



## **MEDOSSIC**

***Mediterranean organization structure and strengthening  
of innovation capacities for sustainable development  
no. 1G-MED08-289***

### ***Good Practices Guide***

***Med Programme***

***Priority-Measure 1-2***

***Axe 1: Strengthening innovation capacities***

***Objective 1.2: Strengthening strategic cooperation between economic development  
actors and public authorities***

Working component:	3. Existing situation analysis - Synthetic Diagnosis-Good Practices Investigation - Benchmarking
Action:	3.22. Good practices guide
Deliverable:	3.22. Good practices guide
Version:	01
Date:	21. 7. 2010
Status:	Final version
Type:	Good practices guide
Availability	Public
Responsible Partner	LP (RDA of Inner-Karst Region)
Editor:	Mateja Simčič, Jana Nadoh Bergoč

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## 1. IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Ref. No of project	1G-MED08-289
Project acronym	MEDOSSIC
Project full title	Mediterranean organization structure and strengthening of innovation capacities for sustainable development

Security (distribution level)	Restricted
Date of delivery	17 May 2010
Deliverable number	3.22.
Type	Good practice guide
Status & version	Draft - version 1
Number of pages	
Responsible Partner	RDA of Inner-karst region (Mateja Simčič, Jana Nadoh Bergoč)
Other Contributors	
Author(s)	RDA of Inner-karst region (Mateja Simčič, Jana Nadoh Bergoč)
Keywords	Good practices in eco-innovation, eco-innovation support
Abstract (for dissemination)	

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The intention of gathering good practices arose with the deliberation to establish a pilot structure for stimulating (eco)innovation in each participating partner's region and based on the latter, with the realization that there is a wide gap in understanding of eco-innovation creation and implementation. Based on existing situation analysis and described in MEDOSSIC partner's national reports on good practices, this catalogue is designed to contribute to this understanding. Moreover, it is intended as a significant method for an in depth view into the processes that are behind the creation and implementation of eco-innovations.

However, it is to be noted that during the investigation some methodological difficulties become evident: mostly due to heterogeneity of partners included in the project, some level of incompatibility of gathered data arose. Further, based on observations from the existing situation analysis, some region have not yet achieved noticeable level of (eco)innovation, which means the subject of this catalogue was absent. In such cases, it was recommended to observe general innovation environment and to maintain attentive to data which might indicate some level of (eco)innovation potential. For these reasons the information gathered within Good Practices Catalogue are to be treated cautiously, considering the characteristics of the implementation environment.

Good Practices Catalogue is deliberated as support tool for the following stakeholders:

- partners of MEDOSSIC project, which will utilise the information gathered in order to establish regional pilot structures for stimulating (eco)innovations;
- organizations and managers, interested in different ways to stimulate (eco)innovation;
- (eco)innovators, holders of (eco)inventions, which are interested in practices of (eco)innovations, the impact of their inventions etc.

It is also the intention of this Catalogue to offer an overview of different perspectives, knowledge and experiences with (eco)innovation in order to provide better understanding of these processes. Good Practices Guide consists of several chapters: first, background information on strengthening eco-innovation capacities is provided. This chapter includes the definition of innovation and invention, the definition and classification of eco-innovations and presents a model of eco-innovation process. Second chapter presents some considerations regarding the regions included into the MEDOSSIC project and their (eco)innovation and (eco)innovation support characteristics. The main part of the Catalogue is presented next: it includes the presentations of (eco)innovators (organizations or individuals) as well as organizations, aimed at (eco)innovation encouragement and support.

### 3. BACKGROUND

Similar to other MEDOSSIC actions, good practices investigation also derives from the following definitions:

- **Innovation:** an innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service) or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relation. The minimum requirement for an innovation is that the product, process, marketing method or organizational method must be new (or significantly) to the firm.
- **Invention:** an important distinction is normally made between invention and innovation. Invention is the first occurrence of an idea for a new product or process, while innovation is the first attempt to carry it out into practice (Fagerberg 2004).
- **(Eco)innovation:** it presents all forms of innovation activities resulting in or aimed at significantly improving environmental protection. (Eco)innovation includes new production processes, new products or services, and new management and business methods, the use or implementation of which is likely to prevent or substantially reduce the risks to the environment, pollution and any other negative impact of the use of resources throughout the lifecycle of related activities.

Further, when exploring (eco)innovation, the following classification is in order:

#### 1. ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES:

- pollution control technologies including waste water treatment technologies
- cleaning technologies that treat pollution released into the environment;
- cleaner process technologies: new manufacturing processes that are less polluting and/or more resource efficient than relevant alternatives;
- waste management equipment;
- environmental monitoring and instrumentation;
- green energy technologies;
- waste supply;
- noise and vibration control.

#### 2. ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION for the environment:

- pollution prevention schemes;
- environmental management and auditing systems: formal systems of environmental management involving measurement, reporting and responsibilities for dealing with issues of material use, energy, water and waste;
- chain management: cooperation between companies so as to close material loops and to avoid environmental damage across the value chain (from cradle to grave).

### 3. PRODUCT AND SERVICE INNOVATION offering environmental benefits:

- new or environmentally improved products (goods) including eco-houses and buildings;
- green financial products (such as eco-lease or climate mortgages);
- environmental services: solid and hazardous waste management, water and waste water management, environmental consulting, testing and engineering, other testing and analytical services;
- services that are less pollution and resource intensive (car sharing is an example).

