



Challenges and opportunities for fisheries and aquaculture in the Black Sea

*Fisheries and Aquaculture
in the Danube and the Black Sea
region: views for building forward
better - 22 April 2021*

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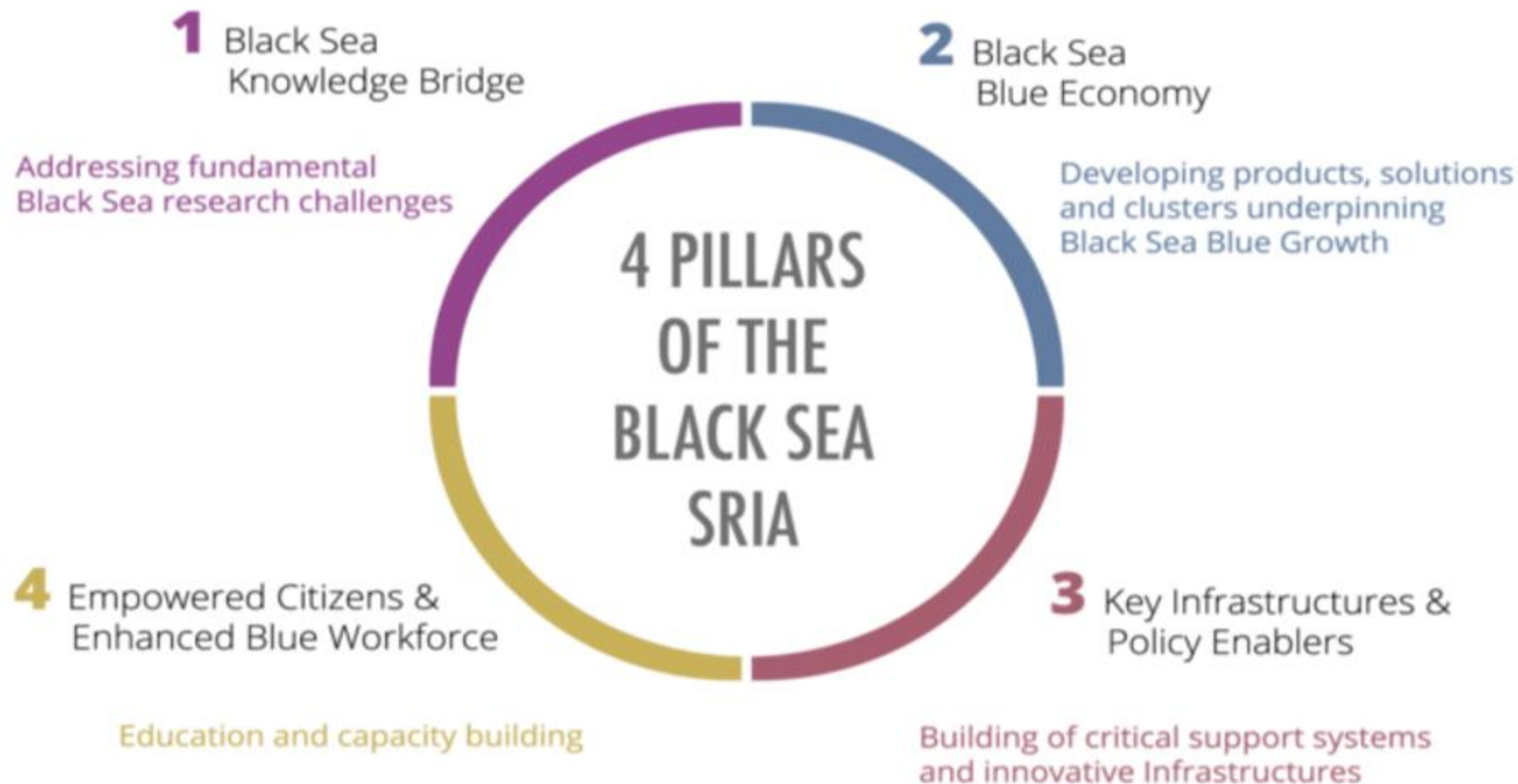
European Commission
Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea

- Overarching framework - **Black Sea Synergy (lead EEAS)**
- CMA specific policy framework: **2019 Bucharest Ministerial Declaration**
- Unique **regional framework for cooperation** on maritime affairs and BE in the region
- 7 Countries: **Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine**
- **3 Goals:** Healthy marine ecosystem - Innovative blue economy - Investments
- **Implementation** launched in February 2020. 2021 Turkish Coordination
- Concrete opportunities for cooperation: **Black Sea Virtual Knowledge Centre** www.bsec-bsvkc.org and CMA Assistance mechanism **National Hubs** www.blackseablueeconomy.eu
- Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea, **scientific pillar of the CMA**

Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea

GOAL		PRIORITY	
I	Healthy marine and coastal ecosystems	1	Ensure the protection and sustainability of the marine ecosystem
		2	Address marine pollution and plastic litter
		3	Support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture ←
		4	Supporting innovative marine research infrastructures
		5	Encourage the production, management and sharing of marine and coastal environmental knowledge for effective environmental monitoring and observation
II	A competitive, innovative and sustainable blue economy for the Black Sea	1	Foster innovative business models, stimulate research and innovation, and sustainable growth and up-to-date jobs
		2	Promote transport and digital connectivity
		3	Promote blue skills and blue careers as an engine for innovation and competitiveness
III	Fostering Investment in the Black Sea blue economy	1	Improve access to financial resources and promote sustainable investment in the blue economy
		2	Promote maritime entrepreneurship and clusters



