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FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Accompanying the document

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PALIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND
THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE**

**Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western
Mediterranean**

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Glossary

ACCOBAMS	Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area
BLUEMED:	A research and innovation initiative for blue jobs and growth in the Mediterranean
BLUEMED SRIA:	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda; https://www.researchitaly.it/uploads/12493/Bluemed%20SRIA_A4.pdf?v=7fb440d .
CEF:	Connecting Europe Facility; https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility
CLLD:	Community-Led Local Development
COSME:	Europe's programme for small and medium-sized enterprises; https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/cosme_en
DCI:	Development Cooperation Instrument; https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/funding-instruments-programming/funding-instruments/development-cooperation-instrument-dci_en
EFSI:	European Fund for Strategic Investment; http://www.eib.org/efsi/index.htm
EFSD:	European Fund for Sustainable Development; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0581&from=EN
EIPP:	European Investment Project Portal; https://ec.europa.eu/eipp/desktop/en/index.html
EMFF:	European maritime and Fisheries Fund; https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/emff_en
EMODNET:	European Marine Observation and Data Network; http://www.emodnet.eu/
ENI:	European Neighbourhood Instrument; http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2014:077:0027:0043:EN:PDF
ENI-CBC-MED:	European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme; http://www.enpicbcmmed.eu/enicbcmmed-2014-2020
ENP:	European Neighbourhood Policy: Communications on 'A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean' COM(2011) 200 http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0200&from=EN

	ENP Review priorities, COM(2016) 805; http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/report_implem_macro_region_strategy_en.pdf
ERASMUS+:	EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe; http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en
ERDF:	European Regional Development Fund; http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/erdf/
ESF:	European Social Fund; http://ec.europa.eu/esf/home.jsp
EU:	European Union
EU H2020:	EU's Research and Innovation programme; https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation;
FAO-BGI:	Blue Growth Initiative (FAO); Blue Growth Initiative – FAO; http://www.fao.org/in-action/globefish/fishery-information/resource-detail/en/c/379558/
FARNET:	European Fisheries Areas network; www.farnet.eu
FLAG:	Fisheries Local Action Group
GFCM:	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean; http://www.fao.org/gfcm/en/
Global Strategy:	Global Strategy for EU's foreign and security policy https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union
ICZM:	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
LIFE:	EU financial instrument supporting environmental, nature conservation and climate action projects; http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/
MARPOL	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
MED Programme:	Mediterranean Programme; http://www.programmemed.eu/en
MEDFISH4EVER:	https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/inseparable/en/medfish4ever
MSP:	Maritime Spatial Planning
MSSD:	Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development; http://www.unep.org/docs/unepmap/mssd_2016_2025_eng.pdf
PELAGOS	Agreement creating the Sanctuary for Mediterranean Marine Mammals
PRIMA:	Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area; https://ec.europa.eu/research/environment/index.cfm?pg=prima
RAMOGEPOL	Agreement to set up a pilot zone for the protection of the marine environment in order to co-ordinate joint actions to limit marine pollution in the border area between Italy - Monaco – and France.
REMPEC:	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea; http://www.rempec.org/rempecnews.asp?NewsID=372

UfM:	Union for the Mediterranean
UNEP-MAP:	United Nation Environmental Program-Mediterranean Action Plan
VKC:	Virtual Knowledge Centre
WWF:	World Wildlife Fund

Introduction

The ‘Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean’ is described in two documents:

- (1) a Communication from the European Commission to the other EU Institutions; and
- (2) a Framework for Action, in the form of a Commission Staff Working Document, complementing the Communication.

The **purpose** of the Initiative is to **foster sustainable blue growth and jobs, improve safety and security and preserve ecosystems and biodiversity in the western Mediterranean region**. This will be achieved through coordination and cooperation among the relevant countries on three main goals and a few priority areas of action. While geographically speaking the Initiative focuses mainly on the seas and coasts surrounding **Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia**, it also addresses the marine and coastal areas as interconnected systems. The scope of the actions may therefore vary depending on specific needs, and the Framework for Action remains open to other partners in the Mediterranean region.

The Initiative builds on the Union for the Mediterranean process and its Ministerial Declaration on the Blue Economy adopted on 17 November 2015.¹ This Declaration invited the countries of the Union for the Mediterranean to explore the added value and feasibility of appropriate maritime strategies (including at sub-regional level), building on the experience of the 5+5 Dialogue process. Therefore the 10 countries concerned have been fully involved in preparing both the Initiative and of the Framework for Action.

The extensive, bottom-up consultation process for the Framework for Action involved a wide range of stakeholders from the region representing international, national, regional and local authorities, but also the private sector, academia and civil society (this process is described in detail in Chapter 5 of the Communication).

This allowed pointing to a series of gaps that can be summarized as follows:

- a) *Strategic* gaps: several sectorial, strategic, legislative and programming frameworks for the blue economy in the western Mediterranean are asymmetric in their objectives and/or geographical scope (for instance EU or neighbourhood countries).² Greater coordination could help to implement them in a more coherent and effective manner while avoiding any duplication of effort.
- b) *Information and knowledge* gaps: data availability, accessibility, processing and understanding are dissimilar and fragmented. This hampers awareness raising, the dissemination of information and, more importantly, evidence-based policy-making. There is also a limited capacity for informing decision-makers and engaging in dialogue with them. In addition, fragmentation within and across sectors and countries makes it difficult to achieve the critical mass needed to attract knowledge and investment and trigger innovation and competitiveness both at national and sub-

¹ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/node/3846>.

² For example the EU Maritime Security Strategy, the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy and the African Charter on Maritime Security; the BLUEMED Initiative; the Maritime Spatial Planning and Marine Strategy Framework Directives; the Cohesion and Neighbourhood Policies, including the European Territorial Cooperation programmes; the EU Blue Growth Strategy, the EU Common Fisheries Policy and the FAO Blue Belt Initiative; the EU Strategy for more jobs and growth in coastal and maritime tourism; the EU Traffic Monitoring Directive, the Switchmed Programme.

regional level.

- c) *Enforcement* gaps: national capacities and resources vary from country to country and some authorities need support at national and regional level to implement, enforce and monitor the measures agreed under the different frameworks (protocols , guidelines and codes of conduct, standards)³ and initiatives.⁴ In addition, enforcement gaps can prevent a state-of-the-art application of modern concepts to maritime and coastal planning, aquaculture, maritime tourism and skill development.

Based on the above gaps, three ways in which the Initiative could add value have been identified:

1. Tailoring responses to challenges and tackling geographic or thematic asymmetries, for example by focusing on cross-border threats in order to reduce risks and mitigating their consequences; benchmarking for decision-making.
2. Bundling interventions and promoting horizontal coordination and enforcement. Examples include obtaining economies of scale, using resources more efficiently, providing citizens with better services and implementing international agreements and commitments.
3. Promoting the awareness, alignment and vertical coordination of existing strategic initiatives and/or actions among stakeholders at local, regional or national level, for example by aligning policy frameworks where appropriate and desirable, networking and promoting best practice, and disseminating results.

To make sure that concrete results are obtained, the Framework for Action sets the main goals to pursue and how to get there, outlining to a certain extent some of the possible actions and projects for the region. It is conceived as a rolling document, meaning that new actions are added over time and existing ones are adapted as they move towards completion. Implementation of the Framework for Action is the responsibility of all (at national, regional, and local level), and throughout its duration sufficient information and outreach will be crucial to make it widely known among all types of stakeholders. However, within each participating country the WestMED Task Force will be in charge of prioritising actions, coordinating and monitoring implementation of the Framework for Action and revising its contents as necessary.

³ For example, decision, recommendations/resolutions by sectorial intergovernmental organizations, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, FAO International Plans of Action, the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean guidelines on multiannual management plans for sustainable fisheries, Barcelona convention, International Maritime Organization standards etc.

⁴ For example, the mid-term strategy (2017–2020) General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries, Horizon 2020 initiative for a cleaner Mediterranean, the Strategy for Water in the western Mediterranean, the Sustainable Consumption and Production Action Plan the United Nation Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan and the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Structure of the Framework for Action

The Framework for Action reflects the goals and priorities selected in the Communication. It is articulated into:

- *Goals*: these address the core challenges for the region and are therefore essential to the success of the Initiative. The three goals are:
 1. A safer and more secure maritime space;
 2. A smart and resilient blue economy;
 3. Better governance of the sea.
- *Priorities*: the main areas where the Initiative can create added value, either by tackling a challenge or by seizing an opportunity. For each priority, the Framework for Action presents tables with possible actions.
- *Actions*: interventions and projects (such as new approaches, closer coordination in policy making, investments, training or networking initiatives, policy reviews) that countries and stakeholders carry out to address the different priorities of the Initiative. All interventions should not preclude existing EU competences and legislation. Funding sources are also indicatively proposed. They are subject and without prejudice to the assessment of the evaluation procedures and criteria for the concerned funds, programmes and projects.
- *Targets*: result indicators are proposed and as far as possible quantified for each goal. Baselines and timeframes have been determined or estimated for most targets.
- *Union priorities*: this section describes how the actions identified will help implementing the European Union's priorities 'Jobs, growth and investment', 'Energy Union and climate change', 'Migration' and 'A stronger global actor'.
- *Background projects*: examples drawn from reports and from stakeholder inputs to stimulate further initiatives and to illustrate what is needed.

