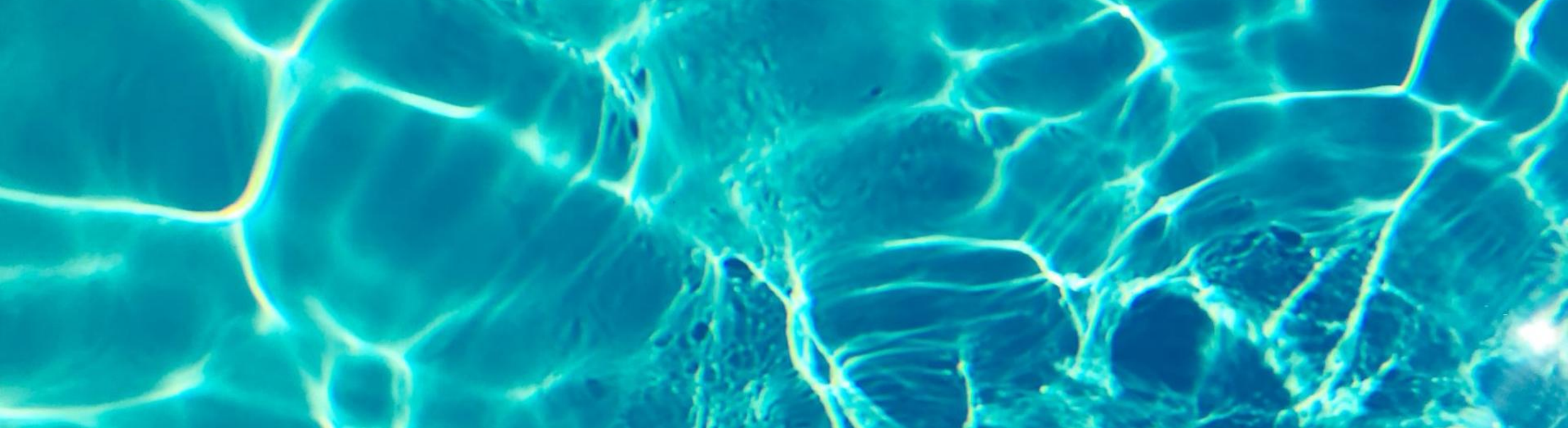
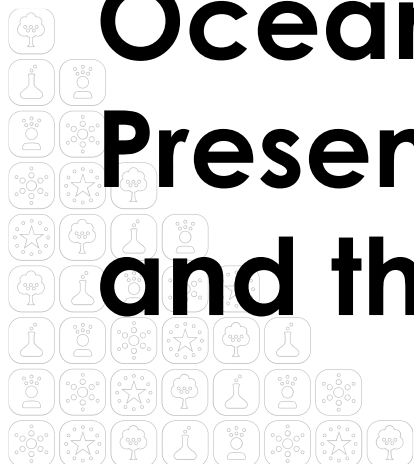




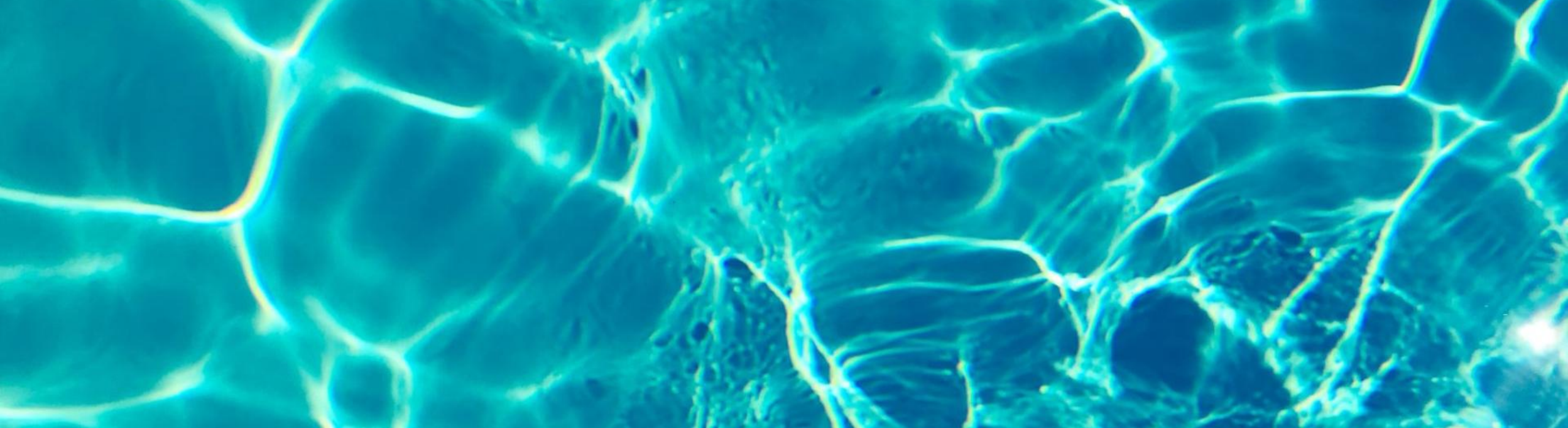
BLUE ECONOMY WG MEETING

Ocean and Water R&I Strategy: Presenting ERRIN's contribution and the road ahead



AGENDA

14:00	Welcome and introduction	Saara Nuotio-Coulon (Blue Economy WG Co-Leader)
14:05	Ocean and Water R&I Strategy: Presentation by DG RTD, Unit "Ocean, Seas and Waters"	Wiebke Pankauke, Head of Unit "Ocean, Seas and Waters" DG RTD
14:25	Illustrating ERRIN's input: Regional examples	Piemonte (Silvia Bruschieri) Turku/South-West Finland (Saara Nuotio-Coulon) Emilia-Romagna (Savino Dalmonte)
15:50	Interactive discussion: What's next before the Q4 2026 Strategy adoption?	ERRIN Members, European Commission
14:20	Wrap-up ERRIN's joint input: General messages and Blue Focus	Soren Heinecke & Saara Nuotio-Coulon (Blue Economy WG Co-Leaders)
15:30	Networking coffee	--
16:00	End of meeting	--



