

# Consultations on the design of the Blueing the Black Sea Program (BBSEA): A Regional Initiative to Tackle Marine Pollution and Climate Change in Support of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea

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Consultation workshop in Romania, 22 April 2021

## Summary

### I. What was discussed?

Co-hosted by the World Bank and the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS), and in cooperation with the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, the workshop (held as a webinar) was the sixth in a series of 'National Consultations' organised in all six Black Sea littoral states, incl. the Republic of Moldova to seek:

- ▶ input from respective stakeholder communities on marine pollution, pressing issues and priorities related to pollution prevention, reduction, and control in the Black Sea, and opportunities to inform the planned 'Blueing the Black Sea' (BBSEA) programme<sup>1</sup> architecture and implementation modalities;
- ▶ information to support a national and regional pollution diagnostic tool that will form the baseline for further action.

The webinar also offered an opportunity to present as a regional good practice the Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests through World Bank support:

- ▶ [Romania Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project](#).

### II. Who was present?

The webinar was opened by a panel of key speakers - *H.E. Amb. Michael B. CHRISTIDES, Secretary General, Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Mr. Ionuț-Sorin BANCIU, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests of Romania, Ms. Gallina A. VINCELETTE, Country Director for the European Union (EU), World Bank, Mr. Ms. Kseniya LVOVSKY, Practice Manager for Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy in Europe and Central Asia, World Bank, Ms. Iryna MAKARENKO, Pollution Monitoring and Assessment Officer, Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution*. A brief outline of their remarks can be found in section IV - *What feedback was received?* below.

The attendance of the webinar reached 99 participants, representatives of the public and the private sector, and followed online, on [Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation BSEC Facebook Live channel](#) and [World Bank Romania Facebook Live channel](#), where it reached over 623 people (see Annex II: Facebook Live channel). The majority of participants were from the host country. Additionally, international experts active in the region and representatives of international organisations, such as representatives of representatives of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea/FAO and the European Commission, joined the event. Participants mainly represented national and regional authorities, academia and financial institutions active in the country. For a complete stakeholder list refer to Annex I: Participating Organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> The Blueing the Black Sea (BBSEA) is a regional initiative, to be led by BSEC PERMIS, to address pollution and develop Blue Economy investments in the Black Sea region as part of the Common Maritime Agenda (CMA), agreed in 2019 by the six Black Sea littoral states plus the Republic of Moldova. BBSEA is funded by the World Bank with an ongoing preparatory investigative phase supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

### III. How was the workshop structured?

As indicated in the [webinar agenda](#), the official opening by key speakers was followed by:

- ▶ the working session 1, where the Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests through World Bank support was presented as a regional good practice.

The 1<sup>st</sup> working session was followed by two interactive sessions offering an overview of how the BBSEA Program will work especially its potential activities in Romania. The two sessions have focused on:

- ▶ the analytical component of BBSEA – to build the analytical fundamentals of the intervention;
- ▶ the BBSEA Regional GEF-funded project – to identify avenues to incentivize investments in pollution reduction technology, innovation and finance.

A key part of the workshop was spent gathering information from participants via a voting system to verify the findings of the World Bank report and to inform how the BBSEA program could be implemented across the wider Black Sea region and how it can benefit Romania.

### IV. What feedback was received?

The welcoming address opening session was moderated by Alexandru Cosmin Buteică, Environmental Specialist, World Bank.

In the **Welcoming Address BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B Christides** emphasized the importance of issues such as regional cooperation, pollution and climate change in the Black Sea. He reminded that it confirmed that the cycle of national level consultations will actually inform the design of the future Blueing the Black Sea program and that this meeting is designed to be participatory and actively involve the audience. Ambassador Christides presented two of the photographs of Mr. Karl Taylor, which “*are very compelling and depicting almost in a dramatic way the problem that we have created not only for our generation but for the generations to come: we and the generations to come are sitting on an ocean of pollution, mainly plastic, and it is high-time to do everything that is in our power to address these issues*”.

