



PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 20 March 2015

Round Table Discussion on

“A Challenge or Obstacle for the future?

Climate Change & Environmental Strategy for the Black Sea”

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) successfully organized the Round Table Discussion on “A Challenge or Obstacle for the future? Climate Change & Environmental Strategy for the Black Sea” on 19 March 2015, at Amalia Hotel, in Athens.

Opening the event, ICBSS Director General, Dr. Zefi Dimadama, thanked the honourable guests, speakers and participants for their attendance, and highlighted the crucial problem of climate change and environmental degradation, not only for the Black Sea region but at international level. Ms. Dimadama underlined the significance of multilateral cooperation and joint efforts in tackling the problem effectively and in a sustainable manner.

Welcome speeches were delivered by Mr. Sarantis Moschovis, First Counselor for Economic and Commercial Affairs at the B2 Directorate for Economic Relations with Balkan, Russia and CIS Countries, BSEC and AII of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and by Dr. Miltiadis Makrygiannis, Deputy Secretary General at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC). Mr. Moschovis noted that the promotion of energy saving and environmental awareness is a priority for Greece and for the Black Sea region as well; Dr. Makrygiannis emphasised the continuous interest of the PABSEC in environmental policies.

Keynote speakers of the event were Mr. Alexander Bakalov, Executive Manager at the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Mr. Alexis Chatzimpiros, Adviser Energy/Islands at the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), Ms. Anastasia Vlyzioti, Project Manager at IncoNet EaP, Centre for Regional and International STI Studies and Support (CeRISS), Mr. Gerasimos Rodotheatos, Expert on Environmental and Ocean Affairs at the European Centre for Environmental Research and Training (EKePEK) and Ms. Alexia Timotheou, Environment and Sustainable Development Expert at the ICBSS.

More specifically, Mr. Bakalov stressed that BSEC is fully committed to implement sustainable regional development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the protection of the environment in the Black Sea region. Mr. Chatzimpiros highlighted the importance of local actors and peripheries as well as the fact that climate change could affect agriculture and water management in the Black Sea. From her part, Ms. Vlyzioti noted that the IncoNetEaP Project, aiming to promote further the STI dialogue between the EU and the Eastern partnership countries, focuses on three societal challenges of

particular importance for the region, climate change, energy and health. To this end, the conclusions of the first Policy Conference on climate change, held last year in Yerevan are available on line. **Mr. Rodotheatos** mentioned that human adaptation to climate change is fundamental and that knowledge-sharing is the key for better practices. Finally, **Ms. Timotheou** stressed that the ICBSS has developed, in cooperation with its network of partners, a series of initiatives for the promotion of environmental policies and energy efficiency practices in the Black Sea region.

The ICBSS Round Table Discussion was organised within the framework of the EU FP7 IncoNet EaP Project.

Communication partner of the event was the think-tank and training institute **Bridging Europe** that broadcasted the event live through the website <http://www.bridgingeurope.net/>. The live-streaming video is going to be uploaded on <https://www.youtube.com>

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About the ICBSS: The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim of fostering multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.

Director General: Dr. Zefi Dimadama

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