



Coordination of Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black Sea

Reporting

Project Information

Black Sea CONNECT

Grant agreement ID: 860055

[Project website](#)

DOI

[10.3030/860055](https://doi.org/10.3030/860055)

Project closed

EC signature date

12 September 2019

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1 October 2019

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30 June 2023

Funded under

SOCIETAL CHALLENGES - Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research, and the bioeconomy

Total cost

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EU contribution

€ 1 997 062,50

Coordinated by

MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Türkiye

Periodic Reporting for period 2 - Black Sea CONNECT (Coordination of Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation in the Black Sea)

Reporting period: 2021-04-01 to 2023-06-30

Summary of the context and overall objectives of the project

The core contribution of the Black Sea CONNECT has been to scientifically, technically and logistically support the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative towards the implementation of the Burgas

Vision Paper and the SRIA, with a view to boosting the Blue Economy in the region. The objectives were as follows: To Support the Black Sea Blue Growth Initiative to consolidate and update the SRIA; To develop the SRIA Implementation Plan; To establish an operational network of SRIA implementing actors for the Black Sea Region; to support the design and implementation of new transnational joint activities and lastly, to make the Black Sea visible through empowered Black Sea societies

The CSA developed and promoted a shared vision for a productive, healthy, resilient, sustainable and better-valued Black Sea. The overall objective was to coordinate the development of the SRIA, based on the defined principles in the Burgas Vision Paper and support the development of the Blue Growth in the Black Sea. The SRIA and its Implementation Plan have guided stakeholders from academia, funding agencies, industry, policy and society to address together the fundamental Black Sea challenges, to promote blue growth and economic prosperity of the Black Sea region, to build critical support systems and innovative research infrastructure and to improve education and capacity building. The project supported the policy direction set in the Burgas Vision Paper and linked stakeholders, relevant initiatives and institutions.

The developed SRIA Implementation Plan is state-of-the-art while considering the challenges of the Black Sea. The actions developed are unique and well designed for the Black Sea supporting the health and resilience of its ecosystems while supporting the development of the Blue Economy in the region based on an ecosystem approach. The IP is supported by the updated SRIA which is a comprehensive document that also supports the links with other basins. The establishment of the ONF was a major step towards ensuring the support of the IPs' joint actions by the Black Sea countries.

The CSA leaves a long-lasting legacy that will be of great benefit to the citizens of the region. A very robust, stakeholder-driven roadmap towards the blue economy is now at hand and countries have started to use this in their national programmes while EC and other international bodies have started to use the SRIA and the IP in upcoming calls including those of the SBEP. The CSA nurtured two distinct groups of Young Ambassadors with a total number exceeding 30, who will all act as multipliers and legacy carriers in their own professions and countries. The 3 Joint Actions that the CSA launched paved the way for the development of more sophisticated approaches addressing the urgent ecosystem challenges of the Black Sea. Lastly, despite all adverse developments during the lifetime of the CSA, CONNECT served as a standing example of successful cooperation and science diplomacy, where the power of science and visions of innovations bound the communities, youth, scientists and policymakers.

Work performed from the beginning of the project to the end of the period covered by the report and main results achieved so far

Black Sea CONNECT was successful in delivering all the project tasks and objectives but CSA's achievements go beyond the project tasks

-Two rounds of national consultations were held and an ample amount of awareness of the Black Sea's unique features and critical state were raised, contributing the region to come together for a

common vision for the Black Sea.

