

AQUAE VENICE 2015 EXPO

BLUE GROWTH:
boosting sustainable development
of marine and maritime economy

the case of Adriatic-Ionian Region

WORKSHOP REPORT



Blue Growth is the long term strategy adopted by European Union to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole, recognizing that seas and oceans are fundamental drivers for the European economy. Still actions to stimulate and harness this great potential for innovation and growth are needed and particularly important.

In this context, Thetis S.p.A (www.thetis.it) organized a workshop on September 28th, 2015, addressed to representatives of marine and maritime industry sectors and regional and local administrations of the Adriatic-Ionian Region.

Aims of the workshop were:

- to get acquainted with the EU Blue Growth Strategy and its objectives and the possibilities offered by the EU funding programs;
- to get acquainted with the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and its Action Plan;
- to learn from cases study and initiatives developed in other areas;
- to strengthen and enlarge collaboration networks;
- to sketch and elaborate ideas and initiatives supporting the implementation of the Blue Growth Strategy in the Adriatic-Ionian Region, in line with EUSAIR objectives.

Sharing of experiences was the working method of the workshop. The morning was dedicated to a plenary session on the Blue Growth and EUSAIR strategies, during which several presentations were given by invited speakers. The afternoon session was dedicated to parallel working groups and included a conclusive session summarising key remarks from the working groups and funding opportunities for the Blue Growth in the Adriatic-Ionian Region.



PLENARY SESSION 9.30-11.00

Blue Growth Strategy: sustainable development for European Coasts and Seas (Chairing: *Thetis, Emiliano Ramieri*)

- Welcome address and introductory statements
(*Thetis, Hermes Redi*)
- The European Blue Growth Strategy
(*DG-MARE, Luca Marangoni*)
- Opportunities from Blue-Growth:
 1. Off-shore sea technologies and infrastructures
(*D'Apollonia S.p.A, Roberto Carpaneto*).
 2. Sustainable tourism in coastal and marine areas
(*CISSET, Mara Manente*).
 3. Boosting marine aquaculture
(*Cà Foscari Venice University, Roberto Pastres*).
 4. Maritime transport funding opportunities
(*Rete Autostrade del Mare, Antonio Cancian*).

PLENARY SESSION 11.30-13.30

Blue Growth in the Adriatic-Ionian Region: needs and opportunities (Chairing: *Unioncamere Veneto, EU Policy Department, Francesco Pareti*)

- The EU Strategy for Seas: the Baltic experience
(*DG-REGIO, Odd Godal*)
- The EU Strategy for Adriatic-Ionian Region
(*Marche Region, Marco Bellardi*)
- Implementing EUSAIR Action Plan: Pillar 1 – Blue Growth
(*Veneto Region, Flavia Zuccon*)
- Blue Growth needs and potential in the Adriatic-Ionian Region
(*COGEA, Alvise Bragadin*)
- Maritime clusters in Adriatic –Ionian Region
(*Ecorys, Matteo Bocci*)
- Introduction to afternoon working method
(*Thetis, Martina Bocci*)

