

SPEAKERS:

H.E. Ambassador Michael B. CHRISTIDES

Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)



Ambassador Michael B. Christides is the Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), headquartered in Istanbul, Turkey. Born in Thessaloniki, Greece, Ambassador Christides joined the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 1976 as first in his Class and served with distinction until his retirement in August 2014. Among other assignments, he served as

Ambassador of Greece to Bulgaria, to Turkey, and to Argentina, and held senior posts in the Hellenic MFA as Political Director for South East Europe, as Director General for International Organizations, International Security & Cooperation and as Director General for International Economic Relations. Ambassador Christides participated in many international meetings and conferences and has spent more than 20 years dealing with Southeast European/Balkan issues, while travelling extensively in the region. He acquired a broad knowledge of the political and economic realities there and established a wide personal network of high-level political, business, academic, and media contacts. He speaks fluent English, German, French, Italian, and moderately good Spanish. After his retirement, Ambassador Christides was elected by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs as Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, assuming his duties on 1 July 2015. After the unanimous endorsement by all BSEC Member States on 15 December 2017, the same Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs reappointed Ambassador Christides for a second three-year term-in-office, from 1 July 2018 until 30 June 2021.

Mr. Steven N. SCHONBERGER

Regional Director, Sustainable Development Department for Europe and Central Asia, The World Bank



Steven Navon Schonberger is Regional Director for the World Bank Group's Sustainable Development Department for the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region. In this role, he is responsible—*inter alia*—for oversight and support of the World Bank's sustainable development programs in agriculture, environment, urban, social, land and water. At his previous role as Water Director, he was encompassing water supply and sanitation, irrigation, transboundary waters, and watershed management in the South Asia, East Asia and Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia Regions. An Agricultural Economist by training, Mr. Schonberger has worked on issues of water resources management, water utility reform, climate resilience, agriculture and irrigation, and finance in virtually all regions of the Globe.

In addition to the World Bank, Mr. Schonberger has worked with UN organizations, private companies, and international NGOs. His recent areas of professional focus include moving to a circular economy approach in water-scarce cities, governance and institutional reforms in irrigated agriculture, and developing innovative partnerships with the private sector for technology and policy innovation. He has authored several World Bank publications on issues of microfinance, agricultural finance, and natural resources policy, as well as co-authored journal articles and book chapters on similar topics. Mr. Schonberger is a native of the State of California in the U.S., where he gained his strong interest and concern for issues of water, economic development, and environmental sustainability, and has lived in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

H.E. Ms. Iliana TODOROVA

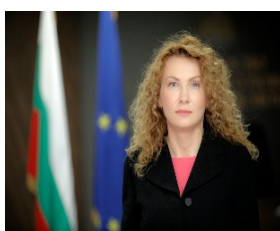
Deputy Minister of Environment and Water of the Republic of Bulgaria



Born on August 2, 1984. Master's degree in Law from SWU "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad. She started her professional career in 2008 in the Basin Directorate "West Aegean Region" - Blagoevgrad. In 2017 she held the position of Chief Legal Adviser of ViK EOOD - Blagoevgrad. Since 2018, she has been Director of the Water Management Directorate at the Ministry of Environment and Water.

H.E. Ms. Denitsa NIKOLOVA

Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria (TBC)



Master of Economics, Majoring in Finance. Specialization in management of the Confederation of Dutch Industry and Employers. Specialization in Rotary International - New York. Specializations in the field of financial control, reporting of irregularities and certification of EU funds. Denitsa Nikolova has 24 years of professional experience, of which:

- ❖ 2006 - 2010 - National Fund Directorate at the Ministry of Finance;
- ❖ 2010 - 2013 - Director General of the General Directorate for Regional Development Programming and Head of the Managing Authority of OPRD and member of the Board of Directors of the FLAG Fund.
- ❖ October 2013-July 2014 Business Development Manager, Trace International Ltd.
- ❖ July 2014-November 2014 - Manager, Smart Synergy Consult Ltd.
- ❖ November 2014 - January 2017 - Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works and Head of the Managing Authority of OPRD.
- ❖ January 2017 - May 2017 - Member of the Board of Directors of the FLAG Fund.

Since May 9, 2017, he has held the position of Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works and Head of the Managing Authority of OPRD. Since August 1, 2017 he is a member of the Supervisory Board of Fund Manager of Financial Instruments in Bulgaria EAD.

Ms. Nadezhda BUHOVA

***Director of European Coordination and International Cooperation Directorate,
Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the
Republic of Bulgaria***



Nadezhda Buhova is working for the Ministry of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria since July 1997. Her work has focused mainly on international cooperation and European integration in the field of transport.

She took up her present role in September 2012. In this capacity, she leads the organization and coordination of all activities of the Ministry related to the EU Affairs and International Cooperation in the fields of Transport Policy, Information Technology and Communications.

She graduated from the University of National and World Economy in Sofia in International Economic Relations and also holds a Master's Degree in Advanced European Studies from the Europainstitut at the University of Basel, Switzerland.

Mr. Fabrizio ZARCONE

***Country Manager for Bulgaria, the Czech Republic,
and Slovakia, The World Bank***



Fabrizio Zarccone, an Italian national, is Country Manager for Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. Before coming to Bulgaria in August 2018, he served as World Bank Country manager for Costa Rica and El Salvador. Mr. Zarccone has almost 20 years of experience working in development. In the World Bank he worked in the Middle East as Senior Operations Officer for the West Bank and Gaza, where he managed important budget support projects for the Palestinian National Authority. He has also extensive experience working for Sub-Saharan Africa, where he had the opportunity to collaborate with the supervision of the portfolio of projects in Kenya, Rwanda and the Comoros Islands.

Mr. Zarccone holds a Ph.D. in Management Sciences from ESADE- Escuela Superior de Administración y Dirección de Empresas, as well as Masters in European Economics & Law.

Ms. Patrizia BUSOLINI

Policy Officer, Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security; Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE); European Commission



Ms. Patrizia Busolini is a policy officer at DG MARE Unit dealing with Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation and Maritime Security. She leads the Common Maritime Agenda (CMA) for the Black Sea to support regional cooperation for a more sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea. CMA is the 3rd and most recent EU sea basin initiative that joins similar frameworks of cooperation in the Atlantic and Western Mediterranean. CMA involves diverse Black Sea stakeholders: policy actors and public authorities, business, and academia, as well as civil society and international organization

towards the goals of ensuring healthy marine ecosystems, innovative blue economy, and investment.

Ms. Busolini equally works on similar regional processes that are active in the Mediterranean basin. Prior to her current position, she led Enlargement and Integration Action of the EU Commission Joint Research Center, focusing the identification and implementation of projects supporting Horizon 2020-associated countries in participating in EU research and innovation projects.

Before joining the EU Commission, Ms. Busolini was responsible for the implementation of the Axis 4 of the EU INTERREG Mediterranean Program and the related Mediterranean intergovernmental platform focusing on capacity building of the program countries in the identification and implementation of joint policies and projects targeting common challenges in strategic sectors such as maritime surveillance, coastal/maritime tourism, and innovation.

Ms. Paola AGOSTINI

Lead Natural Resources Specialist, The World Bank

Paola Agostini is a Lead Natural Resources Specialist in the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Region Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy Global Practice (ENB ECA). Paola leads programs and projects in Central Asia that help to reverse land degradation and increase



resilience of people, ecosystems, and infrastructures. She also works in the Black Sea region on a program to reduce pollution and increase resilience to climate change. Additionally, Ms. Agostini is coordinating the ECCA30 partnership for the World Bank with a special focus to restore 30 million hectares of degraded landscapes by 2030 in Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Previously, she was the Global Lead for Forests, Landscapes, and Ecosystems for the World Bank, working on projects and programs that aim to improve connectivity of Protected Areas, forests, agroforestry, Rangeland, and agricultural land for increased productivity.

Ms. Agostini coordinated TerrAfrica, a regional partnership program in over 26 Sub-Saharan countries that promotes Sustainable Land and Water Management and served as the coordinator for the GEF Program in Latin America and Africa, overseeing a portfolio of over 100 projects

dealing with climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, chemicals, and international waters. Paola Agostini holds a PhD in Economics from the University of California San Diego, and an MA in Economic and Social Sciences from Università Bocconi, Milan, Italy.

Mr. Nicola BERTOLINI
Manager, Ambiente SPA



Nicola Bertolini started his career as Italian Permanent Representative at European Union–Environmental Department before serving as Environmental Consultant in the public and private sector. In the current position of International Development Manager at Ambiente SPA—a top-tier Italian environmental engineering company—Mr. Bertolini uses his extensive expertise in managing and coordinating multidisciplinary teams of professionals from different work experiences. As Project Director, he also has extensive expertise in sustainability, environmental, and energy sectors, with hands-on expertise in project planning, development, management, and contractual and administrative issues. Over the past years, Mr. Bertolini has amassed experience and built strong partnerships in working with multilateral donors and foreign governments with a focus on the following regions: the Black Sea, Western Balkans, EU27, and Sub-Saharan Africa. He holds an MSc in Sustainable Development and Environmental Economics from University of Pisa, Italy.

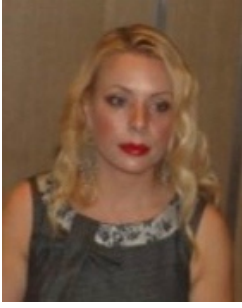
Ms. Adriana DAMIANOVA
Lead Environmental Specialist, The World Bank



Adriana Damianova worked for more than 20 years in the Environment and Natural Resources Global Practice of the World Bank. She joined the World Bank in 1994. Since then, she has led multiple lending operations, sector economic analytics and advisory assistance products for clients in Armenia, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Turkey, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the countries of the Caspian Sea Basin and West Africa. Her areas of expertise include environmental policies and institutions, environmental and climate finance, urban environment and pollution management, climate mitigation and adaptation, trade and environment. She has experience in development assistance in solid waste management, water resources management, water and sanitation infrastructure, and natural resources management. More recently, as an independent consultant she actively contributed and co-authored flagship publications on Blue Economy and Green Finance for countries in ECA.

