EPICAH
Interreg Europe

www.interregeurope.eu/epicah

An interregional cooperation project for improving natural and cultural heritage policies

Regional Action Plan

of the Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" Programme

ASEV
obiettivo sviluppo

Interreg
MARITTIMO-IT FR-MARITIME

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

EPICAH - EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS FOR CROSS-BORDER ADVANCEMENT IN HERITAGE

Regional Action Plan

Policy instrument addressed	Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" 2014-2020
EPICAH partner involved in the Action Plan	Agenzia per lo Sviluppo Empolese Valdelsa (ASEV)
Country	Italy
NUTS2 region	Tuscany
Date	19/12/2019

Table of Contents

Annex 1 - Pilot Action

1. Introduction & Policy context

The purpose of this document is to provide proposals for the improvement of the Policy Instrument "Interreg VA Italy-France Maritime 2014-2020". The proposals were developed and formulated as a result of the interregional learning activities and exchange of experience between the partners of the Interreg project EPICAH in reference to 7 co-respective policy instruments for cross-border cooperation.

1.1. General information about the policy instrument

The present Action Plan aims to impact	
Investment for Growth and Jobs programme	
European Territorial Cooperation programme	✔
Other regional development policy instrument	

Name of the policy instrument addressed	Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" 2014-2020

The main objective of the Italy-France Maritime Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 (here below referred as 'Programme') is the long-term contribution in order to strengthen the cross-border cooperation among the participating regions and to make the cooperation zone a competitive and sustainable zone in the European and Mediterranean landscape.

The Programme priorities includes:

1. Economic development and territorial strengthening.

2. Promotion of the environmental sustainability at the basin level.

3. Improvement of the border efficiency.

4. Promotion of the cultural dialogue and the local governance.

The Programme takes part in the UE Strategy 2020 and is focused on an "inclusive, intelligent, sustainable growth" characterized by high levels of cooperation, productivity and social cohesion. In this context, **valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage in the cooperation area represents a fundamental asset for the sustainable growth.**

1.2. Programme area

The territory interested by the Programme extends for about 56.372 km^2 and unifies two different nations - Italy and France - with the involvement of 21 NUTS3, among which 4 are French and 17 are Italian:

Country	NUTS 2	NUTS 3
Italy	Sardinia	Sassari, Nuoro, Cagliari, Oristano, Olbia-Tempio, Ogliastra, Medio-Campidano, Carbonia-Iglesias
	Tuscany	Massa-Carrara, Lucca, Pisa, Livorno, Grosseto
	Liguria	Genoa, Imperia, La Spezia, Savona
France	Corsica	Corse-du-Sud, Haute-Corse
	Provence-Alps-Côte d'Azur	the Maritime Alps, Var

There are two sub-regions: the Tosco-Ligurian upper Tyrrhenian arch and the Sardinian-Corsican axis. Both of them are characterized by the fact of being maritime areas and the sea itself can be interpreted in terms of territorial subdivision describing and delimiting it.

The whole cooperation area has relevant **natural and cultural heritage - a fundamental resource for its development**.

1.3. Characterization of the actual situation of the programme regarding the cross-border cultural, natural heritage management and tourism

The area of the Programme is characterized by a variety of habitat of terrestrial and, in particular, marine species. The territory is distinguished by a significant natural heritage and represents the richest faunal marine area in the whole Mediterranean Sea. Totally there are 499 sites of community interest (SIC) and Zones of special protection (ZPS), 144 of them are situated in French territory and the rest part -355- in the Italian one. The total surface included in the Natura 2000 network is about 3.057.734 Ha having 4743 habitat, distinguished in 114 different typologies.

The cultural and natural heritage of the area has a huge value in terms of cross-border identity and also as an economic resource linked to the tourism and productive activities at the base of the blue and green economy, which has to be developed and promoted in an innovative and competitive way.

However, the cooperation area is strongly vulnerable in relation to the climate change and to the natural catastrophes. There are regularly negative effects from the natural point of view of the floods and fires, which contributed to emphasize dramatically the vulnerability of the area from the environmental and economic points of view increasing weakness of the tourist economy, which is still based on the season time strongly.

The cross-border area presents an articulated framework, in which the tourist potentialities and those of economic development got through the immense naturalistic and regional cultural heritages combine with needs of the rediscovery and protection of traditions and popular costumes, being integrating part of a millennial culture.

The cooperation space is rich of natural and cultural heritage, biodiversity and represents a unique landscape at the European level though there is the risk of abandon or savage exploitation. In this area there is an elevated number of tourist destinations, cruise traffic,

tourist ports and consequently, the Programme considers the **sustainable tourism one of the main instruments for the growth**. This sector is an excellence in all the territories of the area, in particular concerning the following tourist products: bathing tourism; naval tourism; food and wine (gastronomy) tourism, cultural tourism.

The area contains some of the most important tourist destinations and is based on the attraction power of such brands like Tuscany, taking advantage of significant tourist international fluxes. In the years of crisis, the international tourism itself has been a resource for the economy of this area. The regions of the Mediterranean area have proposed themselves separately on the tourist market, because of the fact that they had acquired a huge notoriety in the past. However, the globalised context implies the confrontation with new more and more competitive tourist destinations and asks for management models different from those having got success in our territories. The key of a correct management of the factors determining the quality and the variety of the of the territorial offering (sustainability, business models and governance) is in the **information government and the capacity of giving fast, complete and accessible answers to different information and personalised needs of the tourist**.