*Mr. Ionuț-Sorin BANCIU, Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests of Romania*, underlined that the Black Sea is a priority for Romania, as it is home to important wildlife now being threatened by pollution. Mr. Banciu reminded the key regional steps taken over the years against the pollution of the Black Sea: the establishment of BSEC, the Bucharest Convention, the CMA etc. He also stressed that “*the cooperation within the Black Sea region still needs further enhancements in order to reach the proposed vision. The end goal is to preserve its ecosystem as a valuable natural endowment of the region whilst ensuring the sustainable reuse of its marine and coastal resources for the economic development, well-being, health and security of all its riparian states*”. Mr. Banciu also mentioned the excellent results achieved by the Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests through World Bank support.

*Ms. Gallina A. VINCELETTE, Country Director for the European Union (EU), World Bank*, highlighted that the Black Sea has been one of Europe’s most polluted seas and that the problem is not a simple one to tackle and it requires a common and coordinated regional solution. She also mentioned the World Bank’s overarching goal in the country to build institutions fit for a prosperous and inclusive Romania, aiming to maximize finance for development, including leveraging additional resources (like better absorption of EU funds), and contributing to regional and global public goods. By addressing pollution in the entire Black Sea region, the World Bank’s Country Program is helping achieve just that. Ms. Vincelette also mentioned that the World Bank’s “*work in Romania is very much in line with the objectives*

*under the European Union Green Deal by identifying common solutions for common challenges and seizing regional opportunities to bolster the sustainable blue economy, building environmental resilience and fostering cross-border cooperation – including in the Danube region*". Lastly, the Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project was mentioned and how it is reducing nutrient discharge, promoting changes in farming practices and behavior at the community level, and strengthening institutional and regulatory capacity at the national level.

*Ms. Kseniya LVOVSKY, Practice Manager for Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy in Europe and Central Asia (ENB ECA), World Bank*, highlighted that transboundary environmental challenges are shared problems that require shared regional solutions. Considering the common ecosystem of the Black Sea and the importance of the Danube estuary, collaboration at the regional level is essential. Any country working to tackle pollution on its own cannot successfully achieve the desirable quality of sea water in a closed ecosystem such as the Black Sea. That is why it is so important for the countries to work together to protect the shared Black Sea, in alignment with the European Union Green Deal, Europe's and Central Asia's Green Transition agenda, and COVID-19 recovery plans. In Romania, like its Black Sea neighbours, the Blue Economy can provide new drivers of inclusive development, job creation, and economic diversification – important in the context of the COVID-19 recovery effort. As the European Green Deal and the Next Generation EU funds provide a unique opportunity for resource reallocation and transformation towards greener economies, the region is looking at a uniquely favourable occasion to build a truly sustainable Blue Economy.

*Ms. Iryna MAKARENKO, Pollution Monitoring and Assessment Officer, Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution* recapped the important regional documents signed over the years, the Black Sea Research and Innovation Agenda, the National Blue Growth agendas and the CMA in the Black Sea Region. Ms. Makarenko also highlighted the foundation and development of the BSEC and the important role it plays in the conservation of the BS. The BSEC is welcoming the progress of Romania and Bulgaria in the implementation of the provisions of the relevant EU water directives and the importance to share these experiences with other riparian countries for them to improve legislation inspired by the EU *acquis Communautaire*. Ms. Makarenko underlined BSEC's intentions to further implement dedicated activities to improve the implementation of these directives and to contribute the harmonization of approaches within the Black Sea. Lastly, Ms. Makarenko welcomed on behalf of BSEC the launch of the BBSEA program and acknowledged its great potential and need to implement its activities, being ready to support the efforts of the World Bank and other partners aimed at the successful implementation of the CMA in the Black Sea region.