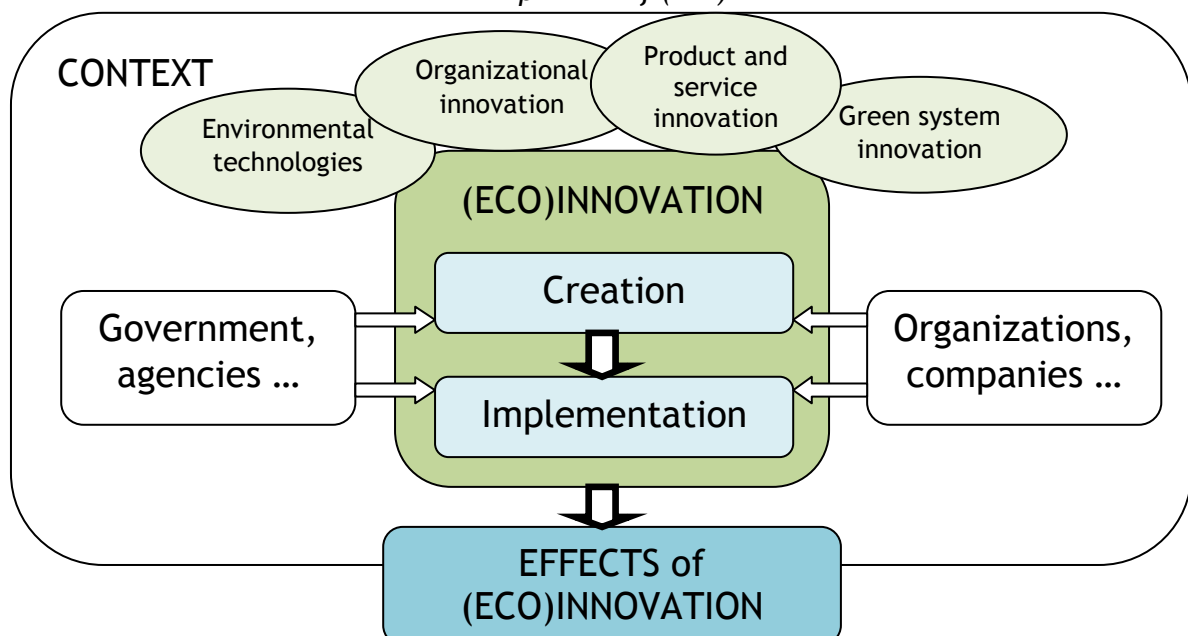
### 4. GREEN SYSTEM INNOVATIONS:

- alternative systems of production and consumption that are more environmentally friendly than existing systems (biological agriculture and a renewable-based energy systems are examples).

Acknowledging the definition of (eco)innovations already provided (see page 5), it is important to emphasize that (eco)innovation is not limited to environmentally motivated innovations, but includes unintended environmental innovations as well. That means that the environmental benefits of an innovation can be a side-effect of other goals. Thus, institutional innovations such as changes in values, beliefs, knowledge, norms and administrative acts are also important factors to be observed. The same applies to changes in management and organization.

What then needs to be recognized is the following: when observing eco-innovation it should be clear whether one observes the creation of product innovations, the implementation of products, technologies, services and practices or rather the support provided to the process of (eco)innovation by different institutional and organizational settings. Another important dimension of (eco)innovation phenomenon is also the observation of (eco)innovation's direct and indirect effects.

Picture 1: The process of (eco)innovation



As presented in Picture 1, the dimensions observed when searching for good practices in the field of (eco)innovation are as follows:

- the process of (eco)innovation creation with acknowledgment of different categories of (eco)innovations;
- the process of (eco)innovation implementation;
- the process of (eco)innovation encouragement and the role of different stakeholders in these processes (government, agencies, organizations, companies etc.);
- the direct and indirect effects of (eco)innovations;
- the context for (eco)innovation processes, including circumstances that influence all the above.

This serves as framework for exploring good practices in stimulating and strengthening innovation capacities that lead to sustainable development. Naturally, these processes are not always recognized in this way. Rather, organizations and individuals involved in (eco)innovation are focused to knowledge and experiences deriving from their everyday practice and do not differentiate specifically among different processes of (eco)innovation such as creation, implementation, encouragement etc. Nevertheless, an insight in these matters adds to the understanding of (eco)innovation and can be recognizable through careful review of the following good practices presented in the Guide.

## 4. GUIDELINES

Based on comparative analysis and the Medossic project partners' observations, there are several activities that prove to be successful, particularly in solving different dilemmas pertaining to eco-innovation encouragement and support. Table 1 offers an overview of the most evident ones.

*Table 1: Guidelines for (eco)innovation support*

<b>Dilemmas</b>	<b>Guidelines for regional pilot structures</b>
<i>Existing gap between entrepreneurs and academic professionals.</i>	Encouragement to the development of a high level educational system and quality R&D organizations.
	Offering other possibilities for networking (organizing discussions, meetings, seminars within business community, locally and internationally).
	Fostering the creation of (European) regional networks in the field of (eco)innovation.
<i>Stated importance of linking the business sector with R&amp;D and the mutual operation on common eco-innovation projects.</i>	Encouragement the exchange of best practices between more developed and experienced regions in the field of (eco)innovation to less experienced regions.
	Encouragement of business environment supporting the exchange of knowledge also within the business community (business incubators, technology parks, knowledge centres etc.).
<i>The deficiency of financial funds to fulfil the requirements to conclude the innovation processes.</i>	Encouragement of national and regional authorities for foreseeing the financial funds in the future budgets to support the local economy with eco subsidies.
<i>Insufficient support of governmental and national public bodies.</i>	More easily accessed government bodies
	Direction also to SMEs The development of human resources, specialized in (eco)innovation knowledge and information providing
<i>Lack of coordination between innovation and ecology and lack of wider public interests.</i>	Raising the awareness of the importance of eco-innovation within business sector and wider public.
	Promotion of dissemination of eco-way of living to the public, using different media channels, organizing public relations campaigns etc.
<i>Absence of central data about (eco)innovation initiatives, programmes and projects in most regions.</i>	Development of regional databases concerning eco-innovation and encouragement of national databases development.
<i>Inefficiency of organizational structures</i>	Stimulation of marketing orientation for

