

Towards a Sustainable Blue Economy for the Mediterranean Sea basin



2nd UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY

OUTCOMES AND MAIN MESSAGES



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Background

Stakeholder engagement is at the core of the institutional mechanism set up towards the implementation of the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE) and its related Roadmap.

Within this framework, the 2nd UfM Stakeholder Conference on SBE hosted by Greece, brought together in Athens over 350 participants in order to take stock of progress achieved; discuss joint challenges and transformative tools and pathways for the Sustainable Development of the sectors and activities of the Mediterranean SBE; feed the Roadmap and the related next steps; and set the path towards future deliberations at political level.

A very rich and dynamic cross-section of Med SBE stakeholders from across the basin – including Palestine and Israel – took part in the Conference, affirming the strong collaborative spirit of the Mediterranean cooperation on Sustainable Blue Economy, at both technical and political level.

The Programme of the Conference¹ was structured around Opening and Closing Plenary Sessions and multiple Parallel Multi-stakeholder Workshops, promoting interactive discussions (i.e. through a participatory approach and the use of Mentimeter) and supported by a Moderator and a Rapporteur. Key outcomes and messages emerging from the parallel workshops dedicated to the 10 priorities of the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE are summarized here below:

OPENING PLENARY:

- The Conference was inaugurated by HE Mr. Christos Stylianides (Greek Minister for Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy) with the support of Mr. Ioannis Pappas (Deputy Minister), together with video messages delivered by EU Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius and by UfM Secretary General Amb. Nasser Kamel, highlighting SBE as one of the top priorities in the Mediterranean Region and welcoming the role of the UfM in making cross-sectorial and cross-border collaboration on SBE a reality.
- The UfM EU and Jordan Co-Presidency represented by Ms. Delilah Al Khudhairi, Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) of the European Commission, and Mr. Mohammad Al-Sakran, Executive Director, Aqaba Development Corporation, together with the UfM Secretariat represented by Deputy Secretary General of the Water, Environment and Blue Economy Division, Mr. Almotaz Abadi, further stressed the role of the UfM as pioneer on SBE in the region, with the adoption of an unprecedented and forward-looking Ministerial Declaration in 2021 and a Roadmap for implementation, raising the level of collective ambition. Conference participants were also welcomed by the President of Eugenides Foundation, Mr. Leonidas Dimitriadis-Eugenides.

¹ [Further details on the Conference can be found on the Mediterranean Blue Economy Stakeholder Platform, managed by the UfM Secretariat.](#)

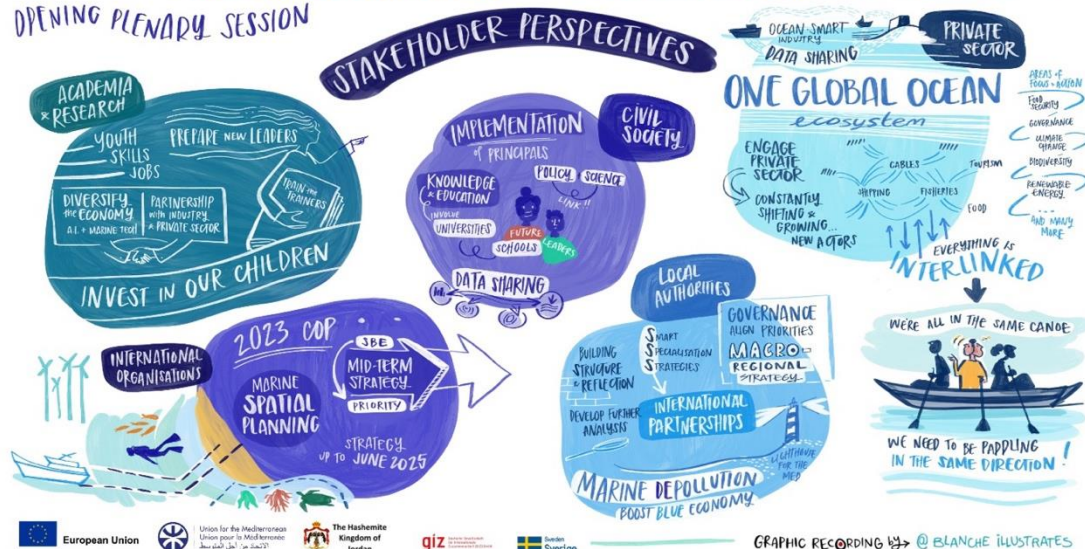
- Three years since the adoption of the 2nd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy, further considerations on 'taking stock and the way forward' were shared by the UfM EU and Jordan Co-Presidency.
- A panel dedicated to the diverse stakeholder perspectives that characterize the sectors and activities of the Med SBE brought the Opening Plenary to a close, featuring interventions by key representatives of academia/research, International Organizations, civil society, local authorities, and the private sector. The panel served to showcase SBE as 'the example' of science diplomacy; highlighting the existing cooperation frameworks that can be mobilized to support SBE as well as potential new ones, such as the macroregional strategy; and stressing the importance of local communities' engagement, the importance of innovation tools including smart specialization strategies, the multiple options to build circular business models, and the overall need for a peaceful and stable Mediterranean where to move and operate.

