

Common Euromed Toolkit for Sustainable Innovation & Market Access



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SME Quick-Start Guide

How to Use This Toolkit Based on the **Time You Have**



If You Have 1 Day

- ✓ Prepare for a meeting or decision
 - ✓ Value Chain Positioning
 - ✓ Innovation Needs Assessment
 - ✓ Go / No-Go Tool

Outcome: Clear focus and priorities.



If You Have 1 Week

- ✓ Get ready for a matchmaking event or mission
 - ✓ Ecosystem Mapping
 - ✓ Cross-Cultural Checklist
 - ✓ Market Strategy Canvas
 - ✓ Cleantech Business Model

Outcome: Structured collaboration plan.



If You Have 1 Mission

- ✓ Turn meetings into partnerships
 - ✓ LOI / MOU Checklist
 - ✓ Pilot Project Concept Note
 - ✓ Funding Opportunity Mapping

Outcome: Concrete follow-up steps.



For Long-Term Impact

- ✓ Sustain and scale collaboration
 - ✓ Sustainability & Impact KPIs
 - ✓ Funding Readiness Check
 - ✓ Post-Project Action Plan

Outcome: Lasting and funded partnerships.

Choose the tools that fit your time and goals. | Start small, grow smart!





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1. Purpose and positioning of the toolkit

The Common Euromed Toolkit is a practical decision-support and action toolkit designed to help SMEs and other stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region move from interest and networking to structured collaboration, market access and implementation.

It supports users to:

- identify concrete **EU–South Med collaboration opportunities**;
- design **realistic market access strategies**;
- structure **sustainable and AI-enabled solutions**;
- transform matchmaking and missions into:
 - business partnerships,
 - pilot projects,
 - Letters of Intent (LOIs) or MOUs,
 - funding-ready concepts.

The Toolkit directly supports:

- **Specific Objective 1 – Collaboration & Partnership**
- **Specific Objective 2 – Market Access & Innovation**

English reference version (for FR and RO adaptations)





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2. Target users

The Toolkit is designed for **practical use**, not policy analysis.

Primary users:

- SMEs and scale-ups active in climate innovation, renewable energy, cleantech, industrial decarbonisation, digitalisation and AI;
- cluster members and cluster managers.

Secondary users:

- innovation agencies and business support organisations;
- research and technology transfer organisations;
- public and semi-public stakeholders supporting industrial transition.

No prior experience in EU funding or internationalisation is required.





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3. How to use the toolkit

The Toolkit is designed to be **flexible and practical** and can be used **step-by-step** or **modularly**, depending on the user's needs and experience.

- **Step-by-step use** is recommended for organisations new to cross-border cooperation or market access, as the modules build progressively from ecosystem understanding to partnerships, pilot projects and funding readiness.
- **Modular use** allows more experienced users to select only the modules relevant to a specific objective, such as preparing for matchmaking, market entry or a pilot project.

Each module includes:

- a clear objective,
- an explanation of what users should achieve,
- concrete tools to complete.

Users are encouraged to **write directly in the tables** and reuse the tools during meetings, missions and follow-up, updating them as collaboration evolves.





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Module 1 – Understanding the Euromed sustainable innovation landscape

Objective

Enable users to understand **where opportunities exist** in the Euromed region and **how value chains are structured** between EU and South Mediterranean markets.

What users do in this module

Users:

- identify relevant sectors and markets;
- map key actors on both sides of the Mediterranean;
- understand where complementarities and gaps exist;
- position themselves within a cross-border value chain.

This module helps SMEs avoid **random partner searching** and focus on **strategic positioning**.



Tool 1.1 – Euromed ecosystem mapping template

Introduction and context

Successful collaboration in the Euro-Mediterranean region requires a clear understanding of **who the key actors are, how value chains are structured, and where complementarities exist** between EU and South Mediterranean ecosystems. Without this overview, matchmaking and missions risk remaining generic and producing limited results.

This tool supports the **Preparatory Phase** by helping SMEs, cluster managers and innovation actors quickly map relevant stakeholders in climate innovation, renewable energy, sustainable industrial practices, decarbonisation and digitalisation (including AI). It enables users to identify opportunities, gaps and potential partners in a structured and comparable way.

