



NaTour4CChange

Interreg
Euro-MED



Co-funded by
the European Union

NATOUR4CCHANGE CAPITALISATION REPORT:

Toward Climate-Resilient Coastal Tourism Through Nature-based
Solutions and Integrated Governance





NATOUR4CCHANGE CAPITALISATION REPORT

Toward Climate-Resilient Coastal Tourism Through Nature-based
Solutions and Integrated Governance

Author: Ante Mandić

The views expressed in this publication are the sole responsibility of
the authors named and do not necessarily reflect the views of the
European Commission.



NaTour4CChange

Co-Funded (80%) by the Interreg Euro-MED Programme



CHAPTER 1

NATOUR4CCHANGE RESILIENCE JOURNEY

1. Introduction and Context	5
2. The Four Pillars of the NT4CC Approach for Climate Action	6
3. Applying the NT4CC Framework	8
3.1 Seven integrated steps practical guidance	9
3.2 Governance role clarification	18
3.3 Financing embedded in the process	20
3.4 Replication readiness checklist	23

CHAPTER 2

INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

Case studies from pilot regions and destinations

1. Introduction and Purpose of Task 2	25
1.1 Pilot destinations	26
1.2 Regions	50

CHAPTER 3

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrated governance is the missing infrastructure of climate-resilient coastal tourism	70
2. Nature-based Solutions are strategic infrastructure for climate-resilient coastal tourism	74
3. From short-term grants to long-term resilience finance: Financing climate action and Nature-based Solutions in coastal tourism	76
4. Without communication, climate action will not stick: Make it a core function of tourism governance	79



© Mus Ben - Spiaggia di Porto Giunco, Capo Carbonara MPA, Sardinia, Italy

CHAPTER 1

NATOUR4CCHANGE RESILIENCE JOURNEY

1. Introduction and Context

Mediterranean coastal tourism is increasingly exposed to the impacts of climate change, creating growing pressure on destinations and regions to strengthen resilience, improve planning, and develop more coordinated responses. Within this context, the NaTour4CChange (NT4CC) project seeks to support climate action in coastal tourism through shared methodologies that connect assessment, planning, implementation, and communication, while capitalizing on the dual role of nature: as a core asset and attraction for coastal tourism destinations, and as a solution to climate change through the design and implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

The report presents a compressed clarification of the four methodologies. It then explains how they connect as a coherent framework, with particular attention to sequence, interdependencies, information flow, coordination, and feedback. On that basis, it translates the framework into practical guidance by clarifying procedural steps, governance roles, financing considerations, and conditions for future replication. The report aims to present the NT4CC approach in a form that is analytically clear, operationally relevant, and suitable for wider application.

2. The Four Pillars of the NT4CC Approach for Climate Action

1 Pillar 1. Climate Risk Assessment Methodology

The Destination Methodological frameworks for Regions and Destinations for assessing the main coastal tourism-related issues concerning Climate Change provides the analytical foundation of the NT4CC approach by establishing two frameworks for assessing climate change in coastal tourism, one at the regional level and one at the destination level. Its main purpose is to identify climate-related tourism issues, assess vulnerability and risk, and define the criteria and indicators needed to support evidence-based adaptation and mitigation planning. Developed through literature review, desk analysis, criteria development, and indicator selection, supported by stakeholder and expert input, the deliverable integrates criteria and indicators within a single assessment framework. Criteria define key areas and priorities for action, while indicators make these priorities measurable and suitable for monitoring and policy adjustment. Operationally, the methodology structures the process around climate change impact assessment, risk characterization and communication, and the development of risk management strategies. Within NT4CC, it functions as the diagnostic entry point that supplies the evidence base for subsequent planning, implementation, and communication.

2 Pillar 2. Climate Action Planning (CAP) Toolkit

The Climate Action Planning toolkit, translates the diagnostic work of NT4CC into an operational planning methodology for tourism climate action. Its purpose is to help regions and destinations elaborate or adjust tourism climate strategies and plans in a structured and practical way. Its central contribution is to convert prior evidence and contextual analysis into a coherent planning process that supports coordination, decision-making, and implementation. Methodologically, the toolkit integrates governance and planning through four stages: establishing enabling conditions, setting objectives, selecting actions and indicators, and drafting the final climate action plan. This process is supported by a Regional Coordination Unit at regional level and a Tourism Climate Action Task Force at destination level, structures bringing together different departments and stakeholders, set up on an ad hoc basis to ensure the implementation of a climate strategy or action plan, alongside tools such as an action planner, action examples, and a template. Within the NT4CC framework, the Toolkit serves as the planning core that transforms diagnostic evidence into actionable climate strategies and creates the institutional and procedural conditions for implementation.

3 Pillar 3. Nature-based Solutions Implementation Manual

The NbS for Coastal Destinations Climate: Action manual - Guidelines to implement the methodology for the design and implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) provides the implementation-oriented NbS methodology within the NT4CC framework. Its purpose is to guide pilot destinations in the design, implementation, monitoring, and scaling of NbS as part of destination climate action planning. Methodologically, it is structured around a seven-step process covering opportunity identification, analysis of challenges and stakeholders, development and selection of NbS options, design, implementation, monitoring and improvement, and up-scaling. A core contribution of the methodology is the integration of the IUCN Global Standard for NbS throughout the process, ensuring that NbS remain participatory, adaptive, monitorable, and responsive to broader societal and ecological challenges. Within the wider NT4CC framework, the NbS Manual functions as the implementation pathway that translates climate action priorities into concrete place-based adaptation interventions, while also integrating governance, communication, financial feasibility, and replication.

4 Pillar 4. Destination Communication and Marketing Manual

The Destination Marketing and Visitor Communications manual provides the communication and destination marketing methodology within the NT4CC framework. Its main purpose is to help destinations, particularly Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) and related actors, integrate climate action into tourism marketing, visitor communication, and stakeholder engagement. Rather than treating communication as a promotional add-on, the deliverable positions it as a strategic instrument for translating climate vulnerability, adaptation priorities, and NbS into credible narratives, visitor guidance, and behavior-oriented interventions. Methodologically, the manual combines conceptual guidance with practical tools, covering vulnerability-informed destination marketing, climate-smart communication strategies, analysis of DMO capacity, behavior change models, tactical implementation, institutional integration, and strategy design. Its annexed toolkit includes templates and instruments for communication planning, messaging, visitor engagement, stakeholder co-creation, monitoring, and channel selection. Within the wider NT4CC framework, the communication manual serves as the methodology that translates assessment, planning, and implementation outputs into communication practice, behavioral influence, institutional embedding, and future learning.

3. Applying the NT4CC Framework

The four NT4CC methodologies should be understood not as separate technical outputs, but as interdependent components of a single framework for climate action in coastal tourism. Together, they form a structured pathway from diagnosis to planning, implementation, communication, monitoring, and learning. Their coherence lies not only in their thematic complementarity, but also in the way each methodology provides the evidence, governance conditions, operational direction, or communication support required by the next. Viewed in this way, the NT4CC approach functions as an integrated framework that connects climate risk recognition with coordinated and adaptive destination response.

This section explains how the NT4CC framework can be applied in practice. It translates the four methodologies into clear guidance for regions and destinations by addressing four practical questions: how to plan climate-resilient coastal tourism using NbS which governance bodies to involve, how to mobilize funding, and how to engage tourists and tourism operators through communication and marketing.

The practical value of the NT4CC approach lies not only in its conceptual coherence, but also in its ability to guide action through a structured sequence of assessment, planning, implementation, communication, monitoring, and replication. Read in this way, the four methodologies provide more than thematic guidance: together, they form an operational pathway for building climate-resilient tourism governance in coastal areas.

The purpose of this section is therefore to make the framework practically usable by clarifying what needs to happen at each stage, who should lead it, what decisions are required, and how the outputs of one step become the inputs of the next.

An Integrated and coherent approach

The NT4CC approach operates as a cohesive pathway rather than a set of isolated activities. Its coherence is built on 2 key principles:



Integrated and progressive governance: Climate action is framed as a multi-level, cross-sectoral effort. As the framework moves forward, governance becomes progressively more structured, requiring continuous coordination between public authorities, tourism actors, technical experts, and local stakeholders.



Cyclical decision flow: The project approach works as a continuous learning cycle rather than a linear sequence. While decisions flow logically from diagnostic evidence to planning, implementation, and communication, built-in monitoring generates ongoing feedback. This ensures that the outputs of one step strictly become the inputs for the next, allowing destinations to continuously adjust, refine, and up-scale their climate responses.

3.1 Seven integrated steps practical guidance

The NT4CC framework can be translated into a practical seven-step **operational pathway**. Read in sequence, these steps show how regions and destinations **can move from climate-risk assessment to implementation, communication, and replication**.

1 Step 1 is to assess climate risks and vulnerabilities for the tourism sector.

This stage is grounded in the Methodological frameworks for Regions and Destinations for assessing the main coastal tourism-related issues concerning Climate Change and establishes the evidence base for all later decisions. It includes:

- **Baseline Assessment:** collecting historical climate data and analyzing past extreme weather events and their impacts on local ecosystems and communities
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** conducting workshops and surveys to involve local communities and tourism businesses in identifying observed changes and vulnerabilities
- **Vulnerability Mapping:** identifying vulnerable sectors (e.g., hospitality, cultural heritage, water resources...) and populations using tools such as GIS to create risk maps
- **Current Impact Assessment:** documenting and quantifying current impacts on the ecosystems and economies on which tourism relies, using meteorological, spatial, and socio-economic data
- **Risk characterization and communication:** applying the hazard-exposure-vulnerability logic before identifying initial risk management priorities supported by criteria and indicators.



© Sitia Geopark

The Climate Risk Assessment Methodology provides the starting point by establishing the **assessment backbone** of the framework. This stage clarifies what the main climate-related tourism risks are, who and what is most exposed, how these risks should be interpreted, and what should be monitored over time. Its function is therefore to generate the evidence base on which later planning and implementation depend. Without this diagnostic step, later decisions would lack a structured basis for prioritization and justification.



Integrated governance

The Climate Risk Assessment Methodology introduces this logic through **collaborative assessment**. The assessment process is not framed as a purely technical exercise, but as a shared governance task involving regional or destination representatives, local authorities, tourism businesses, environmental organizations, and community actors, with regional authorities providing overarching coordination. At this stage, governance is primarily consultative and diagnostic: its purpose is to ensure that climate risks, vulnerabilities, and priorities are identified through a broad and territorially grounded process.



Cyclical decision chain

The Climate Risk Assessment Methodology provides the starting point for this chain by **generating the core evidence needed for later decisions**. Its outputs include the identification of climate-related tourism impacts, vulnerabilities, exposure patterns, risk interpretation, and the criteria and indicators needed to support adaptation and mitigation. These outputs make it possible to determine which issues require action, where intervention is most needed, and which dimensions should be monitored over time. The assessment is not treated as a single diagnostic exercise, but as part of a process in which risks, vulnerabilities, and responses must be revisited as conditions change. In this way, the framework begins with a built-in expectation of review and adjustment.

In this way, the Climate Risk Assessment Methodology turns climate action from a general objective into a territorially grounded decision-making problem.

2 Step 2 is to define enabling conditions and governance arrangements.

The Climate Action Planning Toolkit makes clear that climate action planning must begin by establishing the institutional and collaborative conditions needed to support a coherent response. This includes reviewing internal capacity and expertise, examining climate and biodiversity risks, understanding the policy and legislative context, identifying existing actions and partnerships, and clarifying coordination responsibilities. The practical purpose of this step is to **determine whether the destination or region is ready** to plan and implement climate action, and what institutional conditions must first be strengthened.

The Climate Action Planning Toolkit builds directly on this evidence by **translating diagnosis into a planning process**. Their integrated toolkit helps regions and destinations elaborate or adjust climate strategies and plans through four linked stages: establishing enabling conditions, setting objectives, selecting actions and indicators, and drafting the final climate action plan. Their role within the sequence is to convert assessment findings into a coordinated planning logic that can guide prioritization, decision-making, and implementation.



Integrated governance

The toolkit **formalises this** collaborative **logic into** named **coordination structures**. At regional level, the process is anchored in the Regional Coordination Unit, an interdepartmental body that connects at least tourism and environment or climate-related departments and supports strategic integration. At the destination level, the Tourism Climate Action Task Force acts as the main coordination platform for local climate action planning by bringing together public and private stakeholders, including Destination Management Organizations, private-sector representatives, environmental actors, and other relevant partners. This is the point at which broad stakeholder participation is translated into defined governance bodies with planning responsibilities.



Cyclical decision chain

The Climate Action Planning Toolkit **receives this evidence and translates it into a planning logic**. The toolkit moves from enabling conditions to objectives, actions, indicators, and final plan drafting, while also supporting prioritization through tools such as the scheduler and action planner. This means that diagnostic evidence is not simply carried forward, but processed through a decision framework that considers urgency, internal capacity, cost, enabling conditions, and expected mitigation, adaptation, and tourism effects. The main role of the toolkit is therefore to convert evidence into structured priorities, measurable indicators, and an operational climate action plan.

3 Step 3 is to set objectives and prioritize actions.

Once enabling conditions are clear, the planning toolkit moves to defining objectives, identifying and scoring actions, selecting indicators, and drafting the climate action plan. This is the point at which diagnosis is translated into a strategic program. The key decision at this stage is not only what should be done, but what is feasible, urgent, impactful, and institutionally realistic. The action planner supports this by **helping regions and destinations compare options rather than treating all actions as equally implementable**.



Integrated governance

At this stage, governance shifts from preparation to coordinated prioritization. The Regional Coordination Unit at regional level, and the Tourism Climate Action Task Force at destination level, help translate diagnostic evidence into agreed objectives and priority actions. Their role is to ensure that action selection is not carried out in isolation, but through coordination between public authorities, tourism actors, technical experts, and other relevant stakeholders. In practical terms, integrated governance helps validate priorities, manage trade-offs, and build ownership around the climate action plan.



Cyclical decision chain

This step is the core decision point of the NT4CC approach. It takes the evidence generated through climate risk assessment and the enabling conditions identified in the previous step, and converts them into objectives, actions, and indicators. The action planner supports this process by comparing options against criteria such as urgency, internal capacity, cost, and expected mitigation, adaptation, and tourism effects. In this way, the selected priorities become the operational bridge to the next steps, including the identification of NbS, communication measures, and future monitoring. By linking priorities to indicators from the outset, this step also ensures that action can later be reviewed, adjusted, and improved.

4 Step 4 is to identify where Nature-based Solutions are needed.

This step begins when planning reveals that ecosystem-based adaptation or restoration-oriented responses are required. The NbS Manual makes clear that NbS should not be inserted mechanically into a plan, but identified through analysis of opportunity spaces, ecosystem services, local ecological and socio-economic challenges, and stakeholder conditions. The practical aim is to determine **where NbS can add value and what type of intervention is most appropriate** in the local context. Once priorities and action directions have been defined, the NbS Manual provides a dedicated **implementation pathway** focused on the design, implementation, monitoring, and scaling of ecosystem-based adaptation interventions in pilot destinations. In this sense, it does not replace the climate action plan, but operationalizes selected priorities through a concrete and place-based implementation process.



Integrated governance

NbS Manual extends governance from planning into implementation. The methodology begins with stakeholder mapping and then incorporates inclusive governance, participation planning, communication, and co-design into the design and implementation process itself. In this way, NbS implementation is not treated as a stand-alone technical intervention, but as a negotiated and monitored process that depends on social legitimacy, clear roles, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with wider destination development objectives. Technical actors and local stakeholders therefore become central to implementation governance rather than peripheral to it.



Cyclical decision chain

The learning-cycle logic also becomes more explicit at this stage, as the NbS methodology includes monitoring, evaluation, continuous improvement, and up-scaling, together with the identification of lessons learned, good practices, and opportunities for replication and mainstreaming.

