient use of the limited human and financial resources through joint activities. For these partners, the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean represent a coherent and integrated framework with guidelines and actions for achieving sustainable tourism development in the region.
- **Private sector:** The private sector, as a key player in the emerging green economy, is a strong ally in the process of financing and implementing the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean. This can be done not only through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), but also through innovative circular, social and green business models within the whole tourism value chain.

<sup>30</sup> UN Environment/MAP (1999). Tourism and sustainable development: Recommendations and Proposals for Action formulated by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and adopted by the Eleventh Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Malta, 27-30 October 1999). Athens, Sophia-Antipolis

The private sector can also contribute to the economic and financial sustainability of its own operations by reducing costs and improving margins.

- **Science:** Science is essential. All action and policy development at the national or regional level must rely on strong evidence. The analytical tools for forecasting, planning and assessment of sustainable development-related impacts and actions need to be developed with the scientific community, which itself needs to direct its research capacity to support decision making.
- **Civil society:** Besides being a catalyst for supporting and monitoring the implementation process at the regional and national level, civil society – including organizations accredited as official MAP partners – can take on important tasks associated with awareness-raising, and act as a third pillar of governance, along with decision-makers and judicial entities, to ensure transparency and secure the participation of all citizens.
- **Funding bodies:** Funders are also necessary partners for financing the implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean. For them, these strategic directions contain a set of widely-agreed regional objectives, which will help such bodies to position and assess funding proposals aimed at advancing sustainable tourism development in the region.

The following sub-chapter details the potential role of strategic stakeholders for implementation of Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean

#### 6.1.2. Role of key stakeholders

As explained earlier, the Mediterranean region hosts a wide and diverse number of institutions, at national, regional and global levels, with relevant experience and capacity for contributing positively to the implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean. The following institutions have been identified as potential leaders or coordinators for specific Objectives, Strategic Directions or Actions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean.

- **UN Environment/MAP and its Regional Activity Centres (RACs)**
  - **UN Environment/MAP Coordinating Unit (CU) acting as Secretariat of the Barcelona Convention:** UN Environment/MAP has a critical role in coordinating all activities related to the development, implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and Strategies. In permanent interaction with the Contracting Parties, it has a central position which will ensure ownership and implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, in particular by guiding the RACs and offering technical support to the MCSD. Moreover, as a relevant environmental IGO, it is well connected with UN and intergovernmental bodies to ensure consistency with other international engagements.

- **Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre (Plan Bleu/RAC):** Plan Bleu works as an observation, analysis and prospective centre for environmental and development issues in the Mediterranean. It was heavily involved in the MSSD Review process, and Plan Bleu is now responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the Strategy implementation. Plan Bleu could coordinate several strategic directions and actions for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean, in particular the one related to data collection and analysis, governance and labels. Under the guidance of the MCSD and UN Environment/MAP Coordinating Unit, Plan Bleu could be responsible for the general design and coordination of a possible Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Tourism, including stakeholder consultation processes, implementation and follow-up. It could also directly lead the follow-up of the implementation of actions and activities linked with social (Objective 2) and governance (Objective 5) issues.
- **Sustainable Consumption and Production Regional Activity Centre (SCP/RAC):** SCP/RAC promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns in the Mediterranean region. It led the preparation process of the SCP AP and is actively involved in the SwitchMed<sup>31</sup> initiative, supporting green entrepreneurship, Civil Society Organization (CSO) initiatives, pilot projects with SMEs and SCP policies in southern Mediterranean countries in the tourism sector, among other fields. SCP/RAC could lead the actions (capacity building, handbooks, policies, etc.) aimed at greening tourism industry and developing eco-innovative services, products and businesses, with a particular focus on identifying and scaling up successful local initiatives on a regional scale. It could supervise the actions associated with economic competitiveness and innovation (Objective 3).
- **Priority Action Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC):** PAP/RAC addresses the coastal zones and their resources in the Mediterranean. Its principal activity is to support countries in implementing the ICZM Protocol and the related Regional Action Plan through strategic and site-based planning, boosting governance, decision-support tools, training, capacity-building and awareness raising activities. PAP/RAC could therefore be responsible for the actions associated with environmental integrity (Objective 1), in particular environmental assessments of coastal tourism, including capacity-building activities, handbook development, policy support, etc. In addition, given the systemic and cross-cutting approach developed by the ICZM Protocol, the PAP/RAC is also concerned with Objectives 3 (Economy) and 5 (Governance).

