



STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE ON THE EU STRATEGY
FOR THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION
6-7 FEBRUARY 2014, ATHENS, GREECE



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Thematic Workshop 1:

"Blue Growth"

Summary Report on Workshop Conclusions

Athens, 7 February 2014

Chair:

Beate Gminder, Head of Unit, Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission

Speakers:

Vassilios Tselios, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece

Mathilde Konstantopoulou, Ministry of Development and Competitiveness, Greece

Danijela Stolica, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Montenegro

Kai Böhme, expert

Facilitator:

Amparo Montán, INTERACT Point Valencia

Rapporteurs:

Nassos Sofos, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission and **Luca Marangoni**, Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission

Participants:

Participants included representatives from 7 out of 8 countries, from the public and private sector with strong interest in the maritime and marine affairs.

Summary

The workshop discussed the scope, the topics and the potential actions identified during the stakeholder consultations within the framework of pillar I of the future Strategy. Participants acknowledged the scope of the pillar and recognised the importance of fisheries, aquaculture, blue technology and maritime and marine services for the macro-region. They identified different opportunities and challenges to approach in a jointly manner, such as the maritime spatial planning. The title of the pillar was amended to "Blue growth" to better cover the topics discussed.



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Scope

The workshop allowed validating the scope of the pillar, already identified during the public and stakeholders' consultation. This pillar was found to have close links with the other three pillars. Discussions have highlighting five needs:

- Need to be specific to the Adriatic & Ionian region: local challenges and problems, whilst thinking globally. This implies increasing innovation capacity to compete globally, whilst ensuring environmental sustainability (key words "GLOCAL");
- Need to involve local stakeholders at ground level and reinforce roles, relations and networking amongst different stakeholders (key word "BOTTOM-UP APPROACH");
- Need to raise competencies by promoting circulation of ideas and skills and mobility of researchers and workers (key word "BRAIN CIRCULATION");
- Need to reinforce multilevel governance of maritime space and institutional capacity, notably in candidate and potential candidate countries and harmonize standards and rules (key word "CAPACITY BUILDING");
- Need to share data and information both for stakeholders and the general public (key word "DATA CLOUD").

Topics

Stakeholders have confirmed three topics to be addressed under this pillar: 1) Fisheries and aquaculture, 2) Blue technologies and 3) Maritime and marine services. More in particular:

Fisheries and aquaculture

The social, cultural and economic contribution of fisheries is crucial at local and regional level, especially in case of islands and remote regions. Besides the capacity building, R&D, sustainability and communication-marketing, the importance of the information flow among the stakeholders was highlighted. The most important aspects for fisheries and aquaculture were: institutional development, involvement of local actors, increased skills, strengthening R&D, innovation, clustering, developing businesses and branding. Sustainability was evocated as a horizontal issue. However, to mainstream environmental sustainability may reveal to be challenging and difficult to be implemented. Aquaculture has a lot of potential, but it needs appropriate locations to develop (e.g. Maritime Spatial Planning). Fisheries is a challenged sector as there are issues on overfishing and compliance with EU and



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international rules. Both activities are recognised as important and “fragile”. All actions should be addressed respecting the character of the activities and the regional specificities.

Blue technologies

Technology development should address problems (e.g. sea pollution, CO₂ emissions from maritime transport) and weaknesses (lack of data/knowledge and capacity) and/or unleash potentials (e.g. ITC, robotics, seabed exploration) specific to the Adriatic-Ionian Sea basin. The need to develop disruptive innovation to compete globally, whilst ensuring sustainability, was highlighted. However, this can happen only if the exchange of people, knowledge and ideas within the region is actively promoted. “Brain circulation” and sharing of information and knowledge have been evocated as the cornerstone to innovation and sustainable blue growth. A second important dimension was the role of the different actors and the interaction amongst SME, research centres, public bodies/institutions and citizens. Governance aspects were raised, notably referring to deep sea water and seabed exploration. Different needs and capacities amongst countries and stakeholders have been underlined, notably by referring to governance, institution building needs and the mobility of workers and researcher.

Maritime and marine services

Maritime and marine services are merely focusing on public sector activities largely linked to other topics of the EUSAIR strategy and other subjects of Pillar 1 (aquaculture-fisheries, blue technology). Main issues discussed included Capacity Building, Maritime Spatial Planning, Internationalisation of Businesses and Clusters, Research & Innovation and Communication. The discussion also underlined that activities need to be future oriented, bridge between local and global developments (key word: “glocal”), and build on existing experience, tools and infrastructure. There is a need to distinguish between short, medium and long-term objectives. The involvement of local actors (incl. civil society) within the multi-level government is important.

