



Union for the Mediterranean
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Quarterly Flash News on Blue Economy



Welcome to the 6th issue of the flash news on blue economy in the Mediterranean region!

You will find the most updated information related to the work of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and its partners to promote the blue economy in the Mediterranean region.

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Forthcoming events

1. ***Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas in the climate change era: challenges & opportunities (MPA-ADAPT)***
2. ***CO-EVOLVE- Dissemination Event***
3. ***Mediterranean Sustainable Tourism Convention***
4. ***High-level conference on MedFish4Ever initiatives***
5. ***EurOCEAN 2019 conference***
6. ***18th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), organized by UN Environment MAP***
7. ***BLUEMED CSA High-Level Research Infrastructures Stakeholders Conference***
8. ***Sommet des deux rives (Summit of the Two Shores)***
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10. ***Africa Blue Economy Forum 2019***
11. ***Blue Growth Summer School on emerging technologies, trends and opportunities***

Latest News

1. Launch of a new initiative on Maritime Spatial Planning

UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and the European Commission launched MSPGlobal, a new global project on maritime spatial planning, on 11 and 12 February at UNESCO Headquarters. The project aims to promote better maritime spatial planning with a view to avoiding conflicts and improving the governance of human activities at sea such as aquaculture, tourism, marine energy, and exploitation of the seabed.

More detailed information can be found here: <https://en.unesco.org/news/launch-new-initiative-maritime-spatial-planning>

2. Valencia hosts the first Blue Energy Lab of the region

On February 25 more than thirty entities, companies and people interested in renewable energies, have met in Valencia Port to discuss about the potential of the Mediterranean to take advantage of marine resources and obtain clean energy in the first Blue Energy Lab (BEL) of the Valencia Region.

During the event, several presentations and round tables have been developed in which experts have analysed the possibilities of the Valencian coast for the implementation of infrastructures that allow to take advantage of the potential of the Mediterranean to generate renewable energy.

This event, organized by CEEI Valencia together with the Valencia Port Foundation, is part of the MAESTRALE Project of the Interreg MED programme, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

More information on the event can be found here: <https://maestrale.interreg-med.eu/news-events/news/detail/actualites/valencia-hosts-the-first-blue-energy-lab-of-the-valencia-region/>

3. Key learnings from the Blue Bioeconomy Forum March working groups

The Blue Bioeconomy Forum held its second working group meeting on 11 and 12 March in Brussels. Participants attended four half-a-day sessions dedicated to each working group: Policy, Environment and Regulation; Finance and Business Development; Consumers and Value Chains; Science, Technology and Innovation. These discussions were instrumental in gathering more insight on the key challenges and ways forward identified over the last year, finding the good examples to illustrate potential solutions. The results derived from the working groups, will help framing the Roadmap for the Blue Bioeconomy for the next phase of the consultation process.

On the link below, you will find some of the most interesting solutions that came out of the different sessions:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/node/4329>

4. UfM Secretariat

- **5th meeting of the UfM Working Group on the Blue Economy**

The fifth meeting of the Working Group on the Blue Economy (BE WG) took place at the Centre des Conférences Albert Borschette (CCAB) in Brussels on 25 March 2019. BE WG is an integral part of the UfM Forum on Blue Economy, which is one of the deliverables of the UfM Ministerial Declaration of 17 November 2015 on Blue Economy. The fifth meeting of the BE WG focused on reporting on the progress at national and regional level in achieving the deliverables of the Ministerial Declaration of 2015, based on the national reports submitted to the UfMS. In addition, the updating of the Declaration and the next Ministerial meeting tentatively planned for 2020 was discussed as well as the blue economy financing opportunities and principles, amongst other points. It was held back to back with an info session on Marine Litter and the closure of the EU funded IMP-Med Project "Facility for regional policy dialogue on Integrated Maritime Policy".

- **UfM Task Force on Environment**

The 3rd meeting of the UfM Task Force on Environment brought together on April 9 in Brussels, Belgium, the UfM member countries, UfM Co-Presidencies and the Secretariat of the UfM, and other regional stakeholders and partners. It was devoted to the preparation of the a joint post-2020 Environment initiative/framework for action. In other words, the meeting discussed the relevant concept note that was recently developed by an on-line consultative group (in which many regional partners actively participated), as well as the potential advancements towards a political process in 2020.

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5. WESTMED

- **INTERACT-WestMED cooperation programmes (13 May 2019)**

The event took place on May 13 in Palermo, Italy, and it was organized by the Med Lab Group, featured by the [Interact Programme](#). The event was dedicated to sustainable practices in coastal tourism, and it was focused on coastal tourism through the prism of innovation and environment. The latter are indeed at the very core of multiple cooperation programmes in the Mediterranean basin, not only through Mediterranean programmes but also in those of the southern part of Europe.

More information on the event can be found here: <http://www.interact-eu.net/#o=events/med-lab-group-innovative-practices-coastal-tourism>

- **Blue Economy WestMED Hackathons (14 May 2019)**

The European Commission and the Co-Presidency of the Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean held the event Hackathons WestMED: "Blue economy contribution to the Summit of the Two Shores" on Tuesday 14 May 2019 in Palermo, Italy. The event aimed at facilitating the exchange of project ideas and promote concrete project development among stakeholders in the region operating in the maritime sector (businesses, researchers, institutes, national and local authorities belonging to the western Mediterranean Countries). Specifically, this exchange took place in the framework of 6 different parallel sessions covering the fields of Illegal fishing (IUU), Aquaculture, Plastic Litter, Clean Transport, Clusters and Tourism.

