



# **BLUE MISSION BANOS**

**Supporting the Mission  
Ocean Lighthouse in the  
Baltic and North Sea Basins**

**Deliverable 2.2  
Documentation of BMB  
Assemblies and Reference Groups**

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<b>Author(s)</b>	Frances Klatt, SUBMARINER (Part 1 & 6), Careen Krüger, PtJ (Part 2), Matthias Sandra, VLIZ (Part 3), Eero Asmala, GTK (Part 4), Martin Sjöberg (Part 5)
<b>Project Officer</b>	Daniele De Bernardi
<b>Editor</b>	Angela Schultz-Zehden, SUBMARINER
<b>Approved by</b>	Angela Schultz-Zehden, SUBMARINER
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<b>AUTHORSHIP TABLE</b>		
<b>Authors</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Report Chapter</b>
Frances Klatt	SUB	1 & 6
Careen Krüger	PtJ	2
Matthias Sandra	VLIZ	3
Eero Asmala	GTK	4
Martin Sjöberg	IVL	5



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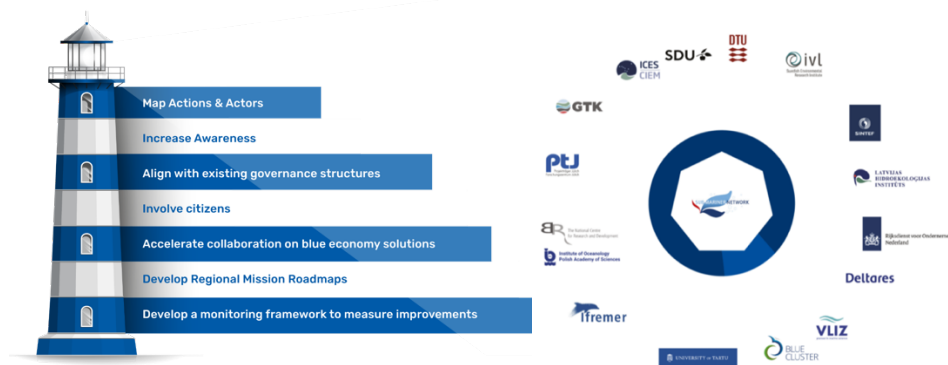
## BLUEMISSIONBANOS PROJECT

BlueMissionBANOS (BMB), as a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) for the Baltic and North Sea (BANOS) Mission Ocean Lighthouse, that inspires, engages, and supports stakeholders across the BANOS region in taking positive action to reach the Mission Ocean objectives. In particular, we facilitate the uptake of a sustainable, carbon-neutral, and circular blue economy by connecting national, regional, and transnational actors from politics, industry, and science, thereby creating a governance model that is conducive to innovation.

While fostering the transition towards the blue economy, BlueMissionBANOS supports the prevention and elimination of water pollution and the protection and restoration of biodiversity and marine and freshwater ecosystems. The project focus is on reducing governance fragmentation, facilitating evidence-based decision-making and fostering citizen engagement across the BANOS area. These supporting actions raise awareness, showcase opportunities, and inspire stakeholders to actively contribute to the transition and the preservation of oceans, seas and waters to 2030 and beyond.

To accelerate the transition towards an innovative and circular blue economy, in line with regions' strategic priorities, as defined by their Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3), BlueMissionBANOS organises regional pilot demonstration arenas (Mission Arena) involving innovators, business support and training organisations, local stakeholders and any interested parties to accelerate the uptake of innovative solutions in support of Mission Ocean. Furthermore, BlueMissionBANOS develops a consistent monitoring framework to assess progress in achieving carbon neutrality and circularity.

Finally, BlueMissionBANOS facilitates synergies and matchmaking between actors working towards achieving the Mission Ocean objectives in the BANOS area, by providing a catalogue of services, technical expertise and projects that can foster progress, collaboration and knowledge sharing. The BlueMissionBANOS project is funded under the call HORIZON-MISS-2021-OCEAN-04 by the European Union under Grant Agreement ID 101093845 and runs from December 2022 until November 2025.