The template is designed to be simple, practical and iterative, serving as a working document before, during and after matchmaking activities.

How to use

Complete the table before matchmaking events or missions to structure your ecosystem overview. Update it after meetings to validate assumptions, capture new insights and identify concrete collaboration opportunities.

Category	EU side (country / region)	South Med side (country / region)
Key industries		
Relevant SMEs		



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Large companies		
Clusters / networks		
Research / R&D actors		
Public authorities		
Investors / funds		
Identified gaps / needs		

Tool 1.2 – Value chain positioning worksheet

Introduction and context

In cross-border collaboration, many partnerships fail to progress because organisations are not clearly positioned within the value chain. Without a shared understanding of *who does what* and *where value is created*, discussions remain generic and collaboration opportunities are difficult to operationalise.

This tool helps SMEs and other stakeholders clearly define their **role in the Euromed value chain** and articulate their specific contribution in relation to sustainable innovation, renewable energy, decarbonisation and digitalisation. It supports more focused matchmaking, clearer





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partner expectations and faster identification of complementarities between EU and South Mediterranean actors.

The worksheet is designed to be completed **before matchmaking activities** and reused during meetings to guide discussions toward concrete collaboration formats.

How to use

Tick your main role in the value chain and briefly describe where you add value. Then indicate where external partners are needed to move from ideas to implementation or market access.

- Technology / solution provider
- System integrator
- Industrial adopter / pilot site
- Service provider
- Research / testing partner

Your main value contribution:

.....

.....

.....

Where do you need partners to move forward?

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Module 2 – Cross-cultural and business communication in the Euromed region

Objective

Reduce collaboration risks caused by **cultural, organisational and communication differences**.

What users do in this module

Users:

- prepare for cross-border meetings and negotiations;
- adapt communication styles;
- clarify decision-making processes;
- reduce misunderstandings that can delay partnerships.

This module is particularly relevant before **missions and B2B meetings**.

Tool 2.1 – Cross-cultural readiness checklist

Introduction and context

Cross-border collaboration in the Euro-Mediterranean region often involves differences in communication styles, decision-making processes and organisational cultures. When these differences are not anticipated, they can slow down discussions, create misunderstandings or weaken trust between partners.

This checklist helps users prepare for initial interactions with new partners by reflecting on key cross-cultural and organisational aspects that influence cooperation. It supports more effective meetings, clearer expectations and smoother collaboration from the outset.





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The tool is particularly useful **before first B2B meetings, missions or online discussions**, and can be revisited as partnerships evolve.

How to use

Complete the checklist before the first meeting with a new partner to identify potential risks and adapt your communication and engagement approach accordingly.

- I know who makes decisions on the partner side
- I understand how fast decisions are taken
- I clarified expectations on timelines
- I prepared simple, clear messages
- I identified cultural sensitivities (hierarchy, formality)

Main risks identified:

.....

.....

.....

Tool 2.2 – Partnership communication protocol

Introduction and context

Effective partnerships depend not only on shared interests, but also on **clear and structured communication**. In cross-border Euromed collaborations, unclear responsibilities, irregular communication or ambiguous decision-making processes often lead to delays or loss of momentum after initial discussions.

This tool supports partners in establishing a **common communication framework** early in the collaboration. By agreeing on basic communication rules, roles and validation processes,





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partners reduce misunderstandings and create a more predictable and efficient working relationship.

The protocol is intended to be defined **shortly after the first serious discussion**, when there is mutual interest in exploring cooperation further.

How to use

After the first substantive discussion with a potential partner, jointly agree on the aspects listed below and record them in the table to guide future communication and decision-making.

Agree on aspects below after the first serious discussion.

Aspect	Agreement
Main contact person	
Communication channel	<input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> online meetings <input type="checkbox"/> messaging
Frequency	<input type="checkbox"/> weekly <input type="checkbox"/> monthly <input type="checkbox"/> ad-hoc
Working language	<input type="checkbox"/> EN <input type="checkbox"/> FR <input type="checkbox"/> RO
Decision validation	

Quick alignment check

- We agree on what information or inputs are required to move to the next phase
- Responsibilities for providing this information are clear
- We have a shared understanding of what short-term progress looks like (next 1–3 months)
- We agree on at least one concrete outcome to be achieved in the next phase

Notes / clarifications (optional):

.....