Welcome and introduction

Saara Nuotio-Coulon

Blue Economy Working Group Co-Leader



ERRIN's Blue Economy WG



Saara Nuotio-Coulon
Turku-Southwest Finland
European Office



Aki Ishiwa
Emilia Romagna Region -
ART-ER Attractiveness
Research Territory



Loles Vidal
Generalitat Valenciana

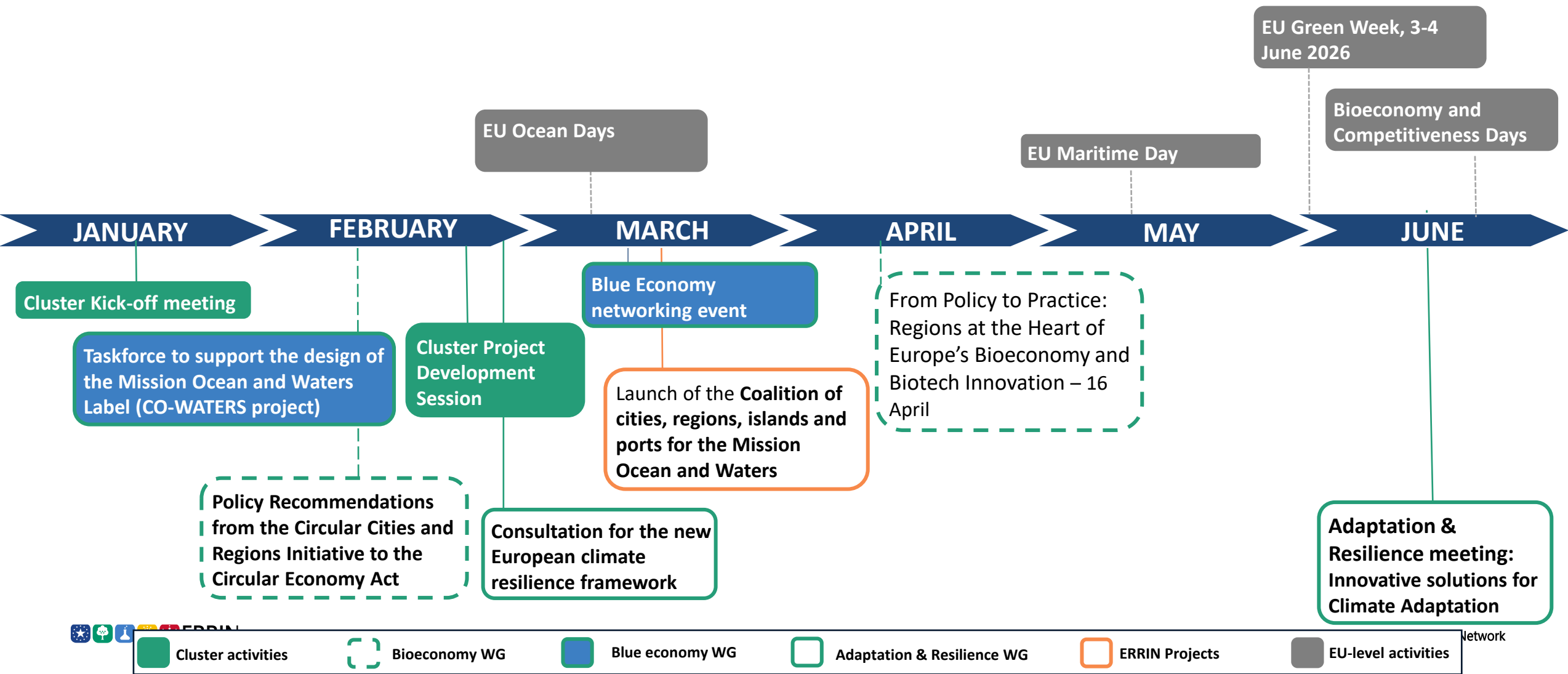


Martin Míšek
South Moravian Region

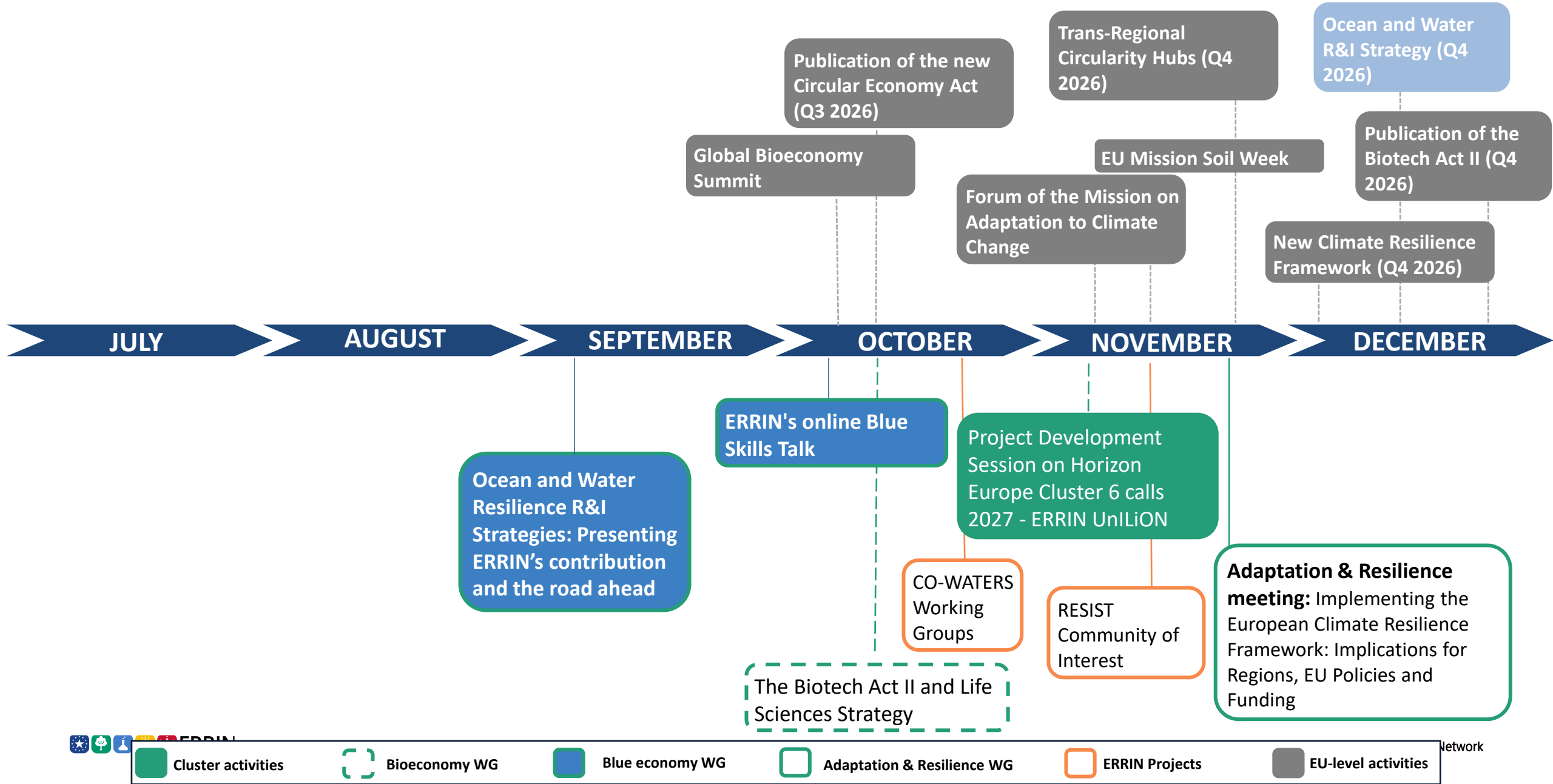


Søren Heinecke
South Denmark European
Office

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ADAPTATION CLUSTER 2026 TIMELINE



