

COMMON MARITIME AGENDA FOR THE BLACK SEA

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2025

Common Maritime Agenda
for the Black Sea

Supported
by the



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASC	Annual Stakeholder Conference		
BSA	Black Sea Awards / Black Sea Accelerator	GFCM	General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean
BSAM	Black Sea Assistance Mechanism	NC	National Coordinator
BSC	Black Sea Commission	NE	National Event
BSEC	Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation	NH	National Hub
CINEA	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency	SRIA	Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda
CMA	Common Maritime Agenda	SustAqua	Sustainable Aquaculture
CPMR	Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions	TG	Technical Group
DG MARE	Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	WB	World Bank

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PREAMBLE



1.1 MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

Dear Colleagues and Partners,

In 2025, Ukraine had the honour of coordinating the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea. Our priorities during the year were 1) improving environmental monitoring in the Black Sea (including the war impact), 2) green ports, innovative transport and infrastructure and 3) more funding opportunities for CMA priorities and objectives.

This year, we held a very fruitful roundtable on war pollution, which in particular strengthened contacts with the Baltic Sea on demining. Ukraine represented the Black Sea region at European Maritime Days in Ireland and Macro-Regional Sea Basin Strategies Days in Belgium, stressing at both events the need to pay more attention to maritime security. We had three Steering group meetings offering the chance to network and exchange experiences, as well as several TG meetings.

Unfortunately, due to the Russian war of aggression, Ukraine could not host the CMA Annual conference, and we are very grateful to Romania, which helped us to hold this vital event successfully.

It has been a year during which we have all learned a lot from each other, felt regional support, and used opportunities arising from our shared vision of the Black Sea region as peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable.

**HRYHORII MOZOLEVYCH, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
THE UKRAINIAN CMA COORDINATOR 2025**



1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2025 implementation report of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA) highlights how Black Sea stakeholders, with the continuous support of the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism (BSAM) and the European Commission, (EC) became a consolidated community in addressing blue economy. The report summarises key achievements, reflects on lessons learned, and points to emerging areas that will shape future actions, while advancing shared priorities and strengthening cooperation across the region.

To establish the broader context, the report offers a brief overview of the CMA's goals, priorities, and governance framework. This structure is underpinned by the BSAM and the network of National Hubs, which together provide operational, logistical, and strategic support at both regional and national levels. Their work is complemented by the Technical Groups, which gather experts around specific themes and contribute targeted guidance to CMA implementation. Year after year, the CMA community manages to be more present and maintain collaborative bonds between national coordinators, national hubs, experts and representatives of blue economy across the Black Sea. This enhances the sense of unity, which fosters expression of ideas and drives cooperation and development of future initiatives, locally and regionally.

Progress in 2025 is illustrated through a combination of qualitative insights and quantitative results. The report captures the increased engagement of the CMA community through regional and national events, such as the Black Sea CMA Stakeholder Conference, the regional roundtable on war-related pollution and country-level discussions (national events), that helped drive cooperation, knowledge exchange, and project development. It also reflects the role of the BSAM and the National Hubs in supporting stakeholders to access funding, prepare proposals, and align projects with CMA priorities. This support contributes to long-term affect as well, that of capacity building and experience with project proposals and EU funding, so that the Black Sea blue economy community can continue accessing opportunities in the future with confidence and independence.

These activities were underpinned by continuous investment from EU programmes and other funding instruments, enabling the launch and implementation of numerous regional projects. Their outcomes, including success stories and best practices, demonstrate the tangible impact of coordinated action in areas such as sustainability, innovation, and pollution management. The concluding section of the report outlines the main priorities for the period ahead. It stresses the importance of deepening regional cooperation, enhancing policy alignment with EU initiatives, and fostering sustainable economic development, all while ensuring the long-term protection and restoration of the Black Sea's marine and coastal environment.



CMA JOURNEY IN 2025: A CONSOLIDATED AND UNITED COMMUNITY

2.1 CMA GOALS ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2025, implementation of the CMA continued to gather momentum across the region, with countries, institutions, and stakeholders working together more closely than in any previous year. Progress was visible not only through new projects and technical outputs, but also through strengthened partnerships, a more active community, and a growing alignment with broader European initiatives such as the EU Mission “Restore Our Ocean and Waters”, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea, setting also the foundation to better cater to new European initiatives that emerged this year, like the Ocean Pact and the New Strategic Approach for the Black Sea.

**HEALTHY
MARINE AND
COASTAL
ECOSYSTEMS**

**A COMPETITIVE,
INNOVATIVE AND
SUSTAINABLE BLUE
ECONOMY FOR THE
BLACK SEA**

**FOSTERING
INVESTMENT IN THE
BLACK SEA BLUE
ECONOMY**

All of the activities and progress described in this chapter are further elaborated upon in the sections that follow. Synergies, events, projects and success stories are presented in more detail and accompanied by links for further information. To illustrate the achievements of the CMA more clearly, the following sections contain numeric and qualitative information on the CMA activities.

CMA GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

Safeguarding the Black Sea's environment remained at the forefront of regional action this year. With growing pressures from pollution, climate change impacts, and the effects of the ongoing war in Ukraine, countries intensified monitoring efforts and broadened collaboration on environmental restoration.

A series of national events, addressing topics like marine litter and ghost gear (RO NH), aquaculture sustainability (TR NH) and ocean literacy (MD NH), helped raise awareness and mobilise local actors. The Regional Roundtable on War-Related Pollution, hosted by the Ukrainian CMA Coordination, reminded everyone of the dire consequences of war on the environment. By specifically showing the effects on the Black Sea ecosystem, this event further highlighted the urgent need for harmonised data and coordinated emergency response across borders.

Several EU-funded projects made major contributions, including RESPONSE, EU4EMBLAS, Black Sea SIERRA, BlackNETs, and AlgaeRevive, which continued to strengthen regional capacities in pollution monitoring, risk assessment, and ecosystem recovery. Their combined efforts ensured that new scientific data, modelling tools, and training opportunities were directly shared with authorities and practitioners. These projects have all been part in CMA activities this year, gaining a spot during events and being exemplified for their efforts.

The SustAqua Technical Group also delivered notable progress, starting to work on the Black Sea Joint Aquaculture Monitoring Programme (BSJAMP) — the first coordinated attempt to develop a shared environmental monitoring framework for aquaculture across the region.

