



# **SHORT BOOK**

**Pilot area 5B:**

**Coast of the Orb delta river**

**DEPARTMENT OF HERAULT**





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# COASTAL AND MARITIME TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

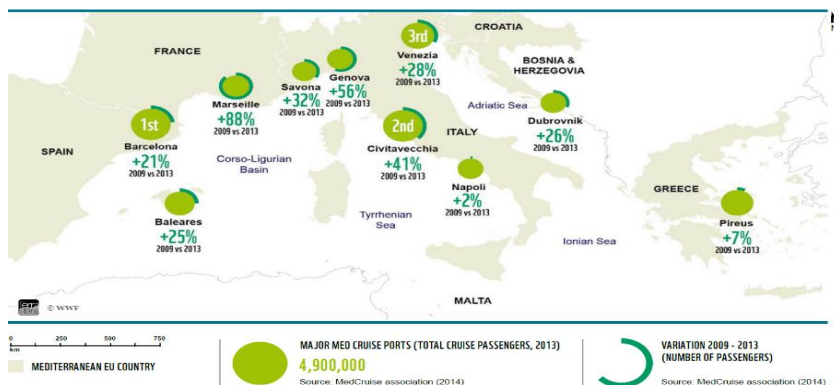
The Mediterranean Basin attracts more than 30% of the international tourist arrivals, especially during summer months. In 2012, nearly 300 million international tourists visited the region, substantially contributing to the economy of the Mediterranean countries (especially Malta, Cyprus and Croatia). Southern EU countries such as Spain, France and Italy have a leading role in the distribution of international arrivals in the Mediterranean region, with a total market share of over 60%, followed by rapid growth rates of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. Turkey is the top non-EU destination with 40 million visits recorded in 2014.

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*Coastal tourism has been identified as one of five priorities of the EU Blue Growth Strategy.*

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The Mediterranean Sea is among the most important cruise and yachting destinations in the world, and is also a rapidly emerging destination for recreational boating. There is a growing demand for spatial expansion of marinas and recreational ports on the Mediterranean coast. Approximately 75% of cruise ports in the Mediterranean are located in Italy, Spain, France, Greece, and Croatia and 9% in Turkey and Cyprus.



***Growth of Mediterranean ports in number of cruise passengers between 2009 and 2013.***

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PILOT AREA

12 x 3km, Orb river, 2 urban coastal areas, many high-level campgrounds, and natural areas.

Population: 23,000 during the year, 62,000 in summer.

+ 5 000 jobs during the summer period.

Beach and dune erosion (44% of the coast), sea & river flooding, 2 tourist harbours.

Extreme climate events over the last 20 years: 5 to 15 storms per year and an average extreme flood every 2 years.

Evaluation of the coastal damage by 2100: between €5 and €20 Billion for the department of Hérault.

The demographic trend is a sharp increase in the population.



### Coastal risks:

Mass tourism, anthropisation and urbanisation of the coast have created fragility and reduced the available space on the terrestrial part of the coastal strip.

Sea level rise, flooding from the sea and the river, erosion of beaches ... More frequent and violent storms contribute to erosion of the coast, and floods of high amplitude and more frequent pose a risk for the residential and tourist equipment established on the coast. Coastal erosion poses a direct threat to urbanisation and campsites near beaches.

The reduction of the sediment contribution from rivers and streams has deprived the system of a considerable volume of sand.

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*Coastal erosion is usually the result of a combination of factors - both natural and human induced - that operate on different scales.*

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Threat to the water supply:

The pilot area is a very high-tension tourist sector with frequent drought situations in summer, often requiring the establishment of a crisis unit at the level of institutional actors and progressive constraints of users (watering limited to green spaces, crops, washing cars ...). Existence of conflicts of uses related to water.

The flow of neighbouring rivers is decreasing, and the influx of tourists increases water consumption.

Waste Management: Pollution and anthropogenic pressure.