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.switchmed.eu>

- **Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (SPA/RAC):** SPA/RAC assists Mediterranean countries in fulfilling their engagements through the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, by implementing the SAP BIO. It has solid expertise in scientific research and policy development on threatened and endangered species as well as on fragile marine and coastal areas. It could therefore play a key role in implementing actions and activities related to the identification, restoration and protection of natural ecosystems in the Mediterranean coast and marine environment (Objective 1).
- **MED POL:** The MED POL Programme is the marine pollution assessment and control component of UN Environment/MAP. It is responsible for the follow-up work associated with the implementation of the Protocols for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-Based Sources and Activities and Dumping of Hazardous Waste. MED POL can assist Mediterranean countries in the development and implementation of pollution control and monitoring programmes to reduce waste from coastal tourism, with a particular focus on marine littering.
- **Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC):** REMPEC aims to facilitate cooperation among Mediterranean countries in order to combat marine oil pollution, particularly by developing national capacities and establishing a regional information system. With this background, REMPEC could contribute to Strategic Directions, Activities and Actions focused on the cruise sector, in particular to reduce marine and air pollution caused by vessels at sea.
- **Other UN institutions**
  - **UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO):** UNWTO is the United Nations agency responsible for the promotion of tourism. UNWTO could support the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism as a tool towards a more responsible and sustainable tourism industry. It could also lead the activities linked with improvement of public policies, awareness raising and planning processes through capacity building and publication of guides at a regional level.
  - **World Heritage Center (WTC) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):** WTC seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world. It has the methodology, experience and political strength to identify vulnerable Mediterranean sites and support their legal protection and if necessary restoration through technical and financial support. It could be involved in the Strategic Directions associated with the cultural impacts of tourism (Objective 4).
  - **UN Development Program (UNDP):** UNDP is the UN body responsible for global development and SDG implementation. It mainly works in developing and post-crisis countries, and has the technical capability and field experience to assess and catalyse the contribution of tourism activities to the sustainable development of local communities. It could be involved in the Strategic Directions linked with social impacts of tourism (Objective 2).
- **International organizations**
  - **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):** OECD promotes policies to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world. In the framework of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, the OECD could support the activities linked with public policies, regulations, taxes, investment schemes and planning processes through peer-learning activities, publication of policy guidance and policy assessment at regional and national levels.
- **Regional organizations**
  - **European Commission (EC):** Nine Mediterranean countries are currently members of the European Union. Through its DG GROW (market and industry), the EC could share its policy experience and good practices from member states. Through its DG NEAR (cooperation), it could finance specific actions and activities with a direct impact on SEMCs. In addition, the Specific Objective 3.1 “To enhance the development of a sustainable and responsible coastal and maritime tourism in the MED area” of the Interreg Med Programme 2014-2020 co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund is also of interest regarding community-building activities, as well as communication and capitalisation<sup>32</sup>.
  - **Union for the Mediterranean (UfM):** UfM is a regional organization made up of Mediterranean countries and European member states. It works on regional projects in the field of education, research, business, environment, energy and transport. Although it does not explicitly cover the tourism sector, it could be relevant for engaging with national authorities to ensure the political commitment of member states.

32 <http://interreg-med.eu/thematics/sustainable-tourism/>

**Table 12: Key stakeholders for coordinating the implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean**

Key stakeholders	Role
MCSD	Political coordination
UN Environment/MAP Secretariat and RACs	Technical coordination
European Commission	Political and Financial support
UfM	Political support
OECD	Policy expertise
UNDP	Development expertise
UNESCO	Cultural expertise
UNWTO	Tourism expertise

Source : Plan Bleu

### 6.1.3. Other relevant stakeholders

Beyond the potential leaders or coordinators mentioned above, the Mediterranean region hosts several other institutions and organizations, at national, regional and global level with the experience and capacity to make positive contributions to implementation of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean. The following institutions have been identified as potential partners for specific objectives, directions or actions.

#### • International organizations

- **African Union:** Five Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia) are members of the African Union. Tourism issues are coordinated within the Infrastructure and Energy commission and politically promoted by the Ministerial Working Group on the long-term Tourism Development Strategy in Africa<sup>33</sup>. Under the recently approved Agenda 2063, Goal 1.5.5.2 refers specifically to tourism: “Increase the contribution of tourism to GDP by at least five times”, although no mention is made of sustainable tourism. The African Union could support sub-regional activities.
- **Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC):** Three Mediterranean countries (Albania, Greece and Turkey) are members of the BSEC. Tourism is one of the areas for cooperation with the aim of promoting the BSEC Region as “one of the leading tourism destinations of the world”. Goal 8 of the BSEC Economic Agenda refers to “Development of Tourism and Protection of Cultural Heritage”. It also aims at “Ensuring sustainable tourism development by adopting green growth strategies that will enable economic expansion while preserving natural and cultural heritage”. The BSEC could support sub-regional activities.

33 <https://au.int/web/en/newsevents/29732/meeting-ministerial-working-group-long-term-tourism-development-strategy-africa>

#### • Financial institutions

- **European Investment Bank (EIB):** EIB is the European Union’s long-term lending institution. The EIB uses its financing operations to promote European integration and social cohesion. It could provide small to medium loans to support regional and national activities linked with the development of sustainable tourism and travel products and services.
- **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD):** ERDB is a major international financial institution working as a multilateral developmental investment bank for market economies. It could provide medium to large loans to support the greening of tourism and travel facilities at regional and national level.

#### • Regional NGOs (MAP partners)

- **Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Sustainable Development and Culture (MIO-ECSDE):** MIO-ECSDE is a Mediterranean federation of environmental NGOs. With more than 100 members, it covers southern and northern countries. It has been involved in the H2020 Med initiative to depollute the Mediterranean Sea, leading the capacity-building activities. MIO-ECSDE could coordinate interactions with national NGOs from both the northern and southern sides of the Mediterranean.
- **IUCN-Med:** IUCN-Med is the cooperation office for the Mediterranean region of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Its members are states, local and regional authorities, and NGOs. It works particularly on invasive species, environmental governance and civil society support. IUCN-Med could provide technical support on nature-related actions with tourism, based on its previous work and projects.
- **WWF-Med:** This international NGO is present in several northern and southern countries as national delegations. It also has a Mediterranean regional office that cover transnational issues. It recently published the Med-trends<sup>34</sup> report that analyses pressures on the marine ecosystem due to industry and human activities, including tourism and cruises. WWF-Med could provide technical support for dissemination activities.