<i>(for applying innovations to market niches, for applying for funds, for stimulating knowledge creation and exchange etc.).</i>	product and services sales and promotion enhancements.
	Providing training in specific knowledge (knowledge management, financial project management and similar business functions).
	Encouraging funds providers for implementation of user-friendly application forms.
	Easing the process of applying for funds by assisting with the preparation of applications.
<i>The problem of ensuring competitive advantages in the frame of globalisation.</i>	Easing innovation processes by means of stimulation of financial funds and other support activities (different kinds of awarding etc.).
	Stimulation of demand for eco-products and services by final customers.

Also, based on the experiences of the Medossic project partners when observing their regional and national environments, several key points have been illuminated, offering a framework for designing and performing eco-innovation support:

1. **ECO-CULTURE AS A FOUNDATION FOR ECO-INNOVATION:** It is clear that eco-innovation is most successful when embedded in suitable context. It is impossible to predict whether a selected activity or a set of them would consequent in actual success of organizations implementing eco-innovation. However, there is no doubt that attaining success in eco-innovation needs to be supported by the environment that encourages the ideas of sustainable development in every aspect of living (economy, politics, society etc.) and with every stakeholder directly or indirectly related. An important lesson is thus directed to the acknowledgement of encouraging a so-called eco-culture.
2. **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECOLOGY AND INNOVATION:** when dealing with eco-innovation support one frequently encounters several policies, initiatives, programmes and projects in the area of ecology or in the area of innovation (nationally, regionally or locally). There are not many examples of combining both areas in eco-innovation application. This is one of the factors that influences eco-innovation significantly and needs to be considered when designing eco-innovation support structures. In addition, this idea needs to be implemented at all levels and areas influencing eco-innovation progress (financial programmes, policies, education etc.).
3. **CENTRALIZED ECO-INNOVATION SUPPORT STRUCTURES:** due to separate policies and initiatives, dealing either with ecology either with innovation, eco-innovation cannot be located specifically within the existing support structures, resulting in lack of centralized information on eco-innovation support, non-targeted existing funds, scarce or non-existent databases on eco-innovation programmes and projects etc. The improvement in this area is an important factor influencing eco-innovation encouragement.

4. **ECO-INNOVATION SUPPORT STRUCTURES ON REGIONAL LEVEL:** not only that the need for eco-innovation support structures centralization is emphasized , it proves more and more important also to implement policies and initiatives on regional (and not specifically to national) level, close to eco-innovators and adapted to specific needs of regional and local levels. In addition, effective participation of regions in the planning and implementation of eco-innovation support policies, initiatives and programmes is necessary.
5. **ECO-INNOVATION SUPPORT INCLUDING BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE:** in the scope of eco-innovation support activities, knowledge of business functions are also important. Namely, companies are often faced with insufficient knowledge and resources to apply innovation to specific market niches, for applying for funds, for stimulating knowledge creation, transfer and dissemination by usage of management practices such as knowledge management etc. and require additional assistance in dealing with these matters.

These guidelines may serve as a foundation for the selection of good practices presented in the following chapters.

## 5. PRESENTATION of GOOD PRACTICES

Partners of the Medossic project have selected a few best practices in eco-innovation support that they identified within their national/regional investigation of good practices. The value of the good practices presented within this Guide is in the recognition of specific characteristics that stimulate eco-innovation on the regional level or even wider in regards to the findings, guidelines and lessons learned by the Medossic project partners within previous project's results (national situational analyses, national investigations of good practices, comparative synthetic report and benchmarking report).

Thus, the Good Practices Guide includes the following good practices:

1. Gaia Laboratory (Cyprus)
2. The Science & Technology Park of Crete (Greece)
3. Eco-label "Legambiente Turismo" (Ferrara Region, Italy)
4. "Itaca Protocol" implementation (Marche Region, Italy)
5. Managing eco-region (Inner-karst Region, Slovenia)
6. Inkubator, ltd. (Coastal-Karst Region, Slovenia)
7. Development Centre Novo Mesto (South-East Slovenia Region)
8. RETA (Spain)

It is the objective of this Guide to offer the reader a selection of experiences from different environments based on different national identification, economic developmental level, eco-innovation progressiveness etc. It is our belief that this case of transnational cooperation will contribute favourable to building on new knowledge, simultaneously encouraging the possibility to build also new partnership and networks, directed to encouragement of eco-innovation in all regions, participating in the Medossic project.

## 5.1 GAIA LABORATORY (CYPRUS)



Gaia Laboratory is an initiative of the University of Cyprus which applies research and operates as part of the state University. It is a relatively young organisation established in 2004 by the University Of Cyprus, in particular, the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. It officially started its operation in 2005.

