



Strengthening research, innovation and knowledge transfer on Climate
Change & Tourism in Higher Education Institutions in Latin America

Final External Evaluation Report

Monica Marquina

DISCLAIMER:

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them

April 2026

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Purpose of the final external evaluation
- 1.2. Position of this report within the overall evaluation process
- 1.3. Scope of the final report

2. Methodology and sources of evidence

- 2.1. Evaluation approach
- 2.2. Fieldwork: interviews with consortium partners
- 2.3. Fieldwork: consultations with external stakeholders
- 2.4. Document review and materials analysed
- 2.5. Direct observation of project meetings
- 2.6. Use of internal evaluation as an input for the external evaluation
- 2.7. Methodological scope and limitations

3. Main findings

- 3.1. Results achieved across the Work Packages
- 3.2. Partnership dynamics and project governance
- 3.3. Project impact
- 3.4. Sustainability prospects
- 3.5. Cross-cutting reflections

4. Overall assessment of the project

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. Recommendations to enhance the longer-term impact of the project results
- 5.2. Recommendations for the sustainability of the results
- 5.3. Lessons learned and recommendations for future collaborative projects

6. Conclusion

Annexes

- Annex 1. List of interviews conducted
- Annex 2. Interview instrument for project partners
- Annex 2. Interview instrument for project partners

Executive Summary

This report presents the final external evaluation of the CLIMAR project – *Strengthening research, innovation and knowledge transfer on Climate Change & Tourism in Higher Education Institutions in Latin America*, developed within the framework of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education (CBHE) programme. The evaluation focused on the closing phase of the project and sought to provide an integrated assessment of its results, partnership dynamics, impact and sustainability prospects, while also identifying relevant lessons for future international cooperation initiatives in higher education.

The evaluation was conducted through a qualitative and triangulated approach, combining 13 semi-structured interviews with consortium partners, 7 brief consultations with external stakeholders, documentation produced by the Quality Committee, materials presented by the partners at the final meeting held in Sitges in March 2026, and direct observation of project meetings. The analysis sought to identify common patterns while preserving the nuances across actors, regions, institutional roles and levels of engagement.

Overall, the evaluation concludes that CLIMAR was a relevant, well-managed and productive project, which achieved a high degree of fulfilment of its objectives and reached its conclusion with substantial results, stable governance and a favourable basis for continuity. The project succeeded in articulating academic production, training, international cooperation and knowledge transfer around a strategic agenda at the intersection of climate change, tourism and sustainability.

Among its main results, particular mention should be made of the online professional course, the postgraduate academic module, the workshops, mobility activities, publications and the consolidation of cooperation networks among institutions in Europe and Latin America. The evidence also shows that, in several partner universities, these results have already begun to be projected into courses, seminars, diploma programmes, research lines, publications, curriculum reforms and new project proposals.

The partnership dynamics show a clearly positive balance. The consortium relied on a recognisable structure, effective central coordination and a level of organisational stability that made it possible to sustain the project within a broad and heterogeneous interregional context. At the same time, the evaluation points to differences in the intensity of participation and in levels of institutional ownership, which help explain the diversity of impacts and continuity strategies across partners.

In terms of impact, CLIMAR generated clear academic and institutional effects, especially in training, capacity building, agenda-setting, curricular innovation, international cooperation and the opening of new networks. The external stakeholders consulted also expressed a positive assessment of the project, highlighting its usefulness for understanding concrete problems, informing decisions and bringing academic knowledge closer to territorial, professional and organisational challenges.

The evaluation also identifies favourable sustainability prospects. The plans presented by the partners show concrete continuity actions, including curricular integration, lifelong learning provision, new research initiatives, joint publications, academic mobility, new project proposals and thematic networks. Sustainability thus appears to be associated with an active process of institutionalisation and selective continuity, rather than with a mere formal extension of the project.

The overall assessment is therefore clearly favourable. CLIMAR can be regarded as a successful project, with relevant results, strong inter-institutional cooperation and a legacy that goes beyond the formal fulfilment of deliverables. On this basis, the report recommends concentrating future efforts in three directions: enhancing the longer-term impact of the results, consolidating sustainability through stronger institutionalisation and network activation, and drawing on useful lessons for future collaborative projects.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the final external evaluation

This report constitutes the final external evaluation of the CLIMAR project – *Strengthening research, innovation and knowledge transfer on Climate Change & Tourism in Higher Education Institutions in Latin America*, developed within the framework of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education (CBHE) programme.

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide an external and independent assessment of the project's implementation, the results achieved, the partnership dynamics, its impact and its sustainability prospects. It also seeks to formulate recommendations aimed at strengthening the use of the results produced, expanding their longer-term projection, and identifying relevant lessons for future international cooperation initiatives in higher education.

1.2. Position of this report within the overall evaluation process

This report forms part of a broader evaluation process. In February 2025, an interim external evaluation was carried out, focused mainly on the desk phase and aimed at assessing the progress of the project up to that point. That report was duly submitted to the funding body, the coordination team and the consortium partners, and fulfilled a support function for the project while it was still underway.

The present final evaluation does not replicate that earlier analysis. Its focus is on the closing phase, when the project has already completed its main trajectory and it becomes possible to assess in a more integrated manner the quality of implementation, the consistency of the results, the lessons accumulated, the level of institutional ownership achieved and the possibilities for continuity opened up by the experience.

The project also had its own internal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, particularly through the work of the Quality Committee and the satisfaction instruments administered to the partners. These inputs form part of the body of evidence analysed in this evaluation. Accordingly, this report draws on a plurality of sources and presents an external assessment built on their triangulation, while maintaining an independent evaluative judgement in relation to the project's internal mechanisms.

