



NEWSTouR



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WELCOME TO THE NEW NEWSTOUR!

I am delighted to introduce our latest newsletter, which we will be producing every six months. NEWSTouR is crafted to spotlight the stories, accomplishments, and insights from NECSTouR's Executive Team and members across Europe as they navigate, innovate, and shape the future of sustainable tourism. Through the unique perspectives of each destination, we celebrate the diversity and strength of our network while underscoring our shared commitment to competitive and sustainable tourism.

In this edition, you will discover stories that demonstrate how collaboration and innovation at European level are transforming the tourism landscape. From pioneering sustainable practices to harnessing data for better decision-making, our network members continue to push boundaries in their regions. This newsletter is an invitation to explore the possibilities that arise from working together on the challenges and opportunities our industry faces.

Whether you are new to our network or a longstanding supporter, we hope these stories inspire you and spark new ideas. We look forward to growing together and welcome your engagement as we journey into the future of European tourism.



Peter De Wilde

NECSTouR Board of Directors
President



REPORTING ON EVENTS

NECSTOUR CONTRIBUTES TO EXPERTS HEARING AT THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC & SOCIAL COMMITTEE HEARING ON TOURISM

NECSTouR's Strategy Director, Cristina Nuñez, delivered a keynote speech at the EESC Hearing on "Tourism in the EU: social sustainability as a driver for the long-term competitiveness of the sector". This contributes to the EESC's upcoming opinion on how sustainability can shape the future of European tourism.

Cristina underlined that NECSTouR is committed to strengthening the positive value of tourism, aiming for destinations that not only thrive but regenerate as part of Regenerative Tourism Governance. Our goal is to help all European regions adopt regenerative approaches by 2030.



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NECSTOUR PARTICIPATES AT TIS IN SEVILLE AND HOLDS THE FIRST TOURISM OF TOMORROW LAB DATA SUMMIT



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From 23-25 October, NECSTouR was a partner and active participant at the Tourism Innovation Summit in Seville, Spain, which attracted nearly 8,000 delegates this year. Our Tourism of Tomorrow Lab held an interactive one-and-a-half-day Data Summit with several NECSTouR regions covering subjects such as managing statistical data, Generative AI, APIs, etc. The Summit was led by NECSTouR's Data Scientist, Daniel Iglesias, and covered much ground across many important areas.

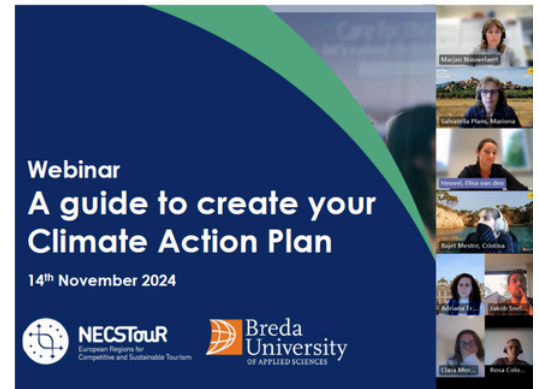
NECSTouR's Managing Director, John Fitzgibbon, participated as a panellist in two sessions of the conference programme.

NECSTOUR WEBINAR: ADVANCING TOURISM CLIMATE ACTION PLANS

On 14 November, NECSTouR hosted the webinar "A Guide on Tourism Climate Action Plans" to showcase the "Blueprint for Tourism Climate Action Plans," a tool from the Interreg Euro-MED Programme Sustainable Tourism Mission.

Led by Marjan Nauwelaert, the session featured Elisa van den Heuvel, who provided an in-depth walkthrough of the tool and highlighted the importance of monitoring emissions, setting baselines, and prioritising actions when creating Climate Action Plans, and Mariona Salvatella sharing Catalonia's Climate Action Plan journey.

The webinar concluded with a collaborative exchange on challenges, strategies, and ways to use the Blueprint as a guide. This event reinforced NECSTouR's commitment to advancing sustainable tourism through its Climate Hub.



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NECSTOUR AT THE WORLD TRAVEL MARKET IN LONDON



On 5-6 November, NECSTouR's Managing Director John Fitzgibbon attended the World Travel Market event in London. This leading event on the tourism calendar provided the opportunity to meet with existing NECSTouR members and make acquaintance with new members, and also to catch up with Charlie Cotton from eco collective who are assisting NECSTouR with reducing our carbon footprint, a key objective of our Climate Action Plan.

NECSTOUR PARTICIPATES AT THE JOINT ANNUAL FORUM IN ALMERIA

The 2nd Joint Annual Forum of the Interreg Euro-MED Sustainable Tourism Mission, held in parallel with the Sun and Blue Congress in Almería, focused on "Climate Adaptation in Tourism." During the Forum, experts, stakeholders, and leaders explored practical climate action strategies through capacity-building workshops and policy debates. Participants prioritized decarbonization, addressed weather-related challenges, and mapped key stakeholders.