In the **Working Session 1**, *Ms. Paola Agostini, Lead Natural Resources Management Specialist, The World Bank*, briefly introduced the BBSEA Program and explained that it covers a combination of national level studies and investment and two regional initiatives, with the Turning the Tide of Pollution and the BBSEA GEF investment/technical assistance project. Back-to-back with this short introduction, Mr. Cesar Niculescu, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank moderated the rest of this working session. *Ms. Naiana MILEA, Director, "Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control" Project Management Unit, Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests of Romania* presented the Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests through World Bank support. The Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project is implemented in selected localities that are vulnerable or potentially vulnerable to the pollution of nutrients, bringing important environmental and social-economic benefits for Romania. The overall development objective of this project is to support the Government of Romania towards meeting its obligations related to the implementation of EU Water Framework Directive and particularly EU Nitrates Directive requirements by (a) reducing nutrients discharges to water bodies, (b) promoting behavioral changes at the communal level (through training and knowledge training networks), and (c) strengthening institutional and regulatory capacity. Project interventions are designed to reduce the discharge of nutrients (nitrogen and

phosphorous) into water bodies leading to the Danube and the Black Sea over the long term, through integrated land and water management.

In **Working Session 2: Turning the tide of pollution in the Black Sea**, a World Bank-led effort to establish an up-to-date diagnostic of the state of play and issues at stake regarding marine pollution in the Black Sea was presented. With contributions from *Mr Owen MacIntyre, Director, LLM, University College Cork* and *Mr. Nicola BERTOLINI, BBSEA pollution expert, Manager, Ambiente SPA* an attempt was made via discussion and some questions asked of the audience, to identify the sources, impacts and prevention efforts (information and institutional gaps) related to marine pollution in the region, as well the key pollution challenges in Romania. The findings will feed into an in-country pollution diagnostic paper, which, in turn, will inform the BBSEA-GEF architecture and the creation of an effective national and regional diagnostic tool. The Live voting tool applied for this session confirmed that the scope of the diagnostic activities reflects the main gaps that need to be addressed. Nutrient pollution was confirmed as the biggest pollution issue.

The **Working Session 3: Blueing the Black Sea Program: BBSEA-GEF regional project, focus on Romania** was a highly interactive consultation exercise. It began with an overview of the of the 3-year BBSEA-GEF project, from *BSEC Executive Manager, Ms Rositsa Stoeva* who said it had “*the long-term objective of an improved environmental status of the Black Sea with increased economic and social benefits for the population*”. This was followed by the gathering of feedback and ideas on the key components of the project especially with regard to Romania. Moderated by *Ms. Mihaela Candea Mirea, Director Executive, ONG Mare Nostrum, Common Maritime Agenda National Hub of Romania*, a series of votes was held for all participants to share their preferences on questions related to the priorities of the overall project, the key concerns related to Romania, eco-sustainable business practices and innovation, how to develop awareness raising and funding avenues that could support pollution reduction.

A comment from the *Ms. Anca Mărgineanu*, participating on behalf of [EU-CONEXUS](#), the European University for Smart Urban Coastal Sustainability, a European transnational higher education and research institution that covers in a comprehensive and interdisciplinary manner, societal challenges faced by urbanised coastal areas and sustainable development, highlighted the need for an active involvement of the universities and academic communities in the region on addressing the various types of pollution problems faced by the Black Sea.

The webinar was **closed by Ms. Rositsa Stoeva, Executive Manager, BSEC PERMIS and BBSEA Project Manager** and *Ms Berengere Prince, Lead Natural Resources Specialist, World Bank*, who offered final words, connected the dots’ between the role of the local, national and regional levels in the development of sustainable Blue economy, and thanked the audience for their contribution and highlighted that result of the live poll is consistent with that received in other countries. Ms. Prince expressed her satisfaction with the expertise of the audience present at the event, which was very much aware of the blue economy.

Each of the main sessions presented a number of topics, which provoked active participation in the live voting.