Its vision is related to the elaboration of research for the development and pilot testing of new eco-technologies and studies which contribute to the safe treatment and reuse of wastewater streams. Its main objective is to contribute in the research for the removal of xenobiotic elements from wastewater which is necessary for the safe discharge of reused water. The organisation's activities involve project design, cooperation with SMEs under the framework of transnational projects related to technology innovation and provision of consulting services to governmental bodies such as the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources and in particular the Water Department and the Environment Service.

Environmental protection is the main concern of the staff of GAIA Lab and for this reason they participate in various evaluation committees and contribute with their expertise in the elaboration of various studies, as well as evaluations for the provision of permissions and the organisation of information campaigns ( i.e. the Green Procurement System of the University and the Campus, the ECO-LABEL certification body and the National Committee related to Environmental Health as well as the evaluation committee of Environmental Impact Assessment).

GAIA Laboratory is one of the most important environmental research bodies in the island. It is active in many different European and national projects and provides environmental consulting services to local government when policy making for environment and natural resources management. Through its work it provides eco-innovative technologies for the purification of waste water, applicable in the national water supply system.

governmental services and indirectly the SMEs involved in cooperation project.

The main financial resources of the organisation derive from the participation of the organisation in European programs FP7, LIFE+, INTERREG and other competitive programs while the Ministry provides approximately 10.000euros annually for laboratory equipment.

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## 5.2 THE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY PARK OF CRETE (GREECE)

The Science & Technology Park of Crete (STEP-C), is based in Heraklion and was established in December 17, 1993 as an initiative of the Foundation for Research and Technology-Hellas (FORTH), with the financial support of the EU (STRIDE), the National Government and the Region of Crete. STEP-C is based in the establishments of FORTH (Foundation of Research & Technology) and is one of the most important research centers in Crete. It constitutes an intermediate body aiming to support the development of innovative enterprises in the region of Crete and operates a) as an administrative department of the Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH) and b) as an incorporated company responsible for the management and development of the property of FORTH. Staff of Step-C consists of 6 administrative employees who currently support the 20 innovative enterprises hosted in the park. The main shareholders of the incorporated company representing STEP-C are FORTH, Piraeus Bank, and 20 small stakeholders including regional and private public bodies such as the Association of Cretan Municipalities and Communities, Plastika kritis, Agro-systems, Intracom, etc.



STEP-C is one of the most important incubators in Crete and in Greece in general. It provides support to all new and innovative enterprises hosted in its establishment and has developed important know how to strengthen the innovation capacity of young researchers. From its gut the most important high tech enterprises active in the ICT sector have been brought.

The mission of STEP-C is to assist so that innovation may constitute the third development pole of the region of Crete, next to agriculture and tourism. Its strategic objectives are carried out on the following three types of activities:

- Provide support services to the enterprises established in the park
- Attract new enterprises to settle and develop new products and services
- Cooperate with public and private bodies outside the park by providing special training courses for their staff.

Considering environmental protection, STEP-C is aimed never to host any new enterprise whose products or services may cause harm to the environment. Moreover, STEP-C participates as partner in various programs and projects aiming to raise environmental awareness both in public and private sector. The main beneficiaries of STEP-C are Enterprises hosted in the park and Young researchers.

Since its establishment, STEP-C supported the business development of approximately 45 companies and developed various projects in order to promote innovation and

entrepreneurial activity in Crete. Most of them are related to ICT and biotechnology and some of the most successful examples of spin-off and researchers' companies are:

- FORTHnet SA
- FORTH Photonics SA
- COMP-ITE SA
- FORTH med
- INFOCHARTA LTD
- VIRTUAL TRIP LTD
- CYTECH LTD

STEP-C, in collaboration with FORTH, encourages companies to join the Park and become major vehicles of the Technology Transfer process. In particular, STEP-C:

- Collaborates with the private sector for the establishment of New Technology Based Firms
- Collaborates with Venture Capital firms for spin-off financing
- Assists in the development of Licensing agreements
- Supports students and researchers to start up new firms.

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### 5.3 ECO-LABEL “LEGAMBIENTE TURISMO” (FERRARA REGION, ITALY)



Legambiente Turismo is a section of a wider environmental association named Legambiente, recognized by the national legislation as environmental association and NGO.

Legambiente, the environmental more diffused association in Italy, has realized since 1997 the ecological label (ecolabel) "Recommended for the involvement in defence of the environment". This is a label of environmental quality that countersigns the receptive and tourist structures that adopt measures to reduce the impact of their activities on the environment and to promote the territory where they are found. This is a carried out project where the priority objective of the protection of the territory, of the landscape, of the culture, of the traditions and of the history plays for the environmentalism, and for the tourist economy the fact that the environmental quality of the tourist places and of the receptive structures, assumed greater influence in the choice of holidays destinations. This is also a range of simple but effective measures, systematically adopted by the receptive structures but realizable also at home. This mark of ecological quality/label (ecolabel) countersigns the receptive structures (hotels, camping, farm holidays, hostels for youth, residential hotels, B&B) of coastal zones, hinterland areas, art cities, natural parks and other tourist structures that adopt measures to reduce the impact of their activity on the environment and to promote the surrounding territory.

The general objective of the proposal of Legambiente Turismo is to relieve and/or contain the charge on the territory by reducing the environmental impact on tourism; to favor more aware and rich in quality and comfort holidays; to involve the local operators and tourists in a lasting and aware choice.