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OPENING PLenary SESSION



Multi-stakeholder workshop 1: Marine research and innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean

- *Integration of Research and Innovation:* Participants emphasized the need for enhanced collaboration and integration of marine research and innovation efforts. Integration was identified as a crucial factor in addressing complex challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable resource management.
- *Technological Solutions:* The workshop highlighted innovative technologies as essential tools for advancing sustainable practices in the Blue Economy. Discussions centered on the role of technology in monitoring and managing marine ecosystems, promoting efficient fisheries, and developing clean energy solutions.
- *Cross-Sectoral Cooperation:* Stakeholders emphasized the importance of cross-sectoral cooperation, encouraging partnerships between academia, industry, and government. Such collaboration was deemed essential for creating comprehensive solutions balancing economic development with environmental conservation.
- *Capacity Building and Education:* there was large consensus on the central importance of capacity building and education to empower local communities and professionals. Strengthening knowledge and skills in marine research and innovation is seen as pivotal for the successful implementation of sustainable practices.
- *Inclusivity and Stakeholder Engagement:* Inclusivity emerged as a guiding principle, emphasizing the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders in decision-making processes. The workshop stressed the need for ongoing engagement with local communities, NGOs, and the private sector.
- *Policy Frameworks:* The discussion explored the role of effective policy frameworks in promoting sustainable practices. Participants highlighted the need for coherent policies that align with international standards and considering the unique challenges of the Mediterranean region.
- *Economic Viability:* Balancing economic interests with environmental sustainability emerged as a central theme. Participants discussed strategies to promote economic viability while safeguarding marine ecosystems and ensuring human well-being and livelihoods, thus acknowledging the delicate balance required.
- *Call for Action:* Participants underscored the urgency of immediate action to address pressing challenges in the Mediterranean's SBE. Workshop participants issued a collective call for stakeholders to actively engage in implementing sustainable solutions, practices, and policies. The outcomes of the session reflect a strong commitment towards collaborative, sustainable, and inclusive practices aimed at ensuring a thriving SBE across the region.

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

Multi-stakeholder workshop 2: Blue skills, career pathways, and employment for a Sustainable Blue Economy

- Jobs and career opportunities across all Mediterranean SBE sectors have accelerated in the region over the past decade and virtually all SBE sectors (both traditional and emerging) are projected to grow in the years to come, until 2030 and beyond. The sectors and activities of the SBE in the Mediterranean also have the potential to play a central role in the green/blue transition in the region (decarbonization, furthering the energy transition, etc.).
- Steering and harnessing this potential to the benefit of our citizens, our environment, and our economies also requires us to face a number of challenges. While we are one of the youngest regions in the world (1 out of 3 Med citizens are under the age of 25), we also face one of the highest youth unemployment rates globally, compounded by a high incidence of youth not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET).
- Key needs/challenges identified during the workshop included:
 - Enhancing our ability to capture/meet the demand in emerging sectors (i.e. offshore renewables, blue biotech, aquaculture, algae production, etc.).
 - Addressing the skills gap between the evolving needs of the market and the skills of the current workforce, namely through a demand-driven approach and by focusing on life-long learning; re-skilling and up-skilling; Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET); enhancing employability through certification; academic mobility; updating, standardizing, and diversifying educational curricula and training; boosting training on soft-skills; and enhancing interdisciplinarity.
 - Tackling brain drain and boosting local ecosystems' ability to support quality blue jobs and career pathways, especially in the South/East of the basin.
 - Significantly increasing private sector engagement (school-to-work transition, mentorship, matchmaking, etc.).
 - Improving communication and coordination between stakeholders at all levels (i.e. through sector-specific partnerships), and especially between academia and the private sector.
 - Communication/outreach/educational efforts should also aim to improve the perception of jobs/careers in SBE, especially among youth and women, and beginning at the early stages of education (i.e. in some SBE sectors women's integration is largely limited to the handling/processing and marketing stages of the value chain; significant barriers exist in traditionally male-dominated industries such as Energy/MRE). The relevance of ESD and ocean literacy were also stressed.
- Maritime Clusters were identified as important strategic actors to support sustainable growth and job competitiveness across the region. Clusters can play a

pivotal role in promoting the uptake of innovation, fostering internationalization, acting as nodes for knowledge transfer (i.e. N-S), enhancing access to finance, and ensuring that support provided is effective and locally grounded. In the Med, Maritime Clusters register a lack of competitive Managerial Staff often without specific innovation, entrepreneurial, and management skills or without specialization in specific but essential fields such as MSP.