.....

.....



Module 3 – Identifying innovation and collaboration needs

Objective

Support SMEs in clearly articulating **what they need**, not only what they offer.

What users do in this module

Users:

- assess internal gaps and constraints;
- prioritise innovation and market needs;
- translate needs into **clear collaboration topics**.

This module is essential for **meaningful matchmaking**.

Tool 3.1 – Innovation needs self-assessment matrix

Introduction and context

Successful collaboration and market access initiatives start with a clear understanding of **internal gaps and constraints**. SMEs often focus on presenting solutions, while real progress depends on accurately identifying the challenges that require external partners, new markets or additional resources.

This tool helps users systematically assess their **innovation and growth needs** across key areas relevant to sustainable innovation and international cooperation. By scoring each area, users can prioritise the most critical needs and focus matchmaking and partnership discussions on concrete, actionable topics.



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The matrix supports more targeted collaboration and reduces the risk of unfocused or mismatched partnerships.

How to use

Score each area from 1 (low importance or low gap) to 5 (high importance or significant gap). Briefly explain each score and identify the single most important need that should guide your collaboration efforts.

Table with 3 columns: Area, Score, Short explanation. Rows include Technology gap, Market access barrier, Skills / capacity gap, and Financing / scaling gap.

Top priority need:

Three horizontal dotted lines for writing the top priority need.

Tool 3.2 – Collaboration readiness scorecard

Introduction and context

After an initial positive exchange, many potential collaborations fail to progress due to unclear communication responsibilities, irregular follow-up or ambiguous decision-making processes. Establishing basic communication and coordination rules early helps partners maintain momentum and build trust.





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This section supports partners in agreeing on practical working arrangements that structure communication, clarify responsibilities and define how decisions are validated. It is designed to keep collaboration efficient and predictable, especially in cross-border Euromed contexts.

How to use

After the first serious discussion, jointly agree on the aspects listed below and record them. Use this as a reference for ongoing communication and coordination throughout the collaboration.

1. Answer the following questions

- I can clearly explain my need
I am open to joint development
I can allocate time/resources
I accept shared risk

Readiness level: Low Medium High

2. What concrete outcome do I expect from this collaboration in the short term (e.g. pilot, agreement, market test)?

Dotted lines for writing response to question 2

3. What assumptions am I currently making about my partner that should be clarified early to avoid misunderstandings?

Dotted lines for writing response to question 3



Module 4 – Market access strategy for Euromed countries

Objective

Enable SMEs to design **realistic and low-risk market entry strategies**.

What users do in this module

Users:

- choose an appropriate entry mode;
- assess risks and constraints;
- decide whether to proceed, adapt or stop.

South Med context reminder – market entry considerations

When preparing market entry strategies for South Mediterranean countries, SMEs should take into account the following contextual aspects:

- **Regulatory timelines** may be longer and less predictable than in EU markets. Formal approvals, permits or certifications can require additional time and follow-up.
- **Decision-making often combines formal and informal processes.** Even when procedures are defined, personal trust and repeated interaction play a key role in advancing discussions.
- **Public–private interaction is frequent**, particularly in sectors such as energy, infrastructure and sustainability. Market entry strategies may need to consider engagement with public institutions, agencies or state-linked entities alongside private partners.

This context should be reflected when defining entry mode, timelines, risks and mitigation measures in the Market Entry Strategy Canvas.



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Tool 4.1 – Euromed market entry strategy canvas

Introduction and context

Entering a new market in the Euro-Mediterranean region involves multiple strategic choices related to customers, partners, risks and operational constraints. Without a structured approach, market entry efforts can be fragmented and expose SMEs to unnecessary risk.

This canvas helps users consolidate the key elements of a **realistic and coherent market entry strategy** into a single, easy-to-use framework. It supports informed decision-making by linking market selection, entry mode and value proposition with an explicit assessment of risks and mitigation measures.

The tool is particularly useful when preparing for pilot projects, partnership discussions or internal decision-making related to Euromed market access.

How to use

Complete each section of the canvas by focusing on one target country or region. Use the completed canvas to discuss, validate and refine your market entry approach with partners or internal stakeholders.

