



# MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION DAYS

November 10, 11 & 12, 2014 – Rome (Lazio Region - IT)

## PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Following the structural, socio-cultural and political changes occurring in the Mediterranean countries, strengthening the Mediterranean sea as a binding area rather than a secluding one, as one single entity towards a more efficient and pertinent resolution of its transversal and global issues, appears to be an appropriate path to follow in the future for the fulfillment of its sustainable socio-cultural and economic development. Reinforcing cooperation initiatives seems therefore crucial to fulfill this end. In this sense, the new emerging models of Macro-Regions (Baltic Sea, Danube, Adriatic-Ionian, and Alpine) and/or Sea Basin strategies (bearing in mind their differences and similarities) should be encouraged as efficient instruments and frames for improving such cooperation. If shared and owed by key actors such as local and regional levels of governance from both EU and Med Partner Countries, and if conceived on a variable geometry with gradual perspective, those models might help build a shared vision of the Mediterranean as well as strengthen cohesion, governance and implementation across the basin.

Following the *Med Cooperation Days* event (Rome, November 10-12, 2014), putting into perspective the potentialities to achieve sustainable development beyond 2015 in the Mediterranean also through the promotion of Macro-regions and Sea-basin strategies in the area, the COM&CAP MarInA-Med project proposes an articulation of recommendations based on the contributions of the multi-stakeholder participants present at the event as well as of the Med Maritime Integrated projects (Med-IAMER, MEDTRENDS, CoRINThos, among others) and of the capitalization project COASTGAP. Three main points are treated as: the **geographical scope and main governance**, the **set-up and implementation**, and the **contents** of the potential Macro-regional Strategies and Sea-basin Strategies to be developed in the Mediterranean. Suggestions are also made regarding the development and implementation of future **cooperation programs** and **projects** for 2014-2020 and onwards.

### **On the geographical scope and main governance of Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies in the Mediterranean**

- A set-up and implementation through a geometry variable and bottom-up approach following the specific geographical and geopolitical situations of the Mediterranean and considering the presence of both EU and non-EU countries should be observed;
- Likewise, the inclusion of local and regional authorities (LRAs) as main actors in the implementation of Macro-regional Strategies and Sea-basin Strategies shall be considered a priority for more relevant and efficient results as well as coordinated actions responding to trans-local and regional needs;
- Awareness raising to Med EU Members States for them to bring their support, encourage and approve in the future such initiatives, especially as the situation of the Mediterranean is a very specific one, should be fostered. Member States shall work hand in hand with LRAs and European Institutions (especially the European Commission) to this end;
- Awareness raising to Members States shall also ensure the replacement of the Mediterranean to a more visible position on the global scale;
- For this to happen, it is nonetheless necessary to increase the co-ownership of the countries from the southern and eastern rim of the Mediterranean in the definition and implementation of the Macro-regional Strategies and Sea-basin Strategies;

**Key words:** geometry variable; bottom-up; LRAs; trans-local and regional needs; Member States implication; southern and eastern rims, gradual co-ownership

### **On the set-up and implementation of Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies**

- The EUSAIR should constitute a pilot strategy, a building block for the implementation of further Macro-regional Strategies in the Mediterranean;

- Prior to the implementation of Macro-regional Strategies in the Mediterranean, there is a need to consider a step-by-step tailored approach by sub-basin respecting the specificities of the basin (as the “one size fits all” principle cannot be applied to the Mediterranean);
- The Maritime Spatial Planning and the Marine Strategy Framework Directives shall constitute relevant frames for these sub-basin approaches as well as for potential investors;
- Synergies between funding programs and initiatives shall allow the reach of a better scope for the Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies developments through cooperation projects;
- A multi-level governance through the participation of LRAs, research centers, maritime clusters (e.g. [CoRINThos project](#)), transnational and territorial cooperation programs and projects will be key to innovate and create employment around the basin, therefore reinforcing exchanges between all its rims;

**Key words:** pilot strategy; step-by-step approach; sub-basin; MSFD; MSP; synergies of funds

### **On the set-up and implementation of Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies (global frame)**

- The Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies shall gradually take into account the all the shores of the Mediterranean in the reflections for their implementations and developments in order to have a more effective approach and impact on the whole of the basin;
- Cooperation of “all shores” of the Mediterranean to Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies implementation shall constitute an important step towards the reduction of the socio-cultural and political gaps of the area. For example, strengthening cooperation between the countries of the Union for the Mediterranean and the initiatives from the European Commission, its DG MARE and Northern Mediterranean countries could be an effective answer to this challenge;
- Following the EUSAIR, the stakeholders think that a Macro-regional strategy in the Western Mediterranean could be the next strategy that shall be implemented in the medium term within the long road towards an integrated global strategy that should encompass the whole basin;
- In this context and to this extent, the capitalization of initiatives, such as the Intermediterranean Commission of the CPMR's [Road-Map for Macro-regional and Sea-basin strategies in the Mediterranean](#) shall ensure the interest and involvement of LRAs from both shores towards the joint consultation, designing and implementation of Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies;
- Capitalization of initiatives, such as the ARLEM ECOTER [Report on a Cohesion Policy for the Mediterranean](#) shall constitute a starting point to the implementation of potential thematic pillars and actions to be capitalized upon in the whole of the basin, for a variable geometry

Macro-regional approach to the Mediterranean (the report identified 5 pillars, a cross-cutting theme and several key actions to be capitalized and implemented);