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## ACRONYMS

BANOS	Baltic and North Sea
BMB	BlueMissionBanos - Supporting the Mission Ocean Lighthouse in the Baltic and North Sea Basin
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EUSBSR	EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region
HELCOM	Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
Mission	EU Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030”
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OSPAR	Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
RG	Reference Group
R&I	Research & Innovation
WP	Work Package

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This report summarises and lays out the various reference groups (RG) and assemblies that have taken place in the first 24 months of the BlueMissionBANOS (BMB) project and their initial results. Contrary to the original work plan, in which a Governance Reference Group would be established, the project has instead set up several groups with different focuses in order to target different people and discuss different elements of the project’s implementation. The complexity of the topics in BlueMissionBANOS and the large number of different stakeholders made this approach necessary. The steering groups were set up in a targeted manner and have been carried out with a high degree of flexibility.

To successfully liaise with stakeholders in the BANOS region, this project has utilised reference groups and assemblies focusing on various aspects of project implementation. This deliverable will describe these assemblies and reference groups and their results in detail.

The Reference Group set up in WP2 Governance deals with the structural implementation of Mission Ocean & Waters in the North Sea and Baltic Sea region. Concretely, it deals with the question of which organisations ultimately, in the long run, take responsibility for ensuring that the Mission Ocean and Waters is implemented within the BANOS Region and how these



responsibilities are organised. Representatives from national ministries and authorities, relevant transnational organisations, and the National Focal Points from BlueMissionBANOS are represented here.

Two workshops on governance have taken place so far at the first and third Mission Arenas in Gothenburg and Amsterdam respectively. The Mission Ocean governance workshops have focused on addressing gaps in regulation, financial mechanisms, environmental considerations, and research in the Baltic and North Seas to achieve a carbon-neutral blue economy. These workshops have brought together stakeholders from all levels of governance to discuss and co-create steps for more effective Mission governance in the future.

Under WP3, BlueMissionBANOS has focused on enhancing citizen engagement in the Baltic and North Sea regions through collaboration with existing networks and Mission Ocean activities. A reference group comprising diverse stakeholders (academia, industry, policy, and society) has been formed to guide this initiative. WP3 activities employ a two-tiered workshop approach: local workshops to gather grassroots insights, followed by regional workshops like those held in Gothenburg (2023) and Amsterdam (2024) to refine and co-develop practical actions and solutions. These workshops identified challenges, proposed solutions, and developed action plans to strengthen citizen engagement in the blue economy. Final recommendations will be validated and endorsed in the project's final year.

In WP5, a reference group was established to provide expertise on monitoring needs relevant to the project. Initially, 41 individuals from various fields and regions were invited, with 19 accepting the invitation. The composition evolved as additional experts were brought in to address identified gaps. Key activities included an introductory briefing session, a Mission Arena workshop featuring keynote lectures and interactive tasks to explore sustainability dimensions and potential key performance indicators (KPIs), and two online workshops. These workshops focused on shortlisting and validating KPIs, as well as identifying future monitoring needs. Through a systematic co-creation process, the reference group formulated and validated 50 sector-specific KPIs, assessing their data needs and technical readiness. The work builds on deliverable 5.1 and culminated in 10 essential KPIs for each mission-relevant sector, alongside recommendations for future monitoring approaches and criteria for KPI selection.

Under WP1 and WP4, three Mission Stakeholder Assemblies have been held – as an integral part of the three Mission Arenas - thus far in the project, with another planned for spring 2025. The Mission Arenas aim to showcase innovative solutions tailored to specific regions, address research and innovation (R&I) needs and barriers, and foster deployment through collaboration. By facilitating knowledge exchange, demonstrations of scalable innovations, and co-created discussions, the Mission Arenas support the detection of implementation requirements, research gaps, and funding opportunities. In each of the Mission Arenas, solutions, still existing gaps and



high-priority actions to be taken in the near future are showcased, discussed and agreed upon during a series of interactive workshops. These action points are then presented in the final Mission Stakeholder Assembly, providing an opportunity for all engaged participants & stakeholders to vote jointly upon the priority actions for the given region. The participation in these assemblies has so far shown the engagement of a wide variety of stakeholders from different institutional types (i.e. research, industry, authorities, NGOs) as well as a good spread across the different age groups.

