



# MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON STRENGTHENING EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION THROUGH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

MALTA, 3-4 MAY 2017



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The event, which took place under the auspices of the 2017 Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU, was organised by the Malta Council for Science and Technology in cooperation with the European Commission DG Research and Innovation.

November 2017



**Videos**

<https://vimeo.com/album/4568352>

**Photos**

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/eu2017mt/sets/72157680273658523>

**Press conference:**

<https://vimeo.com/215986724>

**Speeches**

<https://vimeo.com/217677705>

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## PREFACE

The Ministerial Conference on “Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation”, (‘the Conference’), was held in Valletta, Malta on 3 and 4 May 2017 and culminated in the ‘Valletta Declaration’, which is included in this publication. This event took place under the auspices of the 2017 Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU and was organised by the Malta Council for Science and Technology, in cooperation with the European Commission DG Research and Innovation.

The purpose of the Conference was to convene Ministers in charge of research from the two shores of the Mediterranean to effectively address the complex environmental, demographic, economic and social challenges which currently affect the region.

The Conference, which was preceded by a Technical-Level Meeting, built on the conclusions of two previous events that shaped Euro-Mediterranean R&I cooperation during the past decade. The first was the “Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research” held in Cairo on 18 June 2007, whose ‘Cairo Declaration’, envisaged for the first time the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Research Area. This was followed by the “Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Research and Innovation” held in Barcelona on 2-3 April 2012, which concluded that to transform the region into a zone of sustainable economic development and cultural exchanges, the EU and Mediterranean neighbours need to work closely and establish a renewed, broader partnership in research and innovation based on the principles of co-ownership, mutual interest and shared benefit.

Less than five years later, the European Union and its Mediterranean partners have moved in unison to create a real partnership in key areas of common interest. The Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2017 on the participation of the Union to PRIMA<sup>1</sup> has effectively opened the way towards addressing real challenges at the crossroads between sustainable agriculture, food security and increasingly limited water resources. Meanwhile BLUEMED seeks to support a sustainable approach towards the management and exploitation of marine and maritime sectors in the Mediterranean Sea. The initiative, which has been championed by a number of EU Member States<sup>2</sup> since 2014, is equally a vector for integration among all Mediterranean countries. Countries across the region are also facing many other common challenges including migration, which need to be addressed collectively. Each of these topics links the environment, the economy, society and stability in the region bringing together three different, yet strongly related topics, which are highly relevant to the Mediterranean and its future challenges and opportunities. These topics also reflect a drive towards joint and common strategic agendas for research and innovation while pooling talent and resources towards common aims.

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1. Decision (EU) 2017/1324 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2017 on the participation of the Union in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) jointly undertaken by several Member States

2. Cyprus, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain

Migration, the maritime sector, and Europe's neighbourhood with a focus on the Mediterranean were among the overarching priorities set by the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU, which was also tasked with leading the interinstitutional negotiations on the PRIMA file. It therefore appeared timely to organise a Euro-Mediterranean conference which would take stock of progress made in R&I cooperation, but also serve to identify new potential R&I priorities and ways to address key challenges in the region.

The Conference programme was structured around these three key themes: the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA), R&I for Blue Jobs and Growth in the Mediterranean (BLUMED) and Addressing the Root Causes of Migration through R&I.

The Technical Level Meeting was designed to host a number of parallel sessions where expert panels discussed these three key topics from a technical point of view. The meeting drew on existing knowledge and expertise provided by EU-level setups and networks in the Mediterranean area as well as interdisciplinary participation covering the range of fields addressed.

The meeting brought together around 80 participants from both EU Member States and non-EU Mediterranean countries including national delegates, scientists, academics, representatives of research organisations, funding agencies, the European Commission, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, public authorities and EU-funded R&I project coordinators. The outcomes of the Technical-Meeting were presented by Director General for Research and Innovation Robert-Jan Smits during the Ministerial Conference which was held the day after.

The Ministerial Conference was organised as the flagship high-level meeting of the Maltese Presidency in the area of Research and Innovation. The purpose was to bring together Ministers in charge of scientific research and other high-ranking government officials from both EU Member States and non-EU Mediterranean countries with a view to endorse the "Valletta Declaration on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation". The declaration takes stock of the progress made in Euro Mediterranean R&I cooperation, while looking ahead towards the implementation of major large-scale initiatives being rolled out in the region as well as sowing the seeds for potential future priorities during the final part of Horizon 2020 and beyond.

The Ministerial Conference was attended by 36 country delegations. Representatives of the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament and the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, plus a number of prominent keynote speakers and several experts from the Technical-Level Meeting were also present. In total, around 150 participants convened for the event.

Based on the discussions and recommendations made during the Conference, this report presents papers dedicated to each of the three key Conference topics, which summarise current policy perspective and address concrete steps for follow-up by the countries of the Mediterranean Area through joint Research and Innovation actions.

## FOREWORDS

Science diplomacy can be a key resource in our work towards peace, dialogue and a more cooperative global order. International science cooperation can provide a common basis for engagement, for building trust between potential parties to a conflict, and for sharing knowledge and facilities with a common governance that can be a blueprint for governance of broader issues.

Cooperation in research and innovation is essential if we are to develop and grow knowledge-based societies that are equipped to understand and address our major common challenges. For instance, migration across the Mediterranean is one of the most important current challenges. Therefore, sharing knowledge and building a common understanding is essential to properly addressing its root causes and identifying drivers in countries of origin and transit and its impact on host populations.

There are also important opportunities that represent a success for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation, notably the PRIMA partnership and the BLUEMED initiative.

PRIMA, the 'Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area' is the single most ambitious research and innovation programme ever to be pursued jointly by Mediterranean countries. The programme will enhance the integration of national research in the areas of food systems and water provision and strengthen the cooperation integration of participating EU Member States and international partner countries in these fields.

At the same time, BLUEMED, the initiative for 'Research and Innovation for Blue Jobs and Growth in the Mediterranean Area' is now being rolled out to boost sustainable economic growth of the maritime sector across the region while conserving and upgrading the marine environment, its resources and heritage. These are the main topics of the Ministerial conference on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean cooperation through Research and Innovation on 4th May 2017.

