Information Urbanistic Perspective in the Context of Blue Economy: Analysis of Setúbal and Cartagena Tourism Offer

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ABSTRACT

This article describes how the subject of the blue economy is currently on the political agenda of the European Union. Its strategic scope seeks to involve the various economic stakeholders whose activities are centered on the sea. From tourism to the exploitation of marine resources, economic operators should develop their activities in an integrated way and with a close respect for the sustainability of natural resources. The present article analyzes the level of integration of the economic activities, public and private, through the evaluation of the sites of the main stakeholders in tourism area, establishing a comparison between two important Portuguese and Spanish cities. Assuming that in the current information society, particularly in tourism, the competitiveness of economic activities is conditioned by the availability of integrated information among the various players, it is important to adopt appropriate models to share information and activities because this is an important critical success factor to the economic development of regions.

KEYWORDS

Blue Economy, Information, Information Systems, Information Systems Urbanism, Knowledge, Tourism, Tourism Value Cycle

INTRODUCTION

The subject of the blue economy emerged recently in the scope of the European Commission. With its base in the ecological concerns at the world-wide level, establishing connection between oceans and green economy of the Rio+20 (Silver et al., 2015), the strategies in the scope of the blue economy aim to support the sustainable growth of the marine and maritime sectors, recognizing the importance of the seas and oceans while the motor of economy. Development (i.e., Rio +20), we show how the term entered into use and how it was articulated within four competing discourses regarding human–ocean relations: (a) oceans as natural capital, (b) oceans as good business, (c) oceans as small island developing states, and (d) oceans as small-scale fisheries livelihoods (Silver et al., 2015).

These subject results in the illicit growth of numerous and varied pollutant factors in all the ecosystems and of a collective conscience, frequent assumed through fights of the civil society, for a sustainable development of the humanity through economy greener, bluer and of cleaner technologies.

DOI: 10.4018/IJSKD.2017070104

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This process, generically assumed for the general society, has been a process also strongly supported by the scientific community, in the direction of the search and presentation of trustworthy arguments. This green economy, based on the green energy, green technologies, green businesses and green industries, has come to evolve for the blue economy (Bogdan et al., 2013), in a clear assumption of the importance and relevance of the blue ecosystem balance, marine and maritime, in the natural global system.

The recent economic crisis has come to highlight the importance of sustainability as an essential factor for the progress and well-being of society. This sustainability must be defined on the basis of a balanced dynamics in the use of resources and in the relationship coherent with environmental specificities.

Generally, sustainability must necessarily pass through the existence of a social conscience, respecting three basic principles: the identification and understanding of environmental values, the respect for the specificity and balance of ecosystems and the protection of nature of the relations established with the environment. These are essential factors to ensure sustainability, whatever system or its nature. Without a sustainability perspective economy can’t function continuously (Pauli, 2010).

It is therefore with this sense that the European Union itself has been to support the development of economic activities in this area, having recently released «Blue Growth» strategy that develops around the sea (EC, 2016).

The main objective of this strategy aims to support, in a long-term perspective, a sustainable growth of all marine and maritime sectors, recognizing the importance of the seas and oceans as motors of the European economy with great potential for innovation and growth.

The Blue Growth strategy consists of three components (Johnston, 2016, Kraemer et al., 2017): specific measures of the integrated maritime policy, strategies for sustainable growth taking into account local factors and specific actions in the areas of aquaculture, coastal tourism, marine biotechnology, oceanic energy and mining of seabed. Therefore, we see the need to take action to stimulate the blue growth economy, for this we need to preserve the blue ecosystem to develop a sustainable economy of the sea, while significantly reducing environmental risks (Everest-Phillips, 2014).

The monitoring of these growth strategies will give added value to the economic activities involved, resulting in an efficient value chain of products and services related to the sea that offer direct and indirect employment opportunities. In this sense, we will be able to promote social growth by creating a favorable environment for workers and users associated with maritime activities, not only as mere users, but also as administrators of their resources.

The «blue growth» aims to contribute to the integrated maritime policy for an intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth. Growth will be intelligent if it is carried out with the use of all natural potential in getting the value that the marine and maritime ecosystem offers; it will be sustained if it is carried out without waste and with a view to respect for ecosystems, their rules and natural cycles; and it will be included if you can integrate the interests of all stakeholders involved, in line with the nature of the respective ecosystems. It is in the balance of these three dimensions and in the identification of a management model that emerges the great political and economic challenge of society and its agents.

The European Union’s contribution to the economy through this strategy poses a major challenge in the field of the organization of economic agents, the integration of their respective activities and the provision of information to the generic public. This intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth is only possible from a systemic and strategic perspective on the economy, its resources, its agents and its relations with the surrounding environment. As is the case of maritime transport that has often been addressed by important policy initiatives such as the European Union Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) and the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal region of the Mediterranean. (Niavis et al., 2015).
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