



Synergies among EU programmes and cohesion policies in the Bioeconomy and Blue Economy domains: sharing information for co-designing more effective funds synergies.

Fund synergies implemented in the frame of the WESTMED, EUSAIR and EUSALP initiatives.

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What I will present...

- ▶ The strategies: EUSAIR, WESTMED and EUSALP
- ▶ First steps toward Synergies
- ▶ Bio economy and Blue economy in EUSAIR and WESTMED and EUSALP
- ▶ Challenges and tools to go forward



THE STRATEGIES

Italy participates in **two Strategies** (EUSAIR, EUSALP) and **one Initiative** (WESTMED).

EUSAIR covers the Adriatic and Ionian basin (involving four EU member States and 6 non EU countries)

EUSALP on the Alpine EU internal frontiers

WestMED, on the Western side of the Mediterranean including the Countries from the 5+5 dialogue.



EUSAIR

EUSAIR covers the Adriatic and Ionian basin (involving four EU member States and 6 non EU countries)



EUSALP

EUSALP on the Alpine EU
internal frontiers



WESTMED

WestMED, on the Western side of the Mediterranean including the Countries from the 5+5 dialogue.



THE STRATEGIES – WHAT THEY ARE

Macro-regional strategies **represent a strategic coordination framework**, which has **not own resources** but relies on EU funding. Macro-regional strategies have the ambition of **using resources more effectively by fostering synergies among existing funding**.

Cohesion policy represents **one of the main funding opportunities**, but it addresses also **other funding sources**, such as **IPA** – Instrument for Pre-accession assistance, **EU Direct managed funds** among which Horizon Europe, etc.



THE STRATEGIES – EMBEDDING

In the Department of Cohesion Policy **we focused particularly on embedding (integrating)** EUSAIR and EUSALP priorities into EU Cohesion Programmes.

ETC programmes, due to their transnational and cross-border nature, are a **natural ally for macro-regions**. However, **Mainstream programmes** (Programmes of the "Investment for Job and Growth" Objective) represent a significant opportunity for macro-regional strategies, both in terms of territorial and financial dimensions.

As a result, we have worked since the beginning of this programming period **to assist Mainstream Programmes in aligning with the Strategies and in supporting flagship actions and projects during implementation.**



EMBEDDING – REGULATIONS SUPPORT

In this programming period, **EU Regulations have foreseen specific requirements for programmes to align with Macro-regional priorities** and describe the contribution to those priorities for each specific objective.

Regulation (EU) **2021/1060** (CPR), art. 22.3 (a)(viii)); (art. 22.3 (d) (i); Regulation (EU) Interreg **2021/1059** (articles 17(3)(b)(iv) and 17(3)(e)(i))

These requests were based on the provisions contained in Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR), **for which the programs are required to take into account, in defining the main challenges, the macro-regional and sea basin strategies** (art. 22.3 (a)(viii)), **as well as indicating for each specific objective, if applicable, the contribution to the same strategies** (art. 22.3 (d) (i)). The same indications apply to **Interreg programmes**, pursuant to Regulation (EU) Interreg 2021/1059 (articles 17(3)(b)(iv) and 17(3)(e)(i)).

In addition to this, I need to mention the provisions of Article 22(3)(d)(vi)) CPR, **regarding the activation of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation actions also outside the EU, to contribute to the implementation of multilateral projects and as an additional potential tool to be used for the implementation of the previously mentioned strategies.**



Bio economy and Blue economy in the Strategies

The Blue / bioeconomy topics are fully integrated in all these strategies, either as priority and/or as flagship actions/projects.

A fast view...



Bio economy and Blue economy in EUSAIR

Blue bio economy is part and parcel of the EUSAIR macro-regional strategy, in particular Pillar 1, dedicated to Blue Growth, but also to other pillars of the Strategy: Pillar 3 (Environmental quality).

