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ORIENTATION PAPER

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Climate Change Adaptation



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Mediterranean
Action Plan
Barcelona
Convention





This document has been developed in the framework of the Thematic Community Project of the Sustainable Tourism Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme 21-27 (Community4Tourism project) and its activity of the Mediterranean Clusters.

The Mediterranean Clusters are the main project's proposal for the support of the transferring of practices and results to other actors and territories, and their integration into local, regional, national and European policies and strategies, covering the 4 main topics that the Sustainable Tourism Mission integrates: innovation, circular economy, climate change and nature & biodiversity.

This document is the Orientation Paper for the MED Cluster Climate Change Adaptation and aims to serve as a basis to launch the discussion and set the main priorities for the activities of each cluster in the coming years. It also integrates the main discussions and key challenges identified by the members of the cluster during the 1st and 2nd Annual Meetings of the Clusters (Rome, April 2024 and Tirana, October 2025).

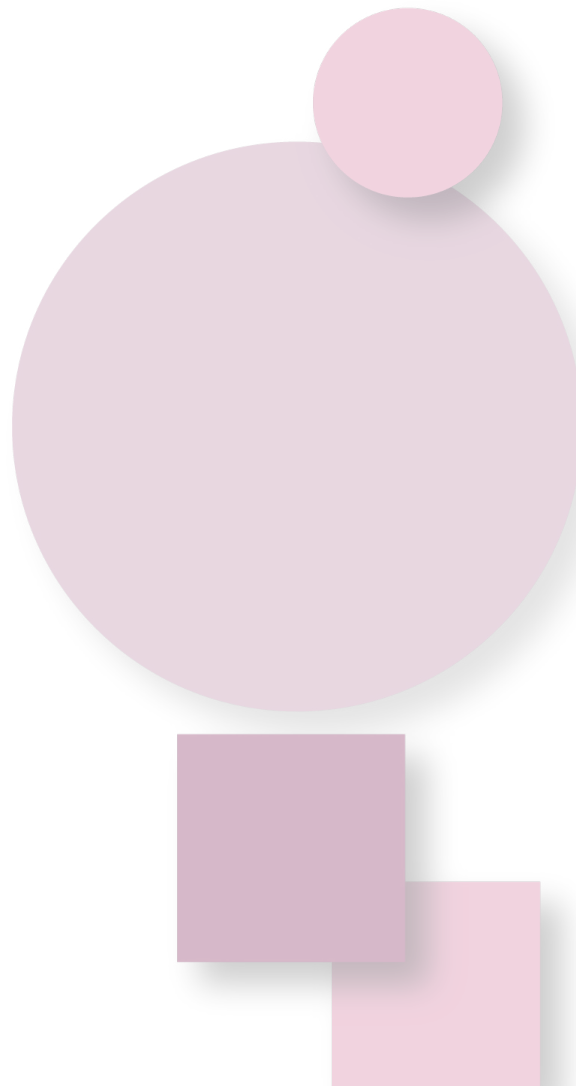




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1. Introduction and explanation of the topic covered by the MED Cluster Climate Change

The Mediterranean tourism sector faces unprecedented challenges as climate change accelerates across the region, with rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and increased frequency of extreme weather events directly threatening the sustainability of tourism destinations. Thus, the urgent need for adaptive strategies becomes evident as traditional tourism models prove inadequate in addressing the cascading effects of climate change on coastal erosion, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, and the degradation of cultural heritage sites that form the backbone of Mediterranean tourism.

The MED Cluster Climate Change Adaptation is part of the Mediterranean Clusters activity. It is implemented under Work Package 2 (Transfer) of the Thematic Community Project Community4Tourism, within the Sustainable Tourism Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme. The cluster focuses on Special Objective SO 2.4. **“Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account ecosystem-based approaches”** which recognizes that tourism adaptation is not merely an environmental imperative but an economic necessity for preserving the Mediterranean’s position as a world-leading tourist destination.

According to the programme priorities and specific objectives, the MED Cluster Climate Change Adaptation will focus on the topics defined by the programme under the Specific Objective 2.4 and will address the following:

- Foster sustainable tourism models which ensure the protection of the environment.
- Answer the central issue of accelerating warming for the future of Mediterranean regions.
- Urge environmental protection in view of both the pressure of human activities and climate change.
- Enhance ecosystem-based approaches in order to prevent disasters and improve resilience.
- Improve the prevention and mitigation of risks.
- Promote the importance of energy transition in the context of climate change.
- Tackle the climate change effects on health.
- Involve citizens in the greener transition of living areas with high touristic assets.





