Interreg Mediterranean

EUROPEAN UNION

BLUE GROWTH

Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

DEVELOPING BLUE GROWTH POTENTIAL

@BlueGrowthCommunity

Activity: 5.4 Capitalization events (back-to-back with Community and transfer events) and territorial engagement

Deliverable: 5.4.1 Capitalization events and Strategic Liaison

Title: 1st Capitalization event "How to foster the development of Blue energies in the Med region" – 10 & 11 November 2020, online event

Partners in Charge:

Plan Bleu for the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean

Partners Involved:

National Inter-University Consortium for Marine Sciences

National Technical University of Athens – School of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering

University of Montenegro – Institute of Marine Biology

Conference of peripheral maritime regions of Europe

IrRADIARE, Science for evolution ®, Lda.

ASCAME (Association of Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and Industry)

Status: Final

Distribution: Private

Dates: 20/11/2020

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1. Introduction

In the framework of the Mediterranean Blue Growth Community project, Plan Bleu co-organised a two-day capitalisation event dedicated to Marine Renewable Energies (MRE) in collaboration with Blue Growth partners: CONISMA, CPMR, ASCAME, UoM, IrRADIARE and NTUA. The second day of this event has been held in the framework of the Circle the Med Forum. Due to the ongoing sanitary COVID-19 crisis, this event took place online on November 10th and 11th, 2020.

In Europe, the Mediterranean sea basin shows a great potential for Marine Renewable Energies (MRE) production, testing of technologies in situ and stimulating the MRE business sector, especially SMEs. Besides, the action plan of the EU Green Deal to turn the fight against climate change into a unique growth opportunity constitutes a great opportunity and accelerator for the sector.

Within the Marine Renewable Energies (MREs) available types, offshore wind energy shows the greatest potential, alongside wave and tidal energy, Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) and salinity gradient. These low-emission technologies (LET) can make a significant contribution to the fulfillment of the EU climate objectives, whilst supporting job creation and economic growth.

To better exploit this enormous potential and push the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of the technologies towards industrial roll-out, the European Commission has launched a number of targeted support instruments. The 2014 Communication on Blue Energy is among them. It recommends two “phases of action” in order to facilitate stakeholder engagement. First of all, the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) 2007, which calls for an increased coordination between different policy areas. As well as, the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP), which is an important tool for the sustainable development of marine areas and coastal regions, including the deployment of ocean energy technologies.

This online event included two parts:

- A capitalization event (10th Nov.) mainly devoted to an overview of the MRE development in the Med region, to the enabling framework (incl. legal & regulatory) to foster it and how to reconcile MRE, biodiversity and eco-tourism;
- An E-Blue Agora (11th Nov.), co-organized with the Circle the Med Forum, dedicated to SMEs with the presentation of tools, funding opportunities and a matchmaking session in the framework of the 1st BLUE DEAL Business Forum.

On the first day, around 100 participants from 14 countries attended the event, including a great variety of stakeholders, ranging from policy makers to researchers and academia, representatives of regional public authorities, and NGOs. While on the second day, over 500 people from 18 countries tuned in to follow the E-Blue Agora.

This report corresponds to activity 5.4 "Capitalization events (back-to-back with Community and transfer events) and territorial engagement" as part of the deliverable 5.4.1 "Capitalization events and Strategic Liaison".

2. Minutes of the Conference

DAY 1: How to foster the development of Blue energies in the Mediterranean region?

Session 1: How to foster the development of marine renewable energy in the Mediterranean Region?

European strategy

Mr. Xavier Guillou from Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (MARE) at EU Commision, presented the European perspective on the development of Marine Renewable energies in the Mediterranean. Although Offshore and Onshore wind energy production is still marginal in the EU, there is a good potential for growth. Europe benefits from good natural resources. According to the International Energy Agency, offshore wind is expected to become the main energy source in the EU by 2040.