5 Step 5 is to design and implement Nature-based Solutions.

Once relevant NbS options have been identified, the process moves into option selection, co-design, implementation, and accompanying communication. At this stage, implementation decisions must also consider governance arrangements, financial feasibility, monitoring needs, and long-term management. This means that **NbS should be treated as a structured implementation pathway rather than as a stand-alone project intervention.**

The focus is on turning selected options into feasible, place-based actions that respond to local ecological conditions, stakeholder needs, and climate priorities.



Dugi Otok, Croatia



Integrated governance

At this stage, governance becomes operational and implementation-oriented. The NbS Manual emphasises that design and delivery should be carried out through inclusive coordination involving public authorities, technical actors, local stakeholders, and affected user groups. Co-design helps ensure that selected solutions are socially legitimate, technically appropriate, and aligned with wider destination objectives. In practical terms, integrated governance at this step is essential for clarifying roles, coordinating delivery, securing local ownership, and supporting the long-term management of the intervention.



Cyclical decision chain

This step transforms identified NbS opportunities into concrete action. It builds directly on the previous stages of diagnosis, planning, and intervention selection, and connects them with implementation, monitoring, and future improvement. Decisions taken at this stage must therefore remain linked to financial feasibility, implementation capacity, expected benefits, and monitoring arrangements. Because the NbS Manual treats implementation as part of a broader adaptive process, this step also prepares the ground for later evaluation, adjustment, scaling, and replication.

6 Step 6 is to embed communication and behavior-change measures.

The Communication Manual makes clear that communication should not be treated as a final dissemination exercise. Instead, destinations should derive communication priorities from the vulnerability assessment and the climate action plan, identify the most relevant audiences and behavioral gaps, and translate these into credible narratives, tactical actions, and engagement formats. The communication toolkit then supports implementation through strategy design, message testing, campaign planning, visitor guidance, stakeholder co-creation, and evaluation. **Communication, therefore, becomes part of climate action delivery, helping destinations turn strategic priorities into visible, understandable, and behavior-oriented action.**



Integrated governance

Communication Manual adds a further layer by embedding communication within destination governance. It makes clear that integrating climate communication into DMO practice is not simply a matter of launching campaigns, but of embedding climate objectives into planning documents, clarifying institutional responsibilities, improving coordination across departments, strengthening stakeholder co-creation, and linking communication to monitoring and accountability. This means that DMOs are positioned not only as communication actors, but also as governance actors that help translate climate priorities into institutional routines and stakeholder-facing practice.



Cyclical decision chain

The Communication manual completes the flow by translating assessment findings, planning priorities, and implementation choices into communication strategy and stakeholder-facing action. Its strategy outline requires destinations to identify communication priorities from the vulnerability assessment and the climate action plan, and then convert these into themes, messages, stories, channels, and behavior-oriented actions. Communication is therefore based on prior evidence and planning rather than on generic destination branding. The manual also reinforces the cyclical nature of the framework by treating communication as an iterative and monitored process. It recommends regular data collection, interpretation, reporting, adaptation of messages and channels, and alignment of communication indicators with wider reporting requirements. By embedding communication objectives in destination strategies, clarifying responsibilities, establishing coordination across departments, defining KPIs, and evaluating effectiveness over time, it turns communication into an ongoing governance function that supports feedback, learning, and future adjustment.

7 Step 7 is to monitor, evaluate, improve, and replicate.

This final step is embedded across the four methodologies and ensures that action does not end with delivery. Indicator-based monitoring, evaluation of implementation performance, communication assessment, and up-scaling all provide evidence for adjustment, reporting, and future transfer. This means that plans, **NbS interventions, and communication activities must all generate learning** that can be used to refine future action and support replication in other destinations or regions. Rather than closing the process, this step reopens it by feeding lessons back into future assessment, planning, implementation, and communication.



© Marie Singer



Integrated governance

At this stage, governance focuses on accountability, coordination, and long-term continuity. Monitoring and evaluation require the continued involvement of regional authorities, destination task forces, technical actors, DMOs, and local stakeholders in order to review results, interpret evidence, and agree on necessary adjustments. In practical terms, integrated governance ensures that learning is shared across actors, that responsibilities for follow-up are clear, and that replication is supported by collective ownership rather than isolated reporting.



Cyclical decision chain

Step 7 makes the cyclical logic of the NT4CC framework fully explicit. The framework should not be understood as a linear sequence in which action ends with implementation, but as a continuous learning cycle in which monitoring, evaluation, communication, and up-scaling generate feedback for future decisions. Assessment informs planning, planning guides implementation, and implementation together with communication produces evidence, engagement, and lessons that support refinement, scaling, and replication. This cyclical decision chain is essential because it enables destinations and regions to adapt their responses over time and strengthens the transferability of the NT4CC approach to other contexts.



Key takeaways from the operational process

Taken together, these seven steps show that the NT4CC approach is not a collection of separate methods, but a single operational pathway for climate action in coastal tourism. Its strength lies in the way it connects diagnosis, planning, implementation, communication, monitoring, and replication within one coherent process that destinations and regions can follow in practice.

What makes this pathway especially valuable is that it combines two essential qualities. First, it is progressively governed: as the process advances, responsibilities become clearer, coordination becomes more structured, and stakeholder involvement becomes more purposeful. Second, it works as a learning cycle: each stage produces evidence, experience, and feedback that inform the next, allowing actions to be refined, strengthened, and transferred to other contexts.

In this way, the NT4CC approach offers more than guidance on individual actions. It provides a practical framework for building climate-resilient tourism governance that is coordinated, adaptive, and replicable across Mediterranean destinations and regions.



3.2 Governance role clarification

A practical clarification concerns **governance roles**. **Integrated frameworks are only effective if responsibilities are clearly assigned**. For this reason, the NT4CC approach should be translated into a governance structure that makes explicit who leads, who coordinates, who provides technical support, and who contributes to implementation and communication.

At the **regional level**, regional authorities provide overall strategic direction and policy alignment. Their role is to ensure that tourism, environment, and climate objectives are connected within a broader governance framework and that climate action in tourism is embedded in wider territorial planning. They create the political and institutional conditions within which climate action can be coordinated and sustained.

Within this regional layer, the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) serves as the main interdepartmental coordination body. Its role is to connect relevant departments, at minimum tourism and environment or climate-related departments, and to ensure continuity between assessment, planning, and implementation. The RCU is responsible for aligning regional priorities, reviewing enabling conditions, supporting integration across policy domains, and maintaining strategic coherence throughout the process.



© Ville de Beaulieu sur Mer

At the **destination level**, the Tourism Climate Action Task Force acts as the main local coordination and planning platform. Its role is to convene the key public and private actors involved in tourism climate action, including Destination Management Organizations, businesses, environmental entities, utilities, and other destination stakeholders. The Task Force translates assessment findings into local priorities, validates actions, supports implementation choices, and maintains coordination across interventions. It is therefore the main body for turning strategy into coordinated destination-level action.

Technical actors form a distinct governance layer that supports both assessment and implementation. This group may include experts, consultants, NGOs, researchers, and specialized organizations. Their role is to provide the analytical and operational expertise needed for vulnerability mapping, criteria and indicator selection, ecological assessment, NbS selection, monitoring design, and feasibility analysis. Technical actors should be understood not as generic advisers, but as a structured source of evidence and design support that underpins informed decision-making.



© Ville de Beaulieu sur Mer

Destination Management Organizations and other communication actors have a specific governance role within the NT4CC approach. Their responsibility goes beyond dissemination. They translate climate priorities into visitor-facing messages, codes of conduct, campaigns, stakeholder narratives, and communication routines embedded in destination practice. Because the communication manual emphasizes institutional integration, cross-departmental collaboration, and the inclusion of communication objectives in planning and operations, DMOs should be treated as governance actors in their own right. Their practical role is to connect climate strategy with behavior-oriented communication, stakeholder legitimacy, and public visibility.



© Ville de Beaulieu sur Mer

Communities, local tourism agents, and businesses should be understood as active participants and co-producers of resilience. Their role is not limited to consultation, but extends to co-design, implementation, communication, and monitoring. This is especially important in the NbS and communication methodologies, where local ownership, participation, and legitimacy are essential for implementation success. These actors help ensure that climate action is socially grounded, locally relevant, and more likely to be sustained over time.

Together, these roles provide a practical governance map for implementation.

Regional authorities provide strategic alignment. The Regional Coordination Unit coordinates across departments. The Tourism Climate Action Task Force steers destination-level planning and action. Technical actors provide evidence and design support. DMOs translate priorities into communication and behavioral influence. Communities and businesses contribute local knowledge, participation, and legitimacy. The framework becomes more operational when these roles are clearly defined and connected within one coordinated governance structure.

3.3 Financing embedded in the process

A third practical issue concerns **financing**. Within the NT4CC framework, financing should not be treated as a late implementation add-on, but as a cross-cutting design principle that shapes decisions from the outset. This perspective is reinforced by the latest methodological deliverable, the **Business and financial model guidelines for NbS implementation**, which positions financing as an integral part of the economic and financial feasibility analysis for NbS rather than as a separate downstream concern.

The first financing entry point appears when **enabling conditions and capacities are assessed**. The Climate Action Planning Toolkit makes clear that regions and destinations differ in planning maturity, institutional capacity, and available resources. As a result, climate action cannot be judged only in environmental terms. It must also take account of organizational and financial conditions that influence what can realistically be implemented, when, and at what scale. In practical terms, funding availability, staff capacity, technical skills, and partnership potential should be treated as core planning variables from the beginning.

The second financing entry point lies in **action prioritization**. The Climate Action Planning Toolkit recognizes that not all actions are equally feasible, urgent, or affordable. Its planning logic therefore implies that action selection must consider cost, internal capacity, and enabling conditions alongside mitigation and adaptation value. Financing should be built into how actions are judged, sequenced, and phased, rather than treated as a separate annex after the planning process is complete.

The third, and most explicit, financing entry point appears in **the design and implementation of NbS**. As detailed in the Business and financial model guidelines for NbS implementation, economic and financial feasibility analysis should move beyond generic funding assumptions and identify context-appropriate mechanisms such as :

- **sustainable tourism contributions,**
- **public-private partnerships,**
- **destination certification and branding schemes,**
- **payments for ecosystem services,**
- **revolving conservation funds.**



Funding mechanism

Brief description

Sustainable tourism contributions (eco tax)

Revenues generated from tourism activity and earmarked for climate action, conservation, or destination resilience. They can provide a predictable local funding stream if they are transparently managed and clearly linked to visible outcomes.

Public-private partnerships

Joint investment arrangements between public authorities and private actors. They can help share costs, risks, and responsibilities for green infrastructure or other resilience-related interventions.

Destination certification and branding schemes

Sustainability labels or destination branding tools linked to financing mechanisms. They can encourage business participation while generating support for conservation or resilience actions.

Payments for ecosystem services

Financial contributions made by beneficiaries of ecosystem functions toward their maintenance or restoration. They help translate ecosystem value into direct support for protection or management.

Revolving conservation funds

Funding mechanisms that reuse repaid resources to finance new actions over time. They can support longer-term financial continuity beyond one-off project funding.

The guidelines also stress the importance of linking NbS financing to clear governance arrangements, long-term operational sustainability, and ROI/SROI logic that captures both direct financial returns and wider social and environmental value.

A fourth financing entry point concerns **communication and institutional embedding**. The Destination Communication and Marketing Manual requires destinations to identify organizational and human resources, technical requirements, and funding needs when translating climate action plans into communication strategies. The toolkit is deliberately scalable, allowing destinations to adopt tools progressively according to institutional capacity and available resources. This means that communication should also be financed as part of governance capacity and implementation readiness, rather than treated as a residual or symbolic activity.

The practical takeaway is clear: financing enters the NT4CC framework at multiple stages and should now be read in conjunction with the project's dedicated business and financial guidelines for NbS implementation. It must be considered when enabling conditions are assessed, when actions are prioritized, when NbS are designed, and when communication is embedded in practice. Treating financing in this way makes the framework more realistic, more implementable, and more credible as a transferable model for climate action in coastal tourism.



© Alexandros Spyropoulos - HSPN Archives

3.4 Replication readiness checklist

The NT4CC approach is designed to be transferable beyond the pilot regions and destinations. Replication, however, does not depend on copying individual actions. It depends on whether the conditions are in place to apply the same methodological logic in a new context. The following checklist can be used to assess replication readiness:

- **A shared methodological logic is in place**
Replication should preserve the core NT4CC sequence: diagnosis, planning, implementation, communication, monitoring, and learning. What is transferred is not a fixed formula, but a coherent pathway for decision-making and action.
- **The approach can be adapted to the local context**
The framework should be flexible enough to respond to different territorial conditions, institutional capacities, and levels of planning maturity. Replication is stronger when adaptation is possible without losing the overall logic of the approach.
- **Governance roles and coordination structures are clear**
Successful transfer requires clearly defined responsibilities. This includes identifying who leads the process, who coordinates across sectors, who provides technical support, and how key stakeholders are involved at regional and destination levels.
- **Monitoring, evaluation, and learning are built into the process**
Replication requires evidence. Indicators, monitoring arrangements, and evaluation mechanisms should be in place so that implementation generates lessons, supports adjustment, and creates a credible basis for transfer to other territories.
- **Communication is institutionally embedded**
Communication should be integrated into governance, planning, and stakeholder engagement, rather than treated as a stand-alone campaign. This helps ensure that climate action is visible, understood, legitimate, and more likely to be sustained over time.

Taken together, these conditions provide a practical test of whether the *NT4CC approach is ready to be replicated*. **The frameworks become most transferable when governance, adaptability, monitoring, communication, and learning** are built in from the outset.



Concluding remarks

The four NT4CC methodologies are most effective when read as one integrated framework for climate action in coastal tourism rather than as separate deliverables. Together, they link diagnosis, planning, implementation, communication, and learning in a coherent pathway that regions and destinations can use in practice.

A key conclusion is that this pathway works as a learning cycle. Assessment generates the evidence base, planning translates that evidence into priorities and actions, implementation turns priorities into concrete responses, and communication supports uptake, legitimacy, and stakeholder engagement. Monitoring and evaluation then feed results back into future action, strengthening adjustment, continuation, and replication.

The practical value of this framework lies in its ability to combine clear governance, adaptive planning, implementation capacity, and institutionalized communication with one approach. Its strength is not in rigid standardization, but a shared methodological logic that can be adapted to different territorial and institutional contexts while preserving overall coherence.

In this way, the NT4CC approach provides a practical basis for building climate-resilient tourism governance in Mediterranean coastal areas and a useful reference for future replication beyond the pilot contexts.



CHAPTER 2

INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

Case studies from pilot regions and destinations

1. Introduction and Purpose of Task 2

This chapter aims to document 12 case studies from the five pilot regions and seven pilot destinations of the project in a harmonized and policy-ready format. Each case study is developed as a stand-alone one-page factsheet that captures the specific experience of the territory while ensuring overall comparability across the NT4CC framework. The purpose is not only to describe what was implemented, but to explain how the process unfolded, what results and lessons emerged, which actors contributed, and under what conditions the experience may be replicated elsewhere.



1.1 Pilot destinations

Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park

Pilot type: Destination

Territory: Cabo de Gata-Níjar Natural Park, Almería, Andalusia

Country: Spain

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Ministry of Tourism and Andalusia Abroad

Tags: NbS; Protected area; Water scarcity; Governance; Tourism diversification



1. Main descriptive information

Cabo de Gata-Níjar is a protected maritime-terrestrial area in the province of Almería covering 49,504 hectares, of which 37,492 hectares are terrestrial and 12,012 hectares marine. It extends across Níjar, Carboneras, and Almería and is one of the most arid and ecologically distinctive coastal areas in the European Mediterranean. Its protection framework includes Special Area of Conservation status, Special Protection Area for Birds, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, UNESCO Global Geopark, Ramsar recognition for the Cabo de Gata salt flats, and SPAMI status for the marine area.