### 6.1.4. Links with institutional processes and frameworks

The development of a future Regional Strategic Framework for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean (strategy) should be consistent with regional policies already approved within the MAP system. It should integrate the outcomes of the last Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention (COP19) held in Athens, Greece, in February 2016, and in particular the MSSD 2016-2025 and SCP AP.

34 <http://www.medtrends.org/>

The development of a possible Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Tourism should follow a similar institutional and inclusive process to the MSSD Review<sup>35</sup>, with an official mandate from the Parties. The content of this future strategy should be submitted for feedback, comment, and possible input to government representatives and key stakeholders as part of a broad consultation exercise. An intermediary proposal should be discussed and validated by the MCSD. Finally, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Tourism will have to be submitted for approval by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

## 6.2. FINANCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

While the cost of developing the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean is fairly reasonable, the investment to implement these directions is significantly higher, as is the case for the MSSD 2016-2025. It is therefore essential to attract private and alternative investment to fund specific actions and activities.

The available data<sup>36</sup> shows a steady decrease in international private investment – due to the increasing insecurity of the region, partially covered by public aid, which is concentrated on the traditional component of the tourism offer, i.e. facilities development (mainly accommodation).

A short list of existing sources of funds for tourism-related initiatives is set out below:

- Multilateral public aid: World Bank, UNDP, GEF, etc.
- Foreign public bilateral aid: USAID, GIZ, AFD, etc.
- International thematic cooperation funds: UNWTO 10YFP Sustainable Tourism, EC COSME, etc.
- Regional Cooperation funds: ENI CBC Med, Horizon2020, etc.
- National investment funds: e.g. Investment Authority, Sovereign Wealth Fund, etc.
- National thematic investment programmes: e.g. “Renovotel” scheme (Morocco), “Tourism Enhancement Act” (Turkey), etc.
- Local funds: mainly from local authorities and/or tourism-related associations of economic operators.

In a context of severe economic constraints and regional political instabilities, traditional funding from states or institutional players is becoming more unreliable and limited. Innovative mechanisms therefore need to be promoted, such as:

- **Public-Private Partnership (PPP):** PPP is defined as a long-term contract between a private party and a government entity, for providing a public asset or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility, and remuneration is linked to performance<sup>37</sup>.
- **Market-driven schemes:** The resources for funding the sustainability performance of a service/product/destination can come from the market, through the payment (on a voluntary basis or included in the retail price) of an additional amount devoted to conservation/restoration/mitigation measures.
- **Crowdfunding:** Crowdfunding is the use of individual financial resources to fund private initiatives, through small grants, donation or equity. It can be started up in different ways (bottom-up or top-down) using online dedicated platforms that connect a community sharing common principles (cultural, geographic, etc.). The results of a survey recently developed by SCP/RAC about crowdfunding in the Middle East and Northern Africa region should be useful<sup>38</sup>.
- **Volunteering:** Many young people (but also older retired people) are prepared to offer work free of charge for public-interest activities (e.g. environmental restoration, beach cleaning, etc.). Several public administrations (e.g. Park management bodies) are already benefiting from this motivated and free resource.
- **Diaspora:** Diaspora communities are well developed across the Mediterranean region. They often have high technical or financial capability as well as the willingness to collaborate on the restoration and development of their places of origin. Their contribution could be channelled through crowdfunding platforms or directly by connecting funders and field initiatives

## 6.3. MONITORING SYSTEM AND INDICATORS.

A comprehensive monitoring system with relevant indicators is essential for tracking the implementation and impact of the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, as described below.

### 6.3.1. Monitoring structure

The monitoring scheme should be consistent, adaptable and multi-level in order to provide a true image of tourism in a volatile and complex environment.

<sup>37</sup> <http://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/about-pppircties>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.switchmed.eu/en/e-library/synthesis-of-the-survey-on-crowdfunding-in-the-mena-region>

In particular, the following two complementary perspectives must be adequately covered:

- **Implementation:** To track the development of the actions recommended in the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean, the level of implementation and gaps associated with the objectives (for example, the number of countries complying with an action);
- **Tourism trends:** To follow the progress of tourism sustainability through a dashboard in relation to the objectives (for example, reduction in water consumption or greenhouse gas emissions).

At the same time, each horizontal perspective should be broken down for a specific geographical scale:

- **Local level:** To monitor the impact on local communities, neighbourhoods, cities and sub-regions. Local stakeholders and participatory processes have to be strongly promoted to identify relevant indicators that might vary depending on the social, environmental, cultural or economic situation of the place.
- **National level:** To follow up the situation at the country level. Special emphasis should be given to connecting local and regional schemes from other economic sectors and countries for a comprehensive, real-time and consistent picture of the reality.
- **Regional level:** To track the progress at Mediterranean level. In particular, this should be integrated with other schemes from relevant international institutions as described in the next sub-chapter.

### 6.3.2. Links with other schemes

The monitoring system and associated dashboards related to the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean have to be consistent with other relevant monitoring schemes from the sustainable tourism sector and more broadly from regional or global sustainable development frameworks.

At Mediterranean level, it should specifically build on the outcomes of the MSSD 2005-2015 that proposed tracking progress with sustainable tourism through a Mediterranean Observatory for Tourism and quality label<sup>39</sup>. More recently, in the framework of the MSSD 2016-2025 and SCP AP, Plan Bleu and SCP/RAC are in the process of identifying and validating thematic indicators that will also be useful for the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean.

