

ECOTOURISM GOVERNANCE AND CLIMATE ACTION IN MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS

a joint session of the IMC Sustainable Cultural & Maritime Tourism Task Force meeting
and the NaTour4CChange project 2nd regional exchange workshop

23 October 2025 | 15:00 - 18:00
Sant Fruitós del Bages (Barcelona)



A side event in the frame of the Global Ecotourism Forum

INTRODUCTION

While **sustainable tourism** is a broad approach that seeks to minimize negative impacts across all types of tourism (including coastal tourism), other forms of tourism deserve special attention, such as **ecotourism** – a specific form of nature-based tourism that directly supports conservation and local communities – and **regenerative tourism** – which goes a step further by aiming to leave destinations better than they were found.

This event is jointly organized by the [CPMR Intermediterranean Commission](#) (within the framework of its Sustainable Cultural & Maritime Tourism Task Force), the [Interreg Euro-MED project NaTour4CChange](#), with the special support of Plan Bleu, and the Generalitat of Catalunya as the main organiser of the Global Ecotourism Forum.

The first part of this event will focus on relaunching the [Mediterranean Ecotourism Consortium \(MEC\)](#). The MEC is one of the main outcomes of the Interreg MED **DestiMED PLUS** project, promoting an integrated governance model based on the methodology of the [MEET Model](#). The MEC is an alliance of Mediterranean regions established to foster public policies that support ecotourism. Its objective is to strengthen multilevel governance and facilitate the exchange of good practices among regions while giving greater visibility to the MEET model and promote it at local, regional, national, and European levels.

In the second part, the **2nd transnational exchange workshop for regional cross-fertilization** will be held as a key activity of the [Interreg Euro-MED NaTour4CChange project](#) (N4CC). N4CC works to enhance sustainable tourism governance in regions with high environmental value by reconnecting tourism and nature, and to address climate change with an ecosystem-based approach. The goal of the session is to create a space for project partner regions (Andalusia, Zadar County, Region of Sardinia, Region of Crete, and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and external stakeholders to present their climate action strategies and share experiences.

Organizing this event within the framework of the [Global Ecotourism Forum](#) allows to join forces and convey a shared message, especially in a key year at European level as the **new EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy** is being shaped. Indeed, this strategy should put particular emphasis on **multilevel governance, strong climate action planning**—including both **adaptation and mitigation policies tailored to the tourism sector**—and on the promotion of **sustainable forms of tourism such as ecotourism**, along with **innovative solutions like Nature-based Solutions (NbS)**.

To validate your participation, we kindly ask you to register via the following link:

>> [REGISTRATION HERE](#) <<

The agenda is also available on the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission website [HERE](#) and the N4CC project website [HERE](#)

DRAFT AGENDA

(30.09.2025)

Working languages: English

ECOTOURISM GOVERNANCE IN MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS

Overall moderation by **Jordi Juarez**, Project & Policy Officer, CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

15:00-15:10 | WELCOME ADDRESS & INTRODUCTION

- **Opening remarks**
 - **Anna Estella**, Deputy Director of Environmental Education, Nature and Society, Catalunya
 - **Xavier Font**, Deputy Director for Territorial Tourism Development, Catalunya (tbc)

15:10-15:40 | RELAUNCHING THE MEDITERRANEAN ECOTOURISM CONSORTIUM (MEC)

This part will present the Mediterranean Ecotourism Consortium (MEC), an alliance of Mediterranean regions arising from the Interreg MED **DestiMED PLUS** project and established to promote public policies that support ecotourism. Hosted by the CPMR Intermediterranean Task Force on Cultural and Sustainable Tourism, its objective is to strengthen multilevel governance and facilitate the exchange of best practices among regions, while increasing the visibility of the MEET model and promoting it at regional, national, and European levels. The **MEET model** is a practical methodology to plan, develop and promote ecotourism experiences in Mediterranean Protected Areas, aligned with climate change adaptation and mitigation criteria. Relaunching its dynamics will allow a clear contribution from the territories to the new EU Tourism Strategy.