- ▶ **Research and innovation; SMEs competitiveness:** increased networking between researchers, SMEs, and Clusters; the easier access to finance and promotion of the creation of start-ups; the stronger RDI and cooperation among SMEs and between SMEs, large enterprises and research centres operating in the macro-region; the increase of joint research papers and number of researchers exchanged within the macro-region and the internationalization of SMEs in the region.
- ▶ **Innovation in marine and blue technologies,** including decarbonisation of maritime mobility; circular economies through the valorization of residual bio resource streams (bio-economy)
- ▶ **Fisheries and aquaculture** (including, scientific cooperation; data gathering and monitoring of alien species; restoration of habitats; etc.)
- ▶ **Governance,** with particular to supporting the implementation of the **Maritime Spatial Planning Directive** (coordinated planning).



Bio economy and Blue economy in WESTMED

- ▶ The DPCoe and MAECI are constantly supporting the WestMed initiative and orienting its **technical assistance mechanism towards new project design activities, mostly based on networking and clustering among relevant stakeholders and addressing different policies and funding instruments.**
- ▶ As a matter of fact, the **blue economy priority set for WestMED strategy evolves in parallel with dedicated conferences, meetings and technical working groups as well as the activities of a dedicated open web platform, namely the “Mediterranean Blue Economy platform”.** This tool serves as **“One-stop shop” devoted to consolidating and sharing general, technical and sectoral knowledge and information.** This interactive hub serves a wide community of stakeholders and actors and it is setting the stage for long-term opportunities and new international cooperation initiatives.
- ▶ **Following the 2021 Union for Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy, a Roadmap has been approved and it is now under implementation.** It is based on the analysis of the joint needs, gaps and opportunities for future projects’ support, funding, and implementation by thematic priority.



Bio economy and Blue economy in WESTMED - 2

Key blu/bio economy areas on which we are currently focussing the WestMED strategy - **in line with the UfM Ministerial declaration** - are:

Small ports and marinas diversification

- ▶ Transformative innovation for small-scale ports, linking to (i.e.) aquaculture, tourism, energy, marine litter facilities)
- ▶ Fostering ports as 'hubs' of clean and renewable energy
- ▶ Alternative fuels
- ▶ Foster ability of ports in adopting fully circular model

Innovation on local value chains

- ▶ Raise awareness on Sustainable Smart Specialisation Strategies
- ▶ Scale-up of good practices on sustainable food value-chains
- ▶ Financing tourism diversification/digitalisation
- ▶ Cluster alliance to address the sector and investors
- ▶ Scale-up innovation practices across the sea basin

Moreover, **we are considering maritime spatial planning as a blue economy “enabler”**, as it fosters a proper planning of marine renewables zones/licensing and allows multistakeholder dialogue (i.e. on Principal Areas for fisheries and Allocated Zones for aquaculture).

Finally, **cross-cutting support is planned for the emerging challenges concerning the so-called Blue skills, careers, and jobs**. Other topics such as maritime safety are also covered and part of the WestMed strategy. As additional and cross-cutting aim **we expect to reinforce socio-economic analysis and support new projects materials that can be of use for promoting ocean literacy involving young generations**.



Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri

Dipartimento per le politiche di coesione

Bio economy and Blue economy in EUSALP

- ▶ **EUSALP focuses its Action 2 on increasing the economic potential of strategic sectors for the Alpine region and identifies the bioeconomy as one of these sectors.** Consequently, a **specific sub-group dealing with bioeconomy** works within the EUSALP Action Group 2. The bioeconomy as one of the focal points of EUSALP was reaffirmed by the EUSALP Manifesto of June 2020.
- ▶ **In the Alpine context, the bioeconomy is viewed as an approach to the replacement of fossil carbon** with carbon from biomass from agriculture, forestry, and waste, in close relation with the **complementary concept of circular economy as a method to enhance the eco-efficiency** of processes and the use of recycled carbon to reduce the use of additional fossil carbon. Of course, the bio-based value chains focus on biomass resources available in Alpine region. In particular, the production of wood and the wood supply chain is a cross-cutting theme of EUSALP that affects numerous sectors of the Alpine life and economy (forest ecosystem services, biodiversity, biomass and energy sector, construction sector), and it is particularly suitable for the application of a bioeconomy and circular model. **Expanding and strengthening the circular economy in short supply chains is one of the five main topics identified by the Italian EUSALP rotating presidency in 2022 and will be taken up again as a main issue by the Swiss presidency in 2023.**



Bio economy and Blue economy in EUSALP - 2

- ▶ A second aspect emphasized in EUSALP is that support to the bioeconomy should be strongly integrated with regional Smart Specialization Strategies (S3). Indeed, the **bio-based industry sector** can provide input and knowledge for promising advanced technologies, such as in the field of biomaterials, biocosmetics, biopharmaceuticals, biofertilizers, biolubricants, essential amino acids for feed production, bioenergy.



