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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Co-Evolve4BG



Co-Evolve4BG

Co-evolution of coastal human activities & Med natural systems for sustainable tourism & Blue Growth in the Mediterranean

The EU-funded project entitled: "Co-evolution of coastal human activities & Med natural systems for supportable tourism & Blue Growth in the Mediterranean with the acronym "Co-Evolve4BG", is led by the National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (Tunisia) and the following eight (8) partners - beneficiaries: (a) Region of Lazio (Italy), (b) Region of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace (Greece), (c) University of Murcia (Spain), (d) Valenciaport Foundation (Spain), (e) National Agency for Environmental Protection (Tunisia), (f) Ministry of Public Works and Public Transport (Lebanon), (g) Al Midan NGO (Lebanon) and (h) AMWAJ Environment NGO (Lebanon).

Co-Evolve4BG has undergone an analysis at Mediterranean scale that aims at assessing and promoting the co-evolution of human activities and natural systems in touristic coastal areas, allowing sustainable development of touristic activities based on the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)/Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and promoting Blue Growth.

Co-Evolve4BG elaborates and implements its Participatory approach.

To ensure the ownership of the action plans developed in the Participatory approach, which constitute a suitable basis for their implementation; the (INSTM) has recruited an “International Facilitator” on behalf of all partners. In order to support the project partners in implementing a participatory approach in each of the pilot areas, designed to bring together partners and local stakeholders and collectively identify actions to increase the sustainability of local activities.

The chosen international facilitator was a French company: [Stratégies Mer and Littoral \(SML\)](#)

Participatory approach – phase 1

During the summer of 2022, the SML team developed a methodological concept for the coordinated implementation of a participatory approach in the 7 pilot areas, (Sousse (Tunisia), Djerba (Tunisia), Circeo (Italy), Alexandroupoli and Samothraki (Greece), Murcia (Spain), Batroun (Lebanon), Tyre (Lebanon).) based on the core principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM):

- Horizontal integration: associating stakeholders from all categories (economic stakeholders, decision-makers, civil society and NGOs, scientists, etc.)
- Vertical integration: associating stakeholders from all relevant levels (from local to national)
- Temporal integration: looking for long-term solutions.

With the ultimate objective to run participatory workshops in each of the pilot areas and produce locally shared action plans, a team of 6 local facilitators was assembled under the SML flag, selected for their expertise on coastal problematics, their ability to facilitate forward-looking workshops, and to manoeuvre between English and respective local languages.

Participatory approach – phase 2

Between October and December 2022, a set of 8 online trainings were organised to progressively **develop the skills of the project partners’ teams and the local facilitators in designing integrated coastal plans** and bring them to the same level of understanding of the approach objectives, concepts and modalities.

The first training, held on October 6th, 2022, gathered the complete team of partners and facilitators for a 3-hour general introduction aiming to:

- Provide an understanding of the special nature and context of the coastal zone and of the demands made upon its resources, with a focus on the challenges of a sustainable and resilient coastal tourism in the Mediterranean and in pilot areas, including climate change adaptation and interaction with other sectors.
- Provide concepts, policy design, methodology, tools and techniques for ICZM and associated approaches (Maritime Spatial Planning, Land-Sea Interactions, Blue Economy, Maritime and Coastal Capital, Ecosystem-Approach and Ecosystem services).



Screenshot of the online general introductory training - 06/10/2022.

In the following months, the introductory training was rolled out in each of the 7 pilot areas in the form of online site-specific introductory training. On the basis of studies developed in the frame of the Co-Evolve4BG project, and provided by the local partners, these trainings focused on the preponderant issues and challenges of each pilot area, allowing to collectively confirm the main topics to be tackled, and then identify the most appropriate facilitation tools (mapping of actors, collaborative tools, mediation, etc.).



