

2nd  
UNION FOR THE  
MEDITERRANEAN  
STAKEHOLDER  
CONFERENCE ON

# SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY

*Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy for the Mediterranean Sea basin*

19-20 February, 2024  
Eugenides Foundation  
Athens, Greece

## DRAFT AGENDA



The UfM Secretariat  
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## BACKGROUND AND CONCEPT

### Objective of the Conference

The UfM EU and Jordan Co-Presidency, the UfM member countries, and the UfM Secretariat aim at gathering together key Mediterranean Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE) stakeholders to exchange on the knowledge-base, best practices, and advancements related to the implementation of the 10 priority areas of work agreed by the 43 Euro-Mediterranean countries within the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy. The conference will be a 'living lab'.

### Background

In February 2021, UfM region Ministers adopted an ambitious new [Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy \(SBE\)](#), expanding the joint agreed upon priorities to 10 and firmly committing to cooperate closely for the Sustainable Development of the sectors and activities of the Mediterranean Blue Economy:

- 1) Governance and the future of sea basin strategies in the Mediterranean region
- 2) Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment
- 3) Sustainable food from the Sea: fisheries and aquaculture
- 4) Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports
- 5) Interactions between marine litter and the blue economy
- 6) Coastal and maritime tourism
- 7) Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- 8) Marine renewable energies
- 9) Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities
- 10) Sustainable investments in the blue economy

A landmark effort and achievement in and for the region, with the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE, the countries of the UfM have embraced the overall shift towards circularity and climate neutrality, and agree to promote sustainable and transformative policies, tools, and approaches in key sectors, as well as address cross cutting enablers including sustainable investments in the blue economy; digitalization; maritime clusters; Maritime Spatial Planning; and blue skills, careers, and jobs.

Since 2021, action-oriented cooperation between UfM countries, UfM Co-Presidency, UfM Secretariat, experts, and stakeholders is notably expressed by the **UfM Roadmap for the implementation of the 2021 Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy, as guidance document for the convergence and coordination of efforts, resources, projects, and activities between countries, donors, and stakeholders**. Supported by an easy-to-handle results-based monitoring, reporting, and evaluation system, the Roadmap provides an overview and analysis of the 10 Ministerial priorities based on an accurate and up to date mapping of ongoing initiatives, programs, projects, and promising processes and actions, together with suggested opportunities and pathways to be followed, launched, or scaled-up from the short to longer term.

The rich and dynamic community of Mediterranean Sustainable Blue Economy stakeholders is at the very heart of the UfM's SBE dossier and of the implementation of the Ministerial and its Roadmap. The [2024 UfM Stakeholder Conference on Sustainable Blue Economy](#) brings together in Athens, Greece, a representation of this Community in order to take stock of progress achieved, to discuss joint challenges and transformative tools and pathways for the Sustainable Development of the sectors of activities of the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean, and to set the path towards future political decisions.

The programme of the Conference will be structured around a high-level segment, 11 parallel multi-stakeholder workshops promoting interactive discussions supported by a moderator and a rapporteur, and by sessions in plenary format.

For further information and knowledge, kindly refer to the [2021 UfM Publication Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean Region](#), the [Mediterranean Blue Economy Stakeholder Platform \(MedBESP\)](#) and the [2021 EC Communication on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU](#).

# AT-A-GLANCE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

2nd UfM Stakeholder Conference on Sustainable Blue Economy

ID	Monday 19 February	Tuesday 20 February
9:00		<b>09:00-10:30</b> MS Workshop 3: Sustainable food from the Sea – Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture <b>Ballroom*</b>
10:00		<b>09:00-10:30</b> MS Workshop 4: Sustainable, climate- neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports <b>Conference Hall*</b>
11:00		10:30-11:00 COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)
12:00		<b>11:00-12:15</b> MS Workshop 5: Tackling marine litter for a sustainable blue economy <b>Ballroom*</b>
13:00	<b>11:00-12:15</b> MS Workshop 6: Sustainable Blue Economy initiatives under the territorial context of islands <b>Conference Hall*</b>	<b>12:15-13:30</b> MS Workshop 7: Sustainable maritime and coastal tourism <b>Ballroom*</b>
14:00	<b>12:15-13:30</b> MS Workshop 8: Ecosystem-based Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning as cross- sector enablers <b>Amphitheatre*</b>	13:00-14:00 Registration (main Hall) and Light Lunch (Peristyle, 1st floor)
15:00	<b>14:00-15:30</b> PLENARY OPENING SESSION <b>Amphitheater</b> Interpretation available in EN-FR-AR-GR	13:30-15:00 LUNCH BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)
16:00	15:30-16:00 COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)	<b>15:00-16:30</b> MS Workshop 9: Marine Renewable Energies <b>Ballroom*</b>
17:00	<b>16:00-17:30</b> MS Workshop 1*: Marine research and innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean. <b>Conference Hall*</b>	<b>15:00-16:30</b> MS Workshop 10: Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities <b>Conference            Hall*</b>
18:00	<b>16:00-17:30</b> MS Workshop 2: Blue skills, career pathways, and employment for a Sustainable Blue Economy <b>Amphitheatre*</b>	<b>15:00-16:30</b> MS Workshop 11: The blue finance process in the Mediterranean <b>Amphitheatre*</b>
19:00	16:30-16:45 COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)	<b>16:45-17:30</b> PLENARY CLOSING SESSION <b>Amphitheater</b> Interpretation available in EN-FR-AR-GR
20:00	<b>17:30-17:45</b> Wrap-up and brief announcements on Day 2 logistics/housekeeping (UfM)	
	18:00-19:30 NETWORKING COCKTAIL (Peristyle, 2nd floor)	

