

Annex 2

Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea Implementation Process

The Common Maritime Agenda cuts across policies, ministries and levels of government. The participating countries set priorities, take ownership, align policies and funds at national level, encourage the participation of private investors and provide the relevant resources, based on the countries' capacity.

Flagship regional projects - potential joint regional projects and bankable investment national and regional projects - need to be suggested by the countries to guide the implementation of the Agenda and for the purpose of attracting investors.

1. POLITICAL COORDINATION

Political coordination is provided through *ad hoc* Ministerial meetings. These meetings are convened upon the initiative of the coordinator of the Common Maritime Agenda Steering Group (see below) and benefit, as much as possible, from the calendar of the Ministerial meetings, organised by the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

The Ministers provide political guidance, review progress and achievements and revise priorities as necessary. They could consider, launch and commit political support for flagship regional projects.

The European Commission should ensure coordination among the relevant EU policies and initiatives, and as much as possible, the alignment of the EU funds and programmes with the priorities of the Agenda.

2. OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

- Operational coordination is ensured through a Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea Steering Group, which coordinates the implementation of priorities and actions of the Agenda. Representatives, preferably senior officials, from the participating countries should be duly empowered by their respective governments.
- To this end, the work of the Steering Group is coordinated by one of the participating countries on a voluntary, one-year rotation term.
- The European Commission remains closely associated to the work of the Group Coordinator and of the Steering Group.
- The mandate, functions, coordination and composition of the Steering Group are validated at Ministerial level.
- Technical groups involving experts and stakeholders may be established to ensure appropriate discussion and implementation at operational level and to promote the definition and identification of projects.

- Key stakeholders should be involved, including national, regional and local authorities, economic and social actors, civil society, academia and non-governmental organisations.
- Sectoral meetings/business fora may be organised, at the initiative of one or more of the participating countries. The Steering Group may facilitate the organisation of these meetings, for instance with the identification of relevant stakeholders.

THE STEERING GROUP ENSURES, ACTING IN GOOD FAITH, THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS:

- Convening and preparing meetings at Ministerial level, as appropriate.
- Proposing revisions to the Common Maritime Agenda and its goals, priorities and actions, to the political level (e.g. *ad hoc* Ministerial meeting).
- Prioritizing actions and projects contributing to the implementation of the Common Maritime Agenda.
- Issuing guidelines on information and publicity about the Common Maritime Agenda.
- Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework and reporting, once a year, to the political level. The Group may decide to make this report public.
- Liaising with local authorities, managing authorities of EU programmes, as appropriate, as well as with relevant regional organisations.
- Establishing temporary technical groups and, if necessary, drafting their objectives and deliverables. Technical groups should be based on a specific priority, result driven and limited in time. These groups should involve relevant experts and stakeholders, including from the research and business communities, as well as the civil society, to implement specific actions and projects.

Decisions of the Steering Group, as described in the functions above, shall be made by consensus among the national coordinators attending the meeting. The participating countries have full autonomy to cooperate with one or more among them in specific projects, which do not have any effects and results for other participating countries or the common cooperation concept in the Black Sea, while contributing to the implementation of the common principles and actions set in the Common Maritime Agenda. Decisions concerning such projects shall be taken by the countries concerned. The Steering Group will be informed about the launching of the projects, as well as their results.

MEMBERS:

- National coordinators/focal points of the participating countries;
- European Commission.

CONSULTATIVE BODIES¹:

- Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS);

¹ Subject to confirmation by both organisation.

- Permanent Secretariat of the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution.

OBSERVERS

- Secretariat of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean;
- Secretariat of the Conference of Peripheral and Maritime Regions;
- Managing Authority of the Joint Operational Programme Black Sea Basin.

The Steering Group may consider inviting, on a case by case basis, other *ad hoc* observers.

MEETINGS

The Steering Group should meet at least twice per year. Additional meetings can be convened based on an agreed calendar.

3. FUNDING

The Agenda is funded by channelling and coordinating existing international, EU, regional and national funding, and by attracting private investments relevant to the three Agenda goals.

The funding alignment will be promoted through two main avenues:

- Earmarking of existing funds: a given amount of the funds is programmed to support the implementation of the Agenda and its actions.
- Focussing of upcoming calls: the Agenda's priorities are mainstreamed in the programmed calls. There is no geographical delimitation. The Agenda should be considered in the programming of funds and stakeholders could benefit from a comparative advantage.

4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE STEERING GROUP

Technical and administrative support is of utmost importance for an effective and efficient performance of the functions attributed to the Steering Group and the possible technical groups.

To this aim, the European Commission should consider the establishment of a Black Sea Assistance Mechanism, which shall support the implementation of the Agenda in consultation with the participating countries.