Tourism is a key local activity and has evolved beyond the traditional sun-and-beach model toward ecotourism, active tourism, geotourism, diving, birdwatching, and cultural tourism. The accommodation structure is strongly shaped by tourist-use dwellings: in 2024, they accounted for about 69.9% of total available places in Níjar and 71.2% in Carboneras. Níjar recorded 100,318 foreign tourists in 2024, while Carboneras recorded 22,754.

The main climate vulnerabilities identified are heat waves, water stress, prolonged drought, flooding linked to torrential rains, sea-level rise, ecosystem degradation, and loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. These pressures affect tourism comfort, water and energy demand, beaches, coastal ecosystems, mobility, and the long-term viability of the tourism model. The NT4CC starting point was a destination diagnosis of tourism dynamics, governance, climate trends, climate risks, and tourism vulnerability, followed by the preparation of a tourism adaptation strategy.

2. Process and current implementation pathway

The case combines two connected NT4CC steps. First, a destination-level diagnosis assessed the territorial framework, tourism dynamics, governance, climate data, historical and projected trends, and tourism vulnerability. Second, that diagnosis was translated into a tourism climate adaptation strategy for the park.

The main governance bodies involved are the Consejería de Sostenibilidad, Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul of the Junta de Andalucía, which oversees park planning and management, and the Governing Board of the Natural Park, a consultative and participatory body involving public administrations, scientific entities, environmental organizations, business representatives, and residents. The municipalities within the park, local landowners and users, technical and operational park staff, the Environmental Agents Service, the Andalusian Environment and Water Agency, and Tragsatec are also explicitly identified as relevant actors.

The strategic pathway is organized around one general objective and five specific objectives focused on risk identification, ecosystem restoration through Nature-based Solutions, strengthening tourism-sector adaptive capacity, integrating adaptation into planning and governance, and promoting active and equitable participation. The strategy is then structured around five strategic axes: strengthening ecological resilience through NbS, reformulating the tourism model, adapting the territorial metabolism of tourism, strengthening awareness and participation, and promoting solid governance.

The main planning and implementation directions identified include habitat restoration, adaptive management of public use, sustainable mobility, diversification of tourism activities, visitor education, water and energy efficiency, and stronger inter-administrative coordination. The main type of NbS intervention identified is ecosystem restoration and conservation in habitats such as dune systems, salt marshes, wetlands, wadis, and *Posidonia oceanica* meadows. A detailed short implementation timeline is not explicitly documented in the diagnosis, but the strategy describes a phased, modular, and flexible implementation approach.

3. Main outputs, emerging results, challenges, and lessons learned

The main outputs currently identified are a destination climate diagnosis and a structured tourism climate adaptation strategy for Cabo de Gata-Níjar. The strategy provides an operational framework for future action through five strategic axes and multiple priority lines covering ecosystem conservation, tourism diversification, water and energy transition, awareness, and governance.

Results are not yet documented as completed implementation impacts. The current material supports emerging strategic and institutional value rather than final outcomes. The expected contribution is a more resilient and regenerative tourism model that is more compatible with conservation, more resource-efficient, and more socially just.



© Junta de Andalucía - Agua Amarga, Andalusia, Spain

The main challenges identified are structural aridity, water scarcity, habitat fragility, seasonality, private-vehicle dependence, poor signage and internal mobility, overcrowding in sensitive areas such as Mónsul and Agua Amarga, and fragmented management. The diagnosis also notes concern about a growing visitor profile less aware of the fragility of the environment and more focused on passive coastal consumption.



Environmental / climate value: the case prioritizes restoration and conservation of vulnerable habitats and ecosystem services through NbS, especially in dune systems, wetlands, salt marshes, wadis, and marine ecosystems.



Governance / institutional value: the case strengthens the link between diagnosis, protected-area governance instruments, and a destination-specific adaptation strategy based on multi-level governance, inclusive participation, and shared knowledge production.



Stakeholder mobilisation value: the strategy explicitly promotes sector training, active involvement of residents, visitor education, inclusive participation in planning, and co-production of knowledge.



Lessons learned:
Lessons learned are not yet documented.

4. Contributing partners and stakeholders

The lead organisation is the Ministry of Tourism and Andalusia Abroad. Other explicitly identified actors include the Consejería de Sostenibilidad, Medio Ambiente y Economía Azul of the Junta de Andalucía, the Governing Board of the Natural Park, the municipalities of Níjar, Carboneras, and Almería, local landowners and users, technical and operational park staff, the Environmental Agents Service, the Andalusian Environment and Water Agency, Tragsatec, tourism companies, environmental organizations, scientific entities, business representatives, residents, and local associations.



© Alexandros Spyropoulos - Playa de Mónsul, Andalusia, Spain

5. Replicability factors



Enabling conditions: A strong territorial and climate diagnosis, established protected-area governance instruments, alignment with regional, national, European, and international climate frameworks, and a strategy organized through clear strategic axes and lines of action.



Constraints: Structural aridity, water scarcity, ecosystem fragility, tourism seasonality, overcrowding in sensitive areas, governance barriers, and fragmented management.



Institutional / financial considerations: Implementation is presented as phased, modular, and flexible, depending on available resources, institutional capacity, and coordination among administrations, local actors, and businesses. The strategy also refers to consistency with European climate finance and related planning instruments.



Transfer potential: The strongest transfer value lies in the sequence of destination diagnosis, protected-area governance, and structured adaptation strategy, which is relevant for Mediterranean coastal destinations facing ecological sensitivity, climate exposure, and growing tourism pressure.



Cap Ferrat Marine Protected Area

Pilot type: Destination

Territory: Cap Ferrat Marine Protected Area and the five coastal municipalities of Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Beaulieu-sur-Mer, Villefranche-sur-Mer, Èze, and Cap-d'Ail, Alpes-Maritimes

Country: France

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Nice Côte d'Azur Metropolis

Tags: Posidonia; Coastal erosion; Marine biodiversity; Tourism governance; Thermal comfort



1. Main descriptive information

The Cap Ferrat Marine Protected Area is a fully marine Natura 2000 site covering 8,958 hectares on the French Riviera. It stretches along five coastal municipalities and includes beaches, ports, tourist sites, mooring areas, and part of the Paillon Canyon. The destination combines a high-value marine environment with a dense concentration of seaside tourism and leisure uses.

Tourism is primarily seaside and upmarket, with luxury accommodation, private villas, gourmet restaurants, private beaches, yachting, scuba diving, water sports, hiking, and heritage tourism. Tourism is concentrated in the summer months and is a major economic driver. Across the five municipalities, employment in tourist accommodation and food services represents 32.99% of total salaried employment, compared with 6.46% nationally.



© Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat Municipality - Port des Fourmis, Beaulieu-sur-Mer, France

The main climate vulnerabilities identified are rising temperatures, heat waves, tropical nights, increasing fire risk, coastal retreat and beach erosion, sea-temperature rise, pressure on water resources, and degradation of marine ecosystems, especially Posidonia meadows and coralligenous formations. The starting point within NT4CC was a destination vulnerability assessment focused on tourism activities, beaches, and emblematic marine habitats and species, followed by a strategy and action plan for adaptation to 2050 and 2100.



© Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat Municipality

2. Process and current implementation pathway

The process began with a technical assessment of climate hazards, tourism sensitivity, adaptive capacity, and future vulnerability across the five municipalities. Data came from Météo France, GREC Sud, the Nice Côte d'Azur climate plan, CEREMA shoreline data, marine habitat monitoring platforms, CATNAT records, tourist offices, municipal stakeholders, and local site visits.

Governance is shared and multi-level. The Marine Protected Area is managed by Nice Côte d'Azur Metropolis, while beach governance is divided between the Metropolis and individual municipalities

depending on the site. The Natura 2000 management framework and the Metropolitan climate plan provide the main institutional basis for action.

The action-planning phase included a workshop in Beaulieu-sur-Mer in July 2025 with around 30 participants, including elected representatives and local socio-economic stakeholders, followed by consultations involving IUCN and MPA administrators, and then a second online workshop to review and rank potential actions. Actions were assessed against four criteria: MPA ability to carry them out, cost, efficiency, and acceptability.

The strategy is structured around five pillars: preserving beach authenticity through sustainable management of Posidonia banquettes; preserving marine biodiversity through new ways of anchoring; raising awareness and monitoring climate impacts; improving thermal comfort for tourists; and adapting tourism practices and activities to climate impacts. The main NbS pathway identified is the preservation and progressive management of Posidonia banquettes as a natural buffer against erosion, together with broader ecosystem protection of marine habitats.

3. Main outputs, emerging results, challenges, and lessons learned

The main outputs currently identified are a destination climate and tourism vulnerability assessment, a strategy and action plan structured around five pillars, and a ranked list of adaptation actions for both the MPA and the municipalities. These actions include Posidonia awareness and monitoring, progressive management of banquettes, new anchoring approaches, climate-impact monitoring, thermal-comfort improvements, and adaptation of tourism activities.

Emerging results are already visible in a limited number of actions. At Petite Afrique beach in Beaulieu-sur-Mer, an initial experiment stored 23,000 m³ of Posidonia material to reinforce the coastal path. A first perception survey conducted by eco-guards in summer 2025 on MPA beaches found that 21% of respondents were already convinced of the need to preserve the banquettes, and 63% accepted preservation after awareness raising.

The main challenges are strong summer tourism pressure, complex shared governance of beaches and marine spaces, constrained public finance, social and political acceptability of beach-management changes, data gaps on coastal hazards, and continuing ecological degradation. The technical assessment also records clear marine pressure from mooring, including numerous marks on Posidonia beds and a reported loss of 37 hectares of seagrass meadow between 2010 and 2018.



Environmental / climate value: protection of Posidonia meadows and banquettes, reduced erosion pressure, support for marine biodiversity, and better monitoring of climate impacts on coastal and marine systems.



Governance / institutional value: a shared adaptation framework linking the MPA, Nice Côte d'Azur Metropolis, municipalities, Natura 2000 management, and the metropolitan climate plan.



Stakeholder mobilisation value: workshops, consultations, eco-guard awareness work, tourist perception surveys, and collaboration with socio-economic actors and elected representatives.



Lessons learned:
Lessons learned are not yet documented.

4. Contributing partners and stakeholders

The main coordinating body is Nice Côte d'Azur Metropolis, which manages the MPA. Other explicitly identified stakeholders include the five municipalities of Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Beaulieu-sur-Mer, Villefranche-sur-Mer, Èze, and Cap-d'Ail; local tourist offices; local elected representatives; socio-economic stakeholders; IUCN; MPA administrators; the Nice Côte d'Azur ports service; and Eau d'Azur for water-resource issues.

5. Replicability factors



Enabling conditions: An existing MPA and Natura 2000 governance framework, metropolitan climate planning, municipal involvement, stakeholder workshops, and a clear ranking process for adaptation options.



Constraints: Complex shared governance, constrained public finance, incomplete coastal-hazard data, and the need for stronger social and political acceptance of changes to beach and tourism management.



Institutional / financial considerations: The action plan explicitly takes into account the MPA's legal ability to act, public-cost constraints, and the split of competences between the Metropolis and municipalities for beaches and coastal spaces.



Transfer potential: The case offers a transferable model for Mediterranean coastal destinations where high-value tourism depends on fragile marine ecosystems. Its strongest transfer value lies in combining climate-risk assessment, shared coastal governance, Posidonia-based beach adaptation, mooring management, and stakeholder awareness within one destination framework.



Capo Carbonara Marine Protected Area

Pilot type: Destination

Territory: Municipality of Villasimius, southeastern Sardinia

Country: Italy

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Municipality of Villasimius

Tags: Marine protected area; Posidonia; Coastal tourism; NbS; Stakeholder engagement



1. Main descriptive information

Capo Carbonara Marine Protected Area is located in the municipality of Villasimius in southeastern Sardinia. The destination is one of the island's most important coastal tourism areas and is strongly shaped by its marine and coastal environment. Villasimius has around 3,700 residents, but in peak summer months it can reach around 50,000 people per day, with about 1,000,000 visitors between June and September.

The area has a high environmental protection status. The Marine Protected Area covers approximately 14,360 hectares and around 40 km of coastline, including 22 beaches, the islands of Cavoli and Serpentara, and important Natura 2000 habitats. It is managed by the municipality of Villasimius and is also designated as a Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance. Key habitats include *Posidonia oceanica* meadows and coastal dunes with junipers.

The main climate and tourism vulnerabilities identified are biodiversity loss or alteration, beach degradation, overcrowding beyond carrying capacity, excessive water consumption, increasing waste production, and rising traffic levels. These pressures are intensified by rising temperatures, increasing frequency of extreme weather events, decreasing precipitation, rising tropical nights, and marine heat stress.

The starting point within NT4CC was a destination-level assessment of the main coastal tourism-related climate issues, followed by a Tourism Climate Action Plan focused on coastal and marine resilience, Nature-based Solutions, and more sustainable tourism management.

2. Process and current implementation pathway

The destination process followed a structured sequence. It began with a review of existing reports, archives, and policy documents, including local management rules for the Marine Protected Area and broader national and regional adaptation frameworks. This was followed by stakeholder engagement, climate-data analysis, a preliminary emissions estimation using proxy indicators, impact-chain definition, and the formulation of actions and measures.

A Tourism Climate Action Task Force was established as part of the process. It involved representatives of the municipal administration linked to the marine area, technical experts, external collaborators with local environmental knowledge, and regional representatives. Two stakeholder meetings were organized, followed by targeted questionnaires for diving centres, fishermen, tour operators, and beach establishment managers.

The implementation pathway builds on identified environmental and tourism pressures. The most clearly defined Nature-based pathway concerns habitat conservation and restoration, especially annual surveys on key coastal sites and monitoring of banquettes, alongside broader protection of *Posidonia* meadows, dunes, and coastal habitats. The action plan is structured around goals covering ecosystem resilience, marine and coastal biodiversity, greenhouse-gas reduction, reduced seasonality, waste reduction, water use, environmental awareness, stakeholder engagement, climate-risk reduction, and financing.



© Luca Sgualdini - Punta Molentis, Sardinia, Italy

3. Main outputs, emerging results, challenges, and lessons learned

The main outputs currently identified are a destination technical report, a Tourism Climate Action Plan, a Tourism Climate Action Task Force, a preliminary proxy-based emissions estimation, and a structured set of climate actions linked to environmental protection and tourism management.

Results are not yet documented as final implementation impacts. The current material supports emerging strategic and institutional value rather than completed outcomes. The plan provides a clearer framework for

linking marine protection, tourism pressures, climate adaptation, and local management priorities in one destination-specific process.

The main challenges are strong summer pressure, anchoring impacts on Posidonia, trampling on dunes, invasive alien species, abandoned fishing gear, excessive water demand, traffic, waste, and data gaps for coastal erosion and local adaptive-capacity indicators. Climate change is also already affecting marine habitats: in the rocky reef habitat, sea surface temperature increased by 0.32°C between 2000 and 2020, with recurrent marine heatwaves, thermophilic species, necrosis, and mass mortality events recorded.



© Luca Sgualdini



Environmental / climate value: protection and monitoring of Posidonia meadows, dunes, reefs, and other fragile coastal and marine habitats, with NbS and habitat-restoration logic embedded in the plan.



Governance / institutional value: creation of a local task-force process and a destination plan that aligns local action with regional, national, and international climate frameworks.



Stakeholder mobilisation value: direct engagement of public and private stakeholders through meetings, questionnaires, and a participatory process involving tourism operators and coastal users.



Lessons learned:

Lessons learned are not yet documented.

4. Contributing partners and stakeholders

The municipality of Villasimius is the managing authority of the Marine Protected Area. The action-planning process also involved the Tourism Climate Action Task Force, representatives of the municipal administration working on the marine area, technical experts, external collaborators with local environmental knowledge, regional representatives, and local stakeholders from diving centres, fisheries, tour operations, and beach establishments. The Environmental Education and Sustainability Center is also part of the local destination context.