\* Interpretation available in EN FR



**DAY 1 – Monday 19 February 2024**

13:00-14:00 Registration (main Hall) and Light Lunch (Peristyle, 1<sup>st</sup> floor)

**PLENARY OPENING SESSION**

Room: Amphitheater  
*Interpretation available in EN-FR-AR-GR*

14:00-14:25 ***Opening remarks***

- HE Mr. Christos Stylianides, Minister for Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, Greece
- Mr. Ioannis Pappas, Deputy Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, Greece
- Video message from EU Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius
- Video message from UfM Secretary General Amb. Nasser Kamel
  
- Welcoming remarks by the President of Eugenides Foundation, Mr. Leonidas Dimitriades-Eugenides, Maritime Ambassador of the IMO

14:25 -14:45 ***Three years since the adoption of the 2nd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy: Taking stock and way forward***

- UfM EU Co-Presidency – Ms. Delilah Al Khudhairy, Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy, DG MARE
- UfM Jordan Co-Presidency - Mr. Mohammad Al-Sakran, Executive Director for Transport and Logistics, Aqaba Development Corporation
- UfM Secretariat – Mr. Almotaz Abadi, Deputy Secretary General

14:45 -15:25 ***Stakeholder perspectives:***

- Academia/research: Mr. Mounir Ghribi, Director of International Cooperation and Research Promotion, OGS
- International Organizations: Ms. Patrizia Busolini, Programme Management Officer, UNEP/MAP
- Civil society: Mr. Emad Adly, Director, RAED
- Local authorities: Ms. Maria Garcies i Ramon, Acting Executive Secretary, CPMR Intermediterranean Commission
- Private sector: Mr. Paul Holthus, CEO, World Ocean Council

**Moderated by:**

Dr. Fay Makantasi – Research Director, DIANEOSIS

Dr. Mounir Ghribi – Director of International Cooperation and Research Promotion (ICAP) at OGS and Director of the Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Blue Economy at EMUNI

15:25-15:30 ***Setting the scene for the parallel multi-stakeholder Workshops***

Mr. Manuel Pleguezuelo, Policy Officer, DG MARE

15:30-16:00 ***COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)***

#### **PARALLEL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS:**

- With a focus on sustainable and transformative pathways and policies, and in line with the 10 priorities of the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE, parallel multi-stakeholder thematic workshops will:
  - Address joint challenges and opportunities in key established and emerging economic sectors and activities of the Mediterranean blue economy, namely: sustainable food from the sea; sustainable maritime and coastal tourism; sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports; interactions between marine litter and the blue economy; and marine renewable energies.
  - Enable discussions on the status and outlook of key SBE tools and enablers, including sustainable blue finance; maritime clusters; digitalization; blue skills, careers, and jobs; MSP and ICZM; marine research and innovation; decarbonization and circularity; insularity; maritime safety and security of blue economy activities.
- Expected outputs will include future capacity-building, technical assistance, calls for proposals, initiatives, programs, and projects. Multi-stakeholder workshops will also promote the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, and the establishment of new partnerships.
- Each workshop will be comprised of thematic presentations followed by an interactive discussion, and will be facilitated by a moderator and a rapporteur.

16:00-17:30 **PARALLEL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS 1 AND 2**  
(Interpretation available in EN-FR)

**16:00-17:30 Multi-stakeholder workshop 1: Marine research and innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean<sup>1</sup>**

Room: Conference Hall (Interpretation available in EN FR)

*Research and Innovation (R&I) are enablers to address some of the most pressing shared challenges faced by the Mediterranean, including climate change, the overexploitation of fish stocks, overall biodiversity loss, and pollution from various sources.*

*R&I offers important opportunities for Med countries to sustainably use and develop their assets to the benefit of their economies, citizens, and environment. Among others, the collection and dissemination of robust scientific data and knowledge across the Mediterranean is essential to ensure evidence-based decision-making. The role of Maritime Clusters should also be highlighted as essential drivers for the uptake of sustainable innovation by businesses and other stakeholders.*

*A wide range of initiatives exist to support greater research and innovation capacity across the two shores of the Mediterranean. Yet, disparities persist, both between the Southern and Northern shores as well as across different SBE sectors.*

