

# **FACILITATING STRATEGIC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCIAL DIALOGUE**

**Background paper Work Package T.2 – focused on  
FACILITATING STRATEGIC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

**July 2019, V.3.**



## Annex 1

### PROJECT IDEA DRAFT TEMPLATE

The aim of the project template is to gather the agreement about the project ideas of each TSG to be further developed to become bankable project. The template and the evaluation list ensure the Audit trail. The template must be filled by the applicant with the support of EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner from the Member State. The evaluation list must be filled by TSG members in order to come up with their decision. If the project idea reaches the threshold of 75 points it will be further developed.

#### 1.1 Template for the development of the project idea (*filled in by applicant*)

<b>Project idea title</b>	Security and safety of blue and green infrastructure as a key factor of sustainability of the blue and green corridors regarding climate changes
<b>Acronym</b>	
<b>Please list which awareness raising events with relevant stakeholders were organised for identification and presentation of the project idea</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Procurement of equipment for project implementation</li> <li>2. Research on the current level of awareness of the dangers and risks of fire, flood, earthquake and other risk directly or indirectly related to climate change.</li> <li>3. Current analysis of green and blue infrastructure on existing organizational and technical measures of fire and environmental protection</li> <li>4. Proposing measures for identifying, controlling and managing risks, improving the quality of planning new green and blue infrastructure.</li> <li>5. Education and knowledge exchange</li> </ol>
<b>Please indicate if the project idea was published on the Stakeholder platform</b>	X
<b>Please indicate which information/awareness activities were carried out using different online channels/formats and list which channels/formats were used</b>	X
<b>Please indicate at which TSG meeting the project idea was agreed</b>	X

<p><b>Potential lead beneficiary (e.g. different sectors, public administration, research institution, business sector, NGOs)</b></p>	<p>Local government will receive updated blue and green infrastructure plans or new ones will be developed.</p> <p>The local community and the general public will be educated about blue and green infrastructures in regard to control and managing the risk of fire and other hazards.</p> <p>Regional emergency services will be networked and standardized to emergency responses.</p> <p>Public institutions ( forestry, utilities etc. ) will be integrated into certain project activities, will use new knowledge related to their activities and will be able to adjust their strategy in accordance with climate change.</p>
<p><b>Potential project beneficiaries</b> (e.g. different sectors, public administration, research institution, business sector, NGOs, other)<sup>1</sup></p> <p><b>Important!</b> Involvement of Private sector/partner must be duly justified and preferably selected by public selection. The public selection is obligatory when the private partners are not eligible for partnership in the determinate calls.</p>	<p>Obtained results and proposed actions will directly benefit local communities, public administration (in terms of sustainable development), research institutions (through capacity building, cross-border research cooperation and networking), NGOs (through inclusion in monitoring, encouraging citizen science and education). Business sectors within the blue growth, small-scale and commercial fisheries are important beneficiaries of the proposed project. Tourism will be significantly advanced through the advancement of the environment and expansion of the tourist offer.</p> <p>Furthermore, existing Blue and Green Infrastructure will be significantly improved, protected areas, natural beauties, biodiversity, and other goods and services will experience significant improvement both in the current state and in management.</p>
<p><b>General objective</b></p>	<p>The project aims to directly indicate the impact of the Climate changes on to Blue and Green Infrastructure in order to prevent and reduce negative impact and to ensure Safety and Security of Blue and Green Infrastructure as a key factor of sustainability of the Blue and Green Corridors, through the use of existing and the collection of missing knowledge, cross-border cooperation, building capacity and awareness raising.</p>

<sup>1</sup>AF p. 55 T2 Facilitating strategic project development and financial dialogue – target groups.

