Cluster organisation: Wood Industry Cluster Slovenia (WIC)

Cluster sectoral coverage: C16 Manufacture of wood and of products of wood and cork, except furniture; C31 Manufacture of Furniture

Cluster geographical coverage: West & East Slovenia (Slovenia)

Number of members: 92 members (85 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Mouazan Erwan Denis David

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The main challenges is to link the digital transformation with the introduction of a circular economy and to complement existing business models and develop ones in line with the twin transition. This is due to insufficient examples of good practices in introducing circular economy concepts as well as due to the need to ensure conditions for sustainable competitiveness, while implementing the requirements of circularity and environmental protection

Project objectives

The aim of the cluster was to understand the requirements of the transition to a circular economy and based on that plan the transition to a circular economy in light of the digital transformation. A particular ambition of the cluster is to support its members to transform their business models and product as well as to help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and find possible links in the value chain through a cross-sectoral cooperation. All in all, this should achieve a greater resilience to upcoming changes.

Activities undertaken

✓ A capacity building training for the cluster team addressing circular economy and green business models.

✓ A showcase toolkit in order to support the development of a future WIC Competence Centre for HR development.

✓ The identification of successful cases of SMEs implementing circular principles

✓ Co-creating and supporting the development of a program of workshops which will take place after this support service.

✓ The application of the assessment tools to two pre-selected SMEs

Results and outputs created

✓ Cluster members trained and mobilised on circular economy concepts and strategies and on green business models

✓ A Circular Economy Transition Handbook "Managing the Transition to Circular Economy in the Wood Sector" with best practices for the wood industry

✓ Two diagnoses and needs assessments for cluster SME members.

✓ One final workshop with the cluster members and policy makers entitled "CIRCULAR ECONOMY - how to tackle it?"

"For us, this program was definitely very useful and helped us in creating active support for our members!" - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Venetian cluster

Cluster sectoral coverage: Productive supply chain for the conservation, restoration and valorisation of Cultural and Environmental Heritage (main coverage)

Cluster geographical coverage: Veneto region, Italy

Number of members: 115 members

Type of support offered: Direct consultancy/advisory support helping to execute specific projects with SMEs; online webinars.

Business Advisor for the facility: Eleni Feleki

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

Acquiring information and developing competences to increase business processes, sustainability and resource efficiency is often challenging for industrial stakeholders. To contribute to the regional industrial transformation, the Cluster aims to become a reference and guidance entity for its members on the subject. This is to be done by establishing a small team of experienced persons able to provide professional answers and support to SMEs as well as structured services such as CO_2 monitoring, LCA and carbon footprint analysis. in order to develop and diffuse circular economy solutions and decreasing carbon footprint in SMEs' processes.

Activities undertaken

✓ An online survey with interested members assessing their familiarity and preparedness with sustainability and circular economy principles

✓ A workshop to identify respondent SMEs' specific needs in terms of business circulatory and potential services to be developed by the Cluster

✓ Four training webinars for cluster managers and selected SME representatives on the topics of sustainability principles, best practices and action planning for circular transformation and CO_2 offset

✓ Development of a practical toolkit for the Cluster to promote and accompany enterprises towards circular economy-oriented actions

Project objectives

Starting from the needs expressed by the cluster managers and engaged member SMEs, identified through the first project actions, the trainings actions were designed to deliver contents, tools and methods based on which the Cluster can further develop and provide circularity-related advisory services in a structured fashion to its members. For the cluster managers, the main objective of the cooperation was to increase their own capacity to guide and manage such structured services. For SME representatives, the objective was to involve them in an early discussion on circularity needs in their business context.

Results and outputs created

✓ An assessments of cluster SME members' needs in terms of understanding circularity principles and competences to be developed

✓ A proposal for the development of Cluster services to its members based on the assessed needs

✓ Cluster managers and SMEs representatives trained and mobilised on circular economy concepts, strategies and tools

✓ A guidebook providing a working methodology for the Cluster to define a SME's path towards contributing to the circular economy

✓ A Roadmap for the Cluster's overall strategy towards a green transition

"Besides the technical content, it was insightful to see how the expert organised the meetings with the cluster and the SMEs, the tools used to work together and to have a relaxed group." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisations: AEI Tèxtils together with ATEVAL, CS-POINTEX, CITEVE and TECHTERA

Cluster sectoral coverage: Textile manufacturing

Cluster geographical coverage: Catalonia (Spain), Valencia (Spain), Piedmont (Italy), North (Portugal) and Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (France)

Number of members: 758 (670 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Public funding, facilitation of external collaboration (beyond cluster), internationalisation support, among others

Business Advisor for the facility: Liv Montuori

ECCP Profile AEI Tèxtils,

Main challenges

Textile is one of the resource-intensive industries prioritized in the EU Green Deal. This is particularly challenging for clusters in supporting SMEs to:

- Considering the sustainability in their 3 dimensions (economic, environmental and social) as an integral factor on the decision-making processes;
- Introducing the resources efficiency optimization in the design stage (eco design/ design for circularity);
- Selecting sustainability and circular materials duly attested (based in LCA, certification, etc.).

Project objectives

The key ambition related to resource efficiency and sustainability was to prepare the cluster managers to promote, advise and guide the cluster members, especially SMEs, in green transition practices and approaches, more specifically: increasing the awareness to green issues among top management and staff; incorporating sustainability in the centre of the decision-making processes; optimizing the resources efficiency; incorporating circular and sustainable materials in textile products.

Activities undertaken

✓ The development of a life cycle assessment-based tool which defines a methodology to carry out the sustainability balance of each step of the life cycle of the textile value chain;

✓ Two online webinars focused on circular economy business models and on the main problems that SMEs face in the adoption of greener practices in their production processes.

Results and outputs created

✓ A life cycle assessment-based tool for clusters and their members with a decision flow based in the 3 sustainability dimensions (environmental, social and economic) in order to obtain more sustainable and circular textile products with greener processes;

✓ Together with the clusters' members the main problems associated with the textile industry were identified: packaging; textile solid waste; waste of water;

✓ Through the interaction among different stakeholders, it was possible to identify solutions to make the sector more circular;

✓ The development of a common methodology for webinars.

"It was an interesting and tough challenge to develop a self-assessment tool of circular business models fully customised to the needs and priorities of our companies" – Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: TECES, Green Tech Cluster

Cluster sectoral coverage: Manufacture of electrical equipment

Cluster geographical coverage: East Slovenia (Slovenia)

Number of members: 46 members (27 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Competence development

Business Advisor for the facility: Nicolai Sederberg Rottbøll

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

- General lack of knowledge amongst Slovenian SMEs about resource sustainability;
- Gaps in the understanding of resource efficiency and green transition practices/approaches of SMEs and their value chains;
- The need of achieving a greater energy efficiency, better product waste management and a more efficient use of materials among Slovenian SMEs;
- The need of turning green transition into business opportunities.