In general, Blue energy is taking off in the Mediterranean regions, as they have enabled conditions for growth in this sector. The Med regions have good resources for floating wind, waves and tidal energy. These renewable energies are developing well with good pilot projects in the pipeline. Certainly, this is fostering growth, investments, jobs and in the coming few years we will have good cases in the MED for scaling up to the commercial phase. The maritime economy in these regions benefits the development of the blue technology sector. In the small islands, for instance, in most cases, the cost of energy is much above the market price. That

makes emerging technology competitive much faster, and that is interesting both for emerging technologies to expand, and for islands to test new solutions to move to decarbonization. Mr. Xavier Guillou emphasized on the European Commission's willingness to strengthen collaboration between Member States on the development of MRE. There is a lot of potential for Member States collaboration in terms of knowledge, access, and management of the maritime space. It is a political choice, he affirmed, to move towards MRE and the willingness is 'centrally' increasing. That is also shown through the European Green Deal and the Offshore Renewable Energy strategy (to be published next week). This strategy will lay out how best to exploit and scale-up offshore renewables (generation, distribution, use) to reach climate neutrality by 2050. Working offshore has a huge potential and it is not at all the same as working onshore. The need for a specific supply chain, dedicated investments, and a structured planning approach is obvious. The EU is currently the global leader by far in the offshore wind sector, but also in the wave energy sector, and it is of strategic importance to remain the leader in this area. The experience acquired in developing high-quality technology is a fact. What is missing is the industrialization and its empowerment through investments. So, it is not only a matter of energy and climate efficiency, but one shall also consider the spatial dimension and the industry dimension. The large-scale devices need a substantial space for manufacturing. The pilot phase of floating devices is opening the way to the implementation. There is already a strong interest from key industrial players to move on, so the member states shall consider providing the necessary funding. EC acknowledges offshore renewable as a particularly good complementary input in the energy mix, because it is more stable and more predictable than onshore solar wind energy.

The tool of the EC in order to manage and protect the EC maritime environment is the 'Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)'. MSP aims to reduce conflict on access to maritime space, preserve and protect maritime activities on the environment, reduce coordination costs for public authorities and improve certainty and predictability for private investments. Mr. Xavier Guillou closed his speech with the MSP Directive, through which all EU coastal Member states must send their national plan by 31 March 2021. This is a strong component in terms of cross-border cooperation within maritime and spatial planning.

Regional smart specialization strategies for MRE in the Med region

Mr. Javier Gomez Prieto from the Joint Research Center of European Commission highlighted the key role of smart specialisation strategy in fostering the development of Blue energy in the Mediterranean and the forthcoming developments (Cohesion Policy). There will be a shift from Smart Specialisation strategy (S3) towards S4, which will include the sustainability aspect. Analyses on how smart specialization can contribute to sustainability, in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda, are already being developed. The interregional cooperation plays a fundamental role in smart specialisation in the marine renewable energy sector. Some of the best studies and lessons to learn can be found **here**.

Many regions in the Mediterranean and in the EU are selecting MRE as a key innovation priority in their strategies. From the Smart specialisation platform, JRC has been provided support not only at individual level in the regions, but also addressing interregional cooperation. The Methodological Manual entitled "Developing Interregional Partnerships for Smart Specialisation" puts together all the domains of specialization and identifies project investments and new ways of cooperation. There is a lesson to learn for cooperation and it is based on mapping regional capacities or identifying analytical tools or proposed business cases. The lesson is outlined in the EU Industrial Policy Strategy (May 2019) "A Vision for 2030", that highlights the support that cohesion policy can bring in mobilising investments in Industrial competitiveness and industrial transition, also taking into consideration Smart Specialisation Strategies. It underlines the potential of the future single market programme to boost industrial modernisation through joint cluster initiatives, as well as of the new Interregional Innovation Investment Instrument proposed under Cohesion policy for the development of EU value chains. DG Regio launched a Pilot S3 Project for boosting interregional cooperation in innovation, testing new ways for commercializing and scaling-up interregional innovation projects that can create or reshape European value chains. There are different EU instruments to attract private investment for promising innovation projects and explore and strengthen synergies between countries (EDIF, EFSI, H2020, COSME).