Element	Description
Target country / region	
Target customer	
Entry mode	<input type="checkbox"/> partner <input type="checkbox"/> distributor <input type="checkbox"/> pilot
Value proposition	
Key risks	
Risk mitigation	





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What specific assumption about this market or customer would most critically affect the success of this entry strategy if proven wrong?

.....

.....

.....

What would be the lowest-risk way to test this market entry approach before committing significant resources?

.....

.....

.....

Tool 4.2 – Go / No-Go decision tool

Introduction and context

Not all market entry or collaboration opportunities should be pursued immediately. In the Euromed context, moving forward without sufficient validation of market demand, partner reliability or internal capacity can lead to inefficient use of resources and stalled initiatives.

This tool supports a **structured and objective decision-making process** by helping users assess whether the key preconditions for market entry or pilot implementation are in place. It encourages realistic reflection before committing time, budget and organisational resources.

The Go / No-Go decision tool is particularly useful after initial partner discussions and before launching pilot projects, formal partnerships or significant market entry efforts.





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How to use

Review each statement and answer honestly. Proceed only if at least four conditions are met. Based on the outcome, decide whether to move forward (GO), adjust the approach (ADAPT) or pause the initiative (NO-GO).

1. Proceed only if at least 4 answers are YES:

- Market need validated
Partner identified
Risks manageable
Internal capacity available
Financial exposure acceptable

Decision: GO ADAPT NO-GO

2. If this decision turns out to be wrong, which assumption (market, partner, capacity or cost) is most likely to be the cause?

Dotted lines for handwritten answer to question 2.

3. What specific change would most quickly move this decision from ADAPT or NO-GO to GO?

Dotted lines for handwritten answer to question 3.



Module 5 – Sustainable and AI-enabled business models

Objective

Support the development of **scalable and sustainability-driven business models**.

What users do in this module

Users:

- define their sustainability value proposition;
- integrate AI where it adds real value;
- align impact with revenue logic.

**AI should only be included where it clearly adds value.*

Tool 5.1 – Cleantech business model canvas

Introduction and context

Sustainable and cleantech solutions generate impact only when they are embedded in a **viable business model**. Many initiatives struggle not because the technology is weak, but because the link between the problem, the solution, sustainability impact and revenue logic is not clearly articulated.

This simplified business model canvas helps users structure the core elements of a **market-oriented and sustainability-driven business model**. It is designed to support SMEs in clarifying how their solution creates value for customers, delivers environmental benefits and generates revenue, while also identifying the key partners required for implementation.

The tool is particularly useful when preparing pilot projects, partnership discussions, funding applications or internal strategy decisions.



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How to use

Complete each block of the canvas by focusing on one concrete solution or project idea. Keep descriptions short and clear. Use the completed canvas to test the coherence of your business model and to communicate it effectively to partners, investors or other stakeholders.

Topic	Content
Problem addressed	
Solution	
Sustainability benefit	
Role of AI (if any)	
Customers	
Revenue logic	
Key partners	

1. I have identified which element of this business model is the weakest or most uncertain at this stage:

- Problem definition
- Solution maturity
- Sustainability benefit
- Customer willingness to pay
- Revenue logic
- Partner dependency



2. If the solution succeeds technically but fails commercially, the most likely cause would be:

- Insufficient customer demand
- Inadequate value proposition
- Pricing or revenue model issues
- High implementation or scaling costs
- Weak market access or distribution
- Misalignment with partner capabilities

Tool 5.2 – Sustainability & impact KPIs

Introduction and context

Demonstrating sustainability and impact is essential for credible partnerships, pilot projects and funding applications in the Euromed context. However, impact is often described in general terms, without clear indicators that can be measured or monitored over time.

This tool helps users select a **small and relevant set of key performance indicators (KPIs)** that reflect both environmental and business impact. Focusing on a limited number of indicators improves clarity, supports monitoring and aligns project outcomes with the expectations of partners, investors and public funding programmes.

The tool is particularly useful when preparing pilot projects, impact reporting or funding applications.

How to use

Select three to five indicators that best reflect the expected impact of your project. Choose indicators that are realistic to measure and relevant to your target market and stakeholders.