Project objectives

- Improving the knowledge of Slovenian SMEs regarding the adaptation of business strategies to climate change;
- Disseminating the energy efficiency of products and services;
- Promoting the awareness among Slovenian SMEs on the importance of having circular business processes;
- Developing a sustainable members engagement program.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ Periodic meetings between the cluster staff and the Business Advisor;
- ✓ The definition of the concrete concept of a tech-talk cycle;
- ✓ An online Tech-talk about "How Green is Your Business?";
- ✓ The identification of five European clusters with which TECES could collaborate;
- ✓ Cluster matchmaking meetings.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ The implementation of a pilot Tech-Talk with TECES members about going "from green to business";
- ✓ Identification of the main obstacles in the adoption of green practices faced by the cluster members;
- ✓ Interaction with clusters which are facing similar challenges on issues related with the green transition and could be interested in developing partnerships with TECES.

"We experienced that there is a huge need for more programs such as TGTF. Many of the small and medium sized companies are just getting started with sustainability management, and often the first question was how to get started. TGTF helped to have this conversation." – Business Advisor

Cluster organisation: SOFIA Knowledge City

СОФИЯ ГРАД НА ЗНАНИЕТО

Cluster sectoral coverage: ICT, Electronics, R&D, Education & VET

Cluster geographical coverage: Sofia City, Bulgaria

Number of members: +50 members (+35 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Fabio Maria Montagnino

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The cluster's ambition is to become a support centre in Sofia for the process of green transition through the services provided by its members. These includes the promotion of projects (EU, PPP) in areas such as energy efficiency, well-being, green cities, circular economy and smart mobility. The core need of the cluster is to increase capacity building within the areas of "greening of ICT" and "greening with ICT", i.e. greening of ICT products and services as well as greening through ICT solutions, to capitalise on the possibility for green growth within the cluster and at city level.

Project objectives

Starting from the cluster's goal of becoming a centre for green growth in the area of Climate-neutral and Sustainable Smart Cities, the project was designed to help create an action plan for greening Sofia based on the cluster's existing strategies and the city's digital transformation strategy. The main objective of the cooperation was to raise awareness on green ICT, disseminating best practices and increasing capacity-building for key local stakeholders. The cooperation also aimed at providing member SMEs with advice on their own business model transformation and initiating PPPs for the implementation of green ICT solutions.

Activities undertaken

✓ An online survey with cluster members to assess their familiarity and preparedness with sustainability and circular economy topics/principles as well as possible interest areas.

✓ A workshop focused on needs and opportunities for businesses in the digital and green transition processes of the city.

✓ A training session with cluster managers and a selected number of potential future trainers focused on green and circular thinking in business making.

✓ Implementation of one-on-one coaching sessions with selected member SMEs (2 sessions for 3 SMEs) centred on the ideation, prototype and testing of circular, sustainable and green business canvas.

Results and outputs created

✓ Assessed cluster SMEs' current state of play on circularity and sustainability issues and identified possible future action areas for the cluster.

✓ An overview of practices for the green economy transition in cities including emerging needs, existing business models and policy tools for urban sustainable development.

✓ Trained cluster managers and members on tools and practices useful for ecosystem mapping, identification of innovation strategies and business models definitions.

✓ Targeted consultancy to selected SMEs on strengthening the sustainability of their business models and the identification of opportunities.

✓ Identified common challenges and possible collaboration opportunities for and across members.

"We appreciate very much the importance of the received technical assistance under TGTF for better focusing our cluster initiatives on smart city transition. The chance of the cluster members and stakeholders, mostly IT professionals and municipality servants, to work with and to be trained by an experienced coach and mentor like Fabio will increase the impact of their digital solutions on urban development." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Strategische Partnerschaft Sensorik e.V.

Cluster sectoral coverage: Intelligent sensor and measurement technology, Digitalization and digital transformation, Safety

and security, Automotive; Automation, Electronic systems

Cluster geographical coverage: Bavaria region, Germany

Number of members: 80 members

Type of support offered: Direct consultancy/advisory support to Cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Nicolai Sederberg Rottbøll, Wadim Baslow

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The Cluster's goal is to promote a sustainability strategy in the sensor industry in Bavaria securing the innovative strength of sensor SMEs. Before the TGTF project, an overall view of the state of sustainability competences of Cluster companies was lacking, preventing the support of the development and coordination of individual business initiatives. Among the challenges of the Cluster are the establishment of a "sustainability management" function and the initiation of a comprehensive stakeholder dialog on sustainability across the value chain.

Project objectives

The project was designed to meet a twofold objective: to raise awareness of the topic of sustainability within the Cluster, and to initiate a dialogue with a selected number of Cluster SMEs, that could possibly contribute to bringing forward future sustainability-related activities. For the cluster managers, a first goal of the cooperation was to map some front-runners among member companies and identify their current sustainability competences and challenges. A second goal was to develop a Cluster action plan for the short to long-term actions in the field of sustainability.

Activities undertaken

✓ An exploration of member SMEs interested in bringing forward a sustainability-oriented discussion within the Cluster
✓ Two workshops focused on assessing the status quo/baseline of performance of member SMEs in terms of sustainability: Existing Assets and Capabilities & Performance pressures, challenges, and goals
✓ Two workshops forward looking/focused on the future of the Cluster in terms of sustainability outlook: Improving performance (short-term, medium-term) & Value gains (long-term)
✓ A session with Cluster managers to define the key actions for the Cluster's greening journey beyond the TGTF project

Results and outputs created

✓ Identified and mapped strengths, existing activities, assets and capabilities of a selected group of member SMEs that can be leveraged in potential sustainability-oriented opportunities
✓ Gained an understanding of external and internal sustainability challenges and pressures with respect to selected SMEs' business models
✓ Plotted aspiration, wishes and goals of selected SMEs, as well as priority areas for improvements on which the Cluster's services could focus
✓ Defined an action roadmap as a guiding policy for sustainability-oriented actions through which the Cluster can support its members' green transition

"This approach was helpful for us: we were able not only to gather a lot of valuable new information, but also to define concrete activities with our members. The jointly developed roadmap generates strong commitment - and is therefore a good basis to really work on the current challenges and concrete needs now.." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Renewable Energy Sources Cluster

Cluster sectoral coverage: Renewable energy and energy efficiency

Cluster geographical coverage: Blagoevgrad region, Bulgaria

Number of members: 41 members

Type of support offered: Direct consultancy/advisory support to the cluster; guidance documents; workshops with clusters facing similar issues/problems

Business Advisor for the facility: Nestor Coronado Palma

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

Key challenges the Cluster's member SMEs are facing are resilience, adaptability and capacity to stay competitive and grow in their contextual national reality. The ResInTech Demo Centre is a newly establish pilot action of the Cluster. Through business development activities and especially its innovation and technology, the Centre aims at strengthening its own capacity to support its members – regional players in the renewable energy sector – in their business model transformation, skills acquisition and investment challenges.

