

**Interreg
Europe**



European Union | European Regional Development Fund



Policy Learning Platform

Webinar on Ecotourism in riverside territories

Objectives of the webinar. Ecotourism in the context of Interreg Europe projects

24 October 2019

Objectives of the webinar



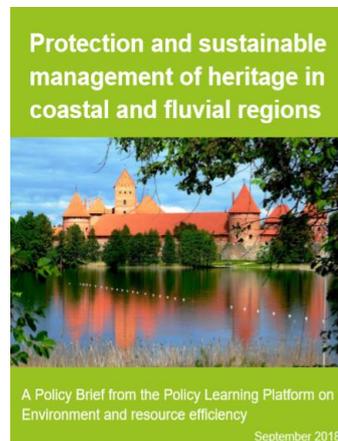
- **Explores links between natural heritage and ecotourism with focus on riverside areas**
- **Makes an overview of good practices from Interreg Europe projects with focus on:**
 - balancing nature protection with tourism development
 - creating partnerships



What has the Platform done on the topic



- Thematic workshop on cultural heritage, June 2018
- Webinar on sustainable tourism, 2018
- Matchmaking session, EWRC October 2018
- Thematic workshop on natural heritage, Nov 2018
- Policy briefs
- Articles and news
- Stories featuring good practices



Ecotourism



Nature-based tourism in which the main motivation of the tourists is the observation of nature and local culture

Contains educational and interpretation features

Eco tourism

Minimises negative impacts upon the natural and socio-cultural environment

Supports the maintenance of natural areas which are used as ecotourism attractions

Riverside areas and sustainable tourism



- **The potential of riverside areas for tourism development not sufficiently recognised**
- **Lack of common tourism strategies for riverside territories**
- **Lack of professional skills and tools for tourism actors**
- **Insufficient cooperation between public authorities and tourism bodies**



Tourist-induced pressures



- **Tourist activities can create environmental pressures:**
 - **Land use changes**
 - **Noise pollution**
 - **Disturbances of species**
 - **Waste or water pollution**



Interreg Europe projects on heritage and sustainable tourism



First call

- **IMPACT:** Innovative Models for Protected Areas: exChange and Transfer
- **SWARE:** Sustainable heritage management of WAterway Regions
- **HERICOAST:** Management of heritage in coastal landscapes
- **CHRISTA:** Culture and Heritage for Responsible, Innovative and Sustainable Tourism Actions

Second call

- **Green Pilgrimage:** Green Pilgrimage Supporting Natural and Cultural Heritage
- **Night Light:** Improving regional policies to reduce light pollution and protect and valorise dark night skies
- **PERFECT:** Planning for Environment and Res. Efficiency in EU Cities and Towns
- **Land-Sea:** Sustainability of the land-sea system for eco-tourism strategies
- **SHARE:** Sustainable approach to cultural Heritage for the urban Areas Requalification in Europe

Third call

- **ThreeT:** Thematic Trail Trigger
- **OUR WAY:** Preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage through
- **ECO-CICLE:** European network for the promotion of cycle tourism in natural areas
- **Delta Lady:** Floating Cultures in River Deltas
- **Star Cities:** Sustainable Tourism for Attractivity of Riverside Cities
- **UL2L:** UrbanLinks 2 Landscape
- **CHERISH** - Creating opportunities for regional growth through promoting Cultural heritage of fishing communities in Europe

Interreg Europe projects on heritage and sustainable tourism



Fourth call:

- **WLE:** Wildlife Economy: Nature as a viable Economic Alternative
- **WAVE:** WAter-linked heritage Valorization by developing an Ecosystemic approach
- **PROGRESS:** PRoMoting the Governance of Regional Ecosystem ServiceS

TO3 projects:

- **Rural Growth:** increasing competitiveness of SMEs in the rural visitor economy sector
- **BRANDTour:** Cultural Routes as Investment for Growth and Jobs
- **Destination SMEs:** Destination strategies for the competitiveness of the local SMEs

Ways ahead: balance between economic activities and protection



- **Striking the right balance between engaging into profitable activities and at the same time not damaging the natural assets**
- **Finding this balance requires high level of awareness of the vulnerability of the assets and the careful management approach**
- **Addressing tourism-related threats by:**
 - **Improving knowledge and skills to manage pressures (e.g. including minimisation of resource use, proper waste management, etc.)**
 - **Systematic gathering of data on tourism impact and use of this data for effective management**

Ways ahead: awareness and long-term thinking



- **Development and promotion of innovative offers**
- **Need for targeted efforts on behalf of nature protection specialists as well as regional and local authorities and tour operators**
- **Better awareness would also lead to longer term strategic thinking and anchoring of ecotourism in regional development strategies**
- **Promote the use of certification schemes and management tools that support destinations and businesses aiming to take more sustainable approach (e.g. ETIS, EU Eco label, EMAS)**

Agenda of the webinar



- **Welcome and Introduction** from the Policy learning platform
- **Balancing nature protection with sustainable tourism development – good practices from Interreg Europe projects**
 - *Evaluating the carrying capacity for visitor management in protected areas – the case study of Danube Delta*, Mr. Andrei Blumer, President of the Association of Ecotourism in Romania, IMPACT project
 - *Developing water tourism along riverways in Latvia and Estonia*, Ms. Māra Sproģe and Ineta Taurina, Vidzeme Planning Region, Latvia, SWARE project
- **Creating partnerships for ecotourism development**
 - *Lough Derg Marketing Group*, Ms. Ruth Mulhern, Tourism Development Officer, Tipperary County Council, Ireland, SWARE project
 - *Gauja national park tourism cluster*, Ms. Lienīte Priedāja-Klepere, Project manager, Vidzeme Planning Region, Latvia, TO3 Destination SMEs project
- **Panel discussion**
- **Wrap-up and conclusions**

Contact us:



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