



Mediterranean Blue Economy Stakeholder Platform

Biannual Flash News on Blue Economy

Welcome to the 11th 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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Latest News

1. 8th UfM Blue Economy Working Group and Digitalization skills webinar

On 10th June 2021 the 8th meeting of the UfM Blue Economy Working Group took place online with more than 100 participants. The meeting was chaired by the European Commission and the Jordanian Co-Presidency, with the assistance of the UfM Secretariat. In addition, the back-to-back event "Digitalization skills organised by the Union for the Mediterranean together with WESTMED took place on the 9th June 2021 in the form of a webinar. The webinar provided an analysis and insights on digitalization skills applied to aquaculture and tourism at Mediterranean level through case studies, projects and initiatives status. [Learn more](#)



2. The UfM Environment Task Force meets to advance joint action in the Mediterranean

The 5th meeting of the UfM Task Force on Environment took place on May 27, bringing together country representatives and regional stakeholders of the [UfM environment agenda](#). The virtual meeting was chaired by the UfM European and Jordan Co-Presidency, with the support of the UfM Secretariat. Its main objectives included: i) Discussing the priorities for action under the 2030 Greener Med Agenda, the new



proposed tool for regional integration and collaboration; ii) Exploring the opportunities for partnership and funding related to the [2030 Greener Med Agenda](#) in view of the ongoing programming; iii) Defining the operational modalities of the 2030 GreenerMed Agenda; iv) Showcasing and linking regional key actions and related developments on (i) plastic within a green circular economy approach (land and sea) and (ii) nature-based solutions, with a focus on Wetlands and Marine Protected Areas. [Learn more](#)

3. UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Action

Ministers from the 42 Member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) gathered today in Cairo at the 2nd UfM Ministerial Conference on Environment and Climate action under the Co-Presidency of Jordan and the European Union. They agreed on a common agenda to strengthen efforts in the Euro-Mediterranean region to urgently tackle the multiple climate and environmental challenges it faces. This commitment reflects the highest possible ambition in accelerating transition towards sustainable, climate-neutral and green economies. [Learn more](#)



4. MPA Engage capitalization conference

On 18th of June 2021, MIO-ECSDE organized the 1st MPA Engage capitalization event providing an opportunity for stakeholders to connect and share experiences towards a collective and consolidated response to climate change in Mediterranean MPAs. Climate change is dramatically affecting the Mediterranean Sea, which is warming at a rate 20% faster than the world's average. MPAs, despite the nature-based solution they offer to support efforts towards climate change adaptation and mitigation, are the first ones to feel the climate change effects. [Learn more](#)



5. Plastic Busters MPAs capitalization event

The Plastic Busters MPAs capitalization event: a stepping stone in consolidating marine litter management efforts in Mediterranean MPAs. Plastic Busters MPAs brought together more than 90 Mediterranean MPA managers and marine litter experts at its 1st capitalization event held online on the 17th of June 2021. The event served as a stepping stone towards a consolidated approach against marine litter in Mediterranean MPAs. It featured the project's advances and achievements addressing the entire management cycle of marine litter, from monitoring and assessment to prevention and mitigation. [Learn more](#)



6. A new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU

The European Green Deal and the Recovery Plan for Europe will define the European economy for many years, or even decades. And the EU's blue economy is fundamental to both efforts. To fully embed the blue economy into the Green Deal and the recovery strategy, the Commission has adopted a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU. [Learn more](#)



7. Make Europe Blue campaign

The Make Europe Blue campaign is calling on you - citizens, businesses, organisations, authorities, celebrities, educators - to make a pledge to help the ocean. Your pledge is a personal promise or action that will keep our ocean healthy. "Every action – even the smallest one - brings change to our ocean". [Learn more](#)



8. UNESCO launches first Ocean Decade Actions to drive ocean knowledge revolution

In the context of global celebrations for World Oceans Day, UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission announced the first Actions officially endorsed as part of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, 2021-2030 (the 'Ocean Decade').

