

Improving Synergies across the Mediterranean for post 2020 II. Who does what?

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Report

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Setting the context for the meeting.

Last June, during the first online meeting on Improving synergies across the Mediterranean, there was a focus on the WHAT, here there were updates on the Mediterranean programming task forces and the identification on possible common challenges. These tackled jointly, in a complementary way should be more efficient.

The second meeting focused on WHO does what. To ensure programme inter-coordination all, Programme authorities, Commission and Member states have an active role. During the first part of the meeting, Commission and Member States took the opportunity to clarify/explain about their views to improve the synergies across programmes. Secondly, programme authorities explored their added value and discussed thematically the type of operations they may finance _based on their nature, TN, CBC, neighbourhood, pre-accession_ to be more efficient and avoiding finance the same kind of operations.

Discussion with the Commission on its role when improving inter-programme coordination and on the importance of the territorial impact.

Objectives of the session:

- 1.- DG Regio will clarify through questions and answers its role in the inter-programme coordination process in the Mediterranean zone.
- 2.-Territorial framework in the area, considering EUSAIR and WestMed as territorial/maritime frameworks
- 3.- links to section 1.2 and 2.1.1 of Interreg template. Where to show interprogramme bottom up coordination in the new OP for 2021-2027?_art 17.4 ETC

Speakers:

- Pascal Boijmans Head of Unit D2-DG REGIO EU Commission.
- Jean Pierre Halkin. Head of Unit D1-DG REGIO. EU Commission.

Mr. Boijmans on behalf D1 and D2, made a brief introduction on **the state of progress negotiations** based on July's 2020 agreements. Please see more information in the attached presentation by *Pascal Boijman_Interact webinar 29 September 2020*. It is to highlight the following information:

- Negotiations Interreg most advanced: major part has already been provisionally agreed
- Specific objective a safer a secure Europe could be planned under all strands of Interreg (not only external borders) (proposal)
- Thematic concentration: at least 60% to 3 PO's of which PO2 and PO4 are compulsory for strand A (compromise proposal by EC)
- Better cooperation governance: may/shall: still open, 10%-15% still open.

Focusing on last **Interprogramme coordination** in the Med area, it was reminded the general agreement (September 2019) between Commission and MS to reinforce coordination and cooperation between TN, CBC, ENI and IPA for better coordination between programmes in the Mediterranean Sea basin, as a driver element for these geographical meetings.

Currently the different programmes still working in their task forces and there is not a 100% of certainty about the SO, they will select. However, there were some themes the programmes showed to be more interested in to tackle jointly, in order to have a more effective action and impact in the area. These are:

1. **Natural Disaster and risk reduction**
2. Supporting SMEs
3. Clean Mediterranean
4. Sustainable tourism and Culture
5. Blue Growth

Discussing about **Who can play what role in Interprogramme coordination**. It is important to highlight that all stakeholders have a role, Member states, Partners states, NCP, Programmes Managing Authorities, Joint Secretariats and European Commission.

Inter-programme coordination should be done in a voluntary basis and it is a process that should be supported by programme authorities in both during programming and implementation phase. What are the main challenges for inter-programme coordination to happen?

- programmes in different stages of programming: timing is crucial
- « complete coordination » (all programmes, many topics) vs « in depth coordination » (few programmes, limited topics)

Which is Commission's Role when improving the inter programme coordination?

It is more as a facilitator and supporter to the process:

- Putting on track/support programmes to a coordination mechanism. Ex: Coordinated calls
- Provide a policy frame with focus on one or two common topics with support on technical advice and logistics (Interact)
- Encourage programme initiatives on e.g. capitalisation/exchange of good practices for specific sub-areas

- Promote the use of Technical Assistance and Specific Objective for better governance (ISO 1) to put into practice the coordination mechanisms of different topics/areas.
Exemple: ISO could finance platform across programmes
- A special mechanism for EUSAIR programmes for alignment with MRS.

Reactions to the presentation.

- DG MARE representatives highlighted the importance of making reference to such territorial framework as the SBS in particular for this area the WestMED, where we are not only working with MS and Partner countries in order to ensure the ownership of the whole process.
- Italy: Minimum goal. Avoid negative thematic overlaps between programmes. What can be the most demanding? Building coordinated operations by strands specialization and demarcation finding the right scales. Coordinated intervention of joint call for proposals.
Participation of partner countries is indeed needed but we have to check on how to involve them.
The need for a role of Strand C in the whole Interprogramme coordination process was mentioned.
- France stressed the fact of using the results from the previous period.
- Spain raised Panoramad as a governance platform financed by Interreg Med as a good example of governance exercise in the Mediterranean.