Ms. Iryna MAKARENKO
Pollution Monitoring and Assessment Officer, Commission on the Protection

of the Black Sea Against Pollution



Ms. Iryna Makarenko is a Pollution Monitoring and Assessment Officer (PMA Officer) at Permanent Secretariat to the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Bucharest Convention), an international intergovernmental organization and the Regional Sea Convention for the Black Sea based in Istanbul, Turkey. Before moving to Turkey, she worked as a diplomat in the Mission of Ukraine to the European Union in Brussels as well as Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine on European Integration and as a diplomat at the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

She holds a master's degree in Environmental and Energy Law (Faculty of Law, Catholic University of Leuven, Kingdom of Belgium), as well as Certificates on Water Law (University of Dundee, Scotland), Environmental Diplomacy (University of Geneva, Switzerland), and Regional Economics (University of Genoa, Italy).

Mr. Owen MCINTYRE

Director LLM, University College Cork



Professor, School of Law, University College Cork; Director, LL.M. (*Environmental & Natural Resources Law*) Programme: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/ckl48/>; Co-Director, Centre for Law & the Environment: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/lawenvironment/>

Prof. McIntyre's principal interest is the field of Environmental Law, with a particular research focus on International Water Law. He is the General Editor of the *Journal of Water Law*, and has served as the inaugural Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law's Specialist Group on Water and Wetlands, as a panel member of the Project Complaints Mechanism of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and as a member of the Scientific Committee of the European Environment Agency. He holds visiting positions at the University of Dundee, Charles University Prague, Xiamen University, and Wuhan University.

Ms. Eolina MILOVA

Senior Environmental Specialist, The World Bank



Ms. Eolina Milova, has served as Senior Environment Specialist at the Bulgarian country office of the World Bank since 2009. In the last 12 years she worked on both lending and analytical projects in the area of environment, water, energy, agriculture, transport, and regional development. More recently, her work program is covering issues as diverse as air quality, forestry, water resource and floods management, integrated regional investments, and a just transition in the context of the EGD, among others. In the last two years, Eolina has been deeply involved in the emerging *Blueing the Black Sea* program of the World

Bank, focusing on pollution and strengthening governance of the Blue Economy.

Ms. Bérengère PRINCE

Lead Natural Resources Management Specialist, The World Bank



Ms. Bérengère Prince, Lead Natural Resources Management Specialist, joined the World Bank in 2010. Over the past decade, she has led several blue engagements in Africa, Europe, and Latin America. Since her transfer to the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Region Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy Global Practice in March 2020, she has been leading the preparation of a new regional program for the Black Sea and serves as a technical lead for teams working in the blue space in Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Russia. Since September 2019, she also led the preparation of the World Bank report

Realizing the Blue Economy Potential of Albania. Ms. Prince started her career at the fisheries department of the French Ministry of Agriculture during the French rotating chairmanship of the EU Council in 2000. She is a French national with an MSc in Agronomy, Natural Resources Management, and Fisheries Economics, as well as an LL.M. in International Business Law.

Ms. Rositsa STOEVA

Executive Manager, BSEC PERMIS; BBSEA Project Manager



Ms. Rositsa Stoeva serves as Executive Manager at the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), headquartered in Istanbul, Turkey. Born in Dimitrovgrad, Bulgaria, Ms. Stoeva joined the Bulgaria Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2003. She served in Istanbul and Skopje. Before joining the BSEC PERMIS in 2017, she held a position of Head of Regional Cooperation Department at the Southeastern Europe Directorate, Counsellor, at the Bulgaria Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ms. Stoeva has

spent nearly two decades addressing Southeastern European and Balkan issues and travelling extensively in the region.

Mr. Svetoslav STOYANOV

Blue Economy Expert; BBSEA Program Officer



Mr. Svetoslav Stoyanov is the Program Officer for the preparation phase of the *Blueing the Black Sea Regional Project* managed by the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). Prior to joining the team, Mr. Stoyanov worked as a policy officer for the European Commission (Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) where he had acquired nearly a decade of hands-on experience in strategic policy development and portfolio management (e.g., Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, Strategic

Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea, Atlantic Action Plan [2018 evaluation](#) and [2020 update](#)), regional cooperation (the Black Sea, EU Atlantic Area, EU Outermost Regions), financial planning, and funding instruments. He coordinated the organization of the annual Black Sea Blue Economy Stakeholder Conference in 2015 to 2018. Mr. Stoyanov is a lawyer by training (HU Berlin) and has worked in the public and private sectors in Germany and Belgium (circular economy, competition law).