

Towards a 'Blueing the Black Sea Programme'

A regional initiative to tackle marine pollution in support of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea

Consultation workshop in Turkey, 4 February 2021

Summary

I. What was discussed?

The 'Blueing the Black Sea' (BBSEA) webinar kicked off a cycle of consultations in all six Black Sea littoral states, incl. the Republic of Moldova, to introduce the planned programme, establish partnerships with key institutional and private stakeholders at national level and seek critical inputs on the architecture of the planned BBSEA Regional project funded by the Global Environmental Facility.

Following an official opening by key speakers, the webinar included a general scene setter and two interactive working sessions, focusing on:

- ▶ the BBSEA umbrella programme architecture;
- ▶ the analytical component of BBSEA – to build the analytical fundamentals of the intervention;
- ▶ the investment component of BBSEA – to identify avenues to incentivize investments in pollution reduction technology, innovation and finance.

II. Who was present?

The webinar was attended by both representatives of the public and the private sector. The majority of participants were from the host country - Turkey, however there were some international experts, such as representatives of the European Commission, the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions and the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism for the Common Maritime Agenda. Participants mainly represented national and regional authorities, academia and financial institutions active in the country. For a complete stakeholder list refer to Annex I.

III. How was the workshop structured?

The webinar was comprised of two working sessions, the first one on the state of play on the current level of marine pollution in the Black Sea which was targeted at identifying sources, impacts and existing prevention efforts. The second, focussed on the BBSEA Regional Project in Turkey, sought to gather feedback from public authorities, private stakeholders and environmental experts on a set of potential activities to reduce Black Sea marine pollution. These include the development and sharing of sustainable business standards, how to attract 'green' and innovative financing capacity, obtaining financial support for 'green' investments and Public Private Partnership investments.

Following a brief presentation of the main topic, a discussion was triggered around a set of preidentified questions shared previously with the registered participants in a consultation background document.

IV. What feedback was received?

Each of the main sessions presented a number of topics, which provoked vivid discussions. Contributions from different participants were received *before* and right *after* the end of the webinar. They can be summarized as follows:

Scene setter: BBSEA umbrella programme (general feedback on marine pollution)

- ▶ **Marine litter (marine solid waste) is equally important and a topic of interest as chemical pollution (eutrophication);** scope of the BBSEA umbrella programme could be extended to cover measures to tackle marine litter;
- ▶ **Major pollution sources are land-based** in the Black Sea coast of Turkey. There are many rivers discharging to the Black Sea. **Majority have irregular flow systems.**
- ▶ In Black Sea region, **the Black Sea coastal cities are mostly responsible for the pollution of the sea. As for Turkey, these cities are; Kırklareli, İstanbul, İzmit, Düzce, Zonguldak, Bartın, Kastamonu, Sinop, Samsun, Ordu, Giresun, Trabzon, Rize, and Artvin.** To prevent the pollution of the sea or at least to decrease the pollution; **deep sea discharge, sewage, wastewater treatment, solidwaste storage, renewable energy systems and etc. should be planned, designed** or the existing systems should be renewed in these cities.
- ▶ **Lack of efficient domestic waste collection and treatment plants are one of the big problems to use the resources of the Black Sea ecosystem in sustainable manner. At present sewage is collected with concrete channels and discharged to the 30-35 m below the surface off 400-500 m to the coastline.** End of the pipeline acts as geyser and impacts sea water causing oxygen deficiencies in the sea water. Some of the concrete blocks destructed and let sewage directly enter to the sea in various places (i.e. Trabzon). Cities like Trabzon need water treatment system and effective transportation system and maintenance services.
- ▶ **Another factor is the winds which carry litters from land to the river systems** to be carried to the sea. Another characteristic of the region is the **highlands and houses.** Especially in the summer time they are getting crowded. **Such characteristics are the main troubles of collecting wastes regularly, transportation of uncollected wastes to the rivers.** Due not to have concentrated settlement system, basin-based strategies/solutions/approaches are needed.
- ▶ **Litter storage areas, transportation and recycling deficiencies are the main reasons of the marine litter pollution in the Black Sea.**
- ▶ **Sea and highland tourism together with fisheries are the main pillars of regional economy. That's why fishing for litter, cleaning and effective litter collection and recycling activities are very vital for the regional economy, employment and welfare of the citizens.**
- ▶ **The Black Sea provides over 70 % of national fish production of Turkey. According to the data from the national statistics, total fish production and biodiversity decrease year by year, while fishing effort remains same or increasing.** Bottom species such as turbot lost their living habitat due to marine litter which cover bottom surface. **After determining the hot spots cleaning activities need to be done by the collaboration of fishermen and administrators, this may help to collect abandoned nets too.**
- ▶ In 2018, fish production from aquaculture passed the fish obtained from capture fisheries. **Encouraging the fish farmers to produce filter feeders as mussel and oysters can prevent possible organic pollution in the marine farming sites.**

