EMD
European Maritime Day
IN MY COUNTRY

#EMDinMyCountry

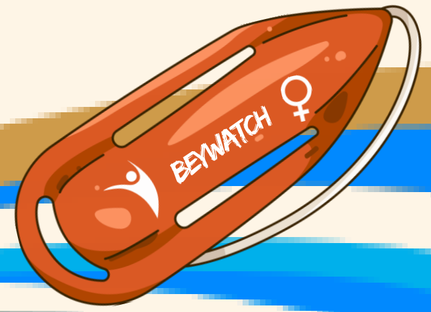
BLACK SEA BEYWATCH

Black Sea Blue Economy Youth and Women Watch

Tuesday, 20 October 2026

Bridging skills, innovation and industry

Irina Kircheva | Marine Cluster Bulgaria,
Project Expert



UNIVERSITY OF THE AEGEAN
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
DEPARTMENT OF SHIPPING TRADE AND TRANSPORT

ICBSS
INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BLACK SEA STUDIES
BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Who are we

Marine Cluster Bulgaria (MCB) is a non-governmental non-for-profit organization established in Varna, Bulgaria, with almost 20 years experience. MCB working for sustainable development of the Bulgarian maritime economy through partnerships and joint actions of all stakeholders.

- **Unification of the efforts of stakeholders** from the sectors of the Bulgarian blue economy and local authorities to achieve sustainable economic growth.
- **Improving the quality of the human and innovation potential**, optimizing the resource efficiency for a competitive Bulgarian blue economy.
- **Promotion and integration of the Bulgarian Blue Economy** into the international maritime economic space.

Promotion of Bulgarian maritime industry	exhibitions, B2B & C2C meetings, workshops
Innovation ecosystem development	Funding& investment opportunities, technological conferences, networking with EU and non-EU maritime clusters, cross cluster collaboration, project development, partners search
Stimulating **career development** in the Blue sectors	Blue career fairs, cohesion of the maritime education to match industrial trends and demand – workshops, training courses, programs
Institutional dialogue for sustainable Blue economy	Policy Consultations (S3, Regional strategy), studies, data collection and processing

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MCB - BSAM BG NATIONAL HUB
COMMON MARITIME AGENDA FOR THE BLACK SEA

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION

Designated by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Bulgaria as the National Hub within the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism.

CONNECTING STAKEHOLDERS

Brings together government, business, research, academia, NGOs and other blue economy actors to strengthen dialogue and cooperation.

