



Restoring our Ocean and Waters by 2030

The power of the young generations' visionary solutions

3-4 October 2023

Liceo Scientifico statale "Vittorio Veneto", Via De Vincenti, 7 - Milano

The event is organised on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the University of Milan Bicocca together with the Vittorio Veneto Liceo Scientifico - also in cooperation with the European Commission and with the contribution of the BlueMissionMed Coordination and Support Action.

The ocean, seas and rivers are increasingly an engine for the European economy, with enormous innovative potential, recognized by the Blue Economy strategy to support sustainable growth in th

e marine and maritime sectors. According to the European Union, the 'sea' provides 4,5 million direct jobs. If the global Blue Economy were compared to a national economy, it would be the seventh largest in the world, and the ocean as an economic entity would be a member of the G7. It operates in the planet's vastest ecosystem:

seas and the ocean cover more than 70% of Earth's surface, they hold 97 % of all our water and sustain 80 % of all forms of life.

The importance of the ocean and our seas is also recognized by the United Nations, which organized the World Conference on Oceans in Lisbon in 2022 and recently concluded successfully the so-called *High Seas Treaty* negotiations aimed at protecting vast areas of our planet's oceans.

And yet in our daily lives, we are leaving an ever-increasing footprint on the ocean and waters which is rapidly degrading their health and threatening their ability to provide many essential services.

This makes us all responsible, individually and collectively, for their protection, regeneration and health. Our young people are able to find visionary solutions to accelerate the transition to zero pollution in the Mediterranean Sea, or to identify ways how best to protect and regenerate our rivers, lakes and our mare nostrum.

This event aims at promoting a dialogue and debate with our future ocean and water stewards and leaders around new scientific advances, innovation activities and solutions in support of implementing the European [Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030](#). It will showcase how the different related Mission Lighthouses offer many new and inspiring blue jobs and professional opportunities.

The Blue Economy covers all sectors related to the ocean, seas and coasts, and is a large and rapidly changing segment of the economy, which has taken significant steps to modernise and diversify over the last decade.

In addition to traditional sectors, new economic niches are evolving and growing such as regeneration of lost biodiversity, reduction of pollution, ocean renewable energy, blue bioeconomy and biotechnology, sustainable eco-tourism, environmental certification, management of marine protected areas, STEM education, etc.

The demand for new skills and competences to well execute these new blue jobs and related job profiles will be huge; it will open many future job avenues and opportunities for our future generation. Finally, yet importantly, a fit for purpose trained workforce will constitute an important asset for supporting the implementation of the European Mission *Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030*.

The programme is fully in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it contributes to the UN Decade of Ocean Science and the European Year of Skills 2023.

Programme

3 October 2023 (14:00 – 18:00)

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via De Vincenti, 7 - Milano

Intergenerational Dialogue Inspired by the European Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030

The purpose of this part of the event, an-intergenerational dialogue is to exchange knowledge and expertise about ongoing EU and nationally funded Mission relevant projects and initiatives, and stimulate new ideas and solutions on specific topics that will be addressed in the different classrooms around four thematic challenges. These challenges are intrinsically linked with the objectives of the European Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030, and its related Mission Lighthouses.

Under the guidance of experienced scientists and representatives from the private sector, students and early career researchers will work together the entire afternoon. The results of this joint work will be brought to the attention of the plenary the following day, as inspiration for the students; their teaching staff and all participants, but also as a contribution to the different ongoing activities supporting the implementation of the Mission and its related Mission Lighthouses.

14:00 – 14:10 Welcome and introduction: Sigi Gruber, retired European Commission Official and Paolo Galli, Director of Marine Sciences, Technology and Management-MaRHE Center Maldives, University of Bicocca

14:10 – 14:15 Setting the scene: Why an EU Mission on Restoring our Ocean and Waters by 2030? Claudia Pecoraro, Policy Officer European Commission

14:15 – 14:45: Blue skills and blue careers, why are they so important? Cristina Pedicchio, President of the mare cluster of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region; **Lucia Fraga Lago,** Centro Tecnológico del Mar - Fundación CETMAR, Vigo (ES); **Garry Kett,** CIIMAR (PT), the Erasmus funded MATES project; **Philip Ackermann,** DRL, (DE) The Plastic Pirates Initiative, **Elena Valsecchi,** CONCEPTU Maris “CONservation of CEtaceans and Pelagic sea TURtles in Med: Managing Actions for their Recovery In Sustainability” Life Project EU

14:45 – 18:00 - Breakout into the four different thematic sessions, called ‘classrooms’:

Classrom 1: The role and management of marine protected areas

Coordinated by **Paolo Galli**, Director of Marine Sciences, Technology and Management-MaRHE Center Maldives, University of Bicocca

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

Kora Dvorski BLUE4ALL, WWF Adria (CRO)

Cristina Canella PhD Candidate Marine Sciences, Technology and Management, University of Milano-Bicocca, connecting from the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations Secretariat (New York, United States)

Federica Siena PhD Candidate Marine Science and Technology, University of Milano Bicocca

Classrom 2: Marine Biodiversity

Coordinated by Jose Luiz Moutinho, coordinator of the EU funded **BlueMissionAtlanticArctic Coordination&Support Action**, AIR centre and A-AAGORA (PT)

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

Sergio Rossi, Università del Salento (IT) – The Ocean citizens Project
Underwater Gardens International (ES)

Cristina Gambi, UNIVPM, (IT) the CLIMAREST project

Enrico Montalbetti, Researcher University of Milano Bicocca

Jacopo Gobbato, PhD Candidate Marine Science and Technology, University of Milano Bicocca

Lorenzo Toniolo Master Student in Marine Sciences, University of Milano Bicocca and University of Maldives