Interprogramme coordination in the Programming Phase:

- There are 2 sections in template for Interreg Programmes (ANNEX1) where interprogramme coordination could be highlighted.
 - **Section 1.2 template:** joint investment needs and complementarities and synergies with other forms of support,...macro-regional strategies, sea-basin strategies where the programme is covered by strategies
 - Coordination section:
 - Substance: overview of objectives of common interest with neighbouring programmes (option in table format)
 - Governance: short description of structures for coordination in place/planned
 - **EC Recommendation: programmes work together on a standard text on coordination which can be inserted in all Mediterranean programmes.**
 - **Section 2.1.2 template** (now section: 2.1.1.1): Priority/Specific objective Related types of action and their expected contribution to those specific objectives and to macro-regional strategies and sea-basis strategies, where appropriate
 - Justify the selected actions in relation to their territorial benefit/impact: reference to territorial/maritime frameworks
 - EUSAIR programmes: reference to relevant territorial challenges and prioritized actions of MRS action plan
 - References to relevant parts of Mediterranean sea basin strategies

Discussion with MS. National solutions How do you foresee programme intercoordination?

Objectives of the session:

MS will discuss on the role of the MS in improving complementarity in Interreg programmes. Their role in programming and in implementation.

Moderation: Mercedes.

Speakers:

- Monica Bellisario. Dipartimento per le politiche di coesione. Italy.

Italy follows a COMPREHENSIVE approach to coordination as a country, regarding Interreg but also ETC and mainstream programmes, following a wider strategic framework. In this line, Italy is also involving regions to introduce this Strategical approach with the Partnership Agreement for 2021-2027. Changing mind-sets. Finding the most adequate intervention scales and create value changes.

There are 2 coordination groups: Western Mediterranean and Adriatic Ionian (EUSAIR).

From a practical view: Awareness raising to come to something specific, such view is taken to programmes TF. Some ideas:

- Constant exchange of information on calendar and agendas of all programmes managed by Italy.
- The different timing is a challenge.
- Promote concrete meetings on specific topics.
- No need for governance.
- Exchange of information in a voluntary basis for the EUSAIR, since there is an intention to go further as a network of MA of the EUSAIR area to help a common basis to make more strategical contributions and insure complementarity of actions.

- Jean Luc Frés. Agence nationale de la cohésion des territoires France.

Based on the first meeting organised by Interact, France started to search for an internal coordination mechanism for programmes placed in France. The first document will check the existing gaps and it will go for recommendations to the programmes at the programming phase and it will try to advice for specific tools during the programing process and monitoring.

France has also organised a meeting across MA Interreg and mainstream programmes within the Alpine Strategy. In November first results will be ready and will be happy to offer such results.

- Spain represented by Moises, shared the ERDF managing authorities network

Thematic discussion in break out rooms: Natural Disaster and Risk reduction

QUESTION	<i>Managing Authority / Joint Secretariat</i>	<i>Member States / National Authority</i>	<i>European Commission</i>
<p>What are the linkages between TN and CBC within this Disaster and Risk Reduction topic?</p>	<p>CBC can focus on specific/ concrete actions (infrastructure) at NUTS III level CBC: being close to territorial needs and opportunity to link to mainstream thematic interests and synergies TN provide a more strategic framework and involve wider target groups (also from NUTS I) TN: inclusion and involvement of both shores of Med into one coordination mechanism TN can offer monitoring/governance/models and plans</p>	<p>Theme is important to start the process of exchange. Topic as facilitator of exchange. Basic requirement = capitalisation approach/intention of each Programme that would launch a coordination process</p> <p>Important to agree between MS (TF members) on the principle of coordination and the will to make this happened. Should not be a tick box exercise.</p> <p>Strategic narrative would be helpful to convince the monitoring committee members of the importance of coordination.</p>	<p>MRS - political thematic strategy TN - technical framework underpinning the thematic strategy - assuring homogeneity of actions at CBC level CBC - coordinated implementation at local level.</p>
<p>Do TN and CBC want to cooperate? How do TN and CBC programmes want to cooperate?</p>	<p>Capitalisation on 2014-2020 results can be used in programming the new period.</p> <p>Coordination is needed in order to align project's activities and results, also in order to identify the roles and specificities between TN and CBC.</p> <p>Synergies and complementarities between approved projects as part of</p>	<p>Exchange on the cooperation potentials should be specific, and this can be achieved through a selected topic, and look into concrete actions (who does what and why, project typologies and typology of actions).</p>	

