

# TOWARDS A MORE SUSTAINABLE MARITIME AND COASTAL TOURISM



***MITOMED+ Models of Integrated Tourism in the MEDiterranean Plus***  
is a Interreg MED funded project that supports involved regions in developing  
a responsible and sustainable maritime and coastal (M&C) tourism.



## Foreword

**T**he MITOMED+ project represented an experience of great importance both for the Region that I have the honour of representing as well as for the entire project partnership and, I might add, for the entire Mediterranean basin. The Mediterranean dimension is precisely that common space and that place of civilization, sharing and peace, which can mark the history of the world. European Territorial Cooperation represents the optimal level for experimenting new development practices, for improving public policies, developing common planning tools and transferring good practices. European Territorial Cooperation acquires a central role as the engine of local development policies.

The Mitomed+ project has shown that sustainability and competitiveness are not opposed strategies, rather they are intrinsically linked. Social dialogue, informed decision-making and the measurement of tourism phenomena are essential elements of a public policy action that wants to keep together economic development, environmental and social sustainability, the attention to individual territorial identities. The important results and products of the project that are reported in this booklet will effectively contribute to the design of a new common Mediterranean strategy for Maritime and Coastal (M&C) tourism.

The MITOMED+ project, led by the Tuscany Region, allowed an in-depth analysis of the governance and policies tools for Maritime and Coastal tourism (M&C). The Tuscan regional policies on tourism are embedding the MITOMED+ results and methods in their strategic instruments.

**Stefano Ciuoffo**

*Councillor for productive activities, credit, tourism  
and trade of the Tuscany Region*

**MITOMED+ Models of Integrated Tourism in the MEDiterranean Plus** is an **Interreg MED** funded project that has supported regions in developing responsible and sustainable maritime and coastal (M&C) tourism in the Mediterranean area.





## Main actions

MITOMED+ has focused on the improvement of public policies, the implementation of joint planning tools, the development of action plans and the transfer of good practices through the following types of action:

- The development of a **system of indicators** and of an **online common open platform** for the observation and monitoring of social and environmental impacts of M&C tourism
- The promotion of **social dialogue** with local and regional stakeholders through meetings and workshops aiming at sharing information and knowledge about the management of M&C tourism
- The creation of a '**Green Beach**' **model** for the sustainable management of beaches, designed and built according to sustainable criteria, that can sustain leisure and economic activities while , at the same time, preserving natural and cultural heritage
- The production of practical documentation that can be used for transferring the project's know-how (the indicators system's tool box, the list of green beach criteria, performance reports and guidelines ecc)
- The organisation of regional capacity building events and three EU level conferences to extend results to other tourism destinations, both inside and outside the project's partnership
- The development of an integrated **MED M&C management** model that capitalises the MITOMED+ results and those of other EU funded and MED projects





## Main outputs

- **The Tourism Data Indicators Toolkit and Manual of Transfer of Best Practices** to learn more about the development, implementation and use of sustainable tourism indicators
- **The Green Beach Model Toolkit** to make better informed decisions about managing beaches in a sustainable way.
- **The MITOMED+ M&C Tourism Management Model** to assure the tourism sustainability and gain competitive advantage, increasing the benefits tourism brings to the territory and the local community
- **The Memorandum of Understanding** to ensure the continuity of the transnational and multi-stakeholder dynamic of cooperation initiated by the MITOMED+ project

## Main achievements

- **26 M&C tourism destinations** testing the indicators system with the aim to measure the sustainability level and plan development policies for improving the overall social and environmental impacts of tourism activities
- **12 M&C tourism destinations** located in Tuscany, Catalunya, Cyprus and Istria implementing the Green Beach Model in public beaches
- **25 Destination Management Organisations** signing the Memorandum of Understanding, and committing to implement the **MITOMED+ M&C Management Model**



## **About the MITOMED+ M&C Management Model**

**A**long the lines of the running and emerging macro-regional strategies and sea basin initiatives promoted by the EU and Mediterranean Partner Countries, it is paramount to foster and substantiate cooperation tools that can make the actions taken by coastal Administrations more efficient in dealing with coastal integrated management and protection, maritime space management, adaptation to climate change, along the way of sustainable development.