WORKING GROUP SESSION 14.30-16.00

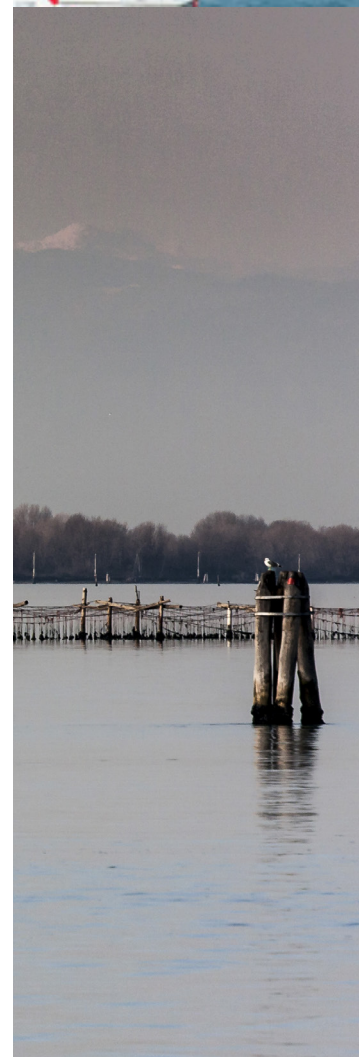
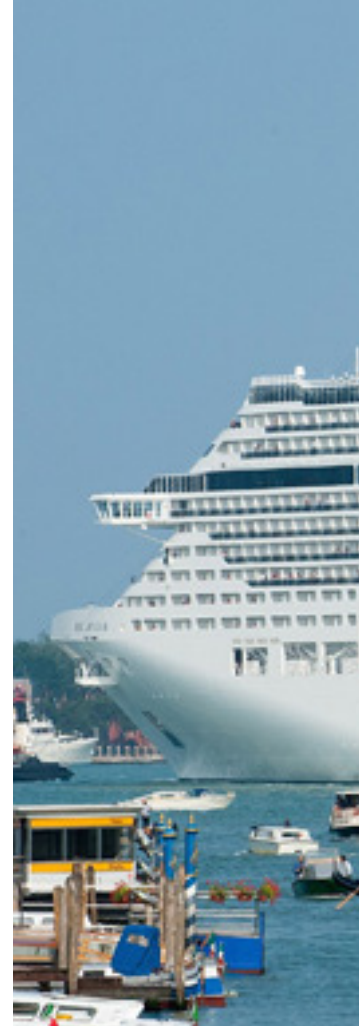
Blue Growth in practice

- Maritime transport clusters working group
(*coordinator Matteo Bocci; rapporteur Sebastiano Carrer*)
- Coastal tourism working group
(*coordinator Mara Manente; rapporteur Emiliano Ramieri*)
- Marine aquaculture working group
(*coordinator Roberto Pastres; rapporteur Martina Bocci*)

PLENARY SESSION 16.30-17.30

Funding Blue Growth

- Resume of working groups results
(*Thetis, Emiliano Ramieri, Martina Bocci, Sebastiano Carrer*)
- ADRION Cooperation Program for the Adriatic-Ionian Region
(*Emilia Romagna Region, Stefania Leoni*)
- Italy-Croatia CBC Program
(*Veneto Region –Managing Authority, Silvia Majer*)



Objectives

The working groups addressed key strategic sectors of the Blue Growth and EUSAIR implementation in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion:

- Maritime transport clusters working group;
- Coastal and maritime tourism working group;
- Marine aquaculture working group.

The working groups involved participants in providing their view and sharing their experience in order to identify and agree on key elements that can concretely support the development and implementation of initiatives (as projects, networking, tools, etc.), contributing to the Blue Growth implementation in the Adriatic-Ionian Region, accordingly to EUSAIR Action Plan's objectives, topics and actions. The overall goal was to set the ground and establish links among commonly interested stakeholders, to develop concrete initiatives beyond the conference that hopefully could benefit of the next funding opportunities.

Working group methodology

The three working groups run in parallel and lasted 1 hour and half. The first quarter of hour was dedicated to the presentation of the working group's participants. Afterwards, the coordinator stimulated the discussion around five key questions: two questions in common to all the three working groups and the other three specific for each working group. The five questions intended to identify those elements that can contribute to the growth and innovation of the working group sector, accordingly to the EUSAIR strategy and its Action Plan. Fifteen minutes were deserved to each question, including final four minutes during which the coordinator and the rapporteur wrapped-up the main working group findings.

Key outcome of the "Maritime transport clusters working group"