A receptive and/or tourist structure "Suggested for the involvement in defense of the environment", engages to improve its environmental management, reducing the critical consumptions, realizing little but effective initiatives, agreed each year with the local groups of adherent enterprises. Main point is also the direct action to sensitize their own guests on the common objective to improve the quality of holidays by safeguarding the environment quality. These actions concern, in particular, the reduction of waste with more focused purchases, the separate collection finalized to the recycle; the water and energetic saving with a rational use of natural resources; the safety of food; the promotion of the kitchen of the territory and of the typical local products; the incentive of the collective transport and of the light mobility; the reduction of the noise pollution in the

exercises and the participation in analogous initiatives in the neighbor areas; the promotion of natural and cultural goods; the involvement of guests in the realization of the eco-sustainable behaviors and the distribution of materials that help the information and the control on agreed measures and the participation of tourists to the monitoring and control of the real realization of objectives of environmental management assumed by the exercise and from the hosting tourist structure. Legambiente Turismo realized different versions of the decalogue suitable to bathing areas, cities of art, hinterland and mountain areas, bathing establishments and other tourist structures.

Receptive and tourist structures (Hotels, camping, farm holidays, B&B, Holidays houses, hostels, residences, bath establishments and other tourist activities) adherent to local projects - besides Legambiente Turismo - local corporate bodies, trade associations and other tourist organizations participate to, today in 11 Italian regions (Abruzzo, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Lombardia, Marche, Toscana, Veneto, Umbria), with 318 receptive and tourist adherent structures, 50.000 sleeping accommodations (and over than 4 millions of presences in 2005) are present.

The case of eco-innovation support of Legambiente Turismo, the ecological label "Recommended for the involvement in defence of the environment" is an example of introduction of environmental standards who not represent only a guideline but a target to reach for increasing and enhancing competitiveness instruments improving sales and business, thank to more attracting clients - tourist.

Thus the environmental sustainability serves as element of competitiveness of SMEs. Since always tourism is related to environment and to the discovery of different territories and people. In the global society, that flattens the differences, confuses and darkens the identities, the environmental protection, of the territory and of the landscape and the safeguard of the culture and of the local traditions are now perceived by tourists and operators as a "plus" to maintain and improve the quality of stays in destinations: the environmental sustainability is a competitive main factor for all structures of reception and relaxation. But a work of environmental innovation is needed, that cannot happen only thanks to impositions or legislative decrees. Durable experiences born instead from the capacity of aware operators available to engage. In this sense an important lesson / good practice is an example that shows how a reply that can bring together and balance the targets of local tourism operators and major stakeholders's objectives has been found in environmental quality to answer to business needs of tourists, more and more oriented to the needs of sustainable tourism.

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## 5.4 “ITACA PROTOCOL” IMPLEMENTATION (MARCHE REGION, ITALY)

The field of the action is Sustainable Building and Construction comprising in such terms all the technical, institutional and political issues related to the concept of Sustainable Buildings: sustainable and energy-efficient technologies (eco-design, eco-materials, energy saving household appliances, domestic, waste disposal, etc.), institutional settings for eco-certification and political (agreement between Central and Regional Government, procedures for incentives for private and public stakeholders, etc).

This action can be recognized as a Support and Encouragement action for Eco-Innovation activities in the specific area of Sustainable Buildings because it concerns with the definition of methodologies and guidelines for public and private stakeholders to follow during the process of creation of a sustainable building in all the phases involved, more specifically design, choice of materials, operative construction, application of eco-innovative and energy-efficient technologies, reuse of materials, waste disposal, certification through the calculation of the integrated energy performance of buildings, both for new as well as old buildings.

In the regulation context on Sustainable Building (Kyoto Protocol, EU Directive on energy performance of buildings, 2002/91/EC, Italian Decree Law 192/2005 on "Rules for the implementation of the National Energy Plan on Rational Use of Energy, Energy Saving and development of renewable energy"), the ITACA Institute developed the ITACA protocol as a tool of regulatory procedures and methodologies for planning environmentally sustainable construction.

With the establishment of a specific Working Group (December 6, 2001), ITACA Institute has emphasised the necessity to initiate a comparison between the Italian regions to allow the formulation of a shared set of rules by which to define the thresholds and requirements necessary for the preparation of green building projects and eco-sustainable building. It is on such a basis a shared working protocol (Protocol ITACA) has been developed which allows buildings to be allocated a score of eco-sustainability based on:

- scientific certainty,
- public interest,
- simplicity.

The ITACA Institute born in 1996, fostered by the Italian regions, with the name , "Institute for Innovation and transparency in procurement and environmental compatibility", is a kind of federal association, with the aim of activating actions and initiatives shared by the regional system to promote and ensure effective technical coordination between the regions and autonomous provinces, providing:

- The definition and development of procedures for the management and / or award of contracts through the introduction of quality systems in administrative procedures inspired by the principles of the UNI EN ISO.

- The promotion and dissemination of good practices in services, supplies and public works for urban quality and environmental sustainability.

In the sitting of 15 March 2007, the Conference of Regions and Autonomous Provinces has approved the draft regional law on "Standards for Sustainable Building." Such a proposal was drafted by the working group coordinated by the architect Silvia Catalino from Marche Region.

The action aims to provide a shared set of rules by which to define the thresholds and requirements necessary for the preparation of green building projects and eco-sustainable building. On such a basis the Itaca protocol allows buildings to be allocated a score of eco-sustainability and provides a shared set of rules in order to define the thresholds and requirements.

This instrument consists of a set of rules and requirements that list the type of performance, not only the characteristic parameters of a particular aspect (such as thermal insulation, etc.), but identifies primarily the ultimate goal which is to be pursued and which consists mainly in reducing energy consumption below a predefined threshold.

The evaluation process helps to objectify the performance of the building providing a common base of reference for all stakeholders, such as property owners, builders, designers and operators of the sector, which would define their strategies for the development of building approach on the basis of the result foresaw.

