



PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 4 April 2023

## SCIENCE-POLICY DIALOGUE FORUM FOR A SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY IN THE BLACK SEA

Thessaloniki, 29 March 2023

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The **Science – Policy Dialogue Forum for a Sustainable Blue Economy in the Black Sea** was held successfully in Thessaloniki (Greece), on 29 March 2023, organised by the **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)**, under the Horizon 2020-funded BRIDGE – BS project.

The **Science – Policy Dialogue Forum** brought together scientists and policy stakeholders from the wider Black Sea region to exchange on key cross-cutting issues in established and emerging blue economy sectors in the Black Sea.

The event was developed in three rounds of **thematic Working Groups (WGs)** of moderated discussions, focusing on **i) multistressors on the Black Sea ecosystem, ii) innovation & entrepreneurship, iii) ocean literacy, capacity building & skills**, enabling an interactive, constructive dialogue based on actual needs and priorities.

Opening the event on behalf of the organisers, **Ms. Georgia CHANTZI**, ICBSS Research and Policy Development Manager, underlined the importance of a continuous science-policy exchange to support science-based policy-making in the region, and highlighted the inclusive and tailor-made approach of the BRIDGE-BS project towards this direction.

Keynote speech was delivered by the BRIDGE-BS project co-coordinator, **Prof. Dr. Mustafa YÜCEL**, Vice Director of the Institute of Marine Sciences of Middle East Technical University (METU IMS) who outlined the main features of the BRIDGE-BS project and stressed the project's critical contribution to the science-based policy needed to preserve the Black Sea ecosystems.

In addition, Dr. Yücel presented the regional cooperation frameworks that aim to support substantially the sustainable development of Blue Economy in the Black Sea, such as the **Black Sea Common Maritime Agenda (CMA)** and the **Black Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)**. With regards to the latter, Dr. Yücel announced the **launch of the Black Sea SRIA**

**Implementation Plan**, to take place in Brussels, on Thursday 4 May 2023, in the framework of the SEArca Intergroup of the European Parliament.

The Science – Policy Dialogue Forum hosted **fifty regional and international stakeholders**, i.e. policy-makers, policy-delivery stakeholders, researchers, business and academia representatives involved in the blue economy sectors from Black Sea and European countries.

Special emphasis was placed on establishing a **science-policy synergy** that will facilitate a continuous two-way exchange and further follow-up actions, even beyond the BRIDGE-BS project's duration.

The [BRIDGE-BS project](#) involves 31 partners from the Black Sea countries, EU/MS and regional organizations, coordinated by the Middle East Technical University Institute of Marine Sciences (METU IMS), Türkiye.

The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No 101000240.

For more information, please visit <https://icbss.org/>

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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 Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and its 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: Mr. Georgios Mitrakos