CO-EVOLVE developed a geodatabase (at Mediterranean NUTS III level) containing information about coastal morphodynamics and oceanographic and climate conditions, necessary to analyse and identify threats to the coasts and related touristic activities.

At the level Occitanie Region, the *“Schéma Régional de Développement du tourisme et des loisirs de la Région Occitanie - 2017 / 2021”* was developed. Some months later, the Department of Herault drew up the *“Schéma départemental de développement du tourisme et des loisirs – 2018 / 2021”*, well-coordinated with the regional plan.

At the level of the pilot area, “Orb delta river”, the services of Department and the urban Community of Béziers (16 January 2017) were met at first. The working team was identified: *Conservatoire du littoral*, the joint association of Orb river, State and Region services, Municipalities, stakeholders.

The territorial scope includes the 4 territories of the coastal municipalities: Vendres – Valras – Sérignan – Portiragnes.

## COASTAL PROTECTION MEASURES

Building coastal defence structures is a concrete way to prevent or reduce erosion at the local level. A significant presence of hard defence structures is observed in several Mediterranean areas characterised by sandy beaches and high urban development. Well-designed defence structures generally reduce the erosion rate of the protected beach, and are often combined with sand supply, dredging and nourishment in the framework of ICZM policy development.

Although the technique of beach nourishment is becoming much more frequently adopted nowadays in the Mediterranean region and it is recommended in all the policy documents mentioned above, it is often applied as a remedial measure rather than a preventive strategy. Therefore, an overall long-term planning, coastal management, and regular monitoring of the coastline should be included in the planning of this type of measures as part of ICZM policy. Efforts by authorities and stakeholders to implement ICZM recommendations are always desirable and suitable.



*Lido de Frontignan - Maguelone – Hérault*

# CO-EVOLVE ACTIONS CARRIED OUT IN THE PILOT AREA

## 1. DEVELOPMENT OF A CYCLE OF INFORMATION AND AWARENESS MEETINGS FOR COASTAL TOURISM PROFESSIONALS

A specific work plan was drawn up during the first semester in '17 in concertation with the working team, a steering committee was set up – see in annexe meeting reports of October & November 2017, March 2018.

The most important milestones of this work plan are:

- Official engagement of the Action during an Info Day & Conference Co-Evolve / CastWater at the “SETT 2017 November, Montpellier – Herault <http://www.salonsett.com/fr/le-salon/sett-2017>;
- Debriefing, evaluation;
- Technical working meetings: Spring 2018;
- Capitalisation, Mayane's Deliverables: animation process, best practices Guide for Sustainable Tourism, Communication Plan;
- Results presentation & discussions during the SETT 2018, November 2018 – Co-Evolve Info Day.

A Co-Evolve conference was organised that focused on water management in Summer.