At global level, the UNWTO published some of the first guidelines<sup>40</sup> on sustainable tourism indicators back in 2004. The tourism sector, through the GSTC, is also providing recognized criteria<sup>41</sup> for destinations and industry that have led to the various certifications and labels widely used at international level. SDG indicators should also be taken into account. Finally, UN Environment/10YFP on sustainable tourism proposes criteria that should be examined.

At European level, the European Commission published the ‘European Tourism Indicators System’ (ETIS)<sup>42</sup> in 2013, a Europe-wide system suitable for tourist destinations, encouraging them to adopt a more intelligent approach to tourism planning, in particular through management, monitoring and information. The EEA<sup>43</sup> is also currently working on designing a dashboard to track tourism impacts, mainly from an environmental point of view, in Europe and neighbouring countries.

### 6.3.3. Indicator selection and follow-up

The selection of the sustainability indicators and the development of a dashboard associated with the Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean should be the result of a collaborative process in which the MCSD can play an advisory role, while Plan Bleu will perform the role of technical secretariat. Detailed reports on the implementation progress need to be published regularly, at least every two years. An online platform could be built to centralize and share all relevant data and outcomes to engage with stakeholders in a transparent, reliable and interactive manner.

<sup>35</sup> The MSSD Review process was led by the MCSD with the technical assistance of UN Environment/MAP Coordinating Unit through its Plan Bleu and the support of the other MAP components. The MSSD 2016-2025 was developed through a highly inclusive process, in which all Member States and regional key stakeholders had the opportunity to participate. See: <http://planbleu.org/en/node/1141>

<sup>36</sup> Study on financing sustainable tourism in Developing countries – Annex 3, AFD & Horwath HTL (2013)

<sup>40</sup> Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations A Guidebook, UN-WTO (2004)

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.gstcouncil.org/en/gstc-certification/gstc-criteria/sustainable-tourism-gstc-criteria.html>

<sup>42</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/index_en.htm)

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2015/europe/tourism>

<sup>39</sup> Towards an observatory and a “quality label” for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu (2012)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Publications

- UN Environment/MAP (2016). *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025*
- UN Environment/MAP (2016). *Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Mediterranean*
- UN Environment/DTIE (2009). *Sustainable coastal tourism: An integrated planning and management approach*
- UN Environment/MAP-SPA/RAC (2003). *Impact of tourism on Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity*. By J.D.KRAKIMEL. SPA/RAC, Tunis
- UN Environment/MAP-SPA/RAC (2003). *Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SAP BIO)* SPA/RAC, Tunis
- UN Environment/MAP (2001). *Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean*
- UN Environment/MAP (1999). *Tourism and sustainable development: Recommendations and Proposals for Action formulated by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and adopted by the Eleventh Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Malta, 27-30 October 1999)*. Athens, Sophia-Antipolis
- Plan Bleu (2012). *Towards an observatory and a "quality label" for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean*
- Plan Bleu (2011). *Cruises and Recreational Boating in the Mediterranean*
- Plan Bleu (2010). *Management of energy, air transport and tourism in the Mediterranean*
- UNESCO (2006). *Tourism, Culture and Sustainable Development*
- UNWTO (2016). *Tourism Trends Snapshot: Tourism in the Mediterranean, 2015 edition*
- UNWTO and EuropeAid (2013). *Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook*
- UNWTO and UN Environment (2005). *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers*
- WTTC (2015). *Economic impact of Travel and Tourism in the Mediterranean*
- WWF-France (2015). *Blue Growth in the Mediterranean Sea: the Challenge of Good Environmental Status*

### Web resources

- UN Environment/MAP: [www.unepmap.org](http://www.unepmap.org)
- Plan Bleu : [www.planbleu.org/en/activites/tourisme](http://www.planbleu.org/en/activites/tourisme)
- PAP/RAC: [www.pap-theoastcentre.org](http://www.pap-theoastcentre.org)
- SPA/RAC: [www.rac-spa.org](http://www.rac-spa.org)
- SCP/RAC: [www.scprac.org](http://www.scprac.org)
- SDGs: [www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org)
- UNDP: [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)
- UNESCO: [www.whc.unesco.org](http://www.whc.unesco.org)
- UNWTO: <http://www2.unwto.org/en>
- OECD: [www.oecd.org/cfe/tourism](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/tourism)
- EC: [www.ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism](http://www.ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism)
- UfM: [www.ufmsecretariat.org](http://www.ufmsecretariat.org)
- WWF Medtrends: [www.medtrends.org](http://www.medtrends.org)
- SwitchMed: <http://www.switchmed.eu/en/news/news-1/le-guide-sur-les-labels-ecologiques-pour-le-tourisme-durable-est-enfin-disponible>
- MEET: [www.medecotourism.org](http://www.medecotourism.org)
- EuroMed heritage: [www.euromedheritage.net](http://www.euromedheritage.net)
- S&T Med: [www.stmedproject.eu](http://www.stmedproject.eu)

## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: MSSD 2005-2015: Orientations and Actions related to Tourism

