



NEW TRENDS FOR THE YACHTING SECTOR IN THE MED AREA

Marseille, October, 12th 2017. The Blue Growth community, featured by the [InnoBlueGrowth project](#) (Interreg MED), celebrated its first transnational event on Yachting in Marseilles last October 11 & 12, 2017. It was the occasion to address a series of issues related to the sector, exchange good practices and explore solutions. New trends for the Yachting sector was the theme chosen for this first capitalization event co-organized by Plan Bleu and InnoBlueGrowth partners in partnership with the iBLUE project, gathering a great variety of stakeholders, ranging from policy makers to researchers and academia, representatives of regional administrative bodies, NGOs, and the private sector.

The [iBLUE project](#), acronym for "Investing in Sustainable Blue Growth and Competitiveness through 3-Pillar Business Model", will last three years until 2019 and is composed of 10 European partners ranging from development agencies, small and medium-sized enterprises, public institutions and universities from nine countries: Albania, Cyprus, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain. The methodology used by iBLUE, with the support of the InnoBlueGrowth project, aims to provide knowledge on economic impact and employment by focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of the Yachting sector. This network of knowledge, consisting of a collection of good practices, innovation models and policies that can be exploited by actors in the maritime transport industry sector, will be useful to policy makers for a better allocation of resources and an impact assessment, but above all, to create a transnational network in the MED area.

The sessions and debates underlined various issues such as the lack of harmonization for regulation and taxes throughout Europe, the very slow process toward digitalization of paperwork and administrative procedures, or the difficulty to recycle boats, in particular those made out of composite materials, among other elements. More specifically, the industry of coastal and nautical tourism represents 1/3 of the maritime economy, as highlighted by Georges Assonitis (INSULEUR – Network of Insular Chambers of Commerce of the EU), and Monica Andreou (Cyprus Chamber of Commerce & Industry): 6 million boats in European seas, 36 million boaters and 48 million water sports users.

Linos Voskarides (European Commission) outlined the main goals that the Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) wants to reach: to implement the use of clean

propulsion boats, information and communication technologies (ICT), to develop technologies for the recycling of sailboats at the end of their use, to harmonize the national rules on yacht security equipment, to homogenize the curricula for skippers (burden to mobility) and to promote "smart marinas".

The participants also shared some good practices of preventing water pollution and recycling waste water, for example in Porto Montenegro through an intervention by Aleksandar Drakulovic (Adriatic Marinas doo, managing the "Porto Montenegro" project), advising for a more integrated and horizontal approach in the sector in order to involve all actors for business and environmental cooperation.

Regarding the IT implementation and digitalization of services management, Angel Puig (NauticAdvisor) presented an analysis highlighting the discrepancies between traditional paperwork administrative procedures in marinas and the increasing use of ICT tools by boat end-users, which hardly matches with the former.

Styliani Florou and Gregory Grigoropoulos (School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, National Technical University of Athens), respectively highlighted the need to better inform citizens on the potentialities of the sector, particularly on how marinas make use of renewable energies to become more sustainable and the projects currently being implemented in Naples and Civitavecchia (also studied in the [Pelagos project](#) on Blue Energy). The current trends in the design of sailing yachts and the competition of racing sailing yachts was also addressed.

Lastly, Vienna Eleuteri (VSY) dealt with charting sustainability and how the yachting sector contributes to sustainable blue growth. She underlined that sustainability is going mainstream to yachting sector.

A study visit at the Palumbo Shipyard within the Port of Marseilles (organized by Plan Bleu), helped understand the wide range of services provided for an all-around treatment of a yacht during dry-dock, the delays and costs implied during the docking period, as well as the ways waste water is treated.

Overall, these discussions were very useful for the iBLUE project to gather inputs to nourish its research, especially because it focuses on the issue of relaunching the yachting sector sustainably. To this end, the project indeed introduced the new methodology it uses, integrating three sustainable pillars (economic, environmental and social) in the concept of business model innovation, which it will present more thoroughly on a later stage.

Lastly, the Blue Growth community created its Yachting sub-community, which you can follow and interact with [here](#).

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