Finally, through the Black Sea Project Awards, the 2025 edition recognised IASON+ for its contribution to ecosystem protection, highlighting growing innovation in this area.

CMA GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

NATIONAL
HUB
SUPPORT

18 PROJECTS

EVENTS

1 REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON WAR-RELATED POLLUTION
MD NATIONAL EVENT LOVE THE OCEAN WORKSHOP
TR NATIONAL EVENT WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE MARINE AQUACULTURE
RO NATIONAL EVENT ALDFG WORKSHOP
BLACK SEA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE SESSION 1: OCEAN LITERACY FOR
MARINE ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE

8 PROJECTS REPORTED IN THE MARITIME DATAHUB
19 ADDITIONAL PROJECTS FUNDED BY INTERREG NEXT
BSB SINCE 2024, 4 OF WHICH STARTED IN 2025

FUNDED
PROJECTS

CMA GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS

BlackNETs **Exorcising the BLACK Sea's Silent Killers**

BlackNETs targets marine plastic pollution by focusing on ghost gear — abandoned or lost fishing equipment that harms wildlife and clogs coastal ecosystems. The project works on prevention, active removal, and recycling, while running joint campaigns such as #GhostBuster to raise awareness and bring fisheries, divers, and communities into the effort.



AlgaeRevive **Harnessing Algae Power for Pollution Reduction and Blue Growth**

AlgaeRevive tackles nutrient pollution and harmful algal blooms. It uses an AI tool, AlgaeSense, to track bloom development in real time, then turns collected biomass into industrial inputs such as bio-based materials. The project links environmental restoration with circular-economy solutions and contributes to EU climate and water-quality goals.

IASON+ **Invasive Alien Species Observatory and Network Development for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts in Black Sea Deltaic Protected Areas**

IASON+ strengthens the region's ability to manage invasive alien species and track climate-driven ecosystem shifts. The project builds monitoring networks across deltaic protected areas and develops methods to assess how invasive species affect biodiversity and ecosystem services. Its results support conservation planning and cross-border ecosystem management.



CMA GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS



RESPONSE Building Response Frameworks under existing and new Marine Pollution Challenges in the Black Sea

RESPONSE improves the region's capacity to detect, assess, and manage pollution threats. It integrates field measurements, modelling tools, and early-warning methods to help authorities respond faster to oil spills, chemical releases, and other environmental hazards. Training sessions and joint exercises strengthen the cooperation between national monitoring institutions, making emergency actions more coordinated and data-driven.

EU4EMBLAS European Union for Improving Environmental Monitoring in the Black Sea



EU4EMBLAS supports long-term, harmonised environmental monitoring in the Black Sea. It upgrades laboratories, modernises sampling and analysis techniques, and generates high-quality data on water quality, biodiversity, and pollution trends. The project also works on public engagement through citizen science and awareness campaigns, helping countries align with EU environmental standards and strengthen their policy frameworks.

CMA GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS

Black Sea SIERRA



Building Response Frameworks under existing and new Marine Pollution Challenges in the Black Sea Harnessing complementary curricular preparedness via sustainable management in response to civil and military pollution on the coastline, tributaries and lagoons in Black Sea's North, West, South zone

SIERRA focuses on improving pollution modelling, forecasting, and risk assessment in the Black Sea. It develops decision-support tools for authorities to predict the spread of contaminants, assess impacts on ecosystems, and plan restoration actions. By combining satellite data, in-situ observations, and advanced models, SIERRA allows countries to react earlier and manage incidents more effectively.

BSJAMP

Black Sea Joint Aquaculture Monitoring Programme

BSJAMP sets up the first unified regional system to track environmental performance in aquaculture. It defines common indicators, data-collection methods, and reporting formats to help countries monitor impacts more consistently. The programme supports policy alignment with GFCM 2030 targets and gives the sector a clearer path toward sustainable growth.

CMA GOAL 2 - A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY FOR THE BLACK SEA

The blue economy continued to evolve, with stakeholders demonstrating growing interest in innovation, skills development, and cross-sector collaboration. National Hubs supported new initiatives in tourism, biotechnology, renewable energy, skills, and connectivity, while three national events focused on the digitalisation–decarbonisation nexus (GE NH), strengthening maritime governance (GE NH) and maritime connectivity in the Black Sea (BG NH).

The newly established Technical Group on Sustainable Tourism entered its first full year of operation, holding three expert meetings and launching two thematic subgroups, one on underwater heritage and another on sustainable tourism. Its work laid the groundwork for a long-term regional vision for sustainable tourism, connecting cultural heritage, innovation, and community-based development.

The Black Sea Stakeholder Conference, held in Constanța, reinforced this momentum. Discussions on ocean literacy, maritime spatial planning, and clean energy transitions showcased a stronger, more interconnected blue economy community. SMEs and innovators presented emerging ideas, while workshop sessions helped translate those ideas into early-stage project concepts.

Across the region, 14 Interreg NEXT BSB projects and multiple EU-funded initiatives contributed to building a more competitive and sustainable blue economy. Among them, TRESOILPower2X received a 2025 Black Sea Project Award for its innovative contribution to cleaner energy solutions.

CMA GOAL 2 - A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY FOR THE BLACK SEA

NATIONAL
HUB
SUPPORT

11 PROJECTS

EVENTS

2 NATIONAL EVENTS HELD IN CONTRIBUTION TO THIS GOAL
BG NATIONAL EVENT ON CONNECTIVITY IN THE BLACK SEA REGION
GE NATIONAL EVENT ON DIGITALISATION AND DECARBONISATION
BLACK SEA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE SESSION 2: EMERGING INNOVATIONS
IN ENERGY TRANSITION AND SPATIAL PLANNING

3 PROJECTS UNDER THIS GOAL REPORTED IN THE MARITIME
DATA HUB
11 PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE INTERREG NEXT BSB SINCE
2024, 2 OF WHICH STARTED IN 2025

FUNDED
PROJECTS

CMA GOAL 2 - A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY FOR THE BLACK SEA

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS

TRESOILPower2X



TRESOILPower2X demonstrates how plastic waste can be converted into clean hydrogen through advanced thermochemical processes. The project tests scalable solutions that reduce marine litter while supporting energy transition goals. Its work helps show how circular-economy concepts can feed directly into emerging alternative-fuel markets.

SustTourism TG

Technical Group on Coastal and Maritime Tourism

This group builds a shared regional vision for sustainable tourism and underwater cultural heritage. It hosts expert meetings, supports early-stage project development, and maintains a live map of ongoing initiatives. Its work aims to create a coordinated approach for tourism development that protects marine heritage while supporting local economies.