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1. Select 3–5 indicators relevant to your project:

- CO₂ reduction
- Energy efficiency
- Cost savings for clients
- Jobs created
- Digital efficiency gains

2. The selected KPIs are primarily intended to demonstrate impact to:

- Business partners
- Customers / end users
- Investors
- Public authorities / funding bodies
- Internal management / strategy purposes

3. The selected KPIs can realistically be measured during the pilot or early implementation phase using:

- Existing internal data
- Simple operational measurements
- Customer or partner reporting
- Estimates or proxies (initial phase)
- External monitoring or expert support





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Module 6 – From matchmaking to partnerships and pilot projects

Objective

Ensure matchmaking activities lead to **concrete, documented outcomes**.

What users do in this module

Users:

- structure meetings around objectives;
- formalise cooperation;
- prepare pilot projects.

South Med context reminder – partnership formalisation

In EU–South Med collaborations, the transition from meetings to formal partnerships often follows a different rhythm than in purely EU-based contexts:

- **Trust-building precedes formal commitment.** Multiple interactions may be needed before signing LOIs or MOUs.
- **Informal alignment is often a prerequisite** to formal documents. Verbal agreements and shared understanding should be consolidated before drafting written commitments.
- **Roles between public and private actors may overlap**, especially in pilot projects linked to energy transition or industrial innovation. Clarifying mandates and decision authority early helps avoid delays.

Users are encouraged to view LOIs, MOUs and pilot concept notes as **living instruments** that structure cooperation while allowing flexibility for contextual adaptation.



Tool 6.1 – LOI / MOU practical checklist

Introduction and context

Letters of Intent (LOIs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) are important instruments for formalising cooperation in the early stages of cross-border collaboration. When these documents are prepared without sufficient clarity, they may create false expectations or fail to support effective follow-up.

This checklist helps users verify that the **essential elements of a preliminary cooperation agreement** are in place before signing. It supports clear understanding between partners and increases the likelihood that cooperation moves forward toward concrete activities such as pilot projects or joint funding applications.

The tool is particularly useful after successful matchmaking discussions and before formalising collaboration.

How to use

Before signing an LOI or MOU, review each item in the checklist and confirm that all key aspects have been discussed and agreed with the partner. Use the checklist as a final validation step to ensure alignment and readiness for cooperation.

1. Before signing, confirm:

- Objective defined
- Roles agreed
- Timeline clear
- Confidentiality addressed
- Follow-up assigned

2. The main purpose of this LOI / MOU at this stage is to:

- Formalise mutual interest
- Prepare a pilot project
- Support a funding application



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- Test cooperation before commitment
- Provide internal or institutional validation

3. After signing this LOI / MOU, the next concrete step is expected to be:

- A follow-up technical meeting
- Definition of a pilot project
- Preparation of a funding proposal
- Market or feasibility testing
- Formal contract negotiation

4. What would need to happen for this LOI / MOU to evolve into a long-term and operational partnership?

.....

.....

.....

Tool 6.2 – Pilot project concept note

Introduction and context

Pilot projects are a key mechanism for testing collaboration, validating solutions and reducing risk before full-scale implementation in the Euromed context. However, many promising ideas remain informal because they are not structured clearly enough to be discussed, evaluated or supported by partners and funders.

This short concept note helps users translate a collaboration idea into a **clear and structured pilot project outline**. It supports alignment between partners, facilitates internal decision-making and serves as a basis for further development, including funding applications or formal agreements.





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The tool is particularly useful immediately after matchmaking activities, when there is interest in moving from discussion to experimentation.

How to use

Complete the concept note by focusing on one concrete pilot idea. Keep descriptions concise and outcome-oriented. Use the completed note as a discussion document with partners to validate scope, roles and expected results.

Title:

.....
.....
.....

Partners:

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Problem addressed:

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Proposed solution:

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Duration:

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.....
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Expected results:

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.....
.....



Module 7 – Financing sustainable innovation

Objective

Improve SMEs' capacity to **identify and access funding**.

What users do in this module

Users:

- map funding sources;
- assess readiness;
- prepare the next steps.

Tool 7.1 – Funding opportunity mapping

Introduction and context

Access to appropriate financing is a critical factor for transforming collaboration ideas and pilot projects into scalable solutions. In the Euromed context, funding opportunities are diverse but often fragmented across EU, national and private sources, making it difficult for SMEs to identify the most relevant options.