<p><b>Work plan and activities of the project idea</b></p>	<p><b>WP 1 (Research and networking)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop multidisciplinary cross-borded research teams and conduct massive networking among the researchers to empower join papers.</li> <li>- Identify gaps in knowledge regarding climate change effects on Security and safety of blue and green infrastructure</li> <li>- Make a team of people responsible for mapping, mapping and creating a detailed list, and collecting information on protected areas, rivers, lakes, MPA and other green and blue infrastructures</li> <li>- Conduct extensive field studies to assess the real situation on the ground and map key habitats, pollutions, habitat destruction, condition of green and blue infrastructures in cities, suburbs.</li> <li>- Form a team of experts responsible for field analysis that includes biodiversity, key habitats, species monitoring and environmental monitoring.</li> </ul> <p><b>WP 2 (Mitigation of pollution)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop specific measures against air pollution, waste disposal, marine pollution due to discharges from ships.</li> <li>- Take concrete actions that include future planning of green and blue infrastructure, such as the construction of bicycle and pedestrian paths to reduce carbon emissions, afforestation and the like</li> <li>- Decrease pollution, especially microplastics, through public involvement.</li> <li>- Mitigate the effects of habitat loss and pollution on biodiversity and habitats.</li> </ul> <p><b>WP 3 (Education and raising awareness)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of educational tools, new methodologies and ID guides for scientists, students and other stakeholders.</li> <li>- Cross-border capacity buidling for academics and research, including both graduate and undergraduate students through interactive workshops.</li> <li>- Stakeholder education and engagement.</li> <li>- Empowering and encouragind citizen science to support species monitoring and data collecting.</li> <li>- Raising the awareness and wider public education throgh extensive media campaigns.</li> <li>- Project promotion</li> </ul> <p><b>WP 4 (Protection of Green and Blue Infrastructures and sustainable development)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop and propose unique regional and national plans and agriments on ways of managing, monitoring and improving common and state-specific natural resources, protected areas, MPAs, rivers, mountains and other green and blue infrastructures.</li> <li>- Providing sources of drinking water for future generations through systems of monitoring, management, creation of drainage systems and monitoring the quality of existing drinking sources</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving the flood control system as one of the most significant problems in the region caused by climate change and excessive pollution of riverbeds.</li> <li>- Better interstate cooperation related to the reduction of pollution of rivers, lakes, seas and other Green and Blue Infrastructures, which will go in the direction of preventing future pollution and improving the quality of the existing situation in order to prevent transboundary pollution.</li> <li>- preserving biodiversity and reducing the impact of natural disasters such as heat stroke, floods, drinking water shortages, drying crops due to drought by actions such as planting hydroaccumulative plants, afforestation, better strategic planning, encouraging the use of more environmentally friendly modes of transport.</li> </ul> <p>In order to reduce the risk of floods and pollution, it is important to take measures such as mapping riverbeds, detecting critical points, sanitation of existing pollution, reconstruction and construction of flood protection infrastructure such as embankments and absorption canals and wells.</p>
<b>Expected results/outcomes</b>	<p>In order to address the defined gaps, the project will bring sustainable solutions in accordance with the EU New Green Deal. A holistic approach of recording and researching biodiversity, planning urban infrastructure, mitigating deforestation, and connecting and moderating endangered areas will be implemented. The knowledge gained through the activities implemented will be utilised to monitor and conserve biodiversity of the proposed areas, map and establish database of local protected areas that will be available to academics and general public, increase volume of forestation, and contribute to planning of green and blue infrastructure that will be enjoyed by the local and non-local population. The project will promote four EUSAIR pillars.</p> <p>From the security aspect, networking and standardization of emergency services will be achieved regarding to equipment, standard operating procedures and communication methods in case of realization of risks such as fires, floods and other natural disasters.</p> <p>Communication between emergency services (on local, state and regional level) will be ensured by implementing independent communication system like satellite communication.</p> <p>Install fire-fighting infrastructure in the blue and green corridors in order to enable the maximum effect of the emergency services response in case of fire or other natural disasters.</p> <p>Providing an ortho photo maps of all blue and green infrastructures in the countries involved in the project.</p> <p>Organization and standardization of drone teams in emergency services.</p>
<b>Relevance to the following priority actions from the EUSAIR ACTION PLAN for Pillar:</b>	<i>To what extent does the project contribute to the implementation of at least 1 of the following priorities? (description)</i>