SUSDEST-NET

Sustainable Destinations Black Sea Network



The Black Sea Basin faces environmental degradation, overdependence on tourism, and fragmented governance, leading to unsustainable resource use and unequal regional development. The project promotes ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)-based sustainable tourism through Destination Management Committees, AI-powered monitoring tools, and collaborative platforms that transform destinations into competitive, resilient, and environmentally responsible areas across the region.

CMA GOAL 2 - A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY FOR THE BLACK SEA

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS

SUSTAIN-2 **A Sustainability Model for Tourism**

Tourism operators in the Black Sea region often lack the knowledge and tools to implement ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance)-based sustainable practices, leading to inefficient resource use and waste. This project delivers a transnational, AI-supported framework that combines training, pilot actions, and digital tools to help operators adopt and sustain ESG-aligned solutions.

Cul-Mar-Skills **MARitime Soft Skills for Onboard Healthy Nutrition and CULinary Arts in Seagoing Services**

Cul-Mar-Skills develops a targeted training programme that combines maritime culinary skills with entrepreneurship and management competences. Through five specialised courses, the project addresses healthy onboard nutrition, supply chain and victualling management, menu planning, and culinary arts for merchant vessels, naval fleets, and cruise ships, strengthening professional skills across the maritime hospitality sector.



TOURAL **Multidimensional model of tourism verticals driving the sustainable balanced growth among rural & remote grids and urban clusters of rural regions, fostering macro-regional cooperation**

TOURAL promotes cultural and creative tourism as a driver of sustainable development, aligned with the EU Tourism Transition Pathway. The project supports smart, multi-destination tourism models through macro-regional cooperation and integrated local value chains, balancing urban growth with the development potential of rural and remote areas. It applies a participatory and integrated approach across complementary tourism niches, including underwater cultural and natural heritage, creative and cultural tourism, science-based tourism, and silver tourism, across regions in the Adriatic-Ionian and Black Sea basins.



CMA GOAL 3 - FOSTERING INVESTMENT IN THE BLACK SEA BLUE ECONOMY

The CMA continued to strengthen the investment landscape by supporting project development, expanding stakeholder capacity, and leveraging regional funding mechanisms. Six Interreg NEXT BSB projects fall under this goal (four starting in 2025), while BSAM and National Hubs supported approximately 30 project concepts for potential funding.

Despite these project concepts primarily contributing to the other CMA goals, their cascade impact of driving funds and innovation to the Black Sea ultimately supports this goal, as investments would be fostered after all, via capacity building and infrastructure development through the project funds.

During the 2025 Stakeholder Conference, two hands-on workshops helped participants develop early-stage project ideas in preparation for upcoming funding calls, contributing to a stronger project pipeline for the region. The INTERSMARTS project, awarded both “Fostering Investment in the Black Sea Blue Economy” and “Winner of Winners,” demonstrated how smart, sustainable tourism can attract investment and promote cross-sector innovation through digital platforms, regional networks and capacity building.

CMA GOAL 3 - FOSTERING INVESTMENT IN THE BLACK SEA BLUE ECONOMY

EVENTS

BLACK SEA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS, ENHANCING PARTICIPANTS' SKILLS IN PROJECT PROPOSALS
BLACK SEA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE SESSION 3: FINANCING INNOVATION AND START-UPS AT COASTAL COMMUNITY

6 PROJECTS FUNDED BY INTERREG NEXT BSB SINCE 2024,
4 OF THEM STARTING IN 2025

FUNDED PROJECTS

CMA GOAL 3 - FOSTERING INVESTMENT IN THE BLACK SEA BLUE ECONOMY

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS

INTERSMARTS **Interdisciplinary Solutions for Smart Sustainable Tourism and Services for Blue Growth in the Black Sea Basin**

INTERSMARTS uses digital platforms and data tools to promote smart, sustainable tourism. It brings together tourism operators, local authorities, and heritage sites to create shared standards, cross-border routes, and joint marketing materials. By improving digital visibility and encouraging cooperation, the project attracts investment into lesser-known areas and shows how technology can drive regional tourism growth.

INTERSMARTS

Eco-Innovation Challenge

The Eco-Innovation Challenge (EIC) is the flagship innovation component of Blueing the Black Sea: a GEF regional project, implemented by the World Bank and executed by UNOPS. The Challenge aims to identify, support, and scale eco-innovations that reduce key sources of pollution affecting the Black Sea. Civitta, an international collaboratory, contributes to this initiative in its role as International Accelerator.

All submitted eco-innovations must address one of the following four critical pollution problems: municipal wastewater, chemical and Industrial Pollution (including non-hazardous war-related pollution), agricultural or livestock runoff, or marine litter. The eco-innovations should tackle these problems through either prevention at the source or remediation of existing pollution.

CMA GOAL 3 - FOSTERING INVESTMENT IN THE BLACK SEA BLUE ECONOMY

SAMPLE OF PROJECTS

BLUE GATES

Empowering Blue and Smart Transformation of the Black Sea Basin

The EU Blue Economy report 2022 highlights the importance of the Blue Economy sector in the European Union. It comprises sectors like marine living resources, renewable energy, port activities, shipbuilding, maritime transport, and coastal tourism. These sectors have immense potential for economic growth, employment, and sustainable development. To tap into this potential, a more sustainable and innovative ecosystem of blue economy actors is needed.

The project aims to unite the efforts of regional and local bodies, universities, and research centres to create joint tools, platforms, knowledge, capacities, and solutions for the Blue Economy ecosystem.



2.2 GOVERNANCE STEPS TO ENSURE A UNITED CMA COMMUNITY

2.2.1 POLITICAL AND OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

The CMA's governance structure ensures that participating countries align their priorities, coordinate policies and funding, and support private-sector engagement while allocating resources according to national capacities. Ministerial Meetings provide high-level political coordination. Implementation is overseen by the Steering Group, composed of National Coordinators appointed by each participating government and representatives of the European Commission (DG MARE).

Coordination of the Steering Group rotates annually, held by Ukraine during 2025. The Steering Group offers political direction, tracks progress, sets priorities, and endorses regional flagship initiatives. It cooperates with national and EU authorities and may establish temporary technical groups for targeted expert work. All decisions are taken during the steering group meetings, by the national coordinators present, and each country is expected to pursue its own initiatives as long as they reflect CMA principles.

