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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 Closure Event: Celebrating Achievements and Building Futures

The National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies (INSTM) proudly organized the Co-Evolve4BG Closure event in Tunis, Tunisia, on October 25-26, 2023, hosted at El Mouradi Hotel. This event marked the culmination of a remarkable 4-year journey, focusing on the collaborative development of coastal human activities and Mediterranean natural systems. The project explored their intricate relationship with sustainable tourism and Blue Growth in the Mediterranean basin. During this event, we were honoured to have distinguished representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Transport, and Tourism, alongside representatives from partners and associated partners organizations, and local actors whose invaluable contributions shaped the project's evolution.

Opening of the Closure Event

The opening day featured insightful sessions led by influential figures such as Mr. Abdelmeneem Belaati, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources, and Fisheries, and Mrs. Leila Cheikhawi, Minister of Environment. Their speeches underscored the urgency of effective coastal management, integration of activities, and climate change adaptation at Tunisian level. The discussion emphasized the exchange of experiences and scientific research collaboration across Mediterranean countries. Furthermore, Mr. Vincent Ernoux (Coordinator of Branch Office for the Western Mediterranean – Interreg NEXT-MED Programme), Mrs. Adriana Salazar Olivan (representative from Water, Environment, and Blue Economy Division - Union for the Mediterranean), Mrs. Irene Morell Rodriguez (representative from the joint Technical Secretariat – ENI CBC Med Programme) and Mr. Béchir Béjaoui (Co-EvolveBG Genral Coordinator) shared valuable insights into the achievements of the Co-Evolve4BG project and the new opportunities it presents.



Exhibition of the main findings of Co-Evolve4BG:

The second day was dedicated to showcasing the fruits of Co-Evolve4BG's partners labour through a comprehensive exhibition featuring 14 stands. These displays encapsulated the project's findings, outputs, and achievements. The event served as a hub for sharing best practices and innovative approaches in coastal zone management and sustainable tourism development. Notable organizations, including Cluster Maritime Tunisian, Plastic Busters CAP Project, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics (OGS) and MEET Secretariat - Blue Tourism Initiative Partner and many others, shared their impactful work.

Co-Evolve4BG Awards:

In a spirit of recognition, the event featured two special awards:

- Co-Evolve4BG Sustainability Excellence Award:

Presented to Agence Nationale de Protection de l'Environnement (ANPE), Partner 5 in Co-Evolve4BG project, based on participants' votes, recognizing their outstanding contributions in disseminating best practices of Coastal Zone management in Sousse, Tunisia (Pilot Area 5).

- Co-Evolve4BG Sustainability Advocate Award:

Recognizing the most engaged participant during the day, Nihel BelGhji of "Groupement des Zrayeb de Djerba," elected by fellow exhibitors.



Building Bridges for the Future:

The event provided a unique platform for networking, fostering new connections, and strengthening existing partnerships. As we bid farewell to Co-Evolve4BG, we look forward to continued collaboration, innovative ventures, and a sustainable future in the Mediterranean region.

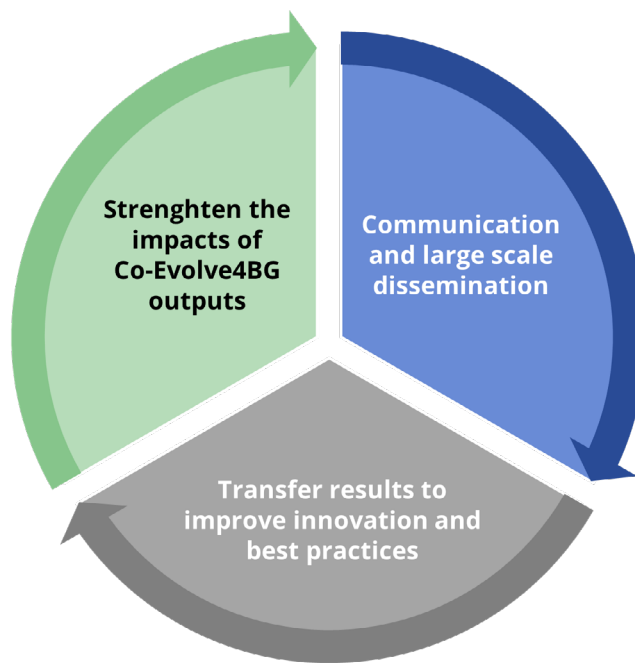
The Transferability Plan at Pilot Areas, Regional Scale and the Mediterranean Scale

The Transferability Plan at Pilot Areas, regional scale and Mediterranean scale of the Co-Evolve4BG project aims to coordinate the transfer and capitalization of knowledge, expertise, and tools developed in the framework of the project implementation

The Transferability Plan is a tool for sharing and disseminating the acquired knowledge. It reinforces the creation and successful promotion of strong and long-term network relationships at the national and Med scale and increases awareness among practitioners and experts.