Screenshot of the online site-specific introductory training in Murcia – 18/11/2022

Participatory approach – phase 3

Between January and May 2023, the mission took its final shape with the organization of face-to-face workshops with local stakeholders in each of the pilot sites, and the elaboration of collaborative action plans for more sustainable and resilient territories across the Mediterranean.

A closer view of the workshops of the Participatory Approach: Bringing together the different stakeholders.

The workshops aimed at bringing together the stakeholders around a common understanding of the challenges and issues of the area, a shared vision for their future, and at collectively identifying actions supporting the vision to increase the sustainability and resilience of the local activities and community, with a special focus on coastal and maritime tourism.

Overall, these workshops offered the opportunity for hundreds of Mediterranean stakeholders to contribute to the development of action plans for a more sustainable local tourism in their region.



Group picture of the participants in Batroun's participatory workshop – 15/04/2023

Every workshop was divided into two mid-day sessions.

The first session, as an introduction, aimed to bring together stakeholders around a common understanding of:

- The objectives of the Co-Evolve4BG project and the interests of the participatory approach are underway.
- The challenges and issues of coastal tourism in the area and their integration into existing local, national, and regional frameworks.
- The most fitted tools for reflection, management and planning that can be mobilised for a more sustainable and resilient coastal tourism.
- The type of actions that could be set for a more sustainable and resilient coastal tourism in the area.
- The methodology and rules of the following session.

After a series of presentations by the project partner, the local facilitator, and relevant local experts, the participants were split into subgroups and invited to react to the territorial diagnosis by filling out a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for their pilot area.



Subgroup of participants working on the site SWOT analysis in Tyre, Lebanon - 26/04/2023

The second session then specifically focused on the development of action plans. Split into groups of 5 to 10 people, the participants were invited to fill out blank action plans by proposing actions for a more sustainable territory, defining their levels of priority (short, mid and long term), pointing out potential leaders, indicators, etc.



Group of participants working on the action plan for Alexandroupolis & Samothraki, Greece - 25/04/2023

Co-Evolve4BG

Co-Evolve4BG General Toolkit

Action plan proposal for a more sustainable tourism in Alexandroupoli and Samothraki

Theme	Operational Objective	Actions	Term*	Leader
Sustainable tourism and blue growth	The regulation of the coastal zone	Action 1.1: Impact analysis (economy, environment, society)	Very short / Short	REMTH
		Action 1.2: Participatory workshops and open calls for the creation of an ICZM organisation in regional level in the beginning	Very short / Short	REMTH
		Action 1.3: Creation of an ICZM organisation	Very short / Short	REMTH/ ALL STAKEHOLDERS
	Better management in hotels and accommodation in Samothraki	Action 2.1: Description of the current situation in the island and understanding of the problem	Mid	
		Action 2.2: Specific requirements for the new accommodation houses in the island	Mid	Municipality / other public authorities
	Better use of the coastal zone	Action 3.1: Understanding of the current uses of the coastal zones	Mid	
		Action 3.2: Coordination and stricter requirements for the coastal use. Diminishing the heavy uses or interventions	Mid	
	Management of seaweed from the lagoon	Action 4.1: Giving motivation to the local enterprises to produce from the seaweed / algae.	Mid	REMTH

Example - Extract from the participatory action plan for Alexandroupolis & Samothraki, Greece - 25/04/2023

The workshops were concluded with a wrap-up session, allowing subgroups of participants to present and share their results, followed by concluding words from the local partners, opening up the future of the project and beyond.

NEXT STEPS OF THE PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

In every pilot area, the inputs from local stakeholders are astonishing and show a strong awareness of local challenges, be they environmental, economic, or social, and of their interconnectedness.

It will now be the challenging responsibility of local partners to set the basis for the implementation of these crucial action plans, within and beyond the frame of the Co-Evolve4BG project, hopefully supported by local actors more committed and motivated than ever.

