



Report

EUSAIR TSG 3 Workshop: “How to progress from TSG 3 Flagships towards EUSAIR macro-regional in the Multiannual Financial Framework period 2021-2027”

DATE: 22 September 2022

PLACE: Manzioli Palace, Izola – Slovenia

PRESENT PARTICIPANTS: See list of participants Annex 2.

PROGRAMME: See Annex 1.

The workshop TSG 3 EUSAIR took place in Manzioli Palace, Izola – Slovenia on 22 September 2022.

The meeting began with the presentation of the main achievements of EUSAIR and the main points of the upcoming revision of the EUSAIR Action Plan made by **Nadine Lahkal**, European Commission. She pointed out that EUSAIR Pillar 3 quickly integrated cross-pillar cooperation with the other three EUSAIR pillars which resulted in including Environmental Quality as a horizontal principle for all EUSAIR pillars, which is also mirrored in the European Green Deal. She pointed out that there is a need for projects like NAMIRS for better preparedness and projects like PET HAB ECO to protect natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems from the consequences of climate change. She also explained that the revision of the EUSAIR Action Plan and communication are still under evaluation but the aim is for the work of the environmental quality pillar to remain central as the priority is to make the Adriatic-Ionian region more resilient, more sustainable and greener.

After that, the welcoming words and the approval of the joint work between Pillar 1 and Pillar 3 were expressed by **Irene Tzouramani**, EUSAIR Pillar 1 Coordinator from Greece. **Senad Oprašić**, EUSAIR Pillar 3 Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, BiH, made a brief introduction to the workshop. He emphasized the importance of further support of Ministers in the implementation of the EUSAIR strategy, which is very important for non-EU countries. He also briefly presented the TSG 3 projects and their development. **Iztok Škerlić** presented the implementation of the ASOSCoP Flagship

through the NAMIRS project co-financed by European funding from the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (DG ECHO). He emphasized that this was the first time in history that a TSG received additional funding for one flagship. This is the concrete implementation in practice of the embedding project by the TSG3 and supporting structure from the Municipality of Izola.

Martina Bocci presented the first draft of the Joint cross-pillar projects TSG3 and TSG1. After the discussion, the main points of the integration of the draft were as follows:

- The project activities must also represent the importance of local actions and consider the bottom-up approach, which was already included in the mono-pillar strategic project.
- The project must include the modular possibility of implementation, since the project itself is very complex and includes a huge area for one source of funding. The modularity of the project will allow, through the embedding process, to implement the project with different sources of funding (multifunding).
- It must include one or several pilot activity areas to test the management of the new (transboundary) protected area in order to gain the best experience and find the most appropriate solution for the management of such protected areas.
- The project must be integrated with the Work package of climate change adaptation activities for EUSAIR.

Folco Soffietti and **Emiliano Ramieri** presented the work of the MSPMED project, Towards the operational implementation of MSP in our common Mediterranean Sea, which met in Izola a day before the workshop, at a Bilateral project meeting Italy-Slovenia. The mentioned bilateral meeting was also part of the programme of the Mediterranean Coast and Macro Regional Strategies Week 2022.

The Opportunities of the European Group for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) for an effective tool for the Cross-border Management of marine protected areas was presented by **Mitja Grbec**. He presented the main achievement of the study: *Analysis of the legal basis for the establishment and further development of marine protected areas in the EUSAIR, with particular emphasis on transboundary marine protected areas*, which is available on the EUSAIR web page at the following link: <https://www.adriatic-ionician.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/EUSAIR-STUDY-FINAL-15.12.2021v.3.pdf>

Mitja Grbec pointed out the following possibilities to manage the transboundary protected areas beyond the territorial seas:

- Expand Natura 2000,
- Implementation of transboundary SPAMIs areas,
- ACCOBAMS implementation,
- PSSa implementation,

The EGTC- European Group of Territorial Cooperation can represent an effective tool for transboundary management of protected areas in the Adriatic-Ionian seas. In this regard, the implementation of economic zones from the EU member states represents an opportunity, since this kind of extension also extends the EU protection law to the high seas. In particular, the Natura 2000 areas and other areas.

