



Innovative
sustainable economy

Interreg
Euro-MED

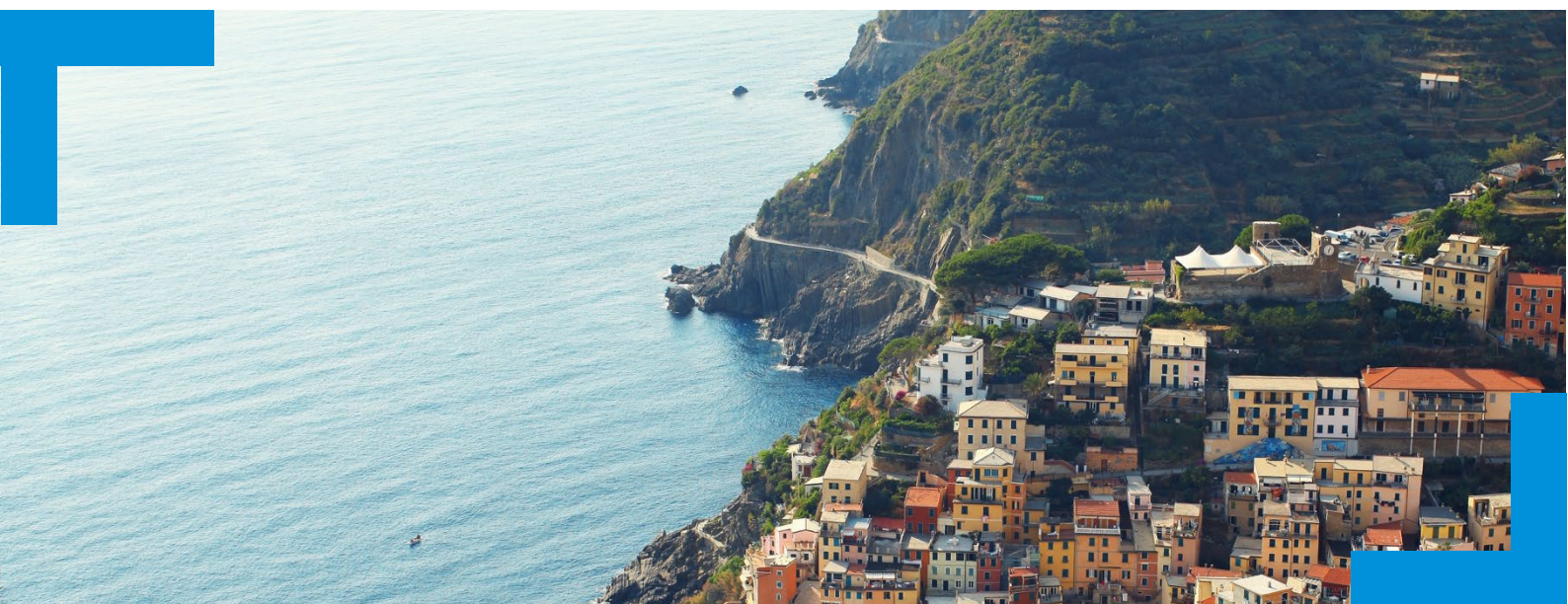


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Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



December 2024

ISE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE REPORT

<https://innovative-sustainable-economy.interreg-euro-med.eu/>





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Abbreviations

Cop	Community of Practice
ISE	Innovative Sustainable Economy
JS	Joint Secretariat)
NCPs	National Contact Points
RAS	Results Amplification Strategy
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
TCP	Thematic Community Project
TPs	Thematic Projects
TWGs	Thematic Working Groups
TSO	Transmission Service Operators
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean



Executive summary

The **Innovative Sustainable Economy (ISE) Community of Practice (CoP)** functions as a collaborative network of 155 partners across 18 countries, covering 16 projects (14 thematic and 2 governance). It facilitates structured interactions through biannual gatherings—both in-person and online—centred around four core actions: **Connect, Learn, Share, and Collaborate**. These engagements help build trust, encourage synergies, and promote the exchange of best practices.

The ISE CoP was officially launched in June 2024 in Marseille, bringing together a wide diversity of 4-ple helix stakeholders from academia, private sector, public authorities, and civil society / NGOs. The second gathering, held online in November 2024, focused on thematic project outputs and governance collaborations. The upcoming third meeting in Sarajevo (April 2025) will further strengthen **Thematic Working Groups (TWGs)**. TWGs will be established to address challenges from 4 focus areas: **Marine Resources, Agri-food Systems, Industrial Transition, and Resource Valorisation**. Each TWG will contribute to the development of **White Papers**, consolidating insights, propose solutions, and guide stakeholder actions.

ISE CoP aims to continuously strengthen stakeholder engagement and enhance ISE Mission Interreg Euro-MED projects synergies. This report will be updated every two years, with past and ongoing efforts to integrate new thematic projects and refine synergistic opportunities. The ISE CoP remains a cornerstone for Mediterranean innovation, uniting diverse stakeholders to accelerate innovative sustainable economic transformation.



Introduction

The **ISE** Mission of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme 2021-2027¹ works to boost a fair transition to a circular economy through two governance projects that develop innovative technical knowledge and ensure these new solutions are transferred into public policies.

As part of the Interreg Euro-MED Results Amplification Strategy (RAS² a series of integrated and mutually reinforcing activities are implemented, comprising mapping resources, engaging the community, building capacity, and impacting policy.

Community engagement relies on the active involvement of individuals and groups in the implementation of activities. Seeking to build relationships, foster collaboration and ensure that all voices and visions are heard and integrated into evidence-based decision-making processes. Effective community engagement promotes transparency, trust and mutual understanding, leading to more inclusive and participatory outcomes.

To this end, the **ISE CoP** was created to build a strong and proactive network in the ISE Mission. Currently, the ISE CoP covers 16 projects (14 thematic and 2 governance) as a space for collective knowledge and learning. We are 155 partners from 18 countries working to strengthen the Mediterranean's innovative, sustainable economy. The ISE CoP includes 115 members and meets twice a year (i.e., every 6 months, in-person and online). It is organised around four actions: **connect, learn, share and collaborate**:

The members of the ISE CoP partners are regularly invited to these gatherings and commit to joint activities and discussions, support each other and share information. The aim is to build trust among project partners addressing similar and/or complementary issues that enable them to learn from each other, to promote synergies and to exchange good practices.

The ISE Mission Thematic Community Project (TCP, Community4Innovatio) will facilitate and organise these gatherings while the Thematic Projects (TPs) are active. In addition, 4 TWGs to boost the connections between TPs will be organised within the 6-months general ISE CoP gatherings (i.e., every 2-3 months and max. 2h meetings). These TWGs will serve to work on White Papers content as the main collaborative work and outcome of these events. Basecamp and Mission email are used as permanent online platforms to

¹ <https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/>

² <https://interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/documents/published/en/programme-documents/programme-documents/result-amplification-strategy/results-amplification-strategy.pdf>



communicate among each other.

Type of partners

The type of partners comprising the ISE CoP are TPs and governance projects partners. Associated Partners (APs) of both types of projects are also welcome to join the ISE CoP gatherings. Nevertheless, only governance projects APs are directly counted and invited. Moreover, when gathering in-person, regional external stakeholders and experts are also engaged.

Within these types of projects, the types of partners are classified within the 4-ple helix approach (Figure 1). In addition, some partners act in different types of projects. Independently of the legal status of each organisation, the 4-ple helix classification relies on the following aspects:

Academia: bringing innovative solutions and technical expertise from a neutral perspective, independently of their legal status.