Project objectives

The project was designed to support the Cluster's business development on its core activities, specifically on the business and operational model of its newly designed ResInTech Demo Centre. The support focused to the cluster managers, with the main objective of the cooperation being to identify best practices, partnerships and strategies for the Centre's development and implementation. In addition, the support enabled to assess the Cluster's business areas for improvement, identifying current opportunities and defining key priority actions.

Activities undertaken

✓ Assessment of the Cluster's current needs and challenges with respect to both the European and national Cluster panorama as well as its core activities, with a focus on the Demo Center
✓ Implementation of a learning & exchange workshop with another European renewable energy cluster
✓ Benchmarking report of the Cluster activities considering the specificities of the national contexts examined
✓ Mapping of opportunities for the cluster considering its current business standpoint and emerging trends relevant to renewable energies in Europe

Results and outputs created

✓ An overview of existing global best practices of business models to be adapted to the Cluster Demo Center
✓ An overview of European best practices in terms of Cluster business development in the specific field of renewable energies
✓ Contact established with European stakeholders relevant to the Cluster's thematic activities
✓ Identification and discussion of possible value-added activities for the Cluster's way forward
✓ One final dissemination workshop with the cluster management focused on the Cluster's next steps

"We believe the TGTF advisor's business expertise and guidance have motivated the Cluster for grasping new opportunities and facing challenges in the long run." Cluster project manager

Cluster organisation: Plastiwin

Cluster sectoral coverage: polymers and biopolymers, elastomers, composite materials and synthetic textiles

Cluster geographical coverage: Wallonia, Belgium

Number of members: 122 members (103 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Direct consultancy to the cluster

Business Advisor for the facility: Anne Grete Ellingsen

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

Plastiwin's main self-identified challenge is to guide the local plastic industry to achieve their sustainable goals by 2050. Among its ambitions are promoting circular economy and sustainability among members, supporting enterprises to increase the recycling rate and the use of secondary raw plastic materials (conventional and bio-plastics), recycling and eco-design. There is a need for Plastiwin to develop a new strategy and Action Plan to consolidate its role in the ecosystem and guide local SMEs' green transitions.

Project objectives

The project started from an assessment of the present situation and needs of Plastiwin. Thereafter, and building on this assessment, the facility focused on supporting the cluster in designing a new strategy and on following up on these actions. Central attention was given to capturing resources, increasing the cluster's visibility and relevance in the local ecosystem, and refocusing its strategic role to better support its members in their green transition ambitions.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ Analysis and discussion of the cluster's actions through the Emerald model.
- ✓ Interactive workshop with the cluster administration to discuss the ecosystem, value chain of the cluster, national and regional stakeholders, and collaboration partners using the Emerald Model.
- ✓ Preparation of framework and financial requirement for the cluster's participation in the key project Industrie du Futur 2020-2024, in partnership with other local clusters.
- ✓ Identification of frontrunners in the cluster for dissemination of experience webinar and training of SMEs to present their cases.
- ✓ Training and coaching the cluster manager in strategic areas, such as self-assessment and stakeholder engagement and dialogue.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ Cluster overall assessment based on the Emerald Model and new Action Plan.
- ✓ New communication strategy and measures to improve the cluster's visibility and stakeholder engagement.
- ✓ A roadmap for the transformation of the cluster and improved readiness for green topics.
- ✓ Support for participation in a strategic regional project in partnership with other local clusters, focused on digitalization and sustainability.
- ✓ A knowledge sharing, discussion and networking session by the sustainability frontrunners during the general plenary meeting of the cluster.

"Thanks to the European expert, Plastiwin has a clear view on our next priorities to allow SMEs to be greener." **- Cluster manager**

Cluster organisations: Materalia and CMAV (Advanced Materials Clusters)

Cluster sectoral coverage: Materials

Cluster geographical coverage: Grand Est (France) and Catalonia (Spain)

Number of members: 161 (86 SMEs) and 63 (37 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Facilitation of collaboration between members; Support of Research, Development and Innovation, among others

Business Advisor for the facility: Nicolai Sederberg Rottbøll

ECCP Profile Materalia ECCP Profile CMAV

Main challenges

Two key industrial sectors were selected to work with:

Metallurgy, which is facing the following challenges: i) replacement of natural raw materials by recycled ones, ii) valorisation of industrial waste heat to use alternative energy vectors, minimizing consumption of fuel-based gas resources, and iii) minimisation of waste materials by developing up-recycling technologies/methods to close the life-cycling of by-products generated in the metallurgical process.

Wind energy, which is facing the challenges of: i) recycling turbine blades is still not economically feasible, which is still a key challenge for this market, ii) extending the technical lifetime of wind farms by recycling components, such as generators.

Activities undertaken

✓ Internal meetings between the cluster team and the advisor to discuss and share the challenges faced and to define the best strategies to reach the objectives of the project.
✓ Study of both industries (metallurgy and wind energy) to know their value chain in order to understand the opportunities and gaps regarding circular economy.
✓ The identification of best practices on circular business models.
✓ Two innovation-based virtual workshops to identify the specific issues/challenges that the metallurgy and wind energy sectors are facing in the implementation of circularity principles in their production processes.

Project objectives

The main objective of this project was to boost green transition in Metallurgy and Wind Energy industries. To do so, the following specific goals were defined:

• the identification of the key sustainable value chains for both industries;
• the assessment of new business models that could be used as role model by both industries;
• the main challenges and barriers that need to be addressed in order to apply circularity to these sectors.

Results and outputs created

✓ Best practices report on circular business models.
✓ 2 online workshops (one for each industry) using cutting edge methods to mobilise participation.
✓ A workshop report covering the main subjects discussed and identifying the issues that should be used as starting points to define strategies and action points.

"The workshops were dynamic, interactive and participation was encouraged. Positive feedback was received and potential further actions between cluster teams and cluster SMEs have been identified."
Cluster manager

Cluster organisations: mareFGV and DLTM

Cluster sectoral coverage: shipbuilding, boatbuilding, maritime transport, offshore and navigation services, remediation of marine ecosystems

Cluster geographical coverage: Friuli Venezia Giuli and La Spezia

Number of members: 70 members mareFGV (60 SMEs), 104 members DLTM (81 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Workshops, webinars, exchanges and learning

Business Advisors for the facility: Spyros Kouvelis and Christina Deligianni

EECP Profile mareFGV ECCP Profile DLTM

Main challenges

The challenge is to raise awareness and increase the use of sustainable materials in the lifecycle in order to minimize the impact of the construction and operation phases, particularly in relation to scrap management. In energy, key challenges are connected to the design and the production of devices that could improve energy efficiency, optimization, the transition of ports/marinas into "energy hubs" and the use of alternative sources of energy.

