



PRESS RELEASE
ON THE COMMON MARITIME AGENDA
FOR THE BLACK SEA REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE
(10 December 2020)

The high-profile Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea 2020 Regional Stakeholders Conference was held online and hosted by the Bulgarian CMA Coordination. Mr. Rossen JELIAZKOV, Minister of Transport, Information Technology and Communications of the Republic of Bulgaria welcomed a distinguished audience of public authorities, regional governments, businesses and academics.

In his keynote speech, the BSEC PERMIS Secretary General outlined examples of the commitment of BSEC to the implementation of the CMA in the Black Sea region. They included the organizing of two workshops this year focusing on the Covid-19 impact on the Blue Economy in the Black Sea; the launching of the Black Sea Virtual Knowledge Centre (BSVKC); BSEC's role in the World Bank's "Blueing the Black Sea" GEF regional project; and the "Pilot innovative solutions for marine litter in the Black Sea" project.

Ambassador Christides said that BSEC "would continue to strive for expanding our coordination and cooperation with all interested organizations and entities that share our primary goal, that is, sustainable development, blue and circular economy, good neighborly relations and regional understanding".

The aim of the conference, organized with the support of the new Black Sea Assistance Mechanism (BSAM), was to mobilize regional stakeholders in the complex process of identifying flagship projects supporting the CMA. Three thematic sessions were held on: coastal and maritime tourism; maritime transport and fisheries and aquaculture. Digitalization and circular economy were included in all three thematic sessions as essential transversal drivers to boost sustainable activities while enhancing resilience.

Two ideas that emerged from the thematic sessions were to try to create a 'Black Sea Brand' on Eco-tourism within the Black Sea Marine Protected Area and a network of 'Green Ports' in the Black Sea. On litter, the conference was told that Covid-19 had made the problem of plastic pollution in the Black Sea a lot worse and it needed urgent action.

The Republic of Turkey will take over the coordination role of the CMA for 2021.