DG MARE also ensures coherence between CMA priorities and EU policies and funding. Regional bodies, including the [Black Sea Commission \(BSC\)](#), [Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions \(CPMR\)](#), the [World Bank](#), the [Food and Agriculture Organisation \(FAO\)](#), the [Managing Authority INTERREG NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme](#) and the [Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation \(BSEC\)](#), participate as observers and provide complementary expertise.

2.2 GOVERNANCE STEPS TO ENSURE A UNITED CMA COMMUNITY

2.2.2 BLACK SEA ASSISTANCE MECHANISM AND NATIONAL HUBS

To support the EU's sea-basin strategies, the European Commission created a dedicated Assistance Mechanism. Within this framework, the CMA is supported by the BSAM. The BSAM works closely with the Steering Group and technical groups, providing operational, logistical, and administrative support. It engages stakeholders across the region through events, facilitates project development, helps form consortia, and offers guidance on funding opportunities.

National Hubs established in Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Türkiye, and Ukraine complement the central team with national experts who have strong networks and detailed knowledge of funding programmes. They assist National Coordinators, organise national events, identify promising project ideas, help stakeholders shape proposals, offer confidential funding advice, and strengthen outreach and awareness of CMA priorities.

The BSAM operates within the broader Sea Basin Strategies Assistance Mechanism (SBS AM), launched in October 2022 and covering the WestMED Initiative, Atlantic Strategy, and the CMA. The SBS AM promotes cooperation, shared learning, and joint action on topics such as skills, blue investment, green shipping, and sustainable aquaculture. This structure expands regional networks and strengthens support for project development and funding access across all sea basins.

The SBS AM is financed by the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) and implemented by CINEA under the policy guidance of DG MARE.

2.2 GOVERNANCE STEPS TO ENSURE A UNITED CMA COMMUNITY

2.2.3 SECTORAL EXCHANGES: TECHNICAL GROUPS

In 2025, the Technical Group on Sustainable Aquaculture consolidated its role as a regional platform for cooperation and practical exchange. Building on earlier meetings, the Group held several expert sessions, which focused on innovation, emerging opportunities and next steps for sustainable aquaculture in the Black Sea. Discussions strengthened dialogue among national authorities, research bodies and industry stakeholders, with particular attention to responsible scaling of production, innovation uptake and alignment with European trends.

A key outcome in 2025 was the advancement of work on a proposal for a Black Sea Joint Aquaculture Monitoring Programme, aimed at developing a common regional approach to environmental monitoring, data collection and reporting for aquaculture activities.



2.2 GOVERNANCE STEPS TO ENSURE A UNITED CMA COMMUNITY

2.2.3 SECTORAL EXCHANGES: TECHNICAL GROUPS

The CMA Steering Group creates Technical Groups to bring together national experts working on specific areas important for a sustainable blue economy. These groups support cooperation, knowledge sharing, and the exchange of good practices, with operational assistance from the BSAM and leadership from appointed experts.

The first TG was focused on Sustainable Aquaculture, established in 2023 under Romania's CMA Coordination and focuses on promoting sustainable and resilient aquaculture in the Black Sea. Its work covers regulatory, scientific, and technical aspects, enhances regional cooperation, and links with similar efforts in other EU sea basins.



2.2 GOVERNANCE STEPS TO ENSURE A UNITED CMA COMMUNITY

2.2.3 SECTORAL EXCHANGES: TECHNICAL GROUPS

The second TG of the CMA, approved in 2024 under Moldova's CMA Coordination, is dedicated to Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism. The TG aims to identify priority areas, integrate knowledge of underwater cultural heritage, support relevant project development, and promote innovative approaches to sustainable coastal and maritime tourism. It will also explore the socio-economic potential of underwater cultural heritage and foster green transition, digitalisation, and cross-sector synergies through a multidisciplinary forum.



2.2 GOVERNANCE STEPS TO ENSURE A UNITED CMA COMMUNITY

2.2.3 SECTORAL EXCHANGES: TECHNICAL GROUPS

In 2025, the TG moved from initial coordination to operational structuring, through 4 meetings, which resulted in the formal establishment of two thematic sub-groups on Sustainable Tourism and Underwater Cultural Heritage. These sub-groups agreed on priority focus areas, working methods and next steps, strengthening cooperation between national authorities, research institutions and tourism stakeholders. Concrete progress included the identification of shared needs for data consolidation, the expansion of regional expert networks, and the development of early project concepts linked to sustainable tourism products, cultural heritage valorisation and digital tools.

Work in 2025 also laid the groundwork for a shared regional approach, including proposals for a common heritage data framework and the development of harmonised tourism concepts, to be further advanced through funding opportunities in 2026.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The CMA thrives on continuous stakeholder engagement, with BSAM playing a key role in supporting events that promote the exchange of best practices and foster networking for future projects.

REGIONAL THEMATIC EVENT 2025: SAFEGUARDING THE BLACK SEA REGION: RESULTS OF THE REGIONAL ROUNDTABLE ON WAR-RELATED POLLUTION.

The regional roundtable on war-related pollution in the Black Sea, held on 6 June 2025, was an important milestone in addressing the environmental and economic consequences of Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine. Organised by the Ukrainian CMA Coordination with support from BSAM, it gathered 127 participants, among which policymakers, scientists, maritime safety experts and international organisations to strengthen cooperation and exchange insights. The discussions stressed the urgency of coordinated regional action and reliable data to confront the escalating pressures on the Black Sea.

Ongoing initiatives such as [BCSEA II](#), [RESPONSE](#), [Black Sea SIERRA](#) and [EU4EMBLAS](#) were presented, illustrating efforts to improve maritime safety, environmental monitoring and ecosystem resilience. Participants reviewed the significant damage to ports and vessels, the widespread threat posed by mines and unexploded ordnance, and the ecological consequences of incidents such as the Kakhovka Dam destruction and recent oil spills. The event highlighted the need for sustained monitoring, technological innovation and reinforced international cooperation to support recovery and long-term sustainability.

It provided a platform for sharing scientific evidence and emerging solutions aimed at mitigating pollution, restoring infrastructure and supporting ecosystem recovery. The roundtable closed with a call for continued collective engagement to enhance the safety and resilience of the Black Sea. Its broad participation demonstrated a strong shared commitment to protecting the region's environment and economy, marking a further step toward coordinated and sustainable action.