The potential for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation can only be fully exploited by acting together and using all our instruments in synergy. We need to focus all together on building the opportunities and facing the challenges across the Mediterranean

**Carlos Moedas,**  
*EU Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation*



During the first half of 2017, Malta took over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time since its accession in 2004. Against the backdrop of an increasingly tense international landscape, the Maltese Presidency succeeded in negotiating deals to push through legislation in several policy areas in order to contribute towards concrete progress on proposals that address regional and global challenges.

In the field of research and innovation, the Maltese Presidency will be remembered for having successfully steered the interinstitutional negotiations on the PRIMA Basic Act, which was adopted by the European Parliament and endorsed by the Council of the European Union in June 2017. Among the many high-level conferences hosted under the auspices of the Maltese Presidency, a landmark event in the area of R&I was the Ministerial Conference on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation, organised by the Malta Council for Science and Technology in cooperation with the European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation on May 4th.

This meeting brought together research ministers from both Europe and neighbouring Mediterranean countries with the aim of discussing the strategic role that R&I can play in reinforcing the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, whilst achieving increased socio-economic development and stability in the region.

The Ministerial Conference addressed three specific areas of common interest, namely: migration, the maritime and marine sectors, as well as sustainable water and food systems. The event culminated in the endorsement of the “Valletta Declaration on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation”, which enshrines the shared vision that research and innovation are key to fully tap the potential of economic growth and sustainable development of the Mediterranean, whilst addressing common social, economic and environmental issues in the region. The outcomes of the Ministerial Conference, which are presented in this publication, as well as the vision encompassed by the Valletta Declaration, will form the basis for concrete follow-up measures to strengthen cooperation among countries and stakeholders from the two shores of the Mediterranean through joint research and innovation.

Whilst taking the opportunity to thank my colleague Hon. Chris Agius, former Parliamentary Secretary responsible for Innovation, I look back with pride at the achievements of the Maltese Presidency on strengthening cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean area in R&I. I look forward with confidence to the implementation of the PRIMA initiative and to the realisation of its ambition towards a stable and prosperous Mediterranean area.

**Hon. Silvio Schembri,**  
***MP - Parliamentary Secretary For Financial Services, Digital Economy And Innovation***



# VALLETTA DECLARATION ON STRENGTHENING EURO-MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION THROUGH RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

*We, the Ministers responsible for Research and Innovation from the Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and of the European Union (EU), and in the presence of Mr. Carlos Moedas, Member of the European Commission responsible for Research, Science and Innovation, Mr. Karmenu Vella, Member of the European Commission responsible for Environment, met in Valletta, Malta on 4 May 2017, determined to strengthen Euro-Mediterranean cooperation through research and innovation.*

**RECOGNISING** that the Mediterranean area has great potential for economic growth which could be used to deliver the social and sustainable dimension of the region.

**CONSIDERING** that the Mediterranean area is experiencing intense social, economic, environmental and demographic changes; that population growth, urban concentration around coastal areas and a climate-sensitive agriculture amongst others, result in water stress, while the incidence of extreme climate events is likely to increase in the region in coming years; that our Mediterranean Sea witnesses the strife and desperation of thousands of migrants who are driven to leave their home countries to escape conflict-stricken territories or to improve their living conditions;

**WELCOMING** the commitment of the Member States of the UfM and of the EU to delivering on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, as also recently demonstrated by the implementing actions and commitments taken at COP22 in Marrakech;

*We restate our belief that strengthening Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation contributes to fully tap the potential of economic growth and sustainable development of the Mediterranean. Therefore, we reconfirm our commitment to knowledge creation and to identifying innovative solutions as a means to creating more opportunities for youth and to understanding and addressing key challenges in the Mediterranean area.*

## STOCK TAKING

1. We **RECALL** the Joint Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Higher Education and Scientific Research held in Cairo on 18 June 2007, the Conclusions of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Research and Innovation held in Barcelona on 2-3 April 2012 and the Discussion of the Informal meeting of the Competitiveness Council on “Euro- Mediterranean Cooperation in Research and Innovation – The Vision and the Mission” held in Nicosia on 20 July 2012.

2. We **REITERATE** the commitment to addressing the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement resulting from state fragility and insecurity, as well as from demographic, economic and environmental trends as expressed in the Declaration and the Action Plan following the Valletta Summit on Migration held on 11-12 November 2015 and in the Conclusions of the high-level Conference on the Migration Challenge and the Role of Research held in Brussels in February 2016.
3. We also **SUPPORT** the Declaration of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour, held in Jordan on 27 September 2016, which calls for mainstreaming employment and decent work objectives in other UfM policies and cooperation initiatives, including research and innovation; the Declaration of the Dialogue 5+5 Third Ministerial Conference on Research and Innovation and Higher Education, held in Tunis, on 31 March 2017.
4. We **RECALL** the Declaration of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Environment and Climate Change held in Athens on 13 May 2014 and the Declaration of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Water held in Valetta, on 27 April 2017.
5. In the area of Blue Economy, we **PROMOTE** the importance of "Investing on Blue research, technology, innovation, knowledge and skills" as indicated in the Declaration of the UfM Ministerial Conference on Blue Economy, held in Brussels on 17 November 2015, in the Conclusions of the high-level Conference on the BLUEMED initiative held in Venice in October 2015 and the Venice Declaration as well as in the conclusions of the Ministerial Conference on Blue Growth, held in Valletta, on 20 April 2017.
6. We **WELCOME** the Joint Programming Proposal for a Partnership in Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) and the subsequent Proposal of the European Commission on 18 October 2016, for a 'Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the participation of the EU in PRIMA jointly undertaken by several Member States'.

## **MIGRATION AND RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**

7. We **UPHOLD** the key role that research and innovation play in developing an understanding of the root causes of migration and the inter-dependencies between different drivers for migration including economic, political, social, demographic, conflict-related and environmental drivers. In this respect, we **EMPHASIZE** the importance of brain circulation, integration and the contribution of scientific diasporas to regional integration, human and sustainable development and regional stability and **ACKNOWLEDGE** the need for increased researchers' and students' mobility, and take note of initiatives launched by countries in the Euro-Mediterranean area to support refugee scientists and researchers in the EU, including 'science4refugees'.