Lara Devetak from the EGTC GO presented some concrete experience from the implementation of EGTC between the transboundary area of Gorizia in Italy and Nova Gorica in Slovenia. The EGTC includes 3 municipalities, one in Italy (Gorizia) and two in Slovenia (Municipality of Nova Gorica and the Municipality of Šempeter-Vrtojba). They have received direct financing from the Interreg Italy-Slovenia with the EU tool foreseen in the EU regulation – the so-called ITI-Integrated territorial investments. This tool has been designed to implement territorial strategies in an integrated way. It allows drawing on funding from

several priority axes of one or more Operational Programmes. She presented two projects: HEALTH (SALUTE- ZDRAVSTVO) and ISONZO – SOČA. Each of the projects has received 5 MIO EUR of co-financing from the Interreg Italy-Slovenia programme 2014-2020. The continuation of the two projects is foreseen also in the next programming period. The main positive effects of the EGTC experience in the area are: cross-border work, being able to choose the most appropriate law, open-mindedness, strategic development of the borderless area, and the implementation is not linked to the national authorities and politics. The weak points are: different and/or incompatible laws in some cases, double bureaucracy, the language barrier and a lot of translation work, and financial dependence on the project co-financing.

Marko Prem, from the Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) in Split, presented the importance of adaptation of the coastal zones in EUSAIR to climate change. The preparation of coastal adaptation plans follows the ICZM process. PAP/RAC can provide assistance and support local communities and regional authorities in the planning of coastal zones in line with the best experience in climate adaptation. They produced several handbooks and videos on adaptation measures, which are available on their website: <http://iczmplatform.org/search?category=4&from=library>. Examples of MSP in the EUSAIR were presented and the MSP Workspace as a platform to assist planners and stakeholders when preparing MSPs. Some major results from the CAMP Bosnia and Herzegovina were elaborated as well. One of the main points to take notice of from his presentation is the integration of the hinterland into tourist products in order to divert tourism flows from the narrow coastal strip. The actions must be undertaken not only for environmental reasons but also for socio-economic reasons.

In the last part of the workshop, **Duško Ćirović** from the University of Belgrade presented the draft of the mono-pillar project implementing the PET HAB ECO flagship: Protection and enhancement of natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems. After the presentation, the moderators Liliana Vižintin and Boris Kryštufek from the Mediterranean Institute for Environmental Studies of the Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia, invited the participants to a guided discussion, during which the following points were raised:

- A need to clarify the aim of the monitoring and collecting of data. What is the purpose of the collection of data? (For example: one of the reasons for collecting the data can be for spatial planning purposes, a layer to be integrated into the existing database in order to be overlapping with the animal corridors.)
- Integrating the project into the Interreg Euro-MED community.
- Contact the national contact points in order to gain data about past projects. It would also be useful to contact the technical secretariat of the programme as they have data about past projects.

The point will be taken into account in the further development of the mono-pillar project proposal PET HAB ECO.

List of conclusions and recommendations:

1. For the further development of the Joint cross-pillar project TSG3 and TSG1, the expert should follow these recommendations:
 - The project activities must represent also the importance of local actions and consider the bottom-up approach, which was already included in the mono-pillar strategic project.
 - The project must include the modular possibility of implementation since the project itself is very complex and includes a huge area for one source of funding. The modularity of the project will allow, through the embedding process, to implement the project with different sources of funding (multifunding).

- It must include one or several pilot activity areas to test the management of the new (transboundary) protected area in order to gain the best experience and find the most appropriate solution for the management of such protected areas.
 - The project must be integrated with the Work package of climate change adaptation activities for EUSAIR
2. The EGTC-European Group of Territorial Cooperation can represent an effective tool for transboundary management of protected areas in the Adriatic-Ionian seas. The other possibilities to manage the transboundary protected areas beyond the territorial seas are:
 - expansion of the Natura 2000 area,
 - Implementation of transboundary SPAMIs areas,
 - ACCOBAMS implementation,
 - PSSa implementation.
 3. The main positive effects of the EGTC experience in the area are:
 - cross-border work,
 - being able to choose the most appropriate law,
 - open-mindedness,
 - strategic development of the borderless area,
 - the implementation is not linked to the national authorities and politics.

The weak points are:

- different and/or incompatible laws in some cases,
 - double bureaucracy,
 - the language barrier and a lot of translation,
 - financial dependence on the project co-financing.
4. To address the climate change adaptation of the coastal zones in EUSAIR, one of the crucial actions to undertake is the integration of the hinterland in the touristic products in order to divert tourism flows. The actions should be taken not only for environmental reasons but also for socio-economic reasons.
 5. For further development of the mono-pillar project implementing the PET HAB ECO flagship, the following recommendations were given:
 - A need to clarify the aim of the monitoring and collecting of data. What is the purpose of the collection of data? (For example: one of the reasons for collecting the data can be for spatial planning purposes, a layer to be integrated into the existing database in order to be overlapping with the animal corridors).
 - Integrating the project into the Interreg Euro-MED community.
 - Contact the national contact points in order to gain data about past projects. It would also be useful to contact the technical secretariat of the programme as they have data about past projects.