1.3. Scope of the final report

The scope of this final report is defined by a dual consideration. On the one hand, it responds to the Terms of Reference for the external evaluation, which require an assessment of the project results, the partnership dynamics and the impact generated on the groups and contexts linked to CLIMAR. On the other hand, it considers the specific moment at which this evaluation is being conducted: the closing of the project and the formulation of continuity strategies by the partners.

From this perspective, the report pays particular attention to four issues: 1) it examines the results achieved and their degree of consolidation, considering not only the production of deliverables but also their usefulness, appropriation and projection; 2) it analyses the working dynamics of the consortium, including aspects of structure, coordination, communication, participation and inter-institutional relations; 3) it considers the impact of the project at its different scales, both within the participating institutions and in their relations with external, territorial or sectoral stakeholders; and 4) it incorporates a specific reading of sustainability prospects, based on the documentation produced in the final stage and on the strategies presented by the partners at the closing meeting held in Sitges in March 2026.

The report is therefore constructed from a synthetic and integrative logic. It does not seek to reconstruct exhaustively every milestone of the project or to repeat the monitoring already carried out in previous stages,

but rather to offer a final assessment of its trajectory, its achievements, its main nuances and the conditions that may favour the continuity and expansion of its legacy.

2. Methodology and sources of evidence

2.1. Evaluation approach

The final evaluation of CLIMAR was conducted through a qualitative approach aimed at producing an external, objective and balanced assessment of the results achieved by the project, the partnership dynamics, its impact and its sustainability prospects. Given that this is a final phase evaluation, the analysis focused on the appraisal of results already obtained and on the conditions for continuity, rather than on the operational monitoring of project progress.

The methodological design was based on the triangulation of different sources of evidence: semi-structured interviews with actors directly involved in the project, brief consultations with external stakeholders, documentation produced by the Quality Committee, materials presented by the partners at the final project meeting, and direct observation of consortium meetings. This approach made it possible to combine retrospective information, participants' perceptions, documentary evidence and institutional projections developed at the close of the project.

2.2. Fieldwork: interviews with consortium partners

The main fieldwork corpus consisted of 13 semi-structured interviews with actors directly involved in the project, conducted as part of the field phase of the external evaluation. These interviews were carried out mainly between July and September 2025 via Zoom, with an approximate duration of 45 minutes each. In some cases, specific issues were revisited or further explored later during the final project meeting held in Sitges in March 2026.

The instrument applied to this first group of interviewees was designed to collect perceptions and evidence on several dimensions of the project: the dynamics of project development, including structure and management, internal communication, decision-making and inter-institutional relations; the quality of project progress, including progress towards results, institutional and local impact, participation of external stakeholders, integration across Work Packages and dissemination strategies; and, finally, a closing block concerning lessons learned and expectations regarding the final stage of the project. The semi-structured nature of the instrument made it possible to work from a common set of topics while at the same time adapting the conversation to the role, experience and trajectory of each interviewee within the consortium.

These interviews constituted a central source for reconstructing the project experience from within, identifying strengths and areas requiring attention, and capturing differences in perception among the coordination team, highly engaged partners, partners with more limited participation, and other relevant institutional profiles.

2.3. Fieldwork: consultations with external stakeholders

As a complement to the work with consortium partners, 7 brief consultations were conducted with external stakeholders who had participated in different CLIMAR activities. These consultations were carried out by email and/or through audio messages, depending on the availability and preferences of each participant. An effort was made to cover a range of profiles, including academic actors, representatives of the private sector, and community actors linked to the project's thematic areas.

The instrument used in this case was shorter and focused on three main issues: the relevance of an initiative such as CLIMAR at the intersection of climate change and tourism; the concrete usefulness of its results, as well as the conditions of feasibility and the limitations for applying or scaling them; and the possible impacts

of the project, together with the conditions needed to sustain them in each context. This second instrument made it possible to gather an external view of the project's relevance, applicability and projection, complementing the internal perspective of the partners.

The inclusion of these voices proved particularly valuable in assessing the extent to which CLIMAR's results were perceived as meaningful and usable beyond the consortium, and in identifying concrete conditions for adoption, support and scalability in different professional, territorial and organisational environments.

2.4. Document review and materials analysed

The evaluation also drew on a set of documentary sources produced during the implementation and closing of the project. Among these, the reports prepared by the Quality Committee were particularly relevant, especially the synthesis of the project trajectory from M1 to M30 and the evaluation and partner satisfaction report for the M30–M36 period. These documents provided systematic information on internal satisfaction, governance performance, quality of implementation and areas requiring attention as identified by the project's own monitoring mechanisms.

The analysis also incorporated the materials presented by the partners at the final project meeting, particularly the updated CLIMAR sustainability plan presented in Sitges in March 2026. These presentations offered relevant evidence on institutionalisation strategies, curricular integration, continuity of research lines, formulation of new projects, creation or consolidation of networks, provision of courses and diploma programmes, knowledge transfer, and international cooperation beyond the formal closure of the project.

The review of these documentary sources made it possible to complement the evidence obtained through interviews with more formalised institutional information and with concrete examples of continuity and projection developed by the partners at the close of the project.

2.5. Direct observation of project meetings

The evaluation also included the direct observation of two project meetings, one held virtually (Panama, 2025) and one held in person, corresponding to the final meeting in Sitges in March 2026. Observing these moments made it possible to gather additional information on the interaction dynamics among partners, the quality of exchanges, the functioning of the working spaces, the type of participation of different actors, and the way in which results and sustainability strategies were presented and discussed during the project and at the time of its closure.

This source proved especially useful for contextualising the evidence emerging from interviews and documents, as well as for appreciating more directly certain aspects of governance, consortium cohesion and the appropriation of results in the final stage.