Considering the main criticalities of the cross-border area of the Programme, which include, but are not limited by:

- o Weakness of the integrated offers among the different regions of the area.
- o Necessity of confrontation with new more competitive tourist destinations.
- o The tourist economy that is still strongly based on the season time.
- o Negative effects of natural and terrestrial anthropic risks, which contributed to emphasize dramatically the vulnerability of the area from the environmental and economic points of view increasing the weakness of the tourist economy.
- o Environmental impacts of the tourist fluxes (water consumes, waste production, etc.).
- o Characterization of the tourism as a not sensitive configuration, defined as "mass tourism".

the challenges of the Programme, and in the same time the **potentiality for an "intelligent and sustainable growth"** concern:

Support for the competitiveness and attraction capacity of the area as an added value compared to the competitiveness of singular territories.
Valorisation of the cultural and natural heritage in the cooperation area.
Protection of the material heritage from the excessive exploitation (over-tourism phenomenon).
Protection of the traditions.
Encouragement of the development of thematic and integrated systems. In particularly, integration of the cultural heritage of the regions in a system of tourist promotion of the area.
Recognition of the strategic tourism role for the sustainable economic development, the territorial promotion and valorisation
Creation of new management models focused on the factors determining the quality and

the variety of the of the territorial offering (sustainability, business models and governance).
Development of interactive information technology platforms as a support to the tourist activities.
Support for the creation or increase of the connection through networks and relation sharing in order to implement the tourist destinations.

2. The background

2.1. Defining needs for improving the policy instrument

The project EPICAH by its activities pointes to support nature conservation and preservation of cultural heritage by making them accessible for tourism in a **sustainable** approach. Therefore, one of the main results that EPICAH intends to reach is to improve the **effectiveness of tourism activity** in managing the organization and valorization of cultural and natural heritage.

The first project activity was focused on the need analysis of each partner's Policy Instrument and previewed a preparation of one State of Art report by partner. The State of Art reports were based on the data of desk research and on the results of the specially created online Surveys that were distributed among the main stakeholders of the cross-border areas of each project partner.

The SWOT analysis of the IT-FR Maritime Programme done by ASEV in its State of Art report evidenced the existence of the following <u>weaknesses of the Policy Instrument 2 concerning the main topics of the project EPICAH</u> (sustainable tourism and natural & cultural heritage protection):

1. The Programme is focused more on the natural heritage protection compare to cultural heritage, moreover **there is an evident lack of appropriate attention to the tourism sector.**
2. **Lack of both horizontal and vertical integration of the projects** among them. For example, the outcomes of tourism projects are not integrated with other tourism projects. The projects dealing with cultural and natural heritage are not integrated in the system of tourism promotion of the area. The Programme finances both assets treated by the project EPICAH (Natural & cultural protection, and Tourism) but they are separated and one asset is not integrated with another. Sometime they even don't know about the outcomes and results of each other.
    As a consequence of the lack of integration there is a **low impact and sustainability of single projects** after their conclusion.
3. **Lack of a consultable database with a focus on the results / successful and transferable implementations of the past projects financed** by the Programme.
4. **General lack of commitment of cross-border partnership,** with poor participation by public and private stakeholders outside a defined strategic framework.

The stakeholders of the IT-FR Maritime Programme involved in the EPICAH online Survey highlighted that, according to their opinion, the principal cause of abovementioned weaknesses of the Programme arise to **a not sufficiently good promotion of the cooperation between projects** from the part of the Programme.

The first EPICAH project joint product (a Joint Report "How is being enhanced the border effect in the protection and development of natural and cultural cross-border heritage in Europe"), based on the National State of Art reports (which in their turn were based on deck analysis and on the online survey launched within the EPICAH project, targeting main stakeholders of the 7 border regions concerned) corroborates that improvements in the **effectiveness of tourism** sector of cross-border areas require among others:

- o   **Integration of tourist information** between border areas.
- o   A **continuous comparison of best practices** to identify the key replicable success factors.
- o   **Joint marketing strategies**.
- o   Packages with **joint cross-border offers**.

Since the overall fields of improvement identified in the EPICAH Joint Report were comparable to those spotted for the IT-FR Maritime Programme, the following ideas about the measures of improvement offered by the EPICAH Joint report were considered useful for the Policy Instrument 2 by the IT-FR LSG and the MA:

- ✓   In neighbouring borders it is necessary to seek cross-border tourism projects that represent positive trend towards further development of cross-border strategies and to learn from them in accordance to implement the best practices within the local environment.
- ✓   It is important within the tourism strategies to keep in mind to form some kind of an intermediate body - platform, that would help to mediate the contacts and link the tourism partners and projects together, and therefore improve cross-border cooperation between entities with different approaches. One of the most important reasons, why the cross-border tourism projects face difficulties, is the fact that the partners on different sides of the border do not know about each other, even if sometimes they are dealing even with the same issues. Or they are missing a platform/possibility to meet appropriate partners for the cross-border cooperation in tourism.

Furthermore, the Joint Report (in the section dedicated to the examples of EPICAH project partners' Good Practices) offered other inputs in relation to the areas of intervention identified for the IT-FR Maritime Programme. IT-FR LSG members paid particular attention to the following Good Practices:

- a)   "The Czech-Bavarian Cultural Platform Treffpunkt. "Treffpunkt" is the Czech-Bavarian Cultural Platform and joint project of Pilsen 2015 (Czech) and the city of Regensburg (Bavaria). The main activity is **networking**. Its objective is to network cultural actors and organizers on both sides of the border. Through networking meetings and exchange channels, participants have the opportunity to meet, exchange ideas and explore their partners.
- b)   European cultural routes. European Cultural Routes are examples of cross-border cooperation joint development strategies and actions as they represent **networks of territories that "exploit" and develop natural and cultural share assets in a coherent and**

sustainable way. Their development is based on the establishment of a common and participated governance structure funded in strict principles regarding the preservation, management and promotion of the heritage. They create/develop a common identity (and also a common brand) based on the uniqueness of the assets and resources territories share. At the same time, such development and consolidation normally generates a stronger felling of belonging and shared ownership. By definition (Council of Europe, 2006), the European cultural routes are "networks of interactions and economic exchange based on culture and creativity that incorporating principles of sustainability, fairness and inclusion based on" cooperation and on cross-border cooperation, making of them also good practices for the promotion of the objectives of the European Union Cohesion Policy. Nowadays, the main cultural European route is the Way of Saint James that also represents one of the main thematic of cross-border tourism projects in the Spain-Portugal borders and Spain-France borders.