Led by diverse proponents from science, government, civil society, United Nations agencies, the private sector, philanthropy and international organizations, these flagship Ocean Decade Actions are characterized by their wide geographical reach. [Learn more](#)



9. MSP pilot project Western Mediterranean

The pilot project in the Western Mediterranean is being implemented in Algeria, France, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia, while other member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean in the Western Mediterranean can also participate in training activities. Building on previous experiences in the region to promote good MSP practices, activities are adapted to meet both regional and national priorities and needs in the context of the Western Mediterranean. [Learn more](#)



10. GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea

A robust new strategy for sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea was launched on 9 July 2021. The targets of the new 2030 Strategy of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) are in alignment with blue transformation, a pillar of FAO's new Strategic Framework. It is an ambitious commitment adopted by 22 countries plus the European Union aims to secure a sustainable future for fisheries and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. [Learn more](#)



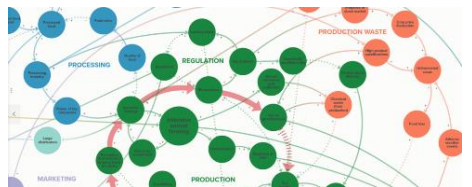
11. MSFD open public consultation launched

The European Commission has launched its [online public consultation](#) on the review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. This initiative will review the achievements and shortcomings of this Directive, explore options for improvement and propose possible amendments. This public consultation aims to gather the views of EU citizens and stakeholders. Please, consider sharing your view on this important EU law. Replies may be submitted in any EU official language. [Learn more](#)



12. Blue Bio Med policy experiment workshops apply innovative methodologies to understand sustainable development challenges

CREDA has implemented, with the help of Reimagined Futures, one of these methodologies, systems mapping. In the first workshop on the challenge of marine plastic pollution in the Mediterranean, this technique helped participants identify factors facilitating and impeding sustainable transformation. [Learn more](#)



13. WINTER MED set up regional priorities for its transnational strategy for an all-year round tourism

The 5th Steering Committee of the WINTER MED Interreg MED project was held online on 19 April 2021 and brought together the CPMR-IMC/IC along with the rest of the Project Partners. These regular meetings allow the partners to share their progress and discuss further



steps to achieve the project's main objective: to foster sustainable and all-year-round tourism in the Mediterranean. [Learn more](#)

14. Intermediterranean Commission Task Force on Tourism gathered Mediterranean regions to reflect on tools to support tourism sustainable recovery

On 16 July 2021, the Intermediterranean Commission (CPMR-IMC) held virtually its meeting of the Task Force on "Culture and Sustainable Tourism", co-organised with the Interreg MED [Sustainable Tourism Community](#). The meeting was designed as a follow-up to the two questionnaires sent last Autumn and in Spring this year in relation to the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector and its sustainable recovery. [Learn more](#)



15. Join the Mediterranean Coast Day 2021

[Mediterranean Coast Day \(25 September\)](#) is a UNEP/MAP regional annual observance introduced under the [Integrated Coastal Zone Management \(ICZM\) Protocol of the Barcelona Convention](#). [PAP/RAC](#) is the promoter of this important observance for the Mediterranean. The date of 25 September was selected to commemorate the first [ratification of the ICZM Protocol](#) by Slovenia. Now more than ever, commitment to compliance and enforcement of the instruments adopted under the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols is critical to the region's efforts to [recover better in the post-COVID era](#). [Learn more](#)



16. IUCN Congress witnesses key political commitments and new funding initiatives, amid consensus on Mediterranean climate and biodiversity crisis

12 Mediterranean leading organisations presented new conservation and financial solutions to tackle biodiversity and climate crisis in the region. Some of the greatest outcomes were the commitments of 8 Mediterranean governments and 5 NGO to achieving 10% of areas under "strong protection" and zero discharge of plastic into the sea within 10 years in the region. Also 3 new funding initiatives were launched to protect Highly Protected Marine Areas and freshwater ecosystems in the Mediterranean and as well as supporting civil society actions in North African countries. [Learn more](#)



Resources and Opportunities

1. Reports & Leaflets: "Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region"

The Union for Mediterranean publication *"Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region"* collect qualitative/quantitative information on the current status and potential of the blue sectors in the UfM region with a particular focus on the Mediterranean countries. The sectoral characteristics, challenges and opportunities of each sector in the past, present and future are presented. Moreover, the publication informs about the trends in terms of employment, the skills needed and the COVID-19 impact on each sector. The reports and related leaflets are available in English, French and Arabic. [Learn more](#)



2. 2021 EU Blue Economy report – Emerging sectors prepare blue economy for leading part in EU green transition