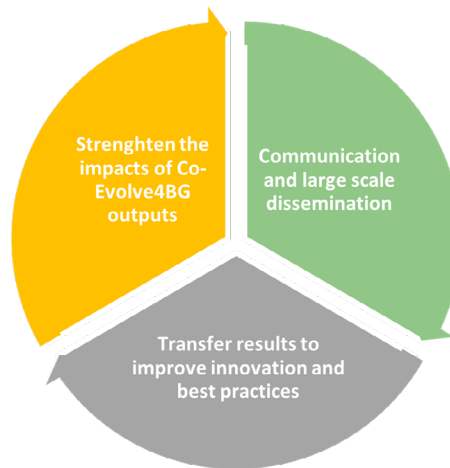
[A closer view of the Transferability Plan. A key tool for the development of the project Co-Evolve4BG](#)

The Transferability Plan is a tool for sharing and disseminating the acquired knowledge. It summarizes the main findings on the Threats and Weaknesses as well as the Enabling Factors that were so diligently collected and processed by the stakeholders from each pilot area of the Co-Evolve4BG project. The Transferability Plan aims at supporting the ongoing dissemination of projects' outcomes and results at local, regional, national and international levels and also increase awareness among practitioners and experts. Consequently, the global conversation will promote the exchange of ideas, developing critical thinking and disseminating best practices across the Mediterranean and/or transnationally.

Focusing on the utilization of the results of the research and study conducted by each pilot area of the Co-Evolve4BG project, the Transferability Plan reinforces the creation and successful promotion of strong and long-term network relationships at the national and Mediterranean scale:

- At the national level: the goal is to transfer Co-Evolve4BG experience, with its lesson learnt and good practices, to other local and regional authorities.
- At the Mediterranean level: the objective is to transfer the experience in other countries too.

Transferability plans' expectations



Content of the Transferability Plan

Brief description of the results of the Co-Evolve4BG project regarding the Threats and Enabling Factors and the Toolkit. Detailed information about the Toolkit and the Threats and Enabling Factors was published in the previous [Newsletter 4](#). There is also a brief description of best practices from international programs presenting similar goals:

- Transferability strategy, identifying the target audiences and the outputs capitalization
- Proposed actions, including the creation of a Horizontal Organization which will lead to better communication among the different stakeholders of the organization.
- Furthermore; employees will have more autonomy and responsibility and also they may feel more motivated and thus more productive.
- The strengthening of participation, publications, and presentations etc.

The proposed structure of the Transferability Plan



The Transferability Plan is an ongoing process trying to facilitate cooperation between the participating countries at the Mediterranean scale. The real implementation of the project in the Mediterranean is still being developed and professionals from many coastal and marine disciplines are working together in a full-extended framework of coordination. The impacts of the Transferability Plan may also be extended to serve the needs highlighted by the Co-Evolve 4BG project in the mid-and long-term implementation.

NEWS



16 May 2023

[Co-Evolve4BG meets local actors in Tyre \(Lebanon\) for a training workshop for sustainable marine tourism.](#)

The workshop had the purpose of establishing a dialogue that boosts the applicability of the tools and mechanisms design for achieving a sustainable tourism and blue growth..



12 May 2023

[Co-Evolve4BG participates in the event "Towards a more sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean" which took place in Florence, Italy.](#)

Organized by Interreg programs: Interreg Italy-France Maritime, Interreg NEXTMed and Interreg Euro-MED in Florence on 4th May 2023.



12 May 2023

[Co-Evolve4BG in Greece gathers different experts in a workshop on blue growth and sustainable tourism in Alexandroupoli.](#)

The workshop's objective was the drafting an action plan in order to promote sustainable tourism and blue growth.

[More News](#)

RECENTS EVENTS



[Co-Evolve4BG meets local actors in Tyre \(Lebanon\) for a training workshop for sustainable marine tourism.](#)

Within the framework of the Co-Evolve4BG project, which includes partners from Tunisia, Lebanon, Italy, Spain and Greece, with the aim of developing coastal human activities, natural systems, sustainable tourism and blue development in the Mediterranean; "AMWAJ of the environment" NGO, in cooperation with Tyre Municipality and Tyre Beach Reserve, organized a training workshop on 26 April 2023 to present and discuss studies, priorities and proposals for a strategic plan to develop sustainable marine tourism that respects the environment.