Through the combination of these assemblies and reference groups, the BMB project is able to liaise frequently and deeply with stakeholders to discuss and co-design all aspects of the project's implementation. These initiatives are expected to continue in the final year of the project.

## 2 GOVERNANCE REFERENCE GROUPS

### 2.1 Governance Workshop: Mission Arena 1 Towards an Effective Ocean Mission Governance

*Date: Wednesday, November 15th, 2023*

*Place: Lindholmen venue, Gothenburg, Sweden*

The first Governance workshop was organised as invitation only and took place at the 1st Mission Arena in Gothenburg. The aim was to find answers to the main question of the workshop "Towards an effective Mission Ocean Governance - What is needed to successfully implement the Mission?". It intended to help to understand stakeholders' ambiguities and doubts regarding the implementation of Mission Ocean. In the workshop, participants discussed successes as well as gaps in regulation, financial mechanisms, environmental aspects and research in the Baltic and North Seas for achieving a carbon-neutral blue economy and the Mission Ocean objectives. The mental modelling method was used as an interactive workshop setting to ensure that the threshold for participation was low and participants felt comfortable making contributions. The outcome of the workshop was not fixed from the beginning, facilitating an open discussion.

The main result that came out of this first workshop was the conclusion that the Mission is an experimental initiative that catalyses progress towards its objectives. It is not the term "Mission" that matters, but rather *ensuring that everyone aligns their efforts towards shared goals*. Building on existing frameworks, such as HELCOM, OSPAR and the EUSBSR, the Mission offers valuable lessons for structuring and advancing future actions. While the necessary scientific knowledge



largely exists to meet the Mission's objectives, *greater focus is needed on knowledge transfer and communication*. Incorporating actors from politics, science, industry, and society will support the development of regionally tailored solutions, with "living labs" as an example of innovative approaches. *Flexible, adaptive governance structures are essential to foster innovation in the BANOS region*. Addressing the Mission's challenges is beyond the capacity of any single organisation, requiring collaboration across horizontal and vertical levels – from national governments to local municipalities – as well as transdisciplinary and cross-sectoral cooperation. An example of this multi-level approach is the Danish model, which includes a Mission hub and Mission Ocean Manager to coordinate efforts.

## **2.2 Governance Workshop: Mission Arena 3**

### **Filling the Gaps: Discussing Pathways for effective Mission Ocean Governance**

*Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024*

*Place: Wicked Grounds venue, Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

While the first governance workshop at the Mission Arena in Gothenburg in 2023 served to capture an initial picture of the implementation of the Mission Ocean & Waters in the BANOS region and to exchange views on the existing structures in the member states, the workshop on 26 November 2024 in Amsterdam was intended to develop future pathways of implementing the Mission. The participants were made up of representatives from ministries, the EU Commission, the national focal points of BlueMissionBANOS and representatives from BlueMissionMed and BlueMissionAA. To be able to work in a results-orientated manner, a pre-briefing with a tour-de-table and an explanation of the methodology took place one week before the workshop online. During the workshop, the following research question was discussed at three tables with a regional focus (North Sea, Baltic Sea, cross-basin): *What are the specific governance gaps identified from the first workshop and how can we overcome them?* The purpose of this exercise was to evaluate the status of the Mission by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and most importantly, opportunities. In a second step, the best ideas were developed further and sketched visually. In the third block of the workshop, each of the three tables were allowed to present their best idea. These ideas, together with the subsequent discussion, were visualised in a storyboard. The results of the workshop were included in the Governance Action Points of the Roadmap for the 3rd Mission Arena and form the basis for a further foresight workshop at the 4th Mission Arena in Sopot at the end of April 2025.



This workshop was part of a series of Governance workshops during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mission Arena. Two additional workshops *"Reconciling offshore wind and biodiversity targets: Are we on track to realise the European Green Deal?"* and *"Small or large scale: What are the governance implications evolving from Offshore Wind Energy development in the North Sea?"* focused on decision-making processes regarding the use of marine space in the North Sea, particularly with regard to the planned expansion of offshore wind farms. The workshop *"Enhancing seaweed aquaculture governance: Working with public authorities to improve licensing and regulatory frameworks in the North Sea"* highlighted gaps in sustainable, innovative aquaculture and discussed ways to close these gaps.

