

## *Call for Contributions*

# **“Guidelines for the sustainability of cruises and recreational boating in the Mediterranean region”**

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## *Summary of the Online meeting*

23 November 2020

10-12 AM (CET)

With **EUR 40 billion economic impact and 6 million passengers**, the cruise sector plays an important role in the economies of the Mediterranean countries. Although it owns huge potential in terms of jobs creation and business opportunities, the prevailing business model adopted by the cruise industry poses serious environmental challenges and social pressures at destination level. A growing number of stakeholders are raising their voice for an innovative and inclusive approach able to increase the sector's environmental and social standards.

As for the recreational boating sector, it generates revenues and employment with a positive economic impact on local communities, especially in France, Spain and Italy which account for **80% of the total demand in the Mediterranean**. However, several issues and common practices of the sector, in particular the segment of super yachts, keep posing serious threats to Mediterranean marine ecosystems.

In this context, Plan Bleu organised an online “Call for Contributions” in partnership with three Interreg Med Horizontal Projects (2019-2022): the **Blue Growth Community**, the **Sustainable Tourism Community** and the **Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community**. With a common objective in mind: to capitalize on innovative knowledge and experiences addressing the main sustainability gaps of the cruises and recreational boating sectors, this webinar consolidated and further expanded the space of dialogue and exchange created on this issue through the project **BlueBoatsMed**, a start-up action supported by the BlueMed CSA.

This call for contribution was answered by a wide range of stakeholders. With representatives of **Port Authorities, International Organisations, Think tanks, Cruise Line and the Boating industry**, these topics have drawn experts from all sides. In fact, the main reason to get together was to brainstorm over the structure and main contents of **“Guidelines for the sustainability of cruises and recreational boating in the Mediterranean region”**.

After a brief introduction, Plan Bleu presented the guidelines structure to set the stage of the discussion. Several participants shared their innovative tools, experiences, best practices and recommendations on the five topics below.

### Question 1: What does sustainable cruising mean?

- **Thomas Corona, Marseille Provence Cruise Club**

Mr Corona stated that sustainable cruising does not only mean sustainability at sea but also on land. He mentioned the importance of liquid natural gas technology (LNG) to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> and particulate emissions. Numerous investments are currently taking place in shore-side power at berths.

He also presented two main measures for sustainability in terms of docking:

- **Closed-loop system** for treating cleaning products on-shore rather than dumping them in the sea.
- Today, one of the greatest concerns for cruise lines is **on-shore sustainability**, which is important at the level of excursions (using cleaner buses), LEZ, development of more walking tours, reducing the use of buses

Finally, he emphasized the need for better spread of passengers in space and time and cruise lines working with tourism offices in the cities to encourage the visiting of less frequented sites. This could stimulate job creation by encouraging cruise lines to purchase from and collaborate with local providers and companies.

- **Josep Canals, MedCities**

According to Mr Canals, it is difficult to talk about sustainability when it comes to cruising because of its multiple impacts. Stronger international regulations for cities and ports are needed EU-wide with the same regulations and rules for everyone.

He believes that:

- **Traceability is important:** Technology can play a big role in monitoring waste management at sea and on land
- **Cities need more skills** - many port authorities are independent from the local public sector, especially in terms of air pollution. Cities need to be able to intervene and should be given enough power to do so by national and supranational authorities
- **Cities need more authority** through the EU to reinforce their decision-making power when it comes to issues like waste management, energy and water management.

Fiscal measures are needed to sanction those who generate more waste. This money can go to sustainable policies (e.g. protection of MPAs). Polluter pays, for instance in Catalonia there is a waste management fund used to address waste management or to support local authorities' efforts.

- **Matteo Bocci, WestMed**

Mr Bocci talked about the **psychological impacts on the cruise industry** as they are being held back by COVID-19 restrictions. The **value chain and business model** have shown their weaknesses with cumulative detrimental effects on local communities. Therefore, financial sustainability should be on the table to find alternatives.

As for **sustainable fuel capacity**, the Westmed initiative addresses green shipping with many port authorities between countries from both shores of the Mediterranean Sea. They try to experiment the concept of energy communities so as to be able to generate and supply sustainable sources of energy. This may also respond to the previous question on how ports could ensure the required supply of sustainable energy, including through LNG.

Finally, while cruising and boating are clearly two separated sectors, they could be part together of a new sustainable value chain and create alternative business models.

## **Question 2: What does sustainable ports mean?**

- **Alberto Cappato, Port of Genova**

In the Mediterranean region, numerous ports are located near or inside the city which generate a lot of localised pollution. Ferries generate more pollution because of the average age of the fleets (infrastructures crumbling). Nowadays, the situation is improving due to more awareness and regulations. According to Mr Cappato, LNG vessels are still a "mirage", although this is the right direction for boats in general. As for the cruise sector, Alberto suggests LNG/cold ironing to be implemented to force the cruise ships to adopt a system that is used upon entering the ports in Alaska.

LED light and photovoltaic panels on roof buildings on shore are appropriate technological solutions that contribute to sustainability in a port.

- **Sara Venturini, Portofino MPA**

Ms Venturini presented the perspective of a Marine Protected Area, Portofino in Italy. In MPAs, the pollution happens during cruise stays (CO<sub>2</sub>, particulate emission and tourists generating waste). In 2014, Portofino MPA carried out an impact assessment of the cruise sector on the MPA and land resources. The research led by the University of Genova estimated that the energy needs would be equivalent to deforesting 200,000 hectares of forest.

Regarding the recreational boating sector, the Portofino MPA regularly monitors the impacts of this activity by measuring hydrocarbons concentration in seawater and by monitoring the extension and health status of Posidonia meadows.