Component 5 will be a novelty in the smart specialization strategy for the next coming financial period. Component 5 builds on the results of the pilot actions aiming to foster Interregional Innovation Investments (I3). This will be done through the commercialisation and scaling up of interregional innovation projects having the potential to encourage the development of the European value chain. ERDF may support Interregional Innovation Investment, but the budget is still under negotiation. The financial and advisory support for I3 will be composed of 3 standards: Standard 1 - Investment in Interregional Innovation project; Standard 2 - Development of Value Chains in Less Developed Regions, Standard 3 - Learning Activities, Evaluation and Capitalization. Mr. Javier Gomez Prieto concluded by saying that to foster blue energy in the MED region, it is necessary to rely on (a) a place-based innovation strategy, supported by smart specialisation processes, (b) a capitalisation strategy, focused on commercialising and scaling up results of previous projects and (c) a coherent policy strategy at EU, national and local, level.

3rd speech

New challenges and opportunities for Alentejo RIS3 - 2030

Introduction by Carmen Carvalheira, Vice President - Alentejo Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRA)

Sofia Martins on behalf of Carmen Carvalheira

Alentejo is the largest Portuguese region, with areas equivalent to 1/3 of the country territory. It belongs to NUTS II, with 5 subregions, 58 municipalities and 400 parishes. Traditionally, Alentejo is considered a rural territory, but new trends have, in the last years, emerged in the regional economy. In the Regional Innovation Scoreboard 2019, Alentejo revealed an increase of the regional innovation performance over time.

CCDRA is Alentejo Regional Coordination and Development commission. CCDRA's mission is to (a) ensure the coordination of various sectoral policies at regional level; (b) implement environmental, spatial planning and city policies, and provide technical support to local authorities and their associations; and (c) implement the state's policy of incentives to the media in accordance with the law. Alentejo region, in its Smart Regional Specialisation Strategy (EREI2020), identified a set of thematic priorities, purposes and new paradigms for innovation policy that foster in the region the environmental, social and economic transformation necessary to meet the current challenges. In the revised EREI2030, 3 strategic objectives, 2 cross-cutting areas, and 5 areas of expertise have been established. The specialization domains aim to produce innovation and innovative direct investment and capture relevant aspects for the region framed in National-European agendas-strategies. The cross domains aim to enhance the project value regarding any of the EREI2030 domains of expertise and to contribute in focusing regional innovation on processes able to increase the Digitalisation and the circularity of the economy. The 2 Strategic objectives aim to promote (a) collective dynamics and (b) medium and long-term impact assessment. EREI2030 Governance aims at mobilising regional actors to achieve the strategic objectives and is based on a network of relational channels.

In terms of Renewable Energy, the Alentejo region is in line with the region's strategic objectives. The region is especially suited for the location of photovoltaic plants due to the solar potential of the region and both large and small hydroelectric power stations, opportunities that arise from the use of national and international water lines that cross Alentejo region. Given the characteristics and size of the Alentejo coast, there is a large potential in the field of the Blue Economy and especially Blue Energy. One of the ongoing projects and initiatives in the field of Blue Energy is the BASEPOINT project. This project aims at validating the performance of a new power-take-off module philosophy for wave energy devices.

Blue Action plans in Med

Ms Maria Vittoria Struglia, Researcher from ENEA, presented the PELAGOS Blue Energy Action Plan in Med. The Action Plan intends to provide recommendations to support the development of Marine Renewable Energies (MRE) in the MED area. It has been addressed to organisations that have the authority to make decisions regarding energy policies from national to local levels. It is mainly based on the 5 National Action Plans of five of the project's partners' countries: Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Spain, and Italy. The action plans intend to provide recommendations to support the development of Marine Renewable Energies (MRE) in the MED area. It has been addressed to organisations that have the authority to make decisions regarding energy policies, from national to local levels. The action plan identifies 6 key areas of intervention, 15 recommendations are given and 34 actions have been suggested to be implemented according to different priorities.