2. State of the art from the International, European, and Mediterranean perspective

2.1 Background

Home to over half a billion people, the Mediterranean is the world's main tourist destination, with more than 400 million international arrivals in 2022. Some of Europe's key destinations are found here, with coastal and maritime tourism constituting a major source of income for many Mediterranean countries.

Climate change and the loss of biodiversity put all this at risk. The region is a biodiversity hotspot, with a higher rate of endemism among species than anywhere else. Yet as a climate change hotspot as well, the region is warming 20% faster than the global average. There are long-running droughts, increasing wildfires, rivers drying up just as floods are worsening, and sea level rise is expected to exceed one meter by 2100. Thousands have already died from the heat, with temperatures expected to be above the threshold for human comfort by mid-century or earlier.

Yet by 2050, the demand for water is predicted to soar to two or three times what it is now. Poor developments threaten biodiversity and resilience along the coastlines. And the farms and vineyards for which the region is equally famed are struggling to irrigate their crops. Food security and the livelihoods of millions are being jeopardized. The future of tourism in the region is under threat, notably coastal zones which have to overcome coastal risks (marine submersion and erosion, harmful algal blooms, etc.).

Tourism globally is responsible for between 8-11% emissions. It also significantly impacts socio-ecosystems, particularly in coastal areas like the Mediterranean basin, which are experiencing rapid and extended urbanization in addition to large seasonal population flows. Aviation, boats and cars are heavy Greenhouse Gas emitters, along with tourism accommodations and infrastructure construction, water use and waste.

The transition towards a sustainable and regenerative model is therefore essential for the Mediterranean tourism sector. Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) approaches are crucial tools that integrate environmental, social, and economic considerations to guide coastal and marine development and management, coordinating diverse stakeholders and balancing competing interests, to mitigate and adapt in front of negative impacts while promoting resilience and ecosystem health. Both ICZM and MSP require strong governance, stakeholder engagement, and adequate resources. As urbanization intensifies in the Mediterranean basin, there's a pressing need for integrated approaches that prioritize sustainability, climate change resilience, and the well-being of both people and ecosystems.





2.2 Status Quo: International, European and Mediterranean perspective

Actions on climate change are guided by a set of interlinked frameworks and commitments, starting at the global level and then becoming ever more locally and sectorally specific. In the context of tourism - as elsewhere - a feedback loop is observed. The sector is both a contributor to and affected by climate change, and the regulatory frameworks being developed seek both to lay the groundwork for reducing its emissions and to provide a structure for its adaptation.

The following frameworks, plans and agreements together govern action on climate at various levels, and depending upon the specific context of the Regional Authority or DMO, will have differing degrees of relevance.

2.2.1 International Context

The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement, an international climate change treaty, was adopted in December 2015 by 196 Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Its primary objective is to enhance the global response to climate change by limiting the century's temperature rise to below 2°C, with efforts to further restrict it to 1.5°C. To achieve this, carbon dioxide emissions must decrease by approximately 45% by 2030 and reach Net Zero by 2050, as outlined in the UNEP's Emissions Gap Report 2018.

The SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 global goals set by the United Nations to address social, economic, and environmental issues by 2030. Tourism features prominently in various SDGs as both a contributor to sustainable development and a sector requiring sustainable management. SDG 8 stresses decent work and economic growth, emphasizing sustainable tourism's role in job creation, local culture promotion, and community well-being (Target 8.9). SDG 12 underscores responsible consumption and production, urging sustainable tourism practices that foster local economies and cultures (Target 12.b). Although SDG 14 focuses on marine conservation, tourism's impact on coastal development and marine ecosystems is highlighted. Similarly, SDG 15 emphasizes land conservation, with tourism affecting terrestrial biodiversity. Sustainable tourism aligns with SDG 11's call for resilient cities (Target 11.4), and addresses climate concerns (SDG 13) and infrastructure needs (SDG 9), underscoring its vital role in broader sustainable development endeavors. Finally, sustainable tourism has to promote tailored uses of natural resources with a tailored equilibrium with the other human activities. This statement is even more important with the natural water resources and its associated SDG6 - ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.





[The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) is an international agreement aimed at succeeding the Aichi Targets set by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It represents a collaborative effort between the host cities of COP15 (Kunming, China) and COP16 (Montreal, Canada) to establish ambitious and measurable goals for biodiversity conservation post-2020. The framework emphasizes addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss, promoting sustainable development, and ensuring equitable sharing of benefits. It serves as a roadmap for national and global action, integrating biodiversity conservation efforts with broader sustainable development agendas, with a focus on tangible outcomes and implementation strategies.