NATURAL RESOURCES AND ADAPTATION CLUSTER 2026 TIMELINE



Water Resilience R&I Call for Evidence

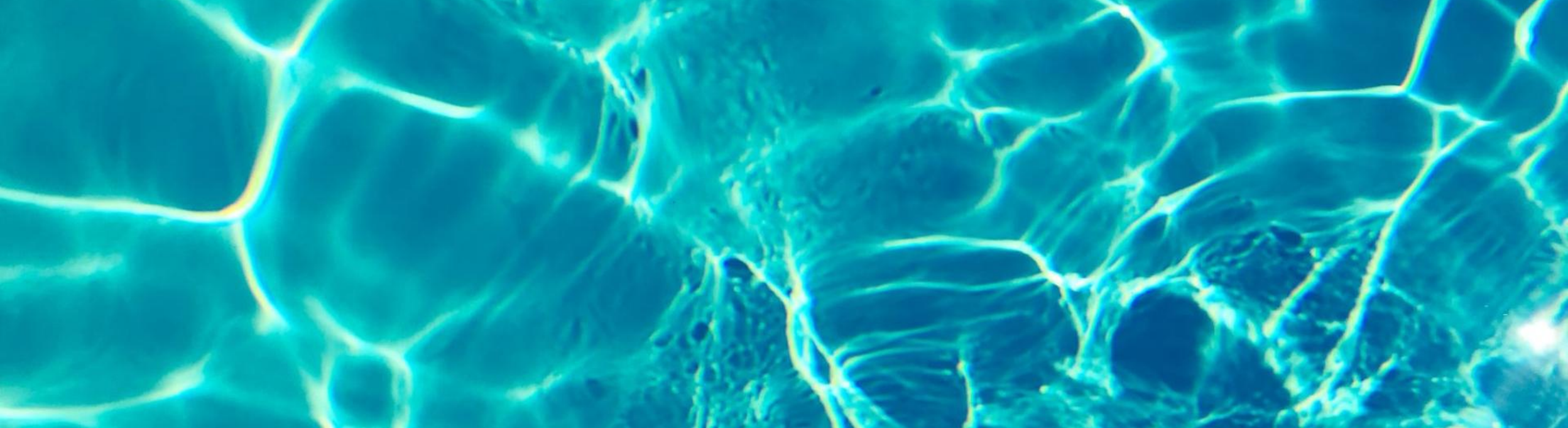
Introduction

On the 15 June 2026, the [EC launched two calls for evidence](#) on the future **Ocean and Water R&I strategy**

ERRIN gathered insights from previous papers and consulted members to [submit a joint response](#)

Key aspects:

- Source-to-sea approach
- Eutrophication
- Water pollution (PFAS)
- Blue Skills
- Nature-based solutions



Ocean and Water R&I Strategy: Presentation

Wiebke Pankauke

EC Mission Ocean and Waters Secretariat (DG RTD)



EU Ocean and Water R&I Strategy

OWRIS Background

- The **European Ocean Pact** and the **Water Resilience Strategy** recognise the ocean and waters as strategic assets for ensuring that Europe remains a liveable, resilient and healthy place and for the EU's prosperity, competitiveness and security.
- Ocean and water **science, research and innovation are at the core of the Union's response** to the climate, biodiversity, pollution and competitiveness challenges.
- Challenges facing EU Ocean and Water R&I:



Insufficient knowledge of the ocean and waters



Global competition in Ocean and Water R&I and technology



Lack of coordination of the R&I landscape



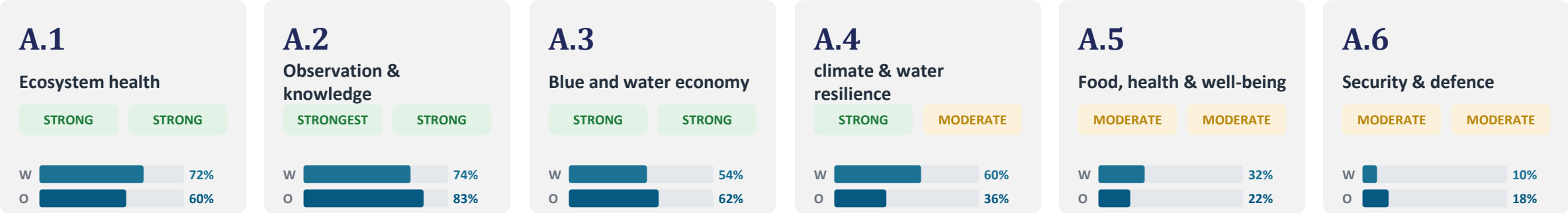
Sub-optimal support along the investment journey

OWRIS Objectives

- A **coordinated framework for Union-level ocean and water R&I** priorities and investment in the next programming period 2028-34 and beyond.
- **Maximise the contribution of ocean and water R&I** to the European Ocean Pact and European Water Resilience Strategy, addressing the identified challenges.
- Planned for **Q4 2026**

Call for Evidence – Summary of results

OBJECTIVE A — SIX R&I PRIORITIES



Which messages do stakeholders give for OWRIS?

- **Coordinate and deploy, rather than duplicate:** Strongest overall convergence
- **Strengthen sea-basin level coordination:** seen as a missing coordination tier between EU policy and individual projects.
- **Close the innovation gap:** distinguish **technology risk** from **scale-up/business-model (“investability”)** risk and strengthen deployment financing.
- **Sustain observation into operations:** Ocean observation infrastructure needs **structural multi-annual funding**
- **Skills, participation & knowledge:** Address workforce and generational gaps, strengthen **SSH integration**, and recognise **water literacy** as integral to R&I.

The strongest finding

Ocean

38%

of Ocean submissions

explicitly articulate this diagnosis

“Coordination and deployment, not scientific capacity, is Europe’s real constraint.”

— Ocean Call for Evidence, headline convergence



2026 assessment of EU Missions

- The Mission has made substantial progress and has **completed its first phase**:



The **Ocean and Waters Mission** has developed a **growing portfolio of 121 solutions** for the restoration of ocean and waters **tested in 349 demo-sites** across Europe and beyond. It also completed the core infrastructure of the **European Digital Twin Ocean**, which is expected to be fully operational by 2030. More than **1200 actions** have been pledged under its Charter.