8. We **PURSUE** to overcome the fragmentation of knowledge and data, aimed at understanding and addressing the challenges posed by migration and integration while also maximising its benefits to the Euro-Mediterranean area, and acknowledge the importance of developing jointly tailored approaches to the needs of populations in the countries of origin and transit as well as of host populations.

### **PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA - PRIMA**

9. We **WELCOME** PRIMA as the most ambitious joint programme to be undertaken in the frame of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and we **CONFIRM** our intention to implementing it on the basis of the principles of co-ownership, mutual interest and shared benefit. We therefore **CALL** for PRIMA to develop, in coherence with national research and innovation policies and programmes in the field of water provision and agro-food systems, in collaboration with the existing Initiatives (such as, Joint Programming initiatives on Water and FACCE and others), a common strategic research and innovation agenda so as to promote scientific excellence, contribute to healthier and more sustainable Euro-Mediterranean societies and strengthen capacities durably while leveraging the knowledge and financial resources of both public and private stakeholders. We therefore **CALL** for the prompt implementation of the PRIMA programme so as to maximise its impact at early stages within the timeframe of Horizon 2020 and beyond.

### **RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR BLUE JOBS AND GROWTH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA - BLUEMED**

10. We **WELCOME** the BLUEMED initiative as a means to promote a healthy, productive and resilient Mediterranean Sea and stress the importance of structuring Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in marine and maritime sectors to encompass a broad range of objectives comprising the creation of new, blue jobs and social well-being while also being mindful of sustainable development and the preservation of the environment in the Mediterranean area.

11. We **VALUE** the work performed by the countries in the Western Mediterranean and the Adriatic and Ionian Region that aim at a joint and common definition of research priorities and **WELCOME** the efforts pursued by the European Commission and the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU to include other member countries of the UfM in the implementation of the BLUEMED initiative on a voluntary basis. To this aim, we **CALL** for support to maintain an open dialogue between key stakeholders to develop joint sub-regional and regional approaches towards actions supporting the implementation of the BLUEMED initiative. We **ACKNOWLEDGE** the potential of research and innovation communities across the Euro-Mediterranean area to maximise existing and future opportunities and the use of the most appropriate instruments supporting the implementation of the BLUEMED initiative.

## THE WAY FORWARD

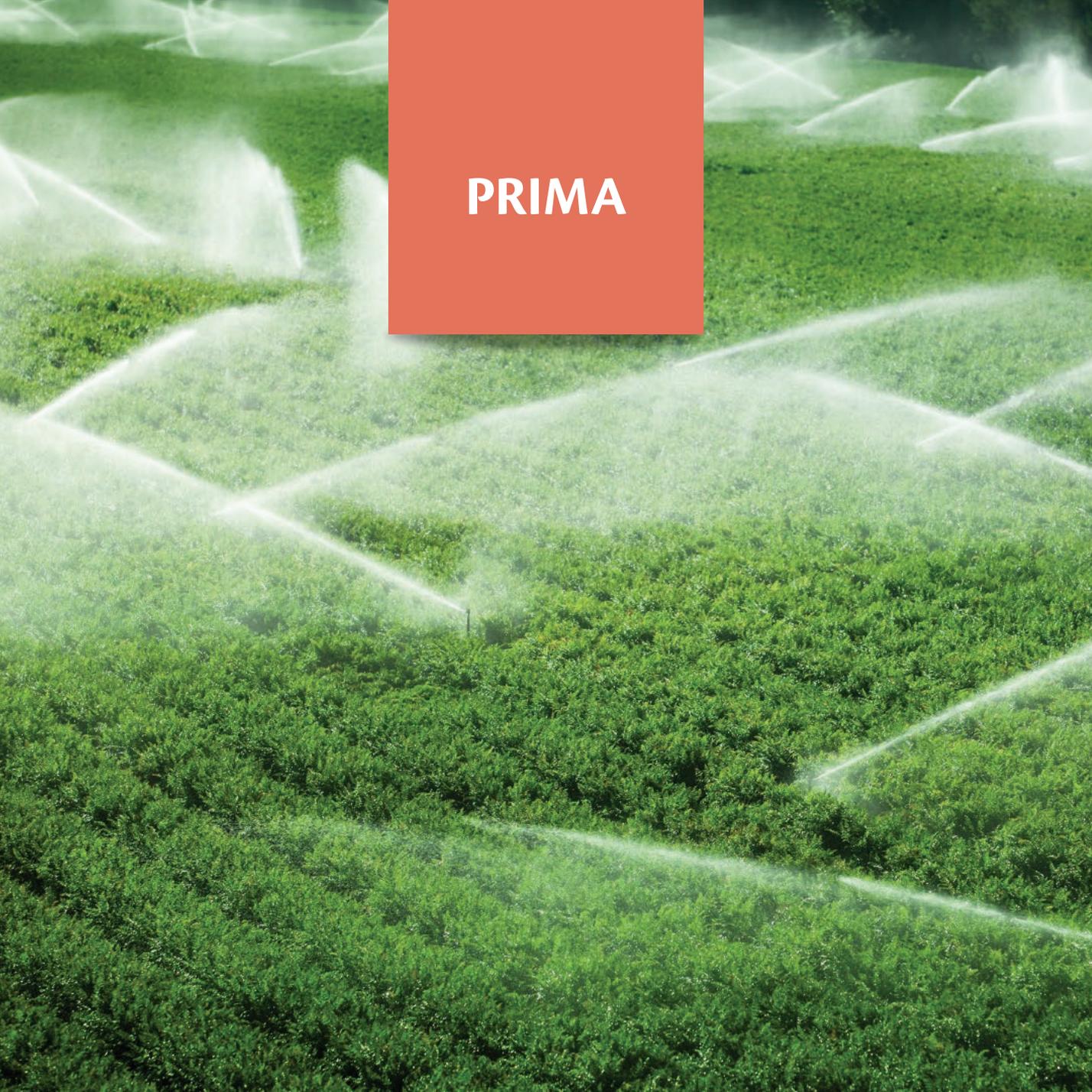
12. We **ENCOURAGE** a coordinated and partnership approach in the Euro-Mediterranean area, including establishing common platforms for methodologies for data collection, analysis and use on migration and integration-related aspects, while making the best possible use of existing tools.

