



1. Overview of the National Workshop on Blue Growth in the Black Sea



The workshop was held at the premises of the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications. The aim of the workshop was to present the Blue Growth state of play and the Facility objectives, launch an in-depth exchange with attendees on national priorities in the context of Blue Economy based on several illustrations by projects in Bulgaria and a draft country assessment developed by the Facility Team.

The workshop was also targeting the identification of potential areas of interest for cooperation at regional level. The event gave also the attendees an overview of financing and funding mechanisms for project development in the Black Sea. About thirty stakeholders from the maritime sector were present.

- [Agenda](#)
- [Attendance list](#)

2. List of points discussed

2.1. Introduction and Plenary Opening Session

Nadezhda Buhova from the **hosting Ministry**, Director of European Coordination and International Cooperation Directorate opened the workshop for Blue Growth in the Black Sea as moderator and thanked all the participants for their presence and interest in Blue economy in Bulgaria. Frédéric Herpers from the Facility Team for Blue Growth in the Black Sea (BSF) went on to present the objectives, the agenda and expected results of the workshop.

The floor was then given to the **Deputy Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications** Velik Zantchev who officially opened the first national workshop under the Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea. He thanked the European Commission for the launch and the support of the Facility Team. He mentioned that sustainable development of blue economy requires achieving effective coordination between different sectoral policies concerning maritime matters. He also stressed that the Black Sea is a key transport corridor between Europe and Asia, a tourist destination and a developing market of blue growth.

He expressed his confidence that the project will provide additional opportunity for the development of blue economy in the region. “I believe that within the framework of the initiative we will outline the priorities on national and regional level as well as develop maritime research and innovation program”, added the Deputy Minister.



The floor was given to Petya Genova from the **Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission** who thanked the presence of the Deputy Minister. She mentioned that the Facility for blue Growth in the Black Sea project was launched in October 2017 for the period of two years, which will most probably be extended for another two years. She reminded that its main objective is to aid stakeholders in the deployment of projects in the field through the use of all financial instruments and capacity of various funds supporting blue economy. She invited the participants to make full use of the Facility in order to express their needs and identify funding opportunities for projects. In this perspective, she reminded that the new programming of European funds is currently under negotiation and might open opportunities for the Black Sea development and the attention paid to the research society involvement in the overall process. It was also recalled the strategic opportunity of the EU annual meeting on maritime matters and blue growth – European Maritime Day, to be organized within the framework of the Bulgarian Presidency, event to take place from May 31 to June 1, 2018 in Burgas and expected to support the Declaration of the Ministers in the Black Sea region on the implementation of common policies in the field.

Frédéric Herpers (BSF) presented continued with the presentation of the **Facility overall mission** to support Blue Growth in Black Sea at national and regional level. He stressed that its mission is to establish and maintain an efficient and effective support mechanism that will identify and engage stakeholders that will contribute to the regional dialogue on blue growth and foster Blue Economy development in the Black Sea region. It was also stressed that the Facility will provide with capacity building support on concrete project development and consistent application of maritime approaches in the coastal countries.

The last presentation of the opening session was focused on **Integrated Maritime Policy/Blue Economy implementation supported by concrete examples** (marine spatial planning but also development of synergies and intersectorial cooperation as booster for Blue economy).



2.2. Blue Growth: illustrations by projects in Bulgaria

Four presentations were delivered by Bulgarian stakeholders:

- “Integrated Bulgarian Maritime Surveillance” [InBulMars](#) (presentation by Peter Kirov from Executive Agency Maritime Administration);
- Vessel traffic management information systems and Port community system (presentation by Zlatko Kuzmanov from [Bulgarian Port Infrastructure Company](#));
- Maritime spatial planning (presentation by Maria Georgieva from [Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works](#));
- Innovative research of the institute of oceanology (presentation by Nikolay Valchev from [Bulgarian Institute of Oceanology](#));



2.2.1. Project “Integrated Bulgarian Maritime Surveillance” InBulMars

Scope of the project/topic (cf. [Presentation](#))

The main objective of the InBulMars project is to elaborate a feasibility study to determine the needs and requirements for improving cross-sectoral information exchange in the field of maritime surveillance. It will also identify the legal and technical problems of integrating the existing national systems for surveillance of Bulgaria's maritime spaces, in particular to support the implementation, operation and maintenance of the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE) under Priority 6. "Fostering the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy" , Measure 6.1 "Integrated Maritime Surveillance" under the Maritime and Fisheries Program 2014-2020. The activities under the project "Integrated Bulgarian Maritime Surveillance" (InBulMarS) started on 01.01.2017 and the deadline for their implementation is 2 years. It is supported by EMFF.



The specific project objectives are to:

- identify needs in operational centers and in surveillance assets for further cross-sectoral information exchange at national level;
- define new information services, based on the CISE Data and Service model, which would be set up and provided to other sectors at national level and possibly exchanged with other Member States;
- Identify requirements and obstacles of CISE integration and to facilitate the integration of data available in different ICT systems in a single user interface.

Linkages with BE assessment and debate

This project contributes to the improvement of the existing national capacities for maritime surveillance in particular in data sharing for safety and security between national authorities and European agencies in according with related EC directives (2010/65 EU. It will therefore develop interoperability and data collection redundancy.

The project is to be realized by national companies regarding confidentiality issues. It will then use national skills (human capital) on IT.

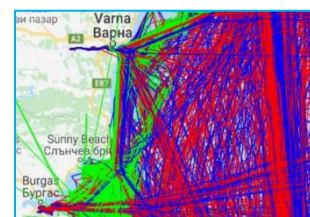
It will help in data sharing and use between civilian and military information systems at European, national, sectoral and regional level.

2.2.2. Vessel traffic management information systems and Port community system

Scope of the project/topic (cf. [Presentation](#))

The presentation is in closed liaison with the previous and address the issues of maritime with data sharing with the ports' and safety and security national authorities.

It illustrates the existing national capacities in maritime and river integrated surveillance system including vessel traffic monitoring,



ship to shore communication and information services, electronic processment of ship documents and automatic processment of safety and environmental data to European related agencies (fi. EMSA)

The system contributes to reach the objective of Bulgarian Ports infrastructure company (BPI Co) in the area of the blue economy (i) establishing a climate of safety of maritime navigation and port movements in Bulgarian waters and ports, (ii) contributing to maritime environment protection by providing safe navigation and electronic environmental data flow; (iii) Contributing to efficiency of port operations and ports in general by providing environment for B2G and B2B electronic data exchange and reducing the time of ship calls and (iv) developing digitalization and electronic governance.

An undergoing feasibility study project aims the development and deploying of electronic data exchange environment for the port community. Since in Bulgaria, there was no initiative of the business community in the field of port activities to create PCS and such systems represent a practice-proven solution for great improvement of the effectiveness of ports through intelligent methods.

BPI Co has committed in developing and provision of such an information environment for the purposes of maritime business environment. The company recognized the need for far-reaching studies to make the future system a tool to improve the efficiency of Bulgarian ports and therefore the blue economy.

Linkages with BE assessment and debate

The presentation confirms the national capacities for maritime surveillance. The development supports the knowledge dissemination. The use of marine surveillance to set up statistics on maritime activities (based on boat positions) is to be shared with authorities in charge of maritime spatial planning set up.

2.2.3. Maritime spatial planning

Scope of the project/topic (cf. [Presentation](#))

Ministry of regional and works representative presented the ongoing process in Bulgaria on maritime spatial planning directive (MSPD- 2014/089 EU). She recalls the objectives (i) establish stronger links between national institutions and raise awareness at national and cross-border level; (ii) participation and involvement of stakeholders; (iii) exchange of information and data; (iv) Identifying cross-border maritime activities, conflicts / synergies and priorities for future development. Marine strategy framework directive (MSFD – 2008/56 EU) is implemented in close liaison with MSPD.



The first experience in maritime spatial planning was defined within MarsPlan project. This EU funded project (INTEREEG) is a cross-border MSP pilot maritime for the Mangalia - Shabla involving Romania and Bulgaria.



The expected outcomes of national MSP will be (i) the identification of relevant stakeholders (institutions, regional and local authorities, research institutes, international and national non-governmental organizations; (ii) the comprehensive analysis of the Romanian and Bulgarian territorial waters and adjacent territories; (iii) the highlights of the vision of national maritime spatial plans.

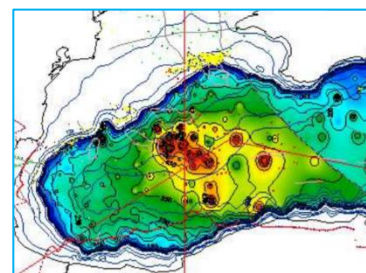
Linkages with BE assessment and debate

The linked implementation with EU directives (MSFD, MSPD) is fully in accordance with EU expectations and it is a motor for the development of a sustainable blue economy. The joint approach with Romania for national implementation is a way not only to tackle cross-border issues but also identify areas for blue economy projects (cooperation). It is really a strength for Bulgaria and the Black Sea. MSP process is a driver for the set-up of integration within administration and development of governance.

2.2.4. Innovative research of the institute of oceanology

Scope of the topic (cf. [Presentation](#))

The institute of oceanology (IOBAS) drew a large panel of support to national maritime and coastal policies in particular in (i) data collection for the definition of the marine environment status (MSFD) and the assessment of human pressures in order to define the action program to recover the GES including MPA identification, (ii) oceanographic modelling for coastal risk management but also assessment of marine renewable energies (wave)



IOO is also involved in the way to reduce the fisheries pressures on marine environment with the adaptation of technics and boats but also targeting high value species or the protection of fishery species (MPA).

Linkages with BE assessment and debate

The presentation illustrates the level of knowledge and skills in Bulgaria and also the support of such institute for maritime policy driven activities and the implementation of EU or national related policies (environment, risks) but also regulation with monitoring and reporting on maritime activities (fisheries).

Further to the support to public activities, the IOO has some actions with private sectors (EIA)



2.3. Initial Blue Growth Assessment presentation and discussion

Frédéric Herpers went on to present the actual Blue Growth preliminary assessment on Bulgaria. He indicated that the assessment is a very first draft to raise interest in and awareness of the potential of Blue Economy in Bulgaria but also in the Black Sea, in order to identify and strengthen cooperation.

Discussions between participants based on the Bulgarian projects presented and the draft assessment made it possible to draw the following conclusions and priorities:

- need to raise national awareness in blue Economy and integrated maritime policy at technical but also at political level;
- need to develop education to develop Bulgarian maritime identity but also the skills which are requested by maritime activities in order to address their needs, create synergies but also to reduce brains drain because of a lack of a national or regional market.
- need to develop the liaison, communication and information between public and private sectors on IMP/BE.
- Innovation must be developed in order to valorize the Bulgarian assets (maritime and coastal capital but also with rivers (Danube)).
- BE could supported with the development of synergies but also with the use of new technologies and innovation for instance in offshore aquaculture or floating wind farm.
- Many efforts are done for WFD, MSFD and MSPD implementation. There is a need to strengthen knowledge and monitoring (real time) to overcome EU legislation objectives (fi. WFD and MSFD). The liaison between public agencies and private sector could help in data collection and gathering.
- The involvement of local stakeholders and authorities is essential for MSP and consistency with land planning (definition and implementation). The full identification of stakeholders is requested for the governance and IMP definition and implementation.

The draft assessment will be shared with all participants for a national review in depth and update. A first update has already done to take in account the first comments during the workshop.

2.4. Financing and funding mechanisms

Matteo Bocci from the Facility Team presented an overview of a range of EU funding and financing mechanisms e.g. Horizon 2020, Employment and Social Innovation, Connecting Europe Facility, Erasmus+, Cosme, European Territorial Cooperation, European Neighbourhood Initiative, European Structural and Investment Funds, Life, their eligibility criteria and how they can contribute to support the development of Blue Economy projects in the Black Sea.

To conclude he provided a snapshot of the overall process of the Facility support linking Blue Economy studies, cross-regional analysis, analysis and identification of funding/financing opportunities supporting regional cooperation projects.

3. Facility support requests

As reported during the preliminary national visit, the area of intervention of the facility could be in the support on the set up of project proposal (content/ EU funding/financing) for MSPD and MSFD operational implementation with potential extension for cross border cooperation (fi. Romania). The project would use the previous successful experiences in Bulgaria (ICZM BSC projects, MARSPLAN).

Regarding governance, the facility is seen as a good opportunity to enhance multi-ministerial dialogue in particular for planning and environment protection. It is fully supported by the participants that this liaison is essential for Blue Economy as the planning is to implement economic and sustainable choices.

4. Conclusion and next steps

Petar Benov from the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications thanked the participants for the very constructive exchange and the Facility Team for their support.

He mentioned that after the Facility Team will proceed with amending the country assessment based on the information collected during the workshop, the assessment will be disseminated to the participants and other stakeholders to collect comments in order to gradually set up a national vision nested and then shared with the other countries around the Black Sea.

Petar Benov also reminded several events related to Blue Economy among which the EMD in Burgas.
