

## Partner search

<i>Project title</i>	<b>Fishing tourism and ichthyotourism diversification activities in the Adriatic &amp; Ionian macro-region</b>
<i>Project acronym</i>	<b>FishTourAir</b>
<i>Possible Programme</i>	<b>Interreg VI B IPA ADRION 2021-2027</b>
<i>Partnership size</i>	6 – 12 partners
<i>Partnership composition</i>	>3 from IPA (EUSAIR) countries, and >3 from ERDF (EUSAIR) countries
<i>Indicative budget</i>	€1.500.000
<i>Indicative duration</i>	36 months
<i>Contact point</i>	Mr. Nikos Koutsomarkos, Urban Development Expert, Planner, MSc, MBA Project4, e-mail: <a href="mailto:info@pr4.gr">info@pr4.gr</a>
<b><i>Deadline for expression of interest</i></b>	<b><u>**15 May 2023**</u></b>

## FishTourAir Proposal outline

### Project summary

The countries of the Adriatic-Ionian Regions and in particular coastal areas are facing socioeconomic and environmental challenges connected to the seasonal coastal tourism and the professional fishing economic activity. On the one hand mass tourism creates pressures to local communities, local customs and heritage, as well the carrying capacity of certain areas. On the other hand, fishing activity has direct negative impacts to the marine biodiversity and fishing stock, all while the competitiveness of traditional fishermen (and their incomes) is diminishing.

The overall objective of the FishTourAir project is to diversify the current economic model of coastal tourism and fishing which considers these two sectors separately and instead of this, to generate an innovative product based on synergies and collaborations among the above blue economy sectors. Within the frame of this project, it is recommended the development of sustainable fishing tourism activities in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion, in order to contribute to the socio-economic improvement of the region and the conservation of its natural and cultural heritage. Cooperation of these different economic sectors will pave the path of mutual benefits

and win-win solutions towards a flourishing blue economy of the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion. The enhancement of links and synergies among fishing (primary sector), and hospitality and leisure (secondary sector) will also create opportunities and interactions with the tertiary sector of education, public sector and research and development.

The central output of the project will be a Common Fishing Tourism Strategy for the A-I Macroregion, with clear goals for setting-up and improving the fishing tourism offer of the area. Dedicated actions plans will follow for each of the participating countries and/or regions, according to their current starting point and challenges. In addition, the project will test pilot fishing tourism travel packages that will also inform and conclude in jointly developed solutions for the up-skilling and re-skilling of fishermen and tourism operators, as well as for capacity building for authorities and networking.

The main outputs of the project are geared towards specific beneficiaries. First of all, governmental institutions will benefit from analytic policy recommendations for either setting-up or improving their legal framework regarding fishing tourism and ichthyotourism activities. Secondly, fishermen and their associations, as well as tour operators, will benefit from improved skills and knowledge about organizing and promoting their fishing tourism offer. Thirdly, local communities and authorities will be sensitized towards supporting fishing tourism travel packages as well as receive needed knowledge regarding the status of the activity in their areas.

The project approach is based on the joint development and implementation, thus it will promote transnational cooperation across Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion areas through exchanging and transferring experiences along with the support of capacity building efforts which will encourage the harmonization of the economic, social and territorial development answering to the needs and challenges of the region and contributing to the coordination and development of macro-regional and sea basin strategies.

The unique proposition of the FishTourAir project is the development of innovative and smart Adriatic Ionian Macroregion solutions through the smart specialization of both economic sectors of tourism and fisheries derived from their collaboration in a strategic way and through participatory approaches and multi-level governance. It will promote business investment and development under the principles of sustainability, contributing to the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage of the A-I macroregion areas. Furthermore, the project will meet the challenge of environmental degradation of marine environment and resources due to the intensive fishing and tourism activities taken place particularly in coastal areas of Adriatic Ionian Macroregion.

#### Background Analysis:

The Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion, comprising of Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and San Marino, is a region with a rich cultural and natural heritage. The region's coastline and waters are home to a diverse range of marine species, including many commercially important fish stocks. The region is also a popular tourist destination, attracting millions of visitors each year.

Coastal tourism alongside professional fishing provides the basis of local economies for many coastal communities in the A-I macroregion. Such coastal areas usually have a seasonal peak in their economies and capacity, due to summer tourism, which can also create conflict with the fishing activity or contribute to its further decline. The socio-economic lag of fishery and tourism dependent areas calls for a solution towards an alternative form of development based on sustainability, instead of conventional and traditional seaside tourism.

Fishing tourism, which involves recreational fishing activities that allow visitors to experience local fishing traditions and learn about marine ecosystems, has the potential to be a sustainable and lucrative form of tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion. Furthermore, fishing tourism can help reduce the impact on fish stocks and the environment, as well as increase knowledge and awareness of the need for environmental protection and cultural conservation, the traditional gastronomy included. Finally, fishing tourism provides to fishermen and their families an additional income sustainable income, often more competitive to demanding professional fishing, thus improving the quality of their lives.

However, the development of fishing tourism in the region faces various challenges, such as missing legislative framework, insufficient promotion and marketing of fishing tourism products, inadequate infrastructure and services, lack of coordination between stakeholders.

