



9th International Black Sea Symposium

on

Blue Growth as a driver for regional development

Athens, Greece

20-21 March 2018

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) launched the International Black Sea Symposium project in the context of a need for transnational cooperation in the wider Black Sea region. Now, in its ninth year, the International Black Sea Symposium (IBSS) builds on the success and positive impact of its previous eight editions to bring together the next generation of stakeholders with an interest in the Black Sea area, focusing on *blue growth*, a long term strategy for sustainable development in the marine and maritime sectors.

The 9th International Black Sea Symposium on “Blue Growth as a driver for regional development” will be held in Athens, Greece, from 20 to 21 March 2018. The event’s working language will be English.

More about the 9th IBSS

Blue growth is a long-term strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth related to the marine and maritime sectors. Encompassing a wide spectrum of diverse maritime activities, blue economy contributes to the creation of favourable conditions for economic growth, sustainable development and social welfare.

Over the past years, aiming to promote an integrated Maritime Policy, the EU has increased the efforts to enable the adoption of a concrete framework for the implementation of blue economy, targeting also the Black Sea sea-basin. Besides, the inter-connectedness of the seas and of the maritime activities demands for enhanced cooperation and coordination of actions among stakeholders for the optimum results.

The concept of Blue Growth is evaluated positively by the Black Sea countries, as it addresses a significant potential of the wider region that remains untapped.

At policy level, the Black Sea countries’ desire to join the efforts for targeted marine and maritime sustainable management have been expressed through various channels, however not in a common, clearly-defined and result-oriented format.

In this regard, taking into consideration that the ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy will not be productive, a tailored-made approach based on the Region’s characteristics, strengths and weaknesses is essential.

Within this framework, through the 9th IBSS, the ICBSS is aiming at offering a platform for dialogue among stakeholders in order to a) identify challenges, opportunities for, and best practices of sustainable blue growth in the Black Sea basin and, b) stimulate synergies at intraregional and interregional levels.

Special emphasis will be placed on the following:

- **Supporting entrepreneurship and increasing competitiveness:** opportunities and challenges for investments, innovative business ideas, youth entrepreneurship and capacity building.
- **Research and Innovation:** entrepreneurial exposure to university research, increasing the role of private sector in research funding and exploitation of results, smart infrastructures.
- **Increased knowledge and mitigation measures:** sustainable exploitation of marine resources, impacts on the marine environment, marine biotechnologies and food security.
- **Coordinated maritime governance:** challenges and perspectives for regional cooperation, inter-regional synergies, institutional approach and best practices.

Through interactive sessions, speakers and participants with acute interest in or involved with blue growth will have the opportunity to discuss, interact and network with fellow stakeholders from the wider Black Sea region.

For more information on how to get involved, please visit www.icbss.org.

We look forward to welcoming you!