The main environmental challenges of recreational boating are:

- discharge of hydrocarbons
- impacts of anchoring, specifically in sea beds, especially sea grasses.

New technologies, like AI and data collection, can help to reduce these impacts

- **Marceau Artaud, Union Marinas in the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region and Monaco area.**

Mr Artaud presented the work done by the Union of Marinas in the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region and Monaco area. A port is part of a hydrographic basin and will therefore collect all land-based pollution.

A sustainable port is managing its waste and effluents and monitors environmental impacts. A sustainable port should have a positive impact on biodiversity and contribute to the strategic development of its territories where each sector could use its territory without conflicts. It should be a connecting space for all projects and in favour to the development of innovative ideas.

Different tools have been developed in the region and can be transferred to any marinas.

- First EU certification: Clean Harbor Guidelines (only certification for Marinas in Europe), here are a 5 steps process to follow to get certified:

**1. Environmental Diagnostic Study:** Carried out by an independent research body, the environmental diagnostic study is conducted in 3 phases. First an exhaustive inventory of the port is made; then the pollution sources are graded; finally a plan of actions is issued with the aim of improving environmental protection, specifying the infrastructures and facilities to be developed as well as the communication policies to be implemented.

**2. The means to fight chronic pollution:** Chronic pollution is liquid and solid waste from port activity and port users. The equipment used as a result of the action program includes facilities for the treatment of wastewater from careening, special and household waste, sewage...

**3. Implementation of means to address accidental pollution, saving water and saving energy**

**4. Training of Port staff.** Since 2004, the port staff have been on regular yearly training courses on the “Clean Harbours” processes, whether they are territorial or private law officials.

**5. Raising awareness of port users.** Marina users are informed of the “Clean Harbours” approach undertaken by the port.

66 marinas in Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur are certified, 87 marinas in France and 2 marinas in Italy. A total of €43 million has been invested in PACA Region.

- There is a new complementary certification in France - “Ports Propres Actifs en Biodiversité” - which allows ports to act in favour of biodiversity. The Ports Propres Actifs en Biodiversité process comprises 4 steps :
  - **Biodiversity diagnostics.** This step include an action plan;
  - **Biodiversity equipments** and good environmental practices;
  - **Marina staff training** and **biodiversity management**;
  - **Biodiversity awareness** and **communication plan**.

22 marinas in Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur and 2 in France are certified “Ports Propres Actifs en Biodiversité”. Clean Harbor Guidelines and “Ports Ports Propres Actifs en Biodiversité” certifications are developed in Provence Alpes Côte d’Azur and in other regions of France.

Finally a charter for Marinas development has been produced. which promotes:

- **Ecomobility**
- **Ecological and energy transition**
- **Excellence in environmental management**

**Question 3: What does sustainable recreational boating mean?**

- **Philip Easthill, European Boating Industry**

There are about 6 million boats in European waters, the vast majority (approx. 80%) are below 8 meters. About 32,000 companies in Europe are involved in this sector and the vast majority are SMEs. Recreational boating represents 280,000 jobs in Europe.

Mr Easthill mentioned specific challenges for the industry, such as:

- **Low and zero emission** propulsion systems (some overlap with cruise ships)
- **Use of new sustainable materials**
- **Eco-mooring**
- **Circular economy**

The European Boating Industry is promoting an approach to build a green and digital recreational boating industry at EU level. Philip emphasized that the particular challenges of each sector should be taken into account and that guidelines should be developed separately. Finally, he underlined that Pharos4MPAs project could be interesting as it developed a lot of good ideas for MPA management guidelines. There is also a lot of value from eco-mooring alternatives to protect seagrass that need to be implemented.

- **Elisabetta Ocello, iBLUE Interreg Med project**

For Ms Ocello and the iBLUE project, recreational boating needs to think about related sectors like services, retailers, operators (e.g. yachting sector). Sustainability is urgent, education is key within companies; having a vision and strategies are needed, taking into account socio-economic and environmental impacts. Companies need to analyse processes and business models to rethink the way the sector operates. The iBLUE project is working with SMEs to help them identify opportunities and threats in their business models through:

- **Analysis of the sector** through data collection to identify the needs, opportunities and the status quo
- **SMEs awareness** of the importance of the business model
- **Analysis of economic, social and environmental perspectives** (costs, impacts whether it be negative or positive)

- **Pietro Angelini, Green Blue Route project - Interreg France/Italy**

The market is forced to change because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Green Blue Route project, Mr Angelini and his team are working on a charter for yachting as it is very important to connect boats with ports (e.g. equipping boats with sensors and information gathering devices). They are working to define new rules in marinas and port areas that are off-limits to these forms of boating. Pietro sees digital opportunities that would allow for the delivery



of simple and impactful messages to end users, allowing yachting to become a sector that can experiment measures to increase sustainability on the market.

#### Question 4: How to monitor the sustainable transition of the two sectors?

- **Jean-François Cadiou, IFREMER**

Mr Cadiou works on environmental issues and is involved in BlueMed - a research project on innovation to support blue economy development.

Jean-François mentioned four important topics to address:

- **Better monitoring** is needed to develop information technologies such as AIS and satellite data.
- **Knowledge gaps** need to be filled: For instance, there is very few data on noise pollution and their impacts on marine ecosystems.
- **On electrification**, the bigger a boat is, the higher the investment will be for energy transition
- **Innovation:** Ship building and naval construction can do better using perhaps sails to provide additional energy to complement motor engine and reduce fuel consumption

Both sectors can also contribute to environmental betterment as they can help collect data at sea; by developing citizen science on key issues like marine litter, algae blooms, etc.

If you would like to know what the next steps are for cruising and recreational boating please contact **Dr. Céline Dubreuil**.