Project objectives

The project was tailored to present and disseminate solutions that are capable of addressing the challenges of the cluster members in their transition to greener technologies. This was done through a direct assessment of the needs of the cluster members followed by a series of webinars with enterprises on the key topics for the sector, which were coordinated by the business advisor and complemented by additional experts in specific areas.

Activities undertaken

✓ Development of project content and outline of actions.

✓ Drafting of a Mapping Matrix to be used as a basis for the mapping of challenges exercise.

✓ Preparing of a participatory mapping with cluster(s) members to fill in on an online survey based on the mapping Matrix.

✓ Identification of potential participants and experts for knowledge and best practices exchange webinars and reach out to them.

✓ Set-up of online voting on subjects for further training & exchange webinars within the project, such as practical application of technologies, technologies for green transition from design to operation, business cases, pitching to investors, marketing, circular economy and LCA assessment, ESG Finance & Investment.

Results and outputs created

✓ Brief report outlining the aggregated groups of challenges/requirements emerging from the Mapping Matrix, along with identification of Marine, Environmental and ESG literacy/training needs.

✓ Three separate and consecutive webinars of 1.5-2.0 hours each for the presentation of solutions and best practices, followed by discussions on each of the three aggregated groups of challenges/requirements emerging from the Matrix.

✓ Final webinars on the most voted and preferred issues.

✓ Final project summary report.

"A cross-sectoral interaction that facilitates the knowledge of exercises/best practices already in place and allows their capitalization (and potential improvement) in other sectors." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Rete di imprese luce in veneto

Cluster sectoral coverage: Lighting and electrical equipment, focus on light engineering and smart lighting

Cluster geographical coverage: Veneto region, Italy

Number of members: 49 members (49 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Lorena Jurado

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The EU Regulations on eco-design requirements for lighting and energy labelling coming into effect in 2021 bring key changes for producers and end-users of lighting products in terms of energy efficiency and circular economy. These requirements constitute a particular challenge to SMEs, who need support to comply with EU obligations, apply innovations to their products and stay competitive by adopting green and circular business models.

Project objectives

Starting from the main challenges faced by the cluster and its members, the project was designed to focus on the challenges related to circular economy to allow for a more effective facility. For the cluster managers, the main objective of the cooperation was to increase their capability on circular economy solutions. For the cluster members, notably SMEs, to develop circular economy strategies for selected enterprises and disseminate the knowledge to all members.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ A cluster value chain analysis mapping the cluster's companies along the value chain.
- ✓ An online survey with cluster members to identify potential cases, contribute to value chain analysis and identify SME needs.
- ✓ Mapping of opportunities based on SME needs and circular economy trends within the EU.
- ✓ Training sessions with cluster managers, addressing circular economy and sustainable business concepts, European framework and opportunities applied to the clusters' value chain.
- ✓ Selection of SME cases and series of meetings to assess needs, objectives and opportunities; and to produce a diagnosis and circular economy strategy for these enterprises.
- ✓ Presentation of SME case studies and sharing of experiences with other cluster members.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ A cluster needs assessment report according to the mapping of the value chain and opportunities.
- ✓ A new circular economy strategy integrated to the clusters' overall strategy for 2021-2024.
- ✓ Cluster managers trained and mobilized on circular economy concepts, strategies and opportunities.
- ✓ Two diagnoses and needs assessments for cluster SME members, with opportunities and objectives mapped out for these firms.
- ✓ One final dissemination workshop with the cluster members focused on the cluster's circular economy strategy and the SME case studies.

"This approach was very useful for us because it allowed us to collect a lot of useful information to define activities to be proposed to companies starting from their specific needs." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Lombardy Green Chemistry Association

Cluster sectoral coverage: Green chemistry, bioeconomy, biorefinery, circular bioeconomy

Cluster geographical coverage: Lombardy region, Italy

Number of members: 52 members (28 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Manfred Kircher

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The number of companies that invest in less harmful substances and GHG emissions and that use green technologies is growing. In 2030, bio-products will represent 30% of industrial production. However, even though the green transition is a recognised priority, more effort is required to encourage business models that are based on renewable raw materials and increase investments in green technologies, products, and activities.

Activities undertaken

✓ The organisation of two training sessions in the form of webinars to share information on strategies to develop a business plan for a circular bio-based business.

✓ Three sessions of one-to-one coaching with ten different SMEs to strengthen the competitiveness of their business model and identify solutions to increase the circularity of bio-based processes.

✓ The organisation of the Bioeconomy Regional Investment Forum, where selected SMEs that received coaching had the chance to pitch their companies and sustainable business models to investors and the public.

Project objectives

The project focused on creating resilient business models, tapping into green investment opportunities and adopting circular economy solutions for materials.

For the cluster members, notably SMEs, the project aimed at:

- presenting funding opportunities for sustainable business model development;
- coaching to identify solutions to increase the circularity of bio-based processes;
- and creating connections to unblock the funding necessary to adopt sustainable business models.

Results and outputs created

✓ The sharing of information and knowledge, and discussions on best practices to secure funding for circular bio-based businesses.

✓ New company profiles for the selected SMEs, with services and solutions to support their green transition.

✓ The SMEs who were presented at the forum had the chance to present their case to investors and the public. Three SMEs were selected as winners, and will receive further coaching from the company accelerator of the Consorzio Italbiotec.

"The cluster has selected several SMEs as applicants for the EIC accelerator funding program and received advice in the framework of TGTF. The consulting helped to sharpen the profile of the applications for the call and, at the same time, the business plans were critically reviewed. In this way, I hope to have contributed to the success of the SME and the cluster as a whole." - Business advisor

Cluster organisation: JIC

Cluster sectoral coverage: Business services

Cluster geographical coverage: South Moravia, Czech Republic

Number of members: 315 members (315 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Anna Tiberi

JIC Profile

Main challenges

JIC's biggest challenge seems to lie in the business models (BMs) area which possibly also has the biggest impact. For many SMEs, the way of operation has been the same for many years and it is difficult to change. They are not prepared for the anticipated challenges of resource scarcity, market and legislation changes. However, the necessary support to make this transition is not available. There are many ideas and examples on how to transform BMs to be more sustainable, but the process usually involves a complex approach (market analysis, pricing, internal processes, logistics) while also often involving changes in entrepreneurs' mindsets. The impact of such changes is difficult to assess in advance.

Project objectives

JIC wanted to use the ECCP's support to better communicate with the public and new clients. Their objective was to raise awareness and promote the green transition trend through success stories and best practice examples.