1. Goal 1 — A safer and more secure maritime space

Goal 1 is about improving the **safety and security** of activities at sea. This is essential to ensuring:

- the sustainable development of a range of blue economy activities and for job creation;
- the good governance of the region's sea and coastal areas; and
- the region's prosperity and stability.

The success of the other two goals of the Initiative also hinges on the degree of safety and security.

Challenges

The region faces a number of complex maritime threats, and there is growing concern about their possible impact on human lives and economic assets.

On average, there are about 60 maritime transport accidents per year in the western Mediterranean, 15 of which involve tankers transporting oil or chemicals.⁵ Nearly half the accidents leading to significant spills (of more than 100 tonnes) over the last decade occurred in the western Mediterranean Sea (ICM 2015⁶). The region still fares rather well compared to other sub-basins, but new economic developments may expose it to more risks, especially in areas where maritime traffic is congested (such as the Strait of Gibraltar, the Bonifacio Strait or the Sicily Channel), and within harbours and terminals. The doubling of the Suez Canal will exacerbate the threats. The concentration of ships increases the risk of collisions,⁷ environmental and noise pollution (WWF 2015⁸) and accidents.⁹

There is also a growing need for greater cooperation on law enforcement. The region has been highly exposed to migration. In 2013-2015, for example, an average of 11 000 illegal migrants per month crossed the region through the western¹⁰ and central¹¹ Mediterranean routes. The central route in particular has seen a dramatic increase in violence, exploitation and abuse perpetrated by smugglers against migrants, and in the number of casualties. Managing mixed migration flows towards Europe has become an increasingly complex issue and one of the main priorities of the EU Neighbourhood policy. Moreover, the current demographic and climate change trends risks exacerbating the existing competition to control resources and could fuel the geopolitical instability of the region.

Maritime surveillance bodies could set up joint emergency rescue plans to address the humanitarian consequences of these migrant flows, which often exceed the capacities of local coastguards. Indeed, the lack of cooperation across the sub-basin undermines the ability of local bodies (OSCE 2014) to respond and adapt in real time to the unpredictable magnitude of and developments in illegal migration flows.

⁵ http://www.medmaritimeprojects.eu/download/ProjectMediamer/SH_Meeting_WME/WM_Transport_factsheet_300115.pdf.

⁶ <http://arxiv.org/pdf/1510.00287.pdf>.

⁷ Source: Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) 2015.

⁸ http://www.medtrends.org/reports/MEDTRENDS_REGIONAL.pdf.

⁹ Voluntary oil discharges into the sea, comprising ballast waters, garbage, washing residues by chemical tankers or bulk carriers, sludge and bilge discharges.

¹⁰ From Morocco and Algeria to Spain.

¹¹ From Libya and Tunisia to Italy and Malta.

Gaps

A variety of policies and governance frameworks already cover a wide range of the region's specific environmental concerns.

Notably, the primary responsibility to prevent and fight maritime pollution of ships rests with the States. The national capacities, the EMSA anti-pollution operational capacity and the assistance provided by REMPEC have to be taken into account to avoid duplicating efforts and ensure maximum results. Concrete actions should tap into the existing international, regional and sub-regional awareness of environmental and sustainability issues and willingness to address them.

Efforts have been made to address maritime risks and threats in general. These include:

- the Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean Region;¹²
- the EU Maritime Security Strategy and its Action Plan;
- the European Border and Coast Guard package;¹³
- a pilot project launched in 2016 to improve operational cooperation on Coast Guard functions between three EU agencies (FRONTEX, EFCA and EMSA) in the western Mediterranean
- the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy and the Lomé Declaration on Maritime Security;
- the Seahorse Mediterranean Network;
- the EMSA/SAFEMED projects;
- the European and Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forums.

The above Regulation has promoted a pilot project launched in 2016 to improve operational cooperation on coast guard functions between three EU agencies (FRONTEX-EFCA-EMSA) in the western Mediterranean. Since the refugee crisis, migration control has become an EU Neighbourhood policy's priority and numerous activities focusing on migration have been also developed under the European Agenda for Migration.

However, these activities are still relatively scattered across the region, despite security and migration being trans-boundary issues that can be addressed only through a well-coordinated response by all countries concerned. Cooperation between EU Member States and southern partner countries should therefore be strengthened to address the safety and security challenges in the region.

Priorities

1.1 Cooperation between coastguards

Actions will seek to increase cooperation between coastguards across the two shores of the western Mediterranean region through actions such as networks among training centres (enhancing mutual understanding of needs and competencies), joint training and staff exchanges. Capacity building will be supported, for example regarding illegal unreported and unregulated fishing, the vessel traffic service and search and rescue.

Actions will also increase the capacity of the authorities of southern partners to tackle irregular migration and illicit trafficking by strengthening their border surveillance systems through the Seahorse Mediterranean Network. This Network exchanges information on irregular

¹² Requested by the 2013 UfM Ministerial transport Conference and adopted by the EuroMed transport Forum in March 2015.

¹³ Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 , Regulation (EU) 2016/1625, Regulation (EU) 2016/1626.

migration at sea by connecting the national contact points in the African countries concerned to the EUROSUR network.

ADDED VALUE: At present there are several initiatives developing maritime security and safety, but assets are deployed at different levels or by different partners in the western Mediterranean region. Progress has been made to facilitate voluntary data exchanges across the two shores of the western Mediterranean region in specific fields or during emergency situations (e.g. oil spills) as well as through the recent establishment of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. However, cooperation between coastguards across the two shores remains limited and the missing links between agencies and between agencies and national authorities to improve the real-time response to emergency situations at sea still need to be addressed. The participation of all western Mediterranean countries in the Seahorse Mediterranean Network¹⁴ is key to preventing and tackling migration on the western and central Mediterranean routes.

1.2 Maritime safety and response to marine pollution

Actions will aim at encouraging data sharing on maritime traffic by giving southern countries support to improve the infrastructure (Automatic Identification System/Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System) and to enable their possible access to the already existing platforms (SAFEMED, SafeSeaNet and Marine Pollution Common Emergency Communication and Information System), and by expanding the data and information currently available.

Actions will enhance the response capacity (planning, preparedness and tools) to counter marine pollution from accidents across the two shores of the western Mediterranean region and support the development of a new generation of tools to improve the emergency response to marine pollution from accidents.

ADDED VALUE: Maritime data sharing needs to be optimised across the two shores of the western Mediterranean region in order to improve situational awareness allow for an effective use of national means and improve cooperation on cross-border operations. Efforts to facilitate interoperability and data exchanges have so far been confined to specific projects, crises and exercises. Some partner countries share environmental data through SAFEMED, while their access to SafeSeaNet (sharing of traffic data) is being hampered by both physical hurdles (lack of infrastructure) and political ones (sensitivity of data to be exchanged, reciprocity). This means that several functions are still missing out on useful data. The Initiative will encourage the sharing of information as highlighted during the 11th meeting of the EuroMed Maritime Working Group.¹⁵

Union's priorities

This goal strongly supports the Union's priorities:

- **Jobs, growth and investment:** by ensuring both the safety and security of activities at sea, this goal is key to job creation and the sustainable development of a range of relevant blue economy activities.
- **Migration:** this is an area with implications far beyond the scope of the Initiative. However, this goal will improve the coastguards' ability to control coastlines and carry out search and rescue operations on the southern shore of the western and central

¹⁴ Participating countries: Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, Malta, Cyprus, Greece and Libya. Invited: Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt.

¹⁵ April 2016, cf. <http://www.rempec.org/rempecnews.asp?NewsID=372>.

Mediterranean. It will also enhance the local management of migration issues, promoting a more effective circular migration and preventing the exploitation of migrants and their children across the region.

- **A stronger global actor:** existing regional processes will be reinforced on relevant areas already identified by the Communication on International Ocean Governance¹⁶. These include capacity building; ensuring the safety and security of seas; and fighting illegal fishing practices.

Targets for goal 1

(This list is tentative and non-exhaustive)

- Full Automatic Identification System coverage achieved by 2018 aiming to increase sharing of maritime traffic monitoring data at regional level¹⁷
- Border surveillance strengthened by involving neighbourhood countries in the Seahorse Mediterranean Network by 2018¹⁸

Possible additional indicators for goal 1

- Number of joint operations of coastguard functions.

¹⁶ JOIN(2016) 49 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0049&from=EN>

¹⁷ Baseline: concerned neighbouring countries have no full access to data sharing platforms (2016).

¹⁸ Baseline: only Libya is involved (2016).

