

This project has received funding from the *European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme* under grant agreement No 727453



Coordination and Support Action

Horizon 2020 - BG-13-2016

Grant Agreement 727453

Task 5.3 – Ambassadors of the BLUEMED

D5.6. Ambassadors' activities report

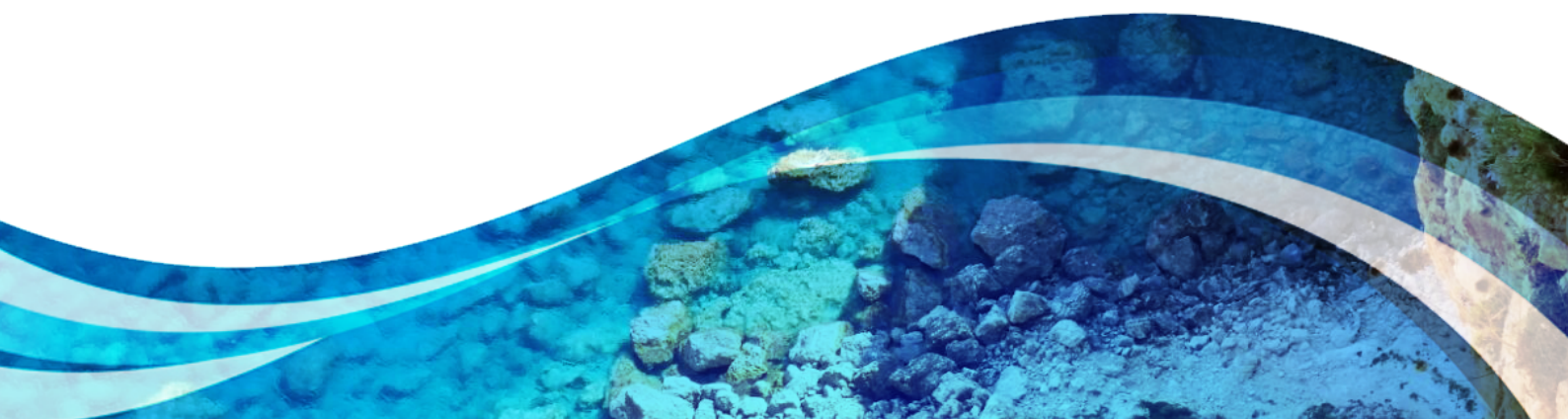
Due date of deliverable: month 45

Actual submission date: month 54

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Project Full title		BLUEMED	
Project Acronym		BLUEMED	
Grant Agreement No.		727453	
Coordinator		Fabio Trincardi - CNR (Italy)	
Project start date and duration		01-10-2016 (54 months)	
Project website		www.bluedmed-initiative.eu	
Deliverable Nr.	D5.6	Deliverable Date	Month 54
Work Package No		5	
Work Package Title		The Global Med	
Responsible		Vassiliki Vassilopoulou (HCMR)	
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Status:		Final (F)	
		Draft (D)	
		Revised draft (RV)	
Dissemination level:		Public (PU)	X
		Confidential, only for members of the consortium (CO)	

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BlueMed Ambassadors' Programme was implemented under Task 5.3 of the BlueMed CSA EC funded project supporting the intergovernmental *BlueMed R&I Initiative for blue jobs and growth in the Mediterranean area* (www.blued-med-initiative.eu/). The objective was to engage and coach a group of highly-motivated young people from non-EU Mediterranean countries, to share the BlueMed vision in their contexts and set the grounds for the development of a pan-Mediterranean network of 'BlueMed Ambassadors'. The network's aim would be to promote the project's research-based vision and approach to a sustainable Blue Economy at the Mediterranean scale and beyond.

Hence, following a recruitment call, five BlueMed Young Communication Ambassadors (BYCAs), from Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey, were selected, and trained on the different aspects of the challenges identified by BlueMed CSA, as the most relevant to be addressed in their countries. In coordination with the BlueMed Pilot, issues related to marine litter were of focal importance to all their plans. Their training, though, did not limit to the scientific perspective, but it was conceived as markedly interdisciplinary, and included high-quality sessions on science diplomacy and science communication.

Another structural pillar of their involvement with BlueMed was their participation to international events of the Blue community, where they were able to share knowledge, experiences and visions and built an intense network of exchanges with their peers, including the Ambassadors of other Basins.

Their mandate was structured around the planning and realisation of suitable actions, mainly pertinent to marine litter prevention, mitigation and removal. The actions were targeted to shed light on the complex political, socio-economic, cultural and behavioural dimensions of the problem, with the final aim of achieving a real change in the Mediterranean coastal communities' practices. Their projects are described in the BYCAs' Action Plans, reported below.

Beach clean-ups, educational initiatives (particularly for young children) and communication campaigns focused on the need to cut down plastics waste: all actions were planned and realised in relation to the country-specific and local contexts. The Ambassadors really succeeded in joining local to global dimensions in their actions, realising initiatives and campaigns able to speak to local contexts while retaining the breath and up-to-datedness of the reflections shared among the international community of scholars and practitioners.

However, due to the pandemic outbreak, part of their plans had to be cancelled, and in fact in one of the cases (Egypt), the launch of the campaign was not possible. On the other hand, the imposed lockdowns favoured communication activities using digital platforms, and hence a major effort on behalf of the BYCAs pertained to reaching out to audiences in their countries through social media. Then, limited physical events with targeted stakeholder groups were held only in Tunisia and in Algeria. Furthermore, via digital conferencing tools the BYCAs could anyway take part to the international scientific events linked with the BlueMed CSA Actions.

Hence, although the activities implemented by the BYCAs deviated from the original Action Plans due to the COVID 19 pandemic, they showed a capacity to reflexively adapt to the new context, exploiting the available opportunities. In fact, digital products like videos and infographics, coupled with social media communication activities can enable the motivation of people promoting youth engagement in eco-friendly actions. The Ambassadors managed to reach out to wide audiences in non-EU countries and shared important contents about the Marine Litter (ML) problem and beyond, in a “One Ocean” perspective of co-responsibility. What is more, they also shared their energetic approach in communicating the need to act co-ordinately and urgently to defend the Mediterranean, and the Oceans as a whole.

Indeed, empowering youth with the appropriate knowledge on global challenges and with an adequate interdisciplinary vision facilitated their becoming agents of change, able to enhance awareness in the wider communities they live in and interact with. The experience from BYCA programme shows that highly-motivated young people with a robust communication strategy at national level can reach out to groups of actors from academia, industry public bodies, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) and citizen associations and drive behavioural changes. These local voices and actions can be united under the auspices of international projects (such as BlueMed CSA) and international fora (eg. Union for the Mediterranean - UfM, United Nation Environment Programme - UNEP) for triggering international attention and ensuring applicability and effectiveness of approaches beyond national borders, supporting science diplomacy initiatives related to tackling international/global challenges.

INTRODUCTION: ENGAGING TO BECOME AGENTES OF CHANGE, A CONTRIBUTION TO SCIENCE DIPLOMACY

The landscape of all BYCAs activities was conceived as rooted to the concept of 'science diplomacy'. As such, they are centred in promoting collaboration and harmony in international relations under the universal umbrella of science and research that offers an opportunity to work together in a spirit of solidarity with other countries.

Recently, the science diplomacy approach has gained relevance and attention in the political and scholarly debate, e.g., regarding the aim to achieve long-term, sustainable, development through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, during the last year the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak showed how promoting scientific collaborations and applying the best resources in R&D, in order to resolve the most pressing challenges of globalization, is the only viable option to succeed.

In this vein, the BYCAs efforts focused on promoting how scientific research and innovation actions, stemming from the BlueMed vision and actions, can help address the international/global policy/environmental issues, as pollution knows no borders and thus requires a collective effort to control it.

Indeed, their communication and engagement actions, based on the BlueMed CSA scientific outcomes, were oriented to taking personal responsibility in being agents of change in their home countries. This was achieved by addressing stakeholder groups from different arenas, advocating about the common problems of the Mediterranean and on the potential options to tackle them. In this sense, their actions were at once grounded in country-specific, local contexts as well as possessing a supra-national horizon. For example, marine litter, being a global problem, requires global solutions as no country will be able to solve it on its own; nonetheless any solution will work to the extent by which each and every actor of ML generation and dispersion will change its habits.

Hence, although partly readapted due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the BYCAs Programme opened a fruitful path for the future, supporting science diplomacy efforts related to the common challenges in the Mediterranean basin.

All the updated information on the BlueMed Young Communication Ambassadors and on their activities, including the follow-up after the end of the project (via the embedded social feed), is available at: www.blued-med-initiative.eu/the-young-communication-ambassadors/.

THE YOUNG BLUEMED COMMUNICATION AMBASSADORS PROGRAMME: SELECTION, TRAINING AND ACTION PLAN PROPOSALS

The Young BlueMed Communication Ambassadors, selected upon coordination with national delegates to the BlueMed Initiative, are five highly motivated young people from the BlueMed non-EU countries: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. Their Task has been primarily to advocate about the BlueMed vision and actions, which are crucial for the realization of sustainable Blue Growth in the Mediterranean. In this way they had the chance to truly act as protagonists for the development of a shared science diplomacy effort across the basin, by addressing key socio-economic challenges through high quality R&I and transnational collaboration, as pursued by the BlueMed Initiative.

The selection. The five BYCAs have been selected in close cooperation with the BlueMed Delegates following a recruitment call, and they have a diverse background (Table 1).

The training. Right after their selection in July 2019, they undertook a training period aiming to familiarize them with the BlueMed SRIA concepts, the relevant BlueMed goals and activities, was also enriched with high-level sessions on science communication theories and tools, and on the basics of science diplomacy, and especially with the holistic, interdisciplinary BlueMed's approach to these themes to ground their mandate. The BYCAs main training event was held in Barcelona in October 2019 at UfM premises. The event was key to introduce the BYCA to the issues of concern with the added value of invited experts¹. These experts included Marga Gual Soler an International Science Diplomacy Advisor who explained Science Diplomacy and its importance as well as Lucille Guiheneuf (SPC-RAC), Salud Deudero (IEO) and Nikos Streftaris (HCMR) who explained the Marine Litter issues. In addition, the timing spent during the training encouraged network building by means of informal interaction, especially considering the travel bans that followed.

In terms of methodology, the co-design approach of the activities and format of engagement events has been promoted since the very beginning. As regard the topics tackled, they were particularly engaged with the issues posed by marine litter (ML), which is a major environmental and socio-economic challenge across the Mediterranean, and was thus the focus of the BlueMed Pilot Action for a Plastic-free, Healthy Mediterranean Sea and of the BlueMed e-training course.

The focus on ML was chosen in total synergy with activities within the BlueMed Pilot Action and the BlueMed e-training course, considering that ML is a common and very important problem in the Mediterranean, imposing basin-wide socio-economic challenges that definitely need high quality R&I and at the same time transnational and interdisciplinary collaboration to be tackled. Moreover, no change is likely to happen if not coupled with an increased awareness by all the actors connected to the generation and release into the environment of ML. Anyway, the special focus on this specific issue

¹ Full e-training Agenda is included in the Annexes of Deliverable 5.5

didn't prevent them from tackling the challenges related to the development of a sustainable Blue Economy in their specific contexts, in a complex and holistic perspective.

In addition to the targeted event, their training included the 11 e-course lessons organised in the framework of the Bluemed Pilot Action for a Healthy Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea. Through the courses the BYCAs were able to gain combined knowledge from experts on ML pollution and the Blue Economy, as well as a focus on ocean literacy and citizens' engagement, in order to obtain a holistic understanding on practices, impacts and possible solutions regarding ML.

Table 1: The BlueMed Ambassadors' portraits and background.



Inès Boujmil

BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Tunisia

BSc in Geosciences and MSc in Geomatics/spatial analysis



Mustafa Ghazal

BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Egypt

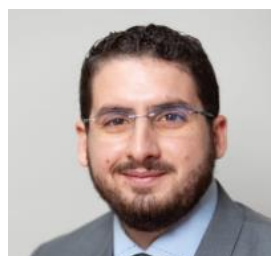
BSc in Chemistry / Biochemistry and MSc in Chemistry



Deniz Yapılcan

BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Turkey

BSc in Communication; videomaker.



Badr El Mahradi

BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Morocco

BSc in Geological & Earth Sciences; M.Eng. in Hydroinformatics; Msc in Water & Coastal management; Msc Environmental Assessment and Management, and Advanced Master in Sustainable Blue Growth



Fella Moualek

BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Algeria

BSc in Marine Environment and MSc in Environment

Action Plans drafting and development. The Ambassadors were asked, throughout the training period, to reflect on how the knowledge and experiences they were gaining could become the core of communication/action initiatives able to achieve the desired socio-political, cultural and behavioural change in their local contexts; to this end, and with the objective of realising a real bi-directional exchange with their contexts, they were asked as a preliminary step to collect and share a snapshot of their countries' most perceived issues related to the development of a sustainable Blue Economy, and to envisage actions to tackle these.

In October 2019, during the two-days targeted training event in Barcelona (Spain), the BYCAs' draft communication Action Plans (APs), with their proposals on the communication approaches they would pursue in their countries, were presented, discussed and further elaborated with the help of the course trainers and of the BlueMed CSA management and communication groups.

In January 2020, in the frame of the Venice BlueMed Pilot Action event (back-to-back with the UNESCO Ocean Decade event), the BYCAs' Action Plans² were finalized and shared with the participants to the event.

The central goal of all the APs was to enhance the shared awareness regarding this common problem in the Mediterranean, basing on the most up-to-date knowledge, and to build networks amongst different actor groups, involving also the citizenry, for inspiring actions pertinent to ML prevention, mitigation, removal, and ultimately achieve a socio-political, cultural and behavioural change of Mediterranean coastal communities.

The solutions that were promoted involved beach clean-ups, education initiatives (particularly with kids and teens), communication campaigns focused on the need to cut down plastics waste, and especially single-use plastics, pursuing a paradigm change pinned on considering plastics a renewable resource that needs to be disposed of correctly and recycled, and no more just a waste.

The Ambassadors succeeded, in their Plans, to carefully adapt to the respective local and national contexts, promoting a Quadruple Helix approach in relation to the interactions among stakeholders, targeting the public sector, the academia, the industry (mainly fishery representatives) and the citizenry. In particular, according to the Algerian Ambassador's AP, the targeted stakeholder groups were fishers, students, policy makers and citizens; the Tunisian Ambassador's APs focused on the policy sector, local authorities, the industrial sector, and the research institutes; the Turkish Ambassador proposed to reach out mainly to the general public of the country; the Moroccan Ambassador's AP targeted NGOs, universities, and policy makers; the Egyptian Ambassador's AP focused on fishery policy makers, the education sector, as well as on young researchers and early carrier scientists.

Due to the global pandemic crisis in 2020, part of these ambitious and exciting plans described in the BYCAs' APs had to be rescheduled, rethought or cancelled, and only the actions that could be adapted to the prevailing conditions in each of the countries

² We don't include here the Ambassadors' Action Plans, since they were object of a detailed description in D5.5

were actually realized. In fact, in one of the cases (Egypt), due to the lockdown measures, outreach capacities to different stakeholder groups were very limited, as they were based on physical events, and the whole campaign had to be cancelled. Indeed, the imposed lockdowns favoured communication activities using digital platforms, and hence a major effort on behalf of the BYCAs pertained to reaching out to audiences in their countries through social media (especially Twitter, where they published material with the hashtag #BlueMed(country)). Physical events, although fewer than those originally planned and adapted to the sanitary requirements, were held in Tunisia and in Algeria.

Moreover, an important part of the BYCAs activity was to participate to events organised by BlueMed CSA, often in stimulating international contexts, either physically (e.g. the BlueMed Pilot Action event held in Venice in January 2020) or virtually (e.g. the BlueMed #OneMediterranean conference in February 2021), where they shared their visions and activities.

In the following two sections of this report, the BYCAs communication actions in their countries, as well as their activities related to advocating about BlueMed in international events are presented, with the objective of sharing the lessons learned from this important effort coupling youth empowerment and science diplomacy, with the potential to tackle international/global problems, such as those stemming from marine litter.

The Ambassadors' communication actions in their countries

Communication Activities in Algeria

Fella Moualek

The Algerian BYCA organized and participated in a number of actions in her country, targeting various audiences. Her project aimed at raising awareness among sea users (Fishermen, Future Fishermen, Students, Policy makers, Citizens) about the dangers of sea plastic dumping and the importance to reduce its upstream consumption.

Her activities ranged from beach clean-up campaigns to children education through the creation of an animated graphics video.

All her activities were showcased on her social media account (<https://twitter.com/FellaMoualek>), and retweeted by the BlueMed account, for reaching wider audiences.

Environmental Education Activities

The Algerian BYCA participated to events organized by the *Centre National de Recherche en Pêche et Aquaculture* (CNRDPA) for the World Fish Migratory day to raise awareness on the problems of migratory fish and free-flowing rivers, and how these are connected to human actions and especially Marine Litter (Figure 1).



Figure 1: A photo of activities with school kids realised by the BlueMed Algerian Young Ambassador Fella Moualek.