2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

BLACK SEA COMMON MARITIME AGENDA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE 2025

The Black Sea Common Maritime Agenda (CMA) Stakeholder Conference took place on 28 October 2025 in Constanța, Romania, organised by Ukraine and hosted by Romania in support of the Ukrainian CMA Coordination. Bringing together around 150 participants from 11 countries, the 2025 edition continued to serve as a central platform for dialogue, collaboration, and strategic alignment across the Black Sea blue economy community. Its purpose was to connect national authorities, EU institutions, research organisations, maritime industry representatives and civil society around common priorities for a resilient, sustainable, and innovative Black Sea.

The programme featured three plenary sessions aligned with the CMA's strategic goals, addressing ocean literacy for marine ecosystem resilience, emerging innovations in energy transition and maritime spatial planning, and financing innovation and start-ups at coastal community level. Discussions highlighted the importance of translating scientific knowledge into practical action, strengthening cross-border planning for low-carbon maritime activities, and improving access to finance for entrepreneurship and early-stage innovation, drawing also on examples from other EU sea basins.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

BLACK SEA COMMON MARITIME AGENDA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE 2025

The conference included “Wave of change” project showcases session and a poster exhibition presenting 16 initiatives focused on ecosystem restoration, pollution monitoring, AI-driven solutions, citizen engagement and open science.

Two interactive workshops generated project ideas on strengthening ocean literacy and blue skills, and on improving maritime spatial planning and offshore renewable energy integration, confirming the need for better data, coordinated policies, capacity building and inclusive governance.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

BLACK SEA COMMON MARITIME AGENDA STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE 2025

The event concluded with the [2025 Black Sea Project Awards](#), recognising outstanding projects across the CMA's three goal areas, and with a voluntary pledge initiative through which participants committed to actions to inspire, protect, innovate, share, cooperate and celebrate, reflecting the community's shared ambition for a resilient Black Sea.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: DIGITALISATION AND DECARBONISATION AS THE MAIN INSTRUMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GEORGIA'S BLUE ECONOMY, 21 FEBRUARY 2025, BATUMI, GEORGIA

The workshop brought together Georgian maritime authorities, experts, and stakeholders to discuss how digitalisation and decarbonisation can accelerate the country's blue economy. Presentations highlighted major national developments, including the Maritime Single Window, Port Community System, and emerging green maritime initiatives such as electric ferries and cold ironing.

Discussions also covered the state of aquaculture, fisheries legislation, sustainable tourism, and underwater cultural heritage.

A Horizon Europe session provided guidance on funding opportunities for maritime innovation. The event concluded with a call for continued cooperation to advance Georgia's sustainable maritime transformation.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: CONNECTIVITY IN THE BLACK SEA REGION: TRANSLATING INNOVATIVE IDEAS INTO PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS, 27 JUNE 2025, VARNA, BULGARIA

The conference convened 75 participants from government, academia, business, and EU institutions to explore practical steps for enhancing maritime connectivity and innovation in the Black Sea. Discussions focused on advancing new vessel technologies (including hydrogen and hydrofoil concepts), upgrading port infrastructure, and strengthening collaboration through initiatives such as the S3 Shipbuilding Propulsion Systems Alliance.

Participants also examined funding options, new technologies, and ways to involve young professionals in maritime value chains. Several ideas, such as a pilot hydrogen-powered vessel and a yachting training simulator, were selected for further project development. The event reinforced Bulgaria's engagement in promoting sustainable and innovative maritime connectivity in the region.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: LOVE THE OCEAN WORKSHOP, 07 MARCH 2025, CHISINAU, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

The “Love the Ocean” workshop, organised under the [DOORS project](#) and the CMA, engaged 30 young participants in interactive activities on marine conservation and ocean literacy. The programme included demonstrations of real-time environmental data, discussions on major Black Sea challenges, and a co-creation exercise where participants designed their own ocean literacy initiatives.

The workshop emphasised data-driven decision-making and the role of collaboration among scientists, NGOs, and public authorities. It concluded with a short networking and feedback session.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: SUSTAINABLE MARINE AQUACULTURE IN THE BLACK SEA: SECTORAL COOPERATION AND FUTURE-ORIENTED APPROACHES, 29 MAY 2025, TRABZON, TÜRKIYE

This hybrid workshop gathered 124 participants from research institutions, government, industry, and international organisations to discuss priorities for sustainable aquaculture in the Black Sea. Hosted by SUMAE and coordinated by Türkiye's National Hub, the event reviewed Türkiye's aquaculture landscape, key policy and environmental challenges, and innovations in feed, algae-based systems, and market development. Strong interest emerged around algae integration, prompting discussions on potential collaborations between academia and industry. The workshop reaffirmed the importance of cross-sector cooperation for a resilient and competitive aquaculture sector.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: ROMANIA'S EVENT ON A REGIONAL APPROACH TO TACKLING ABANDONED, LOST, OR DISCARDED FISHING GEAR

This event, held on 3 November 2025, brought together 36 participants from public authorities, research institutions, and civil society to address the growing challenge of abandoned, lost, and discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) in the Black Sea. Organised by the Romanian National Hub with the support of the National Coordinator, in synergy with the [BlackNETs project](#), the event highlighted both the policy relevance of ghost gear and the technical tools available for monitoring and recovery.

Experts showcased geophysical detection methods and recent field results, offering practical insights into mitigation options. A collaborative World Café session enabled participants to co-design a focused action roadmap, outlining concrete measures for prevention, retrieval, recycling, and governance, alongside proposed responsibilities and timelines. The workshop concluded with a shared call for accelerated implementation, emphasising the need for targeted funding and closer engagement with fishing communities to reduce marine litter and strengthen environmental protection in the Black Sea.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: GEORGIA'S EVENT ON MARITIME GOVERNANCE AND STRENGTHENING BLUE ECONOMY SECTORS

The event showcased Georgia's progress in strengthening its maritime governance and blue economy sectors. Key national strategies in maritime transport, fisheries, and aquaculture were presented, highlighting alignment with EU and international standards. A panel session on underwater cultural heritage, led by experts from Türkiye, Georgia, and academia, emphasized the importance of preserving the Black Sea's unique cultural assets while fostering sustainable tourism.