Private sector: entities, excluding PA, that are involved in developing finance and driven by the need to earn economic benefits. Run by individuals and companies for profit and not state controlled.

Public authorities: with the competences and responsibilities to make decisions and implement binding and non-binding policies and action plans to ensure the well-being of society. Including elected or appointed government bodies, regulatory agencies, and administrative bodies

Civil society / NGOs: general public and aggregate of NGOs and institutions that advance the interests and will of citizens. Referring to individuals and organisations in a society that are independent of the government and business sectors.

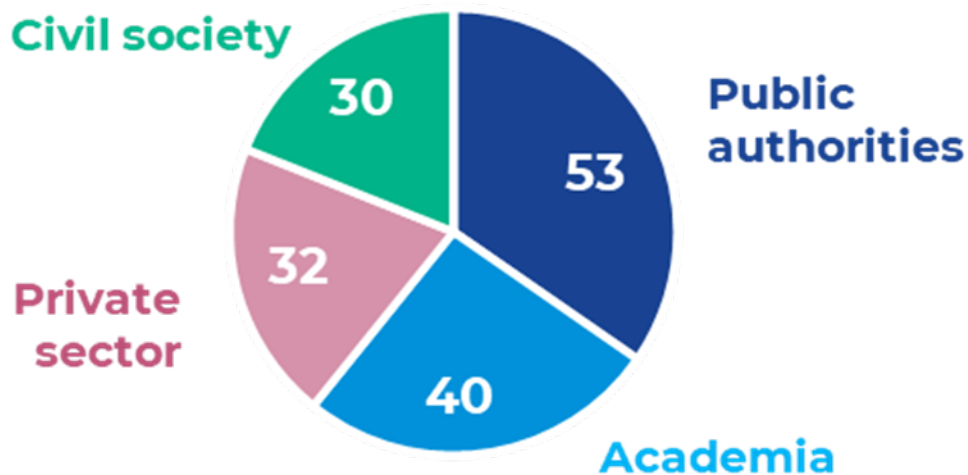


Figure 1. Representation of the diversity of the 4-ple helix stakeholders within the ISE CoP.

Interactive map

An [interactive map](#) (Figure 2) was built to visualise the ISE CoP with:

- Basic information about the structure of the ISE CoP and relations between project partners.
- Direct contact information on the partner organisations (e.g. web, LinkedIn of the responsible person when available).
- Classification of the partner organisations and projects based on 4-ple helix typology and type of connections.
- Tags and icons by focus areas, and type of associated partners.

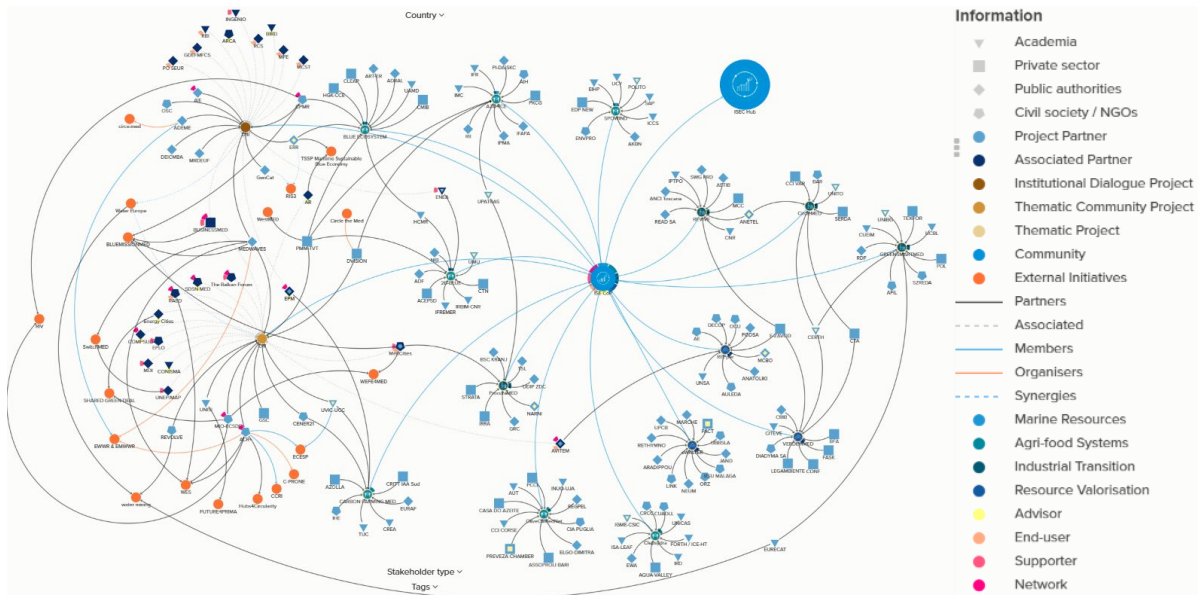


Figure 2. Screenshot of the interactive map and corresponding legend (i.e., Information) representing the ISE CoP. The External Initiatives (orange icons) and Synergies (dotted blue arrows) will be removed and displayed in another map.

Approach

The ISE CoP gatherings offer time to Connect, Learn, Share, and Collaborate. All happens at the same time but there is also an order of the actions (Figure 3).

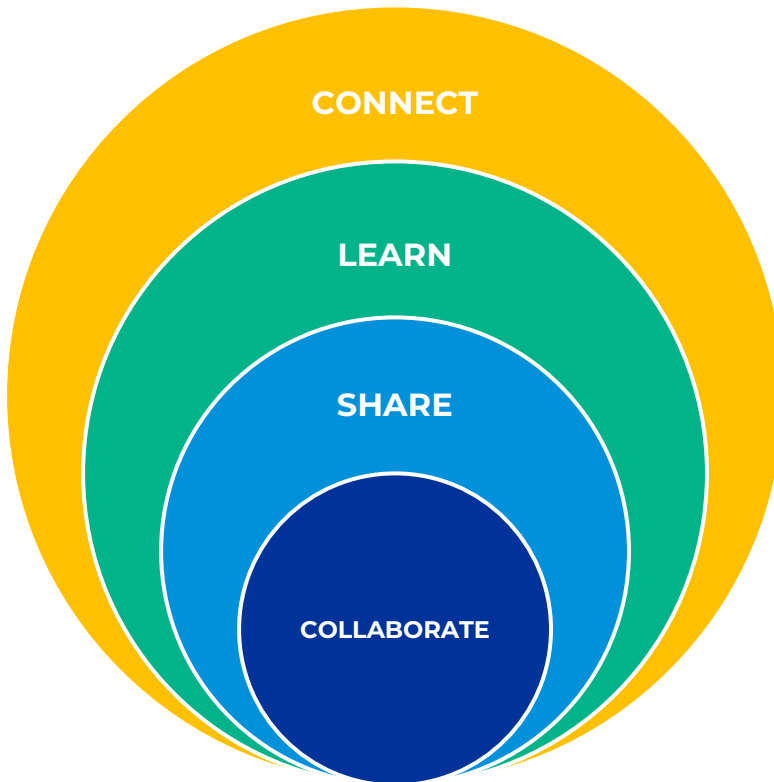


Figure 3. Diagram of the ISE CoP gathering approach steps.

Connect

Connect consists of community building exercises, mapping stakeholders and facilitating informal discussions among stakeholders. To do so the partners are always split into smaller groups and have time to introduce themselves and answer given questions. In addition, networking spaces with posters are provided to encourage informal conversations.

