

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

Consultation workshop in Moldova, 22 March 2021

Summary

I. What was discussed?

Co-hosted by the World Bank and the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS) in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development, and Environment of the Republic of Moldova, the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, and the Common Maritime Agenda National Hub of Moldova, the workshop (held as a webinar) was the third 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) programme¹ architecture and implementation modalities;
- ▶ information to support a national and regional pollution diagnostic tool that will form the baseline for further action.

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), H.E. Mr. Ion PERJU, Minister of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova, Ms. Anna AKHALKATSI, Country Manager, World Bank, Mr. Stanislav PETRASCU, Common Maritime Agenda National Hub of Moldova.* Brief outline of their remarks can be found in section IV below.

The attendance of the webinar 61 participants, representatives of the public and the private sector, and followed online, on [World Bank Moldova Facebook Live channel](#), where it reached over 750 people (see Annex II: World Bank 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 the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea / FAO and the EU4Environment Action, took 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.

III. How was the workshop structured?

As indicated in the [webinar agenda](#), the official opening by key speakers was followed by two interactive working sessions offering an overview of how the BBSEA Program will work especially its potential activities in Moldova. The two sessions have focused on:

- ▶ the analytical component of BBSEA – to build the analytical fundamentals of the intervention;

¹ 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).

- ▶ 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 – who included experts, academics, government officials, municipalities and businesses – via a voting system to inform how the BBSEA program could be implemented not only in Georgia but also across the wider Black Sea region.

IV. What feedback was received?

In the **Welcoming Address** *BSEC PERMIS Secretary General, Ambassador Michael B Christides* emphasized the importance of issues such as pollution, climate change, the clean energy transition in the Black Sea. He said: “*The beauty of this project is that it is not formulated yet*”. The cycle of national level consultations consultations will actually inform the formulation. Ambassador Christides informed that initially 4 countries will benefit from country-level activity. Gradually though, the ambition is to include all countries that endorsed the Common Maritime Agenda.

H.E. Mr. Ion PERJU, Minister of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova reminded that 22 March is the international water day. He stressed that millions of people do not have access to clean water. The planet is facing a global water scarcity. Volume of water use is increasing double of the rate of population increase. He added that “*water issue is transboundary issue that goes beyond the country and region*”. The Minister underlined that Moldova has made progress in managing water and harmonizing the legislation and policies to the EU directive and policies. Moldova is one of the founding member of BSEC to promote the regional dialogue and cooperation and he invited all the authorities to be part of the Common Maritime Agenda. In conclusion, he invited everyone to change their attitudes towards the water.

Ms. Anna AKHALKATSI, Country Manager, World Bank, in her opening remarks emphasized that through the BBSEA program Moldova can fill the financing gap. *Ms Akhalkatsi* reminded about the strategic important of the Common Maritime Agenda and the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. She also underlined the role of healthy ocean to regulate the climate. Water security diagnostic has been completed by the World Bank last year. One of the findings is that climate change is the highest risk for water resources in Moldova. The program is well aligned with National Development Strategy 2030, and align with the sanitation program. The project will assist the domestic wastewater management in urban and rural area.

Mr Stanislav Petrascu, representative of the Moldovan National Hub of the Common Maritime Agenda closed the opening panel by briefly presenting the Common Maritime Agenda and its objectives. Many of the maritime activities have negative impact in the form of pollution. The National Hub is here to help build bridges. It was stressed that the BBSEA program will catalyze investment in marine environment-related projects and blue economy in general.

In the **Plenary Session**, the *Ms Eolina Milova, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank*, 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.

In **Working Session 1: 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 *Ms Lucia Capatina, Consultant, OIKUMENA Public Association* 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 (waterways and) marine pollution in the region, as well the key pollution challenges in Moldova. 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 highlighted, among others, various projects and programmes initiatives (EUWI, SEIS, EMBLAS, Monitox.ugal.ro, Black Sea Cross Border Program) that could offer important insights and synergies with the work on the in-country pollution diagnostic. Nutrient and chemical pollution have been identified as the most pressing sources of pollution. According to the audience, a framework reform is needed in Moldova to address the pollution problem. In addition, better implementation and enforcement of the existing legal framework could be pursued. The World Bank was called to support institutions at national level, provide funding for projects and investment in sustainable agriculture development.

