

BlueCulTour

Interconnecting Blue Cultural Tourism Offer in the Ionian Sea

Project: BlueCulTour – Interconnecting Blue Cultural Tourism Offer in the Ionian Sea

Partner organisations concerned:

University of Calabria (Italy), National Superintendency for Underwater Cultural Heritage (Italy), Calabria Region (Italy), National Port Fund of Killini (Greece)

Countries involved: Italy – Greece

Programme: Interreg VI-A Greece–Italy Programme 2021–2027

Newsletter

The submerged cultural heritage of the Ionian Sea

A hidden heritage beneath the surface

The Ionian Sea preserves an underwater cultural heritage of extraordinary value, made up of shipwrecks, ancient ports and historical evidence that tells the story of centuries of relations between peoples, trade and civilizations.

This heritage is still little known, but it has enormous potential for the development of sustainable tourism, capable of combining discovery, protection and valorisation.

Calabria: between shipwrecks and coastal landscapes

The Ionian coasts of Calabria host several sites of underwater archaeological interest, including modern shipwrecks and areas of historical relevance. These contexts represent a unique opportunity to develop underwater tourism experiences, where marine exploration is combined with knowledge of cultural heritage.

Puglia: the Gulf of Taranto and its historical evidence

In the Gulf of Taranto, the submerged heritage includes archaeological finds and shipwrecks that testify to the historical importance of this area as a strategic hub in the Mediterranean. The valorisation of these sites can help strengthen the tourism offer by integrating culture and environment into a single experience.

Western Greece: the submerged port of Kyllini

In Greece, one of the most relevant sites is the submerged port of Kyllini, with evidence dating back to the Classical and Medieval periods. This site is an emblematic example of how underwater cultural heritage can tell the history of coastal territories and become a key element for tourism development.

An opportunity for sustainable tourism

Underwater cultural heritage is not only evidence of the past, but also a resource for the future.

Its valorisation makes it possible to:

- promote forms of slow and conscious tourism
- diversify the tourism offer
- generate new economic opportunities for local territories
- strengthen the protection of marine ecosystems

The role of BlueCulTour

The BlueCulTour project was created precisely with the aim of connecting these sites and transforming them into a new integrated tourism offer, based on the valorisation of the underwater cultural heritage of the Ionian Sea.

Through cooperation between the territories of Calabria, Puglia and Western Greece, the project aims to build a sustainable development model that can be replicated over time.

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