1. *What are the existing initiatives and experiences which capitalization can act as a flywheel for the whole macroregion?* Most relevant technological maritime clusters are located in Friuli Venezia Giulia (maritime and nautical sectors) and Sicily (commercial transport and yachting sectors) regions, whereas emerging clusters may be found in Emilia Romagna (offshore technologies) and Puglia (nautical district) regions. A situation characterized by strong fragmentation emerges, there are neither clusters able to lead and foster growth nor a trans-sectorial synergy between clusters. Clusters promote the development and sharing of skills as well as the adoption of new technologies, ameliorating services and products and creating synergies between public and private funding.
2. *Identify concrete initiatives strengthening cooperation between public and private stakeholders that could be put in place to booster Blue Growth in the macroregion (e.g. diversification in tourism sector; reduction of administrative burdens and constraints in aquaculture sector; etc.).* A stronger strategic and operational harmonisation between different clusters is envisaged as a starting point. Cluster of the Adriatic-Ionian Region should aggregate in a formal Platform.
3. *Can clustering of port activities/services throughout the region contribute to develop the sector? How the NAPA cooperation agreement can be further implemented? Which other initiatives would you recommend?* Of course yes. It is necessary to identify tools and best practices to help harmonisation of procedures and operations, useful for public authorities and private actors.
4. *Which practical actions would you recommend in order to improve and harmonize traffic monitoring and management?* Promotion of common technologies for monitoring and enlargement of requisites of Directive 65/2010 (reporting formalities for ships arriving in and/or departing from ports of the Member States) to non EU countries.
5. *Which initiatives should be taken in order to develop ports, optimising port interfaces, infrastructures and procedures/operations?*
 - To promote the elaboration of guidelines for legislative simplification and harmonisation;
 - To simplify number and ways of funding (the very high number of possibilities produce longer time to have access funding and constant fragmentation of available funds);
 - To promote the adoption of strategic infrastructures (at small and large scales) for the development of LNG utilization (Italian shipyards possess technologies and already build ships able to utilize LNG, but the market of such ships is abroad and they are not circulating in the Adriatic-Ionian region due to the very absence of adequate infrastructures).
 - To look at environmental management as a strong driver for innovation and development of common technologies.

Key outcome of the “Coastal and maritime tourism working group”

1. *What are the existing initiatives and experiences which capitalization can act as a flywheel for the whole macroregion?* Initiatives matching the following criteria:
 - Tourism as part of an integrated coastal development, aiming to establish connections and hybridization among the different economic sectors (e.g. agriculture, fishery, aquaculture, tourism, etc.);
 - Economic, environmental and social sustainability of the tourism initiatives, including high-quality of the services offered to tourists;
 - Balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches enabling the construction of a shared vision supporting tourism development.
2. *Identify concrete initiatives strengthening cooperation between public and private stakeholders that could be put in place to booster Blue Growth in the macroregion (e.g. diversification in tourism sector; reduction of administrative burdens and constraints in aquaculture sector; etc.).*
 - Clear definition of roles and responsibilities of public and private actors, since the beginning of the cooperation process and establishment of a governance mechanism enabling the concrete and efficient implementation of identified roles. This should also lead to eliminate/limit overlapping.
 - Public stakeholders should act mainly as promoters of the tourism development, while private actors shall play the role of realising products and services that are really accessible within the market. Private and public stakeholders shall mutually stimulate each other.
3. *What are the tourism sectors that could mostly benefit from a cross-border macro-regional approach and the development of related instruments and services (e.g. Adriatic-Ionian brand, macro-regional tourism routes, improved accessibility at the macroregional scale, networking of countries' excellence, labelling and upgrading local products at macro-regional level, etc.)?*
 - The sectors that are subject to greater international competitiveness are those that might mostly benefit from pooling national and regional capacities and resources together and developing a cross-border approach.
 - Experience tourism: integration of different typologies of tourism (e.g. historic, bathing, archaeological, natural, etc.) that rely on the specific resources of the Adriatic-Ionian territory.
 - Rapidly growing sectors, such as: cruising, leisure boating in small marinas, sport tourism, etc.; to be develop accordingly to sustainable goals and approaches.
4. *How tourism products and services can be diversified to fully exploit the macroregion opportunities (also considering: innovative tourism services and products, different tourist targets, niche tourism market, seasonality, existing and alternative tourism route, integration among different forms of tourism, integration between tourism and other activities, etc.)?*
 - Integration among different forms of tourism: experience tourism (see point 3).
 - Common and shared platforms and services (e.g. smart-box) providing information to tourists to improve their tourist experience. These should include services to elaborate tailored made vacations and limit costs (e.g. facilitating reservation, payment, etc.).
 - Provision of examples of uncommon and innovative tourism routes, based on the principles of sustainable and experience tourism.
 - Limit tourism seasonality by targeting specific tourism segments, as: students, third age, tourism for all, etc.
5. *What are the measures and the instruments to put in place to promote (economically, socially and environmentally) sustainable and responsible (of all stakeholders: wider public, local, regional and national private and public actors, tourists/visitors) forms of tourism, also considering positive effects on issues approached in the other two questions (cross-border perspective, innovation and diversification)?*
 - Harmonisation of norms and regulations, also to limit competitive advantages, within the region, of those countries not applying more stringent norms.
 - Development of a brand for high-quality tourism services and products of the Adriatic-Ionian Region.
 - Networks to strengthen integration and interaction among tourist operators and with operators of other sectors of the coastal economy.
 - Common monitoring system to evaluate the impacts and (environment, economic and social) sustainability of the tourism in the region.
 - Initiatives promoting the “education” of the tourists.