2.6. Use of internal evaluation as an input for the external evaluation

The project had its own internal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, particularly through the work of the Quality Committee. In this final evaluation, these materials were considered a relevant source of evidence, as they made it possible to incorporate systematised information on satisfaction, governance, implementation and the project's evolution over time.

At the same time, the internal evaluation was treated as one input within a broader body of evidence, contrasted with interviews, observations and final-stage materials. The conclusions of this report therefore correspond to an independent external assessment, built on the triangulation of sources and on an autonomous evaluative judgement.

Regarding internal monitoring mechanisms, the project had a regular continuous evaluation device under the responsibility of the Quality Committee, based on the periodic administration and analysis of semi-annual

partner satisfaction surveys. This work made it possible to follow the project's evolution at different moments of implementation and to generate systematic information on core aspects of its functioning, such as governance, coordination, internal communication, meeting organisation and the development of the Work Packages. The reports corresponding to the M13–M18, M25–M30 and M30–M36 periods demonstrate the continuity of this task and its contribution to monitoring the overall progress of the project.

This monitoring function also took the form of a concrete working dynamic within the Committee itself. Meeting minutes show the review of results, the definition of responsibilities for completing and systematising surveys from different periods, the preparation of reports for the coordination team, and the recovery of other evidence related to the quality of the activities carried out. Taken together, this work helped consolidate internal mechanisms of monitoring, traceability and feedback, which strengthened project support throughout its implementation and provided a relevant basis for its evaluation in the final stage.

2.7. Methodological scope and limitations

The methodological strategy adopted made it possible to construct a dense and nuanced reading of the project in its final phase, combining internal and external perspectives, retrospective information and documentary evidence. This design was deemed appropriate for assessing complex processes of inter-institutional cooperation, appropriation of results and impact in heterogeneous contexts.

At the same time, it is important to note some limitations inherent to the exercise. First, this is a qualitative evaluation, focused on perceptions, experiences and evidence of institutionalisation or continuity rather than on the quantitative measurement of impacts. Second, the intensity of participation in the project was uneven across partners, which is also reflected in the richness and depth of some of the responses. Third, part of the information related to sustainability and future projection refers to initiatives that were still underway or in the planning phase at the time of project closure, so their definitive consolidation falls beyond the temporal scope of this evaluation. These limitations do not invalidate the findings reached, but they do help to interpret more precisely the scope of the conclusions presented.

3. Main findings

The findings presented below stem from the integrated analysis of the interviews conducted with consortium partners and external stakeholders, the documentation produced by the Quality Committee, and the materials presented by the partners at the final project meeting. Taken together, these sources make it possible to construct a consistent reading of the closing phase of CLIMAR, identifying both the project's most solid strengths and the nuances observed according to type of actor, degree of engagement and institutional context.

Overall, the evidence collected shows that CLIMAR reached its final stage with visible results, a broadly valued cooperation dynamic, and a basis for continuity that is already beginning to take shape in concrete initiatives, albeit with different levels of ownership and impact depending on institutional contexts.

3.1. Results achieved across the Work Packages

The available evidence makes it possible to state that CLIMAR reached its final phase with visible, substantial results that were widely valued by the different types of actors consulted. Both the partner interviews and the information produced by the Quality Committee converge in highlighting a high degree of satisfaction with project progress, the fulfilment of objectives and the overall quality of the outputs developed. In the final M30–M36 period, the satisfaction survey shows very high ratings across all dimensions analysed, with a shared perception of project consolidation, high implementation effectiveness and valuable results. In a similar vein, the Quality Committee's synthesis report on the M1–M30 trajectory describes an evolution

marked by institutional strengthening, operational maturity and strong alignment between planning and implementation.

Among the most widely recognised results are the training activities developed under the project, the postgraduate academic module and the online professional course. The workshops, mobility activities, publications and the activation of cooperation networks among universities in Europe and Latin America were also valued. Partner interviews show that these outputs were perceived as concrete and useful and, in several cases, as exceeding initial expectations, particularly in the field of training and in the introduction of new academic agendas related to tourism, sustainability, circular economy and climate change.

In this respect, both the partner interviews and the survey conducted among participants in the professional course point in the same direction, namely a very positive assessment of this component of the project. In the interviews, the course was repeatedly identified as one of CLIMAR's most successful and best received results. This perception is reinforced by the survey findings, which show very favourable results across all the dimensions assessed. The contents of the four modules were rated as high or very high by between 93% and 98.2% of respondents, while between 96% and 100% considered the topics addressed to be important or very important. This was accompanied by a very positive appraisal of the course methodology, rated as high or very high by 93% of participants, and of its duration, considered optimal by 87.7%. Taken together, the qualitative and survey evidence support the assessment of the professional course as one of the most successful and best received components of the project.

The external stakeholders consulted provide relevant confirmation from another angle. Their responses show that CLIMAR's results are perceived as useful tools for better understanding the relationship between tourism and climate change, reviewing practices, strengthening ongoing initiatives, informing decisions and improving intervention capacity in territorial, municipal, business or community contexts. This assessment is important because it indicates that the project outputs were also understood beyond the strictly university sphere as applicable and relevant contributions.

At the same time, the comparative analysis of the sources suggests that the different Work Packages and results achieved reached varying levels of ownership and projection across institutions. Partner interviews make it clear that the project produced a great deal, and produced it well, although each organisation's capacity to convert those outputs into embedded capacities, permanent offers or stable lines of work was uneven. Alongside the high overall appreciation, the Quality Committee itself recognises the desirability of further strengthening balanced participation and final articulation among components. Read together, this point does not diminish the value of the results but rather helps specify the contexts and conditions under which these results found stronger institutional sedimentation.

In sum, the findings support the conclusion that CLIMAR achieved substantial, relevant results with real projection potential. The project delivered recognisable academic and training outputs, generated useful resources for different audiences, and opened concrete pathways for institutionalisation in several of the participating universities. The variation observed across partners relates less to the intrinsic quality of the results than to the different institutional conditions available for appropriating, expanding and sustaining them over time.

