



CAPITALISATION

AS A VEHICLE FOR
GREEN AND CIRCULAR
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
IN THE MED REGION



PROJECT NAME

RESults Enabling Transitions: mapping, synthesising and mainstreaming sustainable, green and circular business support achievements in the MED region, for replication and policy-making

ACRONYM

RESET

STARTING MONTH

December 2021

DURATION

24 months

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1M€ (90% ENI Contribution)

DISCLAIMER

This publication has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union under the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of RESET project partners, and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union or the Programme management structures.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The 2014-2020 ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The Programme objective is to foster fair, equitable, and sustainable economic, social, and territorial development, which may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values. The following 13 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, State of Palestine, Portugal, Spain, and Tunisia. The Managing Authority (MA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English, and French. For more information, please visit: www.enicbmed.eu

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources, and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy, and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance, and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report offers a comprehensive assessment of capitalisation methodologies employed in the field of green and circular business within the Mediterranean (MED) region, alongside their anticipated outcomes. It offers profound insights into the role of green and circular businesses, underlining the importance of capitalisation. The report provides an in-depth analysis of the capitalisation methodology adopted by the RESET Project, alongside other capitalisation project methodologies within the MED, serving as case studies to evaluate enabling factors and challenges for future capitalisation endeavours. Finally, the report provides strategic recommendations for the design and implementation of capitalisation projects.

Green and circular businesses play a pivotal role in catalysing change across the Mediterranean. They provide solutions to the environmental and socio-economic challenges in the region resulting in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, water conservation, pollution reduction, job creation, and the mitigation of social disparities. Capitalisation initiatives can further ensure the success and long-term impact of green and circular businesses in the region, as they offer transformative outcomes that include:



DISSEMINATION



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



POLICY INFLUENCE

The capitalisation initiatives in the Mediterranean region present several enablers and challenges. Enablers include prioritising key lessons for dissemination, identifying the most effective and relevant lessons for green and circular business, developing user-friendly knowledge repositories, and engaging with local communities. Challenges include limitations in the collaborations and communication to capture knowledge needed by the community and the ecosystem, adapting best practices and lessons learned to the local context, capturing insights promptly, navigating complex policy environments, and engaging with policymakers and other stakeholders to ensure that capitalisation initiatives are aligned with broader policy goals.

Recommendations for the design and execution of green and circular economy capitalisation initiatives in the Mediterranean region are devised to streamline the dissemination of valuable lessons learned, foster knowledge exchange, and effectively influence policy-making.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISSEMINATION

- **Prioritise Key Lessons for Dissemination:** Identify high-impact lessons, create clear timelines for sharing, and tailor messages to address local needs and global trends.
- **Optimise and Sustain Knowledge Repositories:** Develop user-friendly, centralised platforms for storing and categorising lessons and resources, ensuring continuity and avoiding redundancies.
- **Ensure Accessibility and Understandability:** Provide materials in local languages, employ glossaries to clarify terminology, and engage local communities to create relevant messages.
- **Define Mechanisms to Engage Other Projects:** Encourage previous project managers to actively participate in data collection, analysis, and sharing of insights, potentially by offering incentives and allocating designated budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

- **Localised Application of Good Practices:** Customize practices to address the unique challenges and strengths of each Mediterranean country, exploring modifications or alternatives when necessary.
- **Mitigate Terminological Inconsistencies:** Develop glossaries to clarify terminologies specific to green and circular businesses, ensuring clear communication and understanding.
- **Enhance Cross-Country and Interdisciplinary Collaboration Approaches:** Foster collaboration among Mediterranean countries and engage experts from diverse sectors to bridge contextual gaps, facilitate knowledge exchange, and craft innovative solutions.
- **Empower Local Expertise:** Train and engage local technical experts to ensure practices adapt to local contexts, leveraging local networks and partnerships.
- **Strengthen Stakeholder Involvement and Exchange Platforms:** Engage regional stakeholders actively, emphasising personal connections, and establish exchange platforms like community groups, innovation camps, and international events to facilitate knowledge transfer across demographics.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY INFLUENCE

- **Develop a Common Definition:** Create a shared definition for green and circular businesses to promote coherence and unity in sustainability objectives.
- **Provide Clear Evidence of Benefits:** Leverage impact measurement tools to showcase the advantages of green and circular businesses and tailor communication materials for specific audiences.
- **Strategically Frame the Need for Best Practices:** Tailor messages to align with government priorities, highlighting economic growth, job creation, and environmental preservation.
- **Build Strong Relationships with Policymakers:** Establish connections with policymakers, engage them in decision-making, and provide timely communication materials.
- **Mitigate Regulatory Hurdles:** Proactively addressing regulatory changes and align strategies with evolving policies.
- **Develop a Strategic Engagement Plan:** Interact regularly with influential stakeholders to amplify the impact of capitalisation projects in policy discussions.

CROSS-CUTTING CAPITALISATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Secure Sustainable Funding:** Diversify funding sources and communicate results and benefits transparently to attract continuous financial support.
- **Leverage Cost-effective Activities:** Acknowledge diverse project costs, seek external funding, and employ cost-effective strategies for activities like awareness raising, training, and advocacy.
- **Ensure Coordination with Similar Programs:** Promote coordination among multiple capitalisation projects to reduce redundancy and enhance the impact of shared knowledge.
- **Improve Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms:** Implement robust mechanisms for continuous assessment and refinement of initiatives.
- **Integrate a Capitalisation Component in Programs:** Plan capitalisation activities within each project to systematically extract lessons learned and best practices upon the program completion.
- **Exercise Patience and Persistence:** Acknowledge that sustainable change takes time and remain adaptable to maintain momentum, particularly in policy influence efforts.

In conclusion, collaborative and holistic capitalisation approaches can create an environment where green and circular businesses thrive, contributing to a more sustainable and collaborative Mediterranean region.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT RESET

In recognition of the Mediterranean accelerating employment and environmental crises, there are various calls for action to create a sustainable and inclusive economy that 'works for everyone'. As the region thrives towards developing and implementing measures for a sustainable green transition, RESET aims to facilitate economic and social development via supporting the creation of sustainable and green businesses. The project will gather, analyse, and synthesise learnings regarding 'what works' within the field of sustainable and green business support and seeks to upstream this knowledge effectively. It will support local, national, and regional stakeholders to make use of this knowledge to create strategies, policies, and regulations to stimulate the green economy. RESET targets seven Mediterranean countries and will address the whole enabling eco-system – from EU projects, local initiatives, and policies to national and regional policies and regulations – to capitalise on knowledge related to training, advice, networking services, access to funding and markets, as well as Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection, with a focus on women and youth inclusion.

For more information on the RESET project, please visit the link below:
<https://www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/reset>

REPORT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this report is to assess the capitalisation methodologies employed in the field of green and circular business in the Mediterranean (MED) region and their expected outcomes:



**DISSEMINATION AND
COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS
AND LESSONS LEARNED**



**KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FOR
THE REPLICATION OF GOOD
PRACTICES**



**POLICY INFLUENCE ON
POLICYMAKERS AND ACTORS**

With a focus on the capitalisation enablers and challengers, and enriched by insightful case studies, this report offers actionable recommendations on harnessing capitalisation methodologies to catalyse collaboration, share best practices, and support the transition of the Mediterranean towards a greener, more sustainable future.

METHODOLOGY

The development of this report relied on qualitative research methods. Current and previous projects related to capitalisation within the ENI CBC MED program were selected as case studies. These included projects capitalising on other project outputs, such as RESET, as well as a few projects that were capitalised on. Interviews were conducted with the respective project managers to gather further updated information and identify capitalisation challenges and enablers. The primary and secondary information collected was analysed to produce recommendations for the planning implementation of capitalisation projects and for the continuation of RESET.

