

Speakers

Ambassador Michael B. Christides

**Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS)
The 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. 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.

Ionuț-Sorin Banciu

Secretary of State, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests of Romania



Ionuț-Sorin Banciu is the Secretary of State for European Affairs and International Relations at the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests of Romania. Prior to the current position, Mr. Banciu was elected Deputy in the Romanian Parliament in December 2020 and served as member of the Environment Commission of the Chamber of Deputies until March 2021.

Mr. Banciu started his professional career in 2003 as project engineer in forest management plans, subsequently serving as production manager in forest harvesting and wood products, as head of Forest Office at a private Forest District in Brașov county, as public procurement manager and forest office coordinator at *Piatra Craiului* Forest Administration in Brasov county, followed by several managing positions at local forest administrations until 2017. In 2017-2020, Mr. Banciu was the regional leader for forest programs at WWF Central and Eastern Europe (formerly the *Carpathian Danube Program*). He began his public service career in 2016 as State Secretary for Forests' advisor at the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests.

Mr. Banciu graduated from Transilvania University's Forestry Faculty in Brașov county, attended postgraduate studies in Applied Informatics and Programming at Technical University in Cluj Napoca county, and received a master's degree in forest ecosystems' management from Transilvania University. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Forestry at Transilvania University's Interdisciplinary Doctoral School.

Gallina A. Vincelette

Country Director for the European Union (EU), Europe, and Central Asia, World Bank



Gallina A. Vincelette is the World Bank’s Country Director for the European Union (EU), based in Brussels, Belgium. She is responsible for guiding the Bank’s operational and knowledge engagement with client countries and the EU institutions. Prior to her position in Brussels, Ms. Vincelette was Practice Manager for Macroeconomics, Trade, & Investment in the Europe and Central Asia region of the World Bank. She was responsible for leading the analytical work and lending on macroeconomic and economic policy issues in the Western Balkans, the EU, and Eastern Europe. Ms. Vincelette joined the Bank in 2005 as a Young Professional. Since then, she has worked on economic development issues in a

range of low-, middle- and high-income countries around the world. Her professional interests relate to the topics of economic growth, public debt, fiscal policy, and macroeconomic vulnerabilities. She has published multiple works on these topics in international peer-reviewed journals and co-authored books on economic development and transition economics. Prior to joining the Bank, Ms. Vincelette conducted research at academic institutions in Europe and the US.

Kseniya Lvovsky

Practice Manager for Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy in Europe and Central Asia (ENB ECA), World Bank



Kseniya Lvovsky is Practice Manager for Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy (ENB) in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Sustainable Development Department of the World Bank. Previously, she served as ENB Practice Manager in South Asia, Country Manager for Albania, Head of the Corporate Climate Change Program, and Lead Environmental Economist. Since joining the World Bank in 1993, Dr. Lvovsky led various programs on pollution management, environmental health, sustainable energy, climate change, green growth policies, and—most recently—Blue Economy, working across disciplines and defining strategic directions on several issues in the environment-development interface. Dr. Lvovsky is the lead author of several influential World

Bank reports. She comes from an early cohort of economists who started working on environmental issues, completing her PhD thesis on integrating environmental considerations in economy-wide modeling in 1982.

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).

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 Pise, Italy.

Alexandru Cosmin Buteică
Environmental Specialist, World Bank



Cosmin Buteică, is Environmental Specialist in the World Bank’s Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Region Environment, Natural Resources, and Blue Economy Global Practice (ENB ECA). He contributes to ENB’s program in Romania and other countries, with the focus on the European Union CMU, facilitates synergies between environment and water engagements and is working to advance climate mainstreaming and green transition across ECA. Cosmin has been with the World Bank since 2013, working for both Water and Environment GPs/units in ECA, in the areas of climate change, environment and water services. He has contributed to developing and implementing several large technical assistance programs, knowledge products, and investment lending operations across the ECA region. Over the recent years he has worked on water security diagnostics, rural water supply and sanitation, and compliance with the EU Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive and EU Floods Directive. Prior to his years at the World Bank, he worked in the corporate banking industry in Amsterdam, focusing on sustainability and financial markets. Cosmin has a master’s degree in Global Business and Stakeholder Management with a focus on international development and environmental sustainability from Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University (NL). He also studied in Santiago at the MBA program of Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. His current PhD research in Economics is focusing on financing green growth.

Mihaela Candea Mirea
Executive Director, ONG Mare Nostrum, Common Maritime Agenda National Hub of Romania



Mihaela Candea Mirea serves as Executive Director, ONG Mare Nostrum, Common Maritime Agenda National Hub of Romania. She has made the mission of Mare Nostrum her own to raise the respect for the environment. Ms. Candea Mirea has extensive professional experience in the non-profit sector in the area of environmental protection with expertise in central administration. Her commitment to progress and continuous improvement have earned her the internationally recognized certification of Project Management Professional, which helps her to develop the working environment at the organization. At Mare Nostrum, Ms. Candea Mirea’s work is centered on conservation of the Black Sea ecosystem, including collection of marine litter data, cetacean conservation, and education for

sustainable development. She has authored multiple publications for educators, the scientific community, and the general public. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in project management.

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.

Naiana Milea

Director, "Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control" Project Management Unit, the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests of Romania



Naiana Milea is Director of the Project Management Unit for externally funded projects at the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests of Romania. She has more than 20 years of experience in implementing the World Bank and GEF financed projects addressing agricultural non-point pollution and has an extensive professional experience in water management and environmental protection. With background in economics, Ms. Milea previously worked at the Ministry of Public Finance of Romania and as financial manager for several government projects financed by various international organizations. She contributed to the preparation and implementation of leading environmental

protection, waters, and agricultural sector projects, and now, as project manager of the *Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project* (INPCP), she is an active stakeholder in water protection, notably in preservation of the Danube and the Black Sea. The INPCP supports small communities and farmers in improving their agricultural practices and thus protecting and preserving the environment by building the infrastructure they need to prevent nutrient pollution and by implementing grassroots awareness campaigns. The project—a model for financing scale-up—has received additional financing through 2022, and its new financing scheme is supporting public authorities to build infrastructure for the protection of waters against nitrate pollution.

Cesar Niculescu

Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank



Cesar Niculescu joined the World Bank in 2006, and works in the Bucharest office. His area of expertise is environmental protection and regulation, integrated water management, waste management, air pollution control and monitoring, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and rural development. Mr. Niculescu has extensive experience with the World Bank's Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region in preparation/implementation of various projects and programs involving environment, health, education, water, transport, urban and rural infrastructure, forestry, and mining. Until April 2021, he served as Team Leader for the *Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control Project* (INPCP), as a member of numerous project

teams in the World Bank's ECA region, and as an accredited safeguards/ESF specialist. Mr.

Niculescu's background is in construction engineering and environmental protection. Previously, he worked for more than seven years as Task Manager for Environment at the European Commission—Delegation in Bucharest. Mr. Niculescu has more than 35 years of professional experience in water management, environmental protection and administration, and air quality monitoring, and more than 20 years in preparation and management of environmental projects in the area of rural/urban infrastructure, nature and biodiversity, highly polluted areas, institutional strengthening, and climate change.

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.

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.