



Report on the Romanian National Workshop on Blue Growth in the Black Sea Bucharest, European Union delegation, 06/07/2018

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

The workshop was held at the premises of the Permanent Representation of the EU Commission to Bucharest, being organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Focal point for the Facility.

The aim of the workshop was to present the state of play of Blue Growth in Romania, the Facility objectives, and to launch an in-depth exchange with attendees on national priorities in the context of Blue Economy based on illustrations by actions in Romania 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 sixty stakeholders from the maritime sector attended the workshop. The agenda and the attendance list are attached.

2. Main points discussed

2.1. Introduction and Plenary Opening Session

Mrs Olivia Todorean, national focal point for the Blue Growth Facility for Romania, recalled that Blue Growth is a priority for Romania and indicated that the whole day is dedicated for discussions. The main objective for this workshop is that participants become more familiar with Blue Growth and better informed about the EU Facility, which will support and provide assistance to boost Blue Growth in Romania and in the Black Sea region.

Mr Frederick Herpers – Sub-basin expert for the Facility for Blue Growth, recalled that the raise and development of interest in Blue Economy must consider its 3 pillars: social, economic and environmental. He indicated that during the day, some conceptual aspects (IMP, BE and BE assessment methodology) will be presented first, then the draft assessment with Romanian potentials will be shared and funding and financing opportunities at national and Black Sea regional level will be discussed.

Mrs Melania Ciot, State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, formally opened the workshop. She stated “It is always rewarding to see that things that were once ideas, words on paper, come to bear fruits. In less than a year since we have started to become actively involved in the Facility for Blue Growth, we have a whole process going on. I would dare say, we have a genuine community emerging on maritime affairs, in Romania and in dialogue with experts in Brussels”. She pointed out that Blue Economy offers real economic opportunities and better social perspectives for local communities, bringing growth for the national economy. Blue Economy challenges need to be tackled collectively at all levels. Therefore, it is essential to have a better implementation of the national policies and to improve coordination. Romania has already taken important steps to bring together different actors from the Black Sea and to help them cooperate in many processes and on many topics. To illustrate, Romania is a founder and an active member of BSEC. She recalled that even before its accession to EU and very actively immediately after, Romanian diplomacy worked in close cooperation with the Commission and EEAS, also with important member states, to have the Black Sea Synergy issued, in 2007. Black Sea Synergy was the first EU framework to signal awareness



about the potential in the region and about the EU's role here. Bucharest Convention, for more environment cooperation at the Black Sea, Maritime Spatial Planning contribute step by step to a better integration of the Black Sea littoral. Projects have already been possible due to the Black Sea Operational Program financed by the EU, hosted in Bucharest. Endorsed during the last European Maritime Days in May, the Burgas Declaration and the Vision Paper on Research and Innovation at the Black Sea, are now two reference documents to pave the way for better development and more pragmatic cooperation in the region. They also both showcase and stimulate more EU commitment to regional cooperation in the Black Sea. Bringing these objectives at a new level during Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU is the new challenge with the definition of a Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea in the first semester of 2019.

Mrs Ciot declared that “Burgas declaration should be followed by a Bucharest Agenda”. She stated that a strong Blue Economy does not rely on only one sector; given the megatrends of today world, innovation is needed, and efforts must not be underestimated.

Mrs Maria Magdalena Grigore – State Secretary - Ministry of Transport recalled that the EMD in Burgas organised under Bulgaria's Presidency of the EU Council was a success where Commissioner Vela demonstrated leadership for bringing progress towards the Maritime Agenda and Blue Economy. All attending ministers and high officials welcomed the initiative to set-up the Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea and to identify sources and policy approaches for a more sustainable Blue Economy. She indicated that the Ministry of Transport will organise a related event in Constanta, in June 2019, named Black Sea Investment Forum, where proposals of project and financing mechanisms to support those should be pragmatically explored. Black Sea is a space of cooperation, reassuring stability and security as key condition for economic development. Romania has increased dialogue with Caucasus and South Asia, and has the potential to become a key access to the EU market for those regions – Central Asia, Caspian Sea, Black Sea and Central Europe. Transport Corridor Projects and One Belt One Road Project are two essential initiatives.

Mrs Grigore highlighted the importance of the port of Constanța as one of the largest ports in the Black Sea and main Romanian port, situated in a very favourable geographic position, the very crossroad of exchanges inland with the connection to Danube river and further east. It is a multi-functional port, deep sea port, with direct access to Central and Eastern Europe, with intermodal connection, specialised terminals, certified according to all safety and security standards and simplified custom regime for foreign trade

Mrs Grigore considered that Romania, as EU MS, is committed to make operations more efficient and action oriented, acknowledging that the EU is a key global and regional player with a strong role to play as an accelerator by providing sources of inspirations from other sea basins, providing sources of funds and incentivising projects. She stated that the end-users of national policies need a framework for cooperation and, when this is in place, it shows a wonderful turnover. There is a need to generate concrete cooperation projects to support transport potentials in Constanța by increasing interconnectivity, developing SMEs, environmental protection, research and innovation. She declared that a new research and innovation agenda is needed. It is a goal for Romania to bring forward the achievement of all these policies in 2019 Presidency, paving the way for regional cooperation.



Mrs Maria Manuela Catrina – State Secretary - Ministry of Communication and Information Society stressed out that is important to bring the Digital component into the Blue Growth. Blue Economy cannot be thought outside the Data Economy, needing strong partnership between Public Administration, Academia and Operators, bringing in the knowledge of the sea. She indicated that, from her Ministry’s point of view, for its EU Council Presidency, Romania’s priorities will be innovation, inclusion and security. All those aspects will be part of the Blue Economy, the Bucharest Agenda will therefore have to include Digital Agenda. She stated that smart and resilient solutions must be found as a boost for Blue Growth.

Mrs Petya Genova – European Commission (DG Maritime Policy) thanked all the attendees for the participation and underlined the strong signal given by all Secretaries of State concerning the relevance of regional cooperation and what has to be achieved. She stated that the national priorities expressed for Romania are relevant and important. Romania is a maritime nation, but to produce more growth and jobs it needs strategies for a common vision that could gather together authorities and businesses. A structured dialogue is essential to set goals and visions, in accordance with the principles of Integrated Maritime Policy of the EU that take into account the environmental sustainability of maritime policy. IMP is to build synergies amongst sectors, to join resources and efforts, and to support the process to make common decisions.

She recalled that marine environment and ecosystems are shared with the whole sea basin. Any action can have an influence for all bordering countries across the sea basin. That’s why sea basin approach is requested for maritime issues, both for policy definition and also for project definition (cooperation). Setting up projects needs an access to finance. As EU member state, Romania has a direct access to EU funding, and EU uses joint declarations to promote a better channelling of available EU funding. She reminded that the Facility for the Blue Growth is an assistance mechanism, third generation of such mechanisms to identify regional priorities and support the financing of strategic relevant projects, which are essential to foster the overall Black Sea Agenda.

2.2 Blue Growth Session

Integrated Maritime Policy and Blue economy purposes and benefits illustrated by concrete examples and best practices in EU

Mr Frederick Herpers – Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea indicated that while maritime issues are clear to operators, citizens could be made more aware to those challenges. Therefore, information sharing and communication are essential. He presented the Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea: its objectives, the range of its services and the next steps after national workshops cycle (cross-regional analysis of findings and thematic workshops definition). IMP and Blue Economy concepts were recalled by him and *Mr. Mattéo Bocci – Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea*, and examples of best practices were presented to illustrate the on-going work and the expectations on maritime issues in the Black Sea at sea basin and national level.

After the presentation, Prof Mamut, General Secretary of Black Sea University Network pointed out that if the IMP approach is developed within the Western European part, efforts must be done to better meet the regional needs and context. Therefore, IMP/BE development must take in account discussions around One Belt One Road initiative, but also discussions with other non-Black Sea governments. He considered that a Black Sea Task Force is lacking to assess the impact of such initiative in the region. Another point is the liaison with the 2030 UN SDGs (in particular SDG14),



for which many countries have already started to define special coordination units under the Prime Ministry. All those are at a very early stage of implementation and need support. All those actions must be consistent to reduce duplication.

Maritime Research Strategy – state of play, next steps and opportunities for Romania

Mr. Daniel Stugariu – European Commission (DG Research and Innovation) presented the Strategic Agenda for Research and Innovation (cf. presentation)

He recalled that when the work started on the Strategic Agenda for Research and Innovation for the Black Sea, it appeared that many initiatives and results have already been produced, although there was an initial feeling that “not much was being done”. This impression was possibly due to high fragmentation of those initiatives. A Working Group was set-up and initially worked on defining common priorities starting from already existing Black Sea Projects – one-year work. A two-page document was drafted to set the Vision for Research and Innovation (Burgas Vision Paper), which is the basis for a wide consultation across the Black Sea in order to produce a Roadmap for implementation of actions in line with this Vision. A call of 2 mio EUR is planned LC-BG-09-2019 on Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black Sea. The EC hopes being able to launch the Research and Innovation Strategy next year.

Assessment of Blue Growth at Regional and National Level: Presentation of the main opportunities and priorities for Romania

Mr. Frédérick Herpers went on by presenting the Blue Growth preliminary assessment on Romania. He recalled that this assessment is a very first draft aiming to raise interest in, and awareness of the potential of Blue Economy in Romania, but also in the Black Sea, in order to identify and strengthen cooperation. The assessment will be discussed during the afternoon and improved with participants’ feedback. This feedback will also be replicated on the national country fiche. He indicated that the draft assessment has already been improved thanks to the first national visit in Bucharest, June 8th.

Maritime Spatial Planning in Romania

Mr. Bogodan Ghinea – Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration presented the implementation of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) in Romania and the MARSPLAN Project – EU funded cross-border MSP project with Bulgaria in Mangalia - Shabla. MARSPLAN Project was essential to develop a joint maritime spatial planning approach in particular for any activity which is new for both countries. Additional technical support is essential for success.

Since 2015, Ministry of Development has been responsible for transposing MSP Directive in Romania regulation, by involving a range of national authorities. The Directive was transposed in 2016 (Ordinance 18/2016). The Ordinance was adopted by Law no. 88/2017. MSP does not cover military defence and national security activities. MSP shall not apply to activities of spatial land planning, urban planning, as already regulated by Law no. 350/2001 on spatial and urban planning. A Maritime Spatial Planning Committee has been set-up for the implementation of the MSP (defined as an inter-ministerial body without legal personality functioning under the coordination of the Prime Minister with representatives of all Ministries and Regional Authorities), while local authorities are being involved.

Regulation provides for clear consultation mechanisms, but at the end, decisions depend on Maritime Spatial Planning Committee.



During the exchanges following this presentation it was recalled by one participant that a National Committee for Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) was also in place and there are some overlapping between the two committees as they are dealing both with maritime and coastal zones. A concrete mechanism to manage conflict resolutions is lacking. Local stakeholders are not aware of such processes and it is important to identify ways to engage and involve them.

2.3 Funding and financing opportunities and challenges for Blue Growth

Mr Matteo Bocci and Mr Thanos Smanis - Facility for Blue Growth in the Black Sea presented the state of funding and financing mechanisms (Cf. presentation). It was pointed out that Romania, as an EU MS, has access to a wide range of funding instruments (EU but also international).

The main challenge to support Blue Growth innovation in Romania and in the Black Sea is to attract private investments. Public funding is to pave the way for private investments that should relay the public efforts.

If public funding is available, it is recalled that the diversity of funding mechanisms makes it complex for final beneficiaries to have a clear overview. Policies implementing a vision are essential to capture foreign direct investment as they provide a stable framework. It was concluded that nevertheless there are strong synergy potentials across actors and countries regarding the national and regional assessment. Therefore, mechanisms to boost financial support are essential and should be used as much as possible. One of the objectives of the Facility is to support countries in the identification of financial opportunities to address national priorities and regional cooperation with targeted projects. It is also recalled that on the short term, existing funding should be used even if they are not fully targeted towards Blue Economy and/or in Black Sea.

Mrs Ana Lucia Gheorghe, Managing Authority for the Black Sea Basin Operational Program gave a global overview of the Black Sea Operational Cooperation Program. The BSB programme is part of the EU CBC under the ENI. CBC under ENI extends the principles of CBC beyond EU member states via the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes.

She acknowledged that the participating countries had a great interest in JOP Black Sea Basin 2007-2013, as demonstrated by the high number of projects submitted under the two calls for proposals and also by the increase by the EC of the initial Programme's budget with an addition Euro 11 million since 2008 (from Euros 17 to 28 million), thus recognizing the importance of the Programme for the economic stability and cooperation in the area.

Therefore, the common multilateral experience was valorised in the BSB Programme (2014-2020). The budget increased of 40% with the addition of ENI and IPA funding mechanisms. The global budget is now on the period 2014-2020 around Euro 54 million. Two objectives of the CBC program could support Blue Growth project (1) Promoting Business and Entrepreneurship in the Black Sea Basin, (2) Promoting a coordinated environmental policy and reducing maritime waste by joint action in the Black Sea Basin. She recalled that the area of eligibility includes Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Georgia and Armenia. Participation of Turkish partners is possible in projects with at least one partner from a participating EU Member State and one partner from a participating partner country.

The applicants have to comply with a set of requirements related to their legal status, geographical location, professional and financial situations and partnership. A new call will be launched in October 2018.

2.4 Working groups session on Blue Growth



After lunch, participants were invited to work on the blue economy assessment prepared by the facility, to identify major drivers/brakes, national priorities for Blue economy and ideas of projects that could be supported by the Facility.

Three groups worked in parallel (1) on maritime economic activities, (2) on research, innovation and education and (3) policy driven activities (except research, innovation and education).

The outcomes of each subgroup were shared in plenary to share the following conclusions.

2.4 Conclusions

For Blue Economy in Romania, it is shared and agreed that the main drivers identified are :

- EU legislation and regional agreements (BSC) and regional cooperation as demonstrated by Danube strategy effect
- The strengths of existing sectors (tourism, maritime transport) but also emerging ones (aquaculture and marine renewable energies) and the exploitation of the natural resources (Oil & Gas)
- The set up of innovative clusters, the network of institutes and their involvement in national/regional and EU research programs in particular in cooperation with Bulgaria.

For Blue Economy in Romania, it is shared and agreed that the main obstacles are :

- Limited cooperation amongst stakeholders and strategic view/policy
- Lack of global vision and full understanding/awareness of issues on Blue Economy
- Lack of means and skills to support Blue Economy at national level
- For policy driven activities :
 - Lack of funding for Research and Innovation as well as inconsistent governance and inefficient management
 - Lack of infrastructures for research and innovation
- For maritime activities
 - Limited diversification of Blue Economy Activities
 - Lack of (young) personnel and skills for innovation, lack of innovative SMEs
 - Lack of attractiveness of Blue Economy careers
 - Limited access to finance and bankability (and marketability of patents)
 - Environmental impact and damage to ecosystem diversity

During the workshop, the following priorities for Romania on Blue Economy were identified :

- Improvement of the liaison between national authorities and coastal counties
- Raising awareness of the national and county's Blue Economy potentials
- Set up of business incubators and accelerators
- Improvement of regional cooperation processes
- Connecting Danube to Black Sea Blue Economy at large (cross-country)
- Development of Blue Economy cooperation (environment / economy / operators / research / education / investors)
- Improvement of ministerial coordination and between experts
- For maritime activities
 - Financing of blue-biotechnologies (high-value added products)
 - Financing of tourism diversification (fisheries-sport, diving, yachting) with high-value creation and low-impact on environment.



- Financing of partnership between Private Sector and Research
- Identification of areas to attract young (skilled) professionals
- Development of synergies between sectors (tourism/fisheries/cruise) and Business/Research (biotech/aquaculture/O&G)
- For policy driven activities:
 - Set up of a dedicated national program to Blue Economy
 - Development of the full understanding of the Black Sea system – Interaction with Danube River and marginal ecosystem
 - Set up of education programs – Internationalization and creation of partnerships between universities and research centers, including private sector
 - Regulation/enforcement for protection of natural capital and sustainable development -Financing for assessing impact and increasing safety/prevention of oil extraction on ecosystems and other affected sectors (tourism)
 - Provision of free access to knowledge and data
 - Support to Danubius Research and Innovation

The following actions or projects could be launched to support the development of Blue Economy are:

- Definition of a national policy for BE to strengthen clusters
- Dedicated portal on BE for Romania and portal of portals for regional level
- Setup of a Marine Research Platform
- Development of Biotechnologies along the shore from Vama Veche to Sulina (involving companies across the country – SMEs – and Universities)
- Development of Historical/cultural/ecological routes with Bulgaria, Ukraine
- Marketing campaign to attract young (skilled) professionals in relation to high added-value and tech-intense sectors in the Blue Economy
- High-tech equipment to help Local Authorities ensure safety/prevention of oil extraction impact

The support of the Facility is expected to

- Raise the visibility of the Black Sea area and develop the awareness
- Provide recommendations for inter-sectoral dialogue - Facilitate collaboration with universities and clusters
- Ensure connection with other initiatives and reconnect with regional initiatives
- Development of a new jobs area
- Facilitate access to financing
- Support SMEs by promoting actions and tools (accelerator) to attract venture capitalists
- Channel EU Commission funding at national level, besides private investments, to support the financing of national projects for Blue Economy
- Support networking at local level (SMEs, Ministry, Local Authorities, Mayors, etc.) in order to foster social and economic development at local level
- Involve O&G companies to assess how to deliver prevention equipment and ensure safety



3. Conclusion and next steps

Mrs Olivia Toederan, national focal point for the Blue Growth Facility for Romania, thanked the participants for the very constructive exchange and the Facility Team for their support.

She mentioned that the Facility Team will proceed with amending the country assessment based on the information collected during the workshop, then the assessment will be disseminated to the participants and other stakeholders to collect comments in order to gradually set up a national vision for Blue Economy.

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