



## D4.3 NETWORKING JOINT ACTIVITIES AND IMPACTS

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## Summary CallmeBLUE Project

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The role of maritime clusters is increasingly important in the process of connecting public and private entities working in all transversal sectors related to blue economy at both national and Mediterranean level. Maritime clusters are indeed crucial facilitators of networking, technology transfer, internationalization and innovation between SMEs, large companies, research centers, universities etc., and they act as key actors to promote sustainable investments of the blue economy.

CallmeBLUE aims to strengthen existing and emerging clusters alliances in the Mediterranean area to accelerate north-south regional cooperation processes towards the emerging of strategic maritime clusters in North Africa (south-south cooperation). CallmeBLUE will aim to create a strategic vision and transferable models of interregional cooperation.

CallmeBLUE aims to implement concrete actions at both local and regional level to raise awareness on the relevance of Maritime clusters as key actors for sustainable blue economy policies. The project indeed promotes exchanges of best practices and knowledge transfer between north and southern area, including piloting learning activities aimed at offering a transferable training “Toolkit”, addressed to future maritime clusters in the southern area to be prepared on the legal, structural, administrative and management aspects for a concrete creation of future maritime clusters.

CallmeBLUE ambition is to set-up and strengthen maritime clusters alliances (North-South cooperation) – particularly targeting southern Mediterranean countries (South-South cooperation) but also allowing to enhance regional dialogue and more advanced services offered to Cluster Mediterranean ecosystem.

To this aim, CallmeBLUE offers its role as an accelerator for the policy goals set by relevant regional initiatives such as the UfM Ministerial Declaration for sustainable blue economy and the WestMED Initiative.



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## Executive Summary

The deliverable outlines the approach and activities undertaken to foster synergies with various projects and initiatives.

The objective of the task – *T4.2 Networking with Relevant Projects and Initiatives* - linked to the present deliverable was to create favorable conditions for developing synergies with existing cooperation tools and mechanisms. Throughout the project, various initiatives and projects were engaged to strengthen collaboration, exchange knowledge, and enhance visibility.

A key initial step involved identifying relevant initiatives and projects to approach, as well as assessing existing connections and potential synergies with project partners that could ease the exchanges.

One of the key efforts focused on increasing visibility and developing cooperation within the Mediterranean area through the WestMED Initiative and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which both aim to enhance North-South collaboration on key maritime topics, such as maritime cluster development and collaboration. This cooperation contributed to fostering stronger regional integration and knowledge-sharing among different stakeholders.

To foster the exchange of best practices and concrete experiences, the project engaged in multiple collaborative efforts. This included active participation in external events and invitations extended to identified initiatives to encourage mutual understanding. Additionally, partnerships have been formalized in key areas such as innovation, training for cluster managers, and the role of women in the Blue Economy.

These synergies were established through direct engagement with key stakeholders, joint planning of activities, strategic participation in relevant events, and targeted communication efforts. By fostering these connections, the project successfully laid the groundwork for long-term collaboration and lasting impact within the Mediterranean region.



## 1. Identification of relevant project and initiatives

This chapter focuses on the identification of relevant projects and initiatives that align with the objectives of the CallmeBLUE project. The aim is to map and analyse complementary activities at regional, national, and European levels, ensuring synergies, avoiding duplication, and maximizing the project's outreach.

### 1.1 Approach

As part of the CallmeBLUE project's strategy to support the emergence and reinforcement of maritime clusters in Southern Europe, a survey (cf. Annex 1) has been developed to better understand the networks and relationships already maintained by project partners with external stakeholders in the blue economy. These relationships could be strengthened in various forms such as Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs), new agreements, past, current and future projects and initiatives.

By identifying and mapping these existing connections, whether with key projects, clusters, businesses, research bodies, institutions, or public authorities, the Consortium aimed to build a clearer picture of the ecosystem surrounding the project and to prioritize them.

In addition, the results of this survey (cf. Annex 2) allowed the Consortium to define the typology of activities foreseen and privileged by each project partner.

Finally, it helped project partners to define priorities, stakeholders to engage, tailor outreach efforts, and ensure that the project's activities and outcomes are widely shared and well-targeted.

### 1.2 Key initiatives and projects

As a result of this preliminary phase, various initiatives were identified and prioritized to create favorable conditions for CallmeBLUE to:

- Gain visibility;
- Support collaborative Mediterranean initiatives;
- Exchange good practices and experiences;



- Foster funding and investment opportunities via links to funding entities.

The following initiatives were particularly emphasized:



### **European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP)** is

the EU's main online hub connecting more than 50,000 cluster stakeholders: companies, policy makers, innovation actors across Europe. It facilitates matchmaking, knowledge exchange, events (e.g. Clusters Meet Regions), trend analysis, and sector-specific collaboration. ECCP works with national cluster associations and the European Clusters Alliance.

### **Sea-Basin Strategies: WestMED and Union for the Mediterranean (UfM):**

These strategies promote regional cooperation across Mediterranean countries.



The **WestMED initiative** is the result of years of dialogue between ten countries in the western Mediterranean region involved in the '5+5 Dialogue': five EU Member States (France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Malta), and five Southern partner countries (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia). These countries are ready and willing to work together on their shared interests for the region: to increase maritime safety and security, promote sustainable blue growth and jobs, and preserve ecosystems and biodiversity.



**Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** brings together EU and southern Mediterranean countries to collaborate on sustainable development, economic cooperation, and blue economy projects.



**BlueInvest** is the European Commission's investment platform for sustainable blue economy ventures. It supports SMEs and start-ups through:

- Investment readiness coaching;
- Matchmaking events;
- Investor networking;
- A deal pipeline of over 600 early-stage projects.

Since its launch, BlueInvest has supported over 330 start-ups and helped raise over €300 million in investments. It is now part of InvestEU, with a target of €1.5 billion for blue economy funding by 2026.

## Other Maritime Clusters and networks of clusters

National and regional maritime clusters such as:



**Cluster Maritime Français** bring together private and public stakeholders to promote sustainable blue growth and were informed about the CallmeBLUE project development and objectives.



**BlueTech Cluster Alliance** is a global network of industry-led BlueTech clusters committed to collaboration, joint-projects development and mutual promotion of member companies. Its mission is to foster sustainable investment and growth within the knowledge-based ocean and water industries, benefiting all stakeholders through proactive regional, national, and international collaboration.



**Balearic Maritime Cluster (CMIB)** unites companies, research centres, and public authorities to strengthen the blue economy in the Balearic Islands. With a focus on innovation, sustainability, and internationalisation across key maritime sectors, CMIB's involvement as an associated partner strengthens CallmeBLUE's aim of reinforcing cooperation among Mediterranean maritime clusters.



European Network  
of Maritime Clusters

**European Network of Maritime Clusters (ENMC)** plays a pivotal role in connecting

maritime clusters at the European level and actively participates in the WestMED Initiative, providing a strategic link between CallmeBLUE and broader European maritime collaboration.



## Key Projects



**BlueMissionMed** is an EU-funded project dedicated to restoring the Mediterranean Sea Basin under the EU Mission “Restore Our Oceans and Waters by 2030.” It coordinates action among scientists, policymakers, businesses, and civil society, aiming to reduce pollution and rehabilitate marine ecosystems. The initiative has established seven national/regional innovation hubs across Italy, France, Spain, Greece, Tunisia, and Turkey to support local implementation.



**MARMED**, an ERASMUS + EU project which aims at bridging the gap between the existing needs and the current skillset of Maritime Clusters Managers, ensuring upskilling, for the outline of an innovative professional profile for an increased competitiveness of Maritime Clusters in the Mediterranean area and, overall, boosting innovation and sustainable growth in the Blue Economy sector.



**MedBAN - Mediterranean Blue Acceleration Network** is a Eurocluster initiative supporting SMEs; its funding model may be extended to southern Mediterranean countries. The project mobilized EU blue economy SMEs to adopt processes and technologies for a greener, more digital and more resilient economy. This project has supported directly 49 European SMEs operating in the blue economy sector by providing tailored services aimed at enhancing their innovation capacity and fostering their internationalisation.



**WIN-BIG** is a project co funded by CINEA/DG MARE promoting the role of women in the blue economy. WIN-BIG is addressing the gender imbalance and capacity gaps across Blue sectors in the EU to support women joining and climbing their way up the value chain. To do so, the project provided:



- An accurate and comprehensive dataset on gender status and women's role in Blue economy across all 6 EU sea basins (Atlantic, Mediterranean, Baltic, North, Arctic and Black Sea);
- The identification skills gaps preventing women from entering or progressing in the career ladder;
- The development of female and sea basin-oriented learning labs, acceleration programs and networking events to promote female role models and women-oriented Blue emergent sector.

## 2. Networking activities

This chapter provides an overview of the project’s engagement in collaborative activities, covering three main dimensions: participation in initiatives organized by external stakeholders, coordination of events led by CallmeBLUE, and the conclusion of Memoranda of Understanding with strategic projects. Together, these actions highlight the project’s commitment to fostering collaboration, strengthening visibility, and building long-term partnerships within the blue economy ecosystem.

### 2.1 Events organized by CallmeBLUE involving key initiatives and stakeholders

This section outlines the 5 main events initiated by CallmeBLUE that brought together key initiatives and stakeholders, showcasing how these gatherings fostered dialogue, strengthened synergies, and supported the development of a shared vision for the blue economy sector and the importance of clusters.

#### 2.1.1 Matchmaking Local Workshop in Tunisia on October 14, 2024

The Tunisian Matchmaking Local Workshop<sup>1</sup> served as a dynamic platform for connecting public and private sector actors, highlighting the strategic role of the Tunisian Maritime Cluster, established in 2019. It encourages intersectoral cooperation and fosters joint initiatives between various stakeholders in the blue economy, both national and international.

The event showcased the importance of this cluster as a catalyst for innovation and sustainable development in the blue economy, offering a conducive space for dialogue and collaboration among different actors for North-South and South-South cooperation.

<sup>1</sup> The full description of the workshop is available at this link: [D3.1.1 TECHNICAL REPORT FOR MATCHMAKING LOCAL WORKSHOP IN TUNISIA](#)



**Figure 1 - Local Workshop in Tunisia**

The presence of renowned international partners and EU Clusters, such as the European Union delegation in Tunisia, the Federazione del Mare, and the Pôle Mer Méditerranée, significantly enriched the exchanges. Their participation helped strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations in the maritime sector while providing

a European and Mediterranean perspective on the sector's challenges and opportunities. These actors contributed by sharing their expertise and experiences on best practices, supportive public policies, and innovative technological solutions to support the development of projects in the blue economy.

