

BLUE GROWTH

ANNUAL PLAN 2021

WORKING GROUP LEADERS

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OBJECTIVES

The Working Group focuses on the blue economy covering both marine and maritime research and innovation areas with the intention to support members with their regional strategies (S3 and sea basin) in the field. Sustainability and the digital challenges related to the marine and maritime sector are key issues. The group aims to foster participation in present and future European funding programmes and initiatives and to build partnerships between members.

CONTEXT

EU level priorities, strategies, and events that the Working Group aims to follow up in 2021 include:

- The European Green Deal and especially the section on a sustainable blue economy (p. 14 of the communication)
- [DG Mare's update on the Blue Economy](#); communication planned for Q1 2021
- Mission Starfish on Ocean and Mission on Climate Change Adaptation
- Emissions Trading System to be applied to the maritime sector
- Digitalisation and Digital Innovation Hubs (linking for example to autonomous vessels)
- Circular biobased platform

The following funding programmes are important for the Working Group:

- Horizon Europe calls, project facilitation process
- Partnership on zero-emission waterborne transport
- BlueInvest platform
- Interregional Innovation Investment (I3)

The working group plans to support project development through targeted facilitation on specific calls, similar to ERRIN's facilitation of the European Green Deal Calls in 2020.

ACTIVITIES

How digitalisation can improve the status of the seas?

Mid March

This information session for members will explore opportunities of digitalisation in the maritime sector covering automated shipping, digital ports and AI and fuel consumption. After an update from the Commission, several projects will be presented including the [ECOPRODIGI project](#). The ICT, Transport and Energy WGs will be invited to participate in the session.

Horizon Europe calls 2021 and European Partnerships – Zero-emission waterborne transport & Blue Economy

Late March

This meeting will serve to present the Horizon Europe first calls, foreseen to be published in April. It will also follow-up on the JPI waterborne transport partnership and information on the Blue Economy Partnership and the recently developed Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), which will have been finalised shortly before this meeting.

Depending on when calls open this may present an opportunity for project development, including matchmaking activities.

European Maritime Days

20 – 21 May, webinar

The Blue Growth WG will organise a workshop on cluster management and the role maritime clusters can play in the green recovery at the 2021 edition of European Maritime Days. The moderator and the panel will be made up of ERRIN members, including Flanders, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Västra Götaland, Turku South-West Finland and Alentejo, sharing knowledge on maritime clusters and their role in the twin transitions. Due to the online nature of the event, the wider working group will be able to take part in European Maritime Days 2021.

Mission Starfish 2040

Second part of 2021

An information session updating working group members on the implementation process of the Horizon Europe Mission on Healthy Oceans, Seas, Coastal and Inland Waters. A member of the mission board will be invited to update the group. The meeting may explore the potential to shape the calls during the implementation phase and may focus on one of the five arms of the Starfish Mission:

- Filling the knowledge and emotional gap
- Regenerating marine and water ecosystems
- Zero pollution
- Decarbonising our waters, ocean, and seas and waters
- Revamping governance.

Coastal Environment

Late 2021

This meeting will address the coast in the context of Climate Adaption, where the blue economy has an increasingly important role to play. Many coastal communities are faced with the increasing threat of flooding and rising tides and look to implement new forms of climate adaption solutions along their coasts. Coastal climate adaption solutions must not only serve to protect cities and communities, but are also expected to build on existing natural landscapes and even contribute positively to coastal biodiversity needs. Finally, tourism plays a significant role in many coastal communities and must also be prioritised.

Revision of the EU Emission Trading System, including the maritime sector

Late 2021

This meeting will explore the revisions of the EU Emission Trading System. After an information briefing, greening transport examples will be shared. The meeting will ask how the legislative proposal planned for Q2 2021 will impact the maritime transport sector? Possibility of organising the session with the CPMR network and extending an invitation to the Transport WG.