

# CHERISH

Interreg Europe



## PEER REVIEW

For Interregional Learning and Exchange of  
Experience (ILEE) events



**Paphos**  
**March 27-28 2019**

## THEME A: Policies & Strategies

### *Focus of theme*

This theme focuses on the policies and strategic context and the aims and objectives of relevant policies and strategies (e.g. in programmes and projects). It examines the background to the regional approach, the influence of higher tier policies/strategies and the extent that regional stakeholders are adopting a coherent and effective approach at policy and strategic levels.

#### **1. What the host region has done**

ANETPA aims at reviving the regional maritime and fishing economy through a multifaceted strategy anchored on the EMFF and CLLD – FLAG development activities. The goal is to achieve growth through diversifying the tourist product towards alternative maritime tourism whilst strengthening and promoting the Cypriot maritime and fishing culture. The good practices of Cherish should influence the EMFF – FLAG strategy. Interconnection of both strategies.

#### **2. Strengths, areas for improvement and gaps**

One of the main strengths detected during the ILEE event is the rich cultural and traditional heritage linked to the fisheries communities. “Old country with history” is everywhere and felt by visitors. Also, local people are very proud of local traditions. However, fisheries activity is declining and most fishermen want to convert to tourism activities, which is a strength for fishermen incomes, but need to be monitored as can also be a threat to traditional heritage.

#### **3. Good practices – and potential for transferability**

Fishing tourism and diving projects GPs which can be transferable, but in other countries it might not be adapted because fishermen might not be allowed to take tourist on the se and sea conditions may not allow diving journeys (ex. e.g. Baltic or Atlantic are different seas and with different seasons). Vernacular museums have a potential of transferability.

#### **4. Lessons learnt and their implications**

The interconnection between CHERISH GP and projects supported by the FLAG is an added value for the territory and for cultural heritage protection and promotion.

**5. Recommendations for the host region**

- Further involvement of young people in fishing related tourism, giving them the necessary skills to provide a more fruitful experience to tourists and visitors, using the traditional fisheries cultural heritage as an asset.
- Quite often, a balance between fisheries activity and environment sustainability need to be tackled. This is the case of the “invasive” species (e.g. turtles) that put in danger the fishery activity but on the other hand need to be preserved. These situations may have further attention in future strategies.
- Help fishermen to access to EMFF funds, but not only for tourism purposes.
- FLAG should think about the next programming periods.

**6. Recommendations for other CHERISH regions**

- Look at local FLAGs projects potential.
- Support fishing activities/ and projects through FLAG strategy.

## **THEME B: Cultural Heritage Assets (tangible & intangible)**

Theme B focuses on all cultural heritage assets in place. This can be tangible, and intangible, which includes myths to daily practices, traditions, ecological knowledge and crafts, gastronomy, harbours, boats and fishing nets. This theme provides the opportunity for peer reviewers to highlight the available Cultural Heritage Assets in the host region as well as specific elements (such as processes or techniques) that are important for successful outcomes. It also focuses on the potential for meaningful dissemination and transferability to other regions and countries.

### **1. Which cultural heritage assets can be found in the region?**

We can say that fishing techniques remain pretty much unaltered compared to those employed in the past. Small scale fishermen still use traditional tools combined with new technology. In traditional boatyards, there are certain repair works that can only be done using traditional tools. The same applies to net repairing where fishermen are doing it themselves the old way mainly because of the high cost of purchasing new nets. Regarding food and gastronomy, there are recipes coming from the past like a fish sauce called “Garos” or “Garum”.

### **2. What is particularly interesting and relevant?**

Two things presented during the first day of the ILEEE made an impression to our group. First one was the founding of the Maritime Museum (Thalassa Municipal Museum) in Agia Napa, which works as the arc of maritime cultural heritage for the whole island. The second was the work been done by the Maritime Archaeological Research Laboratory of the University of Cyprus, as presented by maritime archaeologist Maria Ktori.

### **3. Have good practices been adopted or rolled out more widely?**

Both the Maritime Museum and Maritime Archaeological Research Laboratory promote fishing cultural heritage. A lot of work needs to be done though so that good practices are highlighted and a roll out plan to be devised.

### **4. What could be done to boost this process and to stimulate transfer of good practices?**

Municipality of Paphos, Development Agency of Paphos “Aphrodite” and Paphos Fishing Local Action Group have all funds to support protection and dissemination of good practices. First step would be adopting a strategy about fishing cultural heritage and setting up an operational plan filled with actions

that need to be implemented in order for the goals to be obtained.

**5. What factors would need to be taken into account to transfer to other places with different heritage structures, historical, social, economic, political or cultural contexts?**

Transfer should be treated as a learning process. A classification system regarding assets of fishing cultural heritage would be very useful in order to be aware of our similarities and differences. This would bring to the forefront deeper cultural differences and similarities upon which a more substantial discussion could be made. We need to be sure about the “goodness” and contemporary relevance of a practice, before we try to transfer it to other places.

