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

# Major updates on progress at national level in the implementation of the UfM SBE Ministerial Declaration

- The National Tourism Strategy has been updated with a horizon to 2035, with greater emphasis on sustainable development, the green transition, accessibility and diversification of the tourism offer. The update was completed during 2025 and the strategy is available from the Deputy Ministry's official documents page <https://www.gov.cy/tourism/about/ethniki-stratigiki-toyris moy/>
- On 20 December 2023, the Council of Ministers approved the first National Maritime Spatial Plan, which entered into force on 29 December 2023. The Plan consists of a written text, maps for specific marine areas and sectoral thematic maps. <https://www.gov.cy/dms/en/documents/maritime-spatial-planning-2/>
- National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy and Action Plan 2018–2030, prepared by the Department of Environment. It covers the sustainable management of tourism development and tourism-related activities in Cyprus's coastal zones. <https://www.moa.gov.cy/moa/environment/environmentnew.nsf/All/61278835E1CEC365C225843400412297/%24file/ALA Planning Partnership.pdf>
- The Tourism Observatory, established in 2023 within the Deputy Ministry of Tourism, continues collecting and analysing tourism data to support decisions by public and private stakeholders.
- Marine research and monitoring: Marine research and monitoring support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, the management of Cyprus's seven marine Natura 2000 sites, and implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), the Habitats Directive, the Water Framework Directive and the Barcelona Convention.
- Nature restoration: Cyprus is preparing its National Nature Restoration Plan under Regulation (EU) 2024/1991. The Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (DFMR) contributes data and expertise to identify marine restoration needs and proposed measures.

# Initiatives at national (and sub-national) level in the implementation of the UfM SBE Ministerial Declaration

| Ministerial Declaration Priorities                                  | Initiatives at national/sub-national level                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| Food from sea: fisheries and aquaculture                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture:</b> Cyprus implements the Multi-annual National Strategic Aquaculture Plan 2021–2030 and manages fisheries in line with the EU Common Fisheries Policy. The national framework promotes environmentally sustainable production, improved spatial planning and the long-term competitiveness of the sector.</li><li>• <b>Community-Led Local Development and marine protection:</b> Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) support fishing communities and the diversification of coastal economies. DFMR also implements MSFD monitoring programmes and measures supporting healthy marine ecosystems and fish stocks.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution transport and ports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Green port transition:</b> The Cyprus Ports Authority is progressively integrating energy efficiency, renewable energy and low- and zero-emission solutions into port infrastructure and operations. It is also assessing the infrastructure, operational and safety requirements for alternative fuels and strengthening the climate resilience of port facilities.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Coastal and Maritime Tourism                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Diversification of the tourism offer:</b> Cyprus promotes cruise, maritime and diving tourism, alongside nature, cultural and other special-interest tourism. These activities support a broader visitor offer and the objective of extending the tourism season.</li><li>• <b>Accessible and sustainably managed beaches:</b> The Deputy Ministry supports beach accessibility and quality improvements, coordinates the Blue Flag programme nationally, and participates in central and local beach committees.</li><li>• <b>Development of nautical tourism:</b> The Deputy Ministry of Tourism coordinates and monitors the implementation of government policy on marinas and Pleasure craft Berthing Sites. It chairs the Marina Management Committee and the Berthing Sites Assessment Committee. The policy aims to diversify the tourism offer and extend the tourism season. In July 2026, the Deputy Ministry of Tourism launched a public consultation on draft amendments to the legislation and decree governing Pleasure craft Berthing Sites. The proposals seek to clarify licensing procedures, applicable license fees and time limits for project development.</li><li>• <b>Marine protected areas:</b> DFMR manages and monitors Marine Protected Areas and marine Natura 2000 sites, including habitats and species affected by recreational pressures.</li></ul> |
| Marine Renewable Energies                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Offshore renewable energy:</b> Cyprus has set a non-binding target of 100 MW of offshore renewable energy capacity by 2050. A suitable area for offshore renewable energy projects has already been designated in the National Maritime Spatial Plan.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Interactions between marine litter and the blue economy             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Plastic reduction on beaches:</b> The Deputy Ministry continued supporting the <i>Sand and Sea Plastic Free</i> programme implemented by the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative.</li><li>• <b>Marine litter monitoring:</b> DFMR monitors and assesses marine litter under the MSFD and implements measures to prevent pollution from land-based sources through the National Action Plan under the Barcelona Convention’s LBS Protocol.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Diving service standards:</b> Draft legislation on the licensing of recreational and free-diving service providers was prepared in 2024, with the aim of safeguarding service quality and visitor safety.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Marine research and skills:</b> The Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute (CMMI) operates as a Centre of Excellence for marine and maritime research, innovation and technology development. Its work covers decarbonisation, marine biodiversity, pollution prevention and ocean digitalisation, while its education and training activities support blue economy skills and careers.</li><li>• <b>Marine research and monitoring:</b> DFMR supports fisheries, aquaculture, biodiversity conservation and evidence-based management in cooperation with scientific partners. Its work contributes to the implementation of the MSFD, Habitats Directive, Water Framework Directive, Nature Restoration Regulation and Barcelona Convention.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Maritime spatial planning:</b> The National Maritime Spatial Plan sets out the spatial and temporal distribution of current and future activities and uses in the marine waters of the Republic of Cyprus. It supports sustainable development at sea through an ecosystem-based approach. It takes into account economic, social, environmental and cultural considerations and promotes the coexistence of maritime activities and uses.</li><li>• <b>DFMR contribution to spatial planning:</b> DFMR provides data on marine habitats, protected areas, fisheries and aquaculture to inform the planning and management of marine space.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

# Projects at national (and sub-national) level in the implementation of the UfM SBE Ministerial Declaration

| Ministerial Declaration Priorities                                  | Projects at national/sub-national level                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
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| Food from sea: fisheries and aquaculture                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OS-Aqua (2020-2023):</b> This national strategic project supported the development of open-sea aquaculture in Cyprus. It focused on identifying suitable maritime zones, designing facilities and automated monitoring systems, and assessing financial sustainability.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution transport and ports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Environmental management and monitoring:</b> The Cyprus Ports Authority (CPA) implements environmental monitoring, compliance inspections and pollution-prevention and response measures across port areas. It also ensures the reception, collection and environmentally sound management of ship-generated waste, in line with Directive (EU) 2019/883 and the MARPOL Convention.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Coastal and Maritime Tourism                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Beach improvement grants</b> for beach equipment and improvements to shared facilities.</li> <li>• <b>Blue Flag</b> : 46 beaches, as well as the Limassol and Ayia Napa marinas, received Blue Flag awards <a href="https://www.cymepa.org.cy/uploads/8475499772.pdf">https://www.cymepa.org.cy/uploads/8475499772.pdf</a></li> <li>• <b>Paralimni Marina:</b> the development is nearing completion.</li> <li>• <b>Paphos (Kissonerga) marine development:</b> The Deputy Ministry of Tourism launched a two-stage competition for a concession to develop a proposed marina with capacity for 1,000 recreational vessels. The expression-of-interest stage has closed. The project remains in procurement</li> <li>• <b>Artificial reefs:</b> Enrichment of Marine Protected Areas with artificial reefs (2022–2029), supporting biodiversity and responsible recreational use.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Marine Renewable Energies                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HYDRO-RES:</b> The technical assistance project for the promotion of offshore renewable energy in Cyprus was implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and completed in 2025. The project developed a comprehensive roadmap outlining the legal and regulatory framework, a potential support mechanism and the key policy measures required to facilitate the deployment of offshore renewable energy in Cyprus.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Interactions between marine litter and the blue economy             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sand and Sea Plastic Free:</b> Programme activities include using water dispensers and other facilities that discourage single-use plastics. <a href="https://sandseaplasticfree.org/">https://sandseaplasticfree.org/</a></li> <li>• <b>Marine litter prevention:</b> The CPA works to prevent marine litter at source through the proper reception and management of ship-generated waste, environmental inspections and monitoring within port areas. Cooperation with port users, shipping companies and the competent authorities supports responsible waste management and the protection of marine and coastal ecosystems.</li> <li>• <b>Anti-pollution systems at smaller ports:</b> The CPA has installed floating containment booms and related pollution-response equipment at smaller port facilities. The systems contain floating waste and pollutants and limit their spread into adjacent marine and coastal areas. Drone-based surveillance also supports the early detection of pollution incidents and timely intervention.</li> <li>• <b>Marine litter monitoring:</b> Investigation and monitoring of marine litter under MSFD Descriptor 10 in Cyprus’s national waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (2022–2029).</li> <li>• <b>Standardisation:</b> national grant scheme supporting certification of recreational diving service providers to <b>ISO 24803</b></li> </ul> |
| Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Marine research and innovation, skills, careers and employment      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mapping of diving sites:</b> A three-year project with the Cyprus Marine and Maritime Institute mapped diving sites. The resulting material is used in the Deputy Ministry’s information and promotional channels. <a href="https://www.visitcyprus.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Diving-Map.pdf">https://www.visitcyprus.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Diving-Map.pdf</a></li> <li>• <b>Marine ecosystem monitoring:</b> Monitoring of benthic and pelagic ecosystems, alien species, oceanographic conditions, and seawater, sediment and biota quality.</li> <li>• <b>Targeted surveys:</b> CETACEANS PROJECT-CY, underwater noise monitoring and DEEPSEA-CY seabed habitat mapping.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>THAL-CHOR 2 (2018-2023):</b> The Greece-Cyprus project supported the preparation of the draft National Maritime Spatial Plan. It updated marine and human-activity data, enriched geospatial databases, developed a WebGIS system and reviewed the legal framework. The project was co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and national funds.</li> <li>• <b>Marine habitat mapping:</b> Marine habitat mapping and monitoring to inform maritime spatial planning and the management of Marine Protected Areas.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

# 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?**

Cyprus's overarching framework is the National Strategy for an Integrated Maritime Policy, adopted in 2014. It is complemented by the 2021 Maritime Spatial Planning Policy Statement, the National Maritime Spatial Plan adopted in December 2023, implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), and sectoral strategies covering shipping, tourism, aquaculture and integrated coastal zone management.



# Open questions

**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.**

The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund Programme for Cyprus 2021-2027 is the main national funding instrument for fisheries, aquaculture and the sustainable blue economy. It has a total budget of €54.7 million, financed by the European Union (70%) and the Republic of Cyprus (30%). It supports sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, protection of the marine environment, and growth and employment in coastal communities.

Cyprus also supports blue economy research and innovation through the Research and Innovation Foundation's participation in the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership. The 2024 national call had a budget of €1.3 million and provided funding of up to €250,000 per project.



# Open questions

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

- **Seasonality and geographic concentration:** Further diversification and stronger links between coastal destinations and the hinterland remain important priorities.
- **Marine data and information sharing:** Gaps in marine data and limited data sharing hinder the assessment of ecosystem condition, cumulative pressures and restoration needs.
- **Human and financial capacity:** Limited resources constrain long-term monitoring and the implementation and evaluation of measures.
- **Cross-sector coordination:** Coordination across authorities and marine sectors is needed to balance economic activities with ecosystem protection, particularly under climate change and increasing pressure from invasive alien species.
- **Evidence of outcomes:** Consistent destination-level data are needed to assess whether initiatives improve sustainability, accessibility and the distribution of tourism benefits over time.

