

**GREENING THE COAST AND BLUEING THE SEA FOR A RESILIENT GEORGIA:
AN INITIATIVE TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE AND MARINE POLLUTION TO
PROMOTE
THE COMMON MARITIME AGENDA UNDER THE BLUEING THE BLACK SEA
PROGRAM**

Launch of Reports:

***IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON GEORGIA'S COASTAL ZONE:
VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT AND ADAPTATION OPTIONS***
and

***THE COST OF COASTAL ZONE DEGRADATION IN GEORGIA: A TOOL FOR
COASTAL ZONE ADAPTATION AND NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS***

Consultations on:

BLUEING THE BLACK SEA PROGRAM

Event Format

- Live Webinar via Facebook Live/Zoom, 25 February 2021, 17:00-19:00 (GMT+4)

Objectives

Present results and recommendations of the World Bank Reports:

- *Impacts of Climate Change on Georgia's Coastal Zone: Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Options*
- *The Cost of Coastal Zone Degradation in Georgia: A Tool for the Coastal Zone Adaptation and the Nationally Determined Contributions.*

Conduct BBSEA national consultation to seek:

- input from respective stakeholder communities on marine pollution, pressing issues and priorities related to pollution prevention, reduction, and control in the Black Sea, and opportunities to inform the BBSEA architecture and implementation modalities.
- information to support a national and regional pollution diagnostic tool that will form the baseline for further action.

Participants

- Government of Georgia representatives, relevant ministries, public authorities, policy makers, and technical experts responsible for issues related to coastal and marine environment, research, blue economy development, and investment
- regional and local stakeholders
- private entities and financial institutions working on climate change and marine pollution

Context

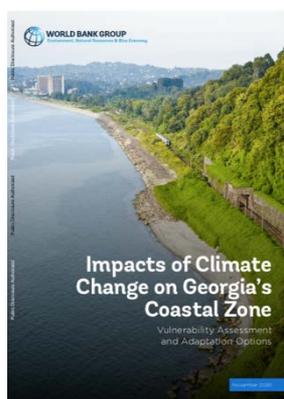
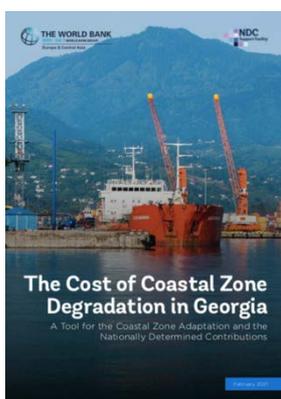
The Government of Georgia is currently in the process of updating its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that was submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat in 2015 under the Paris Agreement to achieve climate goals and enhance sustainable development. Recognizing the importance of the country's unique coastal and marine resources, the Government of Georgia is mobilizing domestic and

international resources for the most climate-vulnerable sectors and is recommending inclusion of coastal areas in the adaptation component of the updated NDC.

With the World Bank's global knowledge, innovation, and engagement, Georgia is entering a new frontier in contributing to the NDC by emphasizing climate adaptation measures in Georgia's coastal zone. Resilient use of water resources and bringing back tourism to coastal resorts after the COVID-19 pandemic are among priority coastal adaptation interventions. The NDC also elevates the importance of afforestation, reforestation, and natural regeneration in the mitigation agenda.

THE WORLD BANK REPORTS

Presentation



At the request of and in consultation with the Government of Georgia, the World Bank has recently prepared two reports:

- [Impacts of Climate Change on Georgia's Coastal Zone: Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Options](#)
- [The Cost of Coastal Zone Degradation in Georgia: A Tool for the Coastal Zone Adaptation and the Nationally Determined Contributions.](#)

The reports identify key climate risks and vulnerabilities for coastal Georgia, assess the impact of climate change on economic sectors and infrastructure, and prioritize initial recommendations and climate adaptation actions. They also offer the first estimate of the costs of environmental degradation of Georgia's coastal zone due to pollution, flooding, coastal erosion, agricultural soil, and forest degradation. The reports seek to raise the level of urgency needed to reduce the impact of climate change on the coastal zone, address the escalating cost of inaction, and emphasize Blue Economy as a vehicle for accelerating climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to contribute to Georgia's and the region's socioeconomic development, tourism, and environmental conservation.

The launch of these reports in conjunction with the launch of the *Blueing the Black Sea* (BBSEA) consultations will provide a robust foundation for informing Georgia's decision-making on coastal development and the new NDCs. It will also contribute to considering adaptation targets for the Black Sea coast and building awareness of and implementing pollution prevention, reduction and control.