© Marco Munez - Capo Carbonara, Sardinia, Italy

5. Replicability factors



Enabling conditions: A strong protected-area framework, clear ecological value, existing local good practices in water reuse, waste management, and marine-coastal protection, and a structured destination planning process supported by stakeholder engagement.



Constraints: Seasonal tourism concentration, high anthropogenic pressure, limited local data for some adaptive-capacity and coastal-risk indicators, and continuing pressures on Posidonia, dunes, biodiversity, water resources, and beach carrying capacity.



Institutional / financial considerations: The plan includes preliminary proxy-based estimation of emissions linked to tourism, waste, water, and mobility, and identifies a cross-cutting goal on funding for climate adaptation and mitigation. It also relies on coordination between municipal management, regional actors, and local stakeholders.



Transfer potential: The case is particularly relevant for coastal destinations with strong seasonal pressure, high ecological value, and overlapping tourism and conservation functions. Its strongest transfer value lies in combining local marine protection, tourism-pressure diagnosis, participatory planning, and Nature-based adaptation in one destination framework.



Dugi Otok

Pilot type: Destination

Territory: Dugi Otok, Municipality of Sali, Zadar County

Country: Croatia

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Natura-Jadera Public Institution

Tags: Island destination; Climate adaptation; Biodiversity; Coastal tourism; Stakeholder engagement



1. Main descriptive information

Dugi Otok is an offshore Adriatic island in Zadar County with a long and highly indented coastline, rich natural and cultural heritage, and strong dependence on tourism, fishing, and agriculture. The Municipality of Sali had 1,787 inhabitants in 2021. In tourism terms, Dugi Otok recorded 26,300 guest arrivals and 190,000 overnight stays in 2023, while nautical tourism also represents an important part of local activity.

The destination combines a diverse tourism offer, including excursions, hiking, cycling, diving, nautical tourism, cultural sites, village festivals, Telašćica Nature Park, and the significant landscape of the northwestern part of Dugi Otok, including Sakarun Bay. Its attractiveness is closely tied to coastal and marine assets, which are also highly exposed to climate pressures.

The main climate vulnerabilities identified are temperature increase, precipitation changes, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, fires, marine ecosystem degradation, and biodiversity loss. These pressures affect visitor comfort, water availability, coastal infrastructure, natural habitats, and the long-term viability of island tourism. The NT4CC starting point was a destination climate assessment, followed by a Tourism Climate Action Plan built on the same evidence base.

2. Process and current implementation pathway

The Climate Action Plan was developed by Natura-Jadera Public Institution in collaboration with Nature & Adventure and in consultation with local tourism stakeholders, including Nature Park Telašćica, the Municipality of Sali, the Tourist Board of the Municipality of Sali, the Tourist Board of Božava, and a local tourism entrepreneur. The planning process began in April 2025 and lasted until September 2025.

The process was grounded in structured planning, stakeholder involvement, previous project experience, and the destination assessment prepared earlier under NT4CC. A Tourism Climate Action Task Force contributed to the process, and two workshops were organized on Dugi Otok to identify priorities, define actions, and clarify timeframes, partners, and estimated costs.

The action framework is organized around a long-term vision of Dugi Otok as a model of sustainable, climate-resilient island tourism. The plan includes actions related to renewable energy, water conservation, plastic reduction, climate education, community engagement, and cooperation with regional and national authorities. A specific Nature-based Solution is not explicitly documented in the available material, although the plan is framed through ecosystem-based approaches and the protection of protected and Natura 2000 areas.

3. Main outputs, emerging results, challenges, and lessons learned

The main outputs currently identified are a destination climate assessment, a destination Tourism Climate Action Plan, a Tourism Climate Action Task Force process, and a ten-year action framework with objectives, indicators, timeframes, partners, and estimated costs. The plan presents Dugi Otok as a long-term climate-resilient tourism pathway rather than a short-term project intervention.

Results are not yet documented as completed implementation impacts. At this stage, the case shows emerging strategic and governance value. The plan translates the climate assessment into a structured set of priorities for resource efficiency, tourism adaptation, climate awareness, and stakeholder coordination.

The main challenges are clear: data scarcity, limited freshwater sources, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, wildfire risk, biodiversity loss, marine ecosystem degradation, and the wider constraints typical of offshore islands, including limited human, material, and financial capacities. The participatory assessment also found that increasing severity is expected over the next 10–15 years for virtually all hazards and tourist attractions. Risk levels were assessed as moderate for many key attractions, including Telašćica Bay, Sakarun Bay, Punta Bjanka, diving sites, nautical infrastructure, and natural beaches.



© Kristina Pikelj - Sakarun Bay, Dugi Otok, Croatia



Environmental / climate value: stronger focus on biodiversity protection, climate resilience of protected and Natura 2000 areas, and reduced pressure on fragile island ecosystems.



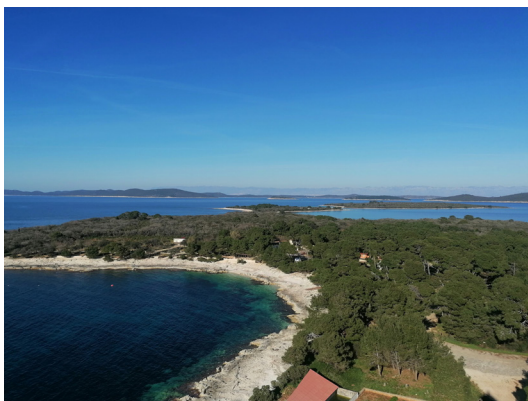
Governance / institutional value: a destination action plan led by Natura-Jadera, supported by a task-force process and linked to local authorities, tourism boards, and protected-area institutions.



Stakeholder mobilisation value: two workshops, consultations with tourism stakeholders, and direct identification and prioritisation of actions with local actors.



Lessons learned:
Lessons learned are not yet documented.



4. Contributing partners and stakeholders

The lead organisation is Natura-Jadera Public Institution. Other explicitly identified actors include Nature & Adventure, Nature Park Telašćica, the Municipality of Sali, the Tourist Board of the Municipality of Sali, the Tourist Board of Božava, local tourism entrepreneurs, local communities, environmental and scientific institutions, visitors, and local government and funding bodies relevant to implementation.

5. Replicability factors



Enabling conditions: A strong nature-protection mandate, an existing management plan for protected and Natura 2000 areas, prior climate assessment, stakeholder consultations, and a ten-year action framework with identified partners and indicators.



Constraints: Data scarcity, island remoteness, limited freshwater, financial and capacity constraints, and growing exposure to sea-level rise, erosion, fires, and biodiversity degradation.



Institutional / financial considerations: The plan explicitly links implementation to local government, tourism providers, scientific institutions, visitors, and national and EU funding bodies, and highlights readiness for investment in climate-resilient infrastructure and environmental protection.



Transfer potential: The case is particularly relevant for Adriatic and Mediterranean islands where tourism depends on fragile coastal and marine systems and where adaptation requires coordinated action across protected-area management, tourism, local government, and community stakeholders. The plan explicitly positions Dugi Otok as a model for climate adaptation among Adriatic islands.





Hutovo Blato Nature Park

Pilot type: Destination

Territory: Hutovo Blato Nature Park, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton / County

Country: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Nature Park Hutovo Blato

Tags: Wetland; NbS; Biodiversity; Climate adaptation; Governance



1. Main descriptive information

Hutovo Blato is a protected wetland area in the lower Neretva basin and one of the most important wetlands in Southeast Europe. It is the last remaining wetland habitat in the Neretva River basin in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was declared a nature park in 1995, has been on the Ramsar List since 2001, and is important for birds, fish, and wetland biodiversity. The park is known for birdwatching, boat rides, cycling, kayaking, hiking, and guided nature visits, and it also combines natural and cultural heritage, including archaeological remains and traditional local landscapes.

The destination is accessible from Čapljina, Mostar, Sarajevo, and the Adriatic coast, and is positioned as a destination for ecotourism, active holidays, and authentic local experiences. Ticket sales show a downward trend from 8,130 in 2022 to 7,108 in 2023 and 6,348 in 2024.

The main climate vulnerabilities identified are long-term droughts, changes in the water regime, elevated temperatures, increased fire risk, frequent floods, sedimentation and overgrowth of wetlands, lowered groundwater levels, salinization, and invasive alien species. The starting point within NT4CC was the identification and assessment of climate-related tourism issues, followed by a destination Tourism Climate Action Plan focused on climate adaptation, ecosystem services, and Nature-based Solutions.

2. Process and current implementation pathway

The case combines a destination diagnosis with a destination Tourism Climate Action Plan. The technical assessment reviewed hydrological, climatic, tourism, legal, and planning conditions, while the action-planning phase was developed through consultations with park staff, local administration, tourism stakeholders, and expert support.

The main governance bodies involved are Nature Park Hutovo Blato, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton / County, the Tourism Climate Action Task Force, and the Regional Coordination Group of HNC. The implementation framework also identifies ministries responsible for environment, natural resources, and tourism, the local governments and tourism organizations of Čapljina and Stolac, local communities, professional and scientific institutions, and visitors as relevant stakeholders.

The main planning steps are clear: prior regional and destination assessments, expert assessment of vulnerability and climate risk, a structured participatory process, definition of goals, preparation of the action plan, proposal of indicators, and prioritization of actions and NbS proposals. The action plan itself was developed from November to the end of December 2025.

The main NbS pathway identified is the restoration and revitalization of wetland ecosystems. Priority actions include restoration of degraded wetland habitats, management of invasive species, eco-pastoral fire protection measures, and cooperation on hydropower-impact monitoring through a joint monitoring system involving Nature Park Hutovo Blato, HPP Čapljina, the Water Agency, and HNC.

3. Main outputs, emerging results, challenges, and lessons learned

The main outputs currently identified are a destination climate diagnosis, a destination Tourism Climate Action Plan, a set of monitoring indicators, and a prioritized action list with NbS proposals. Four main goals structure the plan: conservation of natural values, support for climate resilience and lower emissions, preservation of socio-cultural integrity, and education of visitors and the local community.

Results are not yet documented as completed implementation impacts. The current material supports emerging strategic and institutional value rather than final outcomes. One clear emerging result is the strong convergence between expert analysis and stakeholder perceptions: both identified drought, altered hydrological regimes, elevated temperatures, fire risk, and wetland degradation as key threats, while also recognizing tourism activities and infrastructure as climate-sensitive.



© Vladimir Tadić - Deransko Lake, Hutovo Blato, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The main implementation challenges are high exposure to climate and hydrological changes, ecosystem sensitivity, insufficient adaptation capacity, and dependence on stronger cooperation between tourism, water management, and nature protection. The documents also point to declining attractiveness in summer, restrictions on the use of boats and visitor infrastructure, increased operational costs, and pressure from hydropower and water-regime changes.



Environmental / climate value: restoration of wetland habitats, invasive-species management, better hydrological monitoring, fire protection, and preservation of ecosystem services that support biodiversity and climate resilience.



Governance / institutional value: a formal action plan linked to the park's management system, annual work programmes, annual reporting, and the Tourism Climate Action Task Force.



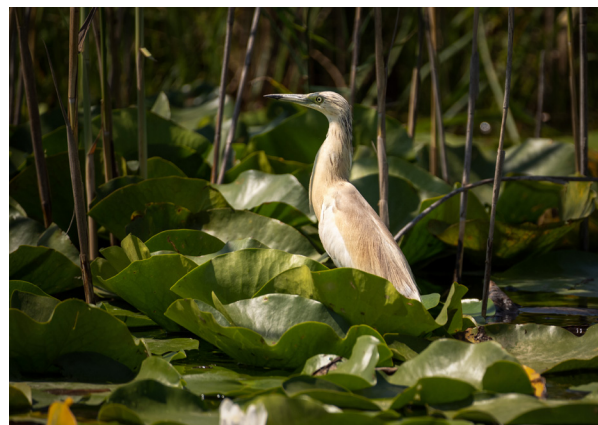
Stakeholder mobilisation value: structured participation through the Tourism Climate Action Task Force, local consultations, and actions involving tourism organizations, local communities, schools, accommodation providers, caterers, and civil-society actors.



Lessons learned:
Lessons learned are not yet documented.

4. Contributing partners and stakeholders

The lead organisation is Nature Park Hutovo Blato. Other explicitly identified actors include the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton / County, the Tourism Climate Action Task Force, the Regional Coordination Group of HNC, local governments and tourism organizations of Čapljina and Stolac, the Water Agency, HPP Čapljina, Gekom d.o.o., professional and scientific institutions, cultural and environmental civil-society associations, tourism operators, accommodation providers, hotels, campsites, caterers, local residents, schools, and visitors.



© Vladimir Tadić

5. Replicability factors



Enabling conditions: A protected wetland area with high ecological value, an existing park-management framework, a clear climate-risk diagnosis, a structured action plan, and a functioning task-force process linking park management, regional authorities, and local stakeholders.



© Vladimir Tadić - River Krupa, Hutovo Blato, Bosnia and Herzegovina



Constraints: High exposure to drought, floods, altered hydrology, salinization, invasive species, and insufficient adaptation capacity, together with the need for stronger cross-sector coordination.



Institutional / financial considerations: The action plan is designed to be integrated into the park's annual work programme and future management plan, with indicators, priorities, responsible units, implementation partners, and estimated costs. The plan also notes the relevance of EU and international funds, partnerships, and technical support for climate-resilient initiatives.



Transfer potential: The case is particularly relevant for wetland and protected-area destinations where tourism depends directly on ecosystem services and where climate adaptation requires coordinated work across tourism, water management, and nature protection.



Zakros–Koufonisi

Pilot type: Destination

Territory: Municipality of Sitia, Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark, eastern Crete

Country: Greece

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Region of Crete

Tags: NbS; Protected area; Water scarcity; Cultural heritage; Governance



1. Main descriptive information

Zakros–Koufonisi is located in the eastern part of Crete, within the Municipality of Sitia and the Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark. The destination combines the Zakros Mountains, wetlands, gorges, coastal zones, archaeological sites, and the island complex of Koufonisi with its surrounding islets and marine area. Both sites are included in the Natura 2000 network and have high ecological and cultural value.



© Sitia Geopark - Koufonisi Island, Crete, Greece

Zakros supports small-scale tourism linked to archaeology, hiking, and nature-based experiences, with limited accommodation and low visitor pressure compared with northern Crete. Koufonisi is uninhabited, with no facilities, but receives organized day-boat visits in good weather and increasing numbers of visitors arriving by private boats. The wider local economy is based on agriculture, livestock farming, and growing eco- and cultural tourism.

The main climate vulnerabilities identified are drought, water scarcity, desertification, and soil/coastal erosion. Koufonisi is also described as highly exposed because of its archaeological remains, arid landscape, fragile dune systems, and limited adaptive capacity. The starting point within NT4CC was a destination-level assessment of climate risks and vulnerabilities, followed by the preparation of a Tourism Climate Action Plan for a low-impact, nature-based, and culturally sensitive tourism model.

2. Process and current implementation pathway

The process combines a destination technical assessment with a destination Tourism Climate Action Plan. The assessment used climate, environmental, and spatial datasets from public authorities and other available sources, together with local observations. Public-sector stakeholders included the Region of Crete and the Sitia Geopark authority, while private-sector stakeholders included tourism professionals from Ierapetra and Sitia.

The action-planning phase translates this assessment into a structured implementation pathway. Governance is centered on the Municipality of Sitia in coordination with the Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark, while the plan also proposes a Destination Climate Action Committee to support coordination, stakeholder participation, monitoring, and long-term stewardship.

