



Blue Tourism Initiative

June 2025

Building a sustainable blue tourism in the context of the multiple crises -
Pilot projects in the Mediterranean, the Caribbean and the Western Indian Ocean



The Blue Tourism Initiative aims to:

Improve the governance of coastal and marine tourism to ensure sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development, and address the associated environmental, health, sociocultural, and economic challenges in the Mediterranean, the Western Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean through:

- Employing a bottom-up approach to mobilize public and private stakeholders around blue tourism challenges.
- Facilitating the emergence of new practices at local level in 12 targeted pilot sites.
- Promoting cooperation and the sharing of experiences, especially at regional level.

Partners:

- **IDDRI** and **Eco union** are the project leaders
- **IUCN** Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, **CANARI** (Caribbean Natural Resources Institute), and **CORDIO East Africa** are partners and implement the project in each of the target regions.



Cost and duration:

- 4 years (2022-2026), € 4,325,900
- Co-funded by the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and supported by Our Blue Future (GIZ), UNEP and the project partners



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL



United Nations
Environment Programme



COMPONENTS

The initiative has three main components based on a **bottom-up approach** through fieldwork at **local pilot sites**, which are then integrated into global and regional sustainability strategies.



COMPONENT 1

Diagnosis and state of play of blue tourism

The first phase assesses the state of coastal and marine tourism at the global, regional and local levels. These **diagnoses** identify the key issues linked to blue tourism at different scales. Methodological frameworks adapted to the different contexts will support the elaboration of **blue tourism strategies** from its conception to its application.



COMPONENT 2

Field deployment in the pilot sites

The second phase aims to develop local sustainability strategies at the pilot site level in collaboration with local, sub-regional, and national stakeholders. For each pilot site, an **action plan** will be co-designed based on previous diagnoses and identified activities implemented with the support of key local actors and dedicated regional fund.



COMPONENT 3

Knowledge sharing, outreach, and awareness raising

The third phase aims to **disseminate** the key learnings and recommendations to global and regional institutions involved in the ocean, socio-economic, and environmental agendas. A **roadmap** for each marine region will integrate sustainable blue tourism perspectives into the relevant policies and strategies at the global and regional scale.

Component 1: Global, regional and pilot-level diagnosis of blue tourism



Global diagnosis of the blue tourism sector

- Review of current trends, challenges and opportunities to sustainable blue tourism
- Proposal of policy pathways to sustainable blue tourism

Regional diagnosis of the blue tourism sector

- Review of regional blue tourism trends (for each project region)
- Review needs, challenges and opportunities to sustainable blue tourism development
- Policy pathways at regional level to sustainable blue tourism