*In light of established and emerging opportunities to synergize efforts and resources, and to foster integration and collaboration across the region as called for by the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE and its Roadmap, the UfM has engaged since its inception in the Mission Restore our Oceans by 2030 and its Mediterranean Lighthouse Coordination Support Action 'BlueMissionMED' as well as with the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership.*

*The potential of Smart Specialization Strategies (S3) should also be further exploited across the Mediterranean. S3 are a useful tool to support the necessary innovation ecosystems at country and local levels. Recently, a dedicated support has been activated for S3 in the area of the Blue Economy, with international partnerships being established, including across the Mediterranean. The upcoming call for expressions of interest for new S3 partnerships, due on 29 March 2024, offers an opportunity for innovative partnerships across the Mediterranean and beyond.*

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<sup>1</sup> Main sources, among others (all workshop box descriptions):

- UfM Publication "Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region" (2021 Edition) <https://medblueeconomyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/file-library-6cc4cde446a35dd9b08d.pdf>
- FAO report "State of Mediterranean and Black Sea Fisheries in 2023" <https://www.fao.org/gfcm/publications/somfi/en/>
- UNEP MAP publication "From Pollution to Solution: a global assessment of marine litter and plastic pollution" <https://www.unep.org/resources/pollution-solution-global-assessment-marine-litter-and-plastic-pollution>

***Introductory presentations/speeches***

- Ms. Delilah Al Khudhairy, Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy, DG MARE
- Mr. Ruben Eiras, Secretary-General, Forum Oceano Blue Economy Cluster / WestMed National Hub/ Westmed Maritime Clusters Alliance
- Mr. Roberto Cimino, Vice President, Italian Blue Growth Cluster, Cluster BIG
- Ms. Hila Ehrenreich, CEO, National Center for Blue Economy, Israel

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

**Moderator:** Ms. Fedra Francocci, BlueMissionMED - Coordination and Support Action, Mission Restore Our Ocean

**Rapporteur:** Mr. George Bugeja, Senior Executive, Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) – SBEP Mediterranean Sea Basin Node



16:00-17:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 2: Blue skills, career pathways, and employment for a Sustainable Blue Economy**

Room: Amphitheatre (Interpretation available in EN FR)

*An acceleration of jobs and career opportunities across all Mediterranean blue economy sectors has taken place over the past decade: an important untapped potential exists in terms of evolving/new jobs and career pathways, especially for youth, within the green/blue transition in the region.*

*Grounded in the relevant role of fisheries and tourism, in particular in the Southern Mediterranean, many opportunities exist also in sectors such as sustainable aquaculture and fisheries/sustainable food from the Sea, blue biotech, zero-pollution and climate neutral maritime transport and ports, and marine renewable energies.*

*As already emerged since the first UfM Regional Seminar on Skills, Careers and Employment in the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean in 2019, in order to support a fully sustainable blue economy underpinned by quality jobs and career pathways, innovative training and educational curricula targeting a wide range of new hard and soft skillsets is needed (i.e. within life-long learning, TVET, aimed at re-skilling/up-skilling, supporting the school-to-work transition, and beyond traditional higher education curricula). This is especially true for sectors such as offshore renewable energy, where shortages in existing skills exist, and job vacancies are expected to triple by 2030.*

*Progress is also needed in order to close the mismatch between the skills of the labour force and the needs of an evolving market. This translates into raising the attractiveness of career pathways in the maritime sectors; leveraging opportunities aimed at women and youth, including addressing brain-drain; and strengthening the enabling environment for 'blue' entrepreneurship.)*

*Effective employment and career support requires greater cooperation through decentralized approaches, from local to regional level (quadruple helix approach involving public, private, research, and tertiary-sector stakeholders), as well as increased engagement from the private sector.*

**Introductory presentations/speeches**

- Mr. Zacharias Siokouros, CEO, Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute
- Ms. Rositsa Stoeva, Executive Manager in charge of Project Management and Cooperation with International and Regional Organizations, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

- Mr. Mounir Ghribi, Director of International Cooperation and Research Promotion (ICAP) at OGS and Director of the Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Blue Economy at EMUNI / EMFAF Flagship Project
- Mr. Ioannis Gkolias, Emeritus Professor, Governor of the Eugenides Foundation, Greece
- Ms. Anna Majó Crespo, Director of Strategic Sectors and Innovation, Barcelona Activa
- Mr. Tarek Tawfik, President, BusinessMed
- Mr Richard Sempere, Director, Ocean Sciences Institute, University of Aix-Marseille; member of the Mediterranean Maritime Cluster (Pôle mer Méditerranée) Steering Committee
- Ms. Assia Elakhras, Counsellor, Mission of Palestine to the EU

#### ***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

**Moderator:** Ms. Adriana Salazar, SBE Expert, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Afef Tlili, UfM Consultant for the SFS Med Platform and Ms. Celia Murcia, Consultant and WestMED Assistance Mechanism Coordinator

17:30-17:45 **Wrap-up and brief announcements on Day 2 logistics/housekeeping Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)**

