



STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE ON THE EU STRATEGY
FOR THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN REGION
6-7 FEBRUARY 2014, ATHENS, GREECE



European
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Thematic Workshop 3:

"Environmental Quality"

Summary Report on Workshop Conclusions

Athens, 7 February 2014

Chair:

George Kremlis, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for the Environment, European Commission

Speakers:

Mitja Bricelj, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Slovenia

Agnes Kelemen, expert

Facilitator:

Ivana Lazic, INTERACT Point Vienna

Rapporteur:

Jelena Stojovic, Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Participants:

There were more than 70 participants from different national/regional public authorities, research centres, universities, associations, institutes, etc.

Summary

The workshop discussed the scope, the topics and the potential actions, identified during the stakeholder consultation, in the framework of pillar III of the future Strategy.

In order to tackle the main environmental challenges in the Region, such as the unsustainable use of marine and coastal area resources, loss of marine and terrestrial natural habitats and ecosystems, maritime transport pollution and accident risks, coastal water quality, etc., all agreed that **cooperation and coordination** between the participating countries is essential.

Participants agreed that the Strategy needs to address challenges related to **marine biodiversity, pollution of the seas and terrestrial biodiversity and habitats** and urged to highlight the link between the marine and terrestrial environment. The key consideration, besides the vertical environmental integration in pillar III, is to ensure **environmental**



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integration in the three other pillars of the Strategy with the view to making them sustainable.

Discussion also focused on the issues related to implementation of actions agreed, which were hampered by low levels of administrative and financial capacity and weak enforcement.

Scope

The results of the stakeholder consultation on pillar III conducted by Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Adriatic and Ionian Region in the period September-December 2013, were thoroughly discussed among the workshop participants. The scope of the pillar was validated. Accordingly, the title of the pillar was changed into "Environmental Quality", which encompasses the notion of "preserving, protecting and improving (the quality of the environment)".

Topics

Protecting the marine environment (marine biodiversity and pollution of the seas) and transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity are confirmed as the main topics to be addressed by the future Strategy under this pillar. During the discussion, the importance of the **Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Maritime Spatial Planning** and **climate change adaptation** were also highlighted as relevant aspects. Furthermore, **strengthening of the administrative, technical and scientific capacities**, establishment of common platforms for **research, observation and monitoring**, and **innovative solutions** are seen as important needs/opportunities to be tackled by the future Adriatic and Ionian Strategy.

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Suggested Actions

Topics	Actions
Marine biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing networks for the monitoring, care and recovery of species and the development of action plans for safeguarding them • enhancing cooperation in marine research on impact of climate change • data exchange and the transfer of good governance • creation of trans-border, open-water protected areas and strengthening cooperation/ setting up networks of coastal and marine protected areas to preserve ecosystems • introducing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) through exchange of best practices; • strengthening new forms of sustainable tourism and fisheries
Pollution of the seas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addressing oil spill problems with coordinated contingency plans at macro-regional scale • defining an action plan for marine litter and establishing operational protocols related to litter monitoring • setting up harmonised methods for prevention, reduction, and recovery of waste at sea • coordinated fight against eutrophication, targeting at source the loads of eutrophication substances • developing new cluster-type cooperation initiatives
Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data exchange and the transfer of good governance • the creation of trans-border protected areas • networks for the monitoring, care and recovery of species and the development of action plans for safeguarding them