



**Land-Sea**  
Interreg Europe



## *LAND-SEA PROJECT*

*“Sustainability of the Land-sea System for Ecotourism Strategies”*

### 6<sup>th</sup> PROJECT MEETING AND INTERREGIONAL CONFERENCE

*20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019*

*Termoli (Italy)*

### **PREPARATION PAPER**



Land-Sea focuses on regional policies for sustainable management of coastal ecosystems and stimulates implementation of territorial strategies for ecotourism development.

[www.interregeurope.eu/land-sea](http://www.interregeurope.eu/land-sea)

Coastal zones need to be managed in order to assure its functionality (ecological and touristic) in the long term. In order to achieve this objective is fundamental to promote a land-sea management that take into account the coastal heritage that need to be preserved but also to be valorised to make people change attitude towards the use of these vulnerable areas. Moreover It is of urgent importance to promote a sustainable management to avoid the great accumulation of waste and marine litter.



***Figure 1 – View of Campomarino's beach.***

The main objective of the Land-Sea project was to favour more inclusive, effective and efficient processes of regional governance so to increase and to encourage the creation of institutional competences and skills for the development of a sustainable coastal system able to preserve natural habitats and contextually to support the development of regional ecotourism strategies.

Beaches are systems where plainly physical, ecological, social and economic dimensions interact. Although these systems can provide several protective, recreational and natural functions, only recreation has been traditionally prioritized by managers. This situation has led to the homogenization of beach management culture and practices. Major flexibility and adaptation capability are required in order to set management strategies to beach setting and beach users. In two antagonistic beaches (natural protected vs. urban) travelers have different motivations and expectations which should be satisfied during holidays, in order to get their



satisfaction and hence their future returns. Recent studies suggest that users' motivations, priorities, and expectations in these two antagonistic beaches are not notably different. Therefore, the usual expectations of the Mediterranean "sun, sand and beach" tourism model is confirmed. Often, users expectations blend with perceptions. In fact, in urban intensive tourist coastal areas, beach services are generally poorly evaluated, albeit their quality was awarded with a Blue Flag.

Land-sea project with its guidelines and action plans not only encounters the exigencies of people who already have a particular attention towards a correct use of naturalistic coastal habitat but it promotes activities directed to change the attitude of the general users of coastal habitat. To the users will be offered the opportunity of living these habitats in a full comfort but in complete respect of nature assuring facilities that can be sustainable ecologically also promoting slow mobility in order to reduce the use of cars and every type of motor vehicles.

In addition these guidelines and Action plans have been developed taking into account Key International and European Directives related to Integrated Coastal Zone Management:

1. Birds Directive (2009/147/EC): The BD [10] is one of the most important nature legislation pieces, creating a comprehensive scheme of protection for wild bird species naturally occurring in the EU.
2. Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC: Member states are legally bound to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring measures to maintain or restore habitats and species listed on the Annexes at a favourable conservation status and introducing robust protection for those while taking in account economic, social and cultural requirements. Designated Natura 2000 sites serve for conservation and restoration of habitats in a good conservation status. The HD [11] together with the BD [10] are the "cornerstones" of the EU's nature conservation policy.
3. Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC): The WFD [12] defines quality by using biological elements together with physical-chemical elements to assess good ecological status at the ecosystem level. The achievement of "Good Chemical and Good Ecological Status" or in case of Heavily Modified Water bodies "Good Chemical Status" and "Good Ecological Potential" of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater is intended.
4. Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC): The MSFD [13] is an integrated framework for the management of marine spaces. The MSFD aims at achieving or maintaining a good environmental status for community waters by 2020 at the latest and contains the explicit regulatory objective that "biodiversity is maintained by 2020" as the cornerstone for achieving Good Environmental Status.



5. Flood Risk Management Directive (2007/60/EC): The FRMD [14] aims to reduce and manage the risks that flooding poses to human, environment, cultural heritage and economics. All inland and coastal waters must be assessed regarding the flooding risk and adequate measures to reduce this flood risk have to be taken. The FRMD needs to be implemented in coordination with the WFD.