Orientation	Action
Reduce the adverse territorial and environmental effects of tourism	1. Strengthen the implementation of the recommendations on tourism adopted in 1999 by the Contracting Parties, identify good practices and produce an in-depth assessment of the progress made by 2008
	2. Promote within countries, on the basis of studies of carrying capacities, a more balanced distribution of tourists in terms of destinations and seasons.
Promote the supply of sustainable tourist facilities and increase the added value of tourism for local communities	3. Draw up a 10-year promotional framework programme for the Mediterranean together with the Ministries concerned, the private sector, sustainable tourism professionals and promoters, highlighting the assets of the Mediterranean cultural and environmental heritage, with a view to developing a "Mediterranean tourism quality label". Promote a pilot action at the regional level to support the implementation of national and sub-national programmes.
	4. Develop "tourism pay-back" formulae so that tourists contribute to the preservation of the natural environment, cultural heritage and the sustainable development of destinations.
	5. Explore the possibility of implementing taxation systems based on transport, especially sea and air transport to islands, as a means of contributing to the sustainable development of these regions.
	6. Adapt tourism more effectively to the constraints and opportunities offered by protected natural areas, especially with a view to preserving biodiversity and the natural and cultural heritage in regional parks, biosphere reserves and protected coastal areas.
	7. Encourage countries to promote rehabilitation programmes in destinations where hotel facilities and tourism infrastructure are becoming obsolete, and where historical sites are poorly maintained.
Improve governance for sustainable tourism	8. Improve coordination between countries and major operators to improve the harmonization of regulations and develop synergies at the regional level.
	9. Improve cooperation mechanisms between tourism and environmental authorities and strengthen the capacities of local authorities to manage the development of tourism and promote sustainable tourism.

Source: UN Environment/MAP, MSSD 2005-2015

## Annex 2: MSSD 2016-2025 Strategic directions and Actions related to Tourism

Objective	Strategic Direction	Action
Objective 2: Promoting resource management, food production and food security through sustainable forms of rural development	2.1 Promote the sustainable use, management and conservation of natural resources and ecosystems	2.1.6 Develop socio-economic models for national strategic choices for water allocation between agriculture, industry, tourism and domestic uses
	2.4 Promote inclusive and sustainable rural development, with a specific focus on poverty eradication, women's empowerment and youth employment	2.4.3 Prepare action plans to support the development of rural tourism that will alleviate overcrowding in coastal cities and resorts, stimulate the utilization of locally produced products and generate local employment opportunities
	2.5 Ensure access of local producers to distribution channels and markets, including the tourism market	2.5.1 Undertake actions to improve access of small-scale producers to markets, including tourism markets, through the use of innovative products and processes, cooperation schemes, market instruments, marketing plans and labelling schemes; 2.5.2 Undertake initiatives to raise awareness on environmental, economic and social benefits of consuming local products, including in the tourism
Objective 3: Planning and managing sustainable Mediterranean cities	3.1 Apply holistic and integrated spatial planning processes and other related instruments, as well as improved compliance with respective rules and regulations, to increase economic, social and territorial cohesion and reduce pressures on the environment	3.1.2 Ensure that legally-binding instruments for tourism development are put in place for those areas that suffer from tourism pressures
	3.3 Promote the protection and rehabilitation of historic urban areas	3.3.3 Create opportunities to strengthen local distinctive character both in planning and in project development in order to enhance local attractiveness, as a tool for economic development and enhancing competitive advantage 3.3.5 Develop or strengthen existing networks of historic cities in the Mediterranean, involving economic players, including the tourism sector
Objective 4: Addressing climate change as a priority issue for the Mediterranean	4.4 Encourage institutional, policy and legal reforms for the effective mainstreaming of climate change responses into national and local development frameworks, particularly in the energy sector	4.4.1 Mainstream climate change into national legislation and policies with a focus on measures concerning energy and transport and on delivering no/low regret adaptation measures across all vulnerable sectors and territories such as (...) tourism
Objective 5: Transition towards a green and blue economy	5.3 Promote sustainable consumption and production patterns	5.3.1. Implement the SCP AP 5.3.2. Undertake awareness-raising programmes on sustainable lifestyles for promoting sustainable behaviour 5.3.3. Carry out capacity-building programmes to support countries in implementing the SCP AP

Source: UN Environment/MAP, MSSD 2016-2025

## Annex 3: SCP Regional Action Plan Objectives and Actions on Tourism

Operational objective	Action
3.1 Develop and promote practices and solutions to ensure efficient use of natural resources and reduce environmental impacts of tourism, respecting spatial, ecological, and socio-cultural carrying capacities of the destination	26) Promote the sharing of relevant knowledge on SCP applied to tourism (e.g. best environmental practice and best available techniques) to optimize the eco-efficiency of tourism activities and the use of environmental management systems (e.g. ISO 14001)
	27) Develop a destination management model to promote sustainable tourism and create a network of sustainable destinations
	28) Promote local sustainable tourism training to enhance local capacities and upgrade the existing ones
3.2 Promote regulatory, legislative and financial measures to mainstream SCP in the tourism consumption and production area, to reduce tourism seasonality creating green and decent jobs and to promote local community engagement and empowerment	29) Promote the diversification of the tourism offer from mass tourism to alternative forms of tourism (e.g. ecotourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, off-season tourism) to reduce the impacts of seasonality and to reduce environmental pressures on coastal areas
	30) Revise current tourism legislation at the national level to facilitate the integration of SCP principles and measures in the tourism sector
	31) Create eco-taxes, eco-charges or fees as an effective instrument to internalize externalities (e.g. tax relief of tourism activities during the low season) creating a fund exclusively earmarked for the improvement of the environmental quality of the destination and for the creation of green jobs
3.3 Raise awareness, capacities and technical skills to support sustainable destinations and green tourism services, and promote the development of appropriate marketing and communication tools to ensure a competitive sustainable Mediterranean Tourism	32) Promote the Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment (TCCA) approach as a mandatory analysis for the preparation of national and local tourism planning and for the approval of new tourism investment
	33) Develop policies and actions to minimize the physical impact of tourist activity
	34) Promote tourism eco-labels with robust environmental criteria based on a standards scheme verified by an independent organization (e.g. EU Ecolabel, Green Key, Nordic Swan, etc.)
	35) Develop and implement capacity building activities for tourism private operators to improve capacities and awareness on the importance of adopting sustainable consumption and production strategies
	36) Encourage marketing and communication activities focused on promoting the Mediterranean sustainable destinations and enhancing the visibility of Mediterranean sustainable tourism service providers in the international and national markets