A BRIEF ON CAPITALISATION AS A VEHICLE FOR DEVELOPMENT

DEFINING CAPITALISATION

Capitalisation, as delineated by the INTERACT guide¹, can be perceived as a dynamic process that enables the “uptake” of results stemming from various projects. This process diligently identifies good practices that have showcased effectiveness and promotes them among concerned stakeholders. But it doesn’t end there. Capitalisation further encourages the replication, utilisation, and eventual integration of these successful outcomes into public policies². This capitalisation process is considered relevant across various levels, be it local, regional, national, or across the Euro-Mediterranean region.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF CAPITALISATION AS A VEHICLE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Capitalisation offers different transformative outcomes which demonstrate its effectiveness as a development vehicle³. These can be categorised into 3 levels:



DISSEMINATION

This involves the effective collection & broadcast of successful methodologies and practices. The objective here is to ensure that stakeholders, from ground-level workers to high-level decision-makers, become aware of these proven techniques. This widespread awareness and communication are essential for replication and broader implementation.



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

An ecosystem thrives when knowledge flows seamlessly. Capitalisation, going beyond dissemination, ensures that insights, successful methodologies, and best practices are replicated, enhanced, and adopted cohesively among organisations and individuals. This symbiotic exchange not only accelerates growth but also ensures that stakeholders benefit from collective wisdom.



POLICY INFLUENCE

One of the most profound impacts of capitalisation is its ability to reshape policies. By influencing policymakers & actors, capitalisation ensures that the overarching regulatory framework is aligned with the objectives of green and circular business development.

¹ Interact-EU. (2019). Capitalisation approaches and practices in Interreg. From concept to practice.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

THE PIVOTAL ROLE OF CAPITALISATION FOR GREEN AND CIRCULAR BUSINESS IN THE MED REGION

The Mediterranean Region, with its unique challenges and opportunities, finds a valuable ally in capitalisation. Given the pressing environmental concerns and the region's aspirations for sustainable development, capitalisation can play a transformative role and ensure the success and long-term impact of green and circular businesses in the region.



LOCAL AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT:

Through capitalisation, communities in the Med region gain a platform to engage in discussions about their local context and environmental challenges. These awareness and engagement foster a sense of responsibility and ownership, encouraging communities to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours, to actively participate in green and circular initiatives, and to help design contextualised solutions.



BUSINESS INNOVATION AND RISK MITIGATION:

Businesses can learn from the challenges and failures faced by others through capitalisation. By leveraging knowledge and experiences, green and circular businesses can anticipate potential challenges, replicate successes, and build on them to enhance and innovate solutions. This can accelerate the growth or transition of businesses in the Med region to a green or circular model.



COLLABORATIVE ECOSYSTEM:

Green and circular businesses in the Med often operate in a developing ecosystem. Capitalisation fosters collaboration among businesses and ecosystem actors, creating an enabling environment that encourages collective knowledge and support for green and circular businesses.



INFORMED POLICY:

Green and circular businesses in the Med can often be hindered by restrictive policies or a lack of supportive infrastructure. Capitalisation, with its ability to influence policy-making, can advocate for a more favourable environment. Whether it's financial incentives, enabling regulations, or generating public goodwill, capitalisation can significantly optimise the landscape for green and circular businesses.

In essence, capitalisation becomes a key factor for fostering green and circular business development in the MED region. It ensures growth that is also comprehensive, inclusive, and most importantly, sustainable.

OVERVIEW OF THE CONTEXT OF GREEN AND CIRCULAR BUSINESS IN THE MED REGION

In the ever-evolving landscape of the Mediterranean region, capitalisation emerges as a foundation for positive transformation. Leveraging existing efforts, knowledge, and resources can magnify the impact of sustainable initiatives, streamline implementation processes, and accelerate the region's transition towards a greener future. By capitalising on what's already been achieved, we can avoid redundant efforts, saving valuable time and resources. In the face of the current environmental and socio-economic challenges, this approach is not just beneficial—it's essential.

The Mediterranean region is marked by its unique combination of natural beauty and socio-economic potential. However, it is confronted by significant environmental and economic challenges. This section explores the characteristics of the Med region at macro, meso, and micro levels regarding green and circular business.

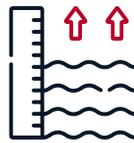
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES IN THE MED REGION

The Mediterranean region is considered as one of the world's most susceptible areas to climate change. The region is already experiencing the effects of climate change, such as more frequent and intense heatwaves, droughts, and floods. These impacts are expected to worsen in the future, potentially having a devastating impact on the region's economy, environment, and people.



RISING TEMPERATURES THREATEN AGRICULTURE

Projected temperature rises of 2-3°C by 2100, which could decrease agricultural productivity by up to 20%, posing severe threats to nations like Egypt and Morocco⁴.



RISING SEA LEVELS DISPLACE MILLIONS

Sea level rise projections of 0.3 metres by 2030 could displace around 117 million people living on the North African coastline⁵.



DISRUPTIONS IN TOURISM IMPACT ECONOMIES

Disruptions in the tourism sector, crucial for many Med economies relying on it like Greece and Tunisia, where it accounted for 18% and 16% of GDP in 2019 respectively^{6,7}.

The impact of climate change is intensified by a multitude of grave challenges that the Med is already confronting⁸. These challenges can be broadly classified into four main categories:



WATER SCARCITY⁹ THREATENS VITAL RESOURCES

Projected water deficit to reach 150 billion cubic meters per year by 2050, which is equivalent to the volume of Lake Geneva, one of the largest lakes in Europe.



SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITY¹⁰ AMPLIFIES CHALLENGES

Leading to reduced economic growth, increased social unrest, and deteriorating public services, like in Morocco, where the richest 10% of the population accounts for over 40% of the country's wealth.



POLLUTION¹¹ THREATENS MARINE LIFE

The Mediterranean is polluted by an estimated 730 tonnes of plastic waste every day.



CONFLICT & INSTABILITY^{12,13} COMPOUNDED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change intensifies the effects of conflict and instability and hampers certain states' ability to prioritise, develop and implement reforms for it.

4 Brouziyne, Y., Abouabdillan, A., Hirich, A., Bouabid, R., Zaaboul, R., & Benaabidate, L. (2018). Modelling sustainable adaptation strategies toward a climate-smart agriculture in a Mediterranean watershed under projected climate change scenarios.

5 ReliefWeb. (2022). Rising sea levels besieging Africa's booming coastal cities.

6 Statista. (n.d.). Total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP in Greece in 2019 and 2022.

7 Knoema. (n.d.). Tunisia - Contribution of travel and tourism to GDP as a share of GDP.

8 UNEP. (2016). Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025.

9 World Bank. (2018). The Mediterranean climate change report.

10 Arab Reform Initiative. (2021). The Mediterranean Region: A Hotspot of Inequalities in the Aftermath of COVID-19.

11 UNEP. (2023). Pollution in the Mediterranean

12 Kelley, C. P., Mohtadi, S., Cane, M. A., Seager, R., & Kushnir, Y. (2015). Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 112(11), 376–381.

13 Jennifer H. (2021). How climate change paved the way to war in Syria.

These challenges are intricate and interconnected, demanding a holistic strategy to achieve sustainable development and increase the region's long-term resilience.

EXISTING EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES

Several organisations and initiatives, such as the Barcelona Convention¹⁴, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership¹⁵, the Mediterranean Action Plan¹⁶, the SwitchMed initiative¹⁷, the Global Water Partnership¹⁸, the World Bank¹⁹, and the United Nations Development Programme²⁰, work to counteract these challenges. Their endeavours include:



SETTING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

e.g., Barcelona Convention setting pollution standards²¹.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABILITY

e.g., Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the World Bank providing financial assistance for businesses and projects.



EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES

e.g., Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the United Nations Development Programme supporting education and training programs.



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND WATER RESOURCES

e.g., Mediterranean Action Plan promoting sustainable agriculture and water resource development



CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

e.g., SwitchMed initiative advancing circular economy and related measures such as waste management



WATER CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

e.g., the Global Water Partnership promoting water conservation and management

While their efforts are commendable, a more cohesive approach is essential. It's not just about creating new initiatives, but also capitalising on existing ones to provide the foundation for a sustainable future.

THE ROLE OF GREEN AND CIRCULAR BUSINESSES

Green and circular businesses can play a pivotal role in the region's transformation²². Their potential benefits include:

- Lowering greenhouse gas emissions
- Conserving water
- Reducing pollution
- Creating jobs
- Countering social inequalities by providing diverse opportunities

According to a report by the World Economic Forum, the green economy in the Mediterranean region is expected to grow by 5% per year between 2020 and 2030.

This growth is expected to create millions of jobs and boost economic growth in the region.

The current assessment shows a notable growth in the green and circular businesses, driven by increasing environmental awareness, improved resource accessibility, and supportive regulatory measures²³.

This growth is a positive development for both the environment and the economy in the Mediterranean region.

14 UNEP. (2016). Barcelona Convention Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Sustainable Development of the Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean (MAP-MED).

15 European Commission. (2021). Southern Neighbourhood: EU proposes new Agenda for the Mediterranean.

16 UNEP. (2019). Mediterranean Action Plan: A Regional Framework for Sustainable Development.

17 SwitchMed. (2021). SwitchMed: Circular Economy in the Mediterranean.

18 Global Water Partnership. (2022). The Global Water Partnership in the Mediterranean.

19 World Bank. (2021). Revitalizing Mediterranean Integration: Why this is good for MENA.

20 UNDP. (2021). A new agreement between UNDP and the Union for the Mediterranean strengthens peace and prosperity across key regions.

21 Europa. (2020). Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean.

22 Interreg Med Green Growth. (2021). SMEs at the cornerstone of the green economy transition in the Mediterranean.

23 Green Growth Platform. (2016). Towards a Green Economy in the Mediterranean region.

However, green and circular businesses in the Med region face unique challenges that hinder their growth and acceleration, including:



LIMITED ACCESS TO FINANCE

Green and circular businesses often require significant upfront investment, which can be a challenge for new enterprises, especially in countries with less developed financial markets such as Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia. For example, only 0.2% of venture capital investment in Egypt went to green and circular businesses in 2019²⁴.



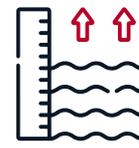
LACK OF AWARENESS

Both businesses and consumers often lack the understanding of the advantages offered by green and circular businesses. For example, only 20% of businesses in the Mediterranean region are aware of the circular economy²⁵.



COMPETITION FROM TRADITIONAL BUSINESSES

Green and circular enterprises often contend with competition from conventional businesses that don't prioritise the environment and benefit from cost advantages due to their economies of scale. For example, the cost of recycled materials is often higher than the cost of virgin materials in Greece²⁶.



LIMITED GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Some countries might not have a conducive regulatory environment for green and circular businesses. For example, Italy does not have a clear definition of what constitutes a "green" business, making it challenging for businesses to qualify for government support²⁷.

The challenges in the Med region are multi-faceted, but so are the solutions. By capitalising on existing efforts, emphasising the growth of green and circular businesses, and fostering a collaborative approach among countries, there's potential for a sustainable and prosperous Mediterranean future.

²⁴ Strategy&. (2022). Middle East Green Finance...

²⁵ Climate Funds Update. (2021). Climate Finance Regional Briefing: Middle East and North Africa.

²⁶ Knowledge Hub for Green Technologies. (2023). The Circular Economy Ecosystem in the MENA Region covering Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and Palestinian Territories.

²⁷ Shady El-S. (2023). Green jobs and green entrepreneurs in the MENA region: Challenges and Opportunities.

RESET PROJECT AND THE CAPITALISATION METHODOLOGY

RESET is a capitalisation project aimed at realising the goals of the ENI CBC MED Capitalisation Call. The main focus is to assimilate, evaluate, and build upon the learning and insights within the field of green and circular business support in the MED. This section examines the capitalisation methodology employed by RESET and identifies the capitalisation enablers and challenges faced by the project.

CAPITALISATION METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The capitalisation methodology follows a demand-driven approach, ensuring that the knowledge produced matches the needs for successful reuse and replication. This framework embodies a multifaceted approach to efficiently gather and categorise knowledge.

- **Desk-based Analysis:** An intensive review of online platforms, primarily official websites and outputs of significant projects, offers a comprehensive understanding of projects at face value.
- **Collaborative Meetings:** Engaging project managers in collective dialogue sessions ensures first-hand insights from those at the heart of the projects. These meetings serve as melting pots of ideas and perspectives.
- **Semi-structured Interviews:** With 19 interviews conducted, these sessions allow for flexible yet directed conversations with project managers, extracting nuanced insights.

Regarding the identification and categorisation of knowledge sources, RESET has identified 19 key projects to be included in the capitalisation process. The projects have been labelled as either Capitalisation Project (high number of synergies with RESET) or Boundary Project (a few key synergies) to clarify their alignment and synergy with RESET. Managers of the 19 identified projects to be capitalised on were contacted and when available, interviewed several times while maintaining a back-and-forth feedback mechanism during the project on deliverables, to ensure the accuracy of information.

CAPITALISATION CRITERIA

The below criteria serve as a robust metric to evaluate the projects:

- The effectiveness of both ongoing and completed projects.
- The disparity between the expected and implemented "green practices".
- The sustainability of these practices, and their ecological impact.
- The continuity of the initiatives, especially their financial benefits for entrepreneurs, especially women and youth.

Sample KPIs: Various qualitative and quantitative Key Performance Indicators were selected. These include success rate of start-ups, the number of training sessions and participants, the improvement of living standards in the countries in question, and the enhancement of the policymakers' knowledge.

CAPITALISATION CATEGORISATION

For a structured capitalisation process, the extracted information is systematically categorised using templates that facilitate easy recognition and matching of existing knowledge with the needed knowledge.

CAPITALISATION OUTPUTS

RESET introduced three components that aim to harness the collective knowledge of various sectors, streamline information flow, and foster proactive collaboration: The Capitalisation Lab and the Capitalisation Clinic. These twin platforms, although distinct in their methodologies and objectives, are united in their overarching goal of advancing green and circular businesses. In addition, RESET introduced a third component dedicated to developing and influencing policies. The following section delves deeper into the two initiatives, providing detailed descriptions, objectives, methodologies, and presents briefly the policy component.

1. DISSEMINATION: CAPITALISATION LAB



DESCRIPTION

The Capitalisation Lab is a structured program designed to engage potential stakeholders in the field of sustainable, green, and circular businesses. Through a targeted approach to data collection methods, this study aims to comprehensively understand the current needs and challenges, as well as identifying the available resources and solutions. All the collected information is efficiently organised in a Database Management System (DBMS) to facilitate in-depth analysis and effectively match knowledge needs with offers.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify and understand the knowledge gaps and requirements in sustainable, green, and circular businesses.
- Engage a diverse range of stakeholders to gather multifaceted perspectives and insights.
- Facilitate systematised storage, retrieval, and analysis of the collected information to improve decision-making, program design, and strategy formulation.
- Match knowledge needs with available resources, solutions, or partners to improve collaboration and synergy.