This 6th Conference will summarise all the aspects developed during the first operative years of the project and present the most important deliverable derived by its implementation: the Regional Action Plans developed by each partner in the Land Sea framework. These Action Plans for coastal areas are able to provide a proper development strategy for the implementation of the tourism-recreational purposes with the environmental objectives imposed at national and EU level. Moreover these Action Plans are not theoretical but actually practical and effective being related to the true economical feasibility of the Regions interested by their development. Indeed the socio-economical aspects will be of central importance in this Conference that has the objective of setting the basis of putting in practice what proposed for the Molise Region but also for the different coastal areas interested by the Land-Sea partnership by the Action Plans.

Focusing on the economical aspect is of major importance because if the documents remain related only to the technical point of view could practically remain useless. Otherwise Interreg projects have the duty and the honour of becoming politically effective in actually changing the attitudes of the Countries involved in the partnership. Indeed being financed by the EU programmes represent also a responsibility to actually put in practice what is said and developed in the funded projects. This is practically what will be done on the 20th of November in the University of the Study of Molise - Department of Bioscience and Territory in Termoli (CB) where all the stakeholders and the political actors will participate and exchange information with the partnership of the project.

Specifically, Molise - in the context of the Italian over-exploited coastal ecosystems - has the value of still being characterised by the presence of important natural resources and a variety of environmental elements, creating optimal condition for the ecotourism development in the region.

The 36 km long Molise coast in fact behaves altogether as a low coast system and is characterized by the presence of coastal areas of great naturalistic value and is one of the most important sandy coastal ecosystems in the Italian Adriatic Sea for its biodiversity. That is for this reason that the implementation of the Action Plan of the Land-sea Project will assure the sustainable economic growth of this important naturalistic areas using ecotourism as a positive and enhancing driver.





**Figure 2. The Molisian coastline.**

The satisfaction of the tourists should be considered as an important driver for the economic development derived by eco-tourism. In their frenetic lives, an attention to the natural environment would be appreciate, but often this possibility likes really far. By creating new perspectives for tourists, new ways of living their own territory, the development of the same would be assured.

The first economical aspect derived by eco- tourism should be founded in retraining of abandoned and degraded sites along the land-sea; this leads to several positive implications, both for local communities and neighbouring sites. For local communities, who manage sites for conservation purposes, the creation of alternative employment and revenue is a real opportunity. By this way a growing interest for conservation of natural environment and cultural heritage develops in locals, who are primed in exploring parts of their territories; the retrained sites became a pride. For the neighboring sites the increasing economic revenues are closely related to the ones derived by the retrained sites. Having a controlled territory, which has been previously adapted and secured to accommodate tourist, the flow of visitors could increase. An example should be the fixing of paths leading to beaches that are not used because of their ruin, or the same paths are not well equipped (by signal, services for visitors etc.); guided tours, should be organized by locals for tourists. Walking tours or bike tours need



appropriate paths to be performed; the more the paths are in well- conditions and attractive the more eco-tourism increase reaching a larger number of visitors.

Another important economical aspect should be founded in the utilization of the coastal area without being influenced by the seasons, providing alternative way of living the winter season in the coastal zone. For instance, possible strategies could be the restoration of existing promenades, equipping beaches with minimal services and offering relaxing and attractive activities to visitors.

In conclusion, the ecotourism has impacts in three domains which are social, economic and environmental sectors. Nowadays this trend is becoming a necessity. In point of fact, tourists are looking for new ways to discover territories. Therefore, ecotourism is the key to meet their expectations as well as a sustainable development related to the vision of a better future. Also small initiatives can have big impacts in the land-sea development. For those, it is not a matter of funds rather a matter of motivation. Therefore, such actions should be encouraged to attract more and better tourists, leading these ones towards a more desirable type of tourism: the ecotourism.