	the programme capitalisation exercises	This also requires a temporary alignment of TF and a common shared strategy	
<i>Which do you think is the programme's main strength within the specific theme. Please consider the programme's impact assessment or mid term evaluation</i>	<p>CBC: Cooperation at NUTS III local level: Municipalities even small may fill in specific gaps in the management of risk</p> <p>Practical technological solutions developed by CBC that can be upscaled (surveillance systems, e.g), good practices</p> <p>TN: link with the MRS topics</p> <p>TN can act as a capitalisation platform for CBC programmes and supported project results, as well as capitalisation methodology</p>	<p>MED capitalisation and governance projects</p> <p>TN liaise with CBC</p>	

Points to be still clarified:

- a shared understanding of capitalisation would be beneficial
- to talk about cooperation, one should first define who does what well and why? To define level of contributions
- a clear methodology is needed on the results and information to be used for boosting coordination mechanisms. Based on a selected topic, one could develop a common methodological approach and a shared terminology on identified topic/challenge (e.g. a common grid on natural/technological hazards capitalising on ESPON Applied Researches or past Interact reports) in order to: 1) differentiate among different type of risks and hazards (natural, technological, combined, etc.); 2) identify a very specific challenge (e.g. risks related to maritime navigation) and differentiate CBC-TN intervention on it based on 2014-2020 experience.

Some information from Slido.com.

How would you like to follow up on the joint initiative of exploring synergies among programmes?

- Sharing info on selected PO and SO for harmonisation & common methodology (including a shared and common document)
- Identification of projects/Pilot activity among coordinated programmes/Focussed thematic activity
- Involving partner countries (non MS) into the exchange
- Provide surveys on what is working now, what could be improved, what could be invented

Where do you see potential for joint work?

- Capitalisation approaches/projects.
- Sharing info on selected PO and SO for harmonisation & common methodology (including a shared and common document).
- Complementarity among strands.
- Definition of common Calls/ToR/documents (narrative)
- Expertise support (Interact, TESIM, and others)
- Raising awareness activities/involvement of stakeholders.

Main Conclusions

1. Need to share information.
2. Joint PO2_ Biodiversity and Risk Management. Disaster and risk reduction
3. Inter-programme coordination is done in a voluntary basis and it is a process that should be supported by programme authorities
4. Working on synergies across programmes should be done in both during programming phase and implementation phase.
5. Challenges for inter-programme coordination to happen?
 - Programmes in different stages of programming: timing is crucial
 - Challenge: « complete coordination » (all programmes, many topics) vs « in depth coordination » (few programmes, limited topics)
6. Although interested in the same topic, there are different perspectives Inland vs Maritime, subgeographical needs East- West/ North and South
7. Among Promote the use of Technical Assistance and Specific Objective for better governance (ISO 1)
8. First step on Improving Synergies and interprogramme coordination in the programming phase (Section 1.2 and 2.1.1 template)
 - Recommendation for template: programmes work together on a standard text on coordination which can be inserted in all Mediterranean programmes
9. Clear identification of programmes value TN, CBC in order to tackle the challenge.
10. Acknowledgement the roles of National authorities (engagement and national coordination EU, ENI/NEXT and IPA), MA/JA (implementation) COM (facilitation)
11. Interprogramme coordination can be done through Governance structures, Capitalisation, operational environments that would support synergies. In the case of the Mediterranean e found that is very much topic based, where capitalisation together with the operational environment to support synergies
12. Bottom up approach. But with some support from EC. Ownership of the whole process. All programmes should have the feeling they are part of this system/methodology at that they have chosen to be part of it because they see it beneficial.
13. Consider EUSAIR and WestMed as territorial frameworks with specific indicators for the implementation
14. Need for a joint Methodology/Structured system for a coordination solution/mechanism. Methodology should be linked to themes, in order to establish a realistic framework .
15. Exploit the capitalisation and lessons learnt from the already programmes.
16. Coordination among DG's : DG Mare (SBS) DG Health and others

