



CO-EVOLVE

Promoting the co-evolution of human activities and natural systems for the development of sustainable coastal and maritime tourism

SCIENTIFIC BROCHURE



Interreg
Mediterranean



EUROPEAN UNION



CO-EVOLVE

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INTRODUCTION

CO-EVOLVE is a 3-years cooperation project funded by the Interreg MED Programme that brought together 12 partners from 5 countries (Spain, France, Italy, Croatia and Greece), including public authorities, universities, a research centre and international organisations. It aimed at analysing and promoting the co-evolution of human activities and natural systems in touristic coastal areas, facing effects due to climate change and allowing sustainable development of touristic activities, in coexistence and synergy with other uses of the coastal and marine space and resources, based on the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).

It consists of two phases: a **Studying phase (M1)** to analyse the threats to and enabling factors for sustainable tourism, and a **Testing phase (M2)** to test instruments, policies, strategies and joint plans to be transferred to other territories afterwards.

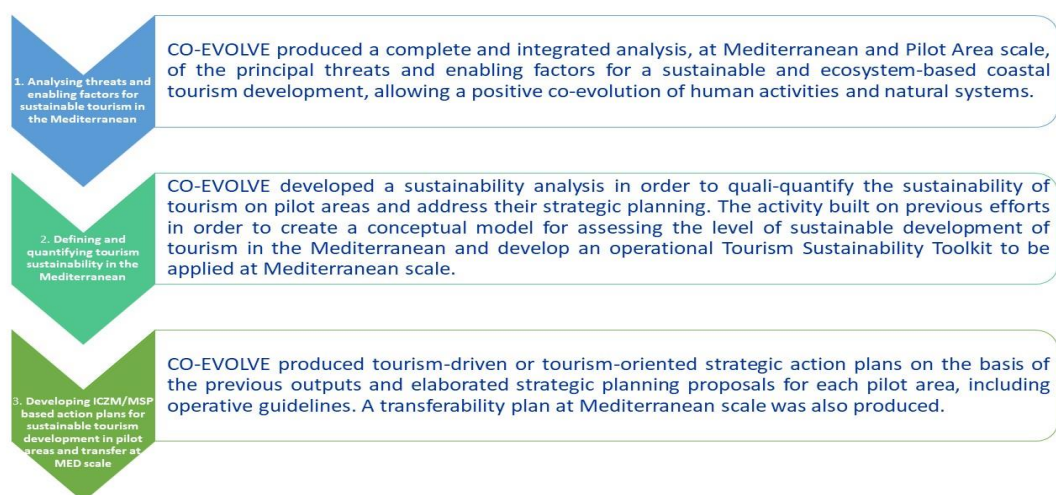
2016		2017												2018												2019											
Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36		
STUDYING PHASE (M1)														TESTING PHASE (M2)												TRANSFERRING ACTIVITIES											

CO-EVOLVE's methodology was tested in 7 pilot areas:

1. Alexandroupoli/ Makri area & Thassos/ Keramoti area - EL
2. Cattolica (RN) port and coast area & Comacchio-Lido di Spina (FE- Po Delta park) - IT
3. Polesine Camerini & Rosolina Mare - IT
4. La Albufera - ES
5. Maguelone/Frontignan area & West Herault coast - FR
6. Kastela Bay - HR
7. Neretva Delta - HR

It couples a presently unavailable analysis at MED scale of threats and enabling factors for sustainable tourism with local studies on seven representative Pilot Areas, to demonstrate through pilot actions the feasibility and effectiveness of an ICZM/MSP-based planning process.