With the participation of 88 people including representatives of stakeholders in government departments, fishermen and civil society organizations to determine strengths and weaknesses and propose appropriate mechanisms to strengthen and activate efforts for sustainable ecotourism and blue development.

President of "AMWAJ", Eng. Malek Ghandour, opened the workshop, noting the local and Mediterranean partnership, especially with the National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (INSTM) from Tunisia, and the support of the ENI CBC Med Programme for environmental conservation in the Mediterranean basin through these projects and activities aimed at forming public opinion, pressure forces, and working groups to preserve the sea Mediterranean from pollution and strive to develop coastal management, sustainable tourism and blue development, leading to an integrated management of the Mediterranean coasts.

He welcomed the participants in this training workshop, which relies on the participatory approach in order to compare the proposed goals, mechanisms, initiatives and mechanisms of action for a sustainable marine tourism that respects the environment.

Representative of the Tyre municipality, **Mr. Ahmad Faraj**, welcomed the participants and this training activity, which is added to the long and fruitful record between AMWAJ and the municipality of Tyre in the participatory work for the good management of the coasts and the cultural and environmental heritage of the city of Tyre. He praised the prominent role of AMWAJ in establishing the Tyre Reserve and participating in its management.

Director of Tyre coast Reserve, **Dr. Ali Badereddine**, praised the joint efforts between AMWAJ, the Tyre Beach Reserve and the municipality of Tyre, and considered this workshop a necessary need and an important auxiliary factor for establishing a strategic plan of action for Tyre Beach Reserve, the area surrounding the north and south of the city, to integrate protection factors, sustainable management of beaches, and the preservation of marine life. He thanked AMWAJ for this initiative and noted the important support from ENI CBC Med.

The organizers welcomed the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon, UNEP and IUCN in order to assess environmental practices in Tyre Beach Protected Area. Co-Evolve4BG meets local actors in Tyre (Lebanon) for a training workshop for sustainable marine tourism.

