

BLUE ECONOMY

A new frontier for growth and a healthy Mediterranean



Blue economy is a major work pillar of Plan Bleu. Plan Bleu supports the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) and the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean. Plan Bleu works in relation and partnership with many governments, enterprises, NGOs and international entities, such as the World Bank, OECD, European Union, FAO and other United Nations institutions, as well as regionally Union for the Mediterranean, AFED, etc.

WHY A SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE BLUE ECONOMY?

Major economic activities rely on the Mediterranean marine and maritime base: tourism and recreational activities; fisheries and aquaculture; maritime civilian and military transport and port activities; bio-prospecting or exploitation of biological resources; exploitation of energy sources. With 46 000 km of coastline and unique marine resources (including in the high sea), the Mediterranean region hosts a Blue Economy with total value estimated at USD 5.6 trillion and generates an annual economic value of USD 450 billion.

A number of experts see Blue Economy as **a new growth frontier**, a kind of Eldorado with an expected tripling of its value added between 2010 and 2030. And this in a context of reduced world growth and of search for sources of economic expansion by many governments. Growth is particularly expected in marine aquaculture, offshore wind energy, fish processing and shipbuilding repair and dismantling.

These economic activities pose particular threats to the health of the Mediterranean Sea including: i) acidification, sea temperature and level increases, shifts in currents, biodiversity resource and habitat losses, ii) pollution and iii) overfishing and other resource sustainability and efficiency issues.

The region is linked with the rest of the world realities, through major straits or canals (Gibraltar, Turkish straits, Suez Canal) and through economic and demographic interdependencies.

In this context, a sustainable and inclusive blue economy is all the more necessary, with low polluting, resource-efficient and circular features. A sustainable and inclusive blue economy can provide a positive contribution to the development of the Mediterranean region. The UN 2030 development agenda includes a Sustainable Development Goal 14 on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources. Further, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (2016-2025) targets Blue Economy with an Objective 1 (Ensuring sustainable development in marine and coastal areas) and an Objective 5 (Transition towards a green and blue economy).

A blue economy is to be considered in relation to international agreements relating to oceans, worldwide (e.g. Law of the Sea) and regionally (e.g. Barcelona Convention). And also in relation to international scientific progress on oceans and the Mediterranean Sea.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE: TOURISM - MARITIME CIVILIAN AND MILITARY TRANSPORT - PORT ACTIVITIES - USE OF BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES - ENERGY SOURCES...

TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE, ACIDIFICATION, BIODIVERSITY LOSS, OVERFISHING, OVERUSE OF RESOURCES, POLLUTIONS (PLASTICS, CHEMICALS...)

SELECTED OUTPUTS & ACTIVITIES

A blue economy for a healthy Mediterranean - Measuring, Monitoring and Promoting an environmentally sustainable economy in the Mediterranean region (2017) is a report financed by MAVA Foundation. It focuses on: i) defining a blue economy in the Mediterranean region; ii) monitoring it through available indicators; iii) selecting available commitments and instruments within regional governance frameworks; iv) recommending policies to foster a blue economy across Mediterranean riparian countries.

'A blue economy for a sustainable development of the Mediterranean Region' (Marseille, 30&31 May 2017) major Conference of Plan Bleu. It dealt with inter alia port activities, tourism and recreational activities, bio-prospecting and underwater mining, offshore energies, maritime transport, ship building and recycling, fisheries and aquaculture. It concluded with recommendations.

The Plan Bleu **Blue Economy Strategy** (2017) is based on extensive dialogue with stakeholders, including other MAP's RACs: Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC); Priority Actions Program Regional Activity Center (PAP/RAC); Regional Activity Center for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP/RAC); Regional Activity Centre for Information and Communication (INFO/RAC).

'Blue Economy in the Mediterranean - Case Studies Lessons and Perspectives' (2019), is a report documenting 40 case studies to provide a Mediterranean perspective on the main blue economy issues and challenges. It includes recommendations for a transition towards a Mediterranean blue economy in line with SDG 14 of the United Nations. It includes a catalogue of tools describing and

assessing promising and easily replicable tools.

InnoBlueGrowth – BlueGrowth Community (2017-2022), funded by the EU Interreg MED Programme, aims at developing smart and sustainable growth in the Mediterranean area, based on the capitalization of a range of on-going and recent projects.

BleuTourMed – Sustainable Tourism Community (2017-2022) funded by the EU Interreg MED Programme, aims at promoting sustainable coastal and maritime tourism, through knowledge sharing and capitalising results and lessons from sustainable tourism projects; to: i) enhance the development of policies on tourism; ii) increase the coordination of strategies among territories at interregional and transnational levels; iii) promote models of tourism based on integrated coastal zone management and maritime spatial planning.