1.1. Coastguard functions cooperation (training, capacity building, search and rescue)

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Enhancing coastguard cooperation through: - networking among training centres - joint training sessions (on bilateral and multi-lateral basis) - common exercises - exchange of staff - capacity building/training - networking among coastguards	National coast guard authorities, European agencies, MED Coast Guard Functions Forum (MEDCGFF) and regional bodies with competencies in CGFs (ECGFF)	Enhance the cooperation in the field of training among coast guard authorities in order to reach a common level of skills in performing coast guard functions. Improve the level of interoperability among different bodies Establish temporary coastguard technical groups	ECGFA-Net, Networking Maritime Academies, SAFEMED III. MEDCGFF	Grants for coastguard training, EMFF EMSA programmes (SAFEMED IV - ENI), WestMED Assistance Mechanism (EMFF 2017)
Promoting training on fisheries control	National coast guard authorities, European agencies	Improve fighting against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing		EFCA training for partner countries (EMFF)
Vessel Traffic Service (VTS): support national capacity building needs in the field of VTS (capacity building, training) providing administrative assistance and training of personnel (VTS operator/ supervisor/ manager).	Countries of the sub-region	Improve the vessel traffic services in the sub-region in order to enhance the maritime safety and to reduce collisions.	Twinning IMP for Tunisia, VTS Morocco and Spain in Gibraltar Strait Marine training institutes	Twinning projects TAIEX EMSA programmes (ENI)
Improving maritime search and rescue cooperation: - by developing SAR capabilities and - by promoting joint activities and exercises among the national authorities	National coast guard authorities (Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres — MRCCs)	Increase SAR capabilities taking into account the existing agreements and cooperation framework, notably in the case of mass rescue operations. Share assets and risk analyses among countries. Define common standards	SARMEDOCC is a running agreement between Italy, Spain and France. Other countries could be associated.	EMSA programmes (ENI), European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, FRONTEX
Seahorse Mediterranean Network	National border and	Increase the capacity to tackle irregular	Seahorse	DCI

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
	coast guard authorities of the region	migration and illicit trafficking by strengthening border surveillance systems	Mediterranean project	EU(TPCMA)

1.2. Maritime safety and response to marine pollution

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Maritime traffic data sharing: providing support to non-EU countries (AIS/VTMIS infrastructure, capacity building, training)	National administrations, EMSA and other regional relevant bodies.	Increase the exchange of data and better respond to maritime safety issues. SAFESEANET accessible to partner countries.	SAFEMED III MAREΣ's community	EMSA programmes (SAFEMED IV, ENI)
Enhance anti-pollution (OPRC) response emergency planning of coastal administrations as supporting element in sustainable development	National authorities, European (e.g. EMSA) and regional (e.g. REMPEC) bodies responsible for pollution response issues. National, regional, local administrations	Harmonise existing contingency plans on pollution response through expert working group, common exercises (both table-top and live exercises) and sub-regional workshops Ensure interoperability among national authorities responsible for marine pollution response through multi-level planning	RAMOGEPOL and LION PLAN, can be supported by the action in order to improve their harmonisation and to ensure a full coverage of the west Mediterranean region. Plan de Emergencia ante el riesgo de Contaminación Litoral (PELCA) IMO-MRCC Morocco-Rabat	European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI
Develop a new generation of Decision Support System tools for emergency response in relation to marine pollution	Public and private stakeholders	Improve transport systems for smart, greener and safer mobility in the WestMED, in particular in	BLUEMED SRIA	EU Horizon 2020, European Territorial Cooperation

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
from accidents		coastal zones, lagoons and restricted areas		programmes ERDF and ENI
Develop new tools, materials and methods to ease and improve the decision-making process in managing on-board emergency situations Develop innovative technologies for safer vessels, with real time structural monitoring, the ability to navigate in degraded conditions (safe return to port) and to operate in extreme environmental situations (resilient ships) Identify and implement safer, secures and clean offshore installations/devices	Public and private stakeholders	Improve transport systems for smart, greener and safer mobility in the WestMED, in particular in coastal zones, lagoons, restricted and/or sensitive areas, also with the use of European GNSS.	BLUEMED SRIA	EU Horizon 2020, ERDF and National Funds

2. Goal 2 — A smart and resilient blue economy

Goal 2 is about **boosting research and innovation, and developing skills, entrepreneurship and industrial cooperation**, thus creating **sustainable jobs and investment opportunities**.

Innovation and knowledge sharing is essential to ensure a resilient blue economy in the western Mediterranean, to accompany the generational change in the labour market and make the region more competitive, able to build on technological and market opportunities, and more resilient to cyclical crises and shocks.

Challenges

Based on a United Nations scenario, between 2007 and 2030 the working age population (aged over 15) in the Mediterranean region will increase by over 100 million people.¹⁹ As much as 84% of these additional workers will be located in the South. Youth unemployment rates are already very high all around the western Mediterranean, ranging between 14% and 58% (average 2011-2015)²⁰, while the demographic trends show an ageing working population on the Northern shore of the Mediterranean and a growing proportion of youth on the Southern one.

Employment demand in ocean-based industries as a whole is set to more than double by 2030,²¹ with especially rapid growth occurring for example in marine aquaculture, fish processing, offshore wind and port activities. But the maritime workforce on the Northern shore is ageing, and young people are no longer attracted to maritime careers. Whether in traditional or emerging maritime sectors, businesses cannot find the desired skills and profiles.²² This mismatch between demand and supply is mainly due to a lack of dialogue and cooperation between industry and the different levels of education.

Beside this employment paradox there is also a dual R&D challenge. On one hand, activities such as tourism, transport and fisheries that are traditionally at the forefront of the blue economy require greater innovation and diversification to remain sustainable, competitive and profitable over time and provide qualified employment. On the other hand, to deploy their full potential several emerging activities and value chains (such as blue biotechnology, marine renewable energies, biological and other resources)²³ require dedicated support to gain adequate critical mass and attract tailored R&D and investment. In this regard, also the European regions need to align better the use of their European Structural and Investment Funds with other funds on the basis of complementary Blue Growth priorities in their Smart Specialisation Strategies for Research and Innovation.

Moreover, a lack of comparable and aggregated socioeconomic data is preventing knowledge sharing and cooperation among businesses, researchers and policy makers across the region. Research cooperation and investments remain quite limited for a number of maritime innovative technologies, such as marine aquaculture, blue-biotech and sustainable marine

¹⁹ http://www.ipemed.coop/adminIpemed/media/fich_article/1323859454_Tomorrow_the-Mediterranean-2030_eng.pdf.

²⁰ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS>.

²¹ The ocean economy in 2030, OECD (2016)

<http://www.oecd.org/sti/the-ocean-economy-in-2030-9789264251724-en.htm>.

²² Ecorys's "Study on supporting a possible network of maritime training academies and institutes in the Mediterranean sea basin" draft Final Report pag. 22-23

²³ This will be aligned with the EU Bioeconomy Strategy and related to the International Bioeconomy Forum.

energy. Although some clustering initiatives have emerged across the sub-basin, and show great potential compared to the overall performance of the Mediterranean basin,²⁴ the lack of synergy between maritime sectors (whether traditional or emerging) remains a major hurdle to knowledge sharing and innovation.

Gaps

A number of strategic initiatives and frameworks are currently being promoted across the western Mediterranean to boost economic activity, research and innovation. These include:

- the EU Blue Growth Strategy and Maritime Policy;
- the EU Strategy for more jobs and growth in coastal and maritime tourism;²⁵
- the BLUEMED Initiative; and
- FAO Blue Growth.

Despite their laudable content, these initiatives target either the EU or the Neighbourhood countries, but not both. Initiatives implemented through EU calls do not always reflect the specific needs of beneficiaries in the western Mediterranean, and support for cross-cutting synergies activities among southern and northern stakeholders is usually limited. Action is required to ensure coordination among existing initiatives, target corresponding sectors on the northern and southern shores, and promote stronger synergies across the region.

Other initiatives do cover both EU and Neighbourhood countries such as the Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production, the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area and the Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean region²⁶. They offer an opportunity and would also benefit from greater synergies and cooperation across stakeholders and greater private sector involvement in implementing them at western Mediterranean level.

Priorities

2.1 Strategic research and innovation

In line with the BLUEMED Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, actions will cover a range of strategic areas of research and innovation in the region, including support to the sustainable exploitation of Mediterranean biodiversity, to bio-based innovative industries and services²⁷ (producing for instance food ingredients, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, chemicals, materials and energy) and to new technologies for ocean observation and monitoring (including of deep-water and seafloor biological and mineral resources). New concepts and protocols will be developed by private companies and maritime operators to maximise the use of infrastructure, ships and platforms for scientific, environmental, safety and security purposes. Tailor-made solutions and new technologies will be pursued to harness marine renewable energies and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

ADDED VALUE: The BLUEMED Initiative deserves to be extended to the southern shore of the western Mediterranean to:

- *tackle asymmetries in terms of its geographic scope;*

²⁴ https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/sites/maritimeforum/files/Med%20clusters%20-%20Annexes%20def_0.pdf.

²⁵ COM(2014) 86:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/macro_region_strategy/pdf/gov_macro_strat_en.pdf.

²⁶ Requested by the 2013 UfM Ministerial transport Conference and adopted by the EuroMed transport Forum in March 2015.

²⁷ In line with the Strategy for Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe, adopted by the Commission in February 2012.

- create economies of scale by making more efficient use of available infrastructure and resources for research; and
- increase stakeholders' capacity for partnerships across the two shores of the region.

2.2 Maritime clusters development

Actions will aim to support medium, small and micro enterprises in the blue economy (for example through national maritime clusters, incubators, boosters, business angels and tailor-made financial vehicles), and foster an effective network of maritime clusters across the region. Regional clusters on renewable energy and on active ageing, based on marine and maritime resources and technologies can also benefit sustainable economic and social development in the region.

ADDED VALUE: As emphasised by the BLUEMED Initiative, maritime clusters are key to creating innovation, jobs and growth. They play a key role in generating the critical mass for economic activities currently not appealing to private investors, notably by developing new avenues for north-south cooperation and between 'traditional' and 'emerging' activities, and by identifying and building innovative value chains across the region — in line with the 'smart specialisation' concept.