This workshop not only laid the foundations for future collaborations but also highlighted investment opportunities and collaborative projects where Tunisia can play a relevant role in the Mediterranean Sea Basin. In this sense, the event reinforced the role of the Tunisian Maritime Cluster as a key player in supporting a sustainable and competitive blue economy in the southern area, capable of addressing current challenges and new opportunities for innovation and regional cooperation.

### 2.1.2 Matchmaking Local Workshop in Algeria on October 15, 2024

The Algerian Blue Economy Conference 2024 and the matchmaking local workshop<sup>2</sup> were significant milestones in advancing Algeria's blue economy sector and defining its role. Accordingly, this event was organized by Leanovator and



**Figure 2 - Local workshop in Algeria**

<sup>2</sup> The full description of the workshop is available at this link: [D3.1 TECHNICAL REPORT FOR MATCHMAKING LOCAL WORKSHOP IN ALGERIA](#)

brought to light the challenges and opportunities within the Mediterranean blue economy, particularly focusing on Algeria's strategic potential.

In particular, the event underscored the importance of sustainable practices, innovation, and cluster development for further advancement of the sector.

This event is the starting point for the successful development of the sector in Algeria and the promotion of new collaborations between Algeria and other stakeholders. In this vein, the North-South and South-South cooperation will be ensured through the future implementation of targeted key actions. These actions will play a crucial role in driving sustainable growth and promoting sustainable development within the local level and beyond.

Therefore, stakeholders discussed about the idea of promoting the establishment of an Algerian maritime cluster, leveraging strategic partnerships, capacity building for emerging clusters, enhancing North-South and regional cooperation, promoting sustainable R&D practices, and encouraging policy and investment support.

Through these initiatives, Algeria aims to reinforce its role as a significant player in the Mediterranean region for the promotion and development of the blue economy and sustainable growth.

The event, structured to foster collaborative synergies and initiate discussions on maritime sustainability and innovation, adhered to a well-defined methodology encompassing stages of planning, stakeholder engagement, logistical coordination, and evaluation.

Involvement of:

### WESTMED

- **Samir BACHOUCHE** - Researcher (CNRDPA) and WestMED National Hub Algeria;
- **Leonardo MANZARI** - Senior Blue Economy Expert, WestMED National Hub Italy.

### UFM

- **Alessandra SENSI** - Head of Sector, Environment, Green and Blue Economy at UFM.



### 2.1.3 Matchmaking Local Workshop in Mauritania on January 20–21, 2025

**Figure 3- Local Workshop in Mauritania**

The Local Matchmaking Workshop in Mauritania<sup>3</sup>, organised within CallmeBLUE project in close collaboration with WestMED National Hub, represented a pivotal milestone in fostering collaboration between Mediterranean and West African maritime clusters. The active contribution of Lemine Abdel Hamid (WestMED National Hub Mauritania) and Matteo Bocci (EU Sea Basin Assistance Mechanism Expert) ensure strong alignment with regional blue economy priorities.



The event gathered policymakers, researchers, businesses, and technical partners, offering a structured space to discuss key challenges and opportunities for the development of Mauritania’s blue economy. Exchanges highlighted shared constraints such as limited private-sector engagement, infrastructure gaps, and barriers to knowledge transfer. In response, participants formulated practical recommendations focused on enhancing governance engagement, strengthening capacity-building and training programmes, and promoting regional cooperation through joint initiatives to support long-term sustainability.

Discussions held in parallel with the Fifth National Event for the Promotion of the Blue Economy in Mauritania further emphasised the importance of aligning national objectives with regional and international strategies, particularly in priority sectors including sustainable fisheries, renewable energy, green hydrogen, tourism, and maritime infrastructure. The need to reinforce public-private partnerships, governance frameworks, and

<sup>3</sup>The full description of the workshop is available at this link: [D3.1.2 TECHNICAL REPORT FOR MATCHMAKING LOCAL WORKSHOP IN MAURITANIA](#)

investment in innovation and digitalisation was also highlighted as a key driver for growth.

Overall, the workshop highlighted the importance of accessibility and stakeholder engagement in future initiatives. The insights gained from this event will serve as a foundation for Mauritania’s national Blue Economy strategy, ensuring its continued growth through innovation, sustainability, and regional cooperation.

Building on these outcomes, continued efforts will focus on targeted capacity-building, infrastructure development, and policy alignment with global sustainability goals. A sustained commitment to international cooperation, technological innovation, and strategic investments will be crucial in ensuring the long-term impact of these initiatives. By focusing on sustainability, economic growth, and social inclusion, Mauritania is poised to play a crucial role in the regional ecosystem.

Within this framework, CallmeBLUE project, in close cooperation with WestMED initiatives and aligned with Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) priorities, remains dedicated to facilitating the implementation of these recommendations, ensuring that this workshop acts as a catalyst for concrete action and long-term impact .

### 2.1.4 Matchmaking Business Forum in Malta on April 24-25, 2025

This Business Forum, co-organised by ANIMA Investment Network with the support of Malta Enterprise, was held on 24-25 April 2025 in Malta, back-to-back with the EU Startup Summit. This strategic alignment strengthened synergies between CallmeBLUE and European innovation ecosystems, while leveraging Malta’s central position between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean and its strong links with the WestMED Initiative.