METHODOLOGY

- Needs Analysis: Conduct extensive surveys and organise topic-based focus groups, involving experts and stakeholders, to capture a broad range of perspectives and requirements.
- Qualitative and Secondary Analysis: Dive deep into the collected data to draw patterns, insights, and connections, thereby discerning actionable points.
- Data Management: Establish and maintain a robust internal Database Management System (DBMS) to effectively organise information, ensuring easy access and retrieval.
- Knowledge Matching: With the insights derived, align the identified needs with the resources or solutions that are available. Additionally, establish channels to facilitate collaboration and create opportunities for cooperation.

2. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: CAPITALISATION CLINIC



DESCRIPTION

The Capitalisation Clinic serves as a hub for disseminating and exchanging common knowledge and best practices in sustainable, green, and circular businesses. It ensures the wide dissemination of valuable information and resources, allowing stakeholders to gain insights, seek guidance, and collaborate on ongoing or new projects.

OBJECTIVES

- Disseminate knowledge, insights, and best practices widely among stakeholders and the general public.
- Facilitate a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and networking.
- Provide tools, resources, and guidance to projects to ensure their effectiveness and success.
- Reach and engage new stakeholders, expanding the scope of sustainable business practices.

METHODOLOGY

- Public Forums: Plan and organise regular events, webinars, or discussions where stakeholders can share, learn, and collaborate.
- Web Toolbox: Develop and maintain a user-friendly online platform equipped with resources, tools, case studies, and best practices.
- Resource Curation: Regularly source, vet, and update the available tools and resources, ensuring they align with current trends and needs in sustainable, green, and circular businesses.
- Engagement Strategy: Implement a targeted marketing and outreach approach to ensure the participation of diverse stakeholders, thereby expanding the clinic's reach and maximizing its impact.
- Feedback Loop: Regularly solicit feedback to continuously improve the clinic's offerings and ensure that it meets the evolving needs of its users.

3. POLICY INFLUENCE: APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE



The valuable insights gathered from the aforementioned initiatives are harnessed to develop regional policy recommendations, taking into account on-ground experiences. The information highlights the effective measures used to create and support green and circular businesses. It will serve as the foundation for policymaking, both on the local and national levels. Notably, the strategic insights from the Capitalisation Lab and Clinic can be used to feed actionable strategies into the regional-level work of the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention.

CAPITALISATION ASSESSMENT

ENABLERS

RESET project adopted the following approaches to ensure its success:

- The capitalisation methodology follows a demand-driven approach, ensuring that the knowledge produced matches the needs for successful reuse and replication.
- A participatory approach is adopted throughout all project phases.
- Project managers of the 19 identified projects to be capitalised on were contacted and when available, and interviewed several times while maintaining a back and forth feedback mechanism during the project on deliverables, to ensure the accuracy of information.

The RESET project, through its structured capitalisation methodology, aims to enhance the collective understanding of sustainable and green business practices in the MED region, even while facing challenges in execution and sustainability.

OVERVIEW OF CAPITALISATION PROJECTS IN THE MED

To delve deeper into the analysis of adopted capitalisation methodologies in the MED, this study interviewed and assessed capitalisation projects implemented within ENI CBC MED. This section presents the objectives and the main activities of these projects.

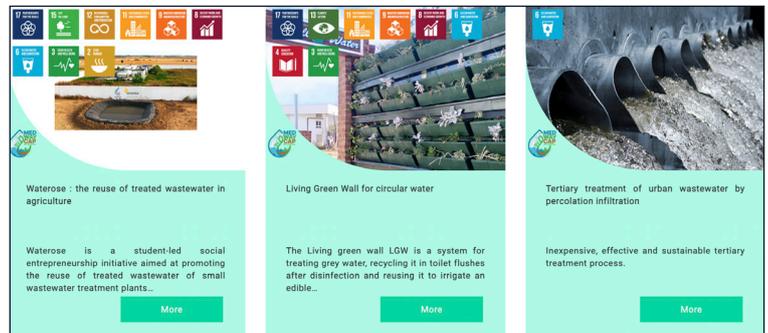


MEDWAYCAP is a capitalisation project supporting innovative and technological solutions to increase water efficiency and encourage the use of non-conventional water supplies. Its overall objective is to challenge the paradigm of non-conventional water reuse and management in the Mediterranean region by promoting sustainable strategies and technological innovations.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

NON-CONVENTIONAL WATER BEST PRACTICES INVENTORY PLATFORM

- Provides data on Non-Conventional Water (NCW) systems and Best Practices (BP) implemented in the Med region.
- Features an [inventory form](#) for registering NCW systems and their BP.
- Advocates for the sharing of know-how, while highlighting contexts, impacts, and sustainability to ensure its transferability and reusability.



INTERACTIVE CAPITALISATION PLATFORMS FOR NETWORKING AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- Upgrading existing platforms ([MENAWARA](#) & [AQUACYCLE](#)) to facilitate access to information on BPs, the understanding of legislations, promote inventory databases, and enable knowledge transfer and e-learning.



INNOVATION CAMPS (ICS)

- Focuses on challenges in the water sector and converting them, under expert guidance, into opportunities that can be further developed & realised in practice.

TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

- Hosted in four countries (Italy, Tunisia, Jordan, and Greece), the exhibitions showcase best practices using various mediums.

AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

- Targeted awareness-raising campaigns in Malta, Tunisia, Greece, and Egypt to promote NCW systems and BPs for mitigating water crises.

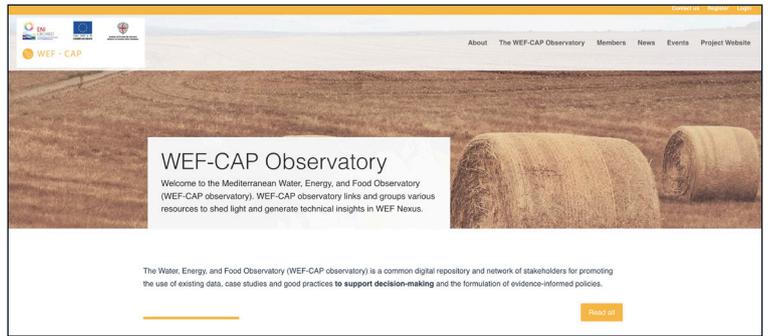


WEF-CAP combines the capitalisation and expansion of tools and methodologies used for innovation commercialization with the capitalisation of water, energy, and food (WEF) innovations across the Mediterranean area. Its main objective is to derive effective economic activity from under-capitalised WEF innovations.

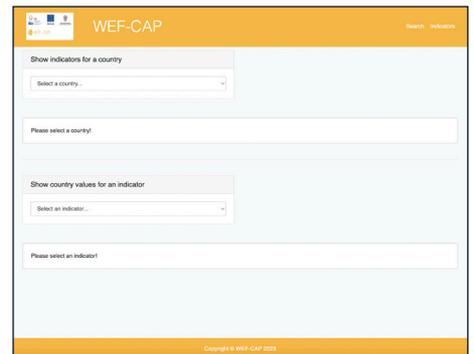
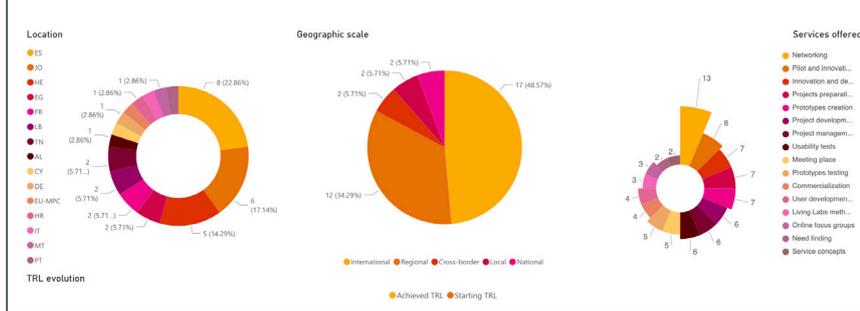
MAIN ACTIVITIES

THE WEF-CAP OBSERVATORY

- A common digital repository and network of stakeholders promoting the use of data and best practices to address the urgent WEF challenges in a specific region or country.
- The provided data and information resources can assist relevant actors and networks in decision-making and formulating evidence-based policies. Additionally, the observatory supports identifying gaps in knowledge and developing well-informed research plans.