As a result, 8 action points were defined:

1. Better coordination between all countries around the North Sea including non-EU countries in Marine Spatial Planning processes. For reasons of transparency, this should also include an exchange of developments in the respective EEZ.
2. Develop a governance structure with a clear leadership responsibility that is able to bring specific solutions to the regions. This should be based on dialogues with Mission actors.
3. Create suitable regulations and financing instruments that are flexible and adaptable enough to realise new concepts. A proof-of-concept approach in the sense of feasibility studies could be integrated into the regulatory system.
4. Take a sea basin approach to tackle climate change and the ambitions of the Green Deal at the political and policy levels.
5. Install a permanent transparent platform to facilitate the dialogue between science and politics and act as a translator between the two parties.
6. Develop a governance structure that is capable of bringing specific solutions to the regions. Knowledge about best practice examples should be transferred beyond the regions to a greater extent such as the Maripark concept.
7. Establish a transnational governance structure to support the implementation of the Ocean & Waters Mission and other regional development issues. This can also be a network of actors mandated with this task by the respective governments.
8. Expand the scope and legacy of Mission Ocean & Waters by engaging with existing networks, including the private sector, and focusing on delivering.



## 3 CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT REFERENCE GROUP

### 3.1 Formation and Introductory Meeting

BlueMissionBANOS contributes to an increased awareness of citizens of all ages in the BANOS area. Therefore, the project reinforces collaboration with and among existing and emerging citizen engagement networks and other Mission Ocean activities. Part of the third work package of BMB, focusing on citizen engagement, aims to develop concrete guidelines and actions to reinforce citizen engagement and Mission uptake by citizens. This is done through a two-layer approach: a first series of workshops at the local level, which provides key insights into local experiences in citizen engagement, and a second series of workshops at the regional level, which reflects on these experiences and draws conclusions.

Preceding this series of workshops, a reference group on citizen engagement was formed, consisting of around twenty experts with different profiles and backgrounds, e.g. scientists, policy experts, industry actors, social scientists representing NGOs, regional and EU institutes, aquaria, trade associations, consultancies, etc. Hence, the reference group covers the so-called quadruple helix, including academia, industry, policy and society and has representatives from different blue economy sectors (offshore energy, aquaculture, shipping, tourism, etc.).

On September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, an online introductory meeting was organised with all members of the reference group to inform them of the project's objectives and align their expectations of the planned workshops at the Mission Arena events. All thirteen organisations agreed to participate in the reference group on citizen engagement of BMB.

### 3.2 Citizen Engagement Workshop: Mission Arena 1

#### **Identifying and co-developing challenges, solutions and actions for citizen engagement activities towards the Mission Ocean and Waters**

*Date: Wednesday, November 15, 2023*

*Place: Lindholmen venue, Gothenburg, Sweden*

This first gathering of BMB partners – the Mission Arena – took place in Gothenburg, Sweden, from November 14 to 16<sup>th</sup> 2023. Within the Mission Arena, WP3 partners organised the first workshop of regional experts, which gathered 30 participants from different European countries, including several members of the BMB reference group on citizen engagement.



Preceding this Mission Arena workshop, three local workshops were organised in Belgium, Denmark and Poland gathering local representatives from industry and non-profit organisations, as well as journalists, experts in citizen science, public engagement, tourism and education. During these workshops challenges, local experiences in citizen engagement were discussed, with a soft focus on the offshore wind energy sector. In each workshop, participants identified a number of challenges and potential solutions linked to citizen engagement. The results from all workshops were largely similar and consistent trends with regards to challenges and solutions were identified.

During the Mission Arena workshop in Gothenburg, the main challenges identified in the local workshops were used as a starting point for discussions. Additional challenges and potential solutions to reinforce citizen engagement in the blue economy sector were further defined during the workshop. This resulted by the end of year one in a list of different challenges and a number of recommendations or potential solutions that can reinforce citizen engagement in the Mission Ocean and Waters.