2.2.2 European Context

[The European Green Deal](#)

The European Green Deal is a comprehensive policy initiative launched by the European Commission to transform the European Union into a climate-neutral and sustainable economy by 2050. It encompasses a wide range of measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing energy efficiency, promoting renewable energy sources, and preserving biodiversity. The Green Deal aims to foster economic growth while ensuring a just transition for affected regions and sectors. It includes initiatives to promote clean technologies, sustainable agriculture, circular economy practices, and biodiversity conservation. The Green Deal represents the EU's commitment to leading global efforts in combating climate change and achieving sustainable development.

[Fit for 55](#)

Fit for 55 refers to the EU's target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030. The Fit for 55 package is a set of proposals to revise and update EU legislation and to put in place new initiatives with the aim of ensuring that EU policies are in line with the climate goals agreed by the Council and the European Parliament.

[EU Adaptation Strategy](#)

The EU Adaptation Strategy, adopted in 2021, aims to make Europe climate-resilient by 2050. It focuses on smarter adaptation through better data, faster action to reduce climate risks and systemic integration across all sectors. It supports nature-based solutions, local initiatives, and embeds climate resilience into policies. The EU is currently working on a new integrated framework for European Climate Resilience and Risk Management to help Member States prevent and get ready for the growing impacts of climate change.





EU Mission: Adaptation to Climate Change

The EU Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change empowers European regions and local authorities to achieve climate resilience, aiming to guide at least 150 communities through understanding climate risks, developing pathways for preparation, and implementing innovative solutions by 2030. Through the Mission Implementation Platform (MIP), it provides resources, data, and tools to support regions and local authorities in their adaptation strategy.

2.2.3 National Context

Nationally Determined Contributions

Launched in 2015 as part of the Paris Agreement, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) provide a common framework for countries to accelerate climate action in both adaptation and mitigation. So far 169 Parties have submitted an NDC. Reading a country's NDC provides a clear picture of the challenges faced, and the objectives for decarbonisation that a plan should look to support.

National Adaptation Plans

Launched by the UNFCCC in 2010, the purpose of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) is to focus on long term adaptation and resilience, in particular for countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. While around 70 countries (mostly emerging economies in Latin America and Africa) now have NAPs, only two are from European countries: Albania and Bosnia & Herzegovina.

2.2.4 Mediterranean Context

The Mediterranean Action Plan

The Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP)—Barcelona Convention System, closely related to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), works with national Contracting Parties and 7 Regional Activity Center (RAC) partners to fulfill the vision of a healthy Mediterranean Sea and Coast that underpins sustainable development in the region.

Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development

The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) was officially adopted during the 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean in 2016. Since its adoption, the MSSD has served as a guiding framework for sustainable





development efforts in the Mediterranean region, providing a common vision and set of objectives (with 28 specific indicators and related flagships) for governments, stakeholders, and international organizations working to address the region's environmental, social, and economic challenges.

2.2.5 Regional /City Context

C40 Cities Initiative

C40 is a global network of mayors of the world's leading cities that are united in action to confront the climate crisis. From the Mediterranean, Barcelona, Rome, Athens and Tel Aviv are members.

EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

The EU Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy is an initiative supported by the European Commission bringing together thousands of local governments that want to secure a better future for their citizens. By joining the initiative, they voluntarily commit to implementing EU climate and energy objectives. Over 8000 [local plans related to climate and energy can be accessed here](#).

2.2.6 Tourism sectoral context

The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism

The Glasgow Declaration was launched in November 2021 at the COP26 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. The text of the declaration and its promises was drafted by UN Tourism and partners The Travel Foundation, UNEP, VisitScotland, and Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency. Many other organisations and experts also contributed.

300 founder signatories (including CPMR and NECSTouR) committed to each create a Climate Action Plan explaining how their organizations would align with the global need to cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 and achieve Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050. Since then, the number of signatories has grown to almost 900, coming from different tourism sectors all over the world and several European DMOs and regional authorities. All have made the same commitment to create a Climate Action Plan (CAP) focussed on five pathways for action: Measure, Decarbonize, Regenerate, Collaborate, and Finance. Signatories commit to reporting on progress each year towards an overall goal of reducing tourism's emissions by 50% by 2030 and reaching Net Zero as quickly as possible before 2050.





In January 2024, UN Tourism published the [Glasgow Declaration Implementation Report 2023 – Advancing Climate Action](#), the first analysis of all tourism Climate Action Plans published to date under the declaration's framework. Some 250+ CAPs were analysed, with the report summarising best practices across all pathways, providing guidance on decarbonisation and regeneration, and proposing areas for future development and collaboration.