3.2. Partnership dynamics and project governance

The governance of CLIMAR is one of the aspects most consistently valued across the body of evidence collected. Partner interviews show a predominantly positive assessment of the project's overall structure, the distribution of responsibilities and the coordination capacity exercised from the central level. This assessment is associated with the existence of a recognisable working architecture, clearly identified responsibilities by package or group, and leadership able to sustain the pace of the project, respond rapidly and support

compliance with deadlines in a broad, diverse consortium operating across very different institutional frameworks.

The Quality Committee reports reinforce this perception. Both the M1–M30 synthesis and the M30–M36 satisfaction report describe a trajectory of organisational maturity, operational stability and strong cohesion among consortium members. They highlight the high ratings received by the Project Management Team and the Steering Committee, as well as the quality of administrative and financial management and the good organisation of meetings and working spaces. This convergence between qualitative evidence and internal measurement lends strength to the conclusion that project governance was, in overall terms, effective and stable.

Internal communication shows an overall positive balance, although not without some tensions. Interviewed partners acknowledged the existence of active channels, the availability of information, access to shared materials and generally rapid operational responses to resolve doubts and sustain tasks. At the same time, some interviews —particularly among European partners— indicated that communication could at times become somewhat diffuse or difficult to manage, especially when exchanges took place through WhatsApp, given differences in working routines, schedules and time zones across the consortium. The internal survey for the final semester shows progress in communication and high levels of satisfaction with coordination. Even so, several sources suggest that the smooth functioning of these channels required constant follow-up, reminders and support. In an interregional consortium of this scale, this finding appears to describe more a management demand inherent to the project format than a problem of disorganisation.

The interviews also show that the quality of the internal dynamic was closely linked to the actual degree of engagement of the teams in each institution. Where there were active groups and committed focal points, the structure operated very effectively and made it possible to combine institutional autonomy with overall coordination. Where participation rested on only a few individuals or faced local administrative, budgetary or organisational constraints, the project continued to function, but with greater demands for support from central coordination. This difference appears repeatedly in the testimonies and helps explain why the same structure could be experienced as enabling in some cases and as more demanding in others.

The Quality Committee documentation also shows that the Committee's strategic role and visibility were strengthened significantly in the second stage of project development, which is the focus of this evaluation. At the same time, both the synthesis report and the final survey suggest that further progress could still be made in consolidating this function during the closing phase. Given the high overall level of satisfaction, this observation does not alter the positive balance of governance, but rather points to a relevant institutional lesson regarding the value of linking the quality function more closely with the dynamics of the Work Packages and with communication among partners from the outset of implementation.

Another important finding is the construction of inter-institutional relations of trust. Partner interviews underline that CLIMAR has left collaborative ties among some partners that are likely to continue after the formal closure, while the sustainability presentations offer concrete examples of this continuity in the form of co-supervised theses, co-publications, agreements, new Erasmus+ or Horizon projects, joint courses, micro-credentials, thematic networks and bilateral or multilateral cooperation among consortium universities. This relational density is one of the project's clearest assets.

Taken together, CLIMAR's partnership dynamics can be characterised as solid, functional and broadly valued. Central coordination appears as a decisive strength, and the project structure proved capable of sustaining results and cohesion over time. The nuances observed relate above all to the different possibilities for institutional ownership and to the desirability of further refining certain coordination, participation and quality mechanisms in future experiences of international cooperation.

3.3. Project impact

The evidence collected indicates that CLIMAR generated clear impacts at academic, institutional, professional and relational levels. In partner interviews, these impacts are reflected in the opening or strengthening of teaching, research and outreach lines; in the creation of courses, seminars, electives and diploma programmes; in the development of theses and publications; and in greater institutional legitimacy for working on the relationship between tourism, sustainability and climate change. In several cases, the project acted as a catalyst for pre-existing processes, helping to organise, make visible and strengthen initiatives that had previously existed in an incipient or fragmented manner.

The sustainability presentations delivered by the partners at the final meeting provide particularly robust evidence of CLIMAR's projection beyond the project's formal cycle. In universities from both participating regions, there are signs of curricular incorporation of CLIMAR modules and contents into Master's programmes, doctoral programmes, elective courses and diploma programmes; the creation of new programmes, short courses and continuing education offers aimed at students, professionals and institutional actors; the continuation of seminars; the development of research lines, groups and projects; the formulation of competitive initiatives already submitted or under preparation; and the strengthening of cooperation agreements, networks and bilateral or multilateral partnerships. In several cases, these projections are further supported by indicators, timelines, approved curricular decisions or projects submitted to calls, making it possible to observe that the project results did not remain confined to the fulfilment of deliverables but began to translate into concrete institutional uses and effective continuity strategies.

External stakeholders confirm that the project's impact is also perceived beyond the consortium. Their responses particularly emphasise CLIMAR's usefulness in providing more operational frameworks for understanding concrete problems, strengthening local strategies, supporting technical or business decisions, accompanying sustainable tourism initiatives and enriching the dialogue between academic knowledge and territorial action. The project is thus valued not only as an experience that raises awareness, but also as one that enables new ways of thinking and acting around environmental and tourism-related challenges.

A cross-cutting finding is that the most consistent impact seems to have occurred on three planes: training, institutional strengthening and network-building. In training, the project left reusable materials, courses and modules, as well as concrete experiences of capacity-building and updating. At the institutional level, it helped consolidate thematic agendas and create conditions for new academic and territorial initiatives. In terms of network-building, it opened cooperation relations that are already showing spillover effects in publications, mobility, agreements and new projects. These three dimensions reinforce one another and help explain why the overall assessment of impact is clearly favourable.