WEF NEXUS Efficient Practices



GREEN INNOVATION DAYS EVENT

- One-of-a-kind three-day event in Lebanon featuring innovations and opportunities in the green sector and circular economy targeting various ecosystem actors.



Readers can click on the project logos to visit the projects' websites/resources.

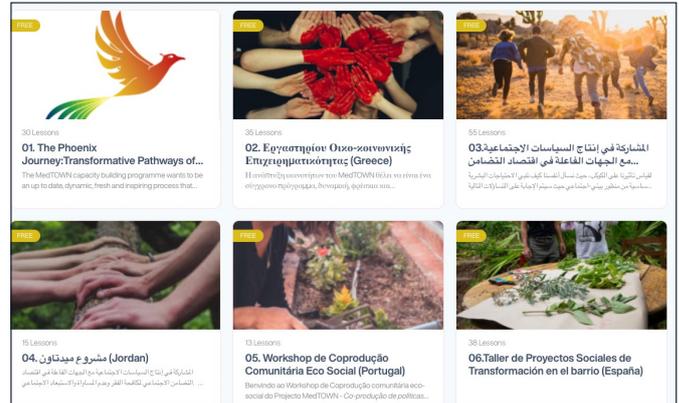


MedRiSSE aims to upscale results from different ENI CBC MED projects addressing social inclusion. The goal is to enable the co-production of municipal services with local Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) agents, and to continue the policy dialogue and advocacy for legal and institutional reforms and policy innovations aimed at supporting emerging sectors of SSE.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

WIDENED COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (WCOP)

- Acts as a Mediterranean Hub for SSE practitioners, public sector intrapreneurs, researchers, NGOs, and civil society invested in co-production and the promotion of SSE.
- Fosters connections and knowledge-sharing with other ENI and EU Neighbours projects.



MEDITERRANEAN CO-PRODUCTION LAB

- Aims to innovate public service delivery by collaborating with SSE and the evaluating scalability of co-production models.



POLICY ADVOCACY

- Undertakes a thorough cross-country analysis, develops policy briefs, and promotes dialogue between SSE ecosystems.



One of the four policy outcomes of the Interreg Green Growth Community (GGC), the Green Growth Book represents an overall scientific fusion of the strategies, obstacles, novelties, and experiences encountered throughout the project. It serves as a guide for planning and implementing future capitalisation and transfer activities.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY LEVEL

Participatory approach that incorporates inputs from various channels to ensure comprehensive and diverse contributions.

- Analysis: Ensures the comparability, reliability, consistency, and relevance of data.
- Synthesis - Mapping of modular project results: Utilises Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) to facilitate collaboration and sharing.

Diagram of the 4 thematic groups of GGC within the Circular Economy framework



- Networking and Lobbying: Forms partnerships with significant organisations and projects to enhance governance.
- Visibility and Transfer: Engages in events, publications, and meetings to maximise visibility and impact.

PROJECT LEVEL

Similar to the community level and fully aligned with the capitalisation activities of the Interreg MED Programme. Projects were grouped into four main categories

- Systematisation of knowledge
- Networking/clustering
- Development of strategic documents
- Dissemination (Public events and training activities)

Each project, while distinct in its goals and methods, seeks to transform the landscape of their respective fields. Whether it's water conservation, green growth, social inclusion, or the fusion of water, energy, and food sectors, these projects exemplify the potential for change through innovation and collaboration.

ASSESSMENT OF CAPITALISATION METHODOLOGIES

The efficacy of capitalisation projects in the Mediterranean region depends on methodological excellence. Different projects come with their unique methodologies, each having its own strengths and weaknesses, which in turn affect the dissemination and transfer of best practices and lessons learned. This section seeks to unravel these aspects and provides a comprehensive assessment of the strengths (capitalisation enablers) and weaknesses (capitalisation challenges) presented by various methodologies at the level of the main outcomes of capitalisation:



DISSEMINATION



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



POLICY INFLUENCE

AT THE LEVEL OF DISSEMINATION



The capitalisation projects' first outcome focuses on the collection and dissemination of knowledge and best practices. These initiatives rely on successful collaborations and communication to capture the knowledge needed by the community and the ecosystem. This section evaluates the capitalisation enablers for the dissemination of good practices and sheds light on the challenges faced during this process.

CAPITALISATION ENABLERS

METICULOUS IDENTIFICATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE NEEDED TO BE DISSEMINATED:

Effective knowledge dissemination starts with a keen understanding of the required knowledge and how it aligns with the existing data. This is achieved by assessing the data needed, the target audience for dissemination, and the overall ecosystem's requirements, as exemplified by the projects analysed. This approach ensures that the disseminated knowledge is relevant, tailored, and aligned with the specific needs of stakeholders.

EFFICIENT SELECTION OF BEST PRACTICES:

Results and knowledge produced by green and circular initiatives in the Mediterranean region can be diverse. Capitalisation projects need to employ efficient selection criteria to choose successful and relevant initiatives or results to be capitalised on. These criteria include environmental impact, commercial viability, team proficiency, developmental stage, geographical location, and alignment with overarching goals and needs. By thoughtfully designing these criteria, projects like Interreg GGC and MEDWAYCAP can maximise their potential for success.

USE OF INNOVATIVE ONLINE PLATFORM FOR THE COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE:

Online platforms play a pivotal role in efficiently disseminating knowledge. This is achieved through the utilisation of database management systems that create glossaries, interactive maps, and repositories. These tools facilitate the systematic tracking of best practices, customised to the specific needs of actors.

Projects like WEF-CAP (Observatory platform) and MEDWAYCAP capitalise on existing platforms from current and previous initiatives such as MENAWARA & AQUACYCLE. By building on these platforms, they enhance the accessibility and relevance of data. Additionally, a direct approach is employed to allow projects to share their best practices and provide updated information.

BENEFITING FROM EXISTING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE:

Existing dissemination channels are impactful avenues that enable outreach to a wider audience. For instance, publications are used to showcase the knowledge and insights generated as factsheets by projects like Interreg GGC. These projects contribute towards greener cities, demonstrating the importance of utilising existing channels for effective knowledge dissemination.

ENSURING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT THE DISSEMINATION PROCESS:

Engaging stakeholders throughout the collection and dissemination process is crucial for sustained success. At the local level, this ensures that the knowledge needed is properly identified. On the other hand, at the level of projects, this promotes efficient data collection and encourages active participation. Exemplary projects emphasise that consistent stakeholder interest and communication enhance the depth and reach of projects, and improve the dissemination of adequate best practices. Personal connections were cited as a way to foster meaningful dialogue and insights much like what MedRiSSE's WCoP is hoping to achieve.

CAPITALISATION CHALLENGES

LACK OF MANDATE FOR PREVIOUS PROJECTS:

One of the fundamental challenges in capitalisation projects is the lack of a mandate for the engagement and participation of previous projects that were completed years ago. Tracking down and communicating with past project managers has become challenging. This step is often necessary to delve deeper into the identification and evaluation of best practices, impacting the effectiveness and influence of capitalisation efforts.