- An extensive list of marine and maritime projects was gathered and analysed under two different reports, providing input to the Final SRIA and its Implementation Plan
- One update and final SRIA have been developed with the input from broad stakeholders produced.
- One draft and Final Implementation Plan with input from broad stakeholders has been produced.
- Black Sea SRIA Final Implementation Plan was launched at a high-impact level event, at the European Parliament.
- The Operational Network of Funders (ONF) was established and actively functioned during the 2022-2023 period, providing input to the Implementation Plan. ONF expressed their interest to continue working together for the implementation of the Black Sea SRIA and concrete steps on these are being taken by METU, the coordinator of Black Sea CONNECT.
- Innovation Workshop was held with success and a Marine Innovation report was provided.
- 3 Joint Actions were piloted under the CSA. The Black Sea Young Ambassadors Programme (BSYAP) which is an education joint action has been a flagship initiative under the CSA. As Innovation Action, the Marine Litter Action Forum is organized as a major platform bringing various communities for innovative solutions. Based on the success of the actions, they are integrated into the Implementation Plan as themes and Strategic Joint Actions.
- Links with relevant EU projects, initiatives, and organizations were maintained throughout the project.
- 13.1 K users and 54.6 K visitors to the Black Sea CONNECT Website. Over 1.500 total followers from different social media channels
- 6 promotional videos including 1 epic, 1 Black Sea Blue Economy introductory motion graphic, 1 BSYA UN Ocean Decade presence and 4 event movies created
- With the major Black Sea CONNECT organized events and those that are attended by the project, the Black Sea has been made the most visible. Black Sea SRIA Implementation Plan Launch Event with the participation of more than 1020 in-person participants at the European Parliament and Marine Litter Action Forum with more than 200 attendance are among the highlights.
- Through target-oriented outreach activities organised at local, regional and international levels; big steps have been taken for Black Sea literate societies. Online Training Platform, MOOC, Black Sea Observatory on Blue Economy, and Gaming have been long-lasting capacity-building tools. Hackathon was prototyped and implemented as an active involvement tool for problem-solving on 2 occasions. Mobile Caravan, Scilabs, and Blue Economy Laboratory are also education programmes that will continue beyond the project.
- BSYA has continued to draw attention to the Black Sea. With the 2 cohorts, more than 30 ECOPs participated in at least 2 workshops, 2 trainings, 10 awareness-raising campaigns and outreach activities. They represented the Black Sea youth in more than 10 major international high-level events. The sustainability of the programme has been ensured with the link to the EU-funded H2020 BRIDGE-BS project. Based on the positive impact created towards this project, actions for BSYA are integrated into the Implementation Plan.

Progress beyond the state of the art and expected potential impact (including the socio-economic impact and the wider societal implications of the project so far)



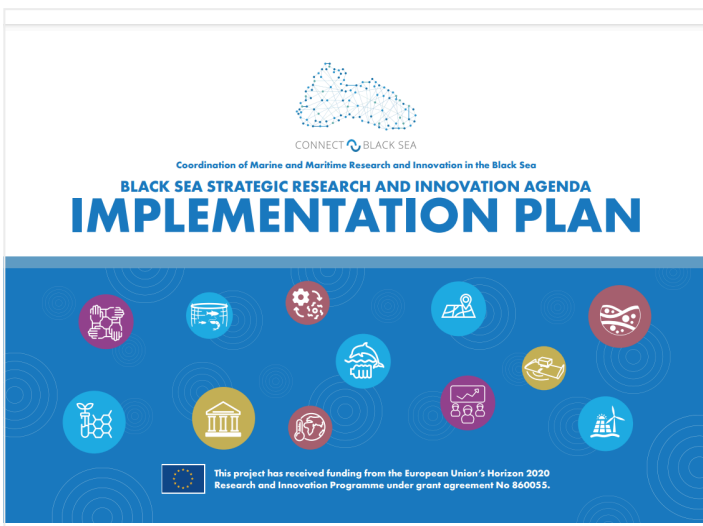
Black Sea CONNECT had a high impact on society at different levels. It has increased the awareness at the society level focusing on the young generation. Also, the CSA has put the Black Sea on the world map making it visible, especially at the European level. The SRIA priorities were picked up by policymakers both at the national and EU levels. Results were presented to the decision makers for example the IP was launched at the EU parliament. The IP provides beyond the state-of-the-art actions which are already being adopted at national levels. The wider society of the Black Sea now has the mechanisms to reach the information on the major challenges of the blue economy but also can reach and understand the opportunities on how to overcome the challenges while valuing the ecosystems and the unique properties of the Black Sea.



Black Sea CONNECT Logo



Launch of the Black Sea SRIA in European Parliament on 4 May 2023



Black Sea SRIA Implementation Plan Cover

Last update: 22 November 2024

Permalink: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/860055/reporting>