- **The MEET methodology in a nutshell** by **Arnau Teixidor**, Programme manager, IUCN Med
- **Presentation of the MEC** (ToRs, Policy roadmap, MoU) and its **implementation** (REBOOT MED, Blue Tourism Initiative etc.) by **Flora Leroy**, EU Programmes Senior Officer, CPMR Intermediterranean
- **Regional experiences**
 - **Tangiers-Tetuan-Alhoceima** (tbc)
 - **South Aegean Region** by **Irini Barianaki**, Development Agency of South Aegean Region
 - **Corsica region** (tbc)
- **Paving the path for the future – your ideas about the MEC**

TAKING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

15:40-15:50 | PRESENTATION OF THE 2nd TRANSNATIONAL EXCHANGE WORKSHOP FOR REGIONAL CROSS-FERTILIZATION

[NaTour4CChange](#) is setting common methods to allow participating regions (Andalusia, Zadar County, Region of Sardinia, Region of Crete and Bosnia Herzegovina) and destinations (Cabo de Gata Natural Park, MPA Capo Carbonara, Dugi Otok, Nature Park Hutovo Blato and Ori Zarkou & Koufonisi Island) to **take climate action via plans and strategies**, supported by **cooperative governance**. While **regions** will focus on **adaptation and mitigation measures**, **destinations** put efforts in **mitigation by testing Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** in their territory. This part aims to present the main activities of the project as well as the results of the 1st workshop.

- **Jelena Šobat**, Director of the Department for Sustainable Tourism, Croatian Ministry of Tourism
- **Izidora Markovic**, Lead partner, Institute for Tourism Croatia

15:50-16:40 | PART 1: FACING COMMON CLIMATE CHALLENGES TOGETHER

- **2-minutes flash presentation about Regional Climate Action Plans' features**
 - **Andalusia Region, Spain** by **José Francisco Benítez**
 - **Zadar County, Croatia** by **Izidora Markovic**
 - **Sardinia Region, Italy** by **Luisa Mulas**
 - **Neretva Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina** by **Sabina Galic (online)**
 - **Crete Region, Greece** by **Kyriaki Theodrou**
- **Live Q&A (30 min)**
 - How did the issues identified in the assessment shape the drafting of the strategy?
 - What were the main trade-offs involved to an efficient stakeholders' engagement?
 - How feasible do you consider the short-term implementation of your regional strategy and what resources/tools are still missing or urgently needed to fine-tune and finalise your strategy?

16.40 – 17:30 | PART 2: PEER EXCHANGE & WORLD CAFÉ ON GOOD PRACTICES

- **Flash presentation on each thematic table about the questions in part 1**
 - **Irini Barianaki**, *EU Project Manager, Development Agency of South Aegean Region*
 - **Mariona Salvatella**, *EU Project Manager, Catalan Tourist Board (tbc)*
 - **Jaume Mata**, *Head of Sustainable Tourism, Visit Valencia*
- **Interactive World Café**
 - Which good practices are transferable in your context?
 - What elements of the showcased approaches are problematic for your context?
 - Any suggestion for new solutions?
- **Reporting & takeaways**

17:30 – 17:40 | WRAP-UP AND N4CC PROJECT NEXT STEPS

- **Izidora Markovic**, *Lead partner, Institute for Tourism Croatia*

EU AGENDA

17:40-17:55 | TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED TOURISM GOVERNANCE

This session will briefly present information about tourism consultations launched in 2025, which contributed to shaping the **new EU Tourism Strategy**. This strategy will build on existing EU initiatives, such as the [Transition Pathway for Tourism](#) and the [European Agenda for Tourism 2030](#). The discussion will also address the **relevance of ecotourism and NbS and outline the next steps for the MEC and tourism-related projects such as N4CC in advancing an integrated and sustainable tourism model, particularly within the framework of the new EU Tourism Strategy.**

- **Coordinating policies for an integrated tourism**, by **Marina Xenophontos**, *DG ENVI, European Commission*
- **Towards effective policy and governance for Mediterranean ecotourism** by **Flora Leroy**, *EU Programmes Senior Officer, CPMR Intermediterranean*
- **Debate**