The webinar also offers a platform for the stakeholder community to initiate consultations on priorities and design of BBSEA, a proposed regional initiative supported by the World Bank and partners to tackle marine pollution and catalyze blue economy investments in the Black Sea region. The outcome of the webinar will define priorities in pollution prevention, reduction, and control in the Black Sea and the architecture and modalities of the *BBSEA* regional project. The acquired information will also support a national and regional pollution diagnostic that will form the baseline for further action.

BLUEING THE BLACK SEA PROGRAM

Consultation Workshop

Introduction

The 2019 Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, negotiated with the active support of the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC PERMIS), has created a new dynamic in the regional dialogue on sustainable Blue economy development and once more highlighted the need for effective preservation of the marine environment. In response to the ambitious political commitments under the [Common Maritime Agenda](#) by the six Black Sea littoral states and the Republic of Moldova (CMA countries), the World Bank has announced the deployment of the *Blueing the Black Sea Program* (BBSEA) aiming to catalyze blue economy investments for the Black Sea and strengthen regional dialogue and institutions. The first activities under this umbrella program consists of an *analytical work* and a *project*. The latter, the [BBSEA Regional Project](#), will be implemented by BSEC PERMIS and is expected to be launched in the 2nd half of 2021 with a focus on water borne marine pollution.

A preparatory action, funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and led by BSEC PERMIS, is expected to deliver the critical elements for the design of the BBSEA Regional project (BBSEA GEF Regional Project) for 2021-2023 which in turn will support identification and preparation of investment to reduce pollution in the Black Sea. To this effect, seven national stakeholder consultation workshops will be organized – one in each CMA country. The cycle of consultations started in Turkey, the coordinator of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea in 2021, followed by Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania and Russia.

The national consultations, held as webinars, will gather selected participants that include public authorities and policy makers responsible for issues related to marine environment, research, blue economy development and investment, as well as private organization working on marine pollution and financial institutions. In practice, the consultations will seek feedback on the state of play, pressing issues and priorities related to pollution prevention, reduction and control in the Black Sea, as well as the opportunities that result in the process.

The pollution problem in the Black Sea

The Black Sea has a pollution problem that has turned it into one of Europe's most polluted seas in the past two decades and has implications for the littoral countries at economic, social (health) and environmental levels. It is a common problem, which requires a joint and coordinated regional solution. Although climate change is expected to exacerbate the pollution problem, the future impacts of pollution under a "business as usual" scenario in the Black Sea are not fully known (**Knowledge gap**). Some existing national and regional policy and legal frameworks are not sufficient or conducive to support regional action against pollution and when they are, implementation is not necessarily effective (**Policy, legal and institutional gap**). The lack of an accurate evaluation of pollution risks hampers the prioritization of impactful pollution reduction investments in the Black Sea basin (**Financial gap**). This is evidenced by the limited innovation and coordinated investments towards pollution prevention, as well as the partial involvement of financial institutions in this domain.

Some of these gaps have already been addressed by policy initiatives at national and regional levels or actions by the industry (e.g., on waterborne pollution by ships). Others have been tackled mostly separately at the level of the coastal regions (e.g., collection and recycling of marine litter).

The current activities under the BBSEA program are described in the table below. The webinar in Georgia will seek to discuss all key gaps in a uniform and focused manner, which will allow BSEC PERMIS and the World Bank to fine tune its actions on both fronts – analytical and investment – and gather concrete input for the Regional project design at the end of the webinar.

Identified Gaps	Analytical Work Turning the Tide of Pollution	BBSEA GEF Regional Project	Timeframe							
			2021 S1	2021 S2	2022 S1	2022 S2	2023 S1	2023 S2	2024 S1	2024 S2
Information & Knowledge	Sources of pollution/ Hotspots of pollution									
	Benefits of addressing pollution									
	Business as usual scenarios (Qualitative assessment)									
		Cost of inaction (Quantitative assessment)								
Policy, Legal and Institutions	Institutional policy and legal analysis									
		Regional dialogue								
		Capacity building for regional coordination								
Financing and Investments		Sustainable business standards and guidelines								
		Investment prioritization								
		Investment plans for pollution prevention and circular economy prepared.								
		Eco-business grants provided through competition								

Consultation Themes and Questions

Working session 1: Turning the Tide of Pollution in the Black Sea

The working session will launch the recently published report on “**Impacts of Climate Change on Georgia’s Coastal Zone: Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Options**”. The report was prepared by the World Bank, in collaboration with the Government of Georgia and explains how supporting blue economy can accelerate the implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures

required to reduce climate risks and contribute to the region's socioeconomic development, tourism and environmental conservation.