c) NecsTour Network. The European NECSTOUR network, project of which Tuscany is the promoter region with Catalonia in Spain and PACA in France, is an instrument for the exchange of a route of actions among a group of regions, local autonomies, member states and European Commission, but also with the industrial, social and consuming universe. **NECSTOUR proposes itself as a permanent debate lab, a platform of exchange of good practices, experiential exchange, experimentation of shared models of measurement of phenomena and social dialogue.** The common element is the will of confrontation on the one hand, about the analysis and the exchange of good practices and on the other hand on the application of the sustainable objectives of the Agenda 21 in the regions and the tourist realities.

d) Eixo Atlantico strategy to boost tourism at border between Galicia (ES) and North Portugal. Likewise, the strategy followed by the Eixo Atlántico in the field of tourism is focused mainly (although not exclusively) on the promotion of local tourism, valorizating the internal market of 7 million inhabitants that the Eurorregion Galicia-North of Portugal has. Thereby, **the strategy is oriented to promote mutual knowledge**, the creation of wealth in the territory and to avoid as much as possible the phenomenon of seasonality. To implement the strategy, several key-elements are used, among which "Seminar to Exchange Experience". Once a year, Eixo Atlántico organizes a meeting between its members tackling tourism. At this seminar, cities discuss around a central theme, being invited to think about common strategies and having the opportunity to present their news in the field of tourism promotion. **The creation of cross border tourism strategies is a way to create synergies between territories and capitalize important tourism assets.**

At this point the EPICAH Joint Report, as well as single State of Art reports of EPICAH partners and online Survey results, gave a rich input for discussions during the IT-FR LSG meetings. The conclusion of these discussions, that also took into consideration the weaknesses of the PI2, evidenced the necessity to improve:

- non-infrastructural networks,

- communication and networking between the projects of the same sector/asset in order to make them aware about the outcomes of each other and to find ways of the results use,

- communication and networking between different sectors of the Programme (tourism with natural & cultural heritage protection) in order to facilitate joint/common strategies for development,

- complimentary tourism offers through the exchange; integrated offers among the different regions of the area, as well as among different projects. This, by the way, could also help to solve another weakness of the area regarding the tourist economy that is still strongly based on the season time (Development of an integrated system to enhance heritage is an opportunity for tourism deseasonalisation),

- accessibility to the generated knowledge for the project in course or other future projects, or even for the beneficiaries of the area.

These needs translated in <u>objectives</u> were further confirmed by the EPICAH learning activities of 2017 that took place in Italy. The EPICAH project partners feedback and assessment of the IT-FR Thematic seminar, GPs and State of Art evidenced that the PI2 had the following main weakness: "here is a great number of projects proposing itineraries & joint action plans, however most of them did not manage to be sustainable and capitalized after the finalisation"; and opportunity: "transfer of know-how and good practices in the field within cross-border and transnational projects".

The EPICAH project partners gave to IT-FR Maritime Programme stakeholders some recommendations and ideas about the measures to adopt to implement the needed improvements, namely:

- to pay more attention to issues related to projects' transferability, by analysing in what way the transferability of the results can be ensured;
- to consider some actions aiming the exchange of knowledge and good practices with other already developed cross-border initiatives;
- to establish a proper organisational form during the implementation to ensure the sustainability of the project results;
- to use the projects results to increase the cross-border cooperation within the policy instrument territory mainly by organizing the same project activities;
- to assure closer participation of the programme bodies in the implementation of the approved projects;
- to assure the capitalisation of the results in a very practical way.

The IT-FR LSG members analysing the EPICAH partners and experts considerations related to PI2, concluded that "it would be necessary to **develop coordinated synergies and partnerships in the fields of tourism, culture and the environment at both strategic and operational level to efficiently exploit tools and resources for the sustainable tourism promotion of cross-border areas**, while

valorising, and highlighting their cultural environmental resources. **The use of innovative, smart and easy-to-use tools for this purpose is a basic requirement".**

Summarising abovementioned information, the following activities and documents provided input for defining needs and measures of improvement of the IT-FR Maritime Programme:

Activity /document	Input
The **Joint Report** "How is being enhanced the border effect in the protection and development of natural and cultural cross-border heritage in Europe"	Requirements for improvements in the effectiveness of tourism sector of cross-border areas
	Measures of the improvement
	Suggestion on the possible areas of intervention by providing examples of the GPs of cross-border areas of the EPICAH project partners.
The State of Art and Online Survey results	Recommendations about the areas of intervention
EPICAH **partners' feedback and assessment forms** for the Thematic Seminar and Study Visit in Italy	Recommendations and ideas about the measures to adopt to implement the needed improvements

The meetings with the MA of the PI2 stated that the most convenient method to front the weaknesses of the PI2 and to reach the objectives proposed by the EPICAH LSG members (mentioned above) was to **influence effectiveness of the programme management and organization through the improvements of the capitalization,** which is the only part of the Programme activities that directly implies the processes and issues in point. Capitalization is an activity that involves the program bodies and the beneficiaries of the projects in a common path of valorisation and dissemination of experiences and it permits maximize the positive impact of the projects through the cluster approach – an approach that consists in uniting/grouping similar projects and initiatives in a network to exchange positive experiences and to learn one from other or even simply act and work together.

It is necessary to precise that the capitalization as a process had already being previewed by the IT-FR Maritime Programme in its previous programming period (2007-2013). However, since there are still some lacks, highlighted by EPICAH and connected with this process, it is obvious that there are some weaknesses in the methodology that imply a necessity to revise and reorganize the process of capitalisation. One of such weaknesses, related to the limitation already mentioned in the SWOT analysis of the IT-FR Maritime Programme done by ASEV in its State of Art report, regards **lack of a tourism cluster** inside of the Programme process of capitalisation. During the previous period of programming, the PI2 previewed grouping the projects in various clusters (by definition homogeneous internally and heterogeneous among them) which shared the same thematic area and which therefore had similar or complementary activities and aims. However, among four clusters there were no one dedicated to tourism.