JIC was already in the process of designing and piloting services called "sustainability as a business opportunity" aimed at assisting their SME clients with implementing CE principles and developing strategies that consider impact on all three areas – people, profit, and the planet in order to achieve long-term success, zero landfill commitment by 2024, and 50% lower GHG emissions by 2030.

Activities undertaken

✓ Develop a proposal on raising awareness around SDGs relevant to JIC under the framework of the European Green Transition.

✓ Co-develop a methodological framework to take action towards green transition.

✓ Co-design a pilot workshop for knowledge transfer to JIC members on raising awareness and committing to priority actions towards the green transition for SMEs (capacitation for implementation).

✓ Fine-tune the process based on the pilot results analysis.

✓ Support the development of an implementation and deployment plan.

Results and outputs created

✓ Guidance document on raising awareness on the European Green Transition goals related to the JIC targets.

✓ Co-creation of a pilot workshop on raising awareness and taking action towards green transition.

✓ Pilot workshop on raising awareness and taking action towards green transition (commitment to priority actions) for SMEs (capacitation for implementation).

✓ Implementation and deployment plan.

"Green Transition must be seen as a business opportunity" - Cluster Management

Cluster organisation: ASSOCIACIÓ CATALANA CLÚSTER DE LA INDÚSTRIA DE L'ESPORT (INDESCAT)

INDESCAT catalan **sports** cluster

Cluster sectoral coverage: Sport

Cluster geographical coverage: Catalunya

Number of members: 87 members (57 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Rafael Dominguez

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

In order to address the challenges linked to Green Transition, INDESCAT wanted to identify what challenges are relevant for each SME and then to offer and implement measures and solutions to tackle them. INDESCAT aims to contribute to the sustainability of the sports industry, to make sport more sustainable and help protect environment. However, INDESCAT has not been able to develop and offer services and SME and mentorship in order to provide particular solutions to individual companies regarding green transition.

Project objectives

The project ambition was to offer a tailor-made service to individual companies, providing them knowledge from international best practices and innovative technologies. INDESCAT ambition is to increase the awareness of SMEs on sustainability, by including social and environmental impacts in their business strategy as a so-called shared value. Since its foundation, INDESCAT has focused on protecting the environment, contribute to green economies and support the Sustainable Development Objectives and the European Green Deal plan.

Activities undertaken

✓ Support the organisation of a working group session on outdoor sports events
✓ Understanding the needs of outdoor events in terms of sustainability
✓ Collect and analyse information on best practices and environmental regulation for outdoor sports events
✓ Draft a sustainability checklist on outdoor sport and validate it with INDESCAT working group
✓ Suggest project ideas related to the sustainability checklist and an initial action plan for implementation of at least one of the projects
✓ Sustainability checklist presentation to cluster members
✓ Feedback analysis with checklist and project ideas final validation

Results and outputs created

✓ Working group session on outdoor sports events
✓ First draft of the sustainability checklist on outdoor sport event
✓ Validation session with selected cluster members
✓ Report including: sustainability checklist on outdoor sport events, list of suggestions on project ideas
✓ Webinar with cluster members on sustainablity checklist
✓ Feedback report based on member inputs
✓ Final sustainability checklist

"TGTF helped raising awareness to the importance of minimising the negative impact of outdoor events on nature and urban areas" – Cluster Management

Cluster organisation: IDiA

Cluster sectoral coverage: Information technology and analytical instruments

Cluster geographical coverage: Aragon region, Spain

Number of members: 78 members (42 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Ulrika Hurt

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

Many companies are willing to act and accelerate the green transition. However, they lack understanding of the general concepts laid out by the regulatory bodies, which need to be further clarified and translated into possible actions. Moreover, expert support and experiences coming from the market are scarce. Having these real references and knowledge are very helpful for the companies when it comes to creating their greening projects and revising their business models.

Project objectives

The objective of this project was to help IDiA members to successfully develop and implement new actions aligned with the priorities of European Commission of the green, digital, and resilient transition. It is vital to support companies in creating and implementing competitive projects that balance investment and benefit. The aim is to increase their competitiveness, bring new solutions to the market and improve the performance of their manufacturing processes. In addition, the cluster wants to encourage its members to design new circular economy flows.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ An online survey with cluster members to learn about their main sustainability concerns and collect ideas for potential future projects.
- ✓ Establishment of a Working Group within the Cluster dedicated to green transition.
- ✓ Mapping of opportunities based on SME needs and circular economy trends within the EU.
- ✓ Drafting of a communication plan to enhance the cluster's role in promoting the green transition.
- ✓ Collection of relevant documents and materials for cluster members to share in a repository.
- ✓ Support to companies with their applications to funding through EU 'green' projects.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ Working Group "Green and Sustainable Innovation" established at the cluster. Five meetings delivered during the TGTF timeframe.
- ✓ A cluster needs assessment, with a mapping of topics of interests and project ideas from survey.
- ✓ Online repository for companies and entities to share information of interest for IDiA's audience.
- ✓ Communication strategy to empower the cluster and its members to act on the green transition.
- ✓ Presentation of funding opportunities for green projects and relevant EU policies.
- ✓ Participation in online event organised by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to present the TGTF and the actions undertaken by IDiA.

"The direct contact between the business advisor and the cluster has been very positive. This kind of initiatives should continue in the future." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Green Synergy Cluster

Cluster sectoral coverage: Environmental services

Cluster geographical coverage: Plovdiv region, Bulgaria

Number of members: 32 members (28 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Emanuela Todeva

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The administrative body of the cluster consists of engineers, experienced in the technical aspect of energy and resource efficiency, who lack business related knowledge. Therefore, the need to develop more economics-related knowledge in order to support the members with their business models, investment assessment and market research was identified.

Activities undertaken

✓ Developing a framework for stakeholder engagement and improving visibility – adapting the Scenario Planning game.

✓ Interactive workshop with stakeholders, identifying the key challenges and opportunities for the Green Synergy Cluster.

✓ Train-the-trainer workshop with Cluster Management developing Effective Communication Strategies.

✓ Train-the-trainer workshop with Cluster Management, SMEs and Business Services on how to develop Business Models for SMEs, Clusters or other Business Organisations.

✓ Business Model generation session with Cluster Management to develop the Business Model for the Green Synergy Cluster, accompanied by a Strategic Development roadmap and an Action Plan.

Project objectives

The objectives of the action were to:

• organize three developmental workshops, utilizing a 'Train-the-trainer' concept;

• and support the cluster management to achieve Effective Stakeholder Engagement, Communication Strategies and driving through Innovation Ecosystem Design and Implementation, and Business Model Generation with an accompanying Cluster Roadmap and Action Plan.

Results and outputs created

✓ Improved skills and competences on stakeholder engagement and improving visibility and opportunities for cluster growth.