18:00-19:30 **NETWORKING COCKTAIL** (*Peristyle, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor*)

## DAY 2 – Tuesday 20 February 2024

09:00-10:30 **PARALLEL MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS 3 and 4**  
(Interpretation available in EN-FR)

09:00-10:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 3: Sustainable food from the Sea – Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture**  
Room: Ballroom (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*As drivers of the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region, the role of fisheries and aquaculture within the blue/green transition in the region is essential.*

*Small scale fisheries have historically supported coastal communities across the Mediterranean, representing 82% of the fishing fleet and 15% of total catch, and with particular importance in the Southern shores of the basin. However, while the fisheries and aquaculture sector is key for food security and livelihoods across the region, producing 2 million tonnes annually and accounting for 700.000 jobs along the value chain, the sustainability of fishing in the Mediterranean is at risk, with more than 85% of the scientifically assessed stocks being caught beyond safe biological limits.*

*In this context, the Mediterranean fisheries and aquaculture sectors must accelerate the shift towards sustainability, circularity, zero-pollution, and carbon-neutral value chains, fully integrating the principles of sustainable consumption and production (SCP), for example by reducing discards and waste from the sectors and ensuring the traceability of food products. Enhancing food quality while meeting market demands and ensuring sustainable jobs will require (inter alia), the transformation of entire production and value chains, sustainable investments, innovation, and leveraging the potential of digitalization.*

*Additionally, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture practices must be part of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), where applicable. Further sustainable expansion of aquaculture in the Mediterranean as per other Sea Basins depends on the availability of suitable space. MSPs should refer to AZAs as a priority in order to responsibly develop, manage, and transform the sector.*

*An AZA is a coastal area resulting from a zoning process within the framework of marine spatial planning (MSP) which identifies sites that are suitable for aquaculture while also minimizing conflicts with other users and uses (i.e. tourism, marine protected areas (MPAs), small-scale fisheries (SSF)), maritime routes, or military zones).*

***Introductory presentations/speeches***

- Mr. Nabil Anwari, Head of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Fisheries, Morocco
- Mr. Antonis Rokakis, President, Chania Chamber of Commerce
- Mr Ahmed Taleb Moussa, Director, Ministry in charge of fisheries and Blue Economy Focal Point to the African Union - Mauritania
- Mr. Georgios Paximadis, Aquaculture Specialist, GFCM/FAO
- Mr. Sheme Kondi, Managing Director, AlMarina Or, Albania
- Mr. Jose Maria Solano Lopez, Ministry in charge of Fisheries / Spanish network of local fisheries groups, Spain
- Mr. Massimo Zuccaro, Scientific Administrator, CIHEAM -IAMB

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

***Moderator:*** Mr. Manuel Pleguezuelo, Policy Officer, DG MARE

***Rapporteur:*** Ms. Siân Ringrose, Head of IP Development and Commercialisation, AquaBio Tech Group, Malta



**09:00-10:30 Multi-stakeholder workshop 4: Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports**

Room: Conference Hall (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*This workshop will address the vital and strategic role of maritime transport in the Mediterranean, its role in ensuring connectivity among UfM Member Countries, the potential of the shipping sector in reducing global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and in adopting fully circular models, and the need for maritime transport and ports across the Mediterranean to address shared environmental, climate change, and societal/social challenges. Indeed, greening maritime transport is amongst the most pressing challenges in the region.*

*Overall, maritime transport is one of the most well-established blue economy sectors in the Mediterranean, both in terms of growth and employment opportunities. Air and marine pollution from ships is a major environmental challenge in the Mediterranean that represents less than 1 per cent of the world's oceans but is one of the busiest seas in the world, supporting 20 per cent of seaborne trade, with significant impacts on marine and coastal ecosystems, human health, and on other blue economy activities.*

*Taking into account the expected continued growth of the maritime transport sector over the coming years, innovative solutions and mitigation measures are necessary to tackle the related negative environmental and social impacts. At the same time, maritime transport is becoming increasingly digitalized, which presents both a challenge and an opportunity.*

*The sector must accelerate market-readiness for zero-emission technologies, which in turn implies the mobilization of significant investments in equipment and infrastructure across the sea basin. The workshop will therefore also aim to foster an inclusive discussion on stimulating investments in more sustainable maritime transport and ports.*

***Introductory presentations/speeches***

- Mr. George D. Pateras, Deputy Chairman, Contships management Inc. and President of the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping, Greece
- Mr. Alex Josephides, Deputy Director General, Cyprus Shipping Chamber
- Mr. Alper Keçeli, Antalya District Harbour Master
- Mr. Mohammad Al-Sakran, Executive Director for Transport and Logistics, Aqaba Development Corporation, Jordan

- Mr. Paul Holthus, CEO, World Ocean Council, partner in GREEN MARINE MED, EMFAF Project
- Ms. Laurence Martin, Secretary General of the Maritime Industrial Cluster - Federazione del Mare
- Mr. Mario Dogliani, SDG4MED, Director General SDG4MED, Team Leader POWER4MED EMFAF Project
- H.E. Admiral Reda Ismaiel, President of the Maritime Transport Sector, Egypt