It is important, said Mrs. Maria Vittoria Struglia, to recognize the state of the art of Blue Energy in the Mediterranean. There is currently no commercial development of MRE in MED and the readiness level is low for most of the MED countries. Nevertheless, some of the MED countries perceived the development of MRE as a strategic tool, which impacts their economy with the creation of new companies

and jobs. The Mediterranean Sea has specific natural conditions with lower wind, tide and current potential, as well as greater depths, in respect to the Atlantic and North Seas. But the Mediterranean has the potential to host different types of MRE (offshore wind and wave) and several large-scale pilot projects are currently being developed. In view of these considerations, PELAGOS action plan pointed out that incentive policies must be put in place and exchange of experiences among Med countries is desirable in order to avoid replication and waste of resources. The six key areas of intervention, which have been identified, are: 1) Marine Spatial Planning - explicit inclusion of MRE in MSP is a common priority -; 2) Research and Innovation - R&I objective is to drive down the Levelized Cost of Energy (LCoE) -; 3) Awareness raising activities - policies should deal with the problem of social acceptance of MRE, information campaigns should be organized in order to promote social acceptance of MRE, identify new jobs fields, promoting high level education and integrating national and regional strategies -; 4) Access to funding - substantial and stable public investment is needed & risk reduction for investors -; 5) Simplification of producers - procedures to implement MRE pilots and get authorizations should be simplified -; and 6) Grid connection - grid construction, new energy networks design (from star to mesh), non-interconnected islands.

Blue Growth Community's Projects the way forward

Mrs. Varvara Bougiouri presented the Blue Growth Community and the way forward for a sustainable Blue Energy in the MED. The Blue Growth Community (BGC) includes 6 thematics: Marine Renewable Energy, Maritime Surveillance, Coastal & Maritime Tourism, Circular Economy and Blue Funding, Blue Biotechnology and Bioeconomy, Fishing & Aquaculture. Each project of the BGC has produced (closed projects) or will produce (ongoing projects) tools, methodologies and in general results which are focused on one or more of the above thematics and which may be used in other thematics as well. Mrs. Varvara Bougiouri made a short presentation of all the community's projects.

Modular projects:

- **PELAGOS** has created the first ***transnational Mediterranean Cluster in Blue Energy***,
- **MAESTRALE** has organized ***10 Blue Energy Labs*** through which have been developed 20 pilot projects,
- **PROteuS** has established the ***MED Maritime Surveillance Cluster***,
- **iBLue** has developed the ***3-PBM methodology*** for SMEs in the yachting sector,
- **4helix+** has produced innovative tools such as the ***cyber space*** and the ***innovation voucher scheme***,
- **BLUE DEAL**, taking into consideration PELAGOS and MAESTRALE, aims to establish transnational and regional ***blue deal alliances***,
- **Psamides** will optimize the ***performance of small and small-medium sized ports and marinas*** implementing innovative tools regarding the tourism activity,
- **BLUE CROWDFUNDING** will integrate and propose ***crowdfunding and alternative funding services*** for blue economy businesses,

- **BLUEfasma** will integrate ***circular economy principles*** in the fishing and aquaculture sector.

Integrated Project:

- **MISTRAL** through a ***Mediterranean Innovation Strategy*** aims to increase the share of knowledge of the different blue growth sectors.

Strategic Projects:

- **MED OSMoSIS** is focusing on the development of the maritime surveillance and information exchanges modules supporting ***interoperable sectoral systems*** in Med,
- **BLUE BIO MED** is promoting research and innovation strategies for ***blue bioeconomy***,
- **B-BLUE** aims at establishing the ***Med Blue Biotechnologies community*** and 5 Blue Biotechnologies HUBs.

To the questions: How to open the way forward? How to continue the work done or in progress? How to implement, transfer, capitalize the Blue Growth projects' results, in order not to lose them in the long run? Mrs. Varvara Bougiouri answered that a first step could be by joining the interactive BGC's Working group on Marine Renewable Energy, in order to share tools, expertise and support the development of MRE in Med. Following, she shared with the participants the community's tools.

Tool 1 - ***Blue Energy planning for Blue Strategies*** is addressed to regions, municipalities, clusters and networks, that are now planning their own strategy in respect to research and innovation strategies for smart specialisation (RIS3) and to the European Green Deal, or are Involved in the planning of the Operational Programme Strategy (National/Regional) for 2021-2027. This tool is based on the results of different Interreg Med projects, notably PELAGOS (Blue Energy Action Plans / Report on Existing policy & regulatory status), MAESTRALE (Blue Energy Potential in the Med Area Analysis Report), MISTRAL (Blue Growth Book) and Blue Growth (Factsheet on Blue Energy / Policy Paper / Report on Blue Energy in progress), which have produced blue energy action plans or other analyses/reports on blue energy potential in the Med area.

Tool 2 - ***Methodologies for knowledge sharing, educational and training activities on blue energy*** are addressed to educational research institutes, as well as to all interested parties involved in educational and training activities - public or private. They are based on MAESTRALE outputs: 10 Regional Blue Energy Labs (20 pilot projects) and 1 Transnational Blue Energy Lab, designed to provide capacity building and best practise exchange and to define tailored services for potential investors. The project also implemented transferring activities, involving high-school students, including seminars, building of prototypes and demonstrations, as well as the online Web GIS, which is an educational tool illustrating the Blue Energy potential of the MED region.

Tool 3 - ***Blue Energy Transnational Cluster in Med*** is addressed to organizations, research centres, local authorities, clusters, networks, etc., that would like to join the cluster, create a national hub in their country or join efforts between them in order to create a "physical" transnational BE cluster in Med. This tool was produced by PELAGOS project and it is the "Blue Energy Cluster - powered by PELAGOS Interreg

Med project". It comprises 6 national HUBs in Greece, Portugal, Italy, Cyprus, Spain and Croatia, as well as the French cluster: Pôle Mer Méditerranée. It offers a consolidated mix of support activities - to all relevant stakeholders in Blue Energy value chain, notably SMEs - including Knowledge and Market Access, Capacity Building, International partnering, International Cooperation and Networking, etc.

Tool 4 - ***Platforms for Blue energy projects' implementation*** are addressed to SMEs, enterprises, academia, decision-makers, public authorities, etc., who would like to create a project funded by national or regional operational programmes. For this purpose, the Blue Growth Community has to propose three interesting platforms:

(1) The "be-cluster" platform (http://www.be-cluster.eu/) aims to increase the innovation capacity of its members, support R&I in the MRE sector and foster linkages and collaborations among all stakeholders of the Quadruple Helix.

(2) The "Web Gis database" (http://maestrale-webgis.unisi.it/) gathers together existing data collections and open access geographical data on Blue Energy potential, with the purpose to provide a reliable and up-to-date informative support to decision-makers and investors, setting the basis for the development of Blue Energy initiatives in the involved regions.

(3) The "4helix+ Cyber Space" is an integrated and collaborative virtual platform promoting collaboration with stakeholders and beneficiaries (blue SMEs, knowledge providers, policy makers, research institutions, universities and society), offering a constant dialogue, coordination, brokering and consultation. There are several spaces and tools provided through this platform: a knowledge provider gallery, a portal for applicants, a blue matchmaking environment and a transferring corner.

Tool 5 - ***Blue Energy funding schemes***

The first funding scheme is addressed to regional public authorities or other organizations that can use funding tools for the benefit of blue companies (mostly MSMEs and start-ups). It was created by the 4helix+ project and is called "Innovation Voucher Scheme". It proposed grants and knowledge/coaching services by "Knowledge Providers" to 48 companies (in 8 pilot areas), in order for them to design and create new products, services, processes or business models. It had a specific structure including several steps: the online application, evaluation and registration of the Knowledge Providers, the selection of Knowledge Providers by SMEs, the online submission of the blue-innovation project proposal, the evaluation of the proposals by the Selection Boards, the 6 months projects realization (including monitoring visits) and the certification (after the successful realization).

The second funding scheme is addressed both to the public and private sector. It is based on the work of the BLUE CROWDFUNDING project, in using crowdfunding and crowdsourcing to fund, test and validate innovative blue economy products and services. The "Toolkit" that will be prepared will target 3 different types of actors: (a) SMEs to learn and implement crowdfunding campaigns; (b) BSOs to be trained to become trainers/"focal points" in order to mainstream crowdfunding knowledge for blue economy projects; and (c) Regions to be guided through a process for changing regulations in order to enable the implementation of a "civic blue

crowdfunding experiment" and mainstream it into future 2021-2027 development policies.