## THEME C: Traditional Ecological Knowledge

This theme provides the opportunity for peer reviewers to highlight the available Traditional Ecological Knowledge in the host region's policy, programme, projects and solutions – as well as specific elements (such as processes or techniques) that are important for successful outcomes. It also focuses on the extent of, and peer reviewers' judgement of the potential for meaningful dissemination and transferability to other regions and countries.

### 1. What Traditional Ecological Knowledge can be encountered in the host region's policy, programme, projects and new solutions (good practices)?

Fishermen have knowledge about navigating (without radar, sonar etc.) and fishing grounds which have been passed on from one generation to the next. But the problem is that there might be no new generation in future, because the Cypriot youth does not step into the occupation of their parents. Youngsters find a job easily in (mass) tourism in Cyprus. Wages are better, more stable and working hours are convenient.

### 2. Threats for TEK

- No successors for the fishermen, the traditional fishing fleet will shrink
- National laws for the protection of seawaters and protection of animal species (turtles and seals) that restrain the number of fishing grounds for the fleet. The "forbidden zones" are rich of fishes. Mutatis mutandis in the Netherlands as the same problems are encountered (no go area around windmills at sea, fishing quota).
- Policy very much focused on stimulating tourism
- Less or few policy attention to the fact that it is not only about fishers and fishing but about whole fishing communities
- Fuel prices which continuously rise, fuel subsidy doesn't keep up
- The Mediterranean Sea is getting more empty because of industrial fishing
- Tourists are not interested in fishing, only in (cheap) fish in the restaurant

### 3. Possible Solutions

- Find new markets and combination of sectors: offer tourists fishing trips, diving trips, nature reserve trips etc.
- Open up wharfs for tourists to show traditional craftsmanship: we noticed that in every partner region there is a group of people (institutional, commercial) who see possibilities to build and restore old sailing vessels

- Organize fishers into a fish auction to create better prices
- Make education and educational institutes a partner of the fishing communities, in order to preserve techniques and knowledge
- Make (retired) fishers a partner of local museums to work on knowledge transfer

#### **4. Transferability to other regions**

Cyprus has invested in research into old ship patterns (blueprints). By documenting them they will be accessible to all wharfs. Mallorca will start a similar project.

The relation between museums and education is very valuable because it will create better circumstances to attract youth and make them aware of their heritage before it's going to be "forgotten heritage".

## THEME D: Economic opportunities

Theme D focuses on economic opportunities from cultural heritage in the fishing communities within the host region. This theme provides the opportunity for peer reviewers to highlight the available economic opportunities in the host region as well as specific elements (such as processes or techniques) that are important for successful outcomes. It also focuses on the potential for meaningful dissemination and transferability to other regions and countries.

### 1. What has been done so far?

Fishing tourism opportunities have been developed and incentives created by local government authorities. A platform for marketing and sales of activities has been created.

### 2. What possibilities for economic opportunities are available?

Based on existing maritime traditions and cultural assets tourist experiences could be organised, based on the principles of creativity and co-creation, creating opportunities for tourists involvement, on a “hands-on-approach”. New product/ market combinations could be made available, such as “diving with the goods” visiting the subaquatic cultural spots, or experiencing local food within culinary and tasting experiences.

Local and regional food products are an important way of the culture and economy. To make viable the whole process from catch to plate is important. A greater link between historical and cultural places (including underwater resources) could be established.

### 3. What has been achieved and what are the success factors?

There seems to be a good perception of the cultural inheritance, historic places and assets. Research has long been implemented to uncover and discover the tangible and intangible assets, raising awareness of both local communities and governmental authorities about its value.

The mythology and historical facts embedded in local cultural heritage are of insurmountable value. Acknowledged efforts on its research, documentation and interpretation are of great significance.

**4. What key lessons are there and challenges remain. Recommendations for other CHERISH Regions.**

Amongst most recent trends in tourism we identify the search for unique and distinctive experiences, allowing the visitor to feel the spirit of the place. For that to take place it is very important that local communities are part of the business development process, especially older people who know the traditional way of doing things and making the products. But that seems to be a challenge still in need to be addressed, or in need of further input.

Communication skills, as well as ability to speak another language to interact with tourists/visitors may be hindering the entrepreneurial process.

Therefore it is very important to involve young people in the whole process, considering they could be more at ease with foreign languages and could make the bridge with older people's storytelling, and participate in the creation of richer and meaningful experiences for tourists. This would also create conditions for regenerating the traditions and traditional economic activities.

Gastronomy is an important carrier of local identity but little seems to be done in Paphos. Economic opportunities are perceived as more of the creative side, but from-sea-to-plate gastronomic experiences are made available.