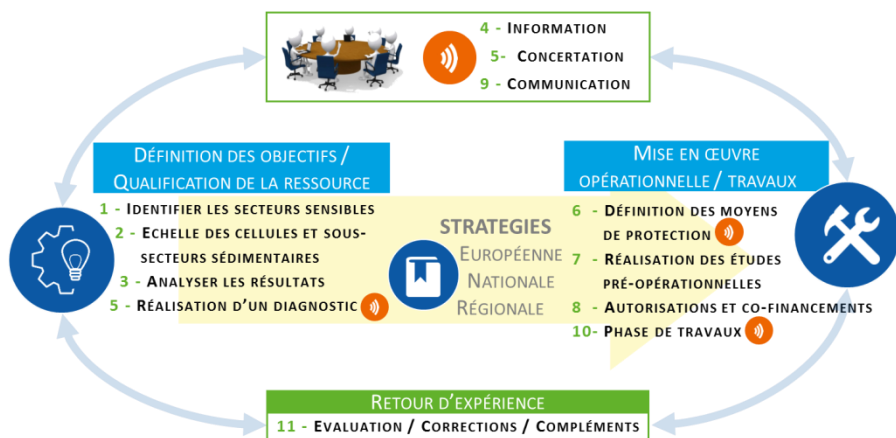
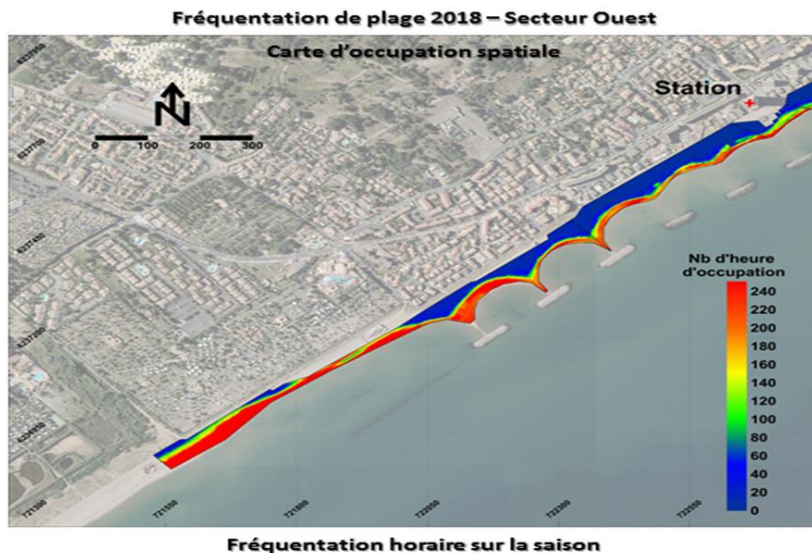
See more: <http://www.salonsett.com/fr/visiter/programme>.





## 2. DRAFTING A SAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (Deliverables 4.7) AND MONITORING TOURIST ATTENDANCE

As part of the SC discussions, and in relation with the expected Co-Evolve result, a need to monitor the beaches was identified. This monitoring will use data from downloaded observations with webcams installed at the top of a housing tower (45m high, in front of the beach). This monitoring will focus on an analysis of tourist attendance and management of coastal sediments.



### 3. STUDY: IMPACT OF SEA LEVEL RISE ON HERAULT COAST (induced by global warming / Climate Change)

To imagine the future of the territories of the pilot area in the coming decades, e.g. departmental port of Vendres.

### 4. CYCLE LOOPS DEFINITION, FROM EV8 - MEDITERRANEAN ROUTE

This document presents the results from the work that has been carried out to define loops from “EV8 – Mediterranean Route”.



Green: the loops selected, Blue: EV8 track, Red: other loops from Hérault by bike.

Following the restitution phase, the results will be presented, and the loops open to the public, via:

- Co-Evolve European website (<https://co-evolve.interreg-med.eu/>);
- Integration of loop information on the Tourinsoft Tourist Information System (database that feeds the websites of tourism local institutions);
- Broadcast on public sites dedicated to outdoor and cycling, Cirkwi (<https://www.cirkwi.com/>) mountNpass (<https://www.mountnpass.com/>)

## 5. SUPPORT OF CAMPSITES TO DEVELOP A SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Four main issues:

- To create official methodology of the environmental footprint of campsites;
- To measure and reduce environmental impacts of open-air accommodation;
- To reduce operating costs for the participating establishment;
- To communicate and raise awareness among customers and employees about environmental issues of this activity.

Reference values selected are:

- CC indicator/1.50 kg CO<sup>2</sup>/customer day;
- Water consumption (in life cycle analysis) Indicator - 315 l/day;
- Depletion of Energy Resources – 35 kWh/customer/day;
- Products certified “organic agriculture” or “EU Eco-label” Indicator – 15%.

Following these assessments, relevant solutions were identified and monitored in order to address open-air accommodation specificities.



## 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 level 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/>

## CONTACT US

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