Tool 6 - ***Blue Business Model*** is addressed to the private sector. The tool was created by the iBLUE project and is the "3-PBM" methodology (including the 3 pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental and societal). It is based on the Business Model Canvas and the RPV (Resources-Processes-Values) framework, including in addition the "environmental costs & benefits" and the" societal costs & benefits". The company who may implement this business model, will pass through 2 phases, the "analysis of the existing business model from the perspective of the 3 pillars" and the "improvement actions and implementation design", will expand its business capabilities, will be able to confront any challenge and will implement innovative plans.

Session 2: How to reconcile the development of renewable energy with biodiversity and tourism

Minimizing the Offshore Wind energy development in Marine Protected Areas

Pierre-Yves Hardy from WWF France presented the key recommendations produced by the Interreg Med PHAROS4MPA project to minimize the environmental impact of the Offshore wind energy development in Marine Protected Areas. An Offshore Wind Report was developed in the framework of this Interreg Project and can be found **here**. This project led by WWF France focussed mainly on French cases, which are currently in the commercialisation phase with three pilot projects for wind turbines. WWF France partnered with the French government, NGOs and other stakeholders. Mr. Pierre-Yves Hardy highlighted the following conclusions, regarding the interaction between offshore wind energy and marine life preservation:

- The Mediterranean Sea is under pressure: all maritime sectors are represented in 1% of the global ocean, so it is overcrowded and there is a strong competition for space.
- Marine Spatial Planning is still at a preliminary stage with no MSP documents that clearly regulate the use of the Med sea.
- The Mediterranean Sea is a biodiversity hotspot despite its small size with important wetlands.
- Many species present in the Med are experiencing unprecedented decline and some of these vulnerable species now face another risk with the potential impacts of Offshore wind farms.
- Marine Protected Areas is the most effective solution for protecting species and reversing the declining trend; The objective is to have one third of the Mediterranean under protection, most probably in areas with high wind potential. The problem is that the management of MPAs is still not effective and most of them are multi-use MPAs. The question is: should we accept another maritime sector in Med?

- Offshore Wind farms will be placed in places where wildlife is under great pressure. It is best to avoid setting up Offshore Wind Farms (OWFs) in Marine Protected Areas.
- In order to identify potential future locations for OWFs, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) needs to be performed to guide renewable energy away from ecologically sensitive areas in general and MPAs in particular.
- Sensitivity mapping is one of the most valuable tools for effective OWF planning, which can help developers and regulators in the early stages of decision-making to steer development away from sensitive areas where negative interactions are most likely to happen. This also reduces business risk.

Finally, Mr. Pierre-Yves Hardy explained that PHAROS4MPA worked to consider how to reconcile biodiversity protection and Offshore Wind development as the renewable energies are crucial to reach internationally agreed goals to steer away from our fossil-fuel dependency.

Sustainable Energy Planning of Mediterranean Islands

Mr. Manos Kamilakis from Aegean Energy and Environment Agency (Renewable Energy Community), presented the Interreg Mediterranean project: Renewable Energy, dedicated to promote renewable energies through specific tools. He focussed especially on presenting a methodology that is analytical and descriptive. The main case study, he used to explain the methodology, was the Greek island of Kythnos. Kythnos has 1608 inhabitants and is a non-interconnected island. It holds a historical background of innovation.

7 years ago the Aegean Energy and Environmental Agency (AEEA) helped the municipality of Kythnos to develop an Island Sustainable Energy Action Plan (ISEAN) within the “Pact of Islands” initiative. The interest from the local community was rather limited though. So they turned to the Smart Islands Initiative which is a bottom-up effort that seeks to convey the potential of islands to function as laboratories for technological, social, political, economic and environmental innovation. The key intervention areas are: Energy, transport, water, waste, governance, ICT, economy.

In the Kythnos case, the methodology used had four pillars:

- Mapping interested key stakeholders
- Political and social support of the project
- Participatory planning of a common local vision
- SWOT analysis of the project with the key stakeholders

In parallel with this methodology, bottom-up and top-down actions were launched.