### **3.3 Citizen Engagement Workshop: Mission Arena 3**

#### **Co-designing actions and guidelines to reinforce citizen engagement in the Mission Ocean and Waters**

*Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2024*

*Place: Wicked Grounds venue, Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

In line with the series of workshops organised during the first year, three local workshops were organised in Belgium, Denmark and Poland preceding a regional workshop at the autumn Mission Arena in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. During the first year, a comprehensive understanding of the "what" was acquired, delineating the challenges and potential solutions.

In this second series, the emphasis pivoted towards the "how" and the practical implementation of these identified solutions, both for the three local workshops and the Mission Arena workshop. During this series, participants co-designed actions and guidelines to address several of the identified challenges based on a set of predefined questions. At the Mission Arena workshop in Amsterdam 32 participants were divided into 4 groups, each of which collectively created a work plan and defined which and how solutions can practically be implemented to address a specific challenge. The BMB consortium will merge all this input into an action plan for each identified challenge. In the final year of the project a last series of workshops will be organised with a



dedicated validation workshop with the reference group at the fourth Mission Arena in Sopot, Poland. All participants in this workshop will gain insight into these actions and guidelines, and jointly finalise and endorse them.

## 4 MONITORING REFERENCE GROUP

BMB WP5 has established a reference group composed of key stakeholders and experts from politics, industry, science, and civil society within the Baltic and North Sea region. This group was tasked to provide input and guidance on the design, development, and implementation of key performance indicators to track the progress of a sustainable, carbon-neutral blue economy in the BANOS region. Members of the RG were invited to participate in regular discussions and contributed their expertise to shape a future monitoring framework that aligned with the goals of the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters.

The objective was to build on the initial KPI mapping exercise conducted as part of BlueMissionBANOS deliverable 5.1 ([D5.1](#)), in which 419 indicators relevant to the blue economy were indicated. These indicators were categorised by sectors, KPI pathways, and sustainability framework dimensions ([D5.1 Appendix 3](#)) and provided a foundation for the expert workshops, where gaps were identified and existing KPIs were evaluated.

The assembly process for the RG was designed to ensure broad representation across key sectors and regions within the Baltic and North Sea area. Invitations were sent to 41 individuals, selected to cover fields identified as critical to the development of a sustainable, carbon-neutral blue economy: aquaculture, energy, general sustainability, multiuse, ports, and transport. The invitees represented 12 countries. Ultimately, 19 participants accepted the invitation to join the RG, representing Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. As the project progressed, the composition of the RG evolved to address apparent gaps in expertise, with additional experts brought in to strengthen the group's ability to provide comprehensive guidance on the design and implementation of the KPIs. This dynamic approach ensured the RG could effectively fulfil its role in shaping a monitoring framework aligned with the Mission's objectives.



The organisation of the RG meetings was structured to gather targeted input for developing a robust monitoring framework and specifically the KPIs. Altogether four meetings were organised (1 in person and 3 online):

**1. Introductory session, September 2023 (online)**

The RG's activities began with an online session on the Microsoft Teams platform to introduce the group to the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters and the BlueMissionBANOS Coordination and Support Action. During this session, the objectives of work package 5 (Mission Monitoring in the North and Baltic Sea) were outlined, and the specific aims of the RG were briefed.

**2. Mission Arena in Gothenburg, Sweden, November 14–16 2023 (in person)**

The RG participated actively in the first Baltic and North Sea Mission Arena, which included:

- **Keynote lectures:** Three RG members delivered invited keynotes to scope and frame monitoring needs relevant to BlueMissionBANOS.
- **Interactive workshop:** This workshop, involving RG members and other stakeholders, was structured around two tasks:
  - *Task 1:* Exploring what each dimension of the sustainability framework means for specific sectors.
  - *Task 2:* Identifying potential KPIs to measure these dimensions.
- **Workshop outputs:** Input from RG members and other participants was collected and later evaluated by focusing on baseline studies to assess current practices and datasets for monitoring the sustainable blue economy.

