

# Technical Group on Sustainable Tourism

Key summary points

Last update: December 2024

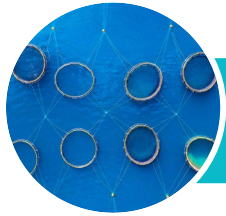
CINEA/EMFAF/2022-3.5.1/SI2.881692

**WESTMED**  
blue economy initiative

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# WestMED Technical / Working Groups (TGs)/ Community of Practice (CoP)



**Sustainable Aquaculture**



**Maritime Clusters**



**Maritime Spatial Planning**



**Green Shipping and Ports**

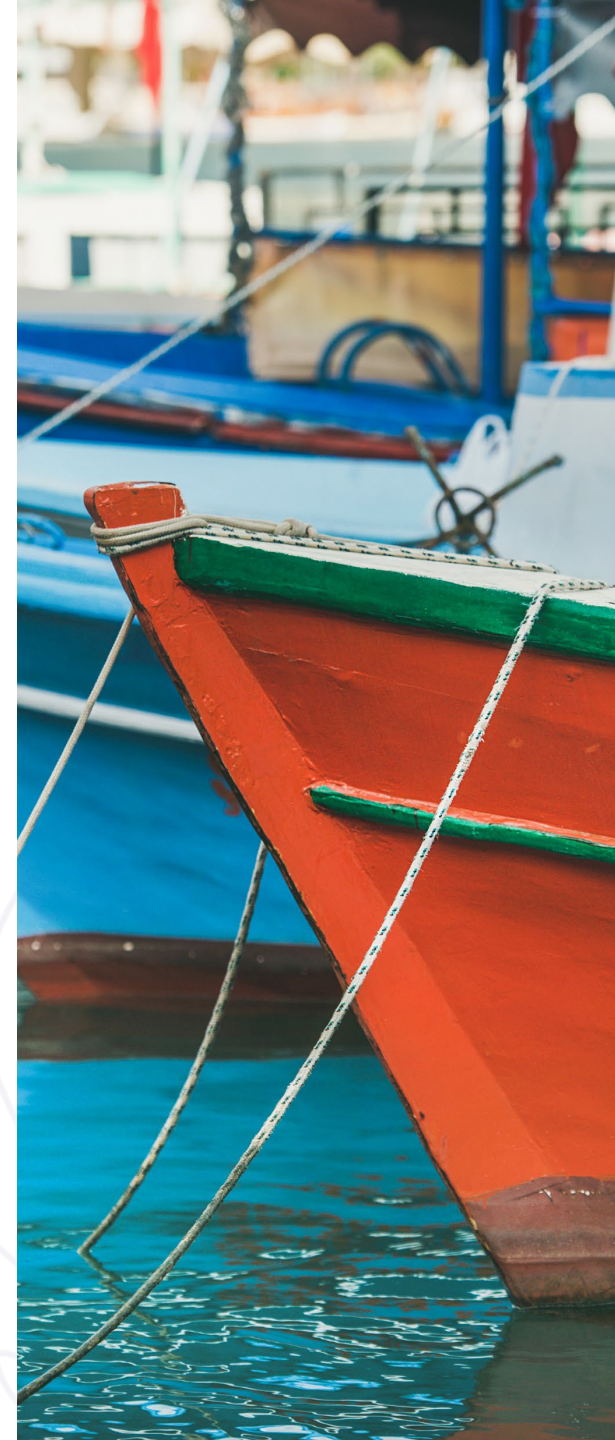


**Sustainable tourism**



# Content

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# Context (I)

- The popularity of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal regions amongst tourists remains at an all-time high. After a temporary covid dip, the latest figures show that [numbers of tourists have already reached pre-pandemic levels](#) and are further on the rise.
- Traditional 'sun, sea and sand' tourism has resulted in improved livelihoods for many local communities, [averaging 11.5% of total employment in Mediterranean countries](#). It is therefore, one of the leading sectors of the economy in the region.
- Mass tourism is one of the main causes of increased pollution and a driver for uncontrolled building along the coastlines. This, coupled to a growing demand for water, food and energy and the structurally rising temperatures (sea and land), severely impacts the region's resources, and is therefore not viable in the long run.