Action 1: Supporting the financing of local development projects

- Promotion of sustainable local tourism development

Action 2: Invitation to the European Economic and Social Committee

- Kythnos was also included in the Smart Islands Report in 2016

Action 3: WISEGRID H2020 project

- Meetings between locals and visitors to discuss the OWF sector
- Public participatory planning meeting organised in May 2018 with local citizens
- Installation of batteries with local citizens in June 2019

The main outcome was that the financing for Kythnos Smart Island was granted.

After that a workshop with local citizens was organized to map their interest and explain the next steps. For instance, as a result of the call for interest, they targeted the location of interest and the means of transport.

Mr. Manos Kamilakis pointed out that the main lesson was that engagement with local communities is crucial to overcome the major obstacles that may arise in a territory in which a OWF project is being considered.

Ports and Marinas as a testbed for innovation and a key part of the MRE supply chain

Mr. Fabio Filocamo, CEO of Porto delle Grazie - Marina di Roccella Ionica in Italy, highlighted the role of marinas and ports and how they put special attention on sustainability. He presented the location of the Marina di Roccella (Porto delle Grazie) and listed the quality of services, the sustainable infrastructure of the Marina, as well as the prizes won by the Marina (gold anchor award by the Yacht Harbour, Blue flag). Mr. Fabio Filocamo and his team are working to upgrade the customer base & positioning (e.g. by promoting sandy beaches and trekking in the back mountains).

The goal is to position the Marina di Roccella in a better place in the European market and to create a green, sustainable port along the sea. A special dock has been installed, which is producing and generating electricity by sea waves. It is the first marina to apply this type of technology. The energy produced is to ensure electrical mobility within the marina (bicycles, small cars, etc.). They plan to add other technologies to produce energy from water, light and wind, as well as to use for example hydrogen power boats. They are also preparing a lab for sustainable innovation, in the form of a bio-compatible sustainability village. They have also turned the parking lot into a photovoltaic park.

For funding, they use a combination of commercial maritime activities, national funds and EU funds. Finally, they are looking for new partners. They want to think of Marinas as small cities, which can make use of the space as ‘smart cities’.

Offshore wind and tourism: could the two happily co-exist?

Ms. Ivana Lukic from s.Pro sustainable projects shared the experience of Baltic Sea on reconciling offshore wind and tourism. S.Pro sustainable project acts as managing authority of the SUBMARINER Network for Blue Growth EEIG, which is the communication and cooperation platform for actors & initiatives in the Baltic Sea Region involved in sustainable and innovative uses of marine resources.

Ocean multi-use has been defined as a concept in which two or more maritime uses can coexist and derive benefits, sharing resources, space and reducing demand for

ocean space. They derive socio-economic benefits for all users, efficiency and cost-reduction (joint operations, e.g. pesca tourism).

Type of offshore wind & tourism multi-use:

- Sightseeing boat tours
- Specially designed platforms serving as resting grounds for seals, facilities for divers...
- Unique wind farm design and layout - a tourist attraction and a landmark (e.g. Copenhagen)
- on land information centers and museums
- Boat tour operators can be engaged OWF related monitoring activities
- Helicopter flights around OWF

Combining tourism and offshore can bring benefits such as:

- Mitigation of potential conflict at early-stage and speed up social acceptance
- Improved awareness about the importance of renewable energy
- Additional income for local tourism operators which can support tourism all year around
- It can be a source of pride from locals especially if the design is done in an innovative visually appealing way

Multi-uses has been supported not only by a series of the EU research funding programmes, but also by the international, national funds and planning policy. An Ocean Multi-Use Action Plan was developed through the MUSES project. Through the UNITED project, five different pilots on multi-use were studied in Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Greece.

Mrs. Ivana Lukic reported the pilot project in Denmark, which concerned an offshore wind farm, not so far from the coast. It was elected the second most important landmark of the city of Copenhagen. The 50% of the turbines are owned by local citizens. This offshore wind farm is much related to the tourism sector and generates an income to the local people. There are tour boats for tourists, which are still limited (30 per year only). The transferring from the boat to the turbine is challenging and there are no standard procedures. There is also a turbine that was built in the 1990s and has a single ladder to access the top, special for sightseeing.

