Project Description

Preserving and Sustainably Governing Cultural Heritage and Landscapes in European Coastal and Maritime Regions (PERICLES)

Alyne E. Delaney[1]

1 *Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark*

Corresponding author: Alyne E. Delaney (ad@ifm.aau.dk)

PERICLES is an ongoing H2020 EU research project on European coastal and maritime cultural heritage and landscapes. PERICLES is only one of the most recent projects which has arisen from the European Union's recent focus – at all levels of institutions including the European Commission, and the European Parliament, in collaboration with such outside groups as UNESCO and the Council of Europe on cultural heritage, culminating in the European Year of Cultural Heritage—on cultural heritage.

PERICLES is unique not only for its focus on coastal and maritime cultural heritage (CMCH), but also due to its focus on intangible as well as tangible heritage. Historically, the focus on heritage in Europe has been on tangible heritage—structures, buildings, boats, etc. – without much work conducted on the intangible. With that in mind, PERICLES researchers have put special emphasis on "the intangible," on coastal and maritime related skills and knowledge, such as stone fence building on islands, traditional boat building for unique coastal environments, language and songs, etc., to go hand in hand with our work on tangible heritage (ports, boats, etc.).

The aim of PERICLES is to promote sustainable, participatory governance of cultural heritage in European coastal and maritime regions through its unique interdisciplinary and geographically wide-ranging approach. The project combines expertise from the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences, as well as from heritage practitioners. The case regions are spread throughout Europe—from Estonia to Denmark and the Netherlands, to Scotland and Ireland, to France and Portugal, to Malta and the Aegean Sea. The project aims to develop a comprehensive framework to understand, preserve and utilize maritime cultural heritage for societal good.

The PERICLES view is that cultural heritage provides a sense of place, unity, and belonging. Rooted in specific landscapes, seascapes, buildings, stories, traditions, language, and cultural practices, cultural heritage is a fundamental part of every society. It connects people to each other and to the past and helps guide the future. Like culture, cultural heritage is not static, but rather, is constantly evolving.

Protection and advocacy for cultural heritage can strengthen identity and local society, thereby improving overall quality of life. Culture and heritage are essential in maintaining and building Europe's economic, social, cultural and natural capital. Realising the potential of cultural heritage in these terms can generate prosperity, bring new jobs, enhance communities and improve environments in ways comparable to Blue Growth initiatives.

Yet coastal cultural landscapes face risks from climate change, pollution, urbanisation, mass tourism, demographic challenges in remote regions, the fundamental transformation of the European fishing industry, neglect, and inconsistent policies of sea and shore conservation across governance scales and between regions.

We can see that great challenges are faced in the ongoing effort to sustainably govern cultural heritage in European coastal and maritime regions. In order to meet these challenges, PERICLES is:

1. developing an in-depth, situated understanding of the cultural heritage of marine and coastal land/seascapes, including knowledge across local, spatial, environmental, social and economic aspects, the results of which are *in press*;
2. developing practical tools, based on stakeholder involvement and participatory governance, for mapping, assessing and mitigating risks to cultural heritage and to enhance sustainable growth and increase employment by harnessing cultural heritage assets;
3. providing policy advice to improve integration of cultural heritage in key marine and environmental poli-