Source: UN Environment/MAP, SCP AP, 2016

## Annex 4: Strategy on tourism for selected Mediterranean countries

Country	Document title (year of issue)	Time frame	Vision	Principles and objectives
Algeria <sup>44</sup>	SDAT 2025 (2008)	2008-2025	To differentiate its tourism offer and target markets to make it less vulnerable, more responsive and flexible regarding market volatility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop new flagship products;</li> <li>Exploit the experience of other competing Mediterranean countries;</li> <li>Carry out needed adaptations to demand trends;</li> <li>Take into account significant domestic demand.</li> </ul>
Egypt <sup>45</sup>	Refreshed Tourism Strategy 2013-2020 (2013)	2013-2020	To be one of the world's foremost diversified, differentiated and vibrant destinations for leisure and special interest tourism where history, landscape and sunshine fuse with the cultures of Europe, Arabia, Asia and Africa to create unique visitor experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an overall tourism economy;</li> <li>Distribute tourism income and benefits through employment creation and enterprise opportunity in food production, transport, host services, retail sales, and individual crafts, thereby creating social benefits penetrating all levels of Egyptian communities.</li> </ul>
Lebanon <sup>46</sup>	Rural Tourism Strategy (2014)	2015-2020	To make rural areas and major urban areas successful sustainable destinations for travel including cultural, historical, religious, culinary, nature, sports, agricultural and adventure tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the income of regions and local communities by receiving more visitors and offering more competitive tourism products, services and experiences to tourists while preserving their natural environment and cultural heritage.</li> </ul>
Morocco <sup>47</sup>	Strategy of the sector of tourism: Vision 2020 (2015)	2015-2020	To make tourism one of the driving forces of economic, social and cultural development, be one of the 20 great world destinations by 2020 and make Morocco a good example in terms of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Double the size of the sector and the accommodation capacity, with the creation of 200,000 new beds;</li> <li>Double tourist arrivals (from Europe and emerging countries);</li> <li>Create 1 million new direct jobs by 2020;</li> <li>Reach 140 billion Dirhams by 2020 in annual tourism revenues;</li> <li>Make tourism widespread in the country and triple the trips made by nationals.</li> </ul>
Turkey <sup>48</sup>	Tourism Strategy 2023 (2007)	2008-2023	To reach a leading position for leveraging rates of employment and regional development and to become a world brand and major destination (among the top 5 countries)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning approach that supports economic growth, is physically applicable, socially oriented and fairly reflects the principles of sustainable tourism;</li> <li>Boost tourism investments by designing incentives to make it economically feasible and viable;</li> <li>Ensure full and active participation of tourism stakeholders in decision-making processes through good governance.</li> </ul>

Source: Plan Bleu, 2016

44 <http://www.andt-dz.org/baoff/fichiers/fichiers/fichiersesma47009129871422970826.pdf>45 [www.encc.org.eg/download.php](http://www.encc.org.eg/download.php)46 [http://www.mot.gov.lb/Content/uploads/Publication/150224033558449~Executive%20Summary\\_Rural%20Tourism%20Strategy\\_English.pdf](http://www.mot.gov.lb/Content/uploads/Publication/150224033558449~Executive%20Summary_Rural%20Tourism%20Strategy_English.pdf)47 <http://www.finances.gov.ma/en/Pages/Strat%C3%A9gies/Strat%C3%A9gie-du-secteur-du-tourisme--la-Vision-2020.aspx?m=Investors&m2=Investments>48 [http://www.kulturizm.gov.tr/Eklenti/43537,turkeytourismstrategy2023pdf.pdf?0&\\_tag1=796689BB12A540BE0672E65E48D10C07D6DAE291](http://www.kulturizm.gov.tr/Eklenti/43537,turkeytourismstrategy2023pdf.pdf?0&_tag1=796689BB12A540BE0672E65E48D10C07D6DAE291)

