Mediterranean Ecotourism Destination (DestiMED) [1]

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Project Title
Mediterranean Ecotourism Destination (DestiMED)

Destination
Mediterranean Region (13 Protected Areas in 6 countries: Spain, Italy, France, Greece, Croatia, Albania)

Project Scope
To build pre-conditions for a Mediterranean destination management organization (DMO) that will harmonize quality standards and tools to monitor compliance, propose attractive ecotourism offers promoted through a lasting brand.

Project Budget
€ 2.2 Million

Timeline
June 2015 - May 2020

Expected Results
- Mediterranean Ecotourism Destinations Standards: Creating a quality framework at interregional level (Mediterranean ecotourism sustainability standard and
monitoring).
- Monitoring system to assess the level of sustainability of tourism offer at Park level: enhancing the reasonable use of resources (local destinations sustainability checks and trainings).
- DestiMED Ecotourism products: supporting stakeholder’s integration (local clusters and regional representation) through an integrated, transversal and territorially based cooperation approach.
- Guidelines for the establishment of eco-tourism management plans for Mediterranean Protected Areas: prepare the framework of the forthcoming governance system (DMO) for Mediterranean Ecotourism in Protected Areas.

**Implementers**
IUCN Mediterranean Centre for Cooperation (IUCN Med) [3], with project partners FEDERPARCHI – Europarc (Italy), MEDPAN – Mediterranean Protected Area Network, WWF Adria and WWF Mediterranean Programme and National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA) in Albania.

**Project URL**

**Related Resources**
MEET Manual - A guide to discover the MEET approach [5] (PDF, 6.4 mb)

**Solid Foundation**
DestiMED builds off the success of MEET (Mediterranean Experience of Ecotourism) [6], a European project (2014-2016) that is now a non-profit association and Destination Management Organization (DMO). The MEET Network was established with the intent of fostering a regional governance system that will coordinate, enhance and promote protected area ecotourism across the Mediterranean Basin, and diversify tourism offerings through the framework of cross-border cooperation.

DestiMED builds on the planning and marketing approaches created and tested through MEET and develops ecotourism standards and monitoring tools, with the aim of building pre-conditions for a Mediterranean destination management organization (DMO) that will harmonize quality standards and tools to monitor compliance, propose attractive ecotourism offers promoted through a lasting brand.

**Focus on Products**
"Products provide destinations and private sector stakeholders with a tangible way to operationalize existing destination management strategies" - Jeremy Sampson [7], Ecosystem Programme Communications Officer, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation

DestiMED creates and strengthens a regional network of protected areas working together to conserve the Mediterranean's natural and cultural mosaic, while promoting a new model of ecotourism to the market through the development of high quality ecotourism products and innovative tools to manage their impacts.

What makes these products special? They are based in and around protected areas, with local communities and local service providers creating a unique niche-market experience in the Mediterranean that supports conservation.

**Practical Feedback on Improving Performance**

IUCN and the DestiMED project are collaborating with the Global Footprint Network to develop an innovative approach to measuring and reducing the environmental impact of tourism, the Ecological Footprint and Monitoring Tool. Developed based on the Ecological Footprint framework [8], the tools adapts a globally recognized methodology to assess the impact of tourism on resources of protected area communities, supported by quantifiable data.

The first footprint calculation and monitoring pilot was launched in 2017, with data collected by local tourism stakeholders. While the monitoring results are at the destination level, tourism businesses and service providers within the destinations can learn from the footprint data by sector (accommodation, food, transport, activities).

A key part of using this tool at the destination level is to share with participating businesses how they have contributed to the overall footprint of the destination, and how individual businesses can reduce their footprint. Such feedback and recommendations are designed for all of the participants to review, discuss, and negotiate together.

Source: Global Footprint Network [9]
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