



Black Sea Assistance Mechanism

Supported by the



COMMON MARITIME AGENDA FOR THE BLACK SEA 2021 - COORDINATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

REGIONAL WEBINAR: BLUE ENTREPRENEURSHIP WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP ON BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT 04 OCTOBER 2021 (14:30-18:10 GMT+3) ONLINE

On 25 May 2021, under the Turkish coordination of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA), a Regional Webinar was organised on 'Research and Innovation (R&I) towards cultivating the potential for Blue Entrepreneurship'. The event was held in cooperation with the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for the region and the Black Sea CONNECT project.

The aim of the event was to strengthen the links between the implementation of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea and its scientific pillar, the Black Sea SRIA. This is a necessary first step towards assessing the R&I needs of priority sectors (which were defined during the last Regional Stakeholders Conference of the CMA held on 10 December 2020) and accelerating SME capacity through a fully sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea region.

A number of challenges emerged during the discussion, including needs:

- for better knowledge of the marine environment to enable the sustainable development of maritime activities;
- for additional support to business innovation through the full adoption of 'circular' business models;
- for stronger data-sharing and the full uptake of innovation potentials offered by the digitalisation of the sector.

Participants also acknowledged that the business ecosystem across the Black Sea region still lacks the essential capabilities needed to take advantage of the opportunities provided by innovative business models available across the blue economy. Therefore, the increasing appetite for private investments in a sustainable blue economy across the Black Sea region remains unmatched due to the limited expertise of local SMEs to either adopt such innovative technologies and business models or pitch their innovation projects to investors and financing institutions.

More recently, a number of initiatives have been promoted by the European Commission to address such challenges, all in line with the Common Maritime Agenda's Goals and Priorities. These include notable Horizon 2020 projects such as BRIDGE-BS and DOORS aimed at fostering research and innovation capacity and business-research dialogue for a sustainable blue economy across the Black Sea.



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Fully aware of such a dynamic context and with the aim of triggering concrete advancement on project ideas while ensuring strong synergies amongst existing activities, this webinar will discuss the concrete challenges and opportunities of the blue economy business ecosystem, while focusing on a dedicated project hackathon session. During the first semester, CMA National Hubs supported Black Sea stakeholders in the definition of projects contributing to CMA goals and objectives. During the hackathon session, these project ideas will be presented by potential lead partners and discussed with potential donors or sponsors. Short concept notes will then be published on the BSAM website and disseminated to the potential donors or promoters who will be asked to provide further feedback. To build upon existing initiatives, potential valuable project ideas will also be discussed.

Participating SMEs and start-ups will have an unprecedented regional opportunity to pitch their ideas and interested regional stakeholders will be invited to join their efforts, supporting them to capitalise on previous experiences.

Therefore, the overall question to be addressed across each session of this webinar is the following: “Given all the activities ongoing in the region, how can the CMA, SRIA and related implementation projects further support local business ecosystems – i.e., by strengthening potential synergies across ongoing activities and addressing relevant persisting gaps?”

AGENDA (EET)

14.15 – 14.30 Connection to the online platform

14.30 – 14.40 Welcome and opening remarks

- **CMA Coordinator**
 - Yunus Emre ÖZIGCI, Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

14.40 – 15.00 Introduction and lessons learned from previous regional exchanges

Moderation of the session – Frédérick HERPERS, Team Leader, Black Sea Assistance Mechanism

- **European Commission:** Supporting a business ecosystem conducive to innovation
 - Patrizia BUSOLINI, Policy Officer, Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security, DG MARE
 - Wendy BONNE, Policy Officer, Healthy Oceans & Seas, DG Research & Innovation
- **BSAM/Black Sea CONNECT:** What did we learn in this respect from the previous regional workshop?
 - Thanos SMANIS, Black Sea Assistance Mechanism central team
 - Mustafa YUCEL, Black Sea CONNECT CSA Co-coordinator/METU

15.00 – 15.30 Initiatives aimed at accelerating business innovations for the blue economy: Complementary objectives and Synergies

BSAM & Black Sea CONNECT> Moderation of the session – Frédérick HERPERS, Team Leader, Black Sea Assistance Mechanism & Pinar UYGURER, Project Manager, Black Sea CONNECT/METU

- **BRIDGE-BS:** Opportunities originating from scientific challenges related to Black Sea ecosystem services: Role of business and start-ups in restoring the Black Sea ecosystems
 - Mustafa YUCEL, Scientific Coordinator, BRIDGE-BS/METU
- **DOORS:** Build capacity in existing and emerging sectors, develop new start-ups
 - Eleonora TSAMPAOU, H2020 DOORS BGA Blue Growth activities leaders
- **DigiCirc:** Acceleration of SMEs across EU sea- basins (experiences from the blue economy call)
 - Davide GUARIENTO, Consultant for DigiCirc

15.30 – 16.10 Challenges and opportunities in supporting innovative SMEs in the Black Sea

BSAM > Moderation of the session – Matteo BOCCI & Thanos SMANIS, Black Sea Assistance Mechanism central team

- **Projects, priorities and future perspectives**
 - Roman MATKIWSKY, Director, Energy and Infrastructure, Black Sea Trade Development Bank (BSTDB)
 - Rieko KUBOTA, Senior Environmental Engineer, World Bank (WB) for BBSEA project which is led by Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and funded by WB
- **EU BlueInvest Platform** > Lessons learnt from 2 years of coaching EU SMEs in investment readiness
 - Magdalena Andreea STRACHINESCU OLTEANU, Head of Unit, Maritime Innovation, Marine Knowledge and Investment, DG MARE

16.10 – 16.20 Break



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16.20 – 17.30

Hackathon: project ideas to support blue economy investment and innovation environment in the Black Sea

BSAM > Moderation of the session – Matteo BOCCI & Thanos SMANIS, Black Sea Assistance Mechanism central team; Baris SALIOGLU, Turkish CMA National Hub

- *EMFAF Call for projects - Black Sea blue economy investment and innovation*
 - *Patrizia BUSOLINI, Policy Officer, Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security, DG MARE*
- Presentation of relevant project ideas to support blue economy businesses ecosystem capacity in the Black Sea
 - *Up-Blue (Accelerating uptake of innovation in Blue Value Chains) - concept to be further developed across the Black Sea: Ketevan BULISKERIA, Head of Batumi Technology and Innovation Agency*
 - *AspBAN presentation: Elise WATTRELOT, Executive Secretary of the Atlantic Arc Commission, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)*
- Moderated discussion amongst participants on how to further develop such ideas

17.30 -18.00

Feedback on the hackathon ideas

BSAM > Moderation of the session - Matteo BOCCI & Thanos SMANIS, Black Sea Assistance Mechanism central team; Mustafa Yucel & Baris SALIOGLU, Turkish CMA National Hub

- Wrap up main elements emerging from hackathon discussion
- BSTDB, WB, BlueInvest, BRIDGE-BS, DOORS > Comments on discussed projects

18.00 -18.10

Conclusions

DG MARE & CMA Coordinator – concluding speech

- *Patrizia BUSOLINI, Policy Officer, Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security, DG MARE*
- *Yunus Emre ÖZIGCI, Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*