✓ Better understanding and knowledge on Effective Communication Strategies with key Stakeholders, Green Ecosystems Design and implementation.

✓ Better Understanding, Knowledge and Practice on Business Model generation for Clusters and SMEs.

✓ The development of a business model implementation plan with cluster managers through co-design.

✓ The development of a Cluster Roadmap and the Strategic Action Plan.

The implemented interactive learning and experiential sessions during the course provided valuable insights for new creative solutions and advanced the green transition roadmap for the cluster. – Cluster Manager

Cluster organisation: Lublin Eco-Energy Cluster

LUBELSKI KLASTER EKOENERGETYCZNY

Cluster sectoral coverage: Renewable energy and energy efficiency

Cluster geographical coverage: Lubelskie region, Poland

Number of members: 38 members (30 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Geraldine Boylan and Alexandre Fintoni

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

Cluster members had little experience in using circular economy solutions and they were looking to acquire new competences in this field though the identification and implementation of new circular economy business models in the context of re-use of waste generated from entities of the cluster. In particular, the cluster wanted to draw inspiration from good practices and specialist advisory support and encourage its members to develop new circular economy solutions.

Project objectives

The project was designed to focus on the challenges and opportunities related to circular economy. For the cluster manager, the main objective of the cooperation was increasing knowledge and capacity of the cluster members on circular economy solutions which they can adopt in their businesses.

Activities undertaken

✓ Baseline questionnaire for the cluster companies to understand their activities and knowledge of circular economy concepts.
✓ Circular Economy Workshop (CEW) (1) providing a baseline level of understanding on circular economy concepts to the cluster members.
✓ Preparation of guidance document on circular economy business models and how these can be implemented.
✓ CEW (2) aimed at improving circular economy opportunities presented by selected cluster members.
✓ CEW (3) aimed at presenting an overview of work undertaken during the project.
✓ One day individual support to 5 cluster members to further develop and refine their main circular economy opportunities.

Results and outputs created

✓ Identification of circular economy opportunities among cluster members and their further development with assistnace of expert (for 5 identified ideas).
✓ Two circular economy case studies.
✓ Guidance document providing information on how to identify suitable circular economy ideas and models based on company activities.
✓ Impoved understanding of circular economy busines models among cluster members.
✓ Improved ideation and identification of circular economy opportunities within cluster members' businesses and industry.
✓ Improved collaboration among cluster members through the identification of circular economy solutions.

"The support focused on generating a shared understanding of circular economy and how circular economy business models can be integrated into existing business models." – Business advisor

Cluster organisation: DITECFER District for Rail Technologies, High Speed, Networks' Safety & Security

Cluster sectoral coverage: Transportation and logistics

Cluster geographical coverage: Tuscany

Number of members: 127 members (102 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Elie Herberichs

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

DITECFER considers business models to be the key to activating the Green Transition and to addressing its needs. At the same time, investments are strictly linked to business models as a 'green transition' means to "do things differently" which requires investments tailored to each specific SME's needs (e.g. new machinery to work with new green materials or new simulation software for designing using eco-design principles etc.). Given its high strategic value, the support to the development of new Business Models and Investments cannot be developed as a DITECFER service without specific preparation to achieve the desired results.

Project objectives

Given the number of possible challenges to be faced with while implementing a Green Transition - twin transition, recovery, and industrial resilience - the ability to offer highly specialized support is crucial for a cluster like DITECFER. Thus, DITECFER wants to be able to offer its companies this level of specialised support and to be able to address their needs. The Recovery Plans and the new EU Industrial Strategy call for Green Transition investments, however the risk is that – like in previous situations – the defined policies are not in line with the operational reality and that, there are not enough people/organizations in the field prepared to undertake the required activities. This poses the risk of not achieving the expected impact and that is exactly what DITECFER wants to avoid.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ Identification of general drivers
- ✓ Clearly define the value chain
- ✓ Development of a set of use cases for cluster members integrating a list of services that can be implemented by the cluster
- ✓ Identification of successful experiences (with members' inputs)
- ✓ Recommendation of tools for services development
- ✓ Fine-tuning and validation with cluster's members (including a workshop)

Results and outputs created

- ✓ Needs assessment of major value chain segments
- ✓ Set of indicators – 1 report produced
- ✓ Handbook of use cases
- ✓ Guidance documents for the development of support services
- ✓ Workshop

"Thanks to the proactive discussions during the meetings with the expert, DITECFER launched the idea of a "Sustainability Awards" to foster and award the most effective green approaches in the value chain" – Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: CONFAPI SARDEGNA

Cluster sectoral coverage: Sardinian small and medium-sized industrial enterprises

Cluster geographical coverage: Sardinia (Italy)

Number of members: 1.000 SMEs

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Massimo Perucca

CONFAPI Profile

Main challenges

Confapi's main mission when they joined this facility was to drive the largest part of its members to a green transition, especially those in the building sector and operating in the Sulcis Area. Confapi's main ambition was to contribute to the reduction of carbon emission of its members and to improve the energy efficiency of buildings. To achieve this goal, SMEs needed to receive the right incentives and systematic support.

Project objectives

- To enhance the SMEs' awareness on the use of high efficiency materials in the building sector and to adopt common guidelines for energy efficiency in buildings;
- To support Public Authorities to develop and implement general and common actions concerning energy efficiency;
- To help SMEs to overcome obstacles as they become greener and identify key actions to become more sustainable.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ Webinars on general topics of the Green Transition, Green Deal, Agenda 2030 and SDGs, Just Transitions and the related actions that can be implemented by SMEs to support the goals.
- ✓ The analysis of the cluster composition in terms of dimension, geographical distribution, industrial sector, and number of employees.
- ✓ A questionnaire distributed among all members of the cluster to identify the topics to be discussed on the three specific seminars issued by sector or requested thematic area.
- ✓ Three webinars of the topics identified through the questionnaire.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ The creation of a baseline of fundamental knowledge among all the companies of the cluster and sharing of best practices for reaching sustainability goals;
- ✓ The involvement of SMEs in the webinars where they identified the carbon transition as one of the main challenges of their near future;
- ✓ The assessment of SMEs' needs and requirements in relation to the green transition to tailor specific seminars addressing the implementation of green transition actions.

"Thank you very much for involving CONFAPI Sardegna in such an important challenge for the future of the Sardinian economy and the development of SMEs." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisation: Cluster Energy Technology Berlin-Brandenburg

CLUSTER ENERGY TECHNOLOGY
BERLIN BRANDENBURG

Cluster sectoral coverage: Electric power generation and transmission

Cluster geographical coverage: Berlin-Brandenburg region

Number of members: 298 members (250 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Sebastian Haas

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The cluster needs support to acquire the knowledge required to help its cluster members, mainly SMEs, to make more sustainable investments and develop more resilient business models. These companies need to be able to benefit from market opportunities created by upcoming sustainability legislation or market trends and to proact/react to them by adapting their business models. Companies should get a precise idea of how to use tools that support them in making sustainable investments. Cluster ETBB wants to make results measurable wherever possible and build best practices in their region.