- Consensus on the need to further promote knowledge/information exchange platforms at regional level. The Mediterranean Blue Economy Stakeholder Platform managed by the UfM Secretariat should play an increasing role in facilitating contacts between existing education networks, exchanging information including pedagogic tools, and serving as an interface for mobility programs.

Moderator: Ms. Adriana Salazar, SBE Expert, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMS)

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

Multi-stakeholder workshop 3: Sustainable food from the Sea – Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture

- A level playing field is needed: commonality and consistency are required to achieve growth of fisheries and aquaculture that is sustainable socially, economically, and environmentally.
- Advancing towards the harmonization of the Mediterranean's approach to challenges and perspectives is critical to achieve change at pace. This requires strong political will to drive collaborative and cooperative approaches. This also includes finding cross-sectoral complementarities. Improved regulation that is commonplace across the Mediterranean is critical.
- Training, Skills & Capacity Building is also crucial for the sectors' progress. There is equally a need for greater gender parity with more female representation at senior positions within the sector. Enthusiasm and passion from youth should be better harnessed to support and drive initiatives, through improved knowledge sharing and integrated working between junior and senior staff/stakeholders is required.
- Leveraging the digital transition and smart data-driven governance is critical for understanding the baselines, predicting change and impacts, and identifying best practice interventions.
- Not all Mediterranean countries have the same status or are facing the same challenges. This poses a major challenge and demands honest discussion and dialogue regarding political and sectoral positions and practices. The UfM along with other forums are uniquely positioned to provide the right environment for these challenging discussions.
- Marine Protected Areas and Marine Spatial Planning are important tools that are available to help to develop cross-sectoral, cross-border, inter-regional dialogue on

such complex and sensitive matters.

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

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

Multi-stakeholder workshop 4: Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports

- Considering the current limited sustainability (toxicity, pollution, flammability, etc.) of many types of 'alternative fuels' (ammonia, Hydrogen, LNG, Methanol, etc.), there is an urgent need to significantly increase research efforts towards achieving the cleanest possible technological solutions and ensuring their wide adoption.
- There is an urgent need to identify economically/financially/fiscally viable models for shipowners, in particular small shipowners as vital actors of the Mediterranean entrepreneurial landscape. The 'costs' associated to the energy transition will largely impact the maritime transport sector.
- Investments, R&I, and the necessary enabling policy instruments should focus on improving the efficiency of vessels, adopting transitional fuels, and achieving Sustainable fuels.
- Best practices in Antalya and Aqaba were highlighted. In the Turkish Mediterranean capital of coastal tourism and commercial activities, compliance with the SECA targets along its 650 km coastline is expected already by end of 2024. Aqaba has focused on enhancing cohesion among the community of port operators so as maximize the impacts of common sustainable actions.
- The EC is engaged at multiple levels, namely by: recognizing the IMO as the suitable level of governance (gathering 74 countries); adopting cross-sectoral collaborative approaches, as key strategy to engage the largest possible ecosystem of stakeholders; acknowledging the competitiveness of the shipping industry as a key actor; setting 2040 emission reduction targets; setting the development of fuel technologies, as high priority within the Net Zero Technology Act; and awarding significant EMFAF projects in the sector (i.e. GREEN MARINE MED and POWER4MED).
- As a follow-up to the first UfM Conference on Greening Ports and Maritime Transport organised in Barcelona in June 2023 and given that this topic is a shared priority both of the UfM Regional Transport Action Plan and the UfM SBE Roadmap, UfM HoS for Transport Mr Francesc Carbonell suggested the possibility of holding back-to-back with the UfM Regional Platform on SBE (former UfM WG on SBE) an event/meeting/conference on these matters, possibly linking with Maritime Clusters.