Beach cleaning campaigns

The Algerian BYCA also organized a number of beach cleaning campaigns in her country, where the BlueMed plogging bags were used to collect beach litter, as part of her action plan to enhance awareness in civil society and promote the BlueMed Young Ambassadors notion that “Pollution has no VISA” (Figure 2).



Figure 2: A photo of a young girl using the BlueMed plogging bag to collect beach litter in the frame of one of the beach cleaning campaigns that were realized by the BlueMed Algerian Young Ambassador Fella Moualek.

Infographic and animated video on plastic pollution and use reduction

Using all the knowledge gained throughout the project, regarding not only the issues of plastic pollution but also the power of images and of clear-cut graphical representations for increasing understanding and enhancing awareness, the Algerian BYCA prepared a clear and accessible infographic (Figure 3) on the need to reduce plastic use.

She also authored and produced a catchy video in animated graphics (Figure 4), with the support of a professional agency, especially suitable for digital dissemination on web portals and social media, in order to share the BlueMed message for reducing the diverse sources of pollution in the Mediterranean, and especially plastic litter.

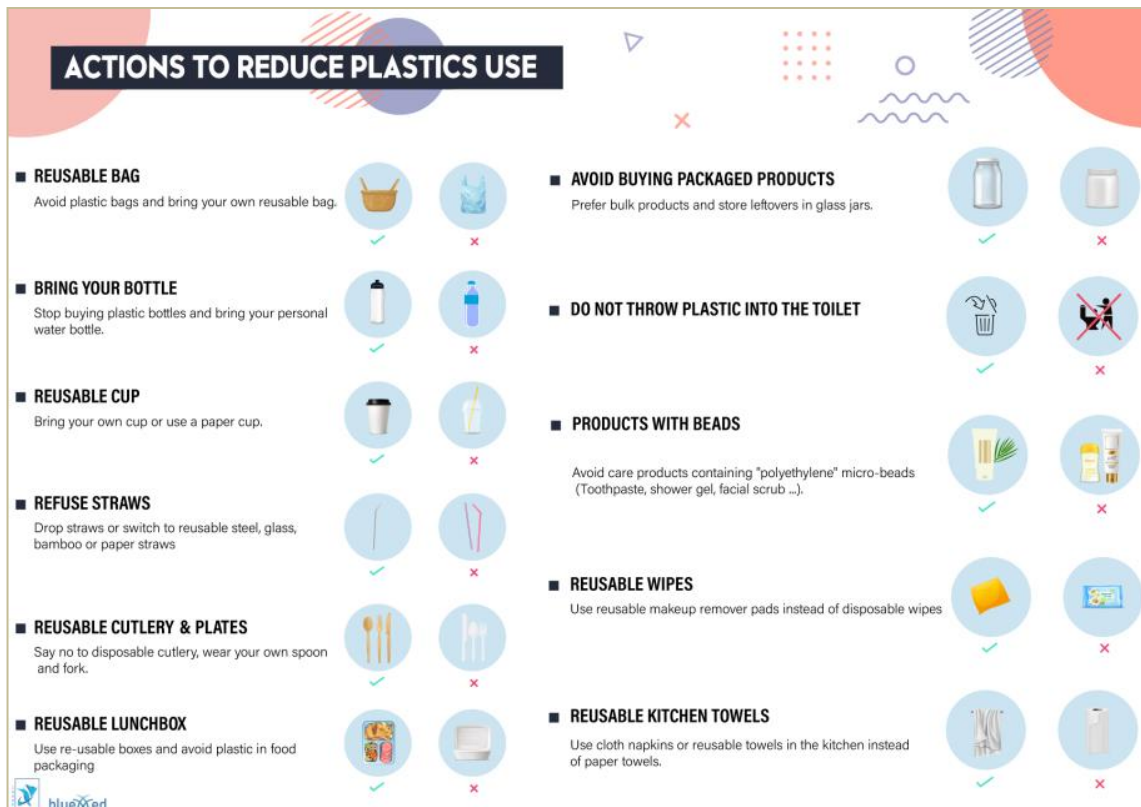


Figure 3: The infographics on plastic use reduction prepared by the Algerian Ambassador Fella Moualek.

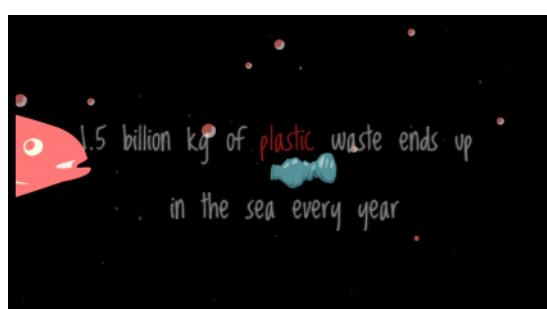
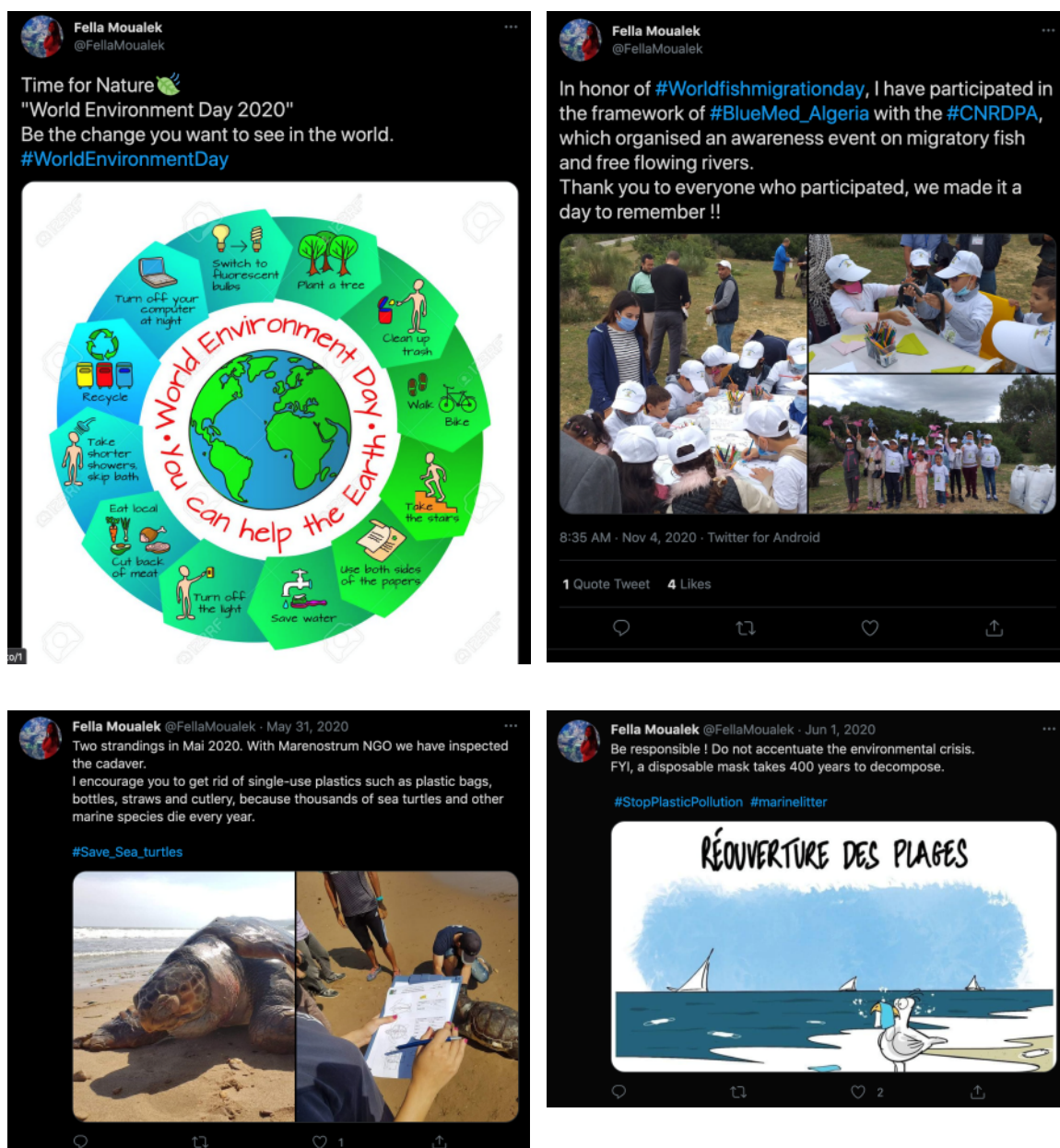


Figure 4: Some screenshots from the animated graphics video on marine litter produced by Fella Moualek.

Communication via social media

Fella's communication to wider audiences was especially focused on social campaigns, reporting activities, experiences and also personal thoughts regarding the BlueMed core interests on the Health of the Mediterranean Sea. Her social campaigning activity intensified especially during the lockdown periods, when she took the opportunity to show also how individual activities, like walks on the beach, could trigger a change in collecting plastic rubbish and launching an awareness-raising campaign via digital communication (Figure 5).

Sharing on social media was also a chance to support the establishing of network among blue actors by means of likes and retweets of posts by ocean-related institutions all around the world.



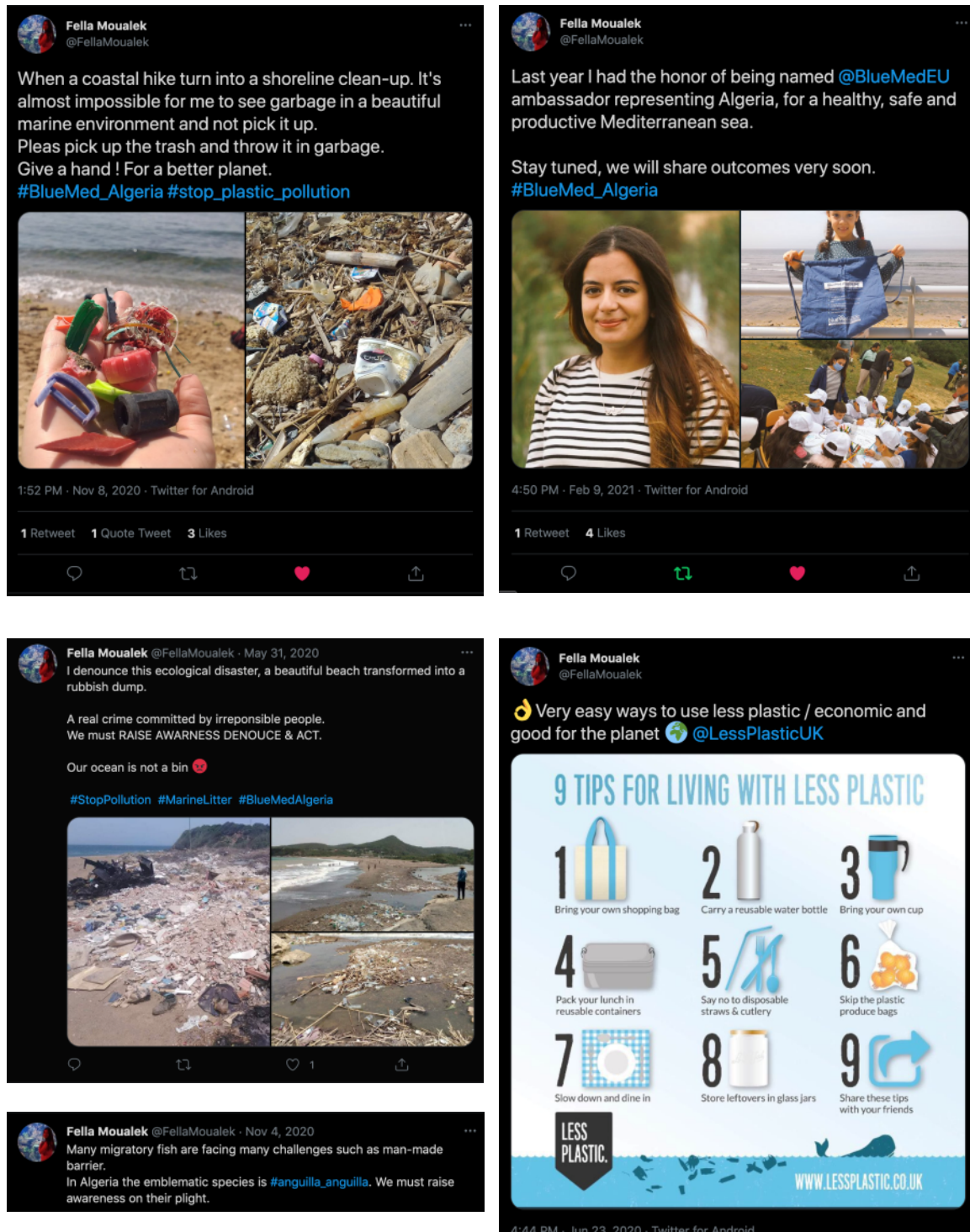


Figure 5: Some posts on Twitter realised by the BlueMed Algerian Ambassador Fella Moualek, in the frame of her social communication activity.

Communication Activities in Turkey

Deniz Yapilcan

Deniz's project was aiming to effectively conveying the message that plastic is a non-biodegradable material, constantly accumulating, inseparable from nutrition for the animals, chemically harmful to human health, highly produced. Her intention was to show how much people's awareness of the problem is poor.

Being a professional video-maker, as well as a sea lover since her childhood and an expert scuba-diver, she planned the realisation of a professional video set on a Turkish beach and including underwater footages.

She also realized beach cleaning campaigns and she was very active on the social media communication.

[Video clip on the effects of marine litter pollution on Turkish beaches: script and storyboard](#)

As mentioned, the Turkish BYCA as a media and video expert as well as a scuba diver had decided to promote the BlueMed message that "pollution has no VISA" by the creation of an underwater documentary.

The concept of her video was focused on establishing a harsh comparison between a happy scene of beach party, full of single-use plastics items, and an underwater scene in the same beach showing the impact of all such plastics, e.g., floating in water or twisted around seahorses, fishes and algae.

Deniz planned the video and realised both script and storyboard, as well as took the first contacts to actually shoot the video and diffuse it on public mobility transportations in Istanbul (hence potentially reaching high numbers of viewers). She also engaged in collecting and washing used single-item plastics from cafes and restaurants, in order not to generate more plastic pollution to shoot the video.

However, the mobility constraints imposed during the pandemic in Turkey forced her to postpone the documentary shooting session to a time with fewer limitations.

[Beach cleaning campaigns](#)

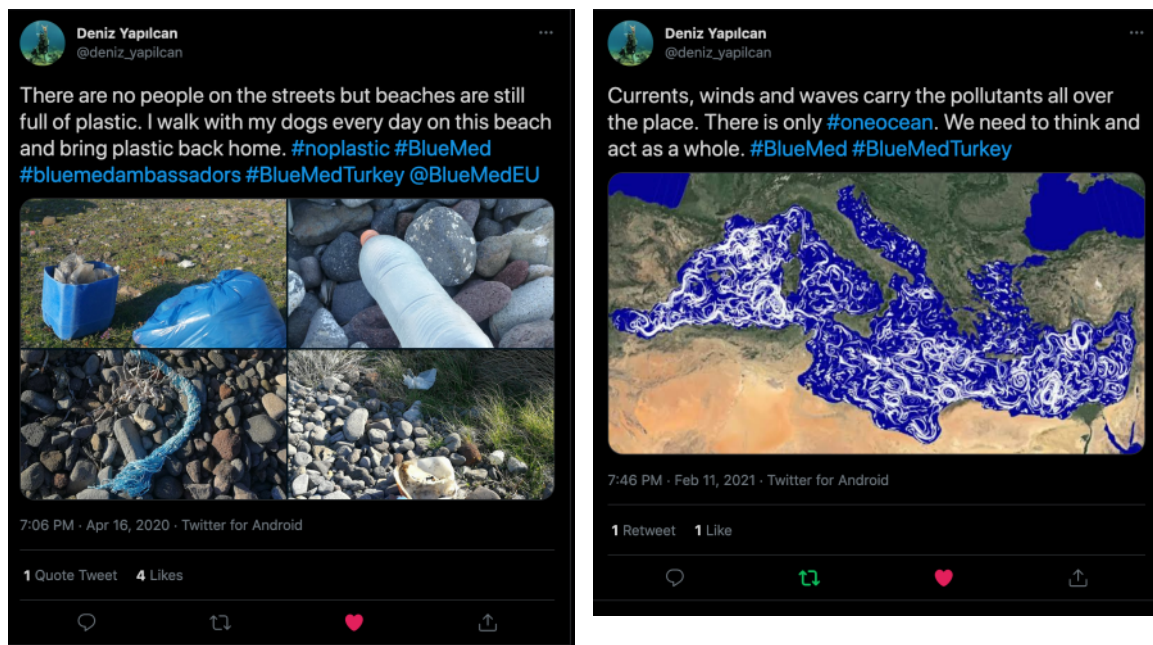
The Turkish BYCA has planned a number of beach clean-up campaigns in her country, however due to social distancing constraints imposed in Turkey during the pandemic crisis, also these activities were not fully developed, but realised adapting to the situation. For example, as visible in the tweets below (Figure 6 and Figure 7), she turned to individual walks on the beach, still allowed by the Turkish anti-COVID measures, and she enhanced their communication via social networks, as an awareness raising initiative.