Another important aspect of the application of rating systems of this type is the ability to communicate the performance achieved and, consequently, to promote environmental quality achieved through the availability of a certificate of sustainability of the property also recognized internationally.

The activity is carried out through committees and working groups set up, plus the regional technicians, and by representatives of local governments and organizations representing the interests of the sector. This has allowed, firstly, a broad and practical comparison on contingency questions and, secondly, knowledge exchange and sharing of projects which can build socio-economic and environmental hypotheses of development in the market sector.

The protocol represents an extremely innovative instrument for Italy which because the Italian Regions have begun to outline, in a coordinated and uniform way, the principle lines on how to manage Green Building and Eco-sustainability of buildings, through a detailed survey of the state of the art in various sectors and the exchange of information between those regions which have already gained experience in this area, in order to develop a cognitive synergy and common strategies in the field.

It is therefore possible to match all the requirements of welfare and usability of buildings that meet the need for a better quality of life within the framework of the ecosystems and

the possibility of renewal of natural resources through the reduction of the consumption of non-renewable energy, the balance between natural and anthropogenic systems.

It should be stressed that the regional territory has climatic, social, environmental and urban characteristics not allowing their precise applicability. However all the principles that underlie the green building and environmentally sustainable building and which consist in the construction of buildings in accordance with the principle of respect for the surrounding environment are shared and proposed with the purpose of a higher level of comfort for people who use them.

Besides the specific area of interest, the Building sector, and its importance in terms of environmental impact and potential implementation of eco-innovative technologies, the action is representative because it concerns with the definition of methodologies and technical guidelines for public and private stakeholders to follow during the process of creation of a sustainable product, the building product, through a participative process of both public and private subjects. The committees and working groups set up for the purpose, comprising regional technicians, representatives of local governments and organizations representing the interests of the sector allowed, firstly, a broad and practical comparison on contingency questions and, secondly, knowledge exchange and sharing of projects which can build socio-economic and environmental hypotheses of development in the market sector. Such an open dialogue is aimed to face the problem of matching the business sectors needs with technical and rules and regulations in order to make eco-innovation initiatives, comprising the standardization and certification process, easier and more wider accessible. The final purpose is therefore to match the scientific and technological offer with end-user demand, by respecting guidelines and directives of governmental sphere.

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## 5.5 MANAGING ECO-REGION (INNER-KARST REGION, SLOVENIA)



The project Management of the Ecoregion of Inner-karst region is a touristic development project of regional significance that has, due to the needs of the comprehensive development, also strategically integrated other fields, such as eco-farming and eco-foods, auxiliary farming activities, education, health and social matters, renewable energy sources etc. The project was co-financed from the European Regional Development Fund.

The purpose of the project was to define guidelines for the sustainable development of the region that will measurably introduce the conditions for a higher quality of living for the inhabitants, and the successful marketing of the natural and cultural heritage in the area of Natura 2000 as well as wider issues, all taking into consideration the biotic diversity at the same time. One of the main goals of the project was to establish a possibly comprehensive identification of the locals with the development vision of the region and introduce encouraging conditions for the lively development of entrepreneurship, especially in the field of services.

By designing and performing numerous communication activities (e.g. issuing the publication Eko-news in the local newspaper), and by preparing strategic and execution documents for the development of the Inner-karst Ecoregion project is a good example of supporting eco-culture in a specific geographical area, regardless of the activities carried out in that particular area. From the viewpoint of dealing with and stimulating eco-innovations, supporting a mindset that also takes into consideration the principles of sustainable development while executing different activities is not only innovative, but also an important framework for eco-innovations: in a culture where preserving and protecting the natural and cultural environment is of great significance, the innovation processes will also be strongly directed into so-called innovations for sustainable development. Numerous activities contribute to the propagation of such a mindset. Those were carried out within the project, the most visible one is without doubt the newly registered regional trademark Zeleni kras (Green Karst), which was established in co-operation with all the communities of the Inner-karst region.

Green Karst label presents a method, directed also to encouraging of a so-called eco-culture. Since eco-innovation is most successful when embedded in suitable context and it is impossible to predict whether a selected activity or a set of them would consequent in actual success of organizations implementing eco-innovation, there is no doubt that attaining success in eco-innovation needs to be supported by the environment that encourages the ideas of sustainable development in every aspect of living (economy, politics, society etc.) and with every stakeholder directly or indirectly related. Regional label Green Karst and management and promotion activities, supporting the implementation of this method, contribute also to cultivating eco-culture, necessary for the success of eco-innovation and eco-innovation support.

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## 5.6 INKUBATOR, LTD. (COASTAL-KARST REGION, SLOVENIA)



Inkubator is a small-sized enterprise registered as a limited liability company. It is a public equivalent body with the Municipality of Sežana as the main shareholder. Inkubator is working mainly at a sub-regional level and partly at regional and cross-border level. It was established in 1991 by the Municipality of Sežana and Sloveneta d.o.o. consulting company. Inkubator is founder and member of Association of incubators and technology parks of Slovenia. It is also associate member of EBN - European BIC network and in 2009 it also adjoined to the “Achieve More” partnership within Europe Innova programme. In 2006, the 3.000 m<sup>2</sup> Business and Innovation Centre (BIC) was constructed and was cofinanced by EU and the Government.

