The main aim of this call is to support coordinated action in the context of the IMP, which will carry inter-sectoral and cross-border elements. The call seeks to promote mutual understanding, awareness-raising and joint responses to well-identified challenges hindering integration between maritime sectors in areas such as marine research, coastal and maritime tourism, maritime transport, marine environment, business and skills development, and clustering of maritime activities. Given these varied targets, the call will award one grant to each of the following actions:

1. to pilot partnerships between public and private stakeholders (public-private partnerships) in one or more of the following areas: sustainable coastal and maritime tourism, marine research and business integration, access to finance and funding for maritime business;
2. to promote networking between maritime clusters in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean on concrete initiatives/topics focusing on research and innovation, business development and internationalisation, skills development, cluster development strategies, cluster management and labelling, in relation to the maritime policy and the blue economy.

The project proposals should be brought in line with the specific objectives corresponding to each of the actions.

The maximum amount available for this call for proposals will be EUR 569,000 (five hundred sixty nine thousand euro), split between the successful projects.

Further details on the project description you can find under the link below.

The geographic area covered by these actions includes the Black Sea and the Mediterranean regions.

Eligible to participate are both stakeholders from EU Member States and partner countries bordering both sea basins and participating in the respective cooperation frameworks (e.g. Union for the Mediterranean, EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region, Black Sea Synergy, etc.) as well as regional and international organisations active in the targeted sea basins.
The deadline for submission of proposals was 26 November 2015.

(UPDATE) Following a careful evaluation of the received project proposals, 3 projects were retained.

The **BLUE.NET project**, awarded EUR 223,237, aims to facilitate, enhance and develop SMEs collaboration and networking among **maritime clusters** in the Adriatic, Ionian and Black Seas.

In the next 24 months, the project shall address the following areas:

- exchange of good practices of cluster management and development of business sectors;
- empowering maritime clusters and/or regional centres of competence to become ‘blue-innovative’; and
- enhanced networking among relevant cluster stakeholders.

The Blue.NET shall result in a common methodology to collect technology features and innovation needs in each maritime cluster. Moreover, the cooperation among the partners is expected to result in a structured process for transnational cluster development.


The **Art Reefs project** (Innovative, competitive and integrated tools for sustainable coastal tourism and inclusive Blue Growth in the Mediterranean and Black seas), awarded EUR 167,520, will pilot a public-private partnership, inviting cross-sectoral stakeholders across the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins over a period of 24 months.

The project aims at promoting and facilitating the use of artificial reefs as effective and affordable tools to boost innovative and sustainable coastal and maritime tourism, while offering inclusive opportunities for transversal Blue Growth across a wide range of compatible activities that combine economic, social and environmental benefits.

**Project partners:** 1. Innogate to Europe (INNO), Spain; 2. National research Council - Institute of Marine Sciences (CNR-ISMAR), Italy; 3. Pôle Mer Méditerranée – Toulon Var Technologies (PMM - TVT), France; 4. Regione Abruzzo - Dipartimento Trasporti, Mobilità, Turismo e Cultura (ABRUZZO), Italy; 5. National Tourism Cluster “Bulgarian Guide” (NTC), Bulgaria; 6. Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities (UBBSLA), Bulgaria.

The **FAIMMAC project** (Fishery and aquaculture integrated management model along the Adriatic coasts), awarded EUR 138,800, has as an objective the promotion of flat oyster integrated management. Flat oysters (Ostrea edulis) are a native bivalve molluscs living in the Adriatic Sea but rarely used in aquaculture.

Concretely, the project aims to provide guidelines to guarantee an eco-friendly aquaculture development among research centres and economic operators to stimulate the sustainable production of flat oysters in the Adriatic basin. The flat oyster integrated management strategy looks at converging with other socio-economic activities in sea coastal areas, promoting job creation, innovation and entrepreneurship in the blue economy of the Adriatic Sea.
The project activities will be implemented by a public-private partnership amongst Adriatic Sea stakeholders from Italy and Croatia over a period of 24 months.

Project partners: 1. CIRSPE, Italy; 2. University of Teramo, Italy; 3. CVI, Croatia; 4. SILMAR, Italy.


All questions related to the call may be sent by e-mail to: EASME-EMFF-calls@ec.europa.eu [4] no later than 18 November 2015, indicating as subject title the call reference "EASME/EMFF/2015/1.2.1.7".

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