[Transition Pathway for Tourism](#)

On 10 March 2020, the Commission adopted a new industrial strategy. The aim was to help EU industry lead the green and digital transformations and to boost the EU's global competitiveness and open strategic autonomy. This first transition pathway describes the measures and outputs needed to accelerate the green and digital transitions and improve the resilience of the tourism ecosystem.





3. The projects' approach

The following projects are the thematic projects approved by the Interreg Euro-MED 21-27 programme, under the Sustainable Tourism Mission and more specifically, tackling the Specific Objective 2.4 Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system-based approaches. They include projects from the program's first (2024-2026) and second calls for proposals (2025-2027).

3.1 COOL NOONS

The Cool Noons project aims to address the issue of urban tourism in Mediterranean cities. Five pilot cities (Budva, Dubrovnik, Lisbon, Marseille, Bologna) will test solutions to improve the offer of activities for both tourists and inhabitants during the hottest hours of the day. Some of the solutions to be tested have already demonstrated their effectiveness (in contexts not linked with tourism), such as revegetation, water equipment or light-coloured urban surfaces. Other new solutions will emerge from the creativity of the first "users" of the cities, i.e. the residents and tourists. The solutions tested will also be cross-evaluated in order to clarify their potential for replication in the Mediterranean region.

3.2 HERIT ADAPT

The Herit Adapt project aims to create a territorial working group in order to co-design a data-driven Sustainable Tourism model for the territories involved in the project. The project deals mainly with UNESCO sites but also less-known monuments in internal and mountain areas. Thanks to a co-creative approach to understanding what is missing, they will create sustainable and resilient strategies. Interdisciplinary working groups will be set up to start the dialogue with people dealing with environmental preservation and people in charge of the preservation of those monuments. The main deliverables will include:

- 1. Feasibility study to understand challenges
- 2. Creation of a sustainable tourism model
- 3. Sustainable tourism strategies Involving adaptation, mitigation and climate neutrality
- 4. Portfolio of tech and IT tools and solutions to be installed in the pilot monuments.

3.3 NaTour4CChange

The NaTour4CChange project is aimed at supporting regional policymakers and destinations to develop a new approach to lead climate mitigation and adaptation using ecosystem-based approaches. The project will:





- 1. Test solutions for increasing the resilience of identified coastal regions and destinations.
- 2. Set common methods to allow participating regions to assess their tourism-related climate adaptation and mitigation priorities, and implement climate actions via plans and strategies, supported by cooperative governance.
- 3. Deliver tourism climate action plans for coastal destinations, focusing on climate adaptation, where Nature-based Solutions will be tested to ensure their feasibility and transferability
- 4. Promote cross-fertilization to draw lessons, best practices and policy recommendations

3.4 MED4REGEN

MED4REGEN is a European project that seeks to turn museums and cultural institutions into drivers of transformation toward more sustainable and regenerative tourism in the Mediterranean. The project responds to the need for a cultural shift in tourism—transforming it from an extractive model into one that actively regenerates local environments and communities. It aims to unlock the potential of museums and heritage sites as hubs for learning, participation, and sustainable practices, helping both residents and visitors embrace climate-friendly, community-driven tourism. Built on a hyper-local approach, it brings together cultural stakeholders, tourism businesses, residents, and visitors around five major challenges: overtourism, dominant narratives, natural heritage, urban centers, and peripheral areas.

Through transnational working groups, focus groups, pilot actions, and a practical toolbox, the project is developing concrete solutions to reconnect tourism with local territories and foster a deep cultural shift that benefits the climate, biodiversity, and local communities.

3.5 AQUAMAN

AQUAMAN (AQUatic systems' evaluation for the Mitigation of wAter scarcity in mediterranean islaNds and coastal tourist destinations under severe pressure) is a collaborative project uniting partners from six Mediterranean countries — including ministries, research bodies, and island municipalities — to promote smarter and greener water management. By sharing knowledge from successful EU initiatives, AQUAMAN supports coastal and island authorities in adopting sustainable practices. The project focuses on tapping into non-traditional water sources such as rainwater, stormwater and treated wastewater, reducing overall water demand and optimizing distribution systems.

AQUAMAN brings together the best practices, tools, and insights from





a wide range of high-level projects. By synthesizing this knowledge, it builds a comprehensive and ready-to-transfer portfolio of nature-based and hybrid solutions, holistic resource management plans, and actionable policy recommendations.

3.6 Regenera4MED

Regenera4MED seeks to transform Mediterranean tourism by promoting regenerative practices that go beyond sustainability. The project focuses on building climate resilience, supporting local communities, and preserving cultural heritage. Through a multistakeholder approach, Regenera4MED will develop innovative tourism experiences, test them in six pilot areas, and create tools to mainstream regenerative tourism practices across the region.