## **THEME E: Stakeholder Involvement**

The final theme focuses on stakeholder involvement in all other themes. The involvement of representatives from relevant stakeholder groups aims to support an active communication, public participation and the successful implementation of the results of the CHERISH project.

Immediately after a first glimpse into the agenda, it was clear that a broad variety of stakeholders are already involved in the preservation of the cultural heritage within the Paphos district. The interesting presentations, the excursion to the harbour and the shipyard and the discussions we had during our stay definitely met these expectations.

### **Situation within the host region**

In nearly all of the projects/attempts presented (e.g. the diving project, fishing tourism offers, traditional shipbuilding, educational programmes, cultural events) stakeholders from different interest groups are directly involved, the products are developed in close cooperation with the local communities and the effects are evaluated afterwards. One aim of the local FLAG is to facilitate Community Led Local Development (CLLD) and to support projects in the private and in the public sector. As a matter of fact, stakeholders from both sectors have been contacted and are actively involved in the activities carried out by the FLAG. The communication between representatives from different interest groups is facilitated by the FLAG and a satisfactory capacity was reported of having personal and direct contact. This was especially the case with the fishermen, which is culturally a fundamental element to gain their trust and insure their participation. Moreover, the FLAG is presenting itself as a structured and institutionalized entity composed by private and public sectors representatives who can support fishermen when they are dealing with bureaucratic issues, which are still seen as a major obstacle when it comes to benefit from public subsidies. Furthermore, competences and knowledge held by the FLAG members are considered as an important tool for supporting the fishermen in the formulation and submission of proposals and requests to the central government.

Based on the cultural background and the personal relationships among the inhabitants, contact and exchange of opinions with stakeholders is normally based on a daily and quite informal contact; additionally to the two more structured meetings that already took place in the framework of the CHERISH project. It is important to emphasize that this relationship was developed over several years and that the representatives 'speak the language' of the fisherman and the inhabitants and are considered as partners on the same wavelength who really care for the problems and

concerns of the local inhabitants. This genuine and trustful relationship between the fishermen and the FLAG was proven during our first day on Cyprus, as many stakeholders joined the CHERISH meeting during the opening session. This is really remarkable since some of the participants joined the ILEEE even though they didn't speak English, but they took the chance to express their opinions and to be heard in front of institutional and international representatives.

To sum up, even if the FLAG is a relatively new entity (established in 2015) and its abilities to support the fishermen are limited compared to the port authorities and the fishery department (the FLAG can just make suggestions and recommendations), its importance has grown fast thanks to the network they built up. Another important aspect of the stakeholder involvement on Cyprus was the cooperation between FLAGs from different regions (e.g. within the "Dive in our islands" project). This lively network can serve as a best practice example for other CHERISH partner regions, as the continuously grown trustful partnership between the stakeholders and the awareness of the FLAGs has shown that measures can only be implemented successfully, if the local people are directly involved.

The local fishing sector only contributes 1.3% to the GDP, but to highlight its socio-economic importance, the involvement of scientists and students is fostered. By analysing the whole value-added chain attached to the local fishery, its relevance for the cultural identity and also for the tourism sector is underlined. Scientific data raises the awareness of the inhabitants for the cultural heritage of the fishing communities. This fact is very important, because people will only protect what they value and it also increases the social esteem for jobs in the fishing sector – a major aspect to attract young people. The involvement of young generations is also enhanced by educational offers e.g. in museums, exhibitions or workshops about traditional shipbuilding or fishing culture. The cooperation of scientists, fishermen and the FLAG for the development of educational programmes was quite impressive.

### **Recommendations for all CHERISH regions**

Despite the really good involvement of stakeholders in general, still some aspects of the public participation could be improved. During the excursion some fishermen mentioned that their opinion is not yet included enough in the policy making process. Some of them have the feeling that the policy doesn't really meet their needs ("They make policy, but they do not talk to the people", "These subsidies are not applicable in practice", "The government doesn't ask the fishermen"). Additionally, some fishermen still struggle with the bureaucratic procedures to be able to receive funding

or to report about their catches or they are not able to use newly developed products, such as the online platform [fishingtourism.net](http://fishingtourism.net). Hence it would be great to intensify the efforts to include more and more fishermen in the existing networks and to make all of them aware of the possible support by the FLAG. Even though not all of their concerns can be considered, the reasons for protected areas and closed seasons should be communicated, and the process to get balancing subsidies and additional income opportunities should be facilitated. The efforts to convince more fishermen to become a member of the FLAG board should be continued to gain even more trust. Another aspect is the inclusion of more people from the fish processing industry and gastronomy within the projects, to improve the marketing for local fishery products in order to raise the appreciation and the price for local sea food.