## Annex I: Participating Organisations

<b>Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests of Romania</b>	<b>National Institute of Research and Development for Marine Geology and Geoecology - GeoEcoMar</b>
<b>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania</b>	<b>Romanian Maritime Training Centre - CERONAV</b>
<b>Ministry of Development, Public Works and municipality</b>	<b>UAT Municipiul Tulcea/ Tulcea</b>
<b>Ministry of Economy, Business Environment and Tourism</b>	<b>Ramboll South East Europe</b>
<b>Ministry of Environment</b>	<b>Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Authority</b>
<b>Constanta Municipality</b>	<b>UNION OF ROMANIAN INLAND PORTS</b>
<b>WWF Romania</b>	<b>University Dunarea de jos of Galati</b>
<b>Ovidius University of Constanta</b>	<b>National Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa"</b>
<b>BSC ICZM Advisory Group Member</b>	<b>Universitatea POLITEHNICA din Bucuresti</b>
<b>National Meteorologic al Administration</b>	<b>Universitatea din Bucuresti</b>
<b>Dobrogea - Littoral Water Basin Administration</b>	<b>Complex Museum of Natural Sciences Constanta</b>
<b>Romanian Maritime Training Centre</b>	<b>Agentia pentru Protectia Mediului Constanta</b>
<b>NIHWM</b>	<b>Black Sea Assistance Mechanism/Romanian National Hub</b>
<b>AGENTIA NATIONALA PENTRU ARII NATURALE PROTEJATE</b>	<b>Eco Dobrogea</b>
<b>Media One</b>	<b>INHGA</b>
<b>Dunarea de Jos University of Galați</b>	<b>Black Sea NGO Forum</b>
<b>Ministerul Mediului, Apelor si Padurilor</b>	<b>Association of Cross-border Cooperation "Lower Danube Euroregion"</b>
<b>UST</b>	<b>Mare Nostrum NGO</b>
<b>WBG</b>	<b>Ambiente spa</b>
<b>Administratia Bazinala de Apa Dobrogea-Litoral</b>	<b>European Commission</b>
<b>Constanta Maritime University</b>	<b>University of Bucharest</b>
<b>Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest</b>	<b>Academia Navala Mircea cel Batran</b>
<b>TERRA Mileniul III</b>	<b>Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania</b>

## Annex II: Facebook Live channel and media monitoring



Stakeholder Webinar: Consultations with #Romania on the Design of "Blueing the Black Sea Programme" - A Regional Initiative to Tackle #MarinePollution and #ClimateChange in support of the #CommonMaritimeAgenda for the #BlackSea



626 Views



- 623 views of the livestream
- 1600+ organic reach from two posts on the event
- 90+ engagements, 16 shares, all positive

**Representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests participated yesterday, April 22, in the webinar Consultations on the design of the Blueing the Black Sea Program** ↑

Representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests participated yesterday, April 22, in the webinar Consultations on the design of the Blueing the Black Sea Program a regional initiative to combat marine pollution and climate change, in support of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea The online event, organized by the World Bank, BSEC PERMIS (International Permanent Secretariat of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization) and the Commission for the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, initiates in Romania a series of consultations good regional practices for combating marine pollution and climate change.

Title	Date	Source
🌐 <a href="#">Ministry of the Environment press release</a>	23 Apr	Agerpres
🌐 <a href="#">Romania has developed solutions to reduce Danube and Black Sea pollution with nitrates from agricultural sources (Secretary of State)</a>	23 Apr	Agerpres
🌐 <a href="#">Romania has developed pollution reduction solutions in the Danube and M. Neagra</a>	23 Apr	Green Report
🌐 <a href="#">The Integrated Nutrition Pollution Control project at the Blueing the Black Sea webinar</a>	23 Apr	Ziarul Pozitiv
🌐 <a href="#">Ministry of Environment, participation in the 'Blueing the Black Sea' regional good practices webinar</a>	24 Apr	Romania Libera
🌐 <a href="#">Ministry of Environment, participation in the 'Blueing the Black Sea' regional good practices webinar</a>	24 Apr	Ultimele Stiri
🌐 <a href="#">Ministry of Environment, participation in the 'Blueing the Black Sea' regional good practices webinar</a>	24 Apr	DIACAF
🌐 <a href="#">Romania has developed solutions to reduce Danube and Black Sea pollution with nitrates from agricultural sources (Secretary of State)</a>	24 Apr	Press 24
🌐 <a href="#">Romania has developed solutions to reduce Danube and Black Sea pollution with nitrates from agricultural sources (Secretary of State)</a>	24 Apr	Press 24

### Annex III – Photo Gallery