**Figure 4 - CallmeBLUE in the Matchmaking Business Forum in Malta**

The event fostered cluster and business cooperation by bringing together Mediterranean and European stakeholders to explore shared visions, showcase innovative blue economy solutions, and initiate co-creative processes involving companies, researchers, and clusters.

By connecting CallmeBLUE activities with the EU Startup Summit, the forum expanded matchmaking opportunities and increased the visibility of the blue economy at European level, resulting in numerous B2B contacts and identified partnership opportunities among participants from both shores of the Mediterranean.

### 2.1.5 CallmeBLUE Final Conference in Tunisia on November 27-28, 2025

The CallmeBLUE Final Conference took place in Tunis, Tunisia, on 27 November 2025, in a hybrid format and back-to-back with the 5th WestMED Stakeholder Conference (held on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025). The event was notably welcomed by Imed Zammit, representative of the Tunisian WestMED National Hub.

The event gathered a broad spectrum of Mediterranean stakeholders, including maritime clusters, policymakers, SMEs, research organisations, and international institutions. It provided a strategic platform to showcase the key results and achievements of the CallmeBLUE project, while promoting dialogue on North–South and South–South cooperation within the blue economy sector.

Through dedicated sessions and high-level exchanges, participants examined how CallmeBLUE outputs, such as Learning Labs, matchmaking workshops, and regional cooperation frameworks, could be further capitalised and aligned with existing regional and policy-driven initiatives.

The WestMED Stakeholder Conference included an award ceremony celebrating excellence in maritime cluster development and cooperation. In this context, CallmeBLUE was honoured with the WestMED Project Award 2025, recognising its role as a flagship initiative in strengthening maritime clusters across the Mediterranean. The award emphasised the project’s impact in empowering clusters as engines of innovation, skills development, and ecosystem integration.



This recognition further reinforced strong synergies between CallmeBLUE and the WestMED Initiative, confirming the relevance, visibility, and scalability of the project’s approach.



Figure 5- CallmeBLUE receiving the WestMED project award

## 2.2 Participation in events organized by external stakeholders

This section will present the project’s active involvement in conferences, workshops, and networking activities organized by external stakeholders, highlighting opportunities for knowledge exchange, visibility, and collaboration with key actors in the blue economy sector.

### 2.2.1 WestMED Hackathon in Portugal, October 3, 2024

This event marked the third edition of the interactive stakeholder Hackathon. With 87 participants from 15 different countries, the WestMED Hackathon 2024 in Portugal has been a great success.

Current and upcoming funding opportunities have been presented, and successful projects were pitched as a basis for the participants to develop project ideas related to 5 different maritime topics. One of them was CallmeBLUE, presented by the Lidia Rossi, Managing Director of ForMare (Coordinator of the project). These ideas will be further explored to establish ways of funding and look for project partners beyond those that have already been engaged during this event.

In the Hackathon’s Project Labs Session, facilitated by Matteo Bocci (EU Sea Basin Assistance Mechanism Expert) and Lorella Ciuti (Blue Project Manager at Forum Oceano, consortium partner of CallmeBLUE, the project took center stage in the discussions on maritime clusters. This session focused on fostering valuable partnerships to scale up emerging clusters, particularly on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

The project was highlighted as an important contributor to the vision of an interconnected WestMED Alliance+, which seeks to further integrate clusters from the eastern Mediterranean into the sustainable Blue Economy framework.



Figure 6- WestMED 3rd Hackathon visual

This session also explored potential project ideas and identified future funding opportunities to drive innovation and sustainable practices within the region.

The session has been attended by relevant stakeholders, in particular:

- Anja Detant, Project Officer of CINEA;
- Alessandra Sensi, Head of Sector - Environment, Green and Blue Economy at Union for the Mediterranean;
- Mohamed Lemine Abdel Hamid, WestMED National Hub Mauritania.

### 2.2.2 Ecomondo expo in Rimini, Italy on November 7, 2024



Figure 7 - CallmeBLUE presentation at Ecomondo

Key members of the CallmeBLUE consortium, including ForMare-Polo Nazionale per lo Shipping, Leanovator (Leancubator), Federazione del Mare, Cluster Maritime Tunisien, and representatives from the Westmed Alliance, Union for the Mediterranean, and the Mauritanian Maritime Cluster gathered at the prestigious



#Ecomondo expo in Rimini, Italy.

Organized by Cluster BIG - Blue Italian Growth, the conference, themed "Accelerating Blue interregional cooperation in the Mediterranean basin," highlighted essential discussions on advancing the Mediterranean's blue economy through resilient cluster networks, digital transformation, and European funding insights.

The event provided a platform to highlight CallmeBLUE's role in strengthening maritime clusters and fostering North-South cooperation. Key speakers emphasized its strategic mission and shared best practices for creating transferable collaboration models. Discussions focused on the importance of Mediterranean stakeholders working towards sustainable blue economy growth and resilience, marking a significant step toward transforming the region into a model of sustainable maritime cooperation.