- The **second deployment phase** will focus on consolidating and institutionalising, working along four main areas:
 1. Political **anchoring** of the Mission
 2. Supporting **deployment** and scale-up, including investments and funding
 3. Strengthening the **governance**
 4. Completing the **monitoring** system



Download the solutions booklet



#HorizonEU #MissionOcean

Discover Mission's solutions
in their deployment phase
in this booklet.

Food for thought

- Longterm strategic perspective vs uncertainty about instruments of the next MFF
- Urgency vs long project cycles
- Levels of governance, EU added value
- Future of Missions, Mission-based approaches, “Moonshots”
- Innovation-to-investment journey

A light micrograph of skeletal muscle tissue. The image shows several large, polygonal muscle fibers with prominent, dark, branching nuclei located at the periphery. The fibers are separated by thin layers of connective tissue, and the overall appearance is highly organized and striated.

Regional Silvia Bru



WATER RESILIENCE R&I STRATEGY

A stronger knowledge base for restoring the water cycle

- “Insufficient knowledge of the water cycle”



- Need to develop innovative technologies to collect data and evidence on the regional territory and to make them available for decision makers
- Goal: to further integrate innovative water monitoring and water management efficiency into the regional water policy



REGIONE
PIEMONTE

SILVIA BRUSCHIERI

Piedmont Region

Policy advisor in Agriculture, Environment and Transport

INNOVATIVE WATER MONITORING

- Satellite observations, remote sensing, drones, real-time telemetry, digital twins can be used to:
- detection of pressure points for emerging contaminants
- monitoring of surface and groundwater (quality and quantity)



Improving water governance

WATER EFFICIENCY

- Improve irrigation water management
- Increase water-use efficiency and ensure sustainable allocation of water resources
- Address competing water needs, in particular in areas / periods affected by water scarcity

REMEDIATION

- Early intervention in case of contamination
- Simulations to test the likely outcomes of different decisions or conditions before acting on them



A light micrograph of skeletal muscle tissue. The image shows several large, polygonal muscle fibers with prominent, dark, branching nuclei located at the periphery. The fibers are separated by thin layers of connective tissue, and the overall appearance is highly organized and striated.









Challenge

1. Land-based pressures → coastal ecosystem impacts

- Diffuse agricultural nutrient run-offs from the catchment area as the main pressure affecting the Archipelago Sea

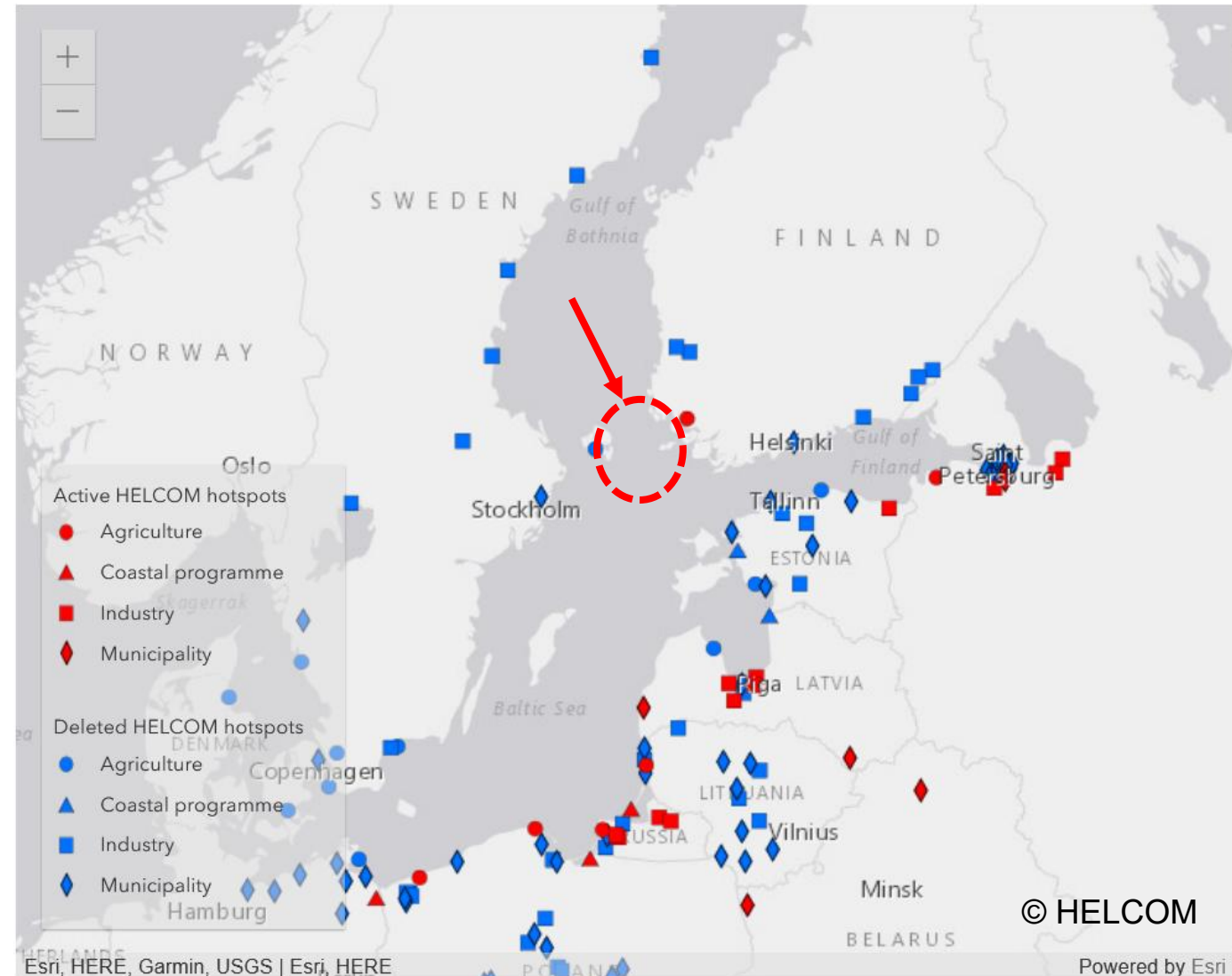
2. Baltic Sea specificities amplify the challenge

- Shallow and brackish waters, semi-enclosed sea, limited water exchange and a large drainage basin

3. Persistent eutrophication

- Archipelago Sea remains on the **HELCOM hotspot list** and is among Finland's most severely eutrophied coastal water areas