The implementation pathway is phased over three stages: **Foundation (2025–2027)**, focused on governance setup, pilot NbS, awareness, and monitoring; **Expansion (2028–2030)**, focused on scaling NbS, eco-tourism infrastructure, and renewable integration; and **Consolidation (2030–2035)**, focused on ecosystem restoration, emissions reduction, and a resilient tourism economy.

The identified or tested actions are mainly Nature-based and ecosystem-based. They include coastal dune protection and restoration, wetland restoration, plantation of native and endangered species, sustainable water management, birdwatching infrastructure, visitor management for Koufonisi, educational hiking trails, awareness campaigns, and ecotourism packages.

3. Main outputs, emerging results, challenges, and lessons learned

The main outputs currently identified are a destination technical report, a Tourism Climate Action Plan, a set of 17 proposed actions with indicators, and a three-phase implementation framework extending to 2035. A governance mechanism through a Destination Climate Action Committee is also proposed.

Results are not yet documented as completed impacts. The current material supports **emerging results** and **expected contribution** rather than final outcomes. The expected contribution is a climate-resilient, nature-positive destination model that links ecosystem restoration, cultural heritage protection, water security, and low-impact tourism.

The main challenges are clear: severe drought and water stress in eastern Crete, soil and coastal erosion, desertification, limited local data, and weak accessibility and infrastructure. Koufonisi also faces growing pressure from uncontrolled private-boat arrivals despite its fragile ecosystems and limited management capacity.



© Sitia Geopark - Koufonisi Island, Crete, Greece



Environmental / climate value: strong emphasis on dune and wetland restoration, biodiversity protection, native planting, water conservation, and reduced pressure on fragile ecosystems.



Governance / institutional value: creation of a structured destination action plan and proposed Destination Climate Action Committee under the Municipality of Sitia and the Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark.



Stakeholder mobilisation value: training of local actors, awareness campaigns, citizen-science style coastal monitoring, and formal agreements between stakeholders are built into the action framework.



Lessons learned:
Lessons learned are not yet documented.

4. Contributing partners and stakeholders

Lead organisation: Region of Crete. The implementation and coordination role is assigned to the Municipality of Sitia together with the Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark. Public-sector stakeholders explicitly mentioned also include the Region of Crete and the Sitia Geopark authority. Private-sector stakeholders include tourism professionals from Ierapetra and Sitia. The action plan also refers to collaboration with universities, NGOs, local communities, fishermen, local businesses, schools, and tourism actors.



© Sitia Geopark - Koufonisi Island, Crete, Greece

5. Replicability factors



Enabling conditions: High ecological and cultural value, protected-area status, low tourism pressure, a clear climate-risk diagnosis, and a phased action plan combining conservation and tourism management.



Constraints: Drought, water scarcity, desertification, soil/coastal erosion, limited local datasets, restricted accessibility, and increasing uncontrolled visitor arrivals to Koufonisi by private boats.



Institutional / financial considerations: Implementation depends on governance coordination, baseline monitoring, formal agreements among stakeholders, and sustained partnerships with local authorities, the Geopark, universities, NGOs, and communities.



Transfer potential: The destination is presented as a replicable model for coastal adaptation where climate action, nature conservation, cultural heritage, and low-impact tourism reinforce each other. Its relevance is strongest for protected coastal and island destinations facing drought, erosion, fragile biodiversity, and the need to avoid mass-tourism pathways early.



© Sitia Geopark - Koufonisi Island, Crete, Greece



1.2 Regions

Andalusia

Pilot type: Region

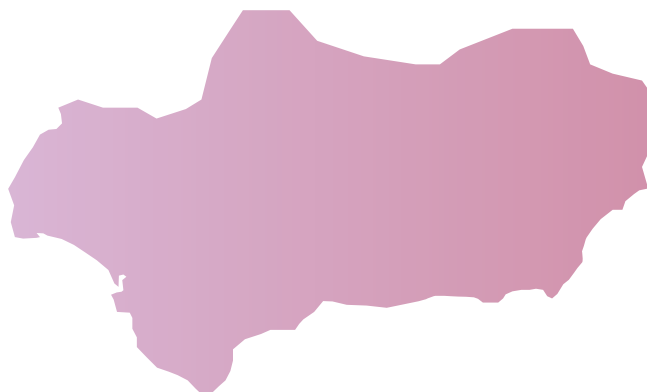
Territory: Andalusia

Country: Spain

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Ministry of Tourism and Andalusia Abroad

Tags: Regional planning; Climate adaptation; Climate mitigation; Governance; Tourism commitment

Andalusia



1. Regional context and climate-tourism challenge

Andalusia is one of Europe's major tourism regions. In 2024, it received 36.2 million visitors and generated close to €30 billion in tourism revenue. Tourism contributes significantly to the regional economy and employment, with a diversified offer spanning beaches, cultural heritage,



© Alexandros Spyropoulos - Cabo de Gata - Níjar Natural Park, Andalusia, Spain

rural tourism, and gastronomy. At the same time, the region is seeking to reduce seasonality and promote a more balanced territorial distribution of tourism activity.

The regional climate-tourism challenge is shaped by rising temperatures, more frequent heatwaves, prolonged droughts, water scarcity, desertification, extreme rainfall, flooding, sea level rise, and beach erosion. These pressures affect coastal resources, natural areas, infrastructure, water availability, and the long-term sustainability of tourism activity. Droughts and heatwaves are identified as the most

persistent and severe risks, while coastal tourism is especially exposed to erosion, biodiversity loss, and increasing pressure on water resources during peak periods.

The regional process started from two linked needs: first, to assess the main climate change mitigation and adaptation issues affecting tourism in Andalusia; second, to translate this assessment into a tourism-specific climate commitment aligned with the Andalusian Climate Action Plan 2021–2030 and the Glasgow Declaration, signed by Andalusia in June 2024.

2. Governance and enabling conditions

Andalusia enters this process with a strong policy and governance base. The regional framework is anchored in the Andalusian Climate Action Law and the Andalusian Climate Action Plan 2021–2030, which identify tourism as one of the sectors affected by climate change and call for adaptation, resilience, and sustainable resource use. This regional framework is aligned with the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda, the European Green Deal, the EU Adaptation Strategy, the Tourism Transition Pathway, Spain's Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan, the National Adaptation Plan, and the Spanish Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2030.

The governance model is participatory and multi-level. It includes the Comisión Interdepartamental de Cambio Climático, which coordinates climate policy across regional ministries, the Consejo Andaluz del Clima as a participatory body, and the Instituto Andaluz de Administración Pública, which provides technical support on participatory methodologies. More than 100 representatives from 79 entities contributed through workshops and consultations, including local governments, universities, research centres, businesses, NGOs, and professional associations.

The enabling conditions also include a strong climate-data base. The Environmental Information Network of Andalusia (REDIAM), with around 2,300 observation stations, supports climate monitoring across the region and provides the evidence base for temperature, precipitation, drought, and sea-level analysis.

3. Strategic planning pathway and outputs

The regional pathway begins with a technical assessment of tourism-related climate risks in Andalusia. This assessment covers the policy framework, stakeholder involvement, historical climate data, existing diagnostics, past extreme weather events, regional vulnerabilities, exposure of tourism to climate hazards, current impacts on tourism, tourism stakeholder adaptation, and future projections. It concludes with general recommendations for the climate action plan.

The next step is the Andalusian Commitment to Climate Action in Tourism. This commitment gives tourism-sector continuity to the broader Andalusian Climate Action Plan and translates the Glasgow Declaration into a tourism-specific framework. It is structured around strategic objectives and actions aligned with the five Glasgow pathways: Measure, Decarbonize, Regenerate, Collaborate, and Finance.

The main outputs currently identified are:

- an assessment of the main coastal tourism-related climate issues in Andalusia;
- the Andalusian Commitment to Climate Action in Tourism;
- a tourism climate framework aligned with the Glasgow Declaration;
- a structured set of strategic objectives and actions covering measurement, decarbonisation, regeneration, collaboration, and finance.



© Junta de Andalucía - Arrecife de las Sirenas, Cabo de Gata - Níjar Natural Park, Andalusia, Spain



© Junta de Andalucía - Minas de Rodalquilar, Cabo de Gata - Níjar Natural Park, Andalusia, Spain

4. Emerging value, challenges, and lessons

The emerging value of the case is strongest at strategic and institutional level. Andalusia has moved from a general regional climate framework to a tourism-specific climate commitment that connects mitigation, adaptation, regeneration, collaboration, and finance. This creates a clearer basis for integrating tourism into wider regional climate action and for positioning tourism as part of the solution to the climate crisis.

The main challenges remain substantial. Tourism growth continues to place pressure on water and energy resources, especially in coastal and mountain areas. Climate change is intensifying droughts, heatwaves, beach erosion, biodiversity loss, and infrastructure damage, while some remote or mountainous areas still face data limitations that reduce the precision of vulnerability assessment. These conditions underline the need for stronger adaptation, resilient infrastructure, and more efficient use of resources.



Governance / institutional value: a tourism-specific climate commitment built on an established regional climate framework and a broad participatory governance process.



Planning / policy value: a clear progression from climate-risk assessment to a structured tourism commitment aligned with regional, national, European, and international frameworks.



Support value for destinations or local actors: actions that promote indicators, training, awareness, adaptation in tourism planning, sustainable certifications, water efficiency, energy efficiency, and better access to practical climate action tools.



Lessons learned:
Lessons learned are not yet documented.

5. Contribution to transfer and replication



Enabling conditions for transfer: A strong regional legal framework, a climate action plan already in place, an extensive climate-monitoring system, and a participatory governance structure linking administrations, experts, civil society, and the private sector.



Constraints: Water scarcity, drought, heatwaves, coastal erosion, pressure on natural resources and infrastructure, and uneven monitoring coverage in some remote and mountainous areas.



Institutional / financial considerations: The commitment includes explicit financing actions, including sustainability criteria in subsidies, mitigation and adaptation criteria in public procurement, support for energy efficiency in tourism buildings, financing for water-efficiency measures, and support for circular-economy approaches in tourism infrastructure.



Transfer potential: The case offers a regional model that links a broad climate policy framework with a tourism-specific climate commitment structured around the five Glasgow pathways. It is especially relevant for regions seeking to connect tourism governance, climate evidence, stakeholder participation, and operational climate action within one coherent framework.



Autonomous Region of Sardinia

Pilot type: Region

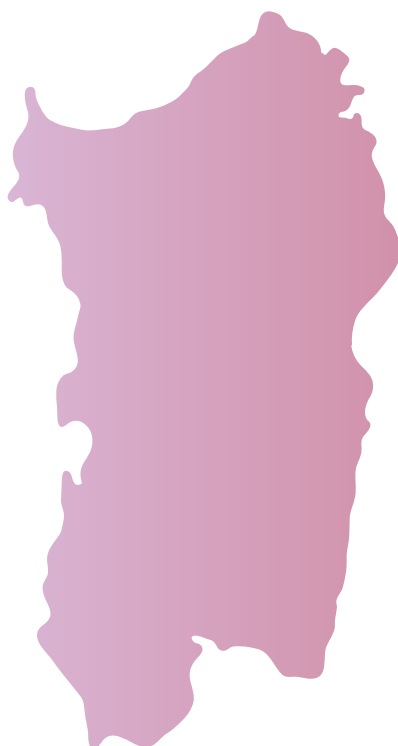
Territory: Autonomous Region of Sardinia

Country: Italy

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Sardinia Region

Tags: Regional planning; Coastal tourism; Climate adaptation; Governance; NbS

Sardinia



1. Regional context and climate-tourism challenge

Sardinia is the second-largest island in the Mediterranean, with an area of 24,100 km² and 1,849 km of coastline. Its tourism profile is strongly linked to coastal resources, especially beach tourism and nautical tourism. The island remains one of the most sought-after destinations at national and international level, recording 16.58 million overnight stays and 3.9 million arrivals in 2023, with a highly seasonal concentration in the summer months. Tourism represents about 10% of the regional entrepreneurial fabric and is one of the island's main economic sectors.

The main climate-tourism challenge lies in the growing exposure of coastal tourism to rising temperatures, longer and more frequent heatwaves, reduced annual precipitation, more intense extreme weather events, longer drought periods, sea-level rise, increasing sea temperature, wave energy, and coastal erosion. These pressures affect natural resources, tourism infrastructure, beaches, marine ecosystems, and the long-term viability of Sardinia's coastal tourism model.

The regional pilot started from the need to identify and assess the main coastal tourism-related climate issues in Sardinia and to translate this assessment into a dedicated regional tourism climate strategy for coastal tourism.



© Capo Carbonara MPA

2. Governance and enabling conditions

Sardinia entered NT4CC with an already established regional framework for climate adaptation. The Regional Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change (SRACC) was adopted in 2019 and updated in 2024, while the Regional Strategic Tourism Plan 2023–2025 provides the main strategic reference for tourism development. The Regional Strategy for Sustainable Development Sardegna2030 also acts as a key framework, integrating tourism, biodiversity, territorial cohesion, and sustainability goals.

A regional governance structure was already in place for climate adaptation, including an Institutional Steering Committee, an Inter-departmental Working Group, thematic working groups, and local authorities. Within NT4CC, this framework was strengthened through the establishment of an Interdepartmental Technical Table for the preparation of the regional climate change adaptation strategy for coastal tourism. This working structure involved the departments responsible for environmental defence, tourism, local authorities and urban planning, cultural heritage, and civil protection.

The enabling conditions also include an established climate-data base managed through ARPAS, the use of the SRACC climate scenarios, a participatory process across departments, and alignment with regional planning instruments such as the Regional Landscape Plan, Hydrogeological Structure Plan, Water Protection Plan, and the Regional Plan of the Tourist Port Network.

3. Strategic planning pathway and outputs

The regional pathway began with a technical report assessing tourism and sustainability in Sardinia, historical climate data, vulnerabilities, current impacts on tourism, future projections, and general recommendations for climate action in coastal tourism. This assessment established the analytical basis for the regional strategy.

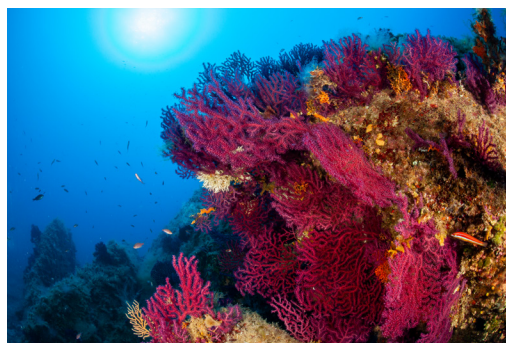
The next step was the preparation of the Regional Tourism Climate Strategy for the Autonomous Region of Sardinia. This strategy combines climate-risk knowledge, tourism-sector analysis, participatory work, impact-chain assessment, and a strategic plan with enabling conditions. A key part of the process was the participatory pathway carried out through the Interdepartmental Technical Table, including structured meetings and work on three impact chains focused on environmental resources, historical-cultural and landscape resources, and tourism services.

The main outputs currently identified are:

- a regional assessment of the main coastal tourism-related climate issues;
- a regional tourism climate strategy for Sardinia;
- an interdepartmental governance structure dedicated to coastal tourism climate adaptation;
- a methodological basis for integrating climate considerations into regional plans, programmes, and local instruments.



© Federica Maccioni



© Luca Sgualdini

4. Emerging value, challenges, and lessons

The strongest emerging value of the Sardinia case lies in the integration of tourism and climate adaptation within an already structured regional climate-governance framework. Coastal tourism is no longer treated only as a sectoral issue, but as a regional planning issue linked to biodiversity, water, landscape, civil protection, transport, and territorial management.

The main challenges are also clear. Sardinia continues to rely heavily on a coastal tourism model marked by strong seasonality, concentration of demand in summer, and high environmental pressure on beaches, dunes, marine ecosystems, and water resources. The technical report also records data limitations, especially for local-scale decision-making, coastal monitoring, sea-level rise, wave strength, and specific socio-economic impacts of climate change on tourism. Climate considerations are still only partially integrated into several planning instruments.



