



ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Permanent International Secretariat – The Secretary General

BS/C.2023.0041

Istanbul, 29 May 2023

Dear Mr. Under-Secretary-General,

In response to your letter dated 21 March 2023, I have the honour to refer to activities and measures undertaken by the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) as a contribution of BSEC to the Secretary General's report to UN General Assembly in relation to resolution 77/248 of 30 December 2022 on oceans and the law of the sea

For the BSEC Organization – the oldest, most representative and institutionally mature economic cooperation organization in the wider Black Sea area – maritime issues have been of high importance. BSEC's activities at regional level focused on both developing concrete joint projects with maritime dimension as well as on continuing supporting its 13 Member States and their desire for concrete actions for the benefit the wider Black Sea region. Since the launching of the ***Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea in 2019***, maritime issues of high importance and with a significant impact for growth have been raised on a regional level. BSEC activities further focused to the endorsement of the scientific pillar of the CMA– the ***Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda for the Black Sea (SRIA)***. Support of both these regional milestone documents remain high in BSEC's agenda.

At the same time, the BSEC Organization has already taken some concrete and project-oriented actions that are mentioned here below:

- 1) With the support of the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission, the BSEC PERMIS established **the first ever Black Sea Virtual Knowledge Centre (BSVKC)** which aim is to provide a centralized platform for information on the Blue Economy in the Black Sea and to improve synergies between stakeholders and Blue Economy related projects in the region, while functioning as stakeholders' platform - <http://www.bsec-bsvkc.org/Forms/Default>
- 2) BSEC PERMIS is an active part of the "**Black Sea CONNECT**" project aims to support the Blue Growth Initiative for Research and Innovation in the Black Sea towards implementing the SRIA and promoting a shared vision for a productive, healthy, resilient and sustainable Black Sea by 2030.

**To: Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
and United Nations Counsel**

**CC: Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law
of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs**

1/2

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- 3) The BSEC PERMIS was approved by the Directorate General for Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission **to receive a direct grant** with the aim to strengthen the project implementation capacity of the BSEC Organization and its role as facilitator of dialog and cooperation in the region. Areas of work addressed tourism, environmental protection and youth entrepreneurship.
- 4) BSEC PERMIS is also an active part of "**BRIDGE-BS**" project which aims to create a connected Black Sea community, strengthened by a new generation of researchers and innovators to address emerging Black Sea challenges.
- 5) Two more projects, where the Secretariat is an active partner with regard to the Black Sea Case Study, have to be also mentioned:
 - "**ARSINOE**" project identifies solutions needed for a successful transformation towards a climate-resilient future and will develop and demonstrate systemic tools enabling regions and communities of variable scale across Europe to achieve the goal.
 - "**REST-COAST**" project aims to demonstrate to what extent up-scaled coastal restoration can provide a low-carbon adaptation, reducing risks and providing gains in biodiversity for vulnerable coastal ecosystems, such as wetlands or sea grass beds.
- 6) The role of the BSEC PERMIS being an implementing entity of the "**Blueing the Black Sea**" Global Environmental Facility regional project aims at tackling marine pollution and catalyzing blue economy investments in the Black Sea region has to be also mentioned in this regard.

Working together with the countries in the region, with the European Commission and other stakeholders and interlocutors interested in further developing joint initiatives and projects for improving the environmental status of the Black Sea stays high on the BSEC's agenda.

With reference to your question as to our agreement on web-posting on the website of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of your Office, I would like to state our consent in this regard.

In concluding I would like to assure you of our readiness in further working together with the United Nations in promoting these goals and of the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely Yours,



Ambassador Lazăr COMĂNESCU
Secretary General

2/2