Figure 6: Social Media Post regarding of the Beach Cleanup campaigns in Turkey using Bluemed plogging bag.

Social communication activity

The Turkish BYCA has been very active in posting experiences, pictures and comments on social media, aiming to trigger the attention of her followers and through them of larger groups of the wider public (Figure 7).



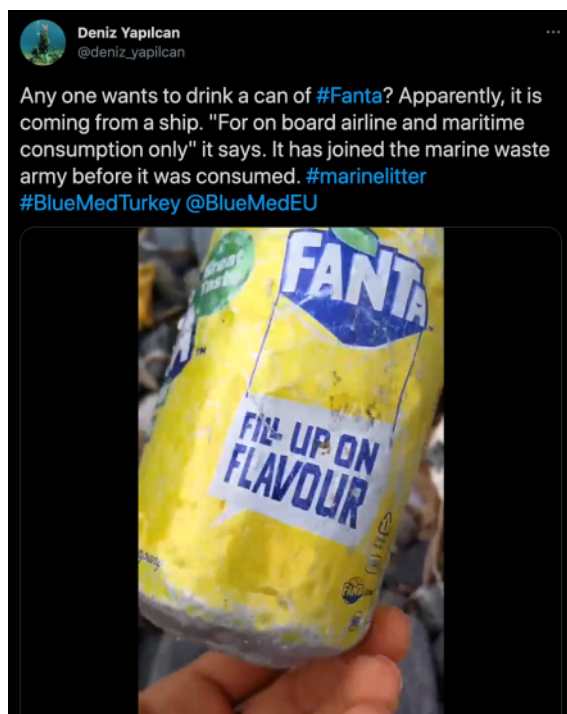
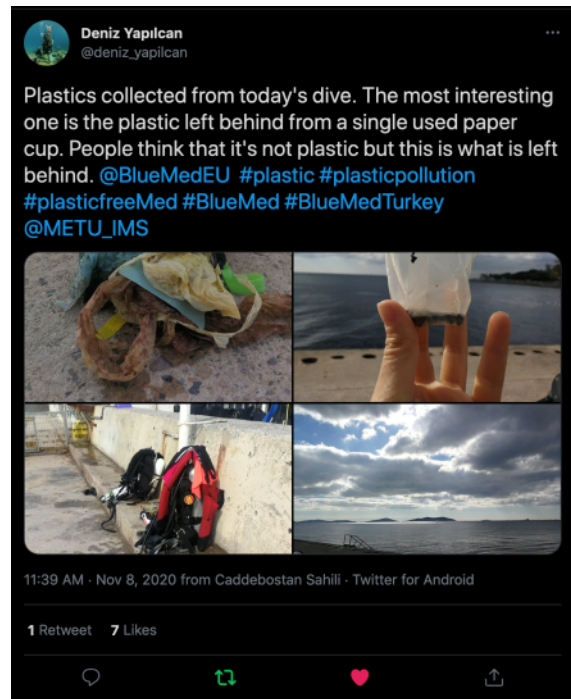


Figure 7: Some social media posts realised by the BlueMed Turkish Ambassador, Deniz Yapilcan, in the frame of her social communication activity.

Communication Activities in Morocco

Badr El Mahrad

Badr's Action Plan focused on the organisation of regional "Training of trainers", somehow structuring a network of local BlueMed Ambassadors, in order to trigger a multiplier effect in the country, and on round tables (e.g., during University Open days) between NGOs related to Blue Growth, Researchers, Universities, Policy makers and start-up incubators.

Given their intrinsic physical nature of the planned actions and the fact that they were planned to be realised along 2020, these activities in Morocco had to be postponed due to the pandemic limitations. Anyway, he managed to realise a beach cleaning campaign, which we report below.

Thus, the main effort of the Moroccan BYCA moved to sharing his knowledge and experiences, as well as the BlueMed vision, during international conferences and events, where he was very active, either participating physically (before the start of the sanitary crisis) or virtually (see below the section "The Ambassadors' communication actions in international events").

Beach cleaning campaign

The Moroccan Ambassador, notwithstanding the limitations due to COVID-19, managed to organize a beach cleaning campaign, realising impactful pictures that he subsequently employed in various contexts to visually convey the message regarding coastal plastic pollution and the wrong interplay between human activities and the environment (Figure 8).

The pictures indeed focused on one side on the harsh friction between the measures taken for the pandemic emergency (the sign in Arabic) and the indifference for the other emergency posed by plastic litter; on the other side, images showing cars parked amidst water, because of the tide rise convey, an effective impression of how the anthropic pressure on environment is too invasive and what are the potentially destructive consequences.





Figure 8: Some impactful pictures from the clean-up campaign realised by the Moroccan Ambassador Badr El Mahrad.

Social communication activity

The social channels were among the most employed tools to overcome the limitations imposed by COVID-19, and the Moroccan Ambassador shared on his account both reports on BlueMed-related challenges and personal experiences and reflections (Figure 9).

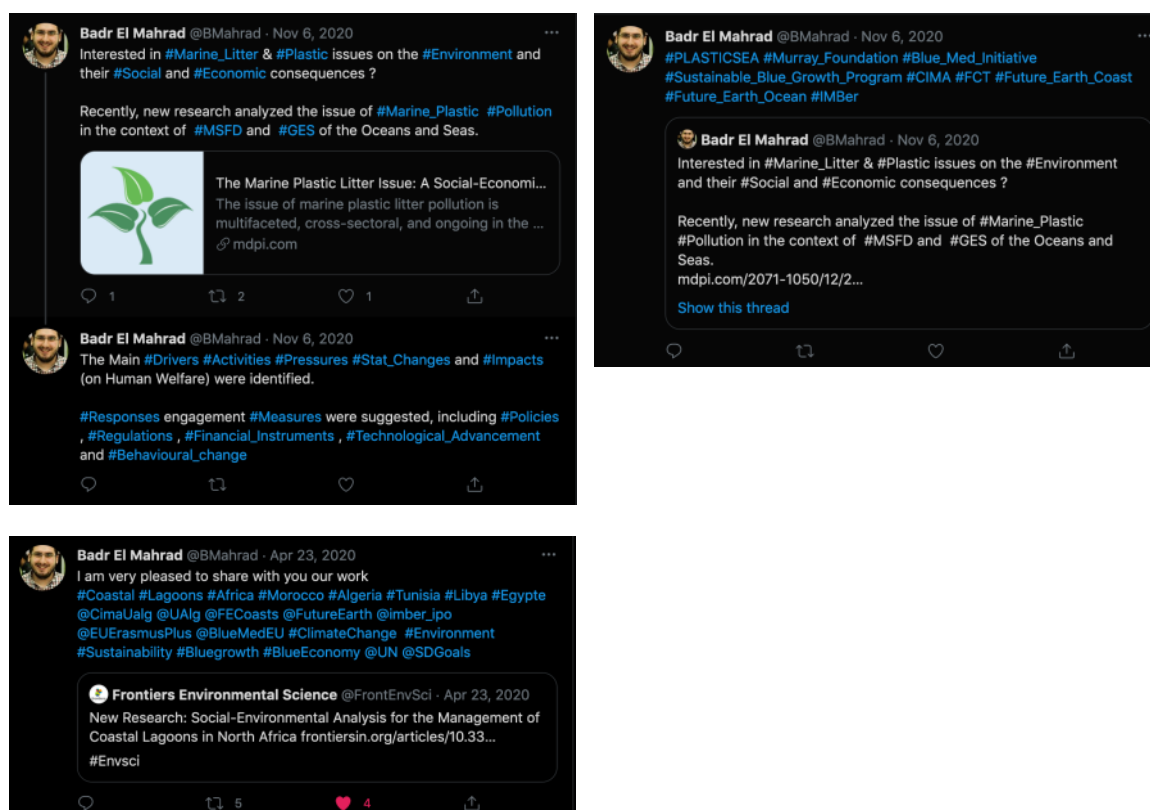


Figure 9: A selection of posts from the Moroccan Ambassador (other posts in the section below devoted to participation to international conferences).

Communication Activities in Tunisia

Inès Boujmil

The Tunisian BYCA, capitalizing on the knowledge gained throughout her BlueMed training, as well on her educational background, decided to focus her communication efforts in connecting local practices with plastic pollution and the loss of traditional knowledge regarding fishing techniques, realizing in this way an original junction between local practices and reflections and high-level discussions happening in the scholarly and policy community.

This was achieved by preparing a documentary explaining the effects of exchanging traditional handcrafted palm-leaf fish traps with plastic fish traps, a practice that has affected the lives of traditional handcraft workers, as well as marine biodiversity, since in many cases the plastic traps are left behind causing significant plastic pollution.

In addition to the video-documentary the Tunisian BYCA was also very active with beach clean-up campaigns and social media reporting.

Video documentary on plastic pollution: “The story behind the ‘ghost’ plastic traps”

Ines’ video documentary, titled “The story behind the ‘ghost’ plastic traps” is centred on the traditional fishing method called ‘charfia’ which takes place on Kerkennah Islands.

In the past, fishers used traps handcrafted with palm leaves, while in the last years these are being replaced by plastic traps. Since in many cases these traps are lost or left behind, plastic pollution becomes an important environmental problem in the area.

The documentary, conceived and authored by Ines, was realised with the support of a professional film-maker agency. Some screenshots from the video are shown below (Figure 10), and the full video can be accessed at the link <https://youtu.be/yTizuSeQyDg>.



Figure 10: Some screenshots from the 'charfia' fishing practice, from the video-documentary produced by Inès Boujmil, the Tunisian BYCA.

Beach cleaning campaigns

The Tunisian Ambassador also organised and participated to a number of beach clean-up campaigns, where she could capitalise on the knowledge gained in BlueMed, coupled with her personal background and with the support of co-organising marine research Institutes and NGOs, to collect and classify beach litter and increase awareness on the issue by taking very meaningful and effective pictures and spreading the campaigns' results on social media (Figure 11 and Figure 13).









Figure 11: Some photos showing beach cleaning activities organized by Inès Boujmil, the Tunisian BYCA.

Chapter on Tunisia in the UN outreach book series “A better world”

The BlueMed Ambassador Inès Boujmil, together with her professor at the Tunisian National Institute of Science and Technologies of the Sea (ISTM), authored a chapter in the book of the series “A better world”, devoted to SDG 14 “Life below water”, promoted by the Human Development Forum, a media organization founded on close collaboration with UN agencies, UN member states and civil sector organisations.

The chapter is focused on the Tunisian “ecosystem approach towards a blue, circular and sustainable economy”, and the BlueMed contribution to the development of this vision is clearly reported at the end of the descriptive parts. The chapter is reported below (

Figure 12) and, together with the whole publication, it is available at the link: <http://digital.tudor-rose.co.uk/a-better-world-vol-6/80/>. The paper was also diffused by Inès on social network, for a greater impact on her network of contacts (Figure 13).

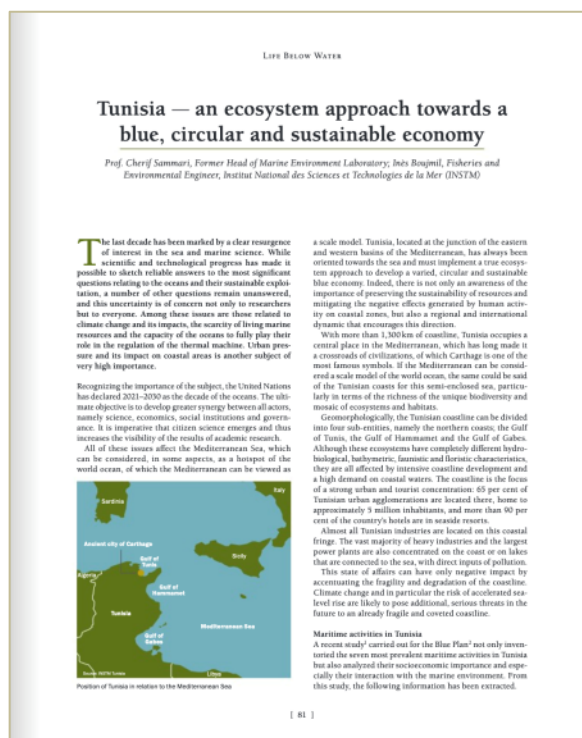
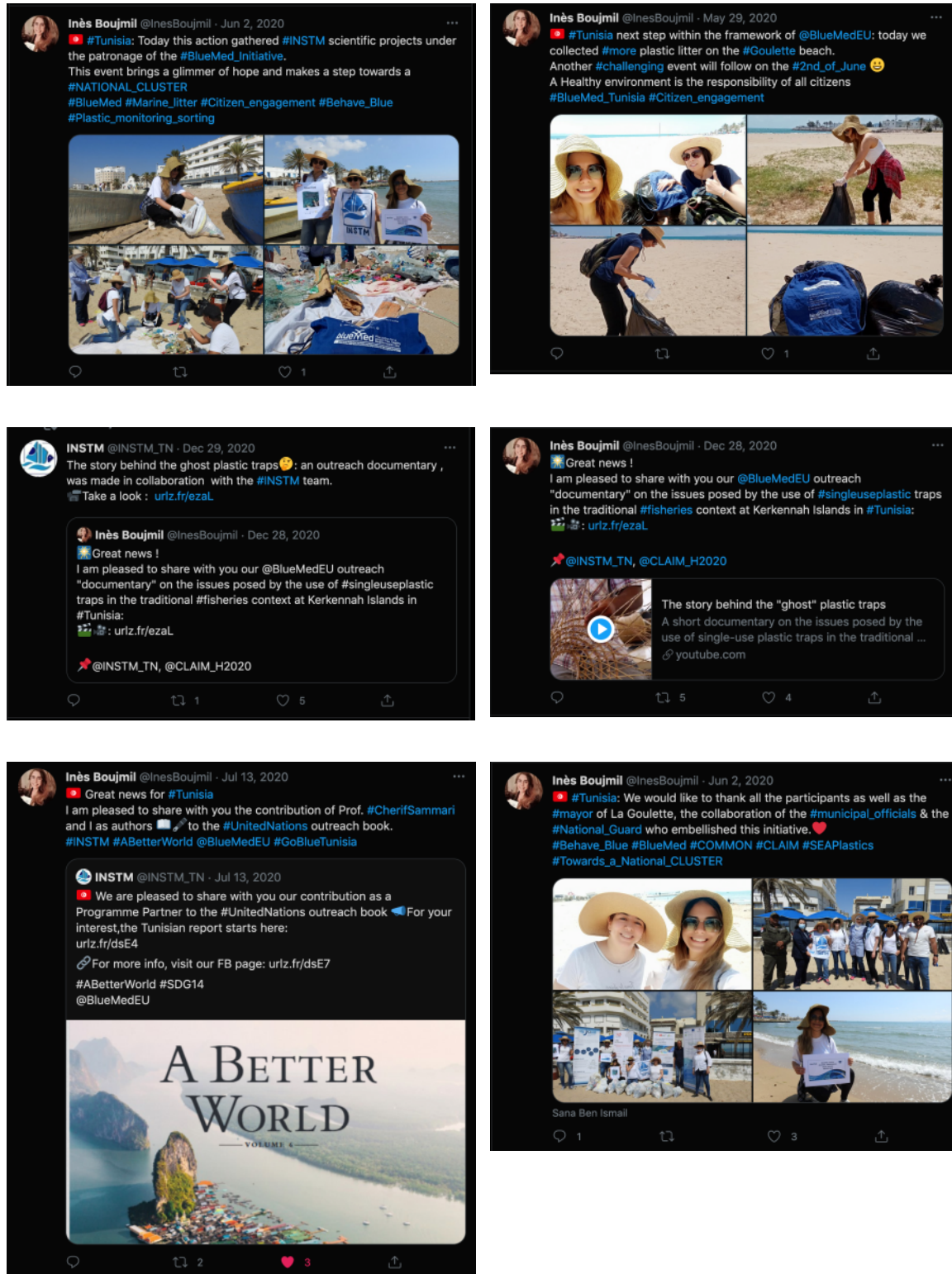




Figure 12: The chapter signed by the BlueMed Ambassador Inès Boujmil in the book of the “A better world” series devoted to SDG 14 “Life below water” by the Human Development Forum, a media organization founded on close collaboration with the UN.

Social communication activity

The Tunisian Ambassadors complemented the described activities with an intense campaign on social media platforms, mainly Twitter, making use of impactful pictures and sharing her personal pushes to action. Selected posts appear in Figure 13.



