



Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE

Thursday 10 December 2020, 10.00 – 13.30 EET

Concept and Agenda



Overall Concept

The Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA) 2020 Regional Stakeholder Conference is the first regional event organised following the signature of the Bucharest Ministerial Declaration in May 2019 and the subsequent launch of the CMA implementation in February 2020, under the Bulgarian yearly coordination.

The conference builds on the main outcomes of the previous regional stakeholder conference held in Istanbul in March 2019, with its main outcome being the establishment of a list of potential projects that could feed the CMA implementation.

The current context is rather unusual and obliges CMA countries to consider the impact of the COVID19 pandemic, in order to be able to identify a recovery response that can support resilient and sustainable development of blue economy sectors in the region.

Consequently, the objective of the 2020 Regional Stakeholder Conference is to jointly examine, in the light of the above-mentioned context and identified blue economy sectors, the outcomes of regional stakeholders events held in 2019, in order to take stock of the elements that can be retained to develop blue economy flagship projects in the years ahead.

In this scope, cooperation with the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea and the Black Sea CONNECT project are of paramount importance and are well integrated into the conference contents.

The conference also aims to mobilise regional stakeholders, as they play a crucial role in the complex process of flagship projects identification and implementation. The event will provide them with an important opportunity to share their experience, exchange views and provide their concrete contribution with a regional and national perspective. The process aims to be bottom-up and collective: CMA national coordinators and policy stakeholders need to work together with the involved blue economy actors - public authorities, academia, business, civil society – in order to jointly shape flagship projects.

The conference will revolve around three main elements, starting with a high-level panel discussion on challenges and opportunities for a sustainable and resilient blue economy in the Black Sea in the new pandemic context. With this input, concrete project discussions will be kicked-off under three specific thematic sessions: coastal and maritime tourism, maritime transport, and fisheries and aquaculture. These are some of the most relevant sectors for the region in terms of gross value added and jobs creation that have been mostly impacted by COVID-19. Digitalisation and circular economy will be included in all three thematic sessions as essential transversal drivers to boost sustainable activities while enhancing resilience. As a final but key element, the conference will debate on the different streams of financing opportunities.

Agenda of the conference

- 10.00 – 10.30** Registration to the online platform
- 10.30 – 10.40** **Welcome addresses**
Mr Rossen JELIAZKOV, Bulgarian Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications
- 10.40 – 10.50** **Key message**
Ms Charlina VITCHEVA, Director-General of the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), European Commission
- 10.50 – 11.00** **Keynote speech**
Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES, Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)
- 11.00 – 11.20** **Plenary session 1: CMA: challenges and opportunities for a sustainable and resilient blue economy across the Black Sea**
The panel will discuss challenges in the maritime transport, coastal and maritime tourism, and fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including the initial known impacts of COVID-19 and the opportunities to redesign sustainable development models
Moderation by Mr Christos ECONOMOU, Deputy Director for Maritime Policy and Blue Economy, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), European Commission
- *Ms Nadezhda BUHOVA, Director of European Coordination and International Co-operation Directorate, Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications, Bulgarian CMA coordination*
 - *Ms Petra GOMBALOVA, Head of Division Eastern Partnership, Regional Cooperation and OSCE, European External Action Service*
 - *Ms Sieglinde GRUBER, Head of Unit for Healthy Oceans and Seas, Directorate-General Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission*
 - *Mr Tornike RIJVADZE, Chairman of Government, Ajara Autonomous Republic (Georgia), CPMR BBSC Member, CPMR Vice-President responsible for Neighbourhood Policy*
- 11.20– 11.25** **Introduction to the parallel sessions**
Reconnecting stakeholders and project ideas in the Black Sea
- 11.25 - 12.30** **Three parallel thematic sessions: Refreshing project ideas and stepping them up to the CMA context**
Building on previous project pipelines, the sessions will discuss elements that can be retained in order to develop future flagship projects and renew the engagement with regional stakeholders. In every session, selected project ideas will be presented as pitching sessions. These ideas will be commented on by key stakeholders and then voted on by attendees, so as to reflect on the most valuable ideas presented

- **Coastal and maritime tourism:** building on COVID-19 recovery, towards long-term resilience sustainability and innovation in the sector
- **Maritime transport:** fostering sustainable shipping and green ports
- **Fisheries and Aquaculture:** towards sustainability and local resilience

12.30 – 12.40 Break

12.40 - 13.05 **Plenary session 2: Wrap-up of parallel workshops: stakeholders' reflections on project ideas**

Moderation by Black Sea Assistance Mechanism:

- Thematic workshop moderators report on main conclusions
- Specific point on marine litter by **Ms Irina MAKARENKO**, *Pollution Monitoring and Assessment (PMA) Officer, Permanent Secretariat Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Bucharest Convention)*
- Comments/Q&A from the public
- Wrap-up conclusions.

13.05 – 13.25 **Plenary session 3: Investment opportunities in the Black Sea**

Building on the ideas emerging from previous sessions, panellists will discuss financing opportunities, especially in the three targeted sectors and the potential synergies to be created across financing streams.

Moderation by **Ms. Isabelle VIALON**, *Deputy Head of Unit Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), European Commission*

- **Mr Vassilis MARAGOS**, *Head of Unit for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus & Eastern Partnership, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), European Commission*
- **Ms Sieglinde GRUBER**, *Head of Unit for Healthy Oceans and Seas, Directorate-General Research and Innovation (DG RTD), European Commission*
- **Mr Laurent DEBROUX**, *Sustainable Development Sector Leader for Turkey, World Bank*
- **Ms Laura BOBARNAC**, *INTERREG CBC Programme, Head of unit, Directorate MA European Territorial Cooperation Programmes, Managing Authority-Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme 2014-2020, Ministry of Public works, Development and Administration*

13.25 – 13.30 **Final conclusions:** Bulgarian Coordination