



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



17th UfM Regional Platform on Sustainable Blue Economy
Barcelona - 19 February 2025

***Annual reporting by Ministerial priority:
Progress on the Roadmap for the implementation of the 2021 UfM Ministerial
Declaration on SBE – ITALY***

Country reporting template: aim and objectives

- This “country reporting template” has been created with the aim to gather data and information at national level to feed the **2021 UfM Ministerial on SBE Roadmap’s Monitoring, reporting and evaluation system**.
- As reflected in the “[Stand-alone document on the Monitoring system of the Roadmap / 2021 UfM Ministerial on SBE](#)” and its related Annex on “[Sector-specific indicators](#)”, the process kick-starts every year with the **delivery of presentations by the countries** (UfM Focal Points on Blue Economy) in the context of the **Regional Platform on SBE meetings**.
- By filling in this template, countries’ crucial inputs will feed current and future updates of the Roadmap and contribute to analyse progress over time in the implementation of the SBE Ministerial Declaration.
- Instructions to fill in this template are provided in the next slide.

How to fill in this template

- This template contains **one slide per each of the SBE Ministerial Declaration Priorities** and related progress. Three open questions have also been included at the end of the document.
- For each of the Ministerial Declaration priorities, a simple **table** should be completed by the countries, with the following information:
 - Policies, strategies and plans in place at national (and sub-national) level
 - Projects and initiatives at national in place at national (and sub-national) level
- Please fill in these tables to the best of your knowledge and feel free to enrich with **hyper-links** to key documents, publications, videos, etc. as needed.
- In case of questions, please don't hesitate to send an email to: alessandra.sensi@ufmsecretariat.org and adriana.salazar@ufmsecretariat.org
- These presentations will be delivered orally by each Focal Point on the UfM Regional Platform Meeting, and should be submitted to the UfM Secretariat team.

Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment 1/4

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Development of socioeconomic observatories</p>	<p>As coordinator of the European Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (https://bluepartnership.eu/), integrating regional specificities at pan-European level, the Italian Ministry of Universities and Research invests yearly to support Transnational Joint Calls for R&I under the following impact-oriented thematic areas of intervention: Digital Twins of the Ocean, Blue Economy Sectors, Managing Sea-Uses, Blue Bioresources, Resilient Coastal Communities and Businesses.</p>	<p>The following EU Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership's cofunded projects are coordinated by Italy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BluEcho - From science to policy: assessing impacts and developing solutions for ship traffic and offshore wind farms through detailed soundmaps. Coordinator: University of Trieste; - FAMOS - Sustainable, Reliable and Socially Acceptable Modular Floating Islands for Multi-use Offshore Spaces. Coordinator: University of Florence; - WASTE2TASTE - From waste to taste: exploring innovative food applications of postharvest fish losses. Coordinator: Stazione Zoologica Anton Dorn; - SHELLFISHBOOST - Boosting the resilience of European shellfish production against climate change-related challenges through genetic selection. Coordinator: University of Padova.



Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment 2/4

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Clusters development</p>	<p>In order to foster national coordination to support the national participation to the European Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership, the Italian Ministry of Universities and Research has set-up an informal group for stakeholders' consultation.</p> <p>The Italian landscape of maritime clusters may be configured with the two national ones (CTN BIG and Federazione del Mare), as an umbrella for regional/sectoral clusters, well representing the economic vocation of territories. The WestMED Assistance Mechanism, through the Italian National Hub has solicited and supported the strategic collaboration among the Italian national clusters, their integration in the WestMED Maritime Clusters Alliance, as well as their bilateral agreements with national maritime clusters in Tunisia, Portugal, Greece, Mauritania, Libya (in progress).</p> <p>Clusters development in Italy is fostering Research&Innovation, enhancing a better connection between Universities and Research Institutes with companies and practical applications.</p> <p>In La Spezia, Italy, a National Hub for Underwater (PNS) was inaugurated in December 2023. It is an inter-agency and inter-ministerial organization created to promote technological development through synergies among Italian excellences in underwater dimension as part of protection of Italian interest in the maritime domain, optimizing potential funding channels, for example from Regions/Local entities/through a dedicated Foundation in phase of constitution.</p>	<p>Tavolo Mare joined by representatives of the Italian blue economy R&I community.</p> <p>https://callme-blue.eu;</p> <p>https://magellancircle.eu/project/medban-mediterranean-blue-acceleration-network/;</p> <p>https://winbigproject.eu/;</p> <p>BLUE BIO MED funded by the INTERREG MED 14-20 defined a mapping of trends and innovation priorities for the blue bioeconomy and contributed to the identification of the quadruple helix innovation actors to promote their cooperation in the co-design of innovative actions.</p> <p>SMART ADRIA, funded by INTERREG-IPA CBC Italy Albania Montenegro, contributed to strengthening cross-border cooperation and enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs operating in the Blue Economy, as well as developing new market opportunities.</p> <p>Identifying the first two technological trajectories to achieve, the underwater networks for monitoring activities and underwater multipurpose robotics systems, in 2024, the National Hub for Underwater published the first 8 "calls" for the national underwater cluster.</p> <p>Italy is also developing new generation hydrographic units capable of developing capabilities to support the blue economy and scientific research in the marine environment.</p>

Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment 3/4

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Training activities</p>	<p>In line with the National Research Plan, development of interdisciplinary skills is fundamental to tackle the future challenges of the sector.</p> <p>The Country is in line with the main international standards in force in the field of training and certification of seafarers and has fully implemented the provisions relating to the International Convention STCW adopted in 1978 (as amended).</p> <p>The contest of training activities is enlarging its coverage towards almost all fields of the Blue Economy, switching from general Sustainable Blue Economy concepts, to specialistic paths: marine geology, MSP-ICZM, green-blue ports, maritime clusters management, maritime surveillance, etc are the subjects towards which universities, VET institutions, research centers have turned their view.</p>	<p>The National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics (OGS) and the University of Trieste organize the Advanced Master in Sustainable Blue Economy https://blueskills.ogs.it/advanced-master/about</p> <p>ERASMUS PLUS project MARMED for the training of maritime clusters manager and which has represented an excellent occasion to let professionals of the sector acquire new skills, as well as southern countries to count on specialized cluster managers for their newly established maritime clusters (Algeria, Mauritania, Libya). https://www.projectmarmed.eu/</p> <p>ADVANCED MASTER IN SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY https://blueskills.ogs.it/advanced-master-sustainable-blue-economy-ay-20232024</p> <p>CIHEAM Sustainable Development of Coastal Communities https://www.iamb.it/education/sustainable-development-of-coastal-communities/</p> <p>BLUE KEP funded by Italy-Croatia has established a regional mobility network for students and teachers to enhance educational systems.</p>



Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment 4/4

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Other</p>	<p>In line with the relevant global (e.g. G7) and EU Policies as well as the European and National Roadmaps, Research Infrastructures are considered key asset to support marine research and innovation.</p> <p>National Recovery and Resilience Plan MER (Marine Ecosystem Restoration) project which is part of Mission 2 – Green Revolution and Ecological Transition, Component 4 – Protection of the Territory and Water Resources, as part of Investment 3.5 – Restoration and protection of the seabed and marine habitats</p>	<p>Through the ITINERIS Project (https://itineris.cnr.it/) investments under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan will support the development of a national integrated observatory.</p> <p>The following research performing organizations National Research Council of Italy, Italian Institute of Geophysics and Vulcanology, National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics, Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn, as affiliated entities of the Italian Ministry of Universities and Research, as well as the Italian Navy Hydrographic Institute, will provide Access to their Research Infrastructures in the framework of the Call for Access that will be launched in 2025 by the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership.</p> <p>Through national Joint Research Units, Italy contributes to the relevant European marine research infrastructures of the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI).</p>



Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports 1/3

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
Setting up an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides in the Mediterranean Sea	<p>The legislative and regulatory framework has been deeply modified in 2023. As part of the European Commission's Fit for 55 legislative package (https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/fit-for-55/), the following are relevant for this TA:(ETS) Directive. (Directive (EU) 2023/959); FuelEU Maritime Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2023/1805); Alternative fuels infrastructure (AFIR) Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2023/1804).</p> <p>Italy has adopted these directives in its legislative system and is currently pursuing a vast plan of port infrastructure adaptation to the new contest, particularly through cold-ironing (OPS) and the activation of LNG terminals in Livorno, Ravenna, after La Spezia. The internal regulatory framework is still incomplete, slowing down the exploitation of the potential that the Italian centrality in the Mediterranean would allow.</p>	<p>EMFAF 2023 projects https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/new-emfaf-regional-flagship-projects-just-kicked-their-work-2023-10-12_en</p> <p>Power4MED, GREEN MED, GREEN MARINE MED, BLUE PORTS</p> <p>LIFE4MEDECA, LIFE4MECA: https://eca4med.com/</p>

Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports 2/3

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Development of alternative and transitional fuels</p>	<p>The development of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in a mature energy market represents an opportunity for Italy to accelerate the path towards the decarbonization required by EU objectives and to increase the diversification of energy sources, also in line with the European Commission’s Communications in the framework of the Energy Union Package. The use of LNG in maritime transport can contribute to achieving the target of reducing the environmental impact resulting from the presence of sulfur in fuels, in compliance with the objectives set by the Directive 2012/33/EU (implemented by Italy with the Legislative Decree 112/2014).</p> <p>Driving shipowners have invested in LNG powered ferry boats (Caronte e Tourist), hybrid ferries and fast ferries (Grimaldi and Liberty Lines), without a real existence of the distribution chain for the regular supplies.</p> <p>It is worth to mention that the WestMED Assistance Mechanism, within its Technical Group on Green Shipping has tackled the subject of fleets renewal and/or refitting, thus promoting an S3 (Smart Specialization Strategy) partnership among its members: the Shipbuilding Alternative Fuels Systems Alliance led by Regione Liguria (ITA), Metropolitan Area of Lisbon (PT) and the Regio Attica (GR) has therefore been submitted and approved, with other 26 partners, from the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Atlantic basins.</p>	<p>Italy is currently engaged in the development of the import and transport of LNG, through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - construction of natural gas liquefaction plants, - the construction of LNG and bio-LNG refueling points in ports and - the purchase of naval units for bunkering activities. <p>SUSPORT funded by the INTERREG Italy-Croatia developed a cross-border planning model for environmental sustainability and energy efficiency in ports, which was tailored to each port through a dedicated plan and tested in concrete pilot actions, yielding tangible results.</p> <p>The GNL FACILE project implemented 8 pilot actions in the main commercial ports of the area using mobile refueling stations, demonstrating the immediate applicability of LNG refueling and showcasing LNG technologies and supply chain operations to industry stakeholders.</p> <p>https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/communities-and-networks/s3-community-of-practice/partnership_sustainable_blue_bioeconomy_shipbuilding_en</p>


Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports 3/3

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Digitalisation of the sector</p>	<p>Still missing a common path across the Mediterranean, digitalisation of maritime transport and ports is being pursued at level of single infrastructures or operators, unless smaller networks are gathering to share the relevant efforts, investments and optimize results.</p> <p>AI and Digital Twin represent the most significant frontiers of such a process, thus multiplying the adoption and cross sectoral models and technologies with other fields of application.</p>	<p>EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters_en#funding-opportunities</p> <p>Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership, https://bluepartnership.eu/about</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>Component 2 of Mission 3 of the NRRP (Recovery Plan) aims to make Italian ports more efficient and competitive in terms of energy and better integrated into the logistics chain</p> <p>Investment 1.1 – “Green Ports” is a central measure intended to reduce CO₂ emissions in ports</p> <p>it is worth mentioning Investment 2.3 – “Cold Ironing” aimed at creating systems to supply electricity to moored ships</p> <p>As part of the same Mission 3, a further investment 2.1 is planned - "Digitization of the logistics chain"</p>	<p>In December 2024 the Italian Association of Desalination and Reuse of Treated Waters (AIDARA) has been established upon the initiative of the Italian National Hub, as a way to mitigate the Italian gap in this field, “equipping” the country with a community of experts, universities, research organisations, companies and local administrations, interested in a proper water management model.</p> <p>https://www.linkedin.com/company/associazione-aidara</p>