### 2.2.3 MARMED project Final Conference in Naples on December 12, 2024

During the final meeting of the MARMED project, a dedicated session was included in the agenda for a presentation by Anouchka Le Roux from Pôle Mer Méditerranée (PMM) of the project CallmeBLUE. This meeting provided an opportunity to explore potential synergies between the two initiatives.

The exchange not only strengthened the ties between MarMED and CallmeBLUE but also contributed to the long-term sustainability of both projects by promoting shared goals, mutual support, and systematic knowledge exchange within the maritime sector.

The meeting featured engaging presentations and discussions on the project's key outcomes, with a particular focus on the opportunity for cross-project collaboration. CallmeBLUE aims to enhance existing and emerging cluster alliances across the Mediterranean, focusing particularly on accelerating North-South regional cooperation to establish strategic maritime clusters in North Africa. By bringing together stakeholders from various sectors, CallmeBLUE seeks to drive forward the growth and resilience of maritime clusters, fostering innovation and sustainability.



The discussions at the final MarMED meeting highlighted the mutual benefits of closer collaboration. Participants underlined how such partnerships could help scale up training activities, foster transferable models, promote professional mobility, and develop shared standards, such as a Blue Cluster Management Certificate, thereby increasing the visibility and impact of both projects.



**Figure 8 - CallmeBLUE presentation during MarMED final conference**

These exchanges laid the groundwork for future joint initiatives, ensuring that MarMED's results continue to have a lasting effect on the Mediterranean blue economy landscape.

#### 2.2.4 WIN-BIG Conference in Roma, on March 26, 2025

While strengthening existing and emerging cluster alliances and accelerate North-South and South-South cooperation, CallmeBLUE explores the power of blue clusters to create pathways for the inclusion of women and youth. The focus on providing resources, networks and opportunities make them grow and foster their potential in the Blue Economy.

Empowering women in the blue economy can create fruitful opportunities for everyone and contribute to a stronger future.

Some key takeaways will follow:

- Encourage greater participation of women in technical and decision-making roles, especially as the gender gap widens along the career path, particularly focusing on how to support their advancement along the career path in the attempt to narrow the gender gap;
- Expand training and capacity-building programs tailored for women;
- Invest in researchers, innovators, and inclusive ecosystems to unlock new opportunities for all.

CallMeBlue project coordinator and some partners — Lidia Rossi, Managing Director of ForMare - Polo Nazionale per lo Shipping, Laurence Martin, Secretary General at Federazione del Mare, Ziad R. Nesrine, Senior Officer at Leancubator, and Emna Sohlobji, President at Cluster Maritime Tunisien (CMT) took part in powerful discussions, sharing their insights and championing the role of women’s leadership in building a sustainable and inclusive blue economy.

For centuries, significant barriers have restricted the participation of women in the maritime sector. Currently, leadership and innovation are being driven by women who are actively shaping the industry's future. The primary challenge remains the expansion of access, representation, and opportunity for future generations.



Figure 9 - CallmeBLUE at WIN-BIG Conference

### 2.2.5 Blue Ecosystem project Meeting in Durrës on April 8, 2025

During the networking and cross-fertilization session held on 8 April in Durrës, as part of the Blue Ecosystem project's Steering Committee, Anouchka Le Roux (PMM) and Elizabeth Domínguez Chapman (Andalusia Maritime & Marine Cluster) presented CallmeBLUE.

The session highlighted the strong complementarity between Blue Ecosystem and CallmeBLUE in supporting sustainable maritime development across the Euro-Mediterranean region. While Blue Ecosystem focuses on accelerating solutions responding to blue economy challenges through co-creation, innovation acceleration, and engagement of 5-helix stakeholders at regional and transnational levels, CallmeBLUE adds value by supporting the creation of new clusters in Southern Mediterranean countries.



**Figure 10 - CallmeBLUE presentation during Blue Ecosystem's meeting**

Together, the two initiatives aim to:

- Transfer knowledge from mature clusters to emerging ones, particularly in circular economy and environmental innovation;
- Foster cross-Mediterranean partnerships between SMEs, research centres, and ports;
- Harmonise tools and methodologies for cluster development and stakeholder engagement;
- Encourage joint training and capacity-building, connecting new and established clusters;
- Promote a shared vision for sustainable blue growth, aligned with the EU Green Deal and regional blue economy strategies.

These synergies will help build a more resilient, inclusive, and interconnected Mediterranean Blue Economy.



### 2.2.6 UNOC in Nice on June 10, 2025

CallmeBLUE participated in the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) session on “Finance and Innovation as Sustainable Blue Economy Accelerators”, held during Mediterranean Day at the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, France.

This high-level event brought together Mediterranean stakeholders to discuss how innovation, finance, and cooperation can drive a more inclusive and resilient blue economy.

CallmeBLUE was represented by Laurence Martin (Federazione del Mare, Italy), Ziad Nesrine (Leancubator, Algeria), and Emna Sohlobji (Tunisian Maritime Cluster, Tunisia), who collectively highlighted the strategic role of maritime clusters. Their interventions emphasised how clusters connect startups, researchers, industry, and institutions, enabling innovation to translate into concrete actions through structured cooperation and territorial anchoring.

The session reinforced CallmeBLUE’s vision of a connected, inclusive, and innovation-driven Mediterranean, underlining the importance of strengthening clusters as platforms for dialogue, skills development, and investment-readiness. The participation in UNOC3 contributed to increasing the visibility of Mediterranean maritime clusters and fostering synergies with regional and international initiatives supporting the Sustainable Blue Economy.