Key outcome of the “Marine aquaculture working group”

1. *What are the existing initiatives and experiences which capitalization can act as a flywheel for the whole macroregion?* Relevant cooperation experiences are on-running in the Adriatic-Ionian Region; they could be extended in time and enlarged, including other actors. Such experiences are both based on projects (e.g. DEFISHGEAR considering the marine litter issue, also from aquaculture; FISHFOREWARD on improving the image & sustainability of fish food products) and on direct cooperation among research institutions (e.g. IT-HR scientific cooperation on fish stock assessment, IT/CNR-ISMAR experience on modelling of larval dispersion of aquatic organisms).
2. *Identify concrete initiatives strengthening cooperation between public and private stakeholders that could be put in place to booster Blue Growth in the macroregion (e.g. diversification in tourism sector; reduction of administrative burdens and constraints in aquaculture sector; etc.).*
 - A positive experience of clustering based on the triple helix approach, between public (e. g. research institutions, municipalities,...) private actors and civil society has been implemented in HR to enhance the competitiveness in several sectors (e.g. food production and commercialization). This model could be exported to the whole Adriatic-Ionian region, with particular regard to the sea food sector.
 - The aquaculture sector would strongly benefit from the creation of a focal point at national level providing administrative and technical support to farmers on specific issues.
 - Both aquaculture and fishery sectors would benefit from the creation of a unique cluster aiming at developing the whole product supply chain.
3. *How diversification can contribute to development of marine aquaculture in Adriatic-Ionian region (e.g. diversification of areas, production methods, species)? Which practical initiatives should be supported?*
 - Supporting the experimentation of introduction of new species.
 - Implementation of new, less impacting methods of production, like polyculture.
 - Definition and set up of synergies with the tourism and the renewable energy production sectors.
 - Development of clusters of companies working with different products and in different areas to decrease competitiveness and increase the capacity of market penetration.
 - Valorisation of typical production from the Adriatic-Ionian Region, particularly those related to high environmental sustainability extensive aquaculture (vallicoltura).
4. *Do you think that education and training could contribute to development of marine aquaculture in Adriatic-Ionian region (e.g. network of academies, training programs for aquaculture farming and supporting operators, etc.)? Do you see practical needs?*
 - It is needed to continue to practice on education and training exchanges, through Erasmus and other programs.
 - Promotion of cross--sector educational programs, like for example cooking + aquaculture, tourism + aquaculture, culture + aquaculture, would contribute to establishment of cross-sector networking and clustering.
 - Networking among aquaculture scientists within the academic sector and more attention to dissemination of results from research in aquaculture would benefit the sector.
 - No-stop education and training programs for farmers would be very beneficial, these actions could benefit from the use of Information Technologies such e-learning and other innovative programs.
 - Consumers taste education would positively impact the sector through the development of new market requests, more suited to some specific types of products available in the region.
5. *Which innovations would you introduce in marine aquaculture in order to develop the sector (e.g. develop the market of processed seafood, develop labelling / traceability / certification, invest in marketing like the “Adriatic-Ionian brand”)?*
 - Invest in better understanding the interaction between aquaculture activities and the surrounding marine environment; study wild / farmed animals interactions; study and quantify possible positive environment / aquaculture interactions.
 - Promote the introduction of sensors and ICT for remote, continuous monitoring of water quality and farmed organisms quality.
 - Invest in genetic selection of farmed organisms.
6. *Other needs/suggestions.* Promote the establishment of Allocated Zones for Aquaculture (AZA) through MSP process.



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