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BioTourS



BioTourS

BIODIVERSITY AND TOURISM STRATEGY TO PROTECT CETACEANS

SECOND NEWS LETTER

DEAR READER, WELCOME TO THE SECOND BIOTOURS NEWSLETTER.

WE ARE HAPPY TO PRESENT YOU THE SECOND NEWSLETTER OF BIOTOURS - BIODIVERSITY AND TOURISM STRATEGY TO PROTECT CETACEANS PROJECT. IN THIS EDITION, WE WILL INTRODUCE YOU THE SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN OF THE RESEARCH VESSEL "IL PORTO DI TARANTO" IN THE ADRIATIC SEA.

ENJOY READING!

THE RETURN TO THE HOME PORT IN TARANTO - ITALY - OF THE JONIAN DOLPHIN CONSERVATION (JDC) BOAT "IL PORTO DI TARANTO" MARKED THE END OF THE OPERATIONS IN THE ADRIATIC SEA WITHIN THE "BIOTOURS" CROSS-BORDER PROJECT, IMPLEMENTED AS PART OF THE INTERREG IPA CBC ITALY-ALBANIA - MONTENEGRO, CO-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION AND MANAGED BY THE PUGLIA REGION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF ITALY, ALBANIA, AND MONTENEGRO.



CITIZEN SCIENCE PROGRAM



For about a month the boat "Il Porto di Taranto" operated in the Adriatic, demonstrating how it is possible to develop and direct scientific research aimed at cetacean monitoring and conservation in the area. JDC adopted the same approach as it has been doing for a decade in the Gulf of Taranto with its Citizen science program, combining sustainable tourism and environmental protection of the ecosystem in which these splendid mammals live.

This is the main objective of the "BioTourS" project which, after a slowdown and a remodeling due to the pandemic, experienced its most impactful moment. Next to the Jonian Dolphine Conservation which is a lead partner on the project, project partners are the Municipality of Termoli (Italy), National Tourism Agency (Albania), and Innovation and Entrepreneurship Centre Tehnopolis (Montenegro).



25 DAYS OF ACTIVITIES

The activities implemented in October involved all project partners and took place in four coastal cities: Bari and Termoli in Italy, Kotor in Montenegro and Valona in Albania. In all of the host cities, round tables and moments of discussion were organized that involved stakeholders, institutions, tour operators and the academic world.





The core of the activities was represented by the sea explorations on board of the “Il Porto di Taranto” on which tour operators, representatives of institutions, university students, and tourist and scientific institutes had the chance to briefly experience first-hand activities at sea. One of the highlights of the journey was when young people with autism from the Onlus “Dalla Luna” Association based in Bari and other local third sector associations took part in the “Youth camps” held in Bari.



150 MILES DEDICATED FOR THE "YOUTH CAMPS"

"Il Porto di Taranto" and its crew covered a total of 700 miles in the Adriatic! Of these 150 miles were dedicated for the "Youth Camps" in which most of the over 260 people involved were hosted onboard including stakeholders, tour operators, students and most importantly children with disabilities. The Camps were organized in Italy, Montenegro and Albania.



Everyone had the opportunity to live an unforgettable experience of Citizen science by becoming "researchers for a day" during the "Youth camps", in fact, on board of "Il Porto di Taranto", biologists and volunteers of the JDC involved the participants in the research and study activities also sharing knowledge on the various characteristics of cetaceans living in the area.

When the weather conditions did not allow to go out at sea, participants were involved on land with other activities planned in the "Youth Camp" in which, thanks to advanced IT supports including Virtual Reality headsets along with 3D reproductions of underwater ecosystems participants were able to digitally explore the sea and its creature.



DOLPHINS

AS AN EXCITING CLOSURE

During the voyage in the Adriatic Sea for the "BioTourS" project, for the joy and amazement of participants six different sightings of three different species of dolphins were made: Striped dolphin, Bottlenose dolphin and Common dolphin. These sightings were even more important as they occurred in stretches of water where Jonian Dolphin Conservation had never operated thus demonstrating the concrete possibility of applying, even in this area of the Adriatic, the best practices that combine the study and protection of cetaceans with innovative forms of tourism that is sustainable and respectful of the marine ecosystem.



THESE ACTIONS IN "BIOTOURS" PROJECT HAVE SHOWN THE WAY: NOW THE HOPE SHARED AMONG THE PROJECT PARTNERS IS THAT THESE GOOD PRACTICES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE ADRIATIC, PAVING THE WAY TO NEW REALITIES CAPABLE OF ADAPTING AND CREATING THESE FORMS OF CITIZEN SCIENCE ACTIONS THAT HAVE HAD SO MUCH SUCCESS IN THE GULF OF TARANTO.

PROJECT PARTNERS



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