Learn

All the ISE CoP gatherings are directly linked with dedicated trainings to TPs. For this purpose, the TCP has a dedicated activity, and information can be found in our work



section³.

Share

Sharing is embedded in the nature of the ISE CoP. Complementing the connecting and learning steps, a big part of the gatherings is for sharing knowledge. Being extremely connected among the 2 types of projects, there is the need to exchange work plans, methodologies, tools, outputs... in other words, share solutions and facilitate further collaboration.

Collaborate

Collaboration can happen when there is strong engagement between partners and new opportunities and synergies may arise. Example of collaboration would be to organise joint events, contribute to each other deliverables, co-write scientific/policy/common position papers, among others. Specific collaborations will be facilitated by the TCP through the co-creation of White Papers (see section 5).

³ [Capacity Building for Thematic Projects. Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission. Interreg Euro-MED governance projects. 2024.](#)

Gatherings

The ISE CoP gatherings consist of inviting at least 3 TP's partners depending on the project coordination, physical location, and technical expertise, reinforcing the opportunity to engage with all TP's consortia, involving all the partners to more or less extends. In addition, the invitation is open to ISE Mission governance projects associated partners and other Interreg Euro-MED missions' representatives. In addition, representatives from the Interreg Euro-MED Joint Secretariat (JS), Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the National Contact Points (NCPs), Mentoring & Twinning Programme takers, and relevant regional external stakeholders and experts are also invited, to take advantage of being all together.

The launch of the ISE CoP was on June 18, 2024, in Marseille. From here ISE CoP gatherings have been held every 6 months and combining with online gatherings. The past ISE CoP gatherings are summarised in this report below with information regarding the event page, agenda, participants, satisfaction survey, and resources used. Upcoming gatherings are planned (see Figure 4 timeline).

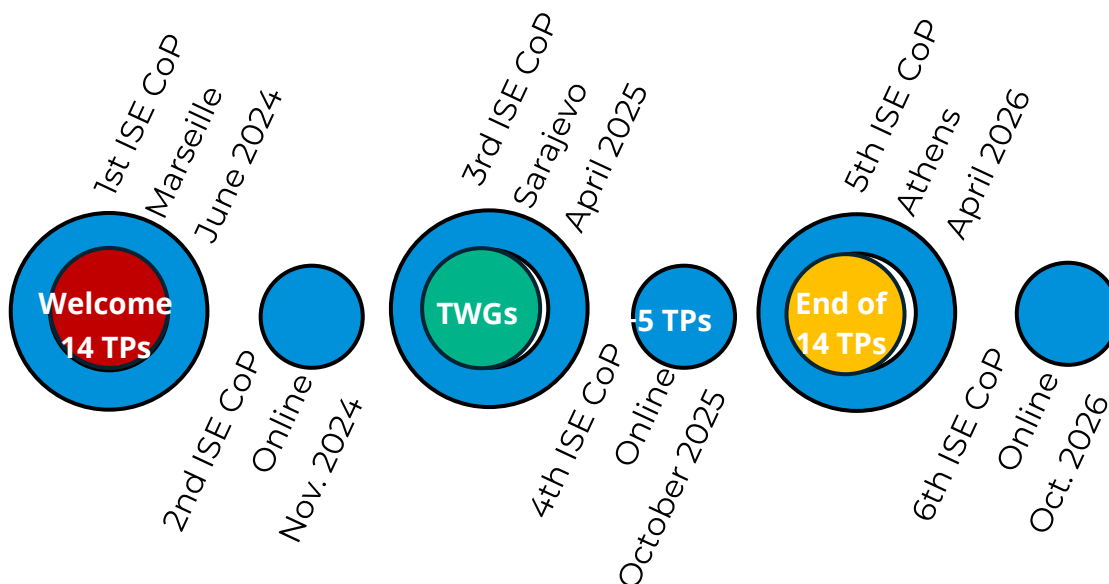


Figure 4. Timeline of the ISE CoP gatherings planned until 2026.



Launch of the ISE CoP, Marseille, June 2024

Event page

<https://innovative-sustainable-economy.interreg-euro-med.eu/events/shaping-sustainable-innovation-in-the-mediterranean/>

Concept Note

Join us in Marseille on the 18 and 19 June for two days of interactive sessions and networking with like-minded people and organisations working for a more sustainable Mediterranean region. Register now below!

On 18 June, we will celebrate the launch of the Interreg Euro-MED Innovative Sustainable Economy (ISE) Mission Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP launch aims to connect, share, learn, and collaborate through community-building exercises, thematic group discussions, presenting a common result amplification approach, and the co-creation of a synergistic map. The event will bring together the 14 Thematic Projects focused on blue and green circular economies.

Following the event, attendees are encouraged to join [the European Week of Waste Reduction \(EWWR\) Awards ceremony](#) at MUCEM and network further during a cocktail dinner.



Agenda

18 JUNE, THURSDAY

TIME	ACTIVITY
13:00-14:00 60 min	Registration Welcome Coffee*
14:00-14:20 20 min	WELCOME Sophie Scarvelis, Interreg Euro-MED Joint Secretariat, Head of Unit Alessandra Sensi, UfM Secretariat, Head of Sector Environment, Green and Blue Economy Mercè Boy Roura, BETA Technological Centre (UVIC-UCC), Project Coordinator INTRODUCTION Maria Calderó Pascual, BETA Technological Centre (UVIC-UCC), Project Manager
14:20-14:50 30 min	CONNECT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you want to reach with your project? Main objectives with keywords How will you reach it? Solutions/main outputs with brief description To do what and when? Planned activities and milestones in a timeline
14:30-15:30 60 min	SHARE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What could you do together? Fill the grid
15:30-16:00 30 min	LEARN Mercè Boy Roura, BETA Technological Centre (UVIC-UCC), Project Manager Mercè Boy Roura & Maria Calderó, BETA Technological Centre (UVIC-UCC), Project Coordination Team Francesco Lembo, ACR+, Deputy Secretary General
16:00-16:15 15 min	COLLABORATE Quick survey and open reactions
16:15-16:30 15 min	Wrap up! What comes next?
16:30-17:30 60 min	Break and walk to the MUCEM Auditorium
17:30-19:30 2 h	EWWR 2023 Awards Ceremony
19:30-21:30	Cocktail and Networking dinner* Grotte Cosquer

*Meals covered by the organisation.

Participants

In the launch of the ISE CoP 82 participants registered and **71 attended in-person**. They were representing a wide diversity of the ISE CoP types of partners (Figure 5a) and 4-ple helix (Figure 5b).