**Key words:** EUSAIR; Western Mediterranean Strategy; road-map; variable geometry

### **On the contents of the Macro-regional and Sea-basin Strategies: the maritime dimension as a core theme**

- Following the example of the Adriatic-Ionian Macro Region which was created upon the base of a maritime strategy proposed by the EC, the first new emerging strategy for the basin after the EUSAIR, could be a specific maritime Sea-basin strategy for the Western Mediterranean;
- The maritime dimension needs to be conjugated to the eco-systemic approach in a balanced way, and vice versa, in order to contribute to the development sustainable maritime economies;
- Capitalization of initiatives, such as the macro-project deriving from the [Bologna Charter](#) (based on the decennial process of cooperation of Beachmed, Maremed etc.) shall be useful to draw and optimize the Macro-regional and Sea Basin Strategies frameworks for cooperation in the Mediterranean;
- To this extent, synergies should be encouraged with the [COASTGAP project \(2\)](#) propositions from their Joint Action Plan (JAP) of a macro-project for further cooperation projects to be implemented and funded by ETC programs (such as the Med Program) and other EU financing sources. The propositions of the JAP indeed echo an integrated approach to the Mediterranean basin and respond to the challenges potential Macro-regional Strategies and Sea-basin Strategies may have to respond to, i.e.:
  - to develop knowledge/network-based monitoring and data managements systems (based on the launch and development of key projects and Observatories such as EURIOMCODE, EUROSION-MED, RESAM, etc.),
  - to use sustainable and strategic resources for Blue Growth of the coasts (based on the development and capitalization of projects such as COASTGROWTH, COASTGAV, ENVICOAST, COASTGOV, etc.),
  - to support research and development innovation clusters and implementation (e.g. follow up of the FACECOAST cluster, etc.),
  - and to respond to challenges driven by climate change (through the set-up of major coastal projects promoted by local and regional coastal authorities, in cooperation with the other levels of government, etc.);
- From this point, capitalization of the results of previous and current projects of cooperation in the Mediterranean (the Maritime projects of the Med Programme among others) and future strategic projects and initiatives are therefore needed for an efficient integrated approach of these strategies;

**Key words:** maritime dimension; integrated approach; maritime strategy for the Western Mediterranean; capitalization; macro-project Bologna Charter (Joint Action Plan);

### On future European Territorial Cooperation projects, programmes and funding

- Multi-level cooperation and joint strategies are key to help solve environmental and maritime issues in the Mediterranean. Cooperation *projects* should be complementary to one other in order to strengthen and optimize their impacts while adopting an environmental and eco-systemic approach according to identified major regional socio-economic drivers and their respective pressures (see for example the [Med-IAMER project's](#) preliminary results);
- Likewise, ETC cooperation *programs* should observe complementary and coordinated strategies in order to optimize and align the use of public and EU funding the best way possible (EMFF, etc.);
- In this sense, in coherence with EU 2014-2020 regulation, synergies between regional operational programs, national programs and thematic and ETC programs in the EU is strongly advisable;
- Within those frames, stronger links between the MSFD and the MSP-ICZM shall also be drawn through cooperation initiatives;
- The representative of the European Parliament present at the event suggested that the Parliament could study in the near future specific proposals for supporting the existing strategies and the start-up of emerging Macro-Regional and Sea Basin Strategies in the Mediterranean (e.g. proposal of 3M euro for a preparatory action for a Med Macro-Region to be proposed in 2015);
- At the same time, ETC programmes as ADRION and MED will be strategic to boost these strategies through their specific axes on Governance. For example, some of their funding actions could aim at boosting the multilevel coordination of key actors, studies, etc.;
- Potential trends for the development of sustainable coastal and marine environment and maritime economies shall be taken into account prior to the drafting of future calls;
- Therefore, data provided through previous projects as in capitalization projects shall be capitalized and used efficiently to this extent (see for example primary results of the [MEDTRENDS project](#), the conclusions and suggestions of the [COASTGAP project](#), and of the capitalization seminars from Termoli and Marseilles);
- Cooperation projects need to be visible as they give visibility to the use of public funding themselves (on and for the territories and their citizens), which is an important fact for the cohesion of the basin as observable results by the public may encourage further initiatives to be undertaken. This would also give more visibility to the European project worldwide. Cooperation programs are therefore central to the realization of projects observing and supporting an integrated approach to the Mediterranean for the drawing of Macro-regional and Sea-basin strategies;
- In this sense, [synergies](#) between cooperation programs should be strongly encouraged, in

order to foster North-South/South-North cooperation and not only parallel North-North/South-South cooperation. For e.g. Med Program, ENPI CBC Med, IPA, UpM projects labeling, 5+5 dialogue, etc.;

- The encouragement of the development and sharing of available and interoperable data on transnational as well as local scales (research centers, maritime clusters, etc.) are critical to the relevant and efficient development and implementation of the strategies;
- The encouragement of the transparency of information and the involvement of multi-level stakeholders (for e.g. through consultations processes) are critical for tailored actions and results of these strategies;

**Key words:** complementarity; optimization of funding resources; enhanced governance capacities through funding; future trends; data operability; clusters; transparency

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ALL PRESENTATIONS FROM THE EVENT ARE AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0Bx180Qzu-LCERFNaQ2JwWWWVclU&usp=sharing>.