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MARITIME COOPERATION IN THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

FOUR YEARS ON....

April 1, 2022

WESTMED
blue economy initiative

Since 2018, 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 while at the same time strengthening relations between the region's countries. It supports the promotion of sustainable maritime issues in the broadest sense possible

Ten western Mediterranean countries (Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco Spain, Portugal and Tunisia), have joined forces to support with project development and connecting potential partners across the sea basin.



More than 50 project ideas so far have been actively supported while alignment has been ensured with a constellation of blue projects present in the Mediterranean region worth about 92 million euro.

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

For the future, the initiative promises to continue boosting close cooperation in order to generate a Sustainable Blue Economy and protect the Mediterranean Sea from pollutants and unregulated human activities

For more information visit: westmed-initiative.eu or call our central team in Madrid: + 34 91 598 08 51

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.

2021

WestMED region

Technical groups (AquaWest and Green Shipping) focused on thematic discussions with key stakeholders throughout the year: experiences were shared, ideas developed and where possible, translated into consortia and project proposals for funding.

WestMED region

Co-hosted events: green shipping in the Mediterranean (with Conferenza GNL), Sustainable Tourism Innovation (with UfM), MSP as booster for Blue Economy (with MSP Global), Sustainable development of the blue economy in Libya (at Seafuture 2021 with the Italian NH).

WestMED region

The first edition of the **WestMED Best Project Awards** generated 54 project submissions in four different categories from across the region. An expert jury selected the winners based on impact and replicability potential. The winners were endorsed by the Steering Committee. The Awards ceremony took place during the 2021 Stakeholder Conference.

Rome, 8 November 2021

The **Maltese-Libyan co-presidency** was officially welcomed during the last Steering Committee meeting of the year to take over the Initiative's leadership from the Italian-Libyan co-presidency.

WestMED region

The **WestMED Cluster Alliance**, consisting of clusters around the Mediterranean, focused on raising the profile of clusters around the region, bringing together different actors and exploring new cluster formations in the south.

WestMED region, 29 June

Online training 'Effective Project Proposal Development for EU Funding' aimed at the southern shore countries. This workshop was organised together with Ascame with simultaneous EN FR interpretation.

WestMED region, November 2021










































Cooperation agreements were signed with ASCAME - Association of Chambers of Commerce of the MED, and with the INTERREG EURO-MED PROGRAMME 2021-27.













Rome, 9 November 2021


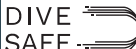











Stakeholder conference "Corridors to Sustainable Blue Development"
A hybrid event, streamed live from Rome featured more than 30 speakers on a wide variety of maritime topics. The conference was attended by 212 participants from 22 different countries. The Best Project Awards were presented to the project winners. A pitch by all winners decided the ultimate winner via public vote. There were five winners in four different categories: Blueskills, Starfish 4.0, The Algeria Startup Challenge, Sicomar Plus and BiovecQ.














2022

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)		FIUUFRA	
	1.2 Maritime safety and response to marine pollution rescue	Maritime safety and the fight against marine pollution	LIFE MEDECA	  
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	FIUUFRA Training for coastguard by EFCA. This was followed up by e-Fishmed; an EFCA managed project (included in the EMFAF Work Programme 2021), to set up a virtual academy on inspection and control for fisheries in the WestMed.	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
BLUEfasma	 BLUEfasma integrates and implements Circular Economy principles in two key blue growth sectors: fishing/aquaculture & coastal/maritime tourism to benefit MED insular, island and coastal areas in a novel, innovative manner.	Circular economy	MT GR CY HR MTN	INTERREG MED	2.812.000
Psamides	 Optimize ports operation and marina management by implementing innovative tools.	Ports	FR ES GR MTN HR	INTERREG MED	2.859.000
GALATEA	 Development of new cross-sectoral and cross-border industrial value-chains, supporting in particular innovative SMEs and facilitated by clusters, to foster the development of Blue Growth key industries in Europe to be competitive at the global level.	SMEs & Clusters	FR ES	H2020	3.671.000
BlueConnect2	 Development of a cascade funding scheme for SMEs developing innovative solutions for ports.	Ports	FR ES	INTERREG ITALY-FRANCE	522.000
GROOM II	 The project will define the overall organization of an infrastructure (EU Center of excellence in robotics) dedicated to ocean research and innovation, and maritime services supporting Blue Growth.	Innovation	FR ES PT	H2020	3.075.000
B-Blue	 Coordinated Capacity Building in Blue bioeconomy Subfields- Fish health-Food Safety and quality.	Food safety	IT EL ES FR SL HR MNE TU	INTERREG MED	1.500.000
CO2NTROL	 Collaborative platform for shipping container operations to take control of CO2 emissions by route optimisation.	Green shipping	FR	EMFF	
LIFE4MEDECA	 Reduction of emissions within the ECA MED area.	Green Shipping	IT ES DK IL DE FR NL	LIFE 2021	1.637.000
FSC*	FSC Joint research activity.	Blue Bio-technology	FR IT	PON RICERCHE	45.000

Project		Description	Topic	Countries	Funding Source	Total (€) Project Costs
Sistina 2*	SISTINA2	Sustainable Tourism in North Mediterranean	Tourism	FR IT	INTERREG ITALY-FRANCE	2.492.000
WestMED Initiative - aligned projects						
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
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

Project		Description	Topic	Countries	Funding Source	Total (€) Project Costs
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
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
STARFISH 4.0		Demonstration of an autonomous connected device and digital tools for safety of artisanal fishermen and sustainable management of small-scale fisheries.	Fisheries and aquaculture	FR GR MR	EMFF	1.158.000
Blue Skills		Opportunities for “Blue” marine and maritime careers by developing skills, exchanging knowledge and valorising research for more sustainable Mediterranean Sea.	Blue skills	DZ FR ES IT MT MR MA PT TU LY	MUR	1.000.000
Algeria Startup Challenge		Pioneering Algerian program that creates opportunities for startup holders and ecosystem actors to support innovation.	SMEs & Innovation	DZ	N/A	N/A
Sicomar Plus		Improving the safety of navigation in the cross-border maritime area between France and Italy.	Maritime safety	FR IT	INTERREG ITALY-FRANCE	6.688.000
BioVecQ		Development of new biotechnological and analytical tools for the sustainable socio-economic development of the aquatic and fish-food sector.	Fisheries and aquaculture	IT TU	ITALY-TUNISIA ENPI CBC	1.722.000
Calypso South		Addressing the challenges of safer marine transportation, protection of human lives at sea, and safeguarding of marine and coastal resources from irreversible damages.	Maritime safety	IT MT	INTERREG Italy-Malta	2.500.000
Plastic Busters MPA's		Addressing the whole management cycle of marine litter, from monitoring and assessment to prevention and mitigation.	Marine litter	AL HR GR IT FR ES	INTERREG MED	5.055.000
Sustainable Community		Gathering key stakeholders who actively work to make tourism a real driver for inclusive and sustainable development in the Mediterranean region.	Tourism	ES IT GR FR HR SI	INTERREG MED	1.583.000
SOCLIMPACT		Downscaling climate impacts and decarbonisation pathways in islands and enhancing socioeconomic and non-market evaluation of climate change.	Climate change	ES CY MT FR PT	HORIZON 2020	4.481.000
Assistance Mechanism		Support WestMED Initiative implementation	Support	MA DZ MT IT FR TN ES LY MR PT	EMFF	2.800.000
Total						92.187.000

* No online information/ website available on this project at date of publication of this brochure

► Total number of project ideas supported with proposal-submissions by the WestMED Assistance Mechanism (incl. awarded, rejected, pending and in preparation): **52**