Regional cooperation remained a central theme throughout the event. The presentation on CMA pathways and funding opportunities illustrated concrete steps for Georgian stakeholders to engage in cross-border blue economy initiatives and access EMFAF and other EU financing instruments. Interactive discussions and a concluding Q&A session reinforced the collective interest in regional collaboration, sustainable resource management, and the development of innovation-driven blue economy projects. The event effectively strengthened partnerships and identified next steps for Georgia's continued leadership within the CMA framework.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL EVENTS: UKRAINE'S ADVANCES BLUE SKILLS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

This seminar, held on 23-24 December 2025, brought together over 65 representatives from educational institutions, research bodies, NGOs, national authorities and international networks. Despite the ongoing war, participants exchanged knowledge on strengthening Ukraine's blue economy within the framework of the CMA for the Black Sea. Through presentations, discussions and field visits, participants explored environmental monitoring, marine spatial planning, scientific capacity-building and the restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems.



On the second day, sessions focused on aquaculture, fisheries, maritime safety, marine energy, sustainable tourism and the impact of the war on the Black Sea. Emphasising the need to strengthen blue skills across sectors, participants highlighted new opportunities for cooperation and innovation. The seminar concluded with a shared commitment to evidence-based policymaking and regional collaboration, laying foundations for future projects under the Common Maritime Agenda.

2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

EU SEA BASINS ASSISTANCE MECHANISM JOINT PARTICIPATION AT EVENTS: EUROPEAN MARITIME DAY 2025

In 2025, the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA) took an active role at the European Maritime Day (EMD) in Cork, reinforcing its visibility within the wider EU blue economy community. Through the Sea Basin Strategies joint stand, the CMA showcased regional achievements, funding opportunities, and examples of cross-border cooperation, alongside the WestMED Initiative and the Atlantic Action Plan 2.0.

The CMA team engaged with stakeholders from business, research, and government, highlighting progress in areas such as sustainable aquaculture, marine pollution prevention, blue skills, and coastal tourism. A dedicated workshop on the EU Sea Basin Strategies provided a platform to discuss shared priorities, including green shipping, innovation, and skills development and to present ongoing work under the CMA and its Technical Groups.

The CMA's presence at EMD helped strengthen collaboration across sea basins and promoted a more connected, sustainable, and innovative Black Sea blue economy.



2.3 CONSOLIDATION OF OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

EU SEA BASINS ASSISTANCE MECHANISM JOINT PARTICIPATION AT EVENTS: REGIONAL EXPERT MEETING

In 2025, the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea (CMA) actively contributed to the regional expert meeting organised by the EU Sea Basin Strategies Assistance Mechanism, which gathered over 120 participants from 15 countries. The meeting was held on the sides of the Macro-regional and Sea Basin Strategies days and provided a platform for experts from the Black Sea, Atlantic, WestMED and Greater North Sea basins to exchange insights on maritime governance, funding opportunities, and emerging priorities for the sustainable blue economy.

The CMA team presented ongoing regional efforts, including progress in pollution reduction, sustainable aquaculture, blue skills, and maritime connectivity, while highlighting opportunities for cross-basin cooperation. Discussions focused on aligning regional strategies with broader EU goals, strengthening project pipelines, and improving access to EU funding through targeted support to stakeholders. The meeting reinforced the CMA's role within the wider European maritime community and underscored the added value of coordinated sea basin actions in addressing shared challenges and accelerating sustainable blue growth.



2.4 EMPOWERING PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICES

2.4.1 BLACK SEA PROJECT AWARDS

Open to projects from the Black Sea coastal states, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Türkiye and Ukraine, the Black Sea Project Awards shine a spotlight on innovative, high-impact, and scalable solutions that contribute to a sustainable and competitive blue economy. They celebrate projects that meaningfully support the CMA's goals and priorities and demonstrate forward-thinking approaches to the region's long-term development.

GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOYSTEMS



GOAL 2 - A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY FOR THE BLACK SEA



GOAL 3 - FOSTERING INVESTMENT IN THE BLACK SEA BLUE ECONOMY

INTERSMARTS

2.4 EMPOWERING PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICES

2.4.1 BLACK SEA PROJECT AWARDS

WINNER OF WINNERS 2025

INTERSMARTS Interdisciplinary Solutions for Smart Sustainable Tourism and Services for Blue Growth in the Black Sea Basin

Description

An Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin project that aims to strengthen sustainability and innovation in the regional tourism sector. The project promotes smart, knowledge-based solutions by combining interdisciplinary research, cross-border cooperation, and practical interventions to help tourism actors adopt new technologies and sustainable practices. Working with key stakeholders across Bulgaria, Greece, Moldova, and Türkiye, INTERSMARTS will test and demonstrate new approaches in selected Core Innovation Regions. These pilot areas will illustrate how smarter tools and collaborative methods can raise both the sustainability performance and quality of tourism services throughout the Black Sea Basin.

Outputs

Cross-border network: A regional expert and stakeholder network supporting collaborative solutions for smart, sustainable tourism
Needs Assessment Reports: Targeted analyses of sustainability gaps and blue-growth potential in Black Sea Basin tourism regions
Innovation Management Platform: A digital platform enabling idea development, stakeholder collaboration, and adoption of sustainable practices.
Research & Networking Events: Workshops and exchanges promoting interdisciplinary learning and innovation in sustainable tourism.

2.4 EMPOWERING PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICES

2.4.1 BLACK SEA PROJECT AWARDS

WINNER OF WINNERS 2025

INTERSMARTS Interdisciplinary Solutions for Smart Sustainable Tourism and Services for Blue Growth in the Black Sea Basin

Partners

Varna University of Management – [VUM](#) (Bulgaria)
International Hellenic University – [IUF](#) (Greece)
Moldova State University, Faculty of Economic Sciences (Republic of Moldova)
Istanbul Development Agency – [ISTKA](#) (Türkiye)

Funding

This project has received funding from the European Union's Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin, with the project number BSB-00332.

2.4 EMPOWERING PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICES

2.4.2 BLACK SEA SUCCESS STORIES

BLACK SEA SUCCESS STORY: 3 PROJECTS RESPONDING TO WAR POLLUTION

In 2025, the Common Maritime Agenda (CMA) placed strong emphasis on addressing war-related pollution in the Black Sea, with the Ukrainian CMA Coordination prioritising enhanced environmental monitoring to support regional green recovery and long-term sustainability. The EU-funded initiatives RESPONSE, EU4EMBLAS and Black Sea SIERRA emerged as key contributors to this effort, delivering substantial advances in data collection, emergency preparedness, and coordinated pollution mitigation.