<p><b>Pillar 1 BLUE GROWTH</b></p> <p><b>Topic 1.1</b> Blue technologies</p> <p><b>Topic 1.2.</b> Fisheries and aquaculture</p> <p><b>Topic 1.3.</b> Maritime and marine governance and services</p>	<p>As research and information is, at the moment, scarce in comparison with the EU countries, in regards to marine biodiversity, this project will allow for scientific data to be obtained and used in development and implementation of the Blue Growth pillar. Through planned research, this project will directly address flagship <i>offostering quadruple helix in the fields of marine technologies and blue biotechnologies for advancing innovation, business development and business adaptation in blue bioeconomy</i>. Moreover, the international character of the project will further advance the second flagship by <i>promoting sustainability, diversification and competitiveness in the fishery and aquaculture sectors through education, research and development, administrative and technological actions, including promotion of initiatives of marketing standards and healthy nutrition habits</i>. More specifically, formation of database of local protected areas that will be available to academics and general public, will include maritime regions. This database will be used in further science projects, but also to encourage development of sustainable tourism by monitoring and protection of endangered species and habitats. Research will highly encourage production of research papers and advising of policy, which will be used in harmonizing the institutional and legal framework of the applicant countries with the EU acquis. As a part of the European Green Deal, this project will strive to participate in the European Climate Pact which aims to learn about climate change, develop and implement solutions, and connect with others and maximise the impact of these solutions. The project will also initiate institutionalization of the Blue Growth pillar through its activities which will result in improved maritime and marine governance and services.</p> <p>Identifying shortcomings in the management system taking into account fire safety and protection, accidents at sea, rivers, lakes and sources of drinking water.</p> <p>Education and standardization of responses to risks threatening blue infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Pillar 2 CONNECTING THE REGION</b></p> <p><b>Topic 2.1.</b> Maritime transport</p> <p><b>Topic 2.2.</b> Intermodal connections to the hinterland</p> <p><b>Topic 2.3.</b> Energy networks</p>	<p>The potential of the Adriatic-Ionian Multi-Modal Corridors will be developed through the exploration of <i>the strategic geographical position of the AI Region, as “junction” between the Mediterranean Sea and Central Europe, intercepting the routes from and to the Far East in the context of global trades</i>. Research done through the project will aim to foster actions that will enable development of green maritime transport and develop cohesive policies of cooperation between the participating countries. Developing transport in the region will provide better connection that leads to higher cooperation between industrial and service activities, however, emphasis will be put on sustainable development. As the European Green Deal aims to make Europe climate neutral by 2050, the Commission proposed the European Climate Law which sets the goal of net greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of at least -55% by 2030. Researching and implementing relevant policies will directly contribute to achieving this goal through Pillar 2.</p>

**Pillar 3**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
**QUALITY**

**Topic 3.1.** The marine environment

**1.a.** Threat to coastal and marine biodiversity;

**1.b.** Pollution of the sea;

**Topic 3.2** Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity

The proposed project will directly contribute to the flagship “Promotion of sustainable growth of the Adriatic-Ionian Region by implementing ICZM and MSP to contribute CRF on ICZM of Barcelona Convention and the monitoring management of MPAs”, within the Pillar 3: Environmental quality. Numerous activities will deliver new knowledge concerning climate change adaptations. By acquiring new knowledge we will be able to make plans for risk prevention and better risk management when it comes to disasters caused by climate change, such as floods, droughts, heat stroke, pollution of the sea, rivers and other systems within Green and Blue Infrastructure. Concrete actions within the project rely on the overall goal “Promote sustainable development and facilitate adoption of coastal and maritime spatial plans (MSP Directive and ICZM Protocol) by defining the gaps in maritime/coastal knowledge”.

A major problem caused by climate change when it comes to Green and Blue infrastructures is the lack of drinking water and the reduction of the quality of existing sources of drinking water, which requires action as soon as possible. This action is in accordance with the overall goal “Identify conflicts and propose sustainable options for actions”, of the flagship “Promotion of sustainable growth of the Adriatic-Ionian Region by implementing ICZM and MSP to contribute CRF on ICZM of Barcelona Convention and the monitoring management of MPAs”.

The project will take actions which will improve Green and Blue infrastructure which is directly following flagship overall goal: “Help the management of natural, social, economic and spatial assets in Adriatic-Ionian region”.

By connecting protected areas, international cooperation, acquiring new knowledge, pointing out the problem of pollution of the sea, rivers and other systems within Green and Blue infrastructure, the project helps protect unique biodiversity and ecosystems.

This project will analyze the impact of climate change on forest fires that have become not just seasonal but year-round phenomenon.

This project will offer solutions in which ways to reduce the risk of adverse effects in certain protected areas.