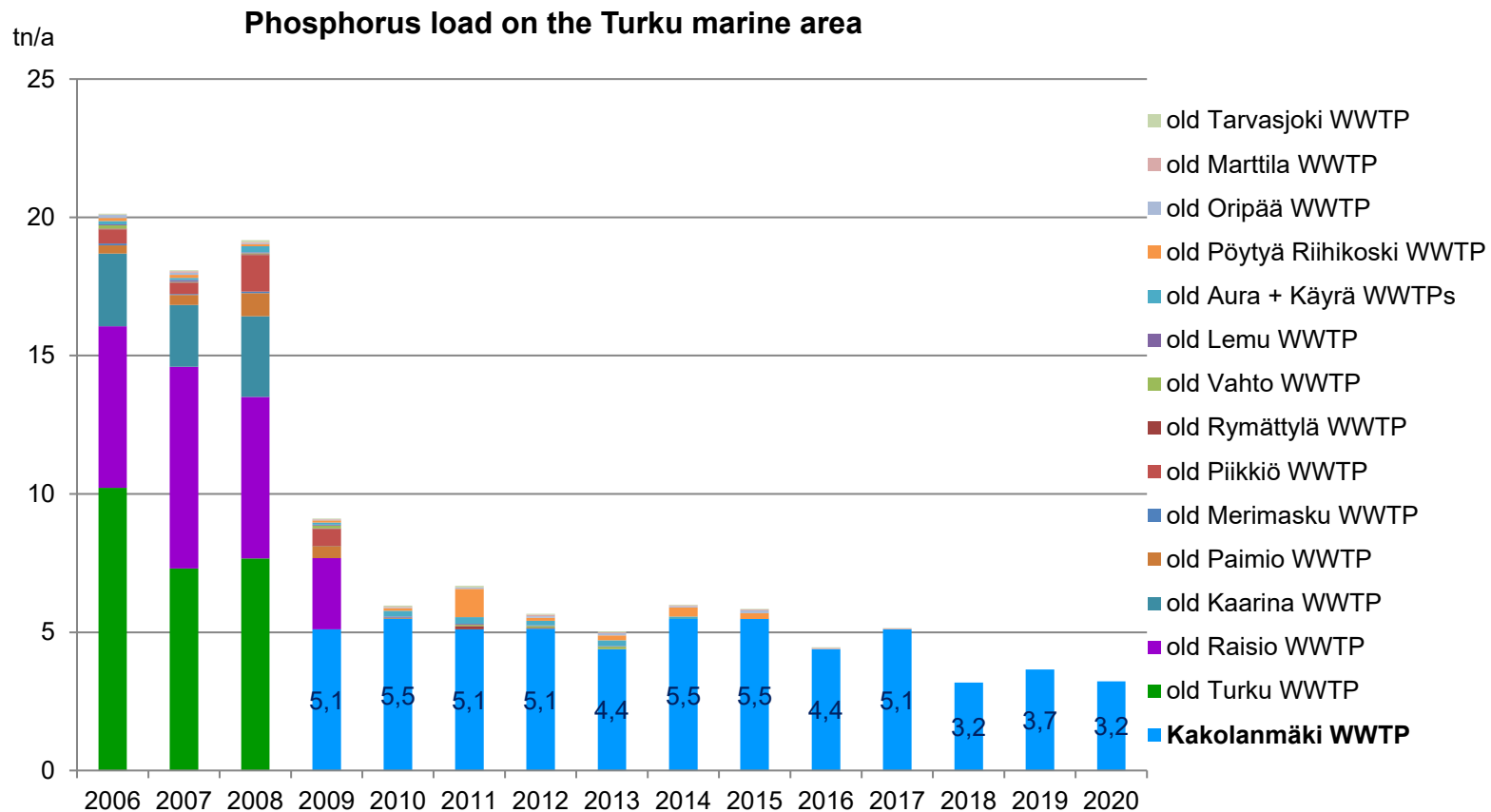
Main Pollution Sites



What has been done?



Turku waste water management



Phosphorus load on the Turku marine area has decreased approximately **83 %** or 16 t/a (2020 vs. 2006-2008)

BOD_{7ATU}-load on the Turku marine area has decreased approximately **79 %** or 280 t/a (2020 vs. 2006-2008)

Nitrogen load on the Turku marine area has decreased approximately **60 %** or 300 t/a (2020 vs. 2006-2008)

Suspended solids load on the Turku marine area has decreased approximately **94 %** or 610 tn/a (2020 vs. 2006-2008)





RESIST – nature-based water management solutions

- Funding programme: Horizon Europe
- Objective: to promote regional climate adaptation measures by developing and implementing nature-based solutions in water management in both urban and rural areas
- Piloting methods: restoration of wetlands and peatlands and construction of stormwater basins to delay runoff and improve water quality
- Duration: 01/2023 – 12/2027
- EU funding: 2,5 M€ for the SW Finland's stakeholders



What the Ocean and Waters R&I strategy should enable?

1. Fill critical knowledge gaps

- Recognise coastal systems as a distinct research priority
- Research on **eutrophic and semi-enclosed coastal seas**, including catchment–coastal interactions and internal nutrient loading.

2. Accelerate deployment

- Focus not only on developing solutions, but on **upscaling, targeting and cost-effective deployment** of proven solutions.

3. Finance the full innovation pathway

- Ensure continuity from **research** → **pilots** → **regional implementation** → **large-scale deployment**.

4. Connect European testing & research infrastructures

- Integrate coastal areas such as the **Archipelago Sea into European testing and demonstration networks** and facilitate replication across Europe.

