



Interreg Euro-MED Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (NSTO)

SECOND WORKING GROUP

Recommendations for integrating sustainable tourism into policies

Unlocking the potential: Goals & opportunities.

Following the **objective 6.6. Actions to support better cooperation governance** of the European Commission for 2021-2027 selected by the Interreg Euro-MED Program, this WG seeks to address the connection between the generation of sustainability data and its effective translation into coherent and actionable policy frameworks.

There is a need to consolidate the role of observatories not merely as monitoring tools but as embedded components of policy-making processes at both regional and national levels. This requires institutional recognition of observatories as strategic instruments capable of delivering harmonized, high-quality, and context-specific data that is directly relevant to policy planning. By aligning indicator systems with international standards such as the UNWTO-INSTO framework, while tailoring them to Mediterranean challenges—such as seasonality, resource stress, biodiversity vulnerability, and social carrying capacity—observatories can provide a solid foundation for policy coherence.

By integrating the contributions of the ST Observatories and the Thematic Projects of the ST Mission into sustainable tourism policies, the Interreg Euro-MED Program is willing to open a window from experimentation to transformation—paving the way for a tourism model resilient, and future-ready.

Main challenges identified in this WG

- To strengthen the **role of sustainable tourism observatories as governance nodes**.
- To **define scalable policy models transferable** across Mediterranean destinations.
- To **facilitate knowledge transfer from the Thematic Projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Sustainable Tourism Mission into actionable policy tools and strategies**.
- To **advocate for long-term political and financial support** to embed sustainability in tourism planning.



Key points for discussion identified in this WG

- **Institutional integration of Sustainable Tourism Observatories** - How can STOs be formally embedded within regional and national governance structures to support decision-making?
- **Transferability of policy models and the results of the Interreg Euro-MED Thematic Projects of the Sustainable Tourism Mission** - What governance models or practices can be adapted and replicated across different territories in the Euro-MED region? How can we better share the challenges and results of the Thematic Projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Sustainable Tourism Mission through the STOs?
- **Multi-level governance and coordination mechanisms** - How can collaboration between local, regional, and national authorities be improved to ensure aligned and coherent sustainable tourism policies supported by STOs?
- **Identifications of gaps between governance levels** - How can STOs help to identify and address gaps between the different governance levels?

Expected outcomes of this WG

- **Improved knowledge transfer mechanisms** – To search for concrete pathways to translate findings from Thematic Projects and observatories into actionable policies.
- **To identify the main contributions** (experiences and practice cases) **of previous Interreg MED projects and the current Thematic Projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Sustainable Tourism Mission.**
- **Enhanced Policy Integration Tools** – In parallel to the previous point, to study **tools** that facilitate the integration of sustainable tourism priorities into broader policy areas such as climate adaptation, cultural heritage, mobility, and circular economy.
- **Proposals for long-term sustainability support** – to analyze strategic advocacy points to secure political, financial, and institutional backing for **the STOs to work on policy impact.**

Common expected outcome to WG1 and WG2

- Recommendations for enhancing the visibility and influence of sustainable tourism observatories in policymaking in the Euro-MED area to be included in the Annex of the MoU of this Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories.