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MARITIME COOPERATION IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

THREE YEARS ON....

March 1, 2021

Since its inception three years ago, the initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the Western Mediterranean (WestMED in short), has been building bridges between Southern Europe and North Africa and strengthening relations between the region's countries.

Grouping ten Western Mediterranean countries (Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Spain, Portugal and Tunisia), the initiative supports project development by providing technical advice and connecting potential partners across the sea basin. Over 16 project ideas have been more actively supported so far, while alignment has been ensured with a constellation of blue projects present in the Mediterranean region worth about 41 million euro.



Bound by good governance principles, the partner countries have continued exploring opportunities to support sustainable blue growth, jobs and innovation. At the same time they have provided a platform for technical dialogue on key issues such as sustainable transport, aquaculture and maritime cluster development across both shores of the Mediterranean.

For the future, the initiative promises to continue boosting close cooperation in order to generate blue growth and protect the Mediterranean Sea from pollutants and unregulated human activities

WESTMED
blue economy initiative

For more information visit: <https://www.westmed-initiative.eu>

TIMELINE OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

La Valetta, 19 April 2017

Under the Maltese Presidency of the European Council, the European Commission adopts the **Communication on the “Initiative for the sustainable development of the blue economy in the Western Mediterranean”**.

Naples, 30 November 2017

At an informal ministerial meeting, the ten **Western Mediterranean countries approve system of governance and management of the WestMED initiative**. Over the course of the following year, the Steering Committee starts carrying out regular meetings, in partnership with the European Commission and the UfM Secretariat, with a view to carrying out the projects identified under the WestMED initiative and ensuring their effectiveness.

Brussels, 1 October 2018

The **European Commission establishes a WestMED Assistance Mechanism** to support the initiative's implementation and the work of its Steering Committee.

Palermo, 14 May 2019

WestMED Hackathons: selected practitioners across the Western Mediterranean and beyond aim at taking existing project ideas to the next level, strengthening project partnerships and developing the project concepts in line with available funding opportunities for the region.

2017

Brussels, 26 June 2017

The **Council Conclusions on Blue Growth endorse the contents of the Communication**, welcome its Framework for Action and invite the countries involved, the European Commission, and the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) to take the Initiative forward in coherence, complementarity and coordination with all the other existing initiatives taking place in the region.

2018

Algiers, 3-4 December 2018

At the **stakeholder conference “Towards concrete Blue Actions in the western Mediterranean”**, 8 parallel sessions facilitate the exchange of project ideas and promote concrete project development among maritime stakeholders. On the following day, the second Ministerial meeting on the sustainable development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean adopts the roadmap for the WestMED Initiative and identifies six priorities for action:

- Maritime safety and the fight against marine pollution,
- Maritime cluster development,
- Skills development and circulation,
- Sustainable consumption and production,
- Biodiversity and marine habitat conservation and restoration
- Development of coastal communities and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

2019

WestMED region

9 National Hubs, WestMED Roadshows, Project Support

Series of meetings taking place in all countries involved to promote the implementation of the Initiative's Framework for Action, increase visibility, engage with stakeholders and facilitate future projects around the six priorities included in the Roadmap.

2020

Online, 15 April 2020

The **Technical Group on Sustainable Transport - Green Shipping** kicks off, with the objective to steer concrete exchanges amongst relevant Port Authorities and Ministries in all the countries across the western Mediterranean.

Online, 30 November 2020

A technical meeting with stakeholders paves the way toward the formation of an **alliance of Maritime Clusters** on both shores of the western Mediterranean.

WestMED region

9 National Events organised, 9 national Hubs continue being fully operational, active project development support

Over the course of year 3, all involved countries organised National Events involving local blue economy stakeholders, some of these generating national media attention.

Online, April-June 2020

Ongoing meetings/exchanges on project development support with actors and stakeholders and organisation of an online **Hackathon on Maritime Innovation Technologies** with 30 participants from the WestMED region.

Online, December 2020






















The WestMED Assistance Mechanism organises a series of **webinars focusing on strengthening ties and opportunities with Southern Partners**. On December 11, a first webinar on 'sustainable aquaculture' is held. This is followed a few days later on December 15, by a webinar on 'sustainable tourism,' co-organised with the BlueMed initiative, Mistral and Blue RoSES. These webinars attract a high number of participants from both shores generating promising paths for future collaboration.














2021










Online, 2 February 2021

During the 2nd UfM Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Blue Economy, the **Mediterranean Ministers designate the WestMED Initiative as a successful example of cooperation** and include this as article 17 in the Ministerial Declaration: Ministers recognise both the WestMED initiative and the EUSAIR as successful examples of cooperation, focused on clear goals, priorities and measurable targets and as a catalyst for the development of sustainable blue economy projects in the region.

GOALS, PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS SO FAR

	Framework for Action 10 Priorities	Roadmap for Action 6 Priorities	WestMED Initiative Supported Projects	WestMED Initiative Aligned Projects
GOAL 1 A safer and more secure maritime space	1.1 Coastguard functions cooperation (training, capacity building, search and rescue)			
	1.2 Maritime safety and response to marine pollution rescue	Maritime safety and the fight against marine pollution		 
GOAL 2 A smart and resilient blue economy	2.1 Strategic research and innovation			
	2.2 Maritime clusters development	Maritime cluster development		 
	2.3 Skills development and circulation	Skills development and circulation		
	2.4 Sustainable consumption and production (maritime transport, ports, maritime and coastal tourism, marine aquaculture)	Sustainable consumption and production		
GOAL 3 A better governance of the sea	3.1 Spatial Planning and coastal management			
	3.2 Marine and maritime knowledge			
	3.3 Biodiversity and marine habitat conservation	Biodiversity and marine habitat conservation and restoration		 
	3.4 Sustainable fisheries and coastal community development	Development of coastal communities and sustainable fisheries and aquaculture		 
Projects covering all priorities (1-6):   				

Project		Description	Topic	Countries	Funding Source	Total (€) Project Costs
WestMED initiative - supported projects (by the Assistance Mechanism)						
FIUUFRA		Training for coastguard by EFCA.	Coast guard training	MA MR DZ TN LY ES FR PT MT IT	EMFF	150.000
Blue RoSES		Developing innovative services that seek to adapt marinas and leisure boat design to changing customer demand. By integrating robotics and IoT, these new services will result in creating job opportunities and new business models. Customers will be enabled to visit underwater sites by piloting a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) from a leisure boat, ground control room or web app.	Tourism	IT ES GR PT	EMFF	1.043.000
DestiMED Plus		DestiMED Plus aims to promote integrated planning on coastal tourism, where regional policymakers apply holistic policies that link tourism with conservation by putting in practice a concrete ICZM approach for ecotourism products in Med Protected Areas.	Tourism	IT ES FR HR GR AL TN MA US	INTERREG MED	3.076.000
NewTechAqua		Expanding and diversifying European and Mediterranean aquaculture production of fin-fish, molluscs and micro-algae by developing and validating technologically-advanced, resilient and sustainable applications. A substantial involvement of the industry is essential for the project.	Aquaculture	IT ES GR NO HR UK FR BE CY	H2020	6.724.000
DigiCirc		European cluster-led accelerator for digitisation of the circular economy across key emerging sectors	Circular economy	FR FI MT IT UK IT PT EL UK NL RS	Horizon 2020	3.755.000
WestMED Initiative - aligned projects (receiving EU Contributions)						
WestMoPoCo		Preparedness for chemical spills response.	Emergency response	FR DZ IT MT MA ES TN MC	ECHO	868.000
Dive Safe		Integrated system for scientific and environmental underwater surveys, with advanced health & safety features.	Cultural Heritage	IT MT TR GR IL	EMFF	1.428.000
CMES WestMed		CMES-WestMed will create a shared methodology for developing training programmes for seafarers and implement three pilot training courses, including a teachers' mobility programme.	Cluster	IT FR TN	EMFF	624.000
Deep Blue		DEEP BLUE promotes collaboration between marine and maritime education, research, and training centres to strengthen relevant skills and increase capacity building for blue career development.	Training	ES IT TN	EMFF	595.000
Afrimed		Algal Forest Restoration In the MEDiterranean Sea.	Ecosystem Restoration	IT FR ES GR TN UK MA AL	EMFF	1.858.000
ODYSSEA		Operate and demonstrate an interoperable and cost-effective platform that fully integrates networks of observing and forecasting systems across the Mediterranean basin, addressing both the open sea and the coastal zone.	R&I and marine knowledge	MA DZ IT FR TN ES EG PT IL UK DE NL TR GR	H2020	8.399.000
Ensamble		ENSAMBLE will promote twinning activities among local coastal communities, and other relevant stakeholders, for the sustainable development of the fishing sector.	CLLD cooperation	IT FR TN	EMFF	448.000
SwitchMed Blue Economy strand		Sustainable SME development on aquaculture and fisheries, by UNIDO.	Aquaculture and fisheries	MA TN IL DZ EG PS JO LB	ENI	1.000.000

Project		Description	Topic	Countries	Funding Source	Total (€) Project Costs
EASYFEED		EASY FEED will validate the use of an innovative aquaculture organic feed formula.	Fisheries	ES PT	EMFF	675.000
MedSkippers		MedSkippers aims to harmonise the training and recognition of professional skippers of small commercial vessels and expand their skill set to boost the nautical charter sector.	Skills development	ES CY EL MA	EMFF	625.000
SIMWESTMED		The project intends to address practical aspects of MSP implementation, identification and sharing of best practices, development of tools to enhance understanding of and address concrete issues and challenges linked to MSP implementation.	MSP	FR ES IT MT	EMFF	2.800.000
ArtReefs		The objective of the project is to pilot a public-private partnership, inviting cross-sectoral stakeholders across the Mediterranean and Black Sea Basins.	Innovation & Sustainable Tourism	ES IT FR BU	EMFF	209.000
Cluster ACT		Cluster ACT develops a mechanism for maritime clusters' networking and collaboration with private investors to enhance innovation and business development	Clusters	IT ES EL HR EG	EMFF	588.000
marGnet		marGnet sets up and tests multi-level solutions to monitor, map, prevent, remove and recycle marine litter from sea-based sources present on the seafloor	Marine litter	IT HR	EMFF	612.000
MEDINBLUE		The project aims at reinforcing the technical capacities of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) secretariat so that it can perform the new tasks related to the blue economy	Capacity building	Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean	EMFF	360.000 (grant EMFF)
MSPglobal IOC-UNESCO		EASME/EMFF/2015/1.2.1.3 - Projects on Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)	MSP	MA DZ MT IT FR TN ES LY MR PT	EMFF	1.750.000
Assistance Mechanism		Support WestMED Implementation	Support	MA DZ MT IT FR TN ES LY MR PT	EMFF	2.800.000
Total						40.982.000