Moderator: Ms. Sevtap Ozdogan, Maritime Expert, Türkiye

Rapporteur: Mr. Leonardo Manzari, WestMED National Hub Italy

Multi-stakeholder workshop 5: Tackling marine litter for a sustainable blue economy

- The detrimental effects of plastics (the majority of which are single-use plastics) in Mediterranean coastal and marine environments extends to the economic sustainability of the region's coastal communities by affecting key sectors such as tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, and shipping.
- In the Mediterranean, there exists an advanced policy and regulatory framework for tackling marine litter. Although countries have made strides in monitoring, reporting, and implementing measures, significant efforts are still required to attain good environmental status.
- Methodological discrepancies continue to affect marine litter monitoring in the Mediterranean, hindering data comparability. Further progress is needed to implement harmonized monitoring approaches aligned with advancements at the Barcelona Convention and EU levels.
- The entry of plastic litter into the marine environment occurs through a multitude of points and diffuse sources, originating from both land-based and ocean-based sources. Rivers constitute a significant pathway of marine litter, contributing to the proliferation of plastics in the coastal and marine environment. This underscores the need for a coordinated and holistic approach to tackle marine plastic pollution at its source (source-to-sea approach).
- To effectively address marine plastic pollution, a thorough and comprehensive understanding of all aspects of plastics is essential, including their composition, degradation mechanisms, recycling feasibility, among others. Sound scientific and up-to-date knowledge is not readily available and accessible to all stakeholders, often resulting in misconceptions and 'false' solutions. Empowering stakeholders with insights into the diverse dimensions of plastics makes them pivotal agents in driving viable solutions for marine litter.
- Numerous pilot projects for marine litter prevention and mitigation have been conducted in the Mediterranean. The challenge now is to scale up these pilot actions and experiences to regional and national levels. Transformative and innovative solutions in addressing marine litter also hinge on a multi-actor ecosystem where stakeholders (i.e. local coastal communities) play a pivotal role. Furthermore, the industry's involvement in the discussions, which has been rather limited thus far, should be reinforced as an integral part of the solution.
- Targeted and science-based awareness raising campaigns and educational activities represent essential measures to engage a diverse audience into propelling the paradigm shift needed. Clean-up efforts, although effective for raising awareness and altering mindsets or for restoring hotspot areas, do not provide a systemic solution to the core issue of marine litter pollution.
- Prioritizing accessibility and affordability of marine litter solutions within inclusive and just societies is paramount. In this context, social innovations related to how we

produce, distribute, and consume products should be regarded as a pivotal approach to moving away from the linear production and use of plastics to the circular one.

- Implementing more sustainable business models, both on and off-shore, is essential in addressing marine litter. This involves integrating principles of eco-design and the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) into business practices, encouraging innovation and fostering a culture of sustainability, securing sustainable financing mechanisms, implementing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes.
- Decarbonizing our economies holds immense potential to generate positive externalities in the realm of plastic pollution mitigation. By incentivizing circularity and reducing the reliance on single-use plastics, decarbonization initiatives contribute to mitigating plastic pollution.
- Further exploration is needed to understand how digitalization can help to address the marine litter crisis. Data analytics, remote sensing, and machine learning could improve monitoring and assessment, and support evidence-based decision-making and mitigation efforts.

Moderator: Mr. Michael J. Scoullas, 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

Multi-stakeholder workshop 6: Sustainable Blue Economy initiatives under the territorial context of islands

- 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 bring 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).
- The aim of the workshop was to elaborate on the territorial context on islands, when related to blue economy initiatives and policies, highlighting the strategic and operational value of SBE concept with strong spatial impact on island economies and communities.
- The multi-stakeholder workshop on Sustainable Blue Economy initiatives, highlighted the imperative of integrating sustainable practices within island

economies due to their unique geographical, ecological, and socio-economic features. The key takeaways from the workshop point towards the essential nature of adopting a holistic and tailored approach to address the distinct challenges and opportunities islands face.

