ROMANIA
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR
MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA

European Commission

Sustainable development of the blue economy of the Black Sea

Enhancing marine and maritime cooperation

Black Sea Stakeholders Conference – *Sustainable development of the blue economy of the Black Sea: enhancing marine and maritime cooperation*

Bucharest, 30 January 2014 – The Member of the European Commission responsible for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Maria Damanaki, and the Romanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Titus Corlăţean, opened today, 30 of January, in Bucharest, the conference "Sustainable development of the blue economy of the Black Sea. Enhancing marine and maritime cooperation", dedicated to marine and maritime Black Sea Stakeholders.

The event affirmed their commitment to work collectively and in partnership to support a blue and sustainable economy in the Black Sea region and to maximise marine and maritime cooperation across all bordering countries.

Governmental representatives as well as private stakeholders from all riparian states (e.g. Bulgaria, Georgia, R. Moldova, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine) were present. The dialogue launched a new phase of a pragmatic cooperation on marine and maritime issues at a sea-basin level, in order to reap the benefits of more growth and jobs for the coastal communities and the littoral states' economies.

Maria Damanaki, European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, mentioned, as regards the objectives of the conference: *"My aim is to promote a maritime agenda for the Black Sea, based on practical cooperation and concrete projects. This will contribute to boosting growth and jobs in the area in a sustainable way. The coastal states and the coastal communities in particular are invited to join this effort and work within the existing regional and EU cooperation channels and funding instruments."*

Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Titus Corlăţean, added: *"As well as the European Commission, Romania is dedicated to boosting cooperation on marine and maritime affairs in the Black Sea area. We will continue to support the streamlining of interconnections between EU policies and instruments relevant for the Black Sea region: Black Sea Synergy, EU Strategy for the Danube region, Integrated Maritime Policy. The desired outcome would be an improved coherence of EU initiatives with existing cooperation formats, benefiting the entire region. A combination of political will and coherent action will offer us the possibility to fulfill the remarkable potential of this region."*

The Black Sea is the meeting area of six countries and cultures, and a place of a large variety of economic activities with an impact on the whole region. The marine and maritime potential of the region could be further exploited.

The potential of the sea is at the heart of the efforts to promote the delivery of a blue economy. The European Commission and its Member States have developed a two-stage approach to help bring forward more maritime growth and jobs to the European seas: by making best use of existing instruments (e.g. focusing on marine research, environmental monitoring, fisheries conversation and regional funding), and by putting in place a specific maritime agenda that targets key sectors like coastal and maritime tourism, blue biotechnology and ocean energy.

Specific maritime policy measures, such as spatial planning, improved marine knowledge and maritime surveillance, come to create better structural conditions for reaping the benefits of the sea. Much of this work is done in close cooperation with third countries, building in small steps on what already exists in a sea-basin.

Relevant background material may be found at the Conference website: http://www.amiando.com/BlackSeaStakeholdersConference.html