### 2.2.7 18th UfM Regional Platform on Sustainable Blue Economy in Brussels on October 15-16, 2025

CallmeBLUE actively contributed to the 18th UfM Regional Platform on Sustainable Blue Economy in Brussels, bringing together institutional leaders and stakeholders from 43 Mediterranean countries.

The meeting provided a key opportunity to share achievements, align regional priorities, and foster cooperation for a more inclusive, sustainable, and innovative blue economy.

CallmeBLUE showcased its role in strengthening maritime cluster alliances and promoting North–South cooperation, with concrete impacts at local and regional levels. Lidia Rossi, Managing Director at ForMare (Project Coordinator) presented the overall objectives, priorities, and results, highlighting key success factors for cluster development identified in Algeria and Tunisia.



The project also aligns with broader regional initiatives, creating synergies with Interreg Euro-Med and NEXT-MED programmes, BlueMissionMed and the Plastic Busters Initiative.



Figure 11 -18th UfM Regional Platform on Sustainable Blue Economy in Brussels

## 2.3 Memorandum of Understanding

This section highlights the 4 Memoranda of Understanding and cooperation agreement concluded with strategic projects, formalizing cooperation frameworks and reinforcing long-term collaboration in support of blue economy regarding innovation capabilities and upskilling of managers of maritime clusters.

### 2.3.1 MoU with MedBAN project on March 18, 2025

On 18 March 2025, CallmeBLUE and MedBAN (Mediterranean Blue Acceleration Network) formalized a strategic collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

This agreement marked a significant milestone in strengthening synergies between these two maritime cluster initiatives, which share a commitment to promoting sustainable innovation and advancing the Blue Economy across the Mediterranean by supporting sustainable blue startups and SMEs.

The MoU was signed during the MedBAN Final Conference 2025 in Lisbon, a key event bringing together stakeholders from across the blue economy ecosystem. The agreement establishes a framework for long-term cooperation, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, best practices, and support services for SMEs in the sector.

The document was officially signed by Ruben Eiras, Secretary General of Fórum Oceano (Lead partner of MedBAN) and Lidia Rossi, Managing Director, ForMare – Polo Nazionale per lo Shipping (Project Coordinator of CallmeBLUE).

Together, CallmeBLUE and MedBAN are committed to driving innovation, digitalization and resilience in the blue economy, supporting SMEs, and fostering strategic partnerships for a more sustainable future.

Both initiatives have been and are actively supported by the WestMED Initiative, through WestMED’s Maritime Cluster Alliance, including the support of Stephanie Vella (WestMED’s National Hub Malta), and Lorella Ciuti, MedBAN project coordinator.

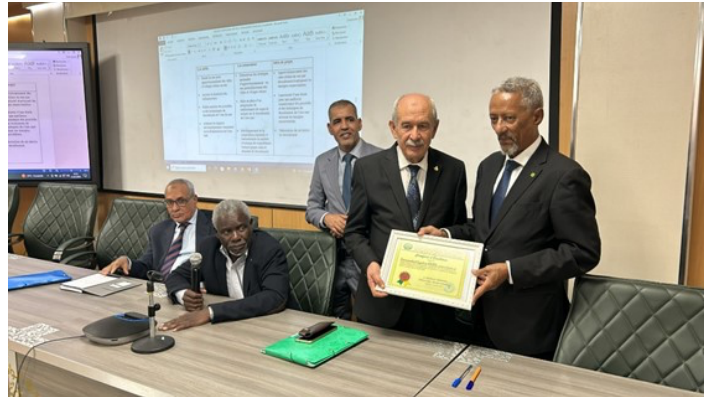


Figure 12- Signature of the MoU with MedBAN project

### 2.3.2 Cooperation agreement between Mauritania and Tunisia on January 21, 2025

During the Local Matchmaking Workshop held in Mauritania, the Tunisian Maritime Cluster launched an initiative to strengthen cooperation among maritime clusters in the southern Mediterranean within the framework of the CallmeBLUE project. As part of this effort, a cooperation agreement was formally signed between the Tunisian and Mauritanian Maritime Clusters, marking an important step toward enhanced regional collaboration.

Building on this momentum, the alliance is expected to expand in the near future to include additional maghrebian countries.



**Figure 13 - Signature of cooperation agreement between Mauritanian and Tunisian maritime clusters**

### 2.3.3 MoU between Leanovator (Algeria) and the Tunisian Maritime Cluster on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Through this MoU, Leanovator and the Tunisian Maritime Cluster (CMT) commit to strengthening synergies between their respective ecosystems by connecting maritime stakeholders, including startups, SMEs, research organisations, and knowledge institutes. The partnership focuses on fostering cooperation and innovation across digital, technological, and environmental domains relevant to the maritime sector.

Joint actions will include the organisation of regular events, workshops, and matchmaking sessions to stimulate collaboration, promote innovation-driven growth, and encourage international trade opportunities.

By exchanging information and expertise, the two clusters aim to support innovation as a key driver of competitiveness and sustainable development in both the Tunisian and Algerian maritime ecosystems.