- Islands, characterized by their limited size, geographical isolation, and close relationship with surrounding marine ecosystems, present a unique set of challenges including resource scarcity, vulnerability to climate change impacts, and economic insularity. These challenges are further compounded by their often dense networks of local communities and economies that are heavily reliant on the sea for livelihoods, culture, and sustenance. The workshop underscored the need for specific attention to these unique island characteristics when embedding sustainable blue economy initiatives, highlighting the importance of local context in sustainability efforts.
- One of the key insights from the workshop is the recognition of islands as potential 'closed systems' that offer unique opportunities for testing innovative approaches to sustainability. This encapsulates the idea that islands, due to their contained environments, can serve as ideal laboratories for pioneering and testing new sustainable practices, technologies, and governance models that could later be scaled or adapted to broader contexts.
- The workshop also illuminated the critical need for collaborative projects that specifically address the risks islands face, emphasizing the importance of engaging with local tourism authorities to integrate sustainable practices into policy frameworks. This collaborative approach is crucial for ensuring that sustainability initiatives are grounded in the local context and supported by all relevant stakeholders.
- In terms of economic development, there was a clear call for supporting the green transition, particularly in the transport sector, which is vital for islands. The adoption of practices such as shore-side electricity for ports represents a significant step towards decarbonizing crucial sectors and reducing the environmental footprint of island economies. Green and energy transitioning for islands, is closely related to the decarbonization procedure of transportation.
- The discussions further highlighted the unique economic landscapes of islands, often dominated by small-scale service tourism and agriculture. This underpins the necessity of involving private sector actors more actively in sustainability efforts, ensuring that economic activities on islands contribute to rather than detract from sustainable development goals.
- A noteworthy point of consensus was the existence of significant, albeit undercommunicated, strategies for diversifying island economies. The workshop participants agreed on the imperative of better promoting these strategies, building upon them to enhance their impact and reach.
- Finally, the workshop advocated for an ecosystem-based approach to sustainable development on islands, underlining the need for precise and comprehensive data

to inform decision-making. Such an approach would enable the formulation of robust, inclusive, and effective island-wise strategies for sustainable blue economies, ultimately leading to better integration of island communities into broader sustainability efforts.

- In essence, the workshop's key messages reflect a broader understanding that implementing Sustainable Blue Economy initiatives on islands requires a nuanced, integrated, and collaborative approach that takes into account the unique characteristics and challenges of island territories. This approach not only aims at environmental sustainability and climate resilience but also seeks to harness the economic and social opportunities inherent in the sustainable use of marine resources, ensuring that island communities can thrive in the face of global challenges.

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

Multi-stakeholder workshop 7: Sustainable maritime and coastal tourism

- Coastal and sea-based tourism is a leading blue economic sector in the region, providing important income generation and employment opportunities throughout the basin. Hard hit by the pandemic, the sector has rapidly recovered, and the rebound effect, visible in at least the countries on the Northern Mediterranean shore is putting increasing pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems. At the same time, the sector is highly vulnerable to climate change. With rising sea levels, increasing temperatures, and seasonal water shortages, the implementation of adaptation strategies will be of utmost importance moving forwards. To decrease the pressure on ecosystems, it will be important to consider ecosystems, biodiversity, and nature as important assets to promote a more sustainable tourism and to embrace sustainability as to create positive impacts generated by the tourism industry.
- The workshop focused on showcasing good examples from the micro to the national level that are already considering sustainability, as well as sound spatial planning.
- During the exchange, the importance of data and the need for constant data monitoring and analysis emerged. Based on this awareness, the UNWTO has promoted and supported the creation of a Coastal and Maritime Tourism Monitoring Centre to be based in Greece. This initiative further strengthens the UN Tourism International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO), that is a network of tourism observatories monitoring the economic, environmental and social impact of tourism at the destination level. The initiative is based on UN Tourism's long-standing commitment to the sustainable and resilient growth of the sector through measurement and monitoring, supporting the evidence-based management of tourism.

- The contributions during the workshop confirmed that good practices with regards to sustainable maritime and coastal tourism are under implementation by businesses (e.g. the examples of the Switcher Community or from Eco-cruising), on the municipal or destination level, on the regional level, as shown by the case of Andalusia, as well as on the national level (e.g. in Malta or Mauritania). All these examples are working on the diversification of the existing tourism offer, showing real opportunities on how to decrease the pressure on ecosystems, while at the same time promoting local economic development.
- However, to reach a broader application as well as positive impacts, mainstreaming and upscaling are necessary. To embed the principles of sustainable maritime and coastal tourism, collaboration on all levels is paramount. Multilevel governance models between municipalities and destinations, the regional and the national level will be necessary to create integrated and systemic approaches that do not only take economic opportunities into account, but are also considering broader sustainability dimensions, including the management of waste, the protection of biodiversity or adaptation to climate change. At the same time, countries in the Mediterranean must continue to learn from each other, as well as to define a joint vision as well as clear criteria for sustainable blue tourism.
- To be able to measure the overall impact of tourism on marine ecosystems, as well as the economy, there is a need for evidence-based information for monitoring, evaluation and planning. To advance this, Plan Bleu in collaboration with other stakeholders is currently developing joint indicators on the Mediterranean level. At the same time, capacity development programmes for Blue Tourism, as to be able to learn on how to define sound sustainable blue tourism projects are underway.