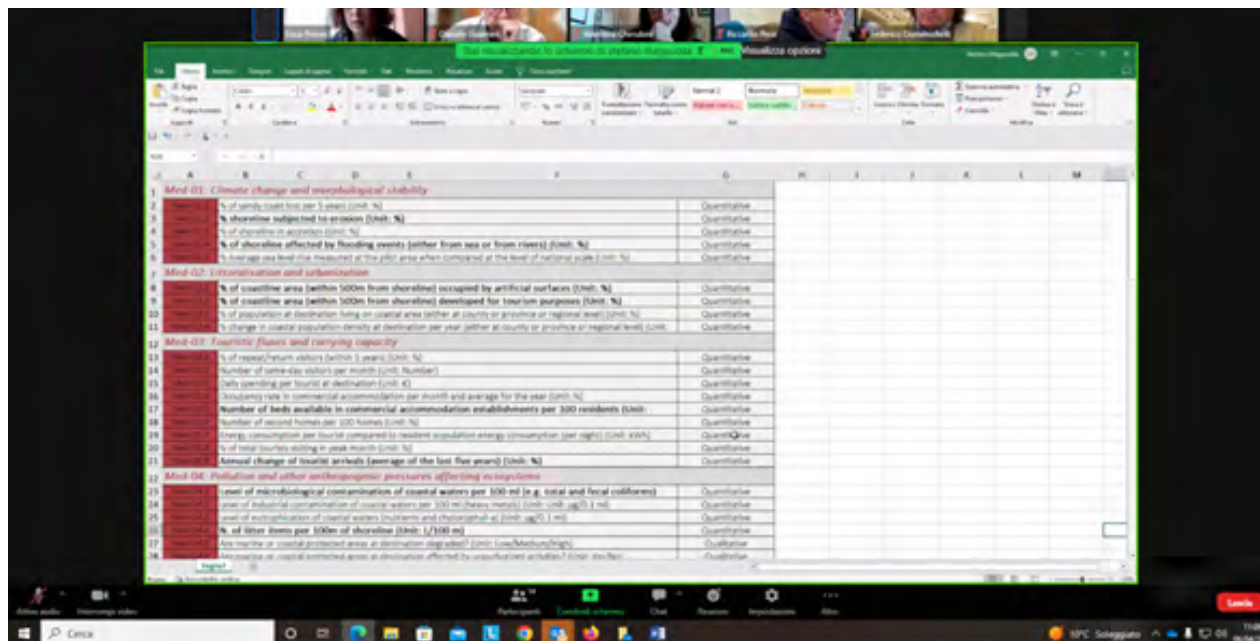


Co-Evolve4BG in Greece gathers different experts in a workshop on blue growth and sustainable tourism in Alexandroupoli.

On the 27th of April 2023, the Region and Eastern Makedonia and Thrace (REMTH), Greek partner of Co-Evolve4BG, organised a participatory training/workshop in Alexandroupoli. Around 10 attendees with different backgrounds and expertise participated in this event. The main objective of the event was to draft an action plan to promote sustainable tourism and blue growth in Alexandroupoli and Samothraki (pilot areas of the project) and to present the transferability plan and discuss about how to transfer the results of the project.

The participatory workshop was developed in two different pillars, fixed at a previous stage at the local scale. Those pillars include threats like pollution, climate change and erosion and key opportunities such as sustainable tourism. During the event, the participants were informed about the Integrated Coastal Zone Management, and they requested to collaborate and discuss the weaknesses, opportunities, and threats concerning the three axes in Alexandroupoli and Samothraki.

Based on the results of the previous action, the participants worked together to draft an action plan later the same day. The results of that activity highlighted the need for creating a horizontal participatory organisation dedicated to Integrated Coast Zone Management ICZM. In this organisation, actors, and experts, both private and public, should participate to better monitor, manage, and program the activities in the coastal zones.



Co-Evolve4BG in Italy: Lazio Region meets local actors to assess the sustainability of tourism in the Circeo UNESCO – MAB Reserve and National Park.

On the 6th of April 2023, the regional Tourism Department of Lazio Region organized a virtual workshop involving selected local actors including Circeo National Park authority, local municipalities, the Chamber of Commerce and tourism administrations in order to share and integrate the assessment tool developed in the context of Co-Evolve4BG project for the development of sustainable coastal and maritime tourism.

During the meeting the participants were asked to vote the macro themes identified by the project in order to evaluate the most significant ones to represent the characteristics, threats and opportunities to reduce the impacts of human activities and to balance tourism and environmental protection in the pilot area.

The results of the survey are expected in a week and will be used in the next activities of the project.

Two more workshops will be held in May, possibly in presence, involving a wider number of local stakeholders aiming at developing an action plan including the local ongoing initiatives of mitigation and adaptation and at the same time identifying concrete actions for the promotion of sustainable tourism in the Circeo National Park and UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserve area.



Co-Evolve4BG in Tunisia involves local stakeholders in the promotion of sustainable coastal and maritime tourism.

On the 2nd and 3rd March 2023, the Institut National des Sciences et Technologies de la Mer (INSTM), the lead beneficiary of Co-Evolve4BG, organized a participatory training/workshop in Djerba. Attendees with different backgrounds and expertise including representative of municipalities, Minister of Transport, Minister of Tourism, Environmental Agencies, Maritime Cluster of Tunisia, NGOs, scientists and experts...) participated in this event. The event aimed to draft a strategic action plan aiming to promote sustainable coastal/maritime tourism in Djerba. To reach this objective, a participatory approach was adopted.