**3. Online meetings, March 2024 and May 2024**

Two additional online expert workshops were held to build on the outcomes of the Mission Arena and advance the RG's contributions:

- **Platform and tools:** Both workshops were conducted on the Microsoft Teams platform with the Miro whiteboard tool to enable interactive participation. Participants were divided into thematic groups based on their sectors to encourage focused discussions.
- **Online workshop 1:** Focused on shortlisting KPIs through a collaborative process, validated with a follow-up questionnaire via Microsoft Forms to finalise the KPIs.



- **Online workshop 2:** Addressed future monitoring needs, exploring qualitative indicators and identifying areas not yet assessed but critical for consideration in the future.

Through this structured series of meetings, the RG provided insights to the development of KPIs and ensured alignment with the overarching goals of the sustainable, carbon-neutral, and circular blue economy framework. Their expertise also guided the identification of gaps and future priorities for monitoring efforts in the Baltic and North Sea region.

In the four RG meetings, 50 sector-specific KPIs were formulated and validated through a co-creation process, representing the progression from [D5.1](#) to [D5.2](#). The RG assessed the data needs and technical readiness level for each KPI to determine their applicability. As a result, 10 KPIs for each Mission-relevant sector in the BANOS area were identified and validated. The co-creation process also addressed monitoring needs and RG members proposed qualitative KPIs to cover identified gaps. Criteria for KPI selection were defined to inform the development of a monitoring framework, which are meant to guide recommendations on formalising monitoring practices in the future.

## 5 BLUEMISSIONBANOS ASSEMBLIES: THE MISSION ARENAS

Three Mission Arenas have been held thus far in the project focusing on different sub-regions, with a fourth planned for spring 2025 (28-30 April 25; Sopot, Poland). The aim of the Mission Arenas is to showcase 'innovative solutions' relevant for the given geographic region as well as remaining 'research and innovation (R&I) needs and barriers', which need to be tackled to foster their deployment (Milestone 9).

The Mission Arenas gather a diverse set of actors engaged in actions to foster the deployment of the Mission objectives – *i.e.* to make the Blue Economy carbon-neutral and circular, while eliminating pollution and restoring biodiversity in a given region. Prior to each Arena, these actors are identified in a systematic process through screening of Mission Ocean & Water relevant national, transnational and EU wide projects present in the region as well as Mission Charter signatories. During the Mission Arenas, participants and speakers exchange in diverse, interactive, carefully designed workshops to transfer knowledge and lessons to be learned from



existing initiatives and identify the most pressing issues that need to be tackled in their region regarding the deployment of the Mission.

The results of these discussion always culminate in the final Mission Stakeholder Assembly, in which all participants are given the opportunity to vote on the priority ranking of actions discussed, fine-tuned and suggested within these workshops. The Mission Arena and final Assembly process is described in detail in [D4.1-The innovation cycle - Methodologies to accelerate implementation of innovative solutions](#).

As described below, BMB has so far already managed to gain the active engagement of more than one thousand actors within the first three Mission Arenas. As shown, these represent the different types of actors that are necessary to ensure Mission deployment, *i.e.* authorities, research & innovation; companies and NGOs. These participants are a very important reference group as a whole for the Mission Ocean in the BANOS region and serve as the key stakeholder group, with whom BMB is continuously engaging further to foster the future generation of actions for Mission Ocean deployment.

## 5.1 Mission Arena 1

*Date: 14-16th November 2023*

*Place: Lindholmen venue, Gothenburg, Sweden*

The first Mission Arena focused on stakeholders in the sub-region of the Western Baltic including Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

During the 1st Mission Arena over 500 participants from 37 countries attended the 52 workshop sessions and activities co-created by 139 stakeholders/organisations around the sub-region. Participants came from a variety of sectors representing all facets of the blue economy. Of the over 500 participants 27% came from research, 17% from educational institutes, 5% from NGOs or transnational organisations, and 23% from policy or administration. In addition, 24% of the participants came from a business background, and 4% were students.

The workshops and dialogues covered the following eight thematic fields:

1. blue biomass production
2. local blue products on the market,



3. effective marine protection,
4. multi-use solutions,
5. support to blue businesses,
6. skills needed,
7. buy-in of citizens, and
8. governance and funding.