MAINTENANCE AND CONTINUITY OF ONLINE DISSEMINATION PLATFORMS:

Online platforms designed for the dissemination and sharing of information within capitalisation projects often fail to consider the platform's continuity beyond the project's scope. As a consequence, these platforms are frequently abandoned after project completion or become outdated within a few years, leading to the diminishing of capitalisation efforts.

LOCATING RESOURCES ACROSS SEVERAL PLATFORMS:

Navigating through an abundance of materials spread across various platforms can seem difficult due to the presence of numerous projects working in parallel on closely related topics, which makes resource accessibility a challenge.

LANGUAGE BARRIERS IN SPECIFIC COUNTRIES OR REGIONS:

Despite substantial efforts invested in developing capitalisation materials such as guides, methodologies, and toolkits, their impact can be hindered if they are not disseminated in languages widely understood in the target country. The absence of capitalisation materials in Arabic can be seen as a challenge to achieving successful capitalisation. This issue is particularly pronounced in some Middle East and North African countries, especially in remote areas where proficiency in English or French may be limited.



There is a lack of mandate and limited responsiveness of partners and project managers. It is also very difficult to track and communicate with other project managers whose projects ended three to four years ago.

Manager of a Capitalisation Project

AT THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



The capitalisation of good practices involves initiatives for an efficient transfer of knowledge and best practices beyond dissemination, with the aim to replicate these successes in other contexts. This section assesses the capitalisation enablers and challenges at the level of knowledge exchange.

CAPITALISATION ENABLERS

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS:

Engaging local stakeholders boosts active participation and knowledge exchange across countries. This can help customise and adapt the implementation of best practices based on local contexts and needs.

ADOPTION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH:

Engaging with experts from diverse sectors and fields broadens the knowledge base and increases the potential for innovative solutions for the replication of best practices. This collaborative approach generates a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in green and circular economy practices, and enables the development of innovative solutions.

USING COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT:

Offering platforms for networking, training, and community-building ensures continuous stakeholder engagement, further fostering a culture of shared learning. Initiatives like MedRiSSE established various efficient platforms for connecting communities of practice, such as Facebook groups to share news and events, and private groups for the local teams of each partner, allowing them to communicate in their own language.

INNOVATIVE APPROACH FOR THE REPLICATION OF BEST PRACTICES:

Initiatives including innovation camps and youth engagement programs, ensure varied participation and facilitate the transformation of best practices into actionable, innovative, and locally-adapted solutions.



Stakeholder engagement enabling initiative: Innovation Camps (ICs)

The project MEDWAYCAP engaged its stakeholders through challenge-driven events such as the ICs where Med region challenges were discussed. With the aid of a Creativity-Innovation Expert, key stakeholders in the water sector identified, refined, and analysed challenges from different perspectives to convert them into opportunities that can be further developed and implemented in practice through the program.



FLEXIBILITY AND CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF PROJECTS:

Continuously monitoring the evolution of projects ensures that they remain relevant and adaptable to changing circumstances, enhancing their efficacy.

CAPITALISATION CHALLENGES**DIFFICULTY IN SOURCING LOCAL EXPERTS:**

Finding local technical expertise for the transfer of best practices can be a challenging task, often requiring organisations to travel to remote locations or collaborate with entities that have limited resources. The ability to engage local experts is crucial for the success of capitalised initiatives, as their implementation frequently involves precise technical guidelines and criteria that only skilled professionals can effectively follow and apply.

CONFLICTING IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES WITH LOCAL REGULATIONS AND SYSTEMS:

Varying laws and regulations across different countries regarding environmental protection, waste management, and related aspects of green and circular businesses can hinder the seamless transfer of best practices. Practices successful in one country may not be feasible or compliant in another due to differing legal frameworks.

DISCREPANCIES IN TERMINOLOGY USED IN BEST PRACTICES:

Different terms are used to describe identical concepts related to green businesses. This disparity can lead to confusion and misunderstandings when attempting to exchange knowledge between countries.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:

Cultural variations present another challenge. While sustainability might hold significant importance in some cultures, it may be a lesser focus in others. Implementing best practices grounded in sustainability principles can be challenging in environments where their value is not universally recognized. Additionally, differing levels of community cooperation and competition across countries can complicate efforts to engage and implement new initiatives.

CONTINUITY OF ACTIONS:

Ensuring continuity for clusters and working groups, and generally maintaining the projects' social synergy beyond the project's scope, can be challenging if the governance and sustainability of these groups are not well planned.



Differences in national regulations hinder cooperation and generalizability of findings

Manager of a Capitalisation Project



Best practices disseminated are inadequate for local conditions. For instance, there are not enough resources in Palestine to afford wastewater treatment

Manager of a Capitalisation Project

AT THE LEVEL OF POLICY INFLUENCE



The primary aim of capitalisation projects is to leverage existing outputs and outcomes to influence policymakers and actors. This influence may be exerted directly through data and best practices or indirectly by shaping perceptions, motivations, and attitudes. This section evaluates the capitalisation enablers and challenges at the level of influencing policymakers and actors.

CAPITALISATION ENABLERS

COLLABORATION WITH ESTEEMED ORGANISATIONS:

The association of capitalisation projects with reputable organisations, like the Interreg GGC²⁸, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment²⁹, and the Mediterranean Action Plan³⁰ significantly bolster their credibility. These organisations provide much-needed resources, technical expertise, and networking opportunities. This collaboration supports the development and dissemination of policy briefs, gaining endorsement from a wider range of stakeholders, and building relationships with policy makers. The regular engagement with influential stakeholders amplifies the capitalisation projects' reach in crucial policy discussions.



PROACTIVE POLICY INFLUENCE INITIATIVES BY INTERREG GGC:

The Interreg GGC's methodology focuses on enhancing the visibility of green and circular business projects. In addition to attending high-profile events, their efforts include creating synergies with powerful entities and organising meetings with policymakers. Such initiatives ensure that the findings and recommendations of the projects are accessible to those who shape policies.

GROWING AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR GREEN AND CIRCULAR BUSINESSES AMONG POLICYMAKERS:

With an evident shift towards recognizing the importance of green and circular businesses, there's a broader receptivity to findings, recommendations, and innovations presented by capitalisation projects. Policymakers' acknowledgment of the economic benefits of these businesses translates to an increased willingness to engage with, and be influenced by, capitalisation projects.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS PROMOTING GREEN AND CIRCULAR BUSINESSES:

The availability of funding mechanisms, such as the Horizon Europe programme, the European Investment Bank, and the Green Climate Fund, underscores the recognition and importance attached to green initiatives. This financial backing not only enables the execution of the projects but also adds to their perceived importance among policymakers.

CAPITALISATION CHALLENGES

LACK OF UNIFIED DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGIES:

The absence of a standardised definition of what constitutes a "green" or "circular" business complicates the dialogue with policymakers. Without a shared understanding, there's a risk of misalignment in terms of objectives, expectations, and outcomes. Policymakers might find it challenging to implement recommendations that don't align seamlessly with existing regulations or those that are perceived as alien due to terminological differences. This could limit the influence of capitalisation projects.

UNEP/MAP, FOR EXAMPLE, PROVIDES A DEFINITION FOR A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS:

"A sustainable business provides commercial solutions which create ecological value and/or safeguard the environment (addressing environmental challenges and/or reducing environmental impacts) and are economically viable and socially empowering."³¹

²⁸ The INTERREG MED GREEN GROWTH COMMUNITY is a network of organisations from the Mediterranean region that is working to promote green growth while it provides a platform for organisations to share knowledge and experience, and to collaborate on projects that promote green growth.

²⁹ The European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment is responsible for the development and implementation of the European Union's environmental policies and provides support to project teams that are working to promote green and circular businesses in the Mediterranean region.