<p><b>Pillar 4. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM</b></p> <p><b>Topic 4.1.</b> Diversified tourism offer (products and services)</p> <p><b>Topic 4.2.</b> Sustainable and responsible tourism management (innovation and quality)</p>	<p>The countries of the Adriatic-Ionian region offer incredible natural resources, such as indigenous plant and animal species and ecosystems, natural lakes, ponds, wetlands, beautiful Mediterranean ecosystems, cultural and historical heritage and others. The big problem is the lack of connectivity at both the local and state levels, and almost no connectivity at the regional level. The activities of this project will work on the development of tourism activities related to local communities and related to Green and Blue Infrastructures. The possibilities are inexhaustible, and this idea of the project is directly related to the flagship: ‘<i>Development of the network of sustainable tourism business and clusters green mapping for the Adriatic-Ionian region – Supporting development and market access for responsible tourism destination and Micro/SME operations EUSAIR reg</i>’.</p> <p>By connecting local communities, protected landscapes, Green and Blue corridors, we will provide better visibility of tourist activities within the Adriatic-Ionian region, enable better monitoring of their activities, improvement of the current situation, monitoring of progress, use of good practices from neighbouring countries, etc.</p> <p>Such activities are directly related to overall goal: “<i>Support to the development and promotion of quality-assessed Micro &amp; SME tourism operations and destinations in the EUSAIR: To measure, map and improve their sustainability; Competitiveness: give them visibility and market uptake</i>”.</p> <p>The huge tourist potential of countries lies precisely in natural wealth and biodiversity, which is an inexhaustible source of opportunities and great potential for self-sustainability.</p> <p>The richness of biodiversity leaves room for science tourism, which is becoming increasingly popular in the world, and in this region has not yet experienced its development. Improving the situation, promotion, management, capacity building leaves room for job creation, internships, learning and others. Such actions and the development of these types of tourism are important for the countries themselves and the improvement of socio-economic conditions.</p> <p>It is important to consult with fire safety and protection experts to provide solutions and reduce the risk of protected areas in order to preserve natural resources.</p>
<p><b>Relation to other pillars of the EUSAIR</b></p>	<p><i>Is the project relevant for other EUSAIR Pillars? If yes, to what extent does it contribute to their objectives? (description)</i></p>
<p><b>Pillar 1 BLUE GROWTH</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>1.1. Blue technologies</p> <p>1.2. Fisheries and aquaculture</p> <p>1.3. Maritime and marine governance and services</p>	<p><i>The applicant, with the support of EUSAIR Facility Point Project Partner, could define specific quantitative and qualitative indicators (technical indicators) to assess, in a harmonized and objective manner, how the project idea contribute to the pillar/topic. Pillar 1: BLUE GROWTH</i></p> <p>The proposed project will directly contribute to achieving flagship of fostering quadruple helix in the fields of marine technologies and blue biotechnologies for</p>



