

Sustainable Coastal & Maritime Tourism Play Central Role in the European Parliament Debate

Brussels, 19 November 2018 – *The International Workshop 'Towards Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism Communities' held recently at the European Parliament in Brussels, in the framework of the Interreg MED Project MITOMED+ (Models of Integrated Tourism in the MEDiterranean Plus), concluded with a renewed call for community participation to improve the sustainability performance of coastal and maritime destinations.*

The event was attended by more than 150 destination managers, professionals and regional policy makers, representatives from the academic and private sectors, as well as well as representatives from the main European Institutions and the World Tourism Organisation. It was an opportunity to share existing good practices, expertise and inspiration to achieve sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism in the Mediterranean and beyond.

Various Members of European Parliament - from different intergroups, political parties and countries – brought their political messages and agreed on the necessity for greater cooperation at the European level to achieve sustainable coastal and maritime tourism.

Hosting Member of the European Parliament of the morning session, Mr **Ivan JAKOVČIĆ**, spoke of his Region, Istria (Croatia) as an example to follow: *“Already 20 years ago we built our tourism strategy around the sustainable development of our territory. Today, thanks to this work, the Region can offer not only sun and sea, but also a well-balanced range of products.”*

See the video at this link: https://youtu.be/Blmfwnt_tPQ

Mr **István UJHELYI**, Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's Committee of Transport and Tourism and Chairman of the Tourism Task Force, echoed these words and added: *“We have to realise how important the tourism sector is for the European Economy; this requires a bigger support from the European Institutions. This is why I am here today.”*

See the video at this link: <https://youtu.be/6TxowbxpCko>

The Vice-Chair of the European Parliament Intergroup on Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas (SEARICA) Mr **Tonino PICULA** spoke about this Intergroup's work - in particular for the islanders - at the European Parliament: *“The new Secretariat for the Islands started in June with a very important project on energy transition towards clean sources of energy for the sustainability for the European islands.”*

See the video at this link: https://youtu.be/fl_53OatSTk

The Member of the European Parliament and of SEARICA Intergroup Mr **Alfred SANT** underlined: *“Coordination is necessary on many issues related with tourism. Such coordination needs benchmarking based on reliable data to assess negative and positive outcomes. In this respect, the work of the MITOMED+ project – aimed at studying Models of Integrated Coastal and Maritime Sustainable Tourism – is extremely prized.”*

See the video at this link: <https://youtu.be/8pBOW9nPKrY>

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 event was co-organised by two of the most important European Regional Networks devoted to Tourism and Maritime Affairs: the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and the Network of European Regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (NECSTouR).

NECSTouR - Network of European Regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism - brings together 36 regions of Europe with a strong competency in tourism, as well as tourism-related academic organisations and representatives of sustainable and responsible tourism business associations and networks from Europe.
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CPMR - The Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions brings together some 160 Regions from 25 States from the European Union and beyond. Representing about 200 million people. The Inter-Mediterranean Commission (IMC) expresses the shared interests of Mediterranean Regions in important European negotiations and encompasses the issues raised in all the Regions bordering the Mediterranean Sea.
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MITOMED+ 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.
<https://mitomed-plus.interreg-med.eu/> | mitomed@regione.toscana.it