During the working session, the World Bank-led effort will be introduced to establish an up-to-date diagnostic of the state of play and issues at stake regarding marine pollution in the Black Sea on the example of the efforts of the coastal countries. Through a targeted discussion, the panel will aim at identifying the sources, impacts and prevention efforts (information and institutional gaps) related to marine pollution, as well the key pollution challenges in Georgia. The findings will feed into an in-country pollution diagnostic paper, which, in turn, will inform the BBSEA-GEF architecture.

Indicative Questions for discussion

- ▶ *Will the diagnostic (i) legal and institutional analysis; and (ii) regional pollution diagnostic contribute to the regional efforts to address marine pollution?*
- ▶ *Does the scope of the diagnostic activities reflect on the main gaps that need to be addressed?*
- ▶ *Which are the stakeholders that have the most important role in addressing marine pollution and should be involved in the technical committee?*
- ▶ *Are there any other similar or relevant existing projects and initiative at national and regional levels that we should consider?*
- ▶ *What are the most important pollution sources, and/or human activity impacting health of marine ecosystems in the Black sea that the "Turning the tide of pollution report" should assess?*
- ▶ *Can institutional, legal and policy reforms help to address pollution issues?*
- ▶ *What are the priorities of your country related to marine pollution prevention and reduction; pragmatic avenues to reduce marine pollution and stimulate sustainable practices?*
- ▶ *What further support would you need from the World Bank to accompany the pollution-free development of blue economy in the Black sea?*

Working session 2: BBSEA GEF Regional project, Focus on Georgia

The working session will present the planned BBSEA-GEF project and aim at gathering feedback on its key components. The project includes a long list of activities some of which primarily at national level (with regional coordination element) and some primarily at regional level (with some national aspect). This set of activities is a long list that will be streamlined based on country priorities as voiced during the consultations.

Activities primarily at national level include:

- A. The Cost of Pollution on the Economy
- B. Cross sectoral Coordination Mechanism for the Blue Economy
- C. National investment Plans for Pollution Prevention and Circular Economy (including financing targets and monitoring)
- D. Eco-Business Competition and Grants to reduce pollution and improve water quality run-off to the Black Sea
- E. Preparation and fund raising for investment to reduce pollution and improve water quality run off to the Black Sea.

Activities primarily at regional level include:

- F. Sustainable Business Standards and Guidelines in key sectors (agriculture, aquaculture, tourism, shipping and water management)

- G. Capacity building in banking for green finance and innovation
- H. Development of sustainable business standards and guidelines
- I. Awareness raising on the issue of pollution in the Black Sea

Indicative Questions for discussion

- ▶ *What are the topmost important national level activities for your country?*
- ▶ *What are the least important national level activities for your country?*
- ▶ *What are the topmost important regional level activities for your country?*
- ▶ *What are the least important regional level activities for your country?*
- ▶ *Does your country need an investment Plan for Pollution Prevention?*
- ▶ *Does your country need an investment plan for Circular Economy?*
- ▶ *Who are the suitable competitors for the eco-business grant competition to reduce pollution and improve water quality run-off to the Black Sea?*
- ▶ *What are the priority sectors for the eco-business grant competition to reduce pollution and improve water quality run-off to the Black Sea?*
- ▶ *Do you know other eco-business grant competition programs dedicated to reducing pollution?*
- ▶ *What investment would be the most efficient to reduce pollution and improve water quality run-off in your country?*
- ▶ *Are there any standards and/or procurement rules for sustainable business operations and investments in your country applied by banks, private investors and development agencies in projects in the domains of agriculture, aquaculture, tourism, shipping and water management?*
- ▶ *What do you consider a good way to support/ promote eco-sustainable business practices and innovation supporting pollution reduction?*
- ▶ *Are there any institutions, at national level or at regional level, that promote investments in green technologies, circular economy models or novel green infrastructures for pollution reduction, waste management and recycling related to marine pollution?*
- ▶ *Are there any financial institutions and (equity) funds active in your country that strategically target and support companies or early-stage ventures that develop solutions for the pollution problem?*

These consultation themes do not include all topics related to marine pollution in the Black Sea, nor can they embrace all potential activities for the investment and analytical components of BBSEA as outlined above. However, they offer a good entry point for discussion. Not least, with the progress of the consultations in the other countries, the thematic focus could evolve and integrate additional facets based on the audience, interest or the overall needs of the consultation.