BlueBoatsMed project (November 2019), BlueMed start-up action, is a series of seminars led by Plan Bleu, bringing together stakeholders of the cruise and recreational boating sectors, to: i) analyze the prospects for further and sustainable expansion in the two sectors in the Mediterranean; ii) agree on related main environmental or societal challenges; iii) present promising innovations and the potential for their uptake, present main instruments to accompany the sustainability transitions in the short, medium and long terms; iv) outline guidelines for sustainable and inclusive cruise and recreational boating in the Mediterranean.

The **'State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean'**, to be published in 2020, is a major report building on a collective effort of all MAP components and partners, with Plan Bleu leading the work. Its chapter 4 "Economic activities and linked pressures" focuses on the green/blue economy.

SELECTED FACTS & FIGURES

- The Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region has a total value estimated at USD 5.6 trillion and generates an annual **economic value of USD 450 billion**.
- For instance, **maritime traffic** is increasing on Mediterranean regional routes including through Suez Canal and Gibraltar straight with a large part for the transport of oil products.
- The **fleet** operating in the Mediterranean is made of more than 8,000 vessels, whose carrying capacity has increased 30% over the past two decades, delivering about 20% of world seaborne trade and 6% of worldwide container throughput.
- The Mediterranean represents **25% of global maritime traffic** and 30% of oil maritime traffic
- The region counts about 600 **ports**, some of which are among the most important in the world.
- For instance, **tourism** direct contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Mediterranean countries is 4.5%, and the sector accounts directly and indirectly for 11.5% of total employment in their economies.
- The number of **tourists** in the Mediterranean is set to reach 500 million in 2030, meaning potentially 250 million international tourists in coastal areas.
- The Mediterranean **cruise industry** is the world's second largest market after the Caribbean, while the **recreational boating** value chain sector counts approximately 32,000 companies, directly employing over 280,000 people only in Europe.
- For instance, **fisheries and aquaculture** industry are key sectors in the Mediterranean with an overall value EUR 4.1 billion and 353,000 direct jobs created
- In 2030, **aquaculture** production in the EU Mediterranean countries will have increased 112% from 2010
- Recreational fishing** is one of the most common tourist activities in Mediterranean coastal areas, whose impact on marine biodiversity is largely unknown
- Offshore wind** is considered as the most promising marine renewable energy. Offshore wind could increase in production to 12 GW by 2030 and close to 40 GW by 2050 for EU Mediterranean countries
- Important new developments occur concerning **oil and gas exploration** and transport in the eastern part of the Mediterranean

SELECTED BLUE ECONOMY EVENTS ATTENDED OR CO-ORGANIZED BY PLAN BLEU

Rome: FAO “2018 Fish Forum” (10 December 2018)

Tunis: Economie bleue et écotourisme au service du développement durable au Maghreb (21-26 January 2019)

Marseilles: “Strengthening the Science-Practice-Policy interface in Blue Growth” (16-17 April 2019)

Budva: Regional workshop “Blue Economy in the Mediterranean: Case Studies, Lessons and Perspectives”(13 June 2019)

Split: Workshop “Policy Recommendations on Sustainable Tourism: Shaping the Results of MED Community”(26-28 June 2019)

Genova: BlueBoatsMed project Partners meeting (19 June 2019)

Barcelona: Workshop “Implementing the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles (17 July 2019)

Berlin: Marine Region Forum (30 September -1 October 2019)

Barcelona: Blue Eco Forum 2019 (14 November 2019)

Marseilles: BlueBoatsMed project Partners meeting (25 November 2019)

Naples: Official side event “Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism to Tackle Environmental and Development Challenges in the Mediterranean Region” (3 December 2019; COP21 to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols).

Brussels: BlueInvest Day 2020 (4 February 2020)

Montpellier: First Annual Assembly of the Blue Growth Community (4-5 February 2020)

Barcelona: 2nd UfM Regional Stakeholders Conference on Blue Economy (10-11 March 2020)

Seville: International Coastal Symposium 2020 (20 April 2020)

Cork: European Maritime Day 2020 (14 May 2020)

Lisbon: 2020 UN Ocean Conference (2 June 2020)

Paris: International Conference on Blue Economy and Blue Growth (, 20-21 July 2020)

La Valletta: Maritime Summit (5 October 2020)

Expected workshops planned by Plan Bleu and its partners in 2020 and 2021

Cruise and recreational boating sectors: towards sustainability guidelines (2020)

Towards sustainable aquaculture in the Mediterranean (2020))

Sustainable Ports in the Mediterranean (in the context of the InterregMED Blue Growth Community)

Training workshop on sustainable funding for Marine Protected Areas (2021)

Workshop on the transition to a Blue Economy (2021)