Governance / institutional value: stronger interdepartmental coordination and a dedicated working structure for integrating climate adaptation into coastal tourism governance.



Planning / policy value: a regional tourism climate strategy anchored in existing adaptation, tourism, and sustainability frameworks.



Support value for destinations or local actors: a methodological and strategic basis for integrating climate considerations into regional and local planning instruments, including coastal and tourism-related tools.



Lessons learned:

Lessons learned are not yet documented.

5. Contribution to transfer and replication



Enabling conditions for transfer: A pre-existing regional adaptation framework, structured interdepartmental coordination, climate data and scenario analysis, and strong alignment between tourism planning and wider regional sustainability strategies.



Constraints: Strong tourism seasonality, concentration of coastal demand, environmental pressure, limited local-scale data, insufficient coastal monitoring, and partial integration of climate considerations into some planning instruments.



Institutional / financial considerations: Continuity of the Thematic Working Group after project completion is identified as essential. The strategy also highlights the need for administrative mechanisms and technically and economically feasible projects in the short and medium term to ensure follow-up.



Transfer potential: The Sardinia case offers a regional model for linking climate-risk assessment, interdepartmental governance, participatory planning, and tourism strategy within a coastal adaptation framework. It is particularly relevant for island and coastal regions seeking to integrate climate adaptation into existing tourism and territorial planning systems.



Herzegovina-Neretva Canton

Pilot type: Region

Territory: Herzegovina-Neretva Canton

Country: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton

Tags: Regional planning; Climate adaptation; Climate mitigation; Governance; Tourism strategy

*Herzegovina-
Neretva Canton*



1. Regional context and climate-tourism challenge

Herzegovina-Neretva Canton is located in the south-western part of Bosnia and Herzegovina and includes nine local self-government units: Čapljina, Čitluk, Jablanica, Konjic, Mostar, Neum, Prozor-Rama, Ravno, and Stolac. The canton combines the Neretva River valley, mountainous areas, and the coastal area of Neum. Its economy is shaped by agriculture, tourism, and industry, while natural resources and cultural heritage form an important part of its territorial identity.

Tourism is one of the canton's key sectors. Mostar attracts most visitors, while Neum records the longest stays. Over the last decade, the canton recorded annual growth in tourist numbers, with a strong concentration in the summer season. Foreign tourists dominate arrivals, while regional tourists increasingly seek active forms of holiday-making.

The main climate-tourism challenge is linked to increasing exposure to heat waves, droughts, floods, forest fires, sea floods, strong winds and storm surges, reduced water availability, and pressure on ecosystems, infrastructure, and visitor safety. The regional process began with the identification and assessment of the main climate change mitigation and adaptation issues affecting tourism in the canton and with the broader aim of strengthening tourism resilience through climate action.



© Brian Eager - Hutovo Blato, Bosnia and Herzegovina

2. Governance and enabling conditions

The regional process is led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton as project partner within NaTour4CChange. The regional role is framed around cooperative governance, climate-responsible planning, and long-term involvement of public authorities, tourism actors, local communities, and other stakeholders.

The enabling conditions include alignment with a broad strategic and legal framework. Regional work is positioned in relation to county, national, EU, and international policies, including climate adaptation and low-emission development strategies, water-management planning, environmental protection law, the European Green Deal, the EU Adaptation Strategy, and the Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism.

The implementation framework also includes indicators, reporting, stakeholder involvement, and revision. A proposed county-level climate-tourism coordination board, public reporting mechanisms, public consultations, training, and cross-sector educational workshops are part of the governance and enabling conditions for implementation.

3. Strategic planning pathway and outputs

The regional pathway starts with an assessment of the main tourism-related climate issues in the canton. This assessment establishes the regional context, analyses climate and tourism trends, identifies climate risks and vulnerabilities, and sets out challenges and recommendations for strengthening resilience in tourism.

The next step is the preparation of a strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation in tourism. This strategy includes an overview of key climate and tourism characteristics, current mitigation and adaptation trends, climate-risk assessment results, a long-term vision, priorities and objectives, a climate action plan, and implementation conditions covering indicators, reporting, stakeholder involvement, and revision.

The main outputs currently identified are:

- an assessment of the main tourism-related climate issues in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton;
- a strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation in tourism;
- a climate action plan for mitigation and adaptation in tourism;
- implementation conditions for monitoring, reporting, stakeholder involvement, and review.



© Hutovo Blato Nature Park - Hutovo Blato, Bosnia and Herzegovina



© Vladimir Tadić

4. Emerging value, challenges, and lessons

The emerging value of the case is primarily strategic and institutional. The regional process connects climate-risk assessment, tourism planning, mitigation and adaptation priorities, implementation conditions, and long-term coordination within one framework. It also sets out five strategic messages: multi-level commitment and coordination, decarbonisation and climate resilience, protection of natural resources and ecosystem services including Nature-based Solutions, diversification of tourism and infrastructure, and the importance of finance and education for implementation.

The main challenges include heat waves, droughts, floods, forest fires, sea floods, reduced water availability, damage to infrastructure and natural resources, limited climate-related data, weak capacities in public administration, insufficient training, legal gaps, and the financial burden of adaptation and mitigation for tourism businesses and local communities.



Governance / institutional value: a clearer basis for coordinated climate action in tourism, including indicators, reporting, stakeholder involvement, and revision.



Planning / policy value: a transition from climate-risk assessment to a regional tourism climate strategy and action plan.



Support value for destinations or local actors: stronger direction for local adaptation planning, stakeholder awareness, and alignment with wider climate and tourism frameworks.



Lessons learned:

Lessons learned are not yet documented.

5. Contribution to transfer and replication



Enabling conditions for transfer: A structured climate-risk assessment, a regional strategy linked to wider policy frameworks, and implementation conditions based on indicators, reporting, stakeholder involvement, and revision.



Constraints: Data gaps, weak institutional capacities, insufficient training, legal gaps, and financial constraints affecting implementation.



Institutional / financial considerations: Relevant conditions include stronger coordination, standardised data collection, institutional networking, early warning systems, training in climate risks, access to EU funds, and financing models such as public-private partnerships and green bonds.



Transfer potential: The case offers a regional model that combines climate-risk assessment, strategic planning, action design, stakeholder involvement, and implementation conditions within one tourism-climate framework.



Region of Crete

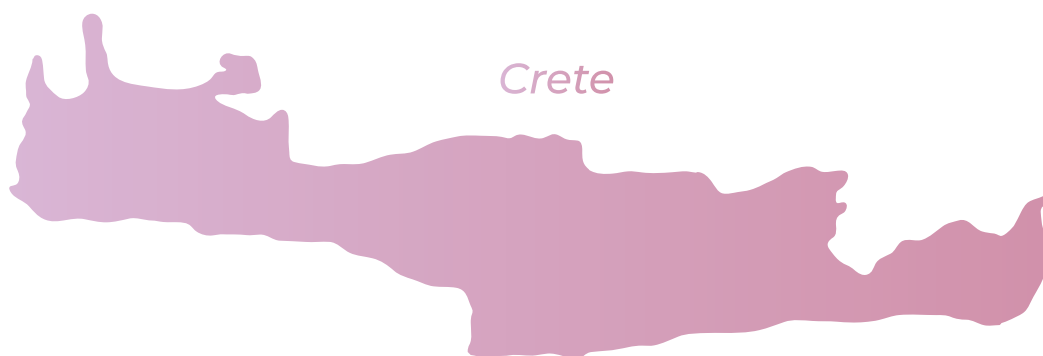
Pilot type: Region

Territory: Region of Crete

Country: Greece

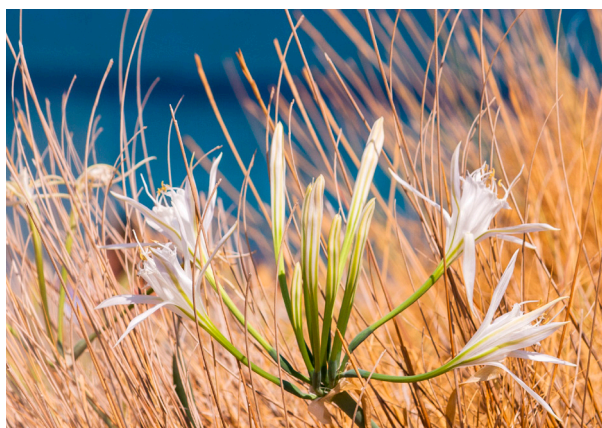
Lead partner / coordinating organization: Region of Crete

Tags: Regional planning; Climate adaptation; Coastal tourism; Water scarcity; Nature-Based Solutions



1. Regional context and climate-tourism challenge

Crete is one of Greece's most tourism-dependent regions. It combines mass tourism with a diverse cultural and natural tourism offer, and in 2024 recorded 6.5 million visitors, with 5.3 million international air arrivals and a strong concentration of tourism infrastructure in Heraklion and Chania. Tourism is a central economic sector, contributing 25–30% of GDP and 30% of employment, while the island also faces strong seasonality, overtourism pressure, and growing environmental stress in coastal areas.



© Sitia Geopark

The main climate pressures affecting tourism are rising temperatures, more frequent and intense heatwaves, declining rainfall, water scarcity, drought, coastal erosion, sea-level rise, flash floods, wildfires, biodiversity loss, and desertification. These pressures affect visitor comfort, beach assets, natural ecosystems, transport systems, water availability, and tourism infrastructure, especially along the north coast where tourism development is most concentrated.

The regional process started from the need to safeguard Crete's natural and cultural assets while sustaining local livelihoods and tourism competitiveness. Within NT4CC, this led first to an assessment of the main tourism-related climate risks and then to a regional strategy focused on in-region tourism impacts and actions.

2. Governance and enabling conditions

Crete enters this process with an established regional policy base. The main enabling instruments are the National Climate Law, the Regional Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change, the Regional Spatial Plan of Crete, the Tourism Strategic Planning and Operational Plan 2024–2028, and the Tourism National Spatial Plan under development. Together, these provide the policy basis for adaptation, tourism planning, spatial regulation, energy transition, and resilience-building.

The regional process also draws on a multi-actor evidence base. Public-sector stakeholders include the Region of Crete and the Sitia Geopark authority, while private-sector stakeholders include tourism professionals from Ierapetra and Sitia. Data sources include national and regional GIS databases, the Hellenic National Meteorological Service, the Natural Environment and Climate Change Agency, the European Environment Agency, and Copernicus. Local-scale data gaps and differences in dataset scale and measurement units remain an explicit constraint.

The strategy identifies governance, planning, and policy conditions as the foundational layer for implementation. It also links delivery to environmental and infrastructural conditions, socio-economic and cultural conditions, and digital and innovation conditions. Progress tracking is tied to indicators, reporting, engagement, and review, with KPI ownership assigned to the Regional Coordination Unit and relevant departments.



© Sitia Geopark - Xerokampos, Crete, Greece



© Sitia Geopark - Xerokampos, Crete, Greece

3. Strategic planning pathway and outputs

The regional pathway begins with a technical assessment covering demography, tourism, the role of tourism in the economy, environmental impacts, the regulatory framework, historical climate data, past extreme events, exposure to climate hazards, current impacts on tourism, future vulnerability, and general recommendations for climate action. This assessment establishes the regional evidence base for tourism-related climate adaptation and mitigation.

The next step is the Regional Strategy for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Region of Crete. The strategy sets a long-term vision and translates the assessment into specific goals and targets: reducing ground and coastal erosion, preserving biodiversity, diversifying the visiting period, promoting renewable energy use by tourism organizations and businesses, monitoring climate change, and promoting bicycling. It also gives operational priority to three immediate tourism-resilience issues: coastal and ground erosion, extreme heat and thermal comfort, and water scarcity.

The main outputs currently identified are:

- **a regional technical assessment of tourism-related climate risks;**
- **a regional strategy for mitigation and adaptation to climate change;**
- **a set of proposed adaptation and mitigation actions and measures;**
- **an action prioritisation framework based on urgency, capacity, cost, enabling conditions, mitigation impact, adaptation impact, and tourism impact;**
- **enabling conditions linked to governance, reporting, engagement, and review.**

4. Emerging value, challenges, and lessons

The emerging value of the Crete case lies in the translation of a broad regional adaptation framework into a tourism-specific strategy. The regional approach links climate-risk evidence, tourism development patterns, policy tools, prioritised actions, and implementation conditions within one planning framework. It also connects adaptation and mitigation rather than treating them separately.

The main challenges are already clear. Crete's tourism model remains highly seasonal and strongly concentrated in the north of the island. Water scarcity, thermal discomfort, coastal erosion, biodiversity degradation, and infrastructure pressure are intensifying, while future tourism vulnerability rises from moderate in the short term to high or very high in many areas over the medium and long term, especially in Lasithi and Heraklion and in municipalities such as Sitia, Ierapetra, Archanes-Asterousia, Gortyna, Faistos, Agios Nikolaos, and Heraklion.



Governance / institutional value: a clearer regional framework for tourism climate action linked to existing adaptation, tourism, and spatial planning instruments, and supported by implementation conditions for monitoring, engagement, and review.



Planning / policy value: a progression from technical assessment to strategy, goals, action prioritisation, and implementation planning, with measurable indicators such as annual temperature, hot days, precipitation days, vegetation cover, water use per guest-night, energy use per guest-night, and coastline under soft protection.



Support value for destinations or local actors: concrete priority directions for coastal protection through soft engineering and Nature-Based Solutions, water-saving and reuse in tourism facilities and public spaces, heatwave readiness, active mobility, tourism-season diversification, and climate monitoring through sensors and observation points.



Lessons learned:

Lessons learned are not yet documented.

5. Contribution to transfer and replication



Enabling conditions for transfer: A strong regional planning base, an existing regional adaptation plan, tourism and spatial planning instruments, available climate data, and a strategy that combines long-term goals, prioritised actions, KPIs, and review mechanisms.



Constraints: Local data gaps, uneven data quality across spatial scales, strong seasonality, concentration of tourism infrastructure in limited coastal areas, water stress, and increasing long-term climate vulnerability.



Institutional / financial considerations: Implementation depends on permits, coastal zoning, beach-management rules, stakeholder coordination, and continued monitoring. The strategy also links delivery to responsible regional departments, municipalities, NGOs, technical advisors, and the Regional Coordination Unit, with phased timelines and KPI tracking.



Transfer potential: The case offers a regional model for island tourism territories that need to connect climate-risk assessment, tourism planning, active mobility, coastal protection, Nature-Based Solutions, and water-stress management within a single strategic framework. It is particularly relevant for coastal regions facing heatwaves, water scarcity, erosion, and strong seasonal tourism pressure.



Zadar County

Pilot type: Region

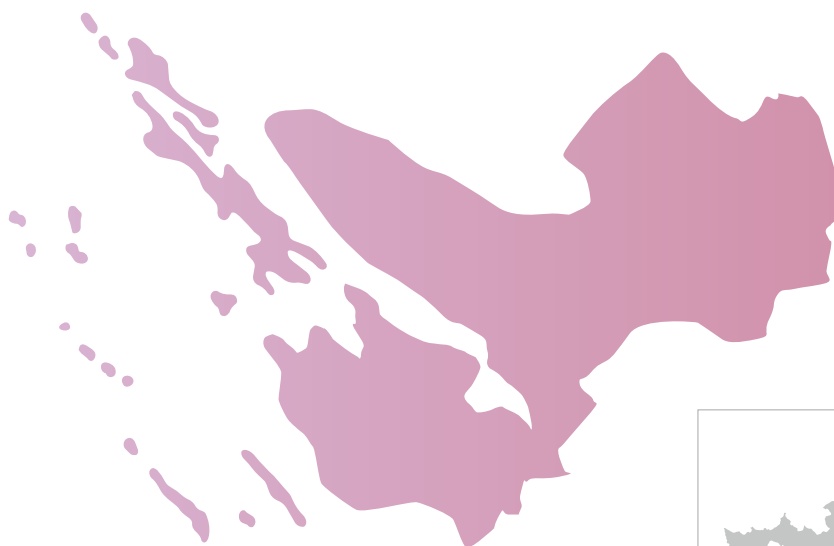
Territory: Zadar County

Country: Croatia

Lead partner / coordinating organization: Institute for Tourism, Croatia

Tags: Coastal tourism; Climate risk assessment; Regional planning; Governance; Nature-Based Solutions

Zadar County



1. Regional context and climate-tourism challenge

Zadar County has a key geopolitical position linking the continental and coastal parts of Croatia. It has 159,766 inhabitants, with most of the population located in the coastal area. Its economy relies on tourism, agriculture, fishing, and maritime traffic. Tourist traffic is concentrated in the coastal area and on the islands, and the county recorded steady growth from 12.7 million overnight stays in 2021 to 15.4 million in 2024. The average length of stay is 6.1 days, and more than half of commercial tourist traffic is generated in private accommodation.