## Annex 5: Stakeholder type and role in Sustainable Tourism

Stakeholder type	Role in promoting sustainable tourism
<b>International development assistance agencies:</b> Multilateral agencies and funding programmes (World Bank, EBRD, etc.); Bilateral agencies (GIZ, AFD, etc.)	Policy development and agreements; Financial and technical assistance.
<b>Regional IGOs:</b> UfM, OECD, EC; <b>Thematic IGOs:</b> UNWTO, UN Environment/MAP and RACs (Plan Bleu, SCP/RAC, PAP/RAC, SPA/RAC, etc.), UNIDO, UNESCO, CEDARE, etc.	Regional Strategy development; Innovative policies, standards and regulation; Infrastructure planning and development; Capacity building and awareness raising; International dialogues and cooperation schemes.
<b>National governments:</b> Tourism Ministries; Other ministries (industry, labour, trade, planning, finance, foreign affairs...); Tourism agencies, e.g. Tourist Board; Other government agencies (economic, business, training, education, etc.); Resource management bodies, e.g. National Parks Service.	Tourism policy, strategy development and implementation; Designing and implementing legislation, standards and regulation; Infrastructure planning and development; Resource management; Communication, information and marketing.
<b>Local governments and destination bodies:</b> Regional governments; Local authorities, e.g. district councils; Destination Management Organisations (DMO), e.g. public-private consortium.	Local strategies and planning; Implementation of policy and regulations; Local infrastructure development and management; Stakeholder engagement, coordination and support.
<b>Private sector businesses:</b> Tourism trade associations – international and regional (WTTC, ETOA, etc.), national and local; Tourism service providers, e.g. hotel businesses (IHG, Accor, etc.); Tour operators – international (TUI, Cook, etc.) and local; Product suppliers, e.g. food producers; Investors – international and domestic; Business networks (ASCAME, ANIMA...).	Sectoral representation, advocacy and lobbying; Operations and management; Links to domestic and international markets; Product development, investment and improvement; Employment creation and income generation; Corporate Social Responsibility.
<b>Employees and trade unions:</b> International Labour Unions (ILO); Local trade unions; Individual workers	Representing interests of employees; Human resource planning and development; Life-long learning and training schemes.
<b>NGOs:</b> International sustainable development organizations (WWF, Oxfam, MIO-ECSDE, IUCN-Med, Foundation Anna Lindh, etc.); Local environmental, cultural and conservation entities; Social and community associations.	Representing different stakeholder interests; Engaging in strategic planning and development; Stakeholder coordination and supporting implementation; Capacity building and provision of expertise.
<b>Education, research and training bodies:</b> National and regional think-tanks (IEMed, IPEMED, AFED, MIO-ECSDE, etc.); Universities, colleges and teaching bodies; Research institutions; Technical experts and advisory bodies.	Knowledge gathering and dissemination; Supporting policy and strategy development; Capacity building and training; Specific advice and expertise.
<b>Local communities:</b> Community councils and representative bodies; Traditional structures; Organised groups, e.g. women, youth; Local formal and informal traders; Individual households.	Planning and decision-making at a local level; Representing and communicating local community interests; Pursuing equitable benefit sharing within communities; Interacting with tourists to mutual benefit.
<b>Consumers/tourists:</b> Individual tourists; Consumer networks, clubs and societies.	Providing incomes to the sector; Behaving responsibly towards the environment and local communities in travel choice and actions.
<b>Media and communication:</b> Mass media; News and communication agencies; Travel magazines; Bloggers; TVs, radios and newspapers.	Communicating information and opinions on destinations and sustainability issues accurately and fairly.

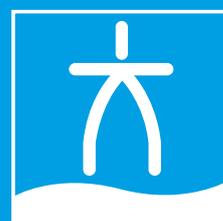
Source: Plan Bleu, 2016 (adapted from the Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook, UNWTO, Europe Aid)

## Annex 6: Strategic directions, Actions and Activities for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean

Strategic direction	N°	Action	Activity (examples)
1.1. Assess and monitor the environmental pressures and impacts from tourism activities on natural ecosystems and their carrying capacity	1.1.1	Identify, adapt and promote Environmental Assessment tools (such as EIA, SEA, carrying capacity) applicable to tourism initiatives.	Publication of handbooks, toolboxes, on-line tools; Technical trainings.
	1.1.2	Engage with donors and funders to integrate effective, transparent and systematic Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)	Publication and endorsement of a charter for sustainable tourism investment
1.2. Support the mainstreaming of resource efficiency, cleaner technologies, environmental management and eco-labelling schemes for green tourism facilities, products and services.	1.2.1	Identify, adapt and promote Best Available Technologies and Best Environmental Practices, environmental management procedures and eco-labelling schemes applicable to Mediterranean tourism facilities and products	Review of existing labels; publication of handbooks and e-tools
	1.2.2	Promote policies and strategies to support (technically and financially) the implementation of resource efficiency, Best Available Technologies, Best Environmental Practices in travel and tourist facilities, as well as the supply of greener products and services	Publication of sectoral and thematic guides; technical trainings; development of sectoral strategies
1.3. Identify, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged coastal, marine and land-based ecosystems	1.3.1	Support programmes and actions to identify, monitor, protect and restore vulnerable and damaged marine, coastal and land-based natural ecosystems	Review of vulnerable areas; publication of policy toolbox; technical trainings
	1.3.2	Identify, adapt and promote innovative compensation schemes financed by industry and visitors (tourism pay-backs, eco-taxes, public private partnerships, etc.)	Publication of handbook and toolbox; technical trainings; launch of labs and initiatives
	1.3.3	Develop a "nature-based solutions approach" through knowledge-sharing activities and pilot projects	Launch (on- & off-line) platforms to share NBS initiatives and projects in the Mediterranean region. Publish guidelines and organize trainings.
1.4. Balance territorial tourism development between coastal areas and hinterlands	1.4.1	Promote inclusive territorial planning through empowerment of local and national policymakers, capacity-building programmes and knowledge-sharing activities	Capacity-building programmes and knowledge-sharing activities
	1.4.2	Promote rural tourism activities and facilities through public investment, tax redistribution and communication campaigns	Develop guidelines, best practices and training activities
2.1. Promote and support the creation, ownership and development of local sustainable tourism businesses	2.1.1	Promote technical, managerial and entrepreneurship training courses, professional hubs and networking activities on sustainable tourism products and services	Elaboration of educational programme, MOOCs and on-line networking platform
	2.1.2	Support the creation and dissemination of dedicated funding schemes to launch and develop local sustainable tourism businesses	Funding guide; technical trainings; new funding schemes