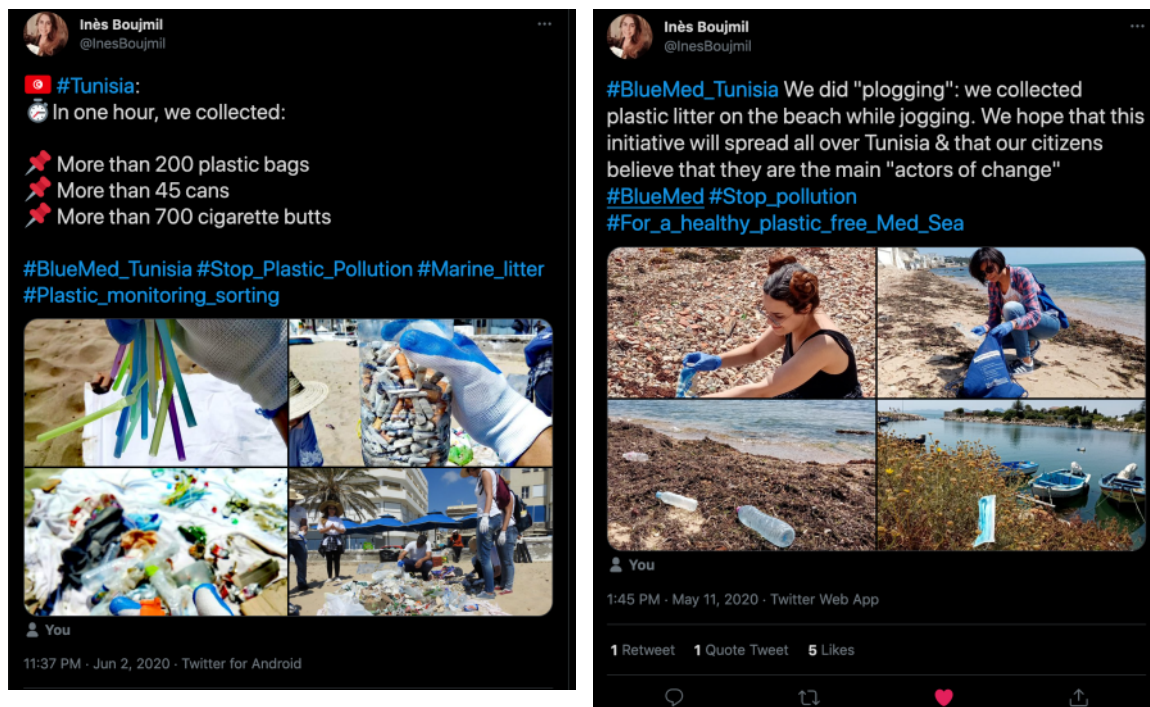


Figure 13: Some posts on Twitter realised by the Tunisian BYCA Inès Boujmil in the frame of her social communication activity.

The Ambassadors' communication actions in international events

A structural pillar of the BYCAs programme was represented by participation to high-level international conferences and events. The Ambassadors had the chance to take part in a number of international events, where they could present their visions and activities under the BlueMed CSA umbrella and exchange experiences and reflections with wider audiences.

These events include the sessions organized by BlueMed CSA in the event devoted to the Pilot Action held in Venice in January 2020, the ESOF 2020 Conference in September 2020, the BlueMed Final Conference in February 2021 (see Annexes I, II, III), but also scientific conferences and events organized by other institutions of the Blue Community, like the 'Connect Black Sea Youth' event, and the 2020 'GT-Water Conference'.

These experiences complement the training received by the Ambassadors, giving them the opportunity to shape a large contact networks in the Blue Community and participate in person the fora, where decisions are shaped and eventually change is taking place. This not only enriched their personal and professional development, but was also conceived to give them an extra-boost of energy in conveying to them the perception that change is possible.

Selected material from these events is presented below, and the contributions of the BlueMed Ambassadors described.

BlueMed Pilot Action Event in the Mediterranean Regional Workshop in Venice (January 2020)

The meeting in Venice was organized back-to-back to the Mediterranean Regional Workshop preparing the UN-Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030. For the BYCA it was an opportunity to present their Action Plans in an advanced stage of development. They selected the coordinated key message "Pollution Needs no Visa" and described the situations of their countries, underlining the specificities and similarities of the plastic litter issues in their respective contexts and explaining how they were planning to address them by organized awareness campaigns and actions.

Below some pictures from the session (Figure 14), a selection of screenshots from their presentations (Figure 15) and a couple of social posts on the event (Figure 16).

The Ambassadors' session received really enthusiastic comments from the audience and the management team attending it.



Figure 14: Some pictures from the Ambassadors' session in the event devoted to the BlueMed Pilot Action in the Mediterranean Regional Workshop in Venice (January 2020).

blueMed

Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Pollution needs no VISA

The BlueMed Young Communication Ambassadors Action Plans

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

Pollution needs no VISA #1

Inès' Action Plan in one tweet:

Industrial pollution in #Tunisia and more precisely in #Gabès is threatening the marine biodiversity !
Let's tackle the #Marine and #Climate #Crisis through #Mitigation & #Adaptation !

Inès Boujmlil
BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Tunisia
BSc in Geosciences
Merg in Fisheries & Marine Environment
& MSc Geomatics applied to Marine Environment

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

Pollution needs no VISA #2

Badr's Action Plan in one tweet:

Saving Moroccan sea at small scale – the white butterfly effect.

Badr El Mahrad
BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Morocco
BSc in Geological & Earth Sciences and MSc in Engineering/hydrodynamics; Water & coastal management; Environmental assessment and management

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

[Nessun titolo]

BIG #THINK BLUE

blueMed

@ Badr El Mahrad

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

[Nessun titolo] déchets solides sur les plages Marocaines

85% des déchets en plastique
+ de 25 déchets par m2
+ de 180 micro-déchets
+ 3 tonnes par m2

TOP 5 des déchets identifiés

- Bouteilles et bouchons en plastique 18%
- Corde et filets de pêche 13%
- Bâtonnets de soufite et coton-tige 10%
- Sacs plastiques «Milk» 9%
- Emballages plastiques 6%

85 %

Plastics

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

Power of future generation on saving our BlueMed

blueMed

@ Badr El Mahrad

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

Pollution needs no VISA #3

Deniz's Action Plan in one tweet:

Human's false needs, creates true pain.

Deniz Yapilcan
BlueMed Y.C. Ambassador in Turkey
BSc in Communication

BlueMed engaging civil societies across the Mediterranean: the young Ambassadors' voices

[Nessun titolo]

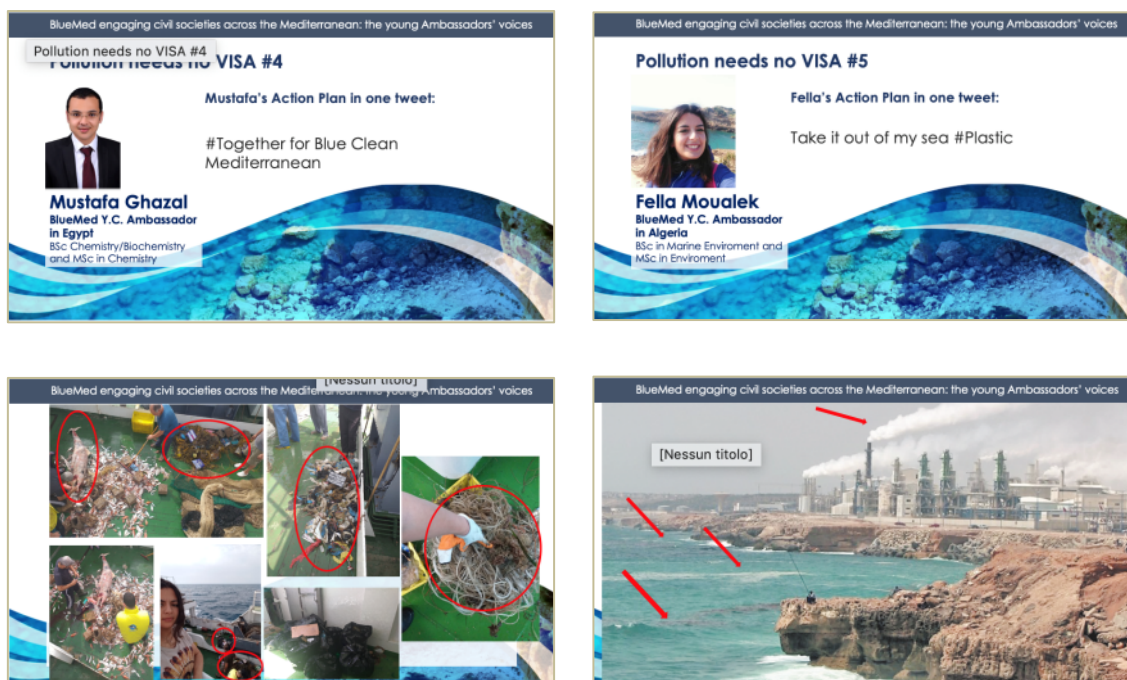


Figure 15: Some screenshots from the Ambassadors' presentations in the event devoted to the BlueMed Pilot Action in the Mediterranean Regional Workshop in Venice (January 2020).



Figure 16: Some Twitter posts related to the Ambassadors' session in the event devoted to the BlueMed Pilot Action in the Mediterranean Regional Workshop in Venice (January 2020).

All-Atlantic Ocean Research Forum (February 2020)

The Moroccan Ambassador Badr El Mahrhad was invited to the All-Atlantic Ocean Research Forum, held in Brussels in February 2020, to bring the voices and experiences of the BlueMed Ambassadors. The Forum in fact was also the occasion to launch the All-Atlantic Ocean Youth Ambassadors Forum.

The Forum, involving leading political and ocean leaders including youth, researchers, entrepreneurs, academics and civil society, was aimed at discussing the future paths of the Alliance, also in connection with the European Green Deal, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the Horizon Europe Mission Healthy Oceans, Seas, Coastal and Inland Waters, and a just transition to a healthy ocean and a climate neutral planet.

Hence, it represented a great opportunity to network with crucial actors of the Blue Economy in the European area and beyond, and start establishing long term interplays with peer Ambassadors from other Basins.

Some social coverage of the event, from the Ambassador himself, but also from other Institutions and personalities, who noticed Badr's speech and diffused it via social, are presented in Figure 17.

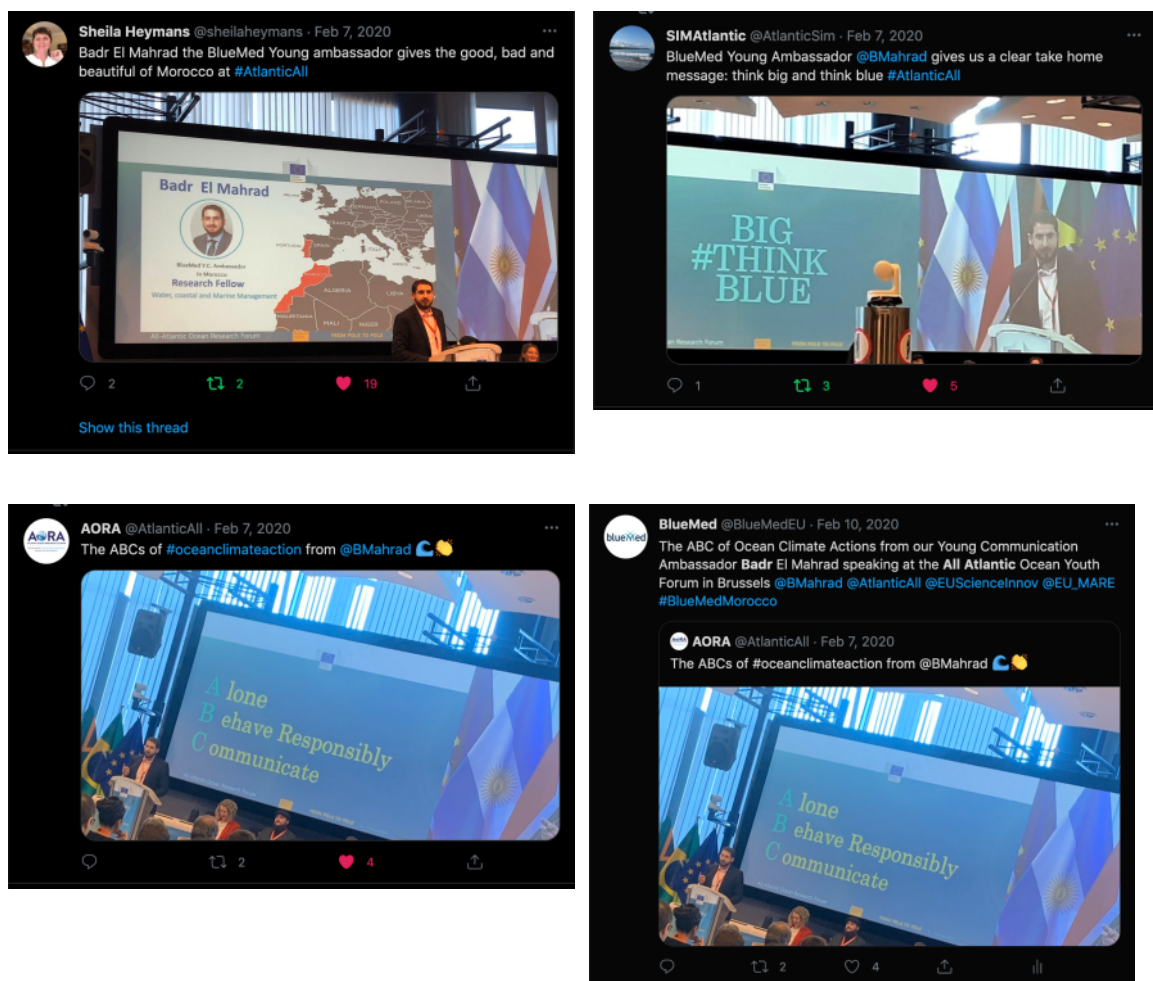


Figure 17: Some social posts regarding the Moroccan Ambassador participation to the All-Atlantic Ocean Research Forum (February 2020).

4th Edition of the International Conference on Geo-IT and Water Resources (March 2020)

The Moroccan Ambassador took the opportunity to advocate for BlueMed key concepts while participating at the 4th Edition of the International Conference on Geo-IT and Water Resources, held in March 2020 in a virtual form due to the pandemic outbreak.

The conference, organised to present the experts' experiences regarding the IT geospatial technologies applied to water management around the Mediterranean, was especially conceived to give participants the opportunity to exchange knowledge and best practices across the Med coastal countries, and thus gave Badr the floor to share the BlueMed's approach to Blue Economy and collect feedbacks from participants.

The participation to the conference was very well covered by the Moroccan Ambassador on social media, as presented in Figure 18.

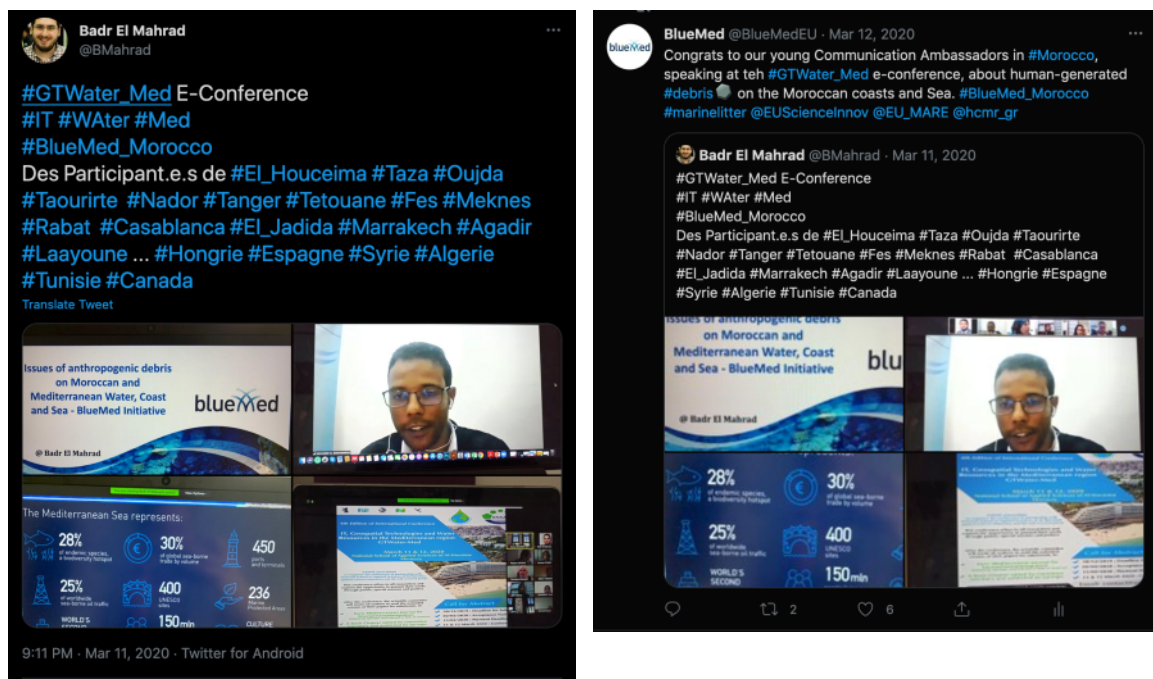




Figure 18: A selection of social posts regarding the participation of the Moroccan Ambassador to the 4th Edition of the International Conference on Geo-IT and Water Resources 2020.

The foreseen speech at the UfM Blue Economy Conference – Thematic Workshop on Marine Litter by the Moroccan BYCA in Barcelona (March 2020) was finally cancelled due to the Pandemic.

Forum Mondial de la Mer Bizerte (July 2020)

The Tunisian Ambassador Inès Boujmil intervened at the third edition of the Forum Mondial de la Mer – Bizerte that was held on July 15, 2020.