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

***Moderator:*** Ms. Sevtap Ozdogan, Maritime Expert, Türkiye

***Rapporteur:*** Mr. Leonardo Manzari, WestMED National Hub Italy

10:30-11:00 ***COFFEE BREAK*** (*Peristyle, 1st floor*)

11:00-12:15 ***PARALLEL SESSIONS: MULTI STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS 5 AND 6***  
(Interpretation available in EN-FR)

11:00-12:15 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 5: Tackling marine litter for a sustainable blue economy**

Room: Ballroom (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*There is no Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean Sea without healthy and restored ecosystems. More than 12 million tonnes of plastic waste enter the ocean every year, threatening marine ecosystems, as well as human health and sea-based economies.*

*The Mediterranean Sea is one of the most affected areas in the world by marine litter (ML), polluted by an estimated 730 tonnes of plastic waste every day. With most ML entering the Sea from land-based sources (40-50%), sea-based sources also contribute with significant litter inputs. Plastics in particular (macro and micro) are ubiquitous in Mediterranean coastal and marine environments and leakage/discharge can occur at all stages of the production-use-disposal cycle. Plastics, mostly single use (SUP), make up 60% of all marine litter collected in beaches.*

*Circularity principles applied to economic processes and value chains, and changes in citizen's/consumer's behaviours and lifestyles are essential to sustainably reshape and rethink our consumption and production patterns. Furthermore, as marine litter pollution does not know borders, close collaboration at regional level is essential.*

*Geared towards tackling the ML challenge across the basin in a coordinated and synergistic manner and building on the results of (inter alia) the UfM-labelled Plastic Busters Initiative and TouMaLi Project, and the Mission Oceans and its Mediterranean Lighthouse (BlueMissionMED coordination support action and its related Innovation Actions), this workshop will aim to further operationalize synergies among ongoing actions at regional level; enhance cross-fertilization among organizations and projects; and promote upscaling and capitalization of relevant findings, monitoring protocols, and mitigation measures in the Mediterranean region.*

**Introductory presentations/speeches**

- Mr. Fuad alHourani, Jordan University
- Mr. Cyril Dewaleyne, Team Leader – Connectivity, Environment, and Climate Action, DG NEAR
- Ms. Cristina Fossi, Full Prof. of Ecotoxicology, University of Siena (video message)
- Ms. Fedra Francocci, BlueMissionMED - Coordination Support Action, Mission Restore Our Ocean

- Ms. Olfat Hamdan – Head of MED POL, UNEP/MAP
- Mr. Fouad Guenatri, Ministry of Fishing and Fishery Products, Algeria
- Ms. Nour El Houda Chaher, Research Associate & Project Manager, University of Rostock, Toumali Project
- Ms. Olga Stavropoulou, Director General, HELMEPA, Greece

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

**Moderator:** Mr. Michael J. Scoullou, Team Leader, Water and Environment Support (WES) Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Southern Neighborhood region

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Thomais Vlachogianni, Senior Programme/Policy Officer, MIO-ECSDE & Senior Marine Litter Expert, Plastic Busters Initiative



11:00-12:15 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 6: Sustainable Blue Economy initiatives under the territorial context of islands**

Room: Conference Hall (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*Islands constitute a key feature of the national territory of many countries. The characteristics of islands vary greatly, depending on location, distance from the mainland, size of the territory and population, and institutional setting. However, islands have additional specific characteristics, which are also common and permanent, and which clearly distinguish them from other territories. In general, long-term development perspectives are fragile even on high performing islands, because of the predominance of low value-added activities based on the exploitation of often-scarce resources. Archipelagos and other situations of double insularity brings extra levels of complexity. These bottlenecks and a lack of economic diversity accentuate the vulnerability of island economies to fluctuations in macroeconomic conditions and to global megatrends (especially globalization, population ageing and migration, digitalization and technological change, and climate change).*

*In recent years, the concept of the blue economy has emerged as a significant potential driver of sustainable economic growth. Recognizing this potential, islands, both large and small, are looking to discover new opportunities that 'blue economy' can offer. Adopting sustainable blue economy development pathways can help islands turn their challenges into opportunities by harnessing their unique advantages.*

*For islands, the importance of the blue economy stems from the fact that most are endowed with extensive marine areas that far exceed their land space. Countries that fully implement the blue economy concept have the triple potential of realizing socioeconomic development benefits that address economic structural challenges and inclusion ambitions, while at the same time improving environmental sustainability and climate resilience.*

*Efforts to implement the blue economy must be strategic, integrated and cross-sectoral. This requires the establishment of a complex set of measures and tools to (inter alia) mitigate and adapt to climate change, create decent jobs and diverse livelihood opportunities, reduce economic inequalities, and face the issue of insularity. Implementation of a blue economy framework in islands requires the inclusion and participation of all relevant sectors and stakeholders, such as government, private sector, civil society and universities/academia.*