2.3 Skills development and circulation

Actions will foster the development of innovative maritime skills through a range of strategic actions to match demand and supply. They will also promote advanced training on sustainable blue growth, and incentives for networking and exchanges between maritime institutes and academies at regional and national level. It is also essential to raise awareness of maritime professions and make them more attractive to young people, and to increase cooperation between maritime education institutes and industry. Special attention will be given to matching the job supply and demand for multimodal freight transport services, supply chains and infrastructure. Moreover, actions will seek to harmonise existing skills and functions for managing migration issues across the region and to promote more effective circular migration.

ADDED VALUE: It is important to build on existing cooperation and on the available resources. Nevertheless, a recent study²⁸ points to an important coordinating role for the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in this domain and identifies a number of possible ways to address the current mismatch between supply and demand for blue skills and increase cooperation among maritime training and education institutions.

2.4 Sustainable consumption and production (maritime transport, ports, maritime and coastal tourism, marine aquaculture)

Actions will:

- implement sustainable consumption and production models and practices, help identify sources of pollution, assess risks and hazards and disseminate management tools; support the use of clean energy sources (solar and wind) for seawater desalination and build capacity across the region; promote energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change in coastal cities;

²⁸ Ecorys, MRAG, Study supporting a possible network of maritime training academies and institutes in the Mediterranean sea basin, 2016, see <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/maritimeforum/en/node/3951>.

- promote green shipping through clean fuels and innovative technologies; optimise port infrastructure, interfaces and procedures/operations across the region; develop the Trans European Network for Transport and motorways of the sea and related port terminals;
- develop new theme-based tourist products and services including:
 - natural, cultural and historical itineraries (including underwater), nautical and cruise tourism, sustainable marinas, pesca-tourism, fisheries cultural heritage and recreational fishing;
 - building eco-friendly artificial reefs;
 - protecting and restoring coastal ecosystems (beaches and dunes) on the islands
 - linking up sea and inland attractors (eno-gastronomy, culture, sports, etc.), and
 - recognising skipper licences.
- develop common technical standards for sustainable marine aquaculture across countries, diversify the sector and build capacity.

ADDED VALUE: Maritime and land-based activities, along with the progressive urbanisation of the coastline, put many pressures on the marine and coastal ecosystems of the sub-basin and can also affect the long-term sustainability of sectors such as marine aquaculture and maritime and coastal tourism. These pressures range from high resource consumption (water, energy, food products, raw materials, coastal space) to air and water pollution and waste. The Framework for Action will contribute to the sustainable development agenda by encouraging the implementation of the Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production and by mainstreaming its approach into all sectors of the blue economy.

The implementation of the Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean Region will be encouraged to overcome existing barriers to the development of the motorways of the sea and investment in greater inter-connectivity, including inland and multimodal connections. It will also encourage a shift towards smarter and greener mobility in the region.

The tourism sector is an essential source of jobs across the region, but it suffers from fragmentation, high seasonality, poor visibility and a lack of product diversification and appropriate skills. Coastal and island destinations are increasingly exposed to environmental and climate change pressures.

Aquaculture in the western Mediterranean region has specific potential to be exploited. However, practices vary widely between the two shores, and existing initiatives focus on either the northern shore (common fisheries policy, BLUEMED Initiative) or the southern shores (Blue Belt Initiative-FAO). Furthermore, the aquaculture sector faces problems of space, public acceptance and co-existence with other economic activities that must be addressed urgently.

Union's priorities

This goal strongly supports the Union's priorities:

- **Jobs, growth and investment.** Promoting investment in blue technologies, green maritime transport, sustainable tourism and aquaculture will help create growth and jobs in the region. Strong emphasis will be placed on developing human capital (skills and administrative and institutional capacity) and promoting entrepreneurship, networks of shared competence and technology transfer.

- **Energy Union and climate change.** The focus is in particular on making sustainable use of natural resources, including water, promoting the use of renewable energies and reducing waste generation and environmental risks.

Targets for goal 2

(This list is tentative and non-exhaustive)

- Inclusion of western Mediterranean countries in the BLUEMED Initiative and in its Strategic Research Agenda by 2017²⁹;
- 25 % increase in certified eco-ports and marinas by 2022³⁰;
- 20 % increase in sustainable aquaculture production value by 2022³¹;
- 20 % increase in off-season tourist arrivals by 2022³²;

Possible additional indicators for goal 2

- Number of new sustainable tourism management schemes by 2022;
- Number of joint touristic offers (and marketing) across the region by 2022;
- Number of jobs created in the region by 2022.

²⁹ Baseline 2016: PT, ES, FR, IT and MT are involved.

³⁰ Baseline 2016: 11 certified ports (source ESPO), other sources: The Yacht Harbour Association, Assomarina.

³¹ Baseline 2014, sources EUROSTAT, FAO and DCF.

³² Baseline 2012-2015, sources EUROSTAT, other sources to be defined.

2.1. Strategic research and innovation

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Developing marine bio-based innovative industries and services.	Research institutes, business and public authorities	New products from bio-based innovative industries and services, such as for producing food ingredients, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, chemicals, materials, energy.	Projects of the Pole Mer Méditerranée and the Moroccan Centre for Fisheries valorisation and technologies CSVTPM-Agadir	European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, National Funds, Blue Calls (EMFF) EU Horizon 2020
Sustainably exploiting deep waters and seafloor biological and mineral resources.	Research institutes, business, public authorities	New products and value chains. New smart robotic systems and devices for exploring and working on deep seafloor, incl. high spatial and temporal resolution and observation (in-situ/remote tools).	BLUEMED SRIA	EU Horizon 2020, LIFE, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, National Funds
Develop new concepts and protocols with private companies and the maritime operators to maximise the use of infrastructure, ships and platforms for scientific and environmental monitoring, safety and security purposes.	Public and private stakeholders	Have instruments and strategies to maximise the use of infrastructure, ships and platforms in the area. Plan and cross-check offshore fixed and mobile infrastructures and environmental monitoring and surveillance needs from coasts to open sea.	BLUEMED SRIA	EU Horizon 2020, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, National Funds
Develop tailor-made solutions and new technologies to improve efficiency on installations, maintenance and exploitation of marine renewable energies (offshore wind, streams and waves) and the power grid charge.	Public and private stakeholders	Improve efficiency on installations, maintenance and exploitation of marine renewable energies.	BLUEMED SRIA	EU Horizon 2020, ERDF, National Funds

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Assessing climate change impacts on the western Mediterranean region (marine ecosystems and their resources from regional to local scales).	Public and private stakeholders	Have an overview of the climate change impacts on marine ecosystems and their resources from regional to local scales, including a comprehensive assessment of climate-related risks in the region.	BLUEMED SRIA	Green Climate Fund ³³
Networking among researchers.	Researchers, research institutes and universities.	Establish temporary technical groups to explore and develop new research areas.		WestMED Assistance Mechanism (EMFF 2017)

2.2. Maritime cluster development

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Network of maritime clusters of the WestMED	Place-based and national and regional clusters of the WestMED.	Enhance the networking among the existing clusters and develop joint actions for boosting knowledge transfer in the blue economy as well as increasing local SMEs' capacity to innovate.	BlueNET project (Adriatic-Ionian and eastern Mediterranean)	EMFF IMP call 2017
Promote the development of medium, small and micro enterprises in the blue economy	Business, national and local authorities, research and training	Define the framework for establishing national maritime clusters (legal, procedural,	Copernicus, marine services.	ERDF, EMFF, ENI, COSME, ESDF, EFSI, National Funds

³³ An AE or an executing entity (i.e. project or programme sponsor) may submit a [concept note](#) for feedback and recommendations from the Fund, in consultation with the National Designated Authority or Focal Point.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
	institutes.	organisational, financial, etc.). Establish incubators, boosters, business angel services and tailor-made financial vehicles to create start-ups and support SME development (including micro enterprises).		
Promoting regional clusters on renewable energy and on active ageing based on marine resources and maritime technologies	Business, national and local authorities, civil society, research and training institutes	Develop new services and products	European Innovative Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. Digital Platform on Active and Healthy Ageing.	ERDF, ENI, ESF, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, EMFF Blue calls

2.3. Skill development and circulation

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Promoting networking and exchanges between maritime, port and logistic institutes and academies (sub-regional and national)	Maritime institutes and academies	Develop new curricula and share capacities. Exchange know-how north-south to educate and train seafarers and fishermen. Improve student circulation. Establish maritime/blue economy training centres.	RAFISMER (African Network of fisheries and marine sciences institutes)	EMFF IMP-MED call 2017, Erasmus+ Capacity Building Action (annual call)
Increase cooperation between maritime education institutes (both higher level and Vocational	Business, VET institutes, universities, maritime institutes and	Define skills gaps and work together on concrete solutions (i.e. development of curricula, training,	List one or more relevant approved projects from Blue Career Call 2016	EMFF Blue Career Call, Erasmus+ Capacity