<p><b>Pillar 2 CONNECTING THE REGION</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>2.1. Maritime transport</p> <p>2.2. Intermodal connections to the hinterland</p> <p>2.3. Energy networks</p> <p><b>Pillar 3 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY</b></p> <p>Topic 3.1. The marine environment</p> <p>1.a. Threat to coastal and marine biodiversity;</p> <p>1.b. Pollution of the sea;</p> <p>Topic 3.2 Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity</p> <p><b>Pillar 4. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM</b></p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>4.1. Diversified tourism offer (products and services)</p> <p>4.2. Sustainable and responsible tourism management (innovation and quality)</p>	<p>advancing innovation, business development and business adaptation in blue bioeconomy.</p> <p>The principal indicator of successful project implementation will be utilization of the conducted research that will be used in further development of policies, scientific innovation and technologies, but also development of business in accordance with sustainable development principles. Moreover, already mentioned development of public database will serve as one of the indicators of success of this project, as the database will have numerous uses in science, tourism and other industries.</p> <p>Production of research papers and publishing will have great impact on the implementation of flagship that refers to increasing networking between researchers, SMEs and clusters, increase joint research papers and researchers exchange in region. As already mentioned, the research will be highly utilized in further advances in harmonizing the institutional and legal framework of the applicant countries with the EU acquis. As a part of the European Green Deal. Ensuring the participation in the European Climate Pact will bring this project greater visibility amongst the general public and academic community.</p> <p><b>Pillar 2: CONNECTING THE REGION</b></p> <p>The project will contribute to development of flagship that targets <i>the strategic geographical position of the AI Region, as “junction” between the Mediterranean Sea and Central Europe, intercepting the routes from and to the Far East in the context of global trades</i>. Through the research, the importance and potential of the Adriatic – Ionian Region will be recognized.</p> <p>Great base for development of sustainable and green maritime transport in the region will be provided, with simultaneous informing of policies needed to be formed for the sustainable development to be achieved on local, regional and international level. Future organization and formation of this transport will provide better connection that leads to higher cooperation between industrial and service activities. As the European Green Deal aims to make Europe climate neutral by 2050, the Commission proposed the European Climate Law which sets the goal of net greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of at least -55% by 2030. Researching and implementing relevant policies will directly contribute to achieving this goal through Pillar 2.</p> <p><b>Pillar 3: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY</b></p> <p>The proposed project will directly contribute to the flagship “Promotion of sustainable growth of the Adriatic-Ionian Region by implementing ICZM and MSP to contribute CRF on ICZM of Barcelona Convention and the monitoring management of MPAs”, within the Pillar 3: Environmental quality. As mentioned above, some of the main activities are the acquisition of new knowledge regarding the impact of climate change on the Safety and Security of Blue and Green Infrastructure as a key factor of the coexistence of the Blue and Green Corridors. The best indicator of project success for this part of the project activities will be habitat and population status of target species and areas, as we plan to continue detail monitoring on long term basis. These indicator also follow actions including the connection of the protected areas, international cooperation, acquiring new</p>
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	<p>knowledge, pointing out the problem of pollution of the sea, rivers and other systems within Green and Blue infrastructure, following flagship overall goal: “Help the management of natural, social, economic and spatial assets in Adriatic-Ionian region”.</p> <p>Part of the actions within the project rely on the overall goal “Identify conflicts and propose sustainable options for actions”, of the flagship “Promotion of sustainable growth of the Adriatic-Ionian Region by implementing ICZM and MSP to contribute CRF on ICZM of Barcelona Convention and the monitoring management of MPAs”.</p> <p>This part refers to drinking water sources that are negatively affected by climate change due to drought and heat stroke. In addition, this goal includes freshwater and marine flows, but also green areas, wetlands, ponds and other systems of Green and Blue Infrastructure, which are negatively affected by climate change. measuring the success of this part of the project is reflected in the preservation of existing water systems, ensuring the best possible monitoring systems for drinking water quality, introduction of drainage systems and other infrastructural changes aimed at preserving Green and Blue Infrastructures.</p> <p>Actions including the connection of the protected areas, international cooperation, acquiring new knowledge, pointing out the problem of pollution of the sea, rivers and other systems within Green and Blue infrastructure, the project helps protect unique biodiversity and ecosystems which are directly following flagship overall goal: “Help the management of natural, social, economic and spatial assets in Adriatic-Ionian region”.