Project objectives

Support Cluster ETBB in building its solutions-finding capacity to support SMEs on Green Transition, thus relieving pressure and burden on their part. Considered a structurally disadvantaged region under the ERDF, SMEs from the German capital region also need the support in order to stay competitive in both a national and an international context. Sustainable innovation is key to achieving this. Cluster ETBB daily business is promoting innovation and facilitating joint innovation projects among cluster players. TGTF support service helped guide Cluster ETBB on how to leverage sustainability-focused innovation and what sustainable, innovative business models for the energy technology sector could look like.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ Develop knowledge co-creation process along the given requirements of relevant funding schemes, rising sustainability concepts.
- ✓ Idea generation for cluster organisation's sustainability support services portfolio.
- ✓ Needs assessment workshop
- ✓ Collection of the "Needed services longlist"
- ✓ Guiding the services selection and leading the agile development process
- ✓ Service concept development for selected services including validation feasibility aspects
- ✓ Outlining sustainability support services design
- ✓ Writing of sustainability support services strategy
- ✓ Services legitimation and joint first steps of implementation within cluster's ecosystem.
- ✓ Disseminating and leveraging the sustainability support services to other clusters.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ Sustainability knowledge inventory (meta structure).
- ✓ Needs assessment workshop.
- ✓ Needed services longlist as needs assessment tool.
- ✓ Structuring of a broad survey.
- ✓ Documented workstream with 5 to 10 SMEs.
- ✓ Service concept including feasibility aspects.
- ✓ Outline Services Design including stakeholder engagement necessities.
- ✓ Validation workshops.
- ✓ Written Services strategy to complement existing plans.
- ✓ Cross-fertilization streams to other 5 BB's capital region clusters.

"Leveraging cooperation between SMEs is crucial to the implementation of Green Transition" – Cluster Management

Cluster organisation: Clúster Alimentario de Galicia (Clusaga)

Cluster sectoral coverage: Food processing and manufacturing

Cluster geographical coverage: Galicia region, Spain

Number of members: 135 members (99 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Paulina Janiak

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The main challenge for the cluster was a lack of knowledge to support their members with the green transition. This was due to insufficient guidance materials being available for the food sector, limited in-house expertise on solutions and tools, limited access to fora or networks to learn from the experiences of other clusters, and insufficient financial and technical support to define and launch green projects and support services for their members.

Project objectives

Clusaga aims to become a facilitator for the green transition of Galician food companies. Thus, they seek to strengthen their capacities and service offer related to green transition and circular economy as well as raise awareness and improve their support to members to adopt sustainable solutions. The ultimate goal is to reduce the negative impacts of food production, foster greener performance and organisational strategies, complying with and anticipating public policies, and entering new markets with greener products.

Activities undertaken

✓ Survey for cluster members to gather data about companies willing to participate in TGTF project pilot and their progress with the green transition.
✓ Compilation and analysis of survey results. Selection of five pilot companies based on award criteria agreed with the cluster.
✓ Tailor-made online survey for the five pilot companies to learn about their efforts to become more sustainable and introduce circular measures in their operations and value chains.
✓ Evaluation of surveys and development of tailored recommendations to advance towards the green transition and circular economy.
✓ Identification of relevant green opportunities for the Clusaga members
✓ Design of new advisory service for the cluster
✓ Delivery of a training session for cluster members

Results and outputs created

✓ Selection of five companies to participate in the TGTF project pilot.
✓ Recommendation report for each of the five pilot companies based on their feedback in surveys about their green transition journey.
✓ One-on-one meetings with the five pilot companies building on recommendation reports.
✓ A green transition workshop delivered for cluster team members and several SMEs, with training on sustainability and circularity concepts for the food sector.
✓ New advisory service designed, and an action plan developed for the cluster to continue the green transition journey beyond the TGTF.
✓ Introduction of an action axis on sustainability and circular economy in Clusaga's Strategic Plan 2021-2025.

"These types of initiatives add value and should be replicated. Tailored advice to companies makes a real impact and strengthens the clusters. We really liked the interactive, hands-on approach of the TGTF" - Cluster manager

TOWARDS GREEN TRANSITION

An initiative of the European Union

Cluster organisation: Cleantech Cluster Lithuania

Cluster sectoral coverage: Environmental services

Cluster geographical coverage: Lithuania

Number of members: 38 members (27 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster staff and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Christian Angerbauer

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

As businesses face an increasing need to become more sustainable in their operations, the cluster suffered from a lack of knowledge to support their members, especially SMEs, in specific 'green' areas. High-quality experience and expertise are not available in national cluster networks, and not easily accessible at international level. Cleantech Cluster Lithuania lacked energy efficiency experts among their staff members, as well as accessible initiatives to offer their SMEs and large-scale projects to motivate their members to embark on the green transition.

Activities undertaken

✓ Identification of capacity-building needs of the cluster staff members.
✓ Selection of relevant topics to cover in capacity-building sessions for cluster staff and members.
✓ Mapping of green opportunities and relevant good practice examples based on the needs of the cluster members.
✓ Design of capacity-building workshops for cluster staff and cluster companies, with dedicated sessions for SMEs, addressing circular economy and sustainable business concepts, European framework and opportunities applied to the clusters' value chain.

Project objectives

By getting involved in the TGTF, Cleantech Cluster Lithuania aimed to acquire knowledge and develop skills to help the cluster staff and members in their sustainability journey and to learn about hands-on experiences and practical solutions that can be tailor made to specific needs of the SMEs. Moreover, such enhanced knowledge, practice and visibility may attract more SMEs to join the cluster and thus strengthen the position of sustainability as part of the mission of the cluster itself.

Results and outputs created

✓ Three capacity-building workshops delivered for the cluster staff, focusing on how the cluster can support their members with sustainability issues.
✓ One workshop delivered for cluster members on general green transition topics of interest.
✓ Two capacity-building workshops tailored to the specific needs and challenges of cluster SMEs.
✓ Cluster manager and staff trained and mobilised on green transition concepts, strategies and opportunities.
✓ List of actions for cluster managers to support cluster members with sustainability issues.
✓ Increased awareness of green solutions and opportunities by cluster members.
✓ Evidence of concrete actions already adopted by an SMEs to improve its sustainability.