The project will focus on three main elements:

1. Regenerative tourism model – Testing and operationalizing a new regenerative tourism model in six pilot regions (to promote climate change adaptation, resilience, and positive environmental impact.
2. Regenerative experiences – Developing and testing regenerative tourism experiences to create sustainable travel options that strengthen local economies and preserve local heritage and culture.
3. Knowledge and tools – Creating tools for self-evaluation, including the RISE digital tool, and designing the Regenera4MED BluePrint to ensure the scalability of the project's outcomes.

3.7 WATERISE (Strategic territorial project)

Faced with rising temperatures and seasonal tourist influxes, Mediterranean islands must quickly rethink their use of water. The WATERISE project aims to tackle water scarcity on seven Mediterranean islands heavily affected by tourism and drought: Pantelleria, Lampedusa, Menorca, Corsica, Lesbos, Cyprus, and Malta. The project seeks to promote sustainable tourism by testing low-impact solutions (natural wastewater treatment, rainwater harvesting, atmospheric water production) in tourist areas. It combines local knowledge (such as 'dammusi' and 'Pantesco gardens') with new technologies.





Supporting Output from the Community4Tourism Project

3.8 Blueprint for DMOs and Regional Authorities to develop Climate Action Plans

DMOs and Regional Authorities based in the region have a significant role in driving climate action. First of all, they are by their nature bound to remain where they are, regardless of how much worse climate change becomes (whereas a business can refocus its strategies elsewhere). Yet this same deep connection to their location and its people means they are also more likely to have an understanding of the context and opportunities for meaningful action. Therefore, the C4T project aims to provide clear and adaptable guidance to Mediterranean Tourism Regional Authorities and DMOs on how to develop a strategy for acting on climate, inspiring and enabling actions supporting adaptation to changing conditions and the reduction of emissions from tourism. It does this by providing the essential guidance necessary to create a Climate Action Plan. A draft of the Blueprint will be presented and discussed in Rome, following which a capacity building process will be delivered during the second half of 2024.

3.9 ICZM/MSP Processes Best Practices Manual for Planning Sustainable Tourism Activities in the Mediterranean

CPMR-IMC, Plan Bleu and the University of Tirana are leading the development of a best practices manual to help Mediterranean destinations navigate the implications of the ICZM Protocol and the EU MSP Directive to plan tourism activities in a more integrated and sustainable way. The manual integrates 10 recent practices and innovative approaches already implemented or tested across different geographical scales from local to national scales. The idea is to establish best practices “selection criteria” (relevance, level of sustainability, level of applicability, level of transferability, level of stakeholder engagement, etc.) which will allow their identification while keeping a geographical balance between Mediterranean shores, different socio-economic contexts and tourism activities. The manual also introduces and fosters various practices including management tools, ecosystem-based management, institutional cooperation, data gathering and monitoring tools, spatial planning, etc. A French translation (and possibly other languages) will be provided, and a capacity-building workshop will be organized.





4. Main challenges and topics for discussion identified

All of the projects have reported a range of different challenges that they are likely to face. These are grouped below as bullet points under a series of four thematic questions, designed to structure a useful and collaborative discussion in Rome.

In addition, under each of the four thematic questions are listed the most relevant aspects of the Special Objective that frame the opening of this Orientation Paper, so as to make explicit how addressing the challenges faced by the projects can support delivery of the Special Objective.

While this classification has been designed to facilitate a constructive discussion, it should also be appreciated that the nature of tourism and climate change means many challenges are overlapping, and could have been grouped differently.

4.1 How should we consider external factors that influence and define our work on tourism's climate and biodiversity action?

4.1a Challenges from the projects

- "Adaptation and mitigation of cultural heritage sites to develop nature-based solutions is forbidden." - *HERIT ADAPT*
- "Adapting and renewing tourism offer according to new holiday patterns" - *COOL NOONS*
- "Challenges motivating leaderships and stakeholders to make commitment to engaging on climate action" - *BLUEPRINT*
- "Lack of interoperability to effectively implement on the ground the planned activities." - *NaTour4CChange*
- "Lack of funding to support action plans implementation within local/regional planning/strategic documents" - *NaTour4CChange*
- "The identification of relevant pilot site areas and their relevance within the project framework and with project outputs." - *AQUAMAN*
- "Making sure that all stakeholders are involved on all the project lifetime" - *REGENERA4MED*
- "Ensuring the good understanding of the tackled concepts must be ensured. Projects are most of the time too technical or innovative and therefore not tangible for tourism stakeholders." - *ALL TPs*
- "Being sure that project legacy will be reached, to make sure that the project outputs will last in time" - *ALL TPs*





4.1b Key criteria from the Two Special Objectives - SO 2.4 and SO 2.7

Of Particular Relevance to Climate Change Adaptation:

- Answer the central issue of accelerating warming for the future of Mediterranean regions.
- Urge environmental protection in view of both the pressure of human activities and climate change.
- Improve the prevention and mitigation of risks.
- Promote the importance of energy transition in the context of climate change.
- Tackle the climate change effects on health.