The European Commission has published the fourth edition of “The EU Blue Economy Report”, providing an overview of the performance of the EU-27 economic sectors related to oceans and the coastal environment. The sector directly employed close to 4.5 million people in 2018 and generated around €650 billion in turnover and €176 billion in gross value added. Emerging activities such as ocean energy, marine biotechnology and robotics are developing quickly and will play an important role in the EU’s transition towards a carbon-neutral, circular and biodiverse economy. [Learn more](#)



3. UfM-WHO Joint Webinar on Environment and Health in Seaport Cities

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2020 to collaborate across sectors in reinforcing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This institutional partnership aims to support UfM Member States in building capacity and promoting action for health, including through health research, health education and advocacy for health, in all policy domains of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. In this context, the webinar helped to raise awareness about and promote healthy environments through urban development and governance in seaport cities. The webinar took place on 17 June 2021. [View the recording here](#)



4. Knowledge for action – new Ocean+ platform launched on World Oceans Day 2021

Collaboration is at the heart of Ocean+ Habitats – it is designed to be a tool that is available and accessible to all. The new platform provides detailed and ready-to-go statistics on the distribution and threatened status of key marine habitats, already broken down by countries. This resource will be of use to diverse actors worldwide, ranging from educational institutions to research organizations to businesses and the private sector. [Learn more](#)



5. AquaDocs: New Document Repository Launched

AquaDocs is the joint open access repository of the [UNESCO/IOC International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange \(IODE\)](#) and the [International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers \(IAMSLIC\)](#) with support from the [FAO Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts](#). It is a thematic repository covering the natural marine, coastal, estuarine /brackish and fresh water environments and includes all aspects of the science, technology, management and conservation of these environments, their organisms and resources, and the economic, sociological and legal aspects. [Learn more](#)



6. Maritime Spatial Planning in Europe: from plan to reality

MSP in Europe: cooperating across borders and sectors for a smart, sustainable and fair use of the maritime space. A video presenting the work of five MSP projects supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (2014-2020). Watch the video [here](#)



7. Webinar “Women in blue economy in the Mediterranean”

The webinar “Women in blue economy in the Mediterranean”, organized by Union for the Mediterranean and EMUNI took place on 22nd of September 2021. It highlighted women contribution and engagement as a fundamental vector in key blue economy sectors in the Mediterranean region, and discussed - within a solution-oriented approach – the challenges hindering the full expression of their opportunities. [Learn more](#)



8. High level side-event to the UfM Ministerial on Environment and Climate Action

This event, co-organized with UNDP and the European Commission, aimed to share, highlight and promote the high-level political and operational efforts towards conservation of biological diversity and ecosystem restoration, with a special focus on food systems within the wider shift to green, blue, circular economy at Euro-Mediterranean level. [Learn more](#)



Upcoming events

1. [13th Baltic Sea Science Congress](#), 18 – 22 October 2021, Aarhus – Denmark
2. [SwitchMed Connect 2021](#), including the [WeMed Award Ceremony](#), 19 - 20 October 2021, Online
3. [Hack4oceans](#), 20 – 21 October 2021, Online
4. [Implementing the Ocean Data and Information System \(ODIS\) architecture](#), 25 – 29 October 2021, Online
5. [Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference 2021](#), 26 – 27 October 2021, Amsterdam – Netherlands
6. [Oceans of Knowledge conference](#), 26 – 27 October 2021, Hybrid (London - England and online)
7. [Ecomondo 2021](#), 26 – 29 October 2021, Rimini - Italy
8. [COP26](#), 31 October – 12 November 2021, Glasgow – United Kingdom
9. [Ocean Hackathon 2021](#), 05 – 07 November 2021, TBD - France
10. [WestMED Stakeholders Conference & Project Awards 2021](#), 9 November 2021 - Hybrid (Cagliari - Italy and online)
11. [World Congress of Marine Stations](#), 17 – 19 November 2021, Online
12. [Blue Bioeconomy Innovation Forum of the BLUE BIO MED project](#), 18 – 19 November 2021, Ferrara - Italy
13. [WavEC Annual Seminar 2021](#), 30 November 2021, Online
14. [Ocean Energy Europe 2021](#), 06 – 07 December 2021, Brussels – Belgium
15. [Barcelona Convention COP 22](#), 7-10 December 2021, Antalya - Turkey
16. [International Ocean Data Conference](#), 14 – 16 February 2022, Sopot - Poland
17. [Sea Tech Week 2022](#), 26 – 30 September 2022, Brest – France

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