TRANSLATING PRIORITIES INTO ACTION

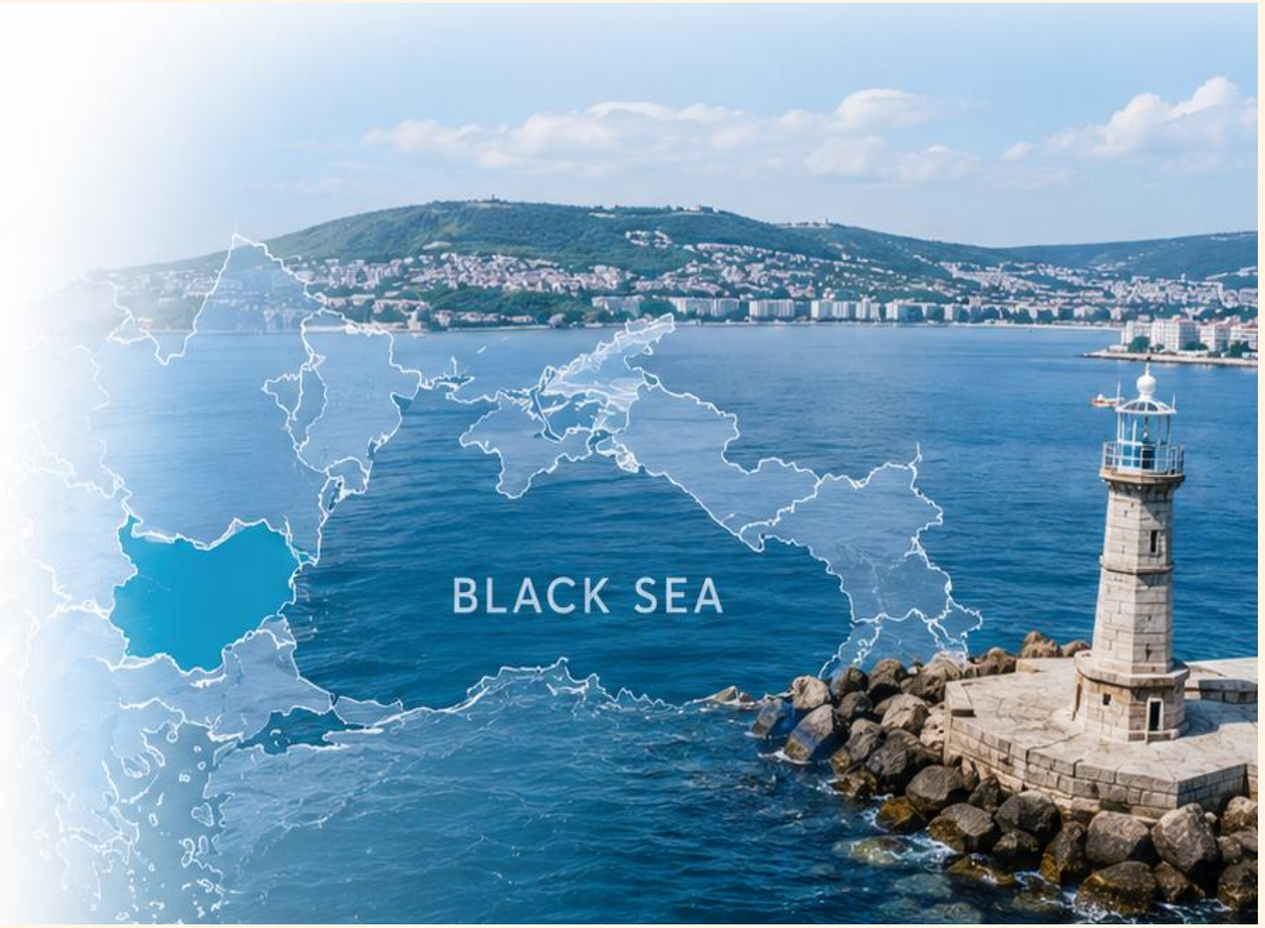
Supports the implementation of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea by identifying opportunities, developing project ideas and facilitating partnerships.

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

Provides information on funding, policies and initiatives, and supports organisations in finding partners and building successful projects.