**A traditional model which is no longer viable.**



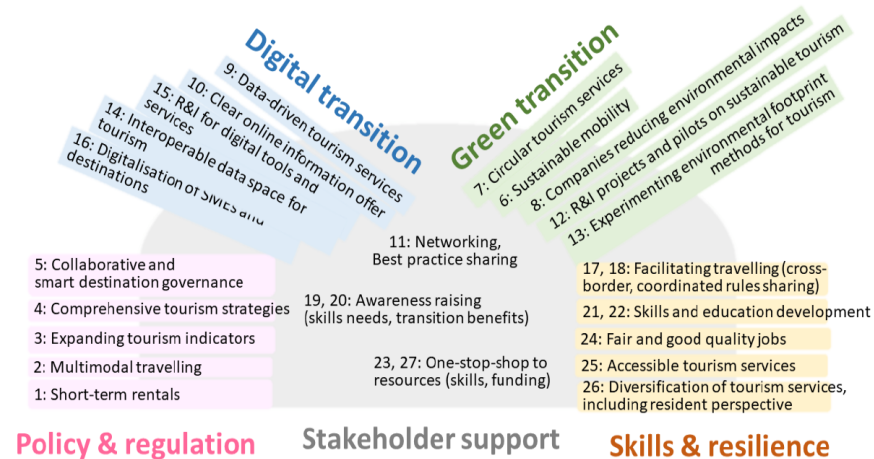
# Context (II)

- For the Western Mediterranean, as stated in the [WestMED Malta Ministerial Declaration](#) (2023), the main objective was to *'strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of the coastal and maritime tourism sector, as part of a smart and resilient blue economy – one of the key goals of the WestMED Initiative. This, by preserving the marine and coastal environment as well as marine cultural heritage and contributing to the attractiveness of coastal areas by means of ecotourism, digitalization and mobilizing private-public investments.'*
- Given the fact that tourism plays such a significant role in the Western Mediterranean as one of the key contributors to both the upside gains as well as the downside risks of the blue economy, there is an urgent need for enhancing eco-tourism in the region. We should enhance EU and external territorial cooperation (including non-EU WestMED countries as partners such as Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) and promote active knowledge sharing amongst stakeholders from both the northern and southern shore, to multiply results.



# Aim of the Technical Group

- The overall objective of the Sustainable Tourism TG within the WestMED Initiative is to serve as a technical forum to discuss trends and opportunities towards sustainable tourism within the region and to provide support to participants to develop project ideas around the topics already set at EU level with regards to the tourism-related topics of green transition, digitalization, promotion of social inclusion, governance, and skills.
- Counting with non-EU members under the WestMED Initiative, this TG will also focus on addressing other policy and regulation topics that can also help non-EU countries adapt and develop these sustainable tourism practices.



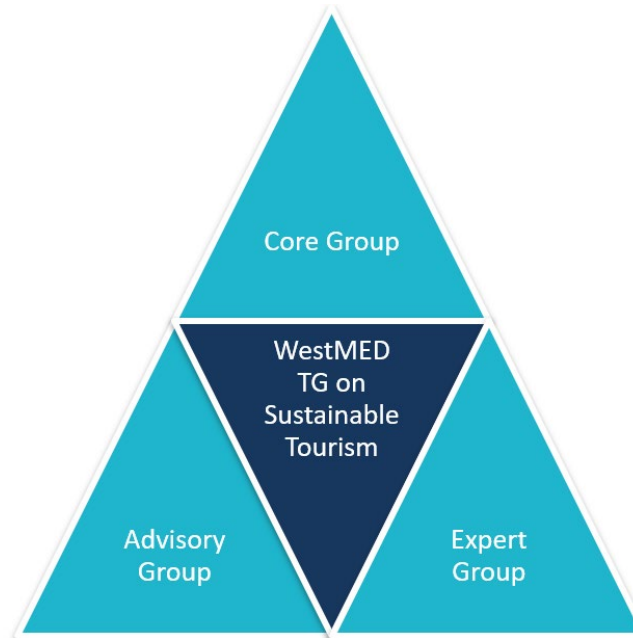
# Structure of the Technical Group (I)