The Transferability Plan succeeded the cooperation between stakeholders, securing the connectivity of all the partners, and, thus, serving as a prior strategy for the ongoing implementation of the Co-Evolve4BG project's results.

The Transferability Plan involved all types of potential end-users and stakeholders; Regional and National Authorities, Municipalities, NGOs/citizens, Scientists/Experts, tourism operators, associations, users, and donors. It targets on specific group of audiences; (a) Authorities, decision-makers, (b) Planners, experts, and (c) Specific target audiences with the vision of fulfilling their needs.



Target audience	Needs
<p>Polymakers: Local, National Med scale level (Coastal Municipalities, Ministries of environment, tourism, and development. DMOs</p>	<p>Being able to find brief and well-structured basic information about the project and in-depth information about the method and research findings potentially relevant to inform recommendations about development actions related to tourism and the environment</p>
<p>SMEs and tourism-related companies</p>	<p>Being able to get well-informed about the findings in relevant topics and implement actions in light of the findings and recommendations</p>
<p>Education community (schools, universities, and other educational contexts and organizations, etc.) and researchers/research institutions, regional authorities</p>	<p>Being able to find brief and/or in-depth and well-structured basic information about the project and in-depth information about resources related to the topic and the project method, pilots, research findings, such as scientific articles and reports, and information about participation in conferences and scientific events</p>
<p>Project partners</p>	<p>Being able to use the transferability plan for any communication, dissemination, and exploitation requirements to share texts, files, and, if needed, messages in a collaborative tool</p>
<p>General audience</p>	<p>Being able to find brief and well-structured basic information about the project and activities, to understand its key aspects quickly</p>

Actions to be taken

The Transferability Plan achieves the dissemination of experience at Pilot Area scale and the diffusion of knowledge at Med scale through the following tasks:



The transferability plan has been developed in two scales:

At the local level, the results of the indicators defined by the Toolkit were recorded for each pilot area. Then, workshops and 'participatory approach' meetings were organized where the vision and joint decisions of the participating agencies and stakeholders (parties/citizens) were shaped for their region (per pilot region). The same process followed for the determination of the specific Threats and Enabling Factors characterized as the most relevant and important sectors. The 'Action Plan' for each Pilot Area was planned and co-decided, including some specific actions proposed to deal with the problems every Pilot Area presented as the most important.

At med-scale (partnership) level. During the Co-Evolve4BG Project meetings of the representatives of all the pilot areas were held, to achieve interaction and communication between them, to present the experiences on national and pilot area scale. The meetings supported the process of defining the broader vision of the beneficiaries of the Co-Evolve4BG Project at Med scale for a sustainable tourism development structured on a common basis and in harmonization with the principles of ICZM, MSP and Blue Growth in the Mediterranean.

The results of the transferability plan can be summarised as following:

The workshops were based on the participatory approach where all stakeholders were well informed about the current situation of the Pilot Areas and the main findings from the Threats and Enabling Factors, as well as the Toolkit utilization, extracted through WP3 and WP4 of the Co-Evolve 4BG project. The training and building capacity of the stakeholders encouraged them to go for the planning of specific actions for the future of their Pilot Areas.

Most opinions expressed on the workshops agreed on;

- The establishment of a dialogue on the sustainable tourism development of coastal areas between the med (supranational) level and the local/pilot areas dimension
- The better exploitation of opportunities for discussions with high institutional levels to directly promote local priorities and (infra)structural needs
- The implementation of the methodology developed within the Co-Evolve4bg project:
 - a. Baseline analyses
 - b. Toolkit implementation, measures, and results
 - c. Structured involvement of stakeholders
 - d. Action Plans per Pilot Areas to design sustainable solutions beneficial for all: the community, the private and public sector, and tourists.

The Workshops



Greece

The workshop organized in Greece contributed to the transferability with the further dissemination of the project's capacity focusing on the local level. This is about to be succeeded by proposing the sharing of leaflets and brochures and organizing more events and training. Lastly, the collaboration of all levels of stakeholders was particularly emphasized. The participants also agreed to the recommendation of a horizontal organization aiming at supporting and further developing the program's tools and outputs, participating in scientific conferences, publishing, and presenting the main results to stakeholders and interesting parts.



Spain

Spain's workshop obtained on new actions proposed by the participants mainly referred to the formative motivation in educational

environments and the improvement of social networking, targeting the sectors related to blue tourism and environmental sustainability, as well as the economic sector. Further actions were proposed, too, concerning the creation of a forum for media participation (TV, radio; influencers) and polling the population through Google for forms. Lastly, the training of politicians with responsibilities on the coast and coastline was determined as very important.



