

With 300 million of international visitors in 2010, the Mediterranean region is the most touristic in the world. Tourism is vital for the region's economy, as show the studies on Morocco and Tunisia respectively carried out in 2012 and 2013. However, the consequences of "mass tourism", the current tourism model in SEMCs, are fatal: decline in biodiversity, especially along coasts, increasing number of conflicts regarding the use of soil and natural resources, etc. The evolution of the demand in Mediterranean tourism, more customised touristic practices, oriented towards the cultural offer and respecting the environment, could also help reshape the South-Mediterranean tourism model.

To do so, IPEMED examined the crucial role of transport systems in the optimisation of touristic flows and an easier access to Mediterranean destinations, the qualitative and quan-

titative increase in infrastructures necessary to the development of tourism, the structuring role of companies in land planning, the conditions of a diversification of the touristic offer, and more particularly the measures necessary to reinforce the sector's capacity and governance, as well as professional training.

PROMOTING A CROSS-CUTTING VISION OF TOURISM STAKES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

In the framework of this integrated approach, tourism must contribute to the socio-economic and territorial development of the South, via a sustainable and inclusive tourism model with significant land planning. This is why IPEMED progressively broadened its works on tourism to other sectors, taking an interest on the quality of bathing water and on sanitation improvement

in the Mediterranean basin, with the support of the French Office for Environmental Education, an organisation in charge of Blue Flag management in France. Likewise, the Institute highlighted the synergies between tourism and agriculture, tourism and ICT, tourism and employment, etc.

“The time when the UfM was launched, when IPEMED was created, was the time of the Euro-Mediterranean return, with the objective of implementing a North-South cooperation model adapted to contemporary geo-economic issues. The financial crisis, conflicts as well as the migrants' crisis undermined this project. The tourism crisis in the region is a consequence of these tensions. Southern instability repels investors, frightened by political upheavals and terrorism;

JL. Guigou, 2013



while Northern and Southern tourists are worried and turn away from these destinations. Tourism is also slowing down in countries spared from the unrest, like Morocco and Jordan. Decline in tourism shows the isolationism gaining ground in both shores of the Mediterranean. Even in this context, IPEMED always kept promoting trust. It did so via a major work of knowledge acquisition -necessary to break pre-conceived ideas- and via the defence of the convergence of economic interests and social values on both shores. The current crisis will pass, but the former regional balance will never return. This is why one must continue to work towards a model based on socio-economic equity, the preservation of the environment, a better sharing of progress and a shift of focus to the South. In this regard, the progressive insertion of Sub-Saharan Africa in the regional space offers Southern countries a great opportunity to act at the heart of the Euro-African economic organisation.”

Maxime Weigert
Associate expert



The article of Maxime Weigert, published in IEMed's Annuaire de la Méditerranée, analyses the impact of Arab revolutions, revealing the obsolescence of tourism models based on social authoritarianism and on a disconnected territory offer. He proposes to implement innovative sectoral strategies intending to diversify investment, offer and employment and to better segment the market.

MAIN PUBLICATIONS



Les Notes d'Ipemed, n°10
« Renouveler le tourisme euro-méditerranéen : le grand chantier »
May 2010



Les Notes d'Ipemed, n°12
« Le tourisme en Tunisie. Les défis à l'heure de la transition démocratique »
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3 EVENTS



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