

**EUROPEAN
OCEAN DAYS**

3-7 MARCH 2025



**EU
MISSIONS**

RESTORE OUR OCEAN & WATERS

**Mission Ocean and Waters Forum
and related events**



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Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters Forum 2025

(3rd Mission Forum)

Draft Programme

Format: In person, (web streamed) - interpretation: FR-DE-EN-IT-ES-NL-PT-EL-DA-FI-SV-CS-ET-LV-LT-HU-MT-PL-SK-SL-BG-RO-HR

Date: 4 March 2025

Venue: Charlemagne Building (170, rue de la Loi/Wetstraat), Brussels

Scope: The third Annual Forum of the Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters” aims to celebrate and take stock of the Mission’s progress and major achievements by 2025, to give voice to the broad Mission communities engaged to date and further mobilise relevant actors around key Mission deliverables and to discuss the needs and strategic steps for reaching the 2030 Mission targets.

The event will showcase the broad mobilisation as well as the concrete research and innovation (R&I) solutions developed under the Mission and contributing towards its objectives. It will discuss how key stakeholders, including but not limited to regions, local authorities and the private sectors are involved in implementing the Mission and how different streams of finance are being mobilised to support the scaling and deployment of solutions for reaching the Mission objectives: to protect and restore marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity, boost coastal resilience, eliminate pollution, and make the blue economy climate-neutral and circular and competitive. Following the 2023 assessment of EU Missions, the event will be an opportunity to discuss the strategic focus of the Mission until 2030, and the necessary steps for the deployment, replication and scaling of innovative solutions developed by the Mission.

The Mission Forum will bring together key stakeholders to:

- Present the progress of the Mission mobilisation to date and the buy-in to the Mission from key stakeholders at national, regional and local level, including through the Mission projects and Charter actions;
- Showcase concrete examples of innovative solutions developed and deployed under the Mission and related initiatives;
- Give voice to the Mission communities and discuss strategic priorities and needs for the Mission implementation at basin level, and the necessary next steps for the

systematic deployment of innovative solutions to restore our ocean and waters across the EU;

- Explore and define how the Mission can actively contribute in the short-, medium- and long-term to future EU priorities including the European Ocean Pact, the EU Ocean R&I strategy and the European Water Resilience Strategy.
- Further build a Mission community and discuss securing co-investments from EU, national, regional, local and private sources to reach the 2030 targets.

Targeted stakeholders: Member States and Associated Countries, relevant third countries and international organisations, regional and local authorities, representatives of sea and river basins, cities, ports, islands, fisheries and conservation communities, shipping, academia and education, industry, businesses, investors, philanthropists, NGOs and representatives of civil society including youth - all the communities engaged in the Mission.

The Forum will be preceded by a matchmaking event on 3 March and a series of events will take place during the European Ocean Days, linking the Mission to new main EU initiatives such as the upcoming European Ocean Pact.

The full programme of the week is available [here](#)

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Moderator: Karen Coleman

08:30 – 09:15 **Registration and welcome coffee**

09:15– 10:00 **Welcome & Opening remarks**

- **Costas Kadis**, European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans
- **Ekaterina Zaharieva**, European Commissioner for Start-ups, Research and Innovation
- **Christophe Clergeau**, MEP, Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas Intergroup
- **Olivier Poivre d'Arvor**, Envoy of the French President of the Republic for the Third UN Ocean Conference
- **Pascal Lamy**, Mission Board Chair

10:00 – 10:30 **Progress and key achievements of the Mission:**

- **Kestutis Sadauskas**, Mission Manager, Deputy Director-General, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission
- **Video** Mission engagement
- Pitch presentations from Mission lighthouses
 - **Nadja Schlichenmaier**, EcoDalli project, Danube and Black Sea lighthouse, Steinbeis Europa Zentrum, Germany
 - **Ana Faria**, BlueMissionAA project, Atlantic and Arctic lighthouse, Atlantic International Research Centre, Portugal
 - **Fedra Francocci**, BlueMissionMed project, Mediterranean Sea lighthouse, National Research Council, Italy
 - **Angela Schultz-Zehden**, BlueMissionBANOS project, Baltic and North Sea lighthouse, SUBMARINER Network, Germany

10:30 – 11:15 **Protecting and Restoring marine and freshwater ecosystems**

This session will focus on discussing about protecting and restoring marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity. Key achievements targeting this objective will be showcased by 3 projects. A panel will discuss the needs of the communities and a forward-looking vision (short-, medium- and long-term priorities) and needs for reaching the Mission objectives for 2030 for the protection and restoration of marine and freshwater ecosystems. They will discuss the needs of local actors and communities from the Mission to support them with enhancing MPAs across Europe, the development of national restoration plans and solutions for restoring free-flowing rivers.

Pitch presentations

- **Márton Pesel**, Dalia project, General Directorate of Water Management, Hungary

- **Ida Beathe Øverjordet**, CLIMAREST project, SINTEF Ocean, Norway
- **Steven Degraer**, Blue4all project, Institute of Natural Sciences, Belgium

Panel

- **Danko Biondić**, Ministry for Environment and Green Transition and State Agency for Water Management, Croatia
- **Luz Paramio**, Science & Technology Regional Fund, Azores Regional Government, Portugal
- **Marina Penna**, Italian Institute of Environmental Protection and Research, Italy
- **Carole Martinez**, MedPAN, Mediterranean Protected Areas Network, France
- **Johan Magnusson**, Team leader Danube-Baltic, DG Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Q&A

11:15– 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 – 12:30 Preventing and eliminating pollution

This session will focus on discussing about preventing and eliminating pollution of our ocean, seas and waters. Key achievements targeting this objective will be showcased by 2 projects and 1 charter action. Based on the points raised during the presentations, a panel will discuss the needs of the communities and a forward-looking vision related to policy, governance, public awareness, research, innovation and investments needs to prevent and eliminate pollution on short, medium and long term.