Of Particular Relevance to Nature and Biodiversity:

- Work beyond protected areas to address pollution, overfishing and climate change.

4.1c Ideas from Rome Meeting for further exploration (with source of suggestion in brackets)

- Implement digitalization to monitor real-time changes caused by climate change and overtourism; develop solutions to mitigate impact on sites (HERIT ADAPT)
- Involve the private sector in addressing challenges; ensure companies feel engaged in the process (ETOA)
- Address gaps in awareness, particularly regarding Integrated Coastal Zone Management (DIBA)
- Facilitate knowledge exchange among departments and stakeholders to effectively target issues related to nature conservation (IUCN):
- Incorporate climate change into tourism strategies at academic and policy levels to address challenges of overtourism and inadequate infrastructure (Tirana)
- Focus on adaptation, provide concrete outcomes, and collaborate with stakeholders using design thinking to address climate-related challenges in tourism (COOL NOONS)
- Engage tourism actors in designing sustainable offers to promote tourism as a solution to climate change; foster collaboration among producers, farmers, and SMEs (MED-GIAHS)
- Recognize the importance of balancing mitigation and adaptation efforts in tourism; consider the scale of impact on biodiversity and climate change at destination level (Global Footprint Network).

Highlight the significance of biodiversity for tourism destinations (IUCN).





4.2 How do we rethink and redesign tourism in light of climate and biodiversity emergencies?

4.2a Challenges from the Projects

- “Fostering creativity and “out of the box” ideas on adaptation solutions” - COOL NOONS
- “Continuing and improvement of the systems through the development sustainable tourism activities, generating richness in the territories and reducing the risk of depopulation” - MED-GIAHS
- “The lack of integration of digital tools in smart sustainable destination management schemes prevent to face overtourism and climate change adaptation through nature-based solutions” - HERIT ADAPT
- “How to ensure the financial resources, expertise, knowledge to create climate action plans” - BLUEPRINT
- “Develop collaborations and build on best practice to avoid constantly reinventing wheel”- BLUEPRINT
- “Lack of “best practices” for southern mediterranean countries” - ICZM/MSP manual

4.2b Key criteria from the Two Special Objectives - SO 2.4 and SO 2.7

Of Particular Relevance to Climate Change Adaptation:

- Foster sustainable tourism models which ensure the protection of the environment.
- Promote the importance of energy transition in the context of climate change.
- Involve citizens in the greener transition of living areas with high touristic assets.

Of Particular Relevance to Nature and Biodiversity:

- Ensure ecological corridors to boost and preserve biodiversity.
- Reinforce sustainable, efficient management and strong protection of protected areas..
- Improve restoration of ecosystems at land and sea degraded by tourism activities.





4.2c Ideas from Rome Meeting for further exploration (with source of suggestion in brackets)

- Advocate for integration and cross-cutting approaches in tourism planning (IUCN)
- Strengthen relationships with various departments beyond natural parks and mobility to build livable destinations (DIBA)
- Involve decision-makers from cities and DMOs in project dialogue to adapt to changing market dynamics (IUCN)
- Address the challenge of international mobility in tourism redesign efforts; promote dialogue between Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and other departments (Global Footprint Network)
- Propose de-politicizing tourism strategy to improve relations between DMOs and governments; advocate for long-term planning based on market realities and honest acknowledgment of obstacles (ETOA)
- Redesign tourism governance by involving all relevant departments; prioritize strategies to convince people and measure tourism flows; initiate projects integrating conservation and sustainability (Andalusia)
- Utilize tourism as a tool to raise awareness of biodiversity in less-known destinations; engage local communities in biodiversity preservation efforts through tourism development (CISP)
- Emphasize integration across spatial, temporal, and sectoral dimensions in tourism planning; foster cooperation from local to national levels (UTH)

4.3 How do we ensure necessary and meaningful engagement with key stakeholders required to support action?

4.3a: Challenges from the Projects

- “Involving local communities” - COOL NOONS
- “Raising awareness on climate changes , specifically in urban areas” - COOL NOONS
- “Knowledge about the role of and risks to heritage in the context of climate change and relevant tourism implications is not adequate, mandating new awareness raising approaches, utilizing flagship heritage for education” - HERIT ADAPT
- “Lack of integrated policies on tourism development and ecosystem-based governance of tourism destinations.” - NaTour4CChange
- “Appreciation of responsibility for acting on climate” - BLUEPRINT





4.3b Key criteria from the Two Special Objectives - SO 2.4 and SO 2.7

Of Particular Relevance to Climate Change Adaptation:

- Involve citizens in the greener transition of living areas with high touristic assets.