Moderator: Mr. Michele Colavito, UfM Tourism Expert

Rapporteur: Ms. Johanna Klein, UfM Consultant

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

- First acknowledged by the EU (MSP Directive) MSP is now considered to be a relevant instrument to plan economic activities at sea while considering environmental and social impacts, also on the Southern/Eastern shores of the Mediterranean. The 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE and the 2023 WestMED Ministerial confirm that MSP is one of the key priorities on which Med countries wish to work, exchange, and establish cooperation upon.
- So as to make good use of the available marine space, both Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) and MSP can support planning decisions, considering interactions between economic activities at sea and the impact of land-based activities on coasts and waters, integrating a concern for preserving biodiversity and mitigating the impact of our activities upon the environment.
- The regional dimension of MSP is crucial as to tackle the shared challenges facing our seas, and of the Mediterranean ecosystem. MSP is indeed also a useful

instrument for cross-border cooperation and transboundary planning.

- The energy transition and the ecological transition (biodiversity targets, processes to establish and manage MPAs, etc.) requires us to shift towards new ways of thinking and planning, whereby multi-use and co-use, cumulative impacts, ecosystem-based MSP, will need to be considered.
- For MSP to be successful in practice, learning from each other's experiences; dialogue across sectors and borders; involving all stakeholders at national, sub-national and local levels; and engaging coastal communities is crucial to ensure that policy decisions are understood and accepted, and that co-decision processes are put into practice.
- As ICZM, MSP and the establishment of MPAs share the same DNA as area-based approaches, the integration of planning for MPAs as part of the MSP process was identified as essential. Including marine conservation tools within MSP was identified as a key pathway to allow for integrated planning, and for synergies and coherence beyond the borders of zones and countries.
- Considering multiple sectoral needs and local interests, balancing sustainable economic goals and environmental needs for protection/restoration requires early engagement of stakeholders in the planning process. Examples were provided by the Israel Coastal Authorities Forum and by the Catalanian approach to MSP, making the case for ensuring that MSP fits to the geographical scale that matters and is applied through the appropriate governance approach.
- The panel underlined the importance of ecosystem approaches to MSP as well as the need engage in transboundary cooperation and collaboration across the Mediterranean.
- The importance of bridging the knowledge-gap between academia/science and (national, sub-national and local) authorities was also stressed. A science-policy dialogue around MSP, and a better integration of different legal instruments (MSP – MSFD) can help to enhance policy coherence and further ensure a true multidisciplinary approach to planning in the Med.
- The EC fully supports the exchange of knowledge and experience on MSP in the framework of the UfM Regional Platform on SBE and the WestMED Initiative Steering Committee. The value of the Med Community of Practice on MSP, supported by the UfM was highlighted, as well as the European Blue Forum that has been set up by DG MARE.

Moderator: Mr. Thanos Smanis, EU MSP Platform

Rapporteur: Ms. Anja Detant, Project Manager, CINEA

Multi-stakeholder workshop 9: Marine Renewable Energies – Effective planning and future landscape

- Though this sector is still at a relatively embryonic stage in the Med (few fully fledged projects on the ground), MRE is fully recognized as one of the key solutions for de-

carbonization.

- Comprehensive set of EU and regional initiatives which are fully embedding MRE, i.e.: 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on the SBE, 2023 reviewed priorities for the WestMED Initiative, 2021 EC communication on a new approach for the Sustainable Blue Economy. The neighboring Sea basin Strategy for the Atlantic is also working intensively to take the sector forward. Examples from Portugal and Greece on initial MRE developments were presented, and the perspective of local authorities was shared by the mayor of the city of Menjez (Lebanon).
- Also from the perspective of local authorities, the Offshore Coalition for Energy and Nature – Mediterranean Sea (Med OCEaN) highlighted 3 key elements to be taken into account: MSP and full engagement with local coastal communities; early identification of environmental impacts and mitigation measures; and co-development and management of offshore wind with other sea related activities as a driver and facilitator.
- MEDSTAT V stressed the importance of data collection and sharing for informed decision-making.
- The central importance of MRE as a potential solution for decarbonization was stressed, while acknowledging common challenges for the sector such as the need for cohabitation, effective planning, MSP, and access to finance as large-scale investments are needed.
- Final takeaways of the session highlighted the existence of common needs in the region to facilitate the first stages of the development of concrete (commercial) projects, including the need for common/shared standards/regulatory frameworks. In addition, the right set of skills in the existing workforce needs to be developed and guaranteed, investors should be placed at the center of the discussion, and strengthening regional cooperation on MRE is of paramount importance.