Pitch presentations

- **Gert Everaert**, INSPIRE project, Flanders Marine Institute, Belgium
- **Rodrigo Sedano**, iMERMAID project, ITCL Technology Centre, Spain
- **Fantina Madricardo**, MAELSTROM project, National Research Council, Italy

Panel

- **Bogdan Bulete**, Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, Romania
- **Stephen Seymour**, Irish Water, Ireland
- **Irene Ingrando**, Po River Authority, Italy
- **Riikka Leskinen**, Regional Council of Southwest Finland

Q&A

12:30 – 13:15 Climate neutrality and circularity in the blue economy

This session will focus on discussing about making the blue economy carbon neutral and circular. Key achievements targeting this objective will be showcased by a project and a Blue Champion. Based on the points raised during the presentations, a panel will discuss a forward-looking vision related to policy, research, innovation, investments and communities needs on short, medium and long term to reach the Mission objectives.

Pitch presentations

- **Konstantinos Topouzelis**, SciDrones, Greece
- **Konrad Bergström**, X SHORE 1, Sweden

Panel

- **Massimo Midiri**, University of Palermo, Italy
- **Wendy de Clercq**, Port of Antwerp-Bruges, Belgium

- **Corina Hanrahan**, Cork City Council, Ireland

Q&A

13:15 - 14:30 Lunch break & group photograph

14:30 – 14:45 Mission awards - Technical assistance awards to fisheries, islands and ports

14:45 – 15:15 European Digital Twin of the Ocean

This session will discuss about the progress, achievements and challenges of the enabler digital ocean and water knowledge system, known as Digital Twin of the Ocean. Key achievements of this enabler will be showcased by a keynote presentation. Based on the points raised during the presentations, 3 panellists from 2 projects and 1 charter action will discuss a forward-looking vision related to policy, research, innovation and investments needs on short, medium and long term.

Presentation

- **Alain Arnaud**, Mercator Ocean, France

Panel

- **Lara Veylit**, ILIAD, SEADOT and CLIMAREST projects, SINTEF Ocean, Norway
- **Baris Salihoglu**, Black Sea DTO, Middle East Technical University, Turkiye
- **Mauro Facchini**, Head of Unit Earth observation, DG Defence Industry and Space, European Commission

Q&A

15:15-15:45 Public engagement for the restoration of ocean and waters

This session will discuss the progress, achievements and challenges of the enabler public mobilisation and engagement. Key achievements of this enabler will be showcased by 2 projects. Based on the points raised during the presentation, a panel will discuss a forward-looking vision with relation to bringing added value to local communities by engaging in the restoration of ocean and waters.

Pitch presentations

- **Afşin Çetinkaya**, SHORE project, Yildiz Technical University, Turkiye
- **Lucy Hunt**, The Ocean Race, Spain

Panel:

- **Antonio Di Natale**, Fondazione Acquario di Genova, Italy
- **Vanessa Sarah Salvo**, Posidonia Green Project, Institut de Ciència del Mar - CSIC, Spain
- **Frank Schweikert**, German Ocean Foundation
- **Charlotte Gugenheim**, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission

Q&A

15:45 -16:30 Funding the deployment and upscaling for the restoration of the ocean and waters – synergies with public and private funds

This session will discuss about securing and leveraging public and private co-investments across EU programmes and beyond, for the deployment of the Mission at national/regional and local level. Examples of synergies with public funds and programmes managed by national, regional and local authorities will be showcased. Opportunities of private investments, including by foundations and

philanthropy, and support by the financial sector, such as the EIB will be highlighted and further promoted.

Panel:

- **Peter Grönwoldt**, Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany
- **Morena Diazzi**, Directorate-General for Knowledge, Research, Labour, Enterprises, Emilia-Romagna Region, Italy
- **Antonella Calvia-Götz**, European Investment Bank
- **Giulia Antidormi**, Swan Hellenic, Cyprus
- **Rachel Clausing**, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation
- **Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva**, Director for Innovation, Digital Education and international cooperation, DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission

Q&A

16:30– 17:00 Coffee break

17:00– 17:45 Looking ahead

This session will discuss next strategic milestones and delivery of the Mission until 2030 and beyond. It will integrate a forward-looking vision on the contribution of the Mission to policy priorities (including the European Ocean Pact) and global developments.

- **John Bell**, Deputy Mission Manager, Director Healthy Planet, DG Research and Innovation, European Commission
- **Haidi Cecilie Petersen**, Danish Ocean Mission Manager, Denmark Presidency representative
- **Margherita Cappelletto**, Ministry for Universities and Research, Italy
- **Karen Evans**, IOC/UNESCO

Q&A

17:45-18:00 Closing

- **Charlina Vitcheva**, Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission
- **Marc Lemaître**, Director-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission

18:00 – 19:00 Networking cocktail

**Project exhibition take place during the coffee breaks and networking event*