The most important challenges of adding tourism activities to existing offshore farms are the following:

- Who is to cover the costs of adapting the offshore facilities to the new situation, and how does this relate to the already obtained offshore wind farm permit conditions received from the government?
- What about the costs of damages to the wind farm infrastructure and the increased operational expenses, which were not part of earlier business plans?

Implementation is easier if taken into consideration early at the design phase. Of course challenges may still be present after starting the two uses together:

- Lack of viable design solutions and operational solutions with proven benefits;
- Permitting not necessarily easier if uses are combined;
- Low awareness about business opportunities;
- Low interest from the tour operators and local communities;

- Lack of capacities and financial resources on the side of tour operators;
- Operational challenges imposed to the offshore wind operators and liability issues in case of accidents within the safety zone.

Mrs. Ivana Lukic highlighted the need to identify viable opportunities and to start the discussions early, involving all sides: offshore wind developers, tourism boards and governments.

DAY 2: E-Blue Agora - 1st BLUE DEAL Business Forum

On the 11th November, Circle the MED - the Mediterranean Online Forum 2020 - and Plan Bleu, along with the Blue Growth Community partnership, co-organised a morning session entitled "**Transition towards a Blue Economy; case studies, lessons and perspectives**". It was the opportunity for ***Ms Caterina Pratico - Lead Partner and coordinator of the Blue Growth Community project -*** to present an overview of the different tools created by the Blue Growth Community's projects.

In the afternoon, was held the E-Blue Agora - 1st BLUE DEAL Business Forum, a 'side' event including three sessions.

The first session: **"Science, policymakers and SMEs to foster the Blue Energy deployment in the Mediterranean area"** dealt with how a wide range of different stakeholders can collaborate in order to accelerate the deployment of Blue Energy in the Mediterranean region. First, Prof. Simone Bastianoni presented the BLUE DEAL project, its goals, tools and results, but also the potential of transferability of the project's outputs. The second presentation was made by Mr. Kostas Karamanis from the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), who showed how EEN could assist SMEs/companies acting in the Blue energy sector through innovation and support to access finance and technology transfer. The third presentation was made by Dr. Christoforos Perakis on the BLUE DEAL Transfer Protocol and the different tools used during the BLUE DEAL Labs.

The second session: **"SMEs/Enterprises acting in the Blue energy market"** had many speakers who had the opportunity to present their innovation, tools and products regarding the further development of the Blue Energy sector. This session gave a solid overview of the different actors being involved, the issues being tackled and the technology which is used for promoting sustainability in the Med region. Here is the list of companies that have presented themselves:

- FEAC Engineering P.C. - Sotiris Kokkinos
- Wave for Energy S.r.l - Andrea Gulisano
- Tecnomac S.r.l - Marco Negri
- TYPSA - Javier Abanades
- InnoEnergy HUB Greece & Cyprus - KiNNO Consultants - Yiannis Geragotellis
- SignalGeneriX - Lefteris Economou

- Rover Maritime - Cristina Suesta
- Eco Wave Power - Yair Rudick
- Rotary Wave - Andrea Novás Cortes
- KUMA ENERGY S.r.l - Ezio Pellegro
- SWEL - Sea Wave Energy Ltd - Tony Antoniou

The third and final session: **“Funding opportunities and financial tools for SMEs”** was moderated by Mr. Luis Miranda Molas from ASCAME (partner of the Blue Growth Community project). The different funding opportunities available for Blue Energy projects were presented by Mr. Thanasis Koukounaris (Dynamic Vision) and Mrs. Vaya Piteli (PRAXI Network). Mr. Darko Ferčej (E-zavod) presented the crowdfunding opportunities for SMEs developed in the Interreg Med project BLUE CROWDFUNDING. Finally, Mrs. Valentina Bozzi (SVIM -Sviluppo Marche Srl) presented the funding approach through the Innovative Voucher Scheme developed by the 4helix+ project.