The mission of Inkubator in a few words: a regional innovative instrument for economic development in the Coastal-Karst region with a vision to become a recognised and reputable full member of EBN. Main objectives of business incubator establishment are as follows:

- to procure business space for new entrepreneurs and small enterprises,
- to provide basic counselling to entrepreneurs,
- to create new jobs for unemployed persons in the region and for envisaged newly unemployed staff after the abolition of border with the EU.

The initial objectives were expanded to the procurement of industrial land for incubatees that “matured” in business incubator. A couple of years ago, after the construction of BIC, the innovation content was added to the incubator’s activities.

The main purpose of a business incubator is to help new companies towards success and consequently towards creating wealth and possibilities for new jobs. In accordance with the purpose the incubator offers services that entrepreneurs cannot handle themselves, especially in the initial phase. By establishing the business innovation centre it upgraded the package of services and expanded processes of incubation on procedures of innovation. Along with new production units, laboratories, offices and common premises for meetings and training, BIC offers a system of services which cover the following fields:

- analysis and evaluation of technological, market and financial aspects of a project,
- package of services for developing entrepreneurial skills,

- assistance in preparation of business plans,
- raising financial resources,
- coaching of companies in first years of development,
- establishing connections between companies and centres of knowledge,
- cross-border cooperation in the field of internationalisation of small and middle-sized companies,
- introducing innovation to existing companies in the region.

The activities within BIC are directed to graduates with business spirit, developers, innovators and young researchers, innovative companies in start-up phase, cross-border companies oriented to international growth, originators of ideas with potential of high added value.

BIC is striving to promote the creation of new innovative companies. In past years, few companies were developed within the Inkubator, which developed innovative products that reduce energy and use of material, reduce pollution and enable the replacement of fossil fuels with other energy products (electric vehicles). In cooperation with other institutions and in the search of new innovative ideas Inkubator focused on the eco-innovative fields, in particular use of renewable sources of energy (photovoltaics, biomass) and sustainable construction or “eco building”. Inkubator partially applied these principles in the construction of BIC, where the primary source of heat is a heat pump and a lot of other eco principles were implemented like low-temperature surface heating and attachments for subsequent installation of solar panels.

In the context of the Association of Incubators and Technology Parks of Slovenia, Inkubator cooperates in attempts to improve the system of the financial support from the Ministry of the Economy or the Public agency of the Republic of Slovenia for entrepreneurship and foreign investments. An important Inkubator’s activity is the technical support to incubatees for applications on a special annual call for innovative enterprises which operate in incubators and technology parks. Inkubator also assists incubatees at applying for other calls of innovative enterprises tenders and in obtaining more favourable financial resources (loans, guarantees).

Inkubator d.o.o. has extensive experience in promoting entrepreneurship and it was the first institution of its kind in Slovenia. It is the only incubator from early nineties, which has managed to survive on the market and has developed into a modern business innovation centre. It assists business growth in the early stages: from verification of business idea (innovation) to business start-up. It also helps in obtaining financial resources and linking business with academic spheres. Flexible organization allows the Inkubator great sensitivity to the needs of its incubatees, entrepreneurs and innovators in the region. Inkubator takes part of important national and European networks and participates in major international projects. With its knowledge and experience makes an important contribution to the development of national and regional policies.

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## 5.7 DEVELOPMENT CENTRE NOVO MESTO (SOUTH-EAST SLOVENIA REGION)



Development of entrepreneurship in South East region was the main aim for the establishment of Development centre Novo mesto ltd. Organization's activities are directed towards development and support of micro, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs. Organization's vision in the field of SME's support is to become regional centre, where entrepreneur would get all needed information and services for the start of his independent economic operations and where already established companies would receive services they need to expand their business more effectively ("one stop shop").

The goals of Development centre novo mesto ltd. are establishment of support environment for entrepreneurs, place for connecting and establishing development partnerships and networking with external experts for creating a network of co-operators that will carry out expectations and goals set in Regional development programme for South East Slovenia.

Development centre Novo mesto ltd is also the administrator of Incubator which started to operate in January 2010. Incubator in Novo mesto is a great promoter of (eko)innovations. In Incubator can be included only firms that are developing products with great added value. Incubator also prefers companies that operate in economic areas preferred by Regional development programme of South-Eastern Slovenia 2007-2013 and are protecting environment.

What concerns the organizational perspective about environmental protection, Development centre Novo mesto ltd. follows the directives of Regional development programme of South-Eastern Slovenia 2007-2013. Development Centre Novo mesto ltd. sees eco-innoavtions as an important upcoming segment in development of successful companies. As regional development agency they are the crossroad of different information, project ideas, programmes and initiatives and the place where development partnerships are born. So the main activity is to give that information to firms they needed. They provide information through different channels, most often through internet pages of Development centre Novo mesto ltd, e-mailings, brochures and others multipliers. They are often organizing meetings on specific themes or actual issues.

Some of the questions that Development centre Novo mesto ltd. deals supporting (eco)innovations are:

- What kind of help offer to companies to support them on their way of (eco)innovation?
- Is our community already prepared to support ecoinnovations in more extended way?
- How to deal with cost-benefit problem?
- How to deal with lack of financial support on local and national level?

- How to improve educational structure in order to be companies more ekoinnovative oriented?

In South-East Slovenia region there are no special supportive organizations for eco-innovations, so Development Centre Novo mesto is at the moment one of the most important supportive environment. They see eco-innovations as an important upcoming segment in development of successful companies. With its knowledge and experience makes an important contribution to the development of national and regional policies.

Development centre Novo mesto ltd is also the administrator of Incubator which started to operate in January 2010. Incubator in Novo mesto is a great promoter of (eko)innovations. In Incubator only firms that are developing products with great added value can be included. Incubator also prefers companies that operate in economic areas preferred by Regional development programme of South-Eastern Slovenia 2007-2013 and are protecting environment.