Of Particular Relevance to Nature and Biodiversity:

- Consolidate the connection of natural ecosystems with high touristic assets at transnational level.
- Support the vision of biodiversity conservation as an economic and social value.

4.3c Ideas from Rome Meeting for further exploration (with source of suggestion in brackets)

- Establish cooperation among regional and city councils to address flight mobility challenges (Travel Foundation)
- Replicate co-design approach from previous project to develop tourism strategy related to agricultural systems and experiences (MED-GIAHS)
- Create forum for tourism sustainability professionals to foster open dialogue and collaboration across departments; initiate CAPs in relevant departments to align with Glasgow Declaration (Andalusia)
- Engage stakeholders through experiential learning; organize design-thinking workshops to raise awareness and generate feasible ideas; prioritize initiatives based on available budget (IUCN)
- Encourage DMOs to prioritize solutions over new additions; evaluate the added value of new initiatives compared to existing successful strategies (University of Toulon)
- Consider supply chain costs and feasibility when transitioning to low-carbon mobility; leverage interdisciplinary knowledge for destination management; prioritize resident consultation to prevent negative market impacts (ETOA)





4.4 How do we ensure our projects deliver meaningful impact?

4.4a Challenges from the Projects

- *"Maintaining the availability of natural resources (water and soil) in a sustainable way" - MED-GIAHS*
- *"Preserving the landscapes, knowledge, culture and heritage" - MED-GIAHS*
- *"Sectoral segmentation and lack of interdisciplinary dialogue prevent to assess the scale of feasible interventions to enhance climate-neutrality, avoiding maladaptation at the same time." - HERIT ADAPT*
- *"Lack of testing and implementation of innovative approaches, where nature is used to improve the resilience of tourism assets" - NaTour4CChange*
- *"Mandate both inside organisation and also at destination/ community level for delivering action" - BLUEPRINT*
- *"Lack of resulting metrics on positive or negative impacts on related tourism activities" - ICZM/MSP manual*
- *"Difficulties in best practices assessment" - ICZM/MSP manual*
- *"Difficulties in identifying the transferable solutions on water related topics to be included in the Joint Catalogue" - AQUAMAN*
- *"Difficulties in developing a long term action plan supporting long term impacts of project solutions" - MED4REGEN*

4.4b Key criteria from the Two Special Objectives - SO 2.4 and SO 2.7

Of Particular Relevance to Climate Change Adaptation:

- Foster sustainable tourism models which ensure the protection of the environment.
- Involve citizens in the greener transition of living areas with high touristic assets.

Of Particular Relevance to Nature and Biodiversity:

- Reinforce sustainable, efficient management and strong protection of protected areas.
- Support the vision of biodiversity conservation as an economic and social value.





4.4c Following the presentations of the deliverables in Rome, a discussion was had about how to support the partners. The following points were proposed

- Identify methodologies based on best practices for adaptation to various destinations; provide training targeting informed policy-makers (Andalusia)
- Explore connection between Climate Action Plans (CAPs) and methodology implementation for destinations; consider suggestions for integration (Andalusia)
- Establish support desk to assist with training and capacity-building efforts; involve stakeholders in the engagement process to ensure implementation (CISP)
- Integrate transversal topics into discussions and initiatives to ensure comprehensive planning and action (IUCN)
- Facilitate sustainable tourism panel discussions and knowledge transfer on governance and project implementation; leverage previous project experiences and develop sustainable tourism leadership summits (Lazio D4T)
- Utilize the Mediterranean platform to access tools and connect with other implementers; integrate relevant tools into the platform for broader accessibility (UTH)

Further developments will be identified and integrated progressively as discussions within the cluster evolve.



5. Key documents

Background reading from the C4T Projects' Deliverables

Blueprint for DMOs and Regional Authorities to develop Climate Action Plans (previously attached).

ICZM/MSP Processes Best Practices Manual for Planning Sustainable Tourism Activities in the Mediterranean (selection criteria).