RESPONSE strengthens regional capacity by developing co-created training schemes and incorporating war-related environmental risks into preparedness assessments; EU4EMBLAS expands scientific monitoring, public awareness and regional data systems, rapidly mobilising to evaluate the impacts of the Kakhovka Dam disaster; while Black Sea SIERRA aims to improve decision-makers' response capabilities through cross-border assessments, updated pollutant analyses and targeted restoration strategies.

Together, these projects help harmonise monitoring methodologies, support the implementation of EU frameworks such as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and provide updated, accessible datasets for regional stakeholders.



2.4 EMPOWERING PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICES

2.4.2 BLACK SEA SUCCESS STORIES

REINFORSEA SUCCESS STORY: BUILDING A RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH CULTURE FOR THE BLACK SEA

The REINFORSEA project, implemented by NIMRD and LOMARTOV under the REINFORCING.eu cascade funding scheme, aims to advance the integration of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles into Black Sea marine science.

The project developed the first Open Responsible Research and Innovation (ORRI) guidelines adapted to the region, covering six key dimensions: public engagement, gender equality, science education, open science, ethics and governance. Through consultations, infographics, and a regional survey, REINFORSEA identified both progress in awareness and persistent gaps in implementation, particularly linked to limited training, resources and community engagement.

The project also produces communication tools and multilingual materials to support wider uptake of ORRI practices among researchers, policymakers and local stakeholders. Designed to be adaptable and scalable, these outputs offer a structured basis for integrating responsible research approaches into future marine projects, educational programmes and regional cooperation initiatives in the Black Sea.



2.4 EMPOWERING PROJECTS AND SUPPORTING BEST PRACTICES

2.4.2 BLACK SEA SUCCESS STORIES

INTERSMARTS, A BLACK SEA SUCCESS STORY IN DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE WORKING MODELS FOR THE TOURISM SECTOR

INTERSMARTS, an Interreg NEXT Black Sea Basin project, was recognised at the 2025 Black Sea CMA Stakeholder Conference as “Winner of the Winners” for its contribution to sustainable and innovative tourism in the region. The project supports the transition towards more sustainable tourism and service models by combining interdisciplinary research, cross-border cooperation and co-creation.

A key outcome is the INTERSMARTS digital innovation platform, which enables tourism operators, public authorities and other stakeholders to develop and apply sustainability-oriented solutions in a collaborative, multilingual environment.

By improving innovation uptake, skills and knowledge sharing, INTERSMARTS contributes directly to CMA Goal II, strengthening a competitive, resilient and sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea.

INTERSMARTS

2.5 CMA IMPLEMENTATION IN NUMBERS

3

STEERING GROUP MEETINGS

7

TECHNICAL GROUP MEETINGS

6

NATIONAL EVENTS

1

REGIONAL THEMATIC EVENTS

1

BLACK SEA STAKEHOLDER
CONFERENCES

318

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS OF
NATIONAL EVENTS

2

SUCCESS STORIES

3

AWARDED PROJECTS

29

SUPPORTED PROJECTS

3

NEWSLETTERS

1

FACTSHEETS

2.6 AMPLIFYING VOICES: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT



32 (50)

NEWS ITEMS PUBLISHED
(COUNTING EVENTS & FUNDING)

19,243

PAGE VIEWS

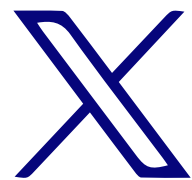


1280

SUBSCRIBERS

4

ISSUES



1221

FOLLOWERS

67

POSTS PUBLISHED

13.4K

VIEWS/IMPRESSIONS

7.1%

ENGAGEMENT RATE
TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS



900

FOLLOWERS

79

POSTS PUBLISHED

31.2K

IMPRESSIONS

15.8%

ENGAGEMENT RATE
TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS

2.6 AMPLIFYING VOICES: STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

CMA communication channels recorded notable increases in both audience size and engagement levels throughout 2025. This demonstrates that the content shared this year, focused on strategic updates, blue economy developments, conference news, funding opportunities, and project highlights, successfully resonated with the community.

Website activity saw a significant boost, with regular updates on events, funding calls, and key publications driving steady traffic and maintaining user interest. Meanwhile, LinkedIn and X experienced higher engagement rates, suggesting that audiences were increasingly interacting with CMA content, sharing it, and using the platforms as reliable sources for updates on regional initiatives.

The growing subscriber base of the CMA newsletter (now 1,280 subscribers) indicates rising interest in structured and curated information from the CMA. Stakeholders across the Black Sea region continue to seek timely updates on events, funding, policy developments, and opportunities for collaboration.

Overall, the 2025 communication performance shows that the CMA community is expanding, not only in size but also in commitment. Stakeholders are increasingly engaged with CMA content, actively participating in events, exploring funding instruments, and following updates from European institutions and regional partners. The increased engagement, achieved with fewer posts, underscores a shift toward higher-quality, higher-impact communication.



CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The implementation of the CMA continues to rely on strong ownership by the Black Sea countries, with ongoing support from the European Commission and the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism. All CMA actions are developed to encourage active stakeholder participation across sectors. Throughout 2025, experts, institutions, local actors, and regional organisations engaged in national events, regional workshops, and the CMA Stakeholder Conference, contributing valuable insights that help shape future priorities. The following sections summarise these contributions, organised around the three CMA goals.

3.1 KEY INSIGHTS AND IMPACTFUL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

GOAL 1 - HEALTHY MARINE AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

Environmental pressures, like pollution from land-based sources, war-related contamination, biodiversity loss, and unsustainable resource use, remain a central concern for Black Sea stakeholders. Discussions during national events and thematic workshops in 2025 emphasised the urgency of improving monitoring systems, restoring marine habitats, and strengthening pollution prevention measures.

Stakeholders reaffirmed that the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) remains a key driver for environmental management. The year 2025 marked the end of 2 large projects that were connected to the SRIA and aimed at promoting its implementation, BRIDGE Black Sea and DOORS. The BRIDGE-BS project aimed at developing predictive tools and capabilities for assessing the impacts of climate-driven and anthropogenic multi-stressors on the Black Sea ecosystem and coastal communities. DOORS set out to assess the environmental, human and geopolitical impacts to the Black Sea ecosystem. Both projects encompassed environmental protection, blue innovation and acceleration and citizen empowerment, while they jointly promoted and managed the Black Sea Accelerator and made sure to cultivate a strong relationship with the CMA¹. Such projects are helping Black Sea countries coordinate research and align actions with EU-wide initiatives such as the Mission “Restore Our Ocean and Waters.” Technologies like remote sensing, in-situ sampling, and digital monitoring platforms were repeatedly highlighted as essential tools for understanding ecosystem changes and guiding policy responses.