13. We **CALL** for a common research and innovation agenda for countries in the Euro-Mediterranean area based on the principles of co-ownership, equal footing and mutual benefit in the key common areas of interest of food systems and water resources in PRIMA, including through key enabling technologies (KETs) and circular economy processes, and **LOOK FORWARD** to the swift implementation and launch of the first Calls in 2018.

14. We **ACKNOWLEDGE** the importance of developing and promoting a shared vision of the Mediterranean Sea as a healthy, safe and productive common resource, so as to promote security, safety and prosperity of present and future generations, via the BLUEMED initiative.

15. We **EMBOLDEN** the development of further priorities for future research and innovation cooperation, including in areas of high industrial relevance. Furthermore, novel innovation paradigms (particularly frugal innovation) addressing societal needs in a sustainable and affordable way could provide significant advantages to facilitate the take-up of new solutions coming from industrial enabling technologies, by involving all relevant stakeholders of the target value chains. Other activities could be enhanced for example in the transport sector, in the fields of competitive, green ports and hinterland connectivity, transport and logistics networks, sustainable urban development and mobility, social sciences, health, environment, blue technology, climate change and renewable energy research.

16. We **INVITE** the EU-MED Group of Senior Officials in Research and Innovation, through its Co-Presidency, in close cooperation with the Secretariat of the UfM, to pursue its efforts to identify priorities for research and innovation cooperation in the Mediterranean, actively promote synergies and complementarities among all the Euro-Mediterranean countries and stakeholders and in cooperation with the Co-Presidency of the UfM Blue Economy Working Group, in order to provide added value to investments and achieve sustainable growth and decent job creation for the region, by capitalizing on achieved results and best practices including through removing barriers, promoting brain circulation, avoiding duplication, reducing fragmentation and promoting integration, while fostering gender equality and research ethics.



**PRIMA**

# 1. PRIMA

## **THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA**

The Mediterranean basin is one of the most arid regions in the world. 180 million people there are "water poor" while a further 60 million people are even considered "water-stressed". Climate change as well as population growth and urbanisation trends further exacerbate the situation. Finally, high agricultural water consumption and unsustainable resource management put additional pressures on scarce resources and fragile eco-systems. The implications are enormous: people suffer from poor health and nutrition, living standards and livelihoods decline as unemployment and political instability rise. This immense economic and social stress drives many people, especially farm families, to leave their homes and look for better prospects in cities or even to migrate within their countries or towards Europe. Past efforts and funding to identify novel approaches to adequately address these increasingly complex and interconnected challenges have proved largely insufficient.

Countries from the Southern, Eastern and Northern shores of the Mediterranean have since become aware of the need to join forces in order to effectively tackle these challenges. However, due to their increasingly complex nature as well as their social, economic and environmental implications on the region, a more integrated approach to research and innovation is crucial. With PRIMA, the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area, EU Member States and partner countries across the Mediterranean Area have developed a joint initiative, based on Article 185 of the EU treaty.

The general objective of PRIMA is "to build research and innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and common innovative solutions for agro-food systems, to make them sustainable as well as for integrated water provision and management in the Mediterranean area, to make those systems and that provision and management more climate resilient, efficient, cost-effective and environmentally and socially sustainable, and to contribute to solving water scarcity, food security, nutrition, health, well-being and migration problems upstream".

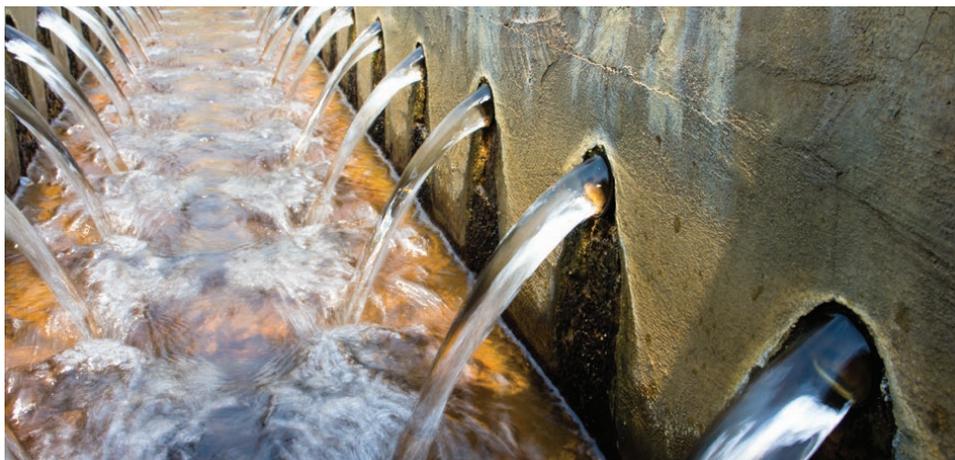
Conceived to be a long-term, strategic and integrated Research and Innovation Programme, PRIMA focuses on the implementation of a common Strategic Research and Innovation agenda (SRIA) building innovation capacities and solutions on both shores of the Mediterranean while contributing to the alignment of the relevant national R&I programmes.

The Horizon 2020 Coordination and Support Action (CSA) 4PRIMA led by Italy, started drafting the SRIA in May 2016 by compiling input from a wide range of sources including experts and stakeholders from different sectors. An open consultation was held in April 2017, which resulted in a further 800 responses from 28 countries. A first draft of the SRIA was presented at the Ministerial Conference "Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation" on 4 May 2017, in the context of an informal Competitiveness Council Meeting under Maltese Presidency in Valletta.

It clearly emerged from the SRIA that PRIMA's aim is to promote excellent research, and establish cooperation among researchers and innovators to develop and adopt solutions supporting communities, consumers and enterprises able to deal with challenges in the water and agro-food sectors with a nexus approach.

To maximize its impact, PRIMA has identified strategically important areas of research and innovation (Priorities) within three thematic areas: management of water; farming system and agro-food value chain aiming to meet 8 operational objectives which together constitute its backbone.

These are summarised in Figure 1.