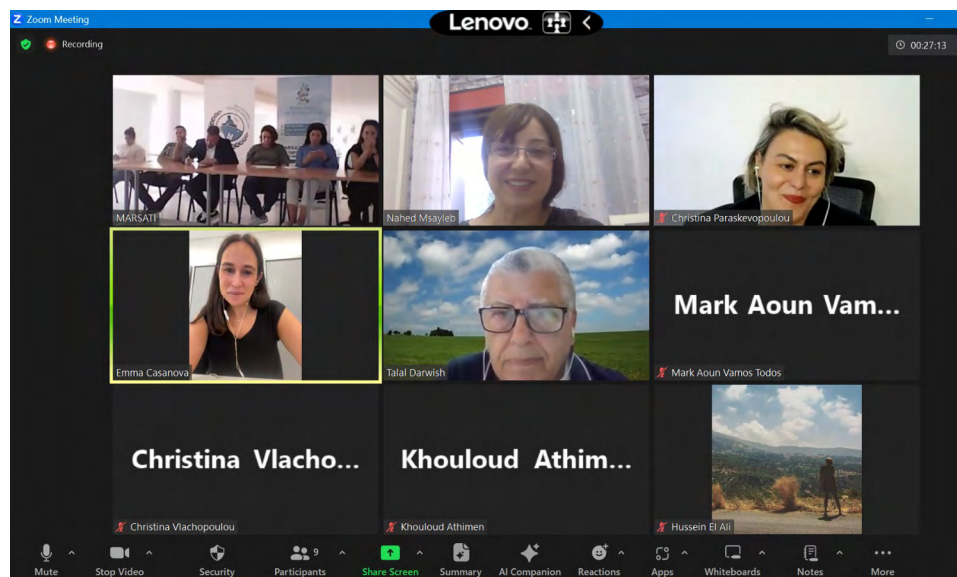
Tunisia

Tunisia's workshop resulted in a Collaboration Agreement between Co-Evolve4BG and ATCOGEN (la Marsa association – Tunisia). To ensure the long-term impact of Co-Evolve4BG results, INSTM took a proactive step by signing an agreement with the esteemed association "MEGARA des villes durables intelligentes," which represents the Tunisian municipality's network. This agreement aims to foster bilateral cooperation and facilitate knowledge-sharing between the two entities. INSTM will provide expertise on the utilization of the Toolkit, while MEGARA will actively disseminate it among Tunisian Coastal/ Maritime municipalities. The further results of the workshop are; the support for the adopted action plan by detailing it in a very important strategic territorial planning approach, the official establishment of an integrated management committee for the coastal zones of Djerba and implementation of the action plan, and the preparation of a detailed spin-off and transferability program.



Italia

The workshop held in Italy proceeded to more specified actions at the local level and highlighted the importance of transferring the project's results to the Biosphere Reserve (MAB) network in Italy and the Toolkit to the "Blue Economy" Department in Lazio Region to be used by the local municipalities for coastal management. Participants also agreed to the importance of communicating the projects's results through specific campaigns and disseminating them by taking part in scientific conferences and forums; and organizing and participating in workshops and events.



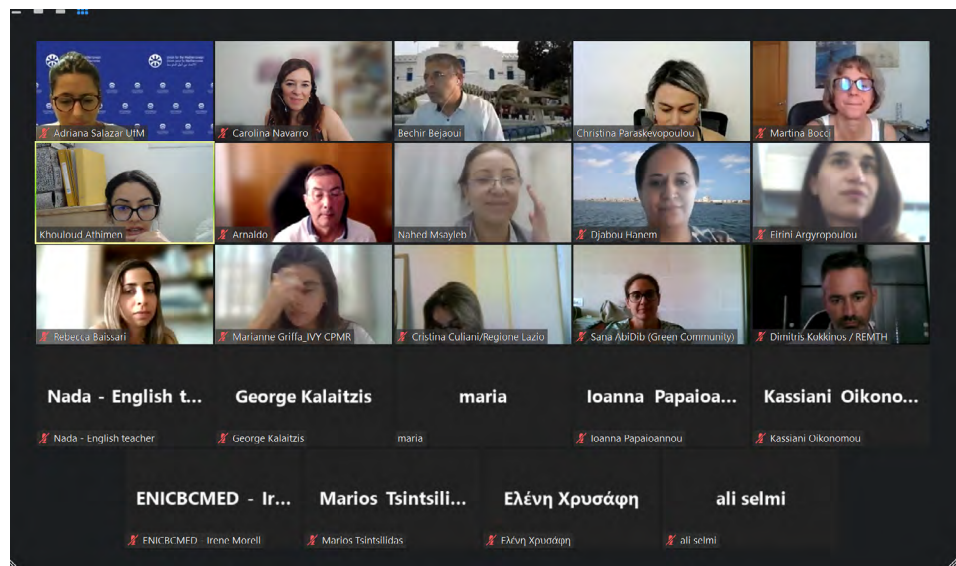
Lebanon

The workshop on 17th October, Batroun, Lebanon, was held online and had a total number of 21 people participated, representing the following categories of actors: National Authorities, Regional Authorities,

Municipalities, NGOs/citizens, Scientists/Experts.