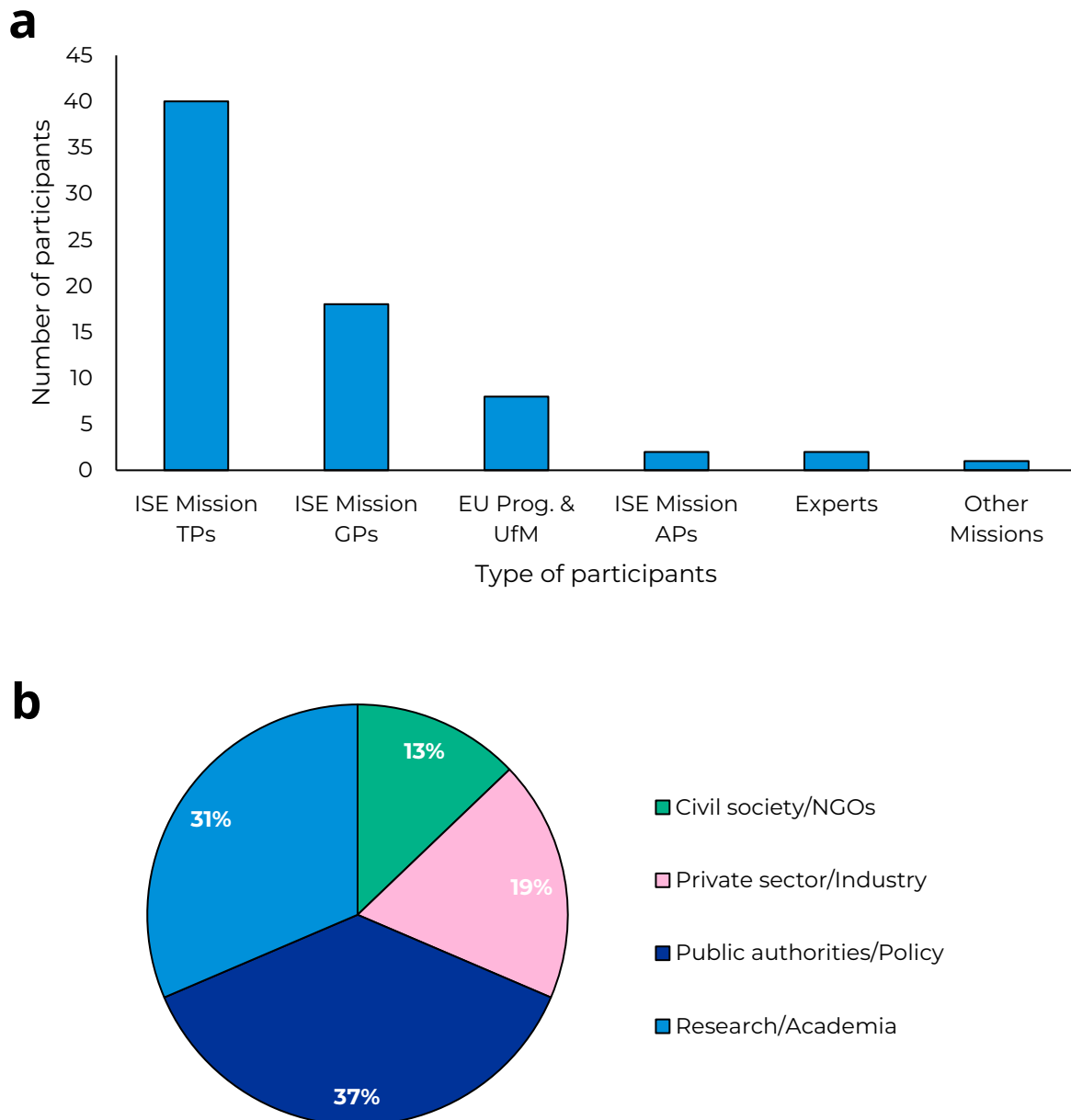


Figure 5. a) Number of 1st ISE CoP participants classified by types of partners; b) Percentage of 4-ple helix classified participants.

Satisfaction

Only 17 out of 73 participants (i.e., 23,3%) conducted the satisfaction survey. Anonymous questions were as follows:

- Did you find the event information on our website useful?
- Did the event meet your expectations?
- How would you rate the timing and structure of the agenda?
- Were you satisfied with the quality of the activities?
- Were you satisfied with the quality of the speakers?
- How would you rate the World Trade Centre as a venue from 1 to 5?
- Were you satisfied with the catering during the event?
- What was the main reason for attending the event?
- Do you need a certificate of attendance for the event?
- How would you like our next major event to be organised?
- What is your overall evaluation of the event?
- Any comments / suggestions

The overall evaluation of the event was Excellent (Figure 6).

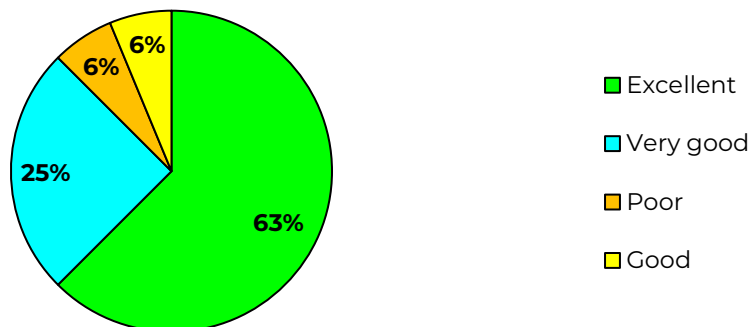


Figure 6. Overall evaluation of the event. Answers from 17/73 (i.e., 23,3%) participants.

Relevant comments and suggestions to consider were as follows:

- Too many different events merged. No clear aim of what and why we were discussing in the table. It was not possible to find synergies with other partners because we did not have a list of participants before attending the event with a summary of their proposal and who is who.
- Congratulations to Fanny Didou for the amazing work!
- It was a very enjoyable experience. Congratulations on the excellent organisation. As a suggestion it would be great if each event could be held in a different location so



that we could get to know the realities of the Mediterranean environment in which the projects take place. The idea of having time to chat in a relaxed atmosphere is also very interesting.

- It was an excellent experience, exchange of information and best practices on a very important topic such as green and circular economy.
- The idea is very interesting to meet and explore with other projects. However, I feel like the objective wasn't clear and especially what will be done with the brainstorming done. Final remark I personally think that flying all over Europe for 24h meeting is not sustainable.



Resources

All material of the 1st ISE CoP gathering was transferred into a public [MIRO board](#) (Figure 8). In the MIRO board are summarised the following information:

- The members attending organised by working groups (i.e., names, entity, LinkedIn profile, and Interviews).
- The presentations given.
- The wooclap survey answers.
- Interviews and event video: check also the [YouTube channel](#).

In addition, the joint posters of TPs can be found in [OUR PROJECTS](#) webpage section (Figure 7). Infographics and photos are available in the corresponding [Basecamp channel](#) (only open to ISE CoP members) (Figure 9). In turn, the launch of the ISE CoP was organised side-by-side to the 1st edition of the MED Innovation Days⁴. Find the corresponding News in here⁵.



⁴https://innovative-sustainable-economy.interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/d1.9.1-med-innovation-days-report_final.pdf

⁵ <https://innovative-sustainable-economy.interreg-euro-med.eu/2024/07/04/ise-mission-launches-the-ise-cop-and-med-innovation-day-in-marseille/>



Figure 7. Screenshots of TPs posters. Find other communication materials in our MEDIA KIT section.



World Trade Center, Marseille

Click the names to connect on LinkedIn!
Click to listen the Interviews!

Projects' representatives legend

- SPOMED
- 2B-BLUE
- AZACE
- BLUE ECOSYSTEM
- CARBON FARMING MED
- Chaparra
- ChwOIMedNet
- ChwAMED
- GREENSMARTMED
- REVIVE
- PresumMED
- ISE Governance (TOP & COP)
- EU funding programmes & UJM
- Associated Partners & other Missions

Go to INTRO MENU

Working Groups

Working Groups: MARINE RESOURCES, AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS, INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION, RESOURCE VALORISATION, NEW BUSINESS MODELS, TRANSFORMATIVE METHODOLOGIES, SUPPORT DECISION-MAKING, BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

World Trade Center, Marseille

Launch of the
ISE Community of Practice (CoP)

SHAPING SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
Ensuring an inclusive and constructive dialogue

Tuesday 18th June 2024
Marseille, France

Go to INTRO MENU

Revise the presented slides!