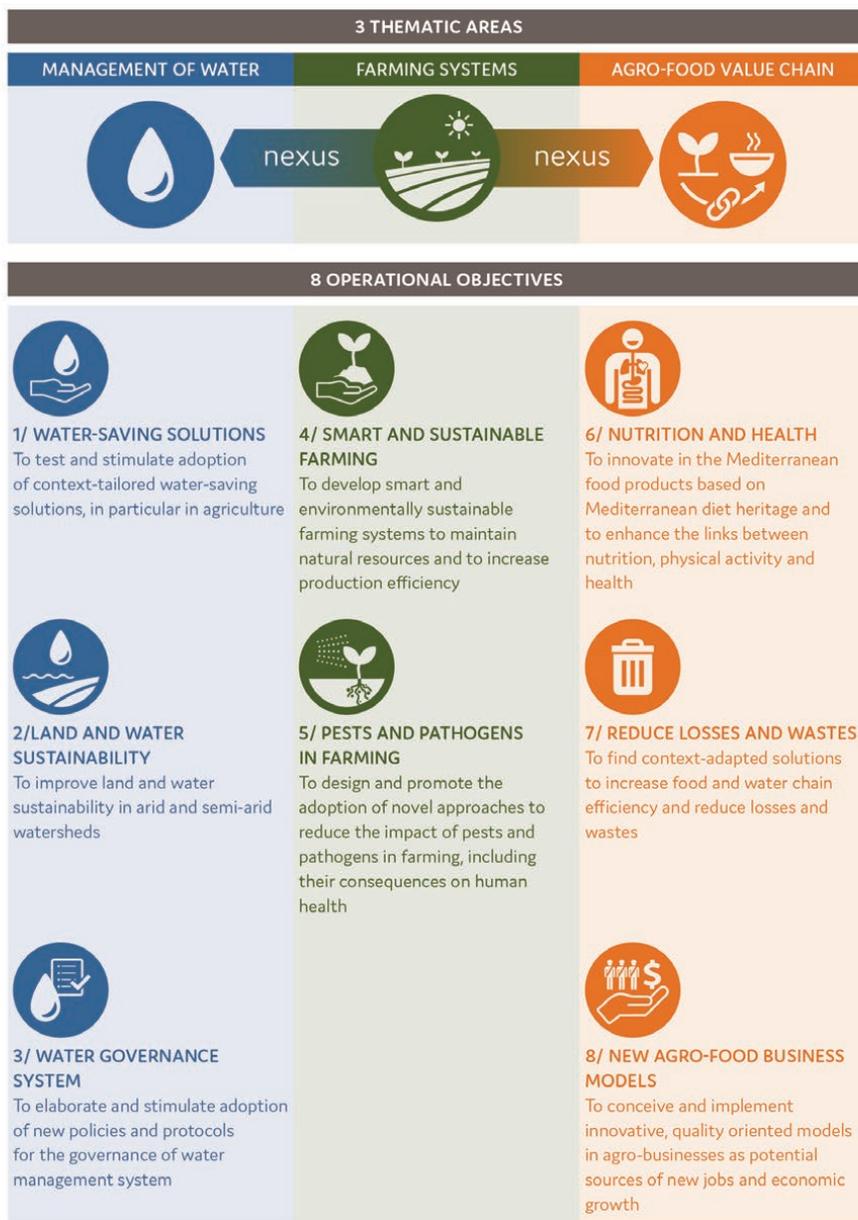


Figure 1.

While specific areas of activities are suggested under each of these thematic areas, PRIMA will promote research and innovation actions with a systemic approach recognising the strong nexus between sustainable water management and provision and food production.

PRIMA, as the most important innovation programme in the Mediterranean area, is expected to have significant impact in the Mediterranean area. The development of innovative solutions will improve the efficiency and sustainability of agro-food production and processing systems and water provision and management in the Mediterranean basin. It is expected to stimulate a more sustainable and competitive industry, promote good health and lifestyles, well-being and economic growth, and will further contribute to achieving the targets of the UN Agenda 2030 through the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Mediterranean Area. (Figure 2)

## PRIMA Facts

In total, 19 states are expected to take part in PRIMA.