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Suggested Actions

Topics	Actions
Fisheries and aquaculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing operational typologies that capture the diversity and characteristics of relevant sector (environmental, administrative, technical, social, cultural) and focus on the crucial parameters characterising the activities and governing their dynamics. Collection and sharing of new specific data (involvement of research institutions from all countries). • Improving clustering activities/efforts among regions and among activities (fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, fishing as leisure) and links to other sectors such as tourism. • Raising competencies/skills of the stakeholders (needs common at macroregional level). • Defining and realising a well organised monitoring plan of the activities and the environment. Fishing should be complemented with other activities to protect the fishing-dependent areas. • Improving communication and marketing. Promotion of the products and identification of new markets. Improving the acceptance of aquaculture products in society (image).



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Blue technologies

- Deep Sea resources: seabed mapping, deep sea observation, research platform on robotics/unmanned marine vehicles and biosecurity;
- Green Sea mobility: research platform for new materials and sensor technologies to reduce costs by lowering cost repairs and saving energy and to develop new propulsion modes and the use of renewable energies. This includes cluster development on green ship building and new materials.
- Knowledge sharing: IT platform for exchanging data and knowledge (knowledge innovative communities, data cloud).
- Facilitating the involvement of partners from candidate and potential candidate countries through capacity building and the promotion of brain circulation and workers/researchers mobility.
- Ensuring the necessary legal framework for exploiting deep sea water and seabed resources in a sustainable manner, through governance mechanisms such as by establishing maritime zones.
- Facilitating access to finance and promoting start-up to prototype ideas and facilitate industrial spin off of RTD results.
- Promoting citizen and business awareness on new technologies



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Maritime and marine services

- Maritime spatial planning, integrated coastal zone management at the forefront (ADRIPLAN). Innovative planning (and technological solutions) in coastal defence related to sea level rise (need for joint action).
- Harmonise standards and regulations across the countries, in a variety of fields (environmental standards for boats and shipping, green shipbuilding, use of alternative fuels by boats)
- Internationalisation of clusters and businesses: Building on existing experience and infrastructure and focusing on smart specialisation and smart communities, sectoral/cross-sectoral networking, networking between industry and academia, clusters inventory (“phone book”).
- Networking of cities with similar profiles focusing on the development of a joint strategy for coastal cities in the new millennium.
- Raising the competencies of people working in the field (increase mobility) and provide targeted trainings within key sectors in themes such as institutional development, capacity building.
- Data Integration - Inventory of existing platforms to bring together and make accessible data sources. (Trieste Gulf model, EMODNET pilot for chemistry, Sea Basin Check Points).
- Communicating-informing: 1) the stakeholders and 2) the general public. Building a macroregional identity and improving knowledge through exchange of good practice.



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Thematic Workshop 2:

"Connecting the Region"

Summary Report on Workshop Conclusions

Athens, 7 February 2014

Chair:

Willebrordus Sluijters, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Speakers:

Andrea Vitolo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy

Rossella Rusca, Department for Development and Cohesion, Italy

Pavle Jankovic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Serbia

Philippe Claeys, expert

Facilitator:

Philipp Schwartz, INTERACT Point Turku

Rapporteur:

Giannantonio Ballette and **Iva Babic**, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Participants:

There were ca. 70 participants representing national, regional and local authorities and other private and public bodies from the Region. Most of participants belonged to the 'Transport' sector.

Summary

The workshop discussed the scope, the topics and the possible actions of pillar II "Connecting the Region". In the discussion, more emphasis was put on the Maritime transports. Rather than an objective choice, this reflected the biased representativeness of the participants. Given the maritime genesis of the future Strategy, it is understandable – as already proved in the course of the stakeholder consultation - that participants were more focused on maritime than on hinterland, and on transport than on energy.



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Scope

Participant acknowledged the scope of pillar II, which should focus on better transport and energy connections in the macro-region. Given the heterogeneity of situations in the Region, there is an evident need, within this pillar, to invest in (administrative, institutional) capacity building. Communication is also an important aspect to, i.a., involve population in the decision making and gain their support on initiatives to be implemented. Research, innovation as well as the involvement of the private partners are essential cross-cutting aspects for achieving the objectives of this pillar and hence those of the entire Strategy.

Topics

Stakeholders agreed that this pillar should focus on three strategic topics: improving maritime transports, developing intermodal links to the hinterland and, with regards to energy, improving interconnections. In both transport and energy networks, the Strategy should combine investments on the networks and soft measure, in particular to ensure the correct application of the regulatory framework.