Working Session 1: Turning the Tide of Pollution in the Black Sea

- ▶ **General support to the work on the Diagnostic** of the state of play and issues at stake regarding marine pollution in the Black Sea (analytical component);
- ▶ The analytical component **should consider conducting the** concrete studies in order to reduce the pollution loads from land and urban areas:
 - An analysis of existing wastewater treatment plants; evaluation of their treatment performances, providing solutions for those plants working with low efficiency (if any);
 - At basin scale, determination of point and diffused sources of pollution, analysis of selected pollutants;
 - Evaluation of the status of water bodies in compliance with EU Water Framework Directive, and other relevant directives, suggesting measures to reduce pollution;
 - Consultancy for industry towards circular economy, resource recovery and cleaner production practices, which will help reduce pollution in the region;
 - Organizing training and short courses on selected topics for raising awareness;
 - Collaboration with institutions from other countries.

Breakout Session 2: BBSEA GEF Regional project

- ▶ Certain domestic financial institutions (e.g. ILBANK) **provide technical, financial and consultation services for the infrastructure and superstructure investment of municipalities due to their requests.**
- ▶ **Setting standards is a good idea; applying 'Blue Flag' criteria by coastal municipality** may help reduce marine pollution by raising the tourism standards and fostering public engagement;
- ▶ **25 blue flag beaches exist in Turkey but the number is not sufficient because there are containment of the land based pollution. The municipalities are playing key role for environmental education.**
- ▶ **Financing is really important. Monitoring of the pollution control coming from the sewage and land-based pollution are important.** Once the municipalities have an access to financial mechanism, and make sure the public is accessible to the information.
- ▶ **Municipalities are able to receive the money from development partners to improve the sewage pipe.** At some of the small municipalities or local governmental organizations like Amasra Kaymaklığı, for example, are financed by local development agencies of Turkey.
- ▶ Main focus of this BBSEA project is to prevent the pollution, management of waste and resources, reinforce the blue economy to reinforce the circular economy and eco tourism. **Best available technologies of EU is already setting the standard to prevent the pollution and implementation.**
- ▶ **The context is different from the country to country. But the applicability and availability of the technologies should be assured and accords with the different socio and economic context in each Black Sea country.**
- ▶ **Information exchange/management should be embedded in the project components and it is important to set the goals, targets and to attain smart goals.**

Annex I: Participating Organisations

Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation of the Republic of Turkey	Sinop University, Faculty of Fisheries, Department of Marine Biology
Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Turkey	Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey	KTU Faculty of Marine Science
Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey	Sahil Güvenlik Komutanlığı
Ministry of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Turkey	TÜRÇEV
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey	Foundation for Environmental Education in Turkey
Turkish Naval Forces Command	İlbank
Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Turkey	Turkish Development and Investment Bank (TKYB)
Sarıyer Municipality, Istanbul	UNDP Turkey
Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (Tubitak), Marmara Research Centre	European Commission
Institute of Marine Sciences of Middle East Technical University	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)
Ankara University, Water Management Institute	Black Sea Assistance Mechanism