A deep analyses conducted by the PI2 MA and ASEV permitted to define a first draft of measures to improve the process of capitalization:

1. Create thematic poles on the theme of sustainable tourism and cultural&natural heritage.
2. Create a methodology for the management of clusters / poles in the different phases: from planning, through implementation to evaluation.
3. Organise programmed and guided/facilitated meetings between the clusters members: having the opportunity to present their outputs in the field of tourism and cultural&natural heritage.
4. Create a database with the outputs of the Programme, which can be useful as input in the phase of programming/implementing of the new projects, to improve access to the information and results.
5. Point to the community of exchange and integration between projects related to different programs.
6. Use the knowledge acquired in the projects for the planning phase of the future cooperation program (post 2020).

The annual event of the cross-border Cooperation Programme Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" of November 2017 and, organised in concomitance, the first cross-border workshop of EPICAH announced the new plan of capitalization, which, taking into consideration the input of EPICAH, proclaimed the creation of the thematic clusters (from projects funded on the cross-border Call 1 - launched in January 2017 and those funded on Call 2 – approved in July 2017), among which one cluster of sustainable tourism (uniting the partners of 18 IT-FR cross-border maritime projects) and one cluster of natural & cultural heritage protection.

The intention to improve the process of capitalization was announced, the tourism cluster was created, however it was still needed to structure the process of improvement better.

2.2.   Lessons learnt

In the 3rd semester Italian partner with help of the external expert and the LSG members analysed the good practices presented during the study visits and thematic seminars organised in Spain-Portugal region. Such projects as Ruta del Vino de Toro, Way of Santiago (Portuguese path) and Eurocity Chaves-Verín. Spa tourism, being focused on various tourism products developed to promote cross-border cultural and natural heritage, were selected as useful for the action plan in the area of PI2. Their approach to **integrate the projects with each other in an overall marketing and management strategy** in order to **create an integrated tourism product** represents exactly what the PI2 needs to concentrate on. The IT-FR Programme has a lot of good examples of single recovery interventions but it needs to move toward the projects that can create integrated tourism products (like the projects presented during the Study visit in ES-PT).

The **"smart tourism approach"**, which based on intelligent use of ICT and big data to improve the management of tourism to make it more sustainable and competitive (used in the projects Smart Heritage and Herit Data presented during the Thematic seminar in Spain) was also considered as interesting and useful for the improvement of the PI2.

In the autumn of 2018 the necessity to accelerate the process of capitalization (caused, on the one hand, by the insecurity about the future funding of the cross-border maritime programmes and sequent necessity to improve the current programme, and, on the other hand, by wish to include the experience and knowledge of the projects of the 1st call, the conclusion of which was planned for September 2019, in the process of capitalization) appeared and forced the PI2 to **concentrate the activities of capitalization on the use of the acquired knowledge now** and not in the planning phase of the future cooperation program (post 2020). During the meetings with MA, the focus was done to a tentative to define better the possible improvements to include in the "Action Plan of the Policy Instrument 2". As mentioned before, the chosen improvement action for the PI2 intends to implement changes in the process of capitalization of the IT-FR Maritime Programme in order to improve effectiveness of the programme management and organization. In this regard, in the 4th semester, it was defined that the activities for improvement of the process of capitalization should concentrate themselves on obtaining such results that can yield to the projects already in progress (and those of the next and the last 4th call). In other words, the improvement of capitalization should try to give to the ongoing projects an added value, which will be able to reform or influence the final part of the ongoing projects (for example, from the point of view of the realizations and integration of results, as learned from the ES-PT good practices). In this context, in January 2019 the input of EPICAH arrived to the MA in form of the ideas about the first concrete actions of the improvement of capitalization process, which the MA then approved and started to take in practice in spring 2019.

During the Study visit in Czech-Bavarian area (late March 2019), another very useful Good Practice for PI2 improvement was learned by the IT-FR stakeholders: **DEPO 2015. It is an active venue combining culture and business, cultural and socially development projects. Its activities fulfil the function of a cultural cluster**, the common denominator in everything the DEPO 2015 does is openness, creativity and innovation. **The cluster approach** goal is networking of cultural actors and managers from Pilsen (CZ) and Regensburg (DE) and their surroundings. The target groups are involved in the networking meet-ups and exchange tours which give them an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas. The IT-FR LSG asked to deepen work DEPO 2015 activities and methodologies, the difficulties encountered and the results achieved in order to be able to apply them in their cross-border area. It was explained that the community building actions - the thematic networking actions - are mostly organized once a year and they are always focus on specific long-term topic (e.g. design for entrepreneurs, cross-border culture, innovation in education). However, often there is a **mix of results or good practices that regard also other topics**. During the meetings, the most successful concepts are TED or PECHA KUCHA. Another activity that works well is to take the stakeholders out to see the good practices with their own eyes. It is more time demanding, but definitely working better than traditional thematic conference. The main results include: new contacts, new cooperations and projects, new activities in the territory, new jobs. Among the difficulties of DEPO 2015 there were mentioned:
- searching for good practices to present real and physical results, what is the only way how to prove success for some people, is a time demanding activity and mostly it is not covered by specific job position;
- attracting new organization that are not used to cooperate this way (so it can happen, that all the networking actions are visited by the same subjects).

The IT-FR LSG meeting of April 2019, dedicated to the analysis of the Czech-Bavarian good practices, confirmed the orientation of the stakeholders toward the experiences/practices able to create integrated tourism products.

The Thematic Seminar, that took place during the Study visit in Estonia-Latvia crossborder area in June 2019, offered to ASEV a possibility to learn better (directly from the Head of Estonia-Latvia Programme Joint Secretariat, Mrs. Helena Jarviste) the Good Practice that regards the approach applied for the process of **capitalization of the Programme**. It was explained that the main problems that the Programme has to front in this regard are the following:

- no budget is previewed for capitalization process.
- There is a <u>necessity to integrate the projects of different areas (assets), as well as their results among them</u>.
- Everything is based on pure enthusiasm of the involved stakeholders since the capitalization it is not among the compulsory activities previewed by the Programme.
- Absence of any written methodology/guideline for capitalization.