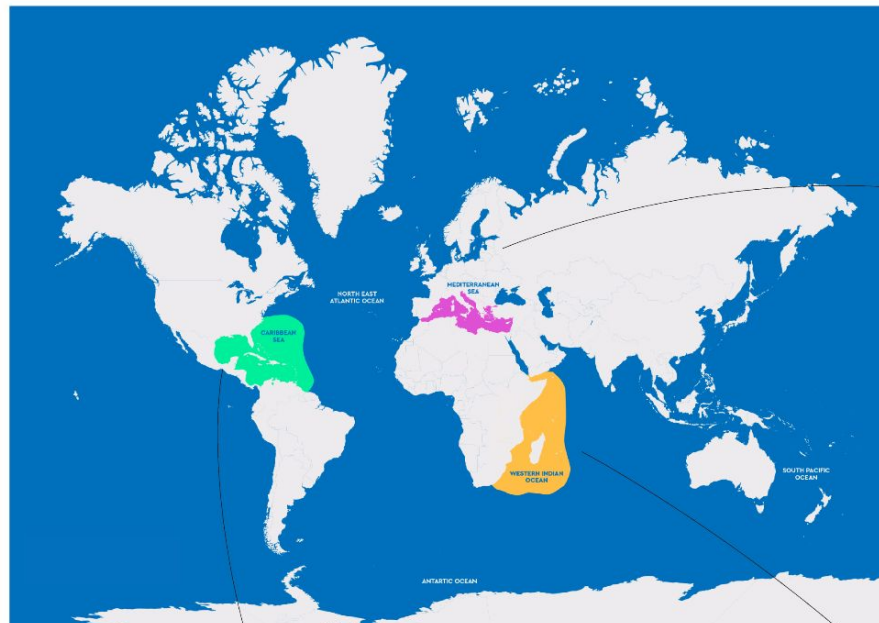
Pilot diagnosis of blue tourism

- Review blue tourism trends, challenges and opportunities at pilot level
- Definition of strategies at pilot level through bottom-up methods
- Definition of action plan for the blue tourism initiatives



Component 2: Implementation of blue tourism activities on pilot sites.