#### Identification of Problems and Bottlenecks:

In order to develop fishing tourism activities in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion, it is necessary to address the following problems and bottlenecks:

- Legislative starting points: The relevant legislative framework is in place only in three countries.
- Insufficient promotion and marketing: There are a lack of promotion and marketing of fishing tourism products, which limits their visibility and attractiveness to potential visitors.
- Lack of coordination and awareness between stakeholders: There is a lack of coordination between various stakeholders involved in fishing tourism activities, such as tour operators, fishing associations, and authorities.
- Geographical differentiation: in terms of landlocked countries, countries with minor coastline and countries with long coastlines and fishing tradition.
- Inadequate infrastructure and services: There is a lack of suitable infrastructure and services to support the offer of fishing tourism activities, such as adequate fishing equipment, boats, and guides.

#### Overall Aim of the Project:

The overall aim of this project is to develop and promote sustainable fishing tourism activities in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion, in order to contribute to the socio-economic development of the region and the conservation of its natural and cultural heritage.

**Objectives and Results:**

Objective 1: Enhance the quality and offer of infrastructure and services of fishing tourism activities.

- Result 1.1: Improved availability of fishing equipment, boats, and guides.
- Result 1.2: Improved quality of fishing equipment, boats, and guides skills.

Objective 2: Improve coordination and collaboration between stakeholders involved in fishing tourism activities.

- Result 2.1: Increased cooperation between tour operators, fishing associations, and local authorities.
- Result 2.2: Development of a network of stakeholders involved in fishing tourism activities.

Objective 3: Increase the visibility and attractiveness of fishing tourism products.

- Result 3.1: Development of promotional and marketing materials for fishing tourism products.
- Result 3.2: Increased visibility of fishing tourism products through online and offline channels.

**Work Packages:****Work Package 1: Management and Coordination of the Project**

- 1.1 Project management and administration
- 1.2 Coordination and communication with partners
- 1.3 Reporting and monitoring of project activities and outcomes

**Work Package 2: Communication Activities**

- 2.1 Development of project website and social media accounts
- 2.2 Organization of stakeholder meetings and events
- 2.3 Development of promotional and marketing materials
- 2.4 Develop a marketing and communication strategy for promoting the fishing tourism packages to domestic and international tourists.

### Work Package 3: Background Studies and Reports

- 3.1 Mapping of existing fishing tourism activities in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion
- 3.2 Analysis of infrastructure and service gaps and opportunities
- 3.3 Identification of best practices and case studies

### Work Package 4: Developing travel packages for fishing tourism activities

- 4.1 Conduct market research and analysis to identify target audiences and their preferences for fishing tourism activities.
- 4.2 Identify and select local fishing communities, guides, and operators that can offer high-quality and sustainable fishing tourism experiences.
- 4.3 Develop a set of standardized fishing tourism packages that offer a range of experiences and cater to different target audiences.
- 4.4 Test and refine the fishing tourism packages based on customer feedback and market demand.

### Work Package 5: Capacity Building Activities, Trainings, and Networking

- 5.1 Development of training programs for fishermen and operators
- 5.2 Organize training sessions and workshops for local fishing communities and operators on sustainable fishing practices, customer service, and package development.
- 5.3 Organization of capacity building workshops for authorities
- 5.4 Establishment of a network of fishing tourism stakeholders

### Work Package 6: Capitalization of Project Results and Policy Recommendations

- 6.1 Development of policy recommendations for the institutionalization of fishing tourism activities in the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion
- 6.2 Dissemination of project outcomes and policy recommendations to relevant organization
- 6.3 Liaise with management authorities of public funding.

## Indicative stakeholders and possible role per country:

Country	Role	Possible Stakeholders
<b>Greece</b>	Provision of legislative know-how Provision of experiences regulating fishing tourism Provision of experiences from fishermen with fishing tourism licenses Lift barriers / increase participation Connection with other forms of tourism	Ministry of Rural Development and Food Ministry of Tourism Ministry of Maritime and Insular Policy Regional / Local Authorities
<b>Italy</b>	Provision of legislative know-how Provision of experiences regulating fishing tourism Provision of organizational and marketing techniques	Ministry of Agriculture Regions Associations/cooperatives of fishermen
<b>Croatia</b>	Provision of organizational and marketing techniques Solutions for funding issues and support for fishermen to modify vessels and undertake fishing tourism Solutions for relation of fishing tourism with protected areas	Ministry of Fisheries NGOs Small fisheries organization
<b>Slovenia</b>	Provision of connections to recreational fishing in inland waters	Ministries Fisheries Research Institute of Slovenia National Institute of Biology
<b>Albania</b>	Obtain know-how for legislation and regulation	Ministries Albanian Center for Marine Research
<b>Montenegro</b>	Improve administrative knowledge and capacity Infrastructure/fishing ports valorization	Ministry of Fisheries Institute of Marine Biology

Country	Role	Possible Stakeholders
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	Obtain know-how for inland waters fishing tourism	Ministries
<b>Serbia</b>	Obtain know-how for inland waters fishing tourism	Ministries
<b>North Macedonia</b>	Obtain know-how for legislation and regulation Obtain know-how for inland waters fishing tourism and ichthyotourism Awareness raising for fishing activities among professionals and administration Develop data and research for the country underlying fishing tourism	Department of Agriculture Department of Tourism Municipalities