Initially, the Estonia-Latvia cross-border Programme tried to carry out the capitalization by organizing meetings among the representatives of different projects of the same area with the aim to let them know each other, to present the results of their projects and to inform others about the planned activities. Such meetings were organised one–two times a year. However, since such approach was considered not sufficiently effective, in 2018 the Programme decided to change the methodology and tried to <u>unite in one workshop the representatives of the projects of different areas</u> (business, tourism...). During the workshop, the project representatives were divided in working groups and were asked to discuss and to find answers for the following questions:

- **how they can integrate the products of each other**?

and

- **how they can cooperate one with others during the project activities planned for the next period**?

They were given about one and a half hour for a discussion. After that, on the base of the results of the debate, all together under the guide of one facilitator they tried to define a common plan of actions (for example, on using the dissemination events of one project to involve other projects that have the same target...). This new approach in capitalization was evaluated as positive and effective by the participants. And it can also be very useful for the PI2.

The method of Estonia-Latvia cross-border Programme was considered useful to place in the base of the activities of capitalization of the PI2.

The following table summarises the input of EPICAH Good Practices for the improvement of the IT-FR Maritime Programme:

Cross-border area	Good practice name	Lesson learnt / Input
Spain-Portuguese	Ruta del Vino de Toro Way of Santiago (Portuguese path) Eurocity Chaves-Verín Spa tourism	These projects demonstrate an useful approach of **integration of the projects** in an overall marketing and management strategy in order to **create an integrated tourism product**.
	Smart Heritage Herit Data	Both these projects use the **smart tourism approach** based on intelligent use of ICT and big data to improve the management of tourism to make it more sustainable and competitive. Moreover, the Smart Heritage project teaches how to face the challenge of balancing conservation of natural and cultural heritage with tourism valorization.
	European cultural routes	An example of **networks of cross-border territories** that "exploit" and develop natural and cultural share assets in a coherent and sustainable way.
	Eixo Atlantico strategy to boost tourism at border between Galicia (ES) and North Portugal	An example of the strategy oriented to the promotion of mutual knowledge, the creation of wealth in the territory and to avoid as much as possible the phenomenon of seasonality. The creation of cross border tourism strategies is **a way to create synergies between territories and capitalize important tourism assets**.
Czech-Bavarian	DEPO 2015	An useful and successful example of using a **cluster approach** in the management of cultural heritage and in the integrating the cultural heritage in tourism.
Estonian-Latvian	The approach used in the capitalization process by the Programme Interreg VA Estonia-Latvia	A very useful example of a new approach in capitalisation (experimented in 2018) applied by the PI Managing Authority to **integrate the products of different projects and areas of the Programme,** as well as to **stimulate the cooperation between projects** during and after their realization.

3. Improvement actions

3.1. Action 1

The analysis carried out above clearly showed that the main defect of the Programme is a lack **of both horizontal and vertical integration of the projects** given to the not sufficiently good promotion of the cooperation between projects from the part of the Programme, what leads to a **low impact and sustainability of single projects** after their conclusion and, as a further consequence, to the general weakness of the integrated offers among the different regions of the area which reduces the **potentiality for an "intelligent and sustainable growth".**

The good practices of EPICAH partners, acquired during the interregional learning activities, demonstrated that creation of integrated products, systems and offers, as well as cross-border tourism strategies can be facilitated by combining different projects (cultural, business, tourism...) in a network, which then is need to be guided and supported in the process of development of coordinated synergies. The use of networks (meetings, seminars, platforms) in order to exchange ideas and GPs, to discuss the common strategies, to explore projects and partners, to develop natural & cultural share assets in a sustainable way, and to create cross-border tourism strategies benefits the capitalization of important tourism assets. In particularly, as showed by the great examples of the partners from other regions, such networks can exploit:
- smart tourism approach (like Spanish-Portuguese Smart Heritage and Herit Data),
- cluster approach (like Czech-Bavarian DEPO 2015).

Considering that the Italy-France Maritime Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 is at the end of the programming period, and that all four calls are closed and the ongoing projects are in the phase of implementation or conclusion, the only aspect of the Programme that can still impact the sustainability of single projects is the process of capitalisation. The possible improvement should permit to **concentrate the activities of capitalization on the results that can yield to the projects in progress.**

Being inspired by the ES-PT and Czech good practices, as well as by the new methodology in capitalisation of Programme Interreg VA Estonia-Latvia used to integrate the products of different projects and areas of the Programme, and to stimulate the cooperation between projects during and after their realization, but considering also the detected imperfections of this methodology, the following specific action was defined for realization:

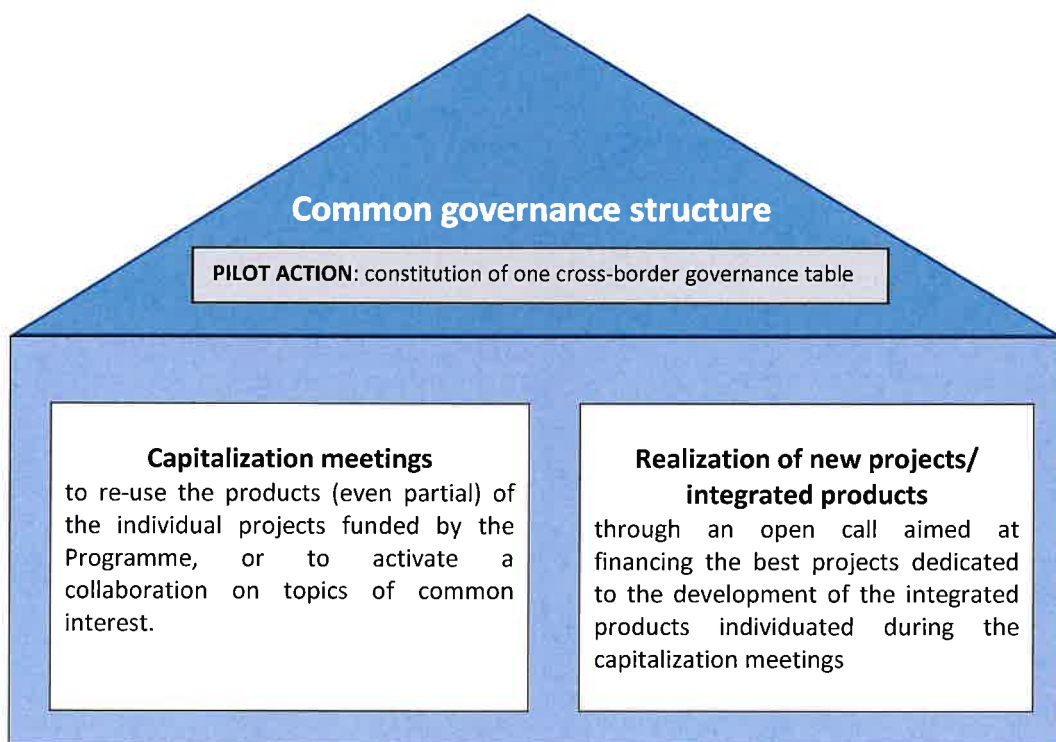| Action 1	Implement changes in the process of capitalization of the IT-FR Maritime Programme

Action Plan type		
Type 1: Implementation of new projects		
Type 2: Change in the management of the policy instrument (improved governance)	✔	
Type 3: Change in the strategic focus of the policy instrument (structural change)		

Goals of the Action 1:

- improve effectiveness of the programme management and organization;
- valorize and maximize positive impact of single projects financed by the programme;
- encourage networking and integration between projects,
- facilitate and enhance dialogue and connections between different sectors of the Programme in order to foster joint/common strategies for development, and creation of complimentary tourism offers.

The identified improvement of the capitalisation process presumes **three possible levels:**

Common governance structure

PILOT ACTION: constitution of one cross-border governance table

Capitalization meetings
to re-use the products (even partial) of the individual projects funded by the Programme, or to activate a collaboration on topics of common interest.

Realization of new projects/ integrated products
through an open call aimed at financing the best projects dedicated to the development of the integrated products individuated during the capitalization meetings

1. A basic level. It regards the activities of **implementation of the capitalisation meetings** among the representatives of two poles of the Programme: 'Sustainable tourism' and 'Conservation, protection and development of natural and cultural heritage'. The purpose of the meetings is to identify possible capitalization actions and economies of scale among the ongoing projects, as well as possible integration of the project products. In other words: to re-use the products (even partial) of the individual projects funded by the Programme, or to activate a collaboration on topics of common interest.

2. An intermediate level. If at the basic level of capitalisation the single projects have the opportunity to re-use the results of other parallel ongoing projects (or those already ended), at this phase of capitalization, the projects (as a whole or parts of them, or partners of them)

are either put together to create a wider system project or completed/replicated in another area. This phase is focused on the **realization of new projects / integrated products** identified during the activities of the capitalization of the 1st level and connected to the necessity of additional financing from the side of the Programme.

3. The highest level. This level <u>needs to be tested</u> before the Managing Authority can decide if to apply it or not. It regards **establishment of a governance structure** to make the most important integrated products and achievements (developed during the activities of the capitalization of the 2nd level) endure in time.

The projects of the Programme that are dealing with/working on such outputs as: certifications, brands, cross-border networks of tour operators, networks of business support tools, memorandum of understanding for the enhancement, management and promotion of the cross-border sustainable tourism itinerary, are united in one working group called "Models of governance of destination". Working together during the implementation of the Action plan they will be able to help finding solutions for integration and sustainability of their outputs, they will be able to suggest and indicate the direction to take, but, given the nature of their outputs and therefor the nature of their integrated products, it will be out of their power (as well as out of the power of the Programme) to carry out/apply the defined models of governance in real life of the territory. Therefore, the **involvement and interest from the policy-makers and other institutions, authorities and stakeholders, that manage their respective areas and data, is essential** to obtain a long-term and substantial effect for the CB area.

3.2. Activities of the Action 1

	Activity	Period
1.1	**Development of the methodology** on how to manage the activities of the poles 'Sustainable tourism' and 'Conservation, protection and development of natural and cultural heritage' as "thematic" learning communities and on how to integrate and reuse knowledge and results: 1.1.1. Definition of the methodology 1.1.2. Finalisation	 February – July 2019 January – June 2020
1.2	**Identification of flagship projects** (projects that do not finish on themselves, but involve other realities/projects and create networks): 1.2.1. Definition of the concept and methodology 1.2.2. Identification and selection of the projects	 September – December 2019 January – June 2020
1.3	**Implementation of the capitalization meetings** among the representatives of two poles: 'Sustainable tourism' and 'Conservation, protection and development of natural and cultural heritage'. The purpose of the	

		meetings is to identify possible capitalization actions and economies of scale among the projects	March 2019 – January 2021
1.4		**Implementation of the in-depth meetings** among the projects of the poles aiming at assisting and emphasizing their orientation towards 'quality' results, deepen the operational and technical aspects of the possible interconnections and integration between the projects	October 2019 – April 2021
1.5		**Ex post validation of the new approach and methodology for the capitalisation process** to extend it to other 4 poles of the Programme.	June-July 2020
1.6		**Specification of the improvements to apply to the ongoing projects and/or their outputs** following the results of the capitalization process	February 2020 – June 2021
1.7		Creation of a **library** (database) with the realizations of the projects	July 2020 – June 2021
1.8		Publication of **a call for expression of interest** for projects (a call without deadlines) aiming at financing the best projects dedicated to the development of the integrated products, identified during the 1st phase of capitalisation (described above: 1.1 – 1.6).	Starting from June-July 2020 until October 2021
1.9		Establishment **of a cross-border tourism governance model:**	January 2020–December 2021
		1.9.1. **Pilot phase**: Constitution of one cross-border governance table. The pilot phase is needed to test a governance structure by constitution of one cross-border governance table opened to both private and public relevant regional stakeholders in order to increase the effect and durability of integrated activities and products of the cross-border area. The detailed description of the Pilot action is available in Annex 1).	March 2020 – May 2021
		1.9.2. **Post-pilot phase**: Extension of the piloted governance model to other Regions and other integrated projects/products of the sustainable tourism pole.	June 2021 – December 2021
		1.9.3. **Possible** formal integration of the governance structure in the capitalization process of the Programme	June 2021 – December 2021