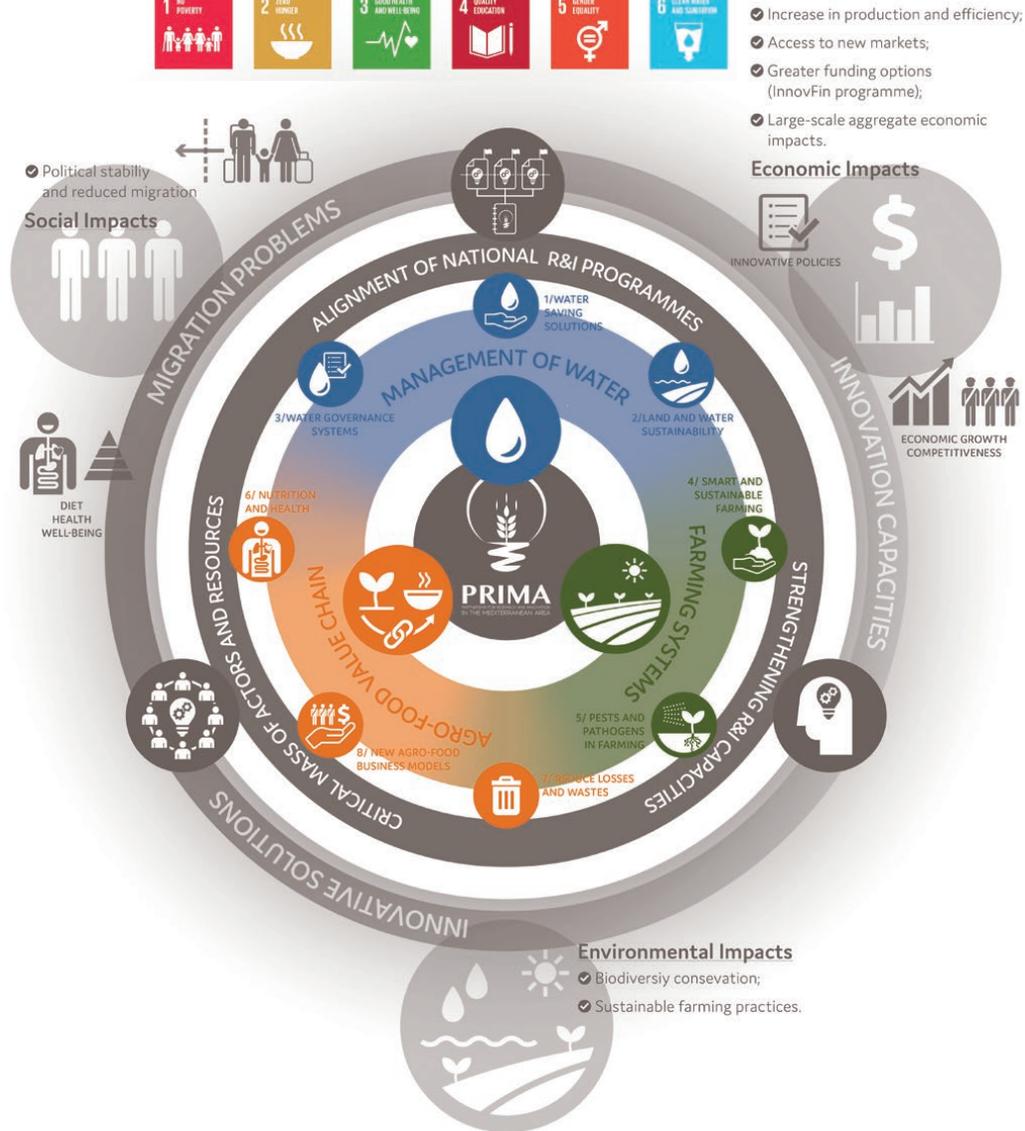
- 11 Member States: Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Croatia and Slovenia;
- 3 third countries associated to Horizon 2020: Israel, Tunisia recently Turkey;
- 5 third countries not associated to Horizon 2020, whose participation in PRIMA is subject to the entry into force or, at least, upon provisional application of their respective international agreement with the EU:
  - Algeria: became a PRIMA Participating State on 26 October 2017, when the relevant international agreement was signed. The agreement provides for provisional application from signature;
  - Egypt: the relevant international agreement was signed on 27 October 2017 and will need to be ratified by both Parties;
  - Jordan: the relevant international agreement was signed on 10 November 2017 and will need to be ratified by both Parties;
  - Lebanon: The EU and Lebanon successfully concluded negotiations of the relevant international agreement on 18 July 2017. The agreement provides for provisional application from signature;
  - Morocco: Negotiations of the relevant international agreement between the EU and Morocco are not yet finalised.

The budget of the initiative is at present €494 million (of which €274 million from Participating States and €220 million from the EU).

Figure 2.



## SDGs implementation



# MIGRATION



## 2. MIGRATION

### THE CHALLENGE OF MIGRATION IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

Global migration is by no means a new phenomenon and will continue to be a defining character of our future as social and economic imbalances between the North and the South are unlikely to be solved in the short term. Considering the reciprocal interrelation of migration flows and policies, Research and Innovation are needed to ensure evidence-based, appropriated and effective governance solutions in a global and Euro-Mediterranean perspective. In this framework, understanding the drivers that stimulate migration flows, including the different set of policies in place to regulate them, is of outmost importance.

Building on the results of the "Conference on Understanding and Tackling the Migration Challenge: The Role of Research" organised by the European Commission, DG Research & Innovation (Feb 2016) and the conference "Social Sciences and Humanities: a New Agenda for Europe's Challenges" held under the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the EU (Nov 2016), the Technical Meeting and the Ministerial Conference held under the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU (May 2017) focused specifically on the analysis and assessment of drivers and trends (from short to long term) of human mobility, especially in the MENA region; the governance of migration, from flows to integration policies, including the analysis of contribution that diaspora groups give to communities of destination and origin; and the analysis of existing adaptation solutions that foster resilience of societies and ecosystems in countries of origin and transit. Selected experts coming from across the region discussed with delegates from Euro Mediterranean countries in order to come up with relevant suggestions for strengthened cooperation on research and innovation in the framework of H2020 and beyond.



The conclusion of the stream on migration focused on understanding the profile of the migrants in the Euro-Mediterranean area and what are the main push and pull factors driving their decisions to migrate. Main statements highlighted that:

1. International migrants are not the poorest from their countries of origin
2. Beyond conflicts, in the MENA region migration is driven by the unfulfilled expectations of the growing middle class
3. In the majority of cases, in the MENA region mismatches between educational qualifications and labour market opportunities create impetus to migrate and discourage potential return
4. Migration policies in countries of destination have unintended consequences on the profile of migrants and the contributions they make to origin and destination countries.

The technical meeting produced a set of recommendations that have been reported to the participants of the Ministerial Conference by DG Robert-Jan Smits. These recommendations focus on the need for the European Commission the EU Member States and Partner Countries to make sure that:

1. A long-standing commitment is made towards collecting comprehensive and comparable data across the region to strengthen our understanding of complex drivers of migration;
2. It is necessary to better understand the effects of migration and integration policies and the ability of migrants to contribute to their countries of origin and destination;
3. Innovative solutions not only technical but also in job creation, education and social protection are put in place to promote resilience in countries of origin, transit and destination;
4. More research is programmed to study return trajectories and how public policies can make reintegration successful;
5. Most research on impact of international migration is done in countries of origin enhancing, and linked to existing research done in countries of destination, in order to enhance Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

The Ministerial Conference particularly endorsed the need for a long-standing commitment towards collecting comprehensive and comparable data across the region to strengthen our understanding of complex drivers of migration; and the need to complement research done in destination countries with research on origin countries enhancing Euro-Mediterranean cooperation.

These important outcomes have been specifically reflected by the European Commission and the EU Member States in the elaboration of the last Work Programme of Horizon 2020 (for the period 2018-2020). Overall several Societal Challenges, whether they focus on environmental and climate-related changes (SC5<sup>3</sup>) or on security-related perspectives (SC7<sup>4</sup>), tackle the issue from different angles. Most of all the Societal Challenge on Europe in a Changing World – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies (SC6) will devote particular space and attention to global migration and integration-related issues.

Some of the key outcomes and conclusions of the Conference including the importance of analysing drivers and existing governance structures, the need to improve forecasting, modelling, and institutional arrangements to establish a global governance for migration are at the core of the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2020 of Societal Challenge 6. The programming period 2018-2020, foresees a series of topics specifically devoted to Migration in its broad sense and coverage.