³⁰ The Mediterranean Action Plan is a regional environmental program that is implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Action Plan provides support to project teams that are working to promote sustainable development in the Mediterranean region.

³¹ SwitchMed. (2022). Set of regional measures to support the development of green and circular businesses and strengthen the demand for more sustainable products in the Mediterranean.

POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN THE MED REGION:

The political instability prevalent in many Mediterranean countries inevitably diverts attention from long-term sustainable growth to short-term crisis management. In such an environment, the priorities of capitalisation projects might be sidelined. Additionally, corruption and the lack of political will can act as a bottleneck in actualizing green policies, even when they're acknowledged as necessary.

LACK OF COORDINATION BETWEEN PROJECTS:

With numerous projects operating in synergy, the lack of a clear methodological pathway for policy influence can limit the effectiveness of capitalisation efforts. This could result in scattered focus, where the combined effect of individual projects fails to create a cohesive influence on policies.

CHANGING NATIONAL REGULATIONS:

In some countries, the variability and frequent changes in national regulations pose challenges to cooperation and the generalizability of findings. These evolving regulations can make it challenging to maintain a consistent approach, leading to periodic reassessments and realignments, thus slowing down the policy influence process.

CROSS-CUTTING CAPITALISATION CHALLENGES

Capitalisation projects often require a combination of activities to achieve dissemination, knowledge transfer, and policy influence effectively. This section details the cross-cutting challenges faced by capitalisation projects to fulfil their overall objectives.

HIGH BUDGETS REQUIRED:

Capitalisation projects often require a combination of different activities to effectively reach their outcomes of knowledge dissemination, transfer, and policy influence. The cost of these activities often adds up to a high budget required for implementation. These costs can sometimes pose challenges in attracting funding from donors and investors, potentially hindering the execution and progress of capitalisation initiatives.

PROTRACTED TIMELINES:

Complex activities within capitalisation projects require adequate time and the collaboration of diverse stakeholders for processes such as identification, dissemination, and advocacy. The implementation and administration of such activities are often too time-consuming, making it challenging to sustain momentum and achieve results within projected timelines.

WEAK MONITORING & EVALUATION MECHANISMS:

Monitoring and evaluation applied to capitalisation initiatives often end at dissemination. As a result, the effectiveness of implementing shared best practices and policy progress remains untraceable beyond that point. Without a means of tracking the implementation of best practices, it becomes complicated to ensure a proper replication of results and their continuous improvement to align with evolving technologies. Consequently, the potential to obtain endorsement and funding for future projects may be compromised.

SUSTAINABILITY CONCERNS:

While capitalisation projects aim to promote sustainable solutions, the absence of robust mechanisms to ensure their own sustainability is a significant pitfall. The inability to sustain the activities and their impact beyond the projects lifespan can hinder the trust and influence that these projects hold from policymakers and ecosystem actors.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS:

The existence of multiple programs and initiatives, that often overlap and lack clear channels for aligning objectives, can result in potential redundancy in efforts. Furthermore, it leaves stakeholders confused given the influx of information at all levels, including dissemination, knowledge exchange, and policy influence.

In conclusion, while capitalisation projects for green and circular economy in the MED have enabling factors that increase their influence, several challenges need to be addressed to enhance their efficiency and sustainability. Balancing the innovative drive of these projects and the practical considerations in their planning and implementation is essential to achieve the desired outcomes in terms of dissemination, knowledge exchange, and policy influence.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPACTFUL AND SUSTAINABLE CAPITALISATION METHODOLOGIES

This section draws on the findings of the desk review and the interviews with capitalisation project managers to formulate recommendations for designing and implementing green and circular economy capitalisation initiatives in the Mediterranean region to help accelerate the growth of green businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISSEMINATION



While there are several challenges associated with disseminating lessons from capitalisation projects in the Mediterranean, implementing these recommendations can pave the way for more efficient, impactful, and wider-reaching knowledge sharing with potential green businesses and other actors who will effectively implement them. Ensuring that these lessons are not only learned but also effectively disseminated will be crucial in fostering the growth of green and circular businesses and contributing towards achieving a more sustainable and collaborative Mediterranean region in the future.

PRIORITISE KEY LESSONS FOR DISSEMINATION:

To ensure dissemination efforts are impactful, capitalisation initiatives can strategically focus on high-impact activities by:

- Identifying the most effective and relevant lessons for green and circular business to ensure a streamlined and focused dissemination approach based on local needs and global trends.
- Utilising clear timelines to share these lessons to maintain momentum and relevance.

OPTIMISE AND SUSTAIN KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORIES:

Developing a centralised database or platform where lessons learned, successful initiatives and available resources for green and circular businesses are stored and categorised for easy access is essential. To ensure the success and sustainability of the platform:

- Ensure a user-friendly interface to easily locate and extract the desired resources. This includes advanced categorisation, research functions, visualisations, interactive maps, etc.
- Plan for the continuity of the platform in terms of maintenance and content updates, from the beginning of the project.
- Build on existing platforms whenever possible to optimise efforts and avoid redundancies.

ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY AND UNDERSTANDABILITY:

Ensuring that all disseminated materials and platforms are available in languages prevalent in the MED region promote inclusivity, and enhance the reach and impact of the initiatives. In addition, providing tailored messages ensure that these resources are understandable and relevant to local actors.

- Frame sustainability benefits in terms of local concerns like economic growth or environmental preservation.
- Engage with local communities in formulating messages that cater to their specific needs and sustainability challenges.

DEFINE MECHANISMS TO ENGAGE OTHER PROJECTS:

Capitalisation initiatives rely on the responsiveness of projects to be capitalised on to gather the needed insights, especially of projects that have concluded. To ensure their engagement, it is recommended to provide incentives and develop mechanisms for previous project managers and entities to actively participate in the data collection, analysis, and framing of best practices and insights. This could entail including them in stakeholder engagement and dissemination events to share experiences and present their best practices, designating a part of the capitalisation project budget for their involvement, establishing a MOU, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



While the exchange of green and circular business practices holds immense potential, it requires a thoughtful approach that respects local nuances and barriers. By emphasising collaboration, communication, and the tailored application of practices, the Mediterranean region can make significant progress in adopting and benefiting from sustainable business models.

LOCALISED APPLICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES:

Green and circular initiatives should be tailor-made to match the unique challenges and strengths of the Mediterranean region. If a practice is identified as non-feasible in one country, explore modifications or alternatives that would make it applicable.

MITIGATE TERMINOLOGICAL INCONSISTENCIES:

Develop glossaries or guides that clarify terminologies specific to green and circular businesses, ensuring clear communication and understanding between regions. Addressing these inconsistencies can prevent misunderstandings and promote the seamless transfer of practices.

ENHANCE CROSS-COUNTRY AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION APPROACHES:

Foster collaboration among countries in the Mediterranean and engage with experts from diverse sectors to bridge the gap between different contexts, facilitate the exchange of best practices, and craft tailored innovative solutions. Organise joint initiatives, knowledge-sharing platforms, and networking events that target sustainable, green, and circular business practices.

EMPOWER LOCAL EXPERTISE:

Another way of ensuring the adaptability of practices to the local context is to source and train local technical expertise in this sector to ensure the sustainable transfer of these practices. These local ambassadors or representatives can convey messages authentically and sensitively, considering cultural variations. Leveraging local networks and partnerships is an effective way to tap into this expertise.

STRENGTHEN STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND EXCHANGE PLATFORMS:

Continuously engage regional stakeholders, emphasising personal connections, to ensure the relevance and local applicability of transferred practices. Establishing exchange platforms is key to fostering trust and easing knowledge transfer processes. Examples include community groups, innovation camps, and international events that drive collaborative efforts. This approach should target different age groups, sectors, and stakeholders to capture a comprehensive perspective.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY INFLUENCE



Implementing the following recommendations enhances the chances of effectively influencing policymakers and stakeholders in the field of green and circular businesses. This, in turn, can create an environment conducive to sustainable development and economic growth in the Mediterranean region.