All the activities are complementary and continuative. Some of them are periodic or repetitive. The activities 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 were started in 2019 and will continue their implementation in 2020. They were carried out by the MA of the PI2 following the input of ASEV (according to the results of the EPICAH activities, the lesson learned and the LSG meetings' results). The activity 1.3 was implemented only for the projects financed under the calls 1 and 2 and in 2020 will be replicated for the projects financed under the calls 2, 3 and 4.

The activities were started in 2019 in order to involve in the capitalization process the projects of the 1st call, considering that they are closing in 2019. In February 2019 the MA with support of EPICAH created the draft Guide Lines (methodology) for the first capitalization meetings aimed to identify possible economies of scale between the projects of the **two** thematic clusters (Sustainable Tourism and Natural&Cultural heritage protection). Before the meetings, a request to fill in a summary presentation of the activities and outputs of each project was sent to the project coordinators. The collected documents were then forwarded to all participants by email. Thanks to this, the participants obtained a clear idea of the activities and outputs of other projects of both clusters, what made the meetings more focused and facilitated the discussion.

During the workshops, the participants (one-two representative for each project) were invited to reply to three questions:

1. (vertical integration) The first question was addressed to the representatives of the 1st call: "How can your outputs be reused by other projects, or included in their activities."

2. (vertical integration) The second question was addressed to the representatives of the 2nd call: "How can the achievements foreseen in your project be shared among the thematic pole projects, so to be reused by other projects and / or integrated into their activities."

3. (horizontal integration) The third question was addressed to the representatives of the 2nd call: "How could you **develop your activities in synergy with projects** with similar / output similar activities in order to **achieve common realizations among groups of projects.**"

Once the referents of the projects replied to the questions, the replies were red by the participants together and discussed in order to identify similar / complementary activities and outputs and to aggregate them by action / output affinity.

After the workshops the results were elaborated and the summary report, containing the synergies proposed between different project activities aimed at achieving economies of scale, was created. The achievements of the projects of two thematic poles were then grouped into four categories: paths / packages / offer mapping; business networks, territories; digital ecosystems / ICT tools; brands / certifications.

On the basis of four abovementioned categories the MA identified 3 thematic areas:
1. Strategies of co-marketing and promotion;

2. Digital ecosystems / ICT tools;

3. Destination governance models.

The division of the projects into three work groups was proposed, following the synergies between the outputs that emerged during the workshops. Therefore, each type of work has been associated with types of achievements to be integrated / to be made interoperable.

The next phase of implementation is aimed to deepen the operational and technical aspects of the possible interconnections between the projects, so to define the integration of the projects.

In order to proceed with the work it is necessary to elaborate the action plan matrix: one for each above group. Then to evaluate the work carried out in order to capture the actions to be carried out for the projects themselves and the necessary interventions, in other words, all three matrix will need to be discussed and validated by all the components of two poles.

In 2020, the whole process that includes the capitalisation meetings will need to be repeated for the projects of the 3rd and 4th call (with eventual participation of the projects of the 2nd call). The previously created Guide Lines (methodology) will help to minimize the confusion of new cluster members. To finance the new integrated projects and products identified during the capitalisation meetings, a **call for expression of interest** will be published by the Managing Authority in 2020.

The highest possible step of the improvement of the capitalization process of the Programme regards the possibility to increase and enlarge the effect and durability of the already finalized integrated activities/products of the projects. It can be done by involvement of the regional and/or national authorities and other important private stakeholders in the process of capitalization by **establishment of the governance structure**. The goal of the governance structure is to to make the most important integrated products and achievements (developed during the activities of the capitalization of the 2nd level) endure in time, or in other words: to design and adopt the agreements/decisions/measures that will let the already finalised Maritime Programme projects' results last in the future.

To test the governance structure, the constitution of one cross-border governance table opened to both private and public relevant regional stakeholders is planned. The pilot previews a formalization of the governance table of one project of the Programme, and a modelling of the governance structure by producing a Guideline on how to implement a cross-border structure for the governance of the integrated products of the projects related to sustainable tourism (*Annex 1*).

The pilot, in case of its success, will be followed by the extension of the piloted governance model to other outputs of the Program. In practice, the procedure described in the Guideline, produced during the pilot, will be applied to integrated products of the projects related to sustainable tourism.

Finally, a formal integration of the governance structure in the programme capitalization process can happen through a decision of the Monitoring Committee of the Programme. After the pilot, the Managing Authority will inform the Monitoring Committee of the Programme about its results, and in case they are positive, will propose to formally include the governance structure in the capitalization process in quality of a permanent feature.

