

The WestMED Assistance Mechanism Four Years of Cooperation

Executive Summary
September 30, 2022

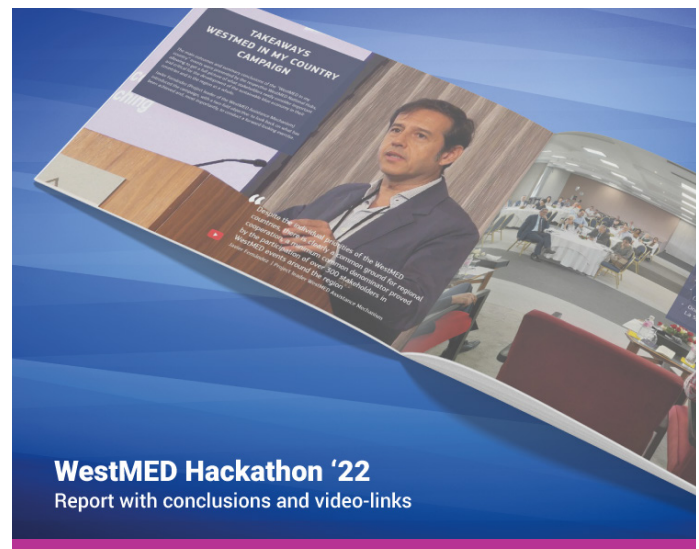
Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia

CORE TEAM

Fully operational

A team of nearly 30 professionals has been fully operational since 2019 and includes the WestMED Central Team, 9 National Hubs and different expert pools relating to events, communication and calls for funding.

During this period of implementation, National Hubs roadmaps were produced and a tailored assessment has been carried out to step-up the Team's work - and further assist the WestMED maritime community and all stakeholders involved implement the 6 Roadmap priorities of the Initiative.



GUIDANCE ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

To support stakeholders in project development and facilitate project ideas, the WestMED team is constantly screening and reviewing key funding sources available to any of the western Mediterranean countries.

These funding opportunities are issued by EU Programmes, Financial Institutions and Development agencies.

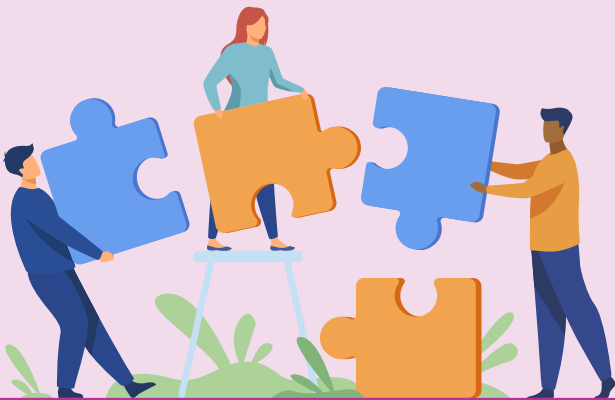
During the 4 years of the contract, 100+ financial opportunities have been mapped, reviewed and disseminated among stakeholders in the different countries.

The team has also established direct liaison with a number of public and private donors and programmes such as INTERACT, Interreg MED, EIB, EASME, UNDP, DG NEAR or ENI CBC MED.

Additionally, ongoing and future opportunities are matched with the WestMED priorities to support synergies between potential project partners among different countries. The National Hubs' role is key in this matchmaking process.

In this light, a training session has been provided aimed at southern stakeholders to foster cross-country sea basin consortia and project proposal development.

29 PROJECT IDEAS AWARDED



Through a balanced top-down and bottom-up project development approach, the WestMED Assistance Mechanism has provided consistent technical support to numerous organisations with a wide range of questions.

84 project ideas have been actively supported over the four years of our activity.

Out of these, 29 innovative Blue Economy projects supported by the Assistance Mechanism have been awarded in total **50.840.334 euro**. Some proposals (supported by the Assistance Mechanism) with requests for funding, are still pending.

100+ MEETINGS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The Core Team, along with the National Hubs, have been actively involved in the organisation of National Events, Roadshows as well as conferences, workshops and seminars to engage with stakeholders at all levels.

Most of the events have been organised online since the beginning of the sanitary crisis.