"The training sessions have been very helpful for us thanks to their practical approach. We find it easier now to talk to the companies in our cluster about the green transition and support them." - Cluster manager

Cluster organisations: Aquimer, together with EEK.SH, BaMS, BioBall e.V. Biookonomie, Acuiplus, Vlaams Aquacultuurplatform, and EATiP

Cluster sectoral coverage: Livestock processing, focus on aquaculture

Cluster geographical coverage: France, Germany, Spain, Belgium

Number of members: Aquimer as leading partner: 151 members (80 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the clusters and SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Lorena Jurado

ECCP Profile Aquimer

Main challenges

Marine and aquatic biomasses have a huge underexploited potential to contribute to the provision of food, feed and other carbon-based resources for European industry sectors. Currently only a limited amount of technical solutions and business modes allow for more sophisticated setups, e.g. in the use of renewable energies, side stream valorisation or cradle-to-cradle approaches to raw material use and integration with other industry sectors.

Project objectives

Starting from the main challenges faced by the cluster and its members, the project was designed to focus on the challenges related to circular economy. The core of the support revolved around providing cluster managers with a wide array of best practices and success stories. Industrial symbiosis, use of renewable energies, and technological solutions to support the greening of the aquaculture sector were discussed with experts in each domain to increase the capacity of cluster managers.

Activities undertaken

✓ Project kick-off and needs assessment of the different clusters involved.

✓ Webinar on the digitalisation of aquaculture.

✓ Webinar on the green shift and innovation best practices from Norway.

✓ Webinar on circular approaches to aquaculture, presenting the successful case of industrial symbiosis between a lobster farm and a data centre.

✓ Webinar with the author of "The new fish wave" to discuss the circular economy experience of the Iceland's Ocean Cluster.

✓ Webinar on accelerating sustainable aquaculture globally: the case of Katapult Ocean.

Results and outputs created

✓ Cluster managers trained and mobilized on circular economy concepts, strategies and opportunities.

✓ Cluster managers trained and mobilized on digitalisation concepts, strategies and opportunities.

✓ Cluster managers trained and mobilised on industrial symbiosis best practices.

✓ Cluster managers trained and mobilized on sustainability concepts, strategies and opportunities.

"Given that various clusters' different interests, TGTF support included experts on circular economy, industrial symbiosis, and sustainability. Success stories from other aquaculture clusters and the involvement of venture capitalists enabled a comprehensive support." – the business advisor

An initiative of the European Union

Cluster organisation: Cluster AEC, Arquitetura, Engenharia e Construção

Cluster sectoral coverage: Construction products and services

Cluster geographical coverage:

Number of members: 69 members (26 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and SMEs

Business Advisors for the facility: Geraldine Boylan and Alexandre Fintoni

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

Regarding the challenges related to sustainability and resource efficiency, namely concerning energy efficiency and sustainable use of materials, the cluster AEC has to comply with the National Plan Energy and Climate 2021-2030 and with the European Green Deal. In this sense, the Cluster need to support Construction Sector companies in order to be able to develop and implement new methods and processes and to optimise solutions, in terms of Green Transition strategies.

Project objectives

The Cluster AEC needs to meet the requirements of two Strategic Documents, in order to achieve the Green Transition established goals: National Plan Energy and Climate 2021-2030 and European Green Deal. To that end Cluster AEC wants to support their members in understanding and implementing this transition, particularly SMEs, which have deep financial difficulties and have no means to invest in RD&I or in skilled human resources, to develop or implement Green Transition solutions or methods.

Activities undertaken

- ✓ Develop baseline questionnaire for the companies involved in the Context Review
- ✓ Current European baseline for planning requirements for energy efficiency in buildings
- ✓ Develop a Context Review online workshop
- ✓ Mapping of Context review workshop results vs high-level policy/ available guidance.
- ✓ Development of an energy efficiency/ self-generation/ renewables/ circular economy checklist for design/architecture stage.
- ✓ Development of an energy efficiency/ self-generation/ renewables/ circular economy checklist for construction phase.
- ✓ Issue checklist to Cluster companies; request feedback on relevant areas.
- ✓ Develop analysis of questionnaire results
- ✓ Develop case studies based on three companies selected by AEC Cluster to identify opportunities assessment for the application of the checklist vs their own company.

Results and outputs created

- ✓ Baseline questionnaire template
- ✓ Analysis of feedback
- ✓ Context review output
- ✓ High-level strategy for the Cluster based on key topics, typical actions (in the context of Portugal) and minimum of 1 example per topic in a 'call out box'
- ✓ Checklist /guide development
- ✓ Case studies development
- ✓ Webinar

"TGTF was essential for assessment of the Green Transition Process in the Portuguese AEC Sector" – Cluster Manager

Cluster organisation: Balears.t

Balears.t
Balears és turisme

Cluster sectoral coverage: Tourism

Cluster geographical coverage: Balearic Islands, Spain

Number of members: 29 members (12 SMEs)

Type of support offered: Advisory support for the cluster and its SMEs

Business Advisor for the facility: Elvira Martín Tarín

ECCP Profile

Main challenges

The main challenge for the green transition of the members of Balears.t is a cultural one. The economic model and mindset that brought prosperity to the Balearic Islands is not sustainable. A profound transformation is required in most actors throughout the value chain. Sustainability must be understood as an investment, not as a burden. Giving visibility to the sustainability returns in the economic results, social and environment aspects is therefore critical.

Project objectives

The project aims to contribute to the transformation of the touristic model in the Balearic Islands by helping the cluster members develop business models based on a long-term commitment to sustainability. It will also work towards a revision of business processes and a cultural change in the management of SMEs and companies across the value chain. To pursue these objectives, tailored coaching sessions and guidance documents will be provided for the cluster members.

Activities undertaken

✓ A diagnosis of the current situation of the tourism sector in the Balearic Islands, with a profiling of the market and actors involved.

✓ Identification of opportunities for cluster SMEs at national and European level related to green transition and post-Covid recovery.

✓ Online survey with cluster members to identify their sustainability challenges and needs.

✓ Dedicated coaching sessions with cluster members addressing their specific sustainability challenges and future ambitions in this area.

✓ Development of hospitality benchmark on sustainability for the tourism sector.

✓ Drafting of recommendations for Balears.t to gain visibility and positioning as green transition facilitator considering the cluster strategy.

Results and outputs created

✓ Informative webinar with cluster members to raise awareness of the services offered at the TGTF.

✓ Presentation outlining the status, sustainability challenges and opportunities for Balearic tourism.

✓ Recommendations for the cluster on how to gain more visibility and positioning as a green transition facilitator for their members.

✓ Several cluster members advised on how to improve the sustainability of their operations and seize 'green' business opportunities in near future.

✓ Tailored recommendations for the cluster members following up from coaching sessions.

✓ Benchmark on sustainability for hospitality sector.

✓ Guidance document with sustainability key performance indicators for Balears.t members.

"Many thanks to the business advisor Elvira Martín Tarín for her professional work and inputs given to our cluster members" - Cluster manager