Interactions between marine litter and the blue economy

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
Prevention measures and circular approaches		
Raising awareness and addressing marine litter including microplastics	<p>An interesting Italian initiative has grown within the contest of the Mission Restore Our Ocean and Waters: smart and circular fish boxes to replace the polystyrene boxes and relevant plastic foil covers, which are commonly used in fishery and aquaculture, with vast dispersion in the marine environment.</p> <p>DuWo is a company with a long experience in both agricultural and fishery field, which has engineered, patented and produced fish plastic boxes, whose design allows to optimize their storage space on board the vessel, to make an efficient use of ice, the release of water, to be used across the whole supply chain from the fishery vessel till the point of sale, thanks to their washability and its embedded chip.</p>	<p>DUWO srl, www.duwo.it;</p> <p>COMMON applied the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) to address the marine litter challenge. This dynamic process of coastal zone management promotes the sustainable use of coastal areas while considering ecosystem vulnerabilities, landscape fragility, and the various human activities that impact both marine and terrestrial environments. By enhancing knowledge of the phenomenon, this approach enables the development of prevention and mitigation actions. Five pilot areas—Maremma Toscana and Salento in Italy, Kuriat Island and Monastir in Tunisia, and the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve in Lebanon—were identified to test and implement strategies aimed at reducing marine and coastal litter, providing concrete solutions for more effective waste management and environmental conservation.</p> <p>The Ministry of Defence through the Italian Navy Department conducts activities and campaigns, using its hydrographic and research ships, in relation to the marine environmental characterization. These activities, which include the observation and sampling activities of “marine litter” (e.g., plastics and microplastics) as well as the systematic measurement and sampling of the seas’ health status, are conducted in collaboration with public institutions and services (e.g. Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia).</p>
Other	As part of the Recovery Plan, investment 1.2, "Lighthouse Circular Economy Projects" , is focused on the development of advanced technologies for the	

Coastal and maritime tourism

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Eco-tourism, slow tourism and reduction of carbon emissions of the industry</p>	<p>While WestMED Assistance Mechanism has established a Technical Group dedicated to the Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism, in Italy the Blue Marina Awards has consolidated its success, achieving the third edition in 2024.</p> <p>Blue Marina Awards is a challenge among Italian marinas, upon their sustainability, which is evaluated upon a clear protocol and a large number of criteria. Supported by RINA and the entrepreneurial association of the nautical sector, BMA is now enlarging its geographical scope to the Mediterranean basin, relying on WestMED network and targeting specific funding calls (i.e. INTERREG NEXT MED).</p>	<p>BLUE MARINA AWARDS, https://www.blumarinaawards.com/</p> <p>The INTERBIKE II Project funded by the INTERREG Italy-Slovenia facilitated the preparation and implementation of strategies for reducing carbon emissions and developed multimodal transport solutions in an area significantly influenced by the presence of waterways to be crossed.</p> <p>In addition, CONSUME LESS funded by INTERREG MED aunched the “Consume-less” model, implementing effective awareness campaigns to increase consciousness and promote sustainable behaviors among tourists.</p> <p>Finally, HERIT_DATA focussed on testing, and transfer of knowledge related to models, strategies, artificial intelligence, big data platforms, and apps, aligning with current sectoral changes and the characteristics of smart destinations.</p>
<p>Promotion of the digitalisation of the sector</p>	<p>Many initiatives are promoting and implementing the digitalisation of the sector, nevertheless it is still difficult to see the adoption of common standards and/or technologies. Such a step would surely allow the exploitation of a vast market, with enormous demand and potential, likely to safeguard sustainability and reduce carbon emission occasions.</p>	<p>The goal of the DIVA Project, supported by the INTERREG Italy Slovenia, was to shape an innovation environment by linking cultural and creative sectors with the economy to develop digital transformation technologies for smart communities.</p> <p>The initiative called Wi-Fi by Italia.it provides for the installation of new Wi-Fi access points in 5G and Optical Fiber within sites of significant tourist interest, identified in the category of marinas.</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>In Recovery Plan, Mission 2, Component 1, investment 3.1 "Green Islands", financed under the PNRR, aims to transform 19 smaller islands not connected to the mainland into models of energy and environmental self-sufficiency, promoting innovative solutions for the ecological transition.</p>	 <p>Union for the Mediterranean Union pour la Méditerranée الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط</p>

Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management 1/2

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Stakeholder engagement, consultations or establishment of MSP plans</p>	<p>The MSP Directive was transposed into national legislation through the Legislative Decree 17 October 2016, n. 201, that establishes a multilevel governance to prepare the plans, as well as to subsequently implement and monitor the same plans. MSP Competent Authority is the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transports. An Interministerial Coordination Table defines maritime areas of reference for the development of maritime plans and defines guidelines for the implementation of MSP. The Technical Committee (TC) from across six Ministries and the 15 coastal Regions supports the Authority. The guidelines, approved by Decree of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, 1st December 2017, identified three maritime areas of reference (“Adriatic”, “Ionian and Central Mediterranean”, “Tyrrhenian and Western Mediterranean”). The planning process has been divided up into six phases. Each Maritime Area is divided into sub-areas based on specific characteristics, and each sub-area is further divided into planning units assigned to vocations (defense, fishing, aquaculture, maritime transport, mining, renewable energies, coastal defense, coastal tourism, scientific research).</p> <p>The new phase of the Plans started according to the Ministerial decree 25 September 2024, n. 237, and finds its programmatic document in the "Operational proposal for the start of the implementation and monitoring phase of the plans", which also constitutes an integral part of the approved Plans.</p> <p>During 2025, the Ministry of Infrastructure, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security, will update the maritime spatial planning for the definition of the uses of marine areas of national interest related to the production of energy from offshore structures, using for this purpose the</p>	<p>The Maritime Space Management Plans are published on the institutional website of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport https://www.sid.mit.gov.it/mappa</p> <p>To update the Italian maritime spatial planning, on the basis of the National Plan for the Sea (2023-2025), also contributes the Interministerial Committee for Maritime Policies, as a strategic tool that the Government and Parliament use to improve inter-ministerial cooperation for the definition of a unitary and strategic maritime policy.</p> <p>In September 2024 the three plans (Adriatic, Ionian and Central Mediterranean and Tyrrhenian and Western Mediterranean) for the Maritime Spatial Planning were approved and the SEA procedure was applied, in compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42 CE.</p> <p>Given the transboundary nature of its marine environment, the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security activated the transboundary SEA procedure for the three Italian Maritime Spatial Plans. Specifically, the bordering states have been notified (including the Northern African countries). Subsequently, the observations of Slovenia, Albania, Greece, Malta, Croatia have been acknowledged. After the conclusion of the SEA procedure and the approval of the abovementioned plans, the counter-declarations have been transmitted to the countries involved.</p> <p>SUSWATER project facilitated the installation of a monitoring system in pilot areas and the definition of an integrated Management Plan for coastal groundwater in each pilot site.</p> <p>The SAGOV project promoted connectivity networks in the South Adriatic area, with a particular focus on maritime transport infrastructure.</p> <p>The main output of PORTODIMARE is the Geoportal of the Adriatic –Ionian Region (GAIR), an interoperable, open-source platform that provides access to multiple information layers, data-</p>

Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management 2/2

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
Other	The establishment in Venice of the “Centro Transdisciplinare per la Pianificazione Spaziale Marittima e l’Economia Blu Sostenibile», upon the initiative of CORILA and the contributing partner CNR-ISMAR, which have supported –together with IUAV- as a scientific pole, the MSP National Technical Committee.	CORILA - Centro Transdisciplinare per la Pianificazione Spaziale Marittima e l’Economia Blu Sostenibile https://www.corila.it/workshop-per-la-progettazione-del-centro-virtuale-transdisciplinare-per-la-pianificazione-spaziale-marittima-e-leconomia-blu-sostenibile/

Marine Renewable Energies

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Research and innovation on MRE technologies</p>	<p>Beyond the evolution of technological progresses of the MRE, it is worth to mention the increasing connection of MREs with the topic of water management. Particularly intense is the synergy with the desalination process, both for its high energy consumption, requiring a growing use of renewable energy sources, and its capacity to enhance the green hydrogen supply chain.</p>	
<p>Specification of licensing procedures</p>	<p>As for the planned offshore wind farm ahead of Sicilian coast of Trapani, it is useful to refer to an interesting study by CGIL – FLAI about the impact of this plan on the fishery system, with indication of suggested measures/practices to mitigate or convert social discomfort and diseconomies into development opportunities for the fishermen communities.</p>	<p><i>La Pesca nel Medwind – impatto socio-economico del futuro parco eolico sulla pesca siciliana</i></p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>Recovery Plan Mission 2 supports the offshore energy transition through an investment plan in innovative renewable energy generation plants at sea, exploiting wave motion and other experimental technologies.</p> <p>Reform 1 of Mission 7 aims to simplify and harmonize authorization procedures for the production of energy from renewable sources</p>	



Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities 1/3

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
Development of training activities	<p>This area of Blue Skills is among the most dynamic, in this period, both for the instability of the international scenario, and for the growing importance of MSP-ICZM, EEZ, to be matched with the technological innovations.</p>	<p>In Italy, IMMSEA, OGS, ITS Fondazione Giovanni Caboto (Gaeta), CMRE NATO, are among the leading organizations in this field, with dedicated training paths.</p> <p>The Adriatic – Ionian (ADRION) Initiative and 5+5 Defence Initiative promote regional cooperation among navies, emphasizing enhanced links, mutual understanding, and interoperability among countries in the field of Maritime Security in the area of Mediterranean Sea. The 2024 edition of the ADRION exercise focused on merchant traffic control, search and rescue, countering asymmetric threats and protection of critical infrastructure.</p>

Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities 2/3

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
<p>Exchange of information, expertise, technical assistance and best practices</p>	<p>The EUREKA Project (INTERREG V-B Adriatic-Ionian ADRION Programme 2014-2020) promoted regional cooperation to improve maritime safety and harmonize navigation procedures. Key achievements included establishing a permanent transnational network, updating the ADRIREP mandatory ship reporting system, developing common training programs for Vessel Traffic Management operators, and implementing the Sea Traffic Management Service to align Vessel Traffic Management Information Systems (VTMIS).</p> <p>The project concluded with the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) and an action plan by the Italian Coast Guard (ITCG) and project partners, creating the Maritime Safety Permanent Transnational Network (MSPTN) and related Thematic Working Groups (TWG).</p> <p>Under the TWG on Operations, led by ITCG, discussions began on the Adriatic Technical SAR Agreement, consolidating existing search and rescue (SAR) cooperation mechanisms in the Adriatic Sea. This agreement promotes clear responsibilities and coordination among national SAR authorities for effective and unified SAR services.</p> <p>The Italian MoD Navy Component shares data on maritime traffic and initiatives like the Virtual-Regional Maritime Traffic Center & Trans-Regional Maritime Network (V-RMTC & T-RMN).</p>	<p>The project Calypso-South addressed the common challenge of maritime safety and the protection of marine-coastal resources by expanding the HF radar observation system for monitoring oil spills.</p> <p>TOBEREADY adopted joint protocols and standards for fires and floods, enhancing the knowledge and skills of the operators involved.</p> <p>SICOMAR PLUS contributed to improving navigation safety in the cross-border maritime space, which has been increasingly threatened in recent years by the rise in freight traffic, particularly involving hazardous materials, as well as the growing number of passengers traveling across the Northern Mediterranean for work, nautical tourism, and cruise activities.</p> <p>The TECHLOG project was supported by the ENI CBC MED Programme and contributed to strengthening ties between academia and the port transport industry (i.e., transport within port areas) in the Mediterranean region.</p> <p>The SALVAGUARDARE project aimed to implement shared actions and strategies for preserving the cultural heritage of the INTERREG ALCOTRA area, with a particular focus on lesser-known sites that face a higher risk of neglect and underappreciation.</p> <p>The Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium (Venice) is designed as a moment of analysis and synthesis on maritime current and remaining issues that involve the maritime cluster in its broadest sense (international organizations, industry, academia, research and study centers, military).</p>

Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities 3/3

Ministerial Declaration related progress	Policies and strategies at national/regional level	Projects and initiatives at national/regional level
Other	<p>Italy is an active participant in the implementation of the updated EU Maritime Security Strategy (2022), which aims to protect the EU's maritime interests by ensuring freedom of navigation, the security of trade routes and the protection of critical infrastructure.</p>	<p>Italian MoD is active in Operation "Fondali Sicuri," following the Nord Stream sabotage, focusing on the surveillance of underwater infrastructures, and cooperative measures involving collaboration with stakeholders and allied navies. It also created the Critical Underwater Infrastructure Surveillance Centre within the Fleet Command (CINCNAV) and has proposed the establishment of a NATO Center of Excellence for the Underwater within the PNS.</p> <p>Italy contributes to EU naval operations, such as Operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI, and Operation Atalanta, aimed at countering piracy off the coast of Somalia.</p> <p>In 2024 the first edition of DEPORTIBUS was promoted, the event is dedicated to the relation between cities and their port spaces. DEPORTIBUS, https://deportibus.it/</p> <p>In 2025, the 9th edition of SEAFUTURE, in the Navy Base of La Spezia represents the largest occasion of exchange of information and best practices, networking, in the field of maritime surveillance. SEAFUTURE, https://seafuture.it/</p>

Open questions

1 – Related to the priority on Governance and the future of sea basin strategies in the Mediterranean region: **Is there any overarching blue economy strategy in your country? Or any process initiated leading to the elaboration of such a strategy?**

2 – Related to the priority on Sustainable investments in the blue economy: **is there any national funding/financing scheme related to the blue economy (or any of its sectors) promoted by your country? If yes, please specify.**

3 - **What are the main challenges, issues or bottlenecks for the implementation of the SBE Ministerial Declaration in your country?**