Classrom 3: Inland waters

Coordinated by **Barbara Leoni**, Professor of inland water University of Milano Bicocca

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

Flavia Dory, Researcher of inland water University of Milano Bicocca

Philip Ackermann, DRL, (DE) The Plastic Pirates Initiative

Eleonora Cascone, Legambiente

Classroom 4: Plastic pollution

Coordinated by **Fedra Francocci**,

Project Manager of EU funded **BlueMissionMED**

Coordination&Support Action National Research Council, (IT)

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

Vesna Kuralt (SI) the REMEDIES project

Giuseppe Riva, Federchimica - PlasticsEurope Italia

Francesco Saliu, Researcher on Environmental Chemistry, University of Milano Bicocca

Becchi Alessandro PhD Candidate Marine Science and Technology, University of Milano Bicocca

Eleonora Concari, Master Student in Marine Sciences, University of Milano Bicocca and University of Maldives

4th October 2023 (9:00 – 13:15)

9:00 - 9:30 Aula Magna, Liceo Scientifico Vittorio Veneto
Registration of participants

9:30 -10:10

Opening and institutional greetings:

Mariarosaria Arena, High school principal Liceo Scientifico Vittorio Veneto

Giovanna Iannantuoni, Rector University of Milano-Bicocca

Anna Scavuzzo, Deputy Mayor Milan Municipality, Councilor for Education

10.10 – 10:30 Keynote speaker:

John Bell, Director “Healthy Planet” and Deputy Mission Manager, European Commission, DG Research & Innovation

10:30 – 11:00 Special Guests

Pascal Lamy, Chair of the Mission Board

Giovanni Soldini, Sailor by satellite link from Pacific Ocean

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee break

11:15 – 12:00

Feedback from the Intergenerational workshops of 3rd October jointly presented by students and experienced professionals

12:00 – 12:50

Panel discussion: Which blue professions for which future?

moderated by **Elisabetta Balzi**, Head of Unit at European Commission, DG Research and Innovation, Healthy Seas and Ocean:

Delphine Lobelle, Fugro Product Owner: Coastal Hazard Analytics (NL)

Roberto Cimino, Vice president Cluster BIG - Blue Italian Growth, (IT)

Raffaele Leone, Director Focus Magazine (IT)

Adrian Stanica, Coordinator of The International Centre for Advanced Studies on River-Sea Systems (RO)

Silja Teege, the Blue Generation Project, (ES)

12.50

Conclusions

Simona Tironi, Councilor for Education, Training, Employment, Lombardy Region

Giovanna Iannantuoni, Rector University of Milano-Bicocca

Draft script

Inter-Generational Workshop participants will be introduced at 14.00 hrs in the plenary room of the Liceo Scientifico Statale "Vittorio Veneto" by an introductory session where Sigi Gruber and Paolo Galli outline the main objectives and working modalities of the afternoon session.

The short introduction will be followed by a short presentation of one or two EU funded project (such as the ERASMUS+MATES Project) will follow (on-line), outlining some interesting project results related to skills strategies for our future blue workforce.

Participants will be organised into small 'hybrid' thematic groups (referred to as 'classrooms') focussing *on the above outlined shared priorities*.

Work will start thanks to project coordinators/practitioners which share their insights and thoughts about some of the scientific challenges identified, solutions to be proposed and most importantly how they have or plan to involve young talents and co-create solutions together with them. Time available will only allow for very short presentations, and far from being exhaustive!, but they should stimulate curiosity and a willingness of participants – especially the young people – to become part of the solutions, to co-create and co-develop solutions. Each 'thematic classroom' will have a "Discussion Coach" who should encourage maximum active participation from participants. In order to well summarise the discussion, each thematic classroom will identify two-three participants to write a short report. This latter will be presented in the plenary session on 4th October.

Young people will be allocated to one of the groups, following their area of expertise indicated prior to the event. To note that it will not be possible to accommodate all preferences that young people have indicated.

However, such a more 'open' approach will allow participating young people to experience a broader range of topics and issues, fully in line with the transdisciplinary nature and knowledge required to become future ocean leaders and stewards, and brilliant innovators.

What do we want to achieve for this session and how?

The goal (and here also the task) for each group is to jointly develop a 7-8 minute short report focusing mainly on the solutions proposed by the young people, and presented by young people. However, in order to well frame it and also to pay tribute to the intergenerational dialogue, experienced professionals who pitched their projects/initiatives could also outline some of the scientific challenges, and their proposed solutions.

While format and style can be determined by each of the groups, it is important to keep in mind that the presentation during the plenary on 4th October needs to fully reflect the collective thinking of the group. Furthermore it should:

- capture and hold the attention of participants
- clearly articulate an understanding of the issue and its challenges
- sets out two or three concrete avenues for collaborative action in addressing them
- articulate a willingness to continue to be engaged and become part of the solutions which contribute to restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030.

Each group will be supported by a "Discussion Coach" from within the broader gathering, the 'classroom coordinator'. In order to initiate the discussion, the Coach will be assisted by several experienced scientists/practitioners who will pitch their project/initiative. They will offer insights and points to consider based on their experiences and will check in with the group regularly to assist in any means they can.

It is proposed to present a set of broad questions that could stimulate work within the groups. These could be framed in a deliberately general manner and are designed to foster and support wide-ranging conversations and innovative thinking. There are no

“wrong answers” to any of them and no preconceived notions of what presentations should look like or contain.

Equipment will be available for project PowerPoint style presentations should groups wish to frame its suggestions in this way. Alternate presentation styles and formats are completely welcomed as well.

Zoom connections will allow participants attending virtually to be part of the discussions. All those who registered for virtual participation will need to be ‘allocated’ to the different groups prior to the workshop.