



## Meeting INTA TransMed on March 9th

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The 'Communities of Competence' *TransMed* held its first meeting on March 9th. The meeting was gracefully hosted in the offices of the French Mission for the UpM in Paris. Henry Chabert being in the chair, and the list of participants is attached.

Since its foundation, INTA focuses its action on territorial transformation and urban development. At the request of several of its members from the Mediterranean, INTA has created a specific working group – a cluster of competences with the objective to co produce new thinking on sustainable urban and territorial development in the Mediterranean leading to a framework for Mediterranean cities and territories that enable shared views, cooperation and complementarities in urban and territorial strategies; such framework serving as a reference tool for local authorities implementing sustainable development initiatives.

The agenda was significantly altered by some changes in the background setting.

Guy Fleuret, senior economist at the European Investment Bank (EIB), provided a clear analysis of the operational process of the financial initiative for the urban development of the Mediterranean setup by the EIB and other IFIs (AFD, World Bank, European Union).

A programme of about a billion euro has been created to promote and support financially about fifteen meaningful and exemplary projects in the three years to come, which will result in an optimum leverage effect.

The EIB has chosen an empirical approach, outside the usual mechanism of issuing calls for tender and detailed specifications, but encouraging a constructive dialogue with the projects' developers. Five minimum criteria are required in the selection process:

1. Tangible nature of the project (transport, water, economic development, habitat),
2. Multidimensional but integrated nature of the project,
3. Environmental impact,
4. Solid governance of the project with clear organization of the management chain (shared management),
5. Financial viability.

Fernando Nunes da Silva, Deputy Mayor of Lisbon, underlined the fact that the strategic time is not the same as the political time; there is a need to "buy" enough time to enrich the strategic thinking by limiting, at least in a first phase, the number of projects (political time), and to select few significant pilot projects to share their exemplary value (moments of experiments in how to design integrated projects).

Hence the importance of a conceptual framework showing that it is possible to carry a different development policy.

Tariq Kabbage, Mayor of Agadir, stressed that employment, and therefore the social dimension, remains a priority across local politics: how to integrate the informal sector as a lever of a sustainable urban development? How also meet new social demands such as transportation, recreation, and sports while meeting the priority requirements of housing, health and jobs? A condition of success is very often dependant on good local governance.

Christian Grusq, President of Diplomacy and Sustainable Development, responding to the debate on financial instruments emphasized the positive role of the private sector, including investment funds. There is need to open a constructive dialogue between public and private investors to direct funds to projects that are better designed, more durable with strong social connotation as for example in the tourism sector.

Mrs. Julia Jordan, of the inter-ministerial mission for the UfM, briefly outlined the policies carried out by the Union, insisting on the importance of the urban dimension. Mrs. Jordan confirmed the interest of the inter-ministerial mission in INTA's contribution.

Prefect François Leblond, president of COFHUAT, confirmed the interest of his organisation in cooperating with INTA, and suggested to take example of the Public Debate on the Grand Paris to engage the local actors of the Mediterranean in defining their own urban future.

The outcome of rich exchange between the participants is four main operational decisions regarding INTA and TRANSMED:

1. To work on new urban development principles, namely on the engineering of the urban economy and the creation of economic value brought by large infrastructures; on a more operative urban governance, and the engagement of the private sector. All that to the benefit of a city that constantly takes into accounts the environmental and social challenges.
2. To position INTA to contribute to the implementation of the operational actions by the UfM, the donors and the local authorities (animating exchange, dialogue, evaluation, ...).
3. To make available to institutions and donors INTA's expertise on "Urban Panels" to enrich with a critical, and constructive perspective the content of the pilot projects, and that also at the beginning of the selection process.
4. To carry, in an independent way, a policy of exchange with the private sector to encourage partnership in financing urban and infrastructure policies and territorial planning in the Mediterranean countries by organizing a seminar on this theme, before the end of this year.

#### **Calendar:**

- Participation of INTA in the urban working group of the UfM on March 28 at Barcelona.
- Preparation of an International Round Table about the role of the private sector in the financing of infrastructure projects in the Mediterranean.