It pursued three main goals:



This document intends to present the main results of the project. It includes five main sections, which represent the key outputs of the project:

- ❖ Threats and enabling factors to/for sustainable tourism
- ❖ Sustainability toolkit
- ❖ Strategic planning
- ❖ Pilot areas
- ❖ Plan of transferability of results

THREATS TO AND ENABLING FACTORS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The assessment carried out in the frame of CO-EVOLVE's studying phase provides an integrated analysis at Mediterranean scale of the main Threats and Enabling Factors (T&EF) for a sustainable and ecosystem-based coastal tourism development, informing the development and implementation of sound policies, the establishment of effective governance systems and a harmonised and aware planning and management at destination scale. The analysis based on the T&EF approach was carried out first at Mediterranean scale and then on each of the Pilot Areas. Key priorities and challenges in relation to sustainable coastal tourism were consequently identified, highlighting differences and common features. The results of this analysis, including the identification of the information available and of the knowledge gaps, allowed to identify site-specific indicators and was the basis on which Pilot Areas Action Plans were developed.

Interactions among T&EFs were analysed, putting an emphasis on the importance of a multidisciplinary, integrated and long-term view and effort on policy and governance. All T&EF are expected to increase in the near future, although at different speed and intensity, with the exception of "pollution and other anthropogenic pressures affecting ecosystems" which should stay constant, owing to the good environmental policies and practices. In general, the intensity of the interactions between T&EF is increasing, with the three main drivers being: i) the morphological instability of coastal areas, also due to climate changes; ii) the increase of tourist fluxes; iii) the protection measures to put in place on the coasts and ecosystems in order to respond to threats and allow for sustainable tourism development. The expected increase of other uses of the coast and the sea within a general expansion of sea economy and their coexistence with tourism will be another major issue.

The analysis resulted in proposals for improvements on the five main cross-cutting obstacles to sustainable tourism identified when adopting this holistic perspective:

- Obstacle 1: Countries' excessive orientation and over-dependence on tourism as an economic activity;
- Obstacle 2: Misbalance between destinations' carrying capacities and demand volume;
- Obstacle 3: Seasonal concentration of demand;
- Obstacle 4: Over-use and pollution of (natural and cultural) resources by tourism industry;
- Obstacle 5: Illegal activities by tourism industry.

		low	medium	high
	Climate changes and morphological stability			
	Littoralization and urbanization			
	Touristic fluxes and carrying capacity			
	Pollution and other anthropogenic pressures affecting ecosystems			
	Conflicts among different uses on land and at sea and land-sea interaction			
	Coastal protection measures			
	Ecosystem protection measures			
	Water management			
	Transport and accessibility			
Climate changes and morphological stability	+			
Littoralization and urbanization	+			
Touristic fluxes and carrying capacity	+			
Pollution and other anthropogenic pressures affecting ecosystems	=			
Conflicts among different uses on land and at sea and land-sea interaction	+			
Coastal protection measures	+			
Ecosystem protection measures	+			
Water management	+			
Transport and accessibility	+			

Intensity and expected trends of interactions among T&EFs.

TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY TOOLKIT

One of the goals of CO-EVOLVE was to establish a common methodology for assessing and monitoring tourism sustainability in coastal destinations through the use of a conceptual model of indicators that addressing key threats and enabling factors encountered in the Mediterranean based on the four pillars of sustainability: environment, society, economy and governance.

The indicators are categorised into three distinctive types, forming a three-tier system of Core, Destination and Pilot Area-Specific Indicators.

Indicators towards sustainability were built to reflect the main threats, enabling factors and governance issues identified in Mediterranean coastal tourist destinations. A first set of *core* indicators was selected from ETIS for all tourist destinations. A second set of indicators was developed for similar *type of destinations* to address specific issues reflecting the characteristics and particularities of the predominant type of tourism (Beach/Maritime tourism, Urban/Cultural tourism, Cruising, Recreational boating, Nature/Ecotourism). A third set of *pilot area*-specific indicators was developed to address area-specific critical issues.