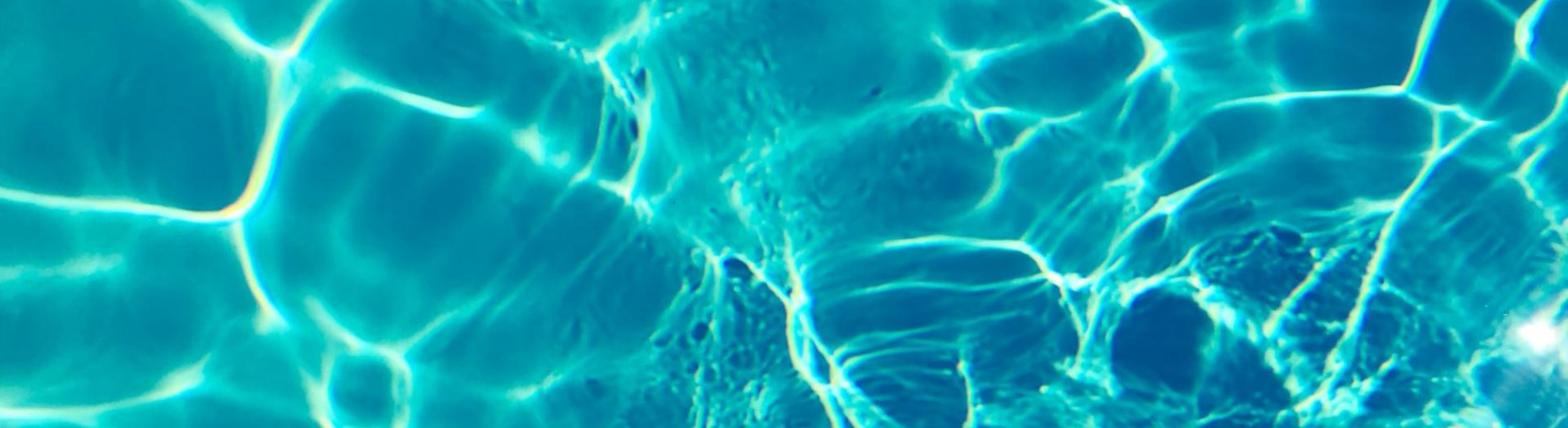


Key message

Coastal regions, such as the Archipelago Sea, should be recognised as
key implementation environments and living laboratories
for the source-to-sea approach
connecting research, demonstration and deployment in real-world settings.

The development of
a European network of testing facilities
for large-scale demonstration of water-smart solutions
should be supported by the Ocean and Waters R&I strategy.





Illustrating ERRIN's input

Regional examples – Emilia Romagna
Savino Dalmonte



EU REGIONS FOR WATER RESILIENCE

24.09.2026

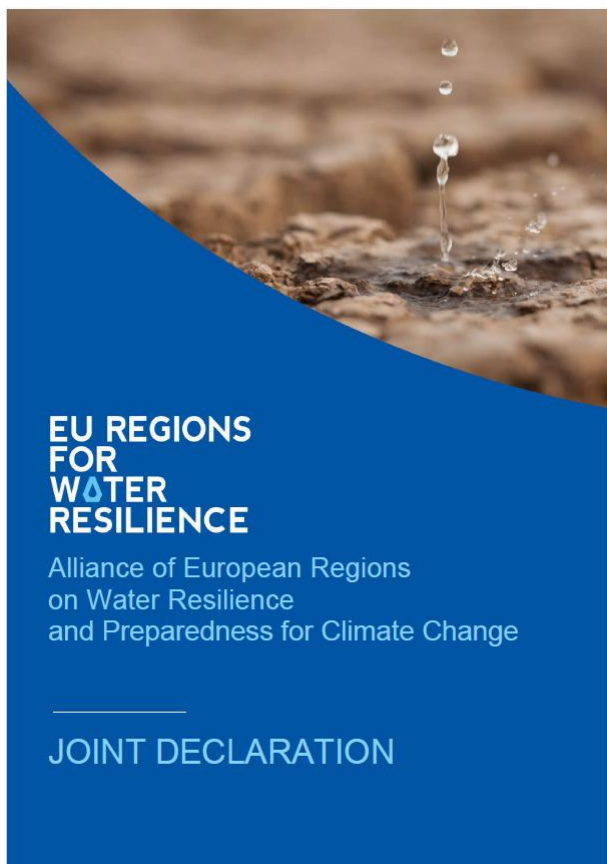
ERRIN

Blue Economy WG meeting

Alliance of European Regions
on Water Resilience and Preparedness
to Climate Change