Click on the image and pass the slides with the little arrows

1. ISE_CoP.pdf

World Trade Center, Marseille

What do you want to reach? ⊕

How will you reach it? ⊕

Revise what the working groups exchanged!

Go to INTRO MENU

To do what and when? ⊕

What could you do together? ⊕

Projects' legend

- SPOMED
- 2B-BLUE
- AZACE
- BLUE ECOSYSTEM
- CARBON FARMING MED
- Chaparra
- ChwOIMedNet
- ChwAMED
- GREENSMARTMED
- REVIVE
- PresumMED
- ISE Governance (TOP & COP)
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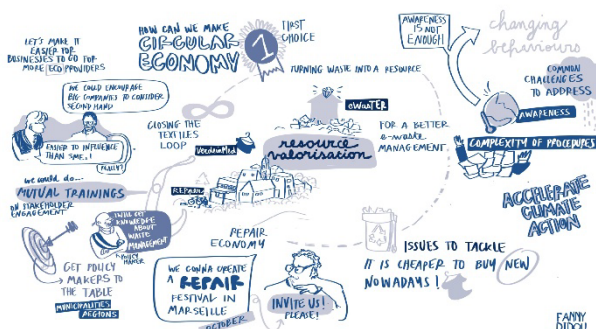
Click on the image and pass the slides with the little arrows

Q4.pdf



The diagram illustrates the 'agrifood systems' approach, showing a cycle of sustainable development and carbon farming.

- Top Left:** A house and a tree are labeled "agrifood systems".
- Top Center:** A river is labeled "contaminated Net".
- Top Right:** A cloud is labeled "Carbon Farming Med." and a box is labeled "Net 2040".
- Center:** A bar chart shows "CO₂" emissions. Below it, a box says "SUSTAINABILITY OF THE OLIVE OIL SECTOR".
- Bottom Left:** A box says "FARMERS USE GROUND WATER & GROUND HAVE QUALITY ISSUES".
- Bottom Center:** Two people are talking, with a box saying "THEN CAN USE GROUNDWATER EXPERIENCE".
- Bottom Right:** A person is standing next to a box labeled "SHAPING RENT PRACTICES".
- Bottom:** A large oval contains the text "COMMON EVENTS" and "ON WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER".
- Left Side:** A tree is labeled "ecosphere" and "GROUND WATER MONITORING".
- Right Side:** A box says "ACCELERATE CARBON MARKET DEVELOPMENT".





b



Figure 9. a) examples of infographics made by Fanny Didou; and b) photos taken during the 1st ISE CoP.



2nd ISE CoP, Online, November 2024

Event page

<https://innovative-sustainable-economy.interreg-euro-med.eu/events/2-ise-cop-gathering/>

After launching the Innovative Sustainable Economy Community of Practice (ISE CoP) on 18 June 2024 in Marseille (read the [News](#)), the 2nd gathering on 14 November 2024 (9.30-13h CET) will be held online.

The [ISE CoP](#) is a key element to build a strong network in the ISE Mission to increase the projects' impacts. The ISE CoP comprises 14 Thematic Projects (TPs) and 2 Governance Projects by offering a space of collective knowing and learning.

[Discover who is who at the ISE CoP INTERACTIVE MAP](#)

The launch of the ISE CoP offered time to Connect, Share, Learn, and Collaborate among the different TPs. You can find all the information exchanged and results of the working groups within the ISEC Hub Knowledge Sharing Space (go to [MIRO board](#)) and respective Basecamp channel (go to [MISSION – Innovative sustainable economy](#)).

The upcoming online gathering will serve as an opportunity to further explain key Governance Projects activities, where we need strong collaboration with the Thematic Projects to discuss about the TPs key productions.

In addition, after considering the results of the survey for training needs, a master class style training will follow, dedicated to amplifying projects' results by explaining amplifying concepts and successful processes within and beyond the Interreg Euro-MED Programme.



Agenda

14 NOVEMBER, THURSDAY

Event moderated by Thematic Community Project (TCP) partners

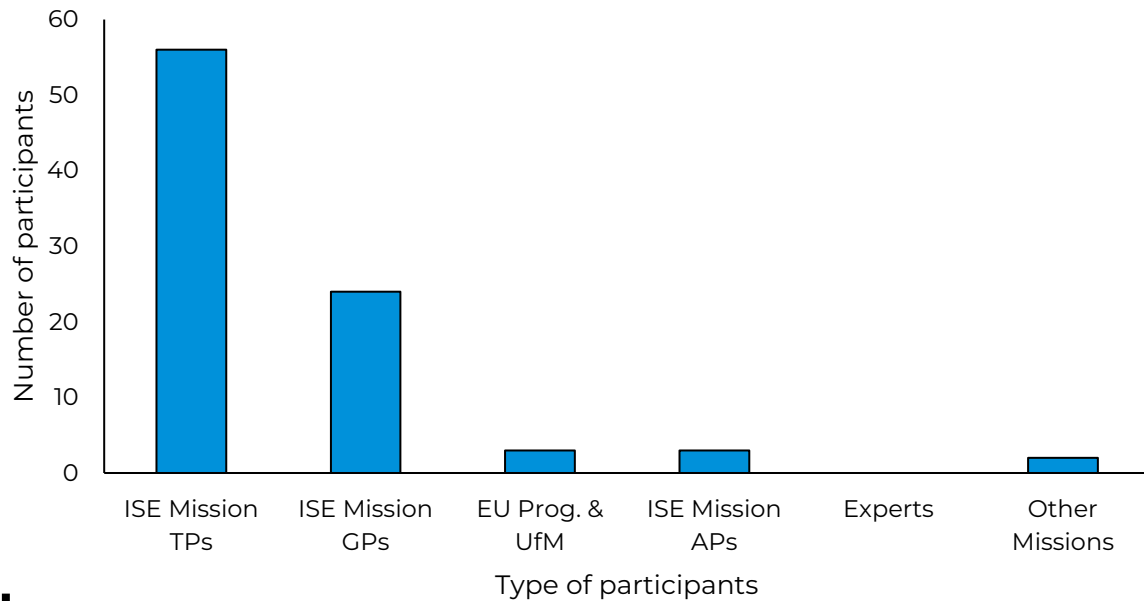
WELCOME	
09:30-09:45 15 min	Where we are now and objectives of the day <i>BETA TC (UVIC-UCC)</i>
THEMATIC PROJECTS: KEY PRODUCTIONS	
09:45-10:05 20 min	Governance projects activities I: Peer Review & Academy <i>PMM & UNISI</i>
10:05-10:15 10 min	Breaking rooms dynamics <i>BETA TC (UVIC-UCC)</i>
10:15-11:15 60 min	Working Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round of introductions • Validation and prioritisation of key productions • Analysis of TPs' key productions (potentialities and relevance to SDGs) • Clustering with other TPs' key productions
11:15-11:30 15 min	BREAK – GRAB A COFFEE <i>All</i>
TRAINING: AMPLIFYING PROJECTS' RESULTS	
11:30-12:45 75 min	Governance projects activities II: Concepts & Successful processes <i>ACR+ & ERR & MIO-ECSDE</i> <i>Invited experts</i>
WRAP UP	
12:45-13:00 15 min	Next Steps & Upcoming in-person Community of Practice gathering <i>BETA TC (UVIC-UCC) & CENER21</i>

