



VI Congress - Conclusions

The VI European Congress of Places with Marina and Leisure Harbors, held in Funchal, on May 16 and 17, 2008, was centered around discussion of the problems and opportunities of "Innovation in the promotion of territorial development" and of "Public and private partnerships in bolstering the competitive position of port areas". Nowadays, these themes are considered major instruments in the definition and application of public policies associated with the management and sustainable development of riverside zones and port areas, leading participants to the strengthened perception that, in light of the strong dynamics of change and modernity in today's world, there is a need for territories to engage in new interfacing and complementary models.

The participants in this Congress, and especially the AEMA members, whose interest is based on contributing to a deeper individual and collective knowledge of experiences gathered in managing territories, and in recognizing the importance of the exchange of ideas, studies and other work-related initiatives, understand that:

1. Increasingly rapid changes in current social, economic and technological spheres, not only entail new responsibilities but also provide increasing opportunities in the way public authorities need to act to attract new residents, as well as those visitor segments that best correspond to their interests and to higher value-added products on a local level;
2. Bearing in mind the pitfalls connected with sustainable development, and the concepts of any territory's capacity to cater for demands, we have to ensure a large measure of rationality and selection in the options applied to the development and promotion of territories;
3. Banking on segmented marketing and communication campaigns in relation to desirable target-clients, especially in cooperation between city networks, provides important ways to work in the future;
4. In this respect, the use of cutting-edge and innovative promotional and communicational tools constitute instruments in which it is important to invest resources in order to achieve their development and practical application;
5. Furthermore, in light of the increased demands and responsibilities with which local authorities are confronted today, as well as the growing scarcity of resources, it is likewise increasingly essential to adopt principles of rationality in the definition of priorities when deciding on which public investments to implement;
6. It is also important to be aware and to prepare in a very rational manner to draw on a broad range of funding sources, namely of private funds which, ensuring those same public interests and priorities, are available for the execution of projects of public-private interest;
7. It is also recognized that interesting solutions of great value-added for territories can result from the committed and regulated merger of those financing mechanisms and the management of works of strategic and structural interest, which it is important to study and attract in line with the public and private interests involved;
8. The attraction of other sources of investment, namely of private funds, cannot however be allowed to cause inefficiencies for public interests, with it always being essential to be prudent and to protect the economic, social and environmental interests of society as a whole;
9. Without prejudicing rapid and pragmatic decisions on the assessment, assembly and development of major projects for the regeneration and upgrade of maritime fronts and port areas, when making such decisions, these must always be extremely well-founded and prudent in assessing the medium and long term impact on the economic and social fabric of the territories concerned.

In light of the foregoing, these are the conclusions that will be diligently applied and presented by the participants to regional, national and European authorities linked to territorial-development planning and promotion processes, since they reflect and convey a desire of the AEMA Association's affirmation per se, in favor of a more sustainable development of its territories.