At the same time, the evidence shows that impact took different forms depending on the region, the type of partner and the institutional context. In several Latin American institutions, more concrete impacts appear in academic provision, work with territorial stakeholders, the opening of new teaching or research lines, and links with governments, communities, entrepreneurs or productive sectors. Among several European partners, the emphasis is placed more on network consolidation, interregional cooperation and opportunities for future projects and publications. Rather than pointing to an asymmetry, this difference seems to reflect different modes of ownership and projection of the project in diverse contexts.

With regard to work with external stakeholders, both partner testimonies and third-party interviews make it possible to affirm that CLIMAR succeeded in opening spaces for interaction with governments, companies, organisations, communities and professional sectors. This participation is particularly visible in working groups, surveys, validation processes, workshops, diploma programmes, knowledge transfer activities and continuing education proposals. Some external voices and some partner testimonies suggest that this component can be further deepened, especially when it comes to sustaining local or territorial appropriation

processes over time. Framed in these terms, this finding does not reduce the project's impact but rather helps identify one of its most fertile areas for future continuity.

In sum, CLIMAR generated impact, and did so at multiple scales. It strengthened academic and institutional capacities, opened channels of articulation between university and territory, provided tools valued by external stakeholders, and consolidated an international network with continuity potential. The intensity of these effects varies across contexts, but the aggregate balance shows an experience with tangible, recognised effects and real possibilities for extension.

3.4. Sustainability prospects

One of the strongest points of convergence across the sources is that CLIMAR has generated a broad expectation of continuity. Partner interviews show that the project's formal closure is perceived, in most cases, as a basis for new initiatives rather than as an endpoint. This perception is confirmed by the sustainability presentations at the final meeting, where partners set out concrete actions aimed at prolonging the project's results through curricular integration, the provision of courses and diploma programmes, new research calls, publication of articles and books, international agreements, thematic networks, co-supervision of theses, academic mobility, micro-credentials, cooperation projects, and engagement with public and territorial stakeholders.

These sustainability strategies show that, in several institutions, continuity has already been conceived in operational rather than merely aspirational terms. Some universities plan to incorporate the CLIMAR modules into Master's programmes, specialisation programmes or doctoral programmes; others envisage short courses, lifelong learning or joint certifications for professionals; others are integrating the project's developments into research groups, theses, publications, permanent seminars, institutional agendas and cooperation proposals with consortium partners. There are also initiatives linked to broader networks and to new European or national calls, suggesting an active appropriation of the project's legacy.

The evaluation of the Final Conference is particularly valuable from a sustainability perspective, because it also shows that participants themselves recognised the event as an effective moment for projecting the continuity of CLIMAR beyond its formal closure. The overall assessment was very positive and particularly highlighted the event's capacity to bring together results, make achievements visible, articulate exchanges with external stakeholders and, above all, generate a shared reflection on concrete pathways for the project's future continuity. From this perspective, the Final Conference constituted a relevant milestone not only for taking stock of what had been achieved, but also for activating sustainability strategies, in convergence with what the partners expressed in their institutional presentations. The observations recorded, for their part, reinforce this reading, as they mainly point to the need to deepen external outreach, strengthen follow-up on sustainability and encourage the projection of new initiatives derived from CLIMAR.

External stakeholders, in turn, provide a particularly useful reading of the conditions that may favour such continuity. Their responses place high value on the project's potential, while also insisting on the importance of better supporting the practical uptake of materials, strengthening networking and follow-up spaces after training activities, adapting some formats to the realities of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises, and bringing academic knowledge even closer to contexts of application. These observations enrich the analysis of sustainability because they introduce concrete criteria of usability, scalability and sustained relevance beyond the immediate training moment.

The Quality Committee documentation is also convergent in this respect. In the final phase of the project, the Committee notes that there are no structural risks and that the general conditions for maximising the final impact and ensuring the sustainability of the results are favourable. At the same time, it proposes consolidating communication, strengthening final operational coordination and deepening transfer to

external stakeholders. These orientations are fully consistent with what emerges from interviews and partner presentations: the sustainability base is solid, and its deployment will depend on the capacity of each institution and of the network as a whole, or parts of it, to translate it into concrete continuity mechanisms.

In this regard, a relevant aspect is that sustainability appears to be projected in differentiated ways. In some cases, it takes shape through curricular institutionalisation and human resource development. In others, through research, publications and new projects. In others, through diploma programmes, short courses, transfer to territorial stakeholders, policy briefs or dialogue forums with decision-makers. There is also evidence of continuity through sub-networks, selective alliances and bilateral agreements among partners. This diversity is a positive feature, as it indicates that CLIMAR's legacy may persist through different channels depending on the capacities, priorities and opportunities of each institution.

Taken together, sustainability prospects are favourable. CLIMAR has left a consistent relational, thematic and institutional basis, and several of the participating institutions have already begun to transform this basis into identifiable continuity actions. The available evidence suggests that the project's sustainability does not depend on the exact reproduction of the original consortium, but rather on the capacity to activate that basis in new configurations, formats and scales of cooperation, training and research.

3.5. Cross-cutting reflections

An integrated reading of all sources makes it possible to conclude that CLIMAR was an experience regarded as relevant, serious and productive by partners, external stakeholders and internal monitoring mechanisms alike. No body of evidence raises any fundamental objection to the project's relevance. On the contrary, the main convergence lies in the recognition of its value in establishing a strategic agenda, generating useful outputs, strengthening capacities and articulating actors and institutions around the relationship between tourism and climate change.