- The TG was approved by the WestMED Steering Committee meeting in June, 26<sup>th</sup> in Brussels and was officially launched at the Sun & Blue Congress (20-22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024)



# Structure of the Technical Group (II)

- The TG is managed by the Spanish and Maltese National Hubs.
- The TG has 3 subgroups:
  - 1) A **core group** (with national members assigned by the National Coordinators)
  - 2) An **advisory group** (with relevant stakeholders that are also involved in steering various tourism initiatives, networks, funding opportunities, etc.)
  - 3) An **expert group** (where all other remaining stakeholders from the tourism industry will be invited to take part to develop project ideas and concrete proposals)
- All these groups will have separate meetings and objectives, but some common meetings will also be organized to ensure synergies between these groups.





# Structure of the Technical Group (III)

- **Core group:** The role of the core group is to inform other WestMED countries about their recent developments for sustainable tourism. The core group can also suggest further topics to be discussed amongst the expert groups.

Country	Representation
Algeria	Chef de cabinet ministère du tourisme et artisanat
France	DGAMPA/SEML/SDPM
Italy	Director of Office III of the former General Directorate for Tourism Enhancement and Promotion, as full member;
Libya	Director of the Department of Tourism and Traditional Industries of Ministry of Tourism
Malta	Senior Manager at the Malta Tourism Authority
Mauritania	Director of Cooperation, Research and Development , National Tourism Office
Morocco	Head of the Planification service within the Department of tourism
Portugal	Turismo de Portugal
Spain	Subdirección General de Desarrollo y Sostenibilidad turística, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism
Tunisia	Director General of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts.



# Structure of the Technical Group (IV)

- **Advisory group:** This group is formed by main representatives of existing tourism initiatives, networks and/or funding organizations within the Mediterranean.

## Advisory Body Members

- **ASCAME General Secretariat**
- **CINEA**
- **Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA)**
- **DG MARE**
- **Interact Programme**
- **Intermediterranean Commission**
- **Interreg NEXT MED Programme**
- **Joint Technical Secretariat - Programme ENI CBC MED**
- **Plan Bleu/Regional Activity Centre**
- **Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)**
- **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**
- **World Ocean Council - The International Business Alliance for Corporate Ocean Responsibility**



# Structure of the Technical Group (V)

- **Experts group:** This group is formed by technical stakeholders of tourism initiatives. The call for joining the expert group was closed in September 2024. Calls to join the expert group will be regularly scheduled to allow more members to join the expert group and/or delete those that wish to leave (i.e. every 6 months – Next one around mid March 2025).



**CALL for Experts: WestMED Technical Group on Sustainable Tourism |  
Deadline 15 September 2024 (EOB)**

24 July 2024 / by Communication team

Deadline to register for this 1<sup>st</sup> Call for experts: **15 September 2024 (EOB)**. Only applications submitted within the deadline will be accepted.

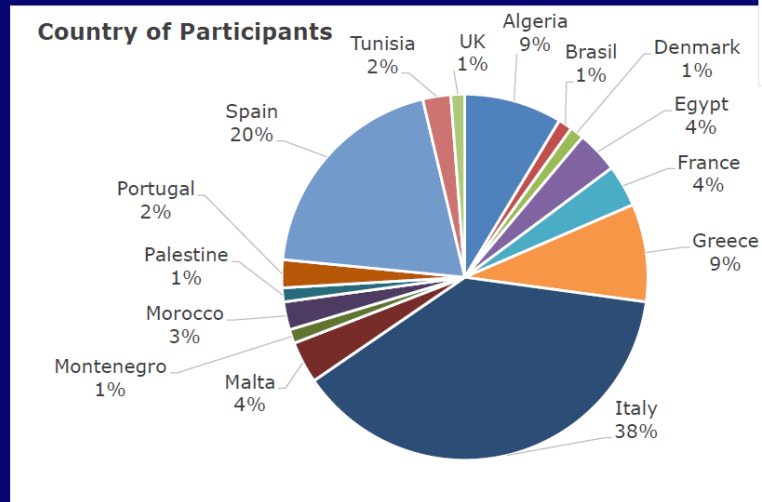


# Structure of the Technical Group (VI)

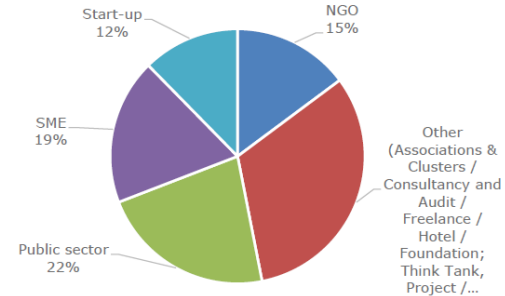
- Next call for tourism experts will be re-opened in mid-March 2025.