***Introductory presentations/speeches***

- Ms. Boile Maria, Head of Unit on Transport, Economics and Environment, University of Pireus, Greece
- Ms. Maria Garcies i Ramon, Acting Executive Secretary, CPMR Intermediterranean Commission
- Capt. Jesmond Misfud, Malta Maritime Forum
- Mr. Nikolaos Tsipiras, Network of the Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the European Union – INSULEUR
- Mr. Maxime Prodromides, President, SMILO – Small Islands Organisation
- Mr. Pablo Bou Mira, Business Development Manager, Catalan Network for Blue Innovation (BlueNetCat)
- Mr. Demetris Francis Lekkas, member of the Scientific Board, Circular Economy and Climate Institute; Associate Professor of Environmental Engineering and Science, University of the Aegean, Greece

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

***Moderator:*** Mr. Manolis Koutoulakis, General Secretary, General Secretariat for the Aegean and Island Policy, Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy, Greece

***Rapporteur:*** Mr. Antonis Avranas, Maritime Transport Attaché, Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU

12:15-13:30 ***PARALLEL SESSIONS: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS 7 AND 8***  
(Interpretation available in EN-FR)

12:15-13:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 7: Sustainable maritime and coastal tourism**

Room: Ballroom (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*The Mediterranean is among the world's leading tourist destinations and the sector is an important driver of the Mediterranean economy. As reported by the UfM, in fact, already in 2021 the sector contributed to 11.3% of GDP, 11.5% of exports, 6.4% of capital investments and 11.5% of total employment in the Mediterranean.*

*With coastal and sea-based tourism representing a leading 'blue economy' sector, in terms of value added and employment across the basin, tourism is also a catalyst for young entrepreneurship, Medium and Small Size Enterprises (MSME) growth, and overall local development, whether rural or urban. All such aspects make coastal and maritime tourism a sector with a significant impact on the social dimension of Sustainable Development across the Mediterranean region.*

*However, for the sector to remain competitive, a new and stronger approach to cooperation across all levels of governance is needed in the coming years, as well as a stronger uptake of innovation both in terms of sustainable technologies and business models. A transformative change is required across the sector's value chains and innovation ecosystems in the Mediterranean, in order to fully express and capture the benefits of shifting towards more sustainable and innovative tourism models in the Mediterranean.*

*Positioning the Mediterranean as a truly 'green' and sustainable tourism destination will require (inter alia) the application of resource efficiency and carbon-neutrality principles, the development of small and micro-scale sustainable cruising/boating opportunities and the adoption of innovative approaches to support the entire value chains of the sector. This would include, for example, standardized labelling/certifications for eco-tourism services and destinations, as well as new and targeted curricula, vocational training, and capacity building (including both for horizontal soft skills, as well as for tackling digital literacy, managerial skills, education for sustainable development (ESD), etc.*

*Efforts should also be strengthened towards small and micro enterprises and local touristic offers, in order to offer greater sustainable products/services diversification, and as a way of tackling seasonality, promoting access to new markets/niches, and leveraging the potential offered by digitalization in a sustainable manner. Increased efforts should be dedicated to capitalizing on the socio-economic benefits of the sector for local communities across the Mediterranean region, and as an engine for local sustainable development.*

### ***Introductory presentations/speeches***

- Ms. Alessandra Priante, Director, Regional Department for Europe, UNWTO (video message)
- Mr. Alessandro Miraglia, Team Leader - Networking, Partnerships and Communication, MedWaves
- Ms. Elena Ortega, Coordinator, General Secretariat of Sustainability, Environment and Blue Economy; Technical Manager, Andalusian Sustainable Blue Economy Strategy
- Mr. Shaun Patrick Ebejer – Ministry for Transport, Infrastructure and Capital Projects, Malta
- Mr. Ioannis Pappas, Eco-cruising, Fu-TOUR, EMFAF flagship project
- Ms. Zahra Fatimetou, Director of Cooperation, National Tourism Office, Mauritania
- Mr. Constantin Tsakas, Program Officer, Socio-economic Analysis on Blue Economy, Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre
- Mr. Arnau Teixidor, Programme Manager, IUCN-Med

### ***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

**Moderator:** Mr. Michele Colavito, UfM Tourism Expert

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Johanna Klein, UfM Consultant



12:15-13:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 8: Ecosystem-based Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) as cross-sector enablers**

Room: Amphitheatre (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*The 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE highlights the importance of ecosystem-based MSP and ICZM as essential tools and enablers to facilitate the sustainable development of maritime and coastal activities in the Mediterranean, with ICZM being integrated within MSP in order to ensure greater synergies through the land-sea interaction principle.*

*Furthermore, in the framework of the Roadmap for the implementation of the 2021 Ministerial, UfM countries have chosen to prioritize MSP as an 'immediate/short-term' priority due to its cross-cutting potential and role as cross-sectoral enabler.*