The region is characterised by Mediterranean conditions in the coastal area, sub-Mediterranean conditions in Bukovica and Ravni Kotari, and colder mountain conditions inland. Strong windiness is a defining feature, especially bora in the area of Pag Island and the Velebit Channel. Climate pressures affecting tourism include extreme air temperatures, heatwaves, drought with reduced water availability, wildfires, floods, sea flooding, strong winds and storm surges, and the effects of solar radiation on property, people, and nature. For the current climate, wildfires and sea flooding are identified as the most significant risks.



Sakarun Beach, Dugi Otok, Croatia

The regional process began with an analytical assessment of climate change mitigation and adaptation in tourism in Zadar County and a Climate Risk Assessment, with the goal of preparing a Regional Strategy for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change in Coastal Tourism. Within this wider process, the selected pilot area is Sakarun Beach on Dugi Otok, where a Nature-Based Solution will be implemented in a protected natural area.

2. Governance and enabling conditions

Climate action in Zadar County is framed by a multi-level legal and policy context that includes the Tourism Act, the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy of the Republic of Croatia, the Low-Carbon Development Strategy, and the Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy and National Action Plan until 2027. Public bodies responsible for environmental protection also support and co-finance the implementation of Nature-Based Solutions.

A Regional Coordination Unit was established to support the process. It includes Zadar County departments responsible for tourism and environment and planning, the University of Zadar, the County Tourist Board, Natura Jadra, and project experts. The wider collaborative process also involved the Tourism Department of Zadar County, the Administrative Department for Physical Planning, Environmental Protection and Municipal Affairs, the Tourist Board of Zadar County, Natura Jadra, the University of Zadar, the Pakoštane Tourist Board, and residents who participated voluntarily in the Climate Risk Assessment.

The process is based on strategic planning procedures, participatory approaches, expert analysis, hydro-meteorological data analysis, stakeholder questionnaires, and IPCC-based methodology. It also uses the Climate Action Planning Toolkit for Mediterranean Regional Authorities and DMOs, including the Scheduler, Action Planner, and CAP Template.

3. Strategic planning pathway and outputs

The regional pathway starts with a situation analysis of climate change mitigation, adaptation, and tourism in Zadar County. This includes destination characteristics, greenhouse gas emissions, existing mitigation measures, the status of adaptation, climate variables and hazards, and a Climate Risk Assessment focused on three thematic areas: tourism infrastructure, tourism offer, and protected areas.

The next step is the Regional Strategy for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change in Coastal Tourism of Zadar County. This strategy sets out a long-term vision, adaptation and mitigation objectives, a decarbonisation action plan, a climate resilience action plan, and enabling conditions for implementation. The adaptation and mitigation objectives cover tourist infrastructure, tourist offerings, natural areas through Nature-Based Solutions, institutional capacity and stakeholder coordination, and greenhouse gas emission reduction from tourism.



Dugi Otok, Croatia

The main outputs currently identified are:

- **a climate and tourism assessment for Zadar County;**
- **a Climate Risk Assessment for the coastal part of the county;**
- **a Regional Strategy for Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change in Coastal Tourism;**
- **a decarbonisation action plan;**
- **a climate resilience action plan;**
- **enabling conditions covering indicators, reporting, engagement, and review.**

4. Emerging value, challenges, and lessons

The emerging value of the case lies in connecting climate-risk assessment, decarbonisation planning, adaptation planning, and Nature-Based Solutions within one regional framework for coastal tourism. Natural areas emerge as the most vulnerable thematic area, with medium risk levels for wildfires, droughts, extreme air temperatures, and heatwaves, while tourist infrastructure and services face increasing threats from wildfires, strong winds, and rising sea levels.

The main challenges include strong seasonality, concentration of tourism in the coastal zone, pressure on beaches and protected areas, high summer water demand, growing nautical traffic, and the difficulty of introducing more environmentally friendly transport modes. Climate uncertainty is also identified as a central challenge, together with the need to prepare for future scenarios in which multiple hazards intensify.



Governance / institutional value: establishment of a Regional Coordination Unit and a cross-sector process linking tourism, planning, environment, protected areas, academia, and tourism boards.



Planning / policy value: a structured progression from assessment and Climate Risk Assessment to a regional strategy, long-term vision, objectives, action plans, and implementation conditions.



Support value for destinations or local actors: a regional knowledge base, examples of good practice, a pilot application at Sakarun Beach, and a stronger emphasis on Nature-Based Solutions, sustainable tourism products, stakeholder coordination, and data-driven planning.



Lessons learned:

Lessons learned are not yet documented.

5. Contribution to transfer and replication



Enabling conditions for transfer: A Regional Coordination Unit, a participatory risk assessment process, alignment with Croatian and EU climate and tourism frameworks, and action planning that combines mitigation, adaptation, and Nature-Based Solutions.



Constraints: Climate uncertainty, strong tourism seasonality, coastal concentration of visitors, growing pressure on natural areas and infrastructure, increasing summer water demand, and the rising significance of wildfires, sea flooding, heatwaves, drought, and strong winds.



Institutional / financial considerations: The strategy identifies the need for stronger knowledge and skills, financial resources, coordination among decision-makers, sustainable funding sources for adaptation, continued cooperation across sectors, and data systems for monitoring decarbonisation and climate action.



Transfer potential: The case offers a regional model that combines risk assessment, cross-sector governance, decarbonisation planning, adaptation planning, and Nature-Based Solutions for coastal tourism. It is particularly relevant for Mediterranean coastal regions facing high tourism pressure, protected natural areas, and multiple climate hazards.



CHAPTER 3

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Integrated governance is the missing infrastructure of climate-resilient coastal tourism

Across Europe's coastal and island territories, and more broadly across the Mediterranean, tourism is increasingly exposed to climate risks, ecosystem degradation, seasonal pressure, and growing competition for space and resources. Yet governance remains fragmented. Tourism, climate adaptation, biodiversity protection, mobility, and territorial planning are still too often managed in parallel, by different departments, at different levels, and with limited continuity between diagnosis, planning, implementation, and follow-up. Recent policy discussions around the upcoming EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy increasingly point to the need for a stronger multilevel, place-based, and participatory governance model. NaTour4CChange (NT4CC) shows that such an approach is not only necessary, but also operationally feasible through dedicated cross-sectoral coordination bodies tested in practice.

WHAT NT4CC SHOWS

- Climate-resilient tourism needs effective institutionalized coordination, not one-off temporary cooperation.** The NaTour4CChange's Climate Action Planning Toolkit shows that destinations and regions need dedicated governance structures to move from climate diagnosis to action. NT4CC translates this into two practical models: the **Regional Coordination Unit**, formally linking at least tourism and environment/climate departments at regional government level, and the **Tourism Climate Action Local Task Force**, bringing together the main public and private actors at destination level. These governance mechanisms make integrated, cross-sectoral, and multi-level governance operational in practice. By strengthening dialogue and coordination between tourism planning and environmental stakeholders across governance levels, they help reduce fragmentation between tourism development policies and environmental conservation strategies. In doing so, they improve policy coherence and support more coordinated, sustainable, and climate-resilient decision-making at regional and destination scales. Across NT4CC pilot regions, RCUs or equivalent formal coordination structures were tested and implemented as working mechanisms rather than abstract templates.
- Governance becomes more structured as implementation advances.** This is visible across NT4CC cases. In Sardinia, the Interdepartmental Technical Table brought several regional departments into a shared process for shaping the coastal tourism adaptation strategy. In Hutovo Blato, the Tourism Climate Action Task Force and the Regional Coordination Group remained involved from diagnosis through implementation and monitoring. In Cabo de Gata, the adaptation strategy embeds inclusive participation, co-production of knowledge, and inter-administrative coordination directly into the action framework. Together, these examples show that governance in NT4CC evolves from diagnosis and planning toward more structured and operational forms of coordination and decision-making as implementation takes shape, demonstrating stronger commitment and co-ownership of the process from the involved actors.
- Policy alignment is not automatic; it must be organized.** NT4CC shows that effective tourism climate action depends on the establishment of stronger multilevel governance, place-based strategies, and permanent coordination mechanisms capable of aligning tourism with climate, environment, transport, housing, socio-economic, and wider territorial priorities. Its governance architecture provides a practical model for making this coordination operational through dedicated coordination units and local task forces.



© Institut za turizam



© Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat Municipality

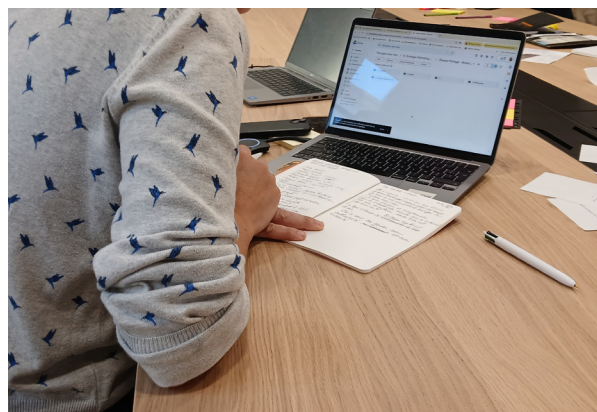
WHAT WE CALL FOR

At EU and wider Euro-Mediterranean level

- **Recognize integrated governance as a core condition of sustainable tourism policy**, not as an optional implementation detail. The future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy should explicitly require and support multilevel, place-based governance arrangements for tourism climate action. Regional and local authorities must be fully involved in **designing and implementing** EU tourism policies, with particular attention to coastal, island, and peripheral maritime territories, and with the capacity building needed to prepare and implement Climate Action Plans.



- **Strengthen and use permanent European coordination spaces for territorial sustainable tourism**, including the EU Tourism Platform and wider Euro-Mediterranean cooperation where relevant, to support structured dialogue, policy alignment, monitoring, and transfer of tested governance models across regions. Encourage interregional **cooperation projects** which are essential instruments for regions and islands to develop innovative tourism solutions and exchange good practices.



- **Embed tourism in wider territorial policy frameworks** by requiring stronger alignment between tourism, climate, biodiversity, transport, housing, land-sea interaction and planning, and cohesion policy. Coastal tourism cannot be governed effectively through a sectoral lens alone. **Place-based tourism strategies must** reflect local realities and carrying capacities. This alignment should also connect more clearly with wider ocean, coastal, and island agendas, including the European Ocean Pact, where relevant.

At EU Regions level

- **Establish or strengthen Regional Coordination Units (RCU)** or equivalent formal coordination structures that formally connect tourism, environment, climate, and territorial planning authorities and give them a shared mandate to guide tourism climate action strategies. NT4CC shows that this type of structure is practical, adaptable, scalable and ensures a space for dialogue in which co-creation and co-design methodologies are promoted. In the project, pilot regions tested such structures as operational governance mechanisms, not simply as proposed models.
- **Support European regions in developing Climate Action Strategies for tourism** through the RCU, including technical assistance, guidance, peer learning, and capacity building. These plans would provide a formal framework for regions to commit to a stronger adaptation of the tourism sector to climate change, while aligning tourism development with broader resilience and sustainability objectives.

- **Consider Treat Regions as the level that can align tourism, climate, environment, and territorial priorities; support destinations;** build institutional capacity; and connect local tourism resilience with wider territorial transition goals.
- **Create the legal, administrative, and financial conditions that allow** climate action strategies to continue beyond electoral cycles and political changes, ensuring their long-term implementation.
- **Use macro-regional and sea-basin frameworks as governance accelerators** for maritime and peripheral territories, especially where tourism pressures and climate risks cross administrative boundaries. This should include stronger cooperation across the wider Mediterranean, including through the Pact for the Mediterranean, so that tourism, blue economy, biodiversity, and climate agendas are addressed in a more connected way across both shores.

At destination level

- **Support the creation of Tourism Climate Action Task Forces** at the coastal destination level that bring together Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), municipalities, businesses, conservation actors, technical experts, utilities, and community representatives around a shared climate action process.
- **Empower destination-level Tourism Climate Action Task Forces** to convene DMOs, private sector associations, conservation actors, and local communities, and to drive the preparation and implementation of Destination Climate Action Plans. These plans should be formally aligned with regional tourism and climate strategies to strengthen policy coherence, enable coordinated implementation, and support destination-level adaptation to climate change.
- **Support a clearer institutional role for DMOs within Tourism Climate Action Task Forces**, alongside municipalities, businesses, conservation actors, and technical experts. At destination level, DMOs should contribute to coordination and implementation support, rather than remain confined to promotion alone.
- **Link governance to implementation capacity** by assigning clear coordination roles, monitoring responsibilities, financing pathways and the technical and institutional capacities needed to carry Climate Action Plans into delivery.



© Hutovo Blato Nature Park - Hutovo Blato, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The transition to climate-resilient coastal tourism will not be delivered by isolated actions, short-term projects, or sectoral plans alone. It requires governance infrastructure: formal coordination, clear mandates, shared evidence, and institutional continuity across levels. NT4CC shows that this architecture can be built and adapted; policymakers should now move from short-term project practice to long-term territorial standard.

2. Nature-based Solutions are strategic infrastructure for climate-resilient coastal tourism

Europe's coastal and island tourism economy depends on healthy beaches, dunes, wetlands, seagrass meadows, water systems, and landscapes. These natural assets are not simply part of the visitor experience; they are the infrastructure that protects destinations from erosion,



© Alexandros Spyropoulos - HSPN Archives

flooding, heat, biodiversity loss, and declining environmental quality, while also sustaining the quality, attractiveness, and long-term value of the tourism offer. Yet tourism policy still too often treats Nature-based Solutions (NbS) as optional environmental projects rather than as core investments in regions and destinations resilience. NT4CC shows that this is no longer sufficient. In Mediterranean coastal destinations, nature must be recognized simultaneously as a tourism asset, a climate adaptation pathway, and a foundation for long-term territorial resilience. This requires a tourism policy that is place-based, climate-aware, and responsive to the real conditions of coastal and island territories.

WHAT NT4CC SHOWS

- **NbS should be treated as resilience infrastructure, not as an environmental add-on.** In practice, this means recognizing their protective, adaptive, ecological, economic, and social functions: they reduce exposure to climate risk, help protect tourism assets and ecosystems, support environmental quality, and sustain destination attractiveness. NT4CC shows this clearly in places such as Dugi Otok, where action at Sakarun Bay includes the protection and management of Posidonia banquettes, the creation of a controlled passage through them, and ecological anchoring to reduce pressure on fragile coastal habitats. These are not stand-alone environmental measures; they are practical investments that protect beaches, reduce climate vulnerability, and help sustain the visitor experience on which coastal tourism depends.
- **NbS can be mainstreamed through a practical implementation pathway.** NT4CC provides a practical seven-step implementation pathway that moves from identifying opportunity spaces and local challenges to NbS selection, design, implementation, monitoring, improvement, and up-scaling, aligned with IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions. Crucially, this pathway integrates governance, communication, risk management, funding opportunities, and replication, showing that successful NbS require policy coordination rather than isolated pilots.
- **The missing link is often policy mainstreaming, not only technical feasibility.** NT4CC shows that NbS become durable when they are embedded in tourism planning, governance, communication, financing, stewardship, and monitoring frameworks rather than treated as isolated environmental projects. The NT4CC's Business and Financial Model Guidelines for NbS Implementation reinforces this point, but the core policy lesson is broader: NbS require enabling conditions if they are to move from experimentation to standard practice in coastal tourism resilience.