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
and Educational Training - VET) and industry	academies	etc.).		Building Action (annual call)
Advanced Training School on Sustainable Blue Growth	Oceanographic and maritime institutes, academies and universities	Establish an international platform for exchanging scientific knowledge and technological know-how in the field of sustainable blue growth for the benefit of WestMED countries.	Advanced training school on sustainable blue growth in the Mediterranean and Black Sea organised by the Italian Institute of Oceanography and Experimental Geophysics. Moroccan experience in the Blue Growth initiative of FAO. Countries experiences on blue growth.	Blue Growth Initiative - FAO, European Territorial Cooperation programmes
Increase the awareness and attractiveness of the maritime profession among young people.	Education institutes, students, public authorities, international institutions	Disseminate best practices. Promote cultural exchanges programmes to discover maritime jobs. Develop youth volunteers' programmes for protecting and cleaning marine habitats. Establish <i>lycées maritimes</i> in coastal towns.	SAFEMED	European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, ESF, EMFF (Priority axis 4) Erasmus+ European Volunteering scheme (3 calls a year), National Funds
Matching of job supply and demand for multimodal freight transport services, supply chains and infrastructure	Public authorities; business; labour unions; VET providers; universities	Improve technological, entrepreneurial and management skills for multimodal freight transport services, supply chains and infrastructure. Definition of training standards for the management of low carbon fuel (e.g. LNG) and underwater operations (repairing and refloating).	• Erasmus + CONTAINER; • Knowledge alliances CTWays; • CEF-T: Picasso and GAINN 4MOS; • CAF-T B2M OS. Strategic project for skills development.	Erasmus+ Capacity Building Action (annual call), CEF, National Funds
Promoting skill development on migration and management of	Regional and local administrations,	Harmonise skills and capacities for managing migration issues.	M@res Project (circular migration).	Migration package (ENI), European

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
migration flows	development and cooperation agencies, other relevant institutes and universities	Promote circular migration. Prevent migrant exploitation, in particular with reference to children	Projects of the MENA programme.	Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI

2.4. Sustainable consumption and production (maritime transport, ports, maritime and coastal tourism, marine aquaculture)

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Sustainable consumption and production

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Implement coordination/cooperation schemes and comparable risk assessment of the effects of multiple anthropic pressures at different depths, including deep-sea areas; comply with regional conventions and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Identify and measure chemical compounds and other sources of pollution in different marine matrices and their impact on marine organisms; develop early warning tools to detect pollutants Develop and test (bio) remediation actions in different areas/places, including possible re-use and recycling of hazardous materials	Public and private stakeholders	Have robust shared tools and strategies for a more sustainable exploitation of local resources and to prevent their depletion	BLUEMED SRIA SpilLess project	EU Horizon 2020, LIFE, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, EMFF Blue Labs call

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
collected.				
Sustainable management of fishing ports and fishing vessels	Regional and local authorities, fishermen and fisheries associations	Increase energy efficiency in ports and vessels. Reduce the dependence of fishing harbours and villages on fossil sources of energy. Improve management in terms of reduced discards and waste. Reduce the cost of the fishing units in the production of ice and the electrification of port facilities. Promote the use of environmental management tools, such as EMAS. Set up a reference model in each country.	BLUEMED SRIA	EMFF, ERDF, ENI
The development of innovative solar powered seawater desalination facilities and solar cooling or refrigeration plants for the provision of drinking water, cooling and additional electricity.	Public and private sector stakeholders	Develop local capacity to sustainably desalinate water and feed cooling systems, including off-grid solutions that do not require use of batteries. Promote the development of local fisheries industry and/or touristic activities and create jobs. Support the economic development of local coastal communities.	Water strategy for the western Mediterranean. BLUEMED SRIA. Global Clean Water Desalination Alliance. Masen Desalination Pilot Project. Masdar's renewable energy desalination pilot programme, which includes four pilot plants using advanced desalination technologies.	European Fund for Sustainable Development (Neighbourhood platform) ENI (bilateral)
Management of waste from ships and fishing vessels	All concerned organisations and research institutes	Improve users' awareness of collecting and recycling waste. Promote facilities and equipment for the reception and recycling of waste from fishing vessels in ports and fishing villages, and set up one reference model in each country	Several projects (e.g. Guardian of the Sea: collection of land-based waste at sea by fishermen)	EMFF, FAO, National Funds

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Improve waste management in ports and coastal zones	Public-private sector	Implement principles of the Port Reception Facility Directive	MARPOL Convention 72 London Dumping Convention and its protocol of 1996 SAFEMED Port Reception Facility Directive	SAFEMED IV, CEF, ESIF, ENI

Maritime transport

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Promoting green shipping through clean fuels (LNG network, on shore power)	Ship owners; National and port authorities; Fuel distribution companies	Define, test and deploy the infrastructure network for the use of alternative fuels, notably LNG — liquefied natural gas for maritime transport and on-shore power supply. Design and build LNG-powered ships, bunkering stations and LNG distribution stations. Ensure the continuity of the transnational chain of LNG fuel distribution.	• Greencranes; • Costa; • LNG Danube Masterplan; • GAINN 4CORE; • GAINN 4MOS; • MedAtlantic Ecobonus; • Poseidon Med II; • Picasso.	CEF-T, National Funds
Optimising port infrastructure, interfaces and procedures/operations	Port authorities, ship owners, national and local administrations	Boost maritime transport, short-sea shipping capacity, cross-border ferry connectivity and integration in multimodal logistic chains through digitalisation and simplification of procedures	Valencia-Livorno Ports Cooperation project	European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, EFSI, EIPP
Developing motorways of the sea and related port connections	Port authorities, ship owners, national and local administrations	Enhance maritime transport and deep-sea shipping capacity		CEF-T ERDF, EFSI, EIPP, EFSD

Coastal and maritime tourism

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Promoting transnational natural, cultural and historical routes. Brand-building of thematic tourist products and services. Common quality standard and certification. Upgrading the legal framework for new demands (chartering, whale watching, etc.).	National, regional and local administrations, business associations, SMEs, tour operators, MPA managing entities	Address tourist seasonality in a sustainable manner. Develop thematic brands and diversify products and destinations. Reach new international markets.	EMFF approved projects Interreg projects ACCOBAMS initiatives POCI³⁴	EMFF Calls (2017) COSME, ERDF, EIPP
Promoting new tourism models and sea-land itineraries	Business organisations	Develop top-end destinations connecting the port and the harbour city with the hinterland by creating a sea and land itinerary with thematic stopovers and new technologies.	Odyssea programme launched by the French Federation of Yacht Harbours (FFPP) gathering more than 70 harbour cities, 9 countries and 16 Mediterranean and European regions in FR, ES, IT, GR, PT, MO, MT	COSME, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI
Promoting tourism-fisheries and fisheries cultural heritage	Fisheries local action groups, coastal communities, tourist operators	Diversify fisheries and create jobs in coastal communities.	FARNET, Pesca Turisimu project (FLAG Corse) and Pescatourisme 83 (FLAG Varois) Moroccan approach of building fishing villages and landing points	EMFF (Priority Axis 4 and IMP call)
Protecting and restoring coastal ecosystems (beaches and dunes) on the islands	Regional and local administrations, environmental NGOs and universities	Disseminate and implement sustainable coastal tourism models based on marine coastal ecosystem and changed	LIFE projects	LIFE, National Funds

³⁴ Science, Technology and Innovation Operational Programme http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/programmes/2000-2006/portugal/science-technology-and-innovation-operational-programme-poci

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
		behaviour of residents and tourists.		
Establishment of environmentally oriented artificial reefs	Research institutes, professionals, marine fisheries and fishing cooperatives, Department of Maritime Fisheries	Have ecological niche fishing and nurseries that can preserve the endemic species and ensure an ecological balance for some stocks. Exchange of knowledge. Introduce new income-generating activities for artisanal fishermen in order to reduce the pressure on fish stocks.	Art-reefs project (IT, FR, ES) Moroccan experience of immersion of artificial reefs at artisanal and industrial scale along the national coast	EMFF calls, National Funds
Promoting sustainable marinas	SMEs, business associations, marinas, research institutes	Exchange practices and promote the adoption of volunteer standards for sustainable marinas, including environmental management tools, such as EMAS.		European Territorial Cooperation programmes, LIFE, ERDF, EMFF, ENI
Explore and protect the underwater natural and cultural heritage through a multidisciplinary approach Establish a network for collaboration between marine and archaeological institutions and the creation of a common disclosure and data sharing policy Develop new concept of smart robotic systems for submarine archaeology	Public and private stakeholders	Provide data and tools for protecting and sustainably exploiting the region's underwater and coastal natural and cultural heritage. Develop new underwater tourist services.	BLUEMED SRIA ARCHEO sub-project	EU Horizon 2020, LIFE, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI, EMFF (incl. Blue Labs call)

Aquaculture

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Promote the diversification of aquaculture and the use of multitrophic marine farming systems	Public and private stakeholders	Establish new practices to ensure long-term sustainability of aquaculture.	BLUEMED SRIA Aquaculture project H2020	EU Horizon 2020, EMFF, ENI and National Funds
Develop common technical standards across countries	Public and private stakeholders	Have in place agreed standards on issues such as monitoring of discharges or prevention of escapes. This will increase legal certainty, facilitate cross-border investment, contribute to a high level of environmental protection and promote a level playing field for operators.	SHOCKMED and other General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) projects, similar regional initiatives in other sea basins (e.g. HELCOM)	Cooperation programmes, EMFF
Capacity building for promoting sustainable and certified aquaculture farms	Local agencies and public administrations, aquaculture farms research and training institutes.	Increase aquaculture production Disseminate knowledge on aquaculture practices.	GFCM projects	ENI, EMFF, FAO

3. Goal 3 — Better governance of the sea

Goal 3 is about promoting the **sustainable management of maritime economic activities** and **preserving ecosystems and biodiversity**.

Coupling socioeconomic development with healthy marine and coastal ecosystems requires a solid institutional, legal and technical framework that can balance competing demands for limited natural resources and space. Effective and efficient governance systems require constant cooperation and synergies among existing structures and initiatives. This is essential in order to make informed and sound choices and identify trade-offs between environmental, economic, social, political and administrative aspects.

Challenges

The western Mediterranean region is a hotspot of anthropic pressure (economic, demographic and environmental). As many as 7 of the 13 areas of the Mediterranean where dense economic activity strongly interacts with conservation issues are found there.³⁵ Potentially competing maritime economic activities in the same waters may deter or prevent investments, while their cumulated pressures can increase waste generation and energy and water consumption, exacerbate the exploitation of mineral and biological resources and ultimately lead to more pollution and the serious deterioration of marine and coastal ecosystems.

The region has the greatest biodiversity³⁶ in the Mediterranean and is one of its most productive areas. However, similarly to the rest of the sea basin, several of the region's fish stocks have been subject to long-term overexploitation.³⁷ Nationally designated marine protected areas,³⁸ including Natura 2000 sites under EU Birds and Habitats Directives, and SPAMI³⁹ sites, cover together about 3.5 % of the western Mediterranean waters,⁴⁰ which is still quite far from the target of having 10 % of the coastal and marine areas conserved through effectively managed and well-connected system of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.⁴¹

It also is worth mentioning that marine litter has been found at all surveyed locations in the western Mediterranean sub-basin, including off the Catalan coasts and canyons, the Gulf of Lions, and the Algero-Balearic basin, with high densities found at its north-western part and on the continental slope (Pham et al., 2014). A recent large-scale study targeting floating debris reported densities of up to 195 items per km² (96 % of which were polymers), with one of the peaks located in the Algerian Basin (CIESM, 2014⁴²).

³⁵ MEDTRENDS Report 2015 Piante C., Ody D., 2015. Blue Growth in the Mediterranean Sea: the Challenge of Good Environmental Status. MedTrends Project. WWF-France: http://d2ouvy59p0dg6k.cloudfront.net/downloads/medtrends_regional_report.pdf.

³⁶ Species diversity in the Mediterranean increases from east to west: 43 % of known species occur in the eastern Mediterranean, 49 % in the Adriatic, and 87 % in the western Mediterranean.

³⁷ Notably, 44 out of 48 stocks assessed in 2012-2014 (source: STECF and GFCM) are considered to be outside safe biological limits and this poses a risk to the future sustainability of the fishery sector in the sub-region.

³⁸ Reference to the Habitats/Birds Directives.

³⁹ Reference to the RAC SPA/BD Protocol.

⁴⁰ MAPAMED, database on Sites of interest for the conservation of marine environment in the Mediterranean Sea. MedPAN, UNEP/MAP/RAC-SPA. April 2016 release: <http://www.mapamed.org>.

⁴¹ Fixed by the Aichi biodiversity target 11 and adopted under Sustainable Development Goal 14.5.

⁴² Ibid. p. 62.

Networking within administrations and integration between governments and with civil society can open up new forms of collaboration and partnerships, and offer new ways to sustainably manage maritime activities. The private sector must be more actively involved together with other key players, such as academia, researchers, NGOs and citizens. The involvement and participation of stakeholders in the decision-making processes is still weak and requires greater accountability.

Finally, enforcing existing and future environmental, fisheries and transport rules⁴³ relies upon the existence of an institutional and administrative framework that is well organised at all levels (international, regional, national, local) and that can, in principle, be implemented in a coordinated and result-based way. To guarantee consistent and effective enforcement, the institutional framework must attract sustained financial resources and investments.

Gaps

Environmental concerns in the western Mediterranean region have been well identified under various long-lasting and consolidated governance frameworks.⁴⁴ Among these, the Barcelona Convention and its protocols provide a legally binding set of instruments for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal regions of the Mediterranean, while the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) provides a framework (also binding) to support the sustainable harvesting of fishery resources.

There is a long-standing tradition of cooperation on marine and maritime issues in the Mediterranean, and a wide range of agreements and strategic initiatives (International Maritime Organisation, Blue Growth Initiative by FAO, UNEP/Mediterranean Action Plan – Barcelona Convention and its Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter and Regional Action Plan for implementation of ICZM protocol, among others) have been adopted and ratified by most surrounding countries. Environmental issues in particular have been the subject of various initiatives under the framework of UNEP/MAP — and in most cases, in partnership with other regional structures.⁴⁵ Their implementation is supported by a solid network of Regional Activity Centres.⁴⁶ The recent GFCM mid-term strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and MEDFISH4EVER⁴⁷ also offer a good basis to address the current overexploitation of fish stocks.

However, while there is real political will to resolve environmental and fisheries challenges and shift to sustainable patterns, the region is still lacking appropriate awareness, dissemination and cross-sectorial evidence-based policymaking. Many shortcomings also remain in implementation and enforcement, in particular at national and local level.

Moreover, data availability, processing and understanding are dissimilar and fragmented. Stress tests on marine data indicate serious knowledge gaps on the geological and ecological nature of the southern waters and a decrease in public investment in monitoring programmes in the north. Information gaps on catches and the effort of small-scale fisheries make the support to the fisheries sector quite challenging.

⁴³ Including resolutions, recommendations and decisions.

⁴⁴ Assessment of feasibility and added value to support a possible sustainable blue economy initiative for the western Mediterranean (<http://www.westmed-initiative.eu/downloads/>).

⁴⁵ MoU signed between UNEP/MAP and FAO-GFCM (2012), IUCN (2013), UfM (2013), ACCOBAMS (2016), UNEP/MAP Joint Strategy with GFCM, ACCOBAMS, IUCN-MED in cooperation with MedPAN, other.

⁴⁶ UNEP/MAP RACs: Plan Bleu, REMPEC, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Priority Actions Programme, Specially Protected Areas and INFO/RAC.

⁴⁷ Valletta's Ministerial Declaration on the sustainability of Mediterranean fisheries adopted on 30 March 2017.

Priorities

3.1 Spatial planning and coastal management

Actions will seek to improve the management of maritime, marine and coastal areas by local actors and ensure an appropriate and coordinated implementation of the EU Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) Directive and the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) of the Barcelona Convention for addressing the cumulated impact of economic activities at sea and on the coasts based on ecosystem approach. They will also aim to improve our knowledge of land-sea interactions and develop eco-friendly engineering solutions for the good environmental status of seas and coasts. Another key area of work will concern the tools to select appropriate sites for offshore installations and to fulfil the energy and environmental requirements of the region.

ADDED VALUE: Consistency will be sought in the implementation of the MSP Directive, the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Barcelona Convention Protocol on ICZM. Additionally, an enabling environment for public and private stakeholders to feed and inform the decision-making process will be promoted.

3.2 Marine and maritime knowledge

Actions will promote data collection, maintenance and storage through the existing instruments, databases and projects (notably EMODNET, the Virtual Knowledge Centre that is managed by the UfM Secretariat and Horizon 2020⁴⁸ projects) and expand their geographical and thematic scope across the region. This will include maintaining and updating information on erosion phenomena and coastal risks, harmonising and expanding the coastline monitoring systems at sub-basin scale, and developing common tools to assess the impacts of human activities. Support to the developing of unmanned autonomous vehicles (and related underwater infrastructure) is an important aspect to be considered, as are broader technical assistance and capacity building on maritime affairs.

ADDED VALUE: Evidence-based policy making requires harmonised and up-to-date marine and maritime data on areas such as investments, gross value added, employment, waste production and disposal, bathymetry, water quality and environmental monitoring.

These data make it possible to:

- *design appropriate actions to boost economic activities (e.g. coastal tourism, deep-sea and short-sea shipping, biotechnologies, renewable energy sources);*
- *tackle horizontal and cross-cutting aspects (research & innovation, businesses clustering and climate change mitigation); and*
- *assess the cumulated impacts of human activities for better spatial planning and coastal management.*

The fact that these necessary data are often either unavailable or are available only to some countries means that increased data sharing and synergies between initiatives and stakeholders must be pursued.

3.3 Biodiversity and marine habitat conservation

Actions will seek to assess the atmosphere-land-sea pressures and the risks for both ecosystems and human health, including the vulnerability and resilience of the Mediterranean sea's biodiversity. Support will be provided to establish and manage marine protected areas, reduce marine litter, manage ballast water and monitor acoustic pollution in close cooperation with Barcelona

⁴⁸ Horizon 2020 - EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020).

Convention and other relevant global and regional actors.. Actions will focus on strengthening the local ability to identify invasive alien species and routes of invasion, the conditions conducive to invasion and the structure and functioning of marine ecosystems. Importantly, awareness campaigns on marine environment and biodiversity and environmental volunteering across the region can be supported.

ADDED VALUE: The region features a uniquely rich marine and coastal biodiversity, and several iconic species (such as whales, dolphins, sharks, sea turtles and birds) are more and more threatened by the many pressures they are under. These include pollution, eutrophication phenomena, the destruction of marine and coastal habitats, disruption of wildlife migratory routes, changes in coastal dynamics, marine litter and noise. Countries will be supported to meet agreed international commitments such as the Barcelona Convention, the Marine Litter Regional Plan in the Mediterranean and the Convention on Biodiversity (and related EU commitments).