A second cross-cutting conclusion is that the project successfully combined three dimensions that are not always effectively integrated in this type of initiative: academic production, training and institutional projection. Partner interviews and sustainability presentations show that, in many institutions, CLIMAR developments have begun to be embedded in programmes, courses, diploma programmes, research lines, theses, networks and future projects. External stakeholders, in turn, confirm that these developments can engage with professional, territorial and sectoral demands. This articulation between knowledge and action is one of the project's most consistent contributions.

The evidence also shows that the project's performance was closely linked to the degree of institutional ownership achieved by each partner. Where there were broader teams, sustained commitment and favourable internal conditions, the results tended to translate more quickly into curricular changes, new offers, research, outreach or cooperation. Where those conditions were more limited, the impact appears to have been concentrated more in the value of learning, the network and future possibilities. This variability forms part of the final balance and helps explain the diversity of trajectories observed within the same consortium.

Finally, the material as a whole suggests that CLIMAR's strongest legacy is not confined to its deliverables. The project has left capacities, networks, cooperation experiences, organisational learning and a continuity agenda that is already showing concrete expressions. This combination of results produced, relationships built and future projections underway is probably the clearest indicator of the consistency achieved by the project at the time of its closure.

4. Overall assessment of the project

Taken together, the different sources analysed support a positive and consistent overall assessment of CLIMAR. The project reached its conclusion with a high degree of fulfilment of objectives, a stable governance structure, substantial results in training, cooperation and academic institutionalisation, and a relational, thematic and institutional basis for continuity that is already beginning to translate into new initiatives, networks and sustainability strategies.

This assessment is grounded in a convergent body of evidence. Partner interviews show a broadly favourable appraisal of the project experience and of its main results; external voices reinforce the perception of the relevance and usefulness of its contributions; the Quality Committee documentation describes a trajectory of operational maturity and high satisfaction; and the sustainability presentations prepared by the partners provide concrete signs of institutional ownership and projection beyond the formal closure. On this basis, the final evaluation supports the conclusion that CLIMAR was a well-accomplished experience, with significant achievements and a reach that clearly goes beyond the administrative fulfilment of its deliverables.

One of CLIMAR's main merits was its ability to articulate, within a single project, academic production, training, inter-institutional cooperation and engagement with external stakeholders around an agenda of high contemporary relevance. The relationship between tourism, climate change, sustainability and circular economy was addressed in a consistent manner and translated into courses, modules, publications, workshops, cooperation networks and applied proposals with potential for use beyond the consortium. This capacity to transform a complex issue into training, institutional and knowledge transfer resources constitutes one of the project's most valuable contributions.

The quality of implementation also deserves a positive assessment. CLIMAR demonstrated effective central coordination, a comprehensible organisational architecture and a working dynamic that made it possible to sustain project progress within a broad, interregional and heterogeneous consortium. The different sources consistently acknowledge the project's follow-up capacity, its responsiveness to problems and the overall stability of its governance. The trajectory reconstructed by the Quality Committee reinforces this conclusion by showing an evolution marked by operational maturity, organisational stability and high partner satisfaction in the final stage.

From the point of view of results, CLIMAR has left embedded academic capacities, new curricular initiatives and materials with potential for reuse. The sustainability strategies presented by the partners show that, in several cases, these results have already begun to translate into concrete continuity actions, such as the incorporation of content into formal programmes, the creation of diploma programmes and seminars, the formulation of new projects, the consolidation of thematic networks and the opening of new collaborations among consortium partners. It can also be stated that the project generated impact beyond its internal sphere, since the external stakeholders consulted particularly value its usefulness in better understanding concrete problems, strengthening ongoing initiatives, informing decisions and bringing academic tools closer to territorial, community, business and institutional challenges.

At the same time, the final evaluation shows that the intensity of results and impact differed across institutions and contexts. In several universities, CLIMAR translated into highly visible curricular changes, training programmes, research lines, agreements or territorial initiatives. In others, its legacy appears to be more concentrated in capacity-building, the expansion of networks and the opportunities opened up for future action. This variability does not alter the project's favourable overall balance, although it does introduce an important nuance: institutional ownership is a decisive factor in explaining the depth and durability of the effects achieved.

In this context, the areas requiring greater attention should be understood as part of a mature assessment of the project and as relevant lessons for future cooperation initiatives. These include the desirability of broadening institutional engagement beyond small core groups of individuals, strengthening certain communication and follow-up mechanisms from the outset, giving the Quality Committee greater strategic visibility, and further deepening sustained transfer to external and territorial stakeholders. These issues are present in the interviews and in the internal quality reports within a general scenario of high satisfaction and consolidation.

In sum, the overall assessment of CLIMAR is positive and robust. The project fulfilled its fundamental purposes, produced relevant results, strengthened institutional capacities, generated valuable learning and consolidated an international network with real possibilities for continuity. Its main challenges going forward lie in deepening impact, broadening institutional ownership and consolidating mechanisms capable of sustaining and scaling up the achievements reached. Considered as a whole, CLIMAR leaves the image of a significant and well-accomplished experience, with a legacy that clearly exceeds the project's administrative closure.

5. Recommendations

The recommendations presented below stem from the evidence analysed and are intended to strengthen the longer-term projection of CLIMAR's results. They are not aimed at correcting structural problems in the project, since the final evaluation shows a broadly positive and well-accomplished experience. Rather, their purpose is to consolidate the achievements reached, expand the conditions for sustainability and draw useful lessons for future international cooperation initiatives in higher education.

On this basis, the recommendations are organised around three complementary dimensions: strengthening the longer-term impact of the project's results, ensuring the sustainability of the capacities and networks built, and identifying the main lessons that the CLIMAR experience offers for the design and development of future collaborative projects.