During the event, discussions were focused on 3 priority axes, which were fixed at prior step based on the results of the threats & enabling factors analysis at Djerba scale and the feedback of the local actors during the previous events held in the context of Co-Evolve4BG. The selected priority axes include:

- Climate change and erosion;
- Transport & accessibility; and
- Best practices to promote coastal/maritime tourism.

During the event, these priority axes were discussed while taking into consideration their relation (impact/effect on) with the coastal/maritime tourism in Djerba. Thus, during the first session a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was carried out to identify and analyze each priority axe's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation with coastal/maritime tourism in Djerba. Later, during the second session and based on the SWOT results, strategic action plans –to promote coastal/maritime tourism in Djerba- were identified by the local actors.

Based on the results of this event, a draft of action plans will be elaborated and shared with the local actors and experts to be more refined. At further step, conventions will be signed with the designated authorities who will adopt/implement the Action Plans in the context of further initiatives.

The event was a great success and led to a fruitful exchange of ideas. In addition, in the context of extending the project outputs and approach beyond the project pilot areas, the list of participants included a representative from the Municipality of Carthage and a representative from the "MEGARA des villes durables intelligentes" association which represents a Tunisian municipalities network.



Co-Evolve4BG organised a participatory workshop in Murcia (Spain) on integrated coastal zone management and blue tourism.

On 25th May 2023, a workshop organized by the university of Murcia (UMU) in the framework of the Co-Evolve4BG project took place at the Auditorio y Palacio de Congresos El Batel, Cartagena (Murcia). It was attended by 31 people involved in sustainable tourism mainly from the region.

The workshop had several objectives, among which the following stand out:

1. To pave the way for the co-construction of action plans for sustainable practices in the tourism sector and in the blue economy in general in the region of Murcia;
2. Developing a participatory approach by involving in the construction of these action plans the different stakeholders (authorities, tourism operators and professionals, fisheries representatives and professionals, decision-makers and planners, NGOs, citizens) in the region of Murcia; and
3. to facilitate the transfer of the results obtained in the Co-Evolve4BG project.

It was carried out through two distinct sessions:

1. The first session aimed at introducing the context and diagnosis carried out in the project, gathering preliminary information on the specificities, opportunities, threats and/or governance in the region of Murcia and sharing a common vision. The information gathered was used to feed the following session.
 2. The second session aimed to identify, in a participatory way, potential priority initiatives and action plans, and who should carry them out, to increase the sustainability of actions related to tourism and the blue economy in the region of Murcia and to facilitate the transfer of the results obtained in the Co-Evolve4BG project.
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WE WERE THERE

- [Italy: Co-Evolve4BG participates in the event "Towards a more sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean "organized by the three Interreg programs: Interreg Italy-France Maritime, Interreg NEXT Med and Interreg Euro-MED in Florence on 4th May 2023.](#)

RECENTS EVENTS



7 th - 8 th | JUNE 2023

Event Tunisie:

1st European Breakthrough Conference on Blue Growth in Murcia Pilot Area

Assistants:

Local stakeholders

Meeting:

Edificio Pleiades. Campus de Espinardo. Universidad de Murcia



19 th - 20 th | JUNE 2023

Event Tunisie:

Steering Committee of the Project Co-Evolve4BG in Murcia Pilot Area

Assistants:

Partners

Meeting:

Hemicycle of the Facultad de Letras at the Merced campus of the University of Murcia, Spain



4 th | JULY 2023

Event Tunisie:

Transferability workshop in Djerba Pilot Area

Assistants:

Local stakeholders

Meeting:

Djerba, Tunisie



JULY 2023

Event Alexandroupolis:
Transferability workshop in Batroun Pilot Area

Assistants:
Local stakeholders

Meeting:
Batroun



20 th - 21 th | JULY 2023

Event Alexandroupolis:
Closure Event of the Project Co-Evolve4BG in Tunis Pilot Area

Assistants:
Local stakeholders

Meeting:
Tunis, Tunisie



Co-Evolve4BG

Partners:



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