



H2020-MSCA-RISE-2014

GREEN BUBBLES

**AN INTEGRATED OFFER BY THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR TO THE
LOCAL SCUBA DIVING INDUSTRY OF PORTOFINO**

01/07/2017

REPORT



Serena Lucrezi—TREES (NWU)
Francesco De Girolamo—Casa Per Ferie Emiliani

INTRODUCTION

The bulk of the work constituting Work Package 1 (WP1) includes a baseline assessment of the diving 'system'. Such a baseline assessment involves the collection of relevant information from all key stakeholders in the diving 'system'. Diving businesses owners and managers constitute one of the most important interfaces between diving tourists, diving operators, researchers, citizen scientists, the relevant authorities (in this case the MPA), local communities (e.g. local businesses and municipalities), the receptive industry (e.g. restaurants and accommodation), various markets (e.g. technology), and the environment. WP2 aims to enhance the offer that the scuba diving industry is able to provide to its market, always embracing a philosophy of sustainability. In this context, the establishment of a synergy with the local commercial sectors, and in particular with the hospitality sector and its sub-sectors, is essential.

The following report summarizes the preliminary outcomes of an initiative begun in 2016 by an idea of the manager of a local receptive establishment in the area of Portofino, specifically the Casa Per Ferie Emiliani in Rapallo. In particular, the initiative proposes a collaboration among various commercial local sectors in the area of Portofino, in order to propose an integrated offer or package deal to the various local scuba diving centers which operate in the Portofino MPA.

The goal of the initiative is threefold: first, the initiative aims to promote collaboration, dialogue and synergies among various local commercial activities in the area of Rapallo; second, it aims to promote a collaboration between commercial activities and activities in the terrestrial and marine parks in Portofino; third, it aims to promote an integrated offer to incoming tourists able to cater for various groups with different needs. There is a focus on scuba diving tourists, who have a tendency to be transient and ephemeral, whose travel arrangements tend to be dictated by the weather, and who are often accompanied by families who are not involved directly in the sport of scuba diving yet desire to partake in recreational activities. The idea of the integrated package is to offer a versatile product, able to satisfy different markets including the scuba diver and his/her family, especially in situations where the weather would make the scuba diving activity difficult.

Concerning the validity of this initiative in the context of Green Bubbles, there are obvious positive effects. First, the initiative embraces collaboration between many sectors in the scuba diving tourism systems. Second, it aims to solve many of the problems raised by the local scuba diving tourism industry of Portofino (see other reports on WP1). Third, it promotes a sustainable (from an economic point of view, but also social and environmental) way of accommodating visiting scuba divers at reasonable costs and by offering them a typical local experience (e.g. guided visits, tasting events, typical cuisine, park excursions).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