DEVELOP A COMMON DEFINITION FOR A GREEN OR CIRCULAR BUSINESS:

A common definition promotes coherence and unity in measuring and addressing sustainability objectives. This alignment ensures policy actors are working towards the same objectives and helps in maintaining a cohesive dialogue with policymakers.

PROVIDE CLEAR AND CONCISE EVIDENCE OF THE BENEFITS OF GREEN AND CIRCULAR BUSINESSES:

Leverage impact measurement tools to present compelling evidence of the advantages of green and circular businesses, and craft concise communication materials tailored to specific audiences. This ensures effective communication of benefits and enhances the prospects of gaining policymakers' endorsement.

STRATEGICALLY FRAME THE NEED FOR THE PROMOTION AND UPTAKE OF BEST PRACTICES:

As certain MED countries might focus less on sustainability, it's important to tailor messages that resonate with government priorities. Highlighting benefits such as economic growth, job creation, and environmental preservation can provide a compelling argument for green and circular business policies. For instance, the promotion of a methodology/best practice for water treatment method can be linked with job creation, efficient water resource management, and improvement of the health and well-being of the residents.

BUILD STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH POLICYMAKERS:

By establishing strong connections with policymakers, capitalisation projects can ensure alignment with government priorities and secure the necessary support for success.

- Develop a solid stakeholder engagement plan targeting national, regional, and local government officials, parliament members, and international organisations.
- Attend government meetings, provide them with timely and updated communication materials, and seek their input on key decisions.

MITIGATE REGULATORY HURDLES:

Given the diverse regulations and frequent changes in national policies, it's essential to be proactive. Regularly update stakeholders on these changes and work collaboratively to align strategies that can influence evolving policies.

DEVELOP A STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN:

Regular interactions with influential stakeholders can help in amplifying the impact of capitalisation projects in crucial policy discussions. For instance, reinforced collaboration with esteemed organisations like the INTERREG Med Green Growth Community could increase the opportunities to influence policies.

CROSS-CUTTING CAPITALISATION RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure impactful capitalisation projects within the Mediterranean region, it is necessary to adopt cross-cutting recommendations that address overarching challenges and enhance the effectiveness of dissemination, knowledge exchange, and policy influence. These recommendations span across multiple dimensions, bridging the gaps between communities, businesses, and policymakers. By integrating these cross-cutting strategies, capitalisation initiatives can establish a more cohesive and interconnected approach, fostering a holistic transformation towards a green and circular economy.

SECURE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING:

Capitalisation initiatives require a considerable budget to cover diverse activities. To guarantee a long-lasting impact, initiatives need to secure funding from diverse sources and plan for their sustainability beyond the scope of the program.

- Seek sponsorships, grants, or collaborations with institutions that have a vested interest in the effective dissemination of these insights.
- Foster relationships with diverse donors, governments, non-governmental entities, and private sector enterprises.
- Transparent communication about the results and benefits of initiatives can attract continuous financial support.

LEVERAGE COST-EFFECTIVE ACTIVITIES:

Acknowledging and planning for the diverse costs associated with capitalisation projects is necessary. In addition to seeking funding from various sources such as governments, donors, and investors, other cost-effective strategies can be employed internally, particularly in areas like awareness raising, training, business support, and advocacy. These could include:

- Utilising digital tools to disseminate and exchange knowledge online between regions in a cost-effective and eco-friendly way, such as online learning, webinars, social media, etc.
- Engaging in partnerships and collaborations to share the expenses of activities, such as events and training sessions, allowing more extensive and cost-effective reach.

ENSURE COORDINATION WITH SIMILAR PROGRAMS:

Initiate and promote coordination efforts among multiple capitalisation projects within the green and circular economy to reduce redundancy and increase the impact of shared knowledge in terms of dissemination, exchange, and policy influence.

IMPROVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS TO SUSTAIN CAPITALISATION EFFORTS:

Adopting monitoring and evaluating the impact of shared practices ensures continuous enhancement and adaptation of replicable practices over time. Furthermore, this mechanism can be complemented by establishing a coordinating entity to oversee the use and implementation of these practices, facilitate communication between relevant stakeholders, and identify best practices that have proven to be more effective and worthy of further promotion.

INTEGRATE A CAPITALISATION COMPONENT AT THE END OF EACH PROGRAM:

To enhance capitalisation efforts, consider integrating a dedicated capitalisation component at the end of green and circular economy programs. Instead of treating capitalisation as a post-project completion endeavour, proactively plan for these activities within each project to systematically extract lessons learned and best practices at the final stage. This proactive approach ensures that valuable insights are captured in a timely manner and can be effectively channelled into existing capitalisation platforms and clusters. Such planning contributes to a more streamlined and impactful knowledge transfer process in the field of sustainable development.

EXERCISE PATIENCE AND PERSISTENCE:

Finally, recognizing that change requires time, especially in complex areas like sustainability, is essential. Capitalisation projects need to be patient, persistent, and willing to adapt their approach as needed to maintain their momentum, especially at the level of policy influence. Policymakers may not necessarily always prioritize green and sustainable businesses within the timeframe of capitalisation projects.

CONCLUSION

The Mediterranean region is characterised by its unique combination of natural resources and social capital. However, it is confronted with significant environmental and socioeconomic challenges. Green and circular initiatives can help address these challenges and contribute towards a more sustainable and collaborative Mediterranean region in the future. Capitalisation in the green and circular sectors is important in the Mediterranean region because it can magnify the impact of sustainable initiatives, streamline implementation processes, and accelerate the region's transition towards a greener future. By capitalising on what's already been achieved, we can avoid redundant efforts, saving valuable time and resources.

The challenges associated with capitalisation methodologies in the Mediterranean region include difficulties in gathering the required knowledge, in the dissemination of best practices to local communities, navigating complex regulatory environments, and ensuring that capitalisation initiatives are aligned with broader policy goals. At the same time, projects adopting a capitalisation methodology have already presented some successful results by identifying the most effective and relevant best practices for green and circular business to be capitalised on, by engaging local stakeholders in knowledge transfer, and by partnering and collaborating with influential organisations and programs.

To optimise the impact of capitalisation methodologies, it is recommended to develop holistic approaches that ensure the dissemination and knowledge transfer of key priority lessons and best practices for green and circular businesses, and the development of effective strategies for policy influence. At the dissemination level, capitalisation initiatives should prioritise key lessons, optimise knowledge repositories, ensure accessibility and understandability, and define mechanisms for engaging past projects. These strategies collectively aim to maximise the impact of disseminating essential knowledge to diverse audiences. At the level of knowledge exchange, capitalisation initiatives should focus on localised application of good practices, mitigating terminological inconsistencies, enhancing cross-country and interdisciplinary collaboration, empowering local experts, and strengthening stakeholder involvement. As for policy influence, capitalisation initiatives should develop a strategic approach to influencing policymakers and actors. This encompasses developing a common definition, providing clear evidence of benefits, framing the need for implementing best practices strategically, building strong relationships with policymakers, mitigating regulatory hurdles, and developing a strategic engagement plan. Finally, capitalisation initiatives should look at overarching strategies to secure sustainable funding, leverage cost-effective activities, coordinate with similar programs, and improve monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Overall, by catalysing collaborative and holistic approaches to capitalisation, ecosystem actors can foster a thriving environment for green and circular businesses and contribute towards achieving a more sustainable and collaborative Mediterranean region.



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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