Carried out on Zoom

Participants

In the 2nd ISE CoP gathering **88 participants connected online**. They were mainly representing ISE Mission TP's types of partners (Figure 10a) and a wide representation of the 4-ple helix (Figure 10b).

a



b

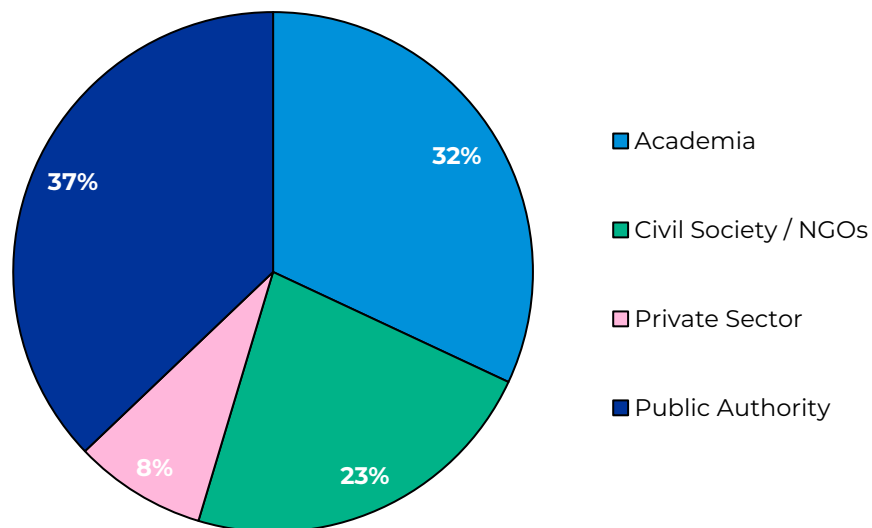




Figure 10.a) Number of 2nd ISE CoP participants classified by types of partners; b) Percentage of 4-ple helix classified participants.

Satisfaction

Only 5 out of 88 participants (i.e., 5,7%) conducted the satisfaction survey. Questions were as follows:

- Which country do you come from?
- What type of stakeholder are you?
- What type of organisation do you work in?
- Which Interreg Euro-MED project are you representing?
- Did you find the online gathering information on our website useful?
- Did you find that the objectives of the day were clearly stated?
- Did the online gathering meet your expectations?
- How would you rate the timing and structure of the agenda?
- How would you rate the timing and structure of the agenda?
- Were you satisfied with the quality of the activities?
- Were you satisfied with the quality of the speakers?
- Would you be interested in the 3rd in-person ISE CoP gathering during 2-4 April 2025 in Sarajevo?
- What is your overall evaluation of the online gathering?

Only one comment referred to the preferences of the training session be first in the agenda.

The overall evaluation of the event was Excellent (Figure 11).

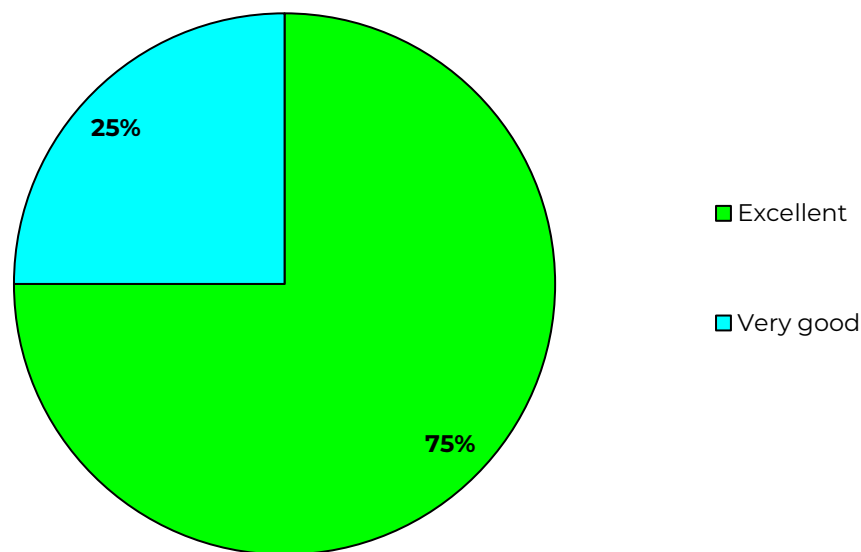


Figure 11. Overall evaluation of the event. Answers from 5/88 (i.e., 5,7%) participants.

Resources

Resources from the 2nd ISE CoP gathering were shared with a follow up email to all registered participants as well as in the corresponding [Basecamp channel](#) (only open to ISE CoP members). Materials comprise:

- [General Presentation](#) (also attached in the follow up email to all registered participants)
- [MIRO Board](#) (view mode only)
- [Training recorded video on Results Amplification typologies and examples](#)

General information about next steps were also given:

- Bilateral meetings for the peer-review process.
- Pilot phase of the Mentoring & Twinning programme.
- Upcoming training for TPs.
- Save the date for the 3rd in-person ISE CoP gathering in Sarajevo.

A reminder about keeping engaged on Basecamp and exchange any updates on projects' activities as well as the available services of the [ISEC Hub](#).

Thematic Working Groups

The launch of the TWGs will take place during the 3rd in-person ISE CoP in Sarajevo during 2-4 April 2025. Four TWGs will be created to boost the connections between TPs and being able to go deeper into specific thematic and take advantage of having specific experts on a focus area (Table 1). These TWGs are thought to be bilaterally organised with TWGs leaders and supporters within and during the 6-months general ISE CoP gatherings (i.e., every 2-3 months and max. 2h online meetings or in-person, when coinciding with the more general ISE CoP) (Figure 12). These TWGs will serve to work on White Papers content as the main collaborative work and outcome of these events (see section 5).

Table 1. Organisation of TWGs based on the ISE Mission focus area and partners' expertise.

TWGs roles responsibilities	FOCUS AREAS			
	Marine Resources 	Agri-Food Systems 	Industrial Transition 	Resource Valorisation
UVIC-UCC	ISE CoP activity leader. Overall framework and organisational responsibilities. General coordination with TPs. Development of TWGs to create White Papers as the main collaborative work of the ISE CoP gatherings and TWGs discussions. Provide template dynamics and facilitation guidelines. Support the overall logistics.			
Leaders	DVISION	UVIC-UCC	MEDWAVES	ACR+
	Organise TWGs every 2-3 months following ISE CoP framework and UVIC-UCC guidelines. Co-create the corresponding White Papers from the information discussed during the TWGs. Be more available at region level for in-person TPs events.			
Supporters	PMM	CENER21	GSC	MIO-ECSDE
	Participate and contribute to TWGs leading to White Papers. Support to the TWGs' leaders. Be more available at region level for in-person TPs events.			
Peer-review process	PMM	UVIC-UCC	DVISION	UNISI

	Link with methodology to review TPs key productions (internal process explained in bilateral meetings).			
Contributors	REVOLVE as communication partner, IDP partners, Associated Partners, External experts, UfM, JS, Other Missions... General awareness of TPs work and be more available at region level for in-person TPs events.			
Involved TPs ACRONYM	4 SPOWIND 2B-BLUE AZA4ICE BLUE ECOSYSTEM	3 CARBON FARMING MED Clepsydra OliveOilMedNet	4 CircleMED GREENSMARTMED REVIVE ProcuraMED	3 REPper EWAsTER VERDEinMED

