

BLUE ECONOMY WORKING GROUP

ANNUAL PLAN 2022

WORKING GROUP LEADERS

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OBJECTIVES

The Working Group focuses on the blue economy covering both marine, maritime and water systems research and innovation areas with the intention to support members with their regional strategies in the field. Sustainability and the digital challenges related to the ocean, seas and water sectors are key issues. The group aims to foster participation in European funding programmes and initiatives and to build partnerships between members.

CONTEXT

- The key EU level priorities, strategies, and events that the Working Group aims to follow up in 2022:
 - Horizon Europe Mission to restore our ocean and waters
 - Horizon Europe Mission on adaptation to climate change
 - European Partnerships
 - Zero-Emission Waterborne Transport (ZEWT)
 - Sustainable Blue Economy
 - Water4All
 - Water smart territories S3
 - European Green Deal & Fit for 55 – in frame of maritime transport
 - Zero pollution action plan
 - European Maritime Days, 19-20 May 2022, Ravenna (IT)
 - European Week of Regions and Cities, October 2022
- Important funding programmes for the Working Group and how the WG aims to facilitate project development:
 - Horizon Europe

- Ocean and waters mission call on role of regions in lighthouses
 - HORIZON-MISS-2021-OCEAN-04-02: Baltic and North Sea basin lighthouse CSA – coffee meeting in February 2022
 - European territorial cooperation programmes
 - Interregional investments for innovation I3
- How the group supports partnership building and collaborate with other European organisations or networks:
 - Through the organisation of webinars, the connection with European institutions, brokerage events and disseminating opportunities
- Topics and tailored activities proposed for less active regions, for example tackling topics directed to widening countries:
 - Expand pool of regional examples used to less active regions
 - Trying to engage widening countries in project development work around the Baltic and North Sea lighthouse CSA call

ACTIVITIES

Coffee Meeting: Ocean & waters Mission lighthouse call – Baltic & North Sea basin

8 February | Online meeting

Following the Blue Economy's continued engagement with Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters, this informal discussion will allow members interested in applying to the CSA call for the lighthouse in the Baltic and North Sea basin (HORIZON-MISS-2021-OCEAN-04-02) to explore possibilities for collaboration. Proposals under this call should bring together complementary public and/or private organisations and networks, and integrate expertise to support the rolling out of a 'lighthouse' in Baltic and North sea basins. They should provide a broad portfolio of services ensuring the development and deployment of innovative solutions addressing the objectives of the Mission Ocean, seas and waters in the lighthouse area. Members interested in the call will be encouraged to participate in the hope that the exchange could lead to a consortium of ERRIN members.

European partnerships on water: Water4All and Water Smart Territories (S3)

May | Online meeting

This meeting will explore the current status of the relevant water related European partnerships, namely Water4All under Horizon Europe and S3 Partnership on Water Smart Territories. The Water4All partnership will organise six calls during 2022-2027, and the session will provide an insight to the coming call topics. Finally, this meeting will aim to establish how regions can participate in and shape Water4All.

Towards zero pollution in the blue economy

June

In May 2021, the European Commission adopted the EU Action Plan ‘Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil’ as part of the Green Deal. The zero-pollution vision for 2050 is translated into key 2030 targets to speed up reducing pollution at the source. These targets include improving water quality by reducing waste, plastic litter at sea (by 50%) and microplastics released into the environment (by 30%) as well as improving air quality to reduce the number of premature deaths caused by air pollution by 55%. This meeting will explore how marine and water systems can address these goals, linking to the mirrored goal in the Ocean and Waters Mission, sharing examples for scaling up these practices.

Coastal environments / Bauhaus of the seas

September

This meeting will address the coast in the context of Climate Adaptation, 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 adaptation solutions along their coasts. Coastal climate adaptation solutions must not only serve to protect cities and communities but also are 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.

This meeting with the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Working Group will explore coastal environments and their place within the Bauhaus of the Seas.

Producing & using clean energy in the maritime sector

October

In the Fit For 55 package the European Commission proposed to raise EU’s renewable energy target from 32% to 40% by 2030 (RED II revision). This means that the EU will need to more than double its wind power capacity by 2030. This session will look at the EU approach to harness the potential of offshore renewable energy within the union and the uses of hydrogen energy in the maritime sector with examples of best practices from ERRIN members.

Governance & scaling up in Mission Restore our Oceans and Waters

December

This meeting will be a chance to follow up with the European Commission on the status of Mission Restore our Oceans and Waters, looking especially at how lighthouses will function in 2023 and beyond, opportunities for regions and the governance model. If suitable, members will be invited to share best practices with the Commission.