This forum brings together, once a year, in the southern coast of the Mediterranean, the most committed personalities for a sustainable maritime development, not only from the economic, scientific, sporting, cultural world, but also from NGOs, foundations, the private sector, international organizations, local authorities or political leaders. Due to the ongoing health crisis, the exchanges took place this year on a videoconference mode, allowing interventions of speakers from around the world.

The BlueMed Tunisian Ambassador presented the BlueMed Initiative in Tunisia, in a joint speech with the Tunisian BlueMed National Delegate Cherif Sammari.

Below are some tweets covering the event (Figure 19).

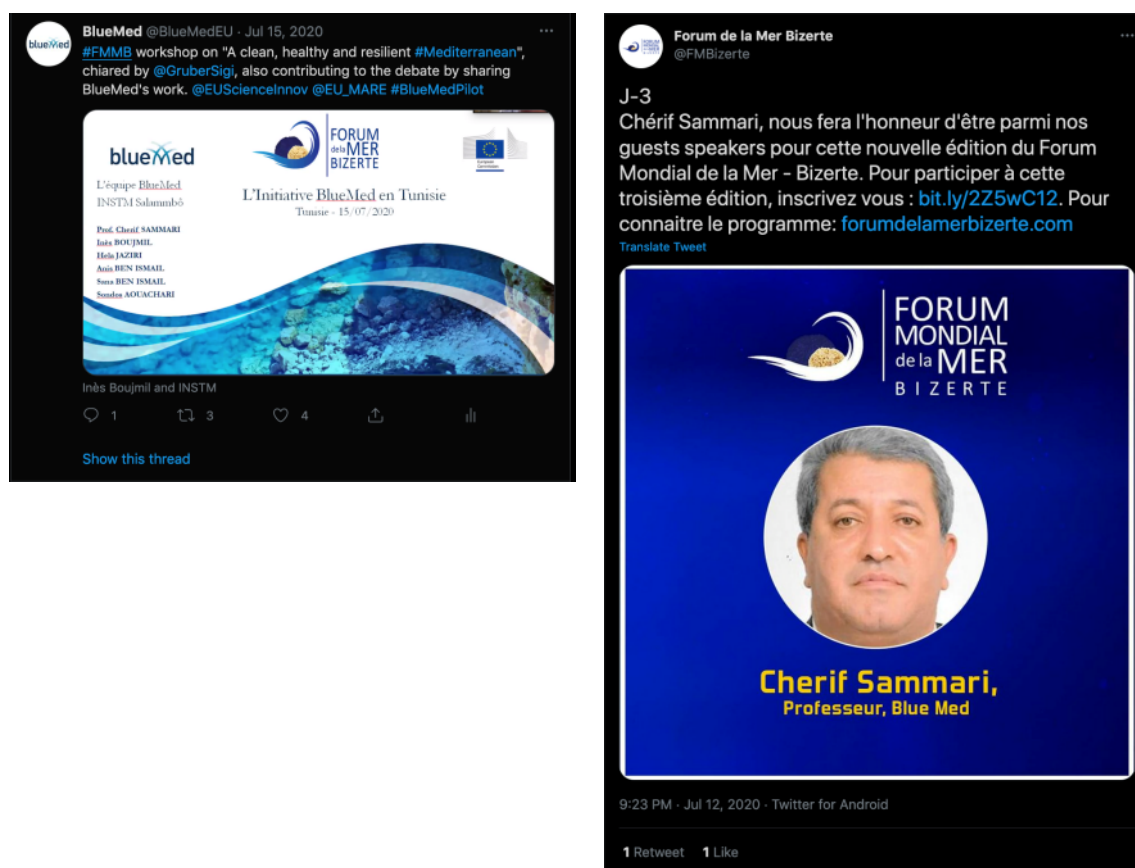


Figure 19: Some tweets related to the participation of the BlueMed Tunisian Ambassador, together with the Tunisian National Delegate Cherif Sammari, to the "Forum Mondial de la Mer Bizerte".

BlueMed e-training session on “Community and Citizen Awareness, Ocean Literacy” (July 2020)

The concluding session of the BlueMed CSA e-training on “Understanding and acting for a Healthy Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea” (<http://www.blued-med-initiative.eu/e-training-course/>) was devoted to exploring the role of citizens as active players in the marine circular economy, towards shared sustainable choices (e.g., marine tourism, food and water consumption, waste management, plastic reduction etc.).

The Tunisian and Moroccan Ambassadors Inès and Badr were invited as panellists to share their experiences so far and present their perspectives on citizens’ engagement. Hence, they were involved in the training, alongside experts and practitioners, as influential and authoritative voices in the field, in a real empowering experience.

The full session, one of the top ten most viewed videos on the BlueMed YouTube channel, is available at: <https://youtu.be/sRLaRgIsiZM>, while a screenshot is provided in Figure 20. Figure 21 reports the social posts by which the Ambassadors promoted among their contacts the participation as panellists to the session.



Figure 20: A screenshot of the BlueMed Ambassadors’ intervention to the BlueMed e-training session on “Community and Citizen Awareness, Ocean Literacy” (July 2020).

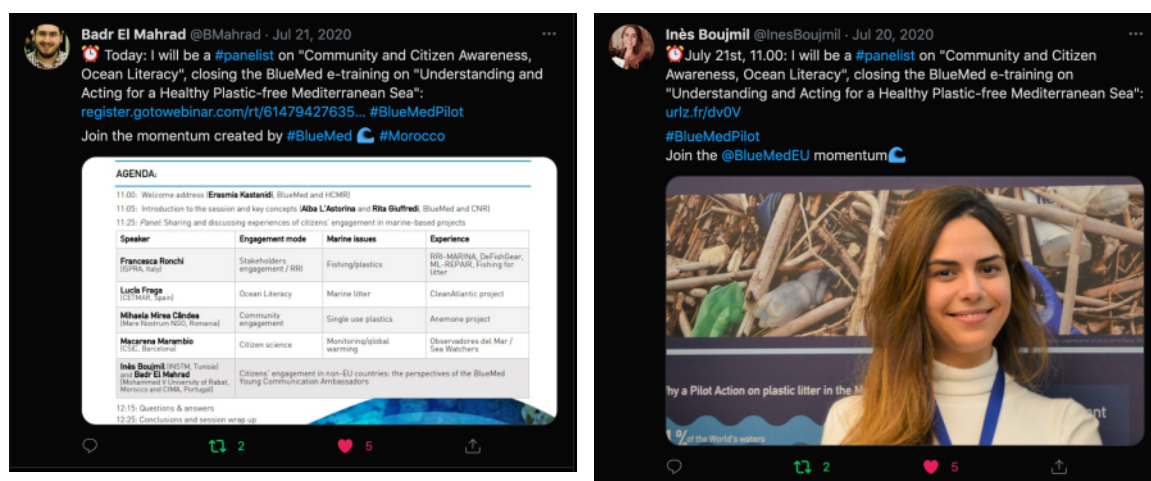


Figure 21: The social posts by the Moroccan and Tunisian Ambassadors, promoting their participation as panelists to the BlueMed e-training session on "Community and Citizen Awareness, Ocean Literacy" (July 2020).

Virtual ESOF Session – SEA SciEnce tea: young voices on the future of the Med Sea" (September 2020)

In September 2020, two BlueMed Ambassadors (Inès Boujmil from Tunisia and Badr El Mahrad from Morocco) participated to the BlueMed session of the EuroScience Open Forum (ESOF), a biennial, pan-European, general science conference dedicated to the latest advancement in scientific research and innovation.

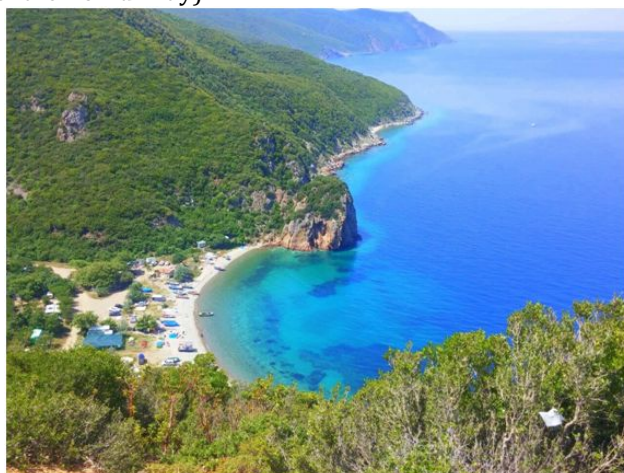
The accepted session proposal, formulated more than one year in advance, focused on a highly innovative panel, making use of artistic means to deliver information and emotional experience of the BlueMed approach to the interactions of the diverse actors of Blue Economy around the Mediterranean. It was conceived as a "Science Tea" (inspired from "Science coffee"), i.e., as an informal event where all participants could sit, have a tea and discuss about the challenges and opportunities at stake.

Unfortunately, the session, titled "SEA Science tea: the BlueMed Ambassadors' perspectives towards a shared governance of the Mediterranean" could not be realised as planned due to the impossibility of realising the planned artistic performances virtually. However, some of the Ambassadors had already prepared a script of the story they intended to narrate in first person at the conference, and we report them below (Box 1 and Box 2).

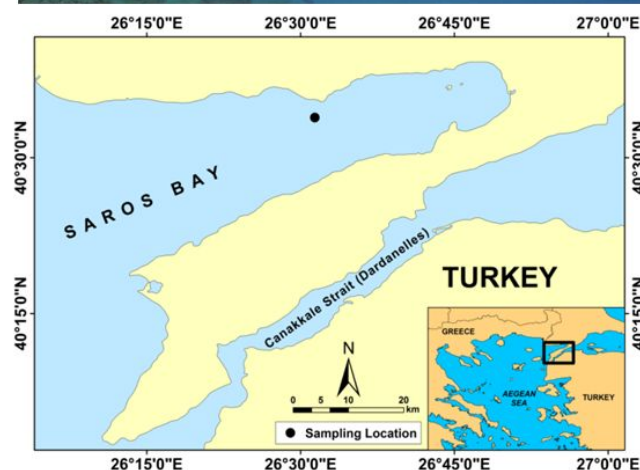
Story Plot

As I walk out from the sea with the plastics, I found during my dive this weekend at Gulf of Saros. I will talk about what I used to see underwater, when I was little, the variety and the amount of the fish and I will compare that with my last dive which I will see most probably more plastics than the living organisms. The most interesting object, which I will see (I cannot know what I am going to see right now). I will talk about the possibilities of who used it, how it reached the beach that I am diving. I will be trained as rescue diver this weekend, so I can create a relation between rescuing a person and the ocean. How we should be responsible for both of them and take an action. Ocean needs emergency first response! I can also add some underwater footage.

(This is an above look of the K  m  r Bay)



(That's me underwater, last week)



Box 1: The plot for the performance that was planned to be realised at ESOF 2020 by the BlueMed Turkish Ambassador Deniz Yapılcı.

Subject: Cadaver or skeleton of a seagull



Reference community: Scientists, citizens, environmental NGOs.

Location of the beach: a beach where the paper industry discharges are located 'TIPASA'.



BlueMed theme: Pollution impacts, mitigation and remediation / Synergies among science, industry, policy-makers and society.

The story in a nutshell:

I collect marine waste on the beach (with a few friends if possible), and I notice that there is a lot of domestic waste on the beach and that the color of the sand is a little different in one place compared to another. During the collection I find the cadaver of a seagull, I wonder about its death and decide to put it aside to find out more about the cause of death, and I continue my waste collection. Suddenly, I find a discharge that leads directly to the sea, I reconsider the facts between the death of the seagull and the waste water discharge and I decide to take a seawater sample.

The next day at the laboratory where I work, I analyze the sample, the result is a water rich in pollutants. I do some research to find out the origin of the discharges in this area and I find a lot of articles and protests about a paper and cardboard recycling industry, whose discharges were directly into the sea and caused an ecological disaster. Suddenly, I receive a message from the seagull on what's up, 'congratulations you found the cause of my death' and then another message saying 'if you want to know my story, watch this video' and then a 'video'.

The video talks about a paper recycling industrial group that has been dumping its liquid industrial waste from 2005 to 2017 directly into the sea. These toxic discharges have damaged marine life over a huge area.

So I reproduce the history of the rejections, beginning (year), some photos... Etc. I interview scientists who have worked on the subject, citizens, fishermen and maybe a hunter on the impact of this discard on their lives and their environment including marine. Do they still swim in this beach? What have they done to deal with it? I report if there have been any demonstrations ... Etc. I also tell aspects of my

personal story, as a scientist I worked during my final project on the impact of this discharges on the marine life's.

I would emphasize **the role of scientists, citizens and civil society in supporting the application and enforcement of environmental laws and the importance of the pressure they exert on industries to change their behavior in an environmentally friendly framework**, given that discharges are now being stopped thanks to their efforts.

I would film footage on the cause of death of the seagull for example it fished a contaminated fish in the area which caused its death.

At the end I talk about what motivated me to become a scientist, and my important role, which is to **BE A VOICE FOR THE OCEAN**.

Box 2: The plot for the performance to be realised at ESOF 2020 by the BlueMed Algerian Ambassador Fella Moualek.

The actual development of the session, anyway, was not very far from the spirit of the first designed proposal, structured around the exchange between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean shores about the most pressing issues R&I can tackle, among which plastic litter was presented with a particular emphasis.

The two Ambassadors, in dialogue with high-profile officers from the European Commission and the Union for the Mediterranean showcased the results of their year-long work on understanding their countries' views on the challenges for a shared governance of the Sea, bringing two examples of actions: Inès showed the first footages of her documentary on the substitution of traditional fishing nets with single-use plastic ones, and the consequent impact on the environment and the local population in Kerkenah, and Badr commented on his campaign of beach cleaning in times of COVID.

The meeting was set in an informal way: Fabio Trincardi (BlueMed CSA Coordinator), Laura Mc Donagh (EU Commission Youth Ambassadors programme), Nayrah Shaltout (BlueMed Egyptian national delegate) and Erasmia Kastanidi (BlueMed CSA Ambassadors' programme), virtually sat around the same table, listened to Inès Boujmil's and Badr El Mahradi's stories and questions, and gave their feedback, while dialogue moderators were Alba L'Astorina and Rita Giuffredi from the BlueMed CSA Communication group.

The full session can be watched online at the link: <https://youtu.be/xXaVG4LtR6M>, while some screenshots are presented below (Figure 22). Figure 23 reports some Twitter posts covering the event on social on Twitter.



Figure 22: Two screenshots from the Ambassadors' session at ESOF 2020.

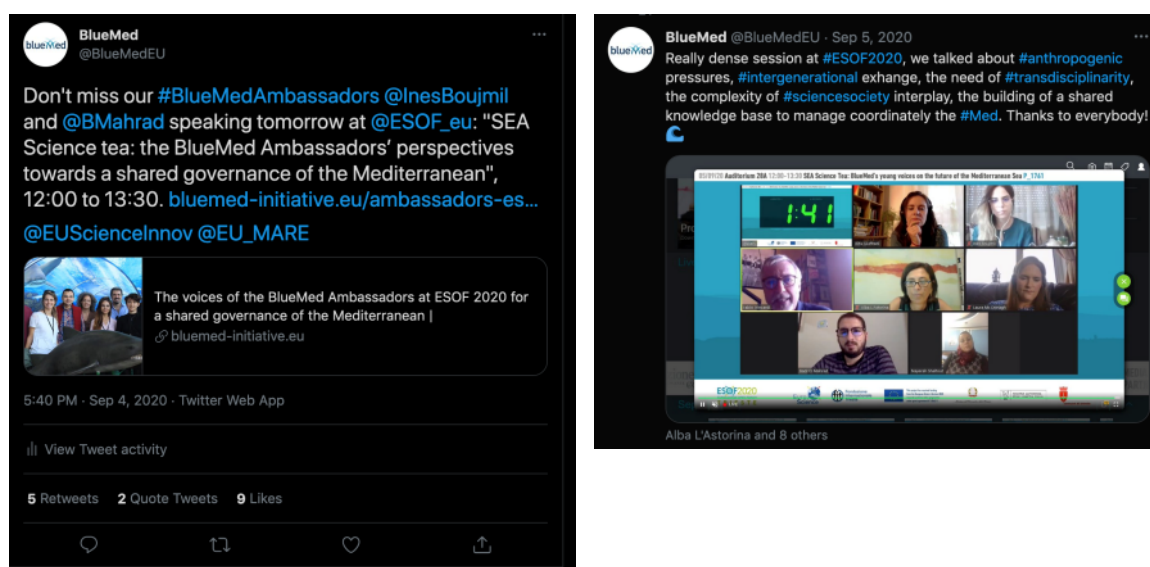


Figure 23: Social posts regarding the Ambassadors' participation to ESOF 2020.

BlackSea-Connect Virtual Event on “Research and Innovation in the Black Sea: Empowering the next generation for a healthy, resilient and productive Black Sea” (October 2020)

The BlueMed Turkish Ambassador was invited to speak at the Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea, organised to present the Black Sea Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), discuss the COVID-19 impacts on research and innovation underpinning Blue Growth in the Black Sea and launch the Young Ambassadors Programme with the participation of Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth.