Three-tier system of indicators developed in CO-EVOLVE

The indicators provide a basic framework of reference to guide decisions towards sustainability while they can be used as a tool to identify and systematically collect the necessary data for measuring and monitoring tourism sustainability in coastal areas.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The development of strategic plans supporting sustainable tourism development in Mediterranean coastal areas needs an easy and common framework to guide Administrators and competent authorities in designing effective plans. The Guidelines for Tourism Driven Strategic Planning offer a step-by-step methodology to local and regional administrators at MED scale to construct tourism-driven strategic plans by integrating main principles and goals of existing concurrent policy documents. The proposed planning methodology was organised in different consequential steps that constitutes an adaptive and cyclical process. It consists of 6 major phases, each of which includes key tasks and steps:

- **STEP 0 “Planning Set Up”** aim at creating the needed bases for the subsequent implementation of the whole planning process through the (i) identification of the planning scope; (ii) definition of the working team; (iii) definition of the territorial scope; (iv) identification of stakeholders; (v) construction of the work plan;
- **STEP 1 “Building knowledge framework”** aim at analysing the planning area in order to build up the knowledge to support the decision-making process by (i) collecting information about T&EF; (ii) analysing data collected (through the use of the Sustainable Toolkit) to obtain an useful knowledge framework; (iii) organising information to summarise the existing condition.
- **STEP 2 “Defining vision, goals and objectives”** aim at creating a plausible vision for the area by identifying main goals and strategic specific objectives to achieve that vision in a medium-long term guaranteeing a coherence among different planning scales.
- **STEP 3 “Tourism driven strategic planning construction”** aim at outlying the strategic actions, which responds to the specific objectives, capable of reaching effective results aligned with the priorities identified. The strategy should be a logical output of the preceding steps of the process.
- **STEP 4 “Implementing the plan”** aim at converting the constructed strategy into practical activities or programs. The planning and implementation phase of the action plans is strongly dependent on the priorities identified during the second phase with the stakeholders’ contribution.
- **STEP 5 “Reviewing the plan”** is the activity designed to provide constant feedbacks on the progress of the planning process and on the status and efficiency of its implementation by performing defined monitoring activities.

In order to be effective, the whole process must be supported by an active involvement of significant stakeholders in the different planning steps.



Conceptual framework of the methodology to the tourism-driven strategic plans construction.

PILOT AREAS

CO-EVOLVE's Pilot Actions embrace a wide range of cases in the Mediterranean area (see picture below), from coastal urbanised or exploited areas (including port areas, structured waterfronts, different kind of beaches with tourism facilities, etc.) to natural protected areas (Natura 200, Ramsar, SIC&ZPS, etc). Fields of intervention are the integrated planning of coast-maritime space, governance and management of conflicts between different uses, recovery and valorisation of natural areas, developing of integrated tourist offers and deseasonalisation of tourist fluxes.



Overview of CO-EVOLVE Pilot Areas' outcomes:

1 Alexandroupoli/ Makri area and Thassos/ Keramoti area (GR): realisation of two MSP-ICZM ACTION Plan focused on achieving sustainable tourism based on the preparation of financing scheme for selected actions according to the existing planning instruments.

2a Port of Cattolica (IT): realisation of an Action Plan for the re-launching of the port area based on improvement on navigation safety, sustainability and waste management. Installation of a jet-suction ejector system for the seabed sustainable maintenance.

2b Comacchio-Lido di Spina (IT): restoration of the beach-dune system and catwalk installation.

3a Rosolina Mare area (IT): formulation of guidelines for the sustainable accommodations in natural areas camping villages with the realisation of a NZEB (Net Zero Energy Building) prototype bungalow as demonstrator.

3b Polesine Camerini Delta Po area (IT): creation of an Environmental Observatory and a planning center for sustainable tourism in the natural area, conservation and protection of environment.

4 Port of Valencia (SP): model to measure economic impact of cruise tourism in local destinations ECO-cruise port/city tool/analysis to reduce environmental impacts from vessel arrivals.

5a Maguelone/Frontignan area (FR): adaptation plan of touristic fluxes in coastal areas subject to Climate Change effects.

5b Vias/Vendre Orb Delta area (FR): design of a common integrated vision along with ICZM principles and Sustainable tourism goals with a realisation of a sediment management plan and a tourists fluxes study.