</p> <p><b>Pillar 4. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM</b></p> <p>The main goal of the Flagship: "Development of the network of sustainable tourism business and clusters green mapping for the Adriatic-Ionian region – Supporting development and market access for responsible tourism destination and Micro/SME operations EUSAIR reg” is "to measure, map and improve sustainability of the tourism business”. Our goal is to strengthen the existing tourist businesses on the territory of the countries, through promotion and mutual collaboration.</p> <p>By connecting local communities, protected landscapes, Green and Blue corridors, we will provide better visibility of tourist activities within the Adriatic-Ionian region, enable better monitoring of their activities, improvement of the current situation, monitoring of progress, use of good practices from neighbouring countries, etc.</p> <p>Such activities are directly related to overall goal: " Support to the development and promotion of quality-assessed Micro &amp; SME tourism operations and destinations in the EUSAIR: To measure, map and improve their sustainability; Competitiveness: give them visibility and market uptake".</p> <p>Accordingly, one of the monitoring tools is to monitor the success of such connections, by measuring the number of meetings, the connections made. When it comes to the creation of new business ideas, the measurement of success is reflected in the number of new tourists, the number of open businesses, the number of trained new staff. Since such tourism is in line with sustainable development and preservation of natural resources, one of the measures of success in project</p>
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	<p>implementation is the backlog of collected waste, trained staff and the general public, infrastructural changes made, planted trees and plants, cleaned parts of rivers, lakes, mountain systems, setting up sustainable waste management systems, building bike and hiking trails and other systems within Green and Blue Infrastructures.</p>
<p><b>Macro-regional impact (Up to 64 points)</b></p>	<p>The proposed project actively imposes implementing and transposing values of the European Union to the applicant countries, but also higher level of Europeanization of countries which are already member states. Croatia, as a member of the Europe Union, will benefit highly from project such as this one, by ameliorating its green and blue infrastructure which will bring it closer to obtaining the goals outlined in its National Strategy for Sustainable development, approved by the European Commission. Moreover, it will compliment the integration process of countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia which commenced with signing and ratifying of the SAP agreements of these countries with the European Union. Participation in projects like this one is an outstanding opportunity for applicant countries to transpose and implement the EU <i>acquis</i> which will benefit them in preparation to become be member states.</p> <p>The region itself is known for the horrific wars that left the numerous consequences. One of the war legacies that the region still struggles with are inter-state relations that have been highly impacted by the unresolved war trauma. As nature and climate change knows no national boundaries, this project will serve as a great platform for cooperation between the states to develop coherent regional policies and plans to tackle climate change in accordance with the European Green Deal. Working together on common goals of Europeanization and tackling climate change, countries, their political officials and general population, will benefit from the cohesive and cooperative project like this one. As such, this project will implement the EU enlargement strategy with which EU confirmed its willingness to facilitate further enlargement in the Western Balkans. Scientific research done and obtained through the project will inform policy-making process. Objective and informed policy-making is a sign of healthy and strong democratic societies. Therefore, apart from tackling climate change, this project aids the democratization process of participant countries as well.</p> <p>Moreover, the project directly implements the EU Green Deal through numerous activities. The EU highlights the importance of supporting its immediate neighbours. As already said, nature does not recognize national and supranational borders. Therefore, in order for the implementation of the EU Green Deal to be as successful as possible, it is crucial to include countries that are not member states at the moment. Current capacities of the EUs closest neighbours must be taken into account. As these countries historically struggled to implement green policies that entail sustainable development and fight against the climate change due to inadequate logistics and resources, it is highly important for the EU to lead and contribute to the green transition of the aforementioned countries through projects like this one.</p> <p>As noted in the EU Green Deal: “A sustainable ‘blue economy’ will have to play a central role in alleviating the multiple demands on the EU’s land resources and tackling climate change. The role of oceans in mitigating and adapting to climate change is increasingly recognised.” Through the activities aimed to be executed through this project, the aim of achieving sustainable blue economy will be accelerated. Moreover, it will seek to find lasting solutions to climate change that include healthy and resilient seas and oceans.</p>