**The MITOMED+ M&C Management Model** aims to improve sustainable and responsible maritime and coastal tourism planning in the Mediterranean area through a series of recommendations, tools and practices based on the work and **results of the MITOMED+ project**, the CPMR-IMC and NECSTouR policy works, and the Interreg MED Sustainable Tourism Community's results.

## WHY DESTINATIONS SHOULD IMPLEMENT THE MANAGEMENT MODEL?

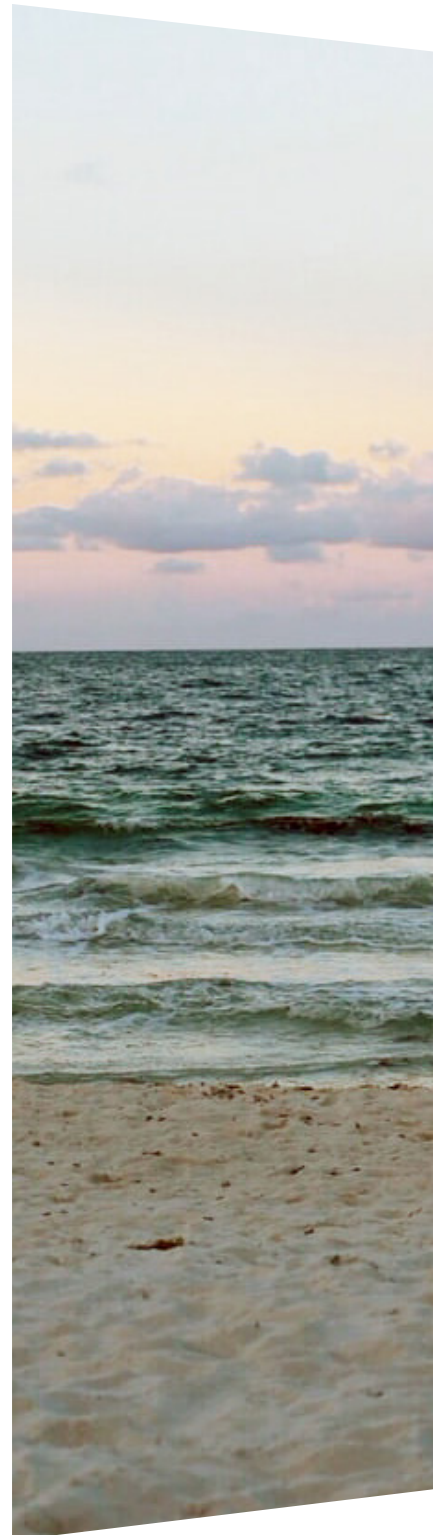
In order to better manage the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism, all entities and stakeholders of Sustainable Tourism should implement an integrated multi-governance approach that supports more expert planning and informed decision making.

The main reasons for implementing a management model should be (UNWTO, 2007:9):

- Ensuring tourism sustainability;
- Establishing a competitive edge;
- Spreading the benefits of tourism;
- Improving tourism yield;
- Building a strong and vibrant brand identity

## WHO SHOULD IMPLEMENT THE MANAGEMENT MODEL?

- Destination Management Organisations (DMOs)
- Public authorities at all levels
- Coastal and Maritime Protected Areas management organisations
- Stakeholders from the tourism private sector
- Representatives from the academia, tourism and environmental sector experts







## **THE VISION OF THE MODEL**

The vision for the Sustainable Management of Tourism Destinations pivots on believing that:

***Tourism planning certainly holds the key to the sustainable management of a tourism destination.***

Wilson, J. - BleuTourMed (2019) Governance as a Tool for Sustainable and Responsible Tourism in the Mediterranean Region. Interreg Mediterranean, June 2019.