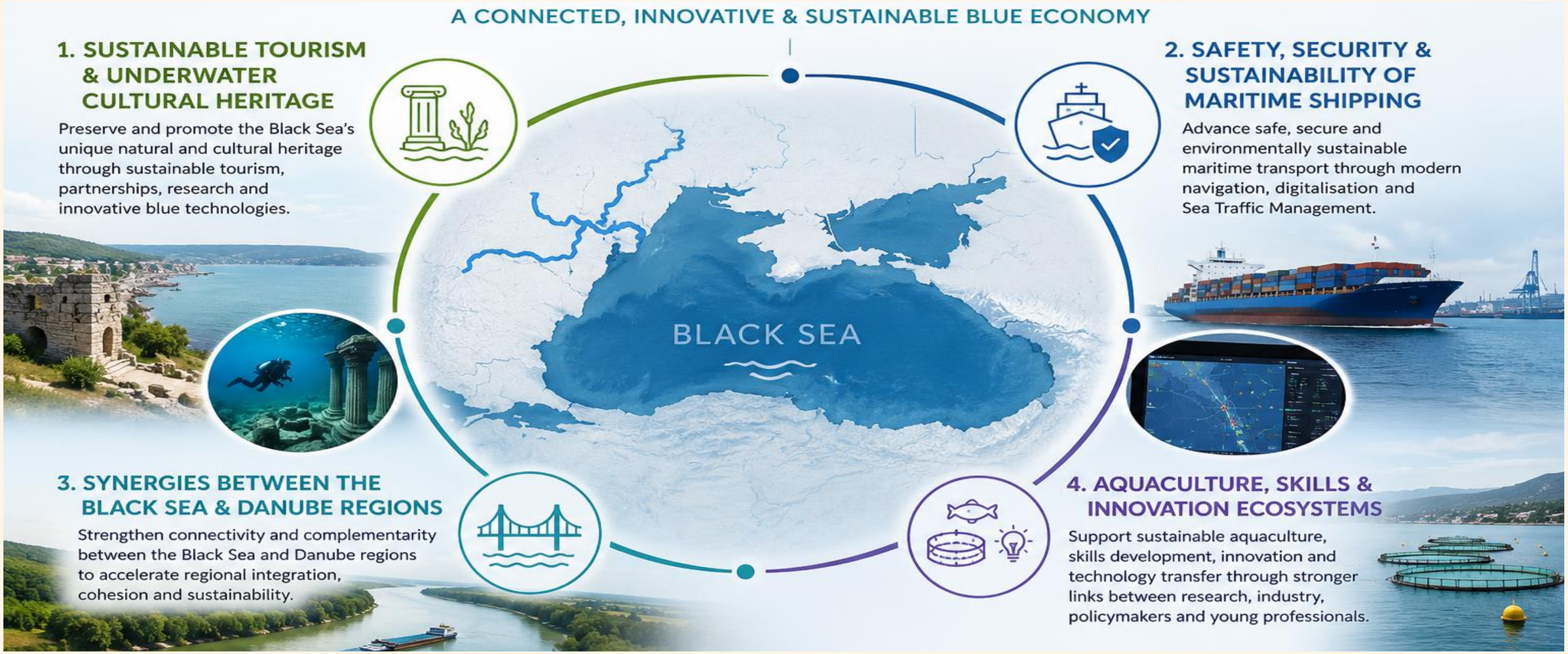
A BRIDGE TO THE REGION AND EUROPE

Strengthens Bulgaria's voice in the Black Sea cooperation ecosystem and connects national stakeholders with regional and EU-level initiatives.



CMA BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY 2026 - MAIN PRIORITIES

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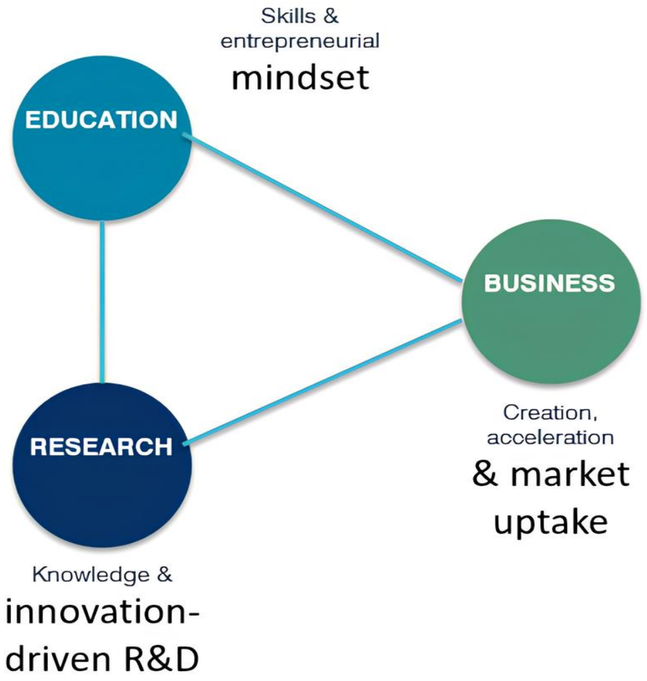


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EIT Water

Europe's Knowledge & Innovation Community for water, marine and maritime sectors and ecosystems.