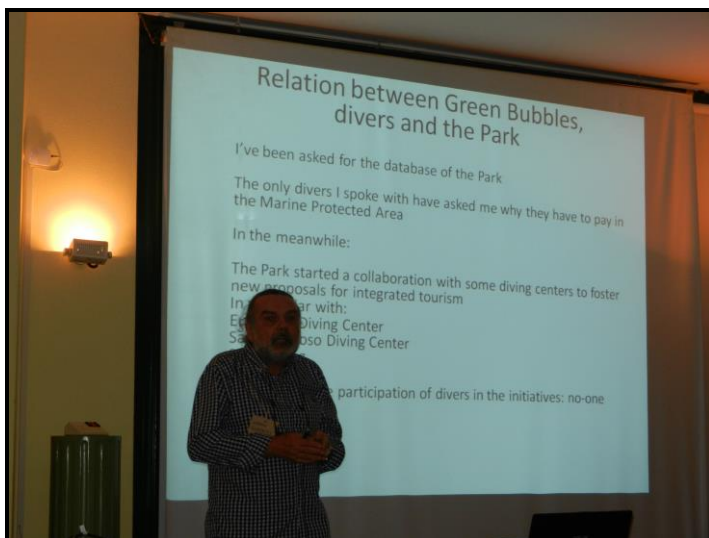
PLANNING PHASE

There was a planning phase which lasted approximately one month (September 2016), in which several stakeholders involved in the promotion of the package gathered and discussed ideas on what and how to present to the market. Green Bubbles offered the stakeholders an opportunity to present the package at the Open Workshop of 26-27 September in Santa Margherita Ligure, in front of a number of representatives from the local scuba diving industry. The stakeholders included Casa Per Ferie Emiliani (Francesco de Girolamo), Parla Come Mangi (Guido Porrati), Dafne Association (Miriam), and the Portofino Park (Alberto Girani).

PRESENTATION OF THE PACKAGE

The various stakeholders gave a presentation of the integrated package and of their respective contributions at the Green Bubbles Open workshop in Santa Margherita Ligure during the 26-27 September. Following the workshop, there was the possibility to liaise with exponents of the local scuba diving industry individually on the subsequent days.





RESULTS

Following the workshop, there were several meetings between the coordinator of this initiative (Casa Per Ferie Emiliani) and the exponents of the local scuba diving industry of Portofino. While it was too early to start implementing the package, which is still under development, the exponents of the scuba diving industry began collaboration with the receptive structure, by means of bookings on behalf of their clients, particularly schools and large groups. Below is a summary of the statistics showing the outcomes of such collaboration. Noteworthy is the inclusion of an exponent of the Freediving industry, the only one in the area of Portofino (Katabasis of Carlo Boscia), as a constant source of clientele for the receptive structure, and the strong collaboration between the receptive structure and the largest dive center in the local area, namely Diving Group Portofino (Abyss, DWS, Dive Passion). The numbers indicate a strong flow of scuba divers and free divers during the first six months of 2017. This trend is expected to grow, despite some cancellations. In addition, the bookings not only include accommodation and breakfast, but a meal characterized by typical food of the local area. The experience of tasting typical local foods has been well received by the clients.

Guests Casa Per Ferie Emiliani 2017

in	out	nights	pax	tot.	sub/apnoea	diving
24-Mar	27-Mar	3	10	30	s	DGP
8-Apr	9-Apr	1	40	40	s	DGP
22-Apr	25-Apr	3	3	9	s	DGP
5-May	7-May	2	16	32	s	DGP
26-May	28-May	2	40	80	s	DGP
26-May	28-May	2	16	32	a	KATABASIS
16-Jun	18-Jun	2	16	32	a	DGP
25-Jun	1-Jul	6	8	48	a	KATABASIS
14-Jul	16-Jul	2	16	32	a	KATABASIS
16-Jul	22-Jul	6	14	84	a	KATABASIS
28-Jul	30-Jul	2	40	80	s	DGP
		31		499		

Cancellations 2017

in	out	nights	pax	tot.	sub/apnoea	diving
8-Apr	9-Apr	1	20	20	s	DGP
26-May	28-May	2	40	80	s	DGP
1-Jul	2-Jul	1	17	17	s	DGP
		4		117		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The integrated offer designed by several stakeholders in the local area of Portofino is still under development. So far the initial collaborations between the receptive industry and the local scuba diving industry appear to be fruitful and positive. The future trends concerning this initiative and its implementation will be monitored and will continue to be supported and advertised by Green Bubbles in every possible manner. Local scuba diving operators who have not yet considered becoming a part of this initiative should be convinced to do so in the future. Dialogues between researchers and the local members of the scuba diving industry represent an important tool to achieve this goal. There are plans to expand the current initiative to include other maritime activities such as sailing and freediving (although this is already taking place), aside from scuba diving. It is also suggested that marine biologists become an important educational component in the experience offered by the integrated package.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank all stakeholders involved in the initiative, all the researchers and all the scuba diving operators who have given support.

H2020-MSCA-RISE-2014
GREEN BUBBLES RISE

The Green Bubbles project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 643712. This report reflects only the authors' view. The European Research Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.