***Governance directly affects whether – and how – real progress is made toward securing the economic, socio-cultural and environmental goals of sustainable tourism development. In the Mediterranean context, tourism destinations have much to gain from adopting a sustainable governance approach, whereby tourism is understood as part of a broader urban or regional ecosystem and the tourism destination is conceived of as a quality place to live, work and visit.***

Conaghan, A., Hanrahan, J. and McLoughlin, E. (2015) A Model for the Transition Towards the Sustainable Management of Tourism Destinations in Ireland, International Journal for Responsible Tourism, pp.103-122..



## HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE MODEL

According to the MITOMED+ M&C Tourism Management Model, the Mediterranean Tourist destinations, must create and implement an integrated **Sustainable Tourism Development Strategic Plan** to achieve economic development for residents without putting at risk their wellbeing and the tangible and intangible elements of their environment, whether natural or cultural.

This entails following **5 FUNDAMENTAL STEPS** to be taken by the stakeholders of the tourism destinations:

### STEP 1: Leading a collaborating structure

The destination management process needs a “sustainable overtime” form of structure of people discussing, collaborating and executing what is decided.

Stakeholders need to be identified a destination development group and partnerships should be established and transformed in a **Destination Management Organization** (DMO) characterised by:

- A mix of public and private stakeholders
- A stable structure empowered legally and securing funds
- Multi-dimensional, based locally but connected to origin markets and knowledge hubs
- In charge of joint definition of the strategy and its implementation, monitoring and evaluation

## STEP 2: Carrying out an assessment of the destinations

As part of this step the following elements need to be assessed by the DMO with the collaboration of numerous stakeholders to find out the starting point of the destination in the journey towards sustainability:

- **Supply and demand analysis**
- **Analysis of existing tourism policies, strategic and marketing plans**
- **Implementing MITOMED+ Indicators to assess the starting point of the destination**
- **Analysis of current trends and risks**

The **results of this assessment need to be communicated to all stakeholders** to assure the **ownership** over the starting point and the steps ahead in the sustainability journey.

## STEP 3: Developing a shared vision with an accompanying budget and timeframe

How do we want our destination to be in 5,10,20 years from now? Step 3 defines an inclusive process among destination stakeholders to define the destination they desire to live and work in:

- **A shared sustainable vision for the tourism destination has to be discussed and agreed through social dialogue and participatory processes that involve all stakeholders**
- **A budget and timeframe for immediate, short term and long-term execution has to be defined and allocated**

## **STEP 4: Formulation, consultation and approval of the Sustainable Tourism Development Strategic Plan**

During the Step 4 the DMO formulates, consults and approves the multi-year Strategy based on five pillars: **governance, competitiveness, innovation, sustainability and inclusion**.

The Sustainable Tourism Development Plan needs to address:

- **Planning and Managing through an inclusive and multi-level governance approach that delineates priorities and addresses all dimensions of M&C tourism destination management**
- **Social sustainability to assure decent jobs, gender equality and opportunity, inclusion of people with disabilities, valorise local communities and identity amongst others**
- **Education, Research and Innovation to share knowledge and information, increase skill set locally, research best practices and identify the right demand**
- **Supply competitiveness and Environmental sustainability**
- **Measuring of the situation of the destination and its supply and demand offer**
- **Finances and Economic sustainability, including adequate distribution of the income and spreading benefits for the territory and local communities**

## **STEP 5: Monitoring and evaluating**

Sustainable development of tourism is a continuous process, and as such it is of particular importance a continuous monitoring, to then evaluate and communicate how actions are to be taken to amend or mitigate any issue that emerges.