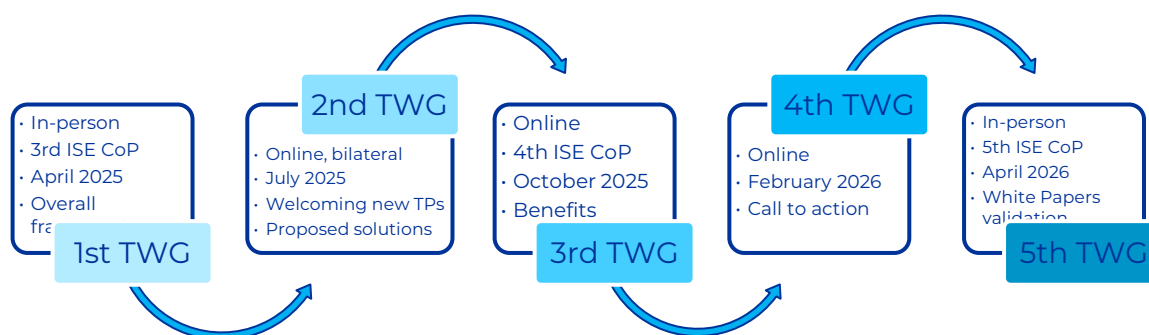


Figure 12. Timeline of the TWGs planned until 2026.

Within the ISE CoP framework clustering the TPs have been driven by 2 different approaches, following a thematic approach and depending on the type of solution tested. This clustering aims to facilitate building interactions among the CoP (Figure 13). Thematic Working Groups are following the clustering by thematic type. Nevertheless, within the TWGs clustering, the different types of TPs outputs are also playing an important role. In the following subsections the 4 thematic are described, jointly with the clusters by types of outputs.



Figure 13. Infographic (by [Fanny Didou](#)) of the ISE CoP framework clustering the TPs by focus areas and representing a Mediterranean community working on different thematic

Marine Resources

Marine resources focus area aims to encompass economic activities related to oceans, seas, and coasts. In other words, this thematic refers to specific blue economy sectors such as aquaculture, fisheries, blue biotechnologies, marine renewable energy, among others⁶. In this specific case, aquaculture performed in inland waters, complementing marine aquaculture practices, has been clustered within this area, despite also tackling food systems (see section 4.2. Agri-Food Systems), and more in line with European Union framework⁷.

The Mediterranean Sea hosts a diverse array of biological, mineral and energy resources. These resources range from animal, plant, coral, metals, fuels, sand and gravel, natural gas, and potential renewable energy resources such as wind, tidal, wave, and biomass. Nevertheless, despite the abundance of marine resources, the Mediterranean Sea is highly impacted by overfishing, ocean acidification, lack of marine spatial planning cooperation and coordination to further implement different economic activities such as offshore wind farms, all related to intense anthropogenic activities and unsustainable management of these resources.

⁶ <https://medblueeconomyplatform.org/about/blue-economy/>

⁷ [EU Blue Economy Sectors](#)



Therefore, sustainable innovative solutions testing new collaborative and spatial planning approaches to implement different sustainable business models are key to overcome Mediterranean challenges within the blue economy sectors ⁸ (Table 2).

Table 2. Thematic Projects' information involved in the Marine Resources TWGs and linked with the type of output clustering..

Project Acronym Webpage link	Project Main Goal	Type of outputs clustering
<u>SPOWIND</u>	Supporting the uptake of new offshore wind technologies, such as floating wind turbines, in the Mediterranean Sea. To enhance coordination between policymakers and raise awareness of 4-ple helix collaboration. Increase institutional capacity of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), municipalities, and Transmission Service Operators (TSO) by adopting the WebGIS tool. Improve the quality of results by involving research institutions and universities.	Support Decision Making
<u>2B-BLUE</u>	Boosting the Blue Biotechnology sector in the Mediterranean by experimenting on the emerging technologies in national contexts and developing effective value chains; establishing public-private partnerships; and preparing for transferability through funding, policy making and entrepreneurship.	New Business Models
<u>AZA4ICE</u>	Promoting sustainable, circular aquaculture in the Euro-Mediterranean area through transnational cooperation and innovative spatial planning in coastal and inland waters. By engaging stakeholders and developing Action Plans, it fosters dialogue, business opportunities, and eco-consciousness. The project supports	Transformative Methodologies

⁸ Roadmap to set the path towards the implementation of the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on sustainable blue economy.



	shifting from a linear economy to circular practices, benefiting public authorities, businesses, and academia.
BLUE ECOSYSTEM	Fostering regional innovation and the involvement of stakeholders to promote a sustainable blue economy. The project identifies the main regional challenges to find innovative solutions and scale up the experience at transnational level.

Agri-food Systems

Agri-food systems refer to those activities and operations covering the journey of food from farm to table, including the whole food value chain, from when it is grown, harvested, processed, packaged, transported, distributed, traded, bought, prepared, eaten and disposed of⁹, including the biological cycle of the circular economy approach¹⁰. In this specific case, the term “agri-”referring to agriculture aims to differentiate between food coming from inland systems (i.e., cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock), without including freshwater either marine fisheries and aquaculture (see section 3.1.1. Marine Resources), and more in line with European Union framework¹¹. Mediterranean agri-food systems are rich and are characterised by permanent crops such as olives, grapes, citrus and nuts. In addition, there is a strong presence of leguminous, fresh vegetables, cereals and it is often complemented with an extensive presence of livestock. Agri-food systems in the Mediterranean are highly impacted by more frequent and intense extreme climatic events (i.e., droughts and floods), jointly with land degradation and salinization of coastal soils and waters. Therefore, sustainable innovative solutions working in adapting current farming practices into more resilient and regenerative ones, applying more sustainable methods, favouring the conservation of water resources, and enhancing diversification of income are key to overcome Mediterranean agri-food systems challenges¹² (Table 3).

Table 3. Thematic Projects' information involved in the Agri-Food Systems TWGs and linked with the type of output

⁹ [FAO. 2023. The State of Food and Agriculture 2023. Revealing the true cost of food to transform agrifood systems. Rome.](#)

¹⁰ <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy-diagram>.

¹¹ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/agriculture-and-green-deal_en

¹² [MedECC \(2020\) Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – Current Situation and Risks for the Future. First Mediterranean Assessment Report \[Cramer, W., Guiot, J., Marini, K. \(eds.\)\] Union for the Mediterranean, Plan Bleu, UNEP/MAP, Marseille, France, 632pp, ISBN 978-2-9577416-0-1, doi: 10.5281/zenodo.4768833.](#)



clustering.