3.4 Sustainable fisheries and coastal community development

Actions will foster the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and coastal communities by increasing the region's ability to manage fish stocks through multiannual fisheries plans, technical measures, closing areas and other specific conservation measures. They will also seek to boost the region's ability to ensure proper data collection, regular scientific assessments and an adequate legal framework for control and inspection. Particularly on the southern shore, technical assistance is important to design and implement specific plans and measures. Local technical groups can be set up to analyse specific opportunities and threats and define joint measures and intervention techniques. Best practices for marketing fisheries products can be identified and circulated, while knowledge and resources can be provided to increase the added value of fisheries products and diversify economic activities in coastal communities (also through bottom-up approaches such as the Community-Led Local Development). All actions will have to be carried out in coherence and synergy with the future regional plan of action for small-scale fisheries.

ADDED VALUE: The fisheries production of the western Mediterranean region accounts for about 60 % of the whole Mediterranean, with extreme diversity of exploited species and fishing techniques. However, there is no doubt that Mediterranean stocks are in peril and that their exploitation needs to be brought to sustainable levels before they are driven outside safe biological limits.

Actions are currently fragmented across the two shores, so greater regional coordination and cooperation will be pursued through the implementation of the GFCM mid-term strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries and by implementing the GFCM Data Collection Reference Framework. This will also ensure that the common fisheries policy is implemented more consistently at sub-basin level and will promote the economic and social cohesion of coastal communities.

Union's priorities

This goal strongly supports the following Union priorities:

- **Jobs, growth and investment.** By establishing a well-coordinated technical, legal and institutional framework able to balance competing demands for limited natural resources and space, this goal will provide an environment conducive to sustainable investments at sea and along the coasts, which is a pre-condition for creating jobs and growth.

- **Energy Union and climate change.** This goal focuses on knowledge, planning and management tools which play a critical role in informing decision-making processes and ensuring that investments are planned and infrastructure is managed with due consideration for climate change effects such as rising sea levels and coastal erosion.
- **A stronger global actor.** Existing regional processes will be reinforced in the areas already identified by the Communication on International Ocean Governance. These include capacity building, marine litter, regional fisheries management, marine protected areas, maritime spatial planning, ocean observation and blue science and innovation.

Targets for goal 3

(This list is tentative and non-exhaustive)

- 100 % of the waters under national jurisdiction and 100 % of coastlines to be covered by Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Management and their implementing mechanisms to be fully in place by 2021;
- At least 10 % of the coastal and marine areas to be covered by marine protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures by 2020;⁴⁹
- 20 % reduction in marine litter on beaches by 2024;⁵⁰
- Southern Mediterranean countries to be included in the European Marine Observation and Data Network EMODNET by 2020;
- All States equipped with an adequate legal framework and the human and technical capabilities to meet their fisheries control and inspection responsibilities as flag, coastal and port States by 2020;⁵¹
- 100 % of key Mediterranean stocks⁵² to be subject to adequate data collection, scientifically assessed on a regular basis and managed through a multiannual fisheries plan by 2020.⁵³

⁴⁹ In line with the Aichi Target 11 of the Convention on Biodiversity and related commitments of the EU and the Barcelona Convention. Baseline 2016: 3.5 %, Source MEDPAN.

⁵⁰ In line with the Marine Litter Regional Plan in the Mediterranean (UNEP-MAP, 2016). Baseline: 450-1500 items/100 m [Decision UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.22, adopted on 09-12 February 2016].

⁵¹ In line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14.4 and the Ministerial Declaration on the sustainability of Mediterranean fisheries, adopted in Valletta on 30 March 2017.

⁵² In the western and central Mediterranean there are five key stocks (Anchovy, Sardine, Deep-water rose shrimp, Hake, Blackspot sea bream) according to the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean mid-term strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries (22-23 Sep 2016). http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/GFCM/News/Mid-term_strategy-e.pdf.

⁵³ Ministerial Declaration on the sustainability of Mediterranean fisheries, adopted on 30 March 2017 in Valletta.

3.1. Maritime Spatial Planning/Integrated Coastal Zone Management including land-sea interaction

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Develop innovative devices and approaches for limiting coastal erosion and pollution Improve the knowledge on land-sea nexus and develop coastal ecological engineering solutions and measures to reach a good environmental status Use integrated decision tools for selecting appropriate sites for offshore installations that fulfil energy and environmental requirements	Public and private stakeholders	To jointly develop new tools to address coastal erosion, achieve good environmental status and promote sustainable offshore operations	BLUEMED SRIA	EU Horizon 2020 European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI
Promoting coordinated MSP and ICZM	Coastal and maritime stakeholders, national and local authorities (incl. hydrographic and oceanographic services), research institutes and networks	Have MSP and ICZM in place and properly coordinated at cross-border and transnational levels	SIMWESTMED in France, Italy, Spain and Malta. RAMOGE and PELAGOS agreement. MSP pilot project for Djerba Island. ICZM projects (PAP-RAC) POSEUR ⁵⁴	EMFF MSP Call, ERDF, National Funds
Ensuring long-term sustainability of coastal tourism and appropriate planning	Public authorities	Address threats such as climate change, alien species and jellyfish	Interreg MED, regional operational programmes (ESIF)	European Territorial Cooperation

⁵⁴ Sustainability and Resource Use Efficiency Operational Program http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/it/atlas/programmes/2014-2020/portugal/2014pt16cfop001

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
		proliferation, demographic dynamic and urbanisation.		programmes ERDF, ENI

3.2. Maritime and marine knowledge (data gaps, data analysis and sharing)

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Improving access to scientific information, virtual research environments and results on marine knowledge	Research institutes and public authorities	Develop technological infrastructure on marine knowledge, notably with reference to the potential of its natural resources and their vulnerability to the effects of climate change and extreme phenomena	LIFEWATCH project	LIFE, EMFF
Extending geographical and thematic scope of existing databases	Research institutes, public authorities, business, statistical institutes, UfM Secretariat, EMODNET	Extend the coverage of EMODNET to the whole WestMED. Implement integrated monitoring plan for the Mediterranean seabed, water column and human activity based on outcome of stress test. Deploy the Virtual	VKC, EMODNET, REDIAM model developed by the Region of Andalucía and others. Mediterranean Observation System	EMFF, EU Horizon 2020, National Funds

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
		Knowledge Centre in the WestMED region, including through national VKC and by including satellite data in the tourism statistics. Address data gaps and access for business and civil society.		
Developing common methodologies and tools (novel sensors to assess the impacts of human activities) Developing unmanned autonomous vehicles and related underwater infrastructure	Public and private stakeholders	Contribute to implement the Barcelona Convention and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) in shared waters. Enhance coordination and cooperation among WestMED countries to achieve the Good Environmental Status. Assist civil protection during response to calamities, support offshore economic activities.	BLUEMED SRIA IMO-MRCC Morocco-Rabat EcAp project	EU Horizon 2020 EMFF (MSFD), ERDF, National Funds
Technical assistance and capacity building on maritime affairs, including establishing a working group for developing joint inspection schemes (WestMED)	Competent authorities in interested countries	Increase administrative capacity to deal with maritime affairs. Ensure appropriate intra-national and cross-sectorial coordination	IMP-MED Facilities 2012-2014 and 2015.	IMP/BE MED Facility 2016-2018 (ENI)
Maintain updated data/information on	Public and private stakeholders	Jointly develop robust	BLUEMED SRIA	ERDF, ENI,

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
erosion phenomena and coastal risks by harmonising and expanding the coastline monitoring systems for basin scale R&I activities		and shared strategies and tools for assisting adaptation to climate change in the region.	Bologna Charter	National Funds, Green Climate Fund

3.3. Biodiversity and marine habitat conservation

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Improve ballast water management	Competent national and local authorities, ship owners.	Harmonise ballast water management regulations and enforce the Mediterranean strategy on ships' ballast water management. ⁵⁵ Develop innovative treatment methods for ballast water management. Increase knowledge transfer and capacity.	BALMAS (IPA Adriatic CBC) and BALMED Project (LIFE - Environment Programme), incl. a Mediterranean Observatory on ships' ballast water management and a regional strategy for the risk management of invasive alien species.	European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ENI, ERDF, LIFE
Assessment of inputs from atmosphere-land-sea and anthropogenic pressures and from the risks and impacts on both marine and coastal ecosystems and human health and wellbeing	Public and private stakeholders	Promote the science-based sustainable exploitation and protection of the local ecosystems and natural heritage	BLUEMED SRIA Amalia project UNEP-MAP (IAS project)	EU Horizon 2020, EMFF, Blue Labs Call, ERDF, National Funds

⁵⁵ <http://www.rempec.org/rempecnews.asp?NewsID=210>

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Identify and address effects of invasive/alien species, including routes of invasions, environmental conditions conducive for invasions, structure and functioning of marine ecosystems and development of new products				
Fighting marine litter	Public and private stakeholders	Improve availability of data on marine litter. Improve capacity to collect marine litter. Reduce the presence of marine litter on beaches.	Horizon 2020 depollution of the Mediterranean Plastic Buster project Litter Drone project	LIFE, EMFF
Monitoring of acoustic pollution and mitigating actions	Research institutes, public authorities	Protect cetaceans and implement Descriptor 11 of the MSFD.	UNEP-MAP projects	LIFE
Awareness campaigns on marine environment and biodiversity	Civil society and public authorities	Create a culture of marine environment and biodiversity protection.	GFCM, UNEP-MAP, POSEUR	LIFE, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI
Support for the establishment and management of marine protected areas	Public authorities, MPA managing bodies, fishermen, civil society, business, research and training institutes	Have an integrated common policy for MPA management and establish marine blue belt policies. Create an observatory of marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean. Address the proliferation of alien species. Assess the impact of fishing gears used by the artisanal fleet on the marine habitats	MEDPAN, UNEP/MAP (including SPA/RAC), GFCM	LIFE, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI
Promote environmental volunteering in the WestMED	Environmental stakeholders		Fundación MIGRES	LIFE, European Territorial Cooperation programmes, ERDF, ENI

3.4. Sustainable fisheries and coastal community development

The table below provides an overview of the identified actions, a non-exhaustive list of indicative actors and expected results, examples of existing projects/initiatives and possible sources of funding.