Monitoring and evaluating entails two **intertwined processes**:

- **Indicators of the Sustainable Tourism Development Plan, to monitor how the implementation is going, actions accomplished, issues that emerged, solutions that were found, etc;**
- **Sustainable measurement of the destination: destination as a whole, environmental, social and economic indicators using the MITOMED+ set of 33 indicators**





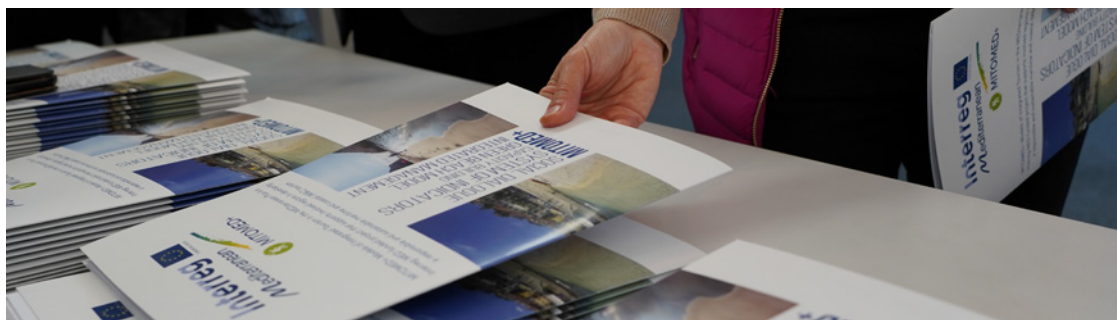
# **MITOMED+ MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

## **TOWARDS A MORE SUSTAINABLE MARITIME AND COASTAL TOURISM**

The conclusions derived from MITOMED+ actions form the basis for the **Memorandum of Understanding**.

The objective of the Memorandum is to ensure the continuity of the transnational and multi- stakeholder dynamic of cooperation initiated by the MITOMED+ project, financed by the European Programme Interreg Mediterranean.

The future cooperation envisaged by the Memorandum is aimed at engaging in this effort not only the project partners but also other regions, destinations and stakeholders that are invited to sign the document and implement the MITOMED+ M&C Management Model in their territories in order to promote the development of a favourable ecosystem for the implementation of interventions of sustainable integrated tourism development.



Signatories must adhere to its overall philosophy and commit to its provisions in order to amplify its impact at all levels:

- **Consider the philosophy, the aim and recommendations of MITOMED+ described in its Memorandum of Understanding, as well as its long-term vision based on its outcomes**
- **Increase knowledge and social dialogue regarding the development of sustainable and responsible M&C tourism in its own reference area or territory**
- **Adopt a Mediterranean M&C tourism management model inspired by MITOMED+ proposal that can provide to the Signatories efficient and concrete tools of management**
- **Disseminate and transfer the Green Beach Model to its own area or other destinations of the Mediterranean area**
- **Improve M&C decision-making and tourism planning at destination level, using the tools produced by MITOMED+**
- **Mainstream its results into local, regional and national policies and foster coordination at all levels**
- **Position its destination, by improving its quality and sustainability**

Now it is time for the Destinations to join forces. To any Coastal and Maritime Destination from the Mediterranean, and beyond, interested in improving its sustainability performance, MITOMED+ offers the opportunity to use the tools mentioned above and sign a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the MED Coastal and Maritime tourism management model.





## **PROJECT PARTNERS:**

**Tuscany Region - Lead partner - ITALY**

ANCI Toscana - Association of Tuscan Municipalities - ITALY

National Research Council - Institute of Bioeconomy - ITALY

Institute of Agriculture and Tourism - CROATIA

Larnaca-Famagusta District Development Agency - CYPRUS

CRPM - Conference of peripheral maritime regions of Europe - FRANCE

Public Enterprise for the Management of Tourism  
and Sport of Andalusia - SPAIN

Girona University - SPAIN

NECSTouR - Network of European Regions for a Sustainable  
and Competitive Tourism - BELGIUM

The project is co-financed by the Interreg MED programme, through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The Interreg MED Programme gathers 13 European countries from the Northern shore of the Mediterranean that are working together for a sustainable growth in the region.

**[www.mitomedplus.interreg-med.eu](http://www.mitomedplus.interreg-med.eu)**



Project co-financed by the European  
Regional Development Fund

## **Models of Integrated Tourism in the MEDiterranean Plus**



For further information check the web site:

**<https://mitomed-plus.interreg-med.eu/what-we-do/>**