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

Rapporteur: Mr. Javier Fernandez, Sea Basins Assistance Mechanism

Multi-stakeholder workshop 10: Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities

- Maritime safety and security (MSS) is an essential pre-condition for the sustainable development of the sectors and activities of the Med SBE: MSS ensures predictability, which in turn is needed in order to secure investments and develop economic activities in the maritime domain. MSS also protects the safety and well-being of citizens and the environment by tackling illegal activities, enforcing regulation, and protecting strategic resources and infrastructure at sea.
- Threats and challenges to maritime security in the Mediterranean are evolving and growing: In recent years, an evolution from 'traditional threats' to new, hybrid threats has been observed, most of them posed by non-state actors. Key threats mentioned

include: Hybrid and cyber-attacks targeting critical maritime infrastructure; piracy and human trafficking, Illegal; unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU), smuggling activities; climate change and environmental degradation. Particular attention was given to the depletion of fish stocks, tensions and competition over the use of marine resources, flooding in coastal areas and islands.

- A wide array of initiatives are already in place to ensure MSS in the Mediterranean, including the 2021 UfM SBE Ministerial Declaration and its related Roadmap, the WestMED Initiative, EUSAIR, Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE), the SAFEMED Project, and the European maritime security strategy (EUMSS) and action plan. The complex ecosystem of actors includes EMSA, EFCA, Frontex, REMPEC the Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MedCGFF). The next MeCGFF will take place in October in Albania, current Co-Chair of the Forum, together with Italy.
- Further dialogue, cooperation, coordination and skills development is needed in order to enhance MSS in the Mediterranean. The role of the UfM could be critical in this regard, particularly by paving the road for the definition of common priorities. It is also crucial to continue reinforcing mechanisms that allow the exchange of information and data among different agents operating in the field, both military and civilian, and particularly between coastguards. For this, transnational projects scaling up success stories at national level, and capacity building, training and skills development of different stakeholders in the context of professional development schemes are essential.
- Finally, it was noted that collaboration should be promoted not only within the Mediterranean itself, but also with neighboring basins, particularly the Black and Caspian Sea, and the Atlantic.

Moderator: Mr. Leonardo Manzari, WestMED National Hub Italy

Rapporteur: Ms. Irene Alonso, Sea Basins Assistance Mechanism

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

- The panel discussed the opportunities offered to southern Mediterranean Countries through the newly launched Blue Mediterranean Partnership (BMP), the initiative promoted by the UfM, the EC and the EIB in cooperation with EU Donor countries and established in November 2023, with the aim to support large-scale sustainable blue economy investments. It also allowed for a broader understanding of other investment opportunities across the Mediterranean, including the PAMEX's Local Investment Finance Facility (PLIFF), and addressing how such initiatives support investment 'pipelines' to address the structural challenges and related potential of the Med SBE.
- The need for greater cooperation among blue economy stakeholders and financial institutions was stated, as expressed in the WestMED Ministerial Conference held in Malta in 2023.

- A number of relevant EU initiatives were reviewed, including BlueInvest, offering support to 100s of businesses aiming to scale-up their solutions and offering an important opportunity in the upcoming 2nd BlueInvest Africa matchmaking event, InvestEU blending funds from the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) with private financing and allowing for guarantees addressing investment risks across the Mediterranean, and a number of initiatives aimed at scaling up innovation, such as the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (SBEP), the Mediterranean Lighthouse for the EU Mission Ocean, and Horizon Europe.
- The discussion also served to highlight the needs and challenges expressed by southern Mediterranean partner Countries currently being supported by the BMP – Egypt, Jordan and Morocco. A general consensus emerged on the need to support financial investments in relevant SBE sectors, including maritime transport, the support to energy transition, access to water including desalination, nature-based solutions to restore the marine ecosystems, and sustainable marine aquaculture.
- Furthermore, the role of Technical Assistance in supporting bankable projects was particularly appreciated, as a key means to support a better vision on the management of exiting funds and to allow for a greater alignment of southern pipelines with the potential offered by financing mechanisms such as the BMP and the PLIFF.
- The need to learn how to best communicate with the national and international banks and to persuade local and international investors on the opportunities offered by blue financing was a key element highlighted.
- Finally, the role of key players including maritime clusters – emerging across southern Mediterranean Countries – as intermediaries with local businesses and start-ups was highlighted.