Deniz joined the launch of the Ambassadors' Programme, sharing her experience as BlueMed Ambassador in an interactive panel fostering synergies across European Seas, where she had the opportunity to establish contacts for networking with Black Sea peers, particularly relevant in her case given the geographical position of Turkey.

Figure 24 reports two slides from her intervention, while Figure 25 shows a social post by BlueMed on her participation to the event.

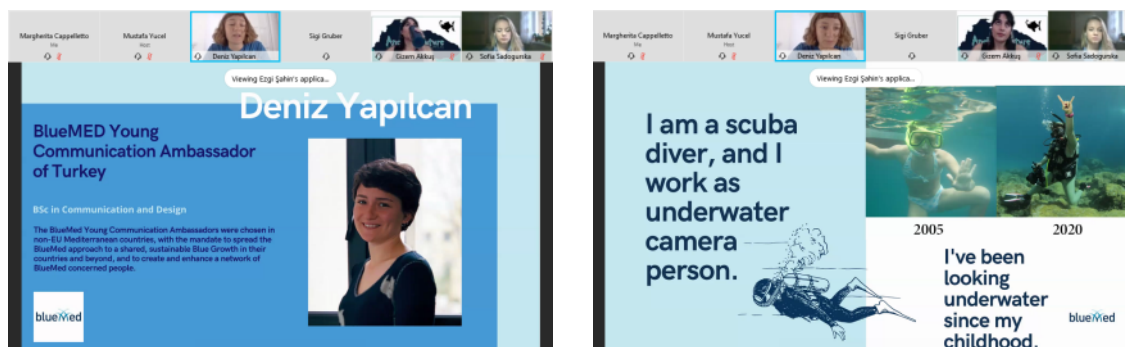


Figure 24: Two screenshots regarding the participation of the Turkish Ambassador to the Black-Sea-Connect virtual conference.

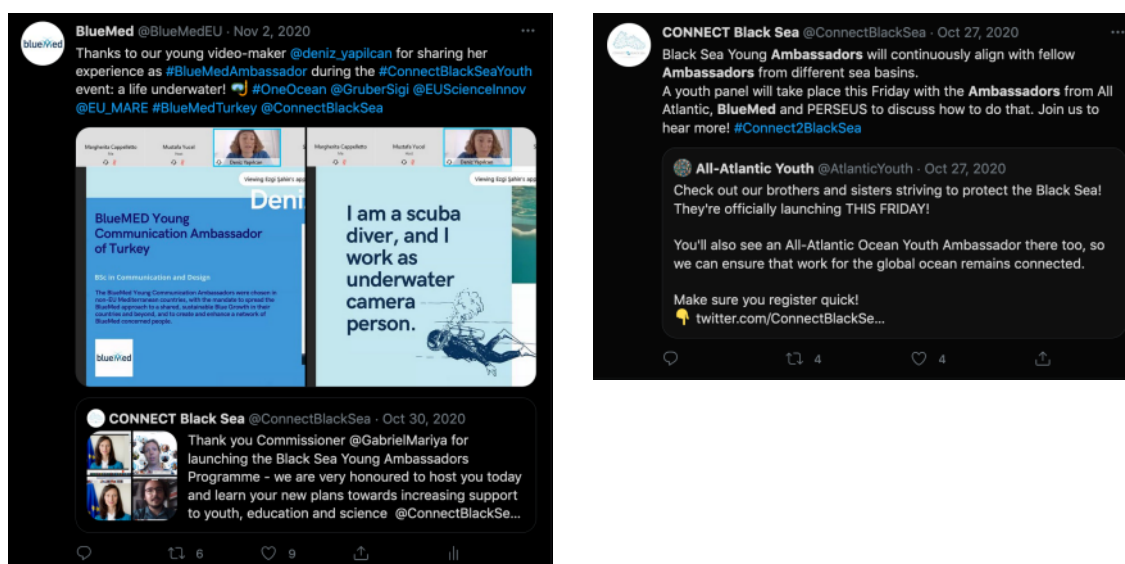


Figure 25: Social posts reporting Deniz’s participation to the Black-Sea Ambassadors’ launch event.

Workshop on “Musing on the concept of Good Environmental Status: the complexity of the status and the status of complexity”, jointly organised by JPI-Oceans and Bluemed CSA (December 2020)

The BlueMed Tunisian Ambassador Inès Boujmil was invited to contribute as a panelist on the topic of “Marine strategy beyond borders” to the workshop on “Musing on the concept of Good Environmental Status: the complexity of the status and the status of complexity”, aimed at addressing the scientific contribution to design and structure a complementary path in addressing the Good Environmental Status, where individual and official positions were asked to confront within a scientific and interdisciplinary approach. This workshop, jointly organized by BlueMed CSA and JPI-Oceans, was officially part of the wide promotional action approved and supported by the Implementation plan of Bluemed “Understanding pollution impacts, mitigation and

remediation in the Med Sea”, also in connection with the recommendation to ‘Support a better definition of GES and harmonize assessment criteria for priority contaminants’, addressed in the framework of the Mediterranean Workshop preparing the UN-Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

Some Tweets on the Workshop promotion are reported below in Figure 26.

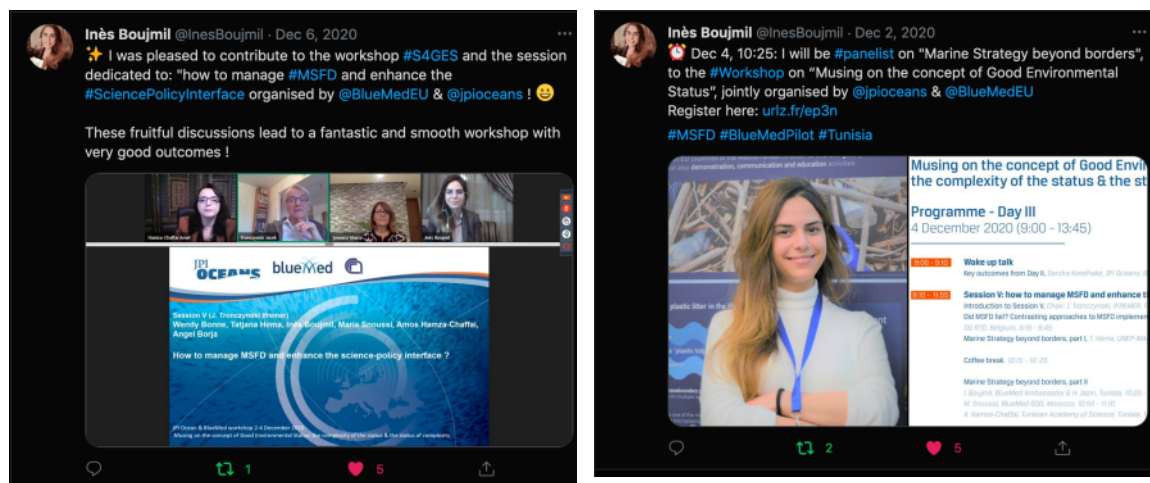


Figure 26: Tweets regarding Inès’ participation to the Workshop on “Musing on the concept of Good Environmental Status: the complexity of the status and the status of complexity”.

BlueMed CSA Final Conference “One Mediterranean: practices, results and strategies for a common Sea” (February 2021)

The final BlueMed event focused on the most relevant outcomes of the BlueMed CSA.

After intense collaborative work, the Mediterranean countries showcased the process and results of the Pilot Initiative for a Healthy, Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea to tackle the marine litter issue. The voices of the BlueMed Pilot National Hubs and of key stakeholders presented this unique success story and envisaged its future.

The BlueMed Young Ambassadors shared their experiences and reflections and engaged in a first of its kind dialogue with their colleagues from other Basins, with the aim of building future common paths, in the co-responsibility spirit of the One Planet-One Ocean approach.

After a first part centred on the presentation of the Ambassadors’ activities throughout their mandate, the second part was focused on the exchange among the BlueMed Ambassadors and selected Ambassadors from other Basins and Programmes: Atlantic, European Marine Board, Black Sea, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission IOC/UNESCO MSPGlobal International initiative. The same BlueMed Ambassadors convened the second part, being hosts of their counterparts and interviewing them on their experiences and reflections, geared to exchange practices, including the mentorship role at the end of the ambassadorship, finding common paths for future synergies. The idea of building up a common platform for continuing such kind of integrated dialogue and exchange of practices stemmed from the discussion.

The full session is available at the link https://youtu.be/w_QEbyqYsgg, and figures among the most followed both live and in recording. Enthusiastic comments were delivered to the organisers regarding the Ambassadors' ability to keep the conversation interesting and lively. Below are some screenshots from the event (Figure 27), and a selection of social posts covering the session (Figure 28). At the end of the BMYAs session, the upcoming opportunity offered by the BlueMed Pilot Hackathon on valuing the best ideas for the community was announced. The challenge, to be performed in teams at the end of May 2021, will contribute to further connecting the youths across basins and sectors.

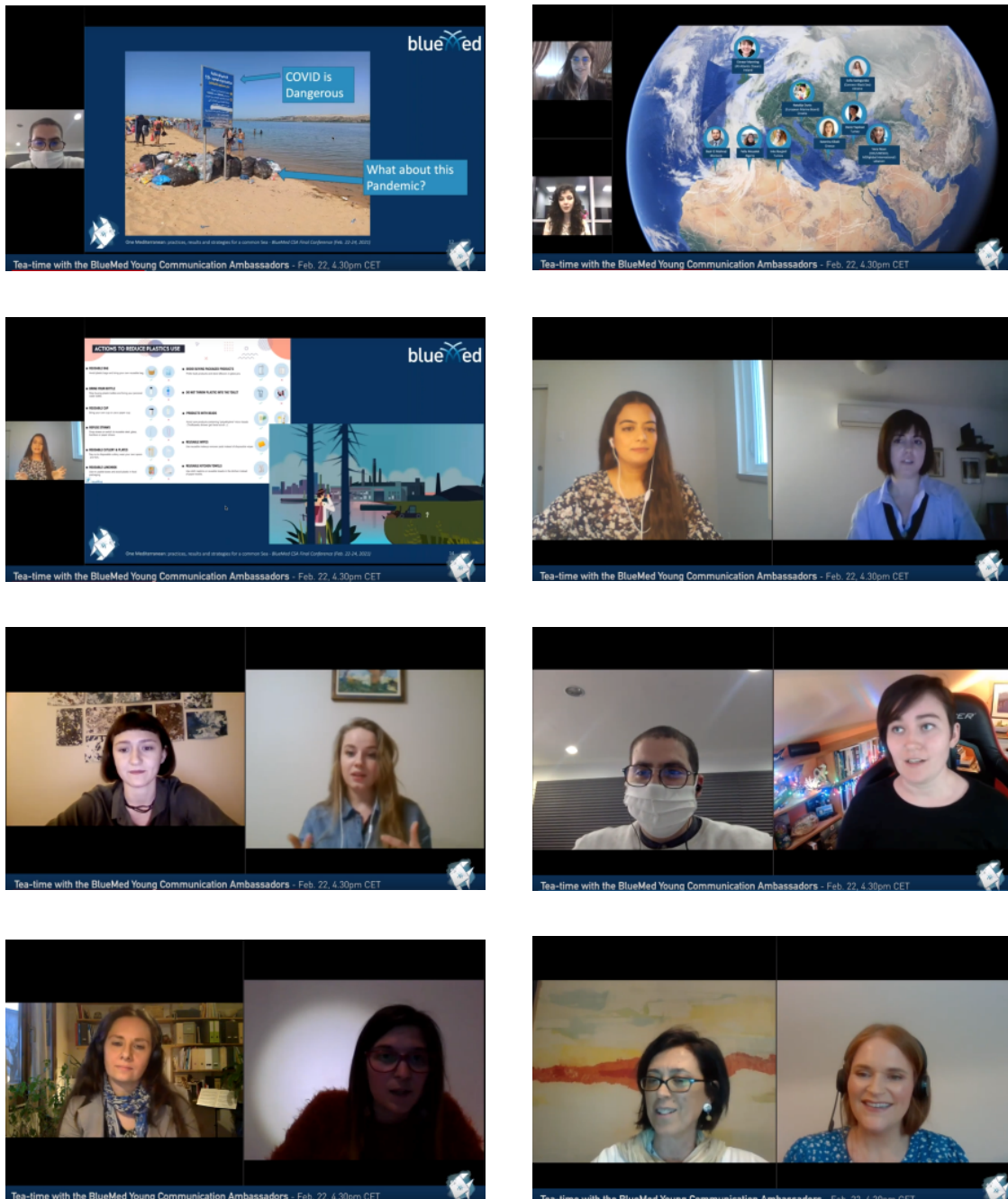


Figure 27: Some screenshots from the Ambassadors' session at the BlueMed Final Conference "One Mediterranean: practices, results and strategies for a common Sea" (February 2021).



Figure 28: A selection of social posts on the Ambassadors' session at the BlueMed Final Conference "One Mediterranean: practices, results and strategies for a common Sea" (February 2021).

Science-policy-society interactions in ecosystem-based marine resources management and planning (March 2021)

The Tunisian Ambassador Inès Boujmil was chosen among the 33 selected participants for the training on "Science-policy-society interactions in ecosystem-based marine resources management and planning", organized by the Mediterranean Biodiversity Protection Community (MBPC) and the BlueMed CSA, with the support of IOC-UNESCO and MSP Global Initiative. The training focused on ecosystem-based management marine spatial planning training.

Virtual Early Career Professional Day (June 2021)

The Tunisian Ambassador Inès Boujmil was also selected to be a moderator of the Virtual Early Career Professional day, which will take place on June 1st, 2021.

The event V.ECOP Day is a 24-hour livestream event, structured on the idea of following the sun around the globe. It will be hosted by and for international Early Career Ocean Professionals from a wide variety of disciplines, who will present their work, activities, and contributions to the UN Ocean Decade and explore what's next in this dynamic field.

Conclusions, recommendations and further developments

This report includes the BYCAs communication campaigns and actions in their countries – Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey – as well as their activities related to exchanging knowledge and experience about BlueMed in international events.

The BYCAs Action Plans were adapted to the pandemic outbreak, however, in addition to the local actions the BYCAs took the opportunity to utilise their social media outlets, as well as the many virtual activities, thus reaching out to wider audiences in their home countries and beyond. The contents shared, highlighted the need for a common governance of the Mediterranean, especially necessary when dealing with global problems like marine litter. Their contributions included the development of original media products, clean-up campaigns, publications and an extensive participation to international conferences, where they had the opportunity to establish contacts and support networks for future collaborative paths.

The BYCAs continuously documented their activities on social media, thus fully exploiting the possibilities of digital communication for awareness raising. Indeed, during the whole period of their engagement with BlueMed, the BYCAs regularly posted tailor-made contents. Their scope was not only to enhance awareness about ML but also to inspire actions of prevention, mitigation, and removal, in order to contribute to the socio-political, cultural and behavioural change of the coastal communities and coastal visitors in their countries. The rapidly changing digital landscape favours social media communication activities and enables the motivation mainly of young people promoting youth engagement in eco-friendly actions.

Wherever the conditions allowed the organization of physical events, such as in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria, the BYCAs proceeded with them, in order to have a direct interaction with chosen targeted groups (e.g., fishers in Tunisia, school children in Algeria). Eye-catching photos of beach clean-up activities were shared online, and received a lot of attention in terms of social media interactions.

The Ambassadors managed to reach out to wide audiences in non-EU countries and shared important contents about the ML problem and beyond, in a “One Ocean” perspective of co-responsibility. Moreover, they also shared their energetic approach in communicating the need to act co-ordinately and urgently to defend the Mediterranean, and the Oceans as a whole.

Indeed, empowering youth with the appropriate knowledge on global challenges and with an adequate interdisciplinary vision facilitated their becoming agents of change. Thus, they were able to pursue the behavioural change of the wider communities they live in and interact with. Outcomes suggest that engaged, highly-motivated young people can become ‘agents of change’ through reaching out to groups of different actors (public bodies, the industry, academia, citizen associations, NGOs) following robust communication strategies at national level. Supportive international projects (such as BlueMed CSA) and international fora (e.g., UfM, UNEP) can help unite these voices for triggering attention and ensuring applicability and effectiveness of approaches beyond national borders, supporting science diplomacy initiatives related to tackling international/global challenges.

It became evident, however, that the BYCAs efforts would have a much greater impact if they were supported by the relevant public bodies of the respective countries, as anticipated during the pre-pandemic period and addressed in the BYCAs APs. Well-informed public bodies, with a robust science-policy interface at a national level, enable the organization of concrete interactions between stakeholders. As such, they enable the dissemination of high-quality R&I, such as those pursued by BlueMed through international and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Awareness campaigns at National Level, through mass media communication channels (as was originally planned by the Turkish BYCA) are of crucial importance for promoting crucial messages pertinent to environmental and social challenges to wider audiences. In parallel, the organization of events targeting scientific audiences, like those linked with BlueMed CSA actions (e.g., the ESOF international conference) enhances synergies between social practices and community campaigns with academia. Summing up, the experience gained through the BlueMed Ambassadors Programme has confirmed the crucial role that young highly-motivated people can play in becoming 'agents of change', supporting science diplomacy initiatives meant to address international/global challenges.