Marine regions



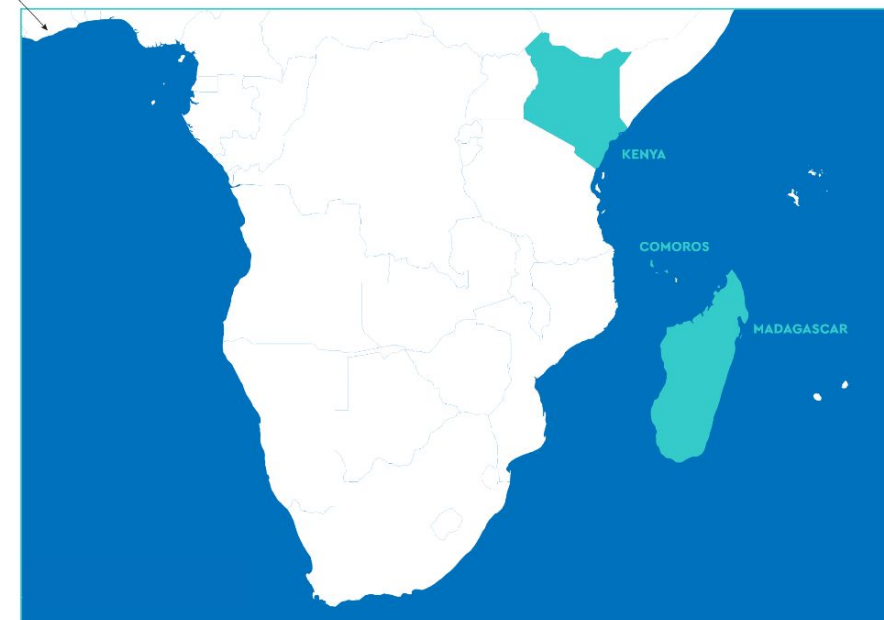
Mediterranean



Caribbean



Western Indian Ocean



Component 2: Implementation of blue tourism activities

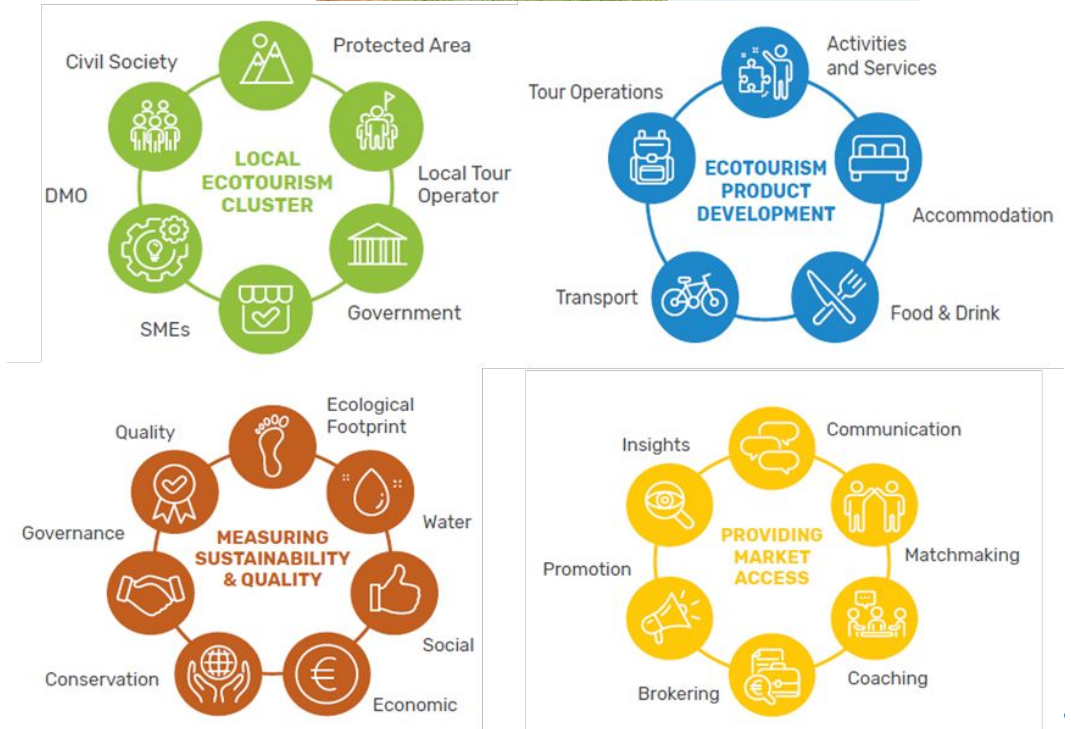
PILOT ACTIONS - MOROCCO - AL HOCEIMA NATIONAL PARK



Goal: MEET Network approach to develop an **ecotourism product** that works all year round and provides sustainable livelihoods in the park; support the strengthening of the park governance, and its tourism infrastructures. **Manage visitor's** attendance and impacts.

PROGRESS SO FAR

- National coordinator
- Agreement with implementing partners.
- Partnership with ANEF (Water and Forests National Agency).
- Secured engagement of private sector.
- Fundraising training workshop



Component 2: Implementation of blue tourism activities

PILOT ACTIONS - MOROCCO - AL HOCEIMA NATIONAL PARK



- **Local Ecotourism Cluster (LEC) Development**

- Training of PA on LEC establishment and management
- Identification and mapping of stakeholders and service providers for the LEC
- Setting the arrangements of the LEC: DMO lead, ToR, informal commitments, etc.
- Ongoing facilitation of the LEC
- Development of a tourism master plan and action plan for the park

- **Product Development and Itinerary Design**

- **Assessment and Improvement**

- Self-Assessment of Governance/Conservation/Quality data collection
- Trial Assessment of Footprints and Social Impact data collection
- Products check with MEET commercial advisor/Intrepid
- Audit of the Products and Itinerary
- Assessment report of the product and destination against the MEET standard

Component 3: Mainstreaming sustainable tourism in marine regions, promoting the sharing of experiences and including sustainable tourism issues in the public debate

- Promote sustainable blue tourism within marine regions through **knowledge sharing**
- Share lessons from pilot projects to facilitate their scaling up.
- Discuss blue tourism challenges for **regional cooperation**, drafting **roadmaps** based on shared sharing.
- **Increase awareness among tourism stakeholders** about blue tourism challenges through project feedback.
- **Foster collaboration among marine regions, programs, and key stakeholders for enhanced regional cooperation**

Towards a Flagship Initiative on Blue Tourism in the Mediterranean

- A **Mediterranean flagship Initiative** on Blue Tourism within the **Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development** (MSSD) is being conceptualised
- Technical secretariat: Eco Union, IDDRI, IUCN-Med and Plan Bleu
- The BTI Mediterranean component as core part
- Endorse and support **field and policy activities** in the Mediterranean countries (North–south) **beyond the current time frame and budget** of the current BTI
- Tackle coastal tourism's environmental challenges through:
 - Knowledge building and monitoring.
 - Field implementation via pilot projects.
 - Regional cooperation through dialogue, workshops, and high-level events.

Project partners



IDDRI



CORDIO



With the support of



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL



Our Blue Future

Thank you!

Giulia.Balestracci@ecounion.eu