Strategic direction	N°	Action	Activity (examples)
2.2. Develop an inclusive and responsible tourism sector that promotes decent jobs, provides for social rights and integrates disadvantaged groups, in particular women, youth and minorities	2.2.1	Support public-private partnerships, programmes and policies to enhance social benefits, provide a social security net and guarantee basic resources to tourism industry workers	Publication of guides; technical trainings; knowledge-sharing platforms
	2.2.2	Identify, adapt or develop labels and certifications to distinguish local, inclusive and responsible tourism facilities, products and services	Review of labels; publication of guides; technical trainings
2.3. Facilitate access to education, skills development, learning programmes and training courses on sustainable tourism for tourism industry workers and local communities	2.3.1	Design, support and implement life-long learning programmes and vocational training centres with a view to a sustainable tourism industry	Curriculum development; harmonization of content; knowledge-sharing platforms
2.4 Promote sub-regional, national and local tourism development, and encourage social tourism policies at the national and local level	2.4.1	Accelerate the development of tourism activities and services adapted to the domestic markets	Elaboration of educational programs, training courses and networking platform; Publication of handbooks, peer learning...
	2.4.2	Support local control and management of the domestic tourism market.	Fair organization / participation; publication of travel guides, apps, ads, website development
3.1 Facilitate innovation, diversification and resilience of tourism products and services	3.1.1	Support capacity-building activities, strategies and policies for developing alternative forms of tourism	Review study; publication of guides; policy trainings
	3.1.2	Coordinate capacity-building activities, national policies and local strategies to adapt tourist and travel facilities and services to environmental and societal risks	Contingency guides; technical trainings; policies support
3.2 Monitor, assess and attract investments in green, local and circular businesses within the tourism sector	3.2.1	Promote consistent tools and models for evaluating and assessing the contribution of the tourism sector to national and local economies	Standardization; e-tools and publication of guides; regional socio-economic analysis
	3.2.2	Promote financial schemes, incentives and loans for investing in alternative tourism products and services	Funding guides; financial trainings; investment handbooks Cooperative business plans, microcredit schedules, local governance and policies support, knowledge and best practices sharing
	3.2.3	Promote financial schemes, incentives and loans for mainstreaming tourism economic benefits into local communities hosting the tourism destination activities, including from chartering and cruising ships	

Strategic direction	N°	Action	Activity (examples)
3.3 Enable the development of agriculture, handicraft and community business at the local scale (destination), promoting synergies between different economic sectors	3.3.1	Support the development of locally-made goods and services adapted to the tourism market	Educational programmes, training courses and networking platform
	3.3.2	Promote communication, dissemination and marketing of locally-made goods and services	Fair organization; product catalogues, ads, website
4.1 Identify, value and protect cultural heritage, local identity, and traditional knowledge	4.1.1	Identify vulnerable cultural hot spots and incentivize their protection and certification	Review of cultural hot spots; Funding for labelling; publication of guides; trainings
	4.1.2	Raise awareness and promote cultural Mediterranean heritage	Communication campaigns; website and apps development; trainings
4.2 Disseminate tools and procedures for assessing and monitoring the cultural impacts of tourism	4.2.1	Raise awareness and train stakeholders in cultural impact assessment tools and procedures	Publication of guides; trainings; knowledge-sharing platform
	4.2.2	Integrate cultural impact monitoring and indicators into national and local tourism observatories	Publication of guides; trainings; knowledge-sharing platform; technical support
4.3 Raise awareness, educate and build capacity in responsible and sustainable behaviours	4.3.1	Promote educational programmes in responsible and sustainable tourism	Curriculum development; e-learning; knowledge-sharing platforms
	4.3.2	Encourage longer, diverse and distributed (temporally and geographically) stays, trips and journeys	Communication campaigns; travel guides and website
5.1 Strengthen monitoring, implementation of and compliance with Barcelona Convention protocols and other regional policy instruments and initiatives supplemented by national approaches	5.1.1	Reinforce implementation, monitoring and enforcement of local and national regulations related to MSSD 2016-2025, ICZM Protocol, SCP AP and SAP BIO	Strengthen actions to control and police against pollution associated with tourist visits; Impact assessment of ICZM policies on national and local legislation Simplified Peer Review Mechanisms to assess implementation of Barcelona Convention protocols and policies, including MSSD 2016-2025
5.2 Enhance transparent and inclusive dialogue and collaboration between local and national policymakers, the tourism industry, business community, and populations at all levels (local and national)	5.2.1	Extend the inclusive and Sustainable Destination Management Organization (SDMO) approach to local destinations	Publication of guide and toolbox; trainings; hubs creation
	5.2.2	Promote the creation of local and national multi-stakeholders observatories, dialogue and partnership schemes	Publication of guide and toolbox; technical support; creation of regional sustainable tourism observatory
5.3 Promote inter-sectoral planning, policy-making and monitoring of the whole tourism chain/cycle, with appropriate governance tools	5.3.1	Promote cross-cutting and holistic planning through inter-ministerial committees and multi-sectoral platforms	Publication of guide and toolbox; technical support; Public private and other partnerships applying the polluter pays principle, as well as eco-conditionality of public and international funding
	5.3.2	Support the development and implementation of local and national strategies for sustainable tourism	Publication of guide and toolbox; technical training; policy support



**Plan  
Bleu**

Plan Bleu pour l'environnement et le développement en Méditerranée  
15, rue Beethoven, Sophia Antipolis, 06560 Valbonne  
+33 (0)492 387 130 - [www.planbleu.org](http://www.planbleu.org)

ISBN 978-2-912081-50-6