

Advanced Specialised Course on Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities

4 May – 10 July 2026

CIHEAM BARI is launching the **seventh edition** of the advanced specialised course on the Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities, funded by the Italian Cooperation.

Objective

The course focuses on the sustainable development of coastal communities and the blue economy, promoting the integration of diverse and effective strategies for managing coastal areas, preserving cultural heritage and local practices, safeguarding environmental resources, and fostering sustainable economic growth.

At the heart of the program is a co-learning approach that unites participants, lecturers, and sectoral experts in a collaborative environment, integrating lectures, workshops, case studies, and practice sessions, offering a comprehensive and interactive learning experience.

Field visits enhance the programme by offering firsthand opportunities to observe best practices, explore applied processes and technologies, and draw inspiration to develop context-specific solutions.

Guided by lecturers and experts from international institutions, universities, research centres, development and cooperation agencies, and NGOs, this process not only facilitates knowledge exchange but also fosters lasting networks and collaborative relationships among professionals committed to sustainable development.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Acquire an integrated cross-sectoral approach to support local strategies for the sustainable development of coastal communities, in line with international frameworks.
- Apply good practices for managing sustainable coastal activities, including responsible fishing, aquaculture, food security, value chains and value addition, coastal tourism, integrated agriculture, ecosystem management, circular-economy approaches, and other innovative solutions.
- Contribute to resilient and diversified coastal economies by promoting nature-based solutions, innovative practices, youth-driven initiatives, and inclusive community participation.
- Build and activate institutional and professional networks that foster regional and international cooperation, knowledge exchange, and policy development for sustainable coastal management.

16 TARGET COUNTRIES

Albania, Congo-Brazaville, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Vietnam.

LOCATION:

CIHEAM Bari | Tricase Office, Lecce, Italy

DURATION:

10 WEEKS, from 4 May to 10 July 2026

LANGUAGE:

English

DIPLOMA

CIHEAM Bari Certificate of Attendance - 12 ECTS¹

BENEFICIARIES & ADMISSION PROCEDURES

The course is designed for officials from key Ministries including agriculture, fisheries, foreign affairs and international cooperation, economy, engineering, environment, and social policies. It is also open to technicians, researchers, agents, and experts from national agencies, research institutes, and other governmental bodies involved in the planning, management, and policy making for coastal areas.

Candidates must hold a university degree in the domains above and possess a good command of the English language (B1 at least).

Eligible candidates may include:

- National administration officials, mid-level managers, technical staff, field personnel, researchers, and experts engaged in the sustainable planning and development of coastal zones;
- Planners, policymakers, and programme managers addressing the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of coastal communities.

Candidates should be nominated by the relevant line Minister or government bodies responsible for the above areas. Minimal required experience in the domain is 5 years.

The list of nominees should be transmitted to CIHEAM Bari officially through the Italian Embassy of each country.

Nominees are required to submit their applications, along with CV, supporting documents and contact details to the following e-mail address: didattica@iamb.it no later than **15 February 2026**. The e-mail message, having as object “application for SDCC 2026 course”, should include the following mandatory annexes:

- Updated CV in PDF Europass format,
- Official nomination letter signed by the Minister / Head of governmental body,
- University Degree certificate,
- Certificate of professional experience, indicating the number of years of expertise in the

¹ The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a standardized framework used across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to facilitate the recognition of academic qualifications and periods of study. It allows students to accumulate and transfer credits between institutions.

- required domain, issued by the authorized office,
- Contact details (e-mail address, phone number),
- Personal data treatment form duly signed.

Nominees will be selected through a rigorous selection process, which includes an oral interview.

Admitted participants will benefit from full scholarships covering all course-related expenses, including travel, board and lodging, insurance, and pocket money.

COURSE PROGRAMME 2026

- **Unit A. Core principles of sustainable coastal development**

This unit introduces the fundamental principles of sustainable coastal development, integrating economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. It presents the FAO Blue Transformation framework and key CIHEAM Bari initiatives supporting the empowerment of coastal communities. The unit emphasizes the importance of participatory governance as the foundation for inclusive and effective coastal management. The learning journey begins in Tricase Porto, where numerous local projects serve as tangible examples of integrated coastal development.

- **Unit B. Community engagement and participatory approaches**

This unit focuses on strengthening community engagement through team-building, facilitation techniques, and participatory governance tools. It introduces methods for inclusive decision-making, multi-stakeholder dialogue, and communication strategies aimed at motivating and engaging coastal communities. Participants explore practical instruments for fostering collaboration, enhancing trust, and supporting locally driven initiatives. The unit highlights the importance of bottom-up approaches as essential components of resilient, cohesive, and socially inclusive coastal development.

- **Unit C. Integrated coastal management and sustainable aquatic food systems**

This unit explores integrated strategies for coastal zone management, with particular attention to co-management models for Marine Protected Areas. Participants examine spatial planning, responsible fishing practices, and diversification opportunities for small-scale enterprises within coastal economies. A dedicated section introduces the principles of responsible aquaculture, addressing its technical, economic, environmental, and governance dimensions. The unit aims to strengthen participants' ability to connect sustainable resource use with local development opportunities.

- **Unit D. Food security, quality, processing, technology and value chains**

This unit provides a comprehensive overview of the aquatic food value chain, covering quality standards, food safety, and post-harvest technologies. The module introduces fish processing value addition, by-product utilization, traceability, certification, and market requirements to enhance competitiveness and improve local incomes. Examples from CIHEAM Bari initiatives illustrate how innovation and diversification can reinforce sustainable blue food systems.

- **Unit E. Coastal community resilience: risks, adaptation and innovation**

This unit analyses the main risks facing coastal communities, including climate change, marine

pollution, ecosystem degradation, and socio-economic vulnerability. It presents practical adaptation strategies such as nature-based solutions, regenerative agriculture, renewable energy, and circular-economy models. Participants explore how cultural heritage, community-based tourism, and youth-driven innovation can strengthen resilience and diversify livelihoods. The unit highlights how these approaches can create opportunities for inclusive and future-oriented coastal development.