



Press release

Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea *2021 Turkish Coordination*

Regional Stakeholders Conference *Towards CMA projects for a resilient and sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea*

Under the 2021 Turkish Coordination of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA) the annual CMA Regional Stakeholders Conference took place in a virtual setting on Monday 22 November. This year's event built upon the results of its previous edition in 2020 as well as further regional events held throughout 2021.

With a strong turnout from across the seven CMA countries and regional organisations (over 300 registered participants), this high-level event presented the progress to date in the implementation of the CMA across the region and paved the way for further achievements in 2022.

As such, the conference outlined the state of play for CMA implementation and the valuable contributions of international and regional organisations (e.g., BSEC PERMIS, CPMR, Black Sea Commission and associated regional initiatives (e.g., the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and the Black Sea CONNECT project, the World Bank Blueing the Black Sea initiative, etc.), all active despite the COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, it fostered discussions for further action and concrete ways forward to ensure synergies across the various initiatives ongoing across the region. This included a notable focus on raising awareness on current and future EC funding opportunities during the next programming period (2021-2027).

In addition, the event promoted the exchange of experiences and best practices with other sea basin strategies such the [WestMED initiative](#) and the [Atlantic Action plan](#). Similarly to the CMA, both of these initiatives are supported by the EC with dedicated assistance mechanisms and national hubs.

A series of three parallel hackathons for project ideas were the key moment of this event. Across the breakout rooms, Black Sea stakeholders discussed project concepts covering the CMA's three headline goals to stimulate their further development. In this regard, pivotal considerations such as capacity building, improvement of skills, and the need to consider the strong dependence on a healthy marine environment for the resilience and the sustainability of the blue economy were to the foreground. These sessions also highlighted the readiness of organisations such as the World Bank and Black Sea Development and Trade Bank to support Black Sea entrepreneurship (SMEs) that enables a greener, more innovative and more resilient Black Sea blue economy.

Looking ahead, this conference was instrumental in the identification of concrete actions that support a resilient and sustainable blue economy in the region, and its outcomes will therefore provide valuable bottom-up inputs to support CMA implementation by Georgia for the year 2022.

More information on the regional conference including presentations and recordings are available [here](#).