



PRESS RELEASE
ON REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP ON
'ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES OF A CIRCULAR ECONOMY: TACKLING PLASTIC
AND MICRO-PLASTIC POLLUTION IN THE BLACK SEA REGION
(17 November 2020)

New Ways Forward to Tackle Plastics Pollution in the Black Sea

Under the Romanian Chairmanship in Office a Regional Stakeholders Workshop on 'Economic opportunities of a circular economy: tackling plastic and micro-plastic pollution in the Black Sea region' was held today.

Important strides forward were taken to combat the growing plastic problem that has made the Black Sea one of the seas most heavily impacted by human activity in the world.

A number of ideas and initiatives were shared by representatives of BSEC Member States, and other experts, as were proposals for developing cooperation on projects to address the plastics issue in the future. All expressed their willingness for more working together and deeper coordination to defeat it.

In an event supported by the Romanian Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests and the European Commission, BSEC's Executive Manager Rositsa Stoeva highlighted the importance of the Marine Litter Project funded by a grant to BSEC from EU DG NEAR to find innovative solutions for marine litter in the Black Sea, due to begin its implementation process in January 2021.

Mr. Alexandru ENE, Director of the Western Balkans and Regional Cooperation Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, as the representative of the current Chairmanship in Office of the BSEC in his closing remarks, said that "we have heard some very good proposals on plastics reduction today which certainly have the potential to be made concrete".

BSEC's Secretary General, Ambassador Michael Christides, said it was clear from the Workshop that we need to increase public awareness about the plastics issue "in new ways". In the Black Sea region this included reaching people who live many miles from the coastal areas as their waste streams into the Sea. We also "have to significantly improve waste management", he said.

He concluded by remarking "we have heard lots of important initiatives today but I think we could be more effective if we could better coordinate them so they don't overlap". This should be a role for BSEC, he said. But he agreed that the session had been extremely valuable as "there are now a number of possible joint projects to mitigate plastics pollution that we need to firm up and take forward".