- **Stakeholder Conferences:** During the four-year contract two Stakeholder Conferences have been successfully organised in Algiers (2018) and [Rome \(2021\)](#).
- **Hackatons:** Two large scale hackathons were organised in Palermo (2019) and [Malta \(2022\)](#) with a focus on project development.
- **Roadshows:** 24 stakeholder meetings were held at the start of the Initiative in the different coastal regions of each country to launch and promote the WestMED initiative, its added value and implementation path.
- **National Events:** 18 National Events have been organised by the National Hubs: in 2020 (9) and in 2022 (9). Some of these generated national media attention.
- **'WestMED In My Country' campaign:** The National Events in 2022 were labeled 'WestMED In My Country', and focused on country-specific maritime topics. The conclusions from these 9 events were presented during the hackathon in Malta and can be viewed in its [summary report](#).
- **Co-organised events:** A range of events have been co-organised with partner organisations such as the UfM, Ascame, MSP Global and EIEAD (on the Blue Economy in Libya).



- **Partner events:** 345 Blue Economy events in the region, carried out by other organisations were attended to promote the WestMED Initiative. Frequently, WestMED's team members also acted as speakers and/or panellists.

TECHNICAL-/ THEMATIC GROUPS

The **Green Shipping Technical Group (TG)** was the first of its kind being activated under the WestMED Assistance Mechanism. Substantial support has been provided since then for the concrete definition of project proposals with leading stakeholders.

Another Technical Group has been formed on **Sustainable Aquaculture (Aquawest)** to develop cooperation and knowledge sharing across the region with an upcoming focus on Cost Action calls.

For **clusters (Maritime Clusters Alliance)**, a working group has been created which has culminated in a roadmap to foster cooperation in the region and further development of clusters in the South.

Tailored support has also been provided in the areas of **sustainable tourism, blue skills, and marine spatial planning**. Also, for each WestMED country, a national dialogue has been activated under the steering role of each National Hub.

ENHANCING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Communications Team works with the members of the Central Team and National Hubs. The team developed channels and materials and effectively disseminated content relevant to the WestMED Initiative at both central and country level.

- **An upgraded website:** The website has become a main information reference for the western Mediterranean with regular content updates. In 2021 the process started to upgrade the website with visual, accessibility and security elements to comply with the standard for EC websites. In 2022, the new website was launched whereby the website address(url) changed from westmed-initiative.eu to westmed-initiative.ec.europa.eu and recognised as an official partner website of the EC.
- **An embedded project DataHub:** The [Maritime DataHub](#) monitors and compiles thorough and up-to-date information about projects relevant to the WestMED initiative, disaggregated by topic, country and funding amount. To date, 170 projects with over 650 partners involved are displayed.
- **Continuous flow of content on social media:** The Twitter account [@WestMedStrat](#) reached the 1330 followers mark, thanks to the WestMED daily presence on this social network. The team provided coverage and specific promotion of events, campaigns and news of interest to the stakeholder community. The National Hubs in Italy and Algeria were also active on their respective Twitter accounts: [Italy](#) (261 followers) | [Algeria](#) (128 followers)
- **Newsletters:** The WestMED [quarterly newsletter](#) targets stakeholders in a tailored manner with news, events, calls and interviews. To date, 18 newsletters (EN, FR) have been issued.
- **Videos:** Two short, animated explainer videos were produced and disseminated, focused on the initiative's objectives and priorities (in 2019 and 2021). For the Stakeholder conference 2021 short promo videos were produced and each of the five best project award winners received an animated video highlighting their work. These videos are all hosted on the dedicated [WestMED Initiative YouTube channel](#).
- **Radio and television coverage:** The WestMED Initiative has been receiving television and radio attention - notably in Tunisia, Algeria and Mauritania.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE SUPPORT

The Steering Committee for the Sustainable Development of the blue economy in the western Mediterranean provides high-level stewardship for the implementation of the WestMED Initiative.

During the four years of implementation, the WestMED Assistance Mechanism has successfully supported the organisation of 13 meetings of the Steering Committee.

These meetings took place in Algiers (October 2018), Paris (February 2019), Brussels (April 2019), Palermo (May 2019), Rabat (October 2019), Brussels (February 2020), Roma (online - July 2020), online (December 2020, April 2021 and June 2021), Roma (November 2021), online (March 2022) and Malta (July 2022).

Six WestMED countries have held the co-chairmanships of the Steering Committee : France, Algeria and Morocco; Morocco and Italy; Italy and Libya; Libya and Malta.

WESTMED PROJECT AWARDS

In 2021 the first edition of the WestMED project awards was launched to identify, showcase and honour exceptional projects in different areas which provide innovative and replicable solutions embodying the WestMED's vision for the Mediterranean.

54 valuable contributions from both shores entered the competition. Five of these were awarded with a certificate, a trophy, a seal and an animated explainer video. [Visit the conference 2021 page](#)