## Group of Experts

- 82 Stakeholders Registered



## Type of organisation



# Key activities of the Technical Group (I)

## 1. Gathering key stakeholders and organizing info sessions on sustainable tourism



**Calling  
Tourism Experts**

Sign up for the WestMED Technical Stakeholder Group on Sustainable Tourism

- Share your expertise
- Join Consortia
- Develop Project Proposals

WESTMED sustainable tourism

Supported by the European Union

This banner features a blue background with a blurred image of people in a meeting. It includes the WestMED logo, the European Union flag, and three call-to-action buttons: 'Share your expertise', 'Join Consortia', and 'Develop Project Proposals'.



**WESTMED**  
sustainable tourism

Supported by the European Union

**Info Session  
WestMED Stakeholder Group  
Sustainable Tourism**

6 September 2024 | 10:00-12:00 | Online

**Register Now!**

eco-CRUISEING FULL TOUR  
EU WESTMED NATOUR

reboot med

This poster has a blue background with an underwater scene of a diver. It features the WestMED logo, the European Union flag, and the text 'Info Session WestMED Stakeholder Group Sustainable Tourism'. It also includes the date and time '6 September 2024 | 10:00-12:00 | Online' and a prominent 'Register Now!' button. Logos for 'eco-CRUISEING FULL TOUR', 'reboot med', and 'EU WESTMED NATOUR' are at the bottom.



# Key activities of the Technical Group (II)

2. Support projects' ideas development, establishment of consortia and search of funding opportunities.



- **A number of project ideas stemming from the following areas were discussed:**

- Eco-islands
- Reduction of plastics/waste
- Development of technological applications for tourism purposes (ex identification of species, plastic..)
- Technological applications for ocean literacy and citizen science
- Awareness and knowledge sharing
- Governance
- Development of strategies (private and public) – Flagship initiatives
- Network of nautical stations
- Planning (coastal tourism and inland tourism) – creating innovative products
- Ecosystem of smart tourist – development of indicators and standards



# Key activities of the Technical Group (III)

## 3. Attend 3<sup>rd</sup> party Events to present the TG work and establish synergies with other Tourism Initiatives.

- REBOOTMED project Event – November 2024
- MedaWeek Event – November 2024
- MedLab Meetings- December 2024



# Synergies

- Mostly with other 3<sup>rd</sup> party Tourism Initiatives (UfM, ASCAME, WOC, CPRM, etc.) – See summary at previous slide
- Other synergies will also be explored with WestMED Green Shipping and Ports Working Group specially with regards to Recreational Ports and Marinas – Working on a common Consortia Building amongst Spanish, Italian and Portuguese Recreational Marinas for a project proposal (Call still TBC).





# Latest news of the technical group

- 11 December 2024 – 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting with the Core Group of the TG. – Next on 14/05/2025
- 9 December 2024 – 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting with the Expert Group of the TG. – Next on 24/03/2025
- 2 December 2024. [WestMED makes its mark at the International Sun&Blue Congress 2024 in Almería, Spain](#)
- 9 October 2024. [WestMED Hackathon 2024: Crafting Sustainable Blue Economy Projects](#)
- 18 September 2024 – 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting with the Advisory Body of the TG. – Next on 26/02/2025
- 24 July 2024. [CALL for Experts: WestMED Technical Group on Sustainable Tourism | Deadline 15 September 2024 \(EOB\)](#)
- 18 July 2024. [A new WestMED Technical group on Sustainable Tourism.](#)



# Thank you for your support!

Spanish National Hub: [spain@westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu](mailto:spain@westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu)

Maltese National Hub: [malta@westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu](mailto:malta@westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu)

[Westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu](http://Westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu)

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