THE EIT KNOWLEDGE TRIANGLE

WHAT EIT WATER CONNECTS

01	**People & sectors**	Industry, innovators, researchers, educators and policymakers
02	**Ideas & investment**	Turning knowledge into practical, scalable solutions
03	**Innovation & business**	Supporting commercialisation, entrepreneurship and growth
04	**Regions & ecosystems**	Connecting place-based strengths into a pan-European network

CONNECTED ECOSYSTEMS • SKILLED PEOPLE • SCALABLE SOLUTIONS • WATER RESILIENCE

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EIT Water

8 Co-Location Centres: local access, European scale

Regional hubs connect local knowledge-triangle actors with EIT Water services, expertise and the wider EIT network.

WHY THE CLC NETWORK MATTERS

- **PLACE-BASED** Innovation rooted in regional needs and strengths
- **CONNECTED** Knowledge and opportunities flow across Europe
- **ACCESSIBLE** A local entry point for innovators, students and entrepreneurs
- **SCALABLE** Strong ideas can move beyond pilots and across borders

1. **NORTH / HQ** — Aarhus, Denmark
2. **UK & IRELAND** — Leeds, United Kingdom
3. **CENTRAL & BALTIC** — Berlin, Germany
4. **WEST** — Antwerp, Belgium
5. **CENTRAL & DANUBE** — Vienna, Austria
6. **SOUTH** — Šibenik, Croatia
7. **IBERIAN PENINSULA** — Málaga, Spain
8. **BLACK SEA** — Varna, Bulgaria

A regional network designed to link local ecosystems and scale innovation across Europe.

Sources: EIT Water; EIT Water factsheet / EIT official information on Co-Location Centres.

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EIT Water



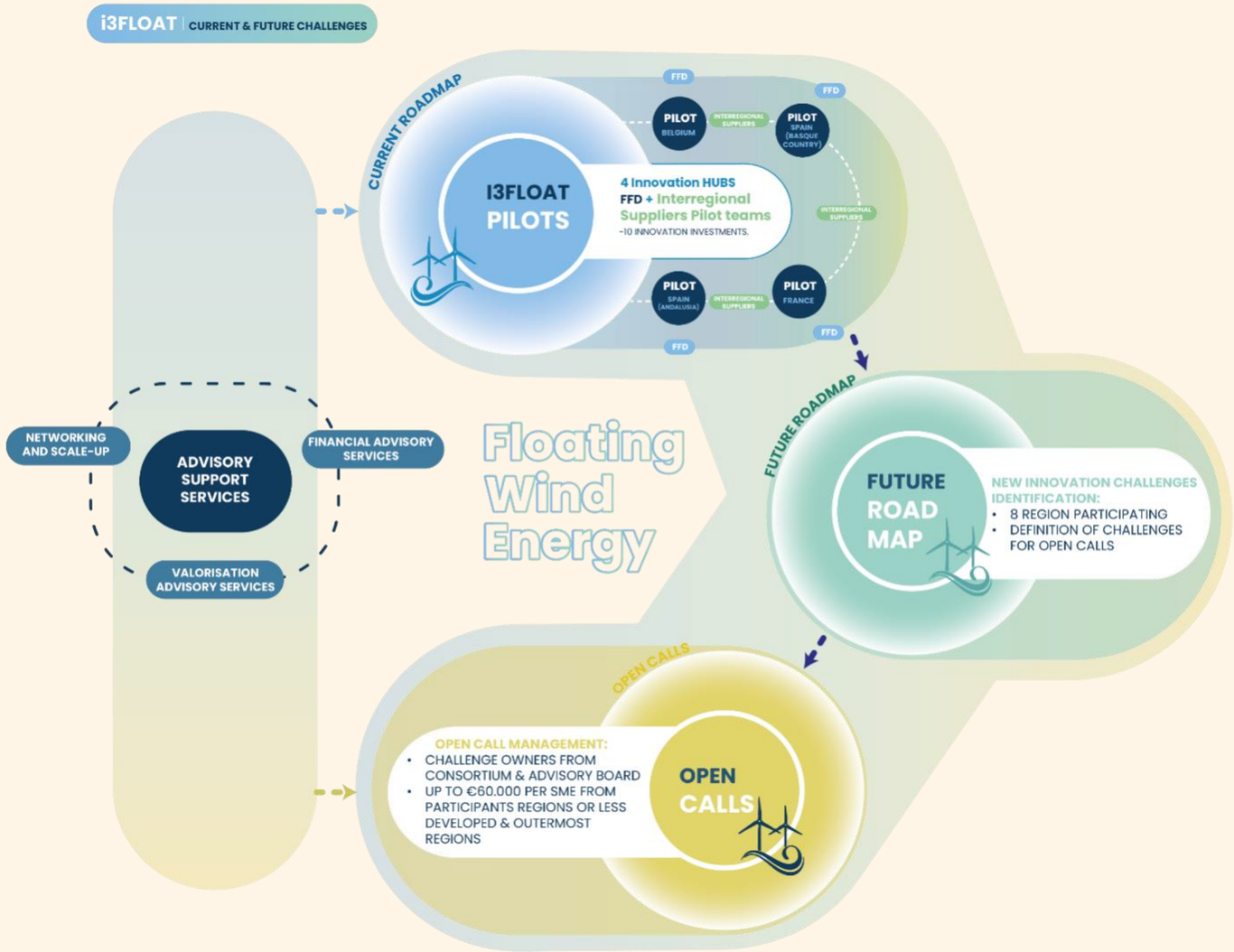
As a member, you'll get access to:

- Europe's most connected water, marine and maritime innovation network spanning 29 countries
- Programmes in entrepreneurial education, startup acceleration, and innovation scaling
- Eight regional hubs bringing collaboration closer to you
- A brilliant community to support you to deliver impact

We're looking for ambitious partners across the WMM systems and ecosystems - universities, research organisations, startups, SMEs, corporates, utilities, public authorities, NGOs, investors, and beyond!

i3float

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I3FLOAT supports Europe's energy transition by reinforcing technological leadership in floating offshore wind, a key technology for unlocking deep-water wind resources in southern sea basins and outermost regions. The project pursues five strategic objectives: capitalising innovation through 10 interregional investments; building interregional collaboration ecosystems; strengthening value chains in Less Developed Regions (LDRs); empowering SMEs through funding and advisory services; and fostering public-private partnerships aligned with Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3).

Expected impacts include accelerated time-to-market for floating wind technologies, increased participation of SMEs, improved regional cohesion and enhanced competitiveness of Europe's industrial ecosystem.

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I3float open calls



I3FLOAT will launch two Open Calls, granting up to €60,000 per SME and mobilising a total of €3,000,000 in cascade funding. Up to 50 SMEs will be supported. Open Calls are based on challenges identified in the Floating Offshore Wind Strategic Innovation Agenda, which combines specific challenges proposed by Challenge Owners or key stakeholders with an open stream for cross-sector technologies.

Application deadline: November 10, 2026, at 17:00 CET
For further information or clarification regarding the I3FLOAT 1st Open Call, please contact: msuarez@basquenergycluster.com

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BlueDial - Empowering a Blue Economy Public Dialogue for coordinated and inclusive policy actions