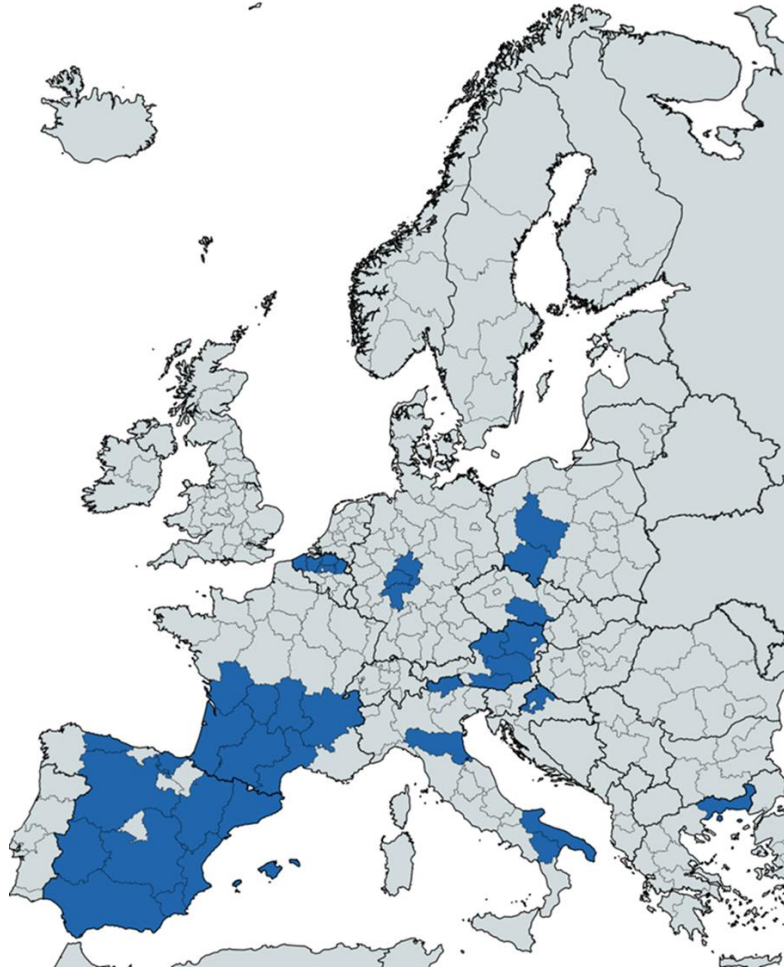


Objectives



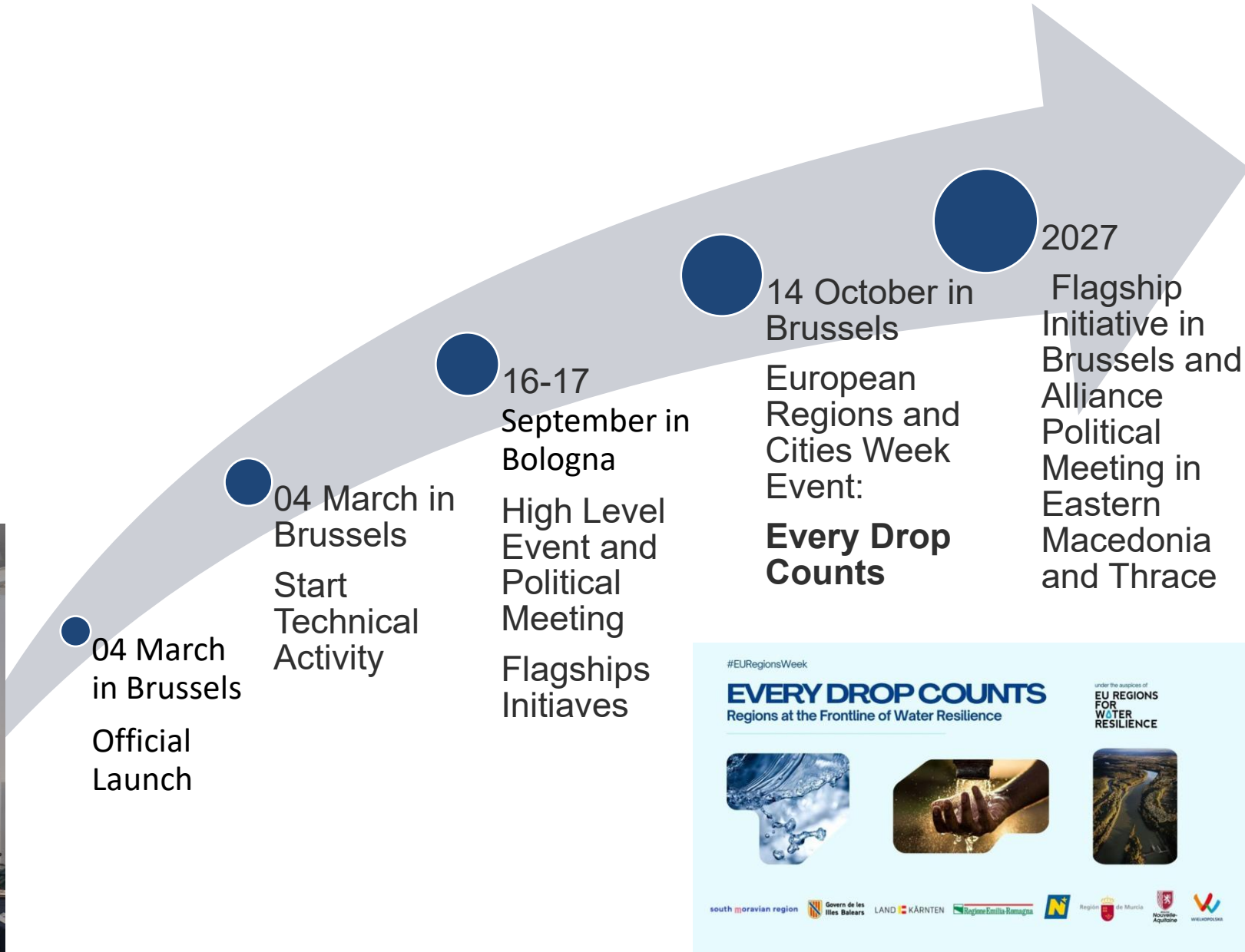
1. Encourage interregional dialogue and contribute to EU Policy-Making
2. Stimulate Investments in Water Resilience and Adaptation
3. Accelerate Collaborative Research and Innovation
4. Promote Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building
5. Enhance Public Awareness and Accountability

Partnership: 29 regions from 10 MS



1. Emilia-Romagna
2. Assia
3. Nouvelle Aquitaine
4. Wielkopolska
5. Comunità Valenciana
6. Andalusia
7. Murcia
8. Catalogna
9. Carinthia
10. Fiandre
11. Isole Baleari
12. Occitania
13. Alta Austria
14. Bassa Austria
15. Sud Moravia
16. Est Macedonia e Tracia
17. Stiria
18. Occitania
19. Castilla la Mancha
20. Castilla y Leon
21. Provincia di Bolzano
22. Aragona
23. Međimurje
24. Estremadura
25. Asturie
26. Auvergne Rhone Alpes
27. Lower Silesia
28. Puglia
29. Basilicata

Steps taken by the Alliance so far... and the next



Task Forces Activity



EU Regulations

- Implementation WR Strategy at regional level
- Technical webinar on the WFD revision



Exchange Experiences/Skills

- Regional Catalogue Best Practices
- Training, Webinar, Study visits



Funds

- Strategic mapping of EU funding
- Joint action on the proposal for the 2028-2034 MFF

Joint Declaration

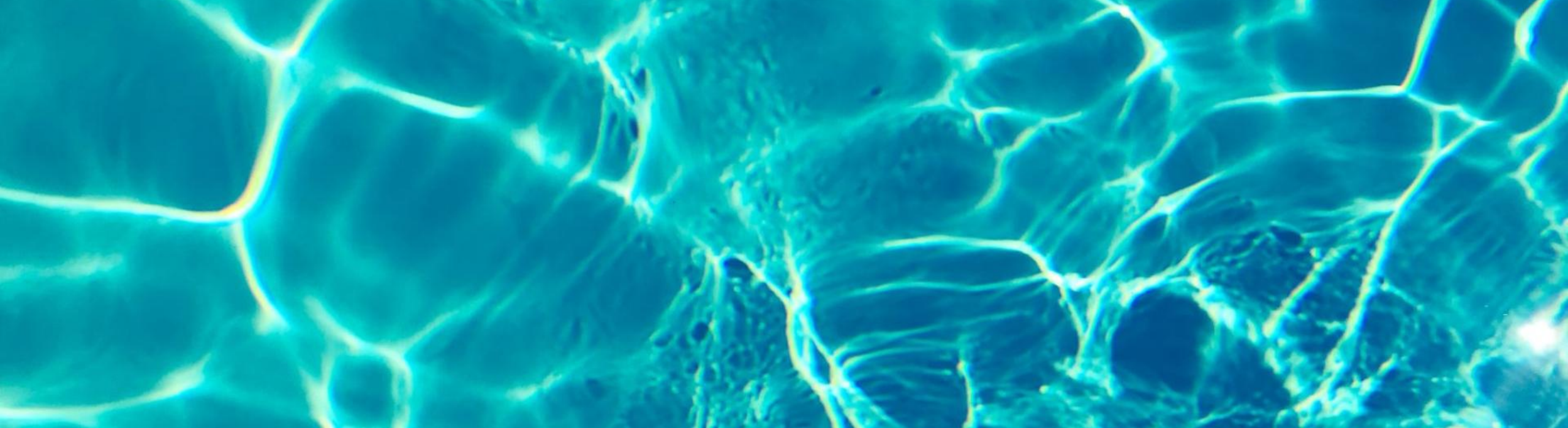
The Alliance is a voluntary, open, and cooperative effort for regions to work together, with EU Institutions as well as other relevant thematic networks.

Thank You!