	<p>Each aforementioned country is a participant and signatory of the Sofia Declaration and Green Agenda for the Western Balkan. These documents transpose the goals of the EU Green Deal on a macro-regional level, and adapt them to the region itself. The Green Agenda for the Western Balkan is also thought “to stimulate the economies in the Western Balkan while bringing the region up to standard with the EU’s environmental standards and climate objectives, reducing corruption and strengthening democracy”. By providing research, this project will enable growing understanding of potential sustainable development of tourism that will benefit the region economically. The development of sustainable tourism will be further deepened by the Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism through which the EU aims to ensure better visibility and recognition of good practices by the EU citizens and society and at strengthening the knowledge and understanding of practices that link sustainability and competitiveness in a mutually reinforcing way.</p> <p>Moreover, sustainable development of fishing, sailing and other industrial activities will be informed by the research done through this project. Apart from that, it will be used in future planning of transport systems that will allow for greater connectivity of the region which will benefit local and regional population. By providing proper infrastructure, it is more likely that local populations will use the benefits of connectivity and become more mobile. Greater mobility expands not only exchange of the economic activities, but also cultural, which deepens the link between cultures as well.</p> <p>The project also addresses The Marine Strategy Framework Directive which - establishes a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy. According to this Directive: “Each Member State should therefore develop a marine strategy for its marine waters which, while being specific to its own waters, reflects the overall perspective of the marine region or subregion concerned.” The research done through the project will help inform future marine strategies of the applicant countries, and also of the existing member states. Similarly, “by applying an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities while enabling a sustainable use of marine goods and services, priority should be given to achieving or maintaining good environmental status in the Community’s marine environment, to continuing its protection and preservation, and to preventing subsequent deterioration», this project highlights the importance of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Common Fisheries Policies, as all of the research done will be used to implement policies in accordance with these directives and regulations.</p> <p>Macro-regional green and blue infrastructure will be subdued to transformation in accordance with the New Industrial Strategy for Europe. Tackling research on services and goods, the project will coordinate progress towards greener and digitalized industries including tourism sector. Apart from encouraging sustainable tourism, as the EU plans a revision of the Regulation on the trans-European transport network and of the Directive on intelligent transport systems, research will be valuable in the producing further advances in relation to more sustainable alternative transport, digitalisation and automation, both on and off land. Moreover, impact of hazardous chemicals which can have long-term and large-scale environmental impacts on the terrestrial and marine environment will be addressed as well by applying Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability Towards a</p>
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	<p>Toxic-Free Environment which strives towards zero chemical pollution in the environment.</p> <p>In relation to Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the project will strive to provide information of potential enlargement of protected areas via Natura 2000, which will be characterized by strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value. Anchored in the EU Green Deal and Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the new EU Forest Strategy targets climate change and deforestation. The EU aims to improve the forest conservation status which continues to be negatively affected by the climate change. Climate change highlights vulnerabilities which are aggravating other destructive pressures such as pests, pollution and diseases, and it affects forest fire regimes. Project is addressing effects of climate change brought by neglect and mismanagement of forests. Accumulating data on these topics will further advance efforts of afforestation, sustainable management and active restoration.</p> <p>As the green and blue infrastructure is quite diverse area of interest, apart from these specifically mentioned benefits, research and policy areas, the project will be open to operate within other spheres, such as research on micro and macro pollution, extensive research on biodiversity, soil quality, water and drainage systems, and many others. However, regardless of the research and proposed project, the emphasis will always be on mitigating climate change, implementing constructive, solid and sustainable solutions, and promoting European values of transparency and democracy. Transparent process will feed into core values of the communities involved, which will help fight against corruption from which region suffers greatly.</p> <p><b>European Commissions Report on Croatia, 2021</b></p> <p>There is particular scope and opportunity for Croatia to invest in sustainable urban and railway transport, energy efficiency, renewable sources of energy and environmental infrastructure. In addition, as regards water and waste management, Croatia considerably lags behind the EU average and investment is necessary to sustain Croatia's economic development. Therefore, Croatia should Focus investment on the green and digital transition, in particular on environmental infrastructure, sustainable urban and rail transport, clean and efficient production and use of energy and high-speed broadband.</p> <p><b>Key findings of the 2021 Report on Bosnia-Herzegovina, 19 October 2021</b></p> <p>Bosnia and Herzegovina made some or limited progress in most areas related to Key Priorities and the Green Agenda. As such, it is at an early stage or has some level of preparation. The country needs to significantly step up its ambitions towards a green transition. The green transition and sustainable connectivity are key to economic integration within the region and with the EU, facilitating cross-border trade within the region and creating real benefits for businesses and citizens. This cluster and the reforms concerned have significant links to the Economic Reform Programme, the Economic and Investment Plan and the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.</p> <p><b>Key findings of the 2021 Report on Montenegro, 19 October 2021</b></p> <p>Montenegro achieved some progress in its integration path. As such, it should now focus on: the energy sector; trans-European networks, telecommunications, TEN-</p>
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	<p>T and TEN-E Regulations; green transition, waste management, water quality, nature protection and climate change. Montenegro should also focus on implementation of the IPARD programme, agriculture and rural development as well as fisheries, upgrading food establishments and food safety controls, EU cohesion policy requirements, capacity for the handling of indirect management programmes in IPA and rules of administration for the own resources system.</p> <p><b>Key findings of the 2021 Report on Serbia, 19 October 2021</b></p> <p>Concerning Serbia's ability to assume the obligations of EU membership, the country has carried out important work on alignment with EU acquis over many areas, particularly on taxation and energy. The country made progress on road safety and rail reform. It also adopted a climate law, as well as a package of major energy laws, including new laws on renewables and energy efficiency. However, it is suggested that it continues to develop bilateral relations with neighbouring countries, most notably Montenegro and Kosovo.</p>
<b>Compliance with six broad criteria (see below) (Up to 6 points)</b>	<b><i>To what extent does the project comply with the Broad Criteria of EUSAIR? (description – please seek guidance in the table clarifying the Broad Criteria)</i></b>
<b>Broad Criteria</b>	
Address priorities and well-substantiated needs expressed by countries, regions and stakeholders or Commission services and be widely supported.	The target areas that will be included and affected by the work of this project are either members of the European Union, such as Croatia, Greece and Italy, or are at the various stages of the application process such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. As member states or applicant countries, these countries strive to promote European values and strategies in their ongoing Europeanization process.
Demonstrate a transnational, if not macro-regional, scope or impact	All of the abovementioned countries are signatory of the Sofia Declaration for the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans that aims to stimulate the economies in the Western Balkan while bringing the region up to standard with the EU's environmental standards and climate objectives, reducing corruption and strengthening democracy. Participating countries will benefit from the financial assistance, logistics support and exchange of the experience by covering the needs of advanced research teams, and building capacities for investment and development.
Be realistic and credible	The project implementation and research in the region is, at the moment, quite scarce. Although not neglectable, research and innovation have great potential to be developed and flourish. However, because of the current lack of information and knowledge, overall marine management suffers. Therefore, this project will form its activities and actions to fit the needs of the region. Emphasis will be put on transparent research, exchange of information, cooperation and sustainability.
Build on existing initiatives and have reached a fair degree of maturity	Cooperation and promotion of European values of democratic principles, transparency and joint action will be further expanded through exchange of the experience of smaller scale urban development projects that were successfully executed in Croatia, Italy and Greece, and have a great potential to be linked to other aforementioned countries. Research and implementation of knowledge of green and blue infrastructure is relatively new in the applicant countries.

