

MITOMED+ Final Conference

Livorno - 03 December 2019

Press release

Livorno, 10 December 2019

The final conference of the Interreg MED Project MITOMED+ (Models of Integrated Tourism in the MEDiterranean Plus), held last week in the City of Livorno in Tuscany showcased the main project results, and opened a discussion on the future policies for the sustainability of maritime and coastal tourism.

The event was attended by more than 70 local and regional policy makers, destination managers, business support organisations and representatives from academic and private sectors.

During the opening session the **Councilor for Tourism of the Municipality of Livorno, Rocco Garufo** stressed how *"the challenge of tourism sustainability remains a priority in the Mediterranean area, made up of precious and delicate cities and territories that preserve a rich natural and cultural heritage. If well addressed it can become a great opportunity for innovation and economic recovery, with a view to sustainable development from an environmental economic and social point of view"*.

Mr Patrick Torrent, the President of NECSTouR spoke about the potential impact of MITOMED+ results at wider EU level and added: *"As network representing the European regional tourism managers, we will work hard to disseminate the knowledge of this project and to position the importance of sustainable tourism policies to contribute towards the European Green Deal priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030"*.

During the first panel, project partners discussed about the impact of MITOMED+ project on MED territory. The project, whose general objective was to create a system to measure the impact of maritime and coastal tourism, and use the results to plan, monitor and build tourism development policies, has ended with various concrete realizations tested through pilot actions at local level: a monitoring platform for indicators linked to sustainable maritime and coastal destinations, a model of green beaches and a model of management of sustainable maritime and coastal tourist destinations.

The second panel was dedicated to the capitalization of project results, bringing upfront the main problematics of the M&C Tourism and solutions delivered by the project. **Mr Emmanuel Maniscalco** from **CPMR** presented briefly the project final output, the **MITOMED+ M&C Tourism Model**, that aims to improve sustainable and responsible maritime and coastal tourism planning in the Mediterranean area, through a series of recommendations, tools and practices in line with EU policies and UNWTO objectives, to: *"ensure tourism sustainability, establish a competitive edge, spread the benefits of tourism, improve tourism yield and build a strong and vibrant brand identity"*.

In this occasion, the political decision makers at all levels have been invited to sign a **Memorandum of Understanding** to implement the MITOMED+ model according to their competences and in their territories in order to promote the development of a favorable ecosystem for the implementation of interventions of sustainable integrated tourism development.

Among the first signatories, in addition to the project partners, the Puglia Region through the regional strategic Agency for the sustainable development of the territory, (ASSET), the Municipality of Giovinazzo and the Municipality of Vieste in Puglia.

The Councilor for Tourism and Productive Activities of Tuscany Region Stefano Ciuoffo closed the conference by thanking the partnership for the work built over the years, characterized by a method of confrontation and sharing by all involved stakeholders. The role of leader that Tuscany Region has played in the project has enabled a deepening of tourism policies - such as the theme of the coast, its enhancement, sustainability declined as environmental, social and economic sustainability - by adopting both the method and the outputs of the MITOMED + project in its disciplinary regulatory framework. The global dimension of the Mediterranean leads to the creation of coherent political instruments that give back to the territory a sharing of values as well as a good economy.

The councilor also stressed the importance of the Mediterranean as a common space, a place of civilization, sharing and peace that can mark the history of the world: *"It is an ambitious narrative, but I am convinced that even singular projects, if integrated into sustainable development policies, constitute a brick on which to build our future important projects"*.

The event was co-organised by the Lead Partner **Tuscany Region**, with other Tuscan partners, the Association of Tuscan Municipalities - **ANCI Toscana** and the National Research Council - Institute for Bioeconomy - **CNR IBE**, with the support of MITOMED+ partnership.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

MITOMED+ is a European Project that focuses on public policies for the sustainable development of maritime and coastal tourism. It develops evaluation and planning tools to help tourist destinations to improve their sustainability levels.

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.

More info: <https://mitomed-plus.interreg-med.eu/> | mitomed@regione.toscana.it