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

CLOSING PLENARY:

The Closing Plenary was moderated by UfM HoS for Environment, Green, and Blue Economy Ms Alessandra Sensi and was dedicated to funding opportunities associated to the various programmes financing SBE-related projects/initiatives in the region (i.e. CINEA, Interreg Euro-Med, Interreg NEXT MED, DG NEAR). The session attested to the central and tried-and-tested importance of combining a process/project approach as well as inter-programme coordination so as to achieve the short, medium and long-term SBE objectives set at regional level – backed by the strong political/policy endorsement of a solid SBE Ministerial Declaration and Roadmap.

The essential role of the UfM in supporting this process in the region was stressed, including as regards to facilitating the opening/expansion of successful sub-regional or EU initiatives to the wider Mediterranean.

The Conference was brought to a close by the UfM EU and Jordan Co-Presidency represented by Ms. Delilah Al Khudhairy, Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) of the European Commission, and Mr. Mohammad Al-Sakran Executive Director, Aqaba Development Corporation, together with the UfM Secretariat, represented by Deputy Secretary General of the Water, Environment and Blue Economy Division Mr. Almotaz Abadi, and Mr. Manolis Koutoulakis, General Secretary, General Secretariat for the Aegean and Island Policy, Ministry of Maritime Affairs & Insular Policy, Greece. The success of the Conference was acknowledged as an important milestone to take stock of progress achieved under the UfM Ministerial/Roadmap, to feed the Roadmap itself, to set the path towards potential future deliberations at political level, and to offer a valuable forum for discussion for the Med SBE Community.

2ND UFM STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY 2024



B2B SESSIONS:

Under the COSME MEDBAN project B2B sessions successfully took place throughout the Conference, aimed at providing acceleration services to innovative SMEs and focusing on fostering internationalization, blue skills development, and capacity-building for a shared maritime cluster ecosystem in the Mediterranean basin.

The **Tunisian Maritime Cluster and the Greek Blue Cluster Strategis signed an MoU** during the Conference, a clear example of successful cooperation aimed at boosting the Sustainable Blue Economy beyond the Western Mediterranean.

A close-up photograph of a hand reaching out and touching a fishing net. The net is made of a dark, textured material with a diamond-shaped mesh pattern. The hand is positioned in the center-right of the frame, with fingers slightly spread. The background is a soft, out-of-focus sunset or sunrise scene, with a warm orange glow on the left side. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

ANNEX

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

AGENDA



The UfM Secretariat
is co-funded by the
EUROPEAN UNION



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



**THE HASHEMITE
KINGDOM OF JORDAN**

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			09:00-10:30 MS Workshop 3: Sustainable food from the Sea – Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture Ballroom*		09:00-10:30 MS Workshop 4: Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports Conference Hall*
10:00			10:30-11:00 COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)		
11:00			11:00-12:15 MS Workshop 5: Tackling marine litter for a sustainable blue economy Ballroom*		11:00-12:15 MS Workshop 6: Sustainable Blue Economy initiatives under the territorial context of islands Conference Hall*
12:00			12:15-13:30 MS Workshop7: Sustainable maritime and coastal tourism Ballroom*		12:15-13:30 MS Workshop 8: Ecosystem-based Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning as cross-sector enablers Amphitheatre*
13:00	13:00-14:00 Registration (main Hall) and Light Lunch (Peristyle, 1st floor)		13:30-15:00 LUNCH BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)		
14:00	14:00-15:30 PLENARY OPENING SESSION Amphitheater Interpretation available in EN-FR-AR-GR		15:00-16:30 MS Workshop 9: Marine Renewable Energies Ballroom*		
15:00	15:30-16:00 COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)		15:00-16:30 MS Workshop 10: Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities Conference Hall*	15:00-16:30 MS Workshop 11: The blue finance process in the Mediterranean Amphitheatre*	
16:00	16:00-17:30 MS Workshop 1*: Marine research and innovation for a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean. Conference Hall*	16:00-17:30 MS Workshop 2: Blue skills, career pathways, and employment for a Sustainable Blue Economy Amphitheatre*	16:30-16:45 COFFEE BREAK (Peristyle, 1st floor)		
17:00			16:45-17:30 PLENARY CLOSING SESSION Amphitheater Interpretation available in EN-FR-AR-GR		
	17:30-17:45 Wrap-up and brief announcements on Day 2 logistics/housekeeping (UfM)				
18:00	18:00-19:30 NETWORKING COCKTAIL (Peristyle, 2nd floor)				
19:00					
20:00					
* Interpretation available in EN FR					

DAY 1 – Monday 19 February 2024

13:00-14:00 Registration (main Hall) and Light Lunch (Peristyle, 1st 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 Dimitriadis-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 Mediterranean²

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.

² 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, 2nd 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 Chafer, 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. Scoullas, 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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