**Figure 14 - MoU between Leanovator and the CMT**

### 2.3.4 MoU between Leanovator (Algeria) and Strategis Cluster (Greece) on October 15, 2024

The MoU between Leanovator and the Strategis Maritime ICT Cluster (Strategis) establishes a framework for enhanced cooperation between the Algerian and Greek maritime innovation ecosystems. The partnership seeks to connect startups, SMEs, and knowledge institutions to foster cross-border collaboration and the development of innovative solutions across maritime sectors.

The two organisations will support digital, technological, and environmental innovation through joint initiatives, including workshops, networking events, and matchmaking activities. By facilitating information exchange and exploring opportunities for collaboration, this MoU aims to promote innovation, internationalisation, and sustainable growth within the Algerian and Greek maritime sectors, while contributing to broader Mediterranean cooperation.



Figure 15 - MoU between Leanovator and Strategis Cluster

### 3. Conclusions

This deliverable demonstrates how CallmeBLUE project has successfully created favourable conditions for synergy-building and long-term cooperation across the Mediterranean blue economy ecosystem. Through a structured approach combining mapping of relevant initiatives, active participation in key regional and international events, organisation of dedicated matchmaking activities, and the formalisation of strategic partnerships, the project has strengthened dialogue and collaboration between mature and emerging maritime clusters, with a strong focus on North-South and South-South cooperation.

By aligning its actions with major regional frameworks such as the WestMED Initiative and the Union for the Mediterranean, CallmeBLUE has reinforced its role as an accelerator of policy objectives related to sustainable blue growth, innovation, skills development, and inclusion. The networking activities and Memoranda of Understanding concluded under this task have laid solid foundations for continued knowledge exchange, joint initiatives, and capacity-building beyond the project's lifetime.

Overall, the outcomes of Task 4.2 and Deliverable 4.3 confirm CallmeBLUE's contribution to building a more connected, resilient, and inclusive Mediterranean maritime cluster ecosystem, ensuring the scalability, visibility, and long-term impact of its results in support of a sustainable Blue Economy.



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## Abbreviations

Term	Definition
<b>CINEA</b>	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
<b>CNRDPA</b>	National Research Center for Development of Aquaculture and Fisheries Resources (Algeria)
<b>DG MARE</b>	Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
<b>ECCP</b>	European Cluster Collaboration Platform
<b>EMFAF</b>	European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
<b>UfM</b>	Union for the Mediterranean
<b>UNOC</b>	United Nations Ocean Conference
<b>WestMED</b>	Western Mediterranean Initiative

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## Annexes

- Annex 1: Internal survey: Questionnaire
- Annex 2: Survey Results



## Annex 1

### Internal survey: Questionnaire

We have pre-identified key initiatives for which we all agreed that they represent interest.

Do you have any existing links with those initiatives? If yes, please describe it briefly and express your capacity to be a facilitator to be in touch with their representatives

#### **Innovation Sustainable Economy Community YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text

- **Ocean Mission & BlueMissionMed YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text

- **European Cluster Collaboration Platform YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text

- **BlueInvest YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text

- **WESTMED YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text

- **Union for the Mediterranean YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text



• **MEDBAN YES/ NO**

**If yes, please describe:**

Free text

1. Do you have identified other initiatives/ projects which could represent an interest? Please describe it, add links when possible and mention if you have existing links with them

Free text

2. In your opinion, what CALLMEBLUE could share to these initiatives? (in terms of results, information, opportunities...)

Free text

3. In your opinion, even if each initiative is different, and that we have limited resources, what type of activities would be the most useful in your opinion? Please rank each item from 1 (low interest) to 5 (very high interest)
  - Participation in their events/ workshops
  - Invitation in our events/ workshops
  - Communication on their platforms
4. Do you have any other ideas of activities that could be performed? If yes, please describe it

Free text

5. Any final comment, please share it here

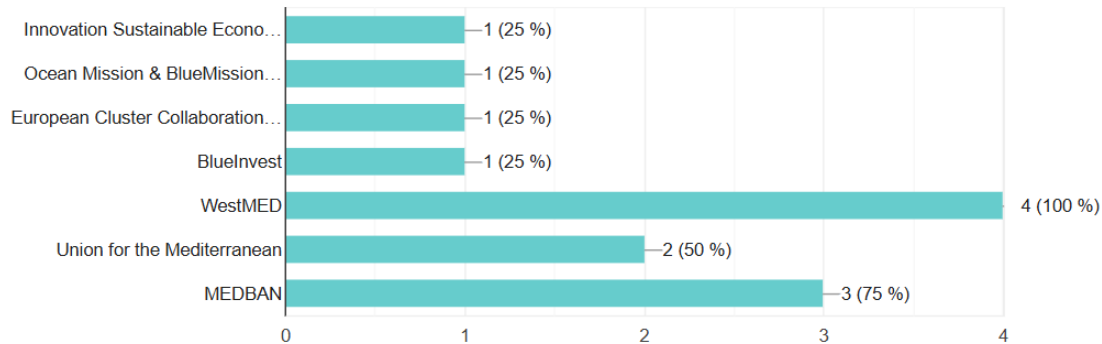
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## Annex 2 Survey results

We have pre identified key initiatives for which we all agreed that they represent interest. Do you have any existing links with those initiatives?

 Copier le graphique

4 réponses



If you have existing connections, please describe it briefly and express your capacity to be a facilitator to get in touch with their representatives.