Project Acronym Webpage link	Project Main Goal	Type of outputs clustering
<u>CARBON FARMING MED</u>	Enhancing the resilience of Mediterranean agriculture by advancing Carbon Farming as a profitable and sustainable business model, leveraging regenerative agricultural and agroforestry practices to maximise revenue streams and drive engagement in the carbon credit market.	
<u>OliveOilMedNet</u>	Promoting sustainability and authenticity in the olive oil sector and increase cooperation and capacity of the 4-ple helix stakeholders. The project tests and validates eco-friendly cultivation and production techniques and authenticity certification models, ensuring that olive oil remains environmentally responsible, economically viable, and globally competitive while supporting SMEs and preserving the region's rich agricultural heritage.	New Business Models
<u>Clepsydra</u>	Protecting aquifers through a smart system for monitoring and interpreting hydrogeological data. The tools created by the project will help integrate environmental protection into socioeconomic activities, supporting more sustainable water and land management practices.	Support Decision Making

Industrial Transition

Industrial transition thematic aims to embrace the EU goal to become climate neutral and move towards a more digital era. Therefore, industrial transition is closely linked to innovation and the ability of economies to respond to new market pressures by creating new business opportunities supporting the development of digital and green capacities,



bringing together funding to finance research and innovation on low-carbon technology and processes. Within this framework, supporting the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are at the core of this group¹³. Industrial transition in the Mediterranean promotes sustainable consumption and production patterns as well as the integration of sustainability principles into decision-making on public and private investments. However, regions undergoing industrial transition are facing challenges such as socio-economic inequalities, high resource-consumption patterns, environmentally harmful and inefficient production facilities, wrong fiscal incentives, not enough trade markets and cooperation, high dependence on natural resources, among others¹⁴. Therefore, sustainable innovative solutions testing innovative circular assessment tools, green methodologies, and procurement, and facilitating capacity building at local level are key to transfer challenges into opportunities, ensuring a fair industrial transition in the Mediterranean¹⁵ (Table 4).

Table 4. Thematic Projects' information involved in the Industrial Transition TWGs and linked with the type of output clustering.

Project Acronym Webpage link	Project Main Goal	Type of outputs clustering
<u>CircleMED</u>	Converting the Mediterranean area into circular-economy-based territories, involving all stakeholders to promote the transition process to circular and sustainable production and consumption models, stimulating awareness and testing innovative circular solutions, developing and scaling up circular approaches, methodologies and strategies easily adaptable to any kind of territory.	New Business Models
<u>GREENSMARTMED</u>	Building an European community that fosters innovation for a green and resilient manufacturing value chain, supporting RIS3 implementation, by turning SMEs' sustainability challenges into business development opportunities.	Transformative Methodologies
<u>REVIVE</u>	Defining innovative solutions for a	

¹³ EU Industrial Strategy.

¹⁴ MAP, U. Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development-MSSD 2016-2025.

¹⁵ OECD (2019), Regions in Industrial Transition: Policies for People and Places, OECD Regional Development Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/c76ec2a1-en>.



	sustainable economic development in rural Mediterranean areas, accelerating the transition towards more competitive, sustainable, and resilient ecosystems.	
<u>ProcuraMED</u>	Fostering a competitive, innovative, and sustainable Mediterranean economy by enhancing the adoption of advanced green technologies through Strategic Procurement. By promoting Green Public Procurement and Public Procurement of Innovation, the project strengthens technology transfer, boosts SMEs' innovation capacities, and empowers public authorities with new tools for sustainable economic growth.	Behavioural Change

Resource Valorisation

Resource valorisation thematic refers to the process of converting waste products or residues from economic activities into economically useful materials through the circular economy hierarchy of the 10 Rs model¹⁶. Short loops are where a product remains close to its most valuable state and function, hence, the most value is retained in the materials, components, and products (i.e., Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair); medium-loops are where material, components, and product value are captured through the re-involvement of producers, and subsequently, less value is lost (i.e., Refurbish, Remanufacture, Repurpose); and long-loops are where components and products lose their original function, and hence lose value, though the material value is captured (i.e., Recycle, energy Recovery, Re-mine)¹⁷. This implies trying to avoid talking about 'waste' but still framing it under the technical cycle of the circular economy approach¹⁸. Resource valorisation in the Mediterranean is a key priority, emphasizing a wide range of different projects and initiatives enhancing this opportunity¹⁹ (Table 5).

Table 5. Thematic Projects' information involved in the Resource Valorisation TWGs and linked with the type of output clustering.

¹⁶ Reike, D., Vermeulen, W. J., & Witjes, S. (2018). The circular economy: new or refurbished as CE 3.0?—exploring controversies in the conceptualization of the circular economy through a focus on history and resource value retention options. *Resources, conservation and recycling*, 135, 246-264.

¹⁷ <https://thecejourney.org.au/>.

¹⁸ <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy-diagram>.

¹⁹ *First Monitoring Report (2021-2022) 2030GreenerMed*.



Project Acronym Webpage link	Project Main Goal	Type of outputs clustering
<u>REPper</u>	Promoting a circular and resource-efficient economy by strengthening the repair sector, supporting SMEs, and fostering behavioral change. It creates a network of Repair Hubs, offers training through the REPper Factory, and uses nudging strategies to make repair more attractive. Operating transnationally, it aims for a sustainable, innovative, and greener economy.	Behavioural Change
<u>VERDEinMED</u>	Considering the opportunities and the challenges of taking a user-centred approach to innovation and sustainability within Textile and Clothing circular economy. Providing a set of principles to guide policy makers, businesses and consumers in the transition from traditional production processes to a systemic approach in consideration of the circular economy.	
<u>EWaSTER</u>	Avoiding and stopping the threat presented by e-waste, eWAsTER takes into account common management criteria, joint planning, and coordinated business promotion. eWAsTER promotes WEEE management as an opportunity to generate sustainable socioeconomic development, based on a smart use of waste as a new secondary raw material resource.	Support Decision Making

White Papers

A **White Paper** is a detailed document that provides information on a specific topic, often



presenting solutions to complex issues or promoting a particular product, service, or methodology. White papers tend to be not that extended (i.e., maximum 20 pages including figures, and images). A White Paper should provide well-researched information that cannot be found with simple desk research. It needs to clearly define the topic, create an accurate outline of the information, and provides facts.

In the ISE CoP framework, White Papers intend to be the long-lasting outcome of the work carried out during the TWGs and general gatherings. In this regard, 4 White Papers will be created, one for each TWG. However, they will follow the same structure (Box 1).



Conclusion

The ISE Community of Practice aims to be the perfect space for building trust among the active partners, which in turn, they are part of bigger communities. So far members of the CoP have been actively engaged and reported high satisfaction rates.

By structuring gatherings around Connect, Learn, Share, and Collaborate, the ISE CoP has strengthened partnerships and advanced solutions for sustainability challenges. Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) will be key in aligning efforts within the four focus areas: Marine Resources, Agri-food Systems, Industrial Transition, and Resource Valorisation. These TWGs will produce White Papers, as the main long-lasting outcome of the discussions and work carried out during working groups and general gatherings.

With continuous growth and evolving collaboration, the ISE CoP remains committed to long-term impact. Upcoming gatherings will already incorporate 5 new²⁰ TPs and more connections and collaborative opportunities will arise.

Report summary updates will occur every two years, ensuring the collection of relevant information. As the initiative expands, the upcoming Sarajevo gathering in April 2025 will further deepen cooperation and refine strategic actions.

²⁰ <https://interreg-euro-med.eu/en/4th-call-for-thematic-projects-final-results-are-out/>



Box 1. Structure of TWGs resulting White Papers.

TITLE

Subtitle

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Overview and definition of the specific thematic tackled in the Mediterranean context.

CHALLENGES

Differentiated by sustainability pillars (i.e., environmental, social, economic) and technical, if need it.

REGIONAL CONTEXTS

Display a map of information of the pilot sites.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Aim to display a joint solution combining the tested ones in different regions of the Mediterranean.

BENEFITS

Aim to design an infographic with homogenised and comparable numbers of the positive impacts of the proposed solutions and linked with the tackled challenges.

CALL TO ACTION

Common positions targeting specific groups of stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS

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List of projects and organisations

ISE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
REPORT



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