



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

## Quarterly Flash News on Blue Economy

Issue N° 2, 26 February 2018



**Welcome to the 2<sup>nd</sup> issue of the online flash news on blue economy in the Mediterranean region!**

*You will find the most updated information related to the work of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and its partners to promote the blue economy in the Mediterranean region.*

## Latest News

1. *1<sup>st</sup> UfM Regional Stakeholder Conference on Blue Economy;*
2. *Ministerial Declaration on the Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the Western Mediterranean;*
3. *The UfM Virtual Knowledge Center on Blue Economy;*
4. *UfM labelled Plastic Busters project;*
5. *UfM labelled MedCoast4BG project;*
6. *EU funded Facility for Regional Policy Dialogue on Integrated Maritime Policy;*
7. *Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention;*
8. *European Union Plastic strategy.*

## Forthcoming events

1. *WestMED - 1st Meeting of the Steering Committee;*
2. *Meeting of the UfM Blue Economy Working Group;*
3. *Forum on Fisheries Science in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea;*
4. *First Advanced Master on Sustainable Blue Growth;*
5. *Master Course on Maritime Spatial Planning.*

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## Latest News

1. The **1st UfM Regional Stakeholder Conference on Blue Economy** took place in Naples (Italy) on 29-30 November 2017. It gathered 400 stakeholders (national authorities and agencies, international and regional organizations, ports, universities, clusters/start-ups, Chambers of Commerce, NGOs, etc.) from all over the Mediterranean region. The organization of 12 thematic workshops provided the opportunity to address key blue economy issues in the most inclusive way since they were run collectively according the format decided by the stakeholders themselves. The different type of stakeholders and the equitable north-south geographic representation offered a reliable snap-shot of what is going on in the region on the promotion of blue economy as well as of potential synergies and operational collaboration. To read the **Summary Records** of the Conference <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/node/4125>  
For further information, please, visit <http://ufmsecretariat.org/ufm-conference-blue-economy2017/>

2. The **“Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the Western Mediterranean”** was politically endorsed on 30 November 2017 in Naples. The Ministers of the Western Mediterranean countries from both shores of the basin gathered and agreed on developing sustainable blue economy in the region through a concrete framework of action. The WestMED Initiative is an important follow up of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on Blue Economy (November 2015). The Napoli Declaration is

available on the UfM website [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/content/western-mediterranean-countries-strengthen-co-operation-promote-blue-economy-region\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/content/western-mediterranean-countries-strengthen-co-operation-promote-blue-economy-region_en).

3. The new version of the **Virtual Knowledge Center (VKC)** <http://www.med-vkc-blueeconomy.org/> was officially launched at the 1<sup>st</sup> UfM Regional Stakeholder Conference on Blue Economy. The VKC is a tool for blue economy stakeholders to share knowledge and support the development of the blue economy. It is an online "one-stop shop" gathering technical and sectoral information on marine and maritime affairs in the Mediterranean. It is built on three pillars: i) KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (KMS); ii) PROJECTS; iii) STAKEHOLDERS. Once registered, users will be able to upload information related their own KMS and/or project using the template provided, and sign up as a blue economy stakeholder and join the Mediterranean "blue economy community". Besides these three pillars, the VKC rotates around thematic/geographic sectors and sub-sectors; users can contribute to enriching them by sending relevant web links at [blueeconomy@ufmsecretariat.org](mailto:blueeconomy@ufmsecretariat.org). Users will also be able to upload blue economy related events (e.g. national or international conferences, workshops, etc.) and/or news. *For further information, please, contact [blueeconomy@ufmsecretariat.org](mailto:blueeconomy@ufmsecretariat.org)*

4. "**Plastic Busters for a Mediterranean free from litter**" is a UfM labeled project whose goal is to effectively tackle the issue of marine litter in the Mediterranean and thus contribute to the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea. In January 2018, under the title "Plastic Busters: preserving biodiversity from plastics in Mediterranean Marine Protected Areas", the project was awarded a five million euros funding by the Interreg MED Programme under Priority Axis 3: Protecting and promoting Mediterranean natural and cultural resources. Over the next four years, the project's activities will be implemented in Italy, France, Spain, Greece, Croatia, and Albania and, through its Transferring and Capitalization work packages, will be extended to non-EU Mediterranean countries. *For further information, please, visit <http://ufmsecretariat.org/project/plastic-busters-for-a-mediterranean-free-from-litter/>*

5. The project **Med Coast for Blue Growth (MedCoast4BG)** received the UfM label in December 2017. The project's general objective is to analyze and promote the co-evolution of human activities and natural systems in coastal areas particularly or potentially devoted to tourism, taking into consideration climate change effects, sustainable development of tourist activities, and basing its analysis and actions on the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP). Although, the project will consider the whole Mediterranean, in terms of analysis, development of tools, capacity building, transferability of approaches, guidelines and best practices, it will focus on a number of pilot areas in Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Spain and Tunisia. The inclusive and open architecture of the project will allow in the medium-term to build a sort of federation of Mediterranean Pilot Areas, sharing the MEDCOAST4BG principles and approaches and willing to contribute to their

consolidation and further expansion to other potential countries/areas. For further information, please, visit <http://ufmsecretariat.org/project/medcoast4bg-med-coasts-blue-growth/>

6. Within the broader context of the UfM Blue Economy Forum, the project **Facility for Regional Policy Dialogue on Integrated Maritime Policy**, which is funded by DG NEAR and thematically steered by DG MARE, runs from 2016 to January 2019. It constitutes a continuation of the IMP-MED project (2010-2014). The project aims to enhance sectorial and cross-sectorial regional cooperation through policy dialogue and the exchange of best practices with existing networks of stakeholders in the Southern Neighbourhood. It primarily supports the ENI South Partner Countries of Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia. The project has recently completed a series of national blue economy studies in the partner countries, identifying potential areas and activities of the blue economy/integrated maritime policy, which could be developed at both a national level and through regional cooperation. Each study includes an assessment of the national maritime and coastal capital (natural, human, technical), and of the existing maritime and coastal activities, focusing on the national components and segments of the value chain. From this analysis, recommendations will be made to encourage sustainable management and exploitation of the national capital, further develop existing activities and promote emerging activities. The Project has prepared National Technical Assistance Plans for these 8 ENI South countries, and will provide National and Regional Technical Assistance to beneficiary countries on their identified Blue Economy Priorities. To contact the project office email to Dr.Lothar Schillak: [teamleader.imp@gmail.com](mailto:teamleader.imp@gmail.com)

7. The 20th Ordinary **Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention** (COP 20) took place in Tirana, Albania, from 17-20 December 2017. The Ministerial Session discussed the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, with focus on SDG 14: pollution and biodiversity. Being aware that sustainable blue economy and key socioeconomic activities depend on clean, biologically diverse and healthy seas, the Parties reaffirmed, inter alia, the vital importance of the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and of the sustainable management of natural resources for the provision of goods and services for the population of the Mediterranean region. The 14 decisions adopted at COP 20, the Tirana Ministerial Declaration and the Ministerial discussions confirm the crucial role of the regional dimension for implementing global policies. For further information: <http://web.unep.org/unepmap/tirana-ministerial-declaration>

8. The first-ever **European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy** was adopted on 16 January 2018 with the aim to transform the way plastic products are designed, used, produced and recycled in the EU. Better design of plastic products, higher plastic waste

recycling rates, more and better quality recycling will help boosting the market for recycled plastics. It will deliver greater added value for a more competitive, resilient plastics industry. The Strategy is part of Europe's transition towards a circular economy, and will also contribute to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, the global climate commitments and the EU's industrial policy objectives. This strategy will help reduce marine litter and support more sustainable and safer consumption and production patterns for plastics. *For further information, please, visit [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/first-ever-europe-wide-strategy-plastics-2018-jan-16\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/news/first-ever-europe-wide-strategy-plastics-2018-jan-16_en)*

### **Forthcoming events**

1. The Ministers and High level representatives from Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Mauritania, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia adopted the declaration on the **Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean (WestMED)** last November in Naples. The declaration politically endorses the initiative and the main principles of its governance, including its set up in partnership with the European Commission and the Union for the Mediterranean. Discussions in Naples recalled the need for quick implementation of concrete projects under the WestMED Initiative through increased cooperation among participating countries and the identification of shared priorities and relevant sources of funding. The first step, to move quickly to the implementation phase of the Initiative, will be the establishment of the West MED Steering Committee, which is convened on 1 March 2018 in Brussels. The meeting will be held under the Algerian-French Co-Presidency.

2. The **UfM Working Group on the Blue Economy** is a technical group of representatives designated by UfM countries and co-chaired by the two UfM co-Presidencies, focusing on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Blue Economy. The 4th Meeting of the UfM Working Group on the Blue Economy will be held on 26 April 2018 in Brussels. Among other things, it will discuss the outcomes of the 1st UfM Stakeholder Conference on the Blue Economy, as well as the latest advancements in achieving the deliverables of the Ministerial Declaration on the Blue Economy at regional (e.g. WestMed and BLUEMED Initiatives, the Virtual Knowledge Centre, etc.) and national level. *For further information, please, contact [blueeconomy@ufmsecretariat.org](mailto:blueeconomy@ufmsecretariat.org)*

3. The **Forum on Fisheries Science in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea** will be hosted by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) on 10-14 December in Rome at FAO Headquarters. The Forum will bring together the wider community of scientists and experts working on fisheries and the marine environment in the Mediterranean and Black Sea in order to build a lasting network, discuss advancements in research, integrate scientific knowledge in support of decision-making and identify research priorities for the coming decade. To submit a proposal for a workshop or a side

event, please send a letter detailing your proposal to the following address:  
[FishForum2018@gfcmonline.org](mailto:FishForum2018@gfcmonline.org).

For more information, please, visit <http://www.fao.org/gfcm/fishforum2018/en/>

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4. The first edition of the **Master in Sustainable Blue Growth** organized by the Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale (OGS) and the University of Trieste started in January 2018 and will be held in Trieste in three sessions, on March, July and October 2018. The Master is established to bring scientific excellence and technological innovation at the centre of a number of Blue Growth initiatives. The Master supports the creation of stable and attractive blue career pathways throughout strengthening professional skills and enhancing competencies in fields related to sustainable blue growth. For further information, please, visit <http://bluegrowth.inogs.it/advancedmaster/introduction>

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5. The **Erasmus Mundus Master Course on Maritime Spatial Planning** (EMMCMSPP) is a two-years advanced Master program (120 ECTS) coordinated by a consortium of three high-rates European Universities: University IUAV of Venice, University of Seville and University of Azores. The consortium welcomes more than 40 Associated Partners and provides more than 30 International internship positions. Aim of the program is to provide students with a multi-disciplinary background to enable them to become specialists in Maritime Spatial Planning and related issues. For further information, please, visit: <http://www.iuav.it/Didattica1/master/master--11/Erasmus-Mu/>

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