During the next 3 year period the research and innovation priorities in the area of migration in Horizon 2020 will also focus on the analysis of the social, cultural and economic impact of migration in EU societies, including cross-fertilization with local communities and the role of "social remittances" as well as on the contribution of migrant populations to encourage socio-economic development in countries of origin.

In addition targeted cooperation with Mediterranean countries is also foreseen in the areas of forced displacement in urban settings (2018) and on international protection systems for asylum seekers and refugees (2019).

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3. Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5: Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials

4. Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 7: Secure societies – Protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens



**BLUEMED**

### 3. BLUEMED

#### RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR BLUE JOBS AND GROWTH IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

The Mediterranean is where a third of the world's seaborne trade passes and where 150 million people depend on tourism-centred economy. It is the cradle of European civilisation with 400 UNESCO sites and a global hotspot for biodiversity in the most polluted European sea.

It also offers a great opportunity to generate a common future with new jobs and growth supported by a clean common sea that can support peace, prosperity and stability along its shores and beyond.

The BLUEMED Initiative will diffuse great ideas to co-create a new blue economy. It is an innovation mission with an economic purpose – to harness ideas and technologies spurring new jobs and economic activity and clusters across the Mediterranean's marine and maritime sectors; blue jobs need new researchers, entrepreneurs; blue jobs need a digitally rewired and engaged workforce and long term funding.

**Blue tourism needs clear blue waters - algae and litter free.**

**Blue energy needs to turn oil and gas into offshore wind energy platforms combined with other purposes such as aquaculture.**

**A blue Mediterranean diet needs sustainable fisheries and hi-tech aquaculture;  
Blue shipping needs clean quiet engines.**

**A safe blue Mediterranean Sea needs fit for purpose blue observation – an observation system for climate impact on the food web, forecasting, natural hazards, and underwater volcanic threats to coastal cities, and where data are open accessible and turned into services for citizens.**

The Conference was preceded by a BLUEMED technical event which took place on the 18th and 19th April 2007, in Valletta, Malta. This event took place in the context of the Presidency Informal Ministerial Meeting on Blue Growth and Ocean Governance in the EU and the Mediterranean. Both Ministerial events saw the endorsement of Declarations with specific references to the BLUEMED Initiative . The overarching aim is to promote BLUEMED as a shared research and innovation initiative by the Mediterranean, in the editerranean and for the Mediterranean.

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5. The Declaration of the European Ministers responsible for the Integrated Maritime Policy on Blue Growth is available here: <https://www.eu2017.mt/Documents/Declarations/Valletta%20Declaration%20IMP%20Blue%20Growth.pdf>

Key questions that have been addressed during the technical discussions were about how to:

- increase cooperation between industry, research and local communities in the Mediterranean region to stimulate innovation and create jobs and growth and,
- promote joint pilot actions including the coordination, planning and programming of relevant research and innovation policies and instruments..

Discussions during the technical session showed that there is scope for, and interest in closer Euro-Mediterranean cooperation partnerships. Concrete steps towards greater co-ownership meant that:

- Efforts are necessary to constantly review the existing BLUEMED Strategic Research and Innovation agenda<sup>6</sup> with the active participation of all countries in a wide range of marine and maritime sectors, from fisheries to tourism.
- Dialogue with all parties needs to be pursued through targeted follow up meetings in order share experience, information and tools and interconnect all the different parallel ongoing initiatives.



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6. [http://www.bluemed-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Bluemed-SRIA\\_A4.pdf](http://www.bluemed-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Bluemed-SRIA_A4.pdf)

In particular it was felt that dialogue to share experience, information and tools and all the parallel ongoing initiatives needed to converge towards key priority areas as follows:

<b>better align and go beyond national priorities/jurisdiction</b>
<b>learn from each other, e.g. create better interfaces between sectors and actors so as to drive local innovation</b>
<b>connect existing initiatives and projects, look at interrelations between sea-land-air; identify a wide range of existing tools not only from the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020</b>
<b>attract talents and focus on competence and skills development to make a younger generation fit for new emerging blue sectors/jobs</b>
<b>promote lobbying on sectorial dialogues with government and anchor research and societal/policy driven 'blue' science, for example within the framework of the Barcelona Convention, so as to ensure long term funding and national interest/obligations for Mediterranean co-ownership</b>
<b>co-create joint pilot activities to strengthen common partnerships to address, for example, youth unemployment as well as train new researchers and new entrepreneurs to develop the skills and competencies needed for blue jobs</b>
<b>invest in large scale transversal activities , go from data collection to information and services; include developing new digital monitoring applications, take holistic approach by combining all data and measurements (smart sampling technologies, also include fisheries stock assessments and monitoring)</b>
<b>push that all data is made publicly available and protocols for data sharing agreed</b>
<b>develop rapid response actions that society needs (major storms, environmental and geological hazards, pollution) which need long term funding and properly training and skilled workforce</b>
<b>create BLUEMED hubs/or satellites (for research and innovation activities) across all countries of the Mediterranean to support the building of a new BLUEMED community comprising public-private partnerships, local and regional authorities and civil society</b>
<b>organise a yearly BLUEMED event back-to-back with events already planned by existing frameworks (for example the newly launched EU-Western Mediterranean Strategy)</b>
<b>work with the Union for the Mediterranean for the development of their Virtual Knowledge Centre, which will further support the networking and enhance connectivity between the Med Sea as a whole. This will also be linked to the BLUEMED Coordination and Support Action funded under H2020</b>
<b>connect and facilitate the networking of the diaspora of researchers from Southern Mediterranean countries as a potential for enhancing cooperation and foster knowledge transfer</b>

The Horizon 2020 CSA: BLUEMED – 727453 project is a Coordination and Support Action for the exploitation of the BLUEMED Research and Innovation Initiative for blue jobs and growth in the Mediterranean area, with particular reference to the implementation of the BLUEMED Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA). To this end, the project has set the scene for the effective coordination of marine and maritime research and innovation activities in the long term, and in particular to consolidate the BLUEMED SRIA, develop the BLUEMED Implementation Plan, and promote joint implementation.