New fisheries governance for the Black Sea

- While the EU has only a small share in the overall Black Sea fisheries catches, it has taken a central role over the past years in promoting and financing policies towards sustainable fishing, through the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).
- There is robust political backing for turning around fisheries governance in the Black Sea, embodied in the 2016 Bucharest Declaration and the **2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration**.
- Ministers committed to act jointly on the basis of a **10-year roadmap of joint actions towards fisheries sustainability and sustainable development of aquaculture**.
- A GFCM **High Level Conference on Black Sea** is planned in **2022** (in Georgia) to allow Black Sea countries to take stock of the progress made in the implementation of the Sofia Declaration.

Deliverables of the new fisheries governance

- **EU provides financial support** to back up its initiatives at sea basin level (annual € 4 million GFCM general grant and the separate € 1 million for the BlackSea4Fish).
- **Improvement of scientific advice and data collection**
 - The **BlackSea4Fish project**, the **first-ever regional scientific platform** where experts share knowledge and expertise towards improving the scientific assessments and provide a sound scientific advice to base fisheries management within the GFCM at regional level. EU is the only donor for this project of 1 million EUR (in 2020).
- **Aquaculture Demonstrative Centres**
 - excellent **regional hubs sharing knowledge, best practices, technical assistance, research** on Black Sea aquaculture and its specificities
 - Romania and Turkey host the two ADCs (Constanta and Trabzon) and the establishment of a third one has been launched to be hosted by Bulgaria (Burgas).
- **Regional Multiannual Management Plan for turbot fisheries**

EU financial support to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak

- **EU provided a comprehensive package of support:**
- A **Temporary State Aid Framework** – this means Member States (MS) had the possibility to support sectors with national funds in line with State Aid modified rules
- The **Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative** (EU structural funds) – this means there was the possibility for MS to modify their European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programmes and foresee working capital support
- **SURE scheme** - this means there was the possibility for MS to foresee support under a new dedicated European Social Fund instrument providing help to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency
- Specific measures in the **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)**
– EU has modified the EMFF rules to foresee dedicated support

- **COVID-19 Specific EMFF measures until 31 Dec 2020** (foreseen in the EMFF Regulation)
- Financial compensation to fishers for the **temporary cessation** of fishing activities with a maximum co-financing rate of 75 % of eligible public expenditure, the support covers both smaller and bigger operators, rendering it possible to keep family businesses running and saving fishers jobs
- **Financial compensation** to aquaculture farmers and processing enterprises for:
 - a suspension or reduction of production
 - a suspension or reduction of sales
 - additional storage costs

- Financing of **working capital** for aquaculture farmers and processing enterprises
- Support to fishery and aquaculture producer organisations for the temporary **storage** of fishery and aquaculture products (enabled by the amendment to the CMO Regulation, which allowed aquaculture producer organisations to benefit from the storage mechanism)

Exceptional flexibility in EMFF implementation

- **Retroactive eligibility** of expenditure as of 1 Feb 2020 (so covering expenditures that occurred between 1/1/2020 till 31/12/2020)
- **Simplified procedure** for amending operational programmes (we could approve changes to operational programmes in 3 weeks rather than 3 months)
- **Flexible reallocation** of financial resources (MS were in principle allowed to rearrange the budget of their operational programmes, use 10% of the budgetary funds allocated to the ring-fenced Union Priority 3)

EMFF support to Bulgarian and Romanian fishers, aquaculture farmers, and fish processors

Bulgaria - 6.6 MEUR (planned support, 2.2 MEUR already paid)

- BG fishery sector - 1.5 MEUR
- BG aquaculture sector - 3.2 MEUR
- BG processing sector - 1.8 MEUR

Romania - 6 MEUR (planned support)

- RO fishery sector - 1.5 MEUR
- RO aquaculture sector - 3.8 MEUR
- RO processing sector - 0.75 MEUR

Opportunities for the Black Sea

- Build on the progress achieved so far **in regional cooperation**
- Use **lessons learnt** from current challenges, especially the Covid pandemic
- **Strengthen compliance and fight against IUU**, especially by ensuring more traceability through the development of a catch certification scheme for turbot
- **Strengthen scientific cooperation and advice**, by including climate change, pollution and alien species in the assessment
- Develop **new conservation measures** based on the scientific advice for sprat and piked dogfish

- **Improve data collection** for sturgeon and for alien species such as rapana, under the GFCM research project
- Focus on protecting **vulnerable species and habitats**
- Develop and implement a pilot study to assess **cetaceans by-catch** in the Black Sea turbot fishery and to test mitigation measures

- At the level of the Member States implement **EMFAF** and in general make use of all available financial and technical tools to maximise the economic benefits and to ensure the sustainable development of the sector and the local communities
- The future **GFCM strategy 2021-2030**, currently under negotiation, should provide an ambitious framework for the next decade

Thank you for your attention!