The **Working Session 2: Blueing the Black Sea Program: BBSEA-GEF regional project, focus on Georgia** 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 Georgia. Moderated by *Mr Svetoslav Stoyanov from the BBSEA Project*, 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 Georgia, eco-sustainable business practices and innovation, how to develop awareness raising and funding avenues that could support pollution reduction.

Judging by the initial reactions of the live poll, investment preparation, investment planning and eco-grant competition received the highest interest. Sustainable business standard and awareness raising on pollution need to be strengthened. The participants believe Moldova would benefit from the pollution investment plan. Youth needs to be supported under the eco-grant competition. Under eco-grant competition, industrial and urban wastewater treatment should be targeted. GIZ and Canada are active in the country with funding programs for pollution prevention and reduction aiming municipalities.

Ms Berengere Prince, Lead Natural Resources Specialist, World Bank, who **closed the webinar** thanked the audience for their contribution and highlighted that result of the live poll is consistent with that received in other countries. However, nutrient pollution and waste water from urban centres and industries are stronger polluters than in other countries. Ms Prince announced that it was expected that implementation of the BBSEA-GEF project would start in September 2021.

Each of the main sessions presented a number of topics, which provoked active participation in the live voting, the results of which can be found in the presentation [here](#).

For interested stakeholders, who couldn't join the webinar or simply like to give additional feedback a tailor-made [Survey in English](#) and [in Romanian](#) languages are available online and to gather opinions after the event.

Annex I: Participating Organisations


Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment of the Republic of Moldova	ICS "DANUBE LOGISTICS" Srl
Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Moldova	Institute of Power Engineering
Water Management Basin Authority of the Republic of Moldova	EU4Environment Moldova
Environmental Agency of the Republic of Moldova	EcoContact
Агентство Регионального Развития АТО Гагаузия	Caroma Nord Moldova NGO
Фонд Образования и Развития - Молдова	NGO IRR Here and Now
State Hydrometeorological Service	AO, Ecostrategii
Universitatea de Stat din Tiraspol	NGO OIKUMENA
Academia de administrare Publică	RAC Society and Environment
Employer's Association of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Moldova	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea / FAO
Institute of Chemistry	Black Sea Assistance Mechanism
Austrian Development Agency	PWC

Annex II: World Bank Facebook Live channel

World Bank Moldova
Published by Boris Banucio · March 19 at 10:27 AM

The [#WorldBank](#), the [Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation BSEC](#), and [Guvernul Republicii Moldova](#) invites you to online Consultations on the design of BLUEING THE BLACK SEA PROGRAMME (MD) - a regional initiative to tackle [#marinepollution](#) in support of the common maritime agenda for the [#blacksea](#).

📅 Date of event: March 22, 2021 at 14:00 #Chisinau time.
🔗 More details about the event: <http://wrlld.bg/nUdH30rBfVU>
📝 Register here: <https://bit.ly/3tzy3kF>



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World Bank Moldova
Published by Svetlana Ignatiuc · March 22 at 12:05 PM

[#BancaMondială](#), Secretariatul Internațional Permanent al Organizației de Cooperare Economică a Mării Negre și [Guvernul Republicii Moldova](#) vă invită la consultări online în cadrul PROGRAMULUI DE ECOLOGIZARE ȘI DEZVOLTARE A BAZINULUI MĂRII NEGRE, inițiativă regională de abordare a poluării marine și schimbărilor climatice.

📅 Evenimentul va avea loc pe 22 martie, 2021 începînd cu ora 14:00 (Chisinau).
⚠️ Mai multe detalii găsiți aici: <http://wrlld.bg/nUdH30rBfVU>
📝 Pentru înregistrare urmați linkul: <https://bit.ly/3tzy3kF>
[Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation BSEC](#)



15

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