*When establishing and implementing ecosystem-based MSP, the aim is to ensure that the collective pressure from all activities is kept within levels compatible with the achievement of good environmental status and healthy ecosystem services, thus promoting the sustainable development of maritime and coastal economies and the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.*

*The application of the ecosystem-based approaches should be adapted to the different contexts, taking also into consideration the ongoing work in the framework of the relevant Regional Sea Conventions.*

*In light of the increasing competition for the use of marine and coastal space and resources in the Mediterranean, MSP/ICZM can therefore play an important role in strengthening cross-border cooperation and promoting co-existence; protecting the environment (i.e. through assigning protected areas, assessing negative impacts on ecosystems, and identifying opportunities for multiple uses of space); and encouraging investments through increased predictability, transparency, and legal certainty.*

*In the context of the existing EU policy framework and the broader political will to advance the MSP process in the Mediterranean, the WestMed Initiative have supported the establishment of an enlarged Mediterranean MSP Community of Practice (MED-MSP-CoP). The MSP, supported by the UfM, CoP is a voluntary expert group bringing together EU and non-EU countries working on MSP in the Mediterranean, with main objectives of establishing a permanent dialogue across borders between MSP experts (i.e. planners, technical experts, researchers), and exchanging knowledge and experiences in the region, aiming towards a shared and common perspective on MSP, and enhancing cooperation at basin level.*

***Introductory presentations/speeches***

- Mr. Christos Economou, Head of Unit for Maritime Regional Cooperation, DG MARE
- Ms. Isabelle Perret, Senior Expert IMP, Secretariat de la Mer, France
- Ms. Carole Martinez, Senior Programme Manager, MEDPAN
- Ms. Marina Markovic, Programme Officer, Priority Actions Programme/Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC)
- Mr. Ophir Paz-Pines, Founder and Chairman, Israel Coastal Authorities Forum
- Mr. Sergi Tudela i Casanovas, Director General, DG for maritime policy and sustainable fisheries, Government of Catalonia

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

**Moderator:** Mr. Thanos Smanis, EU MSP Platform

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Anja Detant, Project Manager, CINEA

13:30-15:00 **LUNCH BREAK** (*Peristyle, 1st floor*)

15:00-16:30 **PARALLEL SESSIONS: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS 9, 10, 11**  
(Interpretation available in EN-FR)

15:00-16:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 9: Marine Renewable Energies – Effective planning and future landscape**

Room: Ballroom (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*While the southernmost marine areas of the Mediterranean region have considerable energy potential, the development of MRE sources in the Mediterranean is for the time being slower for reasons related to natural conditions such as lower wind, tide, and current as well as greater depths.*

*Despite this, there are numerous locations in the Mediterranean Sea basin with considerable development potential, to the benefit of the clean energy transition in and for the entire region. For instance, offshore wind has a huge potential and it is predicted that it could increase energy production up to 12 GW in 2030 and to 40 GW in 2050 in EU Mediterranean countries.*

*Along with the opportunity to generate clean 'blue' power, the deployment of renewable offshore facilities can play an important role in strengthening energy diversification in the region and stimulating economic growth through R&I and job creation.*

*Targeted investments are key to harness the potential of renewable energies in the Med, while positioning them at the heart of further carbon-neutral economic development. In this respect, the 2050 target of the European Union to decarbonize the economy by 80–90% will undoubtedly see Marine Renewable Energies playing a key role.*

**Introductory presentations/speeches**

- Ms. Flora Karathanasi, Offshore Wind Development Consultant, Hellenic Hydrocarbons and Energy Resources Management Company
- Ms. Marisa Lameiras da Silva, Director General for Maritime Policy and WestMed Steering Committee co-chair, Portugal
- Mr. Manuel Pleguezuelo, Policy Officer, DG MARE
- Ms. Cristina Simioli, Director Offshore Energy and Nature, Renewables Grid Initiative
- Mr. Georges Youssef, Mayor of Menjez (Lebanon); Board member, Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy
- Ms. Olfa Bouazizi, Tunisia NSI responsible for energy statistics; Lead Coordinator for energy, transport, and related SDGs, MEDSTAT V
- Mr. Samir Bachouche, Head of Division, National Research Centre, Algeria

***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

***Moderator:*** Mr. Mauro Randone, Regional Projects Manager, WWF

***Rapporteur:*** Mr. Javier Fernandez, Sea Basins Assistance Mechanism



15:00-16:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 10: Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities**

Room: Conference Hall (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*There is no Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean without concerted efforts and coordination to ensure a high level of maritime safety and security throughout the basin, to the benefit of the citizens of the region, our sea-based economies, and our maritime and coastal ecosystems.*

*Consolidating regional cooperation, across sectors and borders, in key areas supporting maritime security (such as maritime surveillance, information exchange, capacity building, and research and innovation), is therefore essential in order to prevent, facilitate early identification, and halt illicit activities in the Mediterranean resulting in negative social, economic, or environmental impacts.*

*In the 2021 UfM Ministerial on Sustainable Blue Economy, UfM Ministers welcomed the active role of the Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MedCGFF) in enhancing regional cooperation and promoting the shared understanding of maritime issues of common interest, both civil and military.*