Marjan Nauwelaert, Chair of NECSTouR Climate Task Force, emphasized the need for collective action and interregional collaboration, sharing insights from Visit Flanders.

The Forum showcased the importance of unity and capacity-building in aligning policies to create a more resilient and sustainable tourism industry.



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NECSTOUR UPDATES

THE NECSTOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETS IN BRUSSELS



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The NECSTouR Board of Directors met in Brussels (15–17 Oct) to launch its 2024–2027 mandate, focusing on the NECSTouR 2030 Pathway. As part of the programme, workshops were held to prioritise NECSTouR 2030 Pathway's objectives, highlighting the Tourism of Tomorrow Lab, Climate Hub, and Governance Hub. The discussions also covered advocacy efforts with the EU institutions and expanding membership. The newly appointed Board Advisers to associate and academic members, Maria Morfoulaki and Nina Nesterova, brought their expertise to foster further collaboration.

The programme concluded with meetings with DG GROW, DG CLIMA, and MEPs, at the beginning of new mandates for the European Commission and European Parliament (2024–29).



THE NEW NECSTOUR MEMBERS PLATFORM IS LIVE!

NECSTouR launched its Members Platform on 23 September, which offers a collaborative space for networking, knowledge sharing, and accessing exclusive content.

Developed with the help of Symantra, the platform features tools like dedicated working groups, a centralized document repository, an event calendar, enhanced networking, and a Projects Hub for funding and training resources.

The introductory webinar on 26 September showcased its functionality to over 40 participants, sparking strong interest and engagement.

Designed to support NECSTouR's 2030 Pathway, the platform fosters collaboration, innovation, and sustainable tourism development. Through the platform, NECSTouR aims to continually improve to meet members' needs and strengthen the European tourism community.



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NECSTOUR CLIMATE HUB: MEMBERS' BEST PRACTICES

As part of NECSTouR's Climate Hub's 2024 priorities, the NECSTouR Executive Team, together with expert Dr Mireia Guix from the University of Queensland, has identified five outstanding climate initiatives from members and summarised these in accessible documents available on our platform. Below, you can find a preview of the best practices.



The Centre-Val del Loire region has an integrated approach to support tourism stakeholders in their ecological transition and the development of sustainable and responsible tourism experiences for a climate resilient sector.



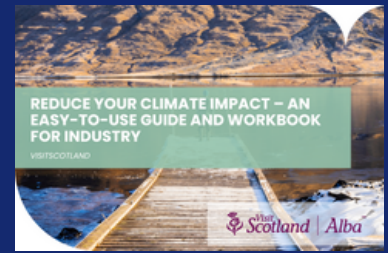
The Canary Islands Tourism Board has created a carbon footprint calculation tool to promote and facilitate the decarbonisation of the tourism sector in their Islands



Normandy Tourism Board has created a region-wide low carbon rate to change individual tourists' mobility behaviours and reduce their transport-related carbon footprint to and within the destination.



TiDES, the Institute of Tourism and Sustainable Economic Development at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, has developed an innovative platform to enhance decision-making for island destinations regarding climate risk assessment and tourism adaptation pathways.



"Reduce Your Climate Impact" is VisitScotland's practical guide and workbook designed to empower the Scottish tourism industry to take decisive action against climate change.

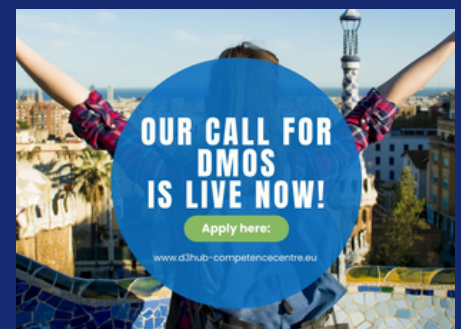
PARTICIPATE IN THE D3HUB CALL

The D3HUB (Data-Driven Destinations) project, of which NECSTouR's Tourism of Tomorrow Lab is a partner, has launched an Open Call for Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to join its 2025 pilot phase.

This project aims to create a self-sustaining European Competence Centre to support tourism destinations in achieving a green and digital transition through data-driven solutions. The upcoming pilot phase will allow selected destinations to participate in a peer-learning scheme, gaining insights from experts and peers on effectively collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and applying data to address key tourism challenges.

Following consultations with DMOs and several NECSTouR members, the D3HUB team identified four critical areas for the pilot: managing the balance between residents and visitors, climate change mitigation and adaptation, redistributing tourism flows in space and time, and supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism.

Applications for the Open Call close on 15 December, providing DMOs an exceptional opportunity to enhance their data-driven tourism strategies.



