



European Union

European Regional Development Fund

Suports project has been funded, ISPRA among participant partners...

There are more than one thousand seaports across Europe, most of which are small, local enterprises (70% of our European ports handle less than a million tons a year). All face the twin challenges of an increasingly competitive marketplace, alongside new and progressively stringent environmental legislation. In particular, the most pressing challenge is to combine ports development with protection of the environment. However, a quality environment must not be seen as an obstacle to commercial success - but as a vital asset. By working within a framework for sustainable development, we aim to demonstrate the mutual benefits for both the environment and the economy.

Whilst big ports have already started introducing new environmental strategies in the fields of waste management and environmental certification, local ports are struggling to keep up with the competition. Several reasons explain this situation: a lack of experts in this area, absence of access to networks, insufficient financial means, or even a lack of environmental consciousness.

Suports project, just newly approved in the framework of the European Programme [INTERREG IVC](#), will have a 3 year life span (January 2010 – December 2012) during which participants partners will work together to select existing environmental management tools to produce easy and ready-to-use tools relevant for local ports. Among the project participant partners, Seine-Maritime County Council (project leader), Ecoports Foundation, Piombino Port Authority, ANCI Ideali Foundation, Public entity Ports of Galicia, East Sussex County Council, Lithuanian Klaipeda Seaport Authority, MEDSOS non-governmental organization, DANETH Intermunicipal Development Agency of Thessaloniki Prefecture and ISPRA.

Aim of the project is to provide small ports with the right tools to improve their environmental performance, and in particular:

- customizing existing environmental management tools that have been developed for large ports (such as self-diagnosis method) for use by local ports so to engage them in integrated approaches for environmental management by adapting current certifications (EMAS, ISO14001, PERS,...);
- aiding a better understanding of ports' impacts on nearby maritime environments, through studies on biodiversity, and promoting the means with which to support plant and animal life (improve the quality of waters,...);
- identifying and promoting best practice for dredging as the most sustainable option, both environmentally and economically.

Project activities include training, studies, workshops, field trips and writing technical documentation. The results of the work will be made available to all European local ports.

In order to achieve such targets, the project budget includes over 2 million € (of which 1.6 millions € - i.e 77,5% - granted by [ERDF](#)).