This tool helps users systematically map and compare **potential funding sources** based on their relevance and strategic fit with the project or business idea. By structuring funding options in a single overview, users can prioritise realistic opportunities and avoid spending time on poorly aligned programmes or investors.

The tool is particularly useful after defining a pilot project or market entry strategy and before engaging in funding applications or investor discussions.



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How to use

List potential EU, national and private funding sources and briefly assess their fit with your project. Use the mapping to prioritise the most promising options and plan next steps for engagement or application.

Source	Programme / investor	Fit
EU		
National		
Private		

1. The funding sources identified are primarily suitable for:

- Early-stage exploration or feasibility
- Pilot project implementation
- Market entry or scaling
- Technology development or validation
- Organisational capacity building

2. The main criteria used to assess the “fit” of funding sources were:

- Alignment with project objectives
- Eligibility requirements
- Funding size and co-financing needs
- Application complexity and timeline
- Strategic value (visibility, partnerships, credibility)





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3. Which funding source appears most realistic in the short term, and what is the first concrete step needed to pursue it?

.....
.....
.....

Tool 7.2 – Funding readiness self-assessment

Introduction and context

Identifying funding opportunities is not sufficient if a project is not yet ready to be financed. Many applications and investor discussions fail because key elements such as project clarity, partnerships or impact definition are not sufficiently developed.

This self-assessment tool helps users evaluate their **level of readiness to pursue funding**, based on essential criteria commonly required by public programmes and private investors. It supports realistic planning and helps determine whether further preparation is needed before engaging in funding processes.

The tool is particularly useful before submitting funding applications or approaching investors.

How to use

Review each statement and mark those that apply to your project. Based on the overall assessment, determine your funding readiness level (Low, Medium or High) and identify areas requiring further preparation.

- Clear project concept
 - Partners identified
 - Budget estimated
 - Impact defined
- Readiness: Low Medium High



Module 8 – Monitoring impact and sustaining collaboration

Objective

Support **long-term cooperation and impact** beyond the project duration.

What users do in this module

Users:

- monitor progress;
- plan follow-up actions;
- sustain collaboration.

Tool 8.1 – Collaboration monitoring dashboard

Introduction and context

Sustaining collaboration requires regular monitoring of progress and outcomes. In cross-border Euromed initiatives, partnerships can lose momentum if follow-up actions are not tracked and responsibilities are not clearly monitored over time.

This dashboard provides a simple overview of the **key milestones of a collaboration**, from initial meetings to partnership formalisation, pilot implementation and funding applications. It helps users maintain visibility on progress, identify delays early and support structured follow-up.

The tool is particularly useful during the follow-up phase of projects and partnerships.



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How to use

Update the dashboard regularly by recording the current status of each indicator. Use it as a shared reference during internal reviews or coordination meetings with partners.

Indicator	Status
Meetings held	
Partnership signed	
Pilot launched	
Funding applied	

1. Based on the current dashboard status, the collaboration is primarily in the phase of:

- Initial exploration and relationship building
- Formalisation of partnership
- Pilot implementation
- Funding preparation or application
- Scaling or market expansion

2. The main factor currently limiting progress is related to:

- Partner availability or commitment
- Technical or operational challenges
- Financial or funding constraints
- Decision-making or governance delays
- External factors (regulation, market conditions)

3. What specific action, if taken in the next 30–60 days, would most significantly improve the progress of this collaboration?

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Tool 8.2 – Post-project sustainability action plan

Introduction and context

The end of a project or mission does not automatically ensure the continuation of collaboration. Without a clear plan for follow-up actions, promising partnerships and pilot initiatives risk losing momentum once formal project activities conclude.

This action plan helps users structure **concrete post-project steps** to sustain collaboration, advance market access and support scaling. By assigning responsibilities and timelines, it ensures accountability and supports the long-term sustainability of Euromed partnerships.

The tool is particularly useful at the end of a project, mission or pilot phase.

How to use

Define the key follow-up actions required after the project or mission, assign responsible persons and set realistic timelines. Review and update the plan regularly to ensure continued progress.