More information on the [WestMED initiative website](#)

6. CPMR's Intermediterranean Commission

- **InnoBlueGrowth, Strengthening the Science-Practice-Policy interface in Blue Growth**

The CPMR Intermediterranean Commission co-organized and participated in the Blue Growth Community's 6th capitalization and community-building event. This major conference on "Strengthening the Science-Practice-Policy Interface in Blue Growth" took place on 16th & 17th April 2019 in Marseille, France.

Organised by the Blue Growth Project (Interreg MED), which includes the CPMR-IMC as a key partner, the event gathered about 80 participants from both sides of the Mediterranean representing a wide diversity of stakeholders from researchers to policymakers and contributors from blue economy sectors. The CPMR-IMC contributed to sharing and identifying better methods and tools for successful knowledge and technology transfer to practice and policy-making.

More detailed information can be found [here](#)

- **PANCeA, Ecosystem-based responses to Mediterranean biodiversity challenges, capitalization event**

More than 100 representatives of Mediterranean biodiversity protection projects signed up to gather at the Orto Botanico in Rome on 6 and 7 May 2019 to discuss Ecosystem-based responses to Mediterranean biodiversity challenges. Transferring the lessons learnt by a biodiversity protection community of 12 projects, this event enlarged previous debates with policy stakeholders and research institutions by integrating the need to involve the private sector and establish effective public and private partnerships.

More detailed information can be found [here](#)

7. European Maritime Day

EMD, celebrated on 16 -17 of May in Lisbon, focused this year on blue entrepreneurship, innovation and investment. The conference included an inspirational opening session, 8 breakout sessions organized by the European Commission focused on a number of strategic EU policy initiatives to support Europe's Sustainable Blue Economy. It hosted 28 high-quality Thematic Workshops designed and organized by maritime stakeholders.

EMD is the annual EU meeting point on maritime affairs and blue growth. It targets maritime professionals, entrepreneurs and ocean leaders from businesses, governments, public institutions, NGOs and academia.

More detailed information can be found here: <https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/maritimeday/en>

8. Revitalization of Mediterranean Diet, 2° World Conference

The three-day conference was held on 15 - 17 May in different historical venues in close proximity in the heart of Palermo. The Programme was articulated through 7 plenary Sessions, 12 parallel Sessions, 9 side events, two cultural dinner events, and a Sustainable Food Systems Innovation Showcase Pavilion, at the S. Cecilia Theatre.

It was an open discussion forum on most appropriate conceptual frameworks and methodological approaches to improve sustainability of food consumption and production in Mediterranean countries by using the Mediterranean diet as a healthy and sustainable lever. It hosted the Italian contribution to the Sommet de deux Rives, focused on circular green and blue economy. It closed with the launch of an FAO-CIHEAM-UfM joint initiative on food system within a SCP approach.

19 thematic sessions provided contributions for a background document in the context of the preparatory process of the Summit of the Two Shores, on 24 June 2019, in Marseille, that will be held on 24 June 2019, in Marseilles.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.mdconference.it/>

9. UN Environment / MAP

- **Workshop on the G7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter in Synergy with the Regional Seas Conventions: Conclusions and Recommendations**

Representatives of G7 Countries, Regional Seas Conventions and Programmes to which G7 Countries are party, and a number of stakeholders from intergovernmental mechanisms, civil society, and industry, met in Metz, France, on 5 and 6 May 2019 on the occasion of the “Workshop on the G7 Action Plan to Combat Marine Litter in Synergy with the Regional Seas Conventions”. The event was organized by the French G7 Presidency and the UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan–Barcelona Convention Secretariat, with the generous support of the Government of Italy.

The document with the conclusions and recommendations can be found [here](#)

- **Call for applications for the “Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award**

Mediterranean coastal cities are invited to apply for the second edition of the “Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award”, which echoes Objective 3 of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), namely “Planning and Managing Sustainable Mediterranean Cities”. The Award, which was instituted in February 2016 by the 19th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 19), recognizes Mediterranean environment friendly coastal cities in which people enjoy a high quality of life and where sustainable development takes place within the carrying capacity of healthy ecosystems. The call for applications is open until 7 June 2019.

For background information, eligibility criteria and application documents, visit the Award's page on UN Environment / MAP website: <http://web.unep.org/unepmap/call-applications-istanbul-environment-friendly-city-award>

10. New EASME Call on MSP: Deadline 04 September 2019

This call for proposals aims to accelerate the development and implementation of the EU Maritime Policy and the sustainable development of the blue economy across Europe. This general objective is further divided into specific objectives as described under each of the 3 topics that are part of this call for proposals: 1) Blue Labs: innovative solutions for maritime challenges; 2) Blue Careers in Europe and 3) Grants for the Blue Economy: investing in innovation.

More information on the call [here](#)

Forthcoming events

1. **Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas in the climate change era: challenges & opportunities (MPA-ADAPT)**, 04 – 05 June, in Barcelona
2. **CO-EVOLVE- Dissemination Event**, 05 June, in Barcelona
3. **Mediterranean Sustainable Tourism Convention**, 5 and 6 June, in Barcelona
4. **High-level conference on MedFish4Ever initiatives**, 11 – 12 June in Marrakech
5. **EurOCEAN 2019 conference**, 11-12 June 2019, in Paris
6. **18th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD), organized by UN Environment MAP**, 11-13 June 2019, in Budva
7. **BLUEMED CSA High-Level Research Infrastructures Stakeholders Conference**, 13 and 14 June, in Paris.
8. **Sommet des deux rives (Summit of the Two Shores)**, 23-24 June, in Marseille
9. **Blue Bioeconomy Forum Second Conference**, 25 June, in Brussels
10. **Africa Blue Economy Forum 2019**, 25-26 June, in Tunis
11. **Blue Growth Summer School on emerging technologies, trends and opportunities**, 1-5 July, in Kotor

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