



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**ON A VIDEO MEETING TO EXPLORE EXTENDING THE BLUEMED PROJECT TO**  
**THE BLACK SEA**  
*(14 July 2020)*

Extending the BlueMed Project to the Black Sea

The first steps towards creating a network of Accessible Underwater Natural and Cultural Heritage Sites around the coast of the Black Sea have been taken by the Black Sea Economic Cooperation.



At a video meeting, hosted by BSEC PERMIS in Istanbul, representatives of ten Member States expressed their unanimous support for exploring an innovative new plan designed to protect, preserve and exhibit the unique underwater archaeological history of the Black Sea coastline.

Based on an extension of the EU-funded BlueMed Project in the Mediterranean, the long-term vision is to create a series of underwater heritage sites and 'Knowledge Awareness Centres' in several locations. These would exhibit to visitors detailed illustration on the history and ecology of the sites using the latest technology and 3D visualisation techniques.

The Black Sea is famed for its particular marine conditions that are helpful in protecting wrecks and submerged heritage over time. To attract "diver tourism" augmented reality systems would be created at each site to enhance the underwater experience and the installation of virtual reality technologies offering 'dry dive visualisation' would help to draw non-divers to the Knowledge Awareness Centres.

The online meeting was shown the BlueMed Roadmap - an integrated strategy towards sustainable tourism development in the long-term - which could act as a model for adoption in the Black Sea. This has now been shared to Member States for distribution with further discussion on taking the proposal forward to be held at the next meeting in early September.