Concerning **maritime transports**, the accent was put on the need to clustering port activities and services, to develop port terminals, including certification re. safety, sustainability, etc. It was also mentioned the need of ensuring a level playing field in the region by promoting compliance with international and European rules.

With regards to **intermodal links with the hinterland**, participants agreed on the need to priorities and promote investments on the comprehensive network, starting with cross-border bottlenecks. The Adriatic Ionian motorway from Trieste to Patras is considered a must for the Region. In order to further develop motorways of the sea, there is a need to improve road and rails infrastructure that link the ports with the hinterland.

Better interconnected **energy networks** will benefit to the whole macro-region, favouring a sound economic development. Focus should be on cross-border interconnection of electricity grids (also as a way to promote the development of energy production from renewable sources) and completion of transnational gas pipelines creating a gas ring in the region. Special attention should also be put on the removal of barriers to cross-border investments.

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Suggested Actions

Topics	Actions
Maritime transports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clustering port activities/services • Development of port terminals • Certification system of ports (safety, environment, ..) • Improvement of the ADRIREP (Adriatic Traffic Reporting) system • Developing new motorways of the sea, and related port infrastructures and ITS (Intelligent Transport System) • Berth allocation system for cruise ships • Standardisation of legal requirements & capacity building (e.g. adoption of EU <i>acquis</i> for non-EU countries)
Intermodal hinterland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments on the comprehensive network • Adriatic Ionian motorway, from Trieste to Patras • Development of air transport • Motorways of the sea: intermodal links to the hinterland • Progress in railway reform (incl. capacity building) • Cross-border facilitation (physical and non-physical investments) • Integrated planning of infrastructure development • Develop nodes and hubs in the hinterland
Energy networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity: improvements of cross-border interconnections • Gas: realising the TAP (Trans-Adriatic Pipeline) and its IAP (Ionian Adriatic Pipeline) connection • Remove barriers for cross-border investments (e.g. through regulatory measures) • Improve efficiency of energy networks



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Thematic Workshop 3:

"Environmental Quality"

Summary Report on Workshop Conclusions

Athens, 7 February 2014

Chair:

George Kremlis, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for the Environment, European Commission

Speakers:

Mitja Bricelj, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Slovenia
Agnes Kelemen, expert

Facilitator:

Ivana Lazic, INTERACT Point Vienna

Rapporteur:

Jelena Stojovic, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Participants:

There were more than 70 participants from different national/regional public authorities, research centres, universities, associations, institutes, etc.

Summary

The workshop discussed the scope, the topics and the potential actions, identified during the stakeholder consultation, in the framework of pillar III of the future Strategy.

In order to tackle the main environmental challenges in the Region, such as the unsustainable use of marine and coastal area resources, loss of marine and terrestrial natural habitats and ecosystems, maritime transport pollution and accident risks, coastal water quality, etc., all agreed that **cooperation and coordination** between the participating countries is essential.

Participants agreed that the Strategy needs to address challenges related to **marine biodiversity, pollution of the seas and terrestrial biodiversity and habitats** and urged to highlight the link between the marine and terrestrial environment. The key consideration, besides the vertical environmental integration in pillar III, is to ensure **environmental**



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integration in the three other pillars of the Strategy with the view to making them sustainable.

Discussion also focused on the issues related to implementation of actions agreed, which were hampered by low levels of administrative and financial capacity and weak enforcement.

Scope

The results of the stakeholder consultation on pillar III conducted by Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Adriatic and Ionian Region in the period September-December 2013, were thoroughly discussed among the workshop participants. The scope of the pillar was validated. Accordingly, the title of the pillar was changed into "Environmental Quality", which encompasses the notion of "preserving, protecting and improving (the quality of the environment)".

Topics

Protecting the marine environment (marine biodiversity and pollution of the seas) and transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity are confirmed as the main topics to be addressed by the future Strategy under this pillar. During the discussion, the importance of the **Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Maritime Spatial Planning** and **climate change adaptation** were also highlighted as relevant aspects. Furthermore, **strengthening of the administrative, technical and scientific capacities**, establishment of common platforms for **research, observation and monitoring**, and **innovative solutions** are seen as important needs/opportunities to be tackled by the future Adriatic and Ionian Strategy.