6. Kaštela bay (HR): formulation of ICZM-MSP local Plan to promote a sustainable form of tourism-driven development.

7 Neretva Delta (HR): elaboration of the methodology for integral protection of rural landscapes and sustainable development of the tourism of the Neretva River Delta.

PLAN OF TRANSFERABILITY OF RESULTS

Transferability at Mediterranean scale is a crucial component of CO-EVOLVE. Therefore, a lot of efforts was invested in order to carry out this last work package of the project. The results are going to be transferred through 3 channels: PAP/RAC meetings, MedOpen online course and horizontal Interreg and other relevant projects.

Transfer through PAP/RAC meetings: Dissemination of the results was and will be ensured in several meetings. One of them was PAP/RAC's focal point meeting which was organised on the 8th and 9th of May 2019 in Split, Croatia. This event was attended by representatives from Ministries of 17 Mediterranean countries. During this meeting, PAP/RAC presented CO-EVOLVE's most important results at that stage of the project. CO-EVOLVE's leaflet was put at the disposal of participants. Another meeting during which CO-EVOLVE results are to be disseminated is the UNEP/MAP COP meeting to be held in Athens in December 2019. On this occasion, the transferability plan at the Mediterranean scale will be distributed to the participants. Representatives from the Ministries of the 21 Mediterranean countries as well as from the European Union will be invited to this meeting.

Transfer through MedOpen online courses: PAP/RAC is going to disseminate the CO-EVOLVE results via MedOpen, its online training course which aims at assisting Mediterranean countries in building capacities for coastal management. The MedOpen training is targeting decision makers (at the local, national, regional, and international level), policy advisors, project managers, staff and experts of international organisations and institutions, academic researchers, students, and all others interested in ICZM issues. Since 2017, the MedOpen course has been included as an integral part of the university curriculum at 3 universities of the following Mediterranean countries: Algeria (2017), and Tunisia and Morocco (2019). CO-EVOLVE results are going to be integrated directly in the training course contents by updating the existing lectures, while a bibliography with some of CO-EVOLVE's most important publications will be proposed to the students as additional literature. The updated MedOpen training courses will be available for students from 2020 onwards.

Transfer through horizontal Interreg and other relevant projects: A lot of importance has been given to the follow-up of and involvement in the activities of the Interreg MED community on Sustainable Tourism (BleuTourMed) ever since the project was launched in November 2016.

Over the first two years of the project, CO-EVOLVE partners identified other projects of interest within the community and started collaborating with several. A specific collaboration was set up with MITOMED+ in particular and a Memorandum of Understanding between the two projects was signed in October 2018. MITOMED+'s pilot destinations committed themselves to replicate CO-EVOLVE's methodology to the best extent possible and the projects to exchange key information on their works and deliverables. In this perspective, specific tools and methodologies were shared with the community on specific occasions, such as the meetings organised by BleuTourMed, in particular CO-EVOLVE's Sustainability toolkit and Strategic planning. Beyond this, CO-EVOLVE partners strongly supported the community with the elaboration of its Policy Factsheets. All factsheets include the description of at least one tool developed by CO-EVOLVE.

In parallel to this, CO-EVOLVE partners initiated a process in 2017 to extend the methodology of the project to other territories, in particular in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. An umbrella project - MedCoast4BG (Med Coasts for Blue Growth) – retaking CO-EVOLVE's methodology and tools, was hence labelled by the Union for the Mediterranean in December 2017.

WHO WE ARE

CO-EVOLVE is a three-year project that aims at analysing and promoting the co-evolution of human activities and natural systems in touristic coastal areas, allowing for sustainable development of tourism activities based on the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)/Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP).

It couples a presently unavailable analysis at MED scale of threats and enabling factors for sustainable tourism with local studies of seven representative Pilot Areas, to demonstrate through pilot actions the feasibility and effectiveness of an ICZM/MSP-based planning process.

Finally, CO-EVOLVE contributes to the Strategic Theme 2 (Joint Action 2.1) of the Bologna Charter Joint Action Plan: <http://www.bolognacharter.eu/>.

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