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NECSTOUR MEMBERS' NEWS

WATERLAND VAN FRIESLAND WINS AWARD FOR AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



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VVV Waterland van Friesland has won second place in a provincial government competition with their awareness campaign encouraging tourists to shower less, or not at all, in order to conserve water. Residents of Friesland could vote on various water-saving ideas, while a professional jury helped select the winners. The campaign, titled "Ode to the Washcloth," focused on the diminishing use of washcloths, a small piece of fabric used for washing. These have become less common as daily showers, especially while on vacation, are becoming the norm. By encouraging tourists to take shorter and fewer showers during the summer months, Friesland saved a total of 378 million liters of water – more than 150 Olympic-sized swimming pools!

The campaign will run for a second year in 2025, following its first year which gained national attention through radio and television.

SWEDISH LAPLAND PARTICIPATES AT THE EUROPEAN WEEK OF REGIONS AND CITIES

During the workshop "Tourism Regions Addressing Climate Change Risks," part of the European Week of Regions and Cities held in early October, various European regions shared innovative strategies to mitigate climate risks in tourism. NECSTOUR member Swedish Lapland highlighted its Care for the Arctic Agenda, emphasising the impacts of climate change in the Arctic regions and the need to implement a systemic change in tourism governance. In addition, other regions contributed to the workshop, such as France's Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, discussing the challenges of adapting ski tourism to shorter seasons, and Portugal's Oeste region, introducing their data-driven tools to combat coastal erosion. The event emphasized Europe's diverse climate challenges and the critical role of interregional collaboration in building a resilient tourism sector.



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THE CATALAN COMMITMENT FOR RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AT THE TOURISM STAKEHOLDER EVENT IN BRUSSELS



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On 14 October, NECSTouR Vice-President Patrick Torrent, from the Catalan Tourist Board, presented Catalonia's pledge at the Tourism Stakeholder Event in Brussels, highlighting the Catalan Commitment for Responsible Tourism. This initiative unites over 200 organizations across Catalonia, prioritizing Public-Private-Residents' partnerships to ensure local communities are central to tourism development. Torrent also discussed Catalonia's collaboration and alignment with NECSTouR and the NECSTouR 2030 Pathway, a strategic framework focused on Climate Action, Knowledge and Data, and Governance and Strategies. This roadmap, developed with NECSTouR members and inspired by the European Tourism Transition Pathway, aims to drive positive change in the tourism sector.

VISITSCOTLAND'S 4-STEP GUIDE TO HELP BUSINESSES ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

VisitScotland has created a simple 4-step guide to help tourism businesses become more sustainable and resilient, recognizing that many are at the starting point on this journey. The guide emphasizes that adopting a sustainable business model is not only the right choice but also crucial for future-proofing. The steps include identifying how climate change may affect the business, integrating adaptation into health and safety policies, considering nature-based solutions to increase biodiversity, and building contingency plans into the supply chain. In addition, VisitScotland also offers climate risk audits to help businesses identify risks and opportunities, ensuring long-term success and resilience.



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FORUM OF THE ADRIATIC AND IONIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE



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ARCHAEODIGIT, of which NECSTouR member the Forum of the Adriatic and Ionian Chambers of Commerce is a partner, is an Interreg Italy-Croatia project that uses digital technologies to preserve the archaeological heritage and promote sustainable tourism. The project, which started in February of this year, integrates tools like augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), to create immersive experiences, boosting off-season tourism while ensuring the long-term protection of cultural sites. Its main priorities are sustainable tourism and cultural development, preservation, interpretation and valorisation of archaeological heritage, digitalisation of the archaeological sites, and the effective use of the ARCHAEO DIGIT Methodology for the future.

With a total budget of €2.42 million, the project will run until July 2026, merging tradition with innovation to redefine cultural tourism while protecting the future of archaeological heritage.

LOOKING AHEAD



NECSTouR KNOWLEDGE DAY

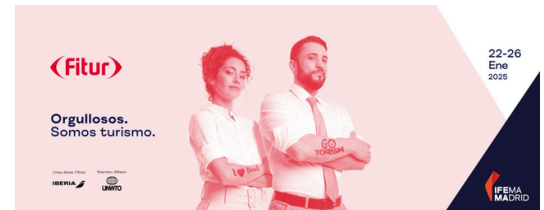
Next 13 December, from 10.00h to 12.30h CET, we are organising the NECSTouR Knowledge Day, a unique opportunity to bring all members together and reflect, recap, and share insights gained through the efforts and collaboration carried out in 2024. Learn from our Climate Hub with concrete best practices in tourism climate action, gain insights from the Tourism of Tomorrow Lab data-driven destinations, and participate in meaningful discussions on the challenges, opportunities and future of tourism.

[REGISTER NOW!](#)



FITUR: International Tourism Trade Fair

From 22 to 26 January 2025, Madrid will be hosting the International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR), the global meeting point for tourism professionals and the leading fair for inbound and outbound markets in Ibero-America.



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ITB BERLIN

Berlin will be the home of ITB from 4 to 6 March 2025 with the motto The Power of Transition lives here. Join one of the largest travel trade shows in Europe, learn and network with other tourism professionals from all over the world.



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The next NewsTour will be out in May, please forward any articles for inclusion by 18 April to communication@necstour.eu