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Suggested Actions

Topics	Actions
Marine biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing networks for the monitoring, care and recovery of species and the development of action plans for safeguarding them • enhancing cooperation in marine research on impact of climate change • data exchange and the transfer of good governance • creation of trans-border, open-water protected areas and strengthening cooperation/ setting up networks of coastal and marine protected areas to preserve ecosystems • introducing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) through exchange of best practices; • strengthening new forms of sustainable tourism and fisheries
Pollution of the seas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addressing oil spill problems with coordinated contingency plans at macro-regional scale • defining an action plan for marine litter and establishing operational protocols related to litter monitoring • setting up harmonised methods for prevention, reduction, and recovery of waste at sea • coordinated fight against eutrophication, targeting at source the loads of eutrophication substances • developing new cluster-type cooperation initiatives
Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data exchange and the transfer of good governance • the creation of trans-border protected areas • networks for the monitoring, care and recovery of species and the development of action plans for safeguarding them



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Thematic Workshop 4:

"Sustainable Tourism"

Summary Report on Workshop Conclusions

Athens, 7 February 2014

Chair:

Raphaël Goulet, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Speakers:

Blanca Belošević, Ministry of Tourism, Croatia

Sofjola Kotelli, Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism, Albania

Antonis Fysekidis, expert

Facilitator:

Riitta Ahdan, INTERACT Point Turku

Rapporteurs:

Joanna Mouliou and Beatriz Jerez, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Participants:

More than 110 participants attended, covering all sectors of activity (private, public, NGOs, universities, research centres, clusters).

Summary

The panel speakers raised a number of important issues that were identified during the consultation of the stakeholders. They reported on: how the consultation process has been carried out; how heterogeneous, national and local level inputs have been transformed into macro-regional ones; the strong links with the other pillars (esp. pillar II "Connecting the Region"); the hinterland dimension of the Strategy in addition to the coastal and maritime ones.

Additionally, they presented the main challenges and opportunities for sustainable tourism in the Adriatic and Ionian region that have to be considered for the drafting of the Strategy Action Plan.

The presentations of the panel speakers provided a good basis for the discussion in the Workshop on the scope of the pillar, the topics to be addressed and the type of potential actions that should be considered.



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With the active participation and engagement of the participants, the Workshop resulted in in-depth discussions on substance with several thoughtful recommendations and suggestions for the Strategy. Among others, participants called for a Strategy that should facilitate the active involvement of the private actors in the implementation of the future actions in the tourism sector.

Scope

The workshop marked the end of the extended stakeholder consultation process on pillar IV and its aim was to reflect on the proposed scope, the topics to be covered and the potential actions to be implemented in its framework.

There has been a consensus on the scope of the pillar, the challenges and the opportunities across the Region. Participants acknowledged the need to focus the objective of the pillar towards sustainable tourism, recognising sustainability and quality as fundamental aspects to boost the competitiveness of the tourism sector in the Adriatic-Ionian Region. For the sake of clarity and consistency, the title of the pillar has been changed accordingly into "Sustainable Tourism".

Topics

Participants in the workshop suggested the inclusion of 4 topics:

- Diversification of tourism products and services
- Quality of tourism services and products (through common standards and certification)
- Sustainable tourism management (through harmonised statistics and indicators)
- Accessibility (travel facilitation and accessible services)

Likewise, cross-cutting issues common to the other pillars were identified, such as:

- Capacity building for both, private – business and public sectors (incl. learning and training, communication and information)
- Research and innovation, and SMEs development

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Suggested Actions

Topics	Actions
Diversified tourism products and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism routes (mapping existing routes, identifying potential synergies on existing routes, creating new routes building on the assets of the Region). • Thematic tourism: culinary, archaeological, farming, fishing, religious, sport competitions etc.
Quality (through standardisation and certification)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating guidelines, exchange of best practices. • Education and training: training for professionals in tourism; knowledge exchange between universities. • Establishing common standards and certification rules and procedures for products and services. Common definition of quality ('stars' classification for hotels) • Coordination for search and rescue (especially regarding tourist yachts) and other emergency situations • Strategy for a Region common branding building process based on the offer of tourist products and services.
Tourism management (through adequate use of statistics and indicators' systems)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing common indicators and statistics. Dissemination and valorisation of the existing European indicator system (ETIS). • Developing innovative strategies and tools to tackle seasonality and congestion in ports during high season. • Mapping of the tourism development institutions per country. • Collaboration among clusters. • Stimulating smart specialisation for sustainable tourism.
Accessibility "Tourism Accessible for all!"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of visa issuing for non-EU travellers and other common visa provisions • Connection of hinterland areas and coastal areas. • Fostering interregional routes and connectivity between the areas, esp. remote places and islands. • Use of social media and information technology tools. • Services and products for seniors and people with special needs. • Solidarity in tourism with inclusion of less visited areas.