WHAT WE CALL FOR

At EU and wider Euro-Mediterranean level

- **Recognize NbS as core tourism resilience infrastructure** in the future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy, with explicit links to climate adaptation, biodiversity, coastal resilience, and local economic stability.
- **Align the future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy with biodiversity, climate adaptation, coastal and territorial planning, and cohesion frameworks**, so that destinations can finance and implement integrated resilience measures without navigating disconnected sectoral systems.
- **Ensure that tourism and coastal policy frameworks create enabling conditions for long-term NbS investment, maintenance, and stewardship**, including stronger links with biodiversity restoration, spatial planning, and sustainable marine and coastal management, while supporting integrated public-private approaches where appropriate.

At EU Regions level

- **Embed NbS in regional tourism climate strategies and coastal planning frameworks** as priority standard adaptation options, especially in territories exposed to erosion, water stress, biodiversity degradation, and seasonal pressure.
- **Build regional capacity to prepare and scale NbS portfolios**, including feasibility assessment, business-model development, governance support, stakeholder engagement, and links to sea-basin and macro-regional cooperation frameworks, drawing on the feasibility and business-model approaches developed through NT4CC with the Methodological frameworks for Regions and Destinations for assessing the main coastal tourism related issues concerning Climate Change.
- **Connect tourism diversification with ecosystem restoration**, so that regenerative, ecotourism, and other lower-impact tourism models are backed by territorial planning and concrete destination measures, not only by communication narratives. This includes, for example, tourism models linked to habitat restoration, low-impact visitor management, and resource-efficiency measures in sensitive coastal and island areas.

At destination and protected-area level

- **Plan NbS as part of destination management and risk reduction**, not only as site-based conservation measures. Destinations should identify where NbS can reduce climate exposure, protect assets, improve environmental quality, and strengthen carrying capacity.
- **Link NbS from the outset to governance, communication, monitoring, and long-term management**. NT4CC shows that interventions are more durable when they are institutionally embedded and socially supported, rather than treated as stand-alone site interventions.
- **Invest in monitoring, learning, and replication** so that successful NbS become part of a transferable tourism resilience model rather than remaining isolated demonstrations.

NT4CC makes one point unmistakably clear: in coastal tourism, nature is not a backdrop to resilience policy. It is the system that makes resilience possible. Nature-based Solutions should therefore be mainstreamed into tourism policy and planning as strategic resilience infrastructure, with the governance and investment conditions needed to support their long-term uptake.

3. From short-term grants to long-term resilience finance: Financing climate action and Nature-based Solutions in coastal tourism

Coastal tourism is still being financed as if climate resilience were a side issue. In practice, many destinations remain dependent on fragmented public grants, short project cycles, and weak and limited financial planning, even though their economies depend directly on beaches, dunes, wetlands, seagrass meadows, water systems, and other natural assets now under growing climate pressure. The issue is no longer whether NbS matters for tourism resilience. The issue is whether destinations have the financial pathways to prepare, implement, maintain, and scale them. The NT4CC financing guidelines make the case clearly: securing long-term and diversified funding for Nature-based Solutions is no longer an environmental preference, but an economic imperative for tourism territories. This requires stronger institutional, technical, and financial capacities to support diversified and year-round sustainable tourism in maritime and peripheral regions.

WHAT NT4CC SHOWS

- **Finance must be embedded in the whole climate action pathway, not added at the end.** The Climate Action Planning Toolkit places enabling conditions, feasibility, and prioritization at the centre of planning, while the NbS Manual explicitly includes economic and financial feasibility analysis, funding mapping, and integration into wider development planning. NT4CC therefore treats finance as part of governance and implementation logic, not as a separate annex.
- **Destinations need a structured financing toolbox, not grant dependence.** The NT4CC business and financial model guidelines identify five practical mechanisms for Mediterranean tourism destinations: sustainable tourism contributions or eco-taxes, public-private partnerships, destination certification and branding schemes, payments for ecosystem services, and revolving conservation funds. Together, these mechanisms show that NbS financing can move from ad hoc subsidy logic toward more strategic and territorially embedded revenue models, with EU funding acting as complementary support rather than the main long-term source for maintenance and operation.
- **NbS become investable when ecological value is translated into territorial and economic value.** NT4CC shows that NbS should be assessed not only through environmental benefits, but also through avoided losses, reduced maintenance costs, protection of tourism revenue, and wider social and environmental returns. The guidelines therefore move from conventional return on investment (ROI) toward broader social return on investment (SROI) and emphasize that bankable projects require inclusive governance, credible monitoring, and long-term legitimacy.

WHAT WE CALL FOR

At EU and wider Euro-Mediterranean level

- **Recognize tourism climate action and ecosystems-based solutions as primary investment priorities, not only project themes.** The future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy should explicitly support long-term resilience finance for coastal and island destinations, especially where tourism, biodiversity, and climate risks are tightly intertwined.
- **Align tourism, climate, nature, and cohesion funding frameworks across EU recovery, cohesion, cooperation, research, and environmental programmes** so that regions and destinations can combine adaptation, biodiversity restoration, and tourism resilience within coherent financing pathways instead of navigating disconnected instruments. These instruments should support project preparation and scaling, but should not be treated as the main long-term income model for NbS maintenance and operation.
- **Support investment readiness for NbS**, including feasibility assessment, project preparation, governance design, and impact measurement, so that destinations can move from promising concepts to credible, fundable interventions.

At EU Regions level

- **Build regional financial capacity for tourism resilience.** Regions should support destinations in developing business cases, financial feasibility analyses, and diversified funding mixes, while helping connect local initiatives with EU, macro-regional, and sea-basin opportunities.
- **Foster the role of Regions as financial enablers and coordinators**, able to align tourism, environment, climate, and territorial priorities and to create the conditions for dedicated, place-based investment streams in ecosystem resilience.
- **Promote mechanisms that retain tourism value in the territory**, especially where revenues can be transparently redirected toward conservation, adaptation, monitoring, and long-term maintenance.
- **Map and mobilize cross-sectoral funding** by using NT4CC feasibility and business model approaches to connect destination projects not only to tourism budgets, but also to climate adaptation, disaster risk preparedness and reduction, and biodiversity restoration funding streams.
- **Engage the private sector** to develop investments and public-private partnerships and take advantage of existing incentives (e.g., eco-certifications, green grants) to mobilize private tourism capital toward NbS and decarbonization efforts.



At destination and private-sector level

- **Move from consultation to co-investment.** DMOs, tourism businesses, SMEs, concessionaires, and local stakeholders should be engaged as part of the planning but also financing model, not only as passive beneficiaries of public funding. NT4CC's financing guidelines show that long-term viability depends on shared governance and visible benefit flows, for example through tourism eco-taxes and public-private partnerships that connect tourism revenues more directly to conservation and resilience.
- **Budget for the full life cycle of NbS,** including design, implementation, operation, maintenance, monitoring, communication, and continuous improvement. Financial sustainability depends on long-term management, not only on initial capital expenditure.
- **Adopt valuation approaches that reflect real territorial value,** including avoided damage, ecosystem services, resilience benefits, and social returns, so that NbS can compete fairly with conventional grey infrastructure in planning and investment decisions.

NT4CC points to a necessary shift in tourism policy: from funding isolated projects to investing in the long-term resilience of tourism territories. Coastal destinations will not adapt successfully if nature remains under-valued and climate action remains under-financed. Europe now needs financing pathways that treat ecosystems as productive infrastructure, make NbS investable without stripping them of social legitimacy, and allow tourism territories to move from short-term project dependence to long-term resilience investment.

4. Without communication, climate action will not stick: Make it a core function of tourism governance

Climate action in tourism often stalls not because destinations lack plans, but because those plans are not socially understood, institutionally embedded, or translated into behavioral change. To be effective, communication must close the “value-action gap” by making sustainable choices easy, visible, and rewarding for tourists. Measures are designed technically, then communicated too late, too narrowly, or too defensively. As a result, visitors do not understand what is changing, businesses do not see their role, residents do not feel ownership, and DMOs remain confined to promotion rather than transition management. NT4CC points to a different approach: communication should not sit at the end of the process as a campaign layer. It should be built into climate governance from the beginning, linked to vulnerability assessment, action planning, stakeholder coordination, and behavior change. That shift is essential if climate action in tourism is to become visible, credible, and durable.

WHAT NT4CC SHOWS

- **Communication must be rooted in risk, not only in branding.** The NT4CC Destination Marketing and Visitor Communications Manual starts by linking destination marketing to climate vulnerability mapping and then connects communication priorities to the climate action plan. In other words, communication is derived from what the destination is exposed to, what it is trying to change, and which audiences must be engaged (e.g., actively shifting visitor flows away from fragile ecosystems during heatwaves).
- **Behavior change requires a practical governance toolbox.** NT4CC does not stop at general advice. The manual includes a full communication toolkit: a Climate-Smart Communication Strategy Template, a Behavior Change Messaging Checklist, a Campaign Planning Canvas, a Visitor Pre-Trip Digital Communication Script, a Stakeholder Co-Creation Workshop Template, a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, and a Visitor Communication Channel Matrix. This is not a publicity package; it is an implementation framework for uptake and accountability.
- **DMOs should be recognized as transition actors, not only destination promoters.** NT4CC shows that they are uniquely positioned to translate vulnerability assessments, climate action plans, and NbS into public narratives, visitor guidance, stakeholder dialogue, and sustained behavior-oriented action. By applying behavioral insights such as nudging and social proof, DMOs can influence visitor choices at key decision points without relying only on restrictions. Within broader destination governance arrangements, concrete examples already appear in NT4CC pilots, from visitor education for responsible use in Cabo de Gata to storytelling and awareness actions in Hutovo Blato.

WHAT WE CALL FOR

At EU and wider Euro-Mediterranean level

- **Recognize communication and engagement as implementation infrastructure for sustainable tourism policy.** The future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy should treat climate communication, stakeholder participation, and behavior change as core conditions for delivery, not as optional dissemination activities.

- **Support communication capacity in destinations and regions.** EU support should cover not only technical planning, but also the tools, skills, monitoring systems, and institutional capacity needed to raise awareness and engage visitors, residents, and businesses in climate action.
- **Promote credible, evidence-based communication standards.** Climate-related destination messaging should be linked to real action, transparent indicators, and measurable change, rather than to generic green branding, ensuring alignment with frameworks like the Glasgow Declaration and the EU Green Deal, **the European Agenda for Tourism 2030 and the Tourism Transition Pathway and the upcoming EU sustainable tourism strategy.**

At regional level

- **Embed communication in tourism climate strategies from the outset.** Regional authorities should ensure that communication is planned alongside governance, finance, implementation, and monitoring, rather than added after strategic decisions have already been taken.
- **Equip DMOs and regional tourism bodies for transition communication.** Shared tools, regional guidance, peer learning, and co-creation formats can help destinations move from one-off campaigns to coherent climate engagement practice. This should include support for narratives that explain ecological realities more clearly, for example by shifting destination imagery away from generic beach promotion toward place-based stories about coastal ecosystems, resilience, and responsible use.
- **Use communication to manage transition, not only to market it.** Where destinations face overtourism, climate pressure, or a shift toward lower-impact models, communication should help explain trade-offs, build legitimacy, and sustain local support. Regional bodies should also support destinations in engaging younger audiences and, where appropriate, trusted local or eco-aligned communicators who can help amplify responsible visitor behaviors.

At destination level

- **Equip DMOs and destination authorities to act as communication leads for climate action,** within a broader governance framework that also involves municipalities, conservation actors, businesses, and community stakeholders, with mandate, tools, and resources to support public understanding, stakeholder engagement, visitor guidance and behavior change. Climate actions messages must be included in the general Destination marketing strategy as a core component of the territory's identity and positioning.
- **Integrate digital and on-site communication** by using real-time digital apps, QR codes, and on-site interpretive signage to actively manage carrying capacity and guide visitors toward climate-adaptive behaviors.
- **Design communication around specific audiences and behaviors.** Visitors, residents, businesses, and civil-society actors do not need the same messages or channels. Effective communication should be targeted, co-designed where possible, and linked to concrete behavioral outcomes.
- **Monitor communication as part of implementation.** Destinations should track not only reach and visibility, but also behavioral response, stakeholder uptake, institutional learning, and the contribution of communication to broader climate objectives.

NT4CC makes a simple but strategic point: communication is not what comes after climate action. It is one of the conditions that makes climate action possible. If Europe wants climate-resilient coastal tourism, it must stop treating communication as a promotional afterthought and start treating it as implementation infrastructure: the mechanism through which climate action becomes visible, legitimate, and durable in practice.

The Table 1 below translates the four policy briefs into a concise multilevel action framework for climate-resilient coastal tourism. It shows where action is most needed and how responsibilities differ across EU, regional, and destination levels.

Table 1: Summary of policy recommendations across governance levels

**POLICY
THEME****CORE POLICY
MESSAGE****EU AND WIDER EURO-
MEDITERRANEAN LEVEL****INTEGRATED
GOVERNANCE**

Climate-resilient tourism requires permanent coordination structures, not ad hoc cooperation.

Recognize multilevel, place-based governance as a core condition of sustainable tourism policy and support permanent coordination spaces for coastal and island tourism cooperation.

**NATURE-BASED
SOLUTIONS**

NbS should be treated as strategic resilience infrastructure, not as optional environmental add-ons.

Recognize NbS as core tourism resilience infrastructure and align tourism policy with biodiversity, climate adaptation, coastal planning, and long-term stewardship.

**RESILIENCE
FINANCE**

Tourism resilience requires long-term, diversified finance rather than fragmented short-term grants.

Support coherent financing pathways for tourism resilience and NbS, while treating EU funds as enabling and complementary rather than the main long-term maintenance model.

**COMMUNICATION
AND ENGAGEMENT**

Communication is implementation infrastructure: climate action will not endure unless it is understood, supported, and translated into behavior change.

Treat communication, participation, and behavior change as core delivery conditions of sustainable tourism policy and support destinations with the tools, skills, and standards needed for credible climate communication.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Establish or strengthen Regional Co-ordination Units or equivalent formal structures to align tourism, climate, environment, and territorial planning and to support Climate Action Strategies.

Embed NbS in regional tourism climate strategies and coastal planning frameworks and build capacity to assess, design, and scale NbS portfolios.

Build regional financial capacity for feasibility assessment, business cases, diversified funding mixes, and cross-sectoral investment in ecosystem resilience.

Embed communication in tourism climate strategies from the outset and equip DMOs and regional tourism bodies for transition communication, ecological narratives, and stakeholder engagement.

DESTINATION LEVEL

Create Tourism Climate Action Task Forces that bring together DMOs, municipalities, businesses, conservation actors, technical experts, and communities to prepare and implement Destination Climate Action Plans.

Plan NbS as part of destination risk reduction, carrying-capacity management, and long-term stewardship, with governance, communication, and monitoring built in from the outset.

Move from consultation to co-investment by engaging tourism businesses, SMEs, concessionaires, and local actors in financing models that support the full life cycle of NbS.

Equip DMOs and destination authorities to lead climate communication within broader governance frameworks, combining digital tools, on-site interpretation, targeted messaging, and monitoring of behavioral outcomes.





NaTour4CChange

Interreg
Euro-MED



Co-funded by
the European Union