5.1. Recommendations to enhance the longer-term impact of the project results

A first recommendation is to reinforce the circulation, reuse and public visibility of the results produced by CLIMAR. The evaluation shows that the project generated training materials, publications, networks, cooperation experiences and tools whose value clearly extends beyond the immediate circle of participants. Partner interviews, external voices and the Quality Committee reports converge in showing that there is significant room to broaden the strategic dissemination of these results, both within universities and towards public, private and community actors linked to tourism, sustainability and climate change. In this context, it would be advisable to consolidate a post-project communication and transfer strategy capable of sustaining CLIMAR's public presence, facilitating access to its outputs and highlighting their usefulness for different audiences.

A second recommendation is to promote more diverse and adapted formats for the use of the materials developed. The evidence gathered suggests that CLIMAR's results may follow different trajectories depending on the type of user, the institutional scale and the territorial context. Several sustainability presentations already point in this direction, through proposals such as short courses, diploma programmes, lifelong learning provision, curricular integration, micro-credentials and joint certifications. External stakeholders add an important consideration: for certain audiences, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises or professionals with limited time, the appropriation of content depends largely on formats being accessible, flexible and compatible with their actual working conditions. It would therefore be advisable to move forward with a format diversification strategy that preserves the academic quality of the materials while expanding their possibilities for uptake.

A third recommendation is to sustain and deepen interaction with external stakeholders. CLIMAR succeeded in opening spaces for dialogue and validation with governments, companies, organisations, communities and professional sectors, and this dimension is valued both by partners and by the stakeholders consulted themselves. The experience suggests, however, that the greatest potential for future impact lies in the continuity of these links through more regular instances of training, technical support, policy briefs, thematic events, exchange forums or pilot local implementation proposals. In terms of legacy, the project has a clear opportunity to strengthen its public footprint if it turns part of the outputs already developed into reference resources for networks, institutions and territories interested in this agenda.

5.2. Recommendations for the sustainability of the results

The main recommendation in this area is to deepen the institutionalisation processes that have already begun. The sustainability presentations show concrete progress in several universities. Since these initiatives constitute one of the strongest indicators of sustainability, it would be advisable for partner institutions to consolidate these processes through formal curricular decisions, the assignment of academic responsibilities, integration into institutional plans, and articulation with postgraduate, research, outreach or international cooperation units. The more clearly CLIMAR developments are anchored in existing institutional structures, the greater their chances of enduring over time.

A second recommendation is to actively sustain the cooperation network built through the project, while accepting that its continuity will probably take more selective and flexible forms than the original consortium. The evidence collected shows that one of CLIMAR's most valuable legacies is the inter-institutional trust generated and the opening of new collaborations among universities in Europe and Latin America. In this context, it seems advisable to favour continuity schemes based on active sub-networks, thematic alliances and derived projects, rather than aiming for a uniform replication of the original consortium. This approach also appears to be the one most consistent with what is already taking place in practice.

A third recommendation is to support the sustainability of the training offer through follow-up mechanisms after the training activities themselves. External voices stress that interest and motivation tend to be high during or immediately after a training experience, but that continuity requires exchange networks, follow-up contacts, additional short modules, spaces for consultation or follow-up, and opportunities for concrete application. Accordingly, it would be advisable for the continuity of CLIMAR training to include some light-touch form of community of practice, networking, updating or follow-up, capable of sustaining the link with participants and encouraging the actual use of what has been learned.

Finally, it would be advisable to reinforce sustainability through a policy of documentation, access and preservation of outputs. The maintenance of the website, the availability of materials, open-access publication, and the preservation of training and dissemination resources appear in the continuity plans of several partners and of OBREAL. Since a significant part of the project's value lies in the future reuse of its results, it is advisable to ensure that these remain accessible, organised and technically available for a sufficient period, and that their location and possible uses are communicated clearly to the different interested audiences.

5.3. Lessons learned and recommendations for future collaborative projects

The CLIMAR experience makes it possible to formulate a first structural lesson: in broad interregional projects, the quality of design and central coordination is indispensable, but the depth of effects depends to a large extent on the actual institutional ownership achieved by each partner. Partner interviews show clearly that, where there were active teams, internal support and a broader institutional base, the results tended to translate more strongly into curricular change, research, cooperation and external engagement. For future projects, it would be advisable to strengthen effective institutional commitments from the outset, including

the identification of responsible teams, replacement mechanisms in the event of staff turnover, and strategies to distribute participation beyond one or two key focal points.

A second relevant lesson concerns the need to strengthen operational articulation between Work Packages and between project functions. In CLIMAR, the overall design was perceived as solid and coherent, and the internal evaluation recognises a very good overall performance of the packages, especially as the project advanced. At the same time, several interviews suggest that the effective integration between research, training, transfer and final outputs could be further enhanced through specific instances of connection, follow-up and shared work among teams. For future experiences, it would be useful to foresee, from the early stages, regular mechanisms of cross-cutting articulation capable of making better use of the inputs generated in each component and favouring stronger internal circulation of results.

A third lesson concerns communication, quality and participation. The Quality Committee reports identify high levels of satisfaction and do not register structural risks, but they also point to the desirability of strengthening internal communication, balanced participation and the strategic function of the Quality Committee. These observations are consistent with several partner testimonies and can be read as useful lessons for future projects: it is advisable from the beginning to ensure a clear combination of agile channels and formal follow-up mechanisms; to give greater visibility to the quality function in dialogue with the Work Packages and with overall coordination; and to sustain active strategies for involving broader teams within each institution. These decisions may contribute to an even more distributed governance and to a more homogeneous ownership of results.

Finally, CLIMAR offers a strategic lesson for projects that seek to address agendas with strong social and territorial relevance: articulation between universities, the public sector, the productive sector and communities requires continuity, mediation and formats adapted to different environments. The project advanced significantly in this direction and left promising foundations for further deepening this relationship. For future initiatives, it would be advisable to integrate, from the design stage, more stable mechanisms for the participation of external stakeholders, as well as to foresee specific resources and time for transfer, local appropriation and the co-construction of solutions. The experience gathered suggests that this component can become one of the main multipliers of impact when it finds adequate conditions of support and institutionalisation.

