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The Hashemite  
Kingdom of Jordan

## First meeting of the UfM Blue Economy Working Group

17 May 2016, Turku, Finland

### Conclusions

The Members of the BE Working Group had their first meeting on 17 May 2016, in Turku, under the Co-Presidency and the UfM Secretariat.

The Group:

- Expressed its appreciation for the work done since the adoption of the UfM Ministerial Declaration on the Blue Economy by the UfM Co-Presidency and the Secretariat to support the implementation of the deliverables of the above Declaration.
- Acknowledged the achievements made in the development of national maritime policies by the countries and calls on all countries to continue their efforts to create an environment conducive to the development of the blue economy and to use existing instruments and facilities to achieve this.
- Acknowledged that the UfM Secretariat will support the co-Presidency in preparing an annual report on the implementation of the declaration's objectives; the UfM SOM will be informed of developments on a regular basis.
- Requested to be kept informed of the outcomes of the exploratory work on the western Mediterranean and ensure that the UfM Secretariat is fully involved in the assessment of the needs at sub-regional level.
- Agreed to further fine tune the definition of the blue economy as per the UfM ministerial declaration with the support of the IMP-MED Facility and other existing instruments.
- Agreed that the UfM forum is a process made of the UfM Blue Economy working group, the regional technical seminars, the UfM stakeholder conference, the Virtual Knowledge Center as a stakeholder register and



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networking platform. The forum will help to promote regional dialogue, further shape the common regional agenda on blue economy, and define its future activities.

- Agreed to invite UNEP-MAP, GFCM, EIB, EBRD, IMO, ARLEM, CPMR, LAS, the Managing Authorities for the MED and ENI-CBC-MED cooperation programmes, as permanent observers to the meetings of the group.
- Invited the co-Presidency and the UfM Secretariat to verify with the EIB the possibility of organizing a workshop on the blue economy at the FEMIP Conference 2016, or to hold a FEMIP Conference dedicated to the blue economy in 2017.
- Expressed its gratitude for the presentation of the latest developments on the blue economy in the region and acknowledged the emerged common interest at regional level on areas, such as MSP & ICZM and land-sea interactions, marine R&I, marine pollution and its prevention, motorways of the sea.
- Invited the UfM Secretariat to keep informed the Group of developments and funding for the UfM labelled 'Plastic Busters for a Mediterranean free from litter project, in line with the ongoing regional efforts on de-pollution and sustainable consumption and production, also possibly in connection with the SwitchMedConnect 2016 event.
- Welcomed efforts to improve and operationalize the coordination between the EU Funding Cooperation instruments and invited the Managing Authorities to consider monitoring and reporting on future blue-economy-related projects and actions.
- Welcomed efforts made to involve all UfM countries in the BlueMED Initiative and therefore agreed to include marine research and innovation as a topic for the regional seminar to be held in 2016 to assist the identification of southern partner countries' needs. Countries are also invited to express their interest to the UfM Secretariat, which will liaise with the BlueMED implementing body to facilitate their involvement and



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participation in to the initiative. The regional seminar will involve Balkan countries and Turkey and will be also open to EU Member States.

- Welcomed the inclusion of UfM countries in the Blue Labs and Blue Tech calls and invited the European Commission to consider a similar provision for the future Blue Careers call.
- Expressed its appreciation for the work done so far on the networking of the maritime training institutes and supports the proposal to establish one or more networks in the Mediterranean, based on the needs of the maritime training institutes. The co-Presidency and the UfM Secretariat will consider the possible funding options.

#### **Next meeting**

Finally, the Co-Presidency informs that:

- The next meeting of the BE WG could be scheduled at the end of this year or early next year. The EU co-Presidency will verify the possibility of holding it back-to-back to a meeting of the EU IMP European Member State Expert Group to facilitate the participation of EU MSs to the UfM Blue Economy WG as well. In that case the meeting would take place in Brussels.