*A number of opportunities now exist for innovation and development across the maritime safety and security sectors in the Mediterranean, including strengthening training, capacity building, and technical assistance, as well as fostering the exchange of information, expertise, and best practices/lessons learned across all shores of the basin.*

**Introductory presentations/speeches**

- Mr. Christos Economou, Head of Unit for Maritime Regional Cooperation, DG MARE
- Mr. Orlando Costa, Head of Unit, General Directorate for Maritime Policy, Portugal
- Commander Nikos Matoulas, Head of Unit for the EU and International Organisations in the Hellenic Coastguard
- Commander Emrush Bejdo, Chief of Operations and Training, Albanian Coast Guard Head Quarters
- Mr. Erik Noor, Project Officer for Technical Assistance to ENP countries, European Maritime Security Agency (EMSA)

**Interactive discussion and key takeaways**

**Moderator:** Mr. Leonardo Manzari, WestMED National Hub Italy

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Irene Alonso, Sea Basins Assistance Mechanism

15:00-16:30 **Multi-stakeholder workshop 11: The blue finance process in the Mediterranean – Boosting sustainable investments in the Med Blue Economy**

Room: Amphitheatre (Interpretation available in EN-FR)

*The Mediterranean sustainable blue finance process has gained momentum over the past years as a key opportunity to drive innovative and sustainable finance and investments towards the sectors and activities of the Med Sustainable Blue Economy, to the benefit of the region's citizens, economies, and ecosystems. While sea-based activities in the Med generate an annual economic value of at least US\$450 billion, this source of wealth is threatened by a number of serious challenges, including over-fishing, pollution and environmental degradation, and climate change.*

*Following up on the first UfM Conference on Blue Finance 'Investing in a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean' (Barcelona, June 2022), and recognizing the value and potential of the sectors and activities of the Med SBE and of the related environment and climate-related challenges, the UfM, the EC, EBRD, EIB, AFD, donors, and three initial Beneficiary Partners (Morocco, Egypt and Jordan) have intensified efforts towards the establishment of the Blue Mediterranean Partnership (BMP), first announced during COP27 in Sharm-El-Sheikh.*

*Exactly one year later, at COP28, donors, including the EC, Sida, and AFD, made formal statements announcing their respective pledges. The Partners intend to establish the BMP as a platform/Fund to enable Sustainable Blue Economy investments especially in non-EU Mediterranean countries and in line with the 2021 UfM Ministerial on SBE.*

*Aiming to promote cooperation, engagement, stewardship, and corporate responsibility from the business and investment communities in maritime and marine sectors and activities at Mediterranean level, in March 2023 the UfM also signed an MoU with the World Ocean Council (WOC) in the framework of the 2021 UfM Ministerial on SBE and its Roadmap, and of the WestMED Initiative.*

### **Introductory presentations/speeches**

- Ms. Delilah Al Khudhairi, Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy, DG MARE – *BlueInvest*
- Ms. Camilla Otto, EBRD – Blue Mediterranean Partnership (BMP) (video message)
- Mr. Mohammad Al Sakran, Director, Aqaba Development Corporation, Jordan
- H.E. Admiral Reda Ismaiel, President of the Maritime Transport Sector, and Ms. Marwa

Zeidan, International cooperation Official, Maritime Transport Sector,  
Ministry of Transport - Egypt

- Mr. Nabil Anwari, Head of Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Fisheries, Morocco
- Mr. Anisse Terai, Director, TELL Group in charge of PLIFF

### ***Interactive discussion and key takeaways***

**Moderator:** Mr. Andrea Tinagli, EIB Representative at the UfM Governing Bodies & Principal Advisor for sustainable finance and investments

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Francesca Torresi, EIB and Mr Matteo Bocci, Sea Basins Assistance Mechanism

16:30-16:45 **COFFEE BREAK** (*Peristyle, 1st floor*)

### **PLENARY CLOSING SESSION**

Room: Amphitheatre  
(Interpretation available in EN-FR-AR-GR)

### 16:45-17:15 **SPOTLIGHT ON PROJECTS**

- CINEA, Ms. Anja Detant, Project Manager (including Start-up Challenge WESTMED Projects' Awards winner ed. 2021)
- DG NEAR, Mr. Cyril Dewaleyne, Team Leader, Connectivity, Environment and Climate Action
- Interreg NEXT MED, Mr. Aldo Puleo, Programme Officer of the Managing Authority
- Interreg Euro-MED, Mr. Guillaume Javourez, Project Officer

**Moderator:** Ms. Alessandra Sensi, Head of Sector – Environment Green and Blue Economy, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

**Rapporteur:** Ms. Maria Caldero Pascual, Coordinator of the Interreg Euro-MED Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission, BETA Technological Center (UVIC-UCC)

17:15-17:30 **CLOSING REMARKS AND WAY FORWARD** – UfM Co-Presidency,  
UfM Secretariat, Greece





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