Do you have identified other initiatives/ projects which could represent an interest? Please describe it, add links when possible and mention if you have existing links with them

In your opinion, what results, information or opportunities from our project could we share to these initiatives?

Even if each initiative is different, and considering we have limited resources, what type of activities would be the most useful in your opinion? Please rank each item from 1 (low interest) to 5 (very high interest)

Participation in their events/ workshops

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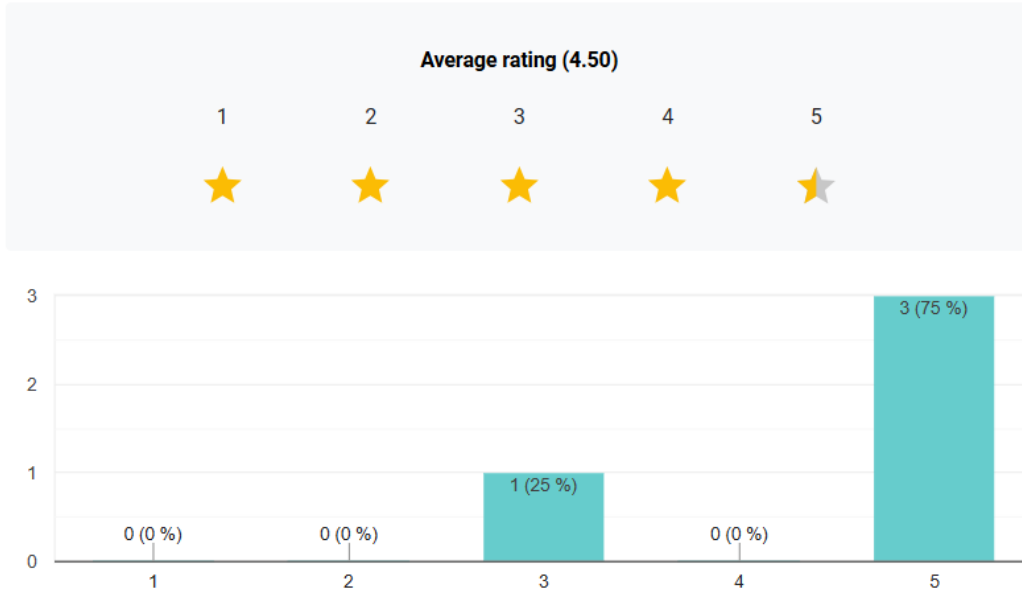
4 réponses



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Invitation in our events/ workshops

4 réponses



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Communication on their platforms

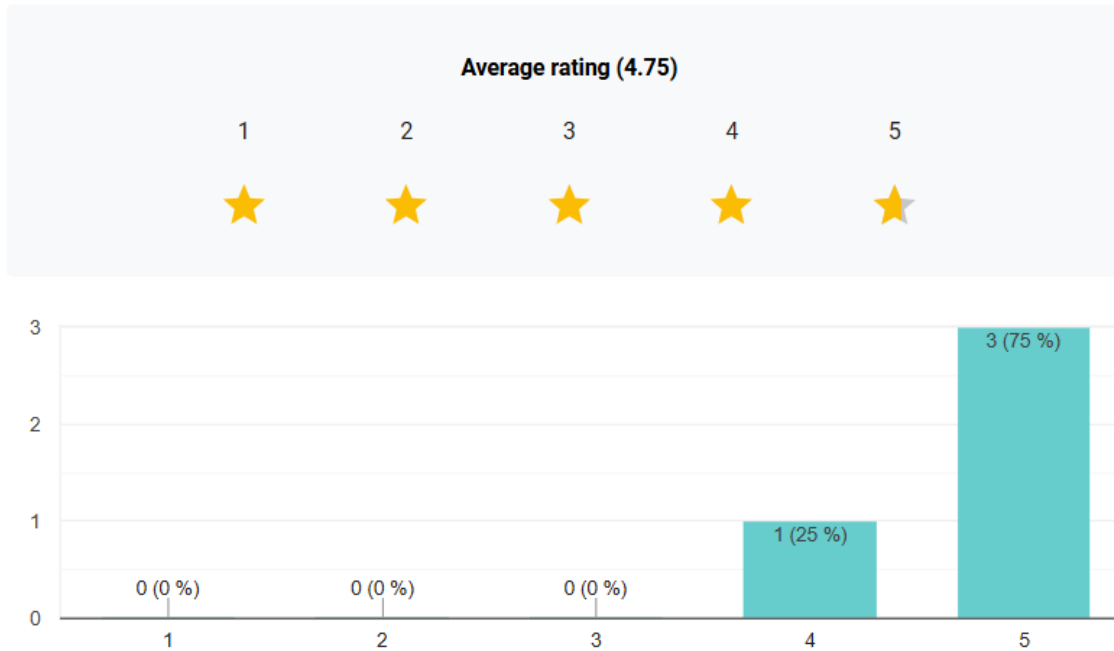
4 réponses



Organisation of joint events

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4 réponses



Do you have any other ideas of activities that could be performed? If yes, please describe it

2 réponses

Organization of joint events (online or on-site) could be the most efficient way to mobilize stakeholders from both parts to maximize the impact and create joint future initiatives.

no

# CallmeBLUE

Cluster ALLiance MEd BLUE

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