6. Conclusion

The final evaluation supports the conclusion that CLIMAR was a successful project, with relevant results, strong inter-institutional cooperation and an effective capacity to establish a strategic agenda around the relationship between tourism, climate change and sustainability. Beyond the outputs generated during implementation, its value lies in the quality of the links built, the capacities strengthened and the conditions it created for new academic, institutional and territorial initiatives.

In this sense, CLIMAR's main legacy lies in the relational, thematic and institutional basis that it succeeded in consolidating. The challenges ahead relate to deepening impact, broadening institutional ownership and consolidating mechanisms capable of sustaining and projecting the achievements reached. On this basis, the experience leaves not only valuable contributions for the participating institutions, but also relevant lessons for future international cooperation initiatives aimed at strengthening the articulation between higher education, sustainability, territory and public action.

Annexes

Annex 1. List of interviews conducted

Consortium partners

Catalina Espinosa – Universidad Autónoma de Chiriquí, Panama
 Javier Toro – Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Colombia
 Franco Bianco – Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Argentina
 Bernardo Rivera – Universidad de Caldas, Colombia
 Daniel Antenucci – Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Argentina
 Lucellys Sierra Marquez – Universidad de Cartagena, Colombia
 Rosa María López Oliver and Farías Martín Brindis – Universidad Anáhuac, Mexico
 Bonnie Lucía Campos Cámara – Universidad Quintana Roo, Mexico
 Cliona Maher – University College Cork, Ireland
 Paolo Figini – Universidad de Bolonia, Italy
 Sandra Patricia Figueroa Chávez – Asociación Colombiana de Universidades, Colombia
 Oana Madalina Driha – Universidad de Alicante, Spain
 Javier de León Ledesma and Valentina Grasso (joint interview) – Universidad de Las Palmas, Spain

External stakeholders

Aideen Loftus – Sustainable Tourism Network / SEAI (Ireland’s National Sustainable Energy Authority), Ireland. Government
 Catalina Druetta – Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Argentina. Academia
 Anahí Abraham – Municipal Government of Mendoza, Argentina. Government
 Agustín González – Wine sector, Argentina. Company
 Jon Beer – Panasea Global S.A., Panama. Company
 Noel Trejos Castillo – Panama Canal Authority, Panama. Government
 Jhon Alexander Abril – Mirador Valle de la Samaria, Colombia. Company

Annex 2. Interview instrument for project partners

Interviewee details: Name. Institution. Role in the project. Work Package participation. Country.

Project development dynamics

Project structure and management

- From your experience, what aspects of the project structure and management have facilitated or hindered your active participation?
- How have you experienced the coordination process among partners? What lessons or tensions would you highlight in this dynamic?

Internal communication

- Which internal communication channels or practices have been most useful for collaborative work? Which have presented difficulties, and why?
- In your experience, how has the flow of information among partners been managed? What could be strengthened?

Decision-making and inter-institutional relations

- What concrete examples can you mention of how collective decisions have been made within the project? At what moments did you feel there was greater or lesser transparency?
- Thinking about the links between institutions, what elements have favoured the construction of solid alliances? And which ones have created obstacles?

Quality of project progress

Progress towards results

- What achievements would you highlight so far in terms of concrete results or relevant processes within the project?
- In which aspects do you consider that the project still has room for improvement in order to achieve its objectives?

Institutional and local impact

- What changes or contributions has CLIMAR generated in your institution or immediate environment (academic, social, territorial) that you believe will remain over time?
- Can you share any experience that reflects the value of the project in your context, or its limitations?

Participation of external stakeholders

- What strategies have been implemented to involve external stakeholders such as NGOs, local governments or companies? With what results?
- What opportunities do you see for strengthening this link with third parties during the remainder of the project?

Integration and articulation among Work Packages (WPs)

- How integrated do you perceive the work to be within and across the different WPs? Where do you observe synergies or disconnections that should be reviewed? Did all partners participate in the same way? If yes, no, and why?
- In what way is a shared vision of CLIMAR's overall purpose being built, or not built?

Dissemination and visibility strategies

Knowledge of and involvement in dissemination actions

- Which communication or dissemination actions have seemed most effective or relevant in your context so far?
- What experiences has your institution had in promoting CLIMAR to wider audiences?

Recommendations for dissemination

- What initiatives could be developed to improve the visibility and impact of the project in your country or region?
- What suggestions would you make for the dissemination strategy to achieve a more significant reach towards the end of the project?

Closing

- If you had to share one key lesson learned so far in CLIMAR, what would it be?
- What expectations do you have regarding the final stage of the project?

Annex 3. Interview instrument for external stakeholders

CLIMAR is reaching its final stage and is leaving concrete results of interest for external stakeholders: tools and training on climate change and tourism, applied knowledge products (inputs, diagnoses and proposals in book format), and cooperation links between universities and organisations/social actors aimed at advancing more sustainable tourism practices. The final results are currently being systematised and will be shared; for this reason, we are interested in gathering your perspective based on your experience of participation in the project.

- From your perspective, why do you consider an initiative such as CLIMAR relevant, or not, for your country or region, especially at the intersection of climate change and tourism? (If helpful: what concrete problem or need does it address in your context?)
- Based on your experience of participation, what concrete usefulness do you think CLIMAR's results may have for your context, and what do you see as the main conditions of feasibility and limitations for applying or scaling them? (If helpful: one example of possible use.)
- What impacts, positive or negative, do you think CLIMAR may leave as a result of your participation, and what would be needed to sustain or scale them in your context? (If helpful: which actor should lead / what enabling condition is missing.)