WAYS FOR SUPPORTING SYNERGIES

- ▶ Two of the key challenges in exploiting synergies between INTERREG, regional programmes, and other EU programmes such as Horizon Europe, lie in the different regulatory and governance frameworks.
- ▶ Regulatory issue has been partially tackled but the governance arrangements in the pursuit of synergies across EU policies and funding streams still poses challenges.
- ▶ Our priority is to improve efficiency and inter-programme coordination as recommended by the recent Special Report by the European Court of Auditors “EU support to cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries. Valuable support, but implementation started very late and problems with coordination need to be addressed”.
- ▶ It was an additional opportunity to underline the importance of establishing cooperation links among programmes.



WAYS FOR SUPPORTING SYNERGIES

- ▶ The 2014-2020 experience has provided us with valuable examples of effective coordination mechanisms both between INTERREG and Horizon Europe and between INTERREG and mainstream programmes. Synergies between Interreg Europe and Smart Specialisation have been analysed by a JRC study and should be promoted.
- ▶ Clear identification and measurability of projects results should be the basis of the uptake process (ranging from in-depth dissemination to a full transfer logic).
- ▶ Many programmes are dealing with similar topics and there is plenty of room for promoting cooperation based on complementarities. The mental map in the next slide shows potentialities in terms of synergies among ETC programmes of the Adriatic and Ionian area in one of the flagship actions of Pillar 1 – dedicated to fostering quadruple helix ties in the field of Blue-bio technologies.



WAYS FOR SUPPORTING SYNERGIES



TO CONCLUDE

- ▶ Fostering synergies between different funding is not an easy task.
- ▶ Some steps to improve Synergies have been made but it is not enough.
- ▶ There are huge potentialities for Macro-regional strategies in terms of synergies between funds around topics of strategic interest for the geographical area they refer to.
- ▶ Lack of dialogue means overlapping and misuse of resources.
- ▶ More than ever before, in the 2021-2027 programming period macroregional strategies and INTERREG will be fostering sustainable and smart regional economic development by improving at the same time the whole EU's innovation ecosystem. They will pave the way to closer links with Horizon Europe and will maximize the impact of both policies by creating complementarities, especially in less developed and peripheral regions.





THANK YOU

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THE SYNERGIES PROJECT

- ▶ In this perspective, I wish to quickly introduce three strategic projects that will be implemented in parallel by the DPCoe, ACT and the Regions in 2023. These projects are titled: "Synergies"; "Knowledge and Simplification" and "Territories". They will test all improvements made at EC regulation level for more coordinated actions within the cohesion policy and other policies.
- ▶ As per the project "Synergies" - coordinated by the DPCoe - the objectives are stated as follows:
- ▶ **Promote integrated forms of governance between INTERREG and mainstream programmes**, as well as the growth of institutional capacity, also in favor of local networks;
- ▶ **Strengthening of the systematic connection between structures and subjects of reference of the regional programs and INTERREG**, in order to ensure a coordinated strategic vision of the two Objectives of coherence and an implementation based on the needs of the territories, also identifying areas of intersection, possible synergies and complementarity and possibility of upscaling of ETC projects, with the possible activation of resources from regional programs to complement and in favor of partner beneficiaries of ETC projects admitted to funding;
- ▶ **Identification of common targets and outputs, priority themes and best practices;**
- ▶ **Development of coordinated evaluation plans between different programs** (by territories, tools or priority themes);
- ▶ **Promotion of INTERREG/mainstream coordinated communication methods and methods**, also in consideration of the regulatory provisions referred to in the CDR, articles 46 and 48.