Background reading to have a further context on issues relating to the cluster

[Climate And Environmental Change In The Mediterranean Basin – Current Situation And Risks For The Future](#) (2020)

The report assesses the best available scientific knowledge on climate and environmental change and associated risks in the Mediterranean Basin in order to render it accessible to policymakers, stakeholders and citizens.

[Climate Change Impact On The Tourism Sector In The Southern Mediterranean](#) (2018)

This study assesses the effects of climate change on the tourism sector across the southern Mediterranean countries and evaluates relevant policy measures addressing these challenges for the region.

[First Scientific Report On Climate And Environmental Change In The Mediterranean](#) (2021)

Report urges that policies for the sustainable development of Mediterranean countries are urgently needed to mitigate these risks and consider adaptation options, but policy-makers lacked adequate information.

[Governance As A Tool For Sustainable And Responsible Tourism In The Mediterranean Region](#) (2019)

Policy factsheet on sustainable tourism governance in the Mediterranean area linked to existing local, national and supranational governance tools and mechanisms.

[Recommendations On Managing Tourism Carrying Capacity And Climate Change Resilience - mainstreaming plans](#) (2022)

This report provides recommendations towards better management of the sustainable development of tourism, of the tourism carrying capacity and climate change resilience for tourism destinations.





[Risks associated to climate and environmental changes in the Mediterranean region](#) (2019)

A preliminary assessment of risk associated to climate and environmental changes in the Mediterranean region by the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC).

[Sustainable Tourism In The Mediterranean: State Of Play And Strategic Directions](#) (2020)

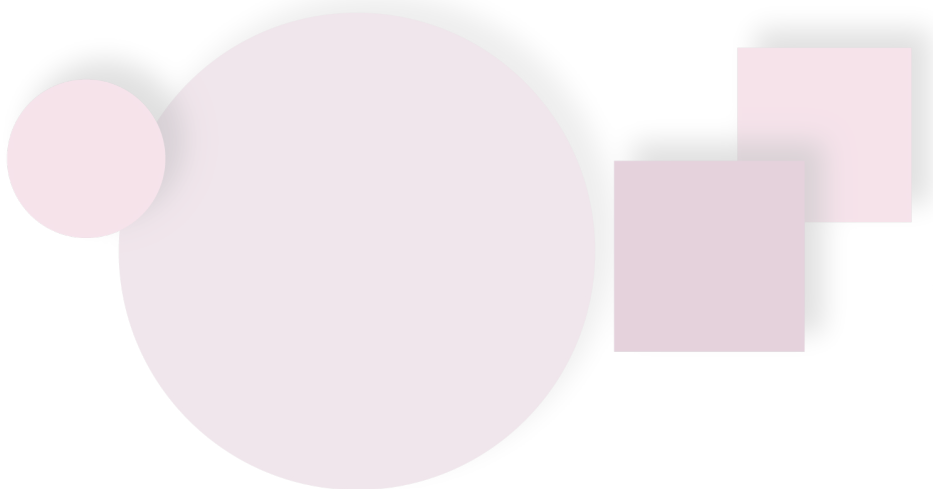
Strategic Directions for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean to be implemented by regional, national and local policymakers and stakeholders under the following shared vision.

[The Mediterranean Sea We Want](#) (2021)

Paper presents major gaps and challenges for implementing the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) in the Mediterranean region.

[Tourism As A Strategic Driver For Inclusive, Responsible And Sustainable Growth In The Mediterranean Region](#) (2019)

Report for policymakers and decision-makers to understand not only the benefits brought by tourism but also the threats and risks that come with it if it is not environmentally and socially sustainable over the long term.





**Sustainable
tourism**

**Interreg
Euro-MED**



**Co-funded by
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This document has been developed in the framework of the Thematic Community Project of the Sustainable Tourism Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme 21-27 (Community4Tourism project) and its activity of the Mediterranean Clusters.

The Mediterranean Clusters are the main project's proposal for the support of the transferring of practices and results to other actors and territories, and their integration into local, regional, national and European policies and strategies, covering the 4 main topics that the Sustainable Tourism Mission integrates: innovation, circular economy, climate change and nature & biodiversity.

This document is the Orientation Paper for the MED Cluster Climate Change Adaptation and aims to serve as a basis to launch the discussion and set the main priorities for the activities of each cluster in the coming years. It also integrates the main discussions and key challenges identified by the members of the cluster during the 1st and 2nd Annual Meetings of the Clusters (Rome, April 2024 and Tirana, October 2025).

AUTHORS:

Originally authored by Jeremy Smith, Climate Specialist, Travel Foundation, this updated version includes integrations done by the Cluster coordinators

Coordination of the Cluster: *NECSTouR and Plan Bleu*

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