Four dedicated working Platforms on knowledge, economy, technology, and policy are set up to allow key stakeholders to work together. A dedicated Work Package is devoted to enlarge the participation to non-EU countries, through suitable activities in the perspective of a global Mediterranean.

In particular, the BLUEMED CSA has identified concrete actions to support the implementation of the Valetta declaration:



## Actions for the implementation of the Valletta declaration

**BLUEMED Initiative key actions from the technical meeting on Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation through Research and Innovation, Malta 3 May 2017**

**BLUEMED CSA supporting activity<sup>7</sup>**

...We CALL for support to maintain an open dialogue between key stakeholders to develop joint sub - regional and regional approaches towards actions supporting the implementation of the BLUEMED initiative (*Valletta Declaration, May 4, 2017*)

Strengthening cooperation to consolidate and implement the SRIA: (i) the BLUEMED Platforms system; (ii) support to the creation of an Operational Network of research funders and key players

BLUEMED shall facilitate the **connection of relevant projects and initiatives of the whole Med area**, so that results are shared and up taken while the BLUEMED SRIA is injected and its actions implemented (*BLUEMED Conference, Sliema – Malta, April 18-19, 2017*)

Capitalisation of projects' results within BLUEMED concept, including Meetings with projects' coordinators. This sharing and capitalization principles inform horizontally the whole CSA and many other tasks

BLUEMED shall facilitate the organization of **follow-up meetings with relevant organizations** (CIESM, CIHEAM, GFCM, CPRM, JPIs, Bologna Charter, etc.) and the private sector, e.g. **clusters and EU technology platforms** (*BLUEMED Conference, Sliema – Malta, April 18-19, 2017*)

Organization as part of the task on governance or as specific and oriented session in foreseen meetings (e.g. workshop with research funders and key players) and involvement in the platforms

The existing BLUEMED Strategic R&I agenda needs to be **updated regularly with an active participation of all countries** in a wide range of marine and maritime sectors, from fisheries to tourism (*Technical meeting, Malta, May 3, 2017*)

Strengthening cooperation to consolidate and implement the SRIA: (i) the BLUEMED Platforms system and key National Pivots; (ii) support to the creation of an Operational Network of research funders and key players

Involvement of non-EU Med countries in the process

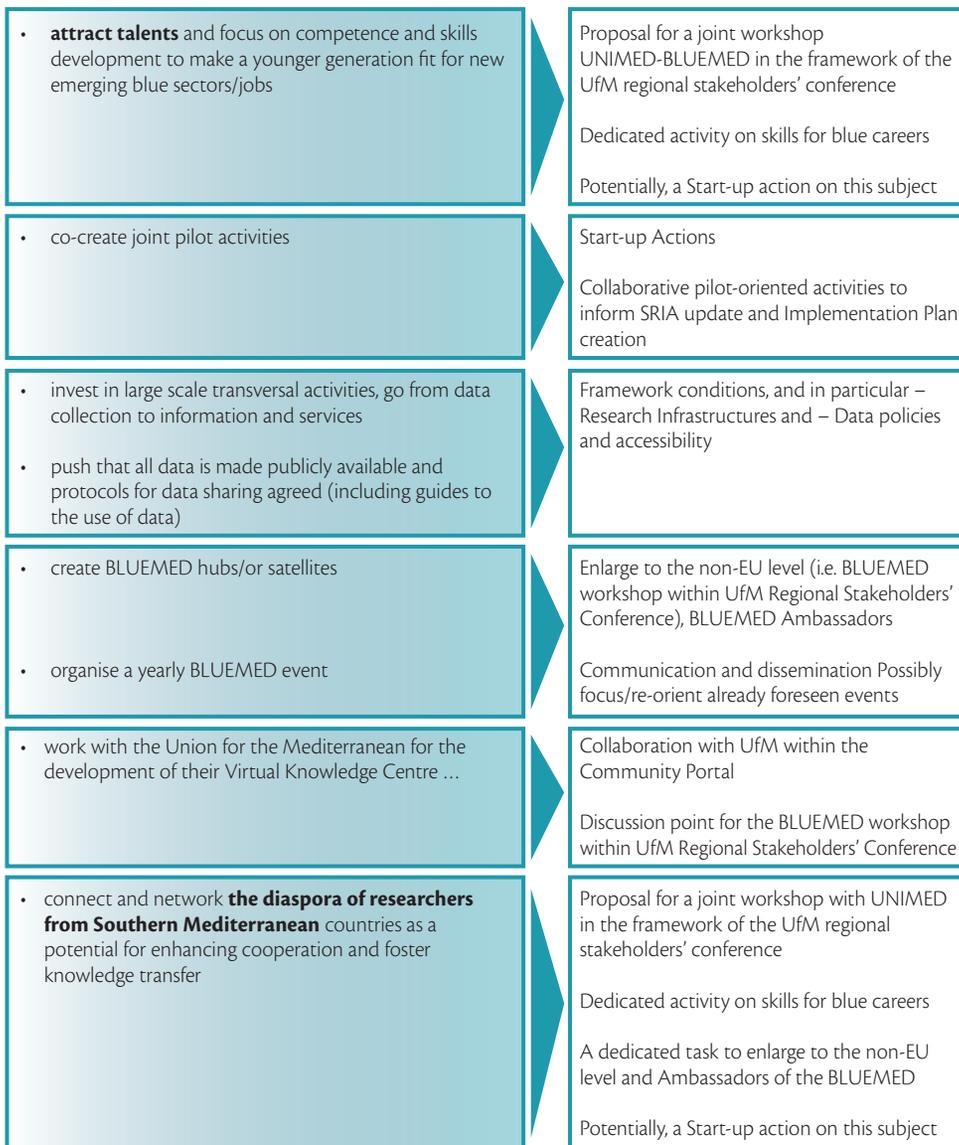
Targeted follow up meetings to continue the discussions with speakers/partners and share experience, information and tools and interconnect all the different parallel ongoing *initiative to (Technical meeting, Malta, May 3 2017):*

- **connect existing initiatives and projects**, look at interrelations between (sea floor)-sea-land-air; identify a wide range of existing tools not only from the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020

Capitalisation of projects' results within BLUEMED concept, including Meetings with projects' coordinators

BLUEMED Platform activities

7. All these actions are part of the Annex I: Description of the Action (DoA) of the project







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