Collaboration was consistently emphasised, particularly between scientific institutions, environmental authorities, local communities, and regional organisations. Stakeholders noted that effective protection of ecosystems requires joint action on marine litter, sustainable aquaculture, and the management of hazardous and emerging pollutants. Public awareness, including ocean literacy initiatives led by national actors and EU-funded projects, was also recognised as vital to building a culture of stewardship for the Black Sea’s natural environment.

¹ The BSAM coordinator and project manager participated in the projects closing events, held several communication exchanges with the project consortia to provide alignment and support where needed. DOORS invited the CMA Steering Group members to an online event, presenting the project outcomes’ support to the CMA.

3.1 KEY INSIGHTS AND IMPACTFUL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

GOAL 2 - A COMPETITIVE, INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY FOR THE BLACK SEA

In 2025, stakeholders placed strong emphasis on the need for innovation, skills development, and sector modernisation to strengthen the region's blue economy. Discussions across events highlighted opportunities in digitalisation, decarbonisation, clean energy, sustainable aquaculture, and tourism diversification.

Many contributions pointed to the importance of stronger access to funding at both EU and national level, to support entrepreneurship and applied research. Ideas included using AI tools for maritime operations, deploying low-carbon vessel technologies, improving fisheries monitoring, and expanding data-driven services for ports and coastal industries.

Developing blue skills remained a priority, with stakeholders calling for updated curricula, wider access to training, and stronger cooperation between universities, research institutes, and maritime businesses. These measures aim to address labour shortages, reduce skills gaps, and engage youth more actively in blue economy careers.

Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture also featured prominently, with calls to harmonise regulations, improve stock assessments, strengthen environmental monitoring, and support innovative production systems such as algae cultivation and multi-trophic aquaculture. Stakeholders stressed the importance of connecting research advances with business opportunities and local community needs.

3.1 KEY INSIGHTS AND IMPACTFUL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM STAKEHOLDERS

GOAL 3 - FOSTERING INVESTMENT IN THE BLACK SEA BLUE ECONOMY

Stakeholders agreed that investment remains a cornerstone of the Black Sea's long-term blue economy transformation. Through exchanges at the Stakeholder Conference and national workshops, participants noted that SMEs, startups, and research-driven initiatives are increasingly presenting viable solutions for pollution reduction, circular economy models, and resource-efficient technologies.

Innovations such as bio-based materials, waste-to-energy processes, digital twins, and green shipping technologies were identified as high-potential areas requiring targeted investment and mentoring. Many stakeholders highlighted the need to promote scalable, market-ready solutions, ensuring they attract both public and private financing.

Strengthening the investment landscape requires reducing administrative barriers, improving access to information on available programmes, and supporting project design—areas where the BSAM and National Hubs continue to play a crucial role. Stakeholders also reiterated the need to link environmental objectives with economic incentives, ensuring that new investments generate both sustainable growth and measurable environmental benefits.

3.2 CONCLUSIONS AND CHARTING THE PATH FOR 2026

In 2025, implementation of the Common Maritime Agenda (CMA) advanced significantly, supported by strong stakeholder engagement and increasing alignment with wider EU priorities for ocean governance. Under Ukraine's coordination, the CMA further consolidated its role as the main regional platform for cooperation on sustainable blue economy development, despite the complex geopolitical context affecting the Black Sea.

Progress during the year was marked by active participation in national and regional events, the Annual Stakeholder Conference, and the work of the Technical Groups. These activities strengthened the region's collective capacity to address environmental pressures, accelerate innovation, foster investment and improve knowledge exchange. Topics such as war-related pollution, sustainable aquaculture, ocean literacy, underwater cultural heritage, green ports and digital transformation gained prominence across countries, reflecting a more mature and interconnected regional agenda.

CMA actions in 2025 aligned closely with broader EU ambitions for oceans and waters. Efforts on ecosystem restoration, pollution reduction and sustainable use of marine resources contributed directly to the EU Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters and supported the objectives of the [EU Ocean Pact](#), particularly in relation to stewardship, scientific cooperation and resilient coastal economies. The [renewed EU Strategic Approach for the Black Sea](#) further reinforced the relevance of CMA work on regional governance, cross-border coordination, monitoring and capacity building.

Communication and dissemination activities reinforced this momentum, with increased engagement across all channels, signalling a more responsive and committed CMA community. Support for project development, delivered by the Black Sea Assistance Mechanism and National Hubs, helped stakeholders translate policy dialogue into concrete actions and better access funding opportunities. Success stories and the 2025 Black Sea Project Awards highlighted tangible progress in clean technologies, pollution monitoring, data-driven research and community engagement.

3.2 CONCLUSIONS AND CHARTING THE PATH FOR 2026

Cooperation with other EU sea-basin frameworks also intensified in 2025. Through the Sea Basin Strategies Assistance Mechanism, exchanges with the Atlantic Action Plan, WestMED Initiative and the Greater North Sea Basin enabled the Black Sea community to draw on shared experience in areas such as green shipping, blue skills, maritime connectivity, sustainable tourism and aquaculture innovation.

Looking ahead, the CMA enters 2026 with a strong foundation, as Bulgaria assumes coordination for the second time. Building on the progress achieved in 2025, priorities for the coming year will focus on three main areas. First, sustainable tourism and underwater cultural heritage will be further promoted as shared regional assets, with emphasis on partnership-building, best practices and innovative, technology-driven approaches. Second, maritime safety, security and sustainability will be strengthened, building on discussions on digitalisation, decarbonisation and greener transport to improve maritime traffic management and the environmental performance of shipping. Third, synergies between the Black Sea and Danube regions will be deepened, supported by the upcoming Bulgarian Presidency of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and by growing convergence observed in projects, events and policy exchanges.

Overall, the 2026 coordination will ensure continuity while opening new avenues for cooperation. Through sustained engagement, knowledge sharing and targeted regional partnerships, the CMA is well positioned to continue advancing its long-term vision of a sustainable, innovative and resilient Black Sea region, delivering lasting benefits for both the marine environment and coastal communities.



THANK YOU



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COMMON MARITIME AGENDA FOR THE BLACK SEA

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2025

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