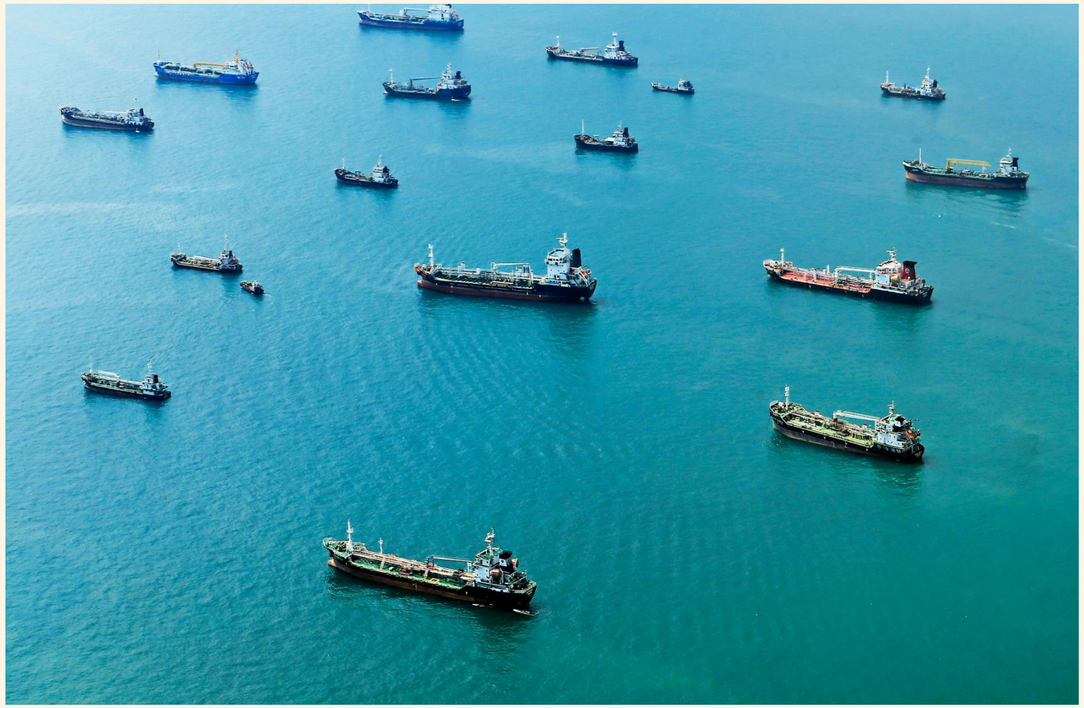
BlueDial is a transnational cooperation project that strengthens public dialogue and institutional capacity to support coordinated Blue Economy governance across the Black Sea Region. The BlueDial project (Project No: BSB01288) is co-funded by the European Union under the Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme.

The project addresses the need for stronger cooperation between:

- Public authorities
- Research organizations
- Maritime stakeholders
- Businesses
- Civil society

Interreg Co-funded by the European Union BlueDial
NEXT Black Sea Basin

BlueDial – Objectives and expected results



- Establish the BlackBlueNET cross-border network
- Strengthen institutional capacity of partner organizations
- Foster inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue
- Develop evidence-based policy recommendations
- Align regional actions with the Common Maritime Agenda
- Promote environmentally sustainable and economically inclusive Blue Economy growth

Expected Outcomes:

✓ Permanent cross-border cooperation network
✓ Joint policy recommendations for the Black Sea
✓ Improved institutional expertise
✓ Stronger cooperation among governments, NGOs and businesses
✓ Increased public awareness of Blue Economy opportunities
✓ Long-term partnerships extending beyond the project lifetime

Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin
Co-funded by the European Union
BlueDial

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ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

MCB

LOCAL CONTACT POINT

Varna, Bulgaria

A maritime-sector gateway to the world's largest support network for SMEs with international ambitions.

1 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partner search, matchmaking and cooperation opportunities for busine technology and R&D.

2 INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Support for innovation, technology transfer and development of competitive solutions.

3 INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

Guidance for SMEs seeking new markets, commercial opportunities and cross-border cooperation.

4 FUNDING & EU OPPORTUNITIES

Helping businesses identify relevant finance, EU programmes and project partners.

MARITIME EXPERTISE: connecting SMEs across maritime transport, ports, shipbuilding, marine technologies, blue resources, tourism and innovation.

OCEANITY

OCEANITY is a Horizon Europe research and innovation project advancing the European Digital Twin Ocean (EDITO) through the development of innovative, interoperable digital applications. By integrating ocean observations, advanced modelling, and diverse environmental and socio-economic data, the project delivers practical solutions **to strengthen coastal and urban resilience, support marine spatial planning,** and enable more sustainable maritime operations across European sea basins.



AETHERIA

AETHERIA is a Horizon Europe research and innovation project leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital Twins, and advanced digital technologies to strengthen coastal and environmental resilience. By transforming complex environmental data into actionable insights, the project supports **climate risk assessment, scenario modelling, and evidence-based decision-making**, empowering researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders to address environmental challenges and adapt to climate change.



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Thank You

https://maritime-forum.ec.europa.eu/theme/governance/european-maritime-day-my-country_en

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