cies and the implementation of associated EU directives; and

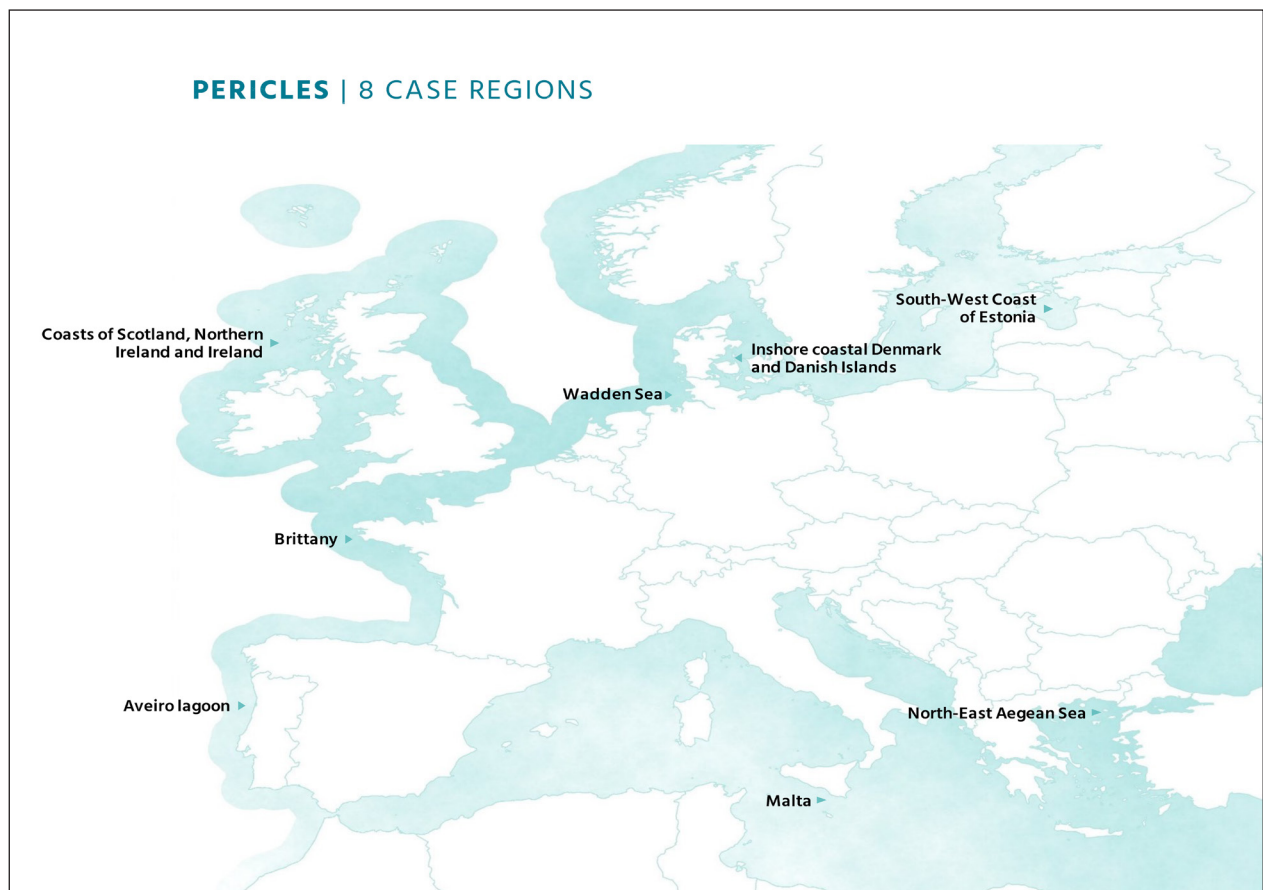4. developing effective knowledge exchange networks.

Key for the success of the project will be our application of a range of participatory, deliberative and action research methods from the social sciences and arts directly involving decision-makers, stakeholders and the public. Innovative aspects include an interactive, on-line, cultural heritage mapping portal (to be on-line in December 2019 at mapyourheritage.eu), cross-cultural heritage stakeholder networks, and focus on providing evidence on how to link European coastal and maritime environmental policies with cultural ones.

The project (ending autumn of 2021) is currently in its middle phase with great emphasis on activities and events in our case study areas where we are, for example, filming heritage in Estonia, co-producing CH knowledge with schoolchildren in Denmark, conducting workshops in France where local stakeholders list and prioritize tangible CH for preservation, inves-

tigating pesca (fishing) tourism in Portugal, and including schoolchildren in art projects on fishing culture in the Aegean.

Our dedicated partners include: Aalborg University (Project Coordinator) (Denmark), The National Heritage Board of Estonia, Wageningen University (the Netherlands), the Scottish Association for Marine Science, the University of Highlands and Islands (Scotland), Queen's University Belfast (N. Ireland), University of York (England), the University of Brest (France), the Regional Natural Park of the Gulf of Morbihan (France), the University of Aveiro (Portugal) and the Hellenic Fisheries Research Institute (Greece).

More information on the project can be found on our main website https://www.pericles-heritage.eu/ as well as other sites such as our regional, Greek one (https://pericles.inale.gr/), and on social media such as Twitter @PericlesProject and Facebook @Pericles – Maritime Cultural Heritage Horizon 2020 Project. Please join us in mapping CMCH on our cultural heritage mapping portal: http://www.mapyourheritage.eu.

PERICLES | 8 CASE REGIONS

South-West Coast of Estonia

Coasts of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland

Inshore coastal Denmark and Danish Islands

Wadden Sea

Brittany

Aveiro lagoon

North-East Aegean Sea

Malta

Map of Case Regions and case demo activity areas