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External Evaluation of the UfM 2021 Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy
SED Consultants P.C.

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External Evaluation of the 2021 UfM Ministerial SB - 35 - PRO547WEB-2024

Dec 2024 – Aug 2025 (8 months) - The Mediterranean basin / UfM Member States

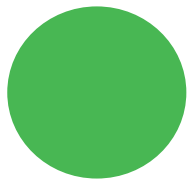
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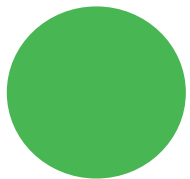
The external evaluation



- was foreseen in the Roadmap, in the context of the preparation of a new Ministerial Declaration, expected possibly after 2025
- was a **Formative Evaluation**: it examined what has been done so far and why, comparing this to the original 2021 Ministerial Declaration and Roadmap. It examined **the extent to which the aims and objectives of the Ministerial Declaration remain feasible, appropriate and acceptable**
- used the **OECD/DAC evaluation criteria** of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, Added Value
- serves to provide information in support of the **preparation and identification of the priorities of a subsequent Ministerial Declaration**, and its recommendations may serve as a basis for **future political deliberations** on the SBE

Findings per criterion

 **RELEVANCE:** The MD remains relevant and effective framework for regional and national action, reflecting shared Mediterranean challenges, priorities, reaffirmed by recent EU and international developments.

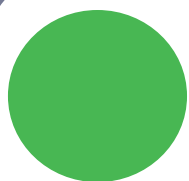
 **COHERENCE:** The MD is coherent and strategically aligned, supporting shared sustainability goals. Implementation depends on national coordination, balanced capacities and ongoing regional support.

 **EFFECTIVENESS:** The MD has prompted coordinated policies, regional strategies, and national actions, though achievement varies. More work is needed to turn frameworks into transformation.

 **EFFICIENCY:** The MD benefits from participatory governance, the Roadmap and EU Programme funding, yet coordination is challenged: uneven implementation and local engagement, fragmented systems.

 **IMPACT:** The MD has sparked regional and sub-regional projects, fostering cooperation and a shared agenda - though coordination and funding issues remain.

 **SUSTAINABILITY:** The MD addresses SBE challenges, aligns national efforts with regional goals, sustains its impact via the monitoring system, the Roadmap, and international alignment.

 **ADDED VALUE:** The MD sets a common strategic agenda, boosting regional cooperation, encouraging regional engagement and strengthening synergies, with the UfM promoting cohesion.

Key Take-aways from the Evaluation



The MD ensures **that the strategic vision is associated to the Roadmap for results-oriented implementation**, with a robust Implementation Plan per priority.

In the future it should **maintain the same approach**, prioritising high-impact sectors.



Capacity-building should be scaled up, especially for Eastern Mediterranean countries. **Governance and coordination** across regional initiatives should be strengthened, beside broader stakeholder engagement. The MD should **address regional disparities** by promoting equitable development mechanisms and enhancing cross-basin collaboration.



It is acting as **a catalyst for national reforms**: supporting national action plans and roadmaps as tools for improving coordination and streamlining collaboration across the Mediterranean, relying on other partners and funding mechanisms for implementation



Access to finance should be expanded and simplified, with a central point of reference for funding opportunities. The BlueMedPartnership is the dedicated Blue Economy Fund offering targeted support for scaling sustainable initiatives

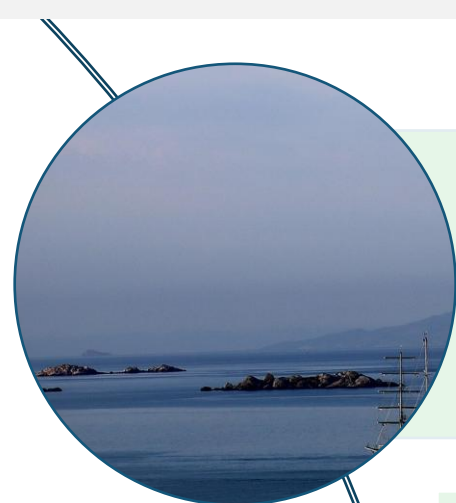


The UfM 's strategic role **as regional convener and facilitator** can be further reinforced, to align Mediterranean efforts with global frameworks.

Conclusions

While progress has been made in critical sectors, challenges related to funding, regulatory differences, and stakeholder coordination must be addressed

- The 2021 UfM MD on Sustainable Blue Economy **continues to be a guiding framework for regional cooperation.**
- **The role of UfM and initiatives to balance capacities and interests in the Mediterranean** are the key to unlocking the full potential of the blue economy.



The emergence of the **Ocean and Mediterranean Pacts** provides a unique **opportunity** to advance regional sustainability efforts.



It is imperative that Mediterranean countries **continue to strengthen cooperation, share resources, and ensure that the Blue Economy remains a driver** for environmental, economic and social transformation across the region.



The current dynamic momentum of the MD is an indication that **funding for the UfMS SBE platform** should not only continue but should be further enhanced.



The participants of the MTE field research were clear in their confirmation of **the importance of securing funding in the future:**

- as a means of continuing & reinforcing the provision of technical assistance by the UfMS
- as a means of securing funding for SBE transnational projects per se and thus supporting capacity building and exchange between participating states.



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Thank you!

Merci !

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