It is of utmost importance that these efforts will be further up-scaled in close interaction with international fora (e.g., UNEP, UfM in the Mediterranean), in order to be efficiently coordinated and increase their effectiveness beyond national borders.

Networking activities among Ambassadors pertaining to different Basins is a promising pathway towards future synergies, in the One Ocean spirit of co-responsibility. These activities enhance the Ocean Ambassadors' voices to make them reach the decision-makers offices. The BlueMed CSA experience has taught that every time such voices are heard in adequate frames, they are able to communicate effectively, impacting the audience and possibly triggering socio-political, cultural and behaviour change.

Under the umbrella of integrated trans-border and multi-stakeholder governance framework, a science policy advocacy group empowered with the voices of engaged and motivated young ambassadors has the potential to truly mobilize policy circles and communities to change, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda and with the legacy of the BlueMed research-based, interdisciplinary and holistic approach.

Annexes

1. Annex I: Venice meeting Agenda “Pollution needs no visa”
2. Annex II: Description of the ESOF Conference Activity in September 2020
3. Annex III: BlueMed Final Conference Agenda



A Plastic-free healthy Mediterranean Sea: operationalizing the BLUEMED R&I Pilot Action

& GSO BlueMed WG 5th meeting

*Back-to-back event with the
Mediterranean Regional Workshop preparing
the UN-Decade of Ocean Science*

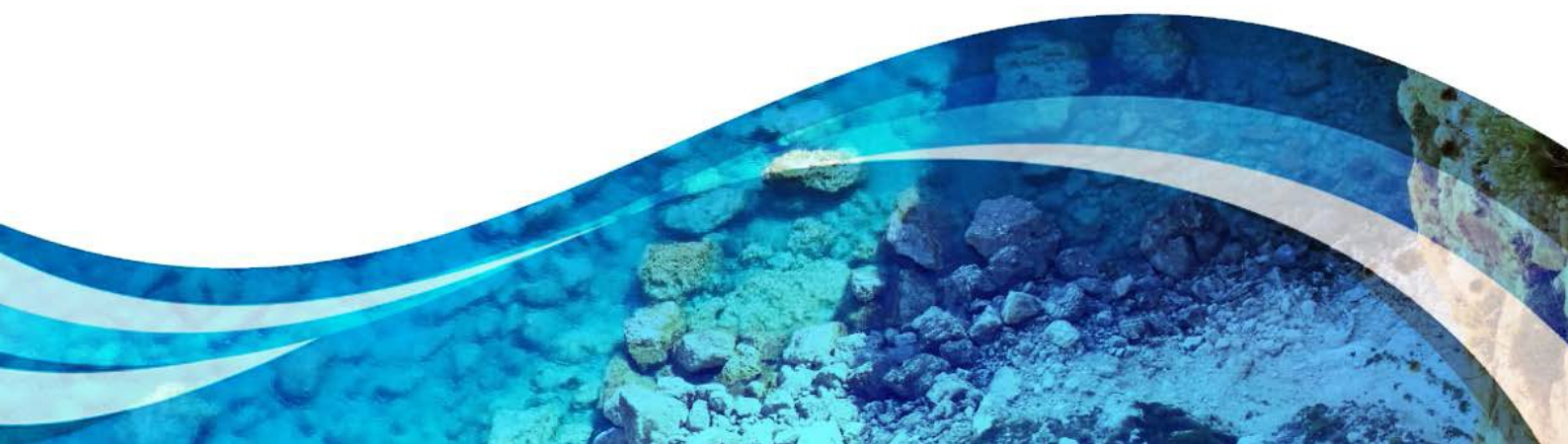
Agenda

2020, January 20th, 09:30-16:00

& 16:00-18:30

CNR-ISMAR

Arsenale - Tesa 104, Castello 2737/F, 30122 Venezia, Italy



A Plastic-free healthy Mediterranean Sea: operationalizing the BlueMed R&I Pilot Action

Following the special event at EcoMondo in November 2019, the BlueMed Pilot Action “Plastic-free for a healthy Mediterranean Sea” is again on the scene. Mediterranean countries’ experts and stakeholders meet in Venice to continue the cross-border coordination to tackle the threat of plastic litter, stepping from exchanging and learning good practices to scale-up operational actions. Via national hubs established at country level, progress is expected on integrating knowledge and innovation in a circular economy and green deal prospective; promoting recycling systems and technologies; supporting sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors; creating new “blue” jobs; inform policies; develop solutions to meet the opportunities; engaging citizens, raising their voice.

Back-to-back with the Mediterranean Regional Workshop preparing the UN-Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030, this BlueMed event will mark a key milestone for projecting the “plastic litter” challenge and related concrete actions in the global perspective.

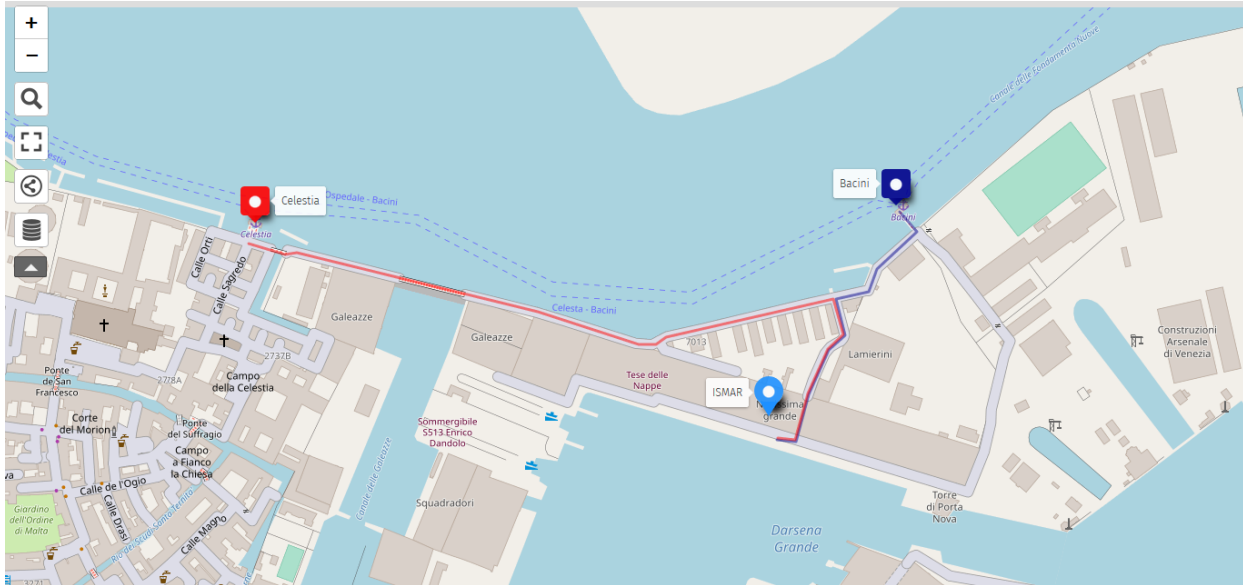
09:30	Registration and welcome coffee
10:00	Opening message Fabio Trincardi, Director, CNR & BlueMed CSA Coordinator
10:15	Scaling up the BLUEMED Pilot for a plastic-free, healthy Mediterranean Sea Sigi Gruber, Head of the Healthy Oceans and Seas Unit, European Commission DG RTD Christos Theophilou, Policy Officer, EC-DG MARE Alessandra Sensi, Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat Christos Ioakeimidis, Project Expert, MED POL, UNEP-MAP Abdellah Srou, Executive Secretary, GFCM Raffaele Liberali, SEMED
11:00	Coffee break
11:30	How to raise the voice of citizens: grass roots; schools; adults; consumers; links to public administrations Messages from: Legambiente, Marevivo, Plastics Europe, Surfrider, Seaatrisk, Ciset, CORILA, Panacea, Plastic Buster, Federpesca Moderator: Alba L’Astorina, CNR, BlueMed CSA COMM
12:30	Q&A from the audience
12:40	Do you know the BlueMed Pilot Action? Joining outreach efforts for public engagement and education The format of ‘Fatti di Plastica’ exhibition, Fedra Francocci, CNR & BlueMed CSA The <i>BlueMed Young Communication Ambassadors</i> pitch presentations, Inès Boujmil, Badr El Mahrad, Mustafa Ghazal, Deniz Yapilcan, Fella Moualek Sketching the e-training course on marine litter, Popi Pagou, HCMR & BlueMed CSA EIT Climate-KIC Education Programme, Irene Hofmeijer & Karin Kubackova, EIT Climate-KIC Moderator: Rita Giuffredi, CNR, BlueMed CSA COMM
13:30	Lunch break
14:15	BlueMed promotional video

14:30	Projecting the Pilot into new Horizons, perspectives from: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Horizon Europe Mission Healthy Oceans and the European Green Deal Maria Cristina Pedicchio, OGS and Healthy Oceans Mission Board Antidia Citores, Surfrider and Healthy Oceans Mission Board Sigi Gruber, Head of the Healthy Oceans and Seas Unit, European Commission DG RTD 2. the UN-Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development Suzan Kholeif, NIOF and EPG IOC/UNESCO Rosalia Santoleri, CNR and Italian Oceanographic Commission
15:20	How to operationalize the initiative: roadmap for cooperation among countries, and future joint actions progress as regards the implementation of national hubs and needs of cooperation Chair: Sigi Gruber and representatives of the countries, BLUEMED EuroMed Group of Senior Officials
15:55	Conclusions and end of the Conference
16:00	
18:30	GSO BlueMed Working Group 5th meeting
19:00	Reception cocktail @ CNR-ISMAR

How to reach CNR-ISMAR

www.ismar.cnr.it/organizzazione/venezia-sede

Address: Tesa 104 – Arsenale, Castello 2737/F, 30122 Venezia, Italy. Tel. (+39) 366 6134613



Getting here

By air:

If you are arriving at “Marco Polo” airport, located in Tessera (Venice mainland) take:

- the [ALILAGUNA lines \(public waterbus transportation\)](#) according to your destination. You can buy your tickets at the ticket offices located a) in the arrival hall; b) just in front of the waterbus stop or c) on board, with an additional fare of 1 EUR;
- the [ACTV AERObus n. 5](#) to Piazzale Roma (20 minutes’ ride);
- the [ATVO airport bus](#) to Piazzale Roma (20 minutes’ ride);
- the car taxi (approximately 20 minutes’ ride);
- the boat taxi (approximately 90,00-100,00 EUR, 30-40 minutes’ ride).

If you are arriving at “Canova” airport, near Treviso, catch the ATVO bus-express (1 hour ride) to Piazzale Roma.

By train:

If you arrive by train, at the railway station of Venezia Santa Lucia, take the boat (line 5.2 just in front of the railway station) and stop at BACINI. For the water bus service timetable please refer to the following [link](#).

Hence walk according to the paths given in the map.

The entrance of the Institute of Marine Sciences is located at Tesa 104 (“Tesa” is the name of the single attached building where ships were originally built).

By car:

When you drive to Venice and park your car at Piazzale Roma or at the Tronchetto Terminal, it is possible within walking distance to reach Actv landing stages for the main public transport waterbus routes.

Parking places here are limited and expensive, but other car parking facilities are available on the mainland and are linked with the city through public transport.

Check availability and rates from VeneziaUnica website by clicking on "PARKING".

From Piazzale Roma, take the boat (line 5.2 at the waterbus stop located in front of the Railway Station) and stop at BACINI. For the water bus service timetable please refer to the following [link](#).

Hence walk according to the paths given in the map.

The entrance of the Institute of Marine Sciences is located at Tesa 104 (“Tesa” is the name of the single attached building where ships were originally built).

Tickets

An ordinary ticket for the in town navigation service costs 7,50 EUR and you can travel on any route (except Alilaguna lines, ACTV routes n. 16, 19, 21 and Casino) with route changes in the same direction, for 75 minutes from the moment of ticket validation.

You can buy conveniently-priced tourist tickets for trips with a minimum length of 24 hours to a maximum of 7 days. Another convenient solution is to buy "Carta Venezia" (Venice card) at the ACTV (boat ticket) office located in Piazzale Roma (this service is available only here and requires to provide a valid identity document). The cost is of 50,00 EUR* and allows to buy tickets at the local reduced fare (1,50 EUR* per ride). The card lasts for 5 years.

For more information on ACTV ticket prices, please refer to the [VeneziaUnica website](http://VeneziaUnica.website).

Hotels' suggestion

Hotel Santa Marina, www.hotelsantamarina.it/it/camere/

Hotel Vecellio Venice Lagoon View, vecellio.hotelinvenice.com/

Hotel Giorgione, www.hotelgiorgione.com/it

Hotel Palazzo Abadessa, www.abadessa.com/it/

Palazzo Contarini Della Porta Di Ferro, www.palazzocontarini.com/

Hotel Casa Verardo Residenza d'Epoca ***S, www.casaverardo.it

Hotel all'Angelo, www.allangelo.it/

Hotel Scandinavia, www.scandinaviahotel.com

Hotel al Piave, www.hotelalpiave.com

SEA Science tea: the BlueMed Ambassadors' perspectives towards a shared governance of the Mediterranean

BlueMed ESOF session - September 5, 2020, 12:00-13:30 CET

Themes:

- Blue Planet + Science diplomacy
- Euro-Mediterranean project – One Sea – Sustainability (Marine Litter)

Format:

Informal and open conversation, facilitated by the BlueMed CSA Communication Team: we take a look “behind the scenes” of a research&policy project. Reflexive approach: we take the chance of the ESOF session to take stock of the BlueMed Young Ambassadors' experience so far.

Speakers:

- Alba L'Astorina (CNR, Italy) and Rita Giuffredi (CNR, Italy): CSA Communication Team [moderators];
- Inés Boujmil (INSTM, Tunisia) and Badr El Mahrad (Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco and CIMA, Portugal): BlueMed Young Communication Ambassadors;
- Fabio Trincardi (CNR, Italy): BlueMed CSA coordinator;
- Erasmia Kastanidi (HCMR, Greece): BlueMed Ambassadors' programme;
- Laura Mc Donagh (EC, DG-RTD): EU Commission Youth Ambassadors programme;
- Nayrah Shaltout (NIOF, Egypt): BlueMed Egyptian national delegates.

Setting:

Everybody positions in her/his living room (or creates a living room scenery with a sofa and a lamp), and holds a cup of tea/coffee/drink (according to the country) – as it would have been in presence (see the original abstract). We ask all the connected listeners to do the same ;-).

The aim is to set a relaxed and informal setting for the conversation.

Timetable

12:00	Introduction to the session & “warm up”	Alba L'Astorina, Rita Giuffredi <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the session;• coordinates of BlueMed; SRIA and implementation plan;• relevance and originality of BlueMed; holistic multi-perspective approach (science-based + policy-oriented);• science diplomacy effort: euro-Med enlargement, construction of a network of people in Med countries
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		willing to work for a common objective, sharing views, concerns and desirable options.
12:05	What is BlueMed about?	Introduction to BM by means of a couple of questions to Fabio Trincardi , who try to explain the core concepts of BM informally and the need to take action urgently (as if chatting on the sofa with a friend).
12:15	Who are the BlueMed Ambassadors?	Questions to Erasmia Kastanidi who briefly explains how the idea of BlueMed Ambassadors was born and how the programme developed up to today.
12:20	The BlueMed Ambassadors' voices	Interviews to Inés Boujmil and Badr El Mahrad: personal stories, experiences as Ambassadors, reflections, and items they want to bring to politicians' attention. The stories behind the videos they are preparing. An object they want to show. What would you ask to national policy makers or local administrators? What would you ask to international organisations and to the European Commission?
12:50	Q&A from the public	via chat
13:05	Institutional feedback	Reflections and answers to the Ambassadors' items by Laura Mc Donagh and Nayrah Shaltout , BlueMed Egyptian national delegate
13:20	Closing remarks	Fabio Trincardi collects the ideas and launches for (a better) future

Infographics and **pictures** will be shown while people talk over (few) specific aspects that are better elucidated graphically (e.g.: BM overview, as in the homepage, BM tour map or BM prioritisation)? Moreover, we can share the links to websites and videos on the chat.



Session proposal P_1761



SEA SciEnce teA: young voices on the future of the Med Sea - the BlueMed Ambassadors' perspectives towards a shared governance of the Mediterranean

Proposed by Alba L'Astorina

URL: <https://escmp.euroscience.org/proposal/view/1761>

Status: Submitted

Programme: ESOF 2020 Science Programme

Format: Innovative formats (e.g. hackatons, Ted-type talks, "My thesis in 180 seconds", fishbowl session, Pecha Kucha, etc.)