Pay attention to cross-cutting aspects	<p>As the climate change and green issues transcend national borders, this project will, in a way, serve as a platform to build bridges and cooperation between the scientists, policy makers and general public from the targeted region. In this sense, researching biodiversity and mapping natural habitats will be a great accelerator of cooperation between various project participants.</p> <p>Therefore, it is crucial to implement and develop projects like this one in order to tackle climate change, develop international cooperation and endorse European values on a practical level.</p>
Be coherent and mutually supportive	<p>The project will, through its activities, actively promote the European Green Deal by contributing to development and implementation of policies and research on fresh air, clean water, biodiversity, healthy soil, extensive research and innovation, green infrastructure and transparency. Moreover, research done through the project will provide a better understanding of the climate change impact on the region which will be essential to further implement the European Climate Convention and mitigate the effects of climate change. All of the abovementioned countries are rich in natural beauty and resources and it is imperative to protect it and conduct research that will allow for scientific data to be used in planning sustainable coexistence.</p>
<p><b><u>Compliance with the Guiding Principles/Priorities of the respective Pillar (Up to 30 points)</u></b></p> <p>Take into account the Guiding principles/Priorities of the Pillar within which the proposed project is developed</p>	<p>The development of a strong, high-quality marine sector that is economically sustainable and environmentally friendly will be addressed through Pillars 1 - 4. Activities planned by the project comply with the EU and international rules and are attributing to their active promotion in the region. By implementing the project, gaps in legal framework will be exposed, and, consequently, will be able to be properly addressed and changed in accordance with the EU acquis. Furthermore, coordinated approach that is based on common priorities of sustainability and development, will spark research and innovation movement that the countries currently lack.</p> <p>The need to develop monitoring, control and surveillance capacities needs immediate address in many Adriatic-Ionian countries. Moreover, sustainable use of resources and integrated control of fisheries remain critical for the entire Adriatic-Ionian Region. Deployment of the existing capacities is essential to initiate development, innovation and deepen integration process. Therefore, this project will inform the policy making process by closing the gap in knowledge relevant to fisheries, fish stocks, biodiversity, sustainable management of fisheries, and diversification and profitability.</p> <p>Moreover, climate change is expected to have extreme effects on the Adriatic-Ionian. Natural habitats and biodiversity are especially endangered. Therefore, the urgency to mitigate risks of climate change on biodiversity will be addressed by bolstering the general resilience of ecosystems.</p> <p>Joint planning of development of sustainable marine transport with aim to bolster macro-regional thinking will be implemented as well. Innovative solutions on cross-border investment, port operating, safety and security of non-renewable fuels, conservatorship, and other fields of action, that stem in research, will be encouraged throughout the project. The project will be fruitful in research that will inform policymakers, implementation of legislatives, and define future MPAs in the region.</p>

	Need for inclusion of the civil society will be addressed through the activities that aim to promote project goals and transformation of policies. Moreover, through these activities of informing and educational nature, raising awareness on climate change and green transition will be covered. Existing network of organisations will be employed together with joint planning efforts of national and regional services. Promotion of higher scientific cooperation of the countries in the region will be implemented through gathering knowledge and resources that will be used to form a shared system of major macro-regional data bases.
<b>Duration:</b> <b>Expected</b> project start and completion date: (day/month/year)	X
<b>Additional Information</b>	X

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