Web site: <https://progeu.regione.emilia-romagna.it/en/wateralliance>

E mail: wateralliance@regione.emilia-romagna.it





Wrap-up: ERRIN's joint input

Søren Heinecke and Saara Nuotio-Coulon
Blue Economy Working Group leaders



Water Resilience R&I Call for Evidence

ERRIN Contribution – General messages

Financing water resilience

- Gap between research and implementation (continuous innovation and investment pathway)
- Coordination between ECF, HE/FP10, NRPPs
- Bankable adaptation and resilience project pipelines

Mission-oriented approach

- Mobilisation of public and private actors, directionality, accelerating deployment
- Projects supporting regions deliver the Mission's objectives to pressing societal challenges

Territorial Water R&I Ecosystems

- Connecting R&I ecosystems across Europe
- Inclusivity: Collaboration between less and more innovative ecosystems
- Build and improve existing structures rather than creating new ones (Partnerships, EIT Water, MIP Ocean)

Water Resilience R&I Call for Evidence

ERRIN Contribution – General messages

Smart specialisation

- S3 is strategic for Cohesion Policy
- Mainstream innovation across policy priorities
- S3 Thematic Partnerships can inform the Water and Ocean R&I priority-setting

Blue skills gap

- Blue skills gap (including a generation gap)
- Involve regions in determining the most pressing gaps
- Place VETs and UAS as delivery partners

Coordinated governance and cross-border cooperation

- Integration, not duplication
- Cross border collaboration (water flows across borders)
- Get a set for LRAs at the table of EU-level coordination tools/platforms

Water Resilience R&I Call for Evidence

ERRIN Contribution – Blue focus

A. Knowledge, technology and territorial testbeds

- Knowledge gaps and technological breakthroughs: Investment in innovative water technologies (monitoring, early detection systems...)
- Networks of testing facilities and research infrastructure: Real-world demonstration is essential (EU network of testing facilities and research infrastructure)

B. Securing water supply through water-smart technologies

- Water efficiency (AI-driven leak detection), climate adaptive farming (precision agriculture, smart irrigation)
- Desalination to alleviate pressure on islands or areas with seasonal strains
- Circular systems for water reuse and efficiency
- Pollution removal (PFAS, pharmaceuticals, micro-plastics, pesticides)

Water Resilience R&I Call for Evidence

ERRIN Contribution – Blue focus

C. Restoring water quality: eutrophication and pollutant run-off

- Source-to-sea approach to tackle eutrophication and land-based pollution
- Nature-based and technical measures to reduce nutrient losses (gypsum, structure liming, fibre amendments and nutrient recycling)
- Special attention to microplastics, nitrates and phosphorus recovery in water treatment facilities

D. Nature-based solutions for floods and droughts

- Climate resilience by design (basin-level planning, nature-based solutions and sustainable water use)
- Spatial planning frameworks enabling sufficient space for water retention, groundwater recharge and green-blue infrastructure (sponge systems)
- NbS for restoring hydrological balance, integrating green infrastructure in building permitting...

A light micrograph of skeletal muscle tissue. The image shows several large, polygonal muscle fibers with prominent, dark, branching nuclei located at the periphery. The fibers are separated by thin layers of connective tissue, and the overall appearance is highly organized and striated.

Ana Nava ERRIN Secretariat

ERRIN Secretariat



ERRIN's Blue Economy WG: Opportunities for engagement

[ONLINE EVENT] ERRIN's online Blue Skills Talk - 6 October

In the series of ERRIN online Skills Talk, the next session will be dedicated to Blue Skills. You will learn about the European Water Academy (EUWA). ERRIN members (South Denmark, Leeuwarden's Water Campus) will also have the opportunity to present their skills initiatives. More information [here](#).

[ONSITE EVENT] Testing the waters – transformative place-based innovations for water resilience - 14 October

Co-organised by the EC's Joint Research Centre and ERRIN, this sesión explores EU regions experimentation in innovative policy-making, offering a replicable model for resilience through regional innovation ecosystems. Registration closes on 30th September. Find more [here](#).

[OPPORTUNITIES] CO-WATERS: New services open

CO-WATERS continues to roll out its service offer to the Coalition of cities, regions, islands and ports for the Mission Ocean and Waters. Register now for the Working Groups and Blue Climathons (registration for Blue Climathons closes on 27th September). Read more [here](#)

Coming soon: ERRIN MEMBER SURVEY

Dates: Open from 1 to 23 October 2026

Objectives

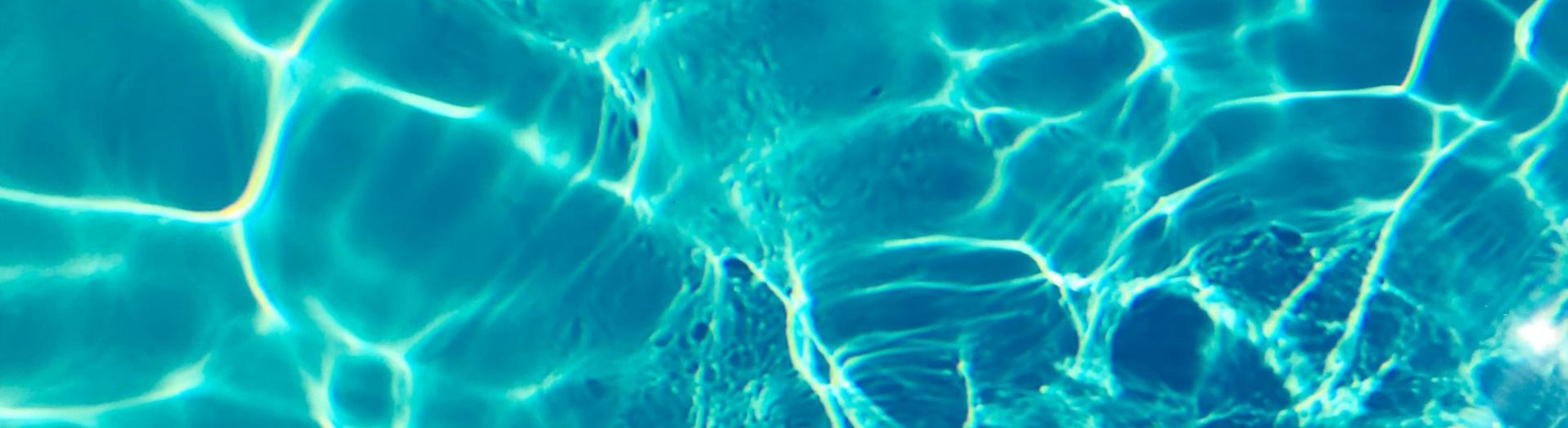
Next month we'll ask you to help shape ERRIN's work for 2027.
We want to hear about:

- your region's R&I priorities
- activities you'd like to see in our Working Groups
- how we can tailor our support services

In practice

- Each member should submit one input representing their entire regional ecosystem – please consult your stakeholders!
- Inputs will be discussed during strategy workshops and will provide a basis for the annual work plans





THANK YOU!

Coffee/Tea time