Duration: 1h30

Theme: Blue Planet

Abstract: The Mediterranean has been a crossroad for the history, economy and culture of Europe, Middle East and North Africa. However, human activities impacting the basin have been largely neglected, nor was a coordinated plan for a sustainable governance of the Sea developed. The Euro-Mediterranean initiative BlueMed is engaged in coordinating Research & Innovation agendas throughout the basin, to promote a sustainable marine and maritime development: the "Blue Growth" approach can be expressed as a knowledge-driven quantum jump in the management of marine resources towards a synergistic, non-conflicting and sustainable use of the sea, radically different from current practices and aimed to the improvement of social wellbeing. SEA SciEnce teA will bring to ESOF the perspectives of the young BlueMed Ambassadors coming from the Northern and Southern Med shores about the most pressing issues R&I can tackle – among which relevant is plastic litter, that the initiative is addressing with a devoted pilot action. The Ambassadors, in dialogue with high-profile officers from the European Commission and the Union for the Mediterranean at ESOF, will showcase the results of their year-long work on understanding their countries' views on the challenges for a shared governance of the Sea. They will narrate their findings and experiences in creative ways: e.g. 3-minutes pitches, short videos, storytelling, graphics, performances. The location will be designed as an informal space, as in the tradition of Mediterranean cultures, with coffee and mint tea being served to all participants. The officers and the audience, listening to the Ambassadors' voices, will be encouraged to join the exchange in a free relaxed way. As final result of the meeting, the policy officers will engage in reporting the instances and perspectives expressed by the Ambassadors to relevant political levels, in order to be heard where the R&I and Sea management policies are designed, including awareness and ocean literacy.


Target audience: Scientists, Media, Industry & Business, Policy makers, General public, Students

Cross-cutting
approches:

One Mediterranean practices, results and strategies for a common Sea

BlueMed CSA final conference

February 22-24, 2021
on-line: digital hub at CNR in Rome

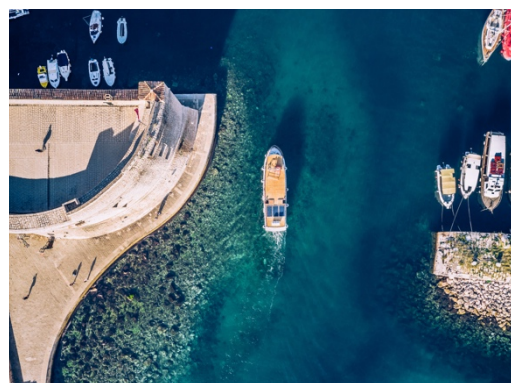


Interactive webinar and livestreaming on the conference webpage
Language of the Conference: English with live translation in French and Arabic

Official conference hashtag: **#OneMediterranean**

<http://www.blued-med-initiative.eu/>

The **Mediterranean Sea** is a crucial crossroad for the history, economy and culture of **Europe, Middle East and North African countries**. Many different interests depend on its resources, and the development of a coordinated plan for a shared, coherent and sustainable management is of paramount importance. Moreover, crucial issues like plastic pollution need to be tackled together by all Mediterranean countries, and pooling all relevant knowledge and people both from research and from the socio-political arena.



The BlueMed Initiative, launched in 2014, addresses these challenges, working on all the relevant levels, stimulating **pan-Mediterranean network-building** and coordinating thematic platforms. The co-building of a **shared Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda**, the subsequent **goals prioritisation** and the development of their **Implementation Plans**, as well as the outcomes of the **Pilot Initiative for a Healthy, Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea**, of the **Start Up Actions** and of the **Ambassadors' Programme** are the most mature achievements of the BlueMed work and will be presented during the conference.



The event will focus on the most relevant outcomes of the BlueMed CSA.

After intense collaborative work, the Mediterranean countries will showcase the process and results of the **Pilot Initiative for a Healthy, Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea** to tackle the marine litter issue. The voices of the BlueMed Pilot National Hubs and of key stakeholders will present this unique success story and envisage its future.

The BlueMed solid and widely participated cooperation process among countries led first to a co-owned Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and then to the endorsement of the Implementation Plan. These tools are conceived to serve future activities: the **Strategic Joint Actions** will be presented during the conference.

The **BlueMed StartUp Actions**, which worked on different topics but all encompassing the BlueMed perspective, will engage in a conversation and present their feasibility studies.

The **BlueMed Young Ambassadors** will share their experiences and reflections and will engage in a dialogue with their colleagues from other Basins, with the aim of building future common paths, in the co-responsibility spirit of the One Planet-One Ocean approach.

The event will be organised in a lively and engaging way, making use of devoted tools to favour the active participation of all the attendees. A **graphic recording** by the illustrator and cartoonist Gabriele Peddes will highlight the discussion topics and support synthesis and confrontation.

AGENDA

DAY 1

- 16:25 Virtual access and netiquette
- 16:30 **Pre-opening of the Conference and Tea-time with the BlueMed Young Communication Ambassadors**
The BlueMed Young Ambassadors share their activities in a dialogue with their colleagues from other Basins.
The BlueMed Young Ambassadors Inès Boujmil, Deniz Yapılcı, Badr El Mahrad, Fella Moualek, together with the **Young Ambassadors** Vera Noon (IOC/UNESCO, MSPglobal International), Natalija Dunic (European Marine Board), Sofia Sadogurska (Connect-Black Sea), Eimear Manning (All-Atlantic Ocean) and Katerina Kikaki (HCMR)
Introduction: **Vassiliki Vassilopoulou (HCMR)**
Invited speaker: **Laura Mc Donagh (EC)**
Moderators: **Alba L'Astorina (CNR)** and **Rita Giuffredi (CNR)**
- 17:45 **Moderated Q&As**
- 17:50 **...do you know what the BlueMed Pilot Initiative is about? Stay tuned! The hackathon valuing best ideas from the community is about to come**
A new opportunity to enlarge, connect and keep closer the BlueMed Community providing insights on the showcase of the Pilot Action on Healthy Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea of tomorrow, not to be missed!
Fedra Francocci (CNR)
- 18:00 **Ask the Ambassadors**
Virtual tea-room open for informal exchanges
- 18:30 End of day 1



DAY 2

09:25 Virtual access and netiquette

09:30 **Welcome to the BlueMed CSA final conference**

Opening by the Moderator

[Sheila Heymans \(EMB\)](#)

Welcome message by the Authorities

[Gianluigi Consoli](#) (Head of international research programming and promotion - Italian Ministry of University and Research), [John Bell](#) (Director EC-DG R&I, video message), [Sigi Gruber](#) (former BlueMed Initiative Co-chair) and [Mahmoud Abuhussein](#) (BlueMed Initiative Co-Chair)

09:50 **Introduction**

The status of the Mediterranean Sea

[Fabio Trincardi](#) (CNR, BlueMed CSA Coordinator)

Retracing the BlueMed tale

[Margherita Cappelletto](#) (CNR, BlueMed CSA Project Manager)

10:10 Break – graphic recording in progress

10:20 **Healthy Plastic-free Mediterranean Sea: what an Initiative!**

After intense collaborative work, the Mediterranean countries showcase the process and results of this unique action to tackle the marine litter issue in the Mediterranean Sea. You will hear the voices of the BlueMed Pilot National Hubs and key stakeholders presenting this success story and envisaging its future scale-up.

The problem

[François Galgani](#) (IFREMER)

What reactions from the countries? Process, solutions & way forward

[Fabio Fava](#) (UNIBO, Italian delegate BlueMed Initiative), [Marta March](#) (MICIN, Spanish delegate BlueMed Initiative), [Baris Shalioglu](#) (METU, Turkish delegate BlueMed Initiative) and [Cherif Sammari](#) (INSTM, Tunisian delegate BlueMed Initiative)

Partnering with key stakeholders and scaling-up: constructive dialogue with SEMED, PlasticsEurope, UNEP-MAP, GFCM, the World Bank, Horizon Europe Mission “Ocean, Seas and Waters”

[Luca Marangoni](#) (EC-EASME), [Raffaele Liberali](#) (SEMED), [Giuseppe Riva](#) (PlasticsEurope), [Christos Ioakemidis](#) (UNEP-MAP), [Pilar Hernandez](#) (GFCM), [Blanca Moreno-Dodson](#) (The World Bank), [Alan Deidun](#) (Horizon Europe Mission Board “Ocean, Seas and Waters”)

Chair: [Sigi Gruber](#) (former BlueMed Initiative Co-chair)

11:30 **Moderated Q&As**

11:45 Break – graphic recording in progress



DAY 2

12:00 From the Research and Innovation Agenda to the Implementation Plan: unveiling the BlueMed Strategic Joint Actions

The BlueMed Pilot presented in the previous session stemmed in a framework of dialogue and cooperation. Indeed, the BlueMed tale dates back in 2014: a solid and widely participated process among countries led first to a co-owned Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and then to the endorsement of the Implementation Plan. These tools are here to serve future activities and to jointly implement the Strategic Actions.

The way to the Implementation Plan

[Esther Chacón Campollo \(AEI\)](#), [Erasmia Kastanidi \(HCMR\)](#)



The Strategic Actions, some examples: pitch presentations on Observing Systems, Climate Change, MRE and MSP, Biodiversity and resources

[Jean-François Cadiou \(IFREMER\)](#), [Maria Snoussi \(Université Mohammed V, Rabat, Moroccan delegate BlueMed Initiative\)](#), [Elena Ciappi \(CNR\)](#), [Pablo Abaunza \(IEO\)](#)

Trajectories: Horizon Europe PPP, Blue Economy Ministerial, UN-Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, JPI-Oceans, WestMED

[Elisabetta Balzi \(EC\)](#), [Alessandra Sensi and Giuseppe Provenzano \(UfMS\)](#), [Rosalia Santoleri \(COI\)](#), [Sandra Ketelhake \(JPI-Oceans\)](#), [Daniele Bosio \(WestMED\)](#)

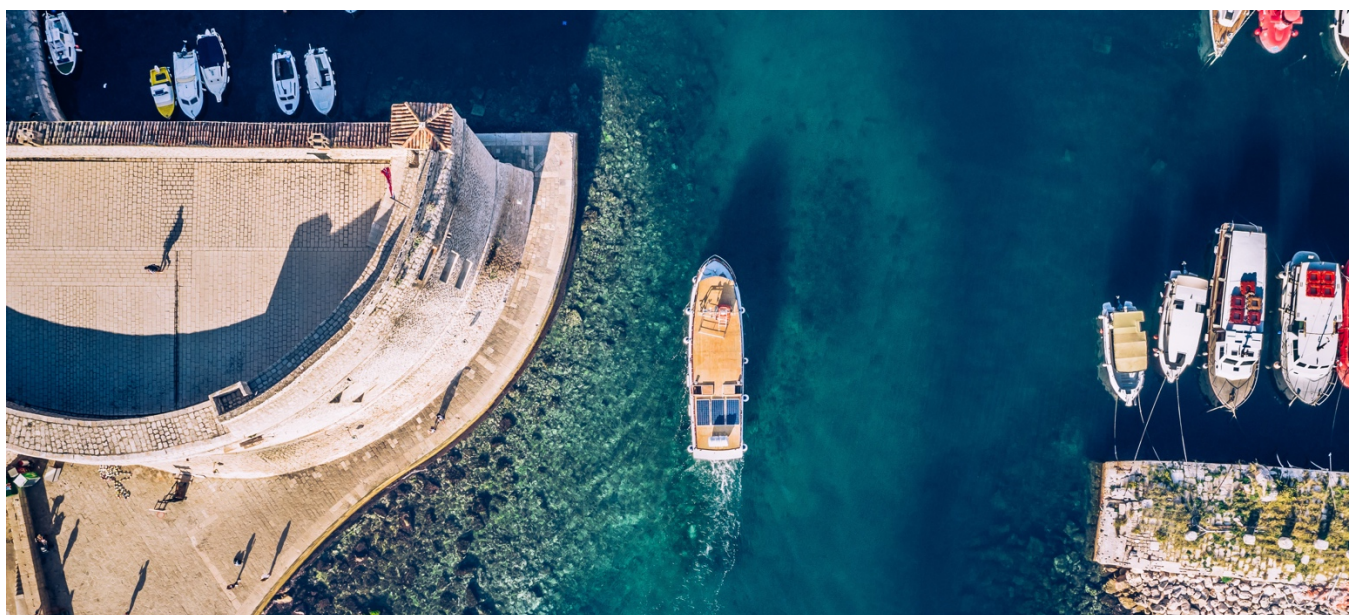
13:00 Moderated Q&As

13:15 Opening the curtains on the graphic recording

[Gabriele Peddes](#)

13:20 End of Day 2

14:00 Virtual coffee room open for informal exchange on strategic actions (60')



DAY 3

09:25 Virtual access and netiquette

09:30 **Wake-up keynote speech**

[Grammenos Mastrojeni \(Diplomat, Senior Deputy Secretary general of the Union for the Mediterranean\)](#)

10:00 **Seeds to flourish: a conversation with the Coordinators of the BlueMed Start-up Actions presenting their feasibility studies**

They worked on different topics and all according to the BlueMed vision:

SEALINES - Mediterranean Safety Network

[Ilaria Antoncecchi \(MISE\)](#)

LabMaf - Developing a Labelling Scheme for Mediterranean Small-scale and Artisanal Fish Products

[Jerneja Penca \(EMUNI\)](#)

ECOMEDPORT - Feasibility study of an ecosystem-oriented plant for sediments management in Mediterranean ports and marinas

[Marco Pellegrini \(UniBO\)](#)

BlueBoatsMed - Foresight on cruise and recreational boating, their potential for transition towards a blue economy in the Mediterranean and associated environmental challenges

[Lina Tode \(PlanBleu\)](#)

Moderator: [George Bugeja \(MCST\)](#)

10:30 **Q&As dynamic session**

11:00 Break and Virtual match-making with the Start-up Actions' Coordinators

11:30 **BlueMed and the lockdown: Snapshot - Synoptic Assessment of Human Pressures on key Mediterranean Hot Spots**

[Mario Sprovieri \(CNR\)](#)



11:45 **Wrap-up, concluding remarks and thanks**

[Fabio Trincardi \(CNR, BlueMed CSA Coordinator\)](#)

12:00 End of the Conference

DIGITAL PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND INFO

Participation to the conference is free. All the up-to-date information and the **registration form** are available at the conference page: <http://www.bluedmed-initiative.eu/bluedmed-final-conference/>.

To receive your personal participation link, please register also to the webinar platform at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1282866598986168336>

Participants will be able to join the event through the **Gotowebinar platform**, where there will be the chance to interact with the speakers with questions or comments. Moreover, virtual coffee rooms will be available for informal exchanges. For a better digital experience we advise every participant to download the Gotowebinar app in advance at the page:

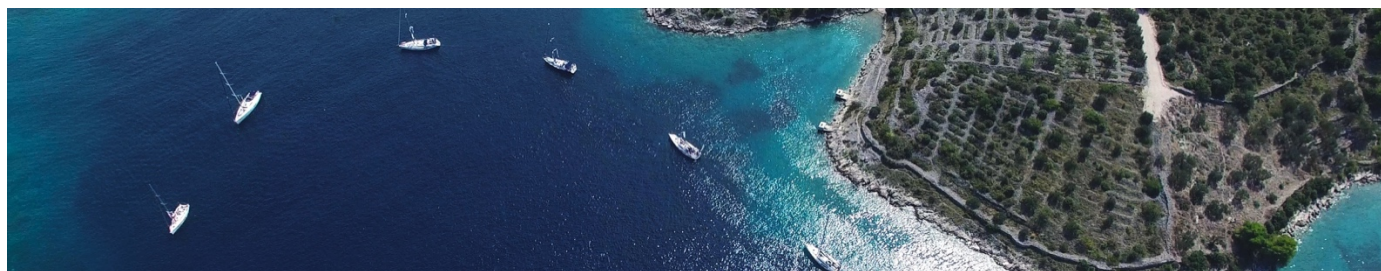
<https://support.goto.com/webinar/help/download-now-g2w010002>. If you use a browser, we recommend Chrome. The system will notify you the connection link; make sure you check your Spam folder.

The event will be broadcasted from a digital hub located at CNR in Rome (Italy). A **livestream** will be available on the conference page; the event will be also recorded.

The conference language will be English, but **simultaneous interpretation will be provided in French and Arabic**. If you would like to hear the conference with the real time interpretation, we recommend to install on your smartphones in advance the **Rafiky Connect app** from Google Play (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.rafikey.connect>) or App Store (<https://apps.apple.com/it/app/rafikey-connect/id1515495958>). During the conference, you will have to simply switch off the English audio on the device where you follow the conference and listen to the simultaneous translation in the language of your choice on the smartphone (login credentials will be provided during the event).

For social sharing (Twitter @BlueMedEU), please mention the hashtag **#OneMediterranean**.

For any further information please contact: bluedmed@cnr.it



LORI – the BlueMed saiLORlgami

In the perspective of avoiding non-necessary pollutant emission, while retaining the symbol of a common gadget for all the participants to the conference, we decided to realise an **origami fish template**, which everyone can print and fold at home! Each participant can share his/her picture with LORI and the official conference hashtag **#OneMediterranean** on Twitter.

In this way, knowledge travels instead of products!

- LORlgami – template to print: http://www.bluedmed-initiative.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/origami_blueMed_M_espressione.pdf;
- LORlgami – instructions to fold the origami: http://www.bluedmed-initiative.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Istruzioni_origami_disegni.pdf;
- LORlgami – video tutorial: <https://youtu.be/3bjciffuo7k>;



LORI, the saiLORlgami was drawn by the cartoonist [Gabriele Peddes](#), who will also "graphically record" the whole conference.



Research and Innovation
for blue jobs and growth
in the Mediterranean Area