The 1st Mission Arena culminated in an Assembly where participants prioritised the most urgent action points within the eight topic areas. The results of this work were published in the [Roadmap for the first Mission Arena](#).

## 5.2 Mission Arena 2

*Date: 25-26 April 2024*

*Place: H2O 6 kvartāls Event Hall, Riga, Latvia*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Mission Arena focused on stakeholders in the sub-region of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and East Sweden.

Over the course of the two-day Arena, over 230 participants and speakers from 19 countries exchanged in 15 diverse workshops, co-created by 59 unique organisations. Sessions focused on the following six thematic fields:

1. freshwater and ocean regeneration,
2. marine protection, planning & policy,
3. sustainable fishery,
4. coastal communities, islands & tourism,
5. shipping & ports, and
6. business support.

The Arena resulted in 43 action points all put together in the regional [Roadmap for the second Mission Arena](#), displaying steps for efficient deployment of Mission Ocean & Waters to 2030.

Of the 230 participants of the second Mission Arena, over three quarters were from the Arena 2 region, with the highest participation from Latvia, Sweden, and Finland. Of the 89 participants who voted on the final roadmap, over ninety percent were from the Baltic Sea region.



Arena 2 participants came from a variety of sectors representing all sides of the blue economy. Of the 89 participants who voted in the final Assembly, 30.5% came from research, 23.3% from NGOs or transnational organisations, and 22.1% from policy or administration. In addition, 14.7% of the participants came from a business background and 4.2% were students.

## **5.2 Mission Arena 3**

*Date: 27-28 November 2024*

*Place: Wicked Grounds venue, Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

In Amsterdam, over 300 participants from 34 countries attended 21 workshop sessions co-organised and run by over 100 speakers. The diverse workshop discussion addressed seven thematic fields:

1. offshore wind & multiuse,
2. marine protection and restoration,
3. citizen engagement & education,
4. blue bio resources,
5. governance,
6. business support, and
7. digital & secure oceans.

The discussions resulted in 52 action points all put together in the [Roadmap for the third Mission Arena](#).

Of the over 300 participants who registered for the third Mission Arena nearly three quarters (72.7%) were from the Arena 3 region, with the highest number of participants from the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. 83.9% of participants came from the BANOS region, with the remaining joining from other European countries.

Our Arena 3 participants came from a variety of sectors representing all sides of the blue economy. Of the 142 participants who voted in the final Assembly, 32% came from research, 23% from companies, clusters or other associations, and 17% from policy or administration. In addition, 9% of the participants were from an NGO or a transnational organisation and 8% were students.



## 6 CONCLUSIONS

BMB has made significant strides in its first 24 months, demonstrating a robust framework for stakeholder engagement, citizen participation, governance innovation, and monitoring progress in the Baltic and North Sea regions. Through the concerted efforts of diverse reference groups and the dynamic Mission Arenas, the project has successfully reached out relevant stakeholder groups and has managed to engage them through a collaborative approach in order to address the challenges of achieving a carbon-neutral and circular blue economy.

The outcomes of the governance workshops underscore the importance of adaptive, multi-level structures and inclusive strategies for effective Mission governance. Similarly, citizen engagement initiatives have yielded valuable insights into the barriers and solutions for fostering active participation in the blue economy.

The monitoring reference group's contributions have been instrumental in developing sector-specific KPIs and identifying gaps in existing frameworks, ensuring that future monitoring approaches are comprehensive and data-driven. Meanwhile, the Mission Arenas have served as pivotal platforms for innovation, fostering collaboration among stakeholders to identify actionable pathways for decarbonisation and circularity.

As the project enters its final year, the emphasis will shift to validating and consolidating the results achieved so far. The fourth Mission Arena in Sopot, Poland, will serve as a cornerstone for finalising recommendations and endorsing the action plans developed through this collaborative effort. With continued engagement and co-creation, the BlueMissionBANOS project is well-positioned to leave a lasting impact, advancing the EU's Mission Ocean while setting a benchmark for sustainability in the BANOS region.