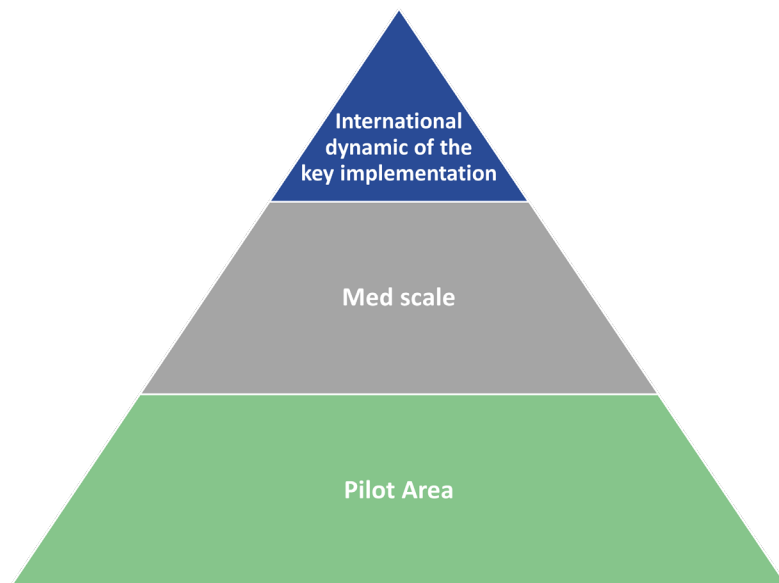
The workshop was designed by giving particular importance to issues related to major topics identified Land use change, Littoralization, Chaotic urban expansion, pollution, etc., in addition to the central theme of sustainable tourism.

The discussion was very positive and responsive towards the protection of green land cover and ecosystem services. The vision for the port of Batroun was to rehabilitate the sidewalks to allow for alternative income generating activities in ecotourism to the most vulnerable fishermen group. The director of MARSATI adopted the recommendations and reported continuation of work to convert the city of Batroun into very attractive touristic site with a large modern port providing advanced services promoting eco-tourism and blue growth.



Online Meetings

The two online meetings focused on the promotion of sustainable practices in coastal and maritime tourism while disseminating the main ideas and achievements of the project. The meetings ended up fulfilling the exchange of good practices, maximizing impact through dissemination and collaboration with local stakeholders, while participants explored innovative approaches to sustainable tourism, working collaboratively to ensure a lasting positive impact on Mediterranean coastal communities. The online meetings constituted the transferability event that provided a platform for valuable discussions and exchange of ideas, emphasizing the significance of collaborative efforts in building a sustainable future for the Mediterranean's coastal and maritime communities.



The results of the Co-Evolve4BG project are driven by the successful creation and promotion of strong and long-term network relationships at the national and Med the transfer of Co-Evolve4BG experience, with its lessons learned and good practices, to other local and regional authorities, and to other countries too.

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Final remarks:

The Blue Growth of coastal/marine areas in the Mediterranean responding to the principles of ICZM and MSP is the area of impact. Every Pilot Area of the Co-Evolve4BG project defined special needs to be solved, taking into consideration the results came from the areas' diagnosis and the toolkit implementation, but also the knowledge transferable from one pilot area to another and the exchange of experience. The outputs created would force other coastal/marine areas to make similar moves towards succeeding in their sustainable tourism. Many groups of people are potential users of the results of the project, including governmental bodies, residents, and entrepreneurs. The building capacity of the Co-Evolve4BG involvers would lead to connecting with other structures nationally and/or internationally to exceed the Co-Evolve4BG project.

NEWS



23 June 2023

[Co-Evolve4BG in Italy keeps on working on the second participatory workshop in the Circeo National Park](#)

This is a second step towards the drafting of an Action Plan for the tourist promotion of the UNESCO Circeo Biosphere Reserve.



12 June 2023

[Co-Evolve4BG organizes events to promote the UNESCO Circeo Biosphere Reserve](#)

The meeting intended to identifying strengths and weaknesses, threats and enabling factors of the area in order to define the shared objectives of the Action Plan on tourism p...



05 June 2023

[Co-Evolve4BG brought together different experts and stakeholders in sustainability in Murcia, Spain](#)

Through a participatory workshop on integrated coastal zone management and blue tourism.

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