The following table summarizes the contribution of the activities described in the action plan for improvement of the policy instruments addressed:

Activity	Expected result	Improvement of the Programme
Specification of the improvements to apply to the ongoing projects and/or their outputs following the results of the capitalization	Availability of a document that defines actions to be carried out for the projects themselves and the necessary interventions	The projects that are already underway are improved. Their impact is valorised and maximised.

process		Inefficient use of the Program resources is reduced thanks to: - re-use of the products of other parallel ongoing projects (or those already ended), - collaboration between ongoing projects on topics of common interest.
Publication of a call for expression of interest for projects (a call without deadlines) aiming at financing the best projects dedicated to the development of the integrated products, identified during the 1st phase of capitalisation	New integrated projects and products are financed	The residuals of the Programme (underspending reported by the projects) are used efficiently and their use derives from the capitalisation process. Wider project systems created or completed/replicated in another Programme area.
Formalization of the governance table and **Modelling of the governance structure** (this activity is a subject of the Pilot Proposal approval)	Availability of a Guideline on how to implement a cross-border structure for the governance of the integrated products of the projects related to sustainable tourism (tourist itineraries, brands, marketing strategies, networks of intelligent destinations etc). The policy-makers and relevant institutions and authorities that manage the respective CB areas, issues and data are involved in the process of capitalization	A long-term and substantial effect and durability of the most important integrated products and achievements for the CB area is assured.

3.3.   Players involved

Development phase:

Besides the Agency for the Development (**ASEV**) the following actors were involved in the development of the action plan:

1. The **Managing Authority** of the Policy instrument 2 Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" 2014-2020.

2. A **Local Stakeholders Group** was formed at the beginning of the project EPICAH to:

- accompany different project activities,

- conduct periodic meetings analysing the lessons learned,

- debate on proposals for adopting these lessons to the territory.

Among the stakeholders that took part of the LSG of the PI2 there were: Tuscany Region, Liguria Region, Confesercenti Toscana (Confederation of Commercial and Tourist Operators), Province of Livorno, Parks of Val di Cornia S.P.A., Municipality of Massa, Petra Patrimonia Corsica and others.

The members of the LSG and the Managing Authority were involved in all project activities better described in the section 2 of the present document and favored the development of the action plan.

Implementation phase:

The following players will be involved in the second phase of the project - implementation of the Action Plan:

- Main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the Programme:
  representatives of the projects financed by the Programme IT-FR Maritime under the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th calls. In particular, 18 projects of the 'Sustainable Tourism' pole and 5 projects of the 'Protection and development of the natural and cultural heritage' pole.
  They will participate to the capitalizzation and in-depth meetings (activities 1.3 and 1.4). They can also be benefied from the activity 1.8 in case they decide to apply for the call.

- Managing Authority of the PI2: it has the power and authority to influence the methods used and will be responsible for the organisation of the capitalization meetings and for ex post validation of the new approach and methodology, as well as for the library creation. The MA will design and finance the call (related to the Action 1) including its publication, evaluation, contracting, implementation monitoring etc.

- PP5-ASEV, will support the managing Authority of the IT-FR Maritime Programme in the following ways:
  - supporting the MA in the drafting and updating the methodology on how to manage the capitalisation activities of the poles.
  - Supporting the MA in the capitalisation and in depth meetings preparation and conduction.
  - Supporting the beneficiaries after implementation of the capitalisation meetings by providing insights concerning the supplementary actions to include in the ongoing projects.
  - Monitoring the indicators' achievement level.
  - Moreover, in case of the Pilot Proposal approval, all pilot activities will be under the PP5 responsibility, namely: definition of governance table to be implemented; definition of

functions and tasks to be assigned to the governance table for capitalization, identification of public and private decision makers and other stakeholders to be involved; planning strategies for involving decision makers and stakeholders, implementation of engagement strategies, functional tests of the governance table, evaluation of the functioning of the table and fine tuning, formalization of the governance table and modelling of the governance structure.

3.4. Timeframe

ACTIVITY	2019	2020	2021
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
1.1. Development of the methodology			
1.1.1. Definition of the methodology			
1.1.2. Finalisation			
1.2. Identification of flagship projects			
1.2.1. Definition of the concept and methodology			
1.2.2. Identification and selection of the projects			
1.3. Implementation of the capitalization meetings			
1.4. Implementation of the in-depth meetings			
1.5. Ex post validation of the new approach and methodology for the capitalisation process			
1.6. Specification of the improvements to apply to the ongoing projects and/or their outputs			
1.7. Creation of a library (database) with the realizations of the projects			
1.8. Publication of a call for expression of interest			
1.9. Establishment of one cross-border tourism governance model			
1.9.1. Constitution of one cross-border governance table (PILOT)			
1.9.2. Extention of the CB governance table to other regions and other identified integrated products/projects (in case the pilot is successful)			

3.5. Output indicators

Action	Indicator	Baseline	Target
Improvement of the process of capitalization	Number of the capitalization and in-depth meetings	0	5
	Number of calls for expression of interest	0	1

4. Risk Assessment

Nr.	Description of the potential risk	Proposed risk-mitigation measures
1	Failure to carry out the activities of the Action Plan	Detailed time planning and constant monitoring from the side of ASEV in collaboration with the Managing Authority will assure the fulfilment of the activities.
2	Non-realistic time-planning	All deadlines were agreed with the Managing Authority. However, in case of necessity and any unexpected delays, some ongoing adjustment will be applied to the timeframe of the action in order to permit the conclusion of all the activities of the action within the end of the second period of the project EPICAH.

5. Monitoring

ASEV, as partner of the project EPICAH, will monitor the implementation of the Action Plan.

It will:

- constantly check the execution of the activities of the action,

- periodically verify the achievement of the indicators,

- report the progress to the EPICAH coordinator in each semester.

6. Official Signatures

6.1. ASEV – Agenzia per lo Sviluppo Empolese Valdelsa

Date:	*19/03/2020*
Organization (Italian)	ASEV – Agenzia per lo Sviluppo Empolese Valdelsa
Organization (English)	ASEV – Agency for the Development of the Empolese Valdelsa
Name	TIZIANO CINI
Signature	Sign and stamp of the organization AGENZIA PER LO SVILUPPO EMPOLESE VALDELSA Via delle Fiascaie, 12 50053 EMPOLI (FI) P.I. 05181410480

6.2.   Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" 2014-2020

Date:	
Organization (English)	Interreg VA Italy-France "Maritime" 2014-2020
Name	MARA SORI
Signature	Sign and stamp of the organization