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
Sustainable small-scale fisheries	Fishermen's associations, public authorities and international organisations	Design and implement plans and measures for sustainable small-scale fisheries (vessel sizes, gears, protected areas, biological closed seasons)	Scientific knowledge on the status of resources should be the starting point for designing and implementing any action. GFCM, UNEP-MAP	ENI, EMFF, FAO - GFCM
Cooperation among fishermen on sustainable fisheries management	Fishermen's associations, public authorities	Establish local technical groups to analyse the context and define shared measures and techniques. Define best practices for improving quality of life for fishing communities and for marketing fisheries products.	FLAGS projects COPEMED (FAO regional project) GFCM	EMFF, FAO - GFCM
Capacity building for fisheries management	GFCM, European Commission, STECF, national administrations, research institutes and universities	Ensure that key Mediterranean stocks ⁵⁶ are subject to adequate data collection, are scientifically assessed on a regular basis and	Blue Growth Initiative	EMFF, FAO-GFCM

⁵⁶ In the western and central Mediterranean there are five key stocks according to the GFCM mid-term strategy (2017-2020) towards the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries (22-23 September 2016).

Actions	Indicative actors	Expected results	Background projects/initiatives	Funding
		are managed through multiannual fisheries plans. Ensure that all States have an adequate legal framework to meet their fisheries control and inspection responsibilities as flag, coastal and port States.		
Create added value to marine fisheries products	Fisheries industries and research institutes, NGOs and public authorities (fisheries)	Provide the knowledge and means to create added value of fisheries products in the countries. Exchange knowledge.	Blue Growth Initiative FAO, which interconnects research and governance. GFCM	EMFF, FAO

4. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

It is clear that the Initiative's actual results will ultimately hinge on the geopolitical stability of the whole basin, on migratory flows and on the parties' ability to mitigate the refugee crisis and adapt to climate change. Nevertheless, even tentative indicators can provide a snapshot of the changes achieved, ease understanding both of outstanding problems and required responses and help evaluate the effect, if any, of the actions and projects carried out for each goal.

The targets (or result indicators) chosen relate as much as possible to concrete achievements with a sea basin or transnational impact. Sometimes, however, results are less quantifiable: for instance, the coordination of policies across national boundaries, the creation of networks, greater awareness among decision makers of the mutual effects of national decisions, greater ownership of common issues, or stronger engagement of local authorities, SMEs and civil society. Consequently, targets will not always be quantitative variables but also, depending on the context, qualitative ones.

Deadlines or timeframes are often proposed to give a sense of direction to the actions and projects. However, these can at best be approximate estimates, subject to regular revision of the Framework for Action.

While the Action Plan should remain relatively stable for a certain period of time, new issues may emerge along the way and priorities may evolve, requiring actions and relevant targets to be updated or replaced. In other words, the Action Plan will be a 'rolling' table. For the same reason a reasonable 'buffering' time must be built into the implementation of each project, with the proviso that impacts might only be measurable in the medium and longer term.

The Assistance Mechanism for the western Mediterranean will be in charge of monitoring and reporting on projects, mobilised resources and progress achieved. All concerned parties (EU, UfM, national and regional administrations, international regional organisations, international financial institutions and relevant agencies) will cooperate with the assistance mechanism to provide the necessary information.

Evaluation activities will be defined and planned by the WestMED Task Force.

5. Stakeholder consultation

In drafting this Framework for Action the European Commission made a point to strongly involve all relevant actors and stakeholders so to ensure that all their interests and concerns were duly taken into account and to provide every possible opportunity for coordination and cooperation. The actors and stakeholders were involved through a series of communication initiatives described below.⁵⁷

5.1. Dedicated website

A website (<http://www.westmed-initiative.eu/>) was launched in mid-February 2016 to encourage stakeholders to get involved and to disseminate information and reports. It gave the Initiative immediate online presence and visibility. The website created awareness and raised interest among stakeholders, who could access and download relevant information and keep abreast of developments.

5.2. Consultation events with relevant stakeholders

Focus groups

Focus groups were one of the key methods for engaging with relevant stakeholders across the sub-basin during the preparatory phase of the project. The objectives of these events were three-fold:

- discussing and fine-tuning the findings of the report ‘Non-Paper based on the context analysis’;
- probing the interest and willingness of local stakeholders to support a maritime initiative for the western Mediterranean; and
- suggesting possible ideas for cooperation with clear added value for the whole sub-region including EU and neighbouring countries.

Four focus groups were organised in different locations and by different partners across the sub-basin.⁵⁸ They involved 74 participants representing 61 organisations and covering most of the concerned countries.⁵⁹ International institutions, transnational cooperation programmes business associations, research and innovation centres, universities as well as European, national and regional authorities and agencies were represented. This allowed the Commission to collect a wide range of views, assessments and proposals, and information on existing relevant frameworks and initiatives in the region. The outcomes of this phase are

⁵⁷ Technical assistance for these tasks was provided by EASME through an external contractor (consortium led by Ecorys Spain, with Ecorys Brussels, Plan Bleu and Stratégies Mer et Littoral).

⁵⁸ Sustainable coastal and maritime tourism including cruise and nautical tourism (North-South corridor), Rome, 4 March 2016; Maritime and marine innovation, including emerging sectors and biotechnologies, Marseille, 8 March 2016; Motorways of the sea for safer and cleaner seas, including integrated maritime surveillance, Tunis, 10 March 2016; Governance and means for a better implementation at sub regional basin (UfM Secretariat, 5+5 Dialogue, Barcelona Convention, GFCM, CPMR, MEDPAN, etc.), Barcelona, 15 March 2016.

⁵⁹ Representatives from Algeria, and Libya were also invited, but could not attend the Collaborative Lab in Tunis. At this early stage it was not possible for a participant from Mauritania to be involved.

summarised in the report ‘Findings and recommendations from stakeholder involvement in the preparatory phase’.

Workshops

The intergovernmental discussion was carried out through four workshops with the 10 countries, the European Commission and the UfM Secretariat. The workshops were also attended by UNEP-MAP, GFCM, the Managing Authorities of the MED and ENI-CBC-MED programmes, plus — at a later stage — CPMR and INTERACT.

The first three workshops were held on 21 March, 29 September and 1 December 2016 in Brussels and focused mainly on the process establishing the Initiative, defining its main objectives, goals and priorities and identifying possible actions. This work was based on the report on ‘Findings and recommendations from stakeholder involvement in the preparatory phase’, the report on ‘Assessment of feasibility and added value to support a possible sustainable blue economy initiative for the western Mediterranean’ and on a preliminary list of actions identified and proposed by the countries. The Framework for Action was built on those contributions.

A fourth workshop was held on 1 February 2017, in Barcelona to discuss the governance of the Initiative. Its main outcomes are summarised in Chapter 5 ‘Governance and Implementation’ of the Communication.

Stakeholder conference

This conference was another building block of the dialogue among the European Commission, the UfM Secretariat, the Countries and the main local and international stakeholders. It was a way to present, discuss and finalise the main features of the Initiative and its Framework for Action. About 200 participants from all concerned countries gathered in Barcelona on 2 February 2017.

In addition to the existing ‘Non-Paper based on the context analysis’, several reports were published following the conference:

- the report on ‘Findings and recommendations from the stakeholder involvement in the preparatory phase’;
- the ‘Assessment of feasibility and added value to support a possible sustainable blue economy initiative for the western Mediterranean’;
- an additional report on ‘Results from the stakeholder consultation’.

All these reports are available on the Initiative’s website:

<http://www.westmed-initiative.eu/downloads/>

Other events

INTERACT Med Lab Group: WestMED Initiative Programmes’ consultation

A meeting was organised on 7 February 2017 in Valencia, Spain, to inform the concerned European Territorial Cooperation and ENI CBC Programmes of the actions stipulated by the Initiative and its Framework for Action, as well as findings and recommendations from the stakeholders’ conference.

The meeting identified the main areas of common interest and made it possible to check the alignment of funds between the proposed actions and the relevant cooperation programmes.

Intermediterranean Commission of the Confederation of Peripheral and Maritime Regions

An assembly of the Intermediterranean Commission of the Confederation of Peripheral and Maritime Regions was held on 1 February 2017 in Barcelona to discuss priorities for the western Mediterranean region and endorse specific recommendations, which were shared at the stakeholder conference on 2 February 2017. Proposals and recommendations have been included into the Framework for Action wherever relevant.

5.3. Other consultation tools: social media and newsletter

Social media were used in order to draw attention to the Initiative and its goals. The dedicated Twitter account (@WestMedStrat), launched in February 2016, was regularly fed with content, and other channels from other institutions and organisations that were considered influential were followed.

Six briefing notes summarising the state-of-play and orientations from the stakeholder conference were published on the website and used to animate virtual discussions on Twitter ahead of the debates in Barcelona on 2 February 2017.

Finally, six newsletters were issued to inform the stakeholders' community of the different stages of the development of the Initiative.