In Development centre Novo mesto they try to emphasise eco-innovations also by signing up some eco-innovative projects, which they have developed on their own or some of them also with other partners and development agencies from Slovenia and Croatia.

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## 5.8 RETA (SPAIN)



The Andalusian Technology Network (RETA) is a non-profit organization that was incorporated in April 2005 at the initiative of the Regional Ministry of Innovation, Science and Enterprise to Foster R+D+I in Andalusian companies.

RETA's main objective is to boost and improve the innovation to all andalusian companies regardless of their size or territorial location, through three premises:

- To have traditional companies that innovate
- To have innovative companies that carry out R+D
- To have companies that already carry out R+D+I to continue growing

To this end, RETA agglutinates the Autonomous Community's innovation offer and makes it available to Andalusian companies.

For its networking model and its large presence in the Andalusian region, RETA is an innovative and unique experience in Spain and Europe, which has the backing of the European Union, through the Regional Program of Innovative Actions (PRAI - RETA). The PRAI-RETA is an instrument funded by DG Regional Policy of the European Commission through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which was approved by European Commission Decision on 12 April 2006.

Since its inception, has sought to facilitate the PRAI European regions the opportunity to experiment in innovation and development, to address large projects territorial jurisdictions. This initiative also offers regions the opportunity to explore many new aspects in R & D that are not taken into account in the context of the Structural Funds. The end result: a significant improvement in competitiveness and the level of technological development and creating more highly skilled jobs. The RETA has allowed PRAI-territorial growth of the Network of Technological Spaces of Andalusia, in the framework of this program has launched new technology clusters, mainly in:

- 1º Industrial estates away from the nuclei of innovation
- 2º Technology centers related to traditional productive sectors

RETA's mission is to move the capacity of innovation of the Technological Centers of Andalusia and the knowledge generated at the universities to the whole Andalusian productive network in order to change it into highly competitive services and products.

RETA guarantees equal opportunities to all companies. It is located in Technological and Industrial Parks; in order the big size companies, as well as small businesses to be able to get advantages from technology and innovation:

- To stimulate and to guarantee the Innovation and Technology Transfer
- To find out opportunities from Innovation and Technological Development
- To foster networking and to boost internationalizations
- To enhance the Andalusian productive network competitiveness

RETA operates as a network deployed throughout every Andalusian Province by means of this “Technology Clusters” located in Technology Parks, Innovation Centres and the major Industrial Parks of the Region. “Technology Clusters” are placed at the heart of companies concentrations in specific geographical areas, where a RETA Technology Expert provides services and advice to local companies, so as to help them innovate. RETA offers Andalusian companies a direct, close, personalized and free consultancy service on:

1. R+D+I financing and results protection.
2. Creation of Innovate and technology-based companies.
3. Business cooperation.
4. Industrial promotion of small and medium-sized companies.
5. Introduction of business management tools and systems.
6. Product and process engineering.
7. Technology Transfer.
8. Specialized Training.

RETA is comprised of 51 members:

- 11 Science and Technology Parks
- 35 Technology Centers and Foundations of Innovation and Technology
- 3 European Business and Innovation
- IFAPA, with its 18 Centers for Agricultural Research and Training and Fisheries
- Technological Corporation of Andalusia and 14 Participating Entities

#### **RETA Members located in the province of Malaga**

##### **Bic Euronova**

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29590, Campanillas (Málaga)  
Tlf.: 951 010 504

<http://www.bic.es/>

##### **Centro Andaluz de Innovación y Tecnologías de la Información y las Comunicaciones**

Edificio CITIC C/ Marie Curie, 6  
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**Fundación Centro de Innovación Turística de Andalucía**

Ctra. Nacional 340, km 189.6

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Technological Areas Network of Andalusia (RETA) operates in the territory through Technology Partnerships (AGT). Technological clusters are concentrations of firms in science parks and industrial estates where there **RETA agents** work directly with employers in your area to facilitate access to services R&D provided by the network. The value and uniqueness of RETA agents is that directly and personally working with entrepreneurs. Technology Partnerships Agents visit companies, meet their needs and detect in the Andalusian Knowledge System the most effective solutions.

Among the activities of Agents are:

- Convert to TGA in the network nodes Technological Spaces, transferring the experience of the Technology Park to the Industrial Estates.
- Enhance the capacity of innovation and enterprise development.
- Promote liaison between business and science.
- Connect business with innovation capacity to CIT, BICs and other businesses of the municipality or adjacent municipalities in the same grouping Technology.
- Technological diffusion among traditional companies so that the use of new technologies promoting modernization and innovation capacity in the future.

RETA constitutes the most important tool for andalusian companies in order to promote the innovation in general, and the eco-innovation in particular. RETA operates in the territory through Technology Partnerships. Technological clusters are concentrations of firms in science parks and industrial estates where RETA agents work directly with employers in the area to facilitate access to R&D&I services provided by the network. RETA offers andalusian companies a direct, close, personalized and free consultancy service on: R+D+I financing and results protection, creation of innovate and technology-based companies, business cooperation and industrial promotion, business management tools and systems, product and process engineering, technology transfer and specialized training. Among the activities of RETA Agents are: promote liaison between business and science, enhance the capacity of innovation and enterprise development, connect business with innovation capacity and technological diffusion among traditional companies so that the use of new technologies promotes modernization and innovation capacity in the future. <http://www.reta.es/>

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