



2ND FORUM OF THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION

IOANNINA, GREECE 11-12 MAY 2017

#EUSAIR

Think macro-regionally, act locally!

2ND EUSAIR FORUM - SUMMARY REPORT
JUNE 2017

More information on the event:

<http://registration.adriatic-ionian.eu/2nd-eusair-forum/introduction/>

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------|--|----|
| I. | INTRODUCTION..... | 4 |
| II. | WELCOME AND OPENING SESSION..... | 5 |
| III. | PLENARY SESSION I: "EUSAIR in Progress – The Voice of the Stakeholders"..... | 10 |
| IV. | Plenary session II-A "Blue Growth: An Adriatic-Ionian Perspective for Sustainable Growth and Jobs"..... | 13 |
| V. | PLENARY SESSION II-B "Blue Growth and the Environment - An Essential Interrelation for the Sustainable Development of the Adriatic-Ionian Region"..... | 14 |
| VI. | PLENARY SESSION II-C "Blue Growth and Connectivity - Sea Interconnections and Port Developments"..... | 16 |
| VII. | PLENARY SESSION II-D "Blue Growth and Tourism - Sustainable, Responsible and Innovative "Blue Tourism"..... | 18 |
| VIII. | CLOSING REMARKS | 19 |

ANNEX 1: 2nd EUSAIR FORUM PROGRAMME

I. INTRODUCTION

The 2nd Forum of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR), jointly organized by the European Commission and the Hellenic Republic, took place in Ioannina, Greece, on 11-12 May 2017. This event took stock of the progress of the Strategy since its endorsement by the European Council in October 2014. It aimed at reflecting in particular on achievements since the 1st Forum held in Dubrovnik in May 2016, and contributed significantly to defining the way ahead.

While the 1st Forum set the necessary steps for further development of the Strategy, the 2nd had an overall focus on Blue Growth, as one of the thematic pillars of the EUSAIR, and its interconnections with the other three thematic pillars: connectivity, environment and tourism.



Around 600 participants representing national, regional and local administrations as well as a wide range of stakeholders from academia to the business sector and civil society of the eight participating countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) gathered to discuss the progress achieved so far and the way forward.



Back-to-back with the Forum, in the morning of 11 May, the Alternate Foreign Minister **Giorgos Katrougalos** and Alternate Economy and Development Minister **Alexis Charitsis** hosted a Ministerial meeting gathering the representatives of the 8 EUSAIR countries, with the participation of representatives of the European Commission. The [Ioannina Declaration](#) adopted at the meeting recognises significant progress in implementing the Strategy. However, it also calls for its further development, notably regarding governance, orientation towards tangible outcomes, funding, communication and cooperation.



The Declaration reaffirms the commitment of the participating countries to ensure that the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) funds are aligned in the best possible way with the

priorities of the Strategy and contribute to achieving its objectives. It recognises the significant potential of the blue economy and reiterates the participating countries' commitment to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors of the Adriatic and Ionian Region. With regards to the continuing refugee and migration crisis which affects the Region, the Ministers agreed to strengthen governance mechanisms and to set up a collaborative platform where the countries can better coordinate their response to the crisis. Finally, the Ioannina Declaration recognises the need for embedding better macro-regional strategies into EU policies in the post-2020 programming period.

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In the morning of 11 May, two other side events took place.

The Enterprise Europe Network, in cooperation with the European Commission and the Hellenic Republic, organised a [Business-to-Business session](#). This event brought together chambers of commerce, small and medium size enterprises, universities, research institutes, clusters and other stakeholders in the Adriatic and Ionian Region. It provided ample possibilities for networking. It allowed stakeholders to find suitable partners for new projects, fostering the development of long-term links, boosting information and co-operation and exploring new, mutually profitable business opportunities. More than 240 companies, universities, research centres, clusters and regional stakeholders attended over 350 bilateral meetings.

The [EUSAIR Monitoring and Evaluation workshop](#) gathered officials from the European Commission and the governance system of the EUSAIR (National and Pillar Coordinators, members of the four Thematic Steering Groups), representatives of national/regional authorities responsible for managing EU funds, as well as academics,

evaluators, etc. The participants exchanged views on basic elements (methodological, thematic and institutional) and best practices for an effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the EUSAIR, helping pinpoint institutional / procedural deficiencies. The interest in the event exceeded expectations, as more than 115 people attended the workshop.

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Following the Ministerial meeting, the representatives of the Governments joined other prominent speakers in the Forum and participated in the panel discussion of the opening session.

The Forum featured high-level speakers in two plenary sessions; the first focused on the progress of the EUSAIR as seen by the stakeholders, while the second, split into four parts, targeted practitioners and provided a space for an interactive exchange of experience and opinions on the following topics related to Blue Growth:

- An Adriatic-Ionian Perspective for Sustainable Growth and Jobs
- Blue Growth and the Environment – An Essential Interrelation for Sustainable Development of the Adriatic-Ionian Region
- Blue Growth and Connectivity - Sea Interconnections and Port Developments
- Blue Growth and Tourism - Sustainable, Responsible and Innovative "Blue Tourism"

The closing session provided an opportunity for reflecting on the outcomes of the Forum and to announce the upcoming handover of the EUSAIR/Adriatic Ionian Initiative chairmanship on 1 June 2017 from Greece to Italy

II. WELCOME AND OPENING SESSION

The conference was opened by the Forum's moderator / master of ceremonies, Ms **Maria**

Nikoltsiou, a journalist from ALPHA Channel, Greece, who welcomed the participants. Mr **Alexandros Kachrimanis**, Governor of the Region of Epirus, who followed, also welcomed the participants to the Forum and thanked the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Economy and Development of the Hellenic Republic for deciding to hold the Forum in Ioannina, the Capital of the Region of Epirus. Mr. Kachrimanis said he is convinced that the EUSAIR serves the growth of the wider region and gives a strong direction that only synergies, cooperation and mutual understanding can lead the change for the participating countries and regions, which share a common future. He also referred to the efforts made by the Region of Epirus in various development sectors and to how macro-regional cooperation through the EUSAIR could reinforce these efforts.

After welcoming the participants to the Forum, Mr. **Thomas Begas**, Mayor of the hosting city of Ioannina, said that the EUSAIR and the Forum's focus sector, Blue Growth, are important not only for coastal areas but also for inland lakes, waterways and ecosystems. He stressed the importance of linking coastal and inland areas, as well as the crucial importance of the West Balkan motorway for the development of the Adriatic - Ionian macro-region. Finally, he proposed a twinning of cities hosting EUSAIR Fora, starting with Ioannina and Dubrovnik.

Mr **Ioannis Mitsis**, president of Chamber of Ioannina, welcomed the participants and talked about the business community's aspirations and how transnational cooperation in the context of the European Union and the EUSAIR can support these, primarily through the construction of the necessary infrastructural projects and ensuring a friendly environment for business. Mr Mitsis also referred to the special reception given for business representatives from the eight EUSAIR countries on the eve of the Forum and the conclusions drawn

from it, as well as to the B2B side event organized that same morning in the context of the Forum, in cooperation with the Enterprise Europe network.

The Keynote addresses of the Forum were made by Mr **Georgios Katrougalos**, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr **Alexis Charitsis**, Alternate Minister of Economy and Development, of the Hellenic Republic. Mr Katrougalos said that, during the Ministerial meeting that same morning, the ministers of the eight EUSAIR participating countries had the chance to renew their strong political commitment to the macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic - Ionian Region. There is still a challenge, he said, to bridge the gap between the Strategy and funding opportunities, so a better alignment of ESI and IPA funding programs and the EUSAIR is necessary, as is to make best use of other available funding resources. The Strategy is not expected, or designed, to solve all regional problems, but it can have a significant contribution towards constructing an area of sustainable economic development, safety and security. It provides, at the same time, a unique framework of cooperation between EU and non-EU member states, which can considerably assist participating candidate and potential candidate countries in their path towards the EU, without substituting the enlargement progress. As far as Greece is concerned, Mr Katrougalos said, actions promoting regional and macro-regional cooperation are viewed as part of a wider effort to build a new economic / productive model based on exploiting the country's comparative advantages, which will ensure a fair-for-all development, beneficial to the people and not only to the numbers.

Mr Charitsis, after making a reference to the great historic, economic and cultural significance of the city of Ioannina, said that the EUSAIR is particularly important for Greece, as the Strategy's Pillars and priorities coincide to a large extent with priorities of the government of the Hellenic Republic. He said

that the EUSAIR, despite its relatively short life, is already a model of transnational cooperation, helping the eight participating countries to work together on an equal footing and extending this cooperation to the regional and the local level and to everyone concerned, thus (a) promoting cultural interrelationships and economic development and convergence throughout the macro-region and (b) providing an important forum and framework of understanding and cooperation between countries which are already members of the European Union and candidate or potential candidate countries. Mr Charitsis referred to the importance of the [Ioannina Declaration](#), adopted by the ministers that same morning, and closed on a more personal note, expressing his satisfaction that the message, concerning the way forward for the EUSAIR, “Think macro-regionally, act locally”, that he himself had coined at the end of the 1st EUSAIR Forum in Dubrovnik, not only had been adopted as the central message of the 2nd EUSAIR Forum, but seemed to be widely adopted as the central principle guiding the future development of the EUSAIR.

In the Forum’s special address, the EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, Ms **Corina Crețu**, stressed that EUSAIR Strategy’s goals were to bring growth, jobs, and stability to the Region, as well as supporting the Western Balkans’ integration into the EU. Ms Crețu pointed to the robust structures for cooperation already in place and highlighted project concepts, developed over the past few years, with macro-regional value. She nonetheless called for more ambition, joint initiatives and financial support from relevant sources to ensure effective implementation of the Strategy. Ms Crețu further recommended putting in place a monitoring and evaluation system including stakeholders, and mobilising sufficient resources to support implementation of the Strategy. The Commissioner underlined that the Strategy ought to

be reflected in national and regional funding agendas, and invited managing and programme authorities and key implementers to sustain and deepen the dialogue initiated over the last six months. Stressing that challenges cannot be tackled in isolation, Ms Crețu also welcomed the proposal for setting up a collaborative platform enabling the countries to coordinate better responses to the migration and refugee crisis.



“I am a true believer in macro-regional strategies and I am convinced that they can play a significant role in fostering European integration. This is all the more true for the Adriatic and Ionian Strategy. Yes, the Strategy is clearly about bringing growth and jobs to all the participating countries, half of which are EU candidate, potential candidate countries, but also aims to support the EU integration of the Western Balkans, fostering stability in the Region.”

Corina Crețu, EU Commissioner for Regional Policy

In his video special address, Mr **Karmenu Vella**, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, pointed out that despite the progress made in the field of governance in the last two and a half years, there was a need for increasing the Strategy’s pace of implementation. More projects needed to be delivered. The Commissioner commended the Greek authorities

for structuring the Forum so as to highlight interconnections between the four pillars of the EUSAIR. Referring to the BlueMed initiative which seeks to develop the blue economy in the Mediterranean, he considered research and innovation as essential for effective implementation of the EUSAIR.



“Blue Growth is our long-term strategy to create sustainable growth and jobs in the marine and maritime sectors; the Adriatic Ionian Region is ripe with all this potential, from aquaculture to coastal and maritime tourism, from marine technology to maritime skills and education, each is a part to sustainable growth and job creation. And we have the tools to realise this: maritime spatial planning and marine protected areas are policies we have developed.”

Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Mr **Nektarios Santorinios**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy of the Hellenic Republic, pointed out the great importance of the EUSAIR and of Blue Growth for Greece, given, on the one hand, the importance for the Greek economy of the coastal areas and of Greece’s 3.053 islands (which correspond to about 50% of the total East-Mediterranean coastline) and, on the other, the global significance of Greek commercial shipping. He then proceeded to briefly

outline his Ministry’s priorities with regard to the shipbuilding/ship-repairing sector, the improvement of maritime connections and of port services and infrastructure, the adoption of clean fuels etc., as well as proposals for the next programming period regarding a reinforced and better focused EU policy for the islands.

Mr **Charalampos Kassimis**, Secretary General, Ministry of Rural Development and Food of the Hellenic Republic, also stressed the importance of the transnational cooperation achieved through the EUSAIR in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region, adding that Blue Growth is of particular significance for his own Ministry, as it is well aligned with the Greek Operational Programme for Fisheries and Maritime 2014-20, which aims at the competitiveness and the availability of fisheries, aqua culture and the processing sector, as well as the protection and rehabilitation of the marine environment and its living resources. He informed the Forum that, in the said OP, special bonus points are foreseen for the selection of projects serving specific objectives of the macro-region. Finally, he referred to examples of community-led local development projects in traditionally fishery-dependent regions, containing a transnational dimension and aimed at economic diversification through linkages with tourism, in particular developing and promoting pesca tourism, thematic trails (gastronomy, archaeology etc.) and diving parks.

EUSAIR MINISTERS PANEL DISCUSSION

Ministers, or their representatives, of the eight participating countries as well as Ms Lena Andersson Pench, representing the Commission, joined the stage to participate in the panel discussion.

Ms **Odeta Barbullushi**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania, highlighted the uniqueness of EUSAIR as a macro-regional strategy which

encompasses an equal number of EU member states and (potential) candidate countries. The benefit for Albania of being part of the EUSAIR is twofold: on the one hand, the cooperation process created a new impetus to work on the EU Acquis in areas that are of importance for EUSAIR (connectivity, tourism, ...) as well as a stimulus to further strengthen administrative capacity. On the other hand, it offers a platform for political interaction between Albania and the EU member states in a time of "enlargement fatigue". However, the Deputy Minister expressed concerns about the lack of adequate financial instruments to overcome disparities in the domains covered by the EUSAIR between EU member states and enlargement countries.

According to Ms **Tea Karaman**, Chief Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Regional Development and EU funds of Croatia, as the youngest EU country, Croatia faces major issues with respect to coordinating activities under EUSAIR and the European Structural and Investment funds respectively. Of special concern was how to use EU funds in a more efficient way, how to bolster human resources and establish criteria for EU funds that are consistent with labelling and ex-post evaluation processes under EUSAIR. Croatia is in the process of establishing National Coordination Committees that would be responsible for coordinating all financial instruments at the EU, national and regional level.

Ms **Sanja Kenig – Ćorović**, Charge d'Affairs at the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Hellenic Republic, described the challenges encountered by her country in setting up the national governance structure and referred to lack of human and financial resources. She also underlined that the current allocation of IPA funds did not meet the needs of the country. This resulted in Bosnia and Herzegovina's inability to participate fully in the implementation of the EUSAIR.

In light of Italy's coming EUSAIR Chairmanship as of 1 June 2017, Mr **Claudio De Vincenti**, Minister for Territorial Cohesion, presented Italy's two main priorities for the EUSAIR in the next 12 months: first improvement of the governance system of the Strategy. This could, for instance, be done by securing continuity thanks to coordination between former, present and future presidencies; second, by strengthening coordination with financing instruments relevant to the implementation of the Strategy. He also touched upon the collaborative platform agreed in the [Ioannina Declaration](#) which he considered an important step towards good governance of migration in the Region, of great benefit for all eight EUSAIR countries.

Mr **Aleksandar Andrija Pejović**, Minister of European Affairs of Montenegro, underlined the dynamic learning process for candidate countries, which is also facilitated by their participation in macro-regional strategies. They are an excellent framework for candidate countries to get ready for cohesion policy upon accession. Lessons learned in the implementation of the National Strategy on Integrated Coastal Zone Management showed how to tackle national priorities, chapters of the EU enlargement process with a coastal focus, as well as cooperation in the macro-regional context. The exchange of ideas and experiences, as provided in the EUSAIR Forum, is crucial for learning about best practices and to streamline programmes in order to have the best possible results for the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

According to Slovenia's proposal presented by Ms **Janja Štiglic**, State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, an initial structure for developing social economy for migrants' needs is to be set up in at least three EUSAIR countries. Second, at least one pilot social enterprise facilitating entry of migrants into the labour market is to be established in each EUSAIR country. And third, the capacity for managing and increasing the

social impact of investments for the benefit of migrants should be developed in the EUSAIR Region.

Ms **Sanda Šimić Stambolić**, Assistant Director of the European Integration Office of Serbia, explained the difference between the Western Balkans' Berlin Process and the EUSAIR. The Berlin Process is a high level political initiative aiming at the transformation of the Region which is promoting good projects in the domain of infrastructure, connectivity and also youth. The EUSAIR is not high level: it is an all-inclusive process. It involves all levels of government - national and local - the citizens, economic and social operators, the universities, etc. She also pointed out the need to strengthen communication about available funding resources for project ideas. The EUSAIR Facility Point will support the stakeholders and governance actors in that respect.

Ms **Lena Andersson Pench**, Director at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, welcomed the line Ministers' messages to reward projects of EU mainstream programmes with bonus points when contributing to macro-regional objectives. The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) offer an important financial pot for the Adriatic-Ionian Region to boost development. However, other funding opportunities outside the ESIF need to be exploited as well. The Commission can help to use the full potential of all existing EU Funds and to facilitate dialogues between Ministries.

Alternate Minister of Economy and Development of Greece, Mr **Alexis Charitsis**, described EUSAIR as an interesting experiment which brings together EU members states and (potential) candidate countries from a geopolitically 'turbulent' region. Disparities do not only exist between the countries but also between regions themselves: to be

tackled, they need incentives with a macro-regional focus on national and local level. Furthermore, Mr Charitsis gave two concrete examples on where the EUSAIR countries will have to show effective cooperation: First, the migration and refugee crisis puts EUSAIR to a test to find common solutions at macro-regional level. Second, delivering results and demonstrating the value of macro-regional strategies has become more important than ever as the future of Cohesion Policy is currently under discussion.

III. PLENARY SESSION I: "EUSAIR in Progress – The Voice of the Stakeholders"

In the plenary session "EUSAIR in Progress – The Voice of the Stakeholders", the Chair Mr **Ioannis Firbas**, EUSAIR National Coordinator, General Director, National Coordination Authority for ESIF, Ministry of Economy and Development, Greece, in his opening remarks reflected on the progress achieved so far and on the challenges encountered in implementing the EUSAIR. He also summed up relevant proposals made by stakeholders from a range of sectors in the eight participating countries. He then gave the floor to four speakers invited to deliver keynote addresses.

Ms **Maria Spyraiki**, Member of the European Parliament, presented an initiative to alleviate energy poverty in the Adriatic and Ionian Region. Energy poverty is defined by three factors which, independently or in conjunction, reduce the capacity of households to respond to their energy needs: energy cost, income of the household, energy efficiency. Ms Spyraiki introduced a pilot project, financed by the EU in 2017-2018, promoting energy efficiency, reducing energy consumption and tackling energy poverty in the Adriatic-Ionian Region. She also mentioned a number of on-going projects in the Region which contribute to improve energy efficiency and that

represent best practices which could be replicated in the area. She finally referred to the Energy Poverty Observatory, expected to be set up by end 2017, as a practical means to identify the problems affecting households in need of support, and the sustainable solutions to tackle them.

Referring to the European Commission's Report on the implementation of macro-regional strategies presented to the other EU institutions last December, Ms **Lena Andersson Pench**, Director at European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, underlined Council's acknowledgement of progress achieved and of contribution to territorial cohesion, to more integrated implementation of EU sectoral policies as well as to closer relations with third countries. She also noted that the Council called for strengthening the link between macro-regional strategies and EU funding. In terms of the EUSAIR, Ms Andersson Pench congratulated the Thematic Steering Groups for promoting projects contributing to the Strategy. This clearly indicated that the Strategy was moving towards tangible outcomes. She emphasised the need for setting up a stakeholder platform, which would play a key role in involving civil society and stakeholders in EUSAIR implementation. She urged participating countries to take on increased ownership of the Strategy and to ensure that strong political commitment be translated into effective implementation. She also stressed the need for including EUSAIR priorities into national funding agenda. To that aim, a structured dialogue between ESIF managing authorities and EUSAIR key implementers has been initiated in each of the four EU member states. She encouraged IPA programme authorities and EUSAIR key implementers to initiate financial dialogue in Enlargement countries too. Finally, referring to the [Ioannina Declaration](#), Ms Andersson Pench welcomed the decision taken by Ministries to set up a collaborative platform which

will enable countries to better coordinate their response to the continuing refugee and migration crisis.

Mr **Apostolos Katsifaras**, Chair of the Committee of the Regions' Adriatic-Ionian Interregional Group and Governor of the Region of Western Greece, claimed that the challenge ahead for the EUSAIR is to succeed in turning the sea - which unites and is the common resource for the participating countries - into a development tool on the one hand, and into a beacon of civilization and values of democracy and of human rights, on the other. To these ends, a variety of issues must be addressed, such as the inequality between regions of the European Union, the issue of democratic deficit and accountability, the migration crisis and the problems created by the economic crisis and youth unemployment. The key to success, Mr Katsifaras suggested, lies in placing more of the relevant decisions into the hands of regional and local authorities and in the mobilization of the local administrative, political and productive resources to the service of securing democracy, peace and prosperity.

The importance of the bottom-up approach in the macro-regional process was highlighted by another keynote speaker, Ms **Eleni Marianou**, Secretary General of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe. She highlighted the need to empower the regional and local actors to be fully involved in the implementation of macro-regional strategies. As concrete recommendations for the success of macro-regional strategies, Ms Marianou pointed to: the need to have a strong cohesion policy, including an effective cooperation strand; the necessity to have the Commission playing a strategic coordination role in the implementation of the strategies; and, last but not least, a close involvement of stakeholders – networks of regions, cities, universities, chambers of commerce – in the implementation of the strategies.



“What is important is to empower the actors. They are at all levels, from local to regional, from enterprises to civil society. When you really empower the actors, then the results are also better.”

Eleni Marianou, Secretary General of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe

STAKEHOLDERS PANEL DISCUSSION

Mr Firbas called the eight Stakeholder panellists to join the stage to participate in the panel discussion.

Mr **Marko Starman**, Faculty Member at the European Faculty of Law, Ljubljana, and former Director of public institute Nature Park Strunjan, Slovenia, opened panel discussion by noting that everything valuable in nature has been passed on to us in a state of equilibrium, which is precisely what nature parks are supposed to be: repositories of environmental tradition. When considering nature protection, we are all forced to think and plan for the benefit of future generations, irrespective of borders.

Mr **Pierluigi Coppola**, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, Italy, presented the reform of planning, programming and design of infrastructures in Italy. “Connecting Italy” is a strategy for transport and logistics infrastructure that includes different aspects: inter-modality and accessibility within port nodes, last mile

connections with the TEN-T network, security and sustainability in maritime and inland shipping. Mr. Coppola underlined that the Italian national strategy for transport and logistics infrastructure was designed to be consistent with the EUSAIR and other macro-regional regional strategies. He reminded, however, that consistency between EUSAIR-relevant projects and EU funding still needed to be achieved.

Ms **Efka Heder**, Director of the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECCL), Croatia, presented this independent, non-profit institution founded in 2009 on the initiative of eight South East European countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo¹, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey. SEECCL was established as a response to the needs of the pre-accession countries in terms of institutionalization of the regional dialogue and targeted cooperation in the field of entrepreneurial learning in the scope of the Small Business Act for Europe. Strong and systematic support given by the European Commission enabled the institution to shift from project- to process-oriented approach, in compliance with macro-regional needs.

In his intervention, Mr **Nenad Đurđević**, Head of Sector for Foreign Economic Relations, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia, provided recommendations from the business community for the implementation of the EUSAIR. He suggested that the EUSAIR should closely interrelate with the other ongoing regional initiatives, notably in the Western Balkans. He referred to the important role that the business community in general and the Chambers in particular, can play for an effective

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

implementation of all pillars of the EUSAIR. He mentioned access to finance from SMEs as a key point to be addressed for promoting economic development and employment.

The importance of the cruising industry in the Adriatic and Ionian Region was highlighted by Mr **Konstantinos Nikoloutsos**, Representative of Adriatic Ionian Chambers Forum, President of Ilia Chamber, Greece. Mr Nikoloutsos stressed that cruising industry works as a network connecting the ports in the Region. However, in his opinion there is still room for further developments, especially in the field of selling authentic ways of life peculiar to the Region.

Mr **Stratos Ioannou**, Deputy Regional Governor of Regional Unit of Preveza and Responsible for Tourism Development of Epirus, Greece, presented the idea of a cultural route through the ancient theatres of Epirus. The initiators had conceived innovative, original and dynamic ways of promoting Epirus as a tourism destination thanks to a network connecting actors from public and private sector, institutions and individual citizens, to be extended to neighbouring countries.

Mr **Andreas Ntais**, President and CEO Port Authority of Igoumenitsa, Greece, made a presentation on the topic "Adriatic/Ionian – Egnatia Supply Chain: New era for ports & transport". He pointed out how bottom-up pressure, starting with the Ancona Charter of 2000 and continuing with various Adriatic-Ionian Fora etc., finally culminated in Strategies being put in place, both at the macro-regional and at the European Union level. He spoke in some detail about the port of Igoumenitsa, the projects implemented to improve connections with other ports in the macro-region, logistics, hinterland connections, port services and security, supplementary business infrastructure etc., and the port authorities' efforts in general to improve

relations and cooperation both within the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region and with the rest of the world.

Another example of good cooperation at a macro-regional level was cooperation of ports and rivers facing common pollution-related problems and environmental degradation. The actions under the project "Boosting Blue Growth through the Development of Sustainable Aquaculture" were presented by **Ioannis Chekimoglou**, President of the Union of Pisciculturists of Thesprotia, Greece.

IV. Plenary session II-A "Blue Growth: An Adriatic-Ionian Perspective for Sustainable Growth and Jobs"

Plenary session II, held on the second day of Forum, focused on Blue Growth and its interconnections with the other three pillars. It was divided in four consecutive sessions which provided the opportunity to present the state of play and the challenges of each pillar and to have an interactive Q&A exchange between panellists and the audience.

The Chair of Session II A, Mr **Bernhard Friess**, Director at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, opened the first session by commending the countries for working together and sharing a common strategy. Working together to restore the health of the seas is crucial and the Forum is a perfect opportunity for a step towards practical cooperation.

In her scene-setting intervention, Ms **Sofia Loukmidou**, Head of Unit at Ministry of Rural Development and Food - Managing Authority for EMFF OP 2014-2020, and Greek Pillar Coordinator for the Thematic Steering Group (TSG)-1, focused on the work of Pillar 1 so far, and referred to aspects relevant to all pillars – sustainable growth and job creation. TSG-1 members had agreed that

macro-regional cluster development, research and innovation, as well as development of blue skills, should be at the heart of this TSG's agenda. Actions of smart growth, via blue technologies and the sectors of fisheries and aquaculture, called for smart specialisation strategies at regional and national levels. Ms Loukmidou stressed the progress in matchmaking to find funding sources, particularly with the ADRION Programme. In terms of Blue Growth, she underlined the need for matchmaking with the needs of the markets and to create jobs to stop the brain drain. Noting that innovation or research - particularly in the blue economy - and clusters involving businesses and research in public sector remained scarce, she pointed out that smart specialisation strategies helped set priorities for building competitive advantage at different geographical scales. This could be done by developing and matching research and development with business needs and by strategic developments of markets.

For Mr **Aleš Gnamuš** from the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, Blue Growth is not sufficiently present in the national and regional smart specialisation strategies developed in the Adriatic and Ionian Region. Nevertheless, smart specialisation being a dynamic process, he is convinced that Blue Growth would eventually become integrated in the Region's smart specialisation strategies. Mr Gnamuš explained that the Joint Research Centre facilitates different platforms, such as marine renewable energy, and would like to step up the involvement of the Adriatic and Ionian Region in this platform given the many investment possibilities he saw in the Region.

Mr **Vedran Slapničar**, Associate Professor at Department of Naval Architecture and Offshore Engineering, University of Zagreb, Croatia, presented the BlueNET project. Involving six countries, the project seeks to boost networking and maritime clusters among SMEs in the

Mediterranean. Its aim is to help disseminate innovation and bring added value to the maritime policies pursued in the targeted geographical area.

Ms **Natassa Kannavou**, Representative of the Piraeus Bluegrowth Initiative, Greece, delivered a presentation on "Innovation in the Blue Economy - how can Maritime Innovation serve as a driver of Sustainable Blue Growth". She presented a sustainable model for innovation and entrepreneurship centres in the Mediterranean which already yielded initial successful results, creating more than 60 direct jobs.

The panel debate was then followed by an interactive session with the audience.

V. PLENARY SESSION II-B "Blue Growth and the Environment - An Essential Interrelation for the Sustainable Development of the Adriatic-Ionian Region"

The Chair, Mr **George Kremlis**, Head of Unit at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment, opened Session II B emphasising that the environment was an important cross-cutting policy as greening the three other pillars of the Strategy made them more sustainable. The session put at the forefront two dimensions: the vertical dimension, addressing environmental investments at different levels in support of Blue Growth; the horizontal dimension, pointing to the requirement that projects comply with the environmental directives.

In his keynote speech, Mr **Mitja Bricelj**, Slovenian TSG-3 Pillar Coordinator, pointed out that cooperation within the Strategy offers an enormous opportunity for implementing the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive as well as integrated coastal zone management (IZCM) tools. Both have tremendous potential for helping avoid conflicts between different users of the marine and coastal

resources and conflicts between countries. In the shared Adriatic and Ionian eco-region, every country have to manage and adapt their plans to ecological status and healthy and productive sea. Mr Bricelj next presented a short video [“Towards a green coast: the case of Slovenia”](#), featuring two examples of good practice, connecting blue and green corridors making the marine and coastal ecosystems healthier and more productive, while at the same time creating green jobs and strengthening the blue economy.

Ms **Marija Lazić**, expert on maritime spatial planning from the Maritime Institute of Gdansk in Poland, presented the Multi-Use in European Seas (MUSES), a Horizon 2020-funded project exploring the opportunities for multi-use in European Seas across five EU sea basins (Baltic Sea, North Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and Eastern Atlantic). Building on existing knowledge, the project aims at exploring opportunities for multi-use in European Seas, including the scope for innovation and potential for blue growth, and at pointing to practical options for how best to overcome existing barriers and to minimise multi-use risks and pressures.

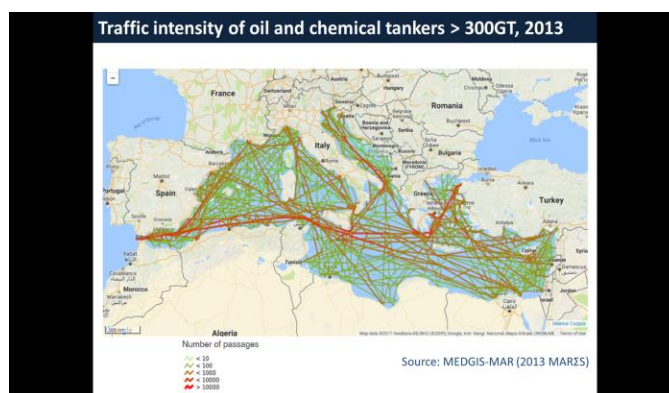
Mr **Apostolos Sigouras**, expert on Ballast Water Management from the Hellenic Register of Shipping S.A., acknowledged that EU cares deeply about Blue Growth and the Environment. Mr Sigouras recalled that the Adriatic and Ionian Seas serve as the main corridors for global shipping. The environmental pollution that this traffic brings about is a cause of serious concern, notably for ports, and negatively affects the quality of life of local populations. On the other hand, this creates many business opportunities and jobs, including ship retrofits and new builds, port facilities, green scrapping and fleet renewal, liquefied natural gas bunkering, clusters' creation, etc.



"Out of EUR 700 million allocated to the 2014-2020 EU Motorways of the Sea projects, less than EUR 150 million have been spent by the European Mediterranean countries. Adriatic-Ionian Region needs to become more proactive and creative."

Apostolos Sigouras, expert on Ballast Water Management from the Hellenic Register of Shipping S.A.

Mr **Gabino Gonzales Deograzia**, Head of Office of the Regional Martine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Malta, showed a map of traffic intensity of oil and chemical tankers crossing the Mediterranean Sea, also displaying the accidents in the last 40 years.



These affect many socio-economic activities, such as fisheries and aquaculture, ports, marinas and fishing harbours, salt production, coast civil

engineering, shipbuilding and yards, industrial water intake, agriculture etc. REMPEC assists the Mediterranean coastal states in ratifying, transposing, implementing and enforcing international maritime conventions related to the prevention of, preparedness for and response to marine pollution from ships.

Mr **Ilias Mavroeidis**, Programme Management Officer, Governance Unit, UN Environment / Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit, Greece, highlighted the achievements of Barcelona Convention that have been introduced in the regulatory and institutional framework, mentioned the partnerships established so far and spoke about the implementation on the ground.



“The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development sets out a vision for “A prosperous and peaceful Mediterranean Region in which people enjoy a high quality of life and where sustainable development takes place within the carrying capacity of healthy ecosystems. This is achieved through common objectives, cooperation, solidarity, equity and participatory governance.”

*Ilias Mavroeidis, Programme Management Officer,
Governance Unit, UN Environment/Mediterranean
Action Plan Coordinating Unit, Greece*

According to Mr **Jacques Ganoulis**, Special Secretary for Water in the Hellenic Ministry of

Environment and Energy, the main challenge for water management remains planning at different levels and scales. For example: how to successfully transfer management and transpose legislation from the European level to the national level, to the 14 geological water districts in Greece, and finally to the local level.

The panel debate was followed by a Q&A session with the audience.

Mr Kremlis closed the panel debate by drawing conclusions. He advocated for strong cooperation among the EUSAIR countries, particularly in light of the growing number of energy-related activities and projects in the Region as well as the increased volume of navigation and transport and their environmental impact. Mr Kremlis recalled that environment is a cross-cutting theme that needs to be mainstreamed in all the pillars of the Strategy in order to achieve synergies and avoid overlapping. In this respect, he referred to various activities at national and international level. The legal framework requires that Member States work hand-in-hand to address environmentally-related issues. Obvious avenues for action are eco-innovation, circular economy and water recycling. Mr Kremlis finally drew attention to protecting water as an essential resource, particularly in light of the risk of water scarcity.

VI. PLENARY SESSION II-C "Blue Growth and Connectivity - Sea Interconnections and Port Developments"

The session was opened by Mr **Rudolf Niessler**, Director at European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy. Focusing on the interconnections between the four pillars, he pointed to connectivity in the Region as a prerequisite for the other three pillars. Thus, fisheries and aquaculture could benefit from harmonisation of maritime traffic monitoring and

information system; transport and energy networks would favour accessible and sustainable sea interconnections and port development; green and multi-modal transport systems would provide efficient and economic hinterland connection between the regional entry sea ports and inland regions. While acknowledging the many synergies in the Region, Mr Niessler noted that strong and effective planning and coordination, notably via maritime spatial planning, were pre-requisites for reaping full benefit from such synergies. Mr Niessler announced that the session would focus on sustainable maritime transport management, intermodality and energy interconnections, and would showcase concrete projects.

In his keynote address, Mr **Antonio Cancian**, Italian Pillar 2 "Transport" Coordinator, summarized the work done so far under TSG-2, Transport subgroup, where the first list of EUSAIR-labelled projects was approved. Beside general EUSAIR criteria, specific criteria were also considered (e.g. interconnection between the axes and nodes; interoperability and inter-modality between different modes of transport; etc.). The first approved list consisted of three "flagship" project proposals involving almost all EUSAIR countries, and 12 complementary sector-specific projects.

Ms **Mirjana Filipović**, Serbian Pillar 2 "Energy network" Coordinator, outlined the progress made under TSG-2, Energy subgroup. She referred to the recently approved initial open list of ten EUSAIR-labelled projects and to measures identified for energy networks. Ms Filipović underlined the need for further development of cross-border hinterland connection projects in the energy sector so as to improve connectivity between all countries of the Adriatic and Ionian Region.

The presentation of Mr **Drazen Zgaljić**, Assistant Professor at University of Rijeka, Faculty of Maritime Studies, Croatia, focused on maritime

transport management, sustainability and ICT solutions. To shift the transport to the sea - generally recognised as the best option also by the European Commission - competitive conditions needed to be secured so as to allow the business sector to recognise sea transportation as profitable compared to other transport options. The same quality of administrative services needed to be ensured throughout the Region. Secure and paperless organisation and administration were needed and stakeholders should report bottlenecks. Services should be provided on the basis of transport corridors rather than on a country-by-country basis.

Mr **Nedim Begović**, Transport planning manager, South East Europe Transport Observatory, discussed the inter-modality, port facilitation and future scenarios for transport in the Adriatic and Ionian Region. Mr Begović focused on the obstacles which are hindering the inter-modal transport in the Western Balkans, e.g. institutional issues, lack of infrastructure facilities, technical and economic constraints. For instance, the unfavourable operating conditions of the rails hamper the competitiveness of ports in the segment of container traffic. He also pointed to the competitive advantages of the Western Balkans, e.g. the favourable transit position of the Region offers great potential for the development of intermodal transport. From there, he presented a number of potential measures (legislative, infrastructural, organizational) which should be implemented to develop a competitive intermodal transport system in South-East Europe.

Mr **Ivan Trkulja**, Head of Transmission System Development Unit, Elektromreža Srbije, presented the Trans-Balkan Corridor project and the related undersea 400 KV cable connection between Italy and Montenegro, which is expected to be operational by 2018. The Trans-Balkan Corridor project is key for the full utilisation of the undersea cable. Mr Trkulja briefly presented the state of play

of the four segments which constitute the Trans-Balkan Corridor project. The project, together with the undersea cable, will facilitate the integration of electricity markets in the South East Europe and with Italy and beyond, increasing cross-border trade and promoting utilisation of renewable energy sources.

Ms **Tatiana Eleftheriadou**, Associate Strategy Development and Regulation Division, New Projects Department, DESFA SA (Greek TSO), presented the topic of liquefied natural gas (LNG) bunkering and small-scale LNG Initiatives, a complement to large-scale LNG. Ms Eleftheriadou explained there are five LNG terminals in the Region. As she outlined the plans for further development, she discussed value added for investments, focusing on the case of Revithoussa LNG in Greece.

Again, the panel debate was followed by an interactive session with the audience.

VII. PLENARY SESSION II-D "Blue Growth and Tourism - Sustainable, Responsible and Innovative "Blue Tourism"

The Chair of the session, Mr **Jean Pierre Halkin**, Head of Unit at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO), opened the session by saying that, as the largest economic activity in the EUSAIR countries, the tourism industry boasts the greatest potential for the EUSAIR economy. For this very reason, sustainable tourism features as a specific pillar under EUSAIR. He also stressed the importance which DG REGIO lends to the tourism industry in the context of smart specialisation strategies. Sustainable tourism is thus combined with innovative and smart actions in the 2014-2020 ESIF programmes.

In his keynote address, Mr **Elton Orozi**, Deputy of the Albanian Pillar 4 Coordinator, Senior Expert at the General Directorate of Tourism Development, Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade and Entrepreneurship of Albania, presented the state of play of TSG-4. Among outcomes of the last two TSG-4 meetings, he emphasised the labelling of almost thirty projects as well as the decision to separate projects from processes. He also reported of TSG-4 cooperation with relevant Interreg programmes for the attribution of extra points to projects contributing to the objectives of Pillar 4 of the EUSAIR.

Ms **Maria Luisa Losavio**, TSG-4 member, Puglia Region, Coordination of International Policies T.A., ETC, IPA, ENI Programmes and EUSAIR, Italy, presented the outcomes of the report on the EUSAIR national tourism strategies in all participating countries, identifying common priorities and actions in relation to the EUSAIR action plan. The report highlighted eight different priority activities/processes and it was agreed that each EUSAIR country should start immediate implementation of one of these priorities.

Mr **Christos Economou**, Head of Unit at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), first of all recalled that the coastal and maritime tourism had been identified as one of the most promising sectors in the framework of the EU Blue Growth strategy. He listed the upcoming actions of DG MARE to support the coastal and maritime tourism at the European level, including some of the actions specified in the Blue Growth Strategy. These actions included developing sector-specific skills and innovative products, diversifying the tourist offer, addressing public complaints and promoting nautical tourism. Mr Economou noted that the EUSAIR could play a significant role in this respect by bringing together the administration and stakeholders, disseminating best practices,

boosting projects, and, hence, promoting the image of the Region. With respect to nautical tourism, he recalled the recently published Commission Staff Working Document on Nautical Tourism, which sets out opportunities and challenges of the sector. He also mentioned the EU year for Cultural Heritage 2018 as an upcoming opportunity for better cooperation in the Region.

Ms **Sandrine Devos**, Secretary General of the European Boating Industry, gave an insight on how to better exploit the potential of nautical tourism. The recreational boating industry is a young but promising sector, in particular as regards employment, with annual turnover of approximately EUR 20 billion. She underlined that nautical industry is a valuable component of sustainable tourism, particularly when combined with culture and sports.

Ms **Floriana Agneto**, expert in archaeology and biology from the Department of Cultural Heritage of the Sicilia Region, Italy, presented the topic "Underwater Cultural Itineraries in Sicily" featuring best practices of innovative and sustainable tourism. Some of the itineraries refer to an innovative system of archaeological parks created in Sicily with the aim of promoting and protecting underwater cultural heritage in accordance with the UNESCO Convention guidelines. There are also itineraries which are accessible to blind tourists and others which are designed for educational purposes.

Mr **Spyros Parthenis**, Director for Strategic Planning at the Ministry of Tourism in Greece, provided a national perspective for cooperation on the maritime and nautical tourism in the context of the EUSAIR. He referred to the National Coordination Committee for Cruise, the public private partnerships and the international and interregional partnerships as drivers for the maritime tourism sector. Mr Parthenis emphasised

that common challenges requires common actions and visions so that can be tackled effectively. So, EUSAIR should be the place there common answers should be given to common questions in the Region.

VIII. CLOSING REMARKS

The closing session began with the report from the B2B side event, which took place before the start of the Forum the previous morning.

Mr **Ioannis Mitsis**, President of the Chamber of Ioannina, reported that more than 240 business representatives from the EUSAIR participating countries had attended the event, making this the most successful event of its kind ever organised in Ioannina. The participants covered all four Pillars of the EUSAIR, plus the food sector. The discussions which took place brought out the synergies existing between business, regional and local authorities and the research community, as well the real need of SMEs to meet, discuss and join forces in order to remain competitive and to explore mutually profitable business opportunities. These aims had been well served by the B2B meeting, said Mr Mitsis, who ended his report by thanking the participants, the European Commission and the Enterprise Europe network for their contribution in making this a worthwhile and useful event.

By way of closing remarks, Mr **Morten Jung**, Senior Expert at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, congratulated the participating countries on getting the Strategy off the ground. He emphasised the importance of regional cooperation for facilitating the EU enlargement process of the Western Balkans, which is a clear objective of the countries themselves and of the EU. In this respect, he confirmed that the EUSAIR is very much in line with the EU enlargement strategy. Regional cooperation

flagship launched and promoted under the Berlin process offered a roadmap for how to connect the Western Balkans region both internally and with the EU, for example via transport corridors. The latter should not only be highways, but also economic and business corridors. In this respect, leveraging the resources made available under IPA funding, setting common priorities for the Region and acting upon them, is of vital importance. The task at hand is not only investing in “hardware”, but also getting rid of the obstacles, for example making the energy systems operational. Mr. Jung finally recommended thinking beyond the current geographical boundaries of EUSAIR, so as to include all Western Balkan countries.

Speaking on behalf of the representatives of the European Commission who participated in the Forum, Mr **Bernhard Friess**, Director at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, summed up the impressions he gathered from the Forum by outlining the messages to be conveyed to Brussels. The impression was that the Strategy had now started seriously to deliver on the promise of effective cooperation and coordination, also in terms of concrete initiatives. Mr Friess underlined the importance of the Thematic Steering Groups for the four pillars reaching consensus on the measures and projects which would take the Strategy and its objectives further. He called on the participating countries to keep up the momentum, while intensifying the implementation that has started. The EUSAIR Facility Point, financed by the Adriatic programme, would play a valuable role in this respect by assisting the TSGs in putting ideas and initiatives into practice. He added that the European Commission very much appreciated that the Ministerial Declaration presented a collaborative platform for a common response to migration challenges in the Region. Mr Friess also thanked the Greek authorities for the hospitality

and commended the Greek chairmanship for the work done. He concluded by wishing the very best to the incoming Italian chairmanship, ensuring that Commission stands ready to continue assisting and playing a prominent role in strategic coordination of the EUSAIR.

Reflecting on the two days of networking and panel discussions, Mr **Vassilis Tselios**, Expert Minister Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and EUSAIR National Coordinator, considered the 2nd EUSAIR Forum successful from different perspectives: first, the high number of participants in the Forum and its side events, and the involvement of various institutions at different levels in organising the event. At the political level, he mentioned the Ministerial Declaration, signed by the eight participating countries, which reaffirmed their commitment to work hand-in-hand. Mr Tselios also referred to concrete proposals made during the discussions on how to tackle energy poverty in the Adriatic and Ionian Region. Prior to summing up the highlights of the panels and discussions held during the two days, Mr Tselios emphasised EUSAIR as a tool for development and as an expression of values and principles shared by the EU as a whole. As such, the Strategy clearly has a role to play in the context of wider discussions on the future of the EU.



“Today, when I was entering the room, there was a blooming tree on the screen. Both days I

heard about projects that can walk the way. I think that we should be more ambitious. I believe that we have projects that can walk the catwalk."

Vassilis Tselios, Expert Minister Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EUSAIR National Coordinator

Finally, Mr **Alexis Charitsis**, Alternate Minister of Economy and Development of the Hellenic Republic, handed over the chairmanship of the EUSAIR to Italy. He thanked everyone who had contributed to the evident success of the Forum and expressed his belief that the work that had been done, at the ministerial level and elsewhere, would lead to a deepening of the cooperation between the eight EUSAIR participating countries. Because, he said, "words at the political level are not what is needed". What finally matters is actions, is the development of synergies and cooperation between the stakeholders themselves, chambers of commerce, SMEs, academia and the research community, regional and local administrations etc. to put in motion projects that can improve peoples' lives. So, it is very important to connect the ideas, views and proposals submitted in the context of the Forum with concrete actions and projects of this nature in the implementation of our programmes. As far as Greece is concerned, a serious effort is being made to support projects which bring out and promote the macro-regional dimension. But it is also very important, besides those programmes already implemented, that *new* projects, which have come out from exactly these processes of macro-regional cooperation are also supported. It is therefore a happy coincidence that, almost in parallel with the organisation of the 2nd EUSAIR Forum, the Monitoring Committee of the ADRION programme had approved 35 such projects, from all eight EUSAIR participating countries, with a total budget of EUR 40 million. This is where future efforts should be concentrated, Mr Charitsis said, expressing his belief that this is also the direction

that will be followed by the new Italian Presidency, to which Greece will offer every possible assistance and support.



Mr **Efisio Luigi Marras**, Ambassador of Italy, congratulated the participants on the results achieved this year, the Greek Presidency, all EUSAIR countries and the European Commission. He stressed out that the Strategy is a long and complex process but that the Forum had encouragingly signalled that the countries are on the right track. As Italy was taking over the EUSAIR Presidency, he promised the country would do everything in its power to keep up the momentum.



ANNEX I:

2ND FORUM OF THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION

PROGRAMME

IOANNINA, GREECE, 11-12 MAY 2017

| 11 MAY 2017, THURSDAY | |
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| 10:30-12:45 | EUSAIR MINISTERIAL MEETING / ADRIATIC-IONIAN COUNCIL |
| 09:00-12:45 | SIDE EVENTS |
| Side event 1 | <p>Business to Business (B2B)</p> <p>The B2B session aims to facilitate meetings and exchange between SMEs, universities, chambers of commerce, clusters and other stakeholders in the Adriatic and Ionian Region with the objective to find partners for new projects and/or explore new business opportunities. The session is organised by Enterprise Europe Network (EEN).</p> |
| Side event 2 | <p>Monitoring and Evaluation of the Progress of EUSAIR</p> <p>This side event will take place with the participation of officials from the European Commission and the governance system of EUSAIR and other macro-regional strategies, from the national and regional authorities responsible for managing EU funds in the EUSAIR countries, as well as distinguished members of academia and the international consulting community. Its purpose will be to discuss the basic elements (methodological, thematic and institutional) of an effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the EUSAIR.</p> |
| 2nd EUSAIR FORUM | |
| Moderator/Master of Ceremonies: MS NIKOLTSIOU Maria, Journalist, ALPHA Channel | |
| 08:00 | Registration |
| 12:45-14:00 | Networking lunch |
| 14:00-16:00 | <p>Welcome and Opening Session</p> <p>Welcome speeches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Alexandros KACHRIMANIS, Governor of Region of Epirus MR Thomas BEGAS, Mayor of Ioannina MR Ioannis MITIS, President, Chamber of Ioannina <p>Keynote addresses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Georgios KATROUGALOS, GR Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs MR Alexis CHARITSIS, GR Alternate Minister of Economy and Development |





Special address

- MS Corina **CREȚU**, European Commissioner for Regional Policy - Video message
- MR Karmenu **VELLA**, European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries – Video message
- MR Nektarios **SANTORINIOS**, Secretary of State, GR Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy
- MR Charalampos **KASSIMIS**, Secretary General, GR Ministry of Rural Development and Food

Panel discussion – EUSAIR Ministers

8 Ministers and Director Andersson Pench from the European Commission discuss with the Moderator/Master of Ceremonies on progress so far – necessary next steps – specific initiatives undertaken in their countries etc.

- MR Alexis **CHARITSIS**, GR Alternate Minister of Economy and Development
- MS Lena **ANDERSSON PENCH**, DG Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission
- MR Igor **CRNADAK**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- MS Sanja **ŠTIGLIC**, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia
- MR Aleksandar Andrija **PEJOVIĆ**, Minister of European Affairs of Montenegro
- MS Odeta **BARBULLUSHI**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania
- MS Tea **KARAMAN**, Chief Advisor to the Minister, Ministry of Regional Development and EU funds of Croatia
- MS Sanda **ŠIMIĆ**, Assistant Director of the European Integration Office of Serbia
- Professor Claudio **DE VINCENTI**, Minister for Territorial Cohesion and the South of Italy

16:00-16:30

Coffee break

Plenary session I: "EUSAIR in progress – The voice of the stakeholders"

[Presentation of the progress achieved so far in the implementation of the strategy and discussion/proposals by stakeholders from the 8 countries].

Chair

MR Ioannis **FIRBAS**, EUSAIR National Coordinator, General Director, National Coordination Authority for ESIF, Ministry of Economy and Development – Greece

16:30-18:30

Keynote addresses

Speaker: MS Maria **SPYRAKI**, Member of the European Parliament

Topic: Fighting Energy Poverty in the Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region: State of Play and Future Perspectives

Speaker: MS Lena **ANDERSSON PENCH**, DG Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Topic: Report on the Progress of macro-regional strategies with an emphasis on the EUSAIR

Speaker: MR Apostolos **KATSIFARAS**, Chair of the Committee of the Regions' Adriatic-Ionian Interregional Group, Governor of the Region of Western Greece





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| | <p>Topic: Local and regional perspective to the EUSAIR challenges</p> <p>Speaker: MS Eleni MARIANO, Secretary General of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions of Europe</p> <p>Topic: Macro-regional strategies: challenges and aspirations</p> <p><i>Panel discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Marko STARMAN, Faculty member at the European Faculty and former Director of public institute Nature park Strunjan – Theme: “Blue and green corridors - the role of protected areas” – Slovenia MR Pierluigi COPPOLA, Ministero delle Infrastrutture e dei Trasporti – Italy MS Erika HEDER, Director of the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECLE) – Croatia MR Nenad ĐURĐEVIĆ (DJURDJEVIC), Head of Sector for Foreign Economic Relations Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia – Serbia MR Konstantinos NIKOLOUTSOS, Representative of AIC Forum (Adriatic Ionian Chambers), President of Ilia Chamber – Greece MR Stratos IOANNOU, Deputy Regional Governor of Regional Unit of Preveza & Responsible for tourism Development of Epirus – Theme: “Cultural Route through the Ancient Theaters of Epirus: A model Integrated Territorial Investment Program” – Greece MR Andreas NTAIS, President and CEO Port Authority of Igoumenitsa – Theme: “Adriatic/Ionian – Egnatia Supply Chain: New era for ports & transport” – Greece MR Ioannis CHEKIMOGLU, President of the Union of Pisciculturists of Thesprotia – Theme: “Boosting Blue Growth through the development of sustainable aquaculture” – Greece <p><i>Open Discussion</i></p> |
| 20:00 | Evening reception and cultural programme offered by the Region of Epirus and the Municipality of Ioannina |

| 12 MAY 2017, FRIDAY | |
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| 2nd EUSAIR FORUM | |
| Moderator/Master of Ceremonies: MS NIKOLTSIU Maria, Journalist, ALPHA Channel | |
| 8:30–9:00 | Welcome Coffee |
| 09:00-10:00 | <p>Plenary session II-A "Blue Growth: An Adriatic-Ionian perspective for sustainable growth and jobs"</p> <p><i>Chair</i></p> <p>MR Bernhard FRIESS, Director, European Commission, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries</p> <p><i>Keynote address/Scene setter</i></p> <p>MS Sofia LOUKMIDOU, Ministry of Rural Development & Food - Managing Authority for EMFF O.P. 2014-2020, Head of Unit – TSG-1 Pillar Coordinator</p> |





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| | <p><i>Panel discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Ales GNAMUS, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission – Theme: “Smart Specialization Strategies focusing on Blue Growth” MR Vedran SLAPNICAR, Associate Professor at Department of Naval Architecture and Offshore Engineering / University of Zagreb, Croatia – Theme: “Maritime Clusters: The BlueNET project” MS Natassa KANNAVOU, Representative of Piraeus Bluegrowth Initiative, Greece – Theme: “Innovation in the Blue Economy - how can maritime innovation serve as a driver of sustainable blue growth” <p><i>Open Discussion</i></p> |
| 10:00-11:00 | <p>Plenary session II-B "Blue Growth and the Environment - an essential interrelation for the sustainable development of the Adriatic-Ionian region"</p> <p><i>Chair</i></p> <p>MR George KREMLIS, Head of Unit, European Commission, DG Environment</p> <p><i>Keynote address/Scene setter</i></p> <p>MR Mijla BRICELJ (TSG-3 Pillar Coordinator, Slovenia)</p> <p><i>Panel discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS Marija LAZIC, maritime Institute Gdansk-Poland (expert on maritime spatial planning, from the Adriatic-Ionian Region but involved in the Baltic Strategy), Poland – Theme: “Relation between blue growth and maritime spatial planning / integrated coastal zone management (with focus on coastal construction)” MR Apostolos SIGOURAS, private sector and an expert on Ballast Water Management from the Hellenic Register of Shipping S.A. and MR Gabino GONZALEZ DEOGRACIA, Head of Office of REMPEC, Malta – Theme: “Impact of large scale marine pollution on blue growth” MR Ilias MAVROEIDIS, Programme Management Officer, Governance Unit, UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit, Greece, Theme: “Contribution of blue growth to the achievements of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Barcelona Convention objectives and SDG 14/Agenda 2030” Professor Jacques GANOULIS, Special Secretary for Water, Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy – Theme: “Environmental Protection and Wastewater Reuse in the frame of Blue Growth” <p><i>Open Discussion</i></p> |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee break |
| 11:30-12:30 | <p>Plenary session II-C "Blue Growth and Connectivity - Sea interconnections and port developments "</p> <p><i>Chair</i></p> <p>MR Rudolf NISSLER, European Commission, Director DG REGIO.G "Smart and Sustainable Growth and Programme Implementation IV"</p> <p><i>Keynote address/Scene setter</i></p> |





MR Antonio **CANCIAN**, TSG-2 Pillar Coordinator, Transport, Italy

MS Mirjana **FILIPOVIĆ**, TSG-2 Pillar Coordinator, Energy Network, Serbia

Panel discussion

- MR Drazen **ZGALJIC** PhD, Assistant Professor at University of Rijeka, Faculty of Maritime Studies – Theme: *“Maritime transport management, sustainability and ICT solutions”*
- MR Nedim **BEGOVIĆ**, Transport planning manager, South East Europe Transport Observatory – Theme: *“Intermodality and transport future scenarios in the Adriatic and Ionian Region”*
- MR Ivan **TRKULJA**, Head of transmission system development unit, Elektromreža Srbije – Theme: *“Transbalkan Corridor project and Undersea Power Links”*
- MS Tatiana **ELEFThERiADOU**, Associate Strategy Development and Regulation Division, New Projects Department, DESFA SA (Greek TSO) – Theme: *“LNG Bunkering and Small scale LNG Initiatives”*

Open Discussion

Plenary session II-D "Blue Growth and Tourism - Sustainable, Responsible and Innovative "Blue Tourism"

Chair

MR Jean-Pierre **HALKIN**, Head of Unit, European Commission, Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy

Keynote address/Scene setter

MR Elton **OROZI**, deputy of the Albanian Pillar 4 Coordinator, TSG-4 member, Senior Expert, General Directory of Tourism Development, Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade & Entrepreneurship of Albania – Theme: *“State of play of the Thematic Steering Group for sustainable tourism (TSG-4)”*

MS Maria Luisa **LOSAVIO**, TSG-4 member, Puglia Region, Coordination of International Policies T.A., ETC, IPA, ENI Programmes and EUSAIR – Theme: *“Outcomes of the report on the EUSAIR national tourism strategies for identifying common priorities and actions in relation to the EUSAIR action plan”*

12:30-13:30

Panel discussion

- MR Christos **ECONOMOU**, Head of Unit, European Commission, Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries – Theme: *“Coastal and Maritime Tourism: an engine of sustainable Blue Growth”*
- MS Sandrine **DEVOS**, Secretary General, European Boating Industry – Theme: *“How to better exploit the potential of nautical tourism”*
- MS Floriana **AGNETO**, Soprintendenza del Mare, Regione Siciliana, Assessorato Beni Culturali e Identità Siciliana – Theme: *“Underwater Cultural Itineraries in Sicily: best practices for innovative and sustainable tourism”*
- MR Spyridon **PARTHENIS**, Head of the Directorate for Strategic Planning, National Representative of EUSAIR Pillar 4, Ministry of Tourism of Greece – Theme: *“Coastal, Maritime and Nautical tourism. A national perspective of cooperation in the context of the EUSAIR”*

Open Discussion





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| 13:30-14:00 | <p>Closing session</p> <p><i>Report from B2B session</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Ioannis MITIS, President of the Chamber of Ioannina <p><i>Concluding remarks</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Commission (MR Morten JUNG, Senior Expert, DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations) European Commission (MR Bernhard FRIESS, Director, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) GR Chairmanship (MR Vassilis TSELIOS, Expert Minister Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EUSAIR National Coordinator) <p><i>GR Chairmanship handing over to Italy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Alexis CHARITSIS, Greek Alternate Minister of Economy and Development MR Efsio Luigi MARRAS, Ambassador of Italy |
| 14:00-15:30 | Farewell Lunch |