Action	Responsible	Timeline
Next meeting		
Funding application		
Market expansion		

1. The actions defined in this plan are primarily aimed at:

- Maintaining partner engagement
- Advancing a pilot project toward implementation
- Preparing or submitting a funding application
- Entering or expanding into a new market
- Scaling an existing solution or partnership





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2. Responsibility for sustaining this collaboration after the project lies mainly with:

- One lead organisation
- A joint coordination mechanism
- A designated project manager
- An external facilitator or cluster organisation
- Multiple partners with shared responsibility

3. What risk could most realistically threaten the continuation of this collaboration, and how can it be mitigated in the next phase?

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4. How clusters can use this Toolkit

Cluster managers as facilitators of collaboration

Cluster managers play a key role in translating the Toolkit into **structured support for member organisations**. Rather than acting as passive disseminators, cluster managers can use the Toolkit to:

- guide SMEs in selecting the most relevant tools based on their maturity and objectives;
- facilitate preparation for matchmaking events, missions and B2B meetings;
- moderate follow-up discussions using the monitoring and action planning tools;
- help align expectations between SMEs, research organisations and public stakeholders.

In this role, the Toolkit functions as a **shared working framework**, enabling cluster managers to structure dialogue, reduce ambiguity and accelerate collaboration outcomes.

Integration into cluster services and activities

The Toolkit can be directly integrated into existing cluster services, without requiring additional infrastructure or complex adaptation. Typical integration points include:

- **internationalisation services**: preparing SMEs for market entry, missions and cross-border partnerships;
- **innovation and sustainability support**: structuring pilot projects, sustainability KPIs and AI-enabled solutions;
- **business development and funding support**: guiding SMEs through partnership formalisation and funding readiness;



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- **training and capacity-building activities:** using selected tools in workshops, bootcamps or mentoring sessions.

By embedding the Toolkit into routine services, clusters increase consistency in support delivery and ensure that SMEs adopt a **common language and structured approach** to collaboration and market access.

Reuse beyond the project lifecycle

The Toolkit is designed as a **living resource** that remains relevant after the project ends. Clusters can reuse and adapt it by:

- applying the tools in future missions, matchmaking events and cooperation programmes;
- updating examples or references while keeping the core structure unchanged;
- using the Toolkit as a baseline for new EU-funded or regional projects;
- sharing it with new members as part of onboarding or internationalisation support.

This reuse potential supports **long-term sustainability**, strengthens cluster institutional capacity and contributes to the reinforcement of Euromed innovation ecosystems beyond the project timeframe.





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5. Expected impact

By applying the Common Euromed Toolkit, SMEs and other stakeholders are expected to achieve **tangible and measurable improvements** in their capacity to collaborate, innovate and access markets across the Euro-Mediterranean region.

At project level, the Toolkit supports the achievement of measurable outcomes, including increased partnership formalisation, pilot project initiation, and funding readiness among participating SMEs, contributing directly to the project's performance indicators

First, the Toolkit contributes to **improved SME readiness for EU–South Med cooperation** by providing clear structures, shared language and practical tools that reduce uncertainty and lower entry barriers. SMEs gain greater confidence in engaging in cross-border discussions, clarifying their needs, positioning themselves within value chains and preparing for collaboration in a structured way.

Second, the Toolkit supports a **higher conversion rate from matchmaking and networking activities into concrete partnerships**. By guiding users from initial contacts to LOIs, MOUs and pilot project concepts, it reduces the risk that meetings remain informal or disconnected from follow-up actions.

Third, the Toolkit leads to **stronger and more coherent pilot projects**, as collaboration ideas are systematically structured around clear objectives, defined roles, realistic market entry strategies and measurable sustainability and impact indicators. This improves the quality, credibility and feasibility of pilot initiatives developed in the Euromed context.

Fourth, the Toolkit increases the **readiness and relevance of funding applications**, helping users identify suitable funding sources, assess their preparedness and align project concepts with the expectations of public programmes and private investors. This contributes to a higher likelihood of successful applications and more efficient use of resources.

Finally, by encouraging sustained collaboration, structured follow-up and long-term planning, the Toolkit contributes to the **reinforcement of Euromed sustainable innovation value chains**. It supports stronger links between EU and South Mediterranean